

UT Extension Sequatchie Co.

Horticulture and Gardening Monthly News & Notes

May 2023

Tomato tips

If you missed the Tomato Class in April the presentation was based on the publications in the following list:

- [Grow It: Cherry Tomatoes SP 810-B](https://extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/SP810-B.pdf) <https://extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/SP810-B.pdf>
- [Tomatoes for the Home Garden](https://extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/SP291-K.pdf) <https://extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/SP291-K.pdf>
- [Container Tomatoes For The Tennessee Gardener D 142](https://extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/D142.pdf) <https://extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/D142.pdf>
- [Backyard Vegetables: The Tennessee Vegetable Garden - Growing Tomatoes W 346-H](https://extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/W346-H.pdf) <https://extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/W346-H.pdf>
- [Plant Diseases: Blossom-End Rot](https://extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/SP277-Y.pdf) <https://extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/SP277-Y.pdf>
- [Growing Vegetables in Home Gardens](https://extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/PB901.pdf) <https://extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/PB901.pdf>
- [Backyard Vegetables: The Tennessee Vegetable Garden - Plant Management Practices W 346-D](https://extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/W346-D.pdf) <https://extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/W346-D.pdf>

New Publications

- Selecting Indoor Plants for the Home or Office <https://extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/W1128A.pdf>
- Caring for Indoor Plants <https://extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/W1128B.pdf>

UT Field Days 2023 Dates

- June 27, 2023, 8 a.m. EDT,- Green Industry Day –UT Gardens and Brehm Animal Science Building, UTIA Campus, Knoxville
- July 13, 2023, 8 a.m. CDT - Summer Celebration –West Tennessee AgResearch and Education Center at Jackson
- July 29, 2023, 9:00 AM, Quarterly Meeting and Tomato Tasting, Bledsoe County office, Pikeville, TN
- August 24, 2023, 8 a.m. CDT - Steak and Potatoes –, Plateau AgResearch and Education Center at Crossville
- August 29, 2023, 8 a.m. CDT - Fall Gardener's Festival, Plateau AgResearch and Education Center at Crossville
- September 9, 2023, 10 a.m. EDT - UT Arboretum Butterfly Festival – Forest Resources AgResearch and Education Center at UT Arboretum in Oak Ridge
- October 5, 2023, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. CDT - Fall in the Gardens: Plant Sale and Garden Talks –and October 6, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. CDT, West Tennessee AgResearch and Education Center at Jackson
- October 19, 2023, 7 a.m. EDT - Woods and Wildlife – Forest Resources AgResearch and Education Center at UT Arboretum in Oak Ridge

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Programs in agriculture and natural resources, 4-H youth development, family and consumer sciences, and resource development.
University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture and county governments cooperating.
UT Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.

UT Gardens Plant of the Month

Hyacinth Bean Vine: A “One Size Fits Most” Plant

Submitted by Whitney Hale, Education Coordinator at the UT Gardens, Knoxville



Purple hyacinth bean vine trellised on bamboo stakes, shown in the foreground, is a fun and easy way to add interest in an annual planting, border or island. Photo courtesy of Whitney Hale.

Truthfully, I laughed when I read an excerpt from historical gardening expert Peggy Cornett’s book, “Jefferson’s Vines of Summer: Beauties and Beasts,” where she wrote, “Ask any of Monticello’s gardeners and they will tell you that enough has been said about the Hyacinth Bean.” Here I am, though, telling you more about it.

The vine’s purple stems, leaf veins, flowers, and seed pods place it firmly on my list of purple favorites in the garden.

Hyacinth bean goes by many names including Indian bean and Egyptian bean, which provide clues about its origin. Most of the *Lablab purpureus* plant is edible when prepared correctly, and it has been utilized as a food crop for centuries in Africa and Asia. It arrived in Europe by the early 1700s and gained popularity. Ever the plantsman, Thomas Jefferson is

thought to have grown it in the early 1800s at Monticello.

In the United States, this plant has been primarily used ornamentally since the early 19th century. Climbing trellises or spreading along the ground, this vine is a fast-growing annual in much of the Southeast but can be hardy in zones 10 and 11. The shape of the seed pods and flowers indicate that it is in the *Fabaceae* family (also known as *Leguminosae*) and is nitrogen-fixing. It’s a great cover crop because it provides nitrogen through fixation and leaf decay, and its extensive root system improves the soil’s structure. Farmers may like this plant, too, because it can be used as forage for cattle and goats.

Purple hyacinth bean vine can be easily grown from seed after fear of frost has passed, in full sun and moist, well-draining soil. Protect young plants from deer and provide adequate support for the vines that can be up to 25 feet long. Flowers are white, blue, or purple, and the seed pods can range from white to red or even dark brown depending on the variety chosen. Seeds for purple flowering varieties are easily found in mail order catalogs and seed displays at garden centers in early spring. Staking against a trellis or archway, similar to what has been displayed in our UT Gardens, Knoxville, Kitchen Garden, makes for a dramatic moment in any garden while also providing shade in the heat of summer. Look for purple hyacinth bean vine growing this summer at the UT Gardens, Knoxville. There, and in your home landscape, you’ll be mesmerized by the buzz of bees and the scent of the flowers in late summer through early fall should you choose to add this purple people pleaser to your garden.

The UT Gardens includes plant collections located in Knoxville, Crossville, and Jackson, Tennessee. Designated as the official botanical garden for the State of Tennessee, the UT Gardens are part of the UT Institute of Agriculture. The Gardens’ mission is to foster appreciation, education, and stewardship of plants through garden displays, educational programs, and research trials. The Gardens are open during all seasons and free to the public.



Gardening Tips

“Gardening requires lots of water - most of it in the form of perspiration.”

Lou Erickson

June

June – Spring is here and the gardening season is getting into full swing. So here are some suggested tasks for the garden and landscape.

- Inspect winter-damaged plants, remove any dead limbs, etc. If the plant has had extensive damage a little TLC may be needed – especially watering during dry periods.
- Trim back catmint (Nepeta) after its first flush of flowers to promote new growth and a second flush of blooms.
- Harvest herbs early in the morning when the essential oil content is at its peak. The best time to harvest most herbs is just before flowering. This time is when the leaves contain the maximum essential oils.
- Daylilies are in peak bloom in June. It is a good time to buy new daylily selections for your garden to ensure you get the color you desire. Visit a daylily farm for the best selections, and plant them in full sun for the best flower production.
- Once daffodil foliage has turned yellow, you can mow or cut it down. If you remove it while it is still green, you decrease the amount of energy available for the bulb to store, decreasing flower size next year.
- To keep squash, cucumber, and bean plants abundantly producing, harvest them frequently.
- Store leftover vegetable and flower seeds in a cool, dry location to save them for planting next year.
- Water your plants in the morning, if possible, to conserve water and reduce evaporation. Infrequent, deep watering is better than frequent, shallow watering since deep watering promotes deep root growth. For best results, deep-water trees and shrubs once or twice a week and flowers two to three times a week. Most plants need 1 inch of rainfall per week. Pay attention to how much falls from the sky and water accordingly. If you have an automatic irrigation system, consider installing a rain sensor that adjusts for rainfall.
- Guard against Japanese beetles on hibiscus and roses.
- Many perennials will keep flowering if cut back after their first bloom period. Such plants include garden phlox, heliopsis, veronica, echinacea, and platycodon.
- Stake tall-growing perennials such as goldenrod, boltonia, rudbeckia, tansy, helianthus, and Joe-pye weed to prevent them from lodging. A hard rain or high wind will bend them over when they are in bloom.
- Direct-seed sunflowers in your garden. Stagger their planting by every week or two through July, and you will have flowers until frost.

Lawn Tips

All Grass Types

- Mow according to the one-third rule (never remove more than one-third of the leaf tissue at any one time that you're mowing.)
- Irrigate only when signs of drought stress such as rolled leaves and lingering footprints are present.
- Treat nutsedge and other weeds with Post-emergent herbicide if needed. See the following for more information:
 - tiny.utk.edu/W260
 - tiny.utk.edu/W146
 - tiny.utk.edu/W267
 - tiny.utk.edu/W147
 - mobileweedmanual.com

Tall Fescue

- Treat preventatively for brown patch on a 28-day interval using a strobilurin fungicide.

Bermudagrass/Zoysiagrass

- Apply fertilizer according to a soil test.



TREE NEWS

APRIL 2023

YOU CAN USE

CONTRIBUTING AUTHORS

EMERGING AND RECURRING PEST

Crape Myrtle Bark Scale in Tennessee

What is Crape Myrtle Bark Scale (CMBS)?

CMBS was first seen in Texas in 2004 and has since become a major pest of crape myrtle in the southeastern U.S. Damage is mostly aesthetic, but heavy infestations will be quite unsightly with heavy sooty mold on the branches and the trunk that can reduce vigor and bloom. The spread of CMBS across the southeast was thought to be associated with distribution of infested plant material initially, then by bird and human activity such as pruning and removal of infested plant material.

If you live in West Tennessee, by now, you have probably encountered CMBS; however, those who are in Middle and East Tennessee are just getting to know this pest and its effects on Crape Myrtle.



What to look for

While heavy infestations are conspicuous, initial signs of the pest may easily be overlooked. Early detection is possible by looking for white dots along crape myrtle branches. Upon closer inspection, adult female scales are off-white, have a felt-like texture, and are about one-tenth of an inch long. Recently infested trees will likely have scale concentrated in the textured bark of branch unions and along small diameter twigs within the canopy. Use a pointed instrument to break the felt-like exterior, and the insects will bleed pink. You may also notice pink egg clusters.

As the infestation progresses, you may observe higher density of adult scale insects. Heavily infested crape myrtles will likely show twigs that are entirely encrusted with white scale. The insects produce large quantities of honeydew, which result in the accumulation of black sooty mold on affected trees and their surroundings. While host trees are rarely killed outright, growth and flowering may be severely limited.

Management and Control

If left untreated, the CMBS will spread rapidly. Once the insects have found your tree, controlling CMBS while keeping your crape myrtles looking their best will be an ongoing effort. Treatment of small trees can be accomplished by applying a sponge and soapy water to the affected branches. Larger trees and trees with heavy infestations will require a more intensive regimen of winter dormant oil sprays and an application of systemic insecticides, such as products containing imidacloprid or dinotefuran.



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