100K Tree Day

The Tennessee Department of Agriculture, Division of Forestry, Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency, and the Tennessee Economic Council are providing free native seedlings in an effort to plant 100,000 trees in Tennessee on February 25th, 2017. The Sequatchie Valley Master Gardeners will handle the distribution for the Sequatchie County. The pick-up location is the Dunlap United Methodist Church, 1958 Main St, Dunlap, TN on Friday 2/24 from 1 pm to 5 pm and Saturday 2/25 from 8 am to 12 pm.

Individuals can order 5 to 20 free seedlings. These will be equal numbers of Eastern Redbuds, Shumard (red) Oaks, Virginia Pines, Yellow (tulip) Poplar, and American Plum. These seedlings are free although there are requests for donations to this worthwhile program. Given the loss of trees to drought/wildfires/etc. and the continuing loss of nectar and pollen sources for the pollinators, this program is even more important this year. Log on to the website below (or google 100K Tree Day) to order, remember to specify pick up at the church.


Ken is also looking for SVMG Members to help hand out seedlings Feb 24 and 25 contact Ken 972-977-1844 if you can help or need more information.
2017 Dates

- **Workday at Sequatchie County Library** January 16, 2017 (Martin Luther King Day)
- **Quarterly Meeting** February 4, 2017, details TBD, Pikeville, TN
- **100K Tree Day** February 24&25, 2017 details on page 1
- **Spring Workshop Series** March 28, 2016 PM Mountain Valley Bank, Dunlap, TN More details soon
- **Valley Fest** May 5-7, 2017 Dunlap TN
- **Quarterly Meeting** May 6, 2017 Dunlap, TN (Conflict with Valley Fest will need to review dates in February)
- **Eastern region TEMG workshop** June 8 Crossville
- **Central region TEMG workshop** June 22 Murfreesboro
- **Steak and Potato Day** August 1, 2017 Crossville
- **Quarterly Meeting** August 12 (Week later due to 127 Yard Sale) Tomato Tasting in Dunlap
- **Western region TEMG workshop** October 12 Memphis
- **Quarterly Meeting** November 4, 2017 Pikeville

2017 All Bugs Good and Bad Series

[https://learn.extension.org/events/tag/2017%20all%20bugs%20good%20and%20bad%20webinar%20series](https://learn.extension.org/events/tag/2017%20all%20bugs%20good%20and%20bad%20webinar%20series)

- **2017 All Bugs Good and Bad Webinar Series: Don't Let Tramp Ants Take Over Your Home**
  Friday, February 3, 2017 at 1:00 pm CST - Presented by Karen Vail
- **2017 All Bugs Good and Bad Webinar Series: Save Your Veggie Harvest From Hungry Insects!**
  Friday, March 3, 2017 at 1:00 pm CST
- **2017 All Bugs Good and Bad Webinar Series: Mosquitoes and Insect Borne Diseases**
  Friday, April 7, 2017 at 1:00 pm CDT
- **2017 All Bugs Good and Bad Webinar Series: Ticks**
  Friday, May 5, 2017 at 1:00 pm CDT
- **2017 All Bugs Good and Bad Webinar Series: Aphids, Scales, and White Flies**
  Friday, June 2, 2017 at 1:00 pm CDT - Presented by Erfan Vafaie
- **2017 All Bugs Good and Bad Webinar Series: Urban Landscapes as a Host for Insects**
  Friday, August 4, 2017 at 1:00 pm CDT - Presented by Matthew Baur
- **2017 All Bugs Good and Bad Webinar Series: Meet Our Native Pollinators**
  Friday, September 1, 2017 at 1:00 pm CDT
- **2017 All Bugs Good and Bad Webinar Series: New Invasive Ants To Know About**
  Friday, October 6, 2017 at 1:00 pm CDT - Presented by Timothy Davis

The production of two new home vegetable gardening publications is complete, and they are now available on the UT Extension publications site:

- W 346-G The Tennessee Vegetable Garden: Stewardship in Soil Management
  [extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/W346-G.pdf](extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/W346-G.pdf)
- W 346-H The Tennessee Vegetable Garden: Growing Tomatoes
February Gardening Tips from the UT Gardens

While it may still be cold outdoors winter and early spring is a good time to prepare for the next season, here are eleven things to do outdoors in the garden next month.

1. Bluebirds are already looking for a place to nest, so clean out your birdhouse soon. If you are in need of a good bluebird house, check out Homes for Bluebirds, Inc. at http://danfinch.com/birds.htm or building your own http://www.tnwatchablewildlife.org/woodworkingforallfamilies.cfm
2. Green/English and sugar snap peas can be direct sown in the garden in February. In colder parts of the state, wait until the end of the month. If sown too late, they will not have time to flower and fruit before it gets too hot.
3. If your ornamental grasses, such as as Miscanthus, Pennisetum, Mexican feather, switchgrass and muhly grass are looking tattered and blowing about the garden, cut them back 3 to 6 inches above the ground. You can also wait until March to do this.
4. Barrenwort (Epimedium) and Lungwort (Pulmonaria) will be in flower soon. Cut back last year's foliage before new growth appears.
5. Lenten rose (Helleborus orientalis) and its hybrids are one of the first plants to flower in the new year. A little cleanup makes a big difference when these winter beauties blossom. There are two thoughts on removing last year's foliage. If you're like me, there's less to do in the garden now, and if I wait around until March, it may not get done. I like to cut back last year's foliage on Helleborus before the flower stalks appear. Follow the old leaves down to the crown and remove the entire leaf stalk near the soil. In mild winters, the foliage often still looks good in February, but as the flowers and new foliage appear, the old leaves will become unsightly. The old foliage will be much more difficult to remove once the new growth has appeared. In some winters, the earliest flowers may get damaged, but I don't mind sacrificing a few for a tidy plant later on.
6. For indoor forcing of blooms, cut branches of pussy willow, forsythia, flowering quince, redbud, and star and saucer magnolia. Choose stems with flower buds that have begun to swell. Cut them at an angle and place in water in a cool location in your home with indirect light.
7. Late February and March are good times to trim trees and shrubs. If the limb is larger than 2 inches in diameter, or heavily weighted, use the three-step method for removing branches. Make the first cut on the underside of the limb about 6 inches away from the trunk, cutting about one-third of the way through the limb. On the top side, cut through the limb 3 to 6 inches beyond the first cut. Remember to remove dead or diseased branches first, and then take out any rubbing or crossed branches. Prune to maintain a natural form unless formality is appropriate for the design.
8. Postpone pruning of spring-flowering and early summer-flowering shrubs like azaleas, forsythia, spirea, and mophead hydrangea until just after they flower.
9. Cut back monkey grass (Liriope) before new growth appears. Use a string trimmer for larger areas.
10. Spot-control weeds in a dormant warm-season lawn by pulling them or by applying a broadleaf weed control.
11. Apply dormant horticulture oil to fruit and nut trees to eliminate scale and other pests. It must be applied before spring growth appears. These oils also can control scale insects on hollies, euonymus and camellias. For best results, be sure to completely spray the entire plant including the underside of the leaves.

If you prefer to remain where it is warm:

1. Sow broccoli, cauliflower and cabbage seed indoors now or buy transplants in March. Harden them off before planting out in March.
2. Remove dust from your house plants by rinsing them in the shower.
3. Extend the life of your Valentine’s Day flowers by changing the water daily and recutting the stems every couple of days, making sure foliage is kept above the water line.
January 2016 Plant of the Month: Japanese Maple

Add Certain Cultivars to Your Landscape for Winter Interest

Submitted by Sue Hamilton, Director of the University of Tennessee Gardens

Japanese maples, *Acer palmatum*, are at the top of my list of favorite trees. This group of trees has such diversity in growth habit, foliage color, leaf-type, form and even bark color that there really is an ideal selection for every garden. At last count, I have 18 different cultivars in my home landscape and my garden is only a half-acre!

You might be wondering why I’ve chosen to highlight them in January? For one, as long as the ground is not frozen, this is a great time to plant a Japanese maple or any tree or shrub. Woody plants have gone dormant and with the cooler temperatures and rainfall, it’s an ideal time to get such plants in the ground. Such plants typically outperform those planted in the spring. And secondly, I want to focus on the group of Japanese maples that make quite a show in the winter landscape. If you have space, don’t overlook adding this great winter-interest tree to your landscape.

Several Japanese maple selections are valued for the brilliant bark color they exhibit once temperatures turn cold. Each has an upright growth habit, and, depending on cultivar, can grow between 6 and 25 feet tall. Foliage is a lime green in spring darkening in color as summer approaches. Fall foliage is a brilliant shade of yellow. Photo by S. Hamilton, courtesy UTIA.

Japanese Sunrise’ is a favorite cultivar for many home gardens because of its multi-colored winter bark. One side of the tree will be bright red while the other side can exhibit a bright yellow. The cultivar has lime-green spring leaves that darken as a summer approaches. Fall foliage is a brilliant shade of yellow. Photo by S. Hamilton, courtesy UTIA.

Japanese maples really are easy trees to maintain. They are not heavy feeders, and using compost or a well-aged mulch well away from the base of the tree and about three to four inches deep will provide enough nutrition for your maple, making commercial fertilizers unnecessary. You may find that you would like to prune or shape your Japanese maple. This is a matter of preference. Remove crossing branches and thin out twigs that are bunched together. This will reveal and accentuate the beauty of the tree’s framework. The best time to prune Japanese maples in our region of the country is late February to early March. It’s recommended to use selective pruning practices, removing no more than one-third of the branches at one time or during one season.

I recommend siting your tree where it can be a focal point in your landscape. You can make it a single specimen planted in an open lawn. Nighttime landscape up-lighting is a fabulous way to showcase the beauty of the colorful bark and the architecture of the tree. Another effective way to distinguish this tree is to pay careful attention to the angle-of-view from which the tree will be seen in your garden and provide it a contrasting-color backdrop. It could be the background color of your home or utility shed or the contrasting color of an evergreen. Planting in a decorative container in a color matching the tree’s bark can be incredibly striking. Add to the winter color of this combination by planting pansies and violas with matching or contrasting flowers around the base of the tree. And Japanese maples, because they are not large trees, can always be used in mixed planting boarders and in foundation plantings.

Outstanding Selections for Winter Appeal:

- ‘Aka kawa hime’ has bright red bark in winter and is one of the more dwarf in this unique group of maples. Grows 6’-8’ tall and 4’-6’ wide.
- ‘Beni kawa’ also has bright salmon-red bark in winter. Grows 10’ tall and 8’-10’ wide.
• 'Bihou' has bark that turns orange in the winter. Grows 15 ‘tall and 8’-10’ wide, and can be viewed in the UT Gardens, Jackson.

• 'Dixie Delight' has bark that changes in the winter first to orange and then to yellow as temperatures get colder. Grows 10’-12’ tall and 6’-8’ wide.

• 'Japanese Sunrise' has multi-colored winter bark. One side of the tree will be bright red while the other side is a bright yellow. And in between these two colors, the bark is a fusion of yellow, orange and red. Can grow up to 25’ tall x 20’ wide. A specimen is on display in the UT Gardens, Knoxville.

• 'Red Wood' has coral-pink bark much like that of 'Sango Kaku'. Known to keep good bark coloration in the old wood as well. Grows up to 12’ tall and 4’-8’ wide.

• 'Sango kaku' is known for its showy coral-pink coloration in the winter landscape. Grows up to 25’ tall and 20’ wide. Specimens are on display at both the UT Gardens sites in Knoxville and Jackson.

• 'Winter Flame' has showy red winter bark. Grows 8’-10’ tall and 6’-8’ wide. You can also see this tree in the UT Gardens, Knoxville.

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No Foolin’! A Community Garden is Coming to Sequatchie County

UT Extension Sequatchie County along with its partners is excited to announce our first Community Garden! The garden is projected to open on April 1, 2017. The target audience will be those with limited land or financial resources with a specific emphasis on Sr. Citizens and Hispanic families.

We would like to invite the Master Gardeners in Sequatchie County to partner with us as educators (not laborers) in this project. “It is our goal” states Aneta Eichler, UT Extension Agent, “to provide an atmosphere where families can learn, grow and give back to their community.” Members of the Community Garden will have the opportunity to learn gardening knowledge from our local Extension Master Gardeners. As the summer progresses, Aneta Eichler and Linda Lambert will be offering Nutrition Workshops and Food Preservation classes for members of the community to learn how to use the items in their food plots.

Families will be given the opportunity to apply for food plots in the community garden. Here, they may choose the types of food they would like to grow. This will allow for individuality of the program, as well as accountability. Each family or group will be expected to maintain their own plot.

We will also be encouraging families/groups to give back to the community by donating a portion of their harvest to the Food Bank, Sr. Center or other organization of choice.

For more information or to serve as a Garden Mentor contact:
Aneta Eichler at 949-2611 or adodd2@utk.edu
Linda Lambert at 949-3313 or rhllel@yahoo.com

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The final tally

**538.8 Volunteer hours**
Valued at
$12,694.13
@23.56/hour

$12,952 total value
of all goods, services etc. donated by SVMG members
Farmers, landscapers and home gardeners all across the state often rely on anecdotal evidence to determine if their soils are acidic or have a high organic matter content, but they don’t have to guess. For decades the University of Tennessee Soil, Plant and Pest Center has provided science-based analytical services that accurately characterize soils. Beginning in January 2017, the center is entering a new phase that administrators believe will propel the center to a higher level of service for years to come.

On January 2, the University of Tennessee Soil, Plant and Pest Center will begin using new technology that will expand the scientific analyses provided to clients as well as enhance the speed with which they may choose to receive their test results. Debbie Joines, SPP Center manager, says the most significant change to the soil-testing service will be upgrading the center’s former “Basic Soil Test” to a new test labeled the “Plus Soil Test.”

“UT Extension has invested in new technology that will now allow the Soil, Plant and Pest Center to provide clients with test results that include all nine Mehlich 1 analytes,” says Joines. “With the Plus Soil Test, clients will receive results for pH as well as P, K, Ca, Mg, Zn, Mn, Fe, Cu and B. The former Basic Soil Test provided only evaluations of pH and four analytes—P, K, Ca and Mg,” she explains. The Basic Soil Test will no longer be available.

As part of the expanded services, Joines pledges that SPP Center clients will now receive their results extremely fast. “Our upgrades will allow us to speed up our turnaround time. Clients will submit samples and see results in most cases as quickly as overnight if they choose to access their reports on the internet either through a desktop computer or through a tablet or smartphone,” said Joines. Users who supply an email address along with their Soil Information Sheet will be prompted to sign into the system upon availability of results. Specifically, Joines says routine soil test results and reports are expected to be available within 1 – 2 days of sample receipt. “If a client wants a more detailed battery of tests, it might take longer. However, we can still provide faster turnaround than we could before the upgrades.”

So when do the new, faster services kick in? Joines expects the new system to be operational beginning January 2. “The new upgrades will allow the Soil, Plant and Pest Center to be extremely responsive to the needs of our clientele. Producers will be able to make critical production decisions and fulfill treatments in a timely manner,” she explained.

“Our soil amendment recommendations are maintenance recommendations that will keep your soil fertile with a minimum amount of expenditure,” she said. “This allows for lower fertilizer costs and amounts and produces higher yields, which in turn can enhance profits.” Joines adds that lower amounts of chemical inputs have the added benefit of being more environmentally friendly for both large-scale producers and home gardeners.

The new technology does come at a cost. While the price for the routine “Plus Soil Test” will remain the same as the old “Basic Plus Test,” some of the fees for SPP Center services are increasing. The cost for the relatively new forage nutritional tests, however, will remain the same. Also, distance plant and pest diagnostics will remain free through your County UT Extension Office. On-line access to results for both of those services is another upgrade planned for the near future.

For detailed service and pricing information, see the UT Soil, Plant and Pest Center website: ag.tennessee.edu/spp