

NEWS YOU CAN USE

For Montgomery County Master Gardener Volunteers

February 2019

We are Ohio State University Extension trained volunteers empowered to educate others with timely research-based gardening information.

What's the Buzz?

These past several weeks of relentless snow, ice, wind and sub-zero temperatures have even the greatest lovers of winter fun feeling the need to escape the frozen tundra. Spring may be 44 days (March 20th) away, but it seems an eternity away from today. One way to jump start spring is by starting spring vegetables plants indoors.

Not only does this give you a different activity beside household chores to do, but gardeners get their fix of soil, water, and dirt (yes, I said DIRT) under their fingernails. I can smell that wet soil now! The grow lights can help light up our homes and our mood. A couple of things you may want to consider are: light, temperature, containers, soil, and humidity.

Light



There are a seemingly endless variety of kits available for purchase, or you can DIY. The kits generally come with the lights included. You can purchase just a grow light, or you can create your own growing area. If you go with the build your own, there are a few considerations when it comes to the lights. Traditional T-12 (Standard) shop light-style fluorescent lights come in dual bulb fixtures. In this case, it is best to buy one Cool White 4000K bulb and one Warm White 3000K bulb, and place them side by side within the fixture. Cool White fluorescents are generally higher in the blue end of the electromagnetic spectrum, which promotes plant responses such as vegetative growth, cell division and cell regeneration, etc. Warm White fluorescents emit light in the red end of the electromagnetic spectrum, stimulating responses such as flower initiation and seed germination. Having the two bulbs together will generate as close to full sun conditions as you can, cheaply and artificially, without buying horticulturally-tailored bulbs. In addition to this, if the seedlings are going to be kept under artificial light for an extended period of time after germination, using two cool whites will aid in avoiding etiolation (characterized by long, weak stems; smaller leaves due to longer internodes; and a pale yellow color), keeping the seedlings compact.

Temperature

The room temperature will directly relate to your soil temperature and the vegetables you are starting. Cool-season vegetables (lettuce, spinach, beets, carrot and various members of the cabbage family) require cooler soil and air temperatures, while warm-season crops (tomato, peppers, squash, etc.) will require higher temperatures. Mixed-season plants can produce mixed results! Approximately 65-70° air temperature for cool season crops and 70-75° for your warm season vegetables.



Container Conundrum

As gardeners, we tend to keep an odd assortment of twine, stakes, open bags of mulch and soil, and empty pots. Unless the container is broken or damaged in some way, we keep it. It is a compulsion we can't overcome, no matter how much our spouses beg us to stop. Do remember, you must clean and sterilize these containers before reusing them. Many people keep egg cartons for seed starting. This is not a good idea. You have a potential for diseases associated with chickens (salmonella, e-coli) having contaminated the cartons. You can purchase new cardboard egg cartons at stores selling backyard flock supplies.



If you are a lazy gardener, such as myself, you can buy flats designed for seed starting. The important point is to use clean, sterile containers.

Growing Mediums

There are numerous commercial soilless growing mediums and expandable peat pots on the market. You can even concoct your own recipe using vermiculite, perlite, and peat, or other various combinations of different materials. The best word of advice here is to keep your growing medium light, airy, and don't use soil from a garden, or used soil from old pots. This soil may contain weed seeds, or insect pests.

Humidity



Humidity can become an issue in the winter with the furnace heat adding to the already dry winter air. Be careful how, and how much, humidity you provide to your seedlings so you don't create issues. You can increase humidity by placing a tray of water with lava rocks in it near the plants; the lava rocks increase the surface area for evaporation. Placing the trays of seeds close together can create a microenvironment with a higher humidity. Remember to increase the space between trays as the seedlings emerge and grow into transplant size to reduce the chance of diseases from lack of air flow.

Transplanting

As your seedlings grow and the weather changes for the warmer, you can move the hardy cool-season crops to the outside. You may consider trying to grow them inside by transplanting the vegetable into a larger container. If you do choose to go outside with the plants, be sure to do a hardening-off process to give them time to develop a thicker cuticle and acclimate them to the outdoor life.

So, let's stop wondering when the snow and cold will depart. Go ahead and create a light bit of in your home – 44 days and counting!



~ Kim

Submit information for "News You Can Use" to Gail Carone: getcarone@hotmail.com

CONTINUING EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

Pure programming time will count as Continuing Education.

Do Not Count drive time, sign-in, breaks or lunch time as Continuing Education.

- Saturday, February 9, 2019 – **1:00 to 3:30 p.m.** – Self-track CEUs (*Greene County*)

An Afternoon of Hostas! **Cost: \$10** includes educational materials
OSU Extension Greene County, 100 Fairground Rd., Xenia, OH 45385

Joy Pierzynski, Director of the OSU Plant and Pest Diagnostic Clinic, will present "*Top Three Scourges of Hosta: Causes and Management.*" Learn to identify and manage: virus X, foliar nematodes, and petiole rot on hosta.

Bob Liames, President of the Miami Valley Hosta Society, will present "*Hostamania.*" a guide on the culture, care and many uses of hosta.

Gene Wogoman, retired hosta grower, will present "*Hosta and Companion Plants.*" a look at using other plants to complement hosta plantings.

Register online - go.osu.edu/greenehosta or hupman.5@osu.edu

- Tuesday, February 12, 2019 – **9 a.m. to Noon** – Self-track CEUs

Young Tree Training Workshop - Caesar Creek State Park

Caesar Creek Hopewell Daylodge, 4848 North Clarksville Road, Waynesville, Ohio 45068

While this is a **free event**, an **RSVP IS REQUIRED!** This allows our hosts to plan for the number of people who will be attending. You can make your reservation by calling Wendi Van Buren at 614-670-2653, and leave a voice mail, or you can email wendi.vanburen@dnr.state.oh.us



Registration is Open for the 2019 International Master Gardener Conference

Penn's Woods: Digging into our Roots **June 17-21, 2019**

Half and full day tours to area public gardens: June 16, 17, and 21, 2019
Valley Forge Casino Resort, Valley Forge, PA

Are you on the map? After 3 1/2 weeks, we have 443 registrants signed up!

Register NOW!!! <http://www.cvent.com/d/hgqxlp>

Note: If a session is filled, it will no longer appear on the Registration site. If a Tour or Field Study Day (FSD) is filled, you will be offered a spot on the waitlist. No additional FSDs will be added; it is unlikely that additional Tours will be added.

Lots of wonderful sessions still available.

Remember, you can defer your payment as long as it is paid in full by May 26th.

Overview of fees:

- Early Registration: \$350
- Field Study Days: \$40 per day
- Advanced Certification Training: \$50 (two afternoons)
- Welcome Reception: \$25
- Container Wars: \$10
- Music in the Garden: \$15
- Guest Admin Fee: \$35
- Tours are priced individually, ranging from \$75 – \$135

More News . . .

The Deadline to Register for GMCMGA Continuing Education Classes is February 15, 2019.

Please review the programs and sign up for the classes you want. Registration is due by February 15, 2019.

Please note that a few of the programs can accommodate a limited number of participants.

Register early to reserve your spot.

Retain a Copy of the registration form for your records and Return a Copy with your check for the fee made payable to GMCMGA no later than FEB. 15, 2019, to Judy Wanamaker, 2849 Meadow Park Drive, Kettering, OH 45440, or register online to Judy Wanamaker at jkw1712@aol.com with Continuing Education in the subject line. Your cancelled check is your receipt.

Upcoming Events

Monday, March 18, 2019 – 6 to 7 p.m.

Greater Montgomery County Master Gardener Association Quarterly General Membership Meeting

Dayton Metro Library – West Carrollton Branch, 300 E. Central Ave., West Carrollton, OH 45449

Checking out Kim's New Office!

Montgomery County Master Gardeners toured Kim Hupman's NEW office and adjacent work spaces on January 23rd at the OSU Extension Montgomery County located inside the Calumet Center at 580 Calumet Lane, Dayton, OH 45417.

Here are a few things to remember when you plan to visit the Extension office:

- There is no longer a receptionist at the front desk to let visitors into the building, and the security system is still in place. Inside the inner lobby, you will see a cabinet with a phone for you to call the extension of the person you want to see.
- Please schedule an appointment to see Kim.
- If you are dropping something off, try to let Kim know beforehand so she can inform the rest of the staff.
- When you enter the building, go to the phone on the cabinet and dial Kim's extension, **114**. Even if you have an appointment, **you must dial Kim's extension for her to let you in.**
- If Kim doesn't answer, dial Theresa at her extension, **110**. She usually knows Kim's schedule.



Photo courtesy of Gail Carone/Theresa Ford



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

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What is the Name of that Perennial?

Helleborus orientalis

Common Name: hellebore
Type: Herbaceous perennial
Family: Ranunculaceae
Native Range: Turkey, Caucasuses, European Turkey
Zone: 4 to 9
Height: 12-18" tall
Spread: 12-18"
Bloom Time: April
Bloom Description: White to pink to rose-purple with yellow stamens
Sun: Part shade to full shade
Water: Medium
Maintenance: Low
Suggested Use: Naturalize
Flower: Showy
Leaf: Evergreen
Other: Winter Interest
Tolerate: Deer, Heavy Shade, Dry Soil, Shallow-Rocky Soil, Air Pollution



Photo courtesy of Gail Carone

Culture: Best grown in organically rich, humusy, well-drained soils in part shade to full shade. Locate plants in areas protected from cold winter winds. Clumps establish fairly quickly. Although the foliage is evergreen, it may become scorched and tattered in extremely harsh winters, particularly if not sited in locations protected from cold winter winds and/or insulated by snow cover. Cut back flowering stems after bloom to promote new foliage growth. New plants can be obtained from division of the clumps (best in spring) and from seedlings which grow up around the plants as a result of self-seeding. A slightly larger and much easier plant to grow than the similar, but earlier blooming, *Helleborus niger*.

Noteworthy Characteristics: *Helleborus orientalis*, commonly called Lenten rose, is a clump-forming, late winter-blooming perennial which typically grows 1-1.5' tall. Features large, cup-shaped, rose-like, usually nodding flowers (3-4" diameter) with center crowns of conspicuously contrasting yellow stamens. Flowers usually appear in clusters of 1-4 on thick stems rising above the foliage. Flower color is extremely variable, ranging from white to pink to light rose-purple, frequently with interior spotting. Palmate, serrate, leathery, 8-16" wide, glossy, basal, dark green leaves (7-9 leaflets) are evergreen in warm climates but deciduous in extremely cold winters. In the St. Louis area, plants will remain evergreen in moderate winters, but may become scorched and tattered in extremely cold weather, particularly if not insulated by snow cover. Blooms in late winter (sometimes when snow is still present) and continues into spring, with a long, 8-10 week bloom period. Leaves, stems and roots are poisonous. Genus name comes from the Greek words *bora* meaning food and *helein* meaning injures/destroys in reference to the plant's toxic leaves, stems and roots which are poisonous to humans if ingested. Specific epithet means from the Orient.

Problems: No serious insect or disease problems. Leaf spot and crown rot are occasional problems. A rugged and easy-to-grow plant.

Garden Uses: Clumps of Lenten rose blooming in February or March are true harbingers of spring. Locate plants near a kitchen window, patio or walkway so that the early bloom may be enjoyed to the fullest. Group in shady locations under trees or large shrubs, woodland gardens or border fronts. May also be incorporated into a naturalized area where clumps will slowly spread through self-seeding. May also be massed to form an attractive ground cover.

Resource - www.missouribotanicalgarden.org

Montgomery Co. Master Gardener Volunteer Program

February 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 Groundhog Day 
3	4	5	6	7	8	9 CONT. ED. AN AFTERNOON OF HOSTAS 1 - 3:30 p.m. Greene Co. Extension
10	11	12 CONT. ED. YOUNG TREE TRAINING WORKSHOP 9 a.m. - Noon Caesar Creek Hopewell Daylodge	13	14 	15	16
17	18  PRESIDENTS DAY OSUE office OPEN	19 3:30 p.m. Exec. Committee mtg. 5 Rivers	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28		