



GNO Gardening Magazine

February 2021



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Cover photo:

The profuse flowers of the vitex plant (*Vitex agnus-castus*) are very attractive to local pollinators including this carpenter bee.

Photo by Dr. Heather Kirk-Ballard

Super Plant Spotlight – Shoal Creek Vitex

If you are looking for a small, showy, butterfly/hummingbird attracting tree with low maintenance requirements, then this Louisiana SuperPlant is a good option. Vitex (*Vitex agnus-castus*) is a native of China and India that has become naturalized throughout certain areas of the United States. It has a long history as a medicinal plant. The English name "chaste tree" and the common name "monk's pepper" refer to erroneous beliefs that parts of the plant reduce libidinal desires. Early-American physicians used it to stimulate lactation and as an emmenagogic. (Look them up).

The Shoal Creek Vitex has large 12" long spikes of vibrant lavender-blue flowers and makes a small shrub or tree 10'-15' tall and wide. A smaller size can be maintained as it responds well to pruning. The leaves are palmately compound, with 5-7 leaflets, and aromatic. Several selections of vitex, including Shoal Creek, also have somewhat fragrant flowers. While being a great plant in its own right, vitex has also been utilized in the south as a substitute for lilac (*Syringa vulgaris*) and butterfly bush (*Buddleja davidii*) which do not grow well in many regions. The vitex flowers have more of a sage



Here is an excellent example of a well pruned vitex tree in a local landscape.



The flowers of the vitex plant.

fragrance and are not nearly as sweet-scented as lilac or butterfly bush but is very similar in appearance to both. Vitex blooms on new growth in early spring (May/June) with a second flush in August. Flowers are complete and fertile so the flower spikes will produce seed, many of which may germinate. Though not required, deadheading is a good way to encourage flowering, prevent seed formation, and maintain a neat tree appearance.

Once established, vitex is very drought tolerant and fits in well to a lower-maintenance landscape. It prospers in hot and dry environments and deer-resistant (deer will not eat it). Vitex prefer well-drained soil and full sun to part sun locations. Vitex trees have a vigorous growth habit.

Unfortunately, this tree is fairly messy, shedding all of its leaves in the fall (deciduous), and dropping old flowers and seeds throughout the year. However, its aromatic green leaves and long, profuse bloom period go a long way toward making up for the litter.

If you want a tough, yet gorgeous, shrub or small tree that is a butterfly/bee/hummingbird magnet, then Shoal Creek vitex is a must for your garden.

~Dr Joe Willis

February Vegetable Planting Guide

Crop	Recommended Variety
Beets	Detroit Dark Red, Kestrel, Red Ace F1, Ruby Queen
Carrots	Danvers 128, Purple Haze, Thumbelina, Apache, Enterprise, Maverick, Sugar Snax 54
Collards	Champions, Flash, Georgia Southern, Top Bunch, Vates
Eggplants (seeds)	Dusky, Epic, Night Shadow, Black Beauty
Irish Potatoes	Dark Red Norland, Red LaSoda, Kennebec, Yukon Gold,
Kale	Siberian, Vates
Kohlrabi	Early Purple Vienna, Early White, Vienna, Winner
Lettuce	Esmeralda, New Red Fire F1, Nevada, Tall Guzmane Elite
Mustard Greens	Florida Broadleaf, Greenwave, Red Giant, Southern Giant Curled, Savannah, Tendergreen
Pepper, Bell (Seeds)	Aristotle XR3, Jupiter, King Arthur, Paladin, Golden Summer, Purple Beauty, Tequila
Pepper, Hot (Seeds)	Grande, Tula, Mariachi, Mitla, El Rey FI, Tobasco, Jalapeño M, Super Cayenne II
Radishes	Cherriette, Champion, White Icicle, April Cross
Shallots	Matador, Prism
Snap Beans, Bush	Blue Lake 274, Bronco, Contender, Festina, Lynx, Provider, Roma II
Snap Beans, Pole	Derby, Blue Lake, Kentucky Blue, McCaslin, Rattlesnake, Kentucky Wonder 191
Spinach	Bloomsdale Long Standing, Melody, Tyee, Unipak 151
Sweet Corn	Merit, Silver Queen, Honey ‘n Pearl, Ambrosia
Swiss Chard	None Given
Tomatoes (seeds)	Bella Rosa, Fletcher, Tribute, BHN 1021, Amelia, Dixie Red
Turnip Greens	Alamo, All Top, Purple, Top White Globe, Seven Top, Southern Green, Top Star, Tokyo Cross

Crazy for Coreopsis

Native gardeners are crazy for Coreopsis! There are 13 species of Coreopsis, pronounced “core-ee-OP-siss,” that are native to Louisiana. These plants are long-blooming, sturdy, good wildlife plants that add weeks of color to our Louisiana gardens starting very early in the Spring. Some Coreopsis are annuals that live and die in one season while others are perennial and can last for many years. One common name for Coreopsis is Tickseed, which may refer to the dark, shiny seeds of some and the tendency for the seeds to stick to skin or clothing. Indeed, it is very easy to collect seed from these plants and easy to grow them, making them a perfect plant to share and popular in wildflower and pollinator mixes.

Coreopsis is a favorite of the horticulture industry and while lots of breeding work has produced many named selections and cultivars of this plant, there are several straight species that are adaptable, beautiful plants for a sunny, well-drained garden. Sometimes, in breeding efforts to make a plant more appealing to people, wildlife benefits can be compromised, making plants less useful to insects, bees and birds. Using straight species, just as they occur in the wild, ensures that your plants will have all of the natural wildlife benefits that nature intended.

Two of the more common species of Coreopsis used in gardens are *C. lanceolata* and *C. tinctoria*. *Coreopsis lanceolata*, Lance-leaf Coreopsis, is

perennial and has large, pure golden yellow flowers. It grows about 12-16” tall and is an early bloomer, beginning in late March and going through June. Like most of our Coreopsis, it prefers well-drained sunny spaces and happily re-seeds, sometimes creating large

colonies. In early April, Lance-leaf Coreopsis in combination with other Coreopsis species like *C. pubescens* and *C. intermedia* can be seen in late Spring and early summer on Louisiana roadsides in the piney regions of the state.

Coreopsis tinctoria, also known as Plains Coreopsis, is an annual species, lasting only one season, and can be seen growing wild on disturbed roadside



Photo by Chris Dunaway

A flower of *Coreopsis lanceolata*, Lance-leaf Coreopsis

areas, but is also a gardener’s favorite. These fast-growing plants can be direct seeded into garden beds and pots or transplanted out as young plants. They always reward with a multitude of bi-colored flowers with yellow petals, red-brown at the base and brown center discs. The flowers are carried above airy, finely cut foliage on tall plants at 2-4 feet. They respond very well to pinching or cutting back when young to produce a denser, more branched plant. There are variations of *C. tinctoria* that present very pale yellow, ivory or mahogany red petals. Again, *C. tinctoria* prefers well drained and full-sun situations but can handle poorer soils. It is easy to collect seed or just allow this plant to re-seed itself in the garden. Coreopsis are the perfect plants for wildflower gardens, meadows, pollinator gardens, naturalistic

Crazy for Coreopsis

and native plantings. A combination of species will provide weeks of color early in the growing season. They do fine in poorer soils, and tolerate our heat and humidity well if given a well-drained situation. Many species of pollinators, especially native bees, will use

Coreopsis and at least two moths use it as a host plant. In addition, the seeds may also be eaten by birds. Native gardeners are crazy for Coreopsis and it's easy to see why!

~Tammany Baumgarten



The Native Plant Initiative of Greater New Orleans is hosting two **Crazy for Coreopsis** native plant giveaways in the GNO area, **February 20th and February 27th**. Each family will receive one or more FREE native Coreopsis plants as supplies last.

[Click on this link or go to npi-gno.org/events](http://npi-gno.org/events) for locations, times and other details.



Coreopsis tinctoria Tall Plains Coreopsis

Weeds of the Month

Henbit and Purple Deadnettle

Henbit (*Lamium amplexicale*) and purple deadnettle (*Lamium purpureum*) often get confused in the late winter/early spring season when both begin to flower in our lawns and gardens. Thin turfgrass or neglected flowerbeds are the perfect habitat for these weeds to spring forth from. Both have purple flowers and a low growth habit. As members of the mint family, both have square stems. Seeds germinate in the fall and winter months during warm spells, with mild winters leading to population booms for both henbit and purple deadnettle. This year's mild winter has both plants making an appearance just about anywhere!

These two weeds thrive in moist, rich soils (like those found in our winter lawns and gardens) and can grow in a range of light conditions. They are often found locally growing together, in company with other cool season weeds such as chickweed, clovers, annual bluegrass, and oxalis. Like many cool season weeds, the blooms do provide nectar and pollen for pollinating insect species such as honeybees.

Telling them apart comes down to some visual cues. Henbit tends to have scalloped, round shaped leaves, while purple deadnettle leaves are more triangular in shape and not deeply scalloped on the edges. The

lower leaves of henbit also tend to have a petiole (leaf stem) while upper leaves lack a petiole. Purple deadnettle leaves all have a petiole. Purple deadnettle leaves towards the top of the plant tend to have a

purplish coloration, which is a good visual clue to differentiate between the species.

Flower color and structure can also aid in identifying which is which. Both produce tubular flowers. Henbit tends to be pink to purple in coloration with some darker purple spotting, and flowers are arranged in a whorled cluster at the top of the plant. Purple deadnettle flowers are often paler in coloration than those of henbit and a bit wider also.

Controlling both of these cool season weeds is the same, regardless of identity. In flower beds, hand pulling before the

seeds set in late spring helps to keep both henbit and purple deadnettle under control. Both tug up out of moist soil very easily. Preemergent herbicides are a good tool for preventing new crops of these and other cool season weeds from sprouting in late fall. Mulching also helps, with a 2-4" layer being adequate to prevent seed germination.

Controlling henbit and purple deadnettle in the lawn means maintaining turf properly year-round through proper mowing height, fertilization, and irrigation practices. A soil test annually will aid in addressing



Photo by Chris Dunaway

Henbit (*Lamium amplexicale*) growing in Mid-City New Orleans. Notice the scalloped leaves with rounded ends.

Weeds of the Month

Henbit and Purple Deadnettle

any pH or nutritional issues that may contribute to unthrifty grass. Thickly grown turf is able to outcompete many cool season weeds, even when in dormancy. Any bare ground or thinly growing areas of grass invite cool season weeds to germinate and take over.

A pre-emergent herbicide applied in the fall will help mitigate populations of both purple deadnettle and henbit. Many post-emergent lawn herbicides are labeled for use on both species. Some of the most common being herbicides include: atrazine, simazine, metsulfuron and various combinations in products formulated for use in southern lawns. Options are many, and can be found here: https://www.lsuagcenter.com/topics/lawn_garden/commercial_horticulture/turfgrass/turfgrass-weeds/broadleaf-weeds/henbit

The purple flowers of both henbit and purple deadnettle are a welcome stopping place for



Photo by Herrmann Bernd

Purple deadnettle (*Lamium purpureum*). Here you see the lobed arrowhead shaped leaves. Notice the purple color in the young leaves at the top.



In this side-by-side comparison you can see Purple deadnettle (*Lamium purpureum*) on the left and Henbit (*Lamium amplexicale*) on the right.

bees and other pollinators during the cool season months, meaning that some gardeners choose to keep these species in a pollinator-friendly habitat areas. Both species are also edible, and local foragers may choose to collect these plants from non-polluted areas for human consumption. Young leaves can be added to salads. Mature specimens of both species are typically parboiled before eating or adding to a recipe. Flowers are also edible. It's always fun to "bite back" those annoying weeds!

Be on the lookout for both purple deadnettle and henbit this month, and try testing yourself, can you tell them apart?

~Anna Timmerman

Look At Me – Lantana

Evergreen foliage with clusters of brilliantly colored flowers in white, pink, yellow, orange, red, blue and purple (with multiple shades of each) and even multiple colors and shades on the same plant in the same flower. That's what you get with lantana. *Lantana* is a genus in the Verbenaceae

family of about 150 species and a continually growing number of varieties. It is native to tropical regions of the Americas and Africa. There are so many varieties of lantana that it can be difficult to navigate the sea of colors, growth heights

and blooming patterns of the group. The most commonly used ornamental selections come from *Lantana camara* but there are other species and hybrids available. Ornamental lantanas fall into roughly two forms: mounding or trailing. Mounding varieties can be over 6 feet tall and wide. Trailing varieties (*Lantana montevidensis*) grow only 1-1.5 ft. high and spread 3-5 ft. or more. There are compact mounding varieties that have been developed that rarely get larger than 30 in. x 30 in. The Patriot Rainbow series gets only 12" tall and 15" wide.

Lantana has opposite, coarsely toothed, ovate dark green leaves. Most varieties have hairy leaves. The leaves are also highly fragrant and even offensive to some. It is a rapidly growing, hardy perennial in zones 8-11 and is often grown as an annual in colder zones. Tiny flowers (ca. 1/4" dia.) are produced in

clusters up to 2" wide year-round but with a nice flush early in the year as the weather begins to warm. The flowers are highly attractive to pollinators and often produce berries that birds love. This heavy flower and fruit production is also the reason lantana is considered a noxious invasive weed in some frost-



Lantana flowers from the Bandana series.

free areas. The pungent leaves and berries are also toxic to most mammals.

Lantana is easy to grow and tolerant of many soil types. It does best in well-drained slightly acidic soils with full sun and is very drought tolerant. Lantana can be incorporated into the landscape or grown as a container shrub.

Profuse and continual production of brilliantly colored flowers certainly makes lantana an eye-catcher. The Bandana Lantana series is also a Louisiana Super Plant selection. These mounding varieties get only about 2' x 2' and come in multiple colors. There is also a "certified sterile" compact (12"x15") series called Bloomify.

~Dr. Joe Willis

What's Bugging You – Casebearer Moths

Have you noticed small greyish to white colored straw-like tubes hanging on your fence or deck? Or maybe it looks like some kind of egg sac? What you are likely seeing is a silk case, with an insect hidden inside. The common name for these creatures is a household casebearer (*Phereoeca uterella*). The long oval-shaped little case or “bag” that is most commonly found in around homes and gardens are the cocoon created by the larval or caterpillar stage of a moth.

An adult female will lay her eggs crevices and other

subsequently enlarged by each following instar during development. It is lined exclusively by silk,

and is gradually extended to form a tunnel, which is open at both ends. After the case is completed, the larva starts moving around, pulling its case behind. A fully developed larva has a case 8 to 14 mm long and 3 to 5 mm wide.

The good news is that they are harmless and in fact, the most common and abundant food of the household casebearer is old spider webs, and the webs of other insects such as

booklice and webspinners from tree trunks.

What can be done about them?

Thorough Cleaning

Because both their diet and the material used to create their cocoon is basically tiny bits of organic material, thorough and consistent cleaning can remove both the food and shelter they need to survive and result in a decreased population. Sweeping down cobwebs, and blowing out accumulated debris in will help prevent a thriving Casebearer population.

Reduce Outside Lighting

Another good tip for preventing casebearers is to reduce outside lighting. Ultimately, these little creatures are moths. Moths are notoriously attracted to porch lights. If moths are attracted by a light left on the patio or a security light on the side of the house, you are attracting them to your home.

~Chris Dunaway



Photo by Chris Dunaway

Household case bearer cocoons attached to a wooden fence.



Photo by Robert Zimlich

An adult case bearer moth.

protected areas. She may lay as many as two hundred eggs in a two week period. The eggs take about 10 days to hatch. According to observations made by Annette Aiello, the case is constructed by the earliest larval stage (1st instar) before it hatches. The case is

Guidelines for Starting Healthy Seedlings

Crop-Specific Requirements:

While much of good seed-starting practices applies to all crops, always check crop/variety-specific information, such as timing, seeding depth, temperature, and light requirements. These crop/variety-specific requirements can be found readily in seed catalogs, at seed catalog websites or on the back of your seed packet.

GOOD SEED-STARTING PRACTICES

1. Choose a **growing medium designed specifically for starting plants**. An ideal growing medium is highly absorptive but also resists compaction and provides good aeration to plant roots. In contrast, regular potting soil or garden soil can be too heavy or may contain pathogens that can infect seedlings. Germination or seed starting mixes are generally made of compost combined with fibrous or porous ingredients that lighten the mix and improve moisture retention and aeration. Seed starting mixes have a much finer texture than regular potting mixes. Typical ingredients may include perlite (a naturally occurring volcanic glass that looks like small Styrofoam balls), peat moss, and/or coir (an alternative to peat moss, made from coconut husks). Here is a basic recipe for making your own seed-starting mix: 4 parts fine compost, 1 part perlite, 1 part vermiculite, and 2 parts peat moss.



An example of starter cell pots with a tray and cover



Place the seeds on top of the growing medium and press in to ensure good contact

7. **LABEL! LABEL! LABEL!** Make sure that you label your trays of freshly planted seeds. The plant type, variety and planting date should be on the label. You can purchase plant labels or make your own.

2. **Use shallow containers or trays** rather than deep pots and make sure that your container also has drainage holes. For crops that dislike having their roots disturbed (for example, cucurbits), choose a pot size large enough to accommodate the plant until it is time to transplant into the field.

3. **Pre-moisten** the growing medium before you seed. This ensures there are no dry pockets when you sow your seeds. Moisten the growing medium so it holds its shape when squeezed but does not release water. (Too much liquid in the starting mix may lead to the seeds rotting before germination.)

4. **Place seeds in the medium**, carefully following variety-specific instructions for seed spacing. Seeds sown too densely are at risk for disease. With most seedling trays, plant 1-3 seeds per cell.

5. **Press seeds firmly** into the growing medium for maximum seed-to-soil contact.

6. **Cover seeds** with a small amount of your growing medium to a depth according to the growing instructions on the packet. (Note that some seeds may not need to be

covered; follow growing instructions carefully.) Take care not to plant seeds deeper than recommended, as this can cause poor germination.



An example of a commercially available seed starting mix



Wet the starting mix before adding to pots



Be sure to label your trays

Guidelines for Starting Healthy Seedlings



Use low pressure to carefully water the trays

8. **Gently water-in** to avoid washing away the seeds. It is important to keep the seeds consistently moist—but not over-saturated with water—during the germination period. Water gently by hand or with an overhead mister. For small seeds, misting is best. Alternatively, you can nest each tray within a leakproof tray and bottom-water. Use plain water; using fertilizer prior to seedling emergence is not recommended, as the salts in the nutrients can make it difficult for the seeds to take up water and begin growing, making the initial root growth less vigorous.

9. If possible, **cover the tray** with a humidity dome, plastic wrap, or an inverted tray to retain soil moisture to help maintain consistent moisture and retain warmth and



A tray of seeds with the cover installed.

humidity. Ventilate the cover during sunny, warm conditions; otherwise, the temperature may rise too much and inhibit germination. Remove the cover as soon as the seeds germinate. This step isn't necessary if you are diligent in checking your seedling trays regularly and maintaining proper moisture. However, it will usually lead to increased germination rate and reduced germination time.



A seed warming pad.

10. **Maintain optimal soil temperature**

for germination. Check the growing instructions for crop-specific recommendations and adjust temperatures up or down as necessary. Use a heat mat to maintain soil temperature if necessary. You can use a soil probe thermometer to monitor temperature. Typically, the recommendation for germination temperature is higher than for newly germinated seedlings. Once the seedlings are established, reduce the temperatures as recommended. There may also be recommendations for alternating day-time high temperatures and night-time low temperatures.

11. **Fertilize lightly.** Some growing media have enough nutrients that fertilizing may not be necessary for the first 2-3 weeks. For other growing media without as much nutrition, you may want to start fertilizing once the plants have emerged and developed their first true leaves. In either case, use a water soluble fertilizer and dilute solution according to the directions on the product label.

12. **Add supplemental lighting** if you are growing indoors. Once seedlings emerge, without sufficient lighting they will become leggy, etiolated and weak.

13. **Bump up** (also called potting on) depending upon the crop. Bumping up is the process of moving the seedlings into larger containers prior to being planted in the field. There are several reasons to do this: it gives the seedlings more room and therefore leads to better root development; it places the seedlings in a planting medium with better fertility (larger plants need more nutrients and may have utilized the available nutrients in the starting mix), and it's a chance to cull out the weaker seedlings. When the seedlings have 4 sets of true leaves, remove seedlings from their original container by grasping their leaves, not the stems. Be careful not to damage the roots. A widger can be used to dislodge seedlings from the soil. Place seedlings slightly deeper than their soil line in the larger container. Press the mix around the stem gently and water in the seedlings with warm water.

14. **LABEL! LABEL! LABEL!** Make sure you label the bumped-up seedlings. Don't rely on memory!



A grow light hanging over young seedlings

This article is adapted from "Johnny's Selected Seeds Publication #7640".

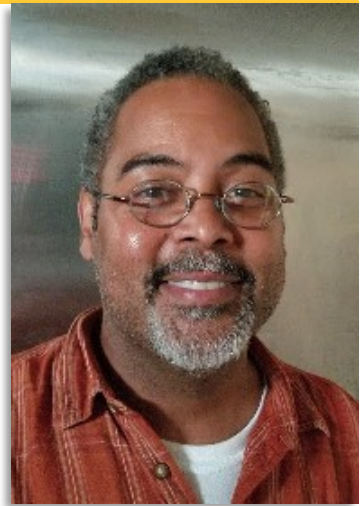
In the Kitchen with Austin

Sweet Potato & Kale Frittata

Just when you thought you couldn't possibly do anything else with kale, here comes this recipe. It's easy to prepare and delicious!

Ingredients:

2 Tbs. olive oil, divided	5 eggs
1 small onion, chopped	¼ cup half and half
1 small sweet potato, diced into bite-sized pieces	2 oz. soft goat cheese
1 lg. bunch kale	salt and pepper



Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spread diced sweet potato on baking sheet with 1 Tbs. of oil. Toss and roast for about 20 minutes until tender.

In the meantime, heat remaining 1 Tbs. oil in a skillet over medium fire. Add onion and sauté until tender. Add kale and cook until wilted. Remove skillet from fire and add roasted sweet potatoes. Spread veggies evenly in skillet.

Wisk eggs and half and half in a large bowl, seasoning to taste with salt and pepper. Pour egg mixture over veggie mixture in skillet. Dot with goat cheese. Bake until top is lightly golden and a toothpick comes out clean, 15-25 minutes.

Bon Manger!

Coming Events

MASTER GARDENERS OF GREATER NEW ORLEANS 2021 Winter Symposium

Creating an Elegant Edible Landscape
Saturday, February 20, 2021
9:30 am to 12:30 pm CST
Webinar



[Click here or go to MGGNO.org for more information or to register.](https://mgnno.org)

Presenting:

Justin Rohner - Integrating Innovations in Elegant Edible Landscaping

Learn how to easily apply new developments in micro-climate technology to create an elegant edible landscape of your own on any-sized property. Discussion to include an in-depth look at innovative ways to tastefully integrate food indoors, outdoor, full-sun, to full-shade spaces and bring new meaning and fun to the mundane, sometimes forgotten spaces of your home, castle, or cabin.

Erika Nolan - Plant Selection and Natural Remedies

Selecting the right varieties will make growing at home easier and more rewarding. Presentation will review how to pick foods that grow best in our region and tips for organic gardening. Bonus information on harvesting seeds from your own plants to ensure continuous seed supply for future crops.

Coming Events



Pelican Greenhouse Plant Sales

Visit the Pelican Greenhouse for a large selection of plants for sale. Many of plants are propagated from cuttings, seeds, and divisions from plants already growing in the Botanical Garden

Beginning Friday February 26th and following weekends. Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays from 8am to NOON **Location:** Pelican Greenhouse (not inside the Botanical Garden): 2 Celebration Drive.

Visit NewOrleansCityPark.com for Park map

VIRTUAL TRAINING FOR FARMERS MARKET VENDORS

Wednesday, Feb. 17 | 9am to 11am



Training for Louisiana farmers market vendors interested in learning about growing, marketing, and selling their products.

Register at [FMVendors.eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com)

The Native Plant Academy is taking applications for the 2021 class.

Open to youth aged 12 to 19 years old in Orleans, Jefferson, St. Bernard, and Plaquemines Parish.

The Native Plant Academy is a 6 week course designed to introduce students to coastal resiliency. The students learned about the natural habitat, flora and fauna ecosystems that are unique to SE Louisiana, the role of Native plants to manage shore stabilization.

The courses are 4hrs on Saturday mornings for 6 wks.

Application deadline: February 15, 2021



The Native Plant Academy class of 2020

[Click here to go to Application link or to to: https://forms.gle/gV5pWSBLLzqG3AFA9.](https://forms.gle/gV5pWSBLLzqG3AFA9)

Local Independent Garden Centers

Orleans

Urban Roots	2375 Tchoupitoulas St., New Orleans, LA 70130	(504) 522-4949
The Plant Gallery	9401 Airline Hwy., New Orleans, LA 70118	(504) 488-8887
Harold's Plants	1135 Press St., New Orleans, LA 70117	(504) 947-7554
We Bite Rare and Unusual Plants	1225 Mandeville St., New Orleans, LA 70117	(504) 380-4628
Hot Plants	1715 Feliciana St., New Orleans, LA 70117	www.hotplantsnursery.com
Delta Floral Native Plants	Pop Up Locations	(504) 224-8682
Pelican Greenhouse Sales	2 Celebration Dr., New Orleans, LA 70124	(504) 483-9437
Grow Wiser Garden Supply	2109 Decatur St., New Orleans, LA 70116	(504) 644-4713
Jefferson Feed Mid-City	309 N. Carrollton Ave., New Orleans, LA 70119	(504) 488-8118
Jefferson Feed Uptown	6047 Magazine St., New Orleans, LA 70118	(504) 218-4220
Crazy Plant Bae	800 N. Claiborne Ave., New Orleans LA 70119	(504) 327-7008

Jefferson

Perino's Garden Center	3100 Veterans Memorial Blvd., Metairie, LA 70002	(504) 834-7888
Rose Garden Center	4005 Westbank Expressway, Marerro, LA 70072	(504) 341-5664
Rose Garden Center	5420 Lapalco Blvd., Marrero, LA 70072	(504) 347-8777
Banting's Nursery	3425 River Rd., Bridge City, LA 70094	(504) 436-4343
Jefferson Feed	4421 Jefferson Hwy., Jefferson, LA 70121	(504) 733-8572
Nine Mile Point Plant Nursery	2141 River Rd., Westwego, LA 70094	(504) 436-4915
Palm Garden Depot	351 Hickory Ave., Harahan, LA 70123	(504) 305-6170
Double M Feed Harahan	8400 Jefferson Hwy., Harahan, LA 70123	(504) 738-5007
Double M Feed Metairie	3212 W. Esplanade Ave., Metairie, LA 70002	(504) 835-9800
Double M Feed Terrytown	543 Holmes Blvd., Terrytown, LA 70056	(504) 361-4405
Sunrise Trading Co. Inc.	42 3 rd St., Kenner, LA 70062	(504) 469-0077
Laughing Buddha Garden Center	4516 Clearview Pkwy., Metairie, LA 70006	(504) 887-4336
Creative Gardens & Landscape	2309 Manhattan Blvd., Harvey, LA 70058	(504) 367-9099
Charvet's Garden Center	4511 Clearview Parkway, Metairie, LA 70006	(504) 888-7700
Barber Laboratories Native Plants	6444 Jefferson Hwy., Harahan, LA 70123	(504) 739-5715

Plaquemines

Southern Gateway Garden Center	107 Timber Ridge St., Belle Chasse, LA 70037	(504) 393-9300
Belle Danse Orchids	14079 Belle Chasse Hwy., Belle Chasse, LA 70037	(504) 419-5416

St. Charles

Plant & Palm Tropical Outlet	10018 River Rd., St. Rose, LA 70087	(504) 468-7256
Martin's Nursery & Landscape	320 3 rd St., Luling, LA 70070	(985) 785-6165

St. Bernard

Renaissance Gardens	9123 W. Judge Perez Dr., Chalmette, LA 70043	(504) 682-9911
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Soil Vendors

Schmelly's Dirt Farm (Compost Only)	https://www.schmellys.com/compost-sales/	
Laughing Buddha Garden Center	4516 Clearview Pkwy., Metairie, LA 70006	(504) 887-4336
Reliable Soil	725 Reverand Richard Wilson Dr., Kenner, LA 70062	(504) 467-1078
Renaissance Gardens	9123 W. Judge Perez Dr., Chalmette, LA 70043	(504) 682-9911
Rock n' Soil NOLA	9119 Airline Hwy., New Orleans, LA 70118	(504) 488-0908

***If you would like your licensed retail nursery listed, please email gnogardening@agcenter.lsu.edu**

February Checklist/Garden Tips

February is the month to fertilize hardy fruit trees such as apple, peach, nectarine, fig and fruit bushes such as blackberry and blueberry. Citrus are fertilized in late January or early February. Wait until March to fertilize tender fruit trees like banana, guava and avocado. For information on growing fruit trees in our area click on the link for the LSU AgCenter publication [Louisiana Home Orchard](#).

Plant gladiolus corms this month through mid March. Plant groups of corms every two weeks during the planting season to extend the display of flowers.

Pick snow peas in the vegetable garden frequently. Ideally the pods should be harvested when flat before the seeds begin to enlarge.

You may clip ground covers back now before new growth appears to remove unattractive foliage, rejuvenate the plants and control growth. Liriope, monkey grass, ferns (if browned back by freezes), wedelia, Japanese ardisia and Asiatic jasmine among others can be cut back with a lawn mower adjusted to its highest setting (make sure the blade is sharp), a string trimmer or even hedge clippers on small plantings. Selectively remove unattractive leaves on aspidistra (cast iron plant) and holly ferns by hand.

Keep beds mulched to a depth of two to three inches to control weeds in beds. Use leaves, pine straw or other available materials. Use your bagging lawn mower or shredder to chop up the leaves prior to putting down. This reduces the volume of the leaves, increases surface area to help the leaves break down and release nutrients, reduces matting and fungal growth, reduces movement by wind and makes for a cleaner look. Mulch helps prevent weed seeds from germinating and helps to retain moisture in the soil.

If you are growing caladiums from tubers, plant them indoors this month to get a head start. Plant the tubers in trays or pots of potting soil, placing them in a warm area of the house. Water them when the soil is dry to the touch. As the leaves appear, move them to a sunny windowsill or a shady area outdoors (if day temps are 70ish and evenings in the 60s). Plant pre-sprouted tubers into the garden in early April.

Finish harvesting any citrus fruit remaining on the trees. Quality will begin to decline as the trees get ready to flower.

Onions, shallots, garlic and leeks are susceptible to an insect called thrips which causes small white marks on the foliage called stippling. Heavy infestations can damage foliage to the point that the harvest is reduced. Control thrips with Malathion.

Clean out your pond garden or aquatic garden this month, if you need to. It is advisable to do this if there is a thick layer of gunk on the bottom. It is best to get this done while the weather is cool, the plants are dormant and the fish are less active. Pond cleaning is the best time to divide and repot water and bog plants that are dormant or semi-dormant. Do not divide those in active growth such as Louisiana irises and calla lilies.

Plant rose bushes in well prepared beds with good drainage and plenty of sun. It is important for the graft union to be 2 inches above the soil of the bed. If you plant roses purchased in containers, this was taken care of by the nursery. Just plant the bush so the top of the root ball is level with the soil of the bed. In the case of bare root roses, you must see to this yourself during planting. Finish planting bare root roses by the end of February.

Plant hardy bedding plants now for a spring burst of color. Foxglove, delphiniums, and hollyhocks need to be planted now so that they will bloom before the summer. Plant snapdragons, dianthus, petunia, stock, phlox, and lobelia as spring annuals in sunny areas. Need cool season color in a partial shade area? The best choices are cyclamen, primroses, pansy, viola, nicotiana, foxglove, alyssum and forget-me-not.

Sow some herbs to enjoy this spring into your garden beds or in containers. Chervil, dill, fennel, cilantro, stevia, oregano, parsley, and rosemary can be planted now. Basil needs warmer temperatures, so hold off until the end of the month.

In the vegetable garden, it's time to get spring crops started! Do a soil test to determine what amendments need to be added.

Lawn Care Do's & Don't's

Do:

1. If you have a history of problems with crabgrass or goosegrass, apply a pre-emergent herbicide now. [Click here to see more information on Crabgrass from the LSU AgCenter.](#)
2. Apply selective herbicides and sedge killers to kill off winter weeds growing in the lawn. You may also scout the lawn and remove weeds by hand. Make a game out of it with kids and grandkids.
3. Continue to scout for fungal damage and control with fungicides if necessary. The most prevalent is called Large Patch of Warm-Season Turfgrass. [Click here to find information about large patch disease from the LSU AgCenter.](#)
4. Take a soil test.
5. Apply sulfur or lime to adjust the pH if necessary according to soil lab recommendations.
6. Use a mulching mower to shred fallen leaves without removing them or use a bagging mower to collect them and put them in your compost pile or use them as mulch in your gardens.
7. Late winter to early spring is a good time to address drainage issues in your lawn. Consider installing a rain garden. Dedicating a small portion of your property to water management can improve the health of your lawn.



Crabgrass in a lawn.

Do Not:

1. Do not apply fertilizer until mid-March as the weather warms up.
2. Do not lay down fill over the lawn grass.
3. Do not lay sod or spread warm-season turfgrass seed.
4. Do not dethatch or aerate the lawn.
5. Do not aerate the lawn.

Your Local Extension Office is Here to Help

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