



GNO Gardening Magazine

April 2021



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A honeybee collecting nectar and pollen
from a bachelor's button flower.

Photo by Chris Dunaway

Look At Me Spring Cottage Flowers Bring Joy and Blooms

Now that spring has “sprung”, several of my absolute favorite cottage flowers are in full bloom. Each time I pass by my garden, these cheerful blooms remind me of my mother and my grandmother’s gardens from when I was a child. Sweet peas (*Lathyrus odoratus*), calendulas (*Calendula officinalis*), bachelor’s buttons (*Centaurea cyanus*), and Chinese poppies (*Papaver orientale*) herald spring for me each year and cause many people passing by the house to stop for a look and a deep inhale. I love spotting these flowers into my

winter vegetable and herb gardens to cheer things up. Unless you can find large, established transplants, it’s much too late to plant these spring bloomers now. However, it’s never too early to purchase seeds and tuck them away in the fridge until October or November to start them for the following spring. Many of us are now placing our seed orders for warm season crops. Check out the flower selection from your favorite seed company and treat yourself to a few packets of winter sown cottage flowers. In many parts of the country north of us, all four of these flowers are sown in early spring shortly before the last frost date. In our steamy climate, we plant them when things begin to cool off in October through December. All require fertile, well-drained soil in full sun. I like sowing them into 4” pots or trays and then transplant

them into the garden in January. This allows me to grow my last round of fall/warm season crops, and then switch to cool season crops without needing to decide where I want my spring flowers right away.

Photo by Dan Gill



Pink and red sweet peas growing in a garden.

This minimizes any disturbance for them. I like to tuck these flowers into any gaps in my winter garden, and they happily co-exist alongside my kale, Brussels sprouts, beets, and collards. There are some tricks to growing each of these cottage flowers successfully, so let’s dig in!

Sweet Pea- Sweet peas are sown in October through December. Soak the

seeds overnight in a cup of warm water, this will aid in germinating them. I plant 4-5 seeds per 4” pot, using a good quality potting soil. I leave the pots outdoors in a sunny location and water them just enough to keep the soil moist but not waterlogged. I transplant them when they begin to be 5-6” tall. You can also sow the seeds directly into the garden where you want them, planting them 2-3” apart. They like a rich soil so add a little compost to the area prior to planting the soaked seeds. A trellis is needed to support them as they grow. Cover if we are expecting a frost, uncovering when the sun comes out in the morning. They can handle cold but not freezing temps. They begin to flower in March and perfume the air with their sweet scent. They last several days as a cut flower.

Look At Me Spring Cottage Flowers Bring Joy and Blooms

Calendula- Coming in cheery shades of yellow, orange, pink, and orange-red, calendulas are grown both as a flower and as a medicinal herb. Seeds can be directly sown into the garden or sown 2-3 to a 4" pot using a potting soil. Put pots or trays in a location getting full sun and keep the soil damp, not saturated. Calendulas can be sown throughout the cool season, but you will get a longer bloom period if you sow earlier (October/November). 'Radio' is an heirloom cultivar that does well in our area. Plants get quite large, so give them 18" of space. They also do well in containers 3-5 gallons in size. Use compost or a slow-release



Calendulas growing in a garden.

fertilizer to prepare the planting area.



Photo by Chris Dunaway

Bachelor's buttons planted at the entrance to New Orleans City Park.

Bachelor's Buttons- I love the classic blue colored bachelor's buttons, but also enjoy the white, pink, purple, and deep purple/black varieties. Bachelor's buttons can be sown directly into gardens or 4-6 to a 4" pot using a good quality potting soil. They need full sun and good drainage, I allow mine to dry out between waterings. They need full sun to thrive and can be planted October through February. Planting earlier results in more blooms over a longer period. I like to pinch my seedlings to encourage bushier plants and more flowers. Pinching means removing the tips of the seedlings, I do so when they are 3-4" tall. The mature plant will reach heights of up to 3' tall if they are happy, and they will need to be staked or supported. Bachelor's buttons make nice cut flowers.

Look At Me Spring Cottage Flowers Bring Joy and Blooms

Chinese Poppies- These poppies are best sown in early fall to give them a good start and some time to reach a decent size before the heart of winter slows their growth. All poppy seeds are very small, I like mixing them with some peat moss or sand before sowing to help me plant them evenly.



Photo by Chris Dunaway

Chinese poppies growing in the New Orleans Botanical Gardens

sunny location and when the seedlings reach 2" or so tall, I'll separate them into their own 4" pot or transplant directly into the garden. Poppies like fertile, well drained soil and full sun. They begin to bloom in our area in April and are finished by June. Chinese poppies are treated as an annual, and the bright crimson blooms are a real showstopper.

With all four of these cottage flowers, it is easy to save seeds from year to year to ensure that you will have a supply of them to resow in the fall. Wait for the seed heads to dry out, then clip them and dry indoors further before storing them in the fridge or freezer until October.

~Anna Timmerman



Photo by Chris Dunaway

A honeybee flies in to check out this Chinese poppy flower.

Poppies can be directly sown into gardens, but I have better luck starting them in trays. I use a good quality potting soil, and lightly sprinkle the seed and sand or peat mix on the surface. I then gently water the seeds in. They need light to germinate and burying them results in little to no germination. I keep my trays in a



Photo by Chris Dunaway

Seeds collected from a bachelor's button plant.

April Planting Guide

| Crop | Recommended Variety |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Snap Beans (bush or pole) | Bush-Blue Lake 274, Bronco, Derby, Lynx, Strike Pole-Blue Lake, Kentucky Blue, McCaslin |
| Sweet Corn | Merit, Silver Queen, Honey ‘n Pearl, Ambrosia |
| Summer Squash | Gold Rush, Justice III, Multipik, Patriot II |
| Hot Peppers (transplant) | Grande, Tula, Mariachi, Mitla, |
| Cantaloupe | Ambrosia, Aphrodite, Athena, Primo, Vienna |
| Southern Peas | Queen Anne, California #5, Quickpick, Colussus |
| Tomato (transplant) | Better Boy, Big Beef, Cupid, Pink Girl, Juliet, Sweet Milton, Bella Rosa, Carolina Gold |
| Collards | Champion, Flash, Georgia, Top Bunch, Vates |
| Cucumbers | Dasher II, Diva, Fanfare, General Lee, Indy, Olympian, Sweet Success, Sweet Slice |
| Cucuzza | None Given |
| Lima Beans (bush or pole) | Dixie Butterpea, Jackson Wonder, Thorogreen Florida Speckled, King of Garden |
| Bell Peppers (transplants) | Aristotle X3R, Jupiter, Lilac, Plato, Tequila |
| Kohlrabi | Early Purple Vienna, Early White, Vienna, Winner |
| Okra | Annie Oakley, Cajun Delight, Clemson Spineless |
| Pumpkins | Atlantic Giant, Baby Bear, Prankster, Sorcerer |
| Radishes | Cherriette, Champion, White Icicle, April Cross |
| Swiss Chard | None Given |
| Winter Squash | Honey Bear, Sweet Mama, Table Queen, Tivoli |
| Eggplant | Dusky, Night Shadow, Epic, Santana, Calliope |

Louisiana Lawns Part IV

Mowing

It is April and here in South Louisiana, it is time to get busy on our lawns. I have heard centipede grass be called “lazy man’s” grass but the truth is, there is no such thing as a plant and walk away lawn. As I have stated in my previous articles, there are many critical steps in maintaining a healthy lawn and they are all interconnected. Miss one step and you will see problems in other areas.

Possibly the one activity that exhibits that the most clearly is the seemingly simple act of

mowing the grass. In fact, mowing the lawn can have the single most influence on the health of a lawn for better or worse depending on whether it is being done correctly or not. The first step is making sure that your equipment is in good condition, adjusted properly, and the blades are sharp. Dull blades do not cut the blades of grass cleanly. The damaged tips do not recover as quickly, can lead to

excessive moisture loss, can be more easily infected by disease and have an unattractive appearance.

The mower deck should be adjusted so that it is level and set to the proper mowing height for the species of turfgrass that you are growing. Field trials were conducted to

determine the best mowing height to maximize growth and turf density. Grass that is cut to the correct height utilizes space most efficiently for collecting solar energy for growth without shading out neighboring blades. Think of blades of grass as individual solar panels in a vast array all collecting energy to run the machine. Maybe this is why factories are called “plants”. Turf that is the proper height

and density can shade out many weed seeds to prevent them from germinating and out compete others for water and nutrients. See table 1 for a list of common turf species in our area with its proper mowing height range.

Another important guideline for mowing is the 1/3 rule.

This means that you should not cut more than 1/3 of the height of grass in a single mowing. For example, if you are growing St. Augustine grass and you set you lawn mower to 3 inches from the ground, you should cut the

grass again when the grass is no more than 4.5 inches tall. The diagram in figure 1 shows how the blades of grass grow from the stem. Cutting more than 1/3 of the total height tends to cut away the blades completely leaving bare stems behind. Denuding the plants will also allow sunlight to reach the eagerly awaiting weed seeds that only need a little energy to germinate and prosper.

And finally, if this were not enough, type of grass you are growing also plays a part in determining what type of mower that you should use. Apparently, Bermudagrass and zoysia respond better to being cut with a reel type mower while St. Augustine and centipede are best cut with the standard rotary mower.

Following these guidelines will go a long way towards achieving that lazy man feeling that you envisioned when you installed your lawn in the first place.



Mowing the lawn in classic Tiger style. Photo from the Advocate.

| Recommended Mowing Height | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Turfgrass Type | Mowing Height (Inches) |
| Bermuda | 0.75—1 |
| Zoysia | 1—2 |
| St. Augustine | 2.5—3.5 |
| Centipede | 1—2 |

Table 1. Recommended mowing height for turfgrass type.

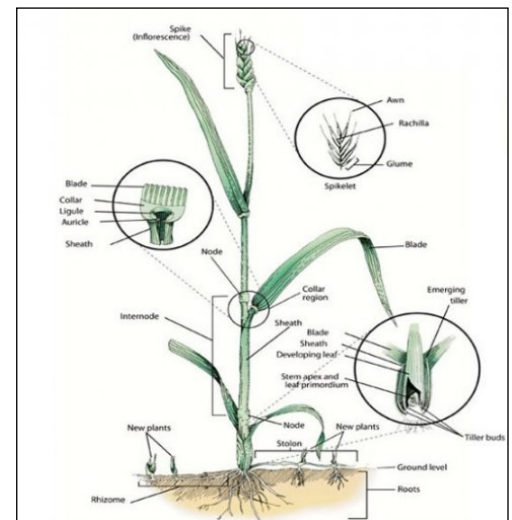


Figure 1. Diagram of a common grass plant.

Super Plant Spotlight - Baldcypress

The baldcypress (*Taxodium distichum*) is not only the Louisiana State Tree but also one of my personal favorite tree species. In fact, I recently planted one in my own back yard.

Baldcypress is a native conifer. They are also deciduous meaning they shed their needles in the fall unlike most conifers.

Hence, its “bald” namesake. Typically found growing in saturated soils, seasonally flooded areas, swamps and stream banks, trees can live in USDA hardiness zones 4a-11. The natural range of baldcypress extends from the Atlantic Coastal Plain in southern Delaware south to Florida, and then west along the lower Gulf Coast Plain to Texas. In the wild, baldcypress can become a large tree attaining a height of 100 to 150 feet and a few hundred years of age. Most landscape specimens tend to grow 50 to 70 tall with a

spread of 20 to 30 feet. Louisiana has the national champion baldcypress. The tree is located in the Cat Island National Wildlife Refuge just north of Baton Rouge and is estimated to be approximately 1,500 years old. It is 96 feet tall with an 85 foot spread. The trunk has a diameter of 17 feet and a circumference of 56 feet. Although it's naturally found in floodplains, river channels, and millponds, expect better growth in moist, well-drained soils in full sun.

Baldcypress trees do develop “knees.” that grow up

from underground or submerged roots. Knees are more prone to develop in clay soils than in silty or sandy soils. Also, knees are more prone to develop on trees growing in water than on trees growing on dry land. Once an individual baldcypress tree begins producing knees, this modified structural growth will

continue even if knees are continually cut out. Yes, you may cut the knees off. Try to cut them horizontally just below the soil surface. Scientists are still unsure about what may cause knees to grow or their exact purpose. Cypress knees are technically called pneumatophores which comes from the Latin words pneumato meaning air and phore meaning bearer of. This comes from the theory that the knees grow in response to low oxygen present in compacted or waterlogged soil.

Surprisingly, the roots and knees of baldcypress trees do not appear to lift sidewalks and other

structures as readily as some other tree species. I find that even the trunk of trees will readily mold themselves objects and other constrictions.

Bald cypress are fast growing for the first 10 years in the landscape. After planting, they should be fertilized annually in late winter or early spring for the first 3-5 years with a balanced fertilizer such as 8-8-8 or 13-13-13 at the rate of 1 pound of fertilizer per inch in diameter of the trunk measured at breast height. You can fertilize every 2-3 years thereafter assuming your native soil is moderately fertile. Take a

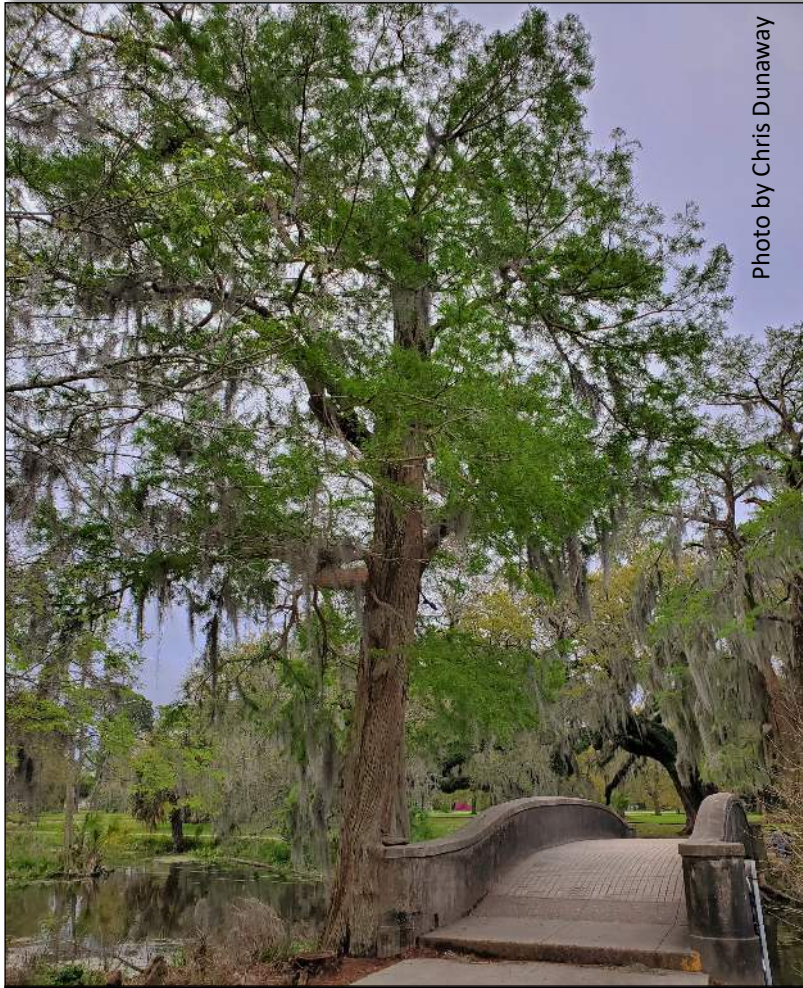


Photo by Chris Dunaway

This iconic baldcypress is growing next to the lagoon in New Orleans City Park. Notice how the trunk has molded itself around the nearly 100 year old bridge built by the WPA.

Super Plant Spotlight - Baldcypress

soil test for more accurate fertilizer recommendations.

Baldcypress trees do produce cones which are actually more round in shape. Each cone is made of a number of scales each of which, is associated with two triangular seeds. The cones do produce a very sticky resin which can make for a bit of a mess when squirrels are feeding on the tasty seeds.

Cypress trees are also very disease and pest resistant. In fact, the natural qualities of the wood have made it a preferred building material for many outdoor uses. Baldcypress is also relatively maintenance-free and requires pruning only to remove dead wood and unwanted lower branches from the tree.

Baldcypress trees grow two rows of oppositely arranged needles on either side of a narrow stem.

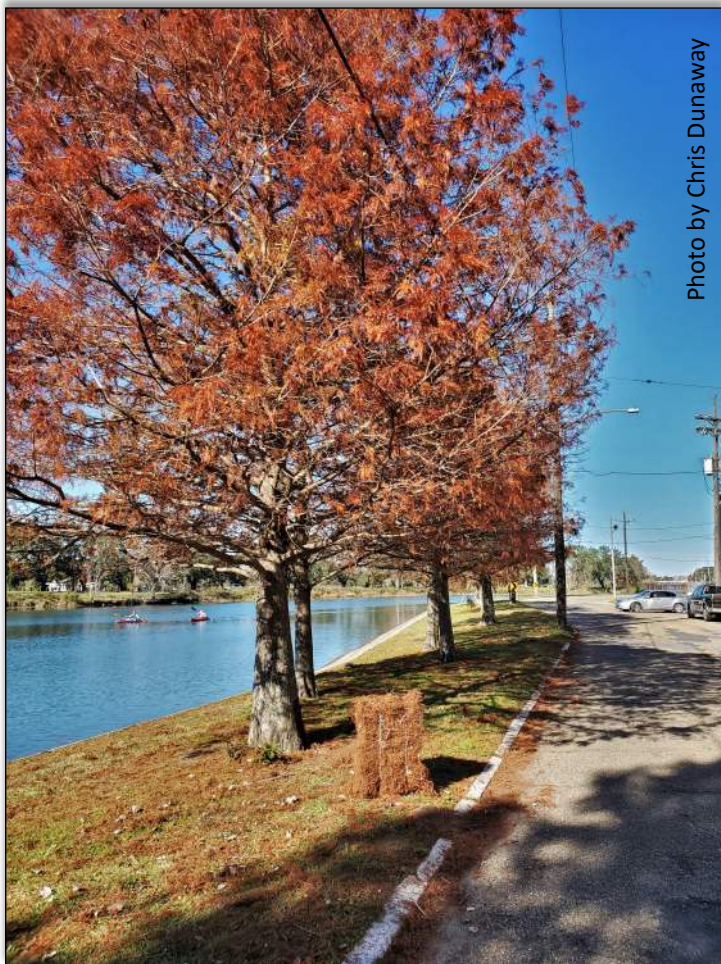


Photo by Chris Dunaway

These bald cypress trees are at home along the banks of Bayou St. John in New Orleans. The needles have turned their traditional fall color and you can see a freshly collected bail. Collect the needles in the Fall for use in your Spring garden.



Photo by Chris Dunaway

In this photo you can see the feather-like leaflets of oppositely arranged needles as well as some newly developing cones.

These feather-like branchlets are one of the most distinctive features of a baldcypress. The needles will turn a flaming auburn color in the fall and will hang onto the tree until they all seemingly drop overnight. The entire leaflet will fall with the needles still attached to the stem. The beautiful color combined with their resistance to decay and fluffy structure make cypress tree needles one of the best mulch materials to use in your garden. I have been promoting their use and even built my own baling box so that I could collect and store them for use in my own garden. Check out the videos that I made on using cypress tree leaves at the following link:

youtube.com/playlist?list=PL2hr6qmeDGTQTBBIWgv-f8ntn_GX4eX0q.

~Chris Dunaway

Weeds of the Month

Burclover (*Medicago polymorpha*, *M. arabica*)

You could write a book the size of War and Peace about the diversity and proliferation of weeds that we've seen in March and April. One weed that seems to be having a really good spring (which is not so good for my thick-coated labradoodle JB) is burclover. We have two species here, *Medicago polymorpha*, also known as toothed medic and burr medic and *Medicago arabica*, also known as spotted medic and spotted burclover. Burclover is a member of the Fabaceae (pea) family and has a symbiotic relationship with the nitrogen-fixing bacterium *Sinorhizobium medicae*. Burclover is an annual broadleaf plant



Figure 1: Burclover (*Medicago polymorpha*) leaves and flowers. Note the bipinnately compound leaves with three leaflets that have toothed edges. Flower cluster shows typical legume flower with keel, wings and banner petals.



Figure 2: Leaves of spotted burclover (*Medicago arabica*). Note the dark spot on each leaflet and the serrated leaflet margins.

that inhabits agricultural land, roadsides, lawns and other disturbed areas. It has the typical "clover" leaf with three leaflets attached to a long petiole. With *Medicago polymorpha*, each leaflet has toothed margins and is solid green (Figure 1). With *Medicago arabica*, each leaflet has serrated margins and a dark purplish spot in the center (Figure 2). Burclover spreads primarily in a decumbent (flat) manner or sometimes ascending. One plant will easily spread to cover 6-12 ft² of space (Figure 3). Though it is believed to be native to Europe, both burclover species are found all over Louisiana and most of the U.S. It has clusters of small (3-6 mm long) bright yellow typical legume flowers with keel, wings and banner petals. Burclover

Weeds of the Month

Burclover (*Medicago polymorpha*, *M. arabica*)

easily roots at nodes along its stem and has a strong, deep taproot. Hand pulling can be difficult but removing one plant quickly clears a large area from the burclover's grasp.

The fruit is a tightly coiled pod with rows of hooked prickles on the outside edge (Figure 4.) The prickles start out soft and green but turn hard and brown as they mature. Each pod contains several yellow to tan kidney-shaped seeds. The prickles of a mature seed pod easily catch onto anything soft that passes by like clothing and animal fur. They are very difficult to remove once they get embedded into dog fur or socks – don't even mention fleece clothing.

Burclover is used as a vegetable in China and makes good livestock forage before the seed pods mature.

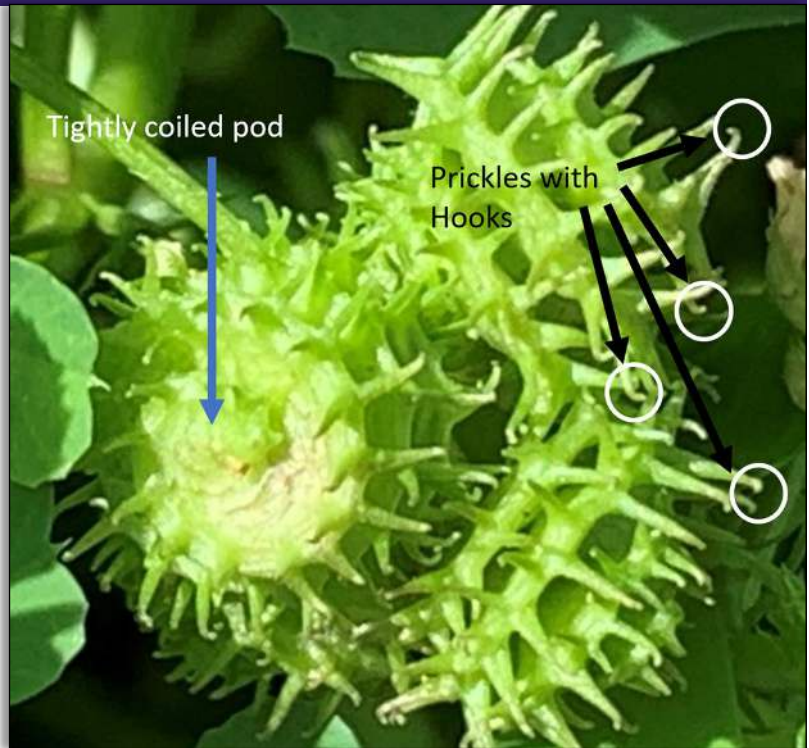


Figure 4: Burclover coiled pod and hooked bristles.



Figure 3: One burclover plant can spread to cover a large area.

Burclover usually shows up and is flowering in our area in March and April but can begin flowering much earlier and bloom much later, depending on the weather conditions. It was flowering in December this year. Burclover dies out as the heat of summer comes on. However, one plant will make hundreds of seeds that lie in wait for the next cool growing season usually germinating in the early Fall.

Use of a pre-emergent herbicide like Hi-Yield Weed Stopper containing dithiopyr in September and again in November will reduce the number of plants you must deal with. For those that still germinate and survive, use of a post-emergent herbicide like Weed Free Zone (2,3-D, dicamba, mecoprop and carfentrazone-ethyl) is effective in most Louisiana lawns.

As far as I'm concerned, this is one weed you do want to control and eliminate. It's not much fun picking those burs out of your pet's fur and paws.

~Dr. Joe Willis and Dr. Ron Strahan

What's Bugging You – Cutworms!

We usually feature a specific insect or pest that you may encounter during the month of publication. We have pictures and identification information as well as control measures.

This month is a little different because we are talking about cutworms.

What are cutworms? Cutworm refers primarily to the larval form of a number of moth species – many belonging to the Noctuidae family.

Cutworms stay hidden during the day and come out at night to feed. The term “cutworm” refers to their frustrating mode of feeding. Larvae crawl around at night looking for food and readily attack the first part of the plant they encounter, the stem: very often the soft

succulent stem of a seedling, and consequently cut it down. Cutworms vary in their feeding habits – some remain with the plant they cut down and feed on it but many, after feeding on only a small stem portion, move on to the next plant and cut it down. This is a wasteful feeding habit that leads to disproportionate damage. Is there anything more depressing or infuriating than walking out to check your garden one morning only to find all those 2-week old snap bean seedlings and the prize peppers and tomatoes you just transplanted last week lying on the ground, cut down where they stood. Of course, the culprits are gone and you're starting all over again. Argggghhhh! Cutworms can also be devastating to our lawns, especially the black cutworm ([see LSU Publication](#)

[#3624-L](#)).

What to do? What to do? What to do?

Larvae can be controlled by application of insecticides delivered as liquid, granule, or bait formulation. The

easiest way to protect young transplants from cutworms is to spray a six to eight-inch band of soil around each plant with an insecticide that contains bifenthrin or permethrin immediately after you have set the plants out and watered them. These pyrethroid insecticides are highly effective against cutworms. Organic gardeners can protect plants by placing “cutworm collars” or “cutworm fences” around each plant when transplanting so that the collar extends about an inch

into the soil and a couple of inches above the soil line. These can be made from wax

paper, aluminum foil, plastic cups, plastic plant pots, or empty paper towel or toilet paper rolls. A 6” diameter band of diatomaceous earth around each plant is also an effective physical barrier. For emerging seedlings, spray the 6-8” band of soil along both sides of the row as soon as seedlings begin to emerge. Cut worms are most damaging to seedlings whose stem is pencil-width or less. Once plant stems get thicker, they are usually safe from cutworm attack. Always read the label and follow directions for any pesticide. Remember, rain or irrigation breaks down the chemical pesticide barrier so reapply after such events.

Photo courtesy of Mississippi State University extension



Granulate cutworm larva (*Feltia subterranean*) caught at the scend of the crime.



Photo by Dr. Joe Willis

A cutworm collar made from a plastic cup.

~Dr. Joe Willis

What's App'ning?

Everybody and their mother has a smart phone nowadays and they have put information at the touch of our fingertips. Computer programming has gone from massive space hogging behemoths to small, user-friendly apps with specific purposes and functions. The average app on the Android system is about 11.5MB and on the iOS system about 34.3MB. MS Office 365, which is multiple programs in a single package, takes about 2-3Gb for download and installation. It seems there are apps written for every aspect, diversion, and purpose in our lives. And there are plenty of apps that are useful for gardeners too. We're going to list some that we have found that are free or inexpensive and perform well for their claimed purpose. If you have any others that you've found to be worthwhile, let us know and we'll share those with all our readers too. The information provided comes from the app developers and my own experience using the app.

PlantSnap

Identify Plants with Your Camera

- Instantly learn the name of plants, flowers and trees with a picture!
- Open the PlantSnap app, snap a photo, and watch the PlantSnap Database name the plant in seconds.

Plant Database

- There are currently 625,000 plants, trees and mushrooms in our worldwide database.
- PlantSnap currently has 90% of all known plant species on Earth in our database, and we continue to train more species into our algorithm every month.

Plant Identification & Learning Algorithms

- Our algorithm is retrained and improved every month using the 200,000+ anonymous images taken by our users every day.
- PlantSnap will update automatically for you every time we add a new batch of species, no additional fees required.



Advertisement image for PlantSnap showing app in use.

Augmented Reality Plant Identification (requires iOS12)

- Watch amazing Augmented Reality animations over a plant
- View information on a plant through an AR interface

PlantSnap Subscription

- Unlimited snaps

- Reach botanists directly
- Global explore map
- Ad-free
- View your collection from the app on the web at my.plantsnap.com

PlantSnap has a free trial version.

The In-App Purchases are:

Monthly premium subscription

\$3.99

Yearly premium subscription

\$14.99

Lifetime premium access

\$19.99

I paid for the Lifetime Premium version and have been using and testing it for about a year or so. I used it on plants that I knew what they were and found it to be very accurate. As with any of these apps, the quality of the picture is extremely influential on the accuracy of the identification. By testing it with plants

What's App'ning?

I already knew, I was able to determine the best way of taking pictures to get the most accurate results. I suggest you go through the same exercise to help you learn the best way to take and frame pictures for the app.

Picture Insect

Simply take or upload a photo of any insect and get accurate ID results within seconds. After downloading the app, tap "Services" on the homepage, and then "Continue" to activate the 7-day free trial. Due to the auto-renewable nature of subscriptions, the annual Premium service will automatically renew after the free trial ends, so you don't need to do anything if you start the free trial and choose not to cancel it. Keep this in mind before downloading and using the app. The premium service will begin automatically UNLESS you have to cancel if you don't want the app.

There is a lot of information packed into this little app. Just reading about how they identify insects is fascinating and educational. They describe the different parts of insects and how they compare and contrast and come up with an identification.

They provide great instructions on taking the best photos.

Picture Insect Premium unlocks unlimited smart identifications and full access to info. Ads are also removed for Premium members. You can access everything through the Picture Insect app, available on iPhone and iPad.

The Premium subscription includes:

Identify insects without limits

Ask our entomologists

Rich contents on thousands of types of insects

Exclusive support team that answers your question within 24 hours

No watermarks or ads

The Premium Subscription Rate:

Monthly \$3.99

Yearly \$19.99

I've tested and used this app a lot on insects I know



Advertisement image for Picture Insect showing app in use.

and those I don't know. It is very accurate if you provide good quality in focus pictures. The most difficult part of using this app is getting the insects to stay still long enough to get a good picture. I've found that using the "burst" mode on my iPhone is a great way to get multiple pictures and there is usually at least one that is good enough to get an ID from.

Mushroom Identifier

I don't recommend using any app to identify edible vs toxic mushrooms. Lots of knowledge and experience are required to safely collect wild mushrooms for eating. With many mushrooms, one mistake will be your last.

However, for getting a pretty accurate identification that you can confirm with an expert later if you desire, this is one great app.

Mushroom Identifier allows you to automatically identify the species of a mushroom from a picture.

What's App'ning?

Take a photo or upload directly from your gallery and get an answer instantly!

Also included is a list of the most common edible mushrooms.

For now it recognizes more than 900 types of mushrooms.

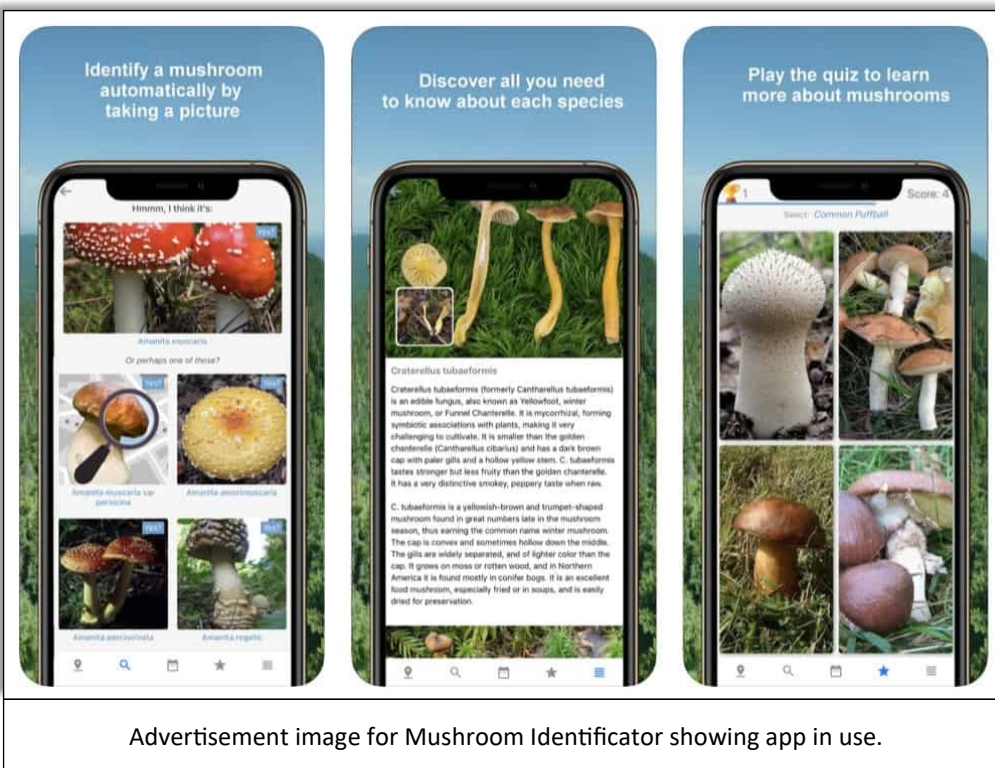
You can also save on a map the place where you found ceps, chanterelles, etc.

Do you think you're a mushroom expert? Then take our quiz!

The app is free, but the app offers a premium subscription option \$4.99 (USD) for a year. This is also an automatic renewal unless you cancel the renewal prior to the anniversary

date. There is also another version that is \$7.99 per year that allows you to manually add pictures and features no ads.

I've used this one less frequently but found it to be very helpful. I'm still working on my picture technique. What I like about this app is that you can identify instantly by filming a video that shows the top, side, cap underside, etc. attributes of the mushroom in question. This allows you to provide the most amount of information to aid in identification.



Citrus Disorder Identification from Leaf Pictures

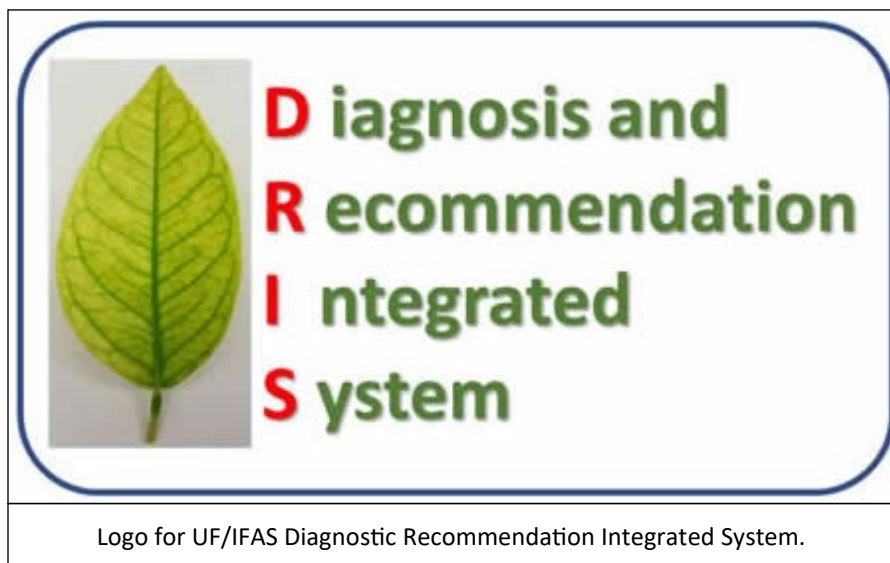
This is a free app developed by the University of Florida that can identify nutritional disorders, diseases or other types of problems with your citrus trees by examining photos of the plant leaves. This app is not available at the App store but is available for smart phones or computers at:

www.makecitrusgreatagain.com

There is also a really good presentation by one of the developers (Chris Oswalt) about the app, how to download and install the app, using the app and the accuracy of the app on our Citrus Course homepage: www.lsuagcenter.com/homecitrus

These are just a few of the hundreds of apps that have made being a gardener or naturalist a lot easier. We wanted to give you an idea of some that we have used with success and hope that you will share with us any apps that you have found extremely helpful that we can also share with GNO Gardening readers.

~Dr. Joe Willis



Monarchs & Milkweed

My first migrating monarch butterfly, faded in color but swooping energetically, appeared in my yard on Monday March 23. Purposely eluding my efforts to get a photo, its flutter-flutter-glide flying pattern and characteristic colors were nonetheless a joy to my heart. My backyard is full of aquatic milkweed, built up over several years, to welcome such travelers.

Journey North reporter Estela Romero wrote on March 24 that, in Mexico's oyamel forest reserves, "Migration has gradually been happening for a few weeks. It's slow – and even pauses at times – but sudden bursts can occur. Every few days these bursts release hundreds and hundreds of monarchs per minute." In Texas, Oklahoma and Arkansas, observers like me report seeing monarchs with faded, worn and tattered wings, indicating migratory behavior.

Texas is the main track. February's 11-day freeze there set back and killed large swaths of plants. Chip Taylor, founder of Monarch Watch, pointed out in the organization's March newsletter that whether monarchs prosper in 2021 will depend on "...the number of returning monarch females, nectar and host plant availability...March and early April temperatures, and then the conditions from May to September." [...in the upper Midwest.]

The Gulf coast presents a spring breeding ground alternative to Texas. From mid-March through mid-May, in Louisiana we typically provide both monarch sexes with flowers for nectar to fuel flight and mating. We also provide milkweed on which the females lay eggs as the return migration continues advancing north and east. Given the damaged flora situation in Texas, this year it's *especially important* for all Gulf coast gardeners who can, to bulk up on nectar flowers

and milkweed now through the end of May.

Although there are good reasons to favor native plants, here's my 2021 take on native versus non-native milkweed. So great is the need, in March through mid-May, *any milkweed is good milkweed*. After June 1, however, the migratory butterflies have



A tattered monarch butterfly nectaring on aquatic milkweed.

died and most of the first generation have matured and left Louisiana. Those that don't get out before temperatures rise (making it too hot to distance fly) become summer and fall captives. There is nothing they can do but breed. Their progeny will become anole and wasp food as well as OE spore disease carriers. Not a pretty fate! Therefore, no later than June 1, keep the nectar flowers going but cut down the milkweed, *especially* the big non-natives like tropical (Asc. curassavica) and hairy balls (Gomphocarpus physocarpus.) Then *keep* them cut back, all the way through winter. With milkweed responsibly managed, we all can do the monarchs a lot of good. And after June 1, there are plenty more Louisiana butterflies that need summer host plants, like maypop for Gulf coast fritillaries, legumes for long-tailed skipper, cassia for sulphurs and parsley, dill and fennel for black swallowtails, to mention a few.

Happy butterfly gardening!

~Ginna Hoff, contributing writer & citizen scientist

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 | 2710 Touro St., New Orleans LA 70117 | (504) 577-4290 |
| 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, Marrero, 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 Center4 | 516 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 |
|---------------------|--|----------------|

Soil Vendors

| | | |
|-------------------------------|---|----------------|
| Schmelly's Dirt Farm | 8301 Olive St., New Orleans, LA 70118 | (504) 535-GROW |
| 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 |
| Grow Wiser Garden Supply | 2109 Decatur St., New Orleans, LA 70116 | (504) 644-4713 |

Farmers Markets in the GNO Area

Farmers Markets in the Greater New Orleans Area

Jefferson Parish

Gretna Farmer's Market

739 Third Street, Gretna

Every Saturday, except the Saturday of Gretna Fest, 8:30AM-12:30PM

Nawlins Outdoor Market

1048 Scotsdale Dr., Harvey

Every Saturday & Sunday, 9AM-5PM

Old Metairie Farmer's Market

Bayou Metairie Park, Between Metairie Lawn Dr. and Labarre

3rd Tuesday of the month, 3:30PM-7:30PM

Westwego Shrimp Lot

100 Westbank Expressway at Louisiana St., Westwego

Daily Mon-Thurs 8AM-6PM, Fri 8AM-7PM, Sat 7AM-7PM, & Sun 7AM-6PM

Lafreniere Park Market-Metairie

3000 Downs Blvd.

Wednesdays, from 3-7PM

Laughing Buddha Farm Hub-Clearview

4516 Clearview

Store Pickups, preorder online at <https://www.laughingbuddhanursery.com/buy-groceries-1>

Jean Lafitte Town Market-Lafitte

920 Jean Lafitte Blvd.

Last Saturday of the month, 9AM-1PM

Orleans Parish

Crescent City Farmer's Market- Mid-City

500 N. Norman C. Francis

Thursdays from 3-7PM

Walk-up and curbside pre-orders at www.crescentcityfarmersmarket.org

Crescent City Farmer's Market- City Park

Tad Gromley Stadium parking lot at Marconi and Navarre

Sundays from 8AM-Noon

Preorder contact-free drive through only, info at www.crescentcityfarmersmarket.org

Crescent City Farmer's Market- Uptown

200 Broadway

Tuesdays from 8AM-Noon

Walk-up and curbside pre-orders, info at www.crescentcityfarmersmarket.org

***SPROUT NOLA ReFresh Market-Truck Farm Table

200 N. Broad (In Whole Foods lobby or in parking lot, weather permitting)

Walk up

SPROUT NOLA ReFresh Market-Lafitte Greenway

2606 St. Louis

Mondays from 3-6PM

Walk up and pre-orders at <https://app.sourcewhatsgood.com/markets/refresh-farmers-market/products>

Vietnamese Farmer's Market

14401 Alcee Fortier Blvd., New Orleans East

Saturdays, 5:30AM-8:30AM

Marketplace at Armstrong Park

901 N. Rampart

Thursdays from 3-7PM

Farmers Markets in the GNO Area

New Orleans French Market
Lower Decatur Street
Daily, 9AM-6PM

Know Dat Grow Dat Microgreens & Produce
Online Sales
<https://www.knowdatgrowdat.com/shop> or <https://www.knowdatgrowdat.com/shop>

Mid-City Arts and Farmer's Market
Comiskey Park, New Orleans
Market dates vary and are on hold due to Covid-19, check <http://midcityaf.org>

Laughing Buddha Farm Hubs
Pick up points vary, pre-orders available
Bywater, Broadmoor, Lakeview, Irish Channel, Mid-City, Algiers Point, Uptown Locations
<https://www.laughingbuddhanursery.com/events>

Barcelo Gardens Farmer's Market- Upper 9th Ward
2301 Gallier Street
Saturdays from 10AM-1PM

Bywater Market at Trap Kitchen-Bywater
1043 Poland Ave
Sundays from 10AM-3PM

Paradigm Farmer's Market-Central City
1131 S. Rampart
Sundays 9AM-Noon

Lot 1701 Small Business and Farmer's Market-Central City
1701 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd.
Every 1st and 3rd Saturday from 11AM to 3PM

BOUNYFUL Farmer's Market-Algiers Point
149 Delaronde St.
First and Third Sundays of the month, from 11AM-3PM

Edgewood Park Market-Edgewood
3317 Franklin Ave.
First market Sunday, April 11th from 11AM-3PM

New Orleans East Hospital Farmer's Market- New Orleans East
5620 Read Blvd.
First Tuesday of the Month- 3PM-Dusk
Third Thursday of the Month- Noon-3PM

Sheaux Fresh Sustainable Foods- Tremé-Lafitte
585 N. Claiborne at Lafitte Greenway (under overpass)
Wednesdays from 2-5PM
Saturdays from 10AM-2PM
Check for current dates/times at www.sheauxfresh.org

Holy Cross Farmer's Market- Holy Cross/Lower 9th Ward
533 St. Maurice
First Saturday of the month, 9:30-Noon beginning April 3rd

St. Charles Parish

Luling Farmer's Market at Westbank Bridge Park-Luling
13825 River Road
Wednesdays, from 1-5PM

German Coast Farmer's Market-Destrehan
13786 River Road
Saturdays, from 8AM-Noon

April Checklist/Garden Tips

1. Constant watering rapidly leaches nutrient elements from the soils of container grown plants. To replace them it is best to use either soluble fertilizers or slow release fertilizers. Soluble fertilizers are easy to apply especially when you use a hose end applicator, but they must be applied every two weeks to maintain a constant supply of nutrients. Slow release fertilizers provide nutrients over several months from one application and so cut down on labor.
2. If crape myrtle aphids have been a problem on your trees in the past, treat this month with Bayer Advanced Tree and Shrub Insect Control with Merit. This is applied as a drench to the base of the trees and is absorbed by the roots. The insecticide travels through the tree's circulatory system up into the foliage making it toxic to the aphids. One treatment protects the tree all summer, preventing aphids and the unsightly black sooty mold they cause.
3. Spray crape myrtles with mancozeb, chlorothalonil or other labeled fungicides to control serious infections of powdery mildew. Powdery mildew appears as a white, powdery material on the leaves. Unlike many fungus diseases that are worse when weather is rainy, this disease is favored by humid, warm weather without rain. It is also occurs on a variety of other landscape plants such as dogwood, euonymus, gerbera daisy, rose and hydrangea, to name a few.
4. Oak trees infested with buck moth caterpillars should be sprayed before the caterpillars begin to migrate down the trunk. Contact local tree care companies to get your trees sprayed.
5. Aphids are a real problem on roses and many other plants in spring. Control with insecticidal soap, oil spray, Malathion or Acephate.
6. As much as is practical, continue to deadhead or remove faded, dead flowers from cool season bedding plants such as pansy, snapdragon and dianthus to promote extended flowering.
7. As much as is practical, continue to deadhead or remove faded, dead flowers from cool season bedding plants such as pansy, snapdragon and dianthus to promote extended flowering.
8. When buying pesticides, ask for a recommendation for the least toxic material that will do the job and buy the smallest container available. Large sized containers take years to use up and by then the pesticide has often lost its effectiveness. Be sure to follow label directions for storage.
9. Keep your Louisiana irises well watered now while they flower and through mid summer. Remove any developing seed pods after flowering is finished.
10. Small birds called sapsuckers peck holes in neat rows. The holes just penetrate the bark and cause sap to bleed from them. Later, the sapsuckers return to feed on the sugary sap and any insects that may have been attracted to it. The damage is usually minor, and control is generally not necessary or practical.
11. Do not delay planting many of the warm season vegetables beyond the middle part of this month. Tomatoes, snap beans, lima beans and bell peppers all set fruit poorly when temperatures are hot. Squashes and corn are both far more likely to have major insect and disease problems when planted later.
12. Cool season herbs and those that thrive during mild weather, such as parsley, dill, tarragon, thyme, sage, cilantro, borage, lavender, chamomile, chervil and arugula, are at their peak this month. They will begin to decline toward late May and finish in early June, so harvest them generously over the next six to eight weeks. Extra harvest can be dried or frozen for use during the summer.
13. If you need to prune spring flowering shrubs such as spirea, viburnum, quince, azalea, camellia, jasmine and mock orange, you may do so as soon as they finish flowering. Remember to prune with a specific purpose in mind, and, unless you are trying to create a clipped formal hedge, try to preserve the natural shape of the shrub.
14. Watch for spider mite damage on many vegetables and ornamentals during dry weather. Very tiny, spider mites are not readily visible to the naked eye. Use a magnifying glass to inspect the plant and look for the tiny red or green eight legged mites. Infested plants get a dull, dusty, unhealthy look to the foliage which eventually turns brown. The spider mites are primarily under the leaves. Spray with a horticultural oil, insecticidal soap, Malathion or Kelthane.

Lawn Care Do's & Don't's

Do:

1. This is the prime planting season for warm season grasses such as St. Augustine, centipede, Bermuda and zoysia.
2. Take a soil test.
3. Apply sulfur or lime to adjust the pH if necessary according to soil lab recommendations.
4. Make the first application of the recommended rate of nitrogen fertilizer for your turf variety if you have not done so. See the fertilizer recommendations on page 5 of the Louisiana Lawns Best Management Practices Guide. [Go to https://www.lsuagcenter.com/~media/system/7/c/8/e/7c8e4b17a12a51839443d9296bd03edc/pub2940louisianalawnsmarch2008.pdf](https://www.lsuagcenter.com/~media/system/7/c/8/e/7c8e4b17a12a51839443d9296bd03edc/pub2940louisianalawnsmarch2008.pdf) to see the guide. Do not apply phosphorous or potassium fertilizer unless recommended by a soil test.
5. Apply selective herbicides and sedge killers to kill off 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.
6. One of the biggest hurdles to growing a good lawn is soil compaction. Continuous foot traffic, rainfall and the depletion of soil organic material has compressed the soil particles eliminating pore space. This pore space allows water and air to enter the soil and is critical to growing plants.
Use a core aerator to open up channels in the soil. Spread a mix of fine compost and sand over the lawn in a 1/4 inch layer.
7. Dethatch the lawn if necessary.
8. Set your mower to the correct height for your turfgrass type. This is one of the most important things that you can do. See Table 1.
9. Continue to scout for disease and insect pests and apply treatment if necessary.
10. Find a list of informative videos on lawn care from the experts at the LSU AgCenter by going to <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL2hr6qmeDGTT5zaBnUbeeJ-tA3-nlbYPg>

Do Not:

1. Do not cut more than 1/3 of the height at a single time.
2. Do not let winter weeds go to seed in the lawn. Use the bagging mower to collect clippings and dispose of them if seed heads are present.

Your Local Extension Office is Here to Help

E-mail us at: GNOGardening@agcenter.lsu.edu



Follow us on Facebook at GNOGardening

For more information visit LSUAgCenter.com

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