



WILLIAMSON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

THE PERENNIAL



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OUR ROOTS

A Message from our President

Well, here we are in 2021 and it still looks a lot like 2020, doesn't it? COVID continues to be very active and most of us are "hunkered down" until we can get the vaccine. But I'm in an optimistic frame of mind these days. Everyone who wants, or can take, the vaccine should be covered by early spring. We'll continue to wear masks and socially distance until we reach the ultimate goal.....herd immunity. So, what's next for the WCMGA? Well, for one thing, we're going to continue to meet via ZOOM until we get the "all clear" from both Williamson Co. and UT. I think I miss the social aspect of our organization more than anything else, but I'm happier knowing we're doing all the right things to keep our membership safe. All of our project leaders have their sites well under control to maximize volunteer safety so I'm ready to get my hands back in the dirt!

For now, there are lots of things you can be doing. Start sorting your seeds. Do some seed viability tests for seeds you've had stored for a while. It's a good time to map out your gardens and decide what is going where when the time comes. Cool weather crops can be started and it did my heart good to watch onions and cabbages sprouting under my grow lights this week. Are you a container gardener? Those pots need to be washed out, soil needs to be purchased, and decisions will need to be made as to what to plant in them. So, keep yourself busy with thoughts of the coming spring because it WILL come, COVID or no COVID.

We're also welcoming a new intern class. It's going to be a bit different for them than it was for all of us as the classes will be held virtually for those who don't wish to attend the in-class sessions. I'm still not sure how this will work myself so we're all on the same learning curve, but we'll learn together! If nothing else, 2020 has shown us just how flexible we actually are. But the goal is the same....to train people to serve the educational gardening needs of our county with fact-based research and a willing heart.

Continue to keep yourself safe with masks, social distancing, hand washing and so on. **This too shall pass and we'll be back in full force before this year is over!**

WCMGA President *Linda Horton*

WCMGA MINI MEETINGS



Last year provided many opportunities to adapt and overcome, including coming up with some creative ways to keep education going for our membership and get some much needed “socially distanced” socialization. One of those ways was our mini meetings. The meetings were held in the fall at a couple of member gardens, so they were totally outside with safety precautions such as masks, limited



number of

attendees, and social distancing. The subjects ranged from growing sweet potatoes in straw bales to hardscapes to tree identification. Members were able to get together safely, learn a few things, and get some CEUs (Continuing Education Units).

Cheri Liddell hosted the first meeting and discussed her experience planting sweet potatoes in straw bales. Attendees were even able to harvest some of the potatoes!

Holly Gardner hosted two meetings and discussed hardscapes and experiments in vegetable gardening. We talked about using materials you have on hand to create garden beds and areas. A warm campfire punctuated the evening meeting.

Two of the meetings were on-site tree



identification classes also hosted by Holly Gardner. UT Extension Agent, **Taylor Reeder** presented, and began the session with an introduction to a few tools used for identifying trees. **Jerry Alldredge** brought many diagnostic resources to share. Taylor was able to provide various leaves and branches harvested from the site so that attendees would have some hands-on practice.

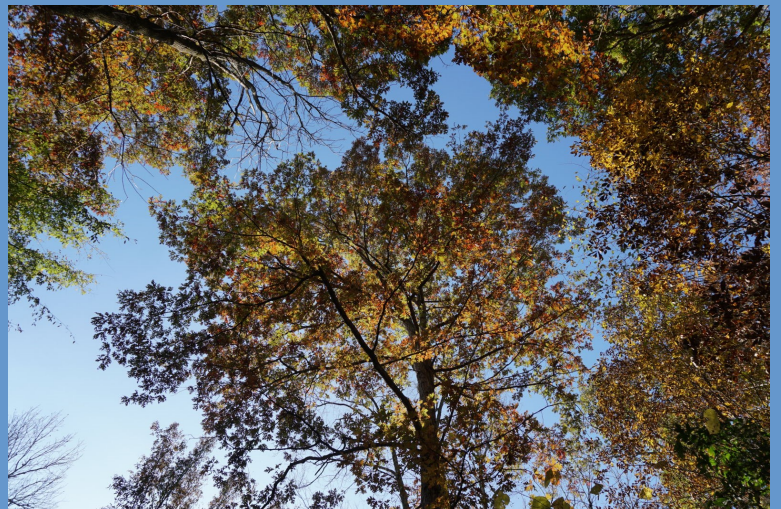
WCMGA MINI MEETINGS



Afterwards, we took a walk around the property and were able to see live specimens identified earlier and get into more detail about bark, growth habit, etc. This mini meeting also did double duty as on-site practice session for our diagnostics team.

All meetings were well attended and comments were very positive, so we plan to have more of them over the next few months. Stay tuned for more information on that. ***We also need subjects, presenters, and locations,*** so if you are interested in hosting and presenting or just hosting, please let **Linda Horton** know at presidentwcmga@gmail.com. The locations must be outdoor-only. These are casual gatherings with limited attendees, so subject matter can be casual as well. It could be just a tour of a garden or a new technique to share (no matter if it succeeded or failed) or ways to attract wildlife to your garden. Or, it could be just a place to have the meeting and we can find someone to speak. COVID protocols will continue to be in place.

Just let us know if you are interested.



IRIS GARDEN



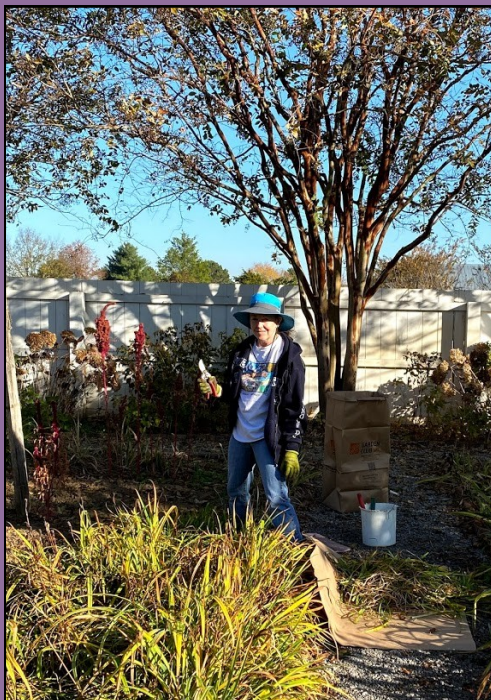
Looking for a safe, garden-related outing? In mid-April, take a trip

to the Ellington Agricultural Center and visit the beautiful IRIS GARDEN. Created and maintained by the Middle Tennessee Iris Society, this is a hidden gem of a garden. With over 100 different cultivars, you will not be disappointed. Iris are at their peak bloom between mid-April and mid-May. Parking is easy. Don't forget to bring a picnic!

Address for GPS: 440 Hogan Rd, Nashville, TN 37220



The Carnton Garden work day last November was a wonderful success. Thanks to all the volunteers who came out to help.



The 2021 Home Garden Variety Trial is Open!

If you would like to participate—
here are two easy steps:

1) Check out all the details in the 2021 catalog to review the trials for this year.

[UT HGVT catalog 2021.pdf](#)

2) Then, once you know what you would like to trial, you can fill out an online **or** paper order form.

[University of Tennessee Home Vegetable
Trial Order Form-2021- fillable.pdf](#)

**The 2020 Trial Report is Here, so Check Out All
the Great Info from Last Year:**

[Home Garden Variety Trial Report-
W657.pdf](#)

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Message



969 posts

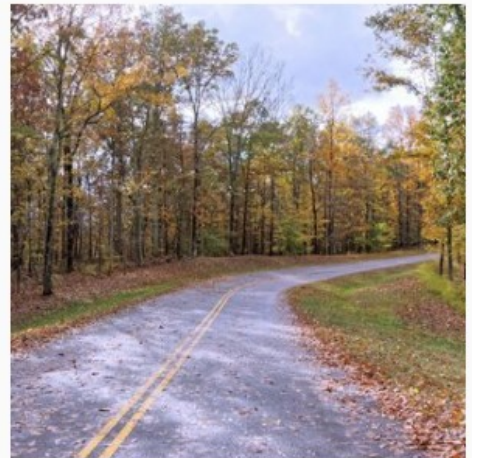
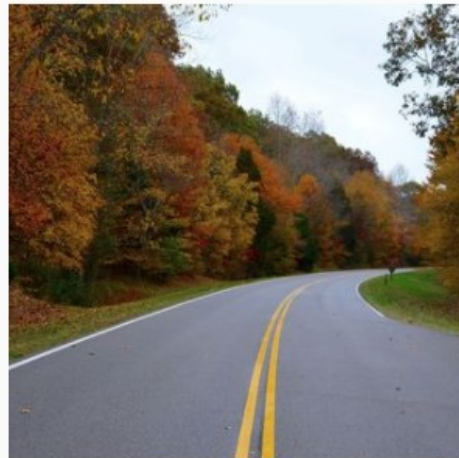
16.4k followers

7,080 following

The Natchez Trace

This historic, 444-mile scenic parkway links Natchez with Nashville & crosses some of the most beautiful terrain in Mississippi, Alabama & Tennessee.

www.scenictrace.com



THE BARK

FEBRUARY

Plant now: Sow seeds of radishes and cold-hardy lettuces. When daffodils appear, plant spinach, turnips, and peas. Cover the pea bed with clear plastic until sprouts begin to emerge; then, immediately switch to a floating row cover to protect the seedlings from weather and birds.

Indoors under lights: start seeds of herbs and annual flowers—such as ageratum, petunia, and snapdragons—that need 8 to 10 weeks to reach transplant size.

Buy now: Watch for garden sales. Order seeds from catalogs

MARCH

Plant now: In mid-March, sow hardy vegetables, such as carrots, beets, kohlrabi, radishes, leaf lettuces, and turnips.

Transplant onions, shallots, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, collards, white potatoes and asparagus crowns to the garden.

Set out herbs, such as rosemary, chives, and thyme—but not tender basil!

APRIL

Pass by broccoli and cabbage on sale at garden centers—hot weather will soon arrive, causing plants to go to seed instead of forming edible heads.

Thin crowded carrots, chard, and lettuce.

Remove floating row covers from peas early in the month. Provide trellis support.

Mulch around the base of cool-season crops to keep their roots cool and moist.

Buy now: Select new azalea and rhododendron bushes while they're in bloom to make sure that the color complements your landscape.



Newsletter/Website Articles Wanted

Special thanks to Holly Gardner and Shelly Wilkinson for their contributions to this issue. If you have photos or stories to share, you can get volunteer hours!

Keep contributing. Keep reading. Keep sharing. Please send your contributions to: wcmgatheperennial@gmail.com.

**Check out our amazing
WCMGA website!**

**Also, look here for
important links to many
of your favorite
gardening resources!**

THE DIRT

PROJECT LEADERS

All projects are looking for more volunteers. Using the membership directory, contact the project leader and asked to be included in this year's group.

Carter House—Ron Novak

Carnton House—Mary Loftus

Jr. Master Gardeners Camp—Patti Dial

Giving Garden—Phillip Francis

Speakers Bureau—Mary Pemberton

Diagnostic Team—Jerry Alldredge

Period Slave Garden—Jack Melnick

Urban/Edible Uprising—Dave Horton

Homestead Manor—Wayne Galentine

WCMGA Mission

The mission of the Williamson County Master Gardeners Association (WCMGA) is to provide research-based, horticultural education, while promoting environmental stewardship, via community volunteerism.

WCMGA operates under the umbrella of UTIA and the UT/TSU Williamson County Extension Office.

Contact Us

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