

WILLIAMSON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

THE PERENNIAL





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OUR ROOTS

A Message from our President

Dear Fellow Master Gardeners,

I'm so excited we're dedicating this issue of THE PERENNIAL to our new Horticulture Extension Agent, Taylor Reeder. I wish we could introduce her in a "normal" WCMGA meeting, but since that isn't an option right now, this is a wonderful way for you to learn a bit more about her and put a face to the name. Several of us have already met and interacted with Taylor and she's going to be a huge resource for our Association. She's already busy "behind the scenes" and will begin contributing articles to this publication in the near future. Not to mention that she has a bubbly, fun personality and is so easy to talk to! Thank you to Kristy Bergstrom and Holly Gardner for the interviews and pictures.

We're trying to decide what the "new normal" is going to look like, but I think you can expect a lot of changes. But the gardens are still growing (weeds and produce, both!) and we need lots of hands to get food to folks who have been really hard hit by this pandemic. With the disruption in supply lines, the lack of produce coming in from foreign ports, and meat plants closed due to the virus, groceries are getting much more expensive! We need all hands on deck to get food harvested and distributed to our neighbors. Please consider putting in a few of your volunteer hours at the Giving Garden or Carnton House. Both sites are VERY safe!

Congratulations to our 18 newly certified interns. They have certainly led the way in getting those 40 volunteer hours in and we are so very proud of each of them. This has been a hard year for them as well as for our membership. Continue to check on each other, socially distance, wear masks, and GET YOUR FLU SHOTS!

Hugs to all of you!

WCMGA President

Linda Horton



Introducing Horticulture Extension Agent Taylor Reeder

Story by Kristy Bergstrom, WCMGA Photo by Holly Gardner, WCMGA



With a kind, confident Alabama drawl and an impressive education to boot, Taylor Reeder is ready to get to work as Williamson County's newest Horticulture Extension agent. Reeder hails from Madison, Alabama, and holds a bachelor's in landscape design and installation maintenance and master's in horticulture from Auburn University. She is also a certified arborist via the International Society of Arboriculture. For the last five years, she worked as a regional extension agent for Home Grounds, Gardens & Pests for the Alabama Cooperative Extension System. Before that, she worked as a horticulture extension agent at the University of Florida for two and a half years,

focusing heavily on research during her time there. Reeder married her husband, Drake, in 2016 and the couple welcomed their first child last year.

Is there an area of horticulture that you're most passionate about?

If I had to choose just one, I'd say trees. I didn't originally take to it in school, but it's something that I learned about later on in my career. I ended up teaching a lot of the arborist classes during my time at the Alabama extension office and just decided I was more interested in it than I originally realized. I also really enjoy soils and find the biology behind how plants work fascinating.

In your experience, what are the three most common mistakes that gardeners make?

Not calling the extension office! We joke that we're the best kept secret, but we don't want to be a secret. You can call us any time and we'll even do diagnostic site visits for free. Another common mistake is not doing a soil test. Most don't realize that this is something that the extension office offers. I also think putting the right plant in the right place is important. The third mistake I see most often is that people over love their plants. Oftentimes they've overwatered or overfed them when plants just want to be left alone. Gardeners get defeated too quickly with plants that die or aren't thriving. When it comes down to it, gardening is really just trial and error.

You started this role in May. What differences have you observed so far with growing in Tennessee versus Alabama?

I was in north Alabama, zone 7b, so we have virtually the same heavy rock/clay soil and similar climate, just a little warmer. I was in a very rural area so people had a lot more space to garden. I've enjoyed seeing people utilize much smaller spaces here to garden. It's frankly amazing to see what people can accomplish in a small garden. The biggest difference I've noticed so far is a lack of fire ants. I'm not sure if it's just not as much of a problem here, but I have yet to receive any calls about them and this was a regular occurrence in rural Alabama. Turf here is also in more of a transition zone; the elevation in rainfall helps with that. It's been both exciting and interesting to see how people here utilize fescue and rye turf. Fruit crops also do better here.

As Tennessee Master Gardeners, how can we best utilize your skill set?

That's a great question! I'm planning on teaching some classes in areas I'm passionate about and will likely do some presentations in upcoming Master Gardener monthly meetings (once they resume). I'm here to support you so contact me any time at treeder2@utk.edu or via my office (615-790-5721) or mobile phone (256-655-3343).

Can you share a little about your history with horticulture research?

My grad school education was entirely dedicated to research. In fact, my dissertation was titled, *The Use of Post Distilled Cedar as an Alternative Substrate for the Production of Greenhouse Grown Annuals*. There's a company in Alabama that milled cedar, removing the oils for cedar closets, etc., and they were trying to figure out what to do with the remaining biomass. They reached out to my professor and asked if we could grow anything in it. The answer is not entirely! The biomass doesn't retain enough moisture, but we found that we could mix it with peat moss and grow certain plants in it. This company started selling the leftover cedar biomass to Young's Plant Farm. They use this mixture in some of their potted plants and sell them to Lowe's. Here's a link to the published research:

<https://etd.auburn.edu/handle/10415/3609>. I also participated in turf trials when I worked at the University of Florida; one of the aspects that I especially enjoyed is that we had master gardeners help with the trials. Ultimately, I would love to do more vegetable and fruit production gardening research and trials. That's the area I know the least about because I specialized in ornamentals.

We need to hear from the WCMGA members!!

With the help of Holly Gardner and Brad Sherp, a questionnaire has been placed on the website (you must use the link below) that you can answer anonymously concerning your abilities to use ZOOM technology, problems getting volunteer hours, safety precautions, and so on. Please be frank and honest.....we need everyone to respond so we can address the concerns. Unfortunately, our meetings are still on hold. Williamson County has the final say on what we are able to do in the Ag Center building, but we put together this survey just to get an idea of how the membership feels about some of our options moving forward.

You do not have to include your name.

The survey is online and should be simple to complete. Just click on the link and it should automatically open a browser for you and take you to the 13 questions. Please answer the questions and click on the blue "Submit Inquiry" at the bottom of the page. The screen may briefly fade as you finish a question, but that is normal. That's it!

**Please take a few minutes to complete the survey and
let us know what you think.**

The deadline to have it completed is *Friday, August 7, 2020.*

That is THIS Friday.

**We appreciate your input and we are committed to exploring safe ways to
continue our mission.**

Here's the link! Please click [here](#). (It is safe!)

If you do have any questions, please contact Holly Gardner
at hollygardner@charter.net or 931-381-5364.

If you cannot access the survey online, please let us know and we will work
with you to get your opinions documented.

WCMGA Digital Cookbook in the works

WCMG Recipes 2020

MG Caitlin Ramsey has volunteered to organize a cookbook!

We're not sure of the final format at this point (print or digital) but Caitlin (with photography/web assistance from Kristy Bergstrom and Holly Gardner) will be pulling in all the recipes and getting them in a useable format. At this time, please gather your recipes and send them to Caitlin at caitlin.jo.ramsey@gmail.com.

Email *MUST* include the subject line: **'WCMG Recipes 2020'**

Recipe submissions must include:

- Title of Recipe
- Who Submitted
- Author (if different from who submitted)
- Where and when it was originally published, or the recipe that inspired the dish (if not completely original work)
- Ingredients, amounts of each
- Directions

If possible, please also include:

- **Main ingredients** that people might be searching for, to incorporate something from their garden (eg. "tomatoes" or "okra")
- **The story** behind the recipe: how did you develop this recipe? Was it handed down through your family? Are there any special heirloom or experimental varieties of produce you like to use? Any specialty brand of vinegar or cheese you prefer to use? Bonus points for a local vendor!
- A beautiful high-resolution **image** of your dish.
- Approx. **number of servings** (eg. 4 servings as a main dish, or 8 side-dish sized portions)
- Approx. **prep time** start to finish.



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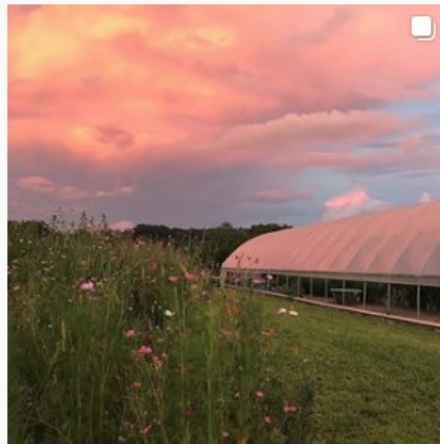
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Kindred Farm

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THE BARK

August

- Harvest vegetables continuously to stretch their season
- Sprinkle compost starter to speed up composting for fall soil building
- Prune summer-blooming shrubs (hydrangea, clethra, caryopteris) after flowers finish
- Plant garlic now for spring harvests
- Dig gently to harvest potatoes a few plants at a time
- Look forward to something different next spring: try alliums in your bulb garden
- Sow seeds of cool-weather herbs (chives, parsley, garlic chives, cilantro and dill)
- Plan perennial beds for fall and winter color with ornamental grasses, fall-blooming bulbs and hardy heaths and heathers
- Enjoy fall fragrance by planting autumn clematis (*Clematis paniculata*), flowering tobacco and annual stock
- Keep cool during summer's dog days with a shade garden embroidered with hostas and hardy ferns
- Color up your bulb garden with fall bloomers (lycoris, fall crocus, colchicum)

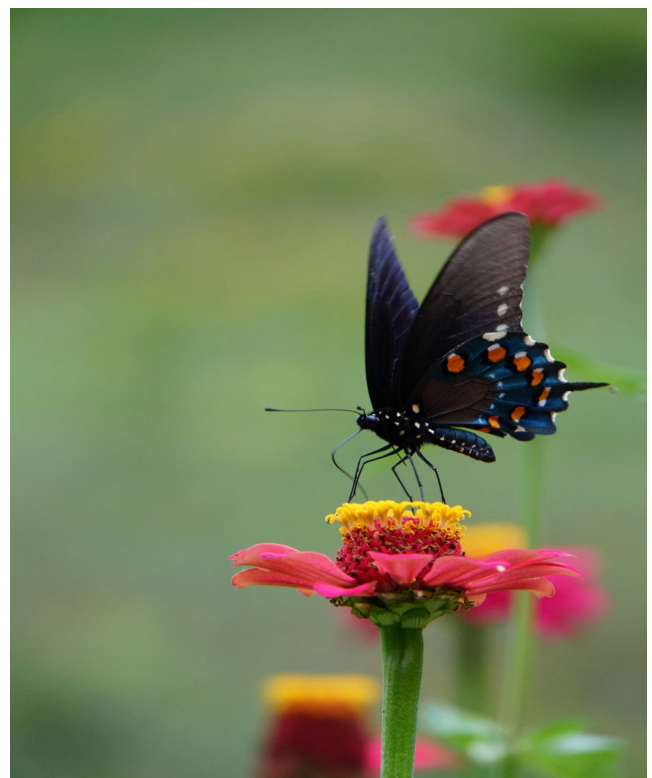
September

- Set out transplants of cool-weather vegetables
- Prune cane fruits such as raspberries and blackberries
- Plant winter pansies and fall annuals (calendula, dianthus, ornamental cabbage and kale)
- Plant peonies
- Plant fall-blooming bulbs to brighten up fading window boxes, planters and in drifts among ornamental grasses
- Continue to harvest herbs and flowers for drying
- Divide peonies, bearded iris and other spring- and summer-blooming perennials

- Plant bare root trees and shrubs
- Order sweet pea seedlings for fall planting
- Plant herbs and groundcovers as the weather cools

October

- Plant or repair lawns
- Plant ornamental grasses
- Cover perennial, vegetable, bulb, and strawberry beds for winter
- Plant winter- and spring-blooming bulbs
- Pre-chill tulips and hyacinths for indoor forcing
- Plant balled-and-burlapped or container fruit trees
- Cut back on feeding houseplants (do not feed dormant houseplants)
- Rake lawn to remove debris
- Sow seeds for frost-tolerant perennials
- Plant container roses
- Plant balled-and-burlapped or container trees, shrubs, and vines
- Prune fall-flowering shrubs just after bloom
- Protect tender plants from frost



Newsletter/Website Articles Wanted

Special thanks to Holly Gardner and Kristy Bergstrom 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



VIRTUAL GARDEN TALKS CONTINUE

The WCMGA Speakers Bureau presents **SHADE GARDENS** on September 21st, 1-3 pm.

Please sign up through the Williamson County Library link [here](#).

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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