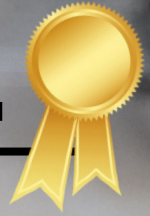


WILLIAMSON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

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# THE PERENNIAL

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WILLIAMSON COUNTY  
**EXTENSION**  
INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE  
THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE

Volume 22 | November 2022



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Cover photo by Holly Gardner  
Arrangement by Ryan Palmer

# OUR ROOTS

## A Message from our President

### Looking Forward

As my first year as president of the WCMGA comes to a close, I can honestly say that I'm more excited to look ahead to the future of our organization than I am to look back on a great year, even if it was. I appreciate the slow down we get in the garden over winter, as it gives me ample time to dream of all that is to come.

We had a great year in 2022, with a successful plant sale and fair booth, strong projects, and new faces joining the group. I want to build on that success in 2023, getting more new members involved in leadership, improving on the plant sale, leaning in to technology, and focusing on community education. I support all of the WCMGA projects, and I think we can increase the community's awareness of, and education through, these outreaches. We have an opportunity, and I believe responsibility, to help connect people to nature and ecology in a way that empowers them to take part in the restoration of this world we all share.

I know that we are technically just a group of "gardeners", but I see us as so much more. We are stewards of this land, with knowledge and occasion to guide and encourage others to take part in the daunting but achievable goal of improving and sustaining this place we call home. But we must walk the walk. So over this winter, think about some things you could do in your own garden: certify your yard as a TN Smart Yard, replace exotics with natives, plant to encourage wildlife, leave plants and debris in place over winter, allow a part of your landscape to "go wild" and see what happens. Remember, we're all in this together.

Enjoy every season,  
WCMGA President  
*Matt Bergstrom*



# The Secret Life of Plants

By Taylor Reeder, UT/TSU Extension, Williamson County

As winter approaches, short days and cool temperatures cause many plants to slow down and enter a suspended growth phase known as dormancy. Dormancy in plants is similar to the way bears hibernate during the winter. You may be asking yourself what is dormancy? And how can I get in on that? Well, to be honest, there isn't an all-encompassing answer. It seems that plants (and bears) are keeping that secret all to themselves.



Now that winter is indeed coming, deciduous plants start to breakdown proteins and other chemicals in their leaves and store them in the buds, bark and wood for growth next spring. Many deciduous plants lose their leaves as they become dormant, such as maples and dogwoods. Evergreen plants such as pine trees and camellias keep their leaves all winter.

There are actually two types of dormancy during the winter. One is called endo-dormancy. In endo-dormancy, the plant refuses to grow even under hospitable conditions. In endo-dormancy, something inside the plants is inhibiting growth. The

other form is eco-dormancy and occurs when the plant is ready to grow, but the environmental conditions are not favorable (usually too cold). Short days and freezing temperatures in the fall induce endo-dormancy in the plant, which occurs first.

As the plant enters endo-dormancy, it tracks chilling hours to chart the passage of the winter. Chilling hours are the time when temperatures drop below 45 degrees Fahrenheit. The number of hours required for chilling varies for different plants. Many people think the plant is tracking hours below freezing. However, hours below freezing have no effect on chilling, but will increase cold hardiness. If warm weather occurs before the plant completes its chilling requirement, no growth occurs. Chilling and endo-dormancy normally prevent plants from beginning growth during warm spells in the middle of the winter. Not all hours above freezing are equal. Temperatures between 35 and 45 degrees Fahrenheit seem to be most effective. Temperatures just above freezing and above 50 F are less effective and temperatures above 60 F often have a negative effect on chilling.

After a plant has checked off its chilling hours it is no longer in a state of endo-dormancy. It is now in eco-dormancy. The plants are dormant only because of cold temperatures. Warmer weather will cause plants to yawn, make that final stretch, and begin to grow. Growth first becomes apparent when buds swell and then green tissue emerges from the bud. However, plants actually begin growing before we notice their swelling buds. So, this winter when your plants start to shed their leaves don't be frightened, they may just be taking a much-deserved rest in preparation for a brilliant show come spring. If you would like more information please give me a call!

Taylor Reeder  
UT/TSU Extension  
Williamson County  
Horticulture Agent



[Horticulture | Williamson County \(tennessee.edu\)](https://www.tennessee.edu/extension/county/williamson/)



**Want more information about dormancy in plants? Click on these links:**

[Winter dormancy and chilling in woody plants - MSU Extension](#) [Vermicomposting - UF/IFAS Extension \(ufl.edu\)](#)

[Forcing cuttings to determine the end of dormancy in fruits and other plants - MSU Extension](#)

[Winter Dormancy in the Landscape: University of Illinois Extension](#)

[\(PDF\) Endo-, Para-, and Ecodormancy: Physiological Terminology and Classification for Dormancy Research \(researchgate.net\)](#)

[Fall color show and winter dormancy in woody plants - MSU Extension](#)

# The Frost Flower Phenomenon

By Holly Gardner, WCMGA Board Member

One of the more interesting phenomenon to witness in the garden in the Fall is the emergence of frost flowers.

Frost flowers are not really flowers. They appear when the weather conditions are just right. The temperature of the air must be at freezing or below freezing, but the ground must be unfrozen.

As the temperature drops, the moisture in the stems of certain plants begin to freeze and causes very small cracks to form in the stems.



The scientific name is ice segregation. As the moisture continues to be pulled up through the plant, it is then pushed through the cracks and freezes, forming delicate petals and ribbons of ice.

These beautiful formations are short-lived as they melt as the sun rises and warms the air.

While there are other plants that can form frost flowers, there one in this area that is most likely, white crownbeard (*Verbesina virginica*).

I first saw them a few years ago when I noticed something white at the edge of the woods. I did a little research online and found very interesting information and beautiful photos. Now, I look for them to return each year (and,



of course, I take photos!) and, I see others who share photos online.

The photos included here were taken on our property in Maury County, Tennessee .

So, pay attention in the mornings in late Fall and you may see this amazing sight!

## Did you know...?

**The impact of the Tennessee Extension Master Gardener Program in 2019 was 200,003 hours of service and educational outreach that represented a value to Tennessee of \$4,534,068.01?**

**If you are a Master Gardener, don't forget to log your volunteer and CEU hours before the end of the year! It is important for certification, but also for calculating funding for each county.**

**Click here to report your hours: [Tennessee Master Gardener](#)**



# NEWS



Our WCMGA September meeting and picnic was held at Jim Warren Park in Franklin in the same screened-in pavilion we used last year. The association provided Whitt's Barbecue and members brought potluck items to share. The food was delicious, as usual! After a short business meeting led by President, Matt Bergstrom, we divided into teams for zinnia trivia questions assembled and presented by Vice President, Ann Harvey. Thank you to the Board Members and Hospitality Committee for all of the picnic planning and coordination!





Colby Jenkins, owner of Maple Hills Nursery, was guest speaker at our October association meeting. He discussed Japanese maples, including pruning techniques and aesthetics. The meeting was presented in-person, as well as, virtually. He was informative and entertaining! Thanks, Colby! For more information, visit their website: [Home | Maple Hills \(maplehillsnursery.com\)](http://Home | Maple Hills (maplehillsnursery.com))

In November, we had our annual new Master Gardener interns graduation and Thanksgiving potluck. Our 2022 interns celebrated their graduation from the UT Master Gardener program with their families and current WCMGA members.

The association provided the turkey and WCMGA members provided the delicious potluck items.



Our interns attended classes earlier this year and accumulated volunteer hours throughout the year by planning and creating their group gardens and by working with WCMGA members on our various projects.

The interns were also required to do a group presentation at this meeting showcasing how their gardens came together and what they learned. They were so creative!

Presentations will be uploaded to our WCMGA website soon, so be sure to check back if you missed them. Certificates were then presented to the interns (now graduates!!) by Taylor Reeder.

We had 30 graduates!! Graduates will have the opportunity to join the WCMGA in January and we hope that they will!



### Message from Taylor:



***THANK YOU! I would like to thank everyone who has helped out with the 2022 Williamson County Master Gardener classes. First, to Linda Horton, for her guidance and support! Thank you to all of the mentors who poured into the lives of our interns. Also, thank you to the WCMGA volunteers who lead classes and hands-on trainings! Lastly, thank you to all of our interns for the hard work and energy you have put in over the last 9 months. This program is a success because of your efforts!***

AND...a special thank YOU, Taylor, for all of your hard work and dedication to this program!! We appreciate you!!

***Sincerely,  
Taylor Reeder***



**CONGRATUATIONS** to our new WCMGA Board Members! They were voted in during our November association meeting. They will attend our December Board meeting and begin their term in January 2023. Welcome!!

**Vice President - Rachel Fortuna  
Secretary - Lorena Machado  
Director of Membership - Jamie Desmond**

And, we want to thank our outgoing WCMGA Board Members! We appreciate your service to the association and its members!

**Vice President - Ann Harvey  
Secretary - Corinne Ruty  
Director of Membership - Sue Boyer**

# CONGRATULATIONS



## CONGRATUATIONS to our 2022 Williamson County Master Gardener Graduates

(alphabetical order)

Sonnie Bain  
Deborah Bos  
Hanna Brazeal  
DeeAnna Carney  
Donna Cate  
Sheila Delony  
Emily Ector-Volman  
Cindy Edison  
Maggie Evans  
Sandy Ewert

Kim Fong  
Melody Hall  
Martha Hansen  
Keith Hetrick  
Josie Hollis  
Seoniad Lough  
Jenn McCoy  
JC McNamara  
Ramsay McGee  
Tennille Melcher

Laurel Pankratz  
Evelyn Pechianu  
Susan Perry  
Meghann Roberts  
Sunny Sargent  
Trisha Selph  
Jolly Sinha  
Michelle Taylor  
Kathy Wirt  
Jill Wright

# THE BARK

## NOVEMBER

- Plant tulip and daffodil bulbs for a stunning display next spring.
- Cut back the yellowing foliage of herbaceous perennials, and lift and divide overcrowded clumps to maintain their vigor.
- Keep harvesting your various cool-season crops.
- Plant out spring bedding displays of pansies, violas and primulas.
- Prepare a bed for planting autumn garlic.
- If you have access to fresh manure, now is the time to spread it across the surface of your vegetable beds to rot down over winter.
- Tidy up your strawberry plants - cut off any dead leaves and remove runners.
- Continue to clear fallen leaves off the lawn to keep it healthy.
- Create compost bins for collecting fallen leaves and dead plant material.
- If the soil is dry, give your garden one last good watering before the ground freezes.



- Once plants are dormant, it is a good time to lift and relocate any plant that you want to move.
- Winterize spigots and take in hoses.
- Prune and destroy all dead or diseased fruit tree limbs when dormant.
- Carrots can be stored in ground for a little while, but be sure to pull them before the ground freezes.

# DECEMBER

- Cover unused beds with mulch or a thick layer of leaves.
- Clean gardening tools.
- Clean any pots or seed trays.
- Feed fall crops (do this every 6 weeks during the growing season).
- Water fall crops during dry spells.
- Order seed catalogs.
- Organize seeds and determine what you will need for spring.
- Don't overlook other great plant choices for holiday color. Poinsettias aren't your only option. Consider kalanchoe, cyclamen, bromeliads, 'Diamond Frost' euphorbia, Christmas cactus, orchids, or even blooming mini-cactus.
- Pot up amaryllis, paperwhites or pre-chilled hyacinths so you'll have winter blooms inside for the holidays and beyond.
- Mulch strawberries when temperatures expected to drop below 20 F — but only if they are dormant!
- Start to think about the garden plan for next year.
- Map out crop rotations for next year in light of any diseases or pests encountered.
- Add fallen leaves to your compost pile or use for mulch.
- Continue to add kitchen scraps, dead plant material that is not diseased, or any grass clippings to compost pile. Turn regularly with a fork.
- Plant trees or shrubs.
- It is not too late to get your Spring bulbs planted. Get them in the ground!
- Cut evergreen boughs or holly with berries for wreaths.
- Remove any diseased leaves from under rose bushes and dispose of them.



## JANUARY

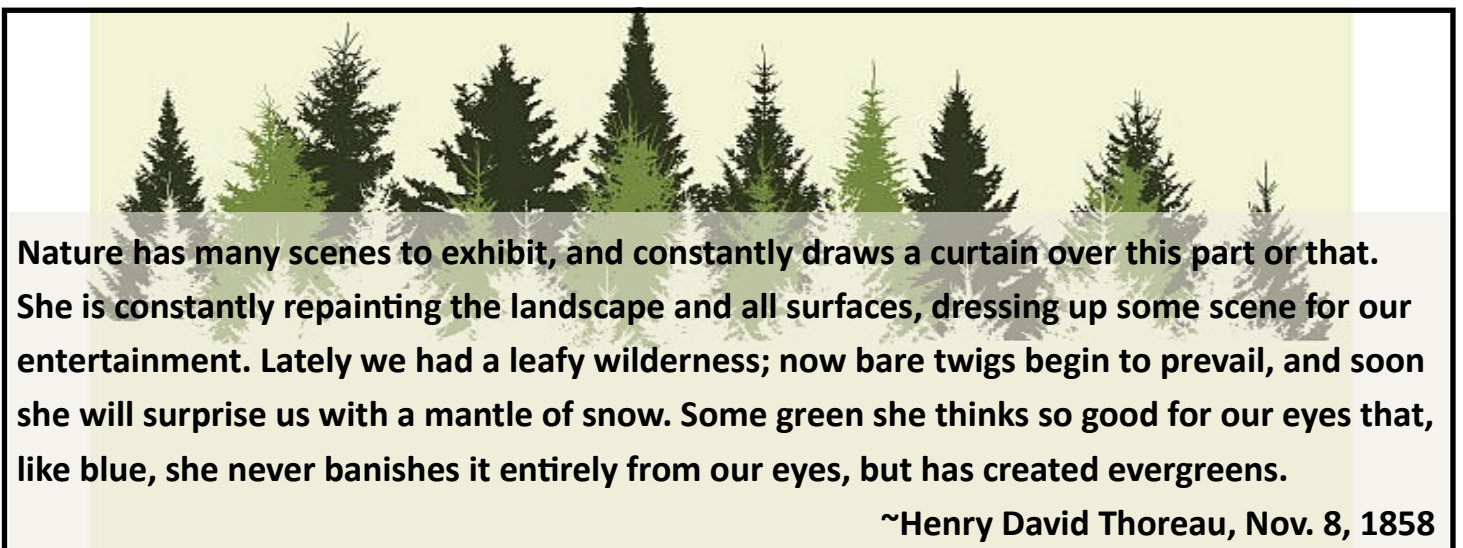


- Inventory leftover seeds.
- Test germination of leftover seed from last year.
- Purchase media from a reputable source and buy new pots or sanitize old ones to reduce disease risk.
- Prepare seed order for remaining cool-season and warm-season seeds for transplants.
- Keep an eye out for spider mites, mealybugs, and scale insects on houseplants.
- Start planning gardens and other yard projects.



- Keep your bird feeders full.
- Compost or chip your Christmas tree.
- Test your garden soil for its pH levels. Contact your local Cooperative Extension office for a soil kit. Then, apply lime, sulfur, and fertilizer according to the soil-test results.
- Prune any damaged or dead branches from your trees and shrubs. Fertilize.
- Start slower-growing, cool season vegetables such as cabbage, brussels sprouts, beets, and onions indoors so you will have seedlings to plant into the garden later.

Another good resource is the [2022 Tennessee Home Vegetable and Fruit Garden Calendar - UT Hort](#)

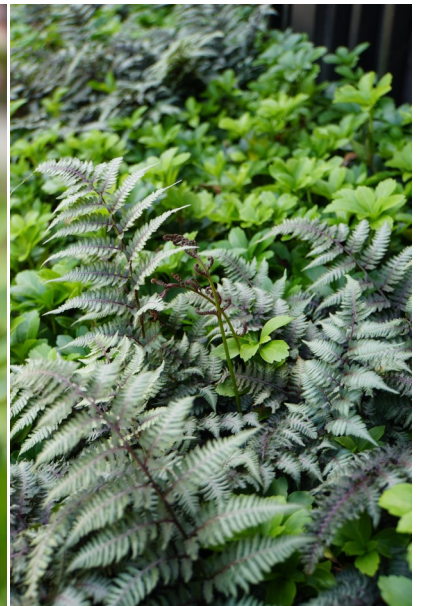


Nature has many scenes to exhibit, and constantly draws a curtain over this part or that. She is constantly repainting the landscape and all surfaces, dressing up some scene for our entertainment. Lately we had a leafy wilderness; now bare twigs begin to prevail, and soon she will surprise us with a mantle of snow. Some green she thinks so good for our eyes that, like blue, she never banishes it entirely from our eyes, but has created evergreens.

~Henry David Thoreau, Nov. 8, 1858

## Member Gardens

Here, we share various photos from our WCMGA members' gardens. With this issue, we get to see photos from Nicole Reed's wonderful garden, during one of our Mini Meetings in June 2021. Enjoy the bright colors during this gloomy part of the year.



If you would like to have your photos shared or your garden featured, please contact us at [ThePerennialWCMGA@gmail.com](mailto:ThePerennialWCMGA@gmail.com).

# THE DIRT



## Newsletter and Website Articles Wanted

Special thanks to Taylor Reeder, Matt Bergstrom, Nicole Reed, and Holly Gardner 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!

## WCMGA by the Numbers

Volunteer hours reported for  
2022 so far: **10,331**

Based on values determined by  
Independent Sector Website:  
Hours Value: **\$228,938.95**

## Events

November 14 - 6:00pm - WCMGA meeting/  
intern graduation/Thanksgiving potluck

## Upcoming Events

December - no WCMGA meeting - Have a  
wonderful holiday season!

January 9 - 6:00pm - WCMGA meeting -  
speaker TBD

## 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.

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