

# Home & Garden Education Center



**UConn** | COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE,  
HEALTH AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
PLANT SCIENCE AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE  
EXTENSION

## May is for Moosewood, Mowing for Monarchs, and Moisture Damage to Rhododendron



### Moosewood

*Acer pensylvanicum*, also known as moosewood, moose maple, striped maple, and snake bark maple. This North American native deciduous tree stays relatively small, growing only to a height of 15 to 20'. The bright green leaves are 3-lobed and about 5 to 7" long and wide but it is the bark of this tree that makes it unique. The young branches are striped green and white longitudinally while the older bark is more green, white, and grayish-brown. With yellow-green flowers in pendulous chains in May and bright yellow leaves in the fall this tree brings interest to any landscape year-round.

[Acer pensylvanicum](#)

### Mowing for Monarchs

New research from the University of Michigan shows that mowing or trimming about a third of a [milkweed](#) patch in mid-June, when stems are starting to flower, and cutting another third in mid-July when the mowed stems have regrown and are beginning to flower, may be beneficial to monarchs. Monarchs may prefer to lay their eggs on young milkweed, before it is in flower and attractive to predators. Always leave the rest of the patch undisturbed.

[Mowing for Monarchs](#)

## Moisture Damage to Rhododendron

This spring has seen an influx of calls regarding dying sections of rhododendron plants, especially in those that have been well-established for years. Many plants are showing the browning of foliage that is very concentrated on 30 to 100% of the plant. Insect damage and some diseases tend to appear more diffused across a plant so the symptoms reported suggest a vascular issue. Rhododendrons are shallow-rooted so even small amounts of standing water from our wet spring (precipitation in Connecticut for March and April is more than an inch and a half above normal) can affect them in the form of root or crown rots, possibly *Phytophthora* sp. Our recommendation is to prune off any browned areas as they will not green up again and rhododendrons can take very heavy pruning and come back from it. For management strategies for *Phytophthora* please visit the link below.

### Phytophthora Dieback and Root Rot



## Ten Tips for the May Gardener

Click on highlighted links for additional information.

- Fertilize bulbs as soon as you see the foliage in the spring as they take in more nutrients when actively growing than when dying. Cut off the flower stalks but leave the foliage intact until it dies.
- [Lace bugs](#) and [aphids](#) will appear soon. Spray with water or use a [low-toxicity insecticide](#) to control them.
- Check out the [Elizabeth Park Conservancy](#) for the volunteer work days to help out in the gardens.
- Check to see if your houseplants are root bound. Water them thoroughly and carefully remove them from their pots. If the roots have compacted around the outside of the root ball, it is time to repot.
- [Herbs](#) can hold their own in early spring containers. Snip leaves to season dishes and create salad dressings.
- Have frost protection fabric or cloches, such as you can buy at garden stores, ready for your transplants.
- Put nets over ripening [strawberries](#) to protect them from birds and other wildlife.
- Mow your lawn any time the grass is 1½ times the normal height, for example, if you mow at a 3" height, don't let the grass get longer than 4 to 5".
- Twist off the wilting seed heads from rhododendrons and azaleas, so that the plants energy can go to foliage growth and next year's flowers, rather than seeds.
- Aerate and moisten the [compost pile](#) to speed decomposition.

[For a more extensive list of tips visit Gardening Tips for May](#)



## Have Your Soil Tested for Macro- & Micro Nutrients

Send your soil sample in for testing now. Our standard nutrient analysis includes pH, macro- and micro nutrients, and a lead scan and as long as we know what you are growing, the results will contain limestone and fertilizer recommendations. The cost is \$12/sample. You are welcome to come to the lab with your 'one cup of soil' but most people are content to simply place their sample in a zippered bag and mail it in. For details on submitting a sample, go to [UConn Soil and Nutrient Laboratory](#).

Photo by dmp, UConn

**Click on the Following Links to Visit Any of Our Sites:**

[UConn Extension](#)

[UConn Food Safety](#)

[UConn Home & Garden Education Center](#)

[UConn Plant Diagnostic Laboratory](#)

[UConn Science of GMOs](#)

Connecticut Invasive Plant Working Group (CIPWG)

**Invasive Mobile Apps:** Download these Invasive/Early Detection/ Reporting Apps on your mobile device!



Invasive Mobile Apps

**World Migratory Bird Day**

May 11th, 2019 is World Migratory Bird Day in North America. This year the focus is Protect Birds: Be The Solution To Plastic Pollution. Please visit the site to find out about events happening near you and the actions you can take to help birds, 365 days of the year.



World Migratory Bird Day



Join the Big Bug Hunt! Help create a warning system to alert gardeners when pests are heading their way. This international research project uses reports from real citizen scientists to track how bugs and pests spread.

## Events/Programs/Save the Date

### [Connecticut College](#)

[Visit the Plant Collections](#) The Connecticut College Arboretum manages four major plant collections containing 6,195 individual, accessioned living plants.

#### **Arboretum Garden Tours:**

**Native Plant Collection:** Sunday, May 5th, 2019

**Caroline Black Garden:** Sunday, May 12th, 2019, Mother's Day.

Arboretum tours meet in front of the Olin Science Center at 10:00 a.m. Tours last 60 to 90 minutes. Free; no registration required.

**Annual Wildflower Walk:** Friday, May 3rd, 2019 from 12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m. Meet at the Outdoor Theater. Free, bring a picnic lunch to enjoy before or after the walk.

**Connecticut River Tidelands: Evolution, Ecology and Challenges:** Wednesday, May 15th, 2019 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. Meet at the Essex Meadows, 30 Bokum Road, Essex, CT.

### [CT DEEP Programs](#)

**Edible Plants Walk:** Saturday, May 4th, 2019 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. James L. Goodwin Conservation Center, Hampton, CT. Inst.: Liz

**Phenological Walk:** Sunday, May 5th, 2019 from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. James L. Goodwin Conservation Center, Hampton, CT. Inst.: Carrie Crompton

**Butterfly Farming:** Sunday, May 12th, 2019 from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. James L. Goodwin Conservation Center, Hampton, CT. Inst.: Deb Field

**Pollinators Day:** Saturday, May 25th, 2019 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Kellogg Environmental Center, Derby, CT.

### [UConn Equestrian, Western, and Dressage Teams](#)



## Spring 2019 Shows

Equestrian Team Show Schedule: Zone 1 Region 5

- May 2-5 Nationals, Syracuse, NY

CT Western Team Show Schedule: Zone 1

- May 2 - 5 Nationals, Syracuse, NY

[Contact Coach Alena Meacham](#)

## Summer 2019 Riding Lessons

Looking for something fun to do this summer? How about horseback riding or polo?



The University of Connecticut's Animal Science Department offers a summer horseback riding program to the public with something for everyone! Dressage, Hunt Seat, Polo, Western riding lessons and Trail Riding are open to adults and children who meet the minimum age and skill level requirements.

Prior to registering, individuals interested in riding in the trail program who have never ridden in UConn's trail program, or who have not participated in the trail program for over a year, will be required to take a riding evaluation lesson (one hour assessment, cost \$36.25) to confirm their riding level. This assessment needs to be completed one week prior to the session starting.

[UConn Summer Riding Program information](#)

## [UConn Extension](#)

[Visit the UConn Animal Barns](#)

Everyone is welcome to explore our animal barns that are open to the public and to learn more about the animals that are used in the Department of Animal Science program. Visitors can see dairy and beef cows, sheep, and horses. The poultry units are closed to the public. Young animals can be found in the barns at the following times of year at barns that are opened to the public: baby foals in the summer in outside paddocks at Horse Unit II, lambs during February and March outside only



at Livestock Unit 1, dairy calves year-round at the Cattle Resource Unit and beef calves beginning in mid -March outside at Livestock Unit 1. Every day visitors can view the UConn dairy cows being milked from 12:30 - 3:00 p.m. at the Kellogg Dairy Center.

## UConn Garden Master Classes



Garden Master Classes such as the following items are offered through the UConn Extension Master Gardener Program. These classes provide continuing education for Certified Master Gardeners as part of the Advanced Master Gardener certification process. These classes are also open to the General Public. Anyone with an interest in gardening and horticulture is welcome.

**Exceptional Native Trees & Shrubs:** Thursday, May 2nd, 2019 from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. at the Edgerton Park Carriage House, 200 Edgehill Road, New Haven, CT. Inst.: Adam Wheeler.

**Garden Workshop:** Saturday, May 4th, 2019 at 9:30 a.m. at Wisdom House Retreat & Conference Center, 229 East Litchfield Road, Litchfield, CT. Inst.: Karen Bussolini

**Garden Chemistry:** Tuesday, May 7th, 2019 from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. at the Fairfield County Extension Center, 67 Stony Hill Road, Bethel, CT. Inst.: Thomas MacGregor

**Tree Identification Walk:** Thursday, May 9th, 2019 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the Edgerton Park Carriage House, 200 Edgehill Road, New Haven, CT. Inst.: Sandra Wilson

[Additional Master Gardener Classes](#)

## Events around Connecticut

**Elizabeth Park History Tour:** Wednesday, May 15th, 2019 at 10:00 a.m. The tour is free, open to the public, and begins at the flagpole outside the Green Cottage. [Elizabeth Park Rose Garden](#), 1561 Asylum Avenue, West Hartford, CT

**Connecticut Iris Society Exhibition and Connecticut Rhododendron Show:** Sunday, May 19th, 2019 from 11:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Pond House, [Elizabeth Park Rose Garden](#), 1561 Asylum Avenue, West Hartford, CT

**Tree Tour with UConn Arborist John Kehoe:** Saturday, May 25th, 2019 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. [Elizabeth Park Rose Garden](#), 1561 Asylum Avenue, West Hartford, CT

**Herb Society of America, CT Unit Annual Herb Symposium, Lunch & Sale:** Sunday, May 30th, 2019 from 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. [Elizabeth Park Rose Garden](#), 1561 Asylum Avenue, West Hartford, CT

**Botany Trail Wildflower Walk:** Sunday, May 5th, 2019 at 2:00 p.m. [Flanders Nature Center](#), Woodbury, CT

**Connecticut Daylily Society Annual Sale:** Saturday, May 18th, 2019 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Avon Senior Center, Avon, CT [Sale information](#).

**Hartford Blooms Garden Tours:** Friday, May 3rd through Sunday, May 5th, 2019. [Tour registration](#).

**Hill-stead Museum May Market:** Saturday and Sunday, May 4th & 5th, 2019 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Hill-Stead Museum, 35 Mountain Road, Farmington, CT [Ticket Information](#).

## 'Lemon Meringue' False indigo



'Lemon Meringue', also known as False indigo, is a *Baptisia* sp. hybrid that is an impressively vigorous native cultivar. Long, charcoal grey stems carry the cool lemon yellow flowers, producing an excellent floral display in late spring and early summer atop the compact, upright mound of blue-green foliage. 'Lemon Meringue' reaches a height and spread of 36" and is deer resistant and moderately drought tolerant. This perennial plant does not require deadheading and is a great early season plant for pollinators.

# KNOWLEDGE TO GROW ON!

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

[Eating mushrooms may reduce the risk of cognitive decline.](#)

[Could eating garlic reduce aging-related memory problems?](#)

[Alternative proteins challenge dairy dominance in sports nutrition segment.](#)

## CLIMATE CORNER

[Pollen is getting worse, but you can make things better with these tips from an allergist.](#)

[Apple trees are mysteriously dying all across America and nobody knows why.](#)

[Auburn professor and team discover breakthrough climate process that will improve society's ability to prepare and mitigate effects of long-term drought.](#)

## WHO KNEW?

[Think the tick threat grows with the grass? Not necessarily.](#)

[Twenty-five ways in which MIT has transformed computing.](#)

[Black bear do's and don'ts.](#)

## UConn Extension Home & Garden Education Center

The UConn Home & Garden Education Center (**HGEC**) is a horticultural informational resource for the citizens of Connecticut and beyond. The staff at the Center reach nearly 400,000 citizens in outreach efforts each year. We're ready to assist you.

You are receiving this email because you have provided us with your email address either when having your soil analyzed or testing the horticultural prowess and investigative abilities of our incredibly well-versed staff at the UConn Home & Garden Education Center! If you do not wish to receive our monthly email updates on gardening tips, pest problems, events and other information, please email us at [ladybug@uconn.edu](mailto:ladybug@uconn.edu) and ask to be removed from this list.

### We Need Your Support!

If you enjoy our efforts to keep you informed about horticultural and UConn-related items, please show your support by liking us on Facebook, following us on Pinterest or Instagram, checking out our weekly Ladybug blog, or visiting the Home & Garden Education center website.



[VISIT OUR WEBSITE](#)

*UConn Extension Home & Garden Education Center: We are on a collaborative journey.*

*How. We co-create knowledge with farmers, families, communities, and businesses. We educate. We convene groups to help solve problems.*

*What. Food, Health, and Sustainability.*

*Join us.*

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UConn Extension 1376 Storrs Road Unit 4134 Storrs, Connecticut 06269 United States (860) 486-9228