



UConn Home & Garden Education Center Knowledge to Grow On!

www.ladybug.uconn.edu



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MARCH IS FOR MOURNING CLOAKS, THE WORM MOON & MIGRANT BIRDS

Hello Fellow Gardeners! You are receiving this email because you have provided us with your email address either when subscribing to our quarterly newsletter, 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! Or, we just might have thought you would enjoy this e-newsletter. 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 and ask to be removed from this list.

Pest Patrol/Current Concerns/Topics of Interest:



From: www.nathistoc.bio.uci.edu



<http://www.moongiant.com>



By: Phil Myers, Museum of Zoology,
University of Michigan-Ann Arbor

Be on the Lookout for Mourning Cloaks

As the days start to warm look for emerging mourning cloak butterflies. They overwinter on the trunks of trees under the bark and in crevices. After mating, the female lays clusters of eggs on host species including willows, American elms, paper birches, cottonwood and hackberry. The young caterpillars feed on the host plant's leaves while occupying a communal web. They will then pupate and emerge in mid-summer as adults that will feed for a short period of time on tree sap, rotting fruit or sometimes flower nectar. The adult butterflies then go into a dormant state (estivation), waking in the fall to feed once again before winter hibernation. And the cycle repeats itself.

March is the Month of the Worm Moon

According to the Old Farmer's Almanac, "March is the month of the Full **Worm Moon**. The Full **Worm Moon** was given its name by the Algonquin tribes from New England to Lake Superior. At the time of this spring **Moon**, the ground begins to soften and earthworm casts reappear, inviting the return of robins."

Migrating Birds

Migrant flocks of male red-winged blackbirds are already arriving in the Northeast. Males make up most of these early arrivals. While they typically nest in or near fresh or saltwater wetland areas, you may notice some at your bird feeder as they search for seeds until insects become available later in the season. Look for the distinctive yellow and red shoulder patches on the males' wings. Females look completely different with brown and white coloration. Check out the difference in the sexes at: https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Red-winged_Blackbird/id

Topics that the Center is getting calls or emails on include aphids on indoor plants, pruning fruit trees, disease resistant tomatoes, winter moths, gypsy moth egg masses and starting seeds. If you have specific questions, gardening queries or pest problems, check out our website, www.ladybug.uconn.edu or call the UConn Home & Garden Education Center (877) 486-6271 (toll-free in CT). Your County Cooperative Extension Centers are also listed on the website.

National Groundwater Awareness Week

WESTERVILLE, Ohio — If you value your life, you should value groundwater, the National Ground Water Association said today in recognition of National Groundwater Awareness Week, March 6-12.

Quite literally, life as we know it would not be possible without groundwater.

“National Groundwater Awareness Week is a time to take stock of this most important natural resource,” said NGWA Director of General Public Outreach Cliff Treyens. “In times of drought or groundwater contamination — when people are noticeably affected — the value of groundwater becomes clear,” said Treyens. “The principle behind what Benjamin Franklin said two centuries ago remains true today: ‘When the well runs dry, we shall know the value of water.’”

It is estimated that groundwater makes up an estimated **99 percent of all freshwater** in the world.

Read more: <http://www.ngwa.org/Events-Education/awareness/Pages/default.aspx>

Ten Tips for the March Gardener:

1. Make plans to attend the UCONN Garden Conference on March 18, 2016.
2. Carefully remove winter mulches and leftover debris from planting beds to reduce the presence of overwintering diseases and pests.
3. Get your soil tested through the [UConn Soil Nutrient Analysis Laboratory](http://www.uconn.edu/soil-nutrient-analysis-laboratory) before any major planting or fertilizing venture. Soils sent in before April 1 will avoid the spring rush.
4. Add limestone as recommended and, if possible, incorporate into planting beds but don't fertilize yet. Wait until mid-April.
5. As ground becomes workable, de-thatch the lawn if you find an inch or more of thatch; seed any bare spots. Get the lawn mower serviced, have the blades sharpened.
6. Seeds of annual flowers and vegetables that require 10-12 weeks of growth before transplanting can be sown indoors now.
7. Plant seeds of cold weather vegetables like spinach, peas, lettuce and broccoli as soon as soil is workable.
8. Before new shoots emerge, cut back last year's stalks on perennials and grasses.

9. Horticultural oil treatments for maple bladder gall mite, spider mites on evergreens and scale on shrubs and trees can be applied; check labels for specifics on appropriate weather conditions.

10. Eliminate any hard to mow areas such as acute angles in beds and borders. Combine single trees or shrubs into a large planting connected with ground cover. Put the bird bath in a flower bed or surround it with ground cover.

Events/ Programs/Save the Dates:

March 17, 2016 – UConn Sustainable Landscape Conference (formerly Perennial Plant Conference).

Speakers include Angela Palmer, Lisa Cowan, Irene Brady Palmer, Roy Diblik, Debra Knapke and Richard Harper. Rome Ballroom, UConn Storrs Campus. www.2016slc.uconn.edu

March 18, 2016 – UConn Garden Conference.

The 2016 UConn Garden Conference features an exciting lineup of top national speakers and local experts on various aspects of garden design, maintenance, and plant selection. This all-day conference offers valuable educational opportunities for gardeners of all levels, from the casual gardener to the Advanced Master Gardener. The speakers featured at the conference will include:

- Artist and writer **Andrew Keys**, who will present a talk on *Uncommon Plants for Northeast Gardens: Book Favorites and B-Sides*
- **Ruth Kassinger**, science writer, speaking on *A Garden of Marvels*
- **Lynn Felici-Gallant**, designer and writer, talking about *Slow Containers: Rethinking Annuals-Only Design*
- UConn Plant Diagnostician **Joan Allen**, speaking on *Organic Pest Control in the Vegetable Garden*
- Smith College Assistant Professor **Jesse Bellemare**, talking about *Horticultural Insights into Plant Conservation in the Face of Climate Change*

Program and registration information, including [online registration](#), is available at

www.2016garden.uconn.edu. A pre-registration fee of \$90 per person is due by March 11. The fee is \$100 per person if postmarked after March 11 or for walk-ins. Student registration is \$25 with valid school ID. Registration is limited and nonrefundable. Please make checks payable to the **University of Connecticut and send to Joan Allen, University of Connecticut, Department of Plant Science and Landscape Architecture, 1376 Storrs Road, Unit 4067, Storrs, CT 06269-4067.**

Included with your registration: an information packet, lunch in the Rome Commons dining room, morning and afternoon refreshments, free parking (adjacent to the conference building), and selected autographed books plus a wide array of gardening books at the Garden Conference bookstore. Plants are also available for purchase.

If you have questions about the conference, please contact Joan Allen at 860-486-6740, email: joan.allen@uconn.edu or visit our website at: www.2016garden.uconn.edu.

March 19, 2016 – CT Master Gardener Association Symposium 8 am to 4 pm

Gardening Gone Native Connecticut College, New London. Featuring Art Wolk presenting BULB FORCING FOR BEGINNERS AND THE SERIOUSLY SMITTEN and Dan Jaffe speaking on WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE: NATIVE PLANTS FOR POLLINATORS. Breakout sessions with Russ Cohen, Vincent Simone, Nancy Dubrulle Clemente, Matt Mattus and Larry Weiner. Walk-ins only after March 7th. Go to: www.ctmga.org for more information.

March 19 & 20, 2016 – Nutmeg State Orchid Society Show & Sale

West Hartford Meeting & Conference Center. \$10. www.nutmegorchids.org

April 2, 2016 – Windsor African Violet Society's Annual Judged Show & Sale

Grace Episcopal Church in Windsor. 8:30 am – 2:30 pm. Plants from Lyndon Lyon Greenhouse for sale. Free admission. <http://windsorafricanviolets.org>

April 2 & 3 – CT Cactus & Succulent Society Annual Show & Sale

NVCC in Waterbury. Starts at 10 am. Free admission and free lectures. www.ctcactusclub.com

April 20, 2016 - Urban Agriculture: A way to reduce food desert communities in Connecticut

Urban agriculture may be an alternative for Connecticut and similar states to increase farmland acreage, increase the number of farmers, reduce food desert areas, and engage urban residents, like Hispanics, in food production. Presented by **German Cutz, Ed.D.**, Sustainable Families & Communities Educator, UConn Extension held from 11 AM - 12 PM in ATL 109, UConn Storrs Campus. Informal discussion and refreshments to follow presentation.

Take Climate Action March 19

Changing climate change starts with us, here today. Together, we made history at COP21 in Paris and now is our time to unite once again and be a part of the incredible future we know we can create for our planet. Join us for Earth Hour on **19 March 2016 at 8:30PM, local time**. Together, let's shine a light on climate action!

From 8:30 to 9:30 pm local time in more than 170 countries and territories, households and businesses shut off lights to demand climate change. Even the Eiffel Tower goes dark. Find an event near you. www.earthhour.org

Garden Master Classes (open to all, fee, <http://mastergardener.uconn.edu/>)

Growing Hops in Connecticut Saturday, March 12, 2016 10 am to 12 pm. New London County Extension Center. Deadline for registration: March 4, 2016. Instructor: Dr. Katja Maurer.

Available, Yet Still Underused Shrubs Wednesday, March 16, 2016 from 6 pm to 8 pm. Tolland County Extension Center. Deadline for registration: March 10, 2016. Instructor: Kevin Wilcox.

Coastal Certificate Starts Monday, Mar 21, 2016 from 6 to 6 pm. Connecticut College, New London. 4 Evening classes plus 1 fieldtrip. Deadline for Registration: Mar 14th. Coordinator: Judy Preston

Benefits of Container Gardening Saturday, Apr 2, 2016 from 10 am to 12 pm. New London County Extension Center. Deadline for registration: Mar 25, 2016. Instructor: John Bodin

The Cutting Garden Tuesday, Apr 5, 2016 from 6 to 8 pm. New Haven Extension Center. Deadline for registration: Mar 29th. Instructor: Michael Russo

Winter Tree ID Thursday, Apr 7, 2016 from 10 am to noon. Windham County Extension Center. Deadline for registration: Mar 31st. Instructor: Ralph Yulo

Plants to Dye For Wednesday, Apr 13, 2016 from 12 to 2 pm. Still River Mill, Eastford, CT. Deadline for registration: Apr 6,th. Instructor: Jude Hsiang

2016 Connecticut Horse Symposium

Saturday, March 5th
& Sunday, March 6th

Sponsored by the Department of Animal Science, University of Connecticut, Storrs Campus

Events include:

- Clinic with Ben Wallace on Body Control, Softness and Lateral Movement
- Meg Brauch Clinic on Natural Asymmetry of the Horse and Five Pillars of Straightness Training
- Hands On Horse Science on Sunday! Learn how to conduct a fecal flotation exam, take a horse's vital signs and more!
- Learn how to improve your riding by picking up techniques from the pros!
- UConn Morgan Drill Team
- UConn Polo Match
- Vendor fair
- Bring your own horse and participate in a clinic (pre-registration required)

As Always a Great Value!

\$20 Adults All Day Pass (Saturday only) **\$10** One Clinic **\$5** Age 9-18/ 4-H Leaders/ UConn Students/ 4-H Members/ after 1PM

\$50 Active Participation - Ride or Drive in Clinic (\$70 to use a UConn horse)

9 & under free! Money raised is used to directly support equine research and extension programs at the University of Connecticut! No pre registration needed for spectators!

Sponsors and Vendors welcome
- call or email for more info

Contact: Dr. Jenifer Nadeau
Email: jenifer.nadeau@uconn.edu
Phone: 860-486-4471
Fax: 860-486-4375

horsesymposium.uconn.edu

UConn
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE,
HEALTH AND NATURAL
RESOURCES

Springtime Flowers & Arrangements at UConn Blooms

Chilly, late winter days got you searching for something colorful? Pick up some flowers from UConn Blooms! We carry everything from orchids to fresh cut roses to colorful floral arrangements. Stop by our store located in the Floriculture Building on Rt. 195 to see what we have to offer. Order online at uconnblooms@uconn.edu or by phone at (860) 486 – 6000. **UConn Blooms operates in two locations, inside the UConn Co-op and its main storefront in the Floriculture Building.**

Create a living piece of art to enjoy at home! Join us for our spring flower arranging workshop on March 23rd and leave with a lovely spring or Easter floral design. Please register by March 21st since seating is limited. The fee for the workshop is \$30.00 and it will be held between 5:30 and 6:45 in the Floriculture building where UConn Blooms is housed. Parking is available alongside our greenhouses and at the Towers parking lot.

UConn Blooms is located in the Floriculture Building on Route 195 (1395 Storrs Road) across from the yellow barn. Parking is available alongside our greenhouses in the driveway. We are open from 10:30 to 5:00 Monday through Friday and we will deliver on campus. Call us at 860-486-6000 to order early. Look for us online at <http://web9.uits.uconn.edu/uconnblooms/> or email uconnblooms@uconn.edu.



KNOWLEDGE TO GROW ON!

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Barley helps improve blood sugar levels, reduce appetite

Sweet discovery in leafy greens holds key to gut health

Fermented foods have grown in popularity. Here's why everyone is drinking kefir.

FDA to Test for Glyphosate in Food

Almond joy: Eating just a handful a day boosts diet health, study shows

CLIMATE CORNER

Severe drought no longer caused just by nature

First nationwide survey of climate change education

Window to reduce carbon emissions is small, scientists say

Climate change deteriorates water quality in the Himalayas affecting 40% of world's population

Nearly all US forests threatened by drought, climate change

Climate change takes from the poor, gives to the rich, study finds

WHO KNEW ?

Four billion people affected by severe water scarcity

Consumers have huge environmental impact

Salmon on drugs? These researchers say they found a range of pharmaceuticals in the tissue of fish off the coast of Washington.

Breeding birds use alligators to protect nests from raccoons, opossums

And more on the planet...Hamburg is banning single serve coffee pods from all government buildings because they are wasteful and damaging to our environment.

Consumers have huge environmental impact

UConn PLANT DIAGNOSTIC LAB WEBSITE: www.plant.lab.uconn.edu

UConn SOIL NUTRIENT ANALYSIS LAB WEBSITE: www.soiltest.uconn.edu

UConn EXTENSION WEBSITE: www.extension.uconn.edu

UConn FOOD SAFETY WEBSITE: www.foodsafety.uconn.edu

UConn SUSTAINABLE LIVING WEBSITE: www.sustainableliving.uconn.edu

Verbena 'Meteor Showers'



It's always fun when you get a new plant to add to your palette and Meteor Shower[™] verbena is just such a plant. Rather than your typical verbena this one is the species *bonariensis*. The flowers look like lollipops sticking up over the short foliage! There have been *Verbena bonariensis* plants available before, but at 6 feet tall and flopping, they had limited uses. At about three feet tall, Meteor Shower[™] is great as the “thriller” in combinations or adding height and whimsy to garden beds in sunny locales. (From: <https://www.provenwinners.com/plants/verbena>)

We Need Your Support!

If you do enjoy our efforts to keep you informed about horticultural and College-related items, please consider showing your support by **liking us on Facebook** <https://www.facebook.com/pages/UConn-Home-Garden-Center/136211899745967>, **checking out our weekly blog** www.uconnladybug.wordpress.com, or **subscribing to our printed, 20-page quarterly newsletter for \$12/year (new price starting March 1st) or sign up for free email version.**

Find the subscription form at <http://www.ladybug.uconn.edu/newsletter/index.html>

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