April is for Agave, Andromeda and Acer rubrum
Often called “century plants,” this genus of succulent perennials are native to the tropical regions of the United States and Mexico and are usually grown indoors in the Northeast. Rosettes of fleshy stemless leaves may have serrated edges and sharp, pointed tips. The plant above is *Agave guadalajarana* which has red teeth on leaf edges and beautiful patterning on the leaves.
Acer rubrum - swamp or red maple

Red maples are a native tree that has red flowers that appear before the leaves in March- April. In the fall, leaves turn brilliant red, yellow and orange making it a good specimen tree. They do well in various soil conditions, and in the wild can often be found in wetland areas. These trees are also fast-growing.

Japanese Andromeda
Japanese andromeda, *Pieris japonica*, is one of the first ornamental shrubs to flower in late winter, which makes it valuable for some of the bees that are active already this year.

**Japanese Andromeda**

UConn Extension educators have curated resources to help families, parents with children at home, citizens, and farmers during the COVID-19 outbreak. We have resources for children's activities, staying healthy, and cooking and recipes.

Extension is in the College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources and has more than 100 years' experience strengthening communities in Connecticut and beyond. Our educators are ready to work together with your community.

**COVID-19 Resources from UConn Extension**
Over 200 species of rare ginger relatives were recently acquired and established into cultivation by staff at the Ecology & Evolutionary Biology Biodiversity Education and Research Greenhouses. The plants were made available to UConn by W. John Kress, Distinguished Scientist and Curator Emeritus at the Smithsonian Institution. Shown above: *Burbidgea schizocheila* flower from the collection.
Colletes inaequalis are native solitary ground nesting bees that are active in March in mild winters. Important pollinators of native early blooming plants. Sometimes many females form hundreds of nests in the same area where soils are sandy, which may alarm people, but these bees seldom sting.
Song sparrows can be seen and heard as they sing their songs from the tops of small trees and large shrubs. They have a streaked breast with a brown spot in the center.
Seed Starting

Seed starting is a fun and easy way to get a jump on the gardening season while it is still a bit cold. Peas, radishes, beets, carrots, kale and lettuce are cool season plants which can be direct seeded outside in the garden or container as soon as the soil is dry enough to be worked.

Warm season crops such as tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, squash and melons will not tolerate frost or cold soils. These seeds should be planted inside the warmth of your home or a greenhouse. Check seed packet for timing. See our fact sheet for much more information and how-to.
KNOWLEDGE TO GROW ON- Read our latest Ladybug blogs

Late March Flowers, Birds and Other Things

Want to Make an Environmental Difference in Your Community?

My vote Goes to Lavender

Defenses and Survival Tactics of Insects

Sign up to receive our blogs by e-mail

Gardening Tips for April

Cut ornamental grasses to a height of 6 inches before new growth appears

Prune butterfly bushes (Buddleia) to a height of 8-12 inches

Turn and aerate compost piles

Get soil tests done for lawns and gardens

Prune rose bushes before bud break

Start seeds indoors for plants that will be set outside at the end of May

For a more extensive list of tips visit Gardening Tips for April
Have Your Soil Tested for Macro- & Micro Nutrients

Send your soil sample in for testing now. For details on submitting a sample, go to UConn Soil and Nutrient Laboratory.

Photo by dmp, UConn

UConn Soil Nutrient Analysis Laboratory

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

COVID-19 Resources from UConn Extension

UConn Extension

UConn Food Safety

UConn Home & Garden Education Center

UConn Master Gardener Program

UConn Garden Master Classes - All open to the public
Events

**Sessions Woods Wildlife Preserve** in Burlington, CT. Take a hike on your own.

**CT DEEP** Fishing season opened early this year to encourage social distancing and avoid opening day crowds.

**Connecticut walking trails**- consider walking on some of our trails here in Connecticut. Keep the recommended distance away from other hikers and stay safe.
Dig for Victory - Dig for Victory 2020 is a non-profit organization bringing people together to focus on something we can control (maybe!) – our gardens.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Salt has an interesting history. Read article in link below for interesting facts about this mineral.

CLIMATE CORNER

Where was the snow this winter? A pattern of lower than normal pressure over the Arctic helped keep the cold Arctic air in the polar region and we had a warmer than normal winter

WHO KNEW?

Scientists have found that insects have an adverse effect to caffeine that may disrupt the behavior and growth of some insects, including mosquito larvae especially when used with other compounds.
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 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.


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