Planting Bulbs

Tis' the season to plant bulbs! This should be the hot topic for Mississippi gardeners at this time of year. Selecting bulbs in the garden center is much like choosing onions or garlic in the grocery store. Bulbs should be firm and free of blemishes, holes, slashes, etc. Many types of bulbs are readily available in garden centers including tulips, daffodils, hyacinths, crocus and iris. Remember, large bulbs produce large flowers.

Bulbs are most attractive when planted in large groups where the intensity of color can be maximized. Planting the bulbs at the same depth will help insure uniform growth and flowering. Take note that planting depth may be different for different bulb types. For example, tulips are generally planted at about 5 inches or 2.5 times the bulb width. Crocus is planted at 2 to 3 inches deep.

Bulbs don't have to be fed when planted in fertile soil, but incorporation of 3 pounds of 5-10-10 per 100 square feet is a good rule of thumb. When foliage appears in the spring an additional pound or two of 5-10-10 is appropriate.

In the fall, you can plant bulbs in containers. This gives mobility to your bulb garden and gives you the flexibility to move them to wherever the action is. Purchase enough bulbs so that once your landscape space is planted you will have a dozen or so of each type to plant in patio containers. Plant at the same depth as in the landscape and consider using controlled release fertilizers.
## Events for November 2019

### Lamar County Events

6 Pine Belt Master Gardener Meeting— 10:00 a.m. Lamar County Extension Office

7 Pine Belt Beekeepers Meeting— 7:00 p.m. Lamar County Extension Office

### Hancock County Events

6 Wildflowers— 2:00 p.m. Pass Christian Library. Wildflowers are a great low maintenance way to add color to the landscape. This program will include information on how to establish wildflower plantings as well as information on variety selection and care of wildflowers for the home landscape. Presenter is Dr. Christian Stephenson, Hancock County Extension Agent

9 Selecting and Caring for Landscape Trees—10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m. Pine Hills Nursery 7434 Cuevas Rd, Pass Christian. Learn how to select trees for your south MS landscape including planting and care for new trees, managing common insect and disease pests, and removing invasive plants from the landscape. Presented by Dr. Christian Stephenson and Tim Ray, Hancock and Harrison Co. Extension Agents.

12 Getting the Most Out of Your Garden Tools—2:00 p.m. Bay St. Louis Public Library. This program will include information on the variety of garden tools available, how to select the best tools for the home gardener, and how to ensure they last by good maintenance. A demonstration on tool sharpening will be included.

13 Hancock County Master Gardener Meeting— 1:30 p.m. Hancock County Extension Office.

### Harrison County Events

6 Hancock/Harrison Forestry and Wildlife Association monthly meeting— 11:00 a.m. until Noon. Sherry’s Country Kitchen located at 20180 Highway 53 in Gulfport, MS. All Hancock/Harrison CFWA members are welcome to attend.

9 Selecting and Caring for Landscape Trees—10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m. Pine Hills Nursery 7434 Cuevas Rd, Pass Christian. Learn how to select trees for your south MS landscape including planting and care for new trees, managing common insect and disease pests, and removing invasive plants from the landscape. Presented by Dr. Christian Stephenson and Tim Ray, Hancock and Harrison Co. Extension Agents.

14 Monarchs, Milkweed, and other Pollinator Plants— The Hancock/Harrison County Forestry & Wildlife Association will host a workshop on the Monarch Butterfly, Lyman Community Center located at 13742 Highway 49 N in Gulfport. 5:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m. Guest speakers will be Patricia (Pat) Drackett, Director of the Crosby Arboretum, and Amy Nichols. Dinner is free for CFWA members, and $10 for non-members. Preregistration is required by November 11th by calling the Harrison County Extension Office at (228) 865-4227 or emailing Tim Ray at tim.ray@msstate.edu.

18 67th Annual Mississippi Gulf Coast Camellia Show – Sponsored by the Mississippi Gulf Coast Camellia Society, Lyman Community Center located at 13742 Highway 49 N in Gulfport, 1 PM – 4 PM. Free to the public, raffles, specialty camellias for sale.

### Jackson County Events

11 Jackson County Master Gardeners Monthly Meeting—10 am at USM marine Education Center in Ocean Springs. Dr. Christian Stephenson will present a program on herbicides and pesticides. Public welcome to attend.

12 Jackson/George County Cattlemen’s Association Meeting — 6-8 pm at East Central Storm Shelter. Meeting sponsored by Jackson County Farm Bureau Federation.

### Pearl River County Events

1 Pearl River County Master Gardener Tour/Meeting—12:30 p.m. at the home of Webb Hart followed by lunch at Hide-a-way Lake Lodge.

9 Pearl River County Master Gardener Garden Clinic —8:30 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Paul Bounds Garden Center in Picayune

18 National Diabetes Month— 11:00 a.m. at the Senior Center of South Pearl River County. Dawn Vosbein, Pearl River County Extension Agent, is the presenter for this program.
Garden Calendar: November

Plant
- Plant shrubs and trees after soil cools.
- Plant summer blooming perennials: Iris, Daylily, and Daisies. Plant winter and spring annuals: Pansy, Pinks, Flowering Cabbage, and Kale.
- Root Rose cuttings.

Water
- Water all newly planted trees and plants regularly.

Prune
- Remove dead limbs and prune evergreen shrubs.
- Cut off tops of brown perennials, leave roots in the soil.

Do Not Prune
- Do not prune spring flowering shrubs such as Azaleas, Hydrangeas, Mock Orange, Spirea, and Flowering Quince because flower buds are already forming.
- Delay pruning of most trees and shrubs until February since any new growth stimulated by pruning may be killed by a sudden freeze.

Miscellaneous
- Put leaves and spent annuals into compost bin.
- Add mulch to your garden and all ornamental beds for winter protection.
- Repair and sharpen garden tools, store with light coat of oil to prevent rusting.
- Build bird feeders and houses.

In Bloom
Wisteria in the Landscape – Friend or Foe?

There’s not a prettier sight than seeing those long racemes hanging down with purple, violet, or white showy flowers during the spring, cascading down vines wrapped around trees, fences, or other obstacles. Wisteria is a beautiful plant still grown extensively as an ornamental. But it is also very invasive and listed as a Mississippi Invasive which includes Con-gongrass, Chinese privet, Torpedograss and many others.

The problem with wisteria lies in its growth habit. Once established, wisteria can be difficult to eradicate. By climbing into the canopy of trees or plants, it can shade them out, impairing those plants from effectively growing. Over time, wisteria will climb and twine around other plants, eventually shading and girdling native plants. Wisteria can be a problem in fence rows, forests, and landscapes, killing or disfiguring desirable trees. Wisteria forms dense thickets, replacing the surrounding vegetation. Although these thickets may provide habitat for certain wildlife, they are a difficult barrier for human and animal activity. Wisterias are high-climbing vines reaching upward of 70 to 80 feet. In addition, wisteria leaves, fruit, and seeds are toxic.

There are two species of wisteria that have escaped in the eastern United States: Chinese wisteria and Japanese wisteria. According to recent genetic analysis, these two species have produced fertile hybrids throughout the southeastern United States. Therefore, differentiation between the two species and the hybrid can be difficult. Both species are perennial, deciduous vines native to Asia. Chinese wisteria is native to China, while Japanese wisteria is native to Japan. Wisteria species and hybrids are not regulated in the United States or the Midsouth.

Since characteristics are similar, control methods are the same for Chinese, Japanese, and hybrid wisterias. Using products containing Glyphosate and Triclopyr work best for homeowners using the frill or cut stump method. Frill (also known as hack and squirt) requires a hatchet, machete, or ax to create an opening in the bark every 2 inches around the woody stem; the herbicide is applied in these openings. Cut stump applications are made after severing the main stem. Apply herbicide to the remaining stump just inside the bark to prevent re-sprouting. Foliar applications are effective when using a nonionic surfactant but be aware of surrounding foliage of wanted plant species. Please read and follow all label directions!

When allowed to grow, wisteria can take over native plants

Chinese Wisteria

Japanese Wisteria
Fall Lawn Care

Even though the weather is now a little cooler, and the lawn may not need to be mowed as often, there are still issues of managing your turfgrass. With the extended summer temperatures, pre-emergence applications may be applied a little later than normal, and a little later is typically better than never. Now is the time to begin winter, and to some degree spring, weed management. A pre-emergent herbicide, before the winter weeds emerge, is the first line of defense to keep your lawn free of the unattractive winter weeds applied. These same chemicals can be applied again in late winter to fight summer weeds. This time of year is also a good time to give your in-ground irrigation system a good thorough inspection and maybe even a break from the long, dry period we are coming out of since the water demands of most turfgrasses is lessened this time of year during winter dormancy. Please note that this doesn’t mean completely neglect to water at all, as dormant turfgrass does still need some water to maintain itself as most grasses in our region may not go fully dormant. Check your irrigation system for leaky sprinklers/fittings/pipes as well as properly adjust your sprinkler heads so they irrigate the intended area. This can help reduce your water or electric bill and help conserve a precious resource.

Some of the more common pre-emergence herbicides include pendimethalin (ScottsHalts), dithiopyr (Hi-Yield Weed Stopper and Sta-green Crab Ex), and benefin plus trifluralin (Green Light Crabgrass Pre-venter, Hi-Yield Crabgrass Preventer) provide good control of annual bluegrass, common chickweed, henbit, and many other winter annuals prior to their emergence. Isoxaben (Green Light Portrait) provides good control of winter annual broadleaves. Isoxaben has no activity on germinating grasses so consider combining it with one of previously mentioned herbicides for a broad-spectrum, pre-emergence weed control program. Pre-emergence herbicides should be applied mid-to-late October and reapplied by late February. Water the herbicides into the lawn or apply just prior to rainfall. Do not use the weed and feed combinations because your turf does not need any fertilizer at this time. Atrazine may be applied to St. Augustinegrass, centipede, and zoysiagrass for broad-spectrum winter weed control from late October through December. It can kill emerged winter broadleaves and grasses and is very effective on annual bluegrass, clover, and lawn burweed.
Caring for Houseplants

Houseplants add color to our homes and can improve air quality. Usually plants in the home have fewer problems than those in the landscape, but infestations of insects or pathogens as well as environmental conditions may cause the plants to be unhealthy or less attractive.

One of the major causes of problems in houseplants is the level of watering. Underwatering is frequently first seen as yellowing of the leaves and browning around the leaf edges. The air inside our homes tends to be much lower in humidity than it is outside. This may cause plants to lose water by transpiration much quicker than expected. Additionally, being placed near an air vent can cause leaves to desiccate. Overwatering is another frequent problem and can cause leaves to wilt. The soil mix for overwatered plants will often have a sour smell and the root system may be dark and off color. To avoid problems with over or underwatering, stick your finger into the soil to a depth of about two inches. If you feel moisture, do not water the plant.

Insect pests of houseplants include aphids, whiteflies, scale, and mealybugs. These insects often hide on the underside of leaves allowing them to escape notice until populations are high. Take care when purchasing new plants or bringing plants in from outdoors as you may be carrying these insects into the house. Infestations of insects can harm the appearance of plants as well as transmit plant diseases. Occasionally, houseplants will develop sooty mold due to insect infestations. Sooty mold is caused by a fungus and appears as a black coating on leaves, and in severe cases stems of plants. This mold is feeding on the “honeydew” produced by sap feeding insects. Most insect pests of houseplants can be removed by forcefully washing leaves of the plant with water. Insecticidal soap and Neem oil, which are both widely available in garden stores, are also effective in eliminating most pest problems.

Disease problems are less common in houseplants as most bacterial or fungal diseases require periods of high humidity in order to infect the plant. The lower humidity inside houses prevents this from occurring in most cases. However, as with insect pests, care should be taken not to bring infected plants into the house as these can serve as a source of pathogens to infect other plants. Disease in houseplants is usually first observed as yellow, brown, or black spots on the leaves. The shape of these spots varies with the particular organism causing the disease. Grayish-white powdery material on leaves and stems is a sign the plant is infected with powdery mildew. Houseplants may also occasionally develop root-rot diseases which are initially observed as wilting or a lesion near the base of the stem.

Houseplant diseases are best managed preventatively. Care should be taken to not overwater the plant, and when watering do not allow the foliage to remain wet for long periods of time as this promotes disease development. Plants should also be spaced to allow for good air circulation. Should disease symptoms appear, the affected foliage can be pruned so that it does not serve as a source for more disease. Additionally, once the disease is diagnosed, fungicides or bactericides can be applied if needed.
Grow Microgreens Indoors

Microgreens are one way to bring the garden indoors throughout the cooler months. They are relatively easy to grow inside under lights or near a window. Microgreens can be used in a variety of ways, including in salads, sandwiches, and smoothies. Certain microgreens can even have higher nutrient contents compared to their full-grown counterparts. Microgreens differ from sprouts since only the stems and leaves are harvested while sprouts are entire seedlings including the root. You can grow microgreens from seed of just about any green you would grow to full size. Common varieties include radishes, kale, mustard, cabbage, arugula and broccoli. Radish, arugula, and mustard microgreens will have a spicier taste compared to kale, broccoli, and cabbage.

The easiest way for the home gardener to grow microgreens is to grow them in a peat-based potting mix. They can be grown in a variety of containers, but it may be in your best interest to grow them in a container with holes that can be placed in a pan and watered from the bottom. Microgreens can mold easily, especially indoors where there may not be good air circulation. Keeping water off the leaves through bottom watering can help to decrease the chance of disease issues.

When you’re ready to plant, sprinkle seeds evenly onto moist potting mix. The amount of seed you use will vary depending on what type of greens you are growing and what growth stage you want to harvest. Varieties harvested at more immature stages can be sown thickly since they will not need as much space between seeds to grow. You may consider ordering custom microgreen seed mixes from a reliable seed source. These mixes are comprised of uniform varieties that will germinate and be ready for harvest at the same time. Once seeds are sown, cover the container with a plastic dome or paper towel to retain humidity until germination occurs. It is easy to overwater microgreens as they grow. Remember that they do not have fully developed root systems and will therefore not require as much water as you may think. Put no more than an inch of water into the bottom pan.

Water your microgreens ahead of time before harvesting so they are not wilted. Harvest by grabbing a bunch and cutting them with a sharp, clean pair of scissors. Plant successively to have a constant supply of microgreens and experiment with different varieties to see what grows and tastes best for you. For more information on growing microgreens, reference Extension Publication 2857: Growing Microgreens for the Mississippi Gardener.
Fall Armyworms are extremely damaging insect pests of Mississippi hayfields and, pastures and in Bermuda turfgrass settings. These caterpillars feed on lush, tender grass/plant leaves, primarily Bermuda grass, crabgrass, and sorghum/sudan type grasses in our area. Producers and landowners should look for fall armyworms throughout the growing season and to be ready to treat quickly when damaging infestations occur.

Fall armyworms are unpredictable pests. Some years, high populations do not occur until early fall. Other years, damaging infestations appear as early as June. I have observed army worms from June – December at various times over the past few years in South Mississippi.

Fall armyworm caterpillars vary in color depending on their stage of development and diet. Most are green or tan, but some can be dark brown to almost black, especially late in the year when numbers are high. The body is punctuated with dark spots, and mature caterpillars are about 1 1/2 inch long. Fall armyworm moths are about three-fourths of an inch long when resting with their wings folded. The forewings are gray to dark brown, but the underwings are white. You will not often see the moths unless you go out at night with a spotlight to look for them or happen to flush one from its daytime resting place.

Fall armyworm moths lay their eggs in clusters, eggs hatch in 2–5 days, and the newly emerged larvae scatter out and begin feeding. They usually begin by feeding on the underside of the leaf blade. Their feeding habits result in tiny, white “windowpanes” in the leaf blades or a white frizzing of the leaf tips. Experienced producers watch for this white frosting or frizzing of the leaf tips as an early warning of fall armyworm infestation.

Caterpillars take about 14 days to complete their larval development, and it takes about a month to complete a generation. About 80 percent of total leaf consumption occurs in the last 2–3 days of the caterpillar stage. This is why fall armyworm damage can occur so quickly; grass that looked fine Friday morning can be nothing but stems by Monday afternoon.

There are several options for effective management of fall army worms. To find what best suits your situation please check out the following MSU Extension Publications: Fall Armyworms in Hayfields and Pastures; p2331, Control Insect Pests in and around the Home Lawn; p1858. You may also contact your local MSU Extension Office to discuss treatment options with your agent.