



Official Publication

Master Gardener Thymes

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Spectacular Spring!

So many trees and plants are blooming profusely this year! I am loving seeing all the color return to our landscape, which makes me excited for what is to come as we move entirely into warmer weather. Some say we can safely plant annuals, tomatoes, peppers, etc. after Mother's Day, but I know some who have already done this planting (and a few have suffered loss). I go by soil temperature, not air temperature, for summer planting. Soil should be consistently 50+ degrees. I'm trying to be patient...I'm ready to grow my tomatoes, peppers, and cucumbers!



Are you working on 2025 continuing education hours? Check out the calendar at the end of this newsletter for a lot of learning opportunities.

NETMGA MAY BOARD MEETING

The next NETMGA Board meeting will be on **May 5**, 6:30pm; Rocky Mount State Historic Site, 200 Hyder Hill Rd, Piney Flats, TN

NETMGA JUNE MEMBERSHIP MEETING

June 9, 5:00pm at Midfield Lavender Farm, 1871 Goodman Loop, Bulls Gap, TN. Details on page 5 of this newsletter.

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- Master Gardener Intern Class Update
- April Member Meeting/Program Recap
- Mark Your Calendar!
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NETMGA Master Gardener Intern Class of 2025

- - from Susie Morrison

Congratulations are in order for our intern class of 2025. We have wrapped up our classes and our sixteen interns are ready and raring to go to join us in accomplishing our project goals. We went through twelve weeks of intensive learning, enthusiastic participation, lots of food (yum), and new friends. All interns have expressed interest in several projects and now it is the members turn to welcome them into our fold and encourage them to continue on with us. Hopefully you can meet all at our upcoming June event. Thanks to the many members who worked tirelessly every week to provide back up for our class and also to those who helped out on occasion and brought food. You can't believe all the good food!

NETMGA April Membership Meeting Recap

Propagation was Fun!!

Sibley Farms won Tri-Cities Best Plant Store on March 28, 2025. On April 7, Wendy Sibley and Jess Strong from Sibley Farms LLC presented an interesting program for our Master Gardeners. Wendy Sibley is the co-owner and daily operations manager of Sibley Farms LLC in Blountville TN. Wendy has over 25 years of retail experience and a lifetime of gardening knowledge. She enjoys helping gardeners achieve success with their plant selections from garden vegetables to trees and shrubs.

The program began with a discussion on soils, and which were best to propagate plants. Then moving on to starting seeds, and propagating perennials. Wendy said she tries several methods of propagating plants to see which works the best. Cuttings can be started by placing them in water or trying rooting hormone. Perennials that do best with layering are Hydrangea, or Roses. Mound layering includes spirea and asters.

Other propagating ideas include: 1) Be sure to use the soil that works best for the plant; 2) Be sure to sanitize tools between plants; 3) If your plant is root bound, cut off the lower part of the plant (a slice) before repotting, 4) For fibrous roots be sure to pull/use a piece of the root that is attached to the soil, 5) Bird Tape is great to keep birds away from fruits.

What is Meadowscaping?

The process of envisioning and cultivating a naturalistic planting to change our lives, yards, and worlds for the better.

Meadowscaping is more than planting a seed or planning a garden – it transforms ordinary spaces into a celebration of biodiversity, a habitat for birds and insects, and a home for native plants, beauty, and harmony. Learn more about how you can transform your yard and join the Meadowscaping movement:

<https://www.americanmeadows.com/content/resources/meadowscaping>

Mark Your Calendar!

May Herb Saplings Meeting

May 1, 7 pm at Exchange Place. Topic: Herbal First Aid with Olivia Reed, 2019 graduate of Herbalachia's Herbalist Lifestyle Program and 2025 graduate of Herbalachia's Medical Herbalism Program. Bring an herb snack to share if you have time.

SAPS May Program

Horticulturist Scott Beuerlein, Manager of Botanical Garden Outreach at the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden, will present "If Some is Good, More is Better, Plant Diversity Forever!" on Thursday, **May 15**, at 7 p.m. at BrightRidge Auditorium, 2600 Boones Creek Rd (Hwy 354) in Johnson City. Sponsored by Southern Appalachian Plant Society (SAPS) the program is free and the public is invited. For more information phone 423-348-6572 or email sapsnews@gmail.com, <http://saps.us/>.



A diversity of plants strengthens and enriches our gardens, and it provides us an insurance policy against all the variables that nature can throw at us now and into the future. In addition, learning a broader palette of plants gives us more tools for planting difficult and/or niche sites. Diverse landscapes are balanced ecosystems that create more and better habitat for wildlife, even in urban situations. This talk will present a wide range of plant ideas and provide many suggestions on how to add more diversity, and therefore more beauty and balance, to your landscape.

Scott Beuerlein is the Manager of Botanical Garden Outreach at the Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden where he runs the plant trials and educational programs, including the CZBG's popular Excellence in Horticulture Symposium Series. This series offers three yearly programs which are among the nation's preeminent single day symposiums, featuring a veritable who's who of top world horticultural speakers.

Scott is also an award-winning garden writer and horticultural speaker. He has published hundreds of articles and columns in gardening and green industry publications. He currently pens two columns in each issue of Horticulture Magazine and is a partner in the long running and highly respected Garden Rant blogsite. A sought-after national speaker with a reputation for being as entertaining as he is informative talking before groups of 12 to 1,200, Scott's audiences have described him as "highly knowledgeable, profound, wacky, irreverent, thought-provoking, great storyteller, funny, and totally honest."

Scott earned a B.A. in Communication Arts from Xavier University. He is an ONLA Certified Landscape Technician and an ISA Certified Arborist. Learn more at www.scottbeuerlein.com.

Tipton Haynes State Historic Site Gala

Tipton-Haynes is offering its first ever Gala to benefit the site and its continuing mission of preserving the history of our site and educating the public on the value and importance of its inhabitants. We will also celebrate the completion of the new visitor center. This Capital Project is coming to a close and it sure has made a difference at the site.

The Gala will be **May 23rd** at 6pm with tours of the site to follow. The grounds are open to the public to enjoy before or after dinner. The menu is sponsored by the Johnson City Texas Roadhouse with an 8oz grilled Chicken breast or an 8oz Sirloin Steak as the proteins, Green Bean Sorbet, Roasted Potatoes, Salad, and Dessert to finish off. Reservations are required for this as food will be ordered per plating. The Price of the Gala Tickets is \$50.00 per person and to reserve a ticket, contact the site with information for the ticket or purchase online at <https://square.link/u/HoqYB5Ut>. Information needed is Name, Email, and Protein type. Contact through tiptonhaynes@outlook.com or 423-926-3631. So come out and join us for the completion of this project and the continuation of our mission.

Hope to see everyone out to see all we have to offer.

Matthew Frye

Co-Director

Tipton-Haynes Historical Association Inc.



June Herb Saplings Meeting

June 5, 6 pm at Exchange Place. Topic: Marty Silver, Park Ranger at Warriors' Path State Park, will lead us on a Tree Walk at the living history farm, sharing ID tips, natural history and uses of our native trees. Bring an herb snack to share if you have time.

June NETMGA Membership Meeting/Program

Based on a request made in the survey submitted at our meeting last year, we will have a Field Trip to Midfield Lavender Farm - **June 9, 2025 (NOTE NOT THE FIRST MONDAY)**. Midfield Lavender Farm is located at 1871 Goodman Loop, Bulls Gap, TN 37711. You can get more information at their website - <https://midfieldfarm.com/>.

Entrance fee is \$8 per person, cash only. This is the 20% discount due for groups,

We are to arrive at 5 p.m. for a two-hour event. Jeannie, from Midfield Gardens, suggested that we carpool due to limited parking. There is a circle drive so if you have mobility issues you can be dropped off at the house or park in the handicap parking.

Please call your friends and enjoy a ride to East Greene County together. Another suggestion – “We recommend comfortable shoes, hats and sunscreen.”

Jeannie, our hostess at Midfield Farm will give a presentation, answer all your lavender questions, and then we can use the porch for our meeting and socializing. You can cut bundles while at Midfield for \$5 per bundle. Lavender plants (hard to find varieties!) and other items will be available for sale.

Lavender lemonade will be available for our meeting. Lemonade will be provided by Midfield Lavendar Farm, and we will also provide light snacks and water.

A Signup Genie will be sent out soon, just to be sure Jeannie knows how many folks to expect.

If you have any questions, please call Brenda McKinnis, 423-946-2769.

Ask-A-Master Gardener

The writers for the Ask-A-Master Garden newspaper column have added 3 new writers. Nancy Weaver, Susie Morrison, and Susanna Barry. They have all written their first article and have done a wonderful job! Check out the NETMGA Ask-A-Master Gardener tab for articles on all types of gardening questions - <https://www.netmga.net/ask-a-master-gardener/> OR see articles written by the new writers:

Susie Morrison – Gardening for Small Spaces - <https://www.netmga.net/ask-a-master-gardener/gardening-general-info/>

Nany Weaver – The Beauty and Benefits of Including Native Plants in Your Garden <https://www.netmga.net/ask-a-master-gardener/native-plants/>

Susanna Barry – Fragrant Flowering Spring Shrubs - <https://www.netmga.net/ask-a-master-gardener/trees-shrubs/>

“Featured Project” – Church Hill Senior Center Garden

The Church Hill Senior Center Garden is located on Main Street in Church Hill, right next to the police station. It is a raised bed vegetable, herb, small fruit, and native perennial garden. All of the harvested produce is donated back to the community – the lunch program at the Senior Center, the food pantry run by Of One Accord Ministry, and Meals on Wheels.

The garden is now in its 16th growing season. The diverse plantings in the garden provide an area of interest for all gardeners. Besides over 35 varieties of vegetables grown each year, there are also berries, native perennials, annuals for pollinator attraction, and both annual and perennial herbs. We are slowly adding native trees and shrubs to the surrounding area to both beautify and educate the public on the advantage of native plants. We also make all our compost on site. This is a no pesticide use garden, with companion planting, beneficial insects, row covers and mechanical control providing insect control. A series of garden rooms constructed around the beds have helped to curtail the hungry deer population. We are actively seeking new gardeners to help with our mission of growing for the community.



If the number of volunteers increase, we hope to continue our educational programs for the youth of the community. In the past, scouting groups, library reading groups, and FFA students have all benefitted from programs at the garden. We are a TN Promise sanctioned project where high school students can receive their community service volunteer hours.



We currently work at the garden on Monday mornings. We are only a short drive from Kingsport. If you would like to become part of the tradition that serves the elderly and those in need in the community, please contact us at chscgarden@yahoo.com

“Featured Project” Native Plant Garden-Nature Center at Steele Creek Park

The Native Plant Garden at The Nature Center at Steele Creek Park, in Bristol Tennessee, was begun in 2019 to accompany a native plants exhibit contained within the Nature Center itself. While there are several garden projects around The Nature Center that require significant volunteer work, our primary efforts this year will be on enhancing and maintaining our educational Native Plants Garden focused exclusively on the native plants of our region.



The roughly 6,500 square foot Native Plants Garden was established in an overgrown area next to The Nature Center. Beginning in 2019 we cleared as many of the undesirable plants as possible and documented over forty native plant species already existing in the garden area. Since then, we have added many new species, created paths through the garden area, and begun adding plant labels identifying representative specimens of most of the native species. We now have over 100 species documented in the garden. We work closely with the Nature Center naturalists to identify and prioritize other species to be added.



Representative plants are labelled with attractive signs containing their common and scientific names, and printed trifold guides for garden visitors are being developed. Our plan is to have brochures for all seasons of the year, as well as ones covering special topics such as traditional uses of native plants. We have recently added an educational display case outdoors next to the Native Plants Garden.



In the future we will be establishing a Native Ferns Garden to complement the Native Plants Garden on the other side of the building. In addition to cleaning out the existing unwanted vegetation and preparing new beds for the plants, we'll be identifying species to be added, sourcing and planting the ferns, and developing educational materials for the garden.

This ongoing project offers volunteers the opportunity to help with further planning, development, and maintenance of the garden in the coming years. Volunteers are needed to help acquire and plant new specimens, as well as to maintain control of the inevitable re-emergence of undesired plants (i.e. weeding!). We also need help with maintaining the paths and performing other tasks. Other important roles for volunteers are to help maintain our plant database, to compile educational information for all the species

exhibited, and to assist in the development of the printed plant guides. In addition, information in the educational display case will be maintained and updated by volunteers.



The Nature Center at Steele Creek Park has many wonderful exhibits, all focused on the flora and fauna of the region. An extensive herbarium collection, started several years ago by Friends of Steele Creek volunteers, is housed at The Nature Center and the Explorers' Library, which contains one of the largest collections of regional natural history books and journals within a 100-mile radius, is available to volunteers and members. Steele Creek Park also hosts a certified Native Trees Arboretum, a Monarch Watch Waystation Garden, and an educational apiary.

The staff does extensive programming, both on-site as well as outreach, especially in the area schools. Jeremy Stout, the full-time Nature Center Naturalist (and City of Bristol Tennessee arborist) has done presentations on Native Plants in the Landscape for Northeast Tennessee Master Gardener classes.

For more information about The Nature Center and Steele Creek Park visit the Friends of Steele Creek Nature Center and Park website: www.friendsofstelecreek.org or Facebook page: [@FriendsOfSteeleCreekPark](https://www.facebook.com/FriendsOfSteeleCreekPark). If you think you'd like to become a gardens volunteer, contact Project Leader Robin Feierabend at mail@friendsofstelecreek.org or (423) 764-3336.

Horticultural information and resources for Tennessee gardeners

<https://uthort.tennessee.edu>

Projects List

Boundless Playground at Warriors' Path State Park Kingsport
Gwyn Duncan 423-239-0460 geduncan@charter.net

Branch House Family Center Blountville
Pat Mazurkiewicz 423-323-1644
robmazur@chartertn.net

Carver Peace Gardens Johnson City
Penny Rutledge 423-612-4785
pennyrutledge2@gmail.com
Brenda McKinnis 423-946-2769 jbmckinnis4@gmail.com

Church Hill Senior Citizens Center Garden
Marcia Vandermause chscgarden@yahoo.com

Discovery Garden at Gray Fossil Museum
John Hitchcock 423-525-8587 jghitchcock25@gmail.com

Exchange Place Living History Farm Kingsport
Earl Hockin 423-817-5473 ehockin@yahoo.com

Harvest of Hope Community Garden Kingsport
Dave Rogers 423-502-2459 dave_carla@chartertn.net

Johnson City Hospitals Johnson City
Barbara Voigt 423-467-2013 voigt7b@comcast.net

Old Deery Inn Blountville
Kate O'Lenic ebkateo@gmail.com

Rocky Mount Living History Site Piney Flats
Don Davis home 423-854-0152, cell 423-943-2392
donfdavis@aol.com

Steele Creek Park Bristol, TN
Robin Feirabend 423-764-3336 Feierabe@ETSU.edu

Sycamore Shoals State Historic Site Elizabethton
Sarah Cox 423-213-9024 mrs.sarahecox@gmail.com

Tipton Haynes Historic Site Johnson City
Vern Maddux 423-440-9236
vjornm@gmail.com
Betts Leach 423-571-8662 BettsL@aol.com

Unicoi County Hospital Erwin-Paused due to Flood
Gina Clark 423-956-2426 gclarkx4@gmail.com

NETMGA Yearly Projects List:

Farm Expo
Wes Walker 804-824-5308 wes.walker@me.com

Kingsport MeadowView Home Show
Paula Peralta 916-580-7256 pjblessed1@gmail.com

Bristol PepperFest
Wes Walker 804-824-5308 wes.walker@me.com

Kingsport Tomato Festival-TBD

**Master Gardeners:
Report your hours each month!!**



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Feed the birds!



MAY and JUNE 2025 Calendar of Events

Covid-19 occasionally affects events. Please note that some programs, events and tours may require masks for participants. Before going you might want to confirm that event has not been cancelled or postponed.

CHECK THE SITES BELOW MONTHLY FOR CLASSES, SEMINARS, WORKSHOPS:

Monday Musings with Melody Rose, Greene County TN Extension

Information and Registration: <https://sites.google.com/utk.edu/mondaymusings/home>

Knoxville Botanical Garden and Arboretum Classes/Workshops: [Learn — Knoxville Botanical Gardens \(knoxgarden.org\)](https://www.knoxgarden.org/learn)

North Carolina Arboretum Classes Schedule:

<https://www.ncarboretum.org/education-programs/adult-education-classes/>

Asheville Botanical Gardens: [ashevillebotanicalgarden.org](https://www.ashevillebotanicalgarden.org)

Tennessee Native Plant Society Seminars: <https://www.tnps.org/tnps-speakers/>

Appalachian Highlands Chapter of Wild Ones:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/783213076410695/about>

Tennessee Valley Chapter of Wild Ones/Programs and Events:

<https://tnvalleywildones.org/programs-events/public-programs/>

Wild Ones Webinars: <https://wildones.org/webinars/>

Orchid Society of East Tennessee meets first Sunday of every other month (Feb. through December), 2 pm Gray Community Center.

<https://www.facebook.com/OrchidSocietyOfEastTennessee/>

MAY 1 Herb Saplings Meeting

7 pm at Exchange Place in Kingsport. Topic: Herbal First Aid with Olivia Reed. Bring an herbal snack to share if you have time. For more info, email sapsnews@gmail.com

MAY 2 2025 Garlic Mustard Pull at Roan Mountain State Park

9:30am-1:00pm. Information: [Event Details — Tennessee State Parks](#)

MAY 5 NETMGA Board Meeting

6:30pm at Rocky Mount State Historic Site

- MAY 10 Woolly Days: Heritage Celebration at Rocky Mount State Historic Site
10:00am. A captivating day that blends colonial heritage with the beauty of our historic gardens. This family-friendly celebration offers an immersive experience where history, horticulture, and community fun come together for a memorable day out. Information: [Woolly Days 2025: Historic Spring Event Near Johnson City & Bristol, TN — Rocky Mount State Historic Site](#)
- MAY 10 Shady Oaks Garden Club Plant Sale
9:00am-1:00pm. Fischman Gallery, 133 N Commerce St., Johnson City. [Shady Oaks Garden Club – Johnson City, TN](#)
- MAY 15 May SAPS Meeting
7:00pm. Horticulturist Scott Beuerlein, Manager of Botanical Garden Outreach at the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden, will present "If Some is Good, More is Better, Plant Diversity Forever!". At BrightRidge Auditorium, 2600 Boones Creek Rd (Hwy 354) in Johnson City. See details on page 3 of this newsletter.
- MAY 17 Living Fences/Screens
10:30am. Evergreen of Johnson City. Registration is highly recommended. Register: [Living Fences/Screens - Evergreen of Johnson City, TN](#) or call 423-282-3431.
- MAY 23 Birding by Ear at Warriors' Path State Park
7:30-8:30am. Cost: \$5. For information: [Event Details — Tennessee State Parks](#)
- MAY 23 Tipton-Haynes State Historic Site Gala
6:00pm, with tours of the site to follow dinner. Registration and protein selection required; deadline May 14. See additional information on page 4 of this newsletter.
- MAY 24 Growing Flowers in Containers
10:30am. Evergreen of Johnson City. Registration is highly recommended. Register: [Growing Flowers in Containers - Evergreen of Johnson City, TN](#) or call 423-282-3431.
- MAY 31 All About Hydrangeas
10:30am. Evergreen of Johnson City. Registration is highly recommended. Register: [All About Hydrangeas - Evergreen of Johnson City, TN](#) or call 423-282-3431.
- MAY 31 Edible Landscape
10:30am. Evergreen of Colonial Heights. Registration is highly recommended. Register here: [Edible Landscape - Evergreen of Colonial Heights](#) or Call: 423-245-4769.
- JUN 5 Herb Saplings Meeting
6 pm at Exchange Place in Kingsport. Marty Silver, Park Ranger at Warriors' Path State Park, will lead a Tree Walk at the living historic farm. Bring an herbal snack to share if you have time. For more info, email sapsnews@gmail.com
- JUN 7 Summer Lawn Care
10:30am. Evergreen of Johnson City. Registration is highly recommended. Register: [Summer Lawn Care - Evergreen of Johnson City, TN](#) or call 423-282-3431.

JUN 9 NETMGA Membership Meeting

Field trip to Midfield Lavendar Farm, Bull's Gap, TN. Details on page 5 of this newsletter.

JUN 14 Perennials for Pollinators

10:30am. Evergreen of Johnson City. Registration is highly recommended. Register: [Perennials for Pollinators - Evergreen of Johnson City, TN](#) or call 423-282-3431.

JUN 14 Pollinators

10:30am. Evergreen of Colonial Heights. Registration is highly recommended. Register here: <https://egardenplace.com/event/ediblelandscape-2/> or Call: 423-245-4769.

JUN 14 Dragonfly Day at Warriors' Path State Park

9:30am-2:00pm. Cost: \$5. For information: [Event Details — Tennessee State Parks](#)