



**University of Kentucky**  
**College of Agriculture,**  
**Food and Environment**  
*Cooperative Extension Service*

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## Upcoming Classes

PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED TO ENSURE ADEQUATE SUPPLIES. TO RSVP, CALL 502-543-2257

### November 2022

Friday, 11/4: Growing Microgreens, 6pm

- Learn the basics of growing microgreens on your countertop. Participants will be provided with growing medium and seeds.

### January 2023

Friday, 1/20: Winter Sowing, 6pm

- Join us for a hands on winter sowing demonstration. Bring a translucent milk jug and plant your own seeds to take home.

## Meetings

ALL MEETINGS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

### Master Gardeners' Assn. Meeting & Horticulture Council

(1st Tuesday of each month)

- November 1st, 6pm
- December 6th, 6pm
- January 3rd, 6pm

### Beekeepers' Association

(2nd Wednesday of each month)

- November 9th, 6pm
- December 14th, 6pm
- January 11th, 6pm

Connect with us & learn more about our programs



# November

## Horticulture Newsletter

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Our office will be closed 11/24 -11/25 and 12/24 - 1/2 for the holidays.



# November Garden Calendar

BY ROSIE LERNER, PURDUE UNIVERSITY

## YARD (Lawns, woody ornamentals & fruits)

- Prevent rabbit and rodent feeding damage by erecting physical barriers, such as metal mesh (1/4 inch) hardware cloth. Pull mulch a few inches away from the trunk, as mulch provides a warm winter home for rodents. Repellents also are available, but their effectiveness is temporary and not foolproof.
- Prevent frost cracking (or sunscald) by wrapping trunks with commercial tree wrap or painting the south and southwest-facing sides of the trunk with white latex outdoor paint. Young, thin-barked trees such as maples and many fruit trees are especially susceptible. Remove the wrap by early spring to prevent overheating of the bark.
- Prune dead, diseased or damaged branches.
- Protect the graft union on rose bushes by mounding soil around the plants and adding mulch on top. Wait until several killing frosts have occurred so plants will be dormant when covered. Plants covered too early may be smothered.
- If you are planning to order a "live" Christmas tree, prepare its planting hole before the soil freezes. Mulch the area heavily to prevent freezing, or dig the hole and put fill in a protected, nonfreezing area such as a garage or basement.
- Clean up and discard fallen leaves and fruits around fruit plants to reduce disease carryover.
- Continue mowing lawn as needed. As tree leaves fall, run them through your mower (remove bagger), allowing the shredded leaves to remain on the lawn. Mow only when grass and leaves are dry.

## GARDEN (flowers, vegetables & small fruits)

- If frost hasn't taken your garden yet, continue harvesting.
- Harvest mature green tomatoes before frost, and ripen indoors in the dark. Store at 55-70 degrees F. The warmer the temperature, the faster they ripen.
- Harvest root crops and store in a cold (32 degrees F), humid location. Use perforated plastic bags as an easy way to increase humidity.
- Remove crop and weed plant debris from the garden and add to the compost pile. This will help reduce the carryover of diseases, insects and weeds to next year's garden. Do not compost weed seed heads.
- Apply mulch to strawberries to prevent winter injury or death to their crowns. Wait until temperatures have hit 20 degrees F to be sure plants are dormant. If mulch is applied too soon the plant's crown can rot.
- Dig and store tender flowering bulbs, and keep in a protected location.
- Complete planting of spring-flowering bulbs.



Erecting physical barriers against woody plants prevents rabbit, deer, and rodent feeding damage.

## HOME (Indoor plants & activities)

- As houseplant growth slows, apply less fertilizer and water.
- If plants are dropping many leaves, move them closer to sunny exposures, such as west and south-facing windows. Artificial lights may be needed to supplement dark rooms.
- Pot spring-flowering bulbs with tips exposed to force into bloom indoors. Moisten soil and refrigerate 10 to 13 weeks. Transfer to a cool, sunny location, and allow an additional three to four weeks for blooming.
- Continue dark treatment for poinsettias by keeping them in complete darkness from 5 p.m. to 8 a.m. daily until early December or until red bracts begin to show.



If you are planting spring-blooming bulbs, now is the time to plant them.



## Autumn Sweet Potato Chili

This recipe is perfect for autumn. Shuffle through some leaves and come inside for a hot bowl of deliciousness!



### Ingredients:

- 1 (15 ounce) can sweet potatoes (do not drain)
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 1 (16 ounce) jar salsa
- 2 (15 ounce) cans black beans (do not drain)
- Water to achieve desired consistency
- ½ cup reduced-fat sour cream
- Shredded sharp cheddar cheese
- Dried or fresh chopped cilantro

### Directions:

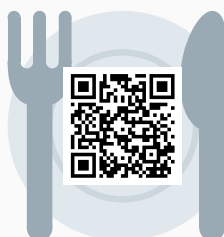
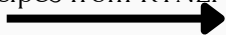
1. Combine sweet potatoes, chili powder and salsa in a large saucepan.
2. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to simmer, and cook until heated through, stirring as needed.
3. Add beans with liquid and cook another 3 minutes to blend flavors.
4. Thin with water if needed. Heat through. 5. Serve with sour cream, cheese and cilantro on the side.

### Notes:

To reduce sodium, use vegetables canned without added salt.

Source: Jeffrey Hines, former Graphic Artist for Nutrition Education Program, University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service

Browse more healthy recipes from KYNEP



*Happy Thanksgiving*

## Autumn Apple Pork

### Ingredients:

- 2 pound pork loin
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¾ teaspoon dried sage
- 3 apples, cored and sliced
- ½ cup dried cranberries
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter
- 1 tablespoon honey

### Directions:

1. Season pork on both sides with garlic powder, salt and sage. Wrap pork tightly in foil and place in the slow cooker.
2. Place apple slices, cranberries and butter on a large piece of foil. Drizzle with honey. Wrap up foil to create a packet. Place in slow cooker.
3. Cook 4 hours on high.
4. Unwrap both packets. Slice pork and top with apples.
5. Optional step: brown the top of the pork loin by placing it in the oven at 425 degrees F for five to seven minutes.

Source: Brooke Jenkins-Howard, Extension Specialist, University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service



# Living Christmas Tree Care Guide

BY RICHARD HENTSCHEL, ILLINOIS EXTENSION HORTICULTURE DIRECTOR

Living Christmas trees have become a popular alternative to cut trees since they can be planted after the holidays and enjoyed for years to come.

## Selection & Storage

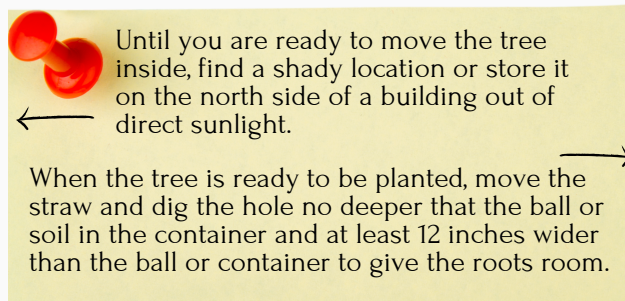
Live evergreen trees can be purchased from nurseries and garden centers with the roots and soil balled and burlapped, also known as B&B, or in a container. B&B trees will be heavier and a little more awkward to handle than a container grown tree which uses a light soil mix. A living tree should remain outside until just before Christmas. Trees should only be inside 4 to 5 days total. Otherwise they may begin to break their winter dormancy and start to grow indoors. Find a shady location or store it on the north side of a building out of direct sunlight. This is also a good time to pick and prepare a roomy spot for the tree's permanent home. Evergreen branches will grow to be 15 to 30 feet wide at the base, and unless it's smaller stature variety, an evergreen tree can easily grow to 35 feet tall. Layer straw 6 to 8 inches deep over the site to keep the soil from freezing deeply.

## Watering

Keeping the tree's root ball or container moist before it is planted is important. Container-grown trees have very efficient drainage and should be checked daily to make sure that the soil is moist. Place a large saucer underneath the container and water the tree evenly and just enough so a little water collects in the saucer. Burlapped trees have heavier soil, which holds more moisture but needs more preparation. Use a large watertight container, such as a reusable plastic tub or large pot, filled with moist potting soil or shredded peat moss to support and insulate the root ball.

## Moving the Tree Inside

Once inside where the air is drier, check moisture levels daily. If the tree is shorter, consider elevating it on a stable structure, such as cement blocks to provide more room underneath for presents.



Until you are ready to move the tree inside, find a shady location or store it on the north side of a building out of direct sunlight.

When the tree is ready to be planted, move the straw and dig the hole no deeper than the ball or soil in the container and at least 12 inches wider than the ball or container to give the roots room.



Live evergreen trees can be purchased from nurseries, either with the roots and soil balled and burlapped or in a container. Keep the root ball moist before it is planted.

## Planting the Tree

When the tree is ready to be planted, move the straw and dig the hole no deeper than the ball or soil in the container and at least 12 inches wider than the ball or container to give the roots room. Remove as much of the burlap as possible and any rope or twine or the entire container and spread the roots out. The root flare, where the base of the trunk starts to flare out, should be at ground level or slightly higher. Water the newly planted tree well and use the straw to mulch it, which will slow the ground from freezing and allow the roots to acclimate. The first year after a tree is planted is important to its long-term success. When spring comes, plan on watering it regularly as needed to supplement rain.



Container grown trees will dry out very quickly and should be watered daily.



# Overwintering Annuals is Possible with these Tips

BY JAN PHIPPS, EDGAR COUNTY MASTER GARDENER, UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS EXTENSION

Every autumn, gardeners gaze at some of their beautiful annuals and wish there was some way to save them. Then, every spring, they wish they didn't have to spend money on the same plants they just discarded the previous fall. Some annuals can be over-wintered to make a Phoenix-like recovery the next season. Some caveats apply. They will look awful for most of the winter, constantly dropping leaves and getting leggy. Some plants need a lot of light, and some don't. The procedure changes depending on the annual, with some not working at all.

Saving vines is easy and requires little space. Take 8-inch cuttings of herbaceous vines like Tradescantia, strip off the leaves on the bottom two thirds, and root them in water. Change the water about once a month. In spring, when new growth is actively growing on the tips, do it again, discarding the old vine and rooting the new tips. Plant this new growth once they have rooted. Woody vines can be dug up and potted, treating them as houseplants for the winter. After several years, when the base is too large and woody, start over by rooting some cuttings in water as previously explained.

Large container-grown annuals like geranium, diamond frost euphorbia, and Mandevilla can be saved in two ways. If you have an area of the house that gets a lot of light, like a sunroom, or south-facing room with big windows, you can keep them alive as houseplants. They will be messy, slowly dropping leaves, and have under-sized blooms until the longer days in March. Cut back on the water and do not fertilize until they begin to put out new growth. When that happens, prune them back by a half or more for the new growing season.

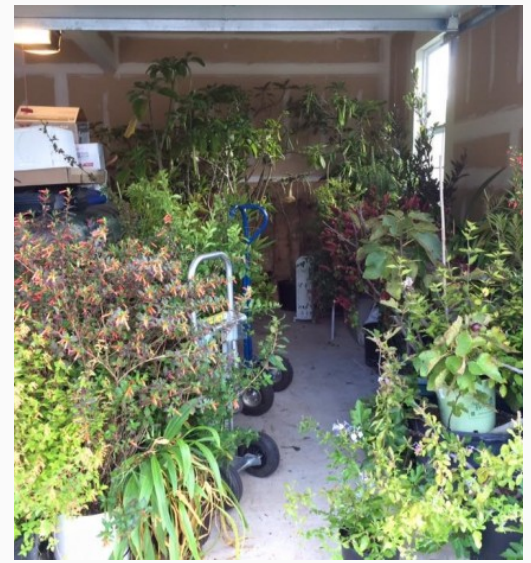


Vining plants are easily propagated in water.



Plants like Mandevilla can be kept alive through winter as houseplants.

Another way to save annuals keeps them out of the house and requires less maintenance. You can put them in a garage or shed that gets cold but doesn't freeze, ever. They will over-winter as live but semi-dormant plants. Keep the soil just moist, not letting the potting medium shrink and pull away from the pot edges. In the spring, when other indoor plants are starting to grow, prune them back to 4 to 6 inches. The Mandevilla can remain longer. Start giving them more light until it is safe to move them outside.



With the right preparations, garages are a great place to overwinter plants. Photo credit: Cornell Cooperative Extension

## Aftercare

After 3 or 4 years, the potting mix of the large annuals will become hard and compacted. In the spring, remove the plant from its container and decide what to do. Either shake off the old soil if you can and repot it using a slightly larger pot and new potting mix or prune the roots and repot it in the same pot with fresh mix. Trying to save bedding annuals like petunias, marigolds, snapdragons, etc. doesn't work very well and it is hardly worth the trouble, space, or mess. It's better to start with new transplants in spring.



With bedding annuals, it is best to use new transplants in the Spring.

# Caring for Birds in the Winter

PENN STATE EXTENSION

Many people think all the birds fly south for the winter. They might be very surprised to learn just how many birds live in our area all year round. Some birds even come to our area in the winter, then spend warmer months further north. Like all other living creatures, their survival requires food, water and shelter. Even if you live on a small suburban lot, there is still quite a bit you can do to help the birds make it through the winter, and encourage them to stick around your yard.

## 1. Leave leaf litter lie on the floor of your gardens

Most overwintering songbirds spend much of their time foraging through the leaf litter on the floor of your garden looking for the tiny insects and eggs that will sustain them throughout the long cold. If you painstakingly clean every leaf off your garden in the fall, you are destroying the birds' main food source.

## 2. Provide thick growth

Birds take shelter in the protective boughs of evergreens or within any shrubs that provide thick growth. Juncos and tree sparrows often take shelter on the ground under the warm boughs. They especially appreciate a stand of several evergreens massed together.

## 3. Clean your birdhouses then leave them up for the winter

Many birds take shelter from the wind in an empty birdhouse. Chickadees and downy woodpeckers especially enjoy enclosed cavities. Clean out your birdhouses of any old nesting material at the end of the summer. To help prevent disease and possible parasite infestation, wipe them down or spray them with a ten percent bleach solution.

## 4. Provide native plants with edible fruit, berries and seeds

Most native perennials provide seed heads which birds eat throughout the winter. Rudbeckia, Coneflowers, Salvias, Coreopsis, Sunflowers and most daisy-like flowers are some of their favorites. Also, Asters, Iron Weed, Goldenrod, Mountain Mint and many grasses provide needed food for the birds. Sure, you may want to deadhead some of these for prolonged blooms throughout the summer, but starting in late summer, let the seed heads stand.

Native Hollies, Viburnum, Beauty Berries, Spicebush, Chokecherries, and Virginia Creeper do their part by providing berries for hungry birds throughout the winter. In shopping for some of these shrubs, always look for the natives. Most have non-native cousins that the birds will ignore. Any well-informed nursery person should be able to help you in selecting native varieties. Some trees that provide fruit that birds love include American Crabapples, Serviceberry, Mulberries, Eastern Red Cedar, and Dogwood. If you enjoy seeing songbirds in your garden, make it a resolution to add some of these plants to your property.

## 5. Keep bird feeders filled

This is the time of year when bird feeders are really appreciated. They will probably need to be refilled every day. It's important for the feeders to be close to shelter where small birds can quickly find refuge from predators, however, not so close that a cat can hide within the thick branches then jump out to grab the unsuspecting bird. Keep in mind that different bird species have different feeding requirements. Some prefer a hanging feeder while others require a tray feeder. The base of a tray feeder should be screened to allow water to pass through so seed does not get mildewed and rot. Suet is especially important in cold weather because it supplies fat for warmth. Woodpeckers, Flickers, and Nuthatches love the unsalted peanuts. Please note that bread is junk food for birds, do not feed bread to birds.

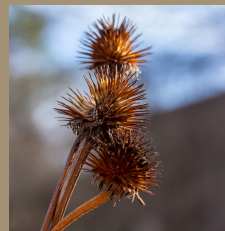


## 6. Provide drinkable water

One of the most important things is providing water. Birds need drinkable water which is often difficult to find in icy weather. I use a birdbath heater which has worked well for many winters. It prevents the water from freezing, even on the very coldest days. The bath is a very busy place!

All these suggestions not only help our bird friends, but provide us with entertainment on long winter days. Planting native trees and shrubs is something you can do when the ground isn't frozen. Investing in a feeder, suet holder, birdbath heater, or birdhouse is something you could do anytime. Plan to invest in at least one native tree or shrub to add to your landscape this year.

Planting native perennials provide abundant seed heads for birds to consume throughout winter, like this coneflower.



Different bird species have different feeding requirements. Some prefer hanging feeders and others tray feeders.

# Making Winter Crafts with Natural Items

Susan M Betz, National Garden Bureau

At no other season of the year is nature so generous with her gifts as in autumn/early winter. Children gain a large body of valuable knowledge about nature by playing and experimenting with leaves, roots, flowers, stems, and other botanical novelties. What's more, they become more observant of the life cycles of local plants, insects and their responses to seasonal change, weather, and climate. The inspiration and natural materials for the following crafts were all kindly supplied courtesy of Mother Nature. Practice stewardship when taking treasures from Mother Nature's cupboard; take what you need, but need what you take. Remember, these project ideas can be modified to match the natural material you find. Most importantly...have fun making these nature crafts!



## Woodland Wreath



### Material Needed:

- Eight-inch straw wreath
- Hot glue gun and glue sticks
- Clumps of moss
- Dried lichen
- Tree bark shards
- Acorns, seed pods and dried flowerheads

### Directions:

- Using a hot glue gun, add clumps of moss and lichens section one at a time, covering both the top and sides of the wreath form.
- After the wreath is covered with moss, finish decorating it with the acorns, dried lichen, and tree bark.



### Material Needed:

- Two 1 1/2 inch dried corn cobs
- Two small acorn caps, 1/2 inch
- Two wiggle eyes
- Four pieces of 3" brown pipe cleaner
- 12" #24 gauge florist wire
- Extra thick tacky glue

## The Christmas Spider

### Directions:

- Glue the two sides of the corn cob together to form the spider's body.
- Bend the brown pipe cleaners in half to make four sets of legs.
- Dab a bit of glue onto the bent part of each set of legs, then push the glued section of the pipe cleaner into the ends of the corn cob's soft pith or inner core.
- Glue the acorn caps on top of one of the sections of the corn cob to make the spider's eye sockets.
- Glue the wiggly eyes into the acorn caps.
- After the spider is dry, attach a wire around his mid-section for a hanger.



### Material Needed:

- Three brown oak apples (Oak apples are galls that are produced on oaks from the gall wasp)
- One large burr oak cap
- One small tree cookie, 1 inch or so in diameter (A tree cookie is a thinly sliced cross-section of a tree branch or trunk)
- Five black peppercorns
- One kernel of dried corn
- Three small black beans
- Two thin one-inch twigs
- White acrylic paint
- Extra thick tacky glue
- Carefully glue the largest oak apple to the tree cookie for a stand. Let it dry. Glue the remaining oak apples on forming a snowman and let dry.
- Paint the body white and let it dry.
- Cut the tiny twigs to a sharp diagonal point and very carefully push them into the sides of the middle oak apple to form the snowman's arms.
- Glue the peppercorns to the snowman's head to make his eyes and mouth; the corn kernel for his nose. Add the black beans buttons and attach the burr oak cap to the snowman's head for his hat.
- Decorate the cap with wee bits of dried herbs and berries. Tie a small colorful ribbon around his neck to finish the project.

## Oak Apple Snowman

### Directions:

# Yummy Sweet Potato Casserole



**6** medium sweet potatoes  
**¼ cup** maple syrup  
**2 tablespoons** brown sugar  
**2** eggs  
**½ teaspoon** salt

**¾ cup** low-fat vanilla Greek yogurt  
**¼ teaspoon** vanilla extract  
**1 tablespoon** cinnamon

**Topping:**  
**½ cup** brown sugar  
**½ cup** ground rolled oats  
**1 tablespoon** maple syrup

**3 tablespoons** melted butter  
**¼ teaspoon** salt  
**½ teaspoon** cinnamon  
**½ cup** chopped pecans

**Preheat** oven to 325 degrees F. **Peel** sweet potatoes and **cut** into 1-inch cubes. **Place** sweet potato cubes in a medium saucepan and **cover** with water. **Cook** over medium-high heat until tender. **Drain** and **mash**. In a large bowl, **mix** together mashed potatoes, maple syrup, brown sugar, eggs, salt, yogurt, vanilla and cinnamon. **Blend** until smooth. **Pour** into a 13-by-9 inch baking dish. Topping: In a medium bowl, **mix** the brown sugar and oats.

**Add** in syrup, melted butter, salt and cinnamon; **blend** until mixture is coarse. **Stir** in pecans. **Sprinkle** over sweet potato mixture. **Bake** 30 minutes, or until topping is lightly browned.

**Yield:** 12, ½ cup servings

**Nutritional Analysis:** 190 calories, 7 g fat, 2.5 g saturated fat, 10 mg cholesterol, 190 mg sodium, 31 g carbohydrate, 20 g sugars, 4 g protein.

Happy Fall  
 News, events, and extension  
 programs available in Bullitt  
 County



HORTICULTURE NEWSLETTER: NOVEMBER 2022

Return Service Requested  
 Shepherdsville, KY 40164

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