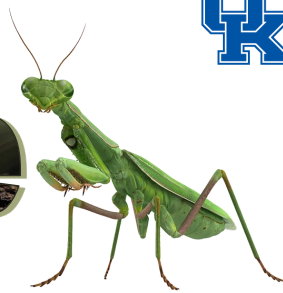


Boone County Horticulture

March-April 2025 Newsletter



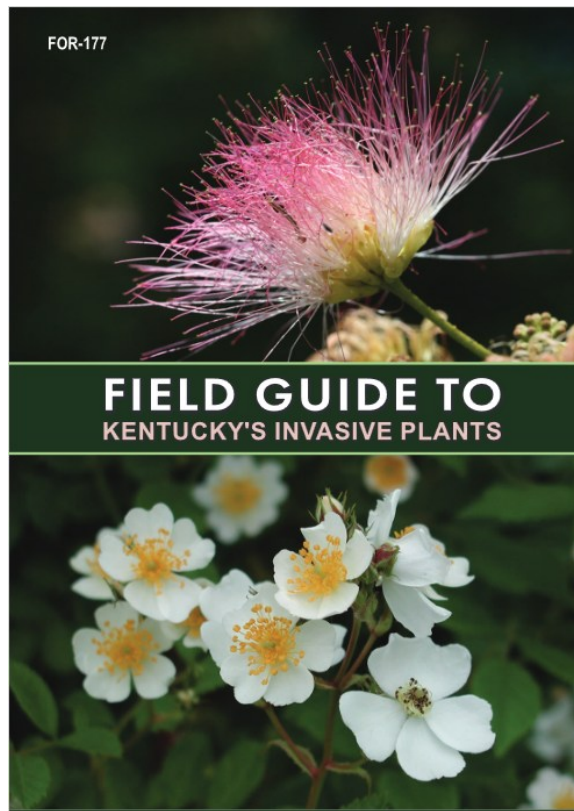
New Field Guide Offers Tools to Combat Kentucky's Invasive Plants

By Ellen Crocker, Department of Forestry and Natural Resources
Assistant Professor

The University of Kentucky Department of Forestry and Natural Resources has released a Field Guide to Kentucky's Invasive Plants, a comprehensive resource aimed at helping landowners, conservationists and forestry professionals identify and manage invasive plant species across the state.

This guide provides detailed profiles of the most prevalent invasive trees, shrubs, vines, grasses and herbaceous plants that threaten Kentucky's ecosystems. Each species is presented with full-color photographs, information about its origins, distribution, threats to native biodiversity and effective control methods. From the hardy callery pear to the pervasive kudzu vine, the guide highlights the threats these species pose to forests, fields and waterways.

The book also emphasizes practical management techniques, offering guidance on hand removal, herbicide application and integrated approaches tailored to site-specific conditions. Special attention is given to balancing ecological health with practical land management goals, ensuring that users can address invasive species responsibly and effectively.



(Continued)

Quick TIP

Apply dormant sprays to fruit trees before they resume active growth in the spring. For example, spray peaches and plums to prevent peach leaf curl and plum pockets while trees are dormant, using Bordeaux, Chlorothalonil or Fixed Copper. (See UK publication ID-21 for additional information.)

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Disabilities accommodated with prior notification.

The Field Guide draws on a wealth of expertise from contributors across specific regions, including the board members of the Kentucky Invasive Plant Council. It builds on an earlier pocket guide with updated content and new species profiles, reflecting the evolving landscape of invasive plant management.

Key features include:

- Species profiles: Clear descriptions and images to help with identification.
- Control strategies: Step-by-step recommendations, from manual removal to chemical treatments.
- Regional relevance: Focused on the invasive plants most common to Kentucky and neighboring states.

Whether you're a landowner grappling with autumn olive or a forest manager tackling multiflora rose, this guide serves as a practical reference for maintaining healthy ecosystems. As invasive plants spread, these resources are critical in equipping communities with the knowledge and tools to protect their natural heritage.



*Callery Pear aka Bradford Pear - Pyrus calleryana, Lorton, Virginia, March 19, 2024.
Source: Flickr*

To obtain your field guide visit <https://forestry.ca.uky.edu/articles/for177-field-guide-kentuckys-invasive-plants>

Callery Pear Bounty Program

Take a picture of a Callery pear you cut down on your property and bring it to the Boone County Enrichment Center on May 13th to receive a native tree. Trees are in 3-gallon pots and vary in size from 2-5 feet. Registration is **REQUIRED** so that we can purchase enough trees. Registration opens on March 13th. Callery pears include cultivars such as Bradford and Aristocrat. Please bring proof of Boone County residency (driver's license and piece of mail). The limit is 1 tree per household, supplies/registration is limited. Be on the lookout for more information!

Installing a Butterfly Garden Can Help Plant Pollination

*By Faye Kuosman,
UK Food Connection Coordinator*

Butterflies aren't the only ones that can benefit from butterfly gardens. Honeybees, which are native to Europe and introduced to the United States, are also important pollinators for home gardens. Numerous other pollinator species including native bees, butterflies and moths, beetles, birds and bats benefit our gardens. Sadly, many of the pollinators have suffered from habitat loss, chemical misuse, diseases and parasites.

Butterfly gardeners play a critical role in nurturing and conserving both native and introduced pollinators. Butterfly gardens and landscapes provide pollinators with food, water, shelter and habitat to complete their life cycles. Urban areas typically feature large areas of pavement and buildings and offer little in the way of food and shelter for pollinators. Garden plantings can help bridge that gap.

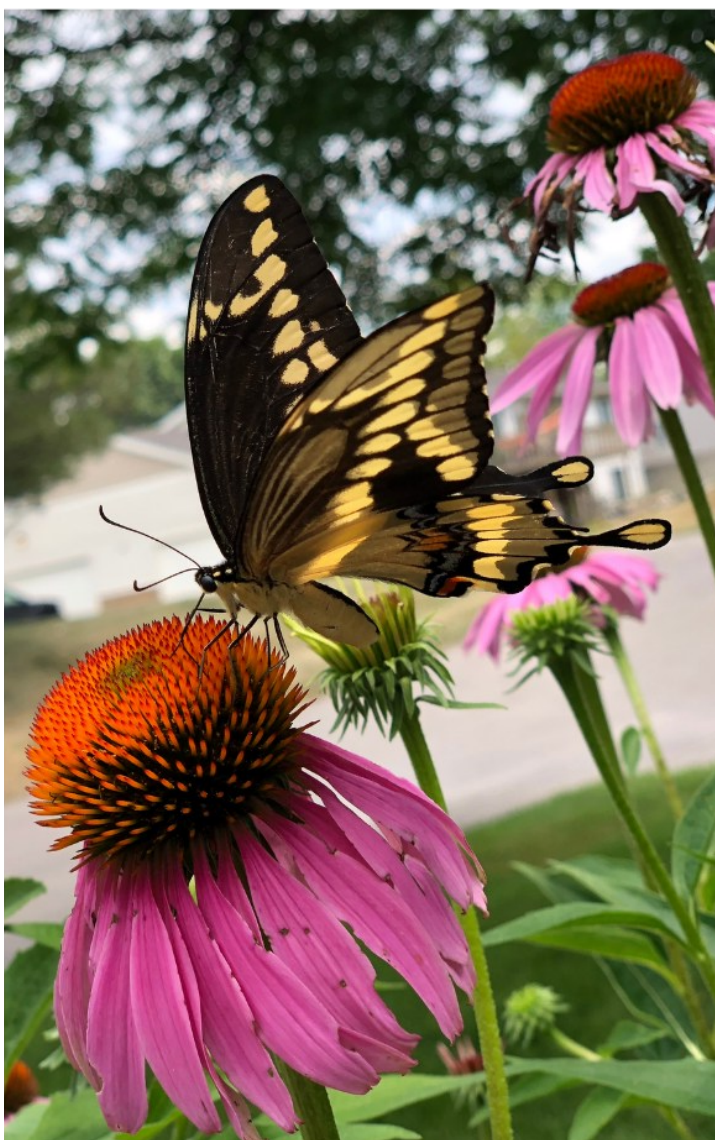
Just like with any new flower bed, you want to pick a site for your butterfly garden with good drainage, full sun, and an area with good weed control. If you are starting a new butterfly garden, get a soil test, eliminate the weeds and add organic matter.

Butterflies, honeybees and other pollinators need protein from flower pollen and carbohydrates from flower nectar. Plan to provide a variety of different types of flowers and aim to have three different flower species in bloom throughout the growing season. Showy, colorful flowers and massed groups of flowers, particularly in small gardens, provide efficient feeding stations for the pollinators. Flowering trees and shrubs also provide excellent food sources. Native plants share a long history with their pollinators, including a wide variety of natives will make your garden a favorite destination for pollinators.

You want to have a variety of plants, preferably native and non-native ones that will bloom throughout the growing season. Some of these are purple cone flower, black-eyed susan, asters, golden rod, yarrow, tall blazing star, milkweed, coreopsis and many more. The Kentucky Native Plant Society has an updated listing of nurseries in Kentucky that sell native plants.

Be sure to have puddling spots for butterflies to get a drink of water. Pollinators also need shelter from the wind, scorching sun, and heavy rain. Fences can serve as windbreaks, which may make the garden more attractive to pollinators.

For information on starting a butterfly garden, contact the Boone County office of the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service.



Spring into Gardening Season

*By Melissa Pilcher
Boone County Extension
Horticulture Assistant*



Spring is coming and with it, things to plan, and soon, things to plant! Starting with a plan saves time, money, and disappointment. Now is a great time to look at catalogs, to dream, and to plan for good things to come. Don't forget to choose some plants for the pollinators!

Don't feel bad if you have dried up plants and leaves in your beds. Whether you know it or not, you are part of a movement to "Leave the Leaves", which is an effort to protect pollinators and invertebrates by providing them with shelter and food to survive the winter. It is recommended to avoid disturbing the plant material as late into spring as you can to avoid destroying insects and eggs that are still hibernating.

And it's a good idea to wait until the soil has dried out before digging. A good way to test is to make a ball with a handful of soil. If it keeps its form when you squeeze it, it's too wet to dig.

Spring into action this March and April:

- Clean containers for seed starting and container gardening using 1 part chlorine bleach to 9 parts water
- Clean and sharpen tools
- Consult seed packets for sow dates when starting indoor seeds, counting back the number of weeks from the last frost date-for zone 6b, that is Mother's Day for warm season crops
- Try your hand at winter sowing tender annuals such as cosmos, zinnias, and marigolds in milk jugs*
- Turn compost throughout the year, including winter months to accelerate decomposition
- In late March plant potatoes and asparagus crowns
- Consult your garden journal and update with any new notes or plans
- Attend gardening classes at your local extension office, libraries, and garden centers

List adapted from the "Growing your own garden calendar" from UK Cooperative Extension Service available to download at <https://bit.ly/3EzLCvf>

To learn more about the importance of pollinators, go to <https://xerces.org/>

*For a video on winter sowing in milk jugs, go to <https://bit.ly/41crOXI>



Late March and early April is an ideal time to split up crowded perennials such as hostas, black eyed Susan, and Liriope.

Quick TIP

Welcome to the Hort Team!

*By Sophia Becker
Boone County Extension
Horticulture Assistant*

My name is Sophia Becker, and I'm excited to join the Boone County Cooperative Extension as the new Horticulture Extension Assistant. While I'm new to this role, I'm not new to Boone County, as I've spent the past year working at the lovely Boone County Arboretum.

I graduated in 2023 from the University of Cincinnati with a Bachelor of Science in Horticulture, and I've been working in the horticultural field for the past five years. Over the last three years, I've worked part-time as an assistant grower at a greenhouse nursery, and during my time as a student, I gained work experience in urban forestry, landscape maintenance, as well as research.

Growing up, my love for the outdoors was nurtured by my family, and it continues to influence how I spend my free time. Whether I'm birdwatching, gardening, or backpacking, I'm happiest when I'm outside. My interest in horticulture comes from a lifelong curiosity about the outdoors, especially plants. I've always been fascinated by the way things grow, and I see plant science as a lifelong journey of learning. I'm always eager to discover something new, and now, in my new role, I have the wonderful opportunity to share that knowledge with others.

Working in this field has shown me how many people share my passion for making the world a greener place. I feel incredibly fortunate to have a career that allows me to be surrounded by what I love every day, and to work alongside people who share that same enthusiasm. I look forward to teaching and learning alongside all of you!



Quick TIP

- Tomatoes, peppers, and eggplant should be started indoors before being transplanted outdoors. Tomatoes should be seeded 4-7 weeks before transplanting while peppers and eggplant need 6-8 weeks.
- Do not plant strawberries where there were potatoes, tobacco, peppers, eggplants or tomatoes the previous year, since these plants all get some of the same diseases.

To Prune or Not to Prune

By Robert Brockman
Boone County Extension Agent
for Horticulture

Many people that I talk to are heavily intimidated by pruning and actively avoid it either due to the time involved or a lack of understanding of what needs to be done. In an attempt to remedy this, I'll be going over a few rules of thumb to keep in mind when your plant needs a good pruning.

The first rule of pruning is that you can prune out dead, diseased, or broken limbs at any point in the year. This means that the season might otherwise not be ideal, but the task is important enough that limbs can be removed.

A second thing to keep in mind is that smaller cuts allow a tree or shrub to recover quicker. Removing a large limb on an older tree comes with a lot of risk. The reason for this is that you are creating a large wound on a slow growing plant. That plant may not be able to heal itself before disease or rot set in. Sometimes you don't have a choice, but whenever possible, start pruning your tree when its young. This is one, of several, reasons that we advise against topping a tree.

Season is very important when it comes to pruning woody plants such as trees and shrubs.

Fall is perhaps the most common time for homeowners to prune. However, fall is one of the worst times to prune. Creating many new cuts on a tree or shrub right before the winter means that you are creating many wounds. Winter, particularly cold winter winds, will pull moisture from wounds and can cause a lot of damage. Ideally, we want the woody plant to have a chance to recover from this pruning before bad weather. Because of this, most plant species prefer heavy pruning early in the season. Early spring or late winter tends to be a good time to prune many species of plants. However, some species of plants have flower buds already formed in that old wood. For species that bloom very early in the season, allow them to bloom before pruning - unless you're willing to have a bloomless spring. A few species to prune after blooming include forsythia, lilac, deutzia, serviceberry, magnolia, azalea, Viburnum, some species of Hydrangea (bigleaf, oakleaf, climbing, and mountain), and many more.

For more information on different types of cuts, when to prune your specific species, or how to train a young tree, reach out to the Boone County Extension Office and lookout for programs.



CHARDONNAY PEARLS DEUTZIA
Deutzia gracilis 'Duncan' - location: Boone County Extension Office

For More Information...

For more information or to register for any of our classes, visit our website at boone.ca.uky.edu.
Click "Online Class Registration" or call us at 859-586-6101.

Upcoming Horticulture Events *Please Register!*

Please Note:

► For most Horticulture classes, registration opens one month prior to the class.

Fruit Tree Pruning Demonstration

► March 6, 6-7:30pm
Boone County Nature Center Barn and Gardens
Come and join us as we demonstrate how to make cuts on peach, plum, apple, and pear trees.

To Grow In the Ground or In a Container?

► March 11, 6-7:30pm
Enrichment Center, Upper Level
This program will focus on the pros and cons of growing in containers versus in the ground.

The Basics of Plant Insects & Diseases

► March 25, 6-7:30pm
Enrichment Center, Upper Level
Join us as we discuss common insects and diseases you may find in your garden. When relevant, we will also discuss management!

Starting a Butterfly Garden

► April 3, 6:30-8pm
Boone County Public Library - Walton Branch, 13000 Towne Center Drive, Walton, KY 41094
Join us for a program on how to start a butterfly garden. We will discuss common plants to add and what host plants attract which butterfly species. **Register with BCPL - Walton online at boone.libnet.info/events**

Weed Identification and Management

► April 8, 6-7:30pm
Enrichment Center, Upper Level
This program will give you the skills to identify common weeds in both the ornamental and vegetable garden. Different management strategies will also be discussed.

Spring Blooms Walk

► April 10, 6-7:30pm
Boone County Arboretum
Take a stroll around the Boone County Arboretum. We will be looking at the flowering trees, gardens, and ephemeral woodland plants. **Register with the Boone County Arboretum at bcarboretum.org/events**

Earth Day Tree Giveaway

► April 22, 4-6pm
Boone County Extension, Florence
We will be giving out tree seedlings of native tree and shrub species.

Harvesting and Post-Harvest Care of Vegetables


► April 22, 6-7:30pm
Enrichment Center, Upper Level
Come and join us as we discuss when to harvest different fruits and vegetables. We will also discuss methods of keeping your vegetables and fruit flavorful, nutritious, and safe from pathogens.

(Continued)



Find us here...

Extension Campus Locations:

Virtual via Zoom, Must register to receive Zoom link 
 Extension Service office, 6028 Camp Ernst Rd., Burlington
 Enrichment Center, 1824 Patrick Dr., Burlington
 Florence Location, 7111 Dixie Hwy., Florence
 Farmers Market, 1961 Burlington Pk., Burlington
 Environmental and Nature Center, 9101 Camp Ernst Rd., Union
 Boone County Arboretum, 9190 Camp Ernst Rd., Union; Register at: www.bcarboretum.org/

Seed Giveaway

► April 24, 5:30-7:30pm

Boone County Public Library -
Walton Branch, 13000 Towne
Center Drive, Walton, KY 41094

We are partnering with the Boone
County Public Library to do a seed
giveaway during their plant swap.

**Register with BCPL - Walton
online at [boone.libnet.info/
events](http://boone.libnet.info/events)**

Kentucky Master Naturalist Program

Program begins Friday, May 16
Boone County Extension
Environmental & Nature Center

This 10-12 week program will teach
participants a wide range of topics
about their environment including
wilderness safety, water quality,
wildlife, plants, geology, and more.

► Applications due by April 18, 2025

► For more details contact Lacey
Kessell: 859-586-6101 or
lacey.laudick@uky.edu



Spring Harvest Salad

5 cups torn spring leaf lettuce

2½ cups spinach leaves

1½ cups sliced
strawberries

1 cup fresh blueberries

½ cup thinly sliced
green onions

Dressing:

4 teaspoons lemon
juice

2½ tablespoons olive oil
1 tablespoon balsamic
vinegar

1½ teaspoons Dijon
mustard

2 teaspoons Kentucky
honey

½ teaspoon salt

¼ cup feta cheese
crumbles

½ cup unsalted sliced almonds



Combine leaf lettuce and spinach leaves with sliced strawberries, blueberries and green onion in a large salad bowl. Prepare dressing by whisking together the lemon juice, olive oil, balsamic vinegar, Dijon mustard, honey and salt; pour over lettuce mixture and toss to coat. Sprinkle salad with feta cheese and sliced almonds. Serve immediately.

Servings: 8 (1 cup) servings.

Per Serving: 130 calories, 9 g fat, 1.5 g sat fat, 240 mg sodium, 12 g carbohydrates, 3 g fiber, 7 g sugar, 3 g protein

Source: <https://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/recipe/spring-harvest-salad>, University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service



For more information or if you have questions, contact us—we are here to help!
859-586-6101 • boone.ca.uky.edu

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