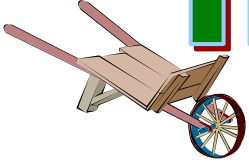


The Wheelbarrow



www.saps.us

Southern Appalachian Plant Society

March 2026

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Cool Season Vegetable Gardening

Lucas Holman

Horticulture Extension Agent and County Director,
UT/TSU Extension, Wilson County, TN

Thursday, March 19 at 7 pm
Kingsport Higher Education Center
300 W. Market Street, Kingsport, TN 37660

Gardeners don't have to wait until April to start growing vegetables and gardening doesn't have to end when frost wipes out the warm season crops in October. Extend your gardening season by learning practical ways to grow cool season vegetables in Tennessee. Lucas will discuss timing, supplies, and his favorite cultivars. He will also look at some of the gardening trends that you see on social media and provide insight on the ongoing question – should you believe everything you see on Facebook? Lucas Holman taught high school agriculture, including the greenhouse program, for almost 10 years. About 8 years ago he made a career shift to Extension and is now the Horticulture Extension Agent and County Director for the UT/TSU Extension office in Wilson County, TN. He received his B.S. in Agriculture from Tennessee Tech University and his M.A. in Curriculum and Instruction from Tennessee Tech University. He and his wife Bonnie own a small farm where they focus on Dorset sheep, daylilies, and other unique perennials and shrubs. They are also blessed with three daughters – Ellie Pearl, Addie Opal, and Millie Ruby.

Spring Plant and Seed Swap and Potluck

SAPS members only

Saturday, March 28 9:30 am

V.O. Dobbins Center

301 Louis Street, Kingsport, TN 37660

This is a new location for our plant swap with plenty of parking and a very easy entrance. The SAPS sign and green balloons will mark the easiest entrance with parking available at the end of the building. It's a great time to share extra early season vegetables and perennials. Garden items are welcome and we will even have a silent auction.

Please identify the plants you bring with the plant ID information form on the last page of the newsletter and remember that every item brought must leave with someone to a new home or return with the one who brought it.

Bring your favorite potluck brunch dish. Because extra serving utensils will not be available, please bring a serving utensil for your dish. Plates, cups, napkins and flatware will be provided as well as water and coffee. The brunch will begin around 10:15 after people have arrived and placed their items.

This event is restricted to members who are current with their dues, but those who are a little late in getting around to renewing membership will be able pay dues on the day. If you have questions or need more information, please call or text 423-737-7915.

We look forward to seeing you all on Saturday, March 28 at the Spring Plant Swap and Potluck.



Upcoming Events

March 1

Propagating Native Woody Plants from Cuttings. 2 - 3:30 pm. Asheville Botanical Gardens. \$45. <https://ashevillebotanicalgardens.square.site/classes>

March 5

Herb Saplings meeting. 7 pm at Exchange Place. Kat Hayes, owner and director of Herbalachia, will speak on Herbal Support for Stress and Resilience. Bring a herb snack to share if you have time. Herb Saplings is a SAPS focus group. All SAPS members are invited to attend Herb Saplings meetings.

March 5

Pruning Fruit Trees. 6 pm. Join UT Extension Washington County Agriculture Agent Adam Watson to learn how to prune your fruit trees to improve yields and enhance fruit quality. In-person location: Jonesborough Farm Bureau Basement Meeting room 1103 Boones Creek Rd. In-person Registration: <https://tiny.utk.edu/inpersontreepruning> Zoom registration: <https://tiny.utk.edu/fruittreepruning>

March 6 - 8

Organic Growers School Annual Spring Conference. Mars Hill University, Mars Hill, NC. <https://www.organicgrowersschool.org/spring-conference>

March 7

Hands on Fruit Tree Pruning. 10 am. Tipton-Haynes State Historic Site, 2620 South Roan Street, Johnson City. In-person Registration: <https://tiny.utk.edu/TiptonHaynespruning>

March 7

Weed Wrangle at Warriors' Path State Park: Garlic Mustard Pull. 1 - 4 pm. Help control this nasty pest by spending a few hours uprooting these invasives along a scenic park trail. 423-239-6786. https://tnstateparks.com/parks/event_details/warriors-path/#/?event=weed-wrangle-at-warriors-path-garlic-mustard-pull-wpsp-2026

March 7

Weed Wrangle. Roan Mountain State Park. 2 – 5 pm. Help remove Chinese Privet from the edge of forests and fields near the Visitor Center and along Highway 143 and prepare for native plantings. Register: https://tnstateparks.com/parks/event_details/roan-mountain/#/?event=rmsp-weed-wrangle-2026

March 7

Weed Wrangle. David Crockett State Park. 9 am – noon. Help remove invasive plants. https://tnstateparks.com/parks/event_details/david-crockett/#/?event=weed-wrangle-2026-1

March 18

Daffodils 101- From Growing to Showing. 5:30 - 7 pm. UT Gardens, Knoxville (South Greenhouse Room 124). Includes some hands-on and a walk through UT Gardens looking at selected daffodil collections. Stacey Wilson, Master Gardener, American Daffodil Society Judge, Garden Club of America Horticulture Judge. \$25. https://utgardens.tennessee.edu/locations/knoxville/workshops-knoxville/?fbclid=IwY2xjawPP155leHRuA2FibQlXMBicmlkETEzYwcyZE9GeTNTbmVvMII1c3J0YwZhcHBfaWQmMDM5MTc4ODlwMDg5MgABHiiyAxYCNzWHwQAAOfc9wfixkFBZSJInibU1qOa_ft7QK5wYSCqJU3cKlpzJ_aem_gSepgO-wQdMI83yMsrrb0A

March 14

Getting to Know Our Native Common Grasses with Dr. Nancy Adamson. 10 am. Asheville Botanical Garden. \$35. <https://ashevillebotanicalgardens.square.site/classes>

March 18

Rethinking Horticulture with Real Ecology. 7 p.m. Wild Ones National Webinar. Free. To register: <https://wildones.org/joey-santore/> A recording will be shared following the live event.

March 19

SAPS Meeting. Lucas Holman, Vegetable Gardening - Cool Season Vegetables. 7 pm.

March 21

Medicinal Native Plants and Soil Blocking Workshop. 11 am. SWVA Higher Ed Center, Rm 103/104. One Partnership Cir, Abingdon. Free. Space is limited. Register by March 8, 2026 by emailing mgcasiem@gmail.com. https://appalachianhighlands.wildones.org/past-events/?wo_event_id=11866

March 21

Bird-Friendly Gardening with Tom Tribble. 10 am. Asheville Botanical Garden. \$25. <https://ashevillebotanicalgardens.square.site/classes>

March 23

Grafting Workshop. 4 - 7 p.m. Ron Ramsey Ag Center, 140 Spurgeon Lane, Blountville, TN 37616. Scion wood, rootstock, and all necessary tools, supplies, and information to get you grafting a successful apple graft provided! \$35 includes five grafts to take home. <https://sullivan.tennessee.edu/grafting/>

March 28

SAPS Spring Plant Swap. VO Dobbins Complex, Kingsport. 9:30 – Noon.

March 28

Duck Island Revival Volunteer Day. Warriors' Path State Park. Help remove invasive plants and be part of restoring this beautiful space for our community and wildlife. Breakfast 8:30 AM. Work begins at 9 am (about 3 hours). Sign up here to volunteer: https://tnstateparks.com/parks/event_details/warriors-path/#/?event=duck-island-revival

March 28

NOLI - Walk with a Botanist. Rocky Fork State Park. 10AM - Noon. Free. https://tnstateparks.com/parks/event_details/rocky-fork/#/?event=noli---walk-with-a-botanist-3-26

March 31

Improving Garden Soils. 6 pm. UT Extension Washington County Agriculture Agent Adam Watson will discuss fertilizers, amendments, and why clay soils aren't as bad as some people think. Jonesborough Farm Bureau Basement Meeting room 1103 Boones Creek Rd. In-person Registration: <https://tiny.utk.edu/inpersongardensoil> Zoom registration: <https://tiny.utk.edu/gardensoil>

April 2

Herb Saplings meeting. 7 pm at Exchange Place. Herbalist Sharon Nelson will speak.

April 16

SAPS Meeting. Kim Whiston, Rock House Gardens in Jonesborough. How to Successfully Grow Hydrangeas. 7 pm

April 10 - 11

Mid Atlantic Garden Faire. Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center, Abingdon. <http://www.gardenfaire.net/>

April 25-26

40th Annual Spring Garden Fair. Exchange Place Living History Farm, 4812 Orebank Road, Kingsport. Saturday 10 am. - 5 pm, Sunday, 12 - 5 pm. \$5.

Irises

Contributed by Hugh Conlon

Perennial irises deliver lovely upright flowers in vibrant colors. Flowers have reclining standards and drooping falls and are easy to care for in sunny to partially shaded gardens. These long-lived beauties bloom in early to mid-spring. Most species prefer a well-drained, humus-rich soil and are deer-resistant. Below are seven (7) of the most popular U.S. iris ("flag") species.

Crested iris (*I. cristata*) is a 3-6 inch, low-growing, rapidly spreading species. In the wild, crested iris is found in moist humus-rich woody soils. Favorite varieties are 'Abbey's Violet' (deep blue violet), 'Alba', 'Tennessee White', 'Eco Little Bluebird', and 'Shenandoah Skies'.

Northern blue flag iris (*I. versicolor*) performs equally well in our Southern Appalachian region. It thrives in both wetland and terrestrial habitats. Clumps of narrow, arching-to-erect, dark purple-green foliage (to 24-inch long & 1-inch wide) emerge in early spring. In late spring, dark purple foliage gradually fades to green. Flowers sit atop 30-inch-high stalks in late spring, each stem bearing 3 to 5 blue-purple flowers (to 4-inch wide) with bold purple veining. One to try: 'Purple Flame'.

Southern blue flag (*I. virginica*) is a native wetland species perfect for setting around garden ponds. In late spring this clump growing iris produces non-fragrant flowers (light blue to purple standards and crested yellow-white falls) on 2 - 2.5 feet tall stems in late spring. Try 'Contraband Girl', a vigorous tetraploid with blue-purple flowers and broad lush foliage.

Copper iris (*I. fulva*) grows in average moist soil. Flat-topped, 3-inch wide, beardless unusual rich copper-brown flowers form on 2-3 feet tall stalks.

Slender blue iris (*I. prismatica*) grows in moist to boggy soils. The narrow upright foliage forms rhizomatous clumps topped with lovely narrow-petaled blue-violet flowers in early May. The floral falls (petals) display a nice central whitish pattern.

Lamance iris (*I. brevicaulis*) is native to the central U.S. and prefers humus-rich, marshy wet soil in full sun to light shade. It is recognized for its long zig-zag stems. Its 12-inch high stalks support 3-6 blue flags, each 1-3 inch wide in variable hues of blue-purple tones.

Rocky Mountain iris (*I. missouriensis*) looks a lot like non-native Siberian iris (*I. sibirica*) with narrow strap-shaped leaves to 20 inches long. Each branched stem holds 2 to 4 blooms in early summer. The beardless flowers have short pale to deep blue or lilac-purple standards and larger falls with deep purple veining. It grows in medium to wet average soil.

Online Sources:

American Meadows, www.americanmeadows.com

Izel Native Plants, www.izelplants.com

Plant Delights Nursery, www.plantdelights.com

Crested Iris



Northern Blue Flag Iris



Copper Iris



Across the President's Desk

By Earl Hockin

March is when gardening truly begins. There are vegetables, herbs and flowers that perform best when their seeds are direct sown in the cool moist March soil. It is also time to start our least favorite gardening activity - weeding. Chickweed, henbit, lesser celandine, and garlic mustard are annual weeds that show up early and should be removed before they flower and produce seeds. Dandelion is an early flowering plant that is often thought of as a weed because it reseeds aggressively. When I was young, my mother would take us out to the pastures of our farm in early spring when the dandelions first came up. We harvested the young leaves to boil and enjoy with butter as the vegetable for dinner. Dandelions were originally brought to North America by Europeans to be grown as food. In the spring early blooming dandelions support pollinating insects including honey bees at a time when there are limited nectar sources. However, I, like others, do not want them spreading in my lawn. I mow over them to prevent blooming, but I let them grow and flower in an area of my property I leave untended.

Shade loving plants should be planted in early spring because they benefit from being planted in moist soil. Good choices for local shade perennials and groundcovers in this area include wild ginger, Virginia bluebells and golden ragwort. A shade plant that is a favorite in our garden is the evergreen Christmas fern. For a shrub, consider spicebush or mapleleaf viburnum. As Randi Eckel explained during her February Zoom presentation, an important benefit of native plants in your garden is that they support numerous native bees, moths, other native insects and birds.

Spring is obviously the time for spring vegetable gardening. Cold hardy vegetable seeds that can be directly sown in the soil when it is workable include

leafy greens, peas and root vegetables including radishes, carrots, and parsnips. Lettuce, onion, parsnips, and spinach seeds will germinate in soil temperatures as low as 35°F. However, they germinate more quickly when the soil temperature reaches 50°. One of the many advantages of growing vegetables and herbs in raised beds is that the soil temperature in the raised bed warms up much sooner than ground soil. You can sow seeds and put in transplants typically 2 or more weeks before it can be done in ground soil. When sowing seeds or transplanting seedlings into raised beds, it is a good idea to put row cover over them to protect the plants from late season snowfall or freezing temperatures.

Turnips, Swiss chard, radishes, peas, parsley, celery, cauliflower, carrots, cabbage, and beet seeds will all germinate when the soil temperature is at least 40°F. An advantage to getting these cool season vegetables started early is that they can be harvested early opening space to plant warm season vegetables.

Some very tasty and healthy Asian vegetables to transplant in early spring are tatsoi, bok choy/pak choi and napa cabbage. These tasty green leafy vegetables are rich in vitamins A, C, and K, fiber, and potassium promoting heart health and strong bones while reducing inflammation. The high antioxidant content of these vegetables makes them excellent for immune support, blood pressure regulation, and cancer prevention.

It is important to support native birds in early March. Clean existing nest boxes and for new nest boxes for bluebirds place them 4 to 10 feet off the ground and in open spaces. Fill birdfeeders with high energy food such as black oil sunflower seeds, thistle seeds and mealworms to help the birds prepare for nesting.

Want Summer Flowering Bulbs?

Now is the time to order summer flowering bulbs and perennials. Are you looking for dahlias, lilies, elephant ears (colocasias), gladioli, caladiums, crocosmia, lycoris (those lovely spider lilies and naked ladies), alstroemeria, or other summer blooming beauties? Brent and Becky's has a large selection of fine quality summer flowering bulbs and perennials and you can support SAPS at the same time. This is also the BEST time to order fall planted bulbs for the greatest selection. They will be delivered at planting time.

Go to <https://brentandbeckysbulbs.com/bloomin-bucks/>, choose Southern Appalachian Plant Society (SAPS) from the pull down menu, agree to the terms, then off you go buying bulbs to beautify your garden. SAPS will receive 25% of the bulb total to help us continue to bring in great speakers. Thanks!

Green & Growing Gardening Seminars

Keep Kingsport Beautiful will hold its “Green & Growing” gardening seminars every Thursday in March at noon at the Kingsport Chamber, 400 Clinchfield Street. Sponsored by A-1 Expert Tree Service. All seminars are free and open to the public.

- March 5 – Christy Shivell, owner of Shy Valley Farms. Rewilding Appalachia: Simple, sustainable techniques to create habitat-rich landscapes with native plants.
- March 12 – Matt Fioramonti, manager at Evergreen in Colonial Heights. The Spring Bloomer.
- March 19 – Joy Moore, TN Master Gardener. Welcoming Pollinators to Your Yard.
- March 26 – John Woodworth, local organic farmer and owner of Ziegenwald Dairy. Seed Saving 101.

Mt. Cuba Trial: Solidago (Goldenrod) for the Mid-Atlantic Region

Mt. Cuba recently released the results of its multi-year trial of Solidago for the mid-Atlantic region. This trial evaluated 70 different goldenrods over a three-year period focusing on ornamental and ecological value. The striking blooms of goldenrods are widely recognized by gardeners and non-gardeners alike. Although a perception exists that goldenrods are aggressive or weedy, this trial showed that only a handful of the Solidago could be categorized as aggressive, and even those can be used in naturalistic gardens. Solidago are not only beautiful, but also provide valuable resources for wildlife. Goldenrods are keystone plants, having an exceptionally high capacity to support biodiversity. To read more: <https://mtcubacenter.org/trials/solidago/>

Exchange Place Spring Garden Fair Seeks Additional Plant Vendors

The 40th annual Spring Garden Fair is Saturday, April 25, from 10 am – 5 pm and Sunday, April 26, from 12 – 5 pm at Exchange Place Living History Farm, 4812 Orebank Road in Kingsport. The festival will feature thousands of plants for sale - perennials, annuals, trees and shrubs - with an emphasis on natives, herbs and heirlooms (including a wide variety of heirloom tomatoes), along with garden related arts and crafts.

Exchange Place invites small/hobby growers to participate in the Spring Garden Fair to increase the variety of plants available. The vendor fee is 10% of gross sales. For more information email epfestivals.gf@gmail.com or see https://exchangeplacetcn.org/?page_id=103. Registration deadline is March 15, 2026.

Southern Appalachian Plant Society 2026 Membership

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Town _____ State _____

Zip _____

Phone (_____) _____

Email _____

For new and renewing members: I am paying \$20.00 for annual membership.
This can be an individual or family membership.

With an additional donation of \$ _____ I am providing gift membership(s) to the person(s) whose membership data is attached to this form. Each gift membership is \$20.00. Include complete membership information for each gift membership.

I am further supporting SAPS programs and activities with an additional tax-deductible donation of \$ _____

I choose to receive the online Wheelbarrow. (The preferred method of providing The Wheelbarrow is digitally. Those who are unable to receive it by email may have a paper copy mailed to them.)

Please send your check made payable to SAPS for the total of your membership, donation and gifts along with this form to:

Shawn Dougherty
911 V I Ranch Road
Bristol, TN 37620

Plant Name _____ (common)
_____ (botanical)

Type: (circle)

Perennial Annual Herb House Plant
Tree Bulb Shrub

Planting Instructions

__Sun __Part Sun __Part Shade __Shade
__Dry Soil __Average Moisture __Moist Soil
__Rich Soil __Average Soil __Sparse Nutrition

Bloom Time:

__Spring __Summer __Fall __Long Bloomer

Height

__Short __Medium __Tall or Vines to __ft.

Special Features: _____

Plant Name _____ (common)
_____ (botanical)

Type: (circle)

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