

April 2025

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Woodford Horticulture Update



Agent Note

Hello, Woodford Countians!

Happy April!

As our weather warms up and you start to work on your lawns, gardens, and landscapes, be aware of your body! Gardening is an excellent form of exercise, but it can be hard on your body. Think back to the last time you worked in the garden. What activities did you do? How long did you work? How did you feel right after? And, most importantly – how did you feel the next day? This video from Utah State University Extension discusses three safe gardening techniques that may be helpful in preventing soreness or pain from working a little too hard in your garden: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3zJW29LMsiA>

Happy Gardening!



Delia Scott, CEA for Horticulture

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Plant Spotlight

Tiarella cordifolia

Common names: Foamflower, False Miterwort, Coalwort

Description

Foamflower is a small, delicate, native herbaceous perennial flower grown in gardens for its neat, interesting foliage and small spikes of creamy white flowers.

Despite its slow growth rate, Foamflower can be used as a groundcover as it spreads by underground rhizomes. It is an excellent ground cover for the heavy shade, and the airy white flowers attract pollinators. It spreads by slender runners to form colonies. It is not tolerant to drought conditions. It is found naturally in moist forests, coves, and well-drained bottomlands. (NC State Extension)



Photo by Debbie Roos, NC State Extension

Dos and Don'ts of Spring Lawn Care in Kentucky

Source: Dr. Gregg Munshaw, UK Extension Turf Specialist

Do: Get your Mower Ready for the Season! Having your mower ready to go before the season starts will save you downtime during the growing season. Sharpen blades. Having sharp mower blades is very important to turf aesthetics and health.

Do: Apply a Pre-emergent Herbicide. Annual grassy weeds such as crabgrass and goosegrass begin to germinate in the spring. By applying a pre-emergent herbicide prior to germination, weed numbers can be drastically reduced and your lawn can have the chance to flourish without fighting weeds for space, nutrients, light, and water. In central and eastern Kentucky, a pre-emergent herbicide should typically be applied prior to around April 15. A good indicator plant for knowing when to apply a pre-emergent herbicide is forsythia. Generally, a pre-emergent application should be applied before forsythia drops its blooms.

Do: Mow at Regular Height. Because the grass grows at a high volume in the spring, it's best to not let the height get too long before mowing. Ideally, never cut off more than 1/3 of the leaf in one mowing. For example, if you want to maintain your lawn at 3 inches, mow when the height reaches about 4.5 inches. Removing more than 1/3 of the leaf blade results in a reduction in root growth. Mow at taller heights to reduce crabgrass populations without the use of herbicides. Recommended heights for lawn grasses in Kentucky are: tall fescue- 3 inches or taller; Kentucky bluegrass - 2.5 inches or taller.

Don't: Apply Nitrogen. The vast majority of nitrogen fertilizer should be applied in the fall. Fall applications improve the health of the lawn and result in a greener lawn in the winter, less spring mowing, and less weeds, heat stress, need for water, and disease problems in summer. The blooming period of forsythia is a good indicator of when crabgrass preventers should be applied. Nitrogen applied in spring and summer promotes growth of warm season weeds such as crabgrass, goosegrass, and bermudagrass. High amounts of nitrogen in spring and summer can also result in increased damage from white grubs in the soil. Adult beetles are attracted to lush lawns, and high nitrogen levels restrict turf rooting, which compounds the damage from the white grubs feeding on the turf roots.

Don't: Apply Weed and Feed Products. Do not apply weed and feed products as we don't want to be applying nitrogen to our cool-season lawns in the spring.

Don't: Seed in the Spring. The best time of year to seed lawns is in the early fall, from mid-August to mid-September. A spring planting has significant competition between seedlings and grassy weeds, and the immature seedlings can struggle with summer heat and drought.

For more information about home lawn care in Kentucky, please contact the Woodford County Cooperative Extension Service or visit:

<https://ukturf.ca.uky.edu/tips-and-recommendations-maintaining-home-lawns>



Preparing for Severe Weather: What You Need to Know

By Tony Edwards – National Weather Service Charleston, WV



In parts of the Deep South, the risk of severe thunderstorms persists throughout the winter months. For us here in the Bluegrass State, however, we're quickly approaching a time when thunderstorms become both more frequent and more intense. As winter storms make way for spring, severe weather — including damaging winds, hail, and even tornadoes—becomes the primary concern.

As I write this article in mid-March, much of the Bluegrass State is already facing the threat of severe weather, a common occurrence for this time of year. Data from the National Weather Service's Storm Prediction Center reveals that the likelihood of severe weather increases as March progresses, peaking in mid-June at around 4%. This means, based on historical data alone, residents of Kentucky have a 4% chance of experiencing damaging winds, hail larger than quarters, or a tornado within 25 miles of their home in the middle of June! The risk then significantly decreases by mid-September.

Given this, now is the time to start preparing for the upcoming severe weather season. The first step is simple: be aware that severe weather is a real possibility. Make checking your local forecast part of your daily routine to stay informed and prepared.

Did You Know? The National Weather Service (NWS) offices that serve Kentucky offer a 24-hour recorded weather forecast, and in many cases, you can even speak to a live person if you have questions about the forecast. Contact your local NWS office to learn more!

SEVERE WEATHER

HAZARDS



Over 280 fatalities occur each year in the U.S. from thunderstorm related hazards.

weather.gov/safety

TORNADO
Take shelter immediately in a sturdy structure



LARGE HAIL
Move indoors away from windows



SEVERE WIND
Move indoors away from windows

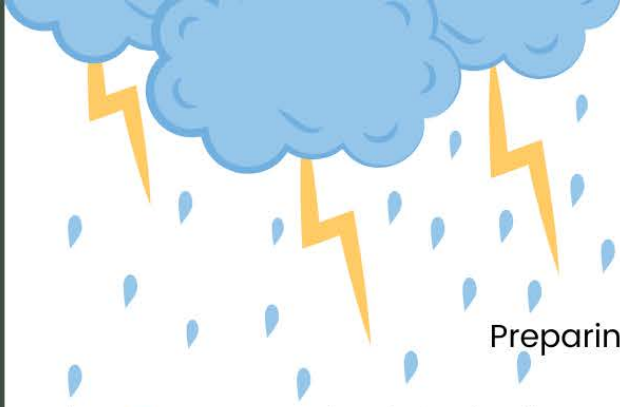


FLOODING
Avoid rising creeks and water covered roads



LIGHTNING
Move indoors if you hear thunder





Preparing for Severe Weather

When severe weather is in the forecast, it's essential to take action ahead of time. Start by ensuring you have access to emergency supplies. This is particularly important if you live in an area prone to flooding and might need to evacuate on short notice.

Make sure you know where your safe spaces are. In most cases, this is the lowest floor of your house—preferably a basement. If you don't have a basement, an interior room with no windows and doors will suffice. If you own livestock, consider moving them to a protected area, especially if hail is in the forecast.

Stay Informed on Severe Weather Days

When severe weather is expected, it's crucial to stay vigilant. Be prepared to adjust outdoor plans if necessary and remain alert to weather updates.

Did You Know? NOAA Weather Radios are specialized devices designed to broadcast weather information and activate alarms when severe weather alerts are issued. Many models run on battery or solar power and do not include an AM/FM radio. You're likely near a transmitter, making this a reliable option to stay updated. Check out these handy radios at your local store to keep your home prepared.

Understanding Watches and Warnings

Severe Thunderstorm and Tornado Watches: Issued when conditions are favorable for severe weather or tornadoes in the near future.

Severe Thunderstorm and Tornado Warnings: Issued when severe weather or tornadoes are occurring or imminent. This is when you need to act fast!

When a warning is issued, take shelter immediately. You may only have seconds to respond, so knowing what to do and where to go is essential.

Buzzing for Bee Club

Local opportunity to get hands-on learning
about our fuzzy buzzy best friends!

3rd Wednesday each month

5:00PM Hive Inspection

6:00 PM Club Meeting

RSVP:

Attending EITHER or BOTH
Hive Inspection | Club Meeting

For further info, contact Joe Lacefield

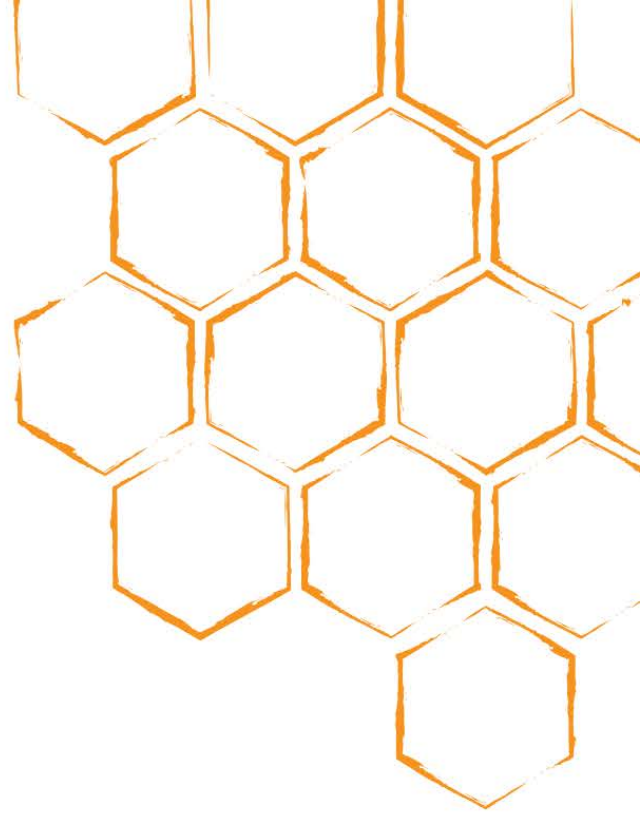
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Calendar of Upcoming Events

April
1

Woodford Co. Monarch Waystation
Grant applications open

April
16

Bee Club Meeting at Woodford
County Extension Office

April
26

Earth Day Tree Giveaway at
Falling Springs Park

May
10

Annual Master Gardener Plant
Sale at Falling Springs Park

May
29

UK Cooperative Extension
Alpha-gal Webinar

Wild Onion vs Wild Garlic

(by Amanda Sears, Madison Co. Extension Horticulture Agent)

Can you tell the difference between the two plants in the pictures? If not, you are not alone! These two plants are very similar. One is wild garlic, *Allium vineale* (right photo) and the other is wild onion, *Allium canadense* (left photo). These plants can grow in a variety of areas, both in the shade and in the sun. They are common in the lawn but may also pop up in flowerbeds. While closely related (both are in the Lily family, Liliaceae), there are a couple of ways to tell them apart. Wild onion has a flatter blade, while garlic has hollow leaves that are more rounded and pointed at the top. If unsure, cut the blade in half horizontally. If it appears hollow, then the plant is wild garlic. Wild garlic leaves can also appear curved or curled. If you have a keen sense of smell, you may also be able to detect the difference as each has an odor similar to its domesticated cousin. For more information on these plants (including controls), go to <https://extension.psu.edu/wild-onion-and-wild-garlic>.



Wild Onion



Wild Garlic

Garden Calendar Quick Tips: April

- Cut back ornamental grasses to 4-6" from the ground.
 - Remove flower stalks from bulbs like daffodils and tulips. Apply fertilizer and make sure to leave the foliage to die back naturally. The leaves provide food for next year's flowers.
 - Continue planting trees and shrubs this month.
 - When mulching trees, add 2-3" of mulch, and do not put mulch against trunks! Avoid "volcano" mulching!
 - You can begin trimming evergreens now through late summer. However, pruning after the spring flush of growth will result in less re-growth.
 - Both Butterflybush (*Buddleia davidii*) and Bluebeard (*Caryopteris x clandonensis*) bloom on the current year's growth. Wait until you see green buds, then prune back to a set of healthy leaf buds.
 - Add organic matter to flower beds and garden plots. Incorporate into the soil where possible.
 - Edge garden beds for a crisp, clean look. This will also keep creeping weeds from encroaching as rapidly.
- Apply new mulch to flower garden beds as needed. Total mulch depth should not exceed 3-4." A 2" layer of mulch is usually sufficient.
- Sharpen mower blades. Clean cuts make for a healthier and more attractive lawn.
 - If you start seedlings indoors, gradually toughen them up with brief trips outdoors on nice days. Start with short times in a shady spot at first because they will sunburn easily.
 - Plant cool season flowers such as pansies, dianthus, and snapdragons now.
 - Plant warm season flowers after May 15.

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Woodford County Extension Master Gardener Page:
<https://www.facebook.com/WoodfordCountyMasterGardeners>