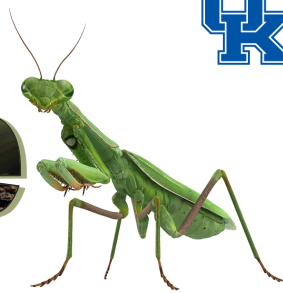


# Boone County Horticulture

## May-June 2025 Newsletter

 **Martin-Gatton**  
College of Agriculture,  
Food and Environment  
University of Kentucky.

**Cooperative Extension Service**  
Boone County  
P.O. Box 876  
Burlington, KY 41005  
(859) 586-6101  
boone.ca.uky.edu



### Front Porch Flowers: **Geraniums**

*By Sophia Becker  
Boone County Extension  
Horticulture Assistant*

If you're looking for a flower that offers big blooms, adaptability, and little care, geraniums may be the most versatile plant to consider for your home this spring. Whether used as vibrant bedding plants, charming container accents, or trailing stars in hanging baskets, geraniums offer a colorful and dependable presence in any outdoor space.

#### **Annual Geraniums: Zonal, Ivy, and Interspecific**

The most common geranium found in garden centers is *Pelargonium zonale*, commonly known as "zonal geraniums". These annuals are typically upright, bushy, or compact in form, and produce large, bold blooms in shades of red, pink, purple, and white throughout the growing season. Zonal geraniums thrive in full to partial sun and prefer dry, well-drained soil. When well cared for, they usually grow between 1 to 2 feet tall and wide, though dwarf varieties are also available. With their vibrant color, sun-loving nature, and ease of care, zonal geraniums are a favorite choice for beginners and seasoned gardeners alike.



*(Continued)*

## Quick TIP

"Deer-resistant" annuals include: Ageratum, Snapdragon, Wax Begonia, Cleome, Dahlia, Foxglove, Blanket Flower, and Lobelia. Resistant perennials include: Yarrow, Anemone, Columbine, Goats beard, Astilbe, Shasta Daisy, Coreopsis, Bleeding Heart, and Coneflower.

### **Cooperative Extension Service**

Agriculture and Natural Resources  
Family and Consumer Sciences  
4-H Youth Development  
Community and Economic Development

### **MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT**

Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, physical or mental disability or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. Reasonable accommodation of disability may be available with prior notice. Program information may be made available in languages other than English. University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Kentucky Counties, Cooperating. Lexington, KY 40506



Disabilities  
accommodated  
with prior notification.

Unlike their upright cousins, *Pelargonium peltatum*, or ivy geraniums trail gracefully, up to 48 inches, making them perfect for hanging baskets or as a cascading accent in pots and window boxes. They also prefer full sun to part sun and well-drained soil, performing best when kept slightly on the dry side. With their glossy, slender, ivy-like leaves and delicate blooms, ivy geraniums add an elegant touch to vertical gardening arrangements.

Interspecific geraniums are hybrid varieties created by crossing zonal and ivy geraniums, combining the best traits of both. They feature large, vibrant blooms in a wide range of colors, along with a semi-trailing growth habit that makes them a great middle-ground option between upright and trailing types. Like their parent plants, they prefer full to partial sun and drier, well-drained soil, making them well-suited for containers, hanging baskets, or sunny garden beds. In addition to their visual appeal, interspecific geraniums are prized for their strong disease resistance and improved heat tolerance, making them a reliable choice for summer gardens.

#### **Perennial Geraniums: Cranesbill**

Perennial geraniums, often called “hardy geraniums” or “cranesbill”, are a dependable choice for Kentucky gardeners looking for lasting color and structure. These tough plants are well-suited to borders, pathways, and ground cover, thanks to their dense, spreading growth and long blooming period from late spring to early fall. They’re highly adaptable and can grow in full sun to shade, but they perform best in partial sun, where flowering is most prolific. With minimal care, perennial geraniums bring vibrant blooms and lush foliage to the garden season after season.



Perennial Geraniums, Source: <https://pxhere.com/en/photo/1101560>



To attract hummingbirds, plant beebalm, lobelia, cleome, columbine, delphinium, four-o'clocks, impatiens, petunias, and trumpet vine.

# Quick TIP



## Keeping Birds Away from Ripening Small Fruits

*By Delia Scott,  
Department of Horticulture Extension Associate*

Birds that feed on ripening small fruit can be a problem for homeowners with plantings of blueberries, raspberries, blackberries, gooseberries, currants and grapes.

There are multiple techniques that may be effective in keeping birds away, depending on bird populations and other available foods. These include using bird scare balloons with large eyes on the sides, placing rubber snakes or owls around plants, hanging aluminum pie pans or old CDs that blow in the breeze, or using reflective tape over and around the plants. These techniques are more effective if used before the bird problem develops. Birds will eventually become accustomed to scare devices, so repositioning them frequently is necessary.

Another effective technique controlling bird feeding is the use of exclusion netting. There are many types of netting available, from fine-meshed netting that also excludes insects to large-meshed netting designed exclusively for bird control. Using a structure is often recommended to keep the netting off the plants, as well as to make harvesting more enjoyable.

Once birds have found fruit, it is difficult to discourage them from continued feeding. Birds will eat fruit long before it is considered ripe, so be sure to apply nets or use scare tactics before fruit begins to color.

*Source: Delia Scott, Department of Horticulture Extension Associate*



*Idea for home fruit grower bird netting. Source: <https://www.uky.edu/Ag/Horticulture/masabni/PPT/irrigation.pdf>*



To avoid buildup of moss in lawns, raise mowing height to 2½ to 3 inches, do not over-fertilize or over-irrigate, avoid night watering, and have soil tested to see if a low pH may be deterring turfgrass growth.

# Quick TIP

## Pruning Shrubs: Mastering the Art of Timing

*By Melissa Pilcher  
Boone County Extension  
Horticulture Assistant*



Pruning shrubs can be an intimidating task for many homeowners, but understanding the right techniques and timing can transform your garden into a thriving, blooming paradise. Not only does pruning enhance the aesthetics of your shrubs, but it also promotes healthier growth, increases flower production, and reduces the risk of disease. Using clean, sharp pruners also reduces risk.

For shrubs that bloom in the spring, timing is crucial. These plants flower on wood that developed in the previous summer and fall. To ensure a burst of blooms next spring, prune them immediately after they've finished flowering. Pruning between late summer and early spring could mean cutting off the very buds that would become next year's flowers.

Summer-flowering shrubs, on the other hand, bloom on new growth from the current year. The best time to prune these is in late winter or early spring. This timing encourages fresh growth that will support the blooms of summer, ensuring a vibrant display.

Pruning in late summer and fall can stimulate new growth that may not withstand the harsh winter conditions. The exception is if you're dealing with diseased or damaged branches, which should be addressed immediately.

### Quick TIP

Avoid tomato plants at the nursery that have brown or yellowing leaves. This could be early signs of fungal diseases such as septoria leaf blight or early blight.

To maintain the shape and health of your shrubs, consider removing up to one-third of the oldest wood at ground level. This promotes new growth while keeping the plant's structure intact. For overgrown, twiggy shrubs that have lost their flowering vigor, rejuvenation pruning is key. Cut all stems to six inches in early spring before growth begins. This technique, suitable for shrubs like forsythia, viburnum, and hydrangea, should be done every three to five years. Keep in mind that spring-flowering shrubs will skip a bloom cycle but will flourish in the long run.

By mastering the art of pruning, you'll not only improve the look of your garden but also promote the health and longevity of your plants. So, grab your pruning shears and give your shrubs the care they deserve!

Illustrations of proper pruning techniques can be found at <http://bit.ly/42t62ym>, or for a video demonstration, go to <https://bit.ly/3ReeT1O>



# Annual and Periodical Cicadas

*By Robert Brockman  
Boone County Extension Agent  
for Horticulture*

Love them or hate them, we will likely be seeing plenty of cicadas this summer! Cicadas are split into two primary groups, the annual cicada and the periodical cicada. These groups are easily split up by their size, the color, and most importantly, how often we experience them.

Annual (dog-day) cicadas come out every year in small numbers. There are so few annual cicadas that many of us forget that they are even flying around. They tend to be much larger than the annual cicada and are green in color. Male cicadas are loud enough that it is often easy to locate a single cicada in a tree while it is singing. The cicada killer wasp is a large, scary looking wasp that hunts annual cicadas every year and carries paralyzed cicadas back to its nest. While cicada killer wasps are big and scary looking, they very rarely sting humans and can often be found flying near sandy areas where they build their burrows/nests.



*Cicada laying eggs in twig, which will later fall to ground - Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources - Forestry, Bugwood.org*

Periodical cicadas are the cicadas we typically think about. They come out every thirteen or seventeen years in tremendous numbers. These broods of cicadas live underground, sipping the sap from tree or shrub roots for the majority of their life. They all emerge at the same time to look for a mate during their short adult life. This joint emergence is an attempt to overwhelm predators and increase their chance of reproduction. While they aren't aiming to, they can easily overwhelm us with their loud singing. In 2025, we expect Boone County will be on the outer edge of the emergence of Brood XIV. The seasonal timing of the cicada emergence is based primarily on soil temperature which can vary from year to year. However, we expect that Boone County will likely start to see cicadas emerge in the 2nd or 3rd week of May and that they will last through the end of June.

Periodical cicadas tend to be relatively small and have black bodies with red eyes and orange wing veins. While cicadas eat very little as adults, they do cause damage to tree and shrub twigs when they lay eggs within those twigs. This damage tends to be very minimal to mature plants but can cause significant damage

*(Continued)*

to newly planted trees and shrubs. Twigs with eggs laid in them will eventually snap off and fall to the ground, something we call “flagging”. To prevent damage to young trees, they can be covered with netting in mid-May. This netting can cause the tree to grow in odd shapes so it should be removed as soon as cicadas die out for the season. If you only have a few young trees, you can also build a structure to hang the netting on so that it isn’t restrictive to fast growing branches. Insecticides are not effective as cicadas are so mobile.



*Periodical Cicada—Kansas Department of Agriculture, Bugwood.org*

While swarms of cicadas can be frustrating at times, try to remember how good of a food source they are to other wildlife. It is likely that many more baby wildlife will survive this year due to the added food source.

KENTUCKY  KENTUCKY STATE  
UNIVERSITY  
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

LET'S *Celebrate*

SATURDAY, MAY 17, 2025 | 10 AM - 2 PM

7111 Dixie Hwy, Florence KY 41042

## FREE COMMUNITY EVENT

- Free light lunch
- Hourly door prizes
- Activities for everyone
- Meet Wally Cat
- Meet organizations serving your community
- **Learn all about our free programs and how we're here to help you!**





For more information or to register for any of our classes, visit our website at [boone.ca.uky.edu](http://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.

## Season Extenders

- May 13, 10-11:30am  
Boone County Enrichment Center (Project Rooms)  
Is your goal to have a vibrant and colorful garden throughout the year? Join Melissa Pilcher, Program Assistant for Horticulture, and learn which plants provide color in your garden from spring through winter.

## Residential Rain Gardens

- July 10, 6-7:30pm  
Join us at the Boone County Arboretum's rain garden. We will focus on the benefits as well as the challenges of rain gardens. Installation and maintenance will also be discussed. **Register with the Boone County Arboretum at [bcarboretum.org/events](http://bcarboretum.org/events)**

## Youth Butterfly Walk

- July 22, 10-11:30am  
Are you or your kids interested in butterflies and other pollinators? Join us as we walk through the pollinator garden at the Boone County Arboretum. We will look for butterflies and discuss both the lifecycle and importance of butterflies. **Register with the Boone County Arboretum at [bcarboretum.org/events](http://bcarboretum.org/events)**

## Summer Blooms Walk

- July 24, 6-7:30pm  
Join us as we take a stroll around the Boone County Arboretum. We will be looking at flowering trees, gardens, and prairie. **Register with the Boone County Arboretum at [bcarboretum.org/events](http://bcarboretum.org/events)**



## Boone County 4-H & Utopia Fair **June 23-28, 2025**

- **Sunday, June 22  
2:00-5:00pm  
Registration of Exhibits**
  - Open Crops, Fruits & Vegetables, Honey
  - All 4-H Exhibits in Cloverville including Fruits & Vegetables
  - Open Foods, Art, Hobbies, Heritage Skills, Needlework, Photography, Legos, etc.**(No Gate Admission Sunday)**
- **Sunday, June 29  
2:00-4:00pm  
Release of Exhibits**
  - Visit [boonecountyfair.org](http://boonecountyfair.org) for more information or a list of classes for entry.

# 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/](http://www.bcarboretum.org/)

## Snappy Pea Salad

- ½ pound sugar snap peas, remove strings and stems; cut in half crosswise
- 1 medium cucumber, cut in half lengthwise; scoop out seeds; slice thinly crosswise
- 1 red bell pepper, diced
- 1 cup shredded carrots
- 2 green onions, thinly sliced
- ¼ cup sunflower seeds



In a large mixing bowl, whisk together dressing ingredients until smooth. Add snap peas, cucumber, bell pepper, carrots and green onion to the bowl.

Toss with dressing. Transfer mixture to a serving platter or bowl to serve. Sprinkle with sunflower seeds and serve immediately. You can also make the salad the night before and store in the refrigerator.

### Dressing:

- 3 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 1 tablespoon lime juice
- ¼ cup canola oil
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper

Servings: 8 (½ cup) servings.

Per Serving: 180 calories; 12g total fat; 1g saturated fat; 0g trans fat; 0mg cholesterol; 490mg sodium; 16g carbohydrate; 3g dietary fiber; 10g sugars; 3g protein; 90% Daily Value of vitamin A; 70% Daily Value of vitamin C; 4% Daily Value of calcium; 8% Daily Value of iron

Source: [https://www.planeatmove.com/recipes/?recipe\\_category=0&recipe\\_ingredient\\_id=&recipe-search=pea+salad&x=0&y=0](https://www.planeatmove.com/recipes/?recipe_category=0&recipe_ingredient_id=&recipe-search=pea+salad&x=0&y=0)



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

Robert Brockman  
Boone County Extension Agent  
for Horticulture  
[rdbr232@uky.edu](mailto:rdbr232@uky.edu)

Sophia Becker  
Boone County Extension  
Horticulture Assistant  
[sophia.beckere@uky.edu](mailto:sophia.beckere@uky.edu)

Melissa Pilcher  
Boone County Extension  
Horticulture Assistant  
[melissa.pilchere@uky.edu](mailto:melissa.pilchere@uky.edu)