

The Thymes

FEBRUARY 2025

“On the wind in February snowflakes float still,
Half inclined to turn to rain, nipping, dripping, chill.
Then the thaws swell the streams and swollen rivers swell the sea –
If the winter ever ends, how pleasant it will be!”

- Christina Georgina Rosetti, from “A Year’s Windfalls” 1866 –

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT, Margo Carroll

Dear Cumberland County Master Gardeners,

As we step into February, I want to take a moment to thank each of you for your dedication to gardening, education, and community service. Your efforts make a positive impact on our community. Even in these colder months, there are plenty of ways to stay involved and prepare for the busy spring season ahead!

Get Involved! There are many opportunities for you to engage, learn, and share your expertise:

Join a Committee Team: If you are not ready to join a team, well, then come and sit in at one of the meetings or activities; there is a Committee Team list attached. It’s fun and rewarding to get together with other Master Gardeners while doing some good.

Garden Festival Yard Sale: The Yard Sale at this year’s Flower, Lawn & Garden Festival will once again be happy to take any

garden or household items, and new for 2025, the yard sale will also include plants! Earn some extra volunteer hours while you’re working in your own garden thinning out those plants by potting them up and donating them to be sold at our Flower Lawn and Garden Yard Sale fundraiser, April 25th & 26th.

Attend the MG Board Meeting: The Board meetings are held each month at “The Country Store” on the third Tuesday at 1:00. This is the place to bring your ideas for projects, fundraising and anything else that our Master Gardener group could get involved in to share the positivity of gardening and growing.

New Member Mentorship: Attend classes and welcome the new 2025 Master Gardeners Intern Class. Every Tuesday, beginning January 28th through April 22nd, the new class will meet from 9:00-12:00. You

are welcome and encouraged to attend these classes and get to know the members of this year’s class; plus, you’ll earn both volunteer and CEU (Continuing Education) Hours! A class schedule that includes topics of each session is included in this newsletter.

Your involvement makes a difference, whether you’re volunteering, attending meetings, or sharing gardening tips with neighbors. Let’s continue to grow together and make an impact in our community.



Looking forward to seeing you soon!

Warmly, *Margo*

Extension Master Gardener Intern Training 2025



Schedule

January 28th

Local Training Kickoff- Meet the Cumberland County Master Gardeners

Weekly Schedule: Live teaching from 9-10:30 central, via zoom webinar. Two 45 minute lectures with a 1:30 hour local lab /tour following.

Feb. 4th - Introduction to TEMG and TN climates and geography- EMG Workgroup (Chaps 1,2)

Feb. 11th- Stewardship in TN- Andrea Ludwig and Emily Richards (Chapter 4)

Feb. 18th- Soils and soil management- Gregg Upchurch and Melody Rose (Chapters 5,6)

Feb. 25th- Botany and Propagation- Natalie Bumgarner and Lucas Holman (Chapter 3)

Mar. 4th- Sustainable landscape design and herbaceous plants- Mike Ross and Celeste Scott (Chapters 7,9)

Mar. 11th- Woody ornamentals and trees- Taylor Reeder and Lee Rumble (Chapter 8)

Mar. 18th- Turfgrass and weed management- Becky Bowling and Mitchell Mote (Chapter 10)

Mar. 25th- Entomology and integrated pest management- Seth Whitehouse and Chris Cooper (Chapter 13)

Apr. 1st- Plant pathology- Celeste Scott and Justin Stefanski (Chapter 14)

Apr. 8th- Vegetables- Amy Dunlap and Melody Rose (Chapter 11)

Apr. 15th- Fruits- Gregg Upchurch and Dave Lockwood (Chapter 12)

Apr. 22nd- Supporting pollinators and great plants for pollinators- Jennifer Tsuruda and Taylor Reeder (Chapter 16)

Upcoming Events



**It's Time
to pay
Your
Membership
Dues**

Pay by check at
the next meeting,
or mail to: CCMG
PO Box 483,
Crossville, TN
38557



FEBRUARY

- 4** 9:00-12:00 2025 MG INTERN CLASS - at the COUNTRY STORE
TOPIC: TN CLIMATES
Every one welcome! EARN CEU & Volunteer hours.
- 4** 1:00-3:00 MEMBERSHIP MEETING - at the COUNTRY STORE
This will be a full Membership Meeting and will cover items from the January meeting (that was cancelled) plus any new topics. (No meal, no speaker)
- 11** 9:00-12:00 2025 MG INTERN CLASS - at the COUNTRY STORE
TOPIC: Stewardship
Every one welcome! EARN CEU & Volunteer hours.
- 18** 9:00-12:00 2025 MG INTERN CLASS - at the COUNTRY STORE
TOPIC: Soils
Every one welcome! EARN CEU & Volunteer hours.
- 18** 1:00-2:30 BOARD MEETING - at the COUNTRY STORE
Everyone welcome! The board discusses projects, budgets and things to come.
- 25** 9:00-12:00 2025 MG INTERN CLASS - at the COUNTRY STORE
TOPIC: Botany & Propagation
Every one welcome! EARN CEU & Volunteer hours.
- 26** 1:00-3:00 CLASSES AT THE GARDEN
TOPIC: Turf Up-Weeds Down
Indoor Classroom Plateau Discovery Garden

MARCH

- 4** 9:00-12:00 2025 MG INTERN CLASS - at the COUNTRY STORE
TOPIC: SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPE & HERBACEOUS PLANTS
Every one welcome! EARN CEU & Volunteer hours.
- 4** 1:00-3:00 MEMBERSHIP MEETING - at the COUNTRY STORE
SPEAKER: CCMG Renee Lloyd- "Greenhouses"
Renee has many years of growing in her own greenhouse, and lot's of great information to share.
(Meal TBD)
- 11** 9:00-12:00 2025 MG INTERN CLASS - at the COUNTRY STORE
TOPIC: WOODY ORNAMENTALS & TREES
Every one welcome! EARN CEU & Volunteer hours.

How To Grow Ginger As A Houseplant – And Have Fresh Ginger All Year Long!

- Article suggestion by Janet Russell -

Did you know that you can grow ginger indoors as a houseplant the whole year round – not only will it give you amazingly fresh ginger whenever you want – but also an incredibly beautiful houseplant to boot!

It's true! Growing ginger indoors is a great way to add beautiful greenery throughout your home and give healthy, delicious flavor to all kinds of dishes and drinks in your kitchen. And you won't believe just how it simple and easy it is to grow and maintain!

Ginger is actually a power packed herb and a spice all in one. The tuberous roots and plants grow as an herb. However, when dried and created into a powder, ginger is classified as a spice. But however you use it, its benefits go well beyond just its great flavor. *The ginger plant is an herb. But the roots create a nutritious and*

delicious spice when dried. The good news is when you grow your own – you can have it however you like!



Ginger has long been known for its healing and medicinal value. Its benefits include aiding in digestion, helping the circulatory system and boosting your immune system. Which, of course, is all the more reason to grow this beautiful plant right inside your home all year long!

There are several options for growing your own ginger as a houseplant. The most common is by purchasing ginger root straight from a nursery or greenhouse and allowing it to sprout and grow. You can also purchase an existing plant already potted up as a houseplant.

If you are lucky enough to happen to know someone already growing their own ginger,

you can also simply take a cutting from the roots of the existing plant. That being said, for most, growing ginger from a root is the easiest and most economical of all.

Growing Ginger From A Root

Propagating a new ginger plant all begins from the root of the plant. The roots have small nodules or “eyes” (much like a potato does) that produce new growth.

Much like when planting a potato, slicing a portion of the ginger root can create a new plant. That is, as long as it has a nodule or two for sprouting. As noted above, one of the best things about ginger is that it can be continually grown from cuttings. All without ever harming the original stock's growing habits.

One note on starting ginger plants from roots. Although you might be tempted to start ginger plants from roots purchased from a local grocery store, it is usually a futile effort.

With ginger root in stores, like many other vegetables and herbs, the roots go through a heat process to kill off pathogens. And the process will often leave the ginger root unable to sprout new growth. The other issue is that store-bought ginger is also often treated with chemicals that leave it less likely to sprout.

Ginger is a heavy feeder, and requires fertile, well-drained soil to grow and develop maximum size and flavor. When planting or transplanting, always start by using a good-quality potting mix. Without good soil and drainage, the roots of ginger will easily rot and can quickly kill the plant.

When growing as a houseplant, select a container that will allow for adequate root growth. Ginger needs a lot of space to develop. Pots that are least 8 to 10 inches in diameter work best. They allow for enough surface area for the roots to develop full flavor.

Potting Up Ginger

Cut your ginger before planting, being sure to allow for a few nodules on each root that will be planted. Set the ginger aside out in the air for a few days after cutting to allow the cutting area to scab over a bit.

Next, fill your pot with about 4 inches of potting soil in the bottom. Then, set your ginger root cuttings down into the soil. Make sure the eyes or nodules are pointing up so the plant can sprout more quickly. Press the ginger root into the soil slightly to set it into place.

Next, cover the ginger root with more potting soil, adding enough that the top of the root is under a 1/2" of soil. To finish, slightly moisten the soil. Not it's time to wait. And wait. And wait some more!

A Lengthy Sprouting Time –

Unfortunately, ginger isn't fast when it comes to sprouting. In fact, it can take upwards of 8 to 10 weeks to see the first sprouts pop through the soil. The key to success is all in keeping the soil moist and warm to encourage sprouting while waiting.

Once it has come through the soil, simply remove the plastic lid or wrap. Then, place the plant in a warm location that receives plenty of indirect lighting. In its natural setting, ginger grows best in shadier locations. By mimicking those same lower light level conditions indoors, it will help the plant grow strong and healthy.

When it comes to long term care, proper watering and fertilizing are big keys to success. You need to water ginger often enough so that the soil never dries out for more than a day at the most.

Slightly moist soil is best for growth, but be careful not to over water and saturate the soil. Overly wet soils will rot the plant's roots if they are sitting in heavy moisture constantly.

As mentioned, ginger is a heavy feeder, so fertilizing is a must for promoting strong growth. Fertilize every 4 weeks with a light solution of an all-purpose, well-balanced organic fertilizer. This will give the plant plenty of nutrients to grow to full size.

You can harvest ginger as a young, tender root – or allow it to grow to full maturity and harvest with a more robust flavor.



Young ginger will have a lighter, milder flavor. It is usually tender, so peeling is not even necessary. To harvest young ginger, gently lift the roots from the pot and carefully slice off a section. Place back into the pot immediately, covering with soil to keep the remaining roots and plant healthy.

To harvest more mature ginger, allow the plant to continue to grow until the roots have filled out, and the skin has toughened up. Mature ginger will require peeling before using, but the flavor is deeper, spicier, and more complex than young ginger.

For further information, please refer to the article source:

<http://thisismygarden.com/>



*Here delicate snow-stars, out of the cloud,
Come floating downward in airy play,
Like spangles dropped from the glistening crowd
That whiten by night the milky way.*

From “The Snow Shower,” by William Cullen Bryant (1794-1878)

Teas in the Garden

Sue Parch

The TEA committee held its first 2025 meeting on January 13 and member willingness to take on responsibilities means the TEAs will continue. Thanks to returning members Julia Wood, Rita Reali and Michelle Cole and new members Deni Martin, Elaine Hanson, Laura Reister and Lisa Briggs from chair Sue Parch.



Our summer TEA, on June 14, will have a Honey Bee theme. Foods, decor, favors, sale products, and speaker will all focus on honey. The September 13 TEA theme is cranberry & orange. Tickets at \$25 per person will be available in March through our online service Eventeny

The group also agreed to take on the responsibility of the Tea Booth to be set up at our FLAG Festival. Our intent is to offer tea, coffee, water and individually wrapped pastries for sale to supplement the food offerings at the show.



Save the date
APRIL 25 & 26 2025



Marketplace-Food-Music-Demos
Cumberland County Community Complex
Crossville, Tennessee

CCMG Committees Teams Positions : 2025

Ask a Master Gardener Desk	Debbie Ward
Bulb Sales Spring & Fall	Linda Ferris, Carolyn Jozwiak
Classes at the Garden	Julia Wood
Community Outreach	Connie Farley
Crossville Planting Projects	Carolyn Jozwiak
Decorating	
E-Mail Coordinator	Alan Baker
Fall Gardeners Festival	Leslie Mullican
Flower, Lawn & Garden Festival	Leslie Mullican, Margo Carroll
Garden Teas	Sue Partch
Hospitality	Ron & Rosie Drechnik Andrea & Tony Capannola
Intern Class Hosting & Welcome Team	Rita Reali, Julie Lesko / Greg Recht, Barbara Blackford, Carla Lund
KinderGarden	Sue Maruska
Membership Contact list	Alan Baker
Merchandise / Publications, Membership clothing	SK Smallwood & Margo Carroll
Newsletter	Jan Pitzer
PDG Spring Plant Sale	Leslie Mullican
PDG Coordinator Director	Vicki May
PDG Umbrella Committee Representative	Mike Barron
Plant Growing & Propagation	
Plateau Discovery Garden UT Membership	Erin Fletcher
Publicity	Kristi Dubois, Erin Fletcher
Rain Barrel Program	
Facebook - Members Group	Alan Baker
Facebook - Public Page	Erin Fletcher
Instagram - Public Page	
YouTube - Public Page	
Search For Excellence	
Speakers Bureau	Carol Burdett
Website	Kelsey Whitefield, Alan Baker

corrections 1/5/2025

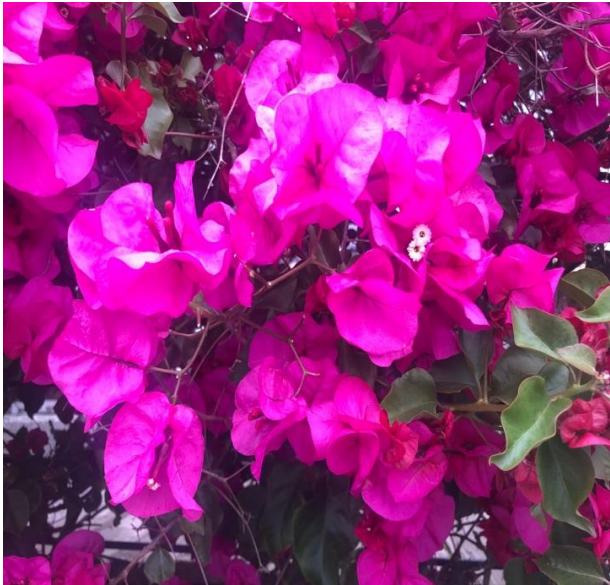
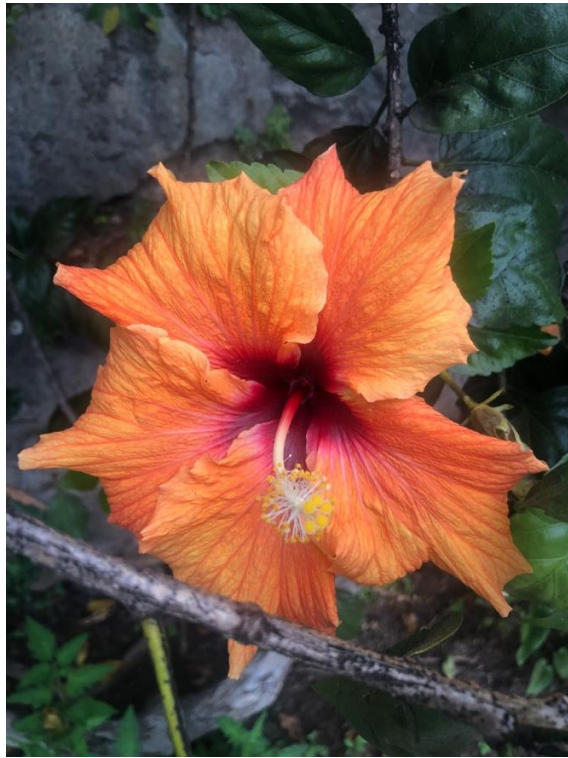
Gardener's To-Do List for February

- **Blooming Branches** – When buds of quince, forsythia, spirea, and dogwood swell, cut some branches for indoor blooms. Make long, angled cuts, and place them in a large vase of warm water. Change the water every few days.
- **Stored Bulbs** – Check stored corms and tubers of caladiums and other summer bulbs for signs of rot. Dispose of any diseased bulbs before others become infected. If your storage area is too moist, move the bulbs to a cool, drier place.
- **Pruning** – Prune ornamental trees and shrubs that are overgrown or need shaping. Remove suckers and water spouts. Wait until spring flowering shrubs (including azaleas) have finished blooming before cutting them back.
- **Assemble** – Organize your seed-starting supplies if you want to start early. Test germinate saved seeds to see what's viable. Some that may handle seeding indoors this month include leeks, spinach, Swiss chard, kale and many herbs.
- **Sharpen Cutting Tools** – Clean blades and oil moving parts.
- **On A Fair Day** – Get busy on hardscaped areas like along the driveway, paths and patio, where leaves have scuttled in and built up.
- **Start Seeds Indoors** – Such as peppers and micro-greens. Kohlrabi and beets can be started indoors, transferred outside and covered with frost cloth.
- **Prepare Your Soil** – Add compost now for optimal spring planting.



Remember to send your articles for next month's newsletter to Jan Pitzer at jprp1990@gmail.com

Without your valuable input, this newsletter can't deliver the spirit of our vibrant membership.



*If you look the right way, you can see that
the whole world is a garden.*

Frances Hodgson Burnett

Our winter is South America's summer. Santiago and Valparaiso, Chile are blooming!