



GNO Gardening Magazine

February 2022

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The delicate flowers of a male Drummond's swamp maple. Photo by Chris Dunaway



Look at Me:

Drummond's Swamp Maple/Swamp Red Maple (*Acer rubrum* var. *drummondii*)

One of the first heralds of a Southern Louisiana spring are the bright red and burgundy colored flowers of the Drummond's swamp maple (*acer rubrum* var. *drummondii*)

bursting open in a colorful display in our area swamps, but increasingly in our yards and along roadsides as well. The I-10 corridor between New Orleans and Baton Rouge is lined with these lovely spring bloomers, which typically hit their peak bloom time in early to mid-February. After blooming, they put on another show with clusters of bright red helicopter-like seeds called "samaras".

The swamp red maple is native to North America, with its range stretching from the Gulf Coast north to southern Illinois, and from southeastern Texas into the Atlantic seaboard. It prefers moist to wet soil conditions but it is not as cold hardy as the other red maples found in North America. Like other maples, the subspecies Drummond's swamp maple has a classic maple leaf shape with three to five lobes in a palmate, opposite

arrangement. The underside of the leaves is slightly hairy, and the leaf margins are slightly serrated. The petioles of the leaves are usually red. It is deciduous and has some touches of fall color when the leaves



A Drummond's Swamp Maple displaying fall color.

prepare to drop. This tree can reach heights of 70-100 feet and the trunks are covered with an attractive smooth, pale grey bark. The flowers are unisexual, with female trees flowering in red only, and male trees flowering with yellow and red blooms. Trees bearing both male and female flowers are also found occasionally. This tree is named for a Scottish botanist who collected specimens in the southern United States in 1830. Thomas Drummond (1790-

1835) encountered this tree in southern Texas, and it now bears his name. He collected 750 species of plants and 150 avian specimens on this trip before dying in Cuba in 1835.

As a landscape tree, I am seeing many newly planted Drummond's red maples in the Greater New Orleans area. They are well suited to our heavy, compacted, wet soils and thrive in full to partial sun. It prefers a

Look At Me – Drummond's Swamp Maple

slightly acidic pH (6.5-6.8) but tolerates our more alkaline soils (7.2-8.0). Winter is a great time to plant a swamp red maple, planting during the dormant season gives the roots adequate time to develop before the summer heat. The swamp red maple has wildlife value, with squirrels and many species of birds enjoying the seeds, and deer utilizing the leaves as a browse source. Several species of moths and insects utilize the tree as a host plant and habitat. The showy Cecropia moth utilizes it as a larval host plant. When looking for a tree that provides seasonal color and visual interest, this is one to consider. The springtime flowers and samaras provide a bright pop of red color in the landscape. The silvery, hairy undersides of the leaves shimmer in the summer winds, especially ahead of storms. In the fall, the leaves turn shades of yellow, red, and orange before fading to brown. The grey, smooth trunks also provide sculptural interest in the winter. If you do not mind raking leaves (or leaving the leaves), the swamp red maple is a fantastic native tree for our area. It's being planted increasingly as a street tree to help in reducing urban flooding in stormwater mitigation projects. I've noticed that several of the tree planting nonprofits working in the area are utilizing it as a street tree in beautification plantings as well.

~Anna Timmerman



Classic palmate leaf shape with five lobes. The leaf at far left has been inverted to show the silvery underside.



Photo by Chris Dunaway

A cluster of the "winged" seed pods called Samaras.



Photo by Chris Dunaway

The male flowers are attractive but easy to overlook.

February Vegetable Planting Guide

Crop	Recommended Variety
Beets	Detroit Dark Red, Kestrel, Red Ace F1, Ruby Queen
Carrots	Danvers 128, Purple Haze, Thumbelina, Apache, Enterprise, Maverick, Sugar Snax 54
Collards	Champions, Flash, Georgia Southern, Top Bunch, Vates
Eggplants (seeds)	Dusky, Epic, Night Shadow, Black Beauty
Irish Potatoes	Dark Red Norland, Red LaSoda, Kennebec, Yukon Gold,
Kale	Siberian, Vates
Kohlrabi	Early Purple Vienna, Early White, Vienna, Winner
Lettuce	Esmeralda, New Red Fire F1, Nevada, Tall Guzmanine Elite
Mustard Greens	Florida Broadleaf, Greenwave, Red Giant, Southern Giant Curled, Savannah, Tendergreen
Pepper, Bell (Seeds)	Aristotle XR3, Jupiter, King Arthur, Paladin, Golden Summer, Purple Beauty, Tequila
Pepper, Hot (Seeds)	Grande, Tula, Mariachi, Mitla, El Rey FI, Tobasco, Jalapeño M, Super Cayenne II
Radishes	Cherriette, Champion, White Icicle, April Cross
Shallots	Matador, Prism
Snap Beans, Bush	Blue Lake 274, Bronco, Contender, Festina, Lynx, Provider, Roma II
Snap Beans, Pole	Derby, Blue Lake, Kentucky Blue, McCaslin, Rattlesnake, Kentucky Wonder 191
Spinach	Bloomsdale Long Standing, Melody, Tyee, Unipak 151
Sweet Corn	Merit, Silver Queen, Honey ‘n Pearl, Ambrosia
Swiss Chard	None Given
Tomatoes (seeds)	Bella Rosa, Fletcher, Tribute, BHN 1021, Amelia, Dixie Red
Turnip Greens	Alamo, All Top, Purple, Top White Globe, Seven Top, Southern Green, Top Star, Tokyo Cross

Louisiana Super Plant – Bandana Lantana (*Lantana camara*)

One year ago, in the February 2021 edition of GNO Gardening, we ran an article about

lantanas. In it we discussed the different types of lantanas, the origins of lantana and growing lantanas. Check it out for more general information about lantanas. This time we want to pay particular attention to the Bandana Lantana Variety Series.

Bandana lantana was chosen as a Louisiana Super Plant in 2013 and continues to be a popular landscape plant as more colors are developed and released. Lantanas in general have some really nice qualities:

- Blooms all Summer through Fall.
- Heat, humidity, and drought tolerant (even full-sun New Orleans summers).
- Tolerant of a broad range of soil conditions.
- Deer resistant.
- Attracts pollinators, including butterflies and hummingbirds.

The Bandana Lantana Series has some added qualities that make it an even better landscape plant selection, especially in urban areas:

- Mounding, compact, dense habit.
- Size 20-26" high by 18-26" wide.

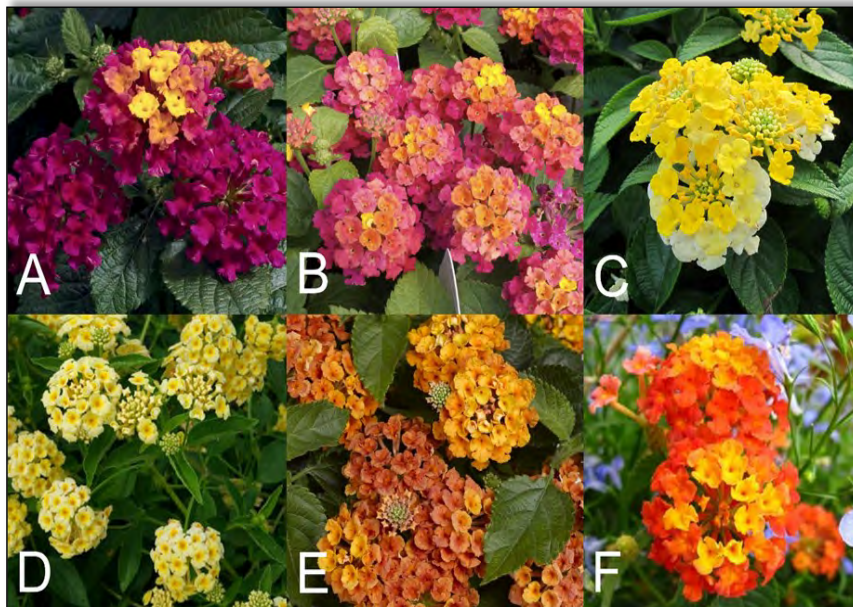


Figure 1: Bandana Series Varieties: A-Cherry, B-Cherry Sunrise, C-Lemon Zest, D-Light Yellow, E-Orange, F-Orange Sunrise



Figure 2: Bandana Series varieties: G-Peach, H-Pink, I-Red, J-Rose, K-White, L-Yellow

- Multiple color varieties available.
- Can be grown inground or in containers.

If you plant Bandanas inground you want to space them about 15-24" apart to allow for full plant development. If growing in containers, they can be grown singly in 2-3 gallon containers or as a thriller in a larger multi-plant container arrangement.

If you're looking for a tough, easy-to-grow plant, with attractive flowers and bloom longevity that will bring pollinators to your landscape, then a colorful Bandana Lantana is the Louisiana Super Plant for you.

The Bandana series of lantana from Syngenta

includes (but may not be limited to) the following varieties: Cherry, Cherry Improved, Cherry Sunrise, Lemon Zest, Light Yellow, Orange, Orange Sunrise, Peach, Pink, Pink Improved, Red, Red Improved, Rose, Rose Improved, White, Yellow, and Yellow Improved.

~Dr. Joe Willis

Pruning Crapemyrtle Trees

The very first thing that you should ask yourself when selecting a crapemyrtle tree for your landscaping is, “How tall do I want the tree to be?” This is important because there are numerous varieties of crapemyrtles that range in mature size from under 1 foot tall to well over 30. Selecting the correct tree for the site is so important because no amount of pruning will make a 30 foot tall tree fit in a spot where you would like a 12 foot tall tree. Trying to force a tree to fit through improper pruning is called crape-murder.

When to Prune:

Although you may prune a tree at any time of year, it is best to prune your crapemyrtles in the winter while they are dormant. Pruning in the winter is less stressful on the trees plus the lack of leaves makes it easier to see the limb structure so that you may see what needs to be removed.

What to Prune:

The first thing to remove are suckers growing from the base. This growth is weak and it will eventually grow to compete with the tree canopy. Next, remove any new shoots sprouting from previous pruning locations. It is pretty common for new shoots to grow from these locations.

Now look for and remove limbs that are broken or

ones that have been improperly pruned. Next look for limbs that cross over and rub against other limbs. Select and remove the least desirable of the two. And Finally look for and remove limbs that are oriented and growing towards the center of the tree. These will frequently be rubbing against other limbs.

How to Prune:

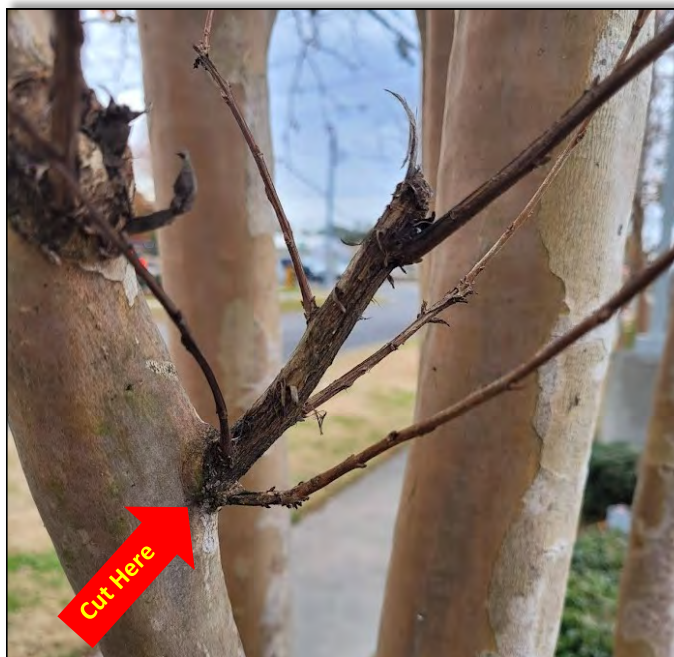
Check the tree a few times per year and remove the suckers and shoots when they are small. Caught early enough, you can easily remove them with your bare hands. Hand held pruners or two-hand loppers should be the only tools that you will need if you prune the tree at least once per year. You may need a limb saw to remove larger branches.

It is important when pruning any tree to make correct cuts. All limbs removed should be cut back to where it connects to the larger branch or trunk. Never cut a limb somewhere in the middle. These stubs will never heal and will become a source of infection and insect predation. Look for the collar where the limb is attached to the trunk and make the cut just above the flare of the collar.

~Chris Dunaway



These crapemyrtles planted next to the road in Metairie have the ideal umbrella shape.



This photo shows the collar of this limb stub where the pruning cut should be made.

Pruning Crapemyrtle Trees



The indicated limb is crossing and rubbing against another branch causing a wound and should be removed.



Suckers from this tree were allowed to grow into competing trunks.



This limb was cut improperly and now has a witches broom of shoots sprouting from the stub.



This photo shows a proper pruning cut which has now been sealed over and protected.

What's Bugging You – Ambrosia Beetle

Xylosandrus crassiusculus

The ambrosia beetle, *Xylosandrus crassiusculus*, is a small boring beetle native to the Asian continent. It was first detected near Charleston, NC in 1974. Since then, it has made its way down to Florida and west into East Texas. The ambrosia beetle attacks many different plant species including pecan, peach, pear, sycamore, crapemyrtle, magnolia, mango, pawpaw, and even muscadine vines. Ambrosia beetles not only burrow into the stems of our trees and shrubs but also bring a fungal organism, *Ambrosiella spp.*, which grows and colonizes the tunnels. The larval stage of the ambrosia beetle will then feed upon the fungi. In nature this is known as a mutualistic relationship.

Ambrosia beetles are so small that are hardly ever noticed by home gardeners. It isn't until we notice the carnage, they leave behind that we know they are even there. When a female beetle locates a suitable host plant she burrows into the heart wood, spreading the fungal spores. It is at this stage in which we notice the small circular strands of compacted frass extruding from the branch. Plants may totally recover from ambrosia beetles if the infestations are relatively small and concentrated on only one side of the stem. If the infestation is extensive the transportation tissues of the plant may become compromised, and decline will result. There is no curative spray for the ambrosia beetle. Once inside a host plant they are protected.

Permethrin and bifenthrin are labeled as trunk sprays and should be used as a preventative on valuable and irreplaceable trees or shrubs.

~Will Afton



Photo by Will Afton

Strands of compacted frass extruding from ambrosia beetle entrance holes in the trunk of a crapemyrtle tree.



Female ambrosia beetle with eggs in plant host. Note white fungal mycelial garden (arrows) in gallery.

Downy Mildew of Brassica

Downy mildew, caused by *Hyaloperonospora parasitica* (formerly *Peronospora parasitica*), is a widespread disease in all areas of the world where brassica crops are grown. Downy mildew is common on cabbage, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, broccoli, kale, kohlrabi, Chinese cabbage, turnip, rutabaga and mustard. The disease is favored by cool (50 to 59°F), wet weather.



Figure 1: Conidiophores and spores on the underside of a brassica leaf.



Figure 2: Downy mildew on cabbage leaf.

Symptoms of downy mildew appear primarily on leaves and flower inflorescences but can occur on all aerial plant parts. The pathogen can infect plants from the seedling stage and throughout the plant's life. Infection in plants past the seedling stage appears as small angular leaf lesions that enlarge and become irregular orange or yellow necrotic patches. A sure sign of downy mildew is the development of conidiophores (fungal fruiting structures) and conidia (fungal spores) on the leaf undersurface. The pathogen can also infect cauliflower curds, broccoli and cabbage heads. In cauliflower, a pale brown discoloration appears on the head surface with gray to black spots and streaks on the head interior. Downy mildew infection also weakens plants and may be

Infection can occur early (in the seedling stage) by airborne spores produced on plant debris or carried in by wind. Splashing rain or water can also spread spores. Since *Hyaloperonospora parasitica* can also infect weeds in the Brassicaceae family, this may also serve as a source of inoculum.

Spores can survive in the soil and on plant debris from previous brassica crops. Once infection occurs, the pathogen spreads and grows and produces more spores that serve as secondary inoculum for spread to other plants and plant parts.

Control of downy mildew involves removal of crop debris, crop rotation and weed control to reduce the sources of primary inoculum. Always plant disease free seedlings and

use resistant varieties where available. Fungicides labelled for use by homeowners on vegetable crops have the active ingredient chlorothalonil or copper. Always read and follow the label for proper use of these and any other pesticides.

~Dr. Joe Willis

Farmers Markets in the GNO Area

Orleans Parish

Crescent City Farmer's Market- Mid-City

500 N. Norman C. Francis

Thursdays from 3-7PM

Walk-up and curbside pre-orders at

www.crescentcityfarmersmarket.org

Crescent City Farmer's Market- City Park

Tad Gormley Stadium parking lot at Marconi and Navarre

Sundays from 8AM-Noon

Preorder contact-free drive through only, info at

www.crescentcityfarmersmarket.org

Crescent City Farmer's Market- Uptown

200 Broadway

Tuesdays from 8AM-Noon

Walk-up and curbside pre-orders, info at

www.crescentcityfarmersmarket.org

SPROUT NOLA ReFresh Market-Truck Farm Table

200 N. Broad (In Whole Foods lobby or in parking lot, weather permitting)

Walk up

SPROUT NOLA ReFresh Market-Lafitte Greenway

2606 St. Louis

Mondays from 3-6PM

Walk up and pre-orders at <https://app.sourcewhatsgood.com/markets/refresh-farmers-market/products>

Vietnamese Farmer's Market

14401 Alcee Fortier Blvd., New Orleans East

Saturdays, 5:30AM-8:30AM

Marketplace at Armstrong Park

901 N. Rampart

Thursdays from 3-7PM

New Orleans French Market

Lower Decatur Street

Daily, 9AM-6PM

Know Dat Grow Dat Microgreens & Produce

Online Sales

<https://www.knowdatgrowdat.com/shop>

Mid-City Arts and Farmer's Market

Comiskey Park, New Orleans

Market dates vary and are on hold due to Covid-19, check <http://midcityaf.org>

Laughing Buddha Farm Hubs

Pick up points vary, pre-orders available

Bywater, Broadmoor, Lakeview, Irish Channel, Mid-City, Algiers Point, Uptown Locations

<https://www.laughingbuddhanursery.com/events>

Barcelo Gardens Farmer's Market- Upper 9th Ward

2301 Gallier Street

Saturdays from 10AM-1PM

Bywater Market at Trap Kitchen-Bywater

1043 Poland Ave

Sundays from 10AM-3PM

Paradigm Farmer's Market-Central City

1131 S. Rampart

Sundays 9AM-Noon

Lot 1701 Small Business and Farmer's Market-Central City

1701 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd.

Every 1st and 3rd Saturday from 11AM to 3PM

BOUNYFUL Farmer's Market-Algiers Point

149 Delaronde St.

First and Third Sundays of the month, from 11AM-3PM

Edgewood Park Market-Edgewood

3317 Franklin Ave.

First market Sunday, May 2nd from 11AM-3PM

New Orleans East Hospital Farmer's Market- New Orleans East

5620 Read Blvd.

First Tuesday of the Month- 3PM-Dusk

Third Thursday of the Month- Noon-3PM

Sheaux Fresh Sustainable Foods- Tremé-Laffite

585 N. Claiborne at Lafitte Greenway (under overpass)

Wednesdays from 2-5PM

Saturdays from 10AM-2PM

Check for current dates/times at www.sheauxfresh.org

Holy Cross Farmer's Market- Holy Cross/Lower 9th Ward

533 St. Maurice

First & Third Saturday of the month, 10:00AM-2PM

St. Charles Parish

German Coast Farmer's Market at Westbank Bridge Park

13825 River Road, Luling, LA

Wednesdays, from 1-5PM

German Coast Farmer's Market at St. Charles

Parish Westbank Regional Library

160 West Campus Drive, Destrehan, LA

Saturdays, from 8AM-Noon

Farmers Markets in the GNO Area

Jefferson Parish

Gretna Farmer's Market

739 Third Street, Gretna
Every Saturday, except the Saturday of Gretna Fest,
8:30AM-12:30PM

Nawlins Outdoor Market

1048 Scotsdale Dr., Harvey
Every Saturday & Sunday, 9AM-5PM

Old Metairie Farmer's Market

Bayou Metairie Park, Between Metairie Lawn Dr. and Labarre
3rd Tuesday of the month, 3:30PM-7:30PM

Westwego Shrimp Lot

100 Westbank Expressway at Louisiana St., Westwego
Daily Mon-Thurs 8AM-6PM, Fri 8AM-7PM, Sat 7AM-7PM,
and Sun 7AM-6PM

Lafreniere Park Market-Metairie

3000 Downs Blvd.

Wednesdays, from 3-7PM

Laughing Buddha Farm Hub-Clearview

4516 Clearview

Store Pickups, preorder online at <https://www.laughingbuddhanursery.com/buy-groceries-1>

Jean Lafitte Town Market-Lafitte

920 Jean Lafitte Blvd.

Last Saturday of the month, 9AM-1PM

Harahan Farmer's Market

6437 Jefferson Hwy., Harahan, LA

Sundays, Noon-4PM

Good Time Guild Farmer's Market at St. Martin's Episcopal Church-Metairie

2216 Metairie Rd.

1st Thursdays monthly, 2PM-7PM

3rd Saturday monthly, 10AM-3PM

Local Independent Garden Centers

Orleans

Urban Roots

2375 Tchoupitoulas St., New Orleans, LA 70130

(504) 522-4949

The Plant Gallery

9401 Airline Hwy., New Orleans, LA 70118

(504) 488-8887

Harold's Plants

1135 Press St., New Orleans, LA 70117

(504) 947-7554

We Bite Rare and Unusual Plants

1225 Mandeville St., New Orleans, LA 70117

(504) 380-4628

Hot Plants

1715 Feliciana St., New Orleans, LA 70117

www.hotplantsnursery.com

Delta Floral Native Plants

2710 Touro St., New Orleans LA 70117

(504) 577-4290

Pelican Greenhouse Sales

2 Celebration Dr., New Orleans, LA 70124

(504) 483-9437

Grow Wiser Garden Supply

2109 Decatur St., New Orleans, LA 70116

(504) 644-4713

Jefferson Feed Mid-City

309 N. Carrollton Ave., New Orleans, LA 70119

(504) 488-8118

Jefferson Feed Uptown

6047 Magazine St., New Orleans, LA 70118

(504) 218-4220

Ninth Ward Nursery

2641 Deslonde St., New Orleans, LA 70117

(504) 296-8398

Crazy Plant Bae

800 N. Claiborne Ave., New Orleans LA 70119

(504) 327-7008

Canopy Plant Company

6030 St. Claude, New Orleans, LA 70117

(504) 381-4033

Too Tall Nursery

2817 N. Roman, New Orleans, LA 70117

tootallfarm@gmail.com

Nice Plants Good Pots

Pop Up and Online Sales

[Etsy.com/shop/NicePlantsGoodPots](https://etsy.com/shop/NicePlantsGoodPots)

Plantery NOLA

Pop Up Locations

www.planterynola.com

Canopy Plant Co.

Pop Up and Online Sales

www.canopyplantco.com

New Orleans Succulent Boutique

Online Sales

<https://sites.google.com/view/nolasucculentshop/home>

Root Life Mobile Plant Nursery

Pop Up Locations

<https://rootlifeplantnursery.com/>

New Orleans Green LLC

Online Sales

www.neworleans-green.com

Plaquemines

Southern Gateway Garden Center

107 Timber Ridge St., Belle Chasse, LA 70037

(504) 393-9300

Belle Danse Orchids

14079 Belle Chasse Hwy., Belle Chasse, LA 70037

(504) 419-5416

St. Charles

Plant & Palm Tropical Outlet

10018 River Rd., St. Rose, LA 70087

(504) 468-7256

Martin's Nursery & Landscape

320 3rd St., Luling, LA 70070

(985) 785-6165

St. Bernard

Renaissance Gardens

9123 W. Judge Perez Dr., Chalmette, LA 70043

(504) 682-9911

Plant Pricks

Pop Up Locations

<https://plantpricks.com/>

Local Independent Garden Centers

Jefferson

Perino's Garden Center	3100 Veterans Memorial Blvd., Metairie, LA 70002	(504) 834-7888
Rose Garden Center	4005 Westbank Expressway, Marrero, LA 70072	(504) 341-5664
Rose Garden Center	5420 Lapalco Blvd., Marrero, LA 70072	(504) 347-8777
Banting's Nursery	3425 River Rd., Bridge City, LA 70094	(504) 436-4343
Jefferson Feed	4421 Jefferson Hwy., Jefferson, LA 70121	(504) 733-8572
Nine Mile Point Plant Nursery	2141 River Rd., Westwego, LA 70094	(504) 436-4915
Palm Garden Depot	351 Hickory Ave., Harahan, LA 70123	(504) 305-6170
Double M Feed Harahan	8400 Jefferson Hwy., Harahan, LA 70123	(504) 738-5007
Double M Feed Metairie	3212 W. Esplanade Ave., Metairie, LA 70002	(504) 835-9800
Double M Feed Terrytown	543 Holmes Blvd., Terrytown, LA 70056	(504) 361-4405
Sunrise Trading Co. Inc.	42 3 rd St., Kenner, LA 70062	(504) 469-0077
Laughing Buddha Garden Center	4516 Clearview Pkwy., Metairie, LA 70006	(504) 887-4336
Creative Gardens & Landscape	2309 Manhattan Blvd., Harvey, LA 70058	(504) 367-9099
Charvet's Garden Center	4511 Clearview Parkway, Metairie, LA 70006	(504) 888-7700
Barber Laboratories Native Plants	6444 Jefferson Hwy., Harahan, LA 70123	(504) 739-5715
Plumeria Insanity Nursery	https://www.facebook.com/Plumeria-Insanity-Nursery-102123651930419	

Soil Vendors

Schmelly's Dirt Farm	8301 Olive St., New Orleans, LA 70118	(504) 535-GROW
Laughing Buddha Garden Center	4516 Clearview Pkwy., Metairie, LA 70006	(504) 887-433
Reliable Soil	725 Reverend Richard Wilson Dr., Kenner, LA 70062	(504) 467-1078
Renaissance Gardens	9123 W. Judge Perez Dr., Chalmette, LA 70043	(504) 682-9911
Rock n' Soil NOLA	9119 Airline Hwy., New Orleans, LA 70118	(504) 488-0908
Grow Wiser Garden Supply	2109 Decatur St., New Orleans, LA 70116	(504) 644-4713

If you would like your licensed retail nursery listed, please email gnogardening@agcenter.lsu.edu

In the Kitchen with Austin

Winter Salad

This salad combines kale, cabbage and apples to make the most satisfying winter salad. You'll be surprised how delicious it is.

Salad Ingredients:

1 bunch curly kale, chopped	¼ cup of your favorite nuts
½ head of green cabbage, chopped	¼ cup of dried cranberries
1 apple, sliced thinly	

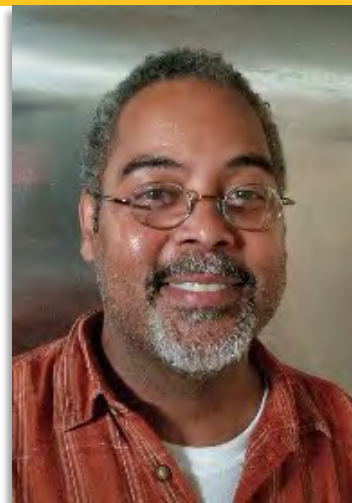
Dressing Ingredients:

¼ cup apple cider vinegar	1 Tbs. honey
¼ cup olive oil	Pinch of salt and black pepper

Directions:

Wash kale and cabbage well before chopping into bite-sized pieces. Place all salad ingredients in large salad bowl.

Place dressing ingredients in a jar with a tight fitting lid. Shake well and pour dressing over salad ingredients. Toss salad to coat evenly and serve. A bit of fresh parmesan cheese added at the end, sends this one over the moon.



Bon Manger!

February Checklist/Garden Tips

February is the month to fertilize hardy fruit trees such as apple, peach, nectarine, fig and fruit bushes such as blackberry and blueberry. Citrus are fertilized in late January or early February. Wait until March to fertilize tender fruit trees like banana, guava and avocado. For information on growing fruit trees in our area click on the link for the LSU AgCenter publication [Louisiana Home Orchard](#).

Plant gladiolus corms this month through mid March. Plant groups of corms every two weeks during the planting season to extend the display of flowers.

Pick snow peas in the vegetable garden frequently. Ideally the pods should be harvested when flat before the seeds begin to enlarge.

You may clip ground covers back now before new growth appears to remove unattractive foliage, rejuvenate the plants and control growth. Liriope, monkey grass, ferns (if browned back by freezes), wedelia, Japanese ardisia and Asiatic jasmine among others can be cut back with a lawn mower adjusted to its highest setting (make sure the blade is sharp), a string trimmer or even hedge clippers on small plantings. Selectively remove unattractive leaves on aspidistra (cast iron plant) and holly ferns by hand.

Keep beds mulched to a depth of two to three inches to control weeds in beds. Use leaves, pine straw or other available materials. Use your bagging lawn mower or shredder to chop up the leaves prior to putting down. This reduces the volume of the leaves, increases surface area to help the leaves break down and release nutrients, reduces matting and fungal growth, reduces movement by wind and makes for a cleaner look. Mulch helps prevent weed seeds from germinating and helps to retain moisture in the soil.

If you are growing caladiums from tubers, plant them indoors this month to get a head start. Plant the tubers in trays or pots of potting soil, placing them in a warm area of the house. Water them when the soil is dry to the touch. As the leaves appear, move them to a sunny windowsill or a shady area outdoors (if day temps are 70ish and evenings in the 60s). Plant pre-sprouted tubers into the garden in early April.

Finish harvesting any citrus fruit remaining on the trees. Quality will begin to decline as the trees get ready to flower.

Onions, shallots, garlic and leeks are susceptible to an insect called thrips which causes small white marks on the foliage called stippling. Heavy infestations can damage foliage to the point that the harvest is reduced. Control thrips with Malathion.

Clean out your pond garden or aquatic garden this month, if you need to. It is advisable to do this if there is a thick layer of gunk on the bottom. It is best to get this done while the weather is cool, the plants are dormant and the fish are less active. Pond cleaning is the best time to divide and repot water and bog plants that are dormant or semi-dormant. Do not divide those in active growth such as Louisiana irises and calla lilies.

Plant rose bushes in well prepared beds with good drainage and plenty of sun. It is important for the graft union to be 2 inches above the soil of the bed. If you plant roses purchased in containers, this was taken care of by the nursery. Just plant the bush so the top of the root ball is level with the soil of the bed. In the case of bare root roses, you must see to this yourself during planting. Finish planting bare root roses by the end of February.

Plant hardy bedding plants now for a spring burst of color. Foxglove, delphiniums, and hollyhocks need to be planted now so that they will bloom before the summer. Plant snapdragons, dianthus, petunia, stock, phlox, and lobelia as spring annuals in sunny areas. Need cool season color in a partial shade area? The best choices are cyclamen, primroses, pansy, viola, nicotiana, foxglove, alyssum and forget-me-not.

Sow some herbs to enjoy this spring into your garden beds or in containers. Chervil, dill, fennel, cilantro, stevia, oregano, parsley, and rosemary can be planted now. Basil needs warmer temperatures, so hold off until the end of the month.

In the vegetable garden, it's time to get spring crops started! Do a soil test to determine what amendments need to be added.

Lawn Care Do's & Don't's

Do:

1. If you have a history of problems with crabgrass or goosegrass, apply a pre-emergent herbicide now. [Click here to see more information on Crabgrass from the LSU AgCenter.](#)
2. Apply selective herbicides and sedge killers to kill off winter weeds growing in the lawn. You may also scout the lawn and remove weeds by hand. Make a game out of it with kids and grandkids.
3. Continue to scout for fungal damage and control with fungicides if necessary. The most prevalent is called Large Patch of Warm-Season Turfgrass. [Click here to find information about large patch disease from the LSU AgCenter.](#)
4. Take a soil test.
5. Apply sulfur or lime to adjust the pH if necessary according to soil lab recommendations.
6. Use a mulching mower to shred fallen leaves without removing them or use a bagging mower to collect them and put them in your compost pile or use them as mulch in your gardens.
7. Late winter to early spring is a good time to address drainage issues in your lawn. Consider installing a rain garden. Dedicating a small portion of your property to water management can improve the health of your lawn.



Crabgrass in a lawn.

Do Not:

1. Do not apply fertilizer until mid-March as the weather warms up.
2. Do not lay down fill over the lawn grass.
3. Do not lay sod or spread warm-season turfgrass seed.
4. Do not dethatch or aerate the lawn.
5. Do not aerate the lawn.

Your Local Extension Office is Here to Help

E-mail us at: GNOGardening@agcenter.lsu.edu



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