



OLDHAM COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION NEWS - DECEMBER 2020



Kentucky Extension
Master Gardener

Meet the President

Hello fellow Gardeners!

My name is Chanthon Swart. I have only been in Kentucky since 2016 but I'm loving it here more than Virginia. I was first introduced to the MG while working as Postmaster Relief in a bitty little town of Goldvian, Va. It got its name because "gold" was discovered there. After a bad car accident, as a form of therapy I took the VA Extension MG program and enjoyed it greatly.



I have been gardening since my teens and love learning about plants for medicinal and beauty purposes.

Meet the VP

Griffin Falvey is a graduate of the 2016 Oldham County Master Gardener class and Vice President of the OCMGA. The activity I enjoy the most about being a Master Gardener are the tours. Pruning trees and being a novice woodlander (clearing up trails) are my current joys. Finally, meeting people in this community and learning about their inspirations has been the proverbial cherry on the sundae.



Watering During Winter

Now that our gardening season is ending, we can breathe a sigh of relief, or can we? If you ever watched 'Game of Thrones' you are familiar with this tag line, "Winter is Coming". Now we normally focus on our vegetable or flowering plant needs during the winter, but sometimes forget about our shrubs and trees. With our recent dry winter, have you noticed more trees turning brown and dying by summer? What are the causes and ways to remedy it?

Precipitation and low moisture are some of the causes for damaged root systems that lead to dying or dead trees and shrubs. Low moisture during the winter leads to the ground cracking and exposing vulnerable roots to freezing rain, salt and other factors. Newly planted shrubs and trees are especially susceptible to winter damages. To ensure that your Fall/Winter shrubs and trees are protected be sure they are planted at the correct recommended depth and watered proficiently during and after planting for several weeks. It is best to water your trees and shrubs when the temperature is above 40 degrees F to ensure the water settles in and does not create an icy layer overnight (in the event of freeze).

Plants that are sensitive to winter damages are: Norway, Silver and Red hybrid maples, lindens, alders, hornbeams, dogwood, willow and broad leaf evergreens. Plants that are not as sensitive to winter damage are: Spruce, arborvitae, fir, yew, and boxwood to name a few. Unfortunately, winter damage will not make itself known until the plants have used up their stored nutrients during spring and have nothing left in the summer months. By then, it is too late to mitigate any damages from root rot and insects.



Watering During Winter cont.

There are things you can do now to ensure continued health for your trees/shrubs:

New plantings:

- Plant at the recommended depths.
- Water sufficiently to help with root establishment.
- Avoid “volcano” mulching.

Established plantings:

- Prune any damaged limbs/branches if possible.
- Mulch adequately.
- Remove any extra suckers at the base.
- If there is a prolonged winter dry spell, water when temp is above 40 degrees F and no overnight freezing is in the forecast.

Happy winter gardening!

By Chanthon Swart, OCMGA President

Reference:

<https://extension.colostate.edu/topic-areas/yard-garden/fall-and-winter-watering-7-211>



Poinsettias, (*Euphorbia pulcherrima*)

The gray days of December seem grayer following the seasonal splendor of fall colors. Seasonal poinsettias can provide a splash of color to brighten our homes and businesses. The poinsettias ability to provide a colorful display for several weeks makes it a bright and cheerful addition to the winter season. With some care the poinsettia will remain healthy with bright red, pink, white or even plum colored flower bracts past the holiday season. Breeders of poinsettias have developed various colors and forms that can be used in many decorative combinations or themes.

Poinsettias are native to the southern highlands of Mexico and Guatemala and grow as large shrubs or trees.

Euphorbia pulcherrima is the botanical name and means “the most beautiful Euphorbia”. Poinsettias were given the common name Poinsettia for Joel Poinsett, our first ambassador to Mexico. Joel Poinsett had a love for botany and brought several plants back to his South Carolina home in 1825. These plants were shared with friends and botanical gardens. Through the efforts of the Eche Family, the poinsettia became widely popular as a potted plant.

The poinsettia is not poisonous. Some people with an allergy to latex could have an allergic reaction to the white latex fluid from a broken leaf or stem of the plant.

When buying a poinsettia, choose one that has sturdy branches, dark green leaves and good flower color. Also, check the soil in the pot to be sure it is moist and not sitting in excess water or dry. Excessive water can promote root diseases and will shorten the plant’s life. A wilted poinsettia will not keep well and will often drop its leaves early. Poinsettias crowded together or left in a protective sleeve for a long period are subject to foliage disease, leaf yellowing and leaf drop.

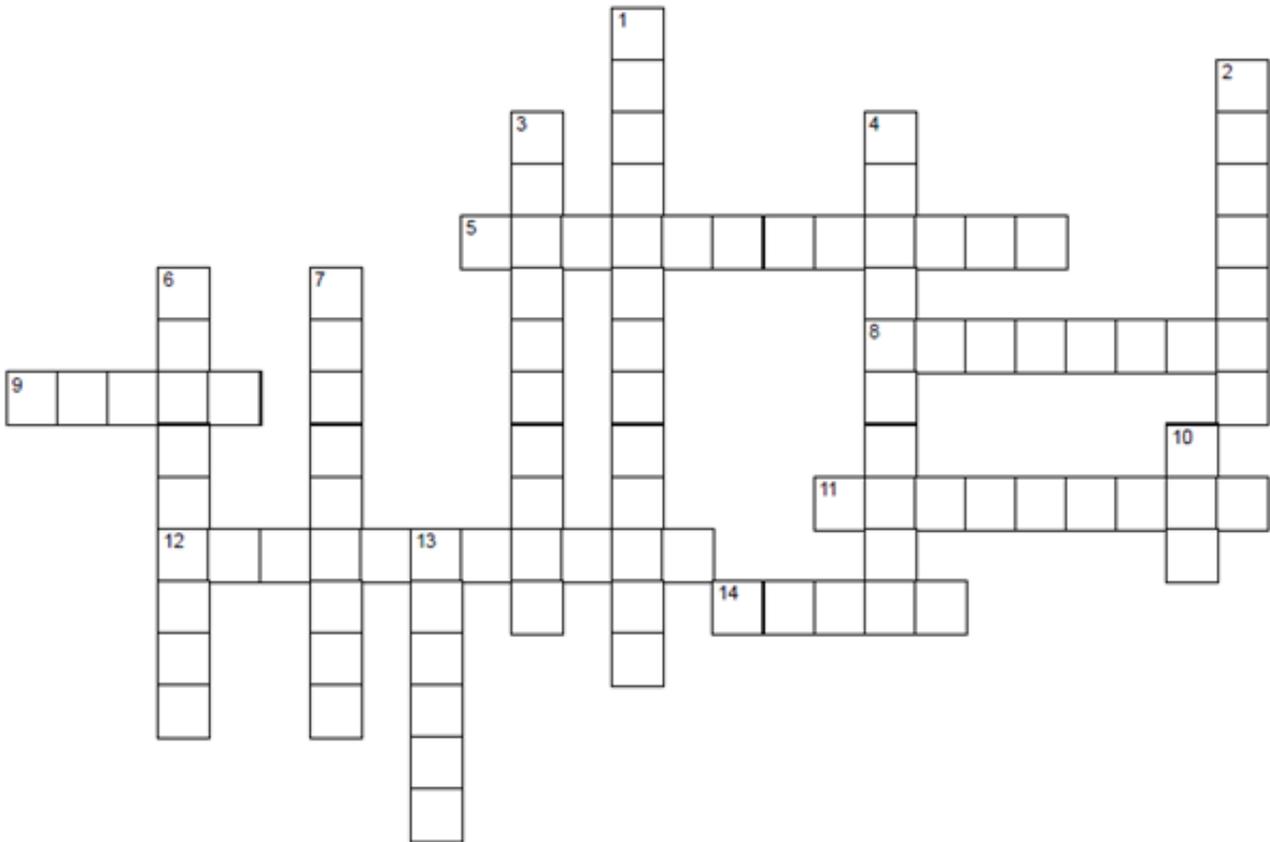
Place your plant in indirect sunlight for six hours or more per day. Direct sun should be diffused with shades or sheer curtains. A temperature of 68 to 70 degrees is best. Protect your plant from drafts from heating vents, wood stoves, or other appliances. Water when soil surface feels dry to the touch. Do not wait until the plant is wilting. Do not over water or allow the plant to sit in excess water. Remove the decorative pot cover and allow the water to drain completely before replacing the cover. Fertilize your plant every third watering. This will keep the plant healthy throughout the winter. Poinsettias can be a nice potted plant on your patio or deck throughout the summer.

By: Michael Boice, Extension Horticulture Assistant



Christmas Horticulture Crossword

Can you guess these Christmas-themed horticultural words?
For multiple word answers, omit any spaces.



ACROSS

- 5 Soft needled Christmas tree
- 8 Winter flowering corm
- 9 Sharp, short needled Christmas tree
- 11 Kissing parasite
- 12 Narcissus tazetta
- 14 Soft, short needled evergreen

DOWN

- 1 Christmas cactus
- 2 Long evergreen entanglement
- 3 *E. pulcherrima*
- 4 *Pinus sylvestris*
- 6 American holly
- 7 Cedar
- 10 Red twisting
- 13 Welcome circle

Remove Bagworms Now

Bagworms are typically pests of evergreens, but may also attack deciduous trees and shrubs. These worms spin a cocoon-like bag to live in and carry the bag with them as they move around. Females lay eggs inside the bags that will hatch the following spring. Winter is a great time to inspect trees and shrubs and remove bagworms. In some cases, the bags may be tightly attached to twigs.

If hand-pulling these from twigs appears to be causing injury, these can be snipped from twigs with a fine pair of pruners. Make sure to dispose of the bags with your garbage.

By Traci Missun, Extension Agriculture Agent
Reference: Bagworms on Landscape Plants, UK Extension Entomology, <https://entomology.ca.uky.edu/files/efpdf2/ef440.pdf>



Mature Bagworms. Photo credit:
<http://entomology.ca.uky.edu/ef440>

What's New?

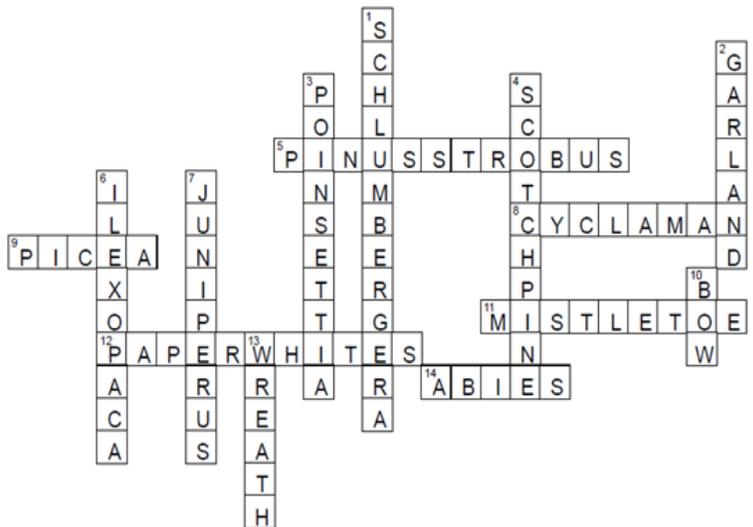
Dues for the 2020-2021 program year are now due. Please send your \$12.00 dues, payable to **Oldham County Master Gardener Association**, to Debbie Bungler the OCMGA treasurer.

Mailing address:
Debbie Bungler
2750 Halls Hill Road
Crestwood, KY 40014

Have a Wonderful Holiday Season!

Christmas Horticulture Crossword

Can you guess these Christmas-themed horticultural words?
For multiple word answers, omit any spaces.



Volunteer Opportunity

Master Gardeners, we welcome your gardening tips and information for the monthly OCMGA newsletter. If you'd like to submit something, please contact Michael Boice at michael.boice@uky.edu. Time spent providing information for the newsletter may be counted toward service hours.

For those chairing volunteer activities in our communities — we welcome information submissions about volunteer opportunities to help keep everyone informed.

