

Central Missouri Master Gardener Newsletter



The Latest Dirt

MAR 2026

Newsletter of the Central Missouri Master Gardeners

Vol. 178 No. 01

Note from the Chair

MAR 2026

Well, here it is March already. The month when we are all excited to get out and start working in the garden and flower beds. I have started turn the soil over with the tiller and planted a few onions just to see how they would handle the March temperatures. Have planted anything in your garden yet?

Things are really going like gang busters at the greenhouse. We are getting ready for our first early spring March plant sale. The plants are looking great and the cold crops are taking off and getting taller every day. Robin Russell and her sister-in-law Carolyn Turner have done a tremendous job of starting from seed and planting into four packs to get ready for the sale. Deb Rademan, as always, is there daily directing everyone at the greenhouse on planting and scheduling work for the slips and all the other important work that goes on from day to day.

We are requesting that anyone that has a cart or wagon that they can loan out for a day at the greenhouse for the early spring sale to drop them off at the greenhouse the week before the sale. Place your name on the cart so we can return it back to you after the sale.

We will be in need of boxes or beer flats or berry boxes like from the grocery stores. They can be dropped off at the greenhouse daily. I would text Deb Rademan or myself. My cell number is 573-418-0494 to make sure we will be there to receive them and lock them in the warehouse until the sale dates.

As we go into our March and April members meeting, I am wondering if any of our members are starting their plants from seeds and you want to share them with your fellow members. Bring your extra plants the meeting and we will be glad to mention your name and let everyone know what you brought. Shirks Dutch store out in Centertown has four pack containers for a dollar a tray and you can place them in to four packs and bring them to the meetings.

I will have a few plants myself to bring in to the March meeting and possible some by April depending how the seeds germinate next month.

Remember to enter your hours as you volunteer or go the meetings. Even if you are an Emeritus other wise your name will fall in to an inactive list and you might not get any information. It does not take long and the Extension office will be grateful as well.

CMMG Chair, Edward Vitela
2025-2026

NEW

History Corner Boys and Girls Club 2019

*NEW



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When Is the First Day of Spring 2026?

In 2026, the March equinox happens on March 20 at 10:46 A.M. EDT. This [falls on a Friday](#) and is the astronomical beginning of the spring season in the Northern Hemisphere and the autumn season in the Southern Hemisphere.

11 Types Of Milkweed That Won't Spread

Written by [Joe Foster](#) in [Milkweeds, Native Plants](#)

Milkweed Species That Do Not Spread Aggressively

While all milkweeds release seeds that can self-sow, the following species do not propagate through rhizomes and are well-behaved in residential gardens. Most will only self-seed modestly, so gardeners won't have to worry about excessive spreading.



Understanding Milkweed Spread in Gardens

Many gardeners encounter issues with milkweed spreading aggressively, particularly when planting the two most common varieties: Common Milkweed and Showy Milkweed. These species spread through underground rhizomes, which are horizontal stems that extend beneath the soil. While rhizomes make it easy to transplant milkweed and encourage growth, they also lead to rapid and sometimes unwanted expansion in residential gardens or yards. Due to their aggressive nature, Common Milkweed and Showy Milkweed are not recommended for formal, manicured flower beds. Instead, they are best suited for wilder locations such as meadows and micro-prairies.

It is important to note that the milkweed varieties listed here do not spread via rhizomes, but they can still self-seed. All milkweeds release seeds attached to silky fibers that float away and germinate elsewhere. However, with these non-rhizomatous species, gardeners won't have to worry about a proliferation of new sprouts throughout their yard.

What Is a Rhizome?

A rhizome is not actually a root, but rather a horizontal underground stem. As rhizome-producing species mature, their root systems send out these underground runners in multiple directions, often traveling a significant distance from the original plant. Periodically, rhizomes push up new shoots that develop into independent plants. This method of vegetative spread is highly efficient, as seen in other rhizome plants like Goldenrod and Black Locust trees.

There are more than 75 species of milkweed native to North America, and many of them do not spread through rhizomes—only by seed. The following sections highlight excellent options for residential gardens, ranging from formal flower beds to neatly maintained borders. These milkweed species offer versatility without aggressive spreading.

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So, let's get right down to it – here is a list of Milkweeds that are not aggressive and will not spread all over your yard.

Milkweed Species That Do Not Spread Aggressively

While all milkweeds release seeds that can self-sow, the following species do not propagate through rhizomes and are well-behaved in residential gardens. Most will only self-seed modestly, so gardeners won't have to worry about excessive spreading.

Butterfly Weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*)



Native from Arizona to Maine, Butterfly Weed is an orange, drought-tolerant milkweed. It thrives in full sun and well-draining soil, typically growing to about 1-2 feet tall. Easily grown from seed, it is a versatile and attractive choice for home gardens.

Redring Milkweed (*Asclepias variegata*)



Also known as White Milkweed, Redring Milkweed produces clusters of white flowers with purple dots, resembling 'snowballs.' Its native range extends from Texas to Connecticut, generally southeast of the Appalachian Mountains. This species prefers full to part sun and drier soils, and grows up to 3 feet tall, making it ideal for slopes and group plantings.

Swamp Milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*)



Swamp Milkweed blooms with pink and white flowers in summer, thriving in moist soil and full sun. It can reach up to 4 feet tall. Its native range is extensive, including much of eastern North America except the West Coast and Mississippi. This milkweed is perfect for low, damp spots in the garden, though supplemental watering can allow it to grow elsewhere.

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White Swamp Milkweed (*Asclepias perennis*)



Also known as Aquatic Milkweed, this species is found along the Ohio and Mississippi river valleys, from Indiana and Missouri to Texas and Florida. It prefers moist environments in full or partial sun, growing 2-3 feet tall and blooming for 1-2 months in optimal conditions.

Longleaf Milkweed (*Asclepias longifolia*)



Longleaf Milkweed grows up to 2.5 feet tall, thriving in moist meadows and near water in full sun. It blooms white and purple flowers in spring, with a native range from Ontario to Texas, Florida, and up to Delaware. This species is a suitable accent for rain gardens.

Poke Milkweed (*Asclepias exaltata*)



Poke Milkweed is a larger species, sometimes reaching 5-6 feet tall. It prefers part sun and well-drained soil and is suitable for garden borders or shaded areas. Its nodding clusters of flowers appear in late spring to early summer, providing food for Monarch caterpillars.

Green Milkweed (*Asclepias viridis*)



Green Milkweed features unique green flowers and grows 1-2 feet tall. Native to the southern United States, it is found from Texas and Florida north to Nebraska and Ohio. This well-behaved species blends well with other plants and can be maintained easily by deadheading.

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Green Comet Milkweed (*Asclepias viridiflora*)



This species is similar to Green Milkweed but has a wider native range across North America. It is adaptable to various sun levels and soil textures, provided the soil is well-draining.

Arizona Milkweed (*Asclepias angustifolia*)



Native to southern Arizona, Arizona Milkweed is drought tolerant and grows in mountains and canyons above 3,000 feet. It produces showy white flowers and reaches 2-3 feet tall in dry, rocky soils. Its taproot helps it withstand arid conditions.

Tall Green Milkweed (*Asclepias hirtella*)



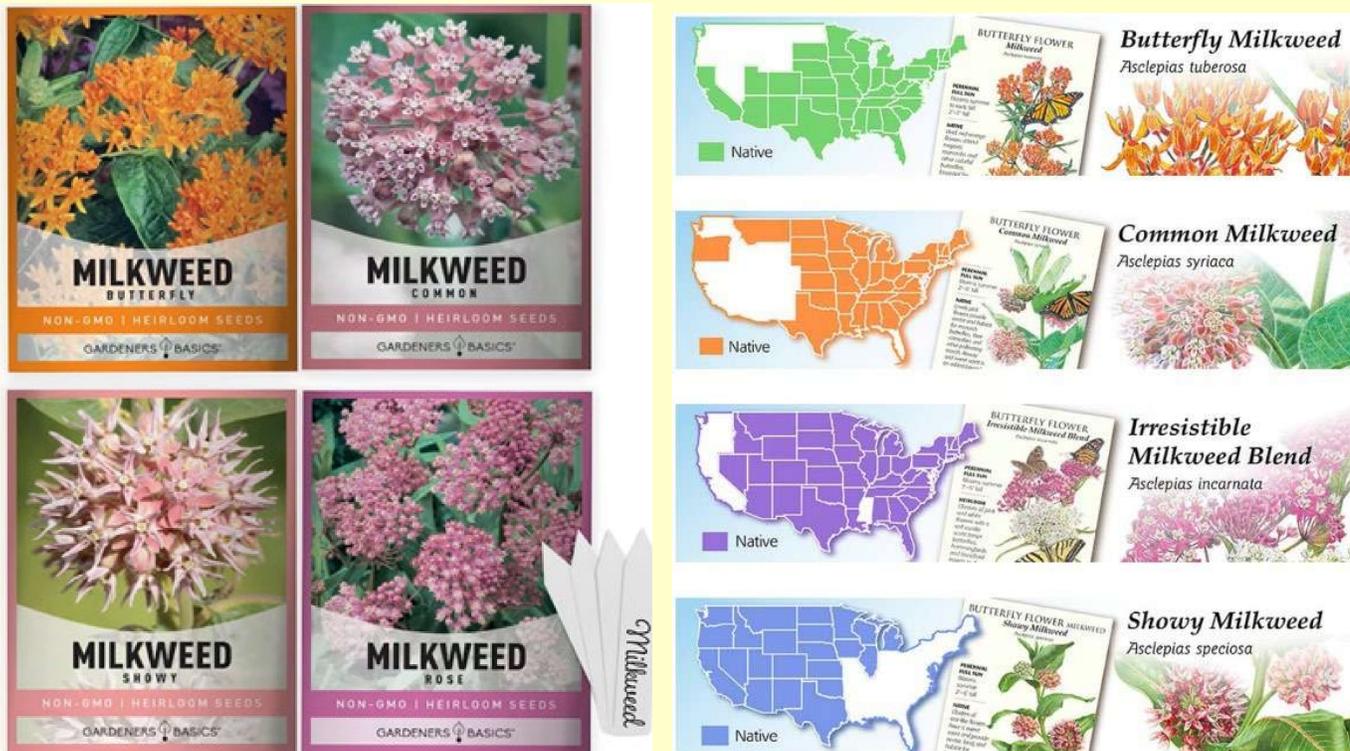
Tall Green Milkweed reaches 3-4 feet tall and has a central taproot, making it drought tolerant. It grows in full to part sun and medium-moist to dry conditions, native to the central United States and Canada from Texas to Georgia, north to Minnesota and southern Ontario.

Sandy Hill Milkweed (*Asclepias humistrata*)



Sandy Hill Milkweed is a shorter, low-growing species that often lays flat on the ground. This plant thrives in well-draining soil and dry conditions, making it suited for environments where moisture is limited. Sandy Hill Milkweed is primarily found in the southeastern United States, especially in sandy areas and along the coast.

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Top 10 Heat-Tolerant Plants

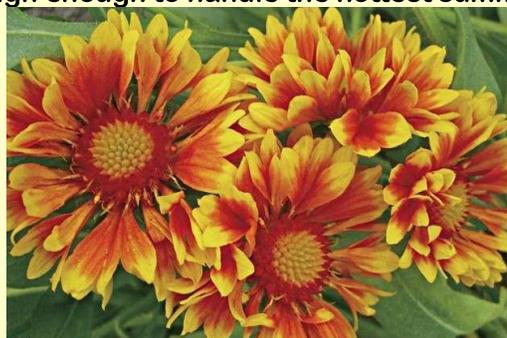


By **Jill Staake**

Birds & Blooms Editorial Policies -Updated on Jul. 01, 2022

Summer sizzles, and so do these beautiful blooms! Choose from these top heat-tolerant plants for your summer flower garden.

Blazing sun have you worked up into a sweat? Cool off with these fuss-free heat-tolerant plants. They're tough enough to handle the hottest summer days.



Proven Winners

Heat Tolerant Plants: Blanket Flower

Gaillardia spp., Zones 3 to 10

The brilliant hues of the native North American blanket flower have a place in any garden. This all-summer bloomer has red and yellow petals with gold, red or purple centers. Blanket flower thrives in full sun and well-drained soil, and is sometimes grown as an annual.

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RDA-GID

Celosia

Celosia argentea, grown as an annual

These fiery, heat-tolerant plants thrive in scorching summer weather. Available in shades of red, orange and yellow, celosia blooms from summer into fall. The crested type resembles a rooster's comb, which explains the flower's other name, cockscomb. Plumed varieties like the one shown at far right unfurl feathery, upright flowers; pinch back the tips to encourage branching for a showier display. Celosia will grow well in a wide range of soils, including heavy clay.



RDA-GID

Coreopsis

Coreopsis spp., Zones 3 to 11

New orange, bright-red and pink varieties add a color twist to the beloved yellow original. The plants range from 8 to 48 inches in height. Keep soil moist around newly planted [coreopsis](#), but resist the urge to overwater.



Cosmos

Cosmos spp., grown as an annual

Suited for full sun to light shade, cosmos comes in a broad spectrum of warm and cool tones, making it a good choice for just about any location. Some cultivars, like Sea Shells, have tube-shaped petals.

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fotolinchen/Getty Images

Fan Flower

Scaevola aemula, annual

These durable heat-tolerant plants have dense foliage and loads of small, fan-shaped flowers in [purple](#), blue or white. Fan flower performs best in well-draining soil and has a trailing habit, sprawling out to roughly 3 feet.



Courtesy Benjamin Krueger

Mexican Sunflower

Tithonia rotundifolia, annual

This fast-growing annual, which blooms in late summer and autumn, reaches 6 feet in height. Its long-lasting orange and red flowers glow in full sun. For smaller spaces, there's a dwarf variety, Fiesta Del Sol, that grows to just 3 feet tall.



Martin Hughes Jones / Alamy

Pine-Leaf Penstemon

Penstemon pinifolius, Zones 4 to 10

This plant's pointy leaves make it resemble a coniferous evergreen. The narrow, [tubular flowers](#), often in shades of red, yellow or magenta, entice bees and butterflies. In addition to not minding the heat, pine-leaf penstemon is drought-tolerant.

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Ali Majdfar/Getty Images

Portulaca

Portulaca spp., annual

Charming flowers grace low, spreading stems of fleshy foliage. Hot, sunny, dry conditions suit this bright bloomer just fine. Show it off in containers, rock gardens or mixed plantings.



Proven Winners

Snow-in-Summer

Cerastium tomentosum, Zones 3 to 7

Despite the chilly-sounding name, snow-in-summer are very heat-tolerant plants. This reliable, maintenance-free ground cover thrives in poor soil and sunny locations. White blooms appear on 2- to 3-inch-tall plants in late spring and summer.



Terra Nova

Yucca

Yucca filamentosa, Zones 4 to 11

Few plants are as heat-tolerant as yucca. Both flowers and foliage come with this Southwestern favorite. For a unique variety, look for the *Variegata* cultivar; its white-edged, blue-green leaves take on a pink tinge in colder weather.

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RECIPE TIME

Artichoke & White Bean Dip

By [Amanda Stanfield](#) Published on December 4, 2025



Photographer: Morgan Hunt Ward, Prop Stylist: Keoshia McGhee, Food Stylist: Emily Nabors Hall.

Ingredients

Original recipe (1X) yields 16 servings

- 1 (10-ounce) jar artichoke hearts in water, rinsed (about 2 cups)
 - 3 medium cloves garlic
- 2 (15-ounce) cans no-salt-added cannellini beans, rinsed (about 4 cups)
 - 1 cup nonfat plain strained (Greek-style) yogurt
 - 4 ounces reduced-fat cream cheese, at room temperature
 - $\frac{1}{4}$ cup grated Parmesan cheese
 - 2 teaspoons finely chopped fresh thyme, plus leaves for garnish
 - 2 teaspoons onion powder
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground pepper
 - $\frac{3}{4}$ cup shredded Gruyère cheese, divided
- Multicolored carrots, Belgian endive leaves, Persian cucumbers and/or pita chips, for serving (optional)

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F with rack in middle position.
2. Combine rinsed artichoke hearts and 3 garlic cloves in a food processor; process until finely chopped, about 1 minute, scraping down the sides as needed.
3. Transfer to a 12-inch cast-iron or stainless-steel skillet.



Photographer: Morgan Hunt Ward, Prop Stylist: Keoshia McGhee, Food Stylist: Emily Nabors Hall.

4. Combine rinsed cannellini beans, 1 cup yogurt, 4 ounces cream cheese, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup Parmesan, 2 teaspoons thyme, 2 teaspoons onion powder and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon pepper in the food processor. Process until smooth, about 2 minutes, scraping down the sides as needed. Add to the skillet with the artichoke mixture; stir to combine. Fold in $\frac{1}{4}$ cup Gruyère and spread evenly. Top with the remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Gruyère.
 5. Bake until the cheese is melted, about 5 minutes. Increase oven temperature to broil; broil until the cheese is golden brown, about 7 minutes.
- Garnish with thyme leaves, if desired. Serve with carrots, endive, cucumbers and/or pita chips, if desired.

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Happy Birthday!



March babies are said to be **happy and optimistic**, they will either be a Pisces or an Aries in star sign. Pisces are said to be optimistic, ambition and determination. Aries are said to be fiery and passionate.

Meetings are held at the Missouri River Regional Library, 214 Adams St, Jefferson City, MO
We hope to see you there!

Online Reporting Site: Hours must be entered at [https://vms.momg.org/sec Login/](https://vms.momg.org/sec>Login/) please remember you need to enter hours on a computer, not a tablet or a phone. Again, all hours must be entered on line.

Enter your hours again starting in January.

Any emails that need to be distributed to ALL MG's should be sent to **CMMG Cole County Master Gardener** <cmmg@missouri.edu>– please don't call in messages

CMMG Official WEBSITE-- <https://extension.missouri.edu/counties/cole/extension-master->

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