Walking and staying upright in a Winter Wonderland

Walking to and from parking lots or between buildings during the winter can lead to slipping and falling on snow and ice. Slips and falls are some of the most frequent types of injuries that occur during the winter months. No matter how well the snow and ice is removed from parking lots or sidewalks, you will still encounter some slippery surfaces when walking outdoors in the winter.

Tips for walking in snowy and icy conditions:

- **Be Cautious** - In cold temperatures, approach with caution and assume that all wet, dark areas on pavements are slippery and icy. Be extra careful when getting into or out of vehicles; hold onto the vehicle for support.

- **Put Your Best Foot Forward** - Wear the right shoes, which means shoes with large treads or raised patterns. Non-slip rubber or neoprene are best. Avoid wearing boots or shoes with smooth soles and heels. You might even consider getting some traction devices for your shoes. The steel coils on the bottom give some grip with ice and allow for better balance.

  - **Stay on the path** - Walk in designated, cleared walkways as much as possible. **Taking shortcuts** over snow banks and other frozen areas can be hazardous.

  - **Think like a penguin!** - Point your feet out slightly like a penguin. Spreading your feet out slightly while walking on ice increases your center of gravity. Bend slightly and walk flat footed with your center of gravity directly over the feet as much as possible.

Keep your hands out of your pockets. Hands in your pockets while walking decreases your center of gravity and balance. You can help break your fall with your hands free if you do start to slip.

Source: Lewis-Clark State College
Pest Patrol: Varied Carpet Beetles Are Stirring

Varied carpet beetles probably can be found in most every house and building in the state. They are out of sight for most of the year while their larvae hide in drawers, closets, and assorted cracks and crevices. They could be thought of as the ultimate crack and crevice cleaners. However, this is not a widely held interpretation, especially if they are chewing on wool, silk, or cotton clothing.

Carpet beetle larvae resemble small, hairy, light tan to red-brown caterpillars (Figure 1). They avoid light and remain hidden in cracks and crevices, but occasionally one can be seen crawling slowly along while looking for a place to pupate. Wandering larvae should be relatively near their food source, which can be any of a variety of products. Food sources can include natural fibers, furs, hides, feathers, horns, bones, hair, processed cereals, dried foods, and flowers. They also may feed on accumulations of dead insects present in wall voids, fluorescent light fixtures, and attics.

Adults are approximately 1/16-inch-long beetles that have irregular patterns of many white, brown, and yellow splotches on their hard wing covers (Figure 2). They are active fliers that are attracted to light and often are found crawling on curtains or windows as they attempt to fly to flowers and feed on pollen.

Management Options

Small numbers of adults or larvae are relatively common and can be cleaned up by hand and discarded. More thorough checking and cleaning are needed if large numbers are present. The vacuum cleaner is one of the best weapons to use against them. Rooms should be cleaned often enough to prevent the accumulation of pet hair, lint, crumbs, and other material on which these insect can feed. Close attention should be given to carpets (especially under furniture), rugs, draperies, upholstered furniture, and closets where natural fabrics and furs are stored. Also, examine registers and associated duct work, corners, cracks, baseboards and moldings, and other hard-to-reach areas.

Crack and crevice treatments along baseboards, using products labeled for indoor application against cockroaches and ants, can be made after the areas have been cleaned.

Source: Lee Townsend, University of Kentucky, Extension Entomologist

Watch your “By The Yard” Newsletter this spring for more information regarding the 2018 Extension Master Gardener class. Application will be available in Summer, 2018!

Winter Weather Policy

When Fayette County Schools are closed, call the Fayette County Extension Office, 859 257-5582, to verify if class will be meeting.
Featured Plant: Hellebores

Hellebores are wonderful garden plants, yet they remain fairly uncommon in perennial gardens. When you consider their evergreen nature, ease of culture and beautiful late winter blooms it is hard to imagine why they have taken so long to catch on. The tide is turning for these shade loving plants. In fact the perennial plant association chose Hellebore as the perennial plant of the year in 2005. Over the last decade or so Hellebore breeders have created and introduced many new cultivars in a range of colors and combinations, many with contrasting spots of color in the flower centers. Improvements in plant form have also produced upward facing blooms, better foliage, and several double flowered types. The bloom color ranges from green to white to rose to burgundy, with some varieties approaching black. There are even some yellow varieties making their way into catalogs and shops.

The most popular hellebores are the oriental hybrids, which are known as Lenten roses because they traditionally bloom around the beginning of lent. Hellebores are easily grown, thrive in partial shade, and can even handle dry shade situations. The plants prefer soils high in organic matter but will tolerate less than ideal conditions. They resent wet feet. Most grow about two feet tall and have glossy evergreen foliage. The real selling point is their miraculous late winter bloom, which typically begins in February here in Kentucky. You may want to trim some of the winter battered foliage to show case the emerging flowers.

Much like peonies, hellebores can take a few years to reach their full potential. But a gardener’s patience is well rewarded and a mature clump of hellebores in full bloom is a spectacle you won’t soon forget.

Although these beauties were once hard to find in nurseries, you can now find them offered for sale and with a little investigating, you can find many unique colors and varieties. If you aren’t familiar with hellebores, try a few in your garden. If you are fortunate enough to have grown them for years look into the newer varieties available today, I think you will be pleasantly surprised at the offerings.

Source: Amanda Sears, Madison County Agent for Horticulture

Starting Plants Indoors from Seeds

Are you thinking of starting your own transplants this year? Be sure to know the right time to start them! Because the growth rate varies among annuals, they require seeding at different times indoors to obtain the best plants for setting out in the garden at the proper time. Often times seed catalogs and seed packets will tell you how many weeks it takes after planting the seed to have a plant big enough to transplant. Sowing dates are based upon the average date of the last frost. In general, it is fairly safe to set out warm season plants here in central Kentucky around May 10.

Most annuals require approximately four to ten weeks to produce a usable transplant. This means counting back from the time plants are needed. For example, dwarf marigolds need six to eight weeks of growing time to produce a transplant. If you plan on setting them out in the garden on May 10, the seed needs to be sown indoors between the 15th and the 29th of March. Many gardeners don’t take the time to make this simple calculation and end up starting their seeds much too soon. This usually results in seedlings that are very tall and not of good quality.

For more information on when to plant seeds to transplant, check out Starting Plants Indoors From Seeds:

Source: Jamie Dockery, Fayette County Agent for Horticulture
February Quick Tips

• The spring window for seeding lawns is mid February through mid March.
• Continue to monitor house plants for pest problems.
• Don’t forget water for the birds in winter!
• Now is time to start seedlings indoors. Wait until late February to start quick crops like tomatoes.
• Have your soil tested now for spring gardens. *(Included in this newsletter is a coupon for a free soil test good thru February 28th for any Fayette County resident, excluding commercial growers.)*
• Bring branches of early blooming spring shrubs indoors for forcing. Good candidates are Forsythia, Flowering Quince, Flowering Cherries, and early blooming Magnolias.

Prune large shade trees now. If late in the month, some bleeding may occur. This is no cause for concern.

Plan to prune fruit trees this month. A day with temperatures above 40 degrees will allow you to spray them with dormant oil, which will take care of many overwintering insect pests.

Shop local garden stores now for best selection of seeds. Complete any mail orders for seeds as newer varieties will sell out quickly. Select varieties with disease resistance where possible.

Plan to rotate crops in this year’s vegetable garden. You want to avoid not only growing the same plant in last year’s location but any related plant from that family. Ideally try to set up a four year rotation for each family and plot. (for example, grow other unrelated crops for three years before you plant tomatoes in the same location again) This makes a big difference in the amount of disease pressure.

Don’t forget to register for 2018 Gardener Toolbox Classes. A condensed registration form is enclosed in this edition of “By The Yard” newsletter. For a detailed listing of the 2018 Gardener’s Toolbox class, visit: [http://fayette.ca.uky.edu/files/gardeners_toolbox_2018.pdf](http://fayette.ca.uky.edu/files/gardeners_toolbox_2018.pdf) or call (859) 257-5582 to have a copy mailed to you.

Sweet & Spicy Butternut Squash

| 2 medium butternut squash | ¼ teaspoon kosher salt | 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon |
| 1 tablespoon olive oil | ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper | ¼ cup honey |

*Preheat* oven to 450 degrees F. *Wash* squash and *pierce* the skin of each with a fork in several places. *Place* both squash in a microwave oven. *Cook* on high setting for 4-5 minutes. *Place* squash on a cutting board and *cut* ½ inch off both ends. *Cut* squash in half lengthwise and remove seeds and pulp. *Peel* off the skin using a sharp vegetable peeler. *Cut* the squash into ⅛ inch cubes. *Place* the squash cubes in a large mixing bowl. *Add* olive oil, kosher salt, cayenne pepper and cinnamon. *Toss* to coat.

*Spread* the seasoned squash cubes on a greased baking sheet. *Roast* for 40 minutes or until fork tender, *turning* after 20 minutes. *Remove* from oven and let sit for 5 minutes. *Warm* honey in a microwaveable dish and *drizzle* over the squash.

*Yield:* 12, ⅛ cup servings

*Nutritional Analysis:* 
60 calories, 1 g fat, 0 g saturated fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 50 mg sodium, 14 g carbohydrate, 2 g fiber, 7 g sugar, 1 g protein.

For More Plate It Up Recipes, Visit: [http://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/content/plate-it-kentucky-proud](http://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/content/plate-it-kentucky-proud)
**Best Way to Collect Soil**

Sample gardens, lawns, and landscaped areas separately. Collect random samples from each area. The area to sample for trees includes the soil below the width of the tree. For shrubs, flower beds, and gardens, sample just the soil where the plants are growing. You should sample problem areas and areas with shrubs, trees, or flower beds separately from other turf or lawn areas.

**Do not sample compost areas, under the drip-line of trees, and close to driveways or streets.**

One commonly overlooked component of soil sampling is the depth of soil to be tested. Most plant nutrients accumulate at the soil surface. This nutrient stratification is a result of past broadcast fertilizer applications and decomposition of plant residue on the soil surface. Because there is a higher concentration of nutrients on the soil surface, soil test values usually go down as the sample depth is increased. To obtain accurate and consistent (between different years) results, samples must be taken to the following depths for these areas:

**Tilled Areas** - Take soil cores to the depth of the tillage operation (usually 6 to 8 inches).

**Non or Reduced-Tilled Areas** - Take soil cores to a depth of 3 to 4 inches for pastures, no-till planting (where fertilizer or lime remains on the soil surface), and minimum-till planting (where fertilizer is incorporated only in the surface 1 to 2 inches).

**Lawns and Turf Grasses** - Collect soil cores to a depth of 3 to 4 inches.

**Sample Preparation** - After individual sample are collected and placed in the bucket, crush the soil material and mix the sample thoroughly. Allow the sample to air dry in an open space free from contamination. When dry, fill a clean container with approximately 2 cups of soil.

**IMPORTANT** - Fayette County Extension office is unable to process credit/debit cards or to make change. Please bring exact change or make a check out to: Fayette County Soil Lab for $7.00.

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**ONE FREE ROUTINE SOIL SAMPLE**

$7.00 Value

**One per Household**

(Commercial Growers Excluded)

Have the soil around your lawn, vegetable garden, flower bed, trees or bushes tested. A great way to get ready for next planting and maintenance in 2018

Redeem this coupon:

Fayette County Cooperative Extension Office,

1140 Harry Sykes Way, Lexington, KY

For more information, please call us at (859) 257-5582.

Expires: February 28, 2018

NO EXCEPTIONS
Limited seats available! Please call 859-257-5582 to RSVP

There are many great reasons to grow some of your own food. We will teach the very basic concepts of growing vegetables. This class will focus on the early spring crops that can be planted and harvested before the main spring planting window. It is far easier than you might think. Class will be led by Fayette County Horticulture Technician Carrie Spry

Sponsored by our Friends at Lexington Southern States Cooperative
2018 GARDENER’S TOOLBOX - REGISTRATION FORM

Name: ________________________ Phone: _____________ E-Mail: ______________
Address: __________________________ City: ______________ State: ____ Zip: _____

TOTAL Amount Enclosed $________

IMPORTANT REMINDERS!
- **Sign up early for classes to avoid being turned away because class is full.**
- **ALL classes are “PRE-REGISTRATION” only.**
- If you need to cancel, you must do so 2 weeks prior to the class time to receive a refund or credit for a different class.
- If handouts and/or plants are not picked up 3 days after class, items will be donated.

Please make check payable to: **Fayette County Master Gardener Association**
Mail To: Gardener’s Toolbox ~ Fayette County Extension Office
1140 Harry Sykes Way ~ Lexington, KY 40504

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<td>Tuesday, 12/4: Caring for Holiday Plants, <strong>Cost: $10.00</strong></td>
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Newsletter

Enclosed

Fayette County

“By the Yard”

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