



The Vine Line

March 24, 2014

Dear Vine Liner,

Thank you for signing up to receive the Vine Line. All of us at the Garden look forward to communicating with future Vine Lines. I welcome any comments about the Vine Line or any suggestions about future topics. Remember to renew your garden membership and if you are not a member, please join and support the Garden: memphisbotanicgarden.com/join.

Thanks,

Jim

Current Conditions from Rick Pudwell:

The cold and single digit temperatures had a negative effect on many plant species at the Memphis Botanic Garden, and the usual bloom dates of our spring flowering plants are behind schedule. Witch Hazel bloomed throughout the cold and their flowers seem to be unscathed.

- Saucer & Star Magnolias are a couple of weeks behind, but beginning to bloom.
- Tulips & Yoshino cherries normally peak about March 15th, but only a few tulips have started to flower.
- The cherries have not begun to swell their buds yet; we predict blooms about April 1st.
- Redbuds & forsythia are a couple of weeks behind schedule but starting to show color.
- Normally Azaleas and Dogwoods peak about April 10th, but this year it will be closer to the 15th or 20th.
- Bearded Iris are usually at peak the last week in April, and I expect they will be blooming though the first half of May.

Tips from Chris Cosby:

To Rejuvenate Existing Beds -

Apply a complete organic fertilizer such as Holly Tone or Plant Tone at a rate of 5 pounds per 100 square feet to all existing beds, then cover with 1-2" of Botanic Garden

A plant recommendation from Sherry McCalla:

mix*, being careful not to cover the crowns of perennials. If you removed any leaves from the beds, run over them with a lawn mower or shred them with a leaf shredder and use them as mulch. Water the bed well to settle the soil and apply 1 inch of your preferred mulch.

To Create New Beds: Use a garden hose to lay out your bed. Curves and flowing shapes are easy to visualize this way and add interest to your garden. Once you're happy with the shape, remove any existing sod using a sharp spade or a sod cutter. Add 4-6" of Botanic Garden Pro Mix, apply a complete organic fertilizer such as Holly Tone or Plant Tone at a rate of 10 pounds per 100 square feet, and till it in thoroughly. Rake the bed smooth and water well to settle the soil. Allow the new bed to settle for a week or two before planting. Apply 1 inch of your preferred mulch after planting.

** The Yard, located at 1735 Thomas Rd, Memphis, TN, 38134—Phone 833-9273, is selling two types of our Botanic Garden Mix that we use routinely at the Garden.*

One is formulated for rejuvenating existing beds and new plantings. Another is one formulated for beds under existing trees. Both mixes are \$27 per cubic yard plus delivery fee. The Garden receives a percentage of each sale.



One of my favorites and must-have herbs is *Tagetes lucida*, also known as Mexican Mint Marigold, Texas Tarragon, or Sweet Scented Marigold. This is a nice glossy green herbaceous perennial that is hardy enough for our growing zone and best planted in soil with good drainage to avoid its having “wet feet.”

Tagetes thrives in full sun but will take some afternoon shade and on a hot day it exudes a beguiling sweet scent somewhat reminiscent of mace or hot spiced sugar.

The leaves of this plant have a sweet flavor similar to French Tarragon but with a bit more anise and is best used when fresh to make teas, chopped and placed in green salads, and it adds a special zest to chicken or tuna salad.

The plant gets lovely golden yellow flowers in late summer that can be dried and used for crafts or in arrangements.

Reminder: Our Spring Plant Sale is April 11-12. Hope to see you then...Jim