

March 30, 2023

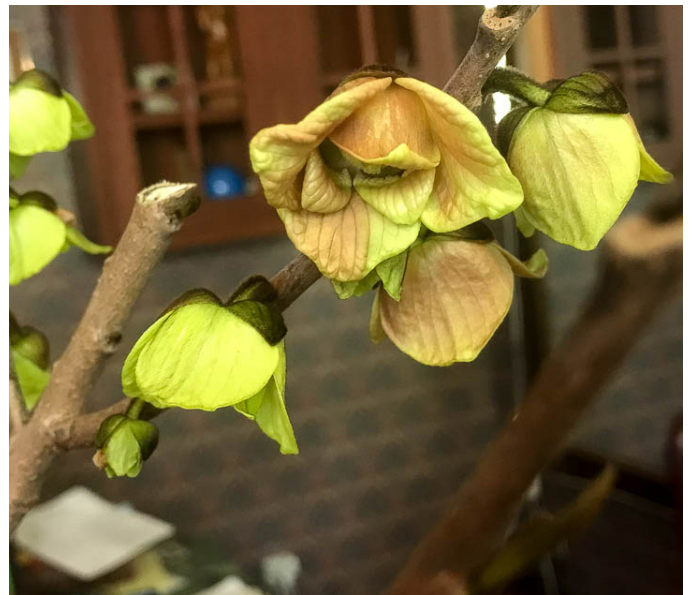
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Novel Cut Woody Plant

By: Stanton Gill

Many cut flower growers have experimented with apple, pear, peach, apricot and plum in cutting stems while dormant and forcing them to bloom out of season for wedding events.

Here is a novel idea. I grow a lot of pawpaw trees in our orchard for the fruit. While we were pruning, we cut several of the stems and held them in the cooler for 3 weeks. I brought them out and put them in a vase of water on March 15. The blooms are opening and they are rather attractive. The flowers hang downward and when first opened has a green tint. This bloom when fully open will be a purple color.



Pawpaw blooms started to change from green to maroon within just two days this week. We should get more intense color as the week progresses.

Photos: Stanton Gill

Interesting Plant for Culinary Use and Microgreens - Untouched Market So Far

By: Stanton Gill

Interesting plants that be used in edible dishes are always popular in the spring. Here is something interesting to try out- Shungiku Asian Green Seed, *Glebionis coronaria*. It also has the common name of garland chrysanthemum seed. It was formerly called *Chrysanthemum coronarium*, and is a species of flowering plant in the daisy family. Though it is popular in Japan and China, it is actually native to the Mediterranean area. In parts

of China, it is called Cantonese *tong ho*. In some parts of Japan, it is called spring chrysanthemum. Microgreens have been a big market selling group of plants at farm markets for the last 10 years. This plant has potential for microgreen sales for restaurant and local farm market sales.

My daughter was dining with friends in Baltimore at a Cantonese restaurant and they were served a soup laced with Shungiku Asian green chrysanthemum. She commented it had a wonderful flavor that really brought out the aromatic nature of the soup. It has been very popular in Japanese dishes, but is relatively uncommon in American cuisine.

This highly popular Japanese vegetable green has yet to be recognized as a vegetable in the West, so you won't find these greens in the produce section of the local grocery store. The dark green aromatic leaves are rich in vitamin B and minerals. They, along with the young stems, are used in tempura, sukiyaki, ohitashi, yosenabe, and shabu-shabu in Japan. The flower petals can be sprinkled over soups and salads as a garnish, or add the young leaves to a green salad. The Japanese dip the flowers in sake and eat them at the beginning of a meal to confer good health and long life.

You cut the chrysanthemum greens when about 4–8" tall for a flavorful addition to salads, vegetables, pickles, and sushi. Edible, small, orange and yellow chrysanthemum flowers appear later on unharvested plants. This is the preferred "fine" or "small" leaf strain.

I did a search and the seeds are readily available commercial suppliers such as Johnny's Seed Company.

What Are We Up To This Spring?

By: Stanton Gill and Brian Kunkel

Fungus gnats continue to be a big deal in the greenhouse business. Brian Kunkel, University of Delaware Extension, and I will be conducting field trials to evaluate several materials for fungus gnat control in April and May this spring. The trials will be held at the University of Maryland greenhouse complex. We will share the results later this season.

Cut Flower Education Seminar June 20, 2023

By: Stanton Gill

Our IPM team is setting up a one-day seminar for commercial cut flower growers on June 20, 2023. We have arranged to have speakers from The Botanical Trading Company, Syngenta Flower Division, Heartwood Nursery of Pennsylvania, and our IPM team with expertise in cut flower growing and problem solving.

This event will be held at Castlebridge Flower Farm in Ellicott City, MD. We will have information on how to register in upcoming IPM alerts later in the season.



Castlebridge Farm Cut Flower Plots

Aphid Activity

By: Stanton Gill

In the last IPM Alert, I mentioned monitoring for aphid activity with greenhouses warming up and overwintering high tunnels heating up with the warm spell of February to early March. A few weeks ago, we received a sample of coneflower with green peach aphid damage. As the aphids remove fluids from newly emerging foliage they cause the foliage to curl, twist, and generally distort.

Biological Control

The green peach aphid is attacked by a number of common predators, including lacewings, lady bird beetles, *Lysiphlebus testaceipes*, *Aphidius colemani*, *Aphidius matricariae*, and is susceptible to the fungus disease, *Entomophthora* spp.. We have used *A. colemani* in Maryland greenhouses with the greatest success rate, using it during the longer days of March through the season and into the fall. *A. colemani* is a parasitic wasp native to North America.

Organically Acceptable Materials

Biological and cultural controls and sprays of insecticidal soap or pyrethrin (pyganic) are acceptable for use on organically certified crops.

Chemical Control

There are several pesticides labeled for aphid control including Endeavor, Spirotetramat, Insecticidal soap such as M-Pede, and Acetamiprid.



Green peach aphids feeding on coneflower.



Distorted foliage on coneflower caused by green peach aphids feeding.

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Read labels carefully before applying any pesticides.

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