



DIRTY DIGS



September 2021

ENTERTAIN, EDUCATE, ELEVATE

President's Message September 2021

What draws people to become members of Master Gardeners? It may be an interest in plants, landscape design, edible gardening, native plants and insects, preserving the environment, service to the community, et cetera. Whatever the reason, the plants are at the core and it is the plants that keep bringing us back, month after month, year after year. There is always something to learn, a plant to share, some new craft project to try, a beautiful garden to visit, or another great recipe to enjoy.

I have found, in Master Gardeners, some of the joy and passion of my heart. I truly enjoy the plants and the people who share my interest and passion.

Our association is made up of passionate people. It is the passion for plants that draw us into the association and gives us an opportunity to learn, explore and grow. In so doing, we make lifelong friendships with kindred spirits.

An extension of the passion for this wonderful organization is the ability to give back and to serve, thus preserving the legacy of the gardeners that came before us. Each member of this association is unique and each of us brings different skills, talents and knowledge to the organization. So where do you fit in this organization? You, and all of our members, are needed to bring the plans and projects to fruition. Our success in the future depends on all of us.



And there is a place for everyone in our organization. What? You say you don't have any talent? I'm betting you have just the skill that is needed. Do you like to get your hands dirty? We have several gardens that need your hands. Do you like to write? There are numerous opportunities to contribute. Do you like to teach? Opportunities abound. Do you have photography or video skills? We can definitely use that talent. Do you like to read? Well, we can always use members to proofread documents. Research? Organization skills? Event planning skills? Plant knowledge? Project management? Computer skills? Fundraising? Public Relations? Again, I say to you – there is something for everyone. If you are asked to hold a position or chair a committee, please consider saying yes to the opportunity. Come, join us on this exciting journey – our future promises to be filled with the knowledge and wonder of plants, community service and some great fellowship along the way!

Keep in touch. Always remember, time began in a garden!

Debbie

Calendar of Events

Dates and Times are subject to change

September 13—Governor's Mansion 9AM

September 14—Demo Garden 8AM, Prattvillage Garden 9AM

September 15—Fall Seminar Planning meeting at Prattvillage Garden at 9 AM

September 15—Part 2 Linda Barry Leaf Stones Workshop 10 AM Prattvillage Garden

September 20—Governor's Mansion 9AM

September 21—Demo Garden 8AM, Prattvillage Garden 9AM

September 27—Governor's Mansion 9AM

September 28—Demo Garden 8AM, Prattvillage Garden 9AM

September 30—AMGA Fall Seminar, Trinity United Methodist Church, ACMGA is hosting 9:30 AM

October 4—Governor's Mansion 9AM

October 5—Demo Garden 8AM, Prattvillage Garden 9AM

October 7—Lunch and Learn 12PM, Trinity United Methodist Church, Work Force of the Garden (Katherine Chapman)

October 11—Governor's Mansion 9AM

October 12—Demo Garden 8AM, Prattvillage Garden 9AM

October 14—Membership meeting at Extension Office at 9AM—Container Gardens by Sue Brasel

October 16—Vegetable Garden Workshop at Demo Garden 9AM—1PM

October 18—Governor's Mansion 9AM

October 19—Demo Garden 8AM, Prattvillage Garden 9AM

October 25—Governor's Mansion 9AM

October 26—Demo Garden 8AM, Prattvillage Garden 9AM

November 2—Farm City Day

November 3—Landowner's Tour

November 4—Lunch and Learn 12PM, Trinity United Methodist Church, Container Plants (Sue Brasel)

November— Trip to Bellingrath Gardens TBD

November—Herbs for the Holidays Workshop TBD

December—Trip to Callaway Gardens TBD

December 2—Lunch and Learn 12PM, Trinity United Methodist Church, Composting (Paula Seamon and Rose McCauley)

What's Bugging You?



[Chris Evans, University of Illinois, Bugwood.org](#)

Do You know the name of this critter? Is it beneficial or destructive or both?

Answer and information can be found on Page 5

Alabama Gardener's Calendar September

Fruits and Nuts

- New catalogs will be arriving soon.
- Start plans for future selections and plantings.
- Take soil test for new planting areas.
- Fertilize established strawberry plantings.

Shrubs

- Study landscape to determine plant needs.
- Check early camellia varieties for damage caused by insects and disease.
- Replace landscape plants as needed that have severe damage caused by insects, disease, or freezes.
- After fall growth is completed, spray all shrubs with a fungicide.

Lawns

- Mow often (5 to 10 days) to remove just 1/3 the grass height at each mowing.
- If daytime temperatures are consistently cooler than 80 degrees F, apply fire ant bait. Read the label carefully for best control.
- If winter or spring weeds were a concern this year, apply pre-emergent herbicides.
- Reseed tall fescue lawns and fertilize at 1 pound slow-release nitrogen per 1,000 square feet.

Roses

- Protect fall crops of blossoms from aphids and thrips.
- Keep plants healthy.

Annuals and Perennials

- Plant perennials and biennials. This is the last planting time for these.
- Divide old clumps of perennials.
- Plant peonies.

Bulbs

- Plant spring-flowering bulbs late this month in north Alabama.
- Delay planting in south Alabama.

Miscellaneous

- Clean up infestations of insects on azaleas, camellias, boxwoods, gardenias, hollies, etc.
- If oil spray is needed, don't use in freezing weather.
- Build a compost bin or box; leaves will be falling soon.
- Monitor house plants for insects and diseases before moving them indoors. Treat as needed to prevent carrying unwanted pest indoors. Check for snakes and lizards.

Vegetable Seeds

- **South:** Plant beets, carrots, Brussels sprouts, collards, kale, lettuce, mustard, onion seeds, radishes, spinach, Swiss chard, parsley, and turnips.
- **Central and North:** Continue planting carrots, collards, kale, lettuce, mustard, onion seeds, parsley, radishes, spinach, Swiss chard, and turnips.

Vegetable Transplants

- **Whole state:** Continue planting cole crops, collards, kale, lettuce, mustard, and spinach transplants, and onion sets.
- **South:** Plant celery transplants.

Questions?

- Call the Master Gardener Helpline at (877) 252-4769. A Master Gardener Extension volunteer is waiting to answer your call.

What's Bugging You Answer:

Azalea Caterpillar

They may completely defoliate azaleas and blueberry bushes, but will usually not cause permanent harm. The best and easiest way to control in your yard landscape is to hand pick them and do as Debbie Boutelier suggests, feed them to your chickens. (DB comment - Tried that. Chickens did not like them and acted as if they were aliens!)

Vegetable School

Troubleshooting crop issues

Tour research plots and learn about insect, disease, and fertility management of vegetable crops.

Fertility management for tomato production. – Dr Andre da Silva

Irrigation best management practices for vegetable crops. – Dr Andre da Silva

Identifying and managing diseases in tomato and pumpkin production. – Dr Ed Sikora

Insect pest scouting practices for tomato and cucurbit crops. – Dr Ayanava Majumdar

Alternative integrated pest management tactics. – Dr Ayanava Majumdar

Feedback and program evaluation

To register please contact David Lawrence (334) 740-1667 Lawreda@aces.edu

Or the Chilton Research/Extension Center (205) 646-3610

This is a free event. This is an outdoor event where social distancing will be observed.



October 6, 2021

9:00am-12:00pm

Chilton Research and Extension Center

120 County Road 756

Clanton, AL 35045



Download the Farming Basics phone app and stay connected.

The Alabama Cooperative Extension System (Alabama A&M University and Auburn University), is an equal opportunity educator and employer. Everyone is welcome!

Lunch and Learn

Butterflies by

Soyna Moore





Virtual Alabama Extension

“Horticulture Happenings”

All programs are Central Standard Time,

“Get Outside with Alabama Smart Yards” Series: Every Wednesday 1:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m.

Registration Link: www.auburn.zoom.us/j/82398811386

<https://www.facebook.com/AlabamaSmartYardsAlabamaExtension>

At Home Beekeeping Series: Last Tuesday of Every Month 6:30p.m.-7:30p.m. (Begins January 26th)

Registration Link: <https://auburn.zoom.us/j/904522838>

Back to Basics Gardening Series: 2nd & 4th Wednesdays 10:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m. (Begins February 10th)

Registration Link: <http://www.aces.edu/go/B2Bzoom>

<https://www.aces.edu/?s=Back2BasicsWednesdays&q=Back2BasicsWednesdays>

Eco Friendly Fridays~ Environmental Education Series:

Last Friday of Every Month 12:00p.m.- 1:00 p.m.

www.aces.edu/go/EcoFriendlyFridays

Alabama Garden Walk Series: 1st and 3rd Fridays 12:00 p.m.-12:45 p.m. (Begins February 19th)

Registration Link: www.aces.edu/go/GardenWalk

Raising Trees Series: Thursday’s 12:00p.m.-1:00p.m.

<https://www.aces.edu/blog/topics/landscaping/raising-trees-webinar-series/>

Alabama Garden Chat Wednesdays TBA (Begins in April)

ForestHer Webinar Series: 2nd Tuesday’s of Every Month 12:00p.m.-1:00p.m.

<https://www.aces.edu/blog/topics/forestry/foresther-workshops/>

2021 Natural Resources Webinar Series: Wednesday’s 12:00p.m.-1:00p.m.

(see the link for the dates scheduled)

<https://www.aces.edu/blog/topics/forestry/natural-resources-webinar-series/>

Alabama Virtual Farm Tours: (Biweekly from March-Oct at 5:00p.m.- 6:00p.m.

Stay informed or watch on <https://www.facebook.com/AlabamaExtensionCommercialHorticulture>

Commercial Horticulture Monthly Webinar Seminars, last Monday of each month: <https://auburn.zoom.us/j/590217859>

or watch Livestream at <https://www.facebook.com/AlabamaExtensionCommercialHorticulture>.

Monthly agenda is posted on <http://www.aces.edu/anr/beginningfarms/webinars.php>

‘Q&A Friday!’ interactive shows: (Fridays from March-Oct 11:30a.m. to 12:30p.m.)

Stay informed or watch on <https://www.facebook.com/AlabamaExtensionCommercialHorticulture>

***For more information, please contact your local county office for more information & the ACES calendar of events for even more available educational programs on interest www.aces.edu/calendar**

For Commercial Horticulture events, use the Farming Basics Phone App to access social media pages & Webinar recordings.

40 Year AMGA Anniversary Celebration

When I first heard about the celebration for 40 years of Alabama's Master Gardener program, I must admit that I wasn't very excited. Anniversaries for me have never been that exciting but just a mark of passage in time. But wow! I was blown away by our event. Many thanks to Kerry Smith for organizing the statewide celebration and to Debbie Boutelier, Bionca Lindsey and crew for putting together our local event at the Autauga County Extension Office.. The main celebration at Auburn University was live streamed via Zoom. Learning about people who were responsible for starting the Master Gardener Program in Alabama like Mary Lou McNabb and Gary Murray was quite eye opening. It was also nice to see Leonard Kuykendall, past Autauga County Extension Agent, at the celebration. At our local event we played games, fellowshiped and of course ate our fill of snacks. Thanks to everyone who worked so hard putting this together and thanks to Debbie Boutelier for managing the live stream equipment.





Maria Pacheco giving pruning demonstrations at our Membership meeting at Lanark.



By Mallory Kelley
Regional Extension Agent
Home Grounds, Gardens, Home Pests

That August heat has been brutal and I know we are all longing for the crisp feeling of fall in the air. When it comes to fall, the chrysanthemum is arguably the favorite of all fall flowers and comes in a wide variety of colors and bloom variations.

When cruising the garden center and looking to purchase a garden mum for your back patio or front door, timing and temperature do play a role in how long you can expect those blooms to last.

For one thing the dry, hot days of fall will cause container plants to dry out much faster so be sure to water them daily. If you need instant impact buy those with most of the blooms open, but for a longer lasting impact of blooms purchase those that are still in bud. Remember that the warmer it is the quicker the buds will open which will result in a shorter bloom period. Waiting until the temperatures start to drop will increase your bloom time and also decrease their need for water.

Even though they are not often looked after for survival through the winter, mums are perennials, meaning that under favorable conditions they will come back each year.

To care for a mum in hopes that it will survive to bloom another year takes some preparation and special care. Begin by planting mums in well-drained soil where they will receive at least six hours of sunshine daily and plant at the same depth they are in the pot. To carry them from year to year in the ground you need to plant right away and keep watered. Planting anything in September or October in central Alabama can be a challenge as we are so hot and dry. Plant mums as early as possible to give them time to be established before winter or they won't have enough time to build root systems strong enough to get through winter.

Water is critical to the growth and survival of mums. They often get too dry in the containers on your front porch as October is usually our hottest and driest month of the year. Mums will be damaged if they are allowed to dry out. Apply sufficient water to a depth of four to six inches regularly. Too much water is also a problem. As with most plants, it is best to water during the day so the foliage will have time to dry off before nightfall. Moisture left on foliage can cause diseases.

Mulch around the mums well to help protect the plant and hold moisture in the ground and will protect roots throughout winter.

* Deadheading (removing spent blooms) not only keeps the plant blooming longer, it also allows mums to put their energy into the root system. When they are finished blooming, remove all dead blooms but, leave foliage to help them get through the winter.

* Before the first hard freeze, make sure the soil is very moist. Apply several inches of mulch such as straw or leaves around the roots to protect the plant through the winter months.

* In late winter or early spring, remove the previous year's plant material and the mulch you applied for the winter.

If your conditions are right and you are fortunate to have your mums come back next spring, the plants will benefit from monthly fertilization. Pruning them back in June will help create a more compact look and increase bud shoots for more blooms in the coming months. Daylength of light also affects when they bloom so those in the ground usually start blooming earlier than those you would purchase in the garden center.

For more information and garden questions about your plants, please contact the Master Gardener Helpline toll free at: 1-877-ALA-GROW!



2021 Fall Landowner Tour

In conjunction with Farm-City Week

Wednesday, November 3, 2021

In case of rain - Tour Date will be Thursday, November 4, 2021

8:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.

Registration 8:00 to 8:45 - Tour starts promptly at 9AM



Trustmark Bank is providing a variety of biscuits and donuts, Riverbank is providing Conecuh Sausage, and Alabama Ag Credit will have good ole southern grits at registration.



TOUR TOPICS:

- 26 Year Growth Comparison of Loblolly and Longleaf
- Tree Girdling for Wildlife
- Planting Failure, Now What?
- Cost-share Available



Tour and Lunch (Cater Up) - \$15

(Riding Tour - Trailers Provided)

4 CFE Points Available, 4 PLM Credits Available

LOTS OF GREAT DOOR PRIZES !!



Featuring Roger Carter Property & John Pirtle Property

3495 County Road 26 Billingsley, AL 36006 [32.65702, -86.75982] (This can be entered into any navigation system)

From Prattville go West on US-82 23 miles. Turn right onto County Road 26 just after Jim's BBQ. The driveway will be 0.5 miles on the right. There will be directional signs along the way.

Pre-Register with Autauga Forestry & Wildlife Stewardship Council: 334-365-5532, Ext. 2403

Name & Phone Number: _____

Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Include your \$15.00 with this registration form. ONE ATTENDEE PER REGISTRATION FORM.

Make checks payable to AFWSC (Autauga Forestry & Wildlife Stewardship Council)

2226 Hwy 14W, Suite A, Autaugaville, AL 36003



The Hummingbird award for September is awarded to Cheri Cook for her work with the Intern Class and Intern Graduation



Birthdays

Martha Hughes 09/01
Albert Striplin 09/05
Linda McCullough 10/20
Pam Hattemer 10/21
Kathryn Whaley 10/22
Lee Ann Marona 10/30
Karen Bell 10/30
Ann Fuller 10/31

These are the birthdays we have on file.
If we missed your birthday, we're sorry. Please contact Debbie Boutelier
so that the information can be added to our file.



Autauga County Master Gardeners Association

Membership Renewal Form

Annual County membership dues for 2022 are \$15. State dues are \$10 and optional. State dues entitle you to State Membership and **Pathways Newsletter**. You can also receive state awards such as Reach for the Stars. Please complete this form and return it to the Treasurer, **NO LATER THAN OCT. 15th 2021**. After the deadline, there is a \$10.00 late fee.

NAME _____

____ Check if your information in the 2021 ACMGA Membership Directory is correct. If no changes, it is unnecessary to complete the information below.

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____ CELL _____

EMAIL _____ DOB _____

(Only give email address if you wish to receive info via email) mm/dd

COUNTY OF TRAINING _____ YEAR OF GRADUATION _____

TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP:

Local Dues State Dues

____ Active Member Local & State \$15 \$10

(includes graduating interns)

____ Active Member Local Only \$15 \$0

(includes graduating interns)

____ Active Member w/ current State Lifetime \$15 \$0

____ Active member w/ new State Lifetime \$15 \$150

(one time fee)

____ Yes, I am a dual member. County of primary membership _____

Make check payable to ACMGA.

Mail or give to:

Cheri Cook Check _____ Cash _____

813 Bluegrass Drive

Prattville, AL 36067 Receipt # _____

PLANT PROPAGATION BY DIVISION

By Don Armstrong with photos and edits by Glenda

It was 90 degrees outside in 2015 when I wrote this article on plant propagation. I have updated the article for the April 2022 plant sale. Propagation by division should be done in October, November, and December, when the plant is dormant and the weather is cooler. The plants used for examples and photos in this article are from Petals From the Past and were, obviously, potted, not dug up from the garden. This article was written in early September to share an idea with the readers so you can get more plants ready for the April 2022 Plant Sale, hence the use of potted plants for examples.



The Victims and Tools

Many perennials will have dead or dying centers after they have been in the ground a few years. Some will have dead centers as soon as only three years. Perennials need to be divided. This results in plants to share with other gardeners and to have ready for the April 2022 Plant Sale. When you dig up a perennial it is a good time to look at rearranging the garden layout. It is often better to not put the perennial back in the same place in the garden. Remember to refresh the garden soil where you dig up the perennial as the perennial will have depleted some of the soil nutrients.

Division is done on plants that do not have a single stem or crown. Hostas, Mums, Ornamental Grasses, and many of the perennial flowers can easily be divided. See the side bar list at the end of this article for a more complete list of plants to divide. Chip East was kind enough to give me the list following his propagation class on Friday, 28 August 2015.

Division is very easy. The “Hard” part is getting the plant out of the ground. That is digging work! So, get the shovel out and dig up some old perennials. Some folks use their shovel to divide their plants. I find this does not allow accuracy in placing the cutting edge in the correct place between the grass stems. I have seen my Father-in-Law use an ax to divide stubborn plants (I have used it too.!) The key tool I use is shown in the photo above.

Put your plant on your favorite working surface and divide it. If it is a clumping plant, like the grasses, then use the machete and chop! First, take a look at the plant and see if you can pull the grasses apart and get between the individual grass stems with your fingers. Then just slice, push, hack, or whatever technique you like to split the plant. With grasses you can often get four or more pieces from one clump. If you were at the propagation classes I did last Spring, then you saw me use my hands to pull apart Mondo Grass. I find that Monkey Grass and Mondo Grass are easy to pull apart by hand (depends upon the soil too!).



Grass division with machete – split

Grass division with machete – quartered

Some plants are better when divided by hand. Plants with rhizomes (Lily of the Nile, Rattlesnake Plant, Canna, [Giant Rhubarb](#), Ginger, Iris, and Red Hot Poker) and corms ([Crocus](#), [Gladiolus](#), and [Freesia](#)) are good examples of this. All loosely growing clumps are best done by hand. Tugging and pulling are two great stress relievers and should be used whenever possible. So, get your hands in there and have fun. I don't wear gloves as I like to feel what I am pulling upon.



Grip the Plant and Pull Apart

See how easy the propagation by division was to do. You just cut or pull and you have a new plant ready to pot up! Now it is time to get them into pots and have them ready for the April 2022 Plant Sale. Normally, I use gallon pots for the divisions. I put wood chips in the bottom of the pot (sometimes the pot is half full of wood chips), slide the division into the pot, and add my potting soil. I label the plants and fertilize them too. I use Osmocote, a slow release fertilizer.



Slide Cutting into the Pot

The grass cuttings will need a haircut. Other cuttings will need to be trimmed up to finish the project.



Add the Potting Soil



Potted but Not Finished

As the weather cools and your perennials go dormant, dig them up, divide them, and have some plants ready for the April 2022 Plant Sale. Share one or two with a fellow Master Gardener too.

Some Herbaceous Plants That Can Be Propagated By Division

Dr. Chip East
Alabama Cooperative Extension System
Regional Extension Agent
Commercial Horticulture

Ascanthus spinosus (Spiny Bear's Breeches)
Achillea filipendulina (Fernleaf Yarrow)
Achillea millefolium (Common Yarrow)
Allium schoemoprasum (Chives)
Anthemis tinctoria (Golden Marguerite)
Aquilegia x hybrid (Hybrid Columbine)
Artemisia ludoviciana (White Sage)
Astilbe sp. (False Spirea)
Bellis perennis (English Daisy)
Bergenia cordifolia (Heartleaf Bergenia)
Campanula glomerata (Clustered Bellflower)
Canna x generalis (Canna)
Chasmanthium latifolium (Northern Sea Oats)
Chrysanthemum sp.
Coreopsis lanceolate (Coreopsis)
Cyclamen persicum (Cyclamen)
Delphinium x elatum (Delphinium)
Dianthus barbatus (Sweet William)
Dianthus plumarius (Cottage Pink)
Digitalis purpurea (Common Foxglove)
Echinacea purpurea (Purple Coneflower)
Equisetum hyemale (Horsetail)
Erysimum sp. (Blister-Cress)
Festuca ovina (Blue Fescue)
Gaillardia x grandiflora (Blanket Flower)
Gazania rigens (Treasure Flower)
Gerbera jamesonii (Transvaal Daisy)
Gladiolus x hortulanus (Gladiolus)
Helleborus orientalis (Lenten Rose)
hemerocallis hybrids (Daylily)
Hippeastrum hybrids (Amaryllis)
Hosta sp. (Plantain Lily)
Hyacinthus orientalis (Hyacinth)
Iberis sempervirens (Evergreen Candytuft)
Iris hybrids (Tall Bearded Iris)
Kniphofia uvaria (Red-Hot Poker)
Narcissus hybrids (Daffodil)
Origanum vulgare (Oregano)
Stachys byzantina (Lamb's Ear)
Zantedeschia sp. (Calla Lily)

Editor's Corner



I am presently on the Nominating Committee for the State Board. We are looking to fill two Members at Large positions, the Assistant Treasurer's position, and an Assistant Newsletter Editor. Please consider and contact me if you are interested.

Debbie Boutelier is looking for someone to fill the handbook editor position. Please if you have Microsoft Publisher experience, you are needed for this position. Also I would like to congratulate Jonna Turberville for stepping up to the plate and volunteering for the public relations chair. Jonna just graduated last month and is very new. This brings up another point. Just because you are new doesn't mean you can't fill a position. I was elected President my first full year as a Master Gardener. There are always people willing to help. So please, consider filling positions when they become available.

Next deadline for newsletter articles is October 13.

Anthony Yarbrough

(ayarb@knology.net)