



February 2016

Volume XXIV Issue II



NEWSLETTER OF THE BALDWIN COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS, INC.

WWW.BALDWINCOUNTYMASTERGARDENERS.COM

2016 BCMG Elected Board

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John Fitzhugh

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Pam Tucker

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Finance Committee Chair:

Gordon Cooper

Intern Class Coordinator

Pam Tucker

Outreach Coordinator

Tany's Waldron

Projects Chairperson

Gary Wallace

Merchandising Purchase Chair

Maura Daniell

*President's Notes by John Fitzhugh****"Hide not your talents, they for use were made. What use a sundial in the shade?"*** By: Ben Franklin

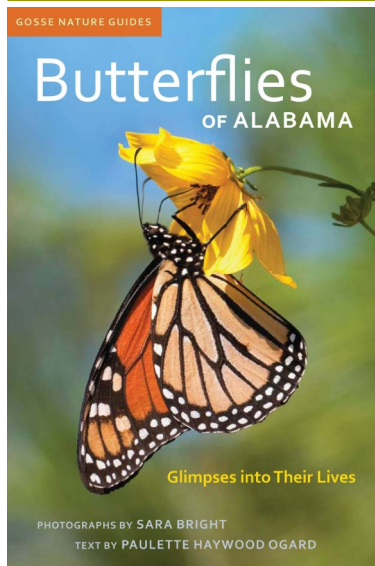
This quote brings to mind how blessed we are as a volunteer organization to have so many talented and hardworking members. The "Tell Us About Your Interests" survey that we conducted last year confirmed that our members have a broad range of useful skills and interest in a wide variety of activities.

As veteran Master Gardeners know so well, almost one-half of our annual volunteer activities occur in the first three months of the year. The intern classes get underway, Spring Workshops begin, Arbor Day celebrations take place, the Festival of Flowers opens in Mobile, and our primary fundraiser, the Spring Plant Sale, takes place at Weeks Bay. The success of these activities requires the involvement of many talented and dedicated members.

So at the risk of being too literary, remember what Rudyard Kipling once said,

"Gardens are not made by singing Oh, how beautiful! while sitting in the shade"

Let us all use our individual talents and have fun working together this year to make our garden the most beautiful ever. Do not wait to be asked, please volunteer.



Our **Spring Plant Sale** at Weeks Bay will open to the public on Friday, April 1, and run through Sunday, April 3. Preparation for the plant sale will take place from Tuesday, March 29 and Wednesday, March 30. On Thursday, March 31, beginning at 2 pm, we will host a special Plant Sale Preview for invited garden club members to hear two exciting guest speakers and to get an early start on plant sales. We are fortunate to have as our guest speakers, Paulette Haywood Ogard and Sara Cunningham Bright. They have produced *Butterflies of Alabama*, a full-color, richly illustrated guide to the 84 known species of "true" butterflies (Papilionoides) found within our state's borders. Ogard and Bright have made a close study of these showy, winged stars of the insect world, pursuing them in a great variety of habitats, rearing them, and photographing their four remarkable life cycle stages.

We need many volunteers to help make this important BCMG event successful!

January 12, 2016 General Meeting Minutes by Mary Hamilton

The meeting was opened with remarks from President, John Fitzhugh.

Everyone is excited about the New Year. The calendar of events is on the website and in the January Newsletter. We are heavily loaded in the first three months with activities. We have to be sprinting from the start. Sign-up sheets for various activities need to be filled up to get the work done in the first quarter. Who was not at the December meeting? President John Fitzhugh recognized those who made sure that the lunch went off perfectly. Busy Bee awards go to Pam Tucker, Diane Hall, Connie Griffin, Sarrah Rankin, Judi Smith, Anita O'Conner, and Tampa Sykora.

Help Line will begin for 2016 on February 11; Monday, Thursday, and Friday.

Pam Tucker needs help for Festival of Flowers in March. Help is needed to get materials over to Providence Hospital in Mobile, to help set up, and to get things back. Men who can carry things are especially needed.

There are 17 people in this years' Intern class; which is a manageable number. There will be an intern lunch on Wednesday, Jan. 20th. Board members are invited and should bring something to go with chicken. A lunch will be held at a later date for all members. If Project coordinators wish to invite interns to participate in their projects, please email Pam. Come to class between 9:00 and 9:30 on Wednesdays.

Tanys Waldron, Outreach Chairman, talked about the Spring Seminars and Arbor Day. They are the first activities to come up this year. Volunteers are needed to set the room up and to manage the kitchen during the Spring Seminars. Most of the Arbor Day events are all occurring on the same date, February 27th. Tanys will hand out sign up sheets at the next meeting. Arbor Day at Foley will be outside at the Farmers Market on Highway 20, next to Wolf Bay. The coordinator is Paula Pritchard. Silverhill: Thursday 25th and Friday 26th. Magnolia Springs' coordinator is Joy Zeanah and Barbara Phillips. Daphne coordinator is Gary Wallace, Fairhope coordinator is Peggy Sheffield. Silverhill Arbor Day is a two day event, February 25 and 26. The coordinator is Carolyn Koch.

Gene Sellier reported that we have 135 paid members, one member withdrew and we have 14 unpaid members for a total of 150 members, if everybody pays.

Frieda Romanchuk introduced the Spring AGMA Conference. Information can be found at Alabama Master Gardener.org You can now register for the conference online. There are a few already planning to go to it.

Dooley's Berry's next column will be on Monarch butterflies. Contact Dooley for seed for milkweed to feed the Monarch caterpillars. Dooley's email is churlbeerry@yahoo.com. Leave a message with your name and phone number.

If email has changed please contact Gene Sellier at bcmqinfo12@gmail.com
Lori Hadley has five 25th Anniversary Books left at \$25.00 each.

Our speaker is Gene Sellier on '*Culinary Herbs*'

The opening slide had the following list:

- ◆ Parsley, Italian style leaves only. Curly for display
- ◆ Lemongrass,
- ◆ Oregano,
- ◆ Rosemary,
- ◆ Cilantro, (Culantro is used as a substitute for cilantro, it survives our summers better.)
- ◆ Sage,
- ◆ Lavender,
- ◆ Peppermint,
- ◆ Thyme.
- ◆ Fennel, Florence Fennel, finocchio, forms an edible bulb that can be eaten cooked or raw. Old Tyme Feed has seed available.

Fresh or dried herbs can be used for cooking.

One Tablespoon of fresh herbs is equivalent to 1 teaspoon of dried herbs.

Infused Vinegars and oils are easy to make, with precautions. For vinegar, first wash the herbs with a solution of 1 teaspoon of Chlorine bleach to one quart of water. Briefly wash them, then pat them dry. Vinegar should be heated to 180 degrees. Use a good vinegar, make sure it is made from apple juice. If there is a distinct acrid odor, pour it out.



Gene Sellier and Gary Wallace

January 12, 2016 General Meeting Minutes by Mary Hamilton (continued)

For oil with herbs use good olive oil, not extra virgin. Try garlic or sage. Heat the oil until it starts to shimmer, then drop in the herbs. Fry until the herbs are stiff. Turn off the heat. Take out the herbs and place them on paper towel. You can eat them or put on salad (but not the cooked garlic.)

Drying Herbs:

Gather herbs after dew is gone.

Gather only the healthiest and robust herbs.

Tie stems together and place in paper bag that has holes for ventilation. Hang in a warm place with good ventilation. Alternatively you can strip leaves and place them on cheesecloth frame.

Use a dehydrator (105 degrees) or oven on the lowest temperature. This also works for chives. Check frequently.

A microwave can be used but be very careful not to burn the herbs.

Freezing Herbs:

Strip leaves from plant stems.

Wash in mild bleach water (like before)

Pat dry, chop fine.

Fill compartments of a plastic ice cube tray with herbs. Cover with water. Freeze.

Remove frozen cubes from try and store in a plastic bag with herb name and date.

Each cube delivers about 1 tablespoon fresh herb. (Caution: Basil will turn black.)

Saving seeds:

Common chives are round and garlic chives are flat. Grow in pots with a tray underneath. Cut the seed heads off. Garlic Flower heads are good to eat.

Gene uses Metro Mix 360 (for planting in pots) which can be purchased at Racines, or Old Tyme Feed. Good mixed 50/50 with ground pine bark, with Black Cow or chicken manure added. When using this mix Gene doesn't fertilize for a while.

Coriander/Cilantro--use fresh, dried it has no flavor. There are some people who do not like cilantro, the dislike of cilantro is genetic.

When Rosemary gets to looking like a tree, you can put cut branches on the grill to flavor your meat or use a branch as a marinating brush. Wash in bleach water, then use as skewers.

Artists are needed Festival of flowers to sketch our booth.

John concluded the meeting with the Door prize won by Judi Smith.

Bernie moved and Frieda seconded to end the meeting. Then it

was time to eat and enjoy ! These delightful herbal treats were brought in to share by Julian Walthall, Mia Martin, Susie Wallace, Donna Aplin, Peggy Loefstedt, Jane Denmark, Pat Greer, Pam Schultz, Diane Hall, Gene Sellier, and Barb Comstock.



Muscle men needed, or just regular guys, too, and trucks, and trailers!

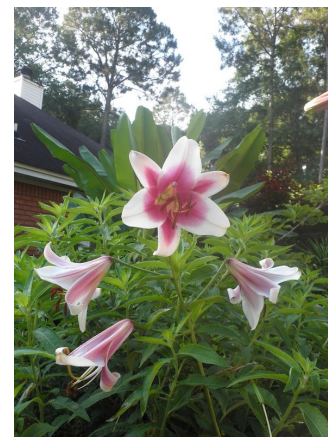
Festival of Flowers needs your help! Call Pam Tucker, 251-929-2132

The Garden in Transition by Barb Comstock

Our president, John Fitzhugh, asked for short articles on members to be included in our Grass Roots newsletters. I thought I'd start with my own. Like many new residents to our shores, I started a garden with "one of each". Every plant that caught my eye at the spring plant sales had to come home with me. Over time, I have discovered some plants thrive under my particular yard's soil, amount of sunlight, irrigation, and fertilization/mulch. To the dismay of my patient, generous partner, some plants had to go, some died, and some were given away to better gardeners.

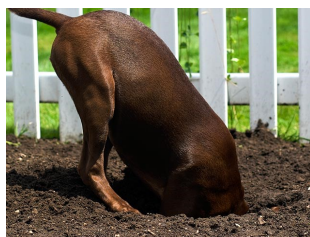
What we have now is a home surrounded by perennials, tropical plants, and low growing trees. We have a front part-sun border around our only tall trees, a magnolia and Leland cypress. There is a small rose garden surrounded by short sun-loving perennials, an ever-expanding group of tropical and sub-tropical exotics, and a back yard full of fruit trees. Our 2016 project will be installing a large 9' by 5' formed-pool for a bog garden, fed by our rain gutters. In it will be the various pitcher plants, papyrus, and reeds that have been struggling in small bog pots.

My favorite flowers are roses. I'm still waiting for my white bird of paradise to bloom (how many years must I wait?) I vow to eliminate all our Mondo Grass! My gardens are always open to garden enthusiasts. We have had tours given to friends, neighbors, and even people visiting a local yard sale. Someone always seems to be home, don't be shy.



The Perfect Hole

The perfect hole for planting shrubs and trees isn't really deep at all.

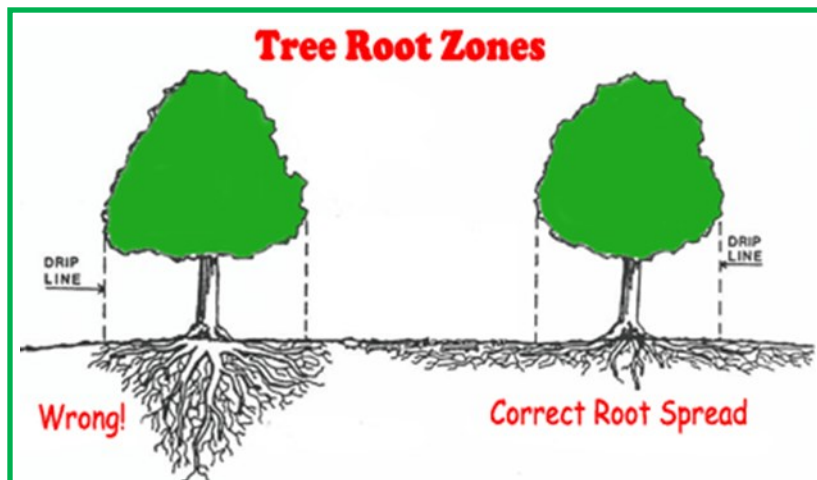
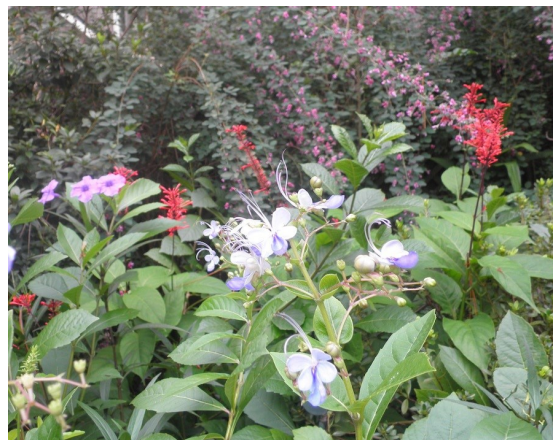


A hole dug only a few inches deeper than the pot the plant resides in, is deep enough. It is very important that you dig the hole as wide as possible, preferably double the size of the pot or, to give your new tree the best start as possible, even bigger. How wide you dig your hole, will determine how fast your tree will grow. How far should you dig?

Consider a 6 foot sapling. Most people would dig a 2 to 3 foot wide hole. The tree might sit there for a few years and struggle to grow an inch. Plant that same sapling in a wider hole, 6 feet wide, cleared of grass and other vegetation, and it may grow 2 to 3 feet in the first year. This is because in that first year, its possible the roots of the new tree may extend all the way to the edge of the your digging.

Breaking up the soil (and removing the vegetation) opens up the soil to trap rainfall. If you have a heavy clay concentration in your soil, it helps prevent a bathtub of water from forming around your new tree. When lifting sod from the area, remember to shake out as much soil as possible; you want as much top soil as possible to stay around the tree.

By digging the perfect hole, you have given your new tree its best chance at growing well.



A tree is anchored by its roots. The trees that grow in the South are surprisingly shallow and far reaching, usually less than 12 inches deep, but spread out over an area much wider than the tree is tall. Any construction within 25 feet of the tree trunk is likely to eliminate a large portion of the tree's anchoring system. Even a minor wind might be enough to knock the tree over.

Trees Lost = Future Lost

By Barb Comstock from information from Charles Lake and John Lake

In 1987, a group of individuals, private citizens, city planners, business owners, and developers, came together and formed a group called the Corridor 98 Committee. Private funds were raised by the communities neighboring Highway 98 to purchase live oaks and crape myrtles to be planted from Bayway Bridge all the way down to Fairhope. Trees were purchased by citizens in Spanish Fort, Lake Forest, Daphne, Montrose, Fairhope, Point Clear, and Battles Wharf and more. The planting of the trees were the result of Eastern Shore citizens efforts to leave a legacy for the future.

The trees purchased were small saplings, but the citizens knew, over the years, they would grow. They also knew that as future developers removed native trees in the undeveloped areas, the live oaks would grow up and make up for the deforestation along Highway 98. The cities of Daphne and Fairhope, along with Baldwin County, matched the monetary contributions of citizens with labor to plant the trees. This was a labor of love by the people of the private and public sectors. As the time the trees were planted, the municipalities passed tree ordinances that protected the trees on public land.

Now, thirty years later, the trees planted with such love and hope for the future are at risk. The developers are coming after the very legacy that citizens and municipalities left 30 years ago to "buffer" the development that they knew was coming. Recent loss of a number of the live oaks along Highway 98, due to a new apartment development, has stirred up protests.

While it is encouraging that grass roots efforts are being made to retard or stop the loss of our trees, it is important that each Master Gardener take on the task of sharing with others the importance of trees in our lives and communities. Our communities' Arbor Days are excellent opportunities to share our message. If you wish further information on how to "pick up the baton" on actions to protect our trees, check out the following websites. Remember, knowledge is power.

Trees in the City by Charlotte Bingham, Penn State Online, Planning Advisory Service www.planning.org, Includes rationales for tree protection and fostering preservation. Excellent information.

Tree Population Falling in Cities by Tod Newcombe on the website Governing, the States and Localities, September 2012. Full of facts and data on tree reduction in cities due to development and lesser factors. www.governing.com

NASA Explains Why You Should Live On a Tree Lined Street - And A Tree Lined City, by Charlie Sorrel derived from a fact filled (and very difficult to understand) NASA study. Article on the website www.fastcoexist.com. Basically it says you are going to roast if we don't have trees.

While it took 30 years for these 30 trees to grow, it took only one morning for them to be cut down.



Stuffed Zucchini from Gene Sellier

Ingredients:

slice zucchini lengthwise

- 2 medium zucchini
- 1 Tbsp. butter
- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 1/2 small onion, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced

hollow each slice leaving 1/4 inch edge, reserve removed zucchini

- 1/4 cup ricotta cheese
- 1/2 cup parmesan cheese, shredded

saute onion and garlic in butter and oil 3 minutes

- 1/4 cup shredded mozzarella
- oregano, approximately 1/3 cup
- chives, approximately 1/4 cup
- 2 Tbsp. bread crumbs

add reserve zucchini and cook on medium-low for 10 minutes until soft- remove from heat

blend in remaining ingredients

stuff each zucchini half, bake for 40 minutes at 350 F

Brown under broiler if desired



Trees and Hurricanes, Paraphrased from an article by Bill Finch, former Environmental Editor for the Mobile Register, October 2004.

Did you know there is a grading system around to help you determine what trees survive the high winds in a hurricane? This grading system, the Hurricane Hazard Report Card, is based on an informal survey of what trees survived, what trees were damaged, over twenty plus years of observation.

Keep in mind that while many feel it is dangerous to have trees in areas where there are hurricanes, in reality trees do you a great service by diffusing the fiercest winds. One reason there is relatively little structural damage in Mobile and Baldwin Counties from straight-line winds, is that the trees dissipate the straight-line winds. In areas where there are no trees, such as adjacent to parking lots, there is severe direct wind damage. While it would be nice to figure out a way to prevent trees and limbs from falling on our houses, if we understood the correct way to prune, limb-up, and protect roots of our trees, it would lessen the risk of damage.

Selecting the right trees is one of the best ways to protect your trees from succumbing to hurricane winds. There are some common factors that make a risky tree. 1) They are common, weedy, easily grown trees. 2) They grow very large, very fast. Trees that grow that big quickly have a poor root system and weak wood. 3) They have no immune system and rot at the least disturbance (such as cut roots, lost bark, or crown rot.) 4) They have a poorly developed limb structure with very few, very heavy, and very crowded vertical limbs (think of the vase shape of pecans.) 5) Their mature height is over 30 feet.

The A List:

The evergreen magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*)

The live oak (*Quercus virginiana*)

Sand live oak (*Quercus geminata*)

Sabal palms (*Sabal palmetto*)

Bald cypress (*Taxodium* species)

The B List:

White oaks (*Quercus alba* and *Quercus michauxii*)

Southern sugar maple (*Acer saccharum* varieties)

The C List:

Sweet gum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*)

Hickories (*Carya tomentosa* & others)

Longleaf pine (*Pinus palustris*)

The D List:

Hackberries (*Celtis* species)

Sycamores

Spanish red oaks (*Quercus falcata*)

Red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*, *J. silicicola*)

White cedar (*Chamaecyparis thyoides*)

Ash trees (*Fraxinus* species)

Spruce pine (*Pinus glabra*)

Slash pine (*Pinus elliotii*)



The E List:

Black cherries (*Prunus virginiana*)

Chinese elm (*Ulmus parvifolia*)

Silver maple (*Acer saccharinum*)

Loblolly pine (*Pinus taeda*)

Sweet bay magnolias (*Magnolia virginiana*)

Sand pines (*Pinus clausa*)

The F List:

Water oaks (*Quercus nigra*)

Laurel oaks (*Quercus hemisphaerica*, *Q. laurifolia*)

Pecans

Tulip poplars (*Liriodendron tulipifera*)

Red maple (*Acer rubrum*)





**2016 Spring
Workshops**

**\$5.00 per
evening**

Cash/Checks only,
payable at the door

**Proceeds Benefit
BCMG Scholarship
Fund**

**Master Gardener
Plant Sale**

April 1-3

**Fri. Sat. Sun.
9 am - 4 pm**

**Weeks Bay
Reserve**

Hwy 98

**GARDENING
QUESTIONS?**

Call our Helpline
1-877-252-4769
or
www.aces.edu

Tuesdays with Master Gardeners

- Feb. 16** 6 pm *Growing Tomatoes in Containers*.....John Kitch
7 pm *Growing Camellias*..... Jim Gaines
- Feb. 23** 6 pm *Organic Gardening*Myra Lassere
7 pm *Recommended Plants from "Old Thyme Feed"...* Cecil Christenberry
in Fairhope
- March 1** 6 pm *Shade Gardens*Diane Hall
6:45 *Growing African Violets & Propagation* Jere Trigg
7:30 *Growing Bromeliads & Propagation*..... Sharon Thoele
- March 8** 6 pm *Landscaping: The Plan*John Kitch
7 pm *Landscaping: The Plants*John Kitch

Time: 6:00—8:00 p.m.

Place: Gulf Coast Regional Research & Extension Center
8300 Highway 104, Fairhope, Alabama
(1/2 mile east of Hwy 98)

For More Information: (251) 550-6464

*** Light refreshments will be served ***

www.baldwincountymastergardeners.com



Published by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System (Alabama A&M and Auburn Universities) in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. An equal opportunity educator and employer. Baldwin County Extension Programs are supported by the Baldwin County Commission. Everyone is welcome! Baldwin County

Events and VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES!

- February 4 Board Meeting at Bryant Bank at 9:30 am
- February 5 Webinar, 2 pm, 'Don't Let the Insects Eat Your Vegetables'
- February 11 General Meeting at 104, Jeremy Pickins
- February 25 & 26 Arbor Day at Silverhill. **Please volunteer.**
- February 27 Arbor Day at Daphne, Fairhope, Foley, and Magnolia Springs. **Please volunteer.**
- February 7 Camellia Club at Mobile Botanical Gardens OR TBA tour.
- February 13 Camellia Day at Mobile Botanical Gardens. Tours, lectures, demonstrations, and sale.
- March 3 Board Meeting
- March 4 Webinar, 2 pm, 'Kill That Queen the First Time: Tips for Making Fire Ant Mound Treatments'
- March 10 General Meeting at 104
- March 10-13 Festival of Flowers at Providence Hospital in Mobile. **Please volunteer!**
- March 16 Intern Luncheon
- March 23 Bald Eagle Bash at Weeks Bay
- March 23 Earth Day at Fairhope Pier. **Please volunteer!**
- March 28, 29, 30 Set up for the Spring Plant Sale. **Please lend a hand!**
- March 31—April 3 Spring Plant Sale! Set up on the 29th & 30th— **It's a volunteer opportunity!**



Grass Roots is compiled and edited by Barb Mühl Comstock. The publisher is Sandra Walton at the Baldwin County ACES office in Bay Minette. The newsletter is available before the monthly general meeting on our website:
www.baldwincountymastergardeners.com.

Submission of articles, items of interest, photos of BCMG events, garden tips, garden jokes, etc. are greatly encouraged and appreciated. Send to grassrootsnews@gmail.com



Baldwin County Master Gardeners
% Baldwin County Extension Office
302-A Byrne Street
Bay Minette, AL 36506
Attn: Sandra Walton

Next meeting: Feb 11

Location: 104

Speaker is Jeremy Pickens

If your contact information
changes, please contact
BCMG
bcmginfo12@gmail.com