

Message from the President
By Sheila Anne Webb

I am happy to start this month with news that our Calhoun County Master Gardeners have been notified that our grant proposal to the Alabama Master Gardeners has yielded a \$1,000 grant for the Greenhouse. This represents a welcome addition to our ongoing efforts to complete this project.

The old adage “March comes in like a lion and out like a lamb” may leave us with no roars at the beginning of the month this year. Many of my flowers are blooming, including a few azalea buds and holly berries. Revolving temperatures into the seventies have teased some plants into early blooms. While the deciduous trees are still bare, I enjoy the night’s constellations and wonder why the squirrels will leave some high branches bare then build two nests in the tree next door.

My hardy yellow crocus clustered its blooms into a great natural bouquet. Thought of this ancient flower’s history. In ancient languages of Mesopotamia, which emphasized consonants, was the flower’s name krkm. The Greeks added some Os for krokos. Then Homer described “the flaming crocus that made the mountain glow.” Many art renderings depict the crocus on paintings, murals and crafts including 2,000 BC stylish Minoan women with crocus flowers sprouting from the hems and waists of their skirts. Minoans grew crocuses as a source of saffron, which was a valuable spice still used today. The medieval nurseryman to the King of France, Jean Robin, passed the flower to Queen Elizabeth I of England describing it as “of a most perfect shining yellow colour, seeming afar to be a hot glowing cole of fire.” The Irish traditionally use it as a St. Valentine’s Day flower. The corms survived the ship’s rodents and made it to America. There are at least 80 recognized crocus species. They look spectacular in clusters.

Thanks again to Don Crow for securing a flag for us. You may recall that Mike Rogers donated this flag which has been flown over the U.S. capitol. Dr. West obtained a stand for it. Don had the flag proclamation plaque, which hangs on the wall by the flag, framed. We’re now at the one-year anniversary of starting our meetings with the pledge to flag followed by a moment for our gardeners’ reflections.

At our meeting March 8th, we’ll share salads and sandwiches with the intern class and have some socialization time over lunch before the speaker presentation and business meeting begin.

The joys and beauty of spring are upon us. March 20th makes it official. Daylight savings time begins March 12th giving us more time to garden. Enjoy!

Like us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/CalhounMGs>





MG Calendar

MG Board Meeting	10:45 a.m.-noon, March 8, Cane Creek Community Gardens
MG Business Meeting	12 p.m., March 8, Cane Creek Community Gardens
Sprouts Deadline	March 25

All Bugs Good and Bad Webinar Series: Protect Your Veggie Harvest from Hungry Insects!

Many vegetables never make it to the table because hungry insects reach them first. Understanding the different types of insect pest management is key to bringing their populations under control. In this webinar, Zack Snipes, Horticulture Extension Agent, Clemson Cooperative Extension will teach Integrated Pest Management skills for all levels of growers. Moderated by Dani Carroll and Mallory Kelley, Regional Extension Agents, Alabama Extension. Go to <https://learn.extension.org/events/2843> for the link to login as a guest and participate in the live event. Note: on March 3, the link to the live webinar opens about 15 minutes before the webinar. If you try to log in earlier, you will get an error message. Webinars will be on the first Friday of each month at 1 p.m. Central time

For more webinars in this series, see 2017 All Bugs Good and Bad Webinar Series. <http://articles.extension.org/pages/74016/2017-all-bugs-good-and-bad-webinar-series>

The webinars are brought to you by the following eXtension Communities of Practice: Ant Pests, and Urban IPM; and by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, Clemson Cooperative Extension and University of Georgia Extension.



MG Notes

Our president Sheila Webb will present our program at our March 8th monthly Master Gardner meeting. She will talk about "Art in the Garden"; this is a change from what was printed in our directories. Lunch will be salads and sandwiches to share with our members.

We have our 2017 directories; I will have them at every meeting if you have not gotten yours yet.

I stopped by the 2017 intern class to recruit volunteers for Earth Day. They are a great bunch; please invite them to visit your project and make them welcome at our meetings.

Thank you to everyone who signed up for Earth Day the week of April 17 through 21. We are completely staffed. Those who have signed up will get a great Earth Day tee shirt courtesy of Tyler Union Foundry. We appreciate their generosity. Many of their staff will be at Earth Day; please thank them.

Please make a note of the Tree Amigos Plant sale on April 8th from 8 a.m. until noon at Cane Creek. Please let all your gardening friends know about this great sale.

SB

Lunch & Learn



There will be another great lineup of topics and speakers for this year's Lunch & Learn, a series of FREE gardening programs. The first session is April 26, from noon - 1 p.m., at Cane Creek Gardens at

McClellan, 77 Justice Avenue.

April 26, The Story of Alabama's Native Americans
Harry Holstein, JSU Professor of Archeology

May 24, Planting, Transplanting and Repotting
David Doggett, Jefferson County Master Gardener

June 28, Classy Caladiums
Hayes Jackson, ACES

July 26, What's Wrong with my Plant?
Dr. Jim Jacobi, ACES Plant Pathology Lab

August 23, Inviting Good Insects into Your Garden
Dani Carroll, ACES

**Dates and speakers are subject to change. Contact the Calhoun County Extension Office at 256-237-1621 to confirm.*

March Gardening Tips

March can present all kinds of weather from cold to very warm. Houseplants should not go out until night time temperatures are warm enough on a regular basis.

Keep your pansies deadheaded to keep them blooming. They will also appreciate a shot of liquid fertilizer.

Allow the foliage on your daffodils to remain. Do not cut, braid, fold or bend. The foliage helps the bulbs

produce healthy blooms next year. It is helpful to remove spent blooms to prevent the daffodils from using their energy to produce seeds.

Do not apply chemicals to lawns that are in the process of greening up.

March is too early to plant summer bedding plants, as most are tropical and the air and soil temperatures are not warm enough.

Any ornamental trees and shrubs planted from now on will need careful monitoring for water over the summer (in addition to those planted over the winter).

Garden Symposium at Longleaf Botanical Gardens

March 16, 2017

Registration begins at 8:00 a.m.

Program 9:00 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Longleaf Botanical Gardens is proud to announce its inaugural Spring Garden Symposium for 2017. This year's theme is "Fabulous Foliage." The Symposium will feature lectures on utilizing lush and dramatic foliage for garden pizzazz. Classic caladiums, verdant ferns, leafy hostas, and a host of other fantastic foliage plants will be the topic of the day.

The first speaker, Dani Carroll, will share foliage selections for the gardens, especially edible plants. "Making America Eat Again" will relay Dani's idea of incorporating ornamental foliage edibles into the landscape. Dani is a regional agent with the Alabama Cooperative Extension and works on many horticulture-related programs in central Alabama. Dani also loves pollinators and is always ready to give a friendly reply to all questions.

The second speaker will be Eleanor Craig. Eleanor, known to many in the southeast as "The Fern Lady" is owner of Fern Ridge Farms, a small specialty nursery located in Cedar Bluff, Alabama. Specializing in perennial garden ferns and growing over 70 different varieties, the nursery has recently been recognized as a source for locating ferns in the book *Plant Lovers Guide to Ferns*. With over 30 years' experience in the nursery and landscaping industry, she will share some of her favorite ferns for foliage as well as their favorite shady companion plants.

Next, Patricia Patty and Hayes Jackson will give a brief presentation on why hostas do better in pots in central Alabama. Patricia is an avid gardener and past president of the Alabama Master Gardeners

Association. Her potted hostas are the envy of many local gardeners.

Lastly, Hayes Jackson will speak on caladiums in the summer garden. Hayes is an all-around plant geek, but he recently began hoarding caladium varieties after a second wind of romantic lust for these colorful annuals. Mark your calendars for March 16, 2017. Pre-registration is a must.

To reserve your spot, call Anniston Museum of Natural History at 256-237-6766. Reservations are required, and if made by March 9, 2017, a box lunch will be included. No lunch available with later registration. Lunch choices: Black Forest ham, smoked turkey, or vegetarian. Cost is \$20.00 to members and \$25.00 to nonmembers. Payment is to be made at the time of registration and may be made by cash, check (made payable to Longleaf Botanical Gardens and earmarked for educational programs) or charge card in person or by phone.

REFUND POLICY: We prefer that a refund request be in writing. Include your name and address. Mail to Anniston Museum of Natural History, Attn: Angie Dothard, 800 Museum Drive, Anniston, AL 36206 or send by email to Angie at adothard@annistonmuseum.org. We have to have this information for the City to issue a check. For a refund, the request must be submitted two weeks prior to the event. There is no refund for transactions less than \$10.00 per person.

From Our Advisor

The Brown Marmorated Stink Bug (BMSB) is a newly invasive insect found throughout much of the United States. The insect is both an urban pest of homes and agricultural pest of tree fruit, sweet corn, vegetable and small fruit.

Cornell entomologists and a team of national scientists through SCRI support are working together to develop more sophisticated monitoring and management tools for this invasive insect. We are asking for your assistance toward this end.

This project plays an important role in our understanding the spread of invasive insects and most importantly, the future successful deployment of biological control efforts to manage the insect in urban and agricultural environments.

The link to the Citizen Science BMSB website provides participants all of the information to take part in the National Citizen Science Brown Marmorated Stink Bug Project:

<http://blogs.cornell.edu/jentsch/a-national-march-madness-citizen-science-project-to-find-the-brown-marmorated-stink-bug-2017/>

We would like participants to verify the EDDMaps submission of the BMSB by requesting they submit a clear image of the specimen and post it into the EDDMaps link to upload the image for verification of BMSB presence in that township/county:
<http://www.eddmaps.org/west/report/insects.cfm?>

If need be, clear images can also be submitted to:
bmsbproject@cornell.edu

David West



MGs and MG interns get the Jacksonville Pocket Park ready for spring



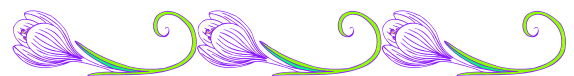
Dr. Charles Ray speaks with our 2017 interns at his Entomology Class



Jim and Linda Wakefield report that it looks as if our blue bird trail is successful. When the bird houses were cleaned out we were hoping for blue birds in the spring. It was found that around 75% of the bird /houses had nests from last year.



President Sheila Webb addresses a full house at the February monthly MG meeting



Officers - Calhoun County Master Gardeners

President: Sheila Anne Webb Vice President: Don Crow
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