

# GARDENERS' GAB



Shelby County Master Gardeners Assoc.

Website: <https://mg.aces.edu/shelby/>

E-mail: [SCMGA.email@gmail.com](mailto:SCMGA.email@gmail.com)

Meetings: Monthly, 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday at 10:00 AM  
Shelby County Extension Office—Columbiana, AL

Like Us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1295873251386288>

Private Facebook Group for Active Members:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/738788633247421>

Alabama MGA: <https://www.alabamamga.org>

Alabama MG Program: [www.aces.edu/mg](http://www.aces.edu/mg)

AMG Online Store: <https://www.victorydesigns.com/amg/>

Vol. 19, Issue 4

54 Members

April 2026

Happy Spring Gardeners,  
Seed starting and spring planting has begun. Lots of things are happening this month. Mainly plant sales and volunteer opportunities. We have Aldridge Gardens and Birmingham Botanical Gardens plant sales. I sent out an email with all of the volunteer opportunities associated with those plant sales. We will have a booth at Helena market this year on Saturday, May 2 and Saturday, June 6. This will be an opportunity to share to the community about being a Master Gardener as well as selling some plants as a fundraiser. So be sure when going through your garden beds this spring to thin out any perennial plants and pot them up. If you would like to start seeds, you can go ahead and do that now. Vegetables will sell well in May. Please be aware that if you have extra 3-inch, 4-inch, and 1-gallon pots bring them to our April meeting. Those pots should not have a trademark name on them. See you at our April meeting.

Happy Gardening,

*Elizabeth*



Elizabeth York  
e.york24@yahoo.com  
205-616-7648

**This Month's Meeting**  
**Friday, April 10<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 AM**

Our Speaker will be Adam Lyons  
His company name is *The Arborist*  
His presentation is titled:  
*Words to Know & Fruits to Live By* (Fruit Trees)



**SHELBY COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION**  
**13 March 2026—Meeting Minutes**



The regular monthly meeting of the SCMGA was held on Friday, March 13, 2026, at 10:00 AM in the Auditorium of the Shelby County Extension Office at 54 Kelly Lane, Columbiana, AL

- **OFFICERS:**
  - Elizabeth York—President
  - Pam Dyer—Vice President
  - Richard Sturm—Treasurer
  - Susan Arvin—Secretary
- **COMMITTEES:**
  - Nominating—Elizabeth York
  - Projects—Dennis Stanek
  - Communications—Elizabeth York (Facebook), Heidee Vansant (*Gardeners' Gab*)
  - Audit, By-Laws, & Membership—Trisha Williams
  - AMGA Advisory Council Representative—Kate Vogel
  - Pathways—Kathy Hagood
  - Hospitality—Sue Owen
  - Sunshine—Karen Mims
  - Fundraising—Elizabeth York
  - Historian—Karen Jensen
  - Lunch & Learn—Martha Jones
  - Grow More Give More Ambassador—Linda Clark
  - Board Member at Large—Stephen Nadeau
- **Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag**
- **Meeting Minutes and Treasurer's Report approval:**
  - ◆ Meeting Minutes from February 2026 approved as published in the *Gardeners' Gab*, March 2026 edition.
  - ◆ Treasurer's Report from February 2026 approved as published in the *Gardeners' Gab*, March 2026 edition; an edit was made to the balances from January to February
- **PROGRAM PRESENTERS:**
  - Charles Murray and Louise Billings from the Birmingham Fern Society presented "A Survey of Ferns for Birmingham"
- **PROJECTS:**
  - ◆ Grace Klein Community Chelsea—this is ongoing when needed.
  - ◆ Grace Klein Pelham, Pathways United Methodist Church—Jeannie Bubbett
    - \*The church is currently working on a grant. Additional work will continue after this process is complete.
  - ◆ Family Connection—Seasonal Raised Bed gardening with kids—Susan Arvin
    - \*Will schedule a meeting with Jeremy Raines to discuss planning for the 2026 planting. Mulching the beds at entrance of the shelter will also be discussed.
  - ◆ Montevallo Pollinator Garden Consult—Assist with advice to the University of Montevallo—Dennis Stanek
  - ◆ Seed to Table in Montevallo—Kate Vogel
  - ◆ Owens House Sensory Garden—Johnnie Brown
    - \*The 2025 Master Gardener intern class is still working on this project
  - ◆ Church at Cahaba Bend (Helena) Consult—Elizabeth York
    - \*Dolores Davis and Elizabeth York assisted with creating 16 raised beds
    - \*On March 21, 2016, at 9:00 AM, a group will meet to plant cool weather vegetables in 8 beds
  - ◆ ARC of Shelby County Consult, Pelham—Dennis Stanek
  - ◆ Manna Farms—Karen Mims
    - \*Meet every Saturday at 8:30 AM to work in the garden
    - \*10 beds of onions (~7,200) have been planted; cabbage was planted the week of 3/2; waiting until April 1 to sow squash.
- **OLD BUSINESS:**
  - ◆ Dennis Stanek helped with the privet pull at Shoal Creek Park in Montevallo
  - ◆ Arbor Day—Held on March 7, 2026, at Aldridge Gardens in Hoover and Veteran's park in Alabaster. Elizabeth York was the lead Master Gardener for Hoover; Pam Dyer was the lead Master Gardener for Alabaster.
- **NEW BUSINESS: I**
  - ◆ Watering Schedule for front of the Shelby Extension office. See sign-up sheet.
  - ◆ Helena Market Days—Richard Sturm is in contact with the organizers to request a Shelby County Master Gardener table for May 2<sup>nd</sup> and June 6<sup>th</sup>. This will be used to promote the Master Gardener class of 2026. There will also be plants for sale as a fundraiser. Those interested in providing plants should start dividing plants or planting seeds. Tomato and other vegetable plants are especially popular in May. The plants should be in smaller (3", 4") up to 1-gallon pots. Anyone who has pots to donate should bring them to the April meeting.
  - ◆ Jacob Turner and his wife are expecting their first baby—it's a girl. Diapers, wipes, and cash were collected as gifts and presented at the March meeting.
  - ◆ Karen Jensen is submitting to the Shelby County Reporter our update to the front of the Shelby County Extension office. It has been put on their website, but has not been published print.
  - ◆ AMGA Conference capped out at 400. This is exciting because they have not seen 400+ in a while. There is now a waiting list.
  - ◆ Next Lunch & Learn is May 4<sup>th</sup> from 12:00—1:00 PM. Kathy Hagood will present "From Milkweed to Monarchs."
- **DATES:**
  - ◆ March 25 from 10:00 AM—12:00 PM "Seeds to Transplants." Gardendale Civic Center, Magnolia Room
  - ◆ March 25 at 1:00 PM—Alabama Smart Yards Webinar, Dr. Brian Brown to discuss "Native Alternative Trees."
  - ◆ April 10 at 10:00 AM—next SCMGA meeting Adam Lyons will speak about fruit trees; there will be a potluck after the meeting.
  - ◆ April 11 from 9:00 AM—1:00 PM - Chilton County Plant Sale at Goose Pond Park.
  - ◆ April 16-17 Aldridge Gardens spring plant sale 9 AM—6 PM
  - ◆ April 16-18 Birmingham Botanical Gardens plant sale
  - ◆ May 4—Lunch & Learn from 12:00-1:00 PM at the Extension office. Kathy Hagood to present "From Milkweed to Monarchs"``
  - ◆ May 6-8—AMGA State Spring Conference, Huntsville, AL— "Gardening to the Moon and Back."
  - ◆ May 8—There will be no May SCMGA meeting due to conflict with AMGA State Spring Conference.
  - ◆ May 15—Potential field trip to Montgomery Botanical Gardens. Pam Dyer will follow up with details.
  - ◆ June 30—Pollinator Training, Petals from the Past; details to come.
  - ◆ Sept 1—Peach Pepper Garden to pantry, Shelby County Extension office. Details to come.
- **ATTENDANCE**—There were 26 members in attendance.
- **MEETING ADJOURNED**  
Minutes respectively submitted by Susan Arvin, Secretary



# SHELBY COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION

Treasurer's Report for March 2026  
Richard Sturm, Treasurer



<b>DEPOSITS</b>	\$	0.00
<b>TOTAL DEPOSITS</b>	\$	<b>0.00</b>
<b>CHECKS</b>		
1358 Sue Owen—Decorations	\$	(9.11)
1359 Martha Jones—Snacks for Lunch & Learn	\$	(19.02)
<b>TOTAL CHECKS</b>	\$	<b>(28.13)</b>
<b>BEGINNING BALANCE</b>	\$	7,630.87
Deposits	\$	0.00
Checks	\$	(28.13)
<b>ENDING BALANCE</b>	\$	<b>7,602.74</b>

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- Apr 7—10:00-11:30 AM Aldridge Gardens—Pre-Plant Sale Class on Hydrangeas—NaphCare Education Building. You may register on Aldridge's Events page at: [www.aldridgegardens.com](http://www.aldridgegardens.com), You may register on Aldridge's Events page at: [www.aldridgegardens.com](http://www.aldridgegardens.com)
- Apr 7—1:30-3:00 PM Aldridge Gardens—Aromi Azalea Talk and Tour-NaphCare Education Building
- Apr 8—10:00-11:30 AM Aldridge Gardens—Pre-Plant Sale Class on Companion Plants—NaphCare Education Building. You may register on Aldridge's Events page at [www.aldridgegardens.com](http://www.aldridgegardens.com)
- Apr 9-Apr 8—10:00 AM-11:30 AM Aldridge Gardens—Pre-Plant Sale Class on Native Plants-NaphCare Education Building. You may register on Aldridge's Events page at [www.aldridgegardens.com](http://www.aldridgegardens.com)
- Apr 10—10:00 AM—SCMGA Meeting. Adam Lyons of The Arborist will present a program on fruit trees. **Potluck lunch to follow.**
- Apr 11—9:00 AM-1:00 PM Chilton County Plant Sale at Goose Pond Park.
- Apr 12—1:30 PM-3:00 PM Aldridge Gardens—Japanese Maples Walk & Talk With David Doggett—You may register on Aldridge's Events page at: [www.aldridgegardens.com](http://www.aldridgegardens.com)
- Apr 14—10:00 AM-11:30 AM—Birmingham Botanical Gardens—Embracing Natives: The Benefits of Native Landscaping in an Urban Environment Members: \$25, Nonmembers: \$30. Register & pay at: [www.bbgardens.org](http://www.bbgardens.org)
- Apr 15—10:00 AM-11:30 AM—Aldridge Gardens—Nature Journaling Class—Meet at the front entrance gate. You may register on Aldridge's Events page at [www.aldridgegardens.com](http://www.aldridgegardens.com)
- Apr 16-17—9:00 AM-6:00 PM Aldridge Gardens Annual Spring Plant Sale—Native plants, Pollinator Plants, Hydrangeas, Companion Plants & Old Favorites!
- Apr 16—18 9:00 AM-6:00PM—Birmingham Botanical Gardens Spring Plant Sale Apr 19—Sale closing after lunch. **Volunteer Opportunities:** Apr 15—Plant deliveries, Apr 16-19—volunteer at ABC Booth (Annuals/Bi-annuals/Climbers). Contact: SCMG Carol Beard (205)617-4059 or Janet Abernathy (205)739-6553
- Apr 17—9:00 AM-5:00 PM & April 18—9:00 AM-3:00 PM Petals From the Past—Antiques in the Garden. There will be antiques, crafts, & collectibles for everyone. Food vendors will be there for your convenience.
- Apr 22—6:00 PM-7:30 PM—Aldridge Gardens—Earth Day Flower Pot Painting Workshop—Education Building. \$40 Includes all supplies.
- May 4—Lunch & Learn from 12:00-1:00 PM at the Extension office. Kathy Hagood to present "From Milkweed to Monarchs"
- May 6—8 AMGA State Conference—Gardening to the Moon & Back—Location: Huntsville, AL—Hosts: MGs of Limestone/Madison/Morgan Counties. **SOLD OUT**
- May 8—**No SCMGA Monthly meeting** due to conflict with State Conference
- May 15—Potential field trip to Montgomery Botanical Gardens. Pam Dyer will follow up with details.
- May 30—10:30 AM—Blackberry Walking Tour—Join Dr. Arlie Powell as he discusses how to plant & maintain blackberries. Tour the blackberry plantings & learn how to properly trellis the plants for a bountiful harvest in your home garden. There is no charge, but you must register for this program on Petals' Events page at [www.petalsfromthepast.com](http://www.petalsfromthepast.com)
- Jun 12—SCMGA Meeting 10:00 AM  
Jul 10—SCMGA Meeting 10:00 AM  
Aug 14—SCMGA Meeting 10:00 AM  
Sep 11—SCMGA Meeting 10:00 AM  
Oct 9—SCMGA Meeting 10:00 AM  
Nov 13—SCMGA Meeting 10:00 AM  
Dec 11—SCMGA Meeting 10:00 AM

## CARDS SENT BY KAREN MIMS ON BEHALF OF SCMGA DURING MARCH

Help Spread  
The Sunshine!



### BIRTHDAY:

Holly Jachimowski  
Carolyn Key  
Sylvia Sheffield  
Dennis Stanek  
Richard Sturm  
Trisha Williams

### THINKING OF YOU:

Heidee Vansant

**RECIPE: Baked Catfish with Spinach & Feta Crust**  
**FROM THE KITCHEN OF: Harvest Select via Sweet Grown Alabama Magazine**

**SERVES:** 4

**INGREDIENTS:**

- 2 tsp. olive oil
- 2 Sweet Grown Alabama garlic cloves, minced
- 8-ounces fresh Sweet Grown Alabama spinach, stemmed & coarsely chopped
- 4 ounces feta cheese, crumbled (Greek feta preferably)
- 1 egg
- 1 cup Panko breadcrumbs, divided
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh Sweet Grown Alabama dill, divided
- 1/2 tsp. Kosher salt
- 1 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 4 (7-8 ounce) Sweet Grown Alabama catfish filets
- 2 Tbls. melted butter
- Lemon wedges

**DIRECTIONS:**

1. Heat oil and garlic in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat 2 minutes until lightly toasted; add spinach.
2. Cook 2 to 3 minutes until spinach is wilted.
3. Transfer to a bowl and cool slightly. Add egg, 1/2 cup breadcrumbs 2 tablespoons dill, salt and pepper.
4. Arrange catfish filets on a foil lined and greased sheet pan. Sprinkle with salt and pepper.
5. Top each filet evenly with spinach mixture. Combine remaining 1/2 cup breadcrumbs, 2 Tbls.

fresh dill and butter; sprinkle over fish.

6. Bake at 425°F for 15 minutes or until fish is cooked through.
7. Serve with lemon wedges
8. For make-ahead: Prepare the spinach topping up to 2 days ahead of time. Keep refrigerated until ready to use.



Please send Karen Mims, Sunshine Committee Chair, information about members (or their family members) who are ill, facing surgery or have lost a loved one. We want to make sure all our members know they are loved and are a vital part of our organization. Karen will send a card to let the member know we are thinking about them. Here are two ways for you to get in touch with Karen:

Email: [mimskaren@yahoo.com](mailto:mimskaren@yahoo.com)  
 Phone: 205-664-2322



**APRIL BIRTHDAYS**

4/27—Steve Nadeau

**Have you "LIKED" us on Facebook?**  
 (this is our public page)  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1295873251386288/>



## PRE-CONFERENCE ACTIVITIES

Wednesday, May 6, 2026

### TOURS

#### U.S. SPACE AND ROCKET CENTER

Most comprehensive manned spaceflight hardware museum in the world

#### HUDSON ALPHA INSTITUTE FOR BIOTECHNOLOGY

Genomic research, educational outreach, clinical genomics & economic development

#### HUNTSVILLE BOTANICAL GARDEN

Extension Master Gardener demonstrations & Walking Tour with Harvey Cotten  
Free garden admission 9am-6pm, Wed, May 6

### WORKSHOPS

Morning & afternoon garden-related workshops at Murray Hall at the Huntsville Botanical Garden

### LOCAL HEROES

#### MEET & GREET PHOTO OP

USAF Lt. Colonel Ed Yielding  
SR-71 Blackbird pilot & "fastest man on earth" in 1990

Brigadier General (Ret) Robert Stewart  
Astronaut & Pilot- 289 hours in space and first astronaut to walk untethered in space

Soar to new heights at the AMGA 2026 State Conference at the Westin Huntsville!



The Westin blends elegance and southern hospitality with the world class shopping, dining, and entertainment of  
**BRIDGE STREET TOWN CENTRE**  
6800 Governors Road NW

**CONFERENCE LOCATION:**  
The Westin Ballroom

**CONFERENCE HOTELS:**  
The Westin Huntsville and The Element on the top floors

Centrally located near highways and conference tours & workshops



Please join us!

# AMGA

## State Conference 2026

### May 6-8, 2026 Huntsville

Hosted by the Extension Master Gardener Associations of Limestone, Madison, and Morgan Counties

## Inspiring Speakers | Informative Topics

### Creating Biodiversity Through Creative Gardening Concepts

Conference Objective: To provide new ideas garnered from tours, workshops, and speakers to enhance outreach activities throughout the state

## KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

### Doug Tallamy

Nationally known University of Delaware professor of Entomology & Wildlife Ecology, NY Times best-selling author and co-founder of Homegrown National Park

Conference Topic:

#### HOMEGROWN NATIONAL PARK

Learn how we can make small changes that will create diverse ecosystems in our yards & communities by reducing lawns, planting native plants, and removing harmful invasives.

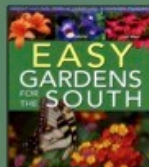
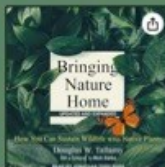
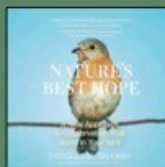
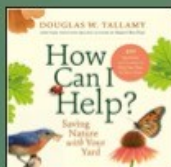


### Harvey Cotten

Director Emeritus of the Alabama Nurserymen's Association, former COO and chief horticulturalist at the Huntsville Botanical Garden & co-author of *Easy Gardens for the South*

Conference Topic:

WHAT'S NEW in 2026:  
MUST HAVES FOR YOUR GARDEN!



Jesse Akozbek

Creator & Hike Lead for Feral Foraging

Darryl Patton

The Southern Herbalist

Edward Pate

Grow More, Give More: Galactic Benefits for School Gardens

Patrick Thompson

Curator of oaks & deciduous azaleas at Davis Arboretum

Cindy Upton

NASA: Gardening in Space

## ALABAMA GARDENERS' CALENDAR FOR APRIL

**Fruits and Nuts**—Season for strawberry planting continues. Start spray program for all fruits. Plant raspberries and blackberries and continue budding apples and peaches.

**Shrubs**—Prune spring flowering shrubs after flowering. Fertilize azaleas and camellias. Spray all shrubs with a fungicide as new growth begins to mature.

**Lawns**—Planting new lawns continues. When daytime temperatures are consistently above 70 F, apply fire ant bait. Read the label carefully for best control. Start a mowing routine as spring growth begins. Monitor the thatch layer in bermudagrass and zoysiagrass lawns. Dethatch if thicker than 1/2 inch. Wait until active growth. Monitor for fungal disease in wet, cool weather. Fertilize warm-season lawns after fully green.

**Roses**—Watch for insects and diseases. Keep old flower heads removed. Plant container-grown plants from nurseries or garden centers.

**Annuals and Perennials**—Plant early started annuals or bedding plants from nurseries or garden centers. Divide mums or root cuttings. Dig and divide dahlias.

**Bulbs**—Plant gladiolus, fancy-leaved caladiums, milk and wine lilies, and ginger and gloriosa lilies. Apply super phosphate to bearded iris and scout for iris borer moth caterpillars. Avoid cutting foliage of narcissus or other bulbs until it has turned brown naturally.

**Miscellaneous**—Spray camellias, hollies, etc., for scale insects. Carefully water new plantings of shrubs and trees. Pinch out tips of new shoots to promote more compact shrubs.

**Vegetable Seeds**—**South:** Plant heat-loving crops, such as okra. Continue planting other frost-tender crops. **South and Central:** Continue planting frost tender vegetables (beans, southern peas, corn, squash, melons, and cucumbers). **North:** Wait until late April to plant beans, cucumbers, melons, southern peas, and squash. Plant sweet corn each week for a staggered summer harvest.

**Vegetable Transplants**—**Whole state:** Plant transplants of tomato, pepper, and eggplant. **South:** Plant certified sweet potato slips. **North and Central:** Plant sweet potato slips in late April.

### Shelby County Master Gardeners Association Board of Directors and Committee Chairs 2026

President	Elizabeth York	205-616-7648	e.york24@yahoo.com
Vice-President	Pam Dyer	205-520-4067	dyer4881@bellsouth.net
Treasurer	Richard Sturm	205-383-6377	rsturm42@yahoo.com
Secretary	Susan Arvin	205-222-8141	susanarvin@gmail.com
Advisory Council Rep	Kate Vogel	205-665-5878	kvogelashfield@aol.com
Awards Committee	Trisha Williams	205-410-5074	trisha325@gmail.com
Board Member At Large	Stephen Nadeau	678-710-5884	sanadeau27@gmail.com
By-Laws Chair	Trisha Williams	205-410-5074	trisha325@gmail.com
Communications ( <i>Facebook</i> )	Elizabeth York	205-616-7648	e.york24@yahoo.com
Communications ( <i>Gardeners' Gab</i> )	Heidee Vansant	205-725-0541	heidee.vansant@gmail.com
Fundraising	Elizabeth York	205-616-7648	e.york24@yahoo.com
Grow More Give More	Elizabeth York	205-616-7648	e.york24@yahoo.com
Historian	Karen Jensen	205-434-0642	karenkjensen3@icloud.
Hospitality	Sue Owen	205-580-9555	sueowen@gmail.com
Newsletter Editor	Heidee Vansant	205-725-0541	heidee.vansant@gmail.com
Lunch & Learn	Martha Jones	205-410-7939	msmatha71@gmail.com
Nominating Comm. Chair	Elizabeth York	205-616-7648	e.york24@yahoo.com
Pathways	Kathy Hagood	205-422-4025	khagood@juno.com
Projects Coordinator	Dennis Stanek	205-789-0341	dennis.stanek@att.net
Sunshine Committee	Karen Mims	205-664-2322	mimskaren@yahoo.com
Webmaster	Beth Glasgow	205-669-7981	bethglasgow@bellsouth.net