



DIRTY DIGS



Autauga County Master Gardeners Association

June 2014

ENTERTAIN, EDUCATE, ELEVATE

Next Meeting

June 12, 2014

Meeting Location:

First Baptist
Church

@9:00 AM

Guest Article



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

Time for Blueberries

Blueberry season is quickly approaching. I am currently counting down the days for the first crop to pick, which I think makes them grow slower. Blueberries are a great addition to any landscape not only for their fruit, but also for their beautiful fall color. Plant different varieties for better tasting fruit and to extend your harvesting season. With blueberries, there are few disease and insects to worry with and very little pruning. Your main concern is an acid soil, watering and weed control.

Some of the most popular rabbiteye blueberries available today are: (Early Varieties) Climax and Brightwell, (Mid to Late varieties) Tifblue and Powderblue, just to name a few. Generally blueberries need fertilizing twice a year, once in early spring and again as the berries fade away. Use a Urea based fertilizer or a fertilizer labeled for Azaleas/Camellias as this will help acidify the soil, blueberries like a low pH of 4.5-5.2. Have a soil test done if you have not had one in the past three years to know what nutrients are lacking and what the pH is.

Prune blueberries in February to remove dead and older canes to try to generate new cane growth from the ground. As your plants start to grow long straight canes, clip these to get branching. The more branches you have, the more fruit you will have next

year.

Plant blueberries this fall in full sun with a moist, well-aerated, well-drained soil, high in organic matter. Incorporate organic matter such as peat moss, compost, or fine pine bark into the soil and mulch around the plant to help in retaining water and suppressing weeds. Plant them 5 feet apart in rows and always plant blueberries at the same depth they were in the container, planting too deep will kill the plant.

If you have more questions about growing and maintaining blueberries or other gardening related questions, call the Master Gardener Helpline. March through August the Alabama Cooperative Extension System offers a Gardening Helpline for the general public each Monday through Thursday from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. This helpline is operated by Master Gardener Volunteers who use research based information to best answer all of your gardening questions.

**If you've got home garden questions, we've got answers!
Call 1-877-252-GROW (4769)**

Master Gardeners at information booth during Prattville's Cityfest



June 2014

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

1	2	3	4	5 <i>Prattvillage TBD</i>	6 <i>Webinar. Board Meeting D Day</i> 	7
8	9 <i>Governor's Mansion</i>	10 <i>Demo Garden 8:30 AM</i>	11 <i>Helpline</i>	12 <i>ACMGA meeting FBC 9 AM</i>	13	14 <i>Flag day</i> 
15  Father's Day	16 <i>Governor's Mansion</i>	17 <i>Demo Garden 8:30 AM</i>	18 <i>Helpline</i>	19 <i>Prattvillage TBD</i>	20	21 <i>First Day of Summer</i> 
22	23 <i>Governor's Mansion</i>	24 <i>Demo Garden 8:30 AM</i>	25 <i>Helpline</i>	26 <i>Prattvillage TBD</i>	27	28
29	30 <i>Governor's Mansion</i>					

The article below was sent to the media and is included for your information.



Master Gardener Program Announcement

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

Would you like to become a Master Gardener? The Autauga County Extension office is in the process of recruiting a Master Gardener class for Fall 2014. Classes will begin Wednesday, September 3rd so get your applications in now. The deadline to register is Friday, August 15th, 2014.

The Master Gardener Program is a nationwide Extension Education Program designed for non-professionals with interest in increasing their gardening skills and helping others with the knowledge they have gained.

The program will consist of 12 weeks of class and hands on training. After completing the courses, the Master Gardener interns will be expected to give 10 hours of service to the Master Gardener Helpline and 40 hours of volunteer service to Extension and/or their communities.

Examples of volunteer efforts include: Talking to Garden Clubs, community garden projects, outdoor school projects, educational workshops, or assisting the local Cooperative Extension Office in some way.

The courses on gardening will be taught by specialist, county agents, and veteran Master Gardeners on subjects such as: Soils and Plant Nutrition, Plant Physiology, Plant Propagation, Care of Landscape Plants, Landscape Design, Lawn Care, Weed Identification, Vegetable Gardening, Herbs, Composting, and many more.

The Autauga County Master Gardener class will be held on Wednesdays from 9-2:00 at the Autauga County Extension Office in Autaugaville beginning September 3rd through December 3rd 2014.

****If a fall class does not make, your applications will be held for the potential of a spring 2015 course on the same day and time (February 11th- April 29th).**

For an application please contact the Autauga County Office at (334) 361-7273. The fee associated with this class is \$125.

WE NEED YOUR HELP

A class is being planned for this Fall. Please help us find interested people who might want to take the class and get them an application. As of now we need about eight more people to register to have a class.

Autauga County Fall Master Gardener Class

Important Facts to Know:

Application should be mailed to Kerry Smith (Autauga County Master Gardener Program):
101 Funchess Hall, Auburn University, Al 36849

The background check forms will be placed in a secure location until time for the class to begin.

Your application must be in no later than Friday August 15th to be considered for the class.

Auburn will provide the Autauga County Extension office with the names of applicants who passed the background check. Approximately 20 applications will be selected for the class. Those selected will receive an acceptance letter in the mail around August 20th.

The fee of \$125.00 is due after you are selected, but before the first class to secure your seat.

Classes will be held at the **Autauga County Extension office in Autaugaville** each **Wednesday from 9-2:00** starting **September 3rd through December 3rd**.

Graduation requirements for Master Gardener Certification include:

- 1. Class Attendance (missed classes must be made up)**
- 2. A passing grade on the weekly take-home tests**
- 3. 50 hours of Volunteer Service (10 of the 50 hours) are to be done at 2 Mandatory 5 hour sessions on the telephone helpline.**

Graduation will be held in August of 2015.

You are considered an Intern until graduation.

Deadline for applications: Friday, August 15th.

What's Bugging You?



Typical Plant Damage

Adult Insect

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

Answer and information can be found on Page 17

Lunch and Learn

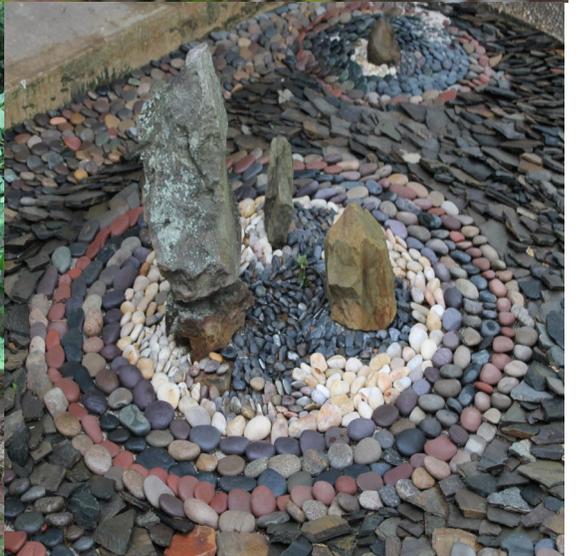


Our Master Gardener, Debbie Boutelier, presented the Lunch and Learn Program on May 6th at Saint Joseph Catholic Church. The subject of the program was edibles in the landscape. There were approximately 25 people in attendance which comprised of the public as well as seasoned Master Gardeners. It was nice to learn that you could plant vegetables as well as herbs among your shrubs. Most of us never thought about beautifying the landscape with plants that produced food. Job well done, Debbie.

Pictures from AMGA Conference from Baldwin County



Continued on next page



Alabama Gardener's Calendar

June

Fruits and Nuts

- Layer grapes and continue spray programs.
- Thin apples and peaches if too thick.

Shrubs

- Lace bugs may be a problem on azaleas, pyracanthas, dogwoods, cherry laurels, and other shrubs.
- Water as needed. Fertilize now.
- Keep long shoots from developing by pinching out tips.
- Take cuttings from semi-mature wood for rooting.

Lawns

- Follow a schedule of fertilization and watering.
- Lawns should be mowed weekly.
- Planting may continue if soil is moist.
- Continue weed spraying if necessary.

Annuals and Perennials

- Keep old flower heads removed to promote continued flowering. Plant garden mums if not already in.
- For compact mums, keep tips pinched out.
- Watch for insects and diseases.

Bulbs

- Foliage may be removed from spring bulbs if it has yellowed and is becoming dry.
- Watch for aphids and thrips on summer bulbs.

Miscellaneous

- If scale insects continue on shrubs, use materials other than oils.
- Set houseplants on porch or outdoors in shade and pay close attention to the need for water.
- If desired, air layer houseplants.

Vegetable Seed

- Plant beans, fieldpeas, pumpkins, squash, corn, cantaloupes, and watermelons.

Vegetable Plants

- Plant tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, and sweet potato vine cuttings



All Bugs Good and Bad

2014 Webinar Series

Please join us for this webinar series for information you can use about good and bad insects. Webinars will be on the first Friday of each month at 2 p.m. Eastern.

- February 7** If Flowers are Restaurants to Bees, Then What Are Bees to Flowers?
Dr. John Skinner
- March 7** Straight Talk About Termites
Dr. Xing Ping Hu
- April 4** Get TickSmart: 10 Things to Know, 5 Things to Do
Dr. Thomas Mather
- May 2** Are Those Itsy Bitsy Spiders Good or Bad?
Dr. Nancy Hinkle
- June 6** Fire Ant Management
Elizabeth Brown
- August 1** Minimize Mosquito Problems
Molly Keck
- September 5** Kudzu Bug Takes Over the Southeastern U.S./Brown Marmorated Stinkbug—All Bad
Dr. Michael Toews/Dr. Tracy Leskey
- October 3** Alien Invasions, Zombies Under Foot, and Billions of Decapitated Fire Ants
Dr. Sanford Porter
- November 7** Where Have All the Honey Bees Gone? Hope for the Future
Dr. John Skinner



For more information on the series and how to connect to the webinars, visit: <http://www.extension.org/pages/70120>.



Brought to you by these eXtension Communities of Practice: Imported Fire Ants, Urban IPM, Bee Health, Invasive Species, & Gardens and Landscapes.



Citations for pictures: Jim Occi, BugPics, bugwood.org; Jerry A. Payne, USDA-ARS, bugwood.org; Nadeer Youssef, TN State Univ.; USDA ARS Photo Unit, USDA-ARS, bugwood.org; David Cappaert, Michigan State University, bugwood.org; Sturgis McKeever, Georgia Southern University, bugwood.org.

Hummingbird Award for May.



Linda Parrish was awarded the Hummingbird Award at the May meeting. Linda has been instrumental in getting the Prattvillage Garden in beautiful shape for the plant sale. She put in many hours and deserves a special thanks. Her contribution helped this year's plant sale be the best ever.



Important Announcements

From Pam Olson: Here's your monthly reminder to bring items for the "Cultivating Our Community" project with you to the next meeting. Pam Olson usually collects them. If she's not at the meeting, Nancy Waggoner steps in. This is our sister project to the Prattville-Autauga Demonstration Garden. Produce from the garden supplies fresh vegetables to AICC, Autauga Interfaith Care Center – our county's food bank. But people who need a temporary helping hand have many needs in addition to food. Cleaning products, both personal and for the home, can take a big bite out of one's wallet yet are essential for one's dignity. We, as individual members, help supply the non-food items. AICC is in constant need of: **adult toothbrushes, toothpaste, shampoo, deodorant, dish detergent, laundry detergent, and household cleaners.** Smaller-sized store brand cleaning products are better because your dollars put products into more bags at the center. Sample sizes of any of the items are okay, too. Anything is appreciated! As with all our MG projects, participation is optional.

New Item Requested for "Cultivating Our Community" Project

We have a new item to add to the other six we regularly collect for AICC – **adult toothbrushes.** The center has finally run out of the generous supply donated by a local dentist. Thank you for your generosity. AICC is always grateful for our donations.

Governor's Mansion—We are working at the Governor's Mansion every Monday morning. If you would like to join us, please let Rose McCauley know during the week prior so that your name can be sent in for a security check. At this time, she will let you know where and when to meet to carpool into Montgomery.

PALS Beautification Award

Anytime you see a yard that you would like to nominate for this award and do not have a nomination form, please get the information to me, Rose McCauley, by regular mail, email or drop it by my home. Include the following -

Your name and contact information

Category - Private House, Business, School, Government

Nominee's Name (if you have it)

Nominee's Address

Nominee's Phone Number (if you have it)

Directions

Reasons for Nomination

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Rose McCauley



HELP THE AMGA SCHOLARSHIP FUND GROW

BUY A MASTER GARDENER AUTO TAG -- \$20

These look great not only on the front of your vehicle but also as garden art on fences or walls.

And they aren't just for Master Gardeners but for anyone who wants to endorse our mission of volunteering, so buy one for a friend or relative. You're helping yourself when you do!

\$10 stays in the MG program and supports workshops and other projects.

\$10 supports the AMGA Scholarship Endowment Fund for worthy Auburn University horticulture students. Last year, two \$1500 undergraduate scholarships were awarded. As the fund grows, graduate level scholarships will be added.

It's an easy way to donate to a GREAT cause and get a beautiful tag in the bargain!

Contact Pam Olson to purchase tags. polsonhome@charter.net, 361-7030.



“Education/demonstration” – It’s a Garden!

By Pam Olson

And in our case, it’s Prattvillage Garden. This volunteer hours category gave last year’s Interns more trouble than anything else associated with reporting hours, and it’s still misunderstood at times by more seasoned members.

Scanning down the list of categories on the online service report screen we see “Education/demonstration.” If we don’t notice the heading it’s under, it’s easy to misconstrue this as some type of program we attended. If we receive education or attend a demonstration, why doesn’t this category fit? Because it’s a VOLUNTEER category, not an EDUCATION category. April’s *Forget-me-nots* piece explained that education hours don’t have descriptive categories, so I won’t repeat that info here. All the categories listed in the dark green sidebar beginning under the **Offer Public Outreach** heading and ending with “MGA/AMGA meeting” are the descriptive categories for volunteer hours. This is the same list that pops up when we click on the dropdown arrow to enter volunteer hours online. The headings are in a different order, but the categories are all there under their proper headings.

“Education/demonstration” is found under **Helping Gardens**, so it’s a type of garden. The odd man out in the list of five gardens is “Tree planting.” You can read about the temporary nature of this category by clicking on the title. The other four are all typical gardens and the categories are used when working in gardens that help the public in some way more than by simply adding beauty to the lives of those who pass by. In the case of “Education/demonstration” gardens, these are used as educational tools and locations for demonstrating different aspects of gardening. Prattvillage is a great example of educating the public on when its flowers bloom and for how long, what grows in sun versus shade, which foliage is evergreen and which is deciduous, and so on. People wander through Prattvillage in all seasons to see it up close and personal and to learn as well as to enjoy.

Click on “Education/demonstration” in the sidebar and you’ll find Prattvillage listed as an example. I’ve added to some of ACES’ online descriptions and examples so they include our specific projects. Sometimes the info I add is from suggestions made by members who see a need for clarification. I ALWAYS welcome comments, feedback, and anything else that helps make reporting hours easier. You’ll also see under this particular description an explanation of where to categorize working in our vegetable garden by the library and why it’s NOT categorized under “Education/demonstration,” even though the word demonstration is part of the garden’s name.

So let me hear from you. Is there something you’d like explained or clarified in a future article or just for yourself? Email or call me: polsonhome@charter.net, 361-7030.

Happy Gardening!

Friends of the Forest

Every year several Master Gardeners help the Autauga Extension office with the Friends of the Forest program that is offered to all 5th graders in Autauga County. This event is held at the Hughes Treasure Forest just on the other side of Autaugaville in Mulberry. Below are pictures from this year's event.



Oh



Deer!

What's Bugging You Answer from page 6

The answer is the Azalea Lace Bug which can make azalea's quite unattractive and possibly kill them. Luckily there is a wide range of insecticides that can be used. These insecticides may be purchased at local garden centers. As always read and follow the labels and be safe when using any insecticide.

Source is from the ACES website

New Apple App for iPhone and iPad called SOW. Just search on the App Store and download free App. It gives you information about what vegetables to plant today for your area and information about all vegetables in Alabama. I love this App. Remember the name is SOW.



Anthony Yarbrough,
Editor