Garden Thyme

Monthly Newsletter of the East Central Alabama Master Gardeners Association June, 2014

From Our President, Ann Hammond…

What happened to Spring? Does anyone feel as if the dog days have gotten here early? I saw a Crape Myrtle blooming – it's to early for that!!!

May was not a good month for me so I'm going to look forward to June. Although it feels as if we are in the middle of summer, we're still getting rain. Everything is growing and looking good. We need to be growing, also. I will be sending out dates so look for emails and/or phone calls. This month I would like to take in the Birmingham Botanical Gardens even though it is rather warm.

For our meeting this month I would like you to come ready to work. I'm scheduling a workday for our meeting day so we can all work on our presentation for the Extension Conference in July. Posters need to be made, a screen backdrop designed and a Tabletop Garden Bed built. So, bring your woodworking tools and your ideas. I'll have the materials. See you there.

All the believers were together and had everything in common. Acts 2:44

Ann

Folklores and Old Wives Tales

Harvest your onion crop after the tops fall over during the week just before a full moon.
When the chair squeaks, it's of rain they speak.
Chives are believed to repel aphids from roses, lettuce and peas.
Hornets' nest built in the top of trees indicate a mild winter is ahead; nests built close to the ground indicate that a harsh winter is coming.
Catchy drawer and sticky door, coming rain will pour and pour.
If June is wet September will be dry.
Birds on a telephone wire predict coming rain.
Lots of blackberry blooms means the coming winter will be cold.
When the ditch and pond offend the nose, then look out for rain and stormy blows.
If summer onions have thin skins the coming winter will be mild.
Dandelion blossoms will close before there will be a rain.
Vinegar soaked brown paper placed on a sprain will ease the pain.
Burning wood pops more before rain or snow.
Plow deep while sluggers sleep, you'll have okrie to sell and okrie to keep.

Be Ready for Showdown when Japanese beetles come to town

By Shane Harris extension agent for ACES.

Ever seen those old western movies and TV shows where the bad guys ride into town and everyone scatters, running inside to lock their doors and windows and hide? The townspeople know there is about to be a shootout and bullets are gonna fly, so they get out of the way in hopes of not getting shot.

Over the last 20 years, the annual return of the Japanese beetle around Memorial Day could be described in the same manner. But instead of riding into town and shooting everything up, Japanese beetles fly in and eat up all our plants – they have the potential to literally destroy some plants in a matter of hours.

the last few Japanese beetle seasons have not appeared to be that bad. Surely the beetle yard bags have not caught them all – has spring been too wet for them? Have the yard-destroying, grub-eating armadillos done some good and knocked down the population? Or are we due for another major outbreak?

Insect populations do run in cycles, with high numbers one year or so then low numbers the next year. However, weather could be the true factor in the decreased number of Japanese beetles. Cold winters and dry weather are thought to affect their cycle. Fluctuation in the population from year-to-year is determined for the most part by how well the larvae survive the prior July and August, and some experts say the larvae do not survive well in dry soil.

Adult Japanese beetles usually begin to emerge from the soil by late May or early June. They are usually a little less than a half-inch long and metallic green with copper-brown wing covers with five tufts of white hairs projecting from under the wing covers on each side. A sixth pair at the top of the abdomen distinguish Japanese beetles from similar beetles. These tufts of hair appear as white spots when viewed from above.

Adult beetles feed on at least 300 species of plants, including roses, other flowers and ornamentals, fruit trees, grapes and even poison ivy. They prefer plants in the sun and usually attack in groups, feeding on the upper surface of leaves, which results in a skeletonized appearance of damaged leaves.

Japanese beetles can be controlled non-chemically and chemically:

NON-CHEMICAL: Hand collecting beetles may not be the most effective method of control, but can be used with smaller population. Simply drop beetles into a solution of soapy water where they will drown. A hand-held vacuum cleaner can also be used to remove beetles. The presence of beetles tends to attract more beetles making their removal more critical.

Avoid using traps. Traps attract more beetles to the area many of which do not make it to the traps, doing more harm than good in most home landscapes.

CHEMICAL: there are many insecticides labeled for use against adult Japanese beetles including cyfluthrin, bifenthrin, deltamethrin, lambda, cyhalothrin, esfenvalerate, permethrin and carbaryl. For botanical alternatives try Neem, Pyola, insecticidal soap, extracts of garlic, hot pepper or orange peels and companion plantings.

As in any good western movie, the good guys must win. So drum up some courage and get out there and fight. Grab your weapons of choice and protect your resident plants from those invading beetles. Otherwise, there won't be a happy ending.

JUNE CELEBRATIONS

Happy Birthday
Charlie 6/18

Happy Anniversary
Martha and Larry 6/1
Tom and Elaine 6/1
Vickie and Roger 6/1
Paul and Trudine 6/12
Stan and Chief 6/18

"I wonder what it would be like to live in a world where it was always June."
- L. M. Montgomery

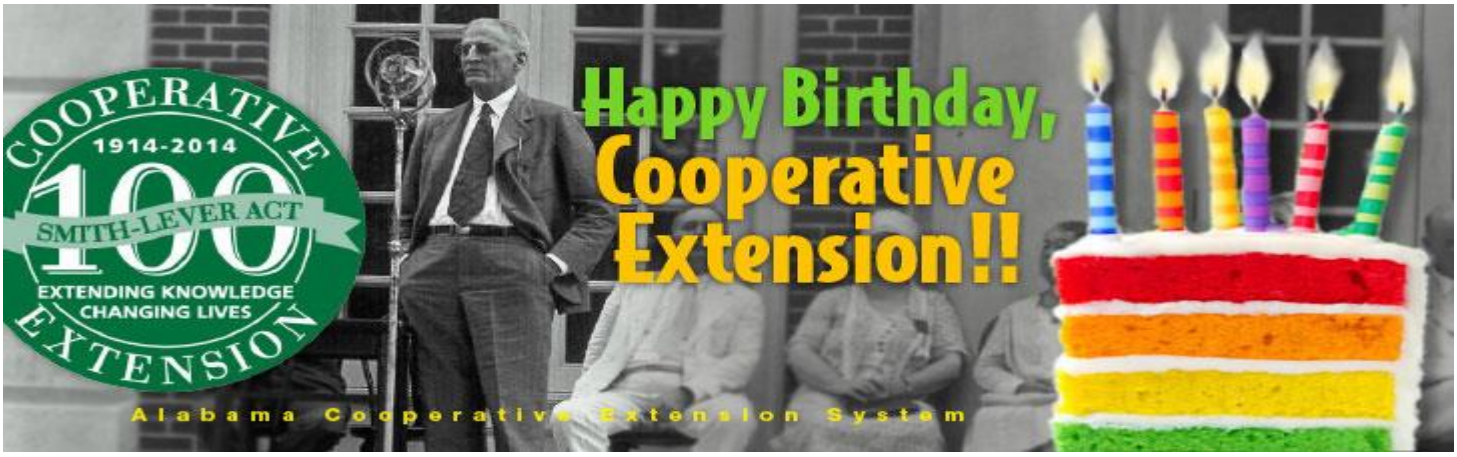
"Spring being a tough act to follow, God created June."
- Al Bernstein

June's monthly meeting – June 16th – will be a workday for the Extension Conference. Since we have a good turnout for meetings and those traveling greater distances will be present anyway, it would make sense to work on that day. After all, this is a group and I would like all to be involved (not just a few that seem to come). There will be something for all to do and yes, it will count as volunteer hours! I will be at Ava UMC at 12:30 so come early or come at meeting time. Ann

"Roses are red,
Violets are blue;
But they don't get around
Like the dandelions do."
- Slim Acres

Don't forget to let us know if you need help with your gardening. Just fill out the Garden Friends form and give it to Ann. We're here to help.

June 14th is Flag Day wave your flag with pride!!!



Governor Honors 100th Anniversary of Cooperative Extension

by Maggie Lawrence on 5/14/2014 1:26 PM

Last week the Alabama Cooperative Extension System celebrated the centennial of the Smith-Lever Act that created a national Extension system. The partnership between federal, state, and local policy makers formed the relationships among funding partners that keeps the Extension system highly accountable and responsive to contemporary issues. With the Smith-Lever Act, Extension became the third mission of the land-grant university system and provides the integration necessary for Extension to deliver research-based information. Many county Extension offices across the state celebrated May 8 in various ways. Some gatherings were serious and others were light hearted. A common theme was the number of people who commented on how their life was shaped by Extension programs and Extension professionals. Governor Robert Bentley signed a commendation document on May 8, 2014 recognizing the important role that the Alabama Cooperative Extension System has played in Alabama's past. The Governor's document also challenges Extension to play an active role in shaping Alabama's future.

The Butterfly-Milkweed Relationship

Milkweeds play a dual role in the garden where butterflies are concerned. Their blooms play a key part by providing nectar to a variety of beneficial insects, including butterflies. More importantly, though, nearly all species of milkweed are used as host plants by the monarch butterfly, which have been in serious decline over the past decade. If you notice that the leaves of your milkweeds have been chewed on, you more than likely have monarch butterfly caterpillars feeding there. The relationship between butterfly and host plant has been playing out for thousands of years and is not detrimental to the plant in any way. Let nature take its course and allow butterfly caterpillars to mature into beautiful butterflies. The milkweeds will recover.

…tussock moth caterpillars also feed on milkweed. These caterpillars are covered with long, stiff hairs that deliver a powerful sting when touched. Tussock moths are not beneficial to the garden and larvae can appear in such numbers that they can strip an entire stand of milkweed clean in just a few days, leaving none for the more desirable monarch butterfly larvae. Unfortunately, any sprays (even the organic ones) that will kill tussock moth caterpillars will also kill the monarch caterpillars.

By Troy B. Marden, excerpt from The Mighty Milkweeds, Alabama Gardener, June 2014

Tussock moth caterpillar

Monarch butterfly caterpillar

2014 Fall Flower & Garden Fest
Healthy Living – Healthy Gardening

The 2014 Fall flower & Gardening Fest will be held Friday and Saturday, October 17 and 18, at the Truck Crops Experiment Station in Crystal Station, Mississippi, which is about 25 miles south of Jackson. Hours are from 9a.m. to 2 p.m. both days and vendors will have food and drinks available.

This is the largest home gardening show in the southeast. Average attendance is 6,000 people over the two day event. Admission and parking are free. The garden, grounds, seminars and one of the tour wagons are handicap accessible.

There will be seminar sessions – each occurring at the same times at different locations and on really interesting topics. There will also be walking tours and workshops, again on very interesting topics.

Let's see if we can get a group together to check this event out. Folks who have attended in the past said it is THE EVENT that you must attend. I'm in – are you??

SURVEY SAYS……

Jack recently brought my attention to a national survey of the country's favorite vegetables and fruits. The list was, I thought, rather extensive with 54 vegetables and 63 fruits listed – some I'd never heard of! So, I thought why not take a survey of our favorites. Email me your five favorite vegetables and five favorite fruits. My email address is sheilabolen@hotmail.com or you can call me at 256-354-2188 and if I don't answer just leave a message. We'll see how we stand against the country's favorites. We've already planted 25 more strawberry plants!

MG Participants with displays/presentations for NACAA Conference

- Autauga – Display about community garden
- Baldwin – Display about various vegetable related projects
- Capital City – Display about school garden project
- Central – Display about cookbook project
- Chilton – Display about partnership with experimental station
- Coffee – Display/Presentation on high school greenhouse project
- East Central – Display on raised tabletop gardens
- Lee – considering a contribution of effort
- MGNA – Display about vegetable demo garden
- Wiregrass – display about "youth services center" vegetable garden
- All groups will be doing or are considering an oral presentation with their displays.

CRITTERS

Danielle Carroll, Regional Extension Agent,
Home Grounds, Gardens & Pests

Hiding Easter eggs may not have been so difficult this year. If your lawn is anything like ours, you may have holes everywhere – some large enough to hide eggs. The holes are easy to see, but sometimes the hole makers are not. By scouting around and asking yourself some questions, you may just have an answer to the "who dunnit?" mystery. Time of year will have a lot to do with 'what' is causing the holes. As far as spring goes, here is a list of candidates.

How large is the hole? Very small holes (pencil size and smaller) my be caused by hungry birds eating at your lawn buffet. Holes caused by birds are just that…small holes with no other evidence. Unfortunately, for earthworms, they do leave behind evidence. If you notice small piles beside the holes – piles that upon closer inspection are composed of many granular pellets, then you more than likely have earthworms. Earthworms are clearly beneficial in soil, providing free aeration which increases water penetration, and aids in thatch control, among many other benefits. These mounds are especially common after much rain. If the mounds are unsightly, use a good rake and a little elbow grease to rake them even with the soil line.

This time of year it is also common to see one of our native bees hovering just above the ground – mining bees. Mining bee holes are about ¼ inch in diameter. The bee itself is a great pollinator and about the size of a honeybee. Mining bees are solitary bees making their nest in the ground. You are more likely to find mining bees in barren areas of the lawn. Again, these are great pollinators and control is not necessary. You can discourage them from making nests in an area by mulching or saturating the ground with water often in the early Spring when they are making nests. Other insects may also be to blame. Cicadas and many beetles are just a few of the insects that call the ground their home in their immature states. As they become adults and leave their ground homes behind they will leave a hole about the size of a nickel. If you have an area that stays wet (holding water) crayfish is a possibility. They leave a mound about 4 inches high made of balls of soil. The mounds may be 2 – 4 inches high with a hole 1 inch in diameter. If you would like to try and catch them you'd be better off looking at night.

You may encounter cicada killer wasp holes a little later in the summer. The body is about 1.5 inches long. They're solitary wasps ad make their burrows in well drained sites, whether bare soils or where grass is kept very short. Cicada killers are so named because they hunt cicadas! The cicada killer wasp larvae feed on cicadas. They bring the cicada to the nesting holes. As they excavate the hole, the excess soil is thrown out into a u-shaped mound.

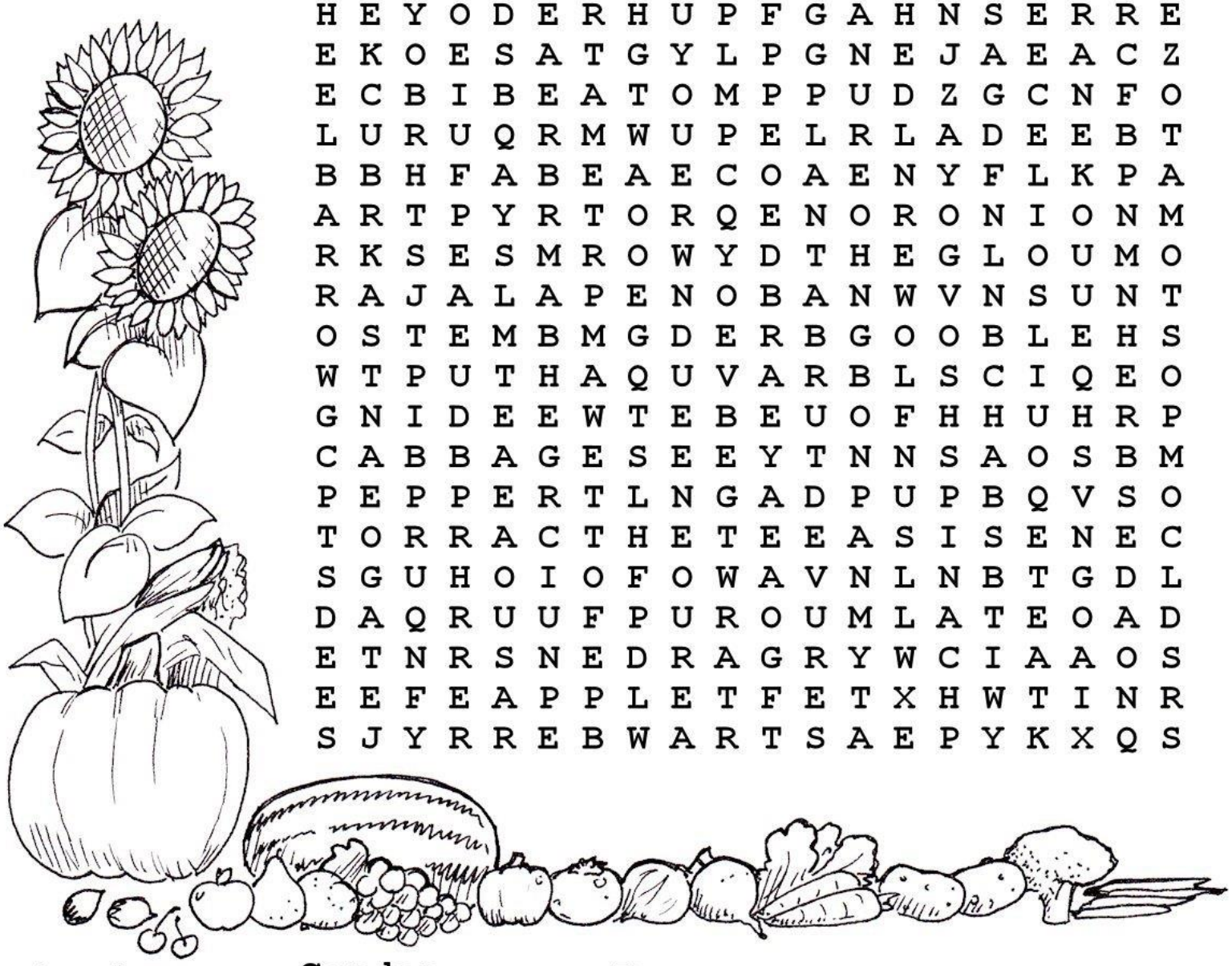
As the holes get larger so does the culprit. Moles and voles are blamed for a lot of damage. Many people have vole damage and blame it on moles. Moles eat insect, earthworms and grubs and make familiar raised tunnel systems in lawns. You may also find a mole hill near the point of ground entry. These 'hills' are usually a couple inches high. Voles feed on plant material and have underground burrows. Moles seldom cause extensive plant damage. If plants are being eaten, the culprit is a vole not a mole. It is important to distinguish between the two types of animal activity because control efforts for voles will not stop mole activity and vice versa.

Squirrels often leaves holes about 2 inches wide, but this is more than likely going to happen in the fall when the squirrels are burying their nuts in the lawn for later. It is true, though, that you may find the same holes excavated at other times of the year when they dig the nuts back up. Holes to chipmunk tunnels are also about 2 inches in diameter. The holes are often backed up to a stump, brush pile or firewood piles.

As the hole gets bigger so does the hole maker. Skunk and raccoon damage occurs for the most part at night. The holes are cone shaped and about 3 – 4 inches wide. You may find an area as wide as a foot in diameter, though. Sometimes, they will peel back newly laid sod in their quest to find grubs and worms. Perhaps the most damaging of the hole makers is the armadillo. Again, the damage is going to be done after the sun goes down. In their search for grubs and other insects, armadillos dig holes that are only a couple inches deep but may be 3 - 5 inches wide. However, the disturbed area may be 3 feet or more. If you find the burrow, the entrance may be 8 inches wide and up to 15 feet long.

Garden Word Search

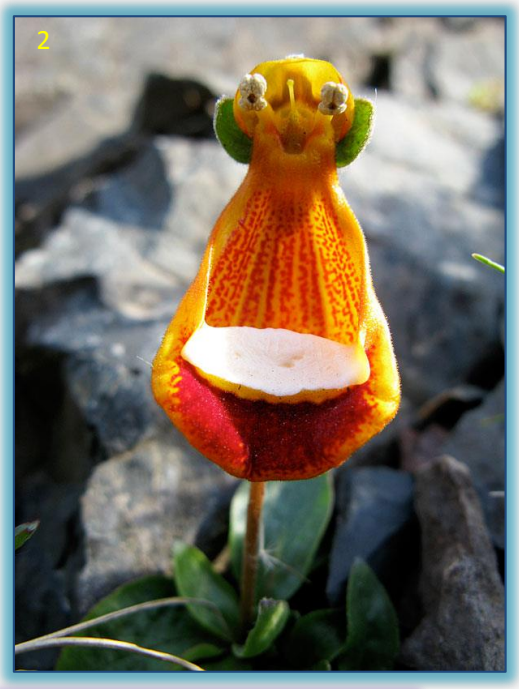
W T R A L S T B J S I E M S H L V E O S
H E Y O D E R H U P F G A H N S E R R E
E K O E S A T G Y L P G N E J A E A C Z
E C B I B E A T O M P P U D Z G C N F O
L U R U Q R M W U P E L R L A D E E B T
B B H F A B E A E C O A E N Y F L K P A
A R T P Y R T O R Q E N O R O N I O N M
R K S E S M R O W Y D T H E G L O U M O
R A J A L A P E N O B A N W V N S U N T
O S T E M B M G D E R B G O O B L E H S
W T P U T H A Q U V A R B L S C I Q E O
G N I D E E W T E B E U O F H H U H R P
C A B B A G E S E E Y T N N S A O S B M
P E P P E R T L N G A D P U P B Q V S O
T O R R A C T H E T E E A S I S E N E C
S G U H O I O F O W A V N L N B T G D L
D A Q R U U F P U R O U M L A T E O A D
E T N R S N E D R A G R Y W C I A A O S
E E F E A P P L E T F E T X H W T I N R
S J Y R R E B W A R T S A E P Y K X Q S

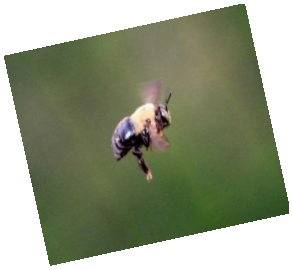


Apple
Asparagus
Beans
Beds
Bucket
Cabbage
Carrot
Compost
Corn
Eggplant
Fence
Flower
Fruit
Garden
Gate
Greenhouse
Harvest
Herbs
Jalapeno
Ladybug
Leaf
Lettuce
Manure
Mulch
Onion
Oregano
Pear
Peas
Pecans
Pepper
Potato
Rhubarb
Roots
Rosemary
Sage
Seeds
Shed
Shovel
Soil
Spinach
Stem
Strawberry
Sunflower
Thyme
Tomato
Trowel
Vegetable
Weeding
Wheelbarrow
Worms

Can You Name Me?

I'm a real flower and these are my blooms. I'm not common to where you live but see if you can find my moniker. (Find the answers later in the newsletter).





Carpenter Bees

Danielle Carroll, Regional Extension Agent
Home Ground, Gardens and Home Pests

Carpenter bees, giant resin bees and bumble bees are three of the largest bees that we will see. They do look a lot alike but do have their differences. For the most part, bumble bees create large nests in the ground. These are the large bees often seen hovering around the dandelions in our lawns and gardens. Many of us are all to familiar with the living quarters of the carpenter bees as they prefer to live above ground, often building nests in wood structures like porches, buildings and even wooden picnic tables. Giant resin bees nest in small places between boards of a building, in rotten logs or take advantage of holes and tunnels created by other insects. Giant resin bees and carpenter bees are both solitary bees while bumble bees are social insects.

All three of these bees have similarities – all having yellow hairs on a black body. Among the three, giant resin bees are the largest at 1 to 1½ inches long. Carpenter bees are usually ½ to 1 inch long and bumble bees slightly smaller than that. A carpenter bee's abdomen is bare and shiny, while a bumble bees abdomen is covered in fine hair. A carpenter bee has a more robust and heavy body than the giant resin bee which is longer and has a cylindrical body. All three bees are pollinators.

For most homeowners, it is the carpenter bees that are on their radar since they are the ones creating nests in their wooden structures. The female carpenter bee is the one drilling perfectly round ½ inch holes into exposed exterior wooden surfaces. She will string tunnels together at 90 -degree angles into the wood. Tunnels can extend 4-6 inches into the wood or even longer after extended use. Adult carpenter bees overwinter in old nest tunnels in which they have stored small amounts of pollen. Overwintering adults emerge and mate in spring. After mating, the fertilized females either re-infest old tunnels or excavate new ones. You may have noticed the fresh sawdust beneath the holes or heard the sound of the excavation going on in your porch.

The female begins to lay eggs in the tunnels, dividing them into individual cells. The female will seal up the cell and move on to another tunnel. As the eggs hatch, the larvae feed on the pollen ball left by the mated female. Often it is the male carpenter bee that we see flying around in our faces in early spring. The males are simply hovering around waiting for females as well as defending their territory. Unfortunately for the males, they have no stinger and they are of no danger to us. They are easily killed with a badminton or tennis racquet. There are also carpenter bee traps available or you can make your own. They often mistake penny-sized circular holes as the entry holes to nest galleries. You may construct a wooden box with such holes on side walls and connect a narrow-neck clear container to the bottom. Hang the trap in an area populated by bees When bees enter the box through the holes they will get into the and make it hard, if not impossible, to get out.

There is no method to totally prevent carpenter bees from drilling/nesting in our wood structures. We do know that carpenter bees are attracted more to unpainted wood surfaces. To slow down carpenter bee infestations, paint or varnish all wood surfaces. Apply two coats of a good exterior primer and follow-up with at least one coat of finish.

However, painting is not always a solution. Some carpenter bee activity can be reduced by using metal window screening stapled into place where bees may be working Paints impregnated with a pesticide have been introduced as a repellent, but the material usually breaks and lasts only a season.

Spraying or dusting insecticides into the holes is an option. Apply dusts late in the evening when the carpenter bees are 'home'. Be careful when spraying as pesticides that effect carpenter bees effect all of our bee pollinators. Injecting a pesticide into the tunnels can be effective, but a barrier lasts longer than an insecticide. A day after applying the insecticide seal the tunnel entrance with a caulking compound to kill the trapped bees and prevent re-infestation. Foam insulation from the pressurized cans is not effective as carpenter bees can get through it easily.

CEU opportunity

All Bugs Good and Bad
2014 Webinar Series

Photo Credit: David Cappaert, Michigan State University, bugwood.org

Minimize Mosquito Problems

August 1, 2014
2:00 PM EST

Molly Keck

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 2:00 PM EST.

Late summer is prime time for mosquitoes and the time of year when West Nile usually peaks. Learn how to protect yourself and your family from mosquitoes by reducing breeding sites, resting sites, and avoiding them altogether.

For connection information, visit: https://learn.extension.org/events/1370.
For more information on the series visit:
http://www.extension.org/pages/70120.

Alabama Cooperative Extension System
Alabama A&M and Auburn Universities

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

eXtension more mind reach

There will NOT be an "All Bugs Good and Bad" Webinar in July as the first Friday falls on July 4th

You're invited to…

A series of free gardening programs sponsored by Calhoun County Master Gardeners & Calhoun County Commission

Held the 4th Wednesday of each month at the Cane Creek Community Garden at McClellan Noon-1pm ~ bring your own lunch!

April 23rd
Rene Morrison, JSU Field School, "Beyond My Backyard"

May 28th
David Doggett, Jefferson County Master Gardener, "Propagating Hydrangeas"

June 25th
Hayes Jackson, Urban Regional Extension Agent, ACES "Sensational Salvias"

July 23rd
Dani Carroll, Regional Extension Agent, ACES "Creating a Bee Friendly Garden"

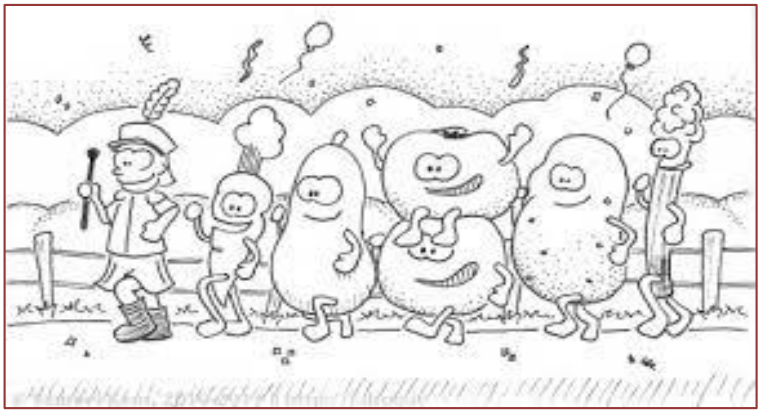
August 27th
Jason Powell, Petals from the Past " Tough Plants for Southern Gardens"

September 24th
Hayes Jackson, Urban Regional Extension Agent, ACES "Easy Plants for Difficult Places"

For more information, call the County Extension Office at 237-1621. www.aces.edu/calhoun

This Is My Name

1. Swaddled Babies – Anguloa Uiflora
2. Happy Alien – Calceolaria Uniflora
3. Monkey Face Orchid – Dracula Simia
4. Flying Duck Orchid – Caleana Major
5. Laughing Bumble Bee Orchid – Orphys bomybliflora
6. Hooker's Lips – Psychotria Elata
7. Dove Orchid or Holy ghost Orchid – Peristeria Elata



Central Region

By Courtney McCrory

June is great for blooms and color but bad for disease and pests. With a little work, hopefully you can ward off most problems. And remember, you must water since our rainfall is unpredictable.

TREES & SHRUBS

Any newly planted trees or shrubs need to be watered often and consistently. I would advise daily for two weeks. Rainfall counts, but you are the backup. New plants are more susceptible to drought-related problems since they are already going through the shock of relocation. Water thoroughly at the base of the plant – the leaves do not need water. Watering overhead creates the perfect environment for fungal diseases. Keep a 2-3-inch layer of mulch around all plants. Pine bark or straw work well. Under trees, you can extend the mulch out to the dripline, since grass would struggle to grow there anyway.

Fertilize new plantings with a slow-release granular fertilizer and water in. Some shrubs need specifically formulated fertilizers. I use one for camellias and azaleas. Read and follow all label directions for appropriate amounts and then water immediately. Fruit-bearing trees have their own fertilizing schedule and bloom times, so use fertilizers for those specific trees.

There are several summer insects on the prowl. Aphids, scale and Japanese beetles love your trees and shrubs. Remove beetles by hand, if you can. However, I would not recommend Japanese beetle traps. They will attract beetles from your whole neighborhood, and won't actually eliminate the problem. Try systemic chemicals to eliminate severe insect problems. Remove infected limbs and try sprays such as horticultural oil and insecticidal soaps for smaller areas. These are more environmentally friendly. You may see powdery mildew on leaves of crapemyrtles. Use a fungicide to take care of that problem.

LAWNS

Water if it has not rained recently and temperatures are in the high 90s. Please do not overwater. This wastes water, which might eventually result in watering restrictions. Overwatering encourages shallow roots, which pests prefer. The rule of thumb is an inch a week. If you receive a good rain, that week is probably taken care of. Definitely water after fertilizing. Set your sprinkler system on a timer or make a note on your calendar and stick to it. Since we had such a wet winter and spring, hopefully drought conditions will not be too bad.

Fertilize lawns now. Nitrogen makes plants green, so look for a higher first number in that triple number. This will promote growth so stay on top of mowing, but do not mow too low. Again, that is another invitation for disease and pests. Check the thatch layer in your lawn. That is the brown, dry grass down near the soil. It should be around ½ inch. It provides a mulch-like cover to keep out a few weeds.

There are so many pests and disease issues that can potentially affect lawns, it is hard to list them all. Stay on the offensive with consistent watering and mowing. If grass begins to look yellow, gray or spotted – there is a problem. It is wise to treat the whole yard if possible to prevent further damage. Try to treat for the specific bug or fungus. Armyworms and nematodes have their own treatment, while there are fungicides for spotty leaves. Be sure to remove clippings from infected areas, to prevent reintroducing the problem.

ANNUALS & EDIBLES

It is not too late to start annuals, herbs or vegetables. Most will go through summer and into fall, some until the first frost. A slow-release fertilizer works well for annuals and you may only need one or two applications for the life of the plant. For edibles, fertilize after their first fruit with calcium nitrate or blood meal. You can try bloom-boosting products, but do not expect miraculous results. Deadheading blooms is a great way to encourage new ones. This is simply the process of pinching off spent blooms so the plant can focus on producing new ones.

Annuals need as much water as lawns. They only live a few months, and work hard the whole time. Containers must be watered daily, perhaps twice on the hottest days. Pots must have a hole for drainage because at the same time, plants do not want to drown either.

Aphids attack new buds on flowering annuals. Scale can be seen on the undersides of leaves. These bugs are flat, brown circles that will suck the green out of a plant. Usually they like my azaleas. Ladybugs are actually helpful since they enjoy eating aphids, so let them stay. I have whiteflies every year. They leave a white, web-like mass on stems and are fast movers. The sprays mentioned earlier can help control and eliminate these bugs. Be sure to spray all over and under the leaves for best results. You may see powdery mildew on bloomers like zinnias. Try a fungicide spray and continue until the problem is gone. Thin out annuals for good air circulation.

On vegetables, look for mites and worms. Use the same products, but make sure it says safe for edibles on the label. Handpick if you are able. Do not leave ripened fruit on too long or you will have several unwanted visitors. Prune out affected leaves or branches to discourage further problems. Bacterial wilt affects tomatoes with no cure. You must remove the entire plant, roots and soil, then start again. If using a container, I would clean it with a bleach solution as well. Enjoy the blooms, stay pro-active and hopefully enjoy a problem-free summer.

Courtney McCrory has been a Jefferson County Master Gardener since 2007.

How Does Your Garden Grow?

Have you ever planted a garden/flowerbed and, as it grew and started producing/blooming, thought to yourself "Now that's a pretty garden"? Have you ever been driving down the road and saw a "planting", be it vegetable garden, flower beds, landscaping or whatever, and thought – "Wow, that would make a GREAT picture"! Take your phone/camera and snap those pictures then email them to me or send me a print with the location taken. Let's see what kinds of garden WOWs we can come up with! Here's a few I've taken……

Our really old peach tree out did itself this year with blossoms. We're hoping it keeps some of the peaches. It'll be a first when we get a ripe peach off this tree. It was sorely neglected/abused until we moved in. Now we baby it!