

Garden Thyme



Monthly Newsletter of the East Central Alabama Master Gardeners Association

August, 2014

From Our President, Ann Hammond...

Hasn't this past week been wonderful! It doesn't seem time for Fall/Autumn but the weather is sure hinting that it is right around the corner. Many of us are already harvesting. Now we also need to be putting in those fall crops. Also, don't forget to pot something for our Fall Plant Sale. Don't wait for the last day. Remember, we are Master Gardeners!

Be patient then brothers until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield it's valuable crop and how patient he is for the autumn and spring rains.

James 5:7

Ann



Mobile Conference Update

I want to thank everybody for their ideas, hard work, and support for the Ag Extension Conference in Mobile. Our display was a HUGE success. Many, many people came by the display. We received numerous praises and comments on our planters. The one thing we did not have was blueprints for the construction of the planters. Everyone that came by wanted one for themselves.

The presentation was also a big hit. Anna did an excellent job with a PowerPoint presentation. Out of the six associations presenting, we were the only one that the audience asked questions about. Kerry asked questions to the other groups but we had audience participation. It was awesome!!!

The other groups presenting were from South Alabama and Montgomery area. North Alabama had a display but did not do a presentation. I was proud that our association made a good showing. Thank you all. Ann



Just a reminder....

Remember to go to our Facebook Page and like us. Check back often for notifications of meetings, CEU opportunities, work days and special events.

AUGUST CELEBRATIONS

Anniversaries

Linda and Ken Barnes – 8/8

Jack and Sheila Bolen - 8/10

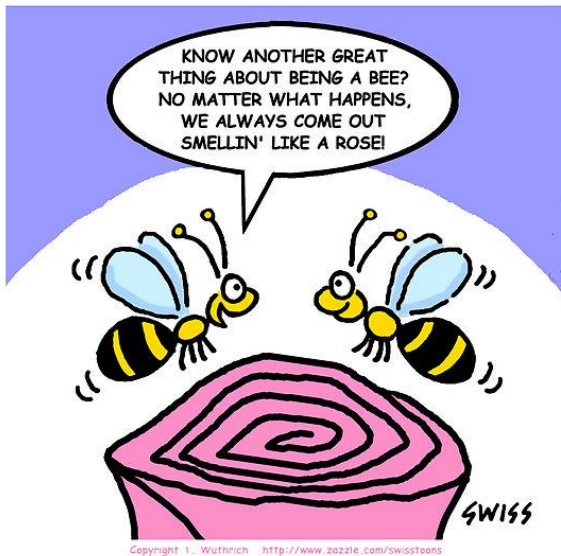
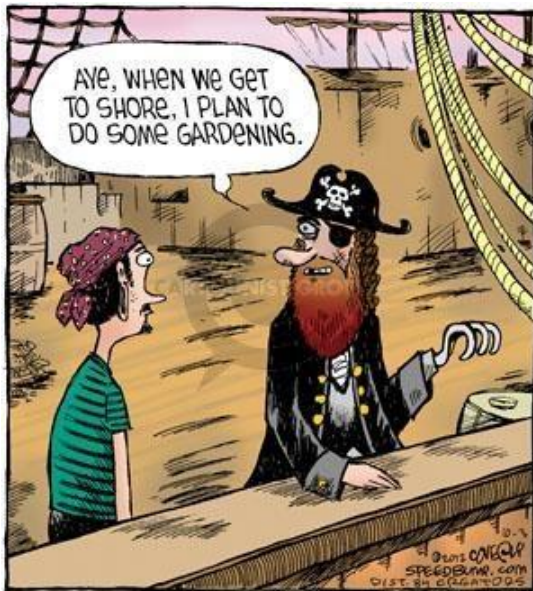
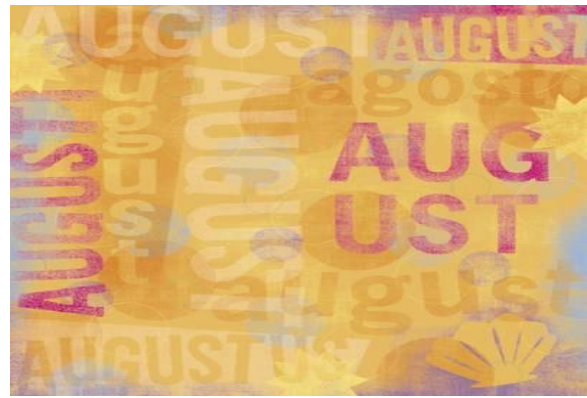
Birthdays

Dee Perkins – 8/4

Crystal Walker – 8/8

Rodney Walker – 8/2

Linda Barnes – 8/30

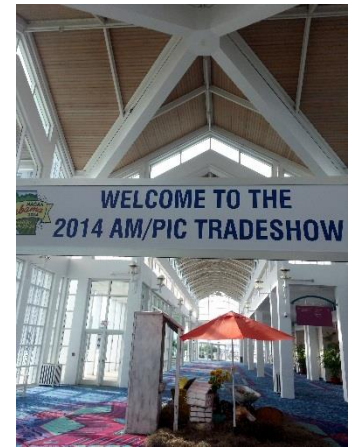


"To forget how to dig the earth and to tend the soil is to forget ourselves." - Mahatma Gandhi

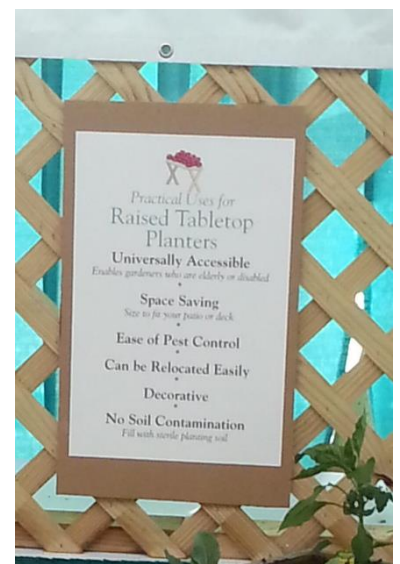
"Those who labour in the earth are the chosen people of God." - Thomas Jefferson

August is
National Catfish Month
Art Appreciation Month
National Smile Week is August 5 – August 11
August 1 – National Girlfriends Day
August 2 – National Ice Cream Sandwich Day
August 3 – National Watermelon Day
August 4 – National Chocolate Chip Cookie Day
August 5 – International Beer Day
August 5 – National Underwear Day
August 6 – Fresh Breath Day
August 8 – National Dollar Day
August 9 – Book Lovers Day
August 10 – National Banana Split Day
August 10 – National S'mores Day
August 13 – International Left-handers Day
August 15 – National Lemon Meringue Pie Day
August 18 – National Bad Poetry Day
August 19 – National Aviation Day
August 21 – National Senior Citizens Day
August 22 – National Tooth Fairy Day
August 24 – National Peach Pie Day
August 30 – National Toasted Marshmallow Day
August 31 – National Trail Mix Day
August 31 – International Bacon Day
On August 16, 1977 Elvis Presley died
On August 30, 1818 Creek Indians raided Ft. Mims, Alabama.

The philosopher who said that work well done never needs doing over, never weeded a garden." - Ray D. Everson



In July 2014, Extension educators from around the United States for the first time came to Alabama for the National Association of County Agricultural Agents (NACAA) Annual Meeting and Professional Improvement Conference. Alabama Cooperative Extension System agents and specialists hosted the event in Mobile. Over 2,200 agriculture and natural resource extension educators, their spouses and children, life members and guests attended the conference. This was the 99th NACAA conference and great for Alabama to host especially on the 100th year anniversary of extension. As part of the conference, we asked that Alabama Master Gardener Associations showcase their volunteerism with displays and share success stories in the Horticulture Super session. Eight Alabama Master Gardener Associations were represented at the conference, Mobile, Central Alabama, Capital City, Autauga, Chilton, Baldwin, MGNA and East Central MG. The Master Gardener displays were exhibited in the entryway by registration so no one at the conference could miss them. East Central Master Gardeners did a FANTASTIC job with the raised bed garden table top display. A lot of comments were made on the ingenuity and creativity of the project. It was really great to see the diversity among the master gardener associations....from raised bed table tops to school education gardens. Miss Anna Hammonds represented the East Central Alabama Master Gardener Association by sharing the success story in the Horticulture Super Session. You could not have asked for a better representative. Super, super job Anna and to all of you for dedication to the master gardener program. Ms. Hammonds and family – a big thank you for driving to Mobile and setting this all up. You guys are awesome! *By Dani Carroll*



Photos courtesy of Ann Hammonds

They're here.....

Crazy ant sighting in South Alabama

With more than 150 resident ant species in Alabama, you would think we wouldn't have room for one more.

Meet the tawny crazy ant – so named because they run around in crazy patterns.

There has recently been a confirmed sighting of the tawny crazy ant, *Nylanderia Fulva*, in Mobile County, the first confirmed sighting in Alabama.

Tawny crazy ants were formerly known as Raspberry crazy ants, named after the pest control operator who first discovered them. The tawny crazy ant (also known as the Caribbean or hairy crazy ant) was originally found in Florida in 1953. Since its discovery, it has been sighted across southeast Texas, Louisiana, central and southern Florida and, just last year, in Albany, GA.

Millions of ants per colony

Native to northern Argentina and southern Brazil, tawny crazy ants are small, brown ants, less than 2 mm long. Under a microscope or hand lens, you can see the ants' hairy body.

Despite their small size, it's their incredible populations that give them away. In a given area, crazy ant populations are 100 times greater than other ant populations combined.

Because of the sheer numbers of tawny crazy ants, food sources are limited for other ant species. This is especially true for fire ants, which are displaced by tawny crazy ants.

That may sound like good news for those of us inundated with fire ant mounds. However, a colony of millions of tawny ants is pretty scary. In areas where they have been found for years, it is not at all uncommon to shovel away dead tawny crazy ants by the five-gallon bucketful.

They are very opportunistic ants, invading electrical boxes, campers, homes and practically anything "just laying around".

The foraging trails of these ants are very apparent. Their movement is erratic, and it often looks as though the ground is moving. The trail of ants may also follow structural line around buildings.

Crazy ants are spread by humans

Tawny crazy ants do not have stingers. Good news, right? Instead of stingers, the workers have

specialized pores on the ends of their abdomens, which excrete chemicals for defense or attack.

Tawny crazy ants are omnivorous. These ants will farm pet like aphid, scales and whiteflies that excrete a sugary excrement called "honeydew".

Tawny crazy ants are very social, and colonies may grow to super-colony status. They also have polygyne colonies, which means colonies may contain several queen ants, which means their population increases rapidly.

Tawny crazy ants, unlike imported red ants, do not spread by mating flights. Current research suggests that tawny crazy ants must be picked up and moved by us.

Tawny crazy ants may invade camper on vacation. They may be present in potted plants or anything that they are able to crawl into. It is extremely important to check anything being moved from a known infested area.

How to manage crazy ants

Tawny crazy ants are hard to control. When they invade homes, indoor insecticides are not enough, since the colonies are often nesting outdoors.

In yards and gardens, remove anything that may become a nesting site including fallen limbs, unplanted plants and anything on the ground that doesn't have to be there.

Tawny crazy ants prefer humid, wet conditions – another reason to plant drought-tolerant plants that do not need irrigation.

Crazy ants are not as attracted to the bait products that are often used to manage fire ants. Infested areas are often managed with contact pesticides applied in buffer zones around structures. For homeowners, using pest control operators is usually the best option.

Above all, remember that people are responsible for spreading tawny crazy ants. Please check anything that is moved from an infested site before bringing it home.

*By Dani Carroll, Regional Extension Agent
Home Ground, Gardens and Home Pests*

The Anniston Star, August 3, 2014



Raspberry crazy ants
*Photo by Dave Ryan
Beaumont Enterprise*



When lots of jets leave trails across the sky, rain will be coming within the next day or two

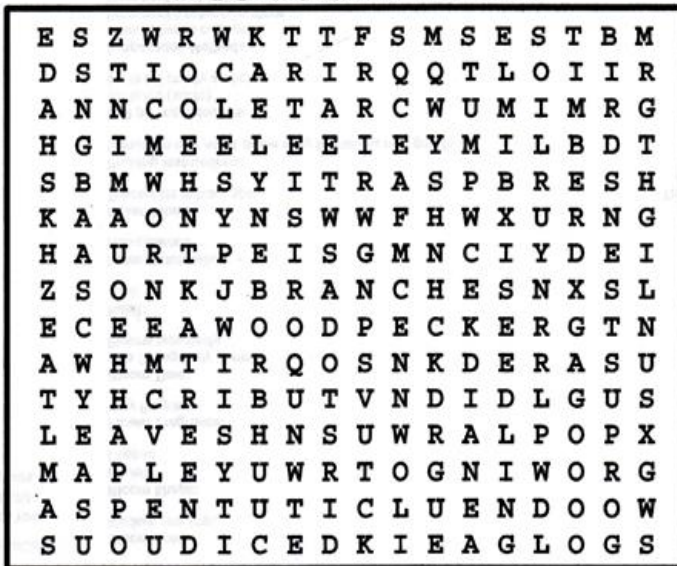
If hornets build nests close to the ground
It will be a bad winter with lots of snow on the ground

Best time of the year for meteor showers is August
Cutting when the moon is new in August completely kills Johnson grass, roots and all

There will be one snow in the coming winter
for every fog in August



Deciduous Trees

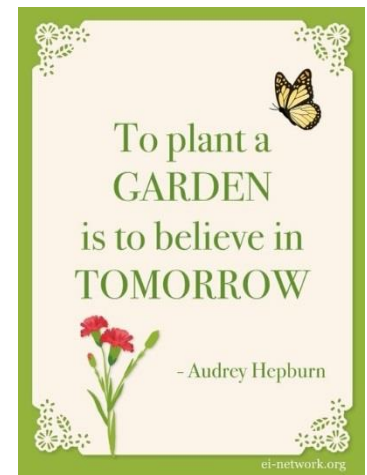


- | | | | |
|-----------|-------------|----------|------------|
| shade | majestic | wood | woodpecker |
| bark | leaves | seedling | sway |
| trunk | growing | birch | timber |
| maple | tire swing | green | logs |
| elm | branches | insects | majestic |
| white oak | squirrel | rustle | deciduous |
| water | bird's nest | wind | buds |
| soil | stump | hammock | aspen |
| sunlight | rings | chestnut | poplar |
| tall | tree house | acorn | willow |

To find the answer to the trivia question, look for a word or phrase that is hidden in the puzzle, but not in the word list

Trivia: An oak tree will not produce its first acorn until it reaches this age.

Answer: _____



off the mark.com by Mark Parisi



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CEU OPPORTUNITIES

For those of us that need CEUs to maintain certification here are two great opportunities.

Interns, even though you don't need CEUs your first year, these can count as volunteer hours. And, if you don't get to view them as they occur, they get archived so you can watch them later.



All Bugs Good and Bad 2014 Webinar Series



Kudzu Bug Takes Over the Southeastern U.S. and Brown Marmorated Stink Bug -- All Bad

September 5, 2014
2:00 PM EST

Michael Toews and Tracy Leskey

Photo Credit: Jeremy Greene, Clemson University, bugwood.org

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.

Learn about two new invasive insects, the kudzu bug and the brown marmorated stinkbug, in this webinar presented by Dr. Michael Toews and Dr. Tracy Leskey.

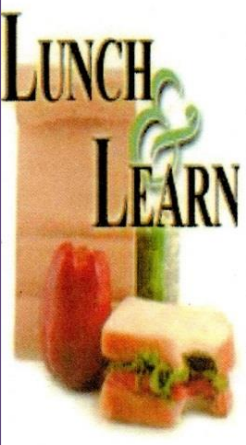
For connection information, visit: <https://learn.extension.org/events/1379>.
For more information on the series visit: <http://www.extension.org/pages/70120>.

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

Citation for pictures: Don Ossi, BugPhoto, bugwood.org; Jerry A. Payne, USDA, ARS, bugwood.org; "Kudzu Insect", 2014 State Insect & Plant Photo Contest, U.S. Insect & Plant, bugwood.org; David Coggins, Michigan State University, bugwood.org; Stephen McKeever, Georgia Southern University, bugwood.org.



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!

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"*

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??

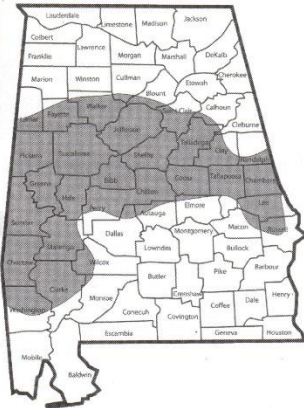
Join the Calhoun County Master Gardeners in welcoming Jason Powell of Petals from the Past to Lunch and Learn. Jason is very well known to gardeners all over the state and will share his knowledge about plants that thrive in our area. His subject for his August 27 presentation is "Tough Plants for Southern Gardens." He will have plants available for purchase.

Are your volunteer hours and/or CEUs up to date on the MG website? If you need help posting them please do not hesitate to ask Ann, Martha, Sheila or another member for assistance in posting them. It makes it much easier at the end of the year to have them up-to-date instead of having to rush to get them all in at the last minute.





Central Region
By Courtney McCrory



Hang on. Don't give up on anything yet. There is still plenty of daylight left for flowers and edibles to produce for you this month. Think about what you might want to change or add in the fall. Fall is the best time to plant because temperatures are lower, making watering less of a chore. However, I have found you cannot always find desired trees and shrubs in the fall. If you need to plant multiple shrubs along your house for example, order them now and begin to prepare the area by adding compost and other organic amendments, setting up new plants for the best chance of success.

RIGHT NOWS AND NEXT TIMERS

Continue maintaining your container plantings. They are not finished yet and can still produce another round or two of blooms. Add some fall color with plants such as *Cosmos* or marigolds (*Tagetes* spp.), which have great orange and yellow colors. Continue deadheading annuals into the fall for maximum blooms. They should last until several consecutive nights of temperatures in the 30s. Save any seeds you can harvest for next spring.

By "next timers," I mean perennials. Plant them now to enjoy next fall, too. Mums are a great example. Please do not trash your cute decorations after the luncheon is finished. They will come back. And if you have the time, you can cut off spent blooms and they will shoot out again. Look for *Sedum*, *Salvia*, New England asters (*Symphotrichum novae-angliae*) and ornamental

grasses for color and interest this time of year. Divide established perennials such as daylilies (*Hemerocallis* spp.), *Iris*, *Coreopsis* and Shasta daisy (*Leucanthemum x superbum*). You can relocate them or give them away.

EDIBLES

Now is the perfect time to plant lettuce, carrots, beets and Brussels sprouts. Soak seeds, cover lightly with soil or mulch and water daily for best results. Lettuce will produce plenty to eat, even in containers. You can enjoy your herbs into fall as well. Take cuttings of favorite herbs and put in smaller pots in a sunny window to enjoy even in the coldest months. You can leave cilantro outside for a while because it grows better in cooler temps, but still needs sun. Pinch off blooms of your tomato plants if there is fruit on them. That way, all the nutrients will go to them instead of trying to produce new fruit at the end of the season. At the end of the month, you can pull up stakes, cages and pots to clean and store over the winter.



Now is the time to divide established perennials, such as *Iris*.

GREEN GRASS

If your lawn is still growing, and it probably is, it still needs to be cut. Do not quit just because it is about to start slowing down. Raise your mowing height just slightly, about 1/2 inch. You do not need to fertilize right now. Be on the lookout for pests and diseases still. Problems should hopefully begin subsiding. Spot-treat with fungicides and hand-pick weeds if possible. You can apply a pre-emergent to control weed seeds before they sprout. Be sure to water in after the application. Continue to water lightly since grass is still growing, but thankfully, nothing like you did in the summer. You will probably dethatch in spring, so try to stay on top of raking heavy leaves to save yourself some work in months to come.

SOMETHING BIG

To use your time and money efficiently, start planning now for new plants. Consider balled-and-burlapped trees to add to your landscape. These are usually larger specimens. Make sure to think through plant placement. For example, do not put a hydrangea in all-day sun and don't plant a tree in a spot it will outgrow. Use raked leaves as free mulch to hold in moisture for your new beds. Water your new plants thoroughly and consistently rather than a light daily sprinkling. There is no need to fertilize now because plants are preparing for dormancy.

As always, be consistent and try to plan ahead. ♡

Courtney McCrory has been a Jefferson County master gardener since 2007.

Photo courtesy of Paige Day.

FALL FEST



Saturday, September 20, 2014

9am til 2pm

Cane Creek Community Gardens at McClellan

Fall Fest is a throwback to the old fashioned county fair. Bring the entire family out for a day of fun. Activities for the kids include a hayride, and inflatables, and a wildlife show. Contests include: Arts & Crafts, Canning, Baked Goods, Quilts, and a Flower show/contest. (For contest rules & registration, see www.aces.edu/calhoun.) There will also be a Fall Farmers & Crafts market.



Seed Saving Workshop 101

Where:
Ava United Methodist Church
Old Highway 431,
Wedowee, AL

When:
Tuesday,
September 9, 2014
9:00am—12:00pm

There is a \$5.00 fee, for non-ECAMG members
Call:
Randolph County Extension System to register.
256-357-2841

Learn about seed saving principles of common vegetables and annuals. Learn what types of seeds can be saved and what types can not. (hybrid vs. open pollinated).

Come and talk with others about the value of local seed exchanges.

We will be having a seed exchange in February 2015 so start backyard seed preservation now.

Sponsored by:
Alabama Cooperative Extension System
East Alabama Master Gardener Association



PRE-REGISTRATION FORM

Name(s): _____
Address: _____
Phone #: _____ E-mail address: _____
of Participants _____ X \$5 _____ = _____
Total Amount Enclosed: _____

(Make check payable to: Alabama Cooperative Extension System)
Return Pre-Registration Form and Payment by
Friday, September 5th, 2014 to:

Randolph County Extension Office
1 Main St. S
P.O. Box 227
Wedowee, AL 36278



Hosted by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station and Auburn University's College of Agriculture, Ag Discovery Adventure will offer adults and children entertaining and enlightening hands-on activities and presentations that will showcase agricultural technology and illustrate the key role agriculture plays in every aspect of our lives. They will explore the multi-faceted world of agriculture, from crop and animal production to home gardening to buzzwords like sustainability and bioenergy.

40 GALLON CHALLENGE

Save 40 gallons of water a day for your county and state.

What is the 40 Gallon Challenge?

The 40 Gallon Challenge is a call for residents and businesses to reduce our region's water use on average by 40 gallons per person, per day. The challenge began in 2011 as a voluntary campaign to increase water conservation.

The 40 Gallon Challenge encourages people to save a minimum of 40 gallons a day by adopting new water-saving techniques. The pledge card outlines water-saving practices and the daily water-savings to expect. You can use the pledge to review the water-saving practices that you or your family currently puts to use. By pledging new practices, you will see the total daily savings expected for your household.

The 40 Gallon Challenge also provides maps and charts to see pledge activities in your state and across the United States.

Why should I conserve water?

Drought conditions, population growth and increasing water demands has put added stress on the water supply. By conserving water, these water demands and the demand for energy-intensive systems that obtain, treat, and distribute water are both decreased.

Why should I pledge to save at least 40 gallons?

Reducing water usage at home not only saves this precious resource, it also helps homeowners keep more money in their wallets. Saving a minimum of 40 gallons a day for 30 days adds up to more than 1,000 gallons per month. This is an easy way to document the amount of water saved since most water providers bill in thousand-gallon increments. In other words, you should see real savings on your water bill if you follow through with your pledge and put to use the recommended water-saving practices.

What if I am already using some of these water-saving practices?

First, thank you for conserving water! If you already use some of these practices, do not choose them in your pledge. Since you already implement a water-saving technique you already benefit from this particular task. For instance, if you are turning off the water when you brush your teeth, then you are already saving up to 8 gallons a day. Including this on your pledge would not truly give you water savings that you can see on your future utility bills.

What can I learn from the 40 Gallon Challenge maps and charts?

The 40 Gallon Challenge maps are a quick way to assess participation of each state and county in the challenge. States and counties are highlighted based on how many gallons their citizens have pledged. The 40 Gallon Challenge charts show the most popular practices being pledged, the pledged practices that are saving the most water daily, and counties that are pledging the most daily savings.

Ag Discovery Adventure

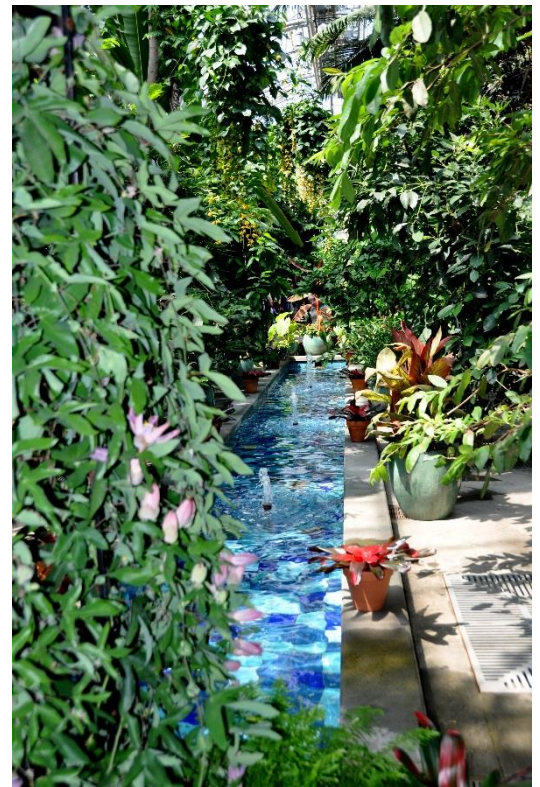
A Window to the Future

Saturday, September 13, 2014

9 A.M. to 2 P.M.

E.V. Smith Research Center, Shorter, Alabama
(Rain date Saturday, October 8, 2014)

United States Botanical Gardens



August 10th I had the pleasure of visiting the United States Botanical Gardens in Washington, D.C. What a treat! These are just a few of the 234 pictures I took there. *Photos by Sheila Bolen*

ECAMGA Meeting Schedule
September 18 – trip to Hayes Jackson’s in
Anniston
October 20 - ? Trip
November 17 – Final meeting of the year and our
Thanksgiving Dinner

2014 Officers
President Ann Hammonds
ashmmnd@gmail.com
Vice President Vickie Stapler
vickiestapler@yahoo.com
Secretary Sheila Bolen
sheilabolen@hotmail.com
Treasurer Almeta Partin
almeta@teleclipse.net
Historian Syble Benefield

Since joining the East Central Alabama MG I’ve heard the name Hayes Jackson quite a few times. Being new to the area – shoot new to the state – I finally looked up some information on him. Here’s what I found -

“Hayes Jackson graduated from Auburn University with a degree in Landscape Design and Ornamental Horticulture. After working in southern California with Armstrong Nurseries, he returned to Alabama to work on his masters in Environmental Biology at Jacksonville State University. Hayes is currently seeking his Ph.D. at Auburn University. Hayes is the Urban Regional Extension Agent with the Alabama Cooperative Extension System in Anniston where he works with urban horticulture and community-based programs concerning urban horticulture.

An avid horticulturist and true plant collector, Hayes has ventured to places like China, the Himalayas of northern India, Japan, Korea, Thailand, Vietnam and Guatemala to look for new plants for Southern landscapes. His gardens have been featured in many publications including Southern Living and Alabama Gardens Great and Small.

Hayes has a 7-acre garden that contains just about one of everything. A fine example of a "botanical wonderland", the garden is mostly composed of paths, beds packed with plants, and the grass can be cut in 13 minutes. The garden contains large collections of palms, ginger lilies, bamboo, camellias, azaleas, conifers, hostas, natives, cacti and succulents, trilliums, cannas, elephant ears, wildflowers, magnolias, amaryllis, daffodils, hollies.....oh gosh, the list goes on, but you get the idea. However, you won’t see a bradford pear or a hybrid tea rose on the place.”

Excerpt from Calhoun County ACES website www.aces.edu?counties/Calhoun/HayesJackson.phop

So, plan to go with us in September to visit his “botanical wonderland”. I’ll be sure to put out an informational email when the details are available.

Why Hydrangeas fail to bloom... Hayes Jackson, Regional Extension Agent

When a late spring freeze arrives it can ruin the developing bloom buds of the Blue Hydrangeas. The freeze may be light and even go unnoticed until one realizes that the blooms are not forming. The cold may kill all the emerging leaves, too.

As a result, most of the new growth comes from the roots. When this occurs, you know you have a problem.

Most flower buds develop on the old stems. Once these stems are damaged in late freeze, new flowers will not appear until the following year or possibly late in the season. This is the rule for the vast majority of mopheads (macrophyllas) but there are exceptional hydrangeas that will bloom despite this damage. Reblooming cultivars are becoming the most popular types offered for sale in local nurseries. Endless Summer, Penny Mac, and Dooley are examples of reblooming Blue Hydrangeas.

Also keep in mind that improper pruning may be the culprit. If you have pruned your hydrangea this year, you may want to leave them alone in the future. Pruning the larger canes removes the source of flower buds.

For more information, visit
www.hydrangeashydrangeas.com/wont_bloom.html.



Photo from www.flickr.com