

Garden Thyme



Monthly Newsletter of the East Central Alabama Master Gardeners Association

April, 2014

From Our President, Ann Hammond...

Spring has sprung! It's planting time again! With Easter just around the corner it's time to pull out the tools and get in the dirt (soil) again. And am I ready! No spring fever for me this year. We've gone from wet and cold to hurry and plant.

Thanks to all those who planted the school beds. I wasn't able to attend but I had the greatest confidence that you would pick up the slack. Now let's continue the momentum. Remember every Thursday will be weeding up until it's time to harvest.

We had a great time at our Friends Workday. Thank you to Paul and Trudine for allowing us to invade your yard. We're looking forward to going to Dee's house

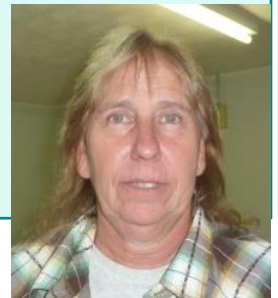
next. Look for the date and time in an email. Let me know if we can help you in any way – we'll put you on the calendar.

Thank you all for being a great master gardener group. Check your emails for upcoming projects. There's several projects we have to complete, maintain and or do.

"Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies.' John 11:25

Happy Easter!

Ann



MEETING AGENDAS

April – tentative to go to Brian Moore's in Tyus, GA – the "Hosta Guy"

May – Birmingham Botanical Gardens

June, July, August, October, November at Ava UMC

September – Hayes Jackson in Anniston

Look for an email with information about going to Brian Moore's





Are you ready?

Plant Sale

Plant Sale

Saturday April 26, 2014

8 a.m.-12 noon

arrive at 7a.m. for final set-up

Kiwanis Park in Wedowee

If you have any pop-up awnings, tables or chairs please bring them with you to our **set-up on Friday the 25th from 4-6pm.** We can use all we get. **ALSO**, don't forget to make a note on **each** plant you bring. The required information:

Plant name

Family name

Genus

Species

Cultivar

Plant growing information such as water, light, temperature and fertilization requirements.

Last years plant sale was awesome - let's strive to make this one even better.

Gardening is something you learn by doing
- and by making mistakes, like cooking,
gardening is a constant process of
experimentation, repeating the successes
and throwing out the failures.

Carol Stocker, American gardening columnist



APRIL FUN FACTS

April starts on the same day of the week as July in all years.

Notable pranks:

- Taco Bell announced on April 1, 1996, that it was purchasing the Liberty Bell to help with the national debt and would rename it the Taco Liberty Bell.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

Ann and Darren 4-8

Janet and Gary 4-10

Membership Directory

Do we have your correct contact information?
Please check the membership directory that will be at the April meeting – there are still some birthdays and anniversaries that are not provided. If you're not able to attend, please email me your information at sheilabolen@hotmail.com

Please remember to let us know if you, family, friends or loved ones are in need of our prayers.
God is so good and He will hear our intercessions for others.



GARDEN FRIENDS

Sometimes our gardens get weighted down with weeds and we just can't get caught up to them - let us know if you need/want help and we'll schedule a work day. Work is always more fun when shared with friends.

The Obsessed Gardener

Are you one? Take the test.

By Chris Woods Taken from "The Weeder's Reader"

Normal Gardener

You won't leave town when your tulips are in bloom

You invest in fine gardening tools.

You have a compost heap.

You can't believe you ordered so many bulbs last fall.

You know the Latin names of your plants.

You have dirt under your fingernails.

You can crush a Japanese beetle in your bare fingertips.

You had a soil test.

You love gardening more than anything.

You buy composted cow manure to top dress your garden.

You know the virtues of hand weeding.

You have a charge account at the local garden store.

Obsessed Gardener

...or your daffodils, your lilacs, your wisteria, your roses, your clematis, your lilies, your hydrangea, your asters.....

You keep spare tools in your car for gardening emergencies.

You take its temperature every day.

It wasn't enough.

You use them in conversations...with the plants.

What fingernails?

You love the sound it makes when you do.

You studied for it.

"And what's wrong with that?"

You buy a cow.

...after dark.

Your spouse buys all your Christmas presents there.

Flowers

Find and circle all of the flowers that are hidden in the grid.
The remaining letters spell a secret message - a quotation from *Romeo and Juliet*.

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

- | | | | |
|------------------|---------------|------------|------------|
| ALSTROEMERIA | CORNFLOWER | GOLDEN ROD | PANSY |
| AMARYLLIS | DAFFODIL | HEATHER | PEONY |
| ANTHURIUM | DAISY | HOLLYHOCKS | PETUNIA |
| ASTER | DELPHINIUM | HYACINTH | ROSE |
| BABY'S BREATH | FORGET-ME-NOT | HYDRANGEA | SNAPDRAGON |
| BELL FLOWER | FOXGLOVE | IRIS | STATICE |
| BIRD OF PARADISE | FREESIA | LAVENDER | STOCK |
| BOUVARDIA | FUCHSIA | LILAC | SUNFLOWER |
| CALLA | GERANIUM | LILY | TULIP |
| CARNATION | GERBERA | LISIANTHUS | VIOLET |
| CHRYSANTHEMUM | GINGER | MARIGOLD | YARROW |
| CLEMATIS | GLADIOLUS | ORCHID | |

FOLKLORE And OLD WIVES TALES

Here are some more old wives tales/folklore - some we've grown up with - others I've never heard before....

An apple a day keeps the doctor away.



Eat your carrots

Drinking warm milk makes you sleepy.

Drink cranberry juice for a bladder infection.

Chicken soup fights a cold.

A teaspoon of honey (from within a five mile radius) helps with allergies.



Here's some about gardening -

The worst day to plant is on the 31st of any month.

Plants that grow upwards toward the sky should be planted in the morning sun, while plants that grow deep into the earth should be planted by moonlight.



Rain on Easter Sunday means rain for the next seven Sundays.

If flowers are planted on "Green Thursday" (Maundy Thursday) you will get all kinds of colors.

The 12 days after Christmas indicate the weather for each of the following months.



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.

Don't forget these CEU sources. There is a great deal of information presented on each topic in a user-friendly format. If you're not able to view them on the scheduled date they are recorded and available to view online the following Monday.

Freeze Damage? When to prune

Wow, what a winter we have had. From short sleeves to parkas within the same week, we have certainly had our share of the “Alabama weather” that everyone talks about. We’re expecting to have more cold damaged plants this spring than in the previous two or three years. But don’t fret; while your landscape may show battle scars from a tough winter, chances are that most plants will be just fine.

With plants such as tea olive (*Osmanthus fragrans*), cleyera (*Temstoemia gymnanthera*), southern magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*), indian hawthorn (*Rhapholepis* spp.) and many others showing winter damage, Extension agents are getting call after call about cold damage. The bet answer at this point is simply to wait it out. While many plants are showing scorched and browning leaves, bare stems and desiccating branches, it is hard for us to determine EXACTLY how much damage has been done. Gardenias, for example, can be severely damaged by cold temperatures. The leaves are not very hard and will fall off with minor cool temperatures. While we might think that the plant has crossed over, we cannot fully know until spring. Often times, stem and branches that appear “dead” still set bud and leaf out in April.

If your plants have been damaged by cold, HOLD OFF pulling out the pruners and the shears. At this point in the season pruning, especially hard pruning on woody plants, can cause more damage than good. First, pruning almost always initiates new growth when not done in the dead of winter. If we have another cold snap and a heavy frost or freeze, all the new growth stands a chance of being damaged or killed. Second, cold damage can take a while to rear its ugly head. It can be weeks before the



extent of damage is fully known. Being the lazy gardener that I am, I want to prune once and be done. If you jump the gun and prune early, you stand a chance of missing some of the damaged tissue. Lastly, pruning early can actually cause you to remove more plant material than is necessary. Sometimes, that “DEAD” tissue isn’t really dead and can regrow if given time. If you prune before you can see the transition point from live to dead, you could be removing healthy wood.

If you are feeling giddy and must get out in the garden, try this instead. Don’t worry about the cold damage. Prune off those branches that you know are dead (for SURE dead tissue can be removed at any time). If you haven’t already, remove the dead parts from the crowns of ornamental grasses, rake out the leaves, remove old flower stalks and start a compost bin. If you simply can’t wait and must prune woody plants now, scratch the damaged stems with your thumbnail and check for green tissue before you start hacking. Remember that if you are doing hard pruning, use proper pruning techniques to reduce problems from disease later down the road. Maybe with a little patience and TLC, your garden will look better than it did before.

By Hunter McBrayer, Alabama Cooperative Extension System, C. Beaty Hanna Horticulture & Environmental Center, which is based at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens.