

Ask a Master Gardener

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Dorothy Rothbart, Carroll County Master Gardener Extension Volunteer

American Camellia Society's Mark Crawford to Speak on October 14

The Carroll County Master Gardeners are pleased to have camellia specialist Mark Crawford present a workshop on growing camellias. Mark has been a member of the American Camellia Society since 1999 and served as the Chair of the ACS Research Committee from 2004-2006. He currently serves as a director on the board of the American Camellia Society.

Mark has degrees in plant science and pathology. His experience includes serving at the Universities of Delaware, Arkansas, and Auburn. Mark worked at Griffin Corporation in Valdosta for 16 years as Manager of Biological Services. He worked on crop production chemicals in the field of vegetable, fruit, and ornamental crops.

His interest in camellias began in the 1990s after becoming a good friend of Hulyn Smith who was a world famous camellia grower and hybridizer. Hulyn was very interested in anything that could improve Camellia culture and was instrumental in introducing Crawford to all the "movers and shakers" of the camellia world.

Currently self-employed, Crawford owns and operates Loch Laurel Nursery, a small, specialty camellia nursery in Valdosta, Georgia. In addition to camellias the nursery grows cold-hardy citrus, and has diversified further by producing eucalyptus seed used as a forestry energy, mulch and pulp crop.

With Mark's extensive knowledge of plants and crop protection chemicals he was able to provide new methods to grow and protect camellias from disease problems. Mr. Crawford was also instrumental in improving grafting success. He is a member of the southern region of the International Plant Propagation.

The October 14 workshop is free of charge and open to the public. Mr. Crawford will focus on growing, propagation, and pests and diseases of camellias. New varieties for show and for the home landscape will be presented. Please visit Loch Laurel Nursery www.lochlaurelnursery.com to enjoy the history of the nursery and view photos of camellias varieties that are available for sale. Plants may be pre-ordered on the website and will be delivered to customers at the workshop. Mark will bring a variety of plants for sale.

Please join the Master Gardeners on Wednesday, October 14 at 7:00 p.m. at the UGA Extension Carroll County office located at 900 Newnan Road in Carrollton. For more information or answers to any other gardening questions, contact a Master Gardener Extension Volunteer at 770-836-8546, via e-mail at ccmg@uga.edu or visit the UGA Extension Carroll County office.

