

Gardening with the Masters

Growing, Gardening and Gaining Knowledge
December 2018/January 2019

WHAT'S HAPPENING

DECEMBER

Dec 1 - Holiday Wreath Making Class

Dec 6 - Demo Garden Workday, Senior Center, 10am

Dec 8 - CCMG Holiday Party

Dec 20 - Demo Garden Workday, Senior Center, 10am

JANUARY

Jan 3 - Demo Garden Workday, Senior Center, 10am

Jan 15 - CCMG Monthly Meeting

Jan 17 - Demo Garden Workday, Senior Center, 10am

Jan 25 - Bird Painting Class Senior Center, 10am
Call (770) 721-7803 to reserve your spot. Cost is \$20 and paint this wintery scene.



Happy Holidays from all the Master Gardeners

Editor's Corner

By Marcia Winchester,
Cherokee County Master Gardener



Renewal pruning!? Do you know what it is? Do you know when and why to perform it? Well don't worry if you don't, because a lot of "professional" yard maintenance staff don't understand it either.



Pruning photo courtesy Marcia Winchester

Renewal pruning is usually severely cutting a shrub back to 6 to 12 inches from the ground. This is most often done when a shrub or general landscaping has grown too large for its location. If it's an inexpensive plant it might be easier to just remove the overgrown shrub and replace it, maybe with a cultivar that is more compact or shorter.

If you decide to utilize renewal pruning, the most important aspect is timing.

I see not just homeowners but yard maintenance workers doing it at the wrong time of year. Spring is the best time because your shrub will automatically start new growth. If you do it in the fall, your shrub could be encouraged to start new growth, which could be damaged by cold. Or it may just sit there as 6- to 12-inch stubs—not a pretty sight all winter. So think twice and don't just copy someone else when you see this pruning going on in your neighborhood.

Do you have questions about other pruning techniques? Ask a Master Gardener! They love answering your gardening questions.

Marcia

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Classic City Awards:

By Mary Tucker, *Cherokee County Master Gardener*

Gardening is always a risk. It's hard to know if that lovely plant at the nursery will really perform in your own garden. Wouldn't you love to put the odds in your favor? Well, thanks to the Trial Gardens at the University of Georgia, you can!

The Trial Gardens grow the newest varieties of annuals and perennials from plant breeders around the world, testing over 400 cultivars in 2018. Throughout the growing season, the plants are evaluated, and performance is rated on the following characteristics: number of flowers, leaf color, uniformity of habit and flower, resistance to insects and diseases, and overall appearance. A select few that are deemed the

Begonia 'Canary Wings'

best performers over the entire season are chosen to receive the Classic City Awards, named in honor of Athens, Georgia, which is often called "The Classic City" for its rich mix of history, culture, and amenities.

Highlighted here are the 2018 winners of the Classic City Awards. Keep these in mind as you plan your garden for 2019. Visit the Trial Gardens' website, <http://ugatrial.hort.uga.edu>, for more pictures of the 2018 winners as well a look at past Classic City winners.

Begonia 'Canary Wings' by Ball Ingenuity: Pictured above, this annual is a wonderful performer in the shade garden, brightening dark areas with its vibrant chartreuse leaves and stunning red flowers, a perfect complement of colors. It is recommended for both containers and garden beds and grows about 12 to 18 inches tall.



Calibrachoa Superbells® 'Holy Smokes!' by Proven Winners: Calibrachoa are annuals that look like miniature petunias and have summer longevity, a wonderful feature for the long growing season of the Southeast. 'Holy Smokes!' grows in a mounding habit and features white petals with purple-blue swatches and yellow centers.

Calibrachoa Superbells®

Calibrachoa Lia™ 'White' by Danziger: This calibrachoa stood out in the trials for long bloom season and its shape when featured in hanging baskets. It also performs well in containers, where its white flowers are the perfect complement to any other color. As with other calibrachoa, this one typically grows 6 to 12 inches in height.



Echinacea Sombrero® 'Tres Amigos' by Darwin Perennials: Blooms on this unusual perennial transition through three distinct colors, opening as a peachy coral, maturing to rose, and fading to burgundy. It performs well in full sun and can take dry conditions. It typically grows about 18 inches tall. At the end of the season, goldfinches will feast on the seeds.

Echinacea Sombrero®

Euphorbia Crystal White™ by Green Fuse Botanical: This annual euphorbia is unusual in that it only grows to about a foot tall. It has a tight branching habit, which shows off the multitude of blooms for full impact. The delicate appearance mixes well with other plants in containers and landscape plantings.



Gaillardia SpinTop™

Gaillardia SpinTop™ 'Red Starburst' by Dummen Orange: Vibrant red petals with yellow tips surround a red center, making this gaillardia a colorful addition to the garden, where it will be happy in a border or in a container planting. The Trial Gardens considers it an annual or short-lived perennial, persisting for a few years before declining. This drought-tolerant sun-lover grows about a foot or two in height.

Continued next page

Exceptional Plants for Your 2019 Garden



Pelargonium Calliope®

Pelargonium Calliope® ‘Large Rose Mega Splash’ by Syngenta Flowers: Some annual geraniums may not be great performers in the South. However, this one stood out with non-stop blooms that please in shades of pink with rose starbursts in the centers. It also maintained disease resistance during a wet summer. It is appropriate for containers, hanging baskets, or in-ground plantings and grows to about 16 inches in height.



Petunia Dekko™

Petunia Dekko™ ‘Star Coral’ by Syngenta Flowers: The annual petunias are a good choice for the South due to their bright colors and dependability. This one topped the list because of long bloom time and a great overall shape. The color combination of hot pink coral with a touch of white makes it lovely as a standalone plant or in combination with others. It will max out at about a foot in height.



Portulaca Hot Shots™

Portulaca Hot Shots™ ‘Tangerine Glow’ by Green Fuse Botanicals: Portulacas are drought-resistant, sun-loving, and spreading annuals that have the added interest of flowers that open in the morning and close in the afternoon. This one filled a large bed in the Trial Gardens, showing off with its blooms that are a mix of tangerine and yellow. It is also perfect for hanging baskets and mixed containers and grows 6 to 8 inches tall.



Impatiens New Guinea Harmony® Radiance™

Impatiens New Guinea Harmony® Radiance™ ‘Hot Pink’ by Danziger: The Trial Gardens grew this vivid pink annual in a location with morning sun. It gave them three uninterrupted months of bloom, making it noteworthy. It will serve to brighten up the shady areas under mature trees, adding some punch to the landscape. It has a mounded growth habit and reaches a foot or two in height.



Salvia Skyscraper™

Salvia Skyscraper™ ‘Pink’ by Selecta: All of the salvias are wonderful for attracting bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds. This variety is an annual or tender perennial with a pink corolla and a magenta-tinged calyx that contrast beautifully with the dark green foliage. Its height of a foot or two makes it suitable for containers or garden beds.



Solenostemon ColorBlaze®

Solenostemon ColorBlaze® ‘Torchlight’ by Proven Winners: This annual coleus features a stunning mixture of red, green, and hot pink on its leaves. It will typically grow 2 to 3 feet tall and doesn't mind being pruned back, responding with a new flush of colorful foliage. It is perfect in a container as a “thriller” plant or as a colorful addition to landscaping beds and is suitable for sun or shade.

PHOTO CREDIT: All photos courtesy of Dr. John M. Ruter (director) and Brandon Coker (garden manager) of the University of Georgia Trial Gardens.

Weed Watch: Winter Weeds

By Stephanie Howard, Cherokee County Master Gardener

Lamium amplexicaule (henbit),
Steve Dewey, Utah State University, Bugwood.org

Although warm season turf is dormant during the winter months, you may still need to manage and practice weed control. Many of these winter annual, biennial, or perennial weeds grow slowly during cold weather, but wreak havoc on your emerging spring lawn. The weeds discussed below reproduce by seeds. They germinate in late summer or fall and thrive during the winter months. During this time, they outcompete and weaken the dormant turf. Bare and weakened patches left by the dieback of winter weeds are prime areas for summer annual weeds to flourish. This article focuses on six particularly troubling broadleaf winter weeds.

Photo © Copyright Bobby Hattaway 2011

Capsella bursa-pastoris (shepherd's purse)

Found primarily in garden beds, this weed can easily outcompete annuals and tender perennials if left untended. Its 4- to 8-inch basal rosette is similar to dandelion. It germinates when the soil temperature is consistently below 60°F, then it overwinters. The 3- to 18-inch erect stems arising from the rosette may occur singly or as multiple stems. Deeply lobed leaves alternate on stems but becomes less lobed at the top of plant. Clusters of flowers appear terminally on each stem. Each four-petal white flower develops into a heart-shaped seed pod. When mature, it splits, scattering 30,000 to 50,000 seeds. Shepherd's purse is in the mustard family. (Brassicaceae).

Photo courtesy Mary Ellen (Mel) Harte, Bugwood.org

the

Cirsium horridulum (yellow thistle)

One does not need to wonder why this is commonly known as horrible thistle with its spiny, thick and lobed leaves. The bottom of the leaves are whitish with a velvety texture, while the tops appear grayish. This native plant (not to be confused with yellow star thistle, *Centaurea solstitialis*) grows erect to over a foot. Tufted yellow (sometimes purple in Southern fields) flowers have spiny heads sporting white hairs at the tip. Yellow thistle is a member of the aster family (Asteraceae or Compositae).



Photo courtesy Katherine Russell, Bugwood.org

Lamium purpureum (purple deadnettle)

Often confused with henbit, *L. purpureum* has triangular-shaped, lobed leaves that appear oppositely on the stem. Its upper leaves have petioles and may be red or purple. Stems are sparsely hairy and are four-sided, similar to henbit. It can grow up to 16 inches tall with terminal pink or purple flowers.

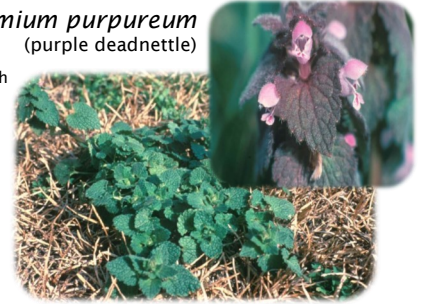


Photo <http://caes2.caes.uga.edu>

Lamium amplexicaule (henbit)

Prevalent in Georgia lawns and gardens, henbit has rounded greenish to purple toothed leaves. Petioles are absent on upper leaves, which distinguishes *L. amplexicaule* from purple deadnettle. Veining under the leaf is prominent. Its reddish or purple flowers are arranged in whorls. *Lamium* species are members of the mint family (Lamiaceae).

Photo <http://caes2.caes.uga.edu>



Stellaria media (chickweed)

This plant has several common names, including starwort, chickenwort, and winterweed. Chickweed is a member of the pink or carnation family

Photo <http://caes2.caes.uga.edu>

(Caryophyllaceae). It is a mat-forming plant that is adapted to moist, shady areas. Chickweed has branched stems with small, smooth, and elliptical leaves. These bright green leaves have pointed tips. Similar to *Lamium* spp., its lower leaves have sparsely hairy petioles. Its star-shaped, deeply-notched white flowers form terminal clusters. Chickweed mats are typically found in turf, garden beds, and in the mulch under trees.

Veronica peregrina (purslane speedwell)

Photo <http://caes2.caes.uga.edu>

Commonly called purslane or neckweed, this member of the plantain family (Plantaginaceae) is a branched, low-growing winter annual. It is anchored by a taproot and often mistaken for *Lamium* spp. or ground ivy. Leaves and stems are irregular— some are smooth, while others are fleshy. Leaf edges also vary between serrated and smooth. Its coarsely toothed leaves are opposite. The four-lobed flowers are white, and the fruit is a heart-shaped capsule.



Camellia Petal Blight

By Karen Garland, *Cherokee County Master Gardener*



Who doesn't love a pop of color in the fall and winter landscape? Camellias (*Camellia* spp.) are slow growing, evergreen shrubs found in USDA Plant Hardiness Zones 7 through 9. Ranging in size from dwarf to 12 feet, they produce flowers in a multitude of shapes and sizes, with over 3,000 hybrid species. Many gardeners value camellias for their winter interest, with their large and colorful flowers becoming a focal point in many landscapes from September through May. Unfortunately, though, there are times when camellia flower problems overshadow the profusion of blooms.

Camellia petal blight, caused by the fungus *Ciborinia camelliae*, is a disease that only affects the flowers. Symptoms initially cause small blotches on the petals. These blotches, which begin as small brown spots, enlarge rapidly until the entire flower is brown, killing the flower tissue. Blossoms and intact flowers drop prematurely to the ground. Upon closer inspection prominent dark brown veins will give the infected petals a netted appearance.



Photos courtesy UGA Extension

However, it is important to note that damage resembling that of camellia petal blight may have other origins, including Botrytis blight, frost, old age, or wind damage. Symptoms that distinguish camellia petal blight from these other causes includes dark petal veins, with infection beginning near the central part of the flower and occurring only on the petals. Additionally, the base of the fallen flower head will have small, hard, black fungal bodies called "sclerotia." During winter and spring when camellias blossom, sclerotia produce inverted mushroom-like bodies called "apothecia," which discharge windblown spores onto emerging blooms, where they germinate and infect flowers when they are wet and temperatures are mild.

Once a plant is infected with this disease it is difficult to control. Therefore, if the disease has not become established in an area, extreme caution should be taken to prevent its introduction. Thankfully, the American Camellia Society is continuing to encourage new research to discover better methods of control for this fungus that has plagued camellia growers for close to a half century. Since camellias are tough, durable plants, to help them continue to radiate beauty follow some of these helpful tips:

- ◆ After purchasing plants, remove the top layer of potting soil and replace it with pathogen-free soil.
- ◆ Plant camellias in a well-ventilated location, keeping the area under the bushes clear of vegetation, leaf litter, and debris.
- ◆ Remove and destroy all diseased buds and flowers as they appear, and collect fallen blossoms, including petals.
- ◆ Do not add camellia petals or leaves to the compost.
- ◆ Each year, when blossoms are no longer present, apply a fresh layer of mulch, 2 to 3 inches thick. The fungus can persist in the soil for several years, so it is important that this is repeated each spring.
- ◆ Spraying an appropriate fungicide during bloom can help to reduce infections. However, many gardeners have reported disappointing results.

Hopefully, by following these tips your garden will be enlivened with an explosion of beautiful flowers, revealing vibrant colors that last until spring. With enough preparation, gardening doesn't have to end with the first frost.

Resources:

"Camellia Petal Blight." Planting Camellias | American Camellia Society, 2018, www.americancamellias.com/care-culture-resources/insects-and-diseases/camellia-petal-blight.

"Camellia Plant Buds: Why Are Camellia Flowers Not Opening And Buds Falling Off." *Camellia Plant Buds: Why Are Camellia Flowers Not Opening And Buds Falling Off in Flowers, Ornamental Gardens*, www.learninggardening.com/Plants-ornamental-flowers-camellia-camellia-flowers-not-opening-684.html.

Weed Watch: Winter Weedscontinued from page 4

This is not a comprehensive list of winter weeds for Cherokee County; however, these are all broadleaf weeds that germinate in the fall and are controlled using the same management strategies. Consider the following steps in controlling the winter weeds discussed here.

- Weeds are often indicators of underlying problems. Therefore, attempt to target and resolve any issues before treating with chemicals. A soil test may help identify overall issues with soil conditions. You may also check for shady areas or soil compaction.
- If your lawn is healthy, or your garden beds are properly mulched, consider pulling the few weeds that you may find. Be sure to do this carefully and before weeds germinate.
- If treating a lawn, apply a pre-emergent herbicide approved for your turf in late summer or early fall (prior to winter weed germination).
- If winter weeds persist, apply a broadleaf post-emergent triazine mix, as needed. Effective triazines are simazine or atrazine. Use only as directed.
- Continued use of these herbicides may result in triazine-resistant weeds. Consider alternating/rotating with a post-emergent mix with pronamide or diquat.

Murphy, Tim R. "Strategies to Control Winter Weeds", UGA Extension Weed Specialist.

Weeds of Southern Turfgrasses. Cooperative Extension Service. UGA Agricultural and Environmental Science.



An Exciting Winter for Birders

By Mary Tucker, *Cherokee County Master Gardener*

Most gardeners I know are also interested in birds, those lovely and lively inhabitants of our gardens. This winter may be especially exciting for those of you who are bird-lovers because several species have "irrupted" into Georgia. An irruption is an unusual migration of birds to regions where they are not typically found. This usually occurs when the winter food source of a species is low, and the birds migrate south in search of better fare. This year, Georgia is seeing several irruptive species, including the red-breasted nuthatch, purple finch, and pine siskin.

It seems that the Georgia birding world is most excited about the red-breasted nuthatch. These little birds are usually found in the northern and western parts of the United States and into Canada. This year, however, they are being seen in the Southeast in fairly large numbers. You'll recognize them by their overall similarity to the other nuthatches we have in Georgia, the white-breasted and brown-headed nuthatches. All nuthatches have a sleek profile, long bills, and short tails. They move through the trees foraging up and down on trunks in search of insects hidden in the bark.

The red-breasted nuthatch has a rusty coloration on its breast and a distinctive black and white face, with a black stripe through the eye. The top of the head is black on the male and gray on the female.

Audubon describes the call as "a tinny yank-yank" that is "higher pitched and more nasal" than that of the white-breasted nuthatch. I have also heard it described as sounding like a child's tin horn or a dog's squeaky toy!

In the wild, they feed on insects and seeds of conifers, such as spruce, fir, hemlock, and pine. If you want to attract them to your feeder, offer suet, peanuts, and black-oil sunflower seeds.

Photo:

<https://www.audubon.org/field-guide/bird/red-breasted-nuthatch>

LAWN CARE-DECEMBER AND JANUARY

By Stephanie Howard, Cherokee County Master Gardener

Warm-Season Grasses

(Bermuda, Centipede, Zoysia, St. Augustine)

- Continue to remove any fallen leaves to reduce disease susceptibility, improve airflow, and increase exposure to sunlight. Keep your lawn free from leaves throughout the season.
- Identify weeds in your turf, and spot treat with a **selective** post-emergent herbicide that is targeted for your specific turf.
- When soil temperatures are consistently at or below 70 degrees, consider applying a fungicide to prevent spring fungal disease.
- In order to prepare for spring success, it is a great time to take soil samples, especially in problem areas. You may apply lime if indicated in the soil report.
- Avoid unnecessary lawn traffic. Take care that you don't walk, play, park, or store materials on your winter lawn.
- If installing new Bermuda turf, do not allow it to dry out. Keep in mind that the turf will remain dormant all winter. While it is acceptable to lay Bermuda sod in the winter, the best time to plant is May through August.

Cool-Season Grasses

(Tall Fescue, Kentucky Bluegrass, Creeping Red Fescue, Chewing Fescue)

- Cool season turf grows best between September and March.
- Spot spray visible weeds with a selective post-emergent herbicide.
- This is not the best time to fertilize or apply lime.
- You may aerate or dethatch cool season turf. However, the best months to aerate are March, April, and October. Although generally unnecessary, a fescue lawn may be dethatched October through April.
- Unless you overseeded, turf may not need regular irrigation.

SOIL TESTING

By Mary Tucker,
Cherokee County Master Gardener

Soil testing is important if you have problem areas in your garden, want to increase crop yield, improve your lawn, or grow healthier, more beautiful flowers.



The Cherokee County Extension Office offers this service and for a small fee, provides testing for soil, plant tissue, water quality, animal waste, feeds and forages, pesticides, and much more!

Want to grow better roses, test the quality of your drinking water, or prepare the soil for that next raised bed or landscape area? Just click on the link below. We will be glad to help you with that next garden project.

The University of Georgia Cooperative Extension offers soil testing services through your local county office.

Visit the Cherokee County UGA Cooperative Extension at 1130 Bluffs Parkway, Suite G-49, Canton, GA 30114. Phone: (770) 721-7803; website: <http://extension.uga.edu/county-offices/cherokee.html>.

All Lawns

- **Remember!** Apply de-icing salts carefully, especially to sidewalk and driveway areas adjacent to turf!
- Use this down time to clean and sharpen blades and tools, test the soil for lawn and garden beds, and check for signs of damage or disease.



RAINFALL COMPARISONS

	Cherokee County			State Wide		
	Sept 18	Oct 18	YTD	Sept 18	Oct 18	YTD
Actual	2.2	5.1	47.4	2.7	4.5	47.9
Normal	4.1	3.7	45.5	3.8	3.1	39.7
Excess	-1.9	1.4	1.9	-1.1	1.4	8.2

DECEMBER Gardening Tips

ORNAMENTALS

- Yews, juniper, holly, boxwood, broad-leaf evergreens and many deciduous trees, roses, and shrubs can be propagated this month. Insert evergreen cuttings in vermiculite or sand in a cool greenhouse or tie bundles of the cuttings together and bury in a cold frame. Remove in early spring and plant in a nursery bed.
- December is a good month to replace overgrown shrubs - don't fertilize until early spring.
- Fertilize pansies and other winter annuals with a fertilizer containing nitrate nitrogen. The higher the ratio of nitrate nitrogen the better the fertilizer. https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/B%201359_2.PDF
- Finish winter clean-up by pruning deciduous perennials 3-4 inches from the ground. Leaving part of the stem helps mark the location and size of the plant. https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/B%20961_4.PDF
- When it is too cold to work in the yard, work on putting your landscape on paper; mark existing plants, site conditions (wet, dry, sunny, shade) then make a list of what you want to add. https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/C%201032-4_3.PDF

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

- Pick mummied fruit off trees and rake up leaves under fruit trees to remove insects and diseases.
- December is a good month to construct raised vegetable beds. Any length is fine but it's good to build them no wider than 30-40 inches for easy access and to minimize compacting soil. https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/C%201027-5_1.PDF
- To protect winter veggies from extreme cold, apply a thin layer of mulch or cover with a row cover. https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/C%20984_3.PDF
- Top dress unused areas of veggie beds with 2-4 inches of composted manure or shredded leaves.
- Fruit trees can be pruned at any time during the winter provided the temperature is above 45°.
- Get asparagus beds ready to plant when weather and soil conditions permit. The planting site should be in areas that will not interfere with cultivation of other crops. Bed preparation should include heavy applications of compost or aged animal manure plus 25 lbs of 6-12-12 per 1000 ft² applied broadcast. Till deeply and smooth soil surface. Set asparagus crowns any time in late December or early January when soil is not frozen.

MISCELLANEOUS

- Keep all indoor plants away from drafts and direct heat sources - inexpensive plastic draft hoods help redirect heat away from plants. https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/B%201318_4.PDF
- Keep checking house plants for insect infestation. Isolate and treat infected plants immediately.
- Winterize your lawnmower, tiller and weed-eater. Drain out gas and replace the oil with fresh oil. Remove the oil filter and either clean or replace it. Check all nuts and bolts to be sure they haven't vibrated loose. Mower blades and tiller tines can be sharpened. Inspect wheels, belts and other moving parts.
- To keep your shears and loppers in good shape for next year, clean them with mineral spirits or Lysol bathroom tile cleaner. Adjust the tension screw and give them a good sharpening. Be sure to use a broad file while sharpening. Tools sharpened by a power grinder will overheat and lose their tempering, making the metal likely to chip or break.
- Clean garden hand tools with liquid detergent and bleach, drying thoroughly. Then oil to prevent rust.
- Blades of shovels and hoes can be sharpened with a file. Apply a light coat of household oil. Treat all wood handles with a coat of linseed oil.
- Drain garden hoses and sprinklers checking for leaks. Replace any old washers. Do not store hoses in direct sunlight or freezing temperatures as both will shorten the life of your hose.
- Clean all pressure sprayers and dusters before putting them away for the winter. Make sure they are functioning properly prior to storage.
- Clean and sanitize all stakes and trellises before putting them up for the winter. Use either rubbing alcohol or 1 part liquid bleach to 9 parts water.



Photo raised bed at Papa's Pantry courtesy Gerald Phillips, Master Gardener

JANUARY Gardening Tips

ORNAMENTALS

- Watch for camellia buds that have brown spots on the edges and then spread to the entire flower. This is petal blight. Remove and destroy any buds showing symptoms. Don't confuse it with cold damage. It's a good practice to remove spent flowers from the ground. https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/B%201065_5.PDF
- January is a good month to plant trees. Do not add fertilizer to planting hole - it could burn the roots. https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/B%20932_3.PDF
- Fertilize annuals in colder months with a fertilizer high in nitrate nitrogen.
- Keep pansies and violas dead headed.
- If squirrels are digging bulbs, cover the bulbs with 1-inch wire mesh so foliage can grow through. Then place mulch over wire.
- Pull up winter weeds now before they form seeds.
- If a few, consecutive warm days have caused your bulbs to nose out from under protective mulch, plan to thicken the mulch layer as soon as cold weather returns to prevent freezing by exposure.
- Analyze last year's planting, fertilizing and spraying records. Make notations to reorder successful varieties.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

- Plant B & B, bare-root and container-grown fruit.
- Water newly planted fruit trees thoroughly, even if the ground is wet, so the soil around the roots will settle.
- Prune grapes in January or February. If this job is left too late in the season, bleeding from cut ends will occur. Train them onto a one or two wire fence. https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/B%20807_4.PDF
- Don't plant strawberries or figs until February or March. https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/C%20945_3.PDF
- Some mail order seed companies offer pelleted seed of lettuce, carrot, and a few other small-seeded crops. Pelleted seed has a special coating to make them larger. This is especially valuable for children and gardeners with arthritic hands, weak eyesight, or poor coordination. Wide spacing of seed helps eliminate thinning.
- When using pelleted seed, plant in moist soil and keep it moist because the coating has to dissolve before the seed can germinate.
- Organize your seeds for inside planting. Take each seed packet and count back from the last frost (April 14) taking into consideration the number of days for germination.
- Remove brown raspberry and blackberry canes that bore fruit last year; tie up green canes for this year's fruit. https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/C%20766_3.PDF
- Spray dormant oil on fruit trees, per label instructions.

- Prune apple and pear trees. Remove dead limbs first, then the pencil-sized, vertical "water sprouts". https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/C%20740_6.PDF
- Sterilize tools, pots, and anything you use around your plants. Use one part household bleach to nine parts water. Soak for about 15 minutes, rinse well and let dry.

MISCELLANEOUS

- Protect liquid insecticides from cold weather to preserve their effectiveness. If any product is stored below the manufacturer's suggested minimum storage temperature, it loses its potency. The most important factor in determining if the product is usable is the complete absence of crystals. If crystals remain after the product returns to room temperature, do not use it. Dispose of it according to the directions on the label.
- Chop unwanted kudzu, English ivy, and bamboo to the ground. Follow with herbicide on the new leaves in April.
- Clean indoor plant leaves with a damp rag. Sandwich the leaf between folds of cloth and wipe gently. Change the cloth for each plant to avoid transferring insects or diseases.
- Make sure houseplants are misted and not touching windows. Cut back on fertilizer except for plants you are trying to force to bloom. <http://www.caes.uga.edu/>



The Pot Lady

As a memorial to Master Gardener Janis Marshall-Kroen, **The Pot Lady** was constructed at the Senior Center Demo Garden in Canton.

Feel free to drop by and pay her a visit while touring the demo gardens.

Recipes

Send recipes to Pat Bowen at
woodsgal1007@gmail.com

Lazy Shepherd's Pie

Serves 6

A tasty alternative to the traditional version of this classic, and a great way to use holiday leftovers. You can also substitute packaged stuffing, gravy, and potatoes if you're short on any of the leftovers.

Ingredients:

2 cups leftover turkey stuffing
2 cups leftover cooked turkey, cut into ½" cubes
1 cup defrosted frozen peas and carrots mix
1¼ cups leftover turkey gravy
2 cups leftover mashed potatoes
¼ cup sour cream or milk

Spray a 9x9" baking dish with nonstick spray. Spread the stuffing along the bottom of the dish. Top with turkey, then peas and carrots, and then gravy. Combine leftover mashed potatoes with sour cream or milk then spread it on top of the rest.

Bake in a preheated 350 oven for 25 minutes, or until gravy is bubbling.

To receive printed copies of the 2019 newsletters, please send a check for \$10 to:

GREAT HOLIDAY GIFT IDEA!!

Diane Walton
326 Lauren Lane
Woodstock, GA 30188

<http://extension.uga.edu/county-offices/cherokee.html>
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UGA Cooperative Extension—Cherokee County
1130 Bluffs Pkwy, Suite G49
Canton, GA 30114



CHEROKEE COUNTY

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Taco Crescent Ring: a colorful party dish

Serves 8 to 16, based on serving size

Ingredients:

1 lb. ground beef
1 package taco seasoning mix
½ cup water
1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
2 8-oz cans refrigerated crescent dinner rolls
Garnish with your choice of shredded lettuce, chopped tomatoes, ripe olives, taco sauce, and salsa.

Instructions:

Heat oven to 375 while you brown the ground beef. Drain, and add the taco seasoning mix and water. Simmer until slightly thickened. Then move the beef to a medium bowl and mix in the cheese.

Unroll both cans of dough and separate into 16 triangles. Arrange triangles in a ring on an ungreased cookie sheet or pizza pan, with short sides of the triangles forming a 5-inch circle in the center of the pan. It should look like rays of the sun with a hole in the center.



Spoon beef mixture on the half of the dough closest to the center of the ring, around the center circle. Then bring each dough triangle up over the filling and tuck it under the center ring to secure it. It's okay if some of the filling shows through.

Bake 20-25 minutes until golden brown and thoroughly baked. Put garnish in the center or on the side.



Mission Statement of the Georgia Master Gardener Association:
To stimulate the love for and increase the knowledge of gardening and to voluntarily and enthusiastically share this knowledge with others