



Gardening With The Masters

Growing, Gardening and Gaining Knowledge
August/September 2024

Garden TRIVIA Time

Dragonflies and damselflies are both in the Odonata order of flying insects. They share some physical characteristics, but there are four ways you can differentiate between them.

Do you know how to tell a dragonfly from a damselfly?

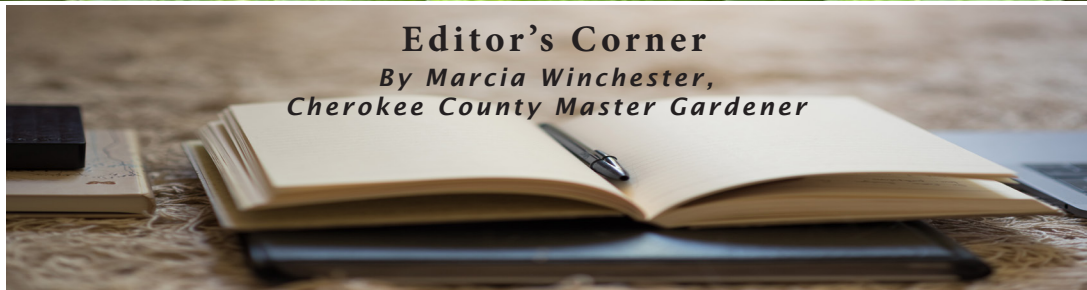
To find out, look in the August/September 2020 issue of the Cherokee County Master Gardener newsletter, *Gardening with the Masters*. Archived issues can be found on the CCMG website, <https://cherokeemaster-gardeners.com/>.

IN THIS ISSUE

| | |
|--|---------|
| Editor's Corner/Trivia | Page 1 |
| Summersweet: A Superb Shade Shrub | Page 2 |
| The Magic of the Passion Flower | Page 3 |
| Foliage Variegation | Page 4 |
| Great Southeast Pollinator Census | Page 5 |
| Foliage Variegation continued | Page 6 |
| Did You Know/Plant Sale/Bradford Pear Alternatives | Page 7 |
| August Gardening Tips/Rainfall | Page 8 |
| September Gardening Tips | Page 9 |
| Recipes/Links | Page 10 |

Editor's Corner

By Marcia Winchester,
Cherokee County Master Gardener



Rarely do I applaud a tree being cut down. However, the other day as I was driving by a local gas station, I yelled "yay!" when I saw several Bradford pears being removed. Bradford pears, which are cultivars of Callery pears (*Pyrus calleryana*), have long outlived their use in landscaping.

Seeds of Callery pears were first collected in 1919 from China after the edible European pears (*Pyrus communis*) being grown in the United States were destroyed by fire blight. These seeds were sent to the U.S. in hopes that they could serve as blight-resistant rootstock for the edible pears. Seedlings were grown out and studied over the subsequent decades.

In the early 1950s some of these study trees caught the attention of horticulturists due to their abundant spring blooms and glossy foliage. In 1961, a cultivar named 'Bradford' was officially introduced and became widely planted in the following years.



Pyrus calleryana 'Bradford' © Jim Robbins ncsu.edu

These trees are propagated by rootstock, and they were touted as sterile. While homeowners loved the early blooms, the flowers give off the odor of rotten meat. The compact form has weak crotches with almost vertical branched angles which are easily split during storms. Weed whackers and mowers can damage the base of the tree, which then produces thorny suckers that form fertile fruit. Even with all of these issues, the Bradford pear has been planted at thousands of locations, including homes, commercial sites, parks, and municipal complexes.

Just when you think there couldn't be any new problems, a really big discovery has been observed. New pear varieties that have been developed are crossing with the Bradford pear, producing fruit that has fertile seeds. These seedlings are thorny and create dense thickets that are taking over natural areas and roadsides, pushing out natives, and even damaging mowers. Seedlings are popping up in neighborhoods. In a short time, the Bradford seedlings have graduated to a Category 1 non-native invasive plant according to the Georgia Exotic Pest Plant Council. Category 1 is the most serious classification and designates an "exotic plant that is a serious problem in Georgia natural areas by extensively invading native plant communities and displacing native species."

What can we do? If you have a Bradford pear (or other Callery pear cultivar), please consider removing the tree. UGA recommends replacing them with eastern redbud (*Cercis canadensis*), Chickasaw plum (*Prunus angustifolia*), or the beautiful American fringetree (*Chionanthus virginicus*). **See photos on Page 7**

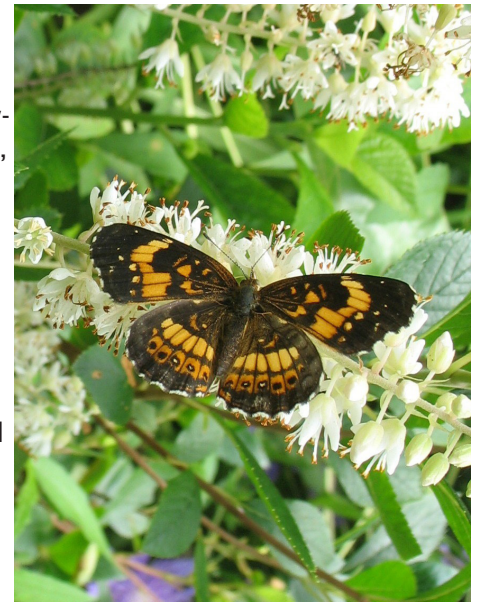
Marcia

Summersweet: A Superb Shade Shrub

By Carolyn Puckett, Cherokee County Master Gardener

I long ago lost count of the number of people telling me, “I cannot grow any flowers because of my shade.” Since I had over 100 species of plants, most flowering, on my one-acre woodland property, I would enthusiastically explain to them that they had a world of choices. One of my favorite shade shrubs that I recommended is summersweet, also known as sweet pepperbush (*Clethra alnifolia*). Native from Maine to Florida and west to coastal Texas, summersweet is hardy in USDA Hardiness Zones 4 to 9.

Summersweet not only has dozens of lovely spikes of white flowers for four to six weeks in July and August, it also blooms prolifically in full shade, which is quite unusual. Blooming on the current season’s growth, the small flowers crowd densely on long 3-to-6-inch terminal spikes. The sweet-smelling flowers’ nectar and pollen are high quality and support hummingbirds, butterflies, bees, and other pollinators. Summersweet’s flowers give way to brown, dry 1/8-inch seed capsules that mature in the fall, providing winter seeds for birds and other small animals.



The shrub’s leaves are also attractive, being a lustrous medium-to-dark green. The simple, 1½-to-4-inch long and ¾-to-2-inch wide leaves with a finely toothed margin grow alternately on the stem. The leaves emerge late in spring, so do not mistakenly think the shrub is dead. The leaves turn an attractive yellow to gold-brown in mid-October to early November, with the color lasting up to four weeks.

In shape, summersweet is oval, round-topped, and densely leaved. The straight species can grow up to 8 feet high and 6 feet wide, growing the largest in moist soil. It has a suckering nature which contributes to its width, but the suckers tend to grow close to the mother plant. The bark is gray and loosely striped.

Another plus for summersweet is its adaptability. It prefers moist, even wet, acidic soil with organic material, but it does well in normal garden conditions. It tolerates full sun if it has enough water, but it does best in part to full shade. It tolerates clay or soil compaction. Summersweet is even a good choice for stabilizing stream banks.

Summersweet has few insect or disease problems. If sited in sunny, hot, dry conditions, it may attract spider mites. It is resistant to phytophthora root rot. Summersweet is also deer resistant.

There are numerous summersweet cultivars. The one with which I am most familiar is ‘Hummingbird’, a dwarf cultivar growing only 30 to 40 inches high. In 1994 this cultivar won the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society Gold Medal Award, and in 1996 it was awarded the prestigious Georgia Gold Medal Award. The flower spikes of ‘Hummingbird’ are 6 to 7 inches long and form at leaf axils as well as at the end of shoots. The fall color is a golden yellow. I have a row of ‘Hummingbird’ summersweet growing beneath my bedroom windows where I can enjoy the flowers and lovely scent.

Since the introduction of ‘Hummingbird’ in 1991, several other dwarf cultivars have become available, including ‘Sixteen Candles’, ‘Einstein’, and ‘Crystalina’. Full-size cultivars include three pink-flowered cultivars: ‘Rosea’, ‘Pink Spires’, and ‘Ruby Spice’, the darkest pink. ‘Sherry Sue’ sports white flowers and bright red stems. ‘September Beauty’ is noted for flowering later in the season.

Clethra is easy to propagate. Softwood cuttings taken in early summer root readily in four weeks. You can dig suckers to start new plants. The seeds germinate readily without any cold period required but are never a nuisance.

You can find summersweet ‘Hummingbird’ and dozens of other perennials and shrubs that do well in our climate at bargain prices at the Cherokee County Master Gardener fall plant sale on Saturday, September 14, from 9 to 12, at the Senior Center, 1001 Univeter Road in Canton.

Try growing summersweet, and you will not be disappointed. You will love it as much as do the bees and other pollinators.

The Magic of the Passion Flower

By Megan Hilf, Cherokee County Master Gardener

Like most Master Gardeners, I am always looking for different, multipurpose, and fun new plants to add to the garden. As you can tell from previous articles I have written, I do love vines. I have an unattractive privacy fence between my yard and my neighbor's property that is in need of serious help. They asked me not to use a vine that would be overbearing or unattractive in the winter. I chose a passion flower vine.

Passion flower vine, which is in the genus *Passiflora*, has over 500 species, most of which are found in the tropics, South America, Central America, Mexico, and the southern United States. Here in Georgia, we have two native *Passiflora* species, *Passiflora incarnata* and *Passiflora lutea*.

Passiflora incarnata, also called the purple passion flower, maypop (because the fruit pops when stepped on), or wild apricot vine, is the most common and has beautiful showy purple-white flowers 2 to 3 inches in size. It can reach lengths of 25 feet.



Passiflora incarnata Canva



Passiflora lutea courtesy Meg Hilf

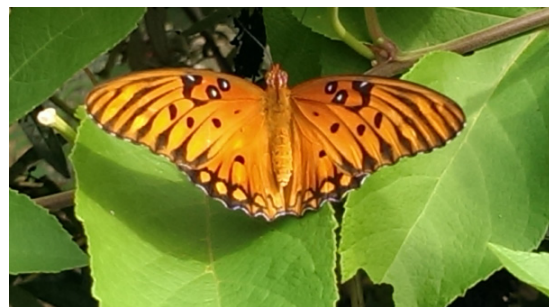
Passiflora lutea, also known as dwarf passion flower or yellow eastern passion flower, has very small, pale yellow to light green flowers about an inch in size. It will grow to lengths of about 15 feet.

Both of our native passion flowers can grow in full sun to part shade, climbing via numerous tendrils that come off the stems. Both are hardy in USDA Hardiness Zones 6 to 11. They flower through the summer and die back in the winter.

The edible fruit is eaten by numerous wildlife species, making the plants a wonderful addition to the wildlife habitat garden. The purple passion flower has a large fruit about the size of a small egg, turning yellow in the fall. The yellow passion flower has a small, black, berry-like fruit, also in the fall.

The leaves are composed of three lobes, with the yellow eastern passion flower having wider, fatter lobes. The Japanese beetles can be a pest to these vines, but they are deer resistant. There are also tropical varieties that can be purchased from nurseries for summer enjoyment.

The genus name *Passiflora* comes from the Latin word *passio* meaning to suffer or endure. In the 1500s the Christian missionaries thought the flower symbolized the passion story of Jesus. Various parts of the flower were thought to represent the crucifixion, with the filaments representing the crown of thorns, the petals the apostles, the tendrils the whip used to flog Jesus, the stigmas the three nails, and the anthers the five wounds of Christ.



Gulf fritillary on passion flower courtesy Meg Hilf

The vines offer great opportunities for many pollinators like bumblebees, carpenter bees, wasps, and hummingbirds. Both the purple and yellow passion flower are larval hosts for numerous butterflies including the zebra longwing and gulf fritillary in Georgia. Other butterflies whose larvae feed on the purple passion flower vine include the variegated fritillary and the Mexican fritillary. I had the fun of watching the whole life cycle of the gulf fritillary on my passion flower vine, from egg to caterpillar to chrysalis to emerging butterfly.

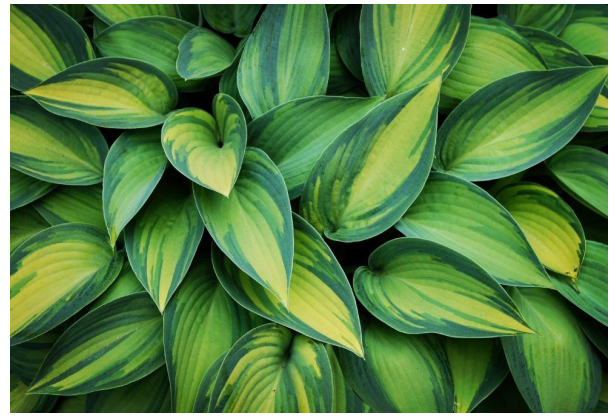
The yellow passion flower has a unique relationship with a very small (7mm) black bee *Anthemurgus passiflorae*, commonly called the passion flower bee. This bee is monolectic, meaning it only feeds pollen from the yellow passion flower to its larvae. This bee is also monotypic, meaning there is only one species, which is highly specialized.

As I said above, I like plants with multiple purposes. This one fits the bill, since it is easily trained to a fence or trellis, has very attractive flowers, bears fruit that provide wildlife benefits, is the larval host for several butterflies, is low maintenance, and adds great fun to gardening!

Foliage Variegation

By Mary Tucker, Cherokee County Master Gardener

Variegated plants are quite popular with many gardeners. We are all familiar with the numerous cultivars of hostas (*Hosta* spp.) that boast striped leaves in so many variations. And think of the myriad of caladiums (*Caladium bicolor*) and coleus (*Coleus scutellarioides*) with their brilliantly colored foliage. But what exactly is variegation and what causes this colorful characteristic?



Variegated hosta Canva

The short answer is that variegation is simply the presence of distinct areas of different coloration on foliage. Variegation can be the result of several factors, and it can either be genetically inherited or occur randomly. In addition, this trait may be stable, or it may have a tendency to diminish over time as the plant puts out new growth.

There are several causes of variegation, and often it is due to an uneven distribution of pigments found in the foliage, most often of the green pigment chlorophyll. This results in areas of lighter green, yellow, or creamy white. If the variation is due to distribution of anthocyanin pigments, it can result in varying shades of reds, purples, and pinks.

Variegation often occurs as striping on the margins or the center of leaves, but it can also appear as rings, speckles, or patches. These areas may be symmetrical, or they may be irregular in shape and distribution. The amount of variegation may vary depending on the age and health of the plant and the amount of light exposure.

There are several types of variegation, and they differ in cause, appearance, and stability.



Variegated prayer plant Canva

Pigmented Variegation

The most common type of variegation is due to the actual pigments that are naturally found in the foliage, and this is termed “pigmented” or “pattern-gene” variegation. This coloration is determined by the DNA of the species or cultivar, and it is stable, meaning it’s passed down from generation to generation. Many popular houseplants, such as the prayer plant (*Maranta leuconeura*), exhibit this type of variegation, and breeders can select plants with exceptional patterning to create hybrids that accentuate the characteristic.



Variegated begonia Canva

Reflective Variegation

Another type of genetically stable and natural variegation is termed “reflective” or “blister” variegation. This is not related to pigments, but rather to the structure of the leaf. Plants with this characteristic have tiny air pockets between layers of the leaf structure, and light reflects differently from these areas, causing shiny patches with a silvery hue. Selections and cultivars of the popular houseplant angel wing begonia (*Begonia coccinea*) often have this characteristic on the leaves.



Variegated monstera Canva

Chimeral Variegation

When variegation occurs randomly (not genetically) due to cell mutation at the growing tips, it is termed “chimeral” or “chimeric,” and the plants are called “chimeras.” The stability of the variegation depends on the location and extent of the mutation. In many cases the mutation occurs with only some of the cells, making the variegation appear on parts of the plant only. Over time, as the chimera grows, the areas may revert to all green. The variegated parts may also be less vigorous since they cannot photosynthesize as efficiently. These sections may decline in health over time, leaving a proliferation of solid green foliage on the plant. Chimeral variegation is not held in the DNA, so it does not pass down to future generations through seeds, and variegation in cuttings may be unstable. Tissue culture is often used to propagate specimens. Rarity and difficulty of propagation can make chimeras both prized and expensive. A dramatic (and quite pricy) example of this type of variegation is the houseplant variegated monstera (*Monstera deliciosa* ‘Variegata’), which exhibits dramatic white areas on its foliage.

GREAT SOUTHEAST



Pollinator Census

Pollinator Census: Bigger and Better This Year

The Cherokee County Master Gardeners have been hosting locations for the Great Georgia Pollinator Census for a number of years. This project, created by the University of Georgia, is a citizen science event for the public to make a difference in pollinator conservation. However, this year the event will be even bigger because it's now the Great Southeast Pollinator Census, and it will be open to residents of not only Georgia but also South Carolina, North Carolina, and Florida.

Anyone is invited to participate, and the project is great for folks of any age. You don't even have to know a lot about insects. In fact the GSePC website (<https://www.gsepc.org>) offers information on how to identify various pollinators as well as instructions regarding the census and a downloadable counting sheet.

You are simply asked to choose a favorite pollinator plant to observe during the count. Then watch that plant for insect activity for at least 15 minutes. These are the groups of insects to look for: bumble bees, carpenter bees, honey bees, small bees, wasps, flies, butterflies/moths, and other insects. Once you've counted the insects that you saw, visit GSePC website to enter your data.

You can do the count in your own yard, at a public garden, or anywhere pollinator plants are blooming. Better yet, join the Cherokee County Master Gardeners at any of the three locations where they are hosting this fun and important event.

Date?

August 24, 2024

Event Time?

10:00am until 12:00noon

Where?

Multiple counting locations →

Not sure how to count? Join the
****POLLINATOR CLASS!****

SATURDAY, AUGUST 24TH, 10:00AM

Cherokee County Senior Center
1001 Univeter Road, Canton

Come join US! and participate in a citizen science project created by the University of Georgia. Everyone can help count pollinator insects during this fun event.

Cherokee County Senior Center

1001 Univeter Road, Canton

Veteran's Park

Backyard Agriculture Education Station

7345 Cumming Hwy, Canton

AND

Ball Ground Botanical Gardens

215 Valley Street, Ball Ground

*****Potential Monarch Chrysalis: Ball Ground Location*****

Bring the Kids! and Enjoy this STEM Activity!

Foliage Variegation ...continued from page 4



Flowering maple Canva

Viral Variegation

Occasionally, a virus will infect a plant and cause chlorosis of the foliage, which creates a lack of chlorophyll and consequently a loss of color on parts of the foliage. Depending on the virus, it may or may not affect the overall health of the plant. In some instances, growers deliberately infect a plant to create this viral variegation. For instance some flowering maples (*Abutilon* spp.) are intentionally treated with a harmless mosaic virus to create variegated foliage. Viral variegation is stable, with the foliage unlikely to revert to green.

Caring for Variegated Plants

When installing variegated plants in your landscape, pay special attention to the sun conditions in your garden since some plants may scorch if in too much sun. Conversely, in very deep shade, the variegated characteristics may decline. As noted, the variegated sections of a plant may be less vigorous, especially in chimeral variegation. If a section of the plant reverts to its solid green character, that section may overtake the plant.

Therefore, it is best to prune out the solid growth to maintain the desired variegated appearance.

Designing with Variegated Plants

Variegated plants can certainly create visual interest in the garden, where the foliage alone will add color and variety. This can be especially useful in a shade garden where there may not be enough sun to produce bountiful blooms, and the highlights of variegated foliage will brighten up dark areas of the landscape.



Variegated *Caryopteris divaricata* highlighted against contrasting foliage, courtesy Mary Tucker

A variegated plant can also serve as a focal point in garden design. Focal points by their nature should be limited in number, so it's usually best to use variegated plants in moderation to avoid a cluttered and busy look that can overwhelm the eye.

To best showcase the color and pattern of variegated plants, it's useful to place them against a contrasting background, such as a grouping of plants with solid foliage, so that the patterning of the variegated leaves will be accentuated.

Since variegated plants have such interesting foliage patterns, they often can be best appreciated up close, especially if the variegation patterns are small.

They also make useful additions to hanging baskets and containers that can be admired on a deck, porch, or patio.



Many houseplants have interesting and colorful variegation, often as a result of the inherent genetic makeup of the plant. These can be used to add color and interest in the home, but again, keep it simple by using them as accents and not overdoing it. Mix your variegated plants with those bearing solid leaves to appreciate the contrast without creating too much busyness.

Collection of variegated begonias with impatiens and ferns in an outdoor container courtesy Mariana DiVita



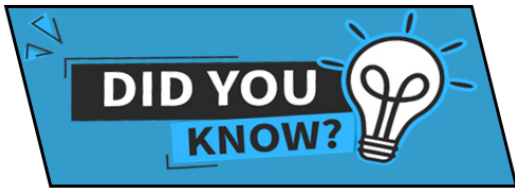
Variegated caladiums in a mixed hanging basket with fuschia and variegated alocasia 'Mickey Mouse' in pots below courtesy Mariana DiVita

For more information:

<https://aggie-hort.tamu.edu/tisscult/Chimeras/chimeralec/chimeras.html>

<https://bygl.osu.edu/index.php/node/1602>

<https://blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/charlotteco/2023/05/03/variegation-sensation-variegated-plants/>

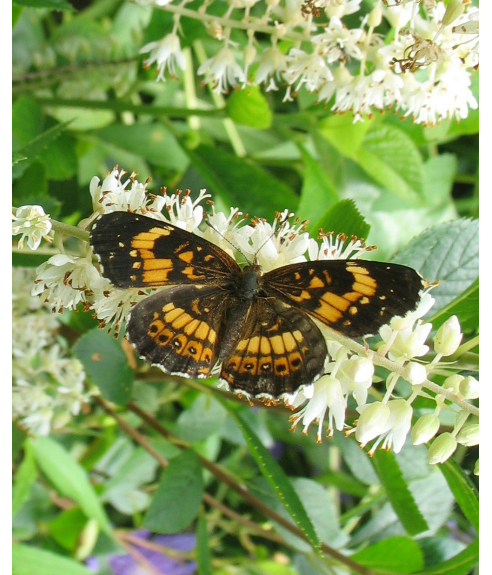


By Mary Tucker, Master Gardener

Did you know that *Clethra alnifolia* 'Hummingbird' has a Georgia connection? The plant was introduced by the late Fred Galle, who was horticulture director at Callaway Gardens in Pine Mountain, Georgia. It was planted along the shore of Hummingbird Lake at Callaway, which is how this selection of summersweet got its name, which is additionally appropriate since the blooms are in fact a favorite of hummingbirds.



In addition to hummingbirds, many other pollinators are attracted to the blooms of summersweet shrubs, including numerous butterflies and bees. This plant's nectar and pollen, as well as the long bloom season, are especially valuable in any pollinator garden.



***Clethra alnifolia* 'Hummingbird' photos courtesy Ellen Honeycutt



Pink garden phlox (*Phlox paniculata*), courtesy John Ruscilli

Cherokee County Master Gardeners Summer/Fall Plant/Bulb One Day Sale

Saturday, September 14, 2024
9:00am until noon

Cherokee County Senior Services
1001 Univeter Road,
Canton, Georgia 30115

Choose from nice varieties of plants, shrubs, trees, specialty plants, garden accessories, and garden art, plus expert advice.

Demonstration Garden tours available upon request.

Cash or Credit Card accepted

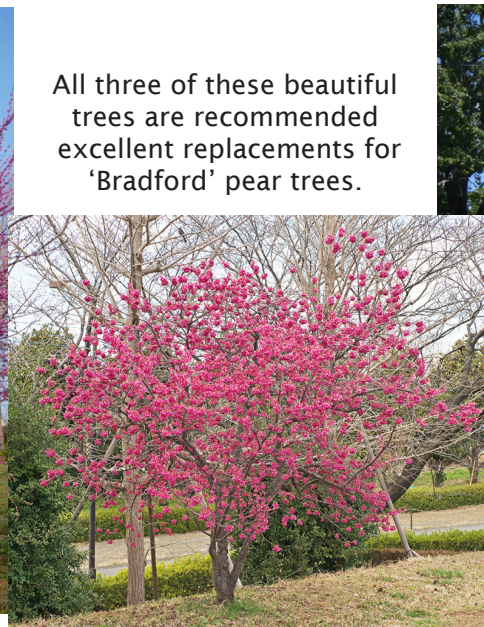


Clethra alnifolia 'Hummingbird' courtesy Ellen Honeycutt

Bradford pear tree alternatives ...continued from page 1



Cercis canadensis
eastern redbud ncsu.edu



Prunus augustifolia
Chickasaw plum Canva



Chionanthus virginicus
American fringetree ncsu.edu



Photo powdery mildew for more info [CLICK HERE](#).

AUGUST GARDENING TIPS

- Heavy rains at harvest can dilute the sugars in melons. Watermelons can reconcentrate sugar if left on the vine for a few dry days, but cantaloupes can't.
- Harvest cantaloupes when the melons pull easily from the stem; honeydews when the blossom end is slightly soft or springy; watermelons when there is a hollow sound when thumped and skin loses its shine. Also, run your hand around the middle of the watermelon. When fully ripe, most varieties develop low, longitudinal ridges, rather like flexed calf muscles.
- Start seeds of cool-weather vegetables like broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, collards and lettuce in order to transplant to the garden in early September. [For garden planning click HERE](#).
- White fly may be a serious problem this month on tomatoes, peppers, eggplants and squash. There are no effective preventive measures, so it's important to control the population before they increase to damaging levels. Hang sticky yellow strips among your plants to trap these pests.

- Plant bush beans now for your fall crop. Watch out for insects, such as Mexican bean beetle.
- If going on vacation this month, be sure to harvest all your vegetables and then arrange for someone to pick fast maturing crops, such as squash and okra; otherwise, they will become overmature and stop producing.




For info about Mexican beetles in your garden, [CLICK HERE](#).

- Spider mites leave webs on the underside of leaves, and eggs are laid in these webs. Spider mites thrive in hot, dry weather. For mild infestations, hose the foliage to wash off the mites. For severe problems, spray with an approved chemical according to the label. [For INFESTATIONS click HERE](#). The best remedy for spider mites on plants is a good, heavy rainfall. [Click HERE for info](#).

AUGUST MISCELLANEOUS

- Water your plants several hours before applying pesticides, especially during dry weather. Drought-stressed plants have less water in their plant tissues. The chemicals that enter the leaves will be more concentrated and may burn the leaves.
- The last two weeks of August is the time to spray kudzu with a non-selective weed killer or mow all visible foliage, since it is at its weakest at this time.

|  | RAINFALL COMPARISONS | | | | | |
|---|----------------------|-----------|----------|------------|-----------|----------|
| | Cherokee County | | | State Wide | | |
| | May 2024 | June 2024 | YTD 2024 | May 2024 | June 2024 | YTD 2024 |
| Actual | 4.9 | 0.9 | 26.9 | 3.6 | 1.6 | 29.9 |
| Normal | 4.3 | 4.1 | 29.2 | 3.2 | 4.5 | 24.8 |
| Deviation | 0.6 | -3.2 | -2.3 | 0.4 | -2.9 | 5.1 |

ORNAMENTALS

- Take root cuttings of woody shrubs and evergreens (such as azaleas, holly, and hydrangeas) to propagate. [Click HERE for growing info](#).
- Powdery mildew diseases attack a great many ornamentals, most often in late summer when the days are warm and nights are cool. Some mildews, particularly those on roses, apples, and cherries, also are increased by high humidity. Prevention by proper cultural techniques is the first defense. Grow resistant varieties; space and prune plants to improve air flow and reduce shading; water early in the day and at the base rather than on leaves; and reduce nitrogen applications to avoid excessive, late-season growth. [Click HERE for mildew factsheet](#).
- Water shrubs deeply once a week during August. Many plants including camellias and rhododendrons, are forming buds for next season's bloom at this time. Do not prune or you will be removing the flower buds. Immature berries of hollies may drop if the plants are water stressed. During hot, dry August days, avoid deep cultivation in your flower beds. Loosening the soil under these conditions reduces water uptake by increasing loss of soil water and damaging surface roots. Plants often look much worse after cultivation than before.
- Water roses with at least 1" of water per week. Remove spent blooms (deadheading) to encourage quicker rebloom. Prune 1/4" above an outward facing five-leaflet eye. Watch for spider mites on the underside of the upper leaves. A blast of water from underneath will discourage them. Continue fertilizing once a month for both August and September. [Click HERE for rose growing](#).

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

- Strawberries, blueberries, and bramble fruits are forming buds for next year's crop; keep them watered for better production.
- Fertilize strawberries in August. On plants set out this spring, apply 4-6 oz. of ammonium nitrate (33% actual nitrogen) or 12-18 oz. of 10-10-10 per feet of row. Spread the fertilizer uniformly in a band 14" wide over the row when foliage (not the ground) is dry. Brush fertilizer off leaves to avoid leaf burn. For plants in the second year of growth, increase application rate to 6-8 oz. ammonium nitrate or 18-24 oz. of 10-10-10 per 25 feet of row. [For growing strawberries click HERE](#).

SEPTEMBER GARDENING TIPS

ORNAMENTALS

- Fall is a great time to plant and divide perennials and shrubs for next year's garden. Plants planted in the fall do not endure the summer heat during establishment and will form sufficient root systems before winter dormancy. [To plant shrubs click HERE.](#) [For dividing perennials click HERE.](#)
- If you are not sure which end of the bulb is the top, plant it on its side. The stem will always grow upright.



Photo courtesy Marcia Winchester, from left to right: *Lycoris radiata*/spider lily, *Hyacinth*, *Narcissus*/daffodil, crocus, *Muscari armeniacum*/grape hyacinth.

- Plant peonies now, but make sure the crowns are buried only 1½ -2" below ground level. Deeper planting keeps the plants from blooming. Look for varieties that perform well in the South.
- Divide, cut back and fertilize daylilies now to promote root growth for next year's flowers.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

- During the fall, be sure to water vegetables adequately; crops such as corn, pepper, squash and tomato won't mature correctly if stressed due to lack of water. Snap bean, tomato and pepper flowers may fail to develop fruit when daytime temperatures rise above 90°F.
- Harvesting guidelines: Pears should be picked at the hard ripe stage and allowed to finish ripening off the tree in a paper bag. The base color of yellow pears should change from green to yellow as the fruit approaches maturity. [For Pear info click HERE.](#)
- Cucumber beetles, squash bugs, Colorado potato beetles and European corn borers pass the winter in debris left in the garden. Remove dead plant material and compost it or till it under. This limits your pest population next year to the insects that migrate into the garden. [For more info about cucurbit insect pests, CLICK HERE.](#)
- To harvest sunflower seeds, wait until the seeds are fully grown and firm, then cut the head, leaving one foot of stem. Hang in a dry, airy spot to finish ripening. Do not store sunflowers on top of each other or they may rot. [To grow sunflowers click HERE.](#)
- Winter-type pumpkins and squash, such as acorn, butternut, and spaghetti keep for several months in a cool, medium-dry basement, garage or tool shed. Allow the fruit to ripen fully on the vine, and cure in the sun to form a hard rind. Harvest before frost, and leave a piece of stem on each when they are cut from the vine. If the floor is damp, elevate them to reduce the possibility of rot. The best storage temperature is about 60°F.



Daylily division courtesy Clemson University, [CLICK HERE.](#)

- Keep basil, parsley, garlic, mint and sage producing by pinching off the flowers. Herbs can be used fresh, frozen, or dried. When the dew dries, cut a few stems, tie a strong cord around this little bouquet, and hang in a cool, dry place until fully dry. Place in a jar for use during the winter. [Click HERE for herb gardening.](#)
- Don't prune or fertilize fruits now; it may disturb bud formation.
- Do not store apples or pears with vegetables such as potatoes and squash. Fruits give off ethylene gas that speeds up the ripening process of vegetables and may cause them to develop "off" flavors.
- Beets, carrots, collards, mustard greens, onions, parsley, radishes, spinach and turnips seeds can be planted in the garden all month.
- Near the end of the growing season, pick off all tomato blossoms that won't have time to bear fruit so that plant nutrients go into existing tomatoes.
- Hot peppers will keep best if stored after they are dry. Pull the plants and hang them up, or pick the peppers and thread on a string. Store in a cool, dry place. Wash your hands after handling them.

SEPTEMBER MISCELLANEOUS

- Autumn is a good time for improving garden soil. Add manure, compost and leaves to increase the organic matter. Before adding lime, have soil tested to determine if your soil is acidic. [For soil testing and amenities click HERE.](#)
- Do not spray pesticides when it is windy or temperatures are over 85°F; and always follow directions carefully.
- Washing clothes worn while applying pesticides is important. Use heavy-duty detergent & hot water ASAP.
- Some pesticides are sold as dusts. Dusts cannot be applied as precisely as sprays and may drift to non-targeted areas.

August/September Recipes

By Maurya Jones

Summer Corn Chowder

Serves 8

Ingredients:

6 ears fresh sweet corn
6 cups of chicken or vegetable broth
2 cloves of garlic, peeled and crushed
1 russet potato, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch dice
2 cups milk
Salt and pepper to taste
1/4 pound slab bacon (rind removed), cut into 1/4-inch dice
1 medium sized onion, cut into 1/4-inch dice
4 medium sized ripe tomatoes, seeded and cut into 1/4-inch dice
1/4 cup slivered fresh basil

Directions

1. Strip corn kernels from cobs; set aside. Simmer cobs, broth, and garlic in a pot, partially covered, for 10 minutes. Discard cobs and garlic. Stir in the potatoes and half of the reserved corn kernels. Simmer, partially covered, until potatoes are tender, 10 to 12 minutes. Purée in a blender; transfer to a bowl. Stir in the milk, salt, and pepper; reserve.
2. Cook the bacon in a pot over low heat to render the fat, about 6 minutes. Add the onion; cook for 10 minutes. Add the reserved soup and remaining corn; simmer for 8 minutes. Stir in the tomatoes and basil. Serve immediately

Serve with a Greek salad and bread of your choice.



Summer corn chowder
courtesy Maurya Jones



Chicken noodle stir fry
courtesy Maurya Jones

Quick Chicken Noodle Stir Fry

Ingredients:

2 (3.5-oz.) packages
instant ramen noodles
(omit flavor packets)
1/2 cup teriyaki sauce
1/4 cup lite soy sauce
2-3 drops of sesame oil
1 Tbsp. honey
1 Tbsp. canola oil
1 pound of boneless,
skinless chicken breasts cubed
1 1/2 cups broccoli florets
1 cup diced sweet onion
1 cup diced red bell pepper
1 cup diced shiitake mushrooms
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 Tbsp. freshly grated ginger
2 green onions, thinly sliced
1/2 tsp. toasted sesame seeds



Directions

1. In a large pot of boiling water, cook ramen noodles until tender, about 3 to 4 minutes; rinse with cold water and drain well.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together teriyaki sauce, soy sauce, sesame oil, and honey.
3. Heat canola oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add chicken and cook until golden and cooked through, about 4 to 6 minutes; set aside.
4. Stir in broccoli, onion, bell pepper, and mushrooms; cook until tender, about 4 to 5 minutes.
5. Stir in garlic and ginger; cook until fragrant, about 1 minute.
6. Stir in chicken stock mixture, scraping any browned bits from the bottom of the skillet.
7. Stir in ramen noodles and chicken until heated through and evenly coated in sauce, about 1 to 2 minutes.
8. Serve immediately, garnished with green onions and sesame seeds, if desired.

NOTES:

- ◇ Instead of ramen noodles, rice can be substituted, or a healthier noodle choice would be "Momofuku" spicy soy noodles, which are air dried not fried.
- ◇ If you don't have time to chop and dice veggies, you can substitute Birds Eye Steamfresh Broccoli, Carrots, Sugar Snap Peas, and Water Chestnuts and a frozen bag of shelled Edamame beans.



UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
EXTENSION
Cherokee County

<https://extension.uga.edu/county-offices/cherokee.html>

1130 Bluffs Pkwy, Suite G49
Canton, GA 30114
770-721-7803



<https://cherokeemastergardeners.com>
<https://www.facebook.com/cherokeemastergardeners>

