



Shades of Green

Agriculture and Natural Resources

E-Newsletter

November 2024



A Note from Athens-Clarke County Agriculture & Natural Resources

Hello readers!

Thank you for tuning in to the November 2024 edition of Shades of Green! Each month, we are going to feature local projects that our office sponsors as a part of a **"Master Gardener Project Highlight"** series. This month we are featuring our office Demonstration Garden and native landscape. Stay tuned for information on using pearl millet as a pollinator plant and 2024 Trial Garden Classic City Award Winners. We hope you enjoy this month's issue of "Shades of Green".

Athens-Clarke County Agriculture and Natural Resources

Included in this issue...

Articles

- ◇ A Note from Athens-Clarke County Agriculture and Natural Resources [Pg.2](#)
- ◇ MG Project Highlight Series: ACC Demonstration Garden and Native Landscape [Pg.3](#)
- ◇ Pearl Millet Wins Approval from Honey Bees and Other Pollinators [Pg.5](#)
- ◇ UGA Trial Garden Classic City Award Winners [Pg.7](#)

Information/Resources

- ◇ Local November Events [Pg.11](#)
- ◇ Local Farmer's Markets [Pg.12](#)
- ◇ Helpful Resources [Pg.14](#)



MG Project Highlight



ACC Demonstration Garden

275 Cleveland RD
Bogart, GA 30622

The ACC Demonstration Garden is a creative, relaxing space where the public can experience seasonal ornamental plants as well as a thriving vegetable garden. Many of the flowers and plants are neatly labeled. The Master Gardeners who curate this space have provided examples and inspiration for any kind of gardener. From up-cycled trellises and birdhouses to a native pollinator palace and towering corn or okra, there are ideas and new experiences for everyone. Workdays are Tuesdays and Saturdays, typically 8-11 am.



MG Project Highlight



Native Landscape Plant Team

275 Cleveland RD, Bogart GA 30622

Athens Master Gardeners maintain the Native Plant Landscape, a habitat that demonstrates the use of Georgia native shrubs and perennials. It is a great pollinator habitat that is also drought friendly, providing an aesthetically pleasing landscape with year-round interest. The landscape surrounds the front and side half of the ACC Extension Office.

Contact: Laura Ney, Iney@uga.edu



Pearl Millet Wins Approval from Honey Bees and Other Pollinators

Jessica Ryan

Pearl millet, an annual grass used for grain and forage, can be a good food source for honey bees and hover flies, according to a recent study.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) [Agricultural Research Service](#) (ARS) and University of Georgia [College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences](#) researchers studied the impact of pearl millet as a source of insect food by surveying insects collecting and consuming the sucrose-rich pollen of this crop. Researchers planted Tift Long-Headed Bulk, a type of pearl millet known for its long candlestick-like heads, at a research farm in Tifton, Georgia, during the past summer.

According to the survey results, the most common insects observed feeding on Tift Long-Headed Bulk pearl millet were honey bees followed by lined earwigs and maize calligrapher hover flies. Other pollinators such as two-spotted longhorn bees, common eastern bumble bees, American bumble bees, sweat bees, and two other species of hover flies also feasted on the crop.

“What makes the study and the results fascinating is that wind-pollinated

grasses, like pearl millet, are rarely promoted as a food source of pollinators in comparison to nectar-rich plants,” said [Karen Harris-Shultz](#), a research geneticist at the ARS [Crop Genetics and Breeding Research Unit](#) on the [UGA Tifton campus](#). “Our research shows that pollinators are utilizing grass pollen.”



A new study from the USDA Agricultural Research Service and UGA College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences has found that pearl millet, an annual grass suited for conditions in the Southeast U.S., is a good food source for some pollinators. In this image, bees collect pearl millet pollen on Tift Long-Headed Bulk growing in Tifton, Georgia.

Pearl Millet Wins Approval from Honey Bees and Other Pollinators

Jessica Ryan

Harris-Shultz added that the study was also the first time that lined earwigs, banded cucumber beetles, two-spotted long-horn bees, and American bumble bees were observed collecting or consuming pollen from the pearl millet crop. ARS researchers in Tifton previously studied pearl millet as a food source for pollinators in 1965, but that study has not been revisited since, according to Harris-Shultz.

Harris-Shultz, CAES [Department of Entomology](#) postdoctoral researcher [Scott Clem](#) and the rest of the research team focused on bees and other pollinators of grasses, especially [centipede grass](#) and sorghum. The researchers took an interest in pearl millet because of its ability to thrive in areas characterized by drought, low soil fertility and high temperatures.

These traits make pearl millet, which is grown primarily in the Southeastern U.S., a low-input crop with great benefits for pollinators and farmers looking for a good field border plant.

“Contrary to popular belief that grasses have no value to bees and other pollinators, this and our previous studies showed that these grasses can be good food sources for insects and may help combat decline in pollinator populations,” said Harris-Shultz.

“In addition to being pollinators, several of these insects, such as the hover flies and lined earwigs, are important biological control agents that assist in sustainable pest management.”

The recent study and its findings were published in the [Journal of Entomological Science](#).



Now Presenting: The University of Georgia Trial Garden Classic City Award Winners for 2024!

This award is reserved for the plants with the highest flowering, foliage, uniformity, and resistance ratings for the entire season. Many plants are spectacular for a given time, but the Classic City Winners represent the best overall. Athens, Georgia, is the home of the University of Georgia and is known as the "Classic City" as an homage to the Classical city of Athens, Greece. Congratulations to the Classic City Winners for an outstanding performance!

The University of Georgia Trial Garden experienced a mild spring, a hot summer, and minimal rainfall. Plants had perfect growing conditions throughout June and into July. The only significant rainy period lasted about one week in July. Our campus and garden did not suffer any major damage, but we are heartbroken for those in our Southeastern community during the unprecedented flooding from Hurricane Helene.

Our Trial Garden grew this year, with 490 trials, including 296 In-Ground, 112 Containers, 84 Hanging Baskets, and 50 All-American Selections Ornamental In-Ground Seed trials. This year, we saw many entries for Interspecific Impatiens, Geraniums, Cuphea, and Combos.

UGA Trial Garden Classic City Award 2024

Vining Mandevilla Agate XXL 'Rose Pink' Ball FloraPlant

The name says it all: this Mandevilla has gigantic flowers and an affinity for climbing. Perfect for a tall trellis or arbor, this annual vine made a statement at the entrance to our garden. Plants were trellised in a concrete planter and watered regularly.



UGA Trial Garden Classic City Award 2024

Playlist Combo 'Pop Life' Sakata

The Trial Garden received more container combos than ever in 2024. Thanks to Sakata, we have some great examples of perfectly balanced SunPatents® 'Pop Life' in 'Compact Red Candy,' 'Compact Classic White,' and 'Compact Hot Coral' from their Playlist Combo series.



UGA Trial Garden Classic City Award 2024

Salvia Unplugged® 'White' Proven Winners

Sometimes salvia can be a late-bloomer, but Unplugged® 'White' has flowered profusely since early summer. Grown in clay beds, medium-size plants are uniform and have large flower spikes. *Salvia farinacea* is native to the southern US and will satisfy the "trifecta"- perennial, pollinators, and deer-resistant!



UGA Trial Garden Classic City Award 2024

Lantana Heartland 'Really Red 2025' DummenOrange

Customers looking for colorful lantana plants that are well-behaved will love the Heartland series. 'Really Red' performed best in terms of compact growth while maintaining good color. Lantana can be grown in landscape and is also an excellent size for containers.



UGA Trial Garden Classic City Award 2024

Helianthus annuus Sunfinity® 'Double Yellow' Syngenta

It is hard to pick a favorite flower, but this double sunflower has won over many hearts this summer. Not only did 'Double Yellow' win both Public and Industry's Choice back in June, but we now have a Classic City winner! We hope to see more of these forever-blooming bush-type sunflowers in the landscape.



UGA Trial Garden Classic City Award 2024

Petunia Supertunia® Tiara™ 'Blue' Proven Winners

The Supertunia series has a reputation as one of the best. This new beauty, Tiara™ 'Blue' has both style and strength! Georgia summers are not easy on petunias late in the season, but the Supertunia seems to have the most vigorous root system that helps them survive into football season.



UGA Trial Garden Classic City Award 2024

Cuphea 'Cubano Presidente' Danziger

This cuphea hybrid is 100% guaranteed to attract hummingbirds! The plentiful orange tubular flowers are irresistible. Plants are perfectly matched with one another, and foliage is flawless. 'Cubano Presidente' is a tender perennial in our region, so many will have the opportunity to enjoy the plant for years to come.



UGA Trial Garden Classic City Award 2024

Catharanthus roseus Nirvana® XDR 'Blush Splash' Syngenta

From day one, the Catharanthus roseus Nirvana® XDR and Cora® XDR from Syngenta gave us a fantastic example of a delicate plant breeding success story. Not all vinca hybrids can tolerate the heavy clay and pathogen load in the Southeastern region, but XDR has shown 100% resistance in both cutting and seed varieties.



UGA Trial Garden Classic City Award 2024

Caladium 'Mount Everest' Classic Caladiums

Caladiums from Classic Caladiums fill our hearts with joy each and every year! The new patterns and colors keep coming from their farm in Florida. 'Mount Everest' gives us a crisp, cool vibe, with tones of white and misty blue/green edges. Nothing beats sitting in the cool shade on a hot day in the company of your caladiums.



UGA Trial Garden Classic City Award 2024

Agastache mexicana Summerlong™ 'Lilac' Darwin Perennials

Perennials are on the rise, and we are happy to highlight another "trifecta" plant, as Dr. A would say... Perennial, pollinator-friendly, and deer resistant! This series ('Yellow' and 'Coral' included) gave us a rainbow of colors. They have great survival rates in clay beds and are very uniform overall.



UGA Trial Garden Classic City Award 2024

Ageratum 'Monarch Magic' Ball FloraPlant

Ageratum 'Monarch Magic' from Ball FloraPlant has provided show-stopping, densely-packed blue flowers that attract butterflies and people alike. The habit is large and shrub-sized with soft round edges that fill the space.



Local November Events

November Friends First Friday

Remarkable Rainforests

Friday, November 1st, 2024

1 PM

State Botanical Garden of Georgia

An amazing array of plants and animals live in the tropical rainforests of the world. While they are located thousands of miles away, students can explore their unique ecosystem in the Botanical Garden's Tropical Conservatory and learn how the rainforest is important to our daily lives. A puppet show and mural activity, a plant discovery hunt, searching for animals, and other hands-on activities.

Holiday Artist Market at Athens Farmer's market

Saturday, November 30th

9 AM—3 PM

Bishop Park, 705 Sunset DR, Athens GA

With over 90 talented vendors and more than 6,000 attendees last year, the AFM Holiday Artists Markets have been a joyful celebration of community and creativity, and we're excited to make this year even merrier! The warmth, generosity, and holiday spirit shared by everyone last season was truly heartwarming, and we can't wait to experience another magical day with ya'll.

Forest Fantasy

Friday, November 8th 2024

6 PM—7:30 PM

Sandy Creek Nature Center, 205 Old Commerce RD, Athens GA

Forests are magical, especially at night. Join us for this family program full of imagination. Enjoy building fairy houses, making sticks into wands and other fun activities. Costumes are encouraged to help create the magic!

"Tallassee Forest Ramble" at the Tallassee Forest

Saturday, November 16th, 2024

10 AM—2 PM, Tallassee Forest, 706-613-3620

Join Trails and Open Space Staff on an exploration of Tallassee Forest. We will visit points of interest, discuss historical land use, and future plans for this 300 acre tract of undeveloped land.

Pictures with Santa

Saturday, November 16th, 2024

9 AM

Shady Brook Farms, 1860 Robert Hardeman RD, Winterville, GA

Fun things planned, including a special mailbox for letters to Santa and a chance to get a letter back from Santa, activities for the children, and a hot cocoa bar.



"Autumn Splendor Lakeside Loop Hike" At

Sandy Creek Park

Saturday November 9th, 2024

10:00 AM—2:00 PM

Celebrate the beauty of fall with an epic day hike. Come along with Trails and Open Space staff on this seven-mile trek around Lake Chapman. Wear shoes for hiking and pack in essentials for this 4-hour walk. The fall color should be spectacular. All minors must be accompanied by an adult.

Fee: \$3 Resident, \$4 Non-resident

ATHENS FARMERS MARKET

Holiday Artist Market

"Shop local this holiday season!"

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 30
9AM-3PM AT BISHOP PARK



Local Farmer's Markets

Stay tuned for information on Holiday Markets happening at Marigold and West Broad Markets later in the month!

West Broad Farmers Market

Will hold markets beginning Saturday, **April 20—December 15th, 2024** from 11 am-2 pm in the West Broad Neighborhood, and on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month at Athentic Brewing Company in Normaltown.

Visit [their website](#) for more information.

Find them on Facebook:

[@WestBroadMarketGarden](#)

The **Marigold Market** is returning on Saturdays 9 am—1 pm at Pittard Park starting April 6th. The Monday Marigold Market (& Café) offers fresh produce and seasonal soup specials year-round, 9 am—3 pm weekly at the Historic Pittard Bank Building. Visit [their website](#) for more information.

Find out more on Facebook:

[@marigoldmarketwinterville](#)

Instagram: [@marigoldmarketwinterville](#)



MARIGOLD




MARKET



Concerned about the state of your garden?

Are weeds taking over your landscape?

No need to fear, Clarke is here!

Follow @gardenwithclarke on Instagram  and learn how to battle pests, identify weeds, build your soil and so much more as you garden alongside Clarke, Athens-Clarke County's super gardener!



gardenwithclarke
UGA Extension Athens-Clarke County





Helpful resources online:

[Find My Local Extension Office](#)

[Georgia Turf](#)

[Free Online Webinars](#)

[Pest Management Handbook](#)

[Pesticide Applicator Info](#)

[Georgia Certified Plant Professional](#)

[Bugwood— Pest Images](#)

[UGA Center for Urban Agriculture](#)

[Extension Publications](#)

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Athens-Clarke County Extension Agriculture and Natural Resources

Mission Statement

The UGA Athens-Clarke County Extension’s mission is to respond to the people’s needs and interest in Agriculture, the Environment, Families, and 4-H/youth in Athens-Clarke County with unbiased, research-based education and information.

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