



# Shades of Green

Athens-Clarke County Agriculture and Natural Resources E-Newsletter

September 2021



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# A note from Athens-Clarke County Agriculture & Natural Resources

Hello readers and happy September!

We hope you all are looking forward to the summer to fall transition (no matter how slow that may feel in Georgia!). Our office is looking forward to what this month holds. We will be hosting yet another one of our [Green Thumb Lectures](#) on invasive plant management. You won't want to miss it!

We are also excited to announce the application for our [2022 Master Gardener Extension Volunteer Program Course](#) is now available. Check out the [flyer](#) later in this issue.

We have extended the deadline to apply for our [Fall 2021 Master Composter Program](#). Make sure to check out the [flyer](#) in this newsletter if you are interested.

The farmers markets in Athens are still in full swing. If you are interested in their times and locations, make sure to check out the "[Local Farmers Markets](#)" page in this newsletter.

We hope you enjoy this month's issue of "Shades of Green".

Take care,  
Athens-Clarke County Agriculture and Natural Resources





# Get Garden Ready for a Winter Nap

By Randy Drinkard

**Y**ou've harvested the last of the summer veggies, and you're ready to hang up your hoe and spade for the winter. But don't abandon the garden spot before the job is finished. Gardens need to be put to bed for the winter. Some fall maintenance will help you avoid several problems next spring.

The end of the season is the best time to make good notes about the past season before you forget. Take note of the varieties that performed particularly well or not so well. Make a map of garden areas that had problem weeds. Identify the weeds if you can. Note any areas that stayed wet or didn't produce well.

Mark your calendar to take a soil test within the next couple of months so that you'll have time to apply any needed lime well before spring



planting. This is an ideal time to take a sample for nematodes, too. The highest nematode populations are while the weather is still hot and plants are still growing.

Now is a good time to remove any trellises you've put up and store them in a dry place. This will help to preserve the life of the trellis. Remove any string or plant debris and knock off any excess soil.

If you have an irrigation system in the garden, get it ready for winter, too. Remove hoses, sprinklers, drip tape, etc. and store these out of the elements for the winter after removing any excess soil or plant debris. Be sure to repair, sharpen and lightly oil garden implements before storage as well.

Once all the obstacles are out of the garden, run a rotary mower across the garden to chop up any plant debris that remains. This allows this debris to dry down faster and keeps weeds from going to seed before frost. Applying a burn-down herbicide after mowing is even better.

During the fall, add organic matter such as composted grass clippings, manure and leaves to the garden. Bury the organic matter and debris by turning the land. Then plant a cover crop for the winter. This will help to prevent any soil erosion and can build up the soil when you turn the cover crop under in the spring. A grain such as rye or wheat works well for this.

Finally, don't forget to order your seed catalogs by the end of the year and begin planning next year's garden. Getting your seed ordered early in the year will better your chances of getting the varieties you want.

Do these things and your garden will have a cozy winter nap. And don't fret ... Spring will be here before you know it and your garden will awake refreshed and ready for those summer veggies once again.

*(Randy Drinkard is a previous Bartow County Extension Agent)*



# Solving the Problem of the Fruitless Tree

## By Willie Chance

While some of us have been picking fruit, some have not. Some gardeners enjoyed branches hanging down with apples, pears, peaches, etc. Other gardeners are wondering, “Why didn’t my plant produce?”

Fruitless trees are a real disappointment. Why have a fruit tree without fruit? You might as well cut it down. Before you do this, consider these fruit tree basics. Often there is no easy answer to this dilemma, but this may help you decide whether to keep the tree or start over.

Does the plant bloom? If the plant does not bloom, it cannot fruit. However, scientists cannot adequately explain why some plants bloom and others do not.

It may not be old enough. Apple trees require two to five years from planting to bear while peaches usually bear in two to four years. Pears require four to six years and plums three to six years before they will bear. Blueberries often bloom the first year, and blackberries the first or second year.

If the tree is not blooming, there is no simple care. Just make sure the plant gets what it needs. Poor tree health may keep plants from producing. Is the tree growing well? Is the area too dry or too wet? Remove weeds and grass around trees and replace with mulch. Never let lawnmowers or weed eaters hit the trees. Did you dig a wide planting hole when planting?



Make sure the trees have at least six to eight hours of sun a day. Plant them away from other plants that may compete with them for water and nutrients. Water them once a week during drought with one inch of water and fertilize lightly two or three times a year. Prune in late January or February. Soil sample to see if the plant needs lime. This last one is very important.

Another reason for lack of production is cold weather. Late frosts kill flower buds. This leads to short fruit crops. Always plant recommended varieties for your area. Call your local county Extension office for assistance, if needed.

Some plants need a pollinator. They bloom but never set fruit. Many apple, pear and some plum trees and muscadine vines are like this. Once again, consult Extension bulletins to determine what variety of fruit you must plant as a pollinator for your specific variety of fruit grown.

Does the tree produce but fruit is knotty, bug bitten or rotten? Some fruits have so many pests that they need several sprays between bloom and harvest. Peaches and apples appear to be the worst, while plums are often not far behind.

What can we do? Spray them regularly beginning at bloom with a ‘home orchard’ or ‘home fruit tree’ spray. Or you can quit growing these fruits and replace them with easier to grow fruits like blueberry, blackberry, muscadine, Oriental persimmon or strawberry.

Fruitless fruit trees are aggravating. These tips may or may not help them produce but should improve overall plant health.

*(Willie Chance is a previous Extension Agent in Houston County, Georgia)*

# Brood X cicadas may be gone, but the evidence of their passing remains

By Ashley Hoppers

**T**he emergence of Brood X exceeded expectations in north Georgia, as those of us who happen to reside in the “cicada zone” observed droves of periodical cicadas during the peak of the event. **Over the past weeks, the song of the male periodical cicada has faded and fewer of these fascinating insects remain, but a sign of their passing is still evident.**

Before ending their brief life cycles, female cicadas have been known to lay eggs on over 200 types of trees, but they do have their favorites. While evergreens are rarely used for egg laying, **some of the trees that are most susceptible to cicada damage include species of oak (Quercus), maple (Acer), cherry (Prunus), hawthorn (Crataegus) and redbud (Cercis).**

University of Georgia entomologist Nancy Hinkle explained that periodical cicadas begin life as “a rice-shaped egg, which the female deposits in **a groove she makes in a tree limb**, using her ovipositor,” which is a tube-like organ many female insects use for laying eggs. **The groove the female makes in the tree limb provides shelter and protects the newly hatched cicada nymph.**

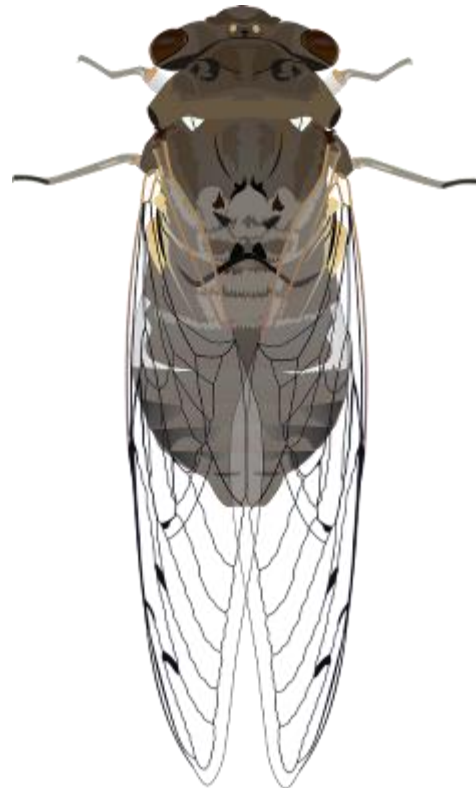
When the cicada hatches from the egg, it looks like a termite or small white ant. Once the young cicada is ready, which is usually just a few days after hatching, **the nymph crawls from the groove and falls to the ground** where it will dig until it finds the roots of its host tree, where it will **imbibe fluids from the tree roots for 17 years.**

These grooves can sometimes kill a tree’s small branches, and when the twigs die and the leaves turn brown, it is called “**flagging**.” This serves as “**nature’s pruning service**,” trimming off the

tree’s weakest appendages, preventing them from breaking off and causing damage during the next winter’s ice storms.

Despite cicadas having a wide variety of trees from which they may choose to lay their eggs, in north Georgia, there seems to have been a strong preference for oaks and maples.

**While trees showing signs of dieback or “flagging” may appear to be injured, there really is nothing to worry about.** This damage is not serious, and any mature, established tree that has flagging will easily replace any shoots that have been broken or “pruned” by the cicadas. If desired, you may simply prune out any damaged branches that you can reach safely.



[\(Continued on page 6\)](#)



# Brood X cicadas may be gone, but the evidence of their passing remains (continued)

Across both Fannin and Gilmer counties, I noticed **highly variable populations**, meaning that locations with heavy flagging were often surrounded by areas with little to no flagging. While this may be somewhat normal for a 17-year periodical cicada emergence, another possible reason for the inconsistent distribution could be attributed to **elimination of nymphs** in those areas due to soil disturbances, such as the removal of trees — the cicadas' food supply — and other soil disturbances. **Construction and the removal of trees and clearing of forested areas can certainly have an impact on our wildlife populations and cicadas are no exception.**

Despite these disturbances, nature always manages to find a way and I feel privileged that I got to experience one of the Earth's oddities. Now that the main event has passed and we're seeing flagging, you can bet that the next brood of cicadas will soon be active underground, tunneling, feeding and growing. **The Brood X cicada nymphs will stay underground for 17 years, emerging as adults in 2038.**

**For other questions about plant damage in your landscape**, contact your local UGA Cooperative Extension agent by visiting [extension.uga.edu/county-offices](https://extension.uga.edu/county-offices).

*(Ashley Hoppers is the UGA Cooperative Extension County Coordinator in Fannin County and Agriculture and Natural Resources agent in Gilmer County, Georgia.)*



*Athens-Clarke County Extension*

# *Virtual Green Thumb Lectures*

## *2021 Free Monthly Gardening Class Series*



## **September: Invasive Plant Management**

Please join us online for an informative presentation on topics including:

- Identifying invasive plants
- Impacts of invasive plants
- Management and control

Gardeners of all experience levels are welcome.

### **WHEN:**

Wednesday, September 15 · 6:00-7:30pm

### **WHERE:**

ONLINE via Zoom.com

Specific link to join Zoom meeting will be sent to the email you register with.

### **TO REGISTER:**

Registration is required. Please register by September 14 by visiting

[www.accgov.com/gardening](http://www.accgov.com/gardening)

### ***For questions:***

Contact Laura Ney, Extension Agent at  
706-613-3640 or lney@uga.edu

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# Stay in the loop! (local or online activities and events)

## Lunch & Learn: Beneficial Garden Insects

- Friday, Sept. 10th from 12:00-1:00 pm
  - FREE online event
- Learn about beneficial insects in your garden!
- You must register for the class, and you can do this by emailing Jessica Warren at [uge3039@uga.edu](mailto:uge3039@uga.edu). Once you register, you will receive an email with the link to attend the session on the day prior to the class.

## Statham Seed Swap

September 25, 2021 from 9am-11am

Statham Public Library

1928 Railroad St, Statham, GA 30666

Come join us for a seed swap. You do not have to bring seeds with you in order to participate in this event, but if you do want to bring some, please make sure they are non-GMO and marked with the collection date. Herbs, flowers, fruits, and vegetables are all welcome. If you have any old seed catalogs laying around, please bring those as well. For more information please call 770-725-4785. [View this event on Facebook](#)

## Atlanta Botanical Garden Virtual Chocolate-Covered Weekend

September 11-12

For more details [visit the event's page](#).

## Atlanta Botanical Garden Scarecrows in the Garden

September 28-October 31

[Visit their website for details and hours.](#)

The **The State Botanical Garden of Georgia** has great local events occurring each month. Make sure to check out their [event calendar](#) or [discover education activities for home](#).

## Georgia Farm Bureau® Farm Passport

- The Farm Passport is your guide to finding and visiting farms throughout Georgia. You and your family can explore the state, support local farms, and eat fresh food while learning where it comes from!
- You can download a printable copy of the passport or find a location to pick one up, as well as find out more information here: <https://www.gfb.org/education-and-outreach/passport.cms>



**UGA Extension** offices around the state are working hard at developing quality online presentations on various topics.

Visit the UGA Extension [event calendar](#) to see events happening local to our county as well as virtual opportunities.



# Local Farmers Markets



The **Athens Farmers Market** is taking place on Saturdays from 8am-12pm at Bishop Park. Make sure to visit [their website](#) for updates and details.

Find them on Facebook: [@AthensFarmersMarket](#)

Follow them on Instagram:  
[@athensfarmersmarket](#)



## West Broad Farmers Market

Online ordering with pick-up and delivery options are available on Saturdays.

Visit [their website](#) to find out how to order online.

Find them on Facebook:

[@WestBroadMarketGarden](#)

## MARIGOLD



## MARKET

The **Winterville Farmers Market** is taking place on Saturdays from 10am-2pm at Pittard Park. Visit [their website](#) for more information.

Find out more on Facebook:

[@marigoldmarketwinterville](#)

Instagram: [@marigoldmarketwinterville](#)

# Would you like to become a Georgia Master Composter?



If you enjoy working with people, digging in the dirt and are interested in teaching others about composting, then the **Master Composter program** is for you! You will become part of an elite group of volunteers that uses the information learned in this training program to teach others how to turn their organic material into a beneficial soil amendment.

This multiple session Master Composter Training Program provides an educational experience in the chemistry and microbiology of composting, types of and reasons for composting, and lessons on teaching audiences.

## Expectations of the Program

1. Complete the training course and field trips
2. Complete class project
3. Volunteer a minimum of 40 hours back to the program in the first year

## Typical Volunteer Duties

1. Teaching or assisting with compost workshops
2. Staffing composting informational booths at various public education and outreach events
3. Giving lectures and hands-on presentations on composting to various civic, community, and garden groups
4. Building Compost Bins

## Georgia Master Composter 2021 Program

### Dates

Every Wednesday from  
September 15, 2021 to  
November 17, 2021

### Time

5:30pm to 8:30pm

### Location

ACC Solid Waste  
Department,  
Administration Building  
Training Room  
  
725 Hancock Industrial  
Way, Athens 30605

### Cost

\$150

### To Apply

Contact Laura New with  
ACC Cooperative Extension  
at [lney@uga.edu](mailto:lney@uga.edu)

Application deadline is  
August 16, 2021

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# Would you like to become an Athens Area Master Gardener?

**E**stablished in 1990, the Athens Area Master Gardener Program provides novice and seasoned gardeners with an intensive educational experience in horticulture principles, practices and pest management. Classes are taught by UGA faculty and other subject area experts.

After completing the educational component of the program, participants perform 50 hours of volunteer service in their community before the end of the calendar year. Master Gardener Extension Volunteers answer gardening questions at the ACC Extension office, staff informational booths at farmers markets and local events, conduct plant clinics, help with Plant a Row for the Hungry gardens, assist curators at the State Botanical Garden of Georgia, teach Junior Master Gardener programs at local schools and more.

**Question? Contact Laura Ney at [Iney@uga.edu](mailto:Iney@uga.edu)**



Athens-Clarke  
County 2022 Master  
Gardener Extension  
Volunteer Program

## Dates

Tuesday and Thursday  
mornings, January 6 —  
April 7, 2022

## Time

8:45am-11:30am

## Location

Athens-Clarke County  
Extension Office  
275 Cleveland Road  
Bogart, GA 30622

## Cost

\$250

## To apply

Contact ACC Extension  
at (706) 613-3640 or  
email [Iney@uga.edu](mailto:Iney@uga.edu)



**APPLICATIONS  
ARE DUE  
NOVEMBER 12,  
2021**



## Course topics include:

- Botany & Plant Physiology
- Soils & Plant Nutrition
- Entomology
- Plant Pathology & Disease Control
- Landscape Design
- Vegetable Gardening
- Fruit Gardening
- Herb Gardening
- Organic Gardening
- Annuals, Perennials & Bulbs
- Plant Propagation
- Composting
- Weed Science
- Integrated Pest Management

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# Join Athens-Clarke County 4-H!



Students in 5<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> grades in Athens-Clarke County can sign up for 4-H now. The mission of Georgia 4-H is to assist youth in acquiring knowledge, developing life skills, and forming attitudes that will enable them to become self-directing, productive and contributing members of society. 4-H meetings will look different this year and are online. There is no charge to be a member or participate in a competition.

To start your 4-H Adventure e-mail the ACC 4-H Agent, Elizabeth Conway, at [ebarber@uga.edu](mailto:ebarber@uga.edu) today!



Virtual 4-H Programs can be viewed on the ACC 4-H website:

<https://tinyurl.com/acc4hvirtual>

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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](#)

[Bugwood— Pest  
Images](#)

[Landscape Alerts  
Online](#)

[Pest Management  
Handbook](#)

[Georgia Turf](#)

[Free Online  
Webinars](#)

[Pesticide Applicator  
Info](#)

[SE Ornamental  
Horticulture  
Production & IPM  
Blog](#)

[UGA Center for  
Urban Agriculture](#)

[Georgia Certified  
Plant Professional](#)

[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.

Visit us online:



Contact us:

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Bogart, GA 30622  
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