

The New Leaf

Coweta County Master Gardener Extension Volunteers Newsletter
University of Georgia Extension – Coweta County

MARCH 2023

*PATTY ELLIS, MGEV
PRESIDENT*

Henbit, an edible weed



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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

For 25 years I was a practicing physician assistant, (PA) and part of maintaining licensure and certification as a medical professional involves completing a prescribed number of continuing education (CE) hours. For PAs that's 100 hours every two years. I don't practice anymore, but still maintain my certification, so now in addition to my 100 hours of medical CE, I've added 10 hours of MGEV CE as well. Continuing education is so important because every day science is making strides to find new answers and update what we know. We are so lucky to have a fabulous team putting together BYAs and post meeting CE for us to attend right here. Every month you'll find Dale Senko's review of an opportunity to learn. If you come across something that you think others would be interested in, please feel free to email it to me for distribution to the group.

As I write this, there are only 54 days until the spring plant sale! The greenhouse and plant sale teams are working together to grow all of the plants that we will sell. The planning that goes on in the background is like putting together a jigsaw puzzle; deciding on dates and times for seeding, potting, and intake. All of the organization that needs to happen to support this takes so much dedication. The fact that we do two of these sales successfully each year is, frankly, astounding. Watch your email inbox for work and intake days.

We have a volunteer meeting coming up on March 9th at 10 AM. These meetings are a chance for all MGEVs to come together, enjoy each other's company, get some great food, and learn about what is going on with the entire program. If you want to see what else is going on each month check out our volunteer website. The website features a calendar of events, as well as past meeting notes and newsletters. You can find it here <https://extension.uga.edu/county-offices/coweta/agriculture-and-natural-resources/coweta-county-master-gardener-extension-volunteers/volunteer-resources.html>

Did you know that March 28th is Weed Appreciation Day? While we most often think of weeds as something undesirable, to be gotten rid of, weeds can also be valuable in the landscape. They provide a habitat for beneficial insects, protecting exposed and degraded soil, and providing food or fodder. Everything in nature has a purpose, even if we humans don't recognize it, just like every volunteer in our organization has a unique and important role to play.

MAY 2023 GARDEN TOUR

• • • • • Save the Date!! • • • • •



Coweta Master Gardener Extension Volunteer

Spring Garden Tour

Saturday, May 20, 2023

9:00am — 3:00pm

Questions? Call 770-254-2620



An Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action, Veteran, Disability Institution

A meeting of the Garden Tour Committee was held on *Wednesday, February 8th* in the Don Morris meeting room. Watch for future messages offering opportunities to work on this fun project.



Pictured:

Amy Barnes, Diane Cook, Nan Van Patten, Marge Cox, Cathy LeBar, Alice Jackson, David Granroos, Ed Atkinson, Melanie Atkinson, Barbara France, Greg Emerson, Dale Senko, Carol Fuller, Pat Farmer and Donna Dietz.

BYA

Submitted by Lynda Matthews

The February BYA was presented by our own Dan Gentry, Allen Summerlin and CR Phillips. Their topic was pruning tips for the home owner, such a great topic and timely considering the freezing temperatures we had in December. Thank you for your expertise.

March 14, at 10:00 in the morning is our first Morning Glory BYA of 2023. A very special friend of the community and of the Master Gardeners, Mike Cunningham, owner of Country Gardens Farm, will be speaking. His topic will be on Small Space Gardening. In addition to this useful information, Mike is bringing cold season vegetable plants and pollinator plants for purchase.

The small bags of Soil 3 Veggie Mix will also be available to purchase.

Thank you for supporting your BYA. See you March 14th.



DEMONSTRATION GARDEN

Submitted by Amy Keller and Kathy Olmsted

Our demonstration garden has had a lovely nap, but it's time to get it cleaned up and ready for spring. There hasn't been much to do this winter, but we'd like to get back to our regular, every other Tuesday (1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month) work day schedule. While it's still cooler weather, we will start at 1 p.m., and as the weather warms up gradually move back to a morning work day. Times will be posted.

This is a fun and relaxing place to volunteer. The workday will be no more than 1.5-2 hours, and you may join as long as you please. Bring gloves and any weeding tool & pruners.

CONTINUING EDUCATION REVIEW

Submitted by Dale Senko



THOUGHTFUL THURSDAY EPISODE REVIEW
"Disease Update"
February 9, 2023

I watched the first 2023 Thoughtful Thursday titled "Disease Update" on February 9, 2023 with Dr. Elizabeth Little. This is a timely topic so don't wait to view this one. Dr. Little covers how freeze damage may look like disease but isn't. To help identify the freeze damage, she shows photos of damaged plants from our recent freeze. They look a lot like the shrubs, plants and turf in my yard. Other examples of disease vs environmental causes are covered as well as tips on preventing these issues. The diseases she does include in the presentation are those appearing at this time of year, i.e., exobasidium on azaleas and camellias, fire blight on fruit trees and downy mildew on hellebores. The presentation is an hour of continuing education. You can access this and other Thoughtful Thursday presentations on the MGLOG website.

The next Thoughtful Thursday is "Georgia Weather Update" on March 9.

MARCH IN THE GARDEN

- Spring arrives on Monday, March 20 but more cold can still come.
- Prune early spring blooming plants (forsythia, quince, winter honeysuckle) after they finish blooming.
- Sow seeds indoors for spring vegetables and flower transplants according to germination and planting dates.
- Divide overgrown clumps of hosta.
- Finish pruning rose bushes.
- Prepare your garden beds for planting; incorporate plenty of organic matter such as compost. Check the UGA Weather site for temperature of soil when beginning to plant.

Georgiaweather.net

<http://georgiaweather.net/?content=calculator&variable=CC&site=WANSLEY>



MARCH PRUNING HINTS FROM CR

- **Annuals:** Pick out and snip off all those faded blooms and stems. Neaten up their pot.
- **Bulbs:** Right now, you should be seeing lots of blooms. Nothing to do but Enjoy!
- **Edibles:** Blueberries tend to grow tall sprouts in the center of the bush. Now is an excellent time to remove them, BUT DO NOT prune any horizontal branches within 6' of the ground as they will bear most of your fruit.
- **Houseplants:** Turn your house plants once a month as they tend to lean into the sun. It makes them look neater that way.
- **Lawns:** I just had my yard 'scalped' removing all the chaff, and it's starting to green up already.
- **Perennials and Ornamental Grasses:** Nothing this month, but April will be busy.
- **Roses:** Prune bush roses severely between now and March 15th. The new growth that is produced will bear most of the year's rose blooms. Wait untill June to prune climbing roses.
- Also, remove all the dead and diseased branches. Cut away limbs that rub. If the plant is completely overgrown, 1/2 to 2/3 may need to be removed.
- **Shrubs:** Continue to prune deciduous shrubs removing all dead wood. If a shrub is rangy, spindly, or has overgrown its location, it is time to prune it back severely. Stay off your camellias until they finish blooming.
- **Trees:** Prune all dead and diseased branches. There aren't any leaves, so it's easy to see what needs to be done. Remove all crossing branches, rubbing branches, and any branches that make a sharp V-shape with the main trunk as these are usually weak and are prone to break off.
- **Vines and Ground Covers:** Get out your lawnmower and mow off your monkey grass on the mower's highest setting or about 3". Spring will convert the ragged edges with lovely, new green foliage.
- And as always, many, many thanks to Reeves & Glasener for their "Month-By-Month GARDENING in GEORGIA."



Gardening reduces stress and improves mental health

Working in the garden reduces cortisol levels (a chemical your body produces in response to stress) even more than reading a book. Just sitting in a garden helps, too.

GREEN HOUSE

Thank you to the 20 or so MGEVs that took time out of their day February 16th to help us prepare 462 softwood cuttings and seed approximately 400 peppers! The Greenhouse is starting to look full. Stephanie stopped by the Greenhouse this afternoon and is excited about our progress.

If you have brought mother plants, please pick them up and take them home, and thank you so much for your donation!

A couple quick items:

~~Please do not bring any more boxes to the Greenhouse/Shed. The shed is cluttered and hard to navigate. We will let you know when we are ready for the strong/durable strawberry-produce boxes.

~~Per Stephanie, please do not touch or alter the thermostat, fans, or watering system. If you think something needs to be changed or checked on, please contact Barbara Schwartz, Ros Johnson, Kathy Olmsted, or Kim Magyar.

~~We no longer use Sign Up Genius for work days. All are welcome to come and stay for whatever length of time you are able.

We thank everyone so much for their time and talents. By working together, we are going to have a successful 2023 Spring Plant Sale! Only 57 days until April 15!

Hope to see each and every one of you before then.

**Barbara Schwartz, 404-304-9247, Ros Johnson, 678-852-7719
Kathy Olmsted, 513-265-1793, Kim Magyar, 678-467-8023**





MARCH tentative work day schedule for the Greenhouse. (GH) For those that work M-F, there are 3 work days scheduled on Saturdays--and lots of volunteer opportunities for us all.

Wednesday, March 1

9am until done: Soil mixing/potting. 10am until complete: Intake day!

TBD: Range of March 2-9

Pot peppers

Saturday, March 4

9am until done: Soil mixing/potting. 10am until complete: Intake day!

Wednesday, March 8

9am until done: Soil mixing/potting. 10am until complete: Intake day!

Saturday, March 11

Last Intake day, if needed.

9am until complete soil mixing/potting. 10am until complete: Intake day!

Monday, March 13

10am until complete: Seed zinnia, squash, cukes, black eye susan vine, moonflower, euphorbia, and watermelon.

General clean up GH area.

Wednesday, March 15

10am until complete: Tomato seeding in trays.

Tuesday, March 21

10am until complete: Seed the 6 packs of tomatoes

Saturday, March 25

10am until complete: Transplanting 3/15 tomatoes from the trays into pots

The Greenhouse Team and Spring Plant Sale Team

Barbara Schwartz, Ros Johnson, Kathy Olmsted, Kim Magyar

SUNSHINE COMMITTEE

Submitted by Sara Hanson

This month please send some warm sunshine to:

**BEVERLY MADDOX
MARCIA MOORE
LYN MATTHEWS &
ANN ROUSE**



YELLOW BAG FUND RAISER

The \$30 off was until February 28. You can use the code Coweta2023 all year for an extra \$5 off and Coweta MGEVs will get \$15 for each bag sold with the fundraising code.



DELIVERY INCLUDED

Order online with our code at **soil3.com**

GIVE & GROW
with **SOIL³**

Soil3 Compost \$30 off Early Bird sale!!
Get a \$5 extra discount and MGEVs get \$15 for each bag sold with fundraising code—Coweta2023

Soil³ Humus Compost \$199.99 — 35.00 \$164.99	<—includes local delivery—> <—(Early Bird + \$5 Discs)—>	\$224.99 — 35.00 \$189.99	Soil³ Veggie Mix
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Questions? Contact the Extension Office at **770-254-2620**
<https://shop.soil3.com/discount/Coweta2023>

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NATURE TRAIL

Submitted by Ed Atkinson, Melanie Atkinson, and Audrey Harrelson

We have a request for volunteers for March at the Nature Trail . As usual, in cold weather work hours are from 1 to 3 pm, and there is no problem if you can't stay the entire time. We did more planting in February, hopefully finished until the fall planting season. The invasive plant eradication continues. If we need to cancel a workday, I'll notify those who have signed up. If you sign up but can't make it, please let someone on the committee know.

March dates:

Monday, March 6

Monday, March 13

Saturday, March 18

Monday, March 27

ARTIST and VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH – MARGE COX

Marge Cox not only creates quilts for herself, but she is a volunteer with Coweta County Quilts of Valor. Marge is pictured here with her band of “Merry Quilters” working on quilts that are given to veterans from Coweta County.



HELP DESK

Submitted by Deberah Williams

So far in 2023, the majority of our client's questions have been about soil tests. A pretty cut-and-dry topic. Those clients might have questions, but they are a pretty easy call to take. "Do you understand the recommendations" and "do you have any questions?" We then send them some publications. Job done.

Sometimes however, interesting topics pop up, and for me, they expand my vision about things to recommend to future clients. One that made me really think was a question on the spreadsheet about mulberries. "My old mulberry tree is dying, and I want to cut it down and replace it with two mulberry trees, so please recommend a variety that does well in our area." The MGEV at the Help Desk did just that and made a great recommendation. Mulberries are trees that can be found in home gardens for as long as I can remember. I recall there was one on our property, but I really don't remember shaking the tree so the fruit would drop to a cloth below to harvest it. What fun! This is recommended in the UGA publication, *Minor Fruits and Nuts in Georgia*, Bulletin 992.

I also wondered, could Marilla's homemade wine in *Anne of Green Gables*, (which Anne mistakenly served to Diana causing her to become inebriated) have been made from mulberries? I looked it up and sadly the wine was made from Red Currants *Ribes rubrum*. I didn't think we could grow red currants here. L.M. Montgomery was, after all writing about Prince Edward Island off the coast of Canada. But according to the UGA publication they can grow in our area if the frost doesn't kill them. Always a possibility in Coweta County, right?

But in *Minor Fruits and Nuts in Georgia*, there are fruits and nuts that can be grown here, using the recommended varieties: serviceberries, juneberries, kiwi, pawpaw, elderberries, cherries, pomegranates, and nuts including almonds and chestnuts. That is in addition to the major fruits like blueberries, blackberries, muscadines, apples, pears, and figs. Most of the major fruits have their own UGA publication and many need more chill hours than we have in our area.

Many of the minor fruits have a native variety. Did I mention that if you plant these fruit trees and shrubs, they are magnets for birds? We need to remember these plants when advising clients who want to have gardens that attract pollinators and birds.

Finally, I did find Marilla's (L. M. Montgomery's) recipe for currant wine. Here is the link if you are interested. *Marilla's Cuthbert's Red Current Wine*, from *The Farmer General*. Recipe comes from L. M. Montgomery's own recipes, available in *Aunt Maud's Recipe Book* edited by Elaine Crawford.

<http://farmergeneral.com/the-abbreviated-edible-fellowship-marilla-cuthberts-red-currant-wine/>
Minor Fruits and Nuts in Georgia, <https://extension.uga.edu/publications/detail.html?number=b992>



BOYS AND GIRLS GARDEN CLUB

Rebecca Gibson delivered a wonderful program to the boys and girls, continuing the vegetable theme. The children planted potatoes and took home the bean plants that had sprouted since their last meeting. MGEVs helping with the meeting were Marge Cox, Rebecca Gibson, Sonjia Lambeck, Kris Carpenter, Amanda Nelms, Dale Senko and Pat Farmer.



FEBRUARY MGEV PROGRAMS

February 4:

Coweta County MGEVs offered a very successful Propagation Workshop at the Extension Office. Allen Summerlin and Cathy LeBar discussed the various propagation techniques that gardeners can use to save and multiply their plants.



February 8:

Pat Farmer and Cathy LeBar conducted a Seed Saving Workshop at the Mitchell Powell Jr. Library. They have created a catalogue of seeds for patrons to borrow and return seeds.



February 14:

Dan Gentry, Allen Summerlin and CR Phillips again wowed the BYA audience with their topic, pruning tips for the homeowner.

2023 Master Gardener Coweta County Committee Chairs

Ask MG/Market Day	Harley Stewart
Backyard Association	Melanie Landrum, Deberah Williams
Boys & Girls Club/Youth Ed.	Rebecca Gibson
Demonstration Garden	Kathy Olmsted, Amy Keller
Education	Cathy LeBar, Paula Hyatt
Ext. Support/MGEV Help Desk	Susan Mills (library), Patty Ellis, Deberah Williams
Fall Plant Sale	Kim Magyar, Kathy Olmsted
Finance	Colleen Stephens
Fundraising	Diane Cook, Cathy LeBar
Garden Tour	Diane Cook
Greenhouse	Ros Johnson, Barbara Schwartz
Hospitality	Colleen Stephens, Amy Sharpe
Communications	Shanna Campbell
Nature Trail	Ed Atkinson, Melanie Atkinson, Audrey Harrelson
Scholarship	Jennie Adcock
Speakers Bureau	Dan Gentry
Spring Plant Sale	Kim Magyar, Kathy Olmsted
Sunshine	Sara Hanson
The New Leaf	Pat Farmer
Volunteer Awards	Patty Ellis
Volunteer Management/Support	Patty Ellis, CR Phillips

Photos: Pat Farmer, Ed Atkinson. Kim Magyar, Ron Gill, Patty Ellis.

Editors: Dianne Teer, Patty Ellis, Connie Gilliam

