

# The New Leaf

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

**DECEMBER**  
**2023**

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*PATTY ELLIS,*  
*MGEV PRESIDENT*

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## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

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**"If you truly love nature, you will find beauty everywhere" – Vincent van Gogh**

All I can say is, "What a year it's been for the Coweta County Master Gardeners!" From big events like plant sales, a garden tour, and party with petals, to behind-the-scenes activities like help desk, communications, and nature trail, we as a group have touched the lives and gardens of thousands of our neighbors. Every plant sold, question answered, and presentation shared has propagated the love of gardening and beauty of nature for friends and strangers (who don't remain strangers for long). All your volunteer and Continuing Education (CE) hours are evidence of the fact that this program makes a difference, not only for us, but for all of those that we meet along the way. And that is the beauty that I see in everything that this group does.

Thank you, to all of you, for having the confidence in me to lead the group this year. While I would love to take credit for all the successes we've had, the truth is that I just tried to stay out of the way, so that you can do the amazing work that you do! I hope that everything that the board has done this year has set the group up to be even more successful next year, under the competent leadership of Diane Cook, our incoming president. I'd also like to give a shout out to our Extension staff for all the support they have provided this year. Stephanie Butcher, Dana Selementi, Ashley Yeager, Laura Morris, and everyone else, thank you for everything that you do to make this program successful.

The last big event of the year is the holiday party on December 13<sup>th</sup> and I hope to see everyone there for fabulous food and fellowship, awards for service, and the chance to win a trivia contest. Speaking of awards, don't forget to log your volunteer and CE hours so that we can recognize all of your hard work. As I write this in late November, we have a lock on 4<sup>th</sup> place in the state for volunteer hours!

I hope that each of you has a safe and healthy holiday season and I look forward to a new year of gardening in 2024.



A tiny basil plant is still blooming in my garden.

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## A PARTY WITH PETALS







**I hope everyone had the opportunity to attend the Morning Glory BYA, "A Party with Petals." I think it's safe to say we broke attendance records with a total of 155 attendees. Deberah and I want to thank all of you who helped make this event a HUGE success! The BYA team began planning this event back in March and no doubt our expectations were exceeded! YOU ALL made that possible!**

**A huge shout out to all who helped, from the BYA team to those of you who jumped in to help with setup on Monday. You transformed the fairgrounds event room into true "party" mode. Someone told me the energy in the room was electrifying and I definitely agree! The hospitality team outdid themselves. Thank you to all who helped with refreshments by sharing your favorite goodies. It was quite the spread, and the tables were gorgeous. To all of you who pitched in for the cleanup it was truly a team effort. There were so many side job responsibilities too, I don't want to leave anyone out, but you know who you are. There were and continue to be so many compliments!!**

**No doubt Jason Powell was impressed and thrilled at the turnout! He has been a friend of CCMGEV for 12+ years. We are fortunate to have such a huge supporter and advocate for our program. We are truly providing educational opportunities for many in our local community, which is always our goal.**

**Melanie Landrum**

## BYA

Submitted by Lyn Matthews

Our November speaker, Giff Beaton, gave a very thrilling talk. Giff inspired us with his talk on "Bird Migration" and he brought the topic to us in a very vivid way.

In January, Paul Pugliese will speak on "Perils and Pitfalls of Overused Plants." We can all learn from this. Paul is the UGA County Extension Coordinator/ANR Agent for Bartow County.

Join us in December for the MGEV Holiday and Awards Program. We will gather to remember 2023, our accomplishments, and our happy events. Please come and enjoy the food, fellowship, and awards. Our Hospitality Committee will once again provide a wonderful event.

## CONTINUING EDUCATION REVIEW

Submitted by Dale Senko



If you want to learn more about milkweeds and their relationship to monarchs, watch the video "Monarchs and Milkweed", at the Garden Gate gardening series on YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BKqe-4ORhVo&t=3s>

As you plan your garden for 2024, be sure to include milkweed in it, especially if you have a pollinator garden. This video explains the relationship between milkweed and monarchs, and how critical milkweed is to the monarch population. The following are all described in a simple, easy to understand approach: different native non-tropical species, common bug infestations, the monarch life cycle, and how to harvest and plant milkweed seeds. While you are at the site, check out the other Garden Gate seminar videos. I have found them to be very instructive and entertaining.

## SUNSHINE COMMITTEE

A note from Beverly Maddox:

*"Thank you, my Beloved MGEV Family for your kindness during our deepest sadness. Whether you kept us in your thoughts and prayers, sent one of the many touching cards, sent a lovely floral arrangement, gave a Memorial donation or helped out in anyway, your love brought us great comfort and will always be remembered. I am so appreciative of the recognition of my Beloved husband, James in the Newsletter, so sweet! I miss you, Beverly Maddox"*

## DECEMBER IN THE GARDEN

- Water newly planted trees and shrubs during cold weather.
- Do holiday shopping for garden-loving friends and family. Consider gifts like garden tools, gloves, birdhouses, books on native plants, and garden calendars.
- Resist temptation to prune shrubs and trees now.
- Replenish mulch around your plants.
- Harvest fall planted vegetables.
- Keep bird feeders filled and clean throughout the winter.
- Review notes from the summer to plan for next year's garden. Order catalogs and review online.

## DECEMBER PRUNING HINTS FROM CR

- Annuals: Remove faded flowers from pansies, dianthus, and snapdragons.
- Bulbs: No pruning is required at this time.
- Edibles: A good pair of hand pruners and long-handled loppers are essential for maintaining fruit trees and vines. When purchasing pruning tools, you get what you pay for. Now is the time to disassemble, sharpen, lubricate, and clean your sharp instruments for future use.
- Houseplants: Prune your evergreen shrubbery and bring the cuttings indoors. juniper, holly, and magnolia foliage is quite decorative when arranged around houseplants. Use Nandina berries for a red accent in a table centerpiece.
- Lawns: Mow your fescue and ryegrass regularly, removing only 1/3 of the height each time. Now is an excellent time for mower maintenance. Run the engine until it runs out of gas and stops, check to make sure there is plenty of oil in the engine sump, tip the mower deck up and clean the bottom of the mower if necessary, and remove and sharpen the blade. Now you're all set for next year.
- Perennials and Ornamental Grasses: If you haven't cleaned up your perennial garden, now is the time to do so. Prune dead stalks and leaves but remember to leave 3 to 4 inches of stem as a marker (you will cut down the dead stalks in early spring once new growth begins to emerge). Discard any diseased leaves or plants.
- Roses: There is no pruning now.
- Shrubs: You can do a little selective pruning of evergreens like hollies, nandinas, and camellias if you want to use them for holiday decorations, but wait until early spring just before they begin to actively grow, to do any substantial pruning.
- Trees: Prune out any dead, diseased, or broken branches from trees planted in the last six months. If you have deciduous trees that require major pruning, schedule the work to be done in the next six months while trees are still dormant. Be sure you hire or consult with an arborist if you are not sure which branches are alive and which are dead.
- Vines and Ground Covers: Once vines are dormant you can prune to shape them, but be sure not to prune off flower buds for next spring.



## WHAT HAVE WE HERE?



**The mystery plant of November was:**

**False Foxglove, Against tenuifolia**

Slender-leaved False Foxglove is a very fine textured native wildflower found in sunny areas in wet woodlands, thickets, meadows, along coastal shores, and in disturbed areas. Plant it in full sun to partial shade in moist well-drained soil though it does withstand many soil types and moisture levels. It self-seeds easily and will naturalize in the landscape.



**Who can identify this famous insect?**

**Send answers to:  
Patfarmer100@gmail.com**



## FUN AFTERNOONS

A group of present, future and friends of the MGEVs attended an afternoon of food and flowers on November 4. Everyone enjoyed the pastries and fellowship at St. Paul's recent Fall Flower Festival and Tea. Another MGEV, Bonnie Umberger created one of the many theme based flower designs displayed around the church.

Ruth Phillips (MGEV friend), Beck Lee and Cindy Irons (MGEV Class of 2024), Amy Barnes, Melanie Landrum, and (not pictured) Kim Magyar, Dianne Teer, Dale Senko, and Pat Farmer had a great time.



On November 20, 2023, Lyn Matthews directed her band of merry elves in decorating the Christmas tree at the Extension Office. Over the years, it has been customary for Lyn to trim the tree. We played Christmas music and enjoyed each other's company. In the picture are Kathy Olmsted, Amy Keller, Ginger Coats, Kim Magyar, Lyn Matthews, and Lyn's daughter-in-law Kathy Matthews. A big thank you to Dana Selementi for taking our group picture. Merry Christmas!



## AND THE WINNER IS...

We can't wait to try this recipe, Janice! (from NTH Cookie Contest)



## SAVE THE DATE

**MGEV CHRISTMAS PARTY – DECEMBER 13<sup>th</sup> – 5:30pm**

**Please RSVP on the Sign Up Genius or  
 call the Extension office 770-254-2620**

## Get Ready for the 124th Christmas Bird Count!

While we're not quite ready to share the results from last year's Christmas Bird Count, which will be part of a special edition of American Birds, coming out a little later this year, we wanted to make sure that you had ample time to prep for this year's count! The Christmas Bird Count season starts December 14, 2023, and ends January 5, 2024. Now is a great time to reach out to a count circle compiler to volunteer! [Click here for a map of all count circles](#)

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## PLANT SALE & GREENHOUSE

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Submitted by Kim Magyar

The Plant Sale and Greenhouse Team met recently to discuss the seed order for the 2024 Spring Plant Sale (SPS). The greenhouse is heated and all the mother plants are looking good, as are the cuttings. We will need to order some trade gallons for the 2024 SPS, as well as a load of soil. The Watering Team is getting a small break during this cool season. Great plants don't happen without the vital volunteer hours! I also want to reach out to ask if anyone has Angel Trumpet (*Brugmansia*) cuttings that we could have. Also, if you have any shrubs that we haven't sold at our sales, we'd love to add some variety to our shrub and tree inventory. Please contact Kathy Olmsted or Kim Magyar to coordinate.

Kathy and I are also looking for MGEVs to take over the Sales Team in 2025. Ideally, we would like two or three Master Gardeners to shadow us and be involved in the process during 2024. 2024 will be the last year we chair the Sales Team. The past few sales have been successful, but it's time for us to pass it along to MGEVs who have fresh ideas, and new energy. Kathy and I have detailed notes, data, and timelines to share. Being a part of the Plant Sale Team is a great way to learn about plants, propagation, timing, and making connections with other MGEVs. Reach out to us for more information! Kathy and I wish everyone a peaceful and beautiful Christmas season.

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This amaryllis was in bloom at the greenhouse on Monday, November 20, 2023



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## 2023 Master Gardener Coweta County Committee Chairs

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**Ask MG/Market Day**  
**Backyard Association**  
**Boys & Girls Club/Youth Ed.**  
**Demonstration Garden**  
**Education**  
**Ext. Landscape**  
**Ext. Support/MGEV Help Desk**

Harley Stewart  
 Melanie Landrum, Deberah Williams  
 Rebecca Gibson  
 Kathy Olmsted, Amy Keller  
 Cathy LeBar, Paula Hyatt  
 Cathy LeBar  
 Susan Mills (library), Patty Ellis, Deberah Williams

**Fall Plant Sale**  
**Finance**  
**Fundraising**  
**Garden Tour**  
**Greenhouse**

Kim Magyar, Kathy Olmsted  
 Colleen Stephens  
 Diane Cook, Cathy LeBar  
 Diane Cook  
 Barbara Schwartz (lead), Cathy LeBar, Marge Cox  
 Colleen Stephens, Amy Sharpe  
 Jerry Allen  
 Ed Atkinson, Melanie Atkinson, Audrey Harrelson

**Hospitality**  
**Communications**  
**Nature Trail**

**Scholarship**  
**Speakers Bureau**  
**Spring Plant Sale**  
**Sunshine**  
**The New Leaf**  
**Volunteer Awards**  
**Volunteer Management/Support**

Jennie Adcock  
 Dan Gentry  
 Kim Magyar, Kathy Olmsted  
 Sara Hanson  
 Pat Farmer  
 Patty Ellis  
 Patty Ellis, CR Phillips

Photos: Pat Farmer, Amy Keller, Dave Granroos, Marge Cox, Dale Senko, Patty Ellis  
 Editors: Dianne Teer, Patty Ellis, Connie Gilliam



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**EXTENSION**  
 Master Gardener Program

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