

THE NEW LEAF

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

FEBUARY 2025



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

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Oh my! Has this not been the strangest start of a new year in a long time? All of this snow; what in the world do we do with it. Well, I have settled back in my comfy chair, fire in the fireplace, and am enjoying one of the books recommended by Cliff Brock at our January BYA. He was entertaining and freeing in his approach to gardening. If you missed him, be sure to watch the video on Facebook and You Tube when it airs.

We had great attendance at our Volunteer Meeting and BYA this month. Thanks to all who braved the cold to come out. The Greenhouse team has also braved the cold. They had two workdays with another coming up before the end of January. The Hospitality Committee has already served us twice, and I always appreciate how inviting everything looks and how good it tastes. I know that they would appreciate having you volunteer to bring something to share at one of our upcoming events. Just let Susan Mills or Amy Sharpe know or sign up at one of our meetings. Pat Farmer and her team always appreciate contributions for the New Leaf.

This is a great time to think about how you want to contribute as a Master Gardener Extension Volunteer (MGEV) this year. Take a look at the list of committees. There are so many opportunities and we need each of you to participate in order to have a strong and successful organization. If you need help deciding on something feel free to ask questions. It's fun to work with fellow MGEVs, getting to know them better and learning more about their passion for gardening.
Everyone has something to share.

Enough for this time! Stay safe and warm and I hope to see you soon.

Jennie

*We ♥ our
Volunteers*

NANCY'S NEWS

Submitted by Nancy Coats



Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge to be Nominated to Join UNESCO World Heritage List

The nomination will now go to the Federal Register for public review and then be submitted to the World Heritage Committee for a final decision. If designated, the refuge would join the list recognizing 1,223 cultural and natural sites of universal importance.

Here is an interesting article about the Okefenokee Refuge UNESCO nomination.. Please support this wonderful honor.

Friday, December 20, 2024

WASHINGTON — The Department of the Interior today announced that Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge will be nominated to join the UNESCO World Heritage List.

Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge, managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, consists of more than 400,000 acres encompassing 92 percent of the Okefenokee Swamp, a large hydrologically intact swamp that is the source of two rivers – one that flows into the Atlantic and the other into the Gulf of Mexico. It is one of the world's largest naturally driven freshwater ecosystems in the temperate zone with a diversity of habitat types, including 21 vegetative types. The refuge's undisturbed peat beds store valuable information on environmental conditions over the past 5,000 years and are a significant source of information related to global changes.

The nomination comes after a collaborative process with partners and consultation with the Federal Interagency Panel for World Heritage. The nomination will now go to the Federal Register for public review and then be submitted to the World Heritage Committee, composed of representatives from 21 nations, for a final decision for inclusion on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

I have also been to the Stephen C. Foster State Park entrance for a meteor shower. There are rental cabins (State Park rustic with beds, sofa, TV, basic kitchen outfitting). If you go for the meteor shower, definitely rent a cabin. It's a Dark Sky park, so you will want to have a few red bulbed flashlights (regular flashlights not allowed in a Dark Sky park). Also, either State or Federal law requires the park gates be closed at 10 PM. The best time for the meteor shower when we were there was between midnight and 1 AM.

Stephen C. Foster State Park

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stephen_C._Foster_State_park

Stephen C. Foster State Park is a 120-acre (49 ha) state park in the Okefenokee Swamp in Charlton County, Georgia.

GREENHOUSE

Submitted by Barb Schwartz

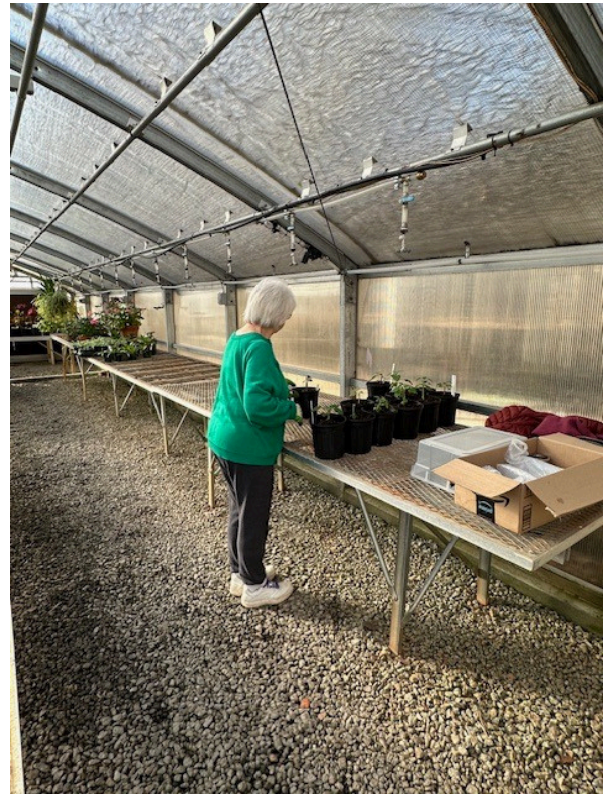
Jan 16th workday. Seeding and repotting.

Many hands made quick work. The tree seedlings were so large that we were able to pot 52 of them into 2 and 3 gallon pots. Between Mother Nature and the plant care team, we expect them to flourish.



Assembly line getting things upsized.

Marge Cox tending to begonias



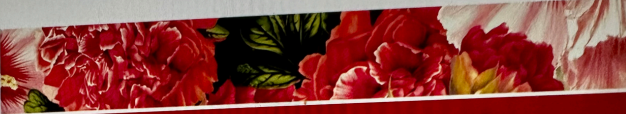
Carol Fuller is the designated organizer of newly potted herbaceous seedlings.



BYA & MORNING GLORY

Submitted by Kim Magyar

Cliff Brock kicked off the 2025 BYA season with a charming talk titled “Slips, Seeds, and Starts.” Cliff loves to share plants. His life mission is to be a modern day Johnny Appleseed by sharing his rare and unusual plants. Cliff's enthusiasm for sharing and starting plants made it seem easy to do, even for a beginning gardener. Starts are his favorite way of sharing because they tend to be the most successful. Cliff has a passion for trilliums. A couple of fun facts from Cliff are that Georgia has the most species of trilliums, and mayapple plants are primarily spread by tortoise droppings. Cliff definitely enjoys “pass along plants” and his talk was inspiring. He encourages us to try seed starting and divisions, and asks us to become very familiar with our favorite plant and share our knowledge about that plant. Cliff's program was endearing and accessible. He brought SO MANY PLANTS for door prizes. Hope to see you all next month. There are 2 programs in February. BYA is about trees and Morning Glory is about bulbs. Check the MGEV calendar for more information.




Backyard Association

A Presentation by Coweta Master Gardener Extension

Jeremy Oxford
Horticulturist, Certified Arborist,
Formerly: Hills & Dales Estate,
UGA Graduate

Tuesday @ 7:00pm
February 11, 2025


**“Let’s Talk Trees:
A gardener’s guide
to tree care”**



UGA Extension – Coweta County
255 Pine Rd, Newnan, GA 30263
(770) 254-2620 / coweta.extension@uga.edu

FREE to attend, but you must register to be entered into the drawing for door prizes.

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extension@uga.edu, at least three weeks prior to
the program date.



A Morning Glory Backyard Association Event

A Presentation by Coweta Master Gardener Extension



Keith G. Robinson
Dunaway Gardens Executive Director–
Gardens and Culinary;
Garden and Environmental Designer;
Featured in *Garden & Gun*, *Garden Design*,
Atlanta Homes & Lifestyles, *Veranda*

Tuesday @ 10:00am
February 25, 2025

**“Collecting and
Designing with Bulbs”**
+ Happenings at Dunaway Gardens!

UGA Extension – Coweta County
255 Pine Rd, Newnan, GA 30263
(770) 254-2620 / coweta.extension@uga.edu

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INSPIRING YOU

Submitted by Dale Senko



More inspiration for you this month from the Inspiration Garden. Garden leaders Kathy Olmsted and Amy Keller decided to do some “milk jug” gardening with the volunteers -Nancy Harrelson, Susan Mills, Liz Volz, Ada Rasoulia, Dick Viall, and Dale Senko.

As the name indicates, seeds are sown in milk jugs and will spend the winter in the jugs cold stratifying. When the temperatures increase by early spring, the seeds will germinate. The photo of different seed packs are the many different flowers chosen to spend winter in their “jug” greenhouses at the Inspiration Garden

Try this technique in your garden. Information on seed packets will help you to figure out which seeds should be planted when. ‘Direct sow after all danger of frost has passed’ becomes code for planting in late winter/early spring, and ‘start indoors 3-4 weeks before average last frost’ means sow in milk jugs in mid to later winter, while “sow 4-6 weeks before average last frost” indicates planting time in early to mid-winter. You can find more information about starting seeds in milk jugs in last month’s newsletter and various websites.

Keep an eye on the containers. Water the seedlings lightly if they dry out. When temperatures hit 50-60 F, especially if it is sunny, remove the tops of the jugs so the seedlings won’t fry. Cover again in the evening.

When the seedlings have produced at least two sets of true leaves, it is time to transplant them into individual containers to allow the roots to grow and then transplant them into the garden.

We trenched the jugs at the Inspiration Garden in a raised bed to avoid disturbance by critters or wind. No need to bury them in the ground because they need the cold exposure time.

We will show you how the seeds progress in the Inspiration Garden in the coming months.



CONTINUING EDUCATION

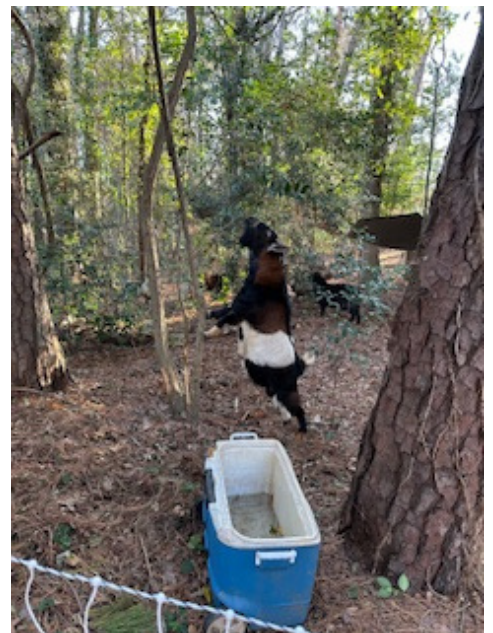
Submitted by Cathy LeBar

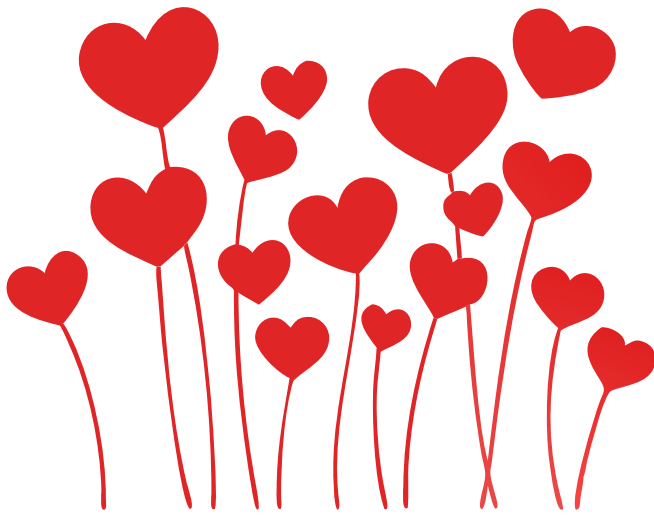


Rhodes Shell gave a Continuing Education presentation after the recent MGEV Volunteer meeting.

Rhodes , Class of 2022, has been an orchid hobbyist for many years, attending Orchid shows and keeping up with “Everything Orchids”. He had a display of different varieties of orchids and told us the characteristics of each one. He also demonstrated how to repot a Phalanopsis .

Rhodes has also found a way to solve his weed problem.

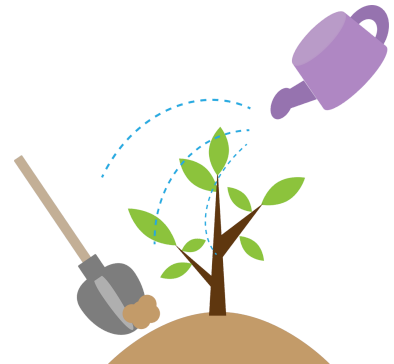




FEBRUARY IN THE GARDEN

- Good time to prune.
- Clean out bird boxes and get ready for returning birds.
- Some cool season crops may be planted when soil is above 40 degrees.

Georgia Arbor Day in 2025 is on Friday, February 21st. Arbor Day is a national holiday that celebrates the importance of trees. Many states celebrate Arbor Day on different days, based on the best time to plant trees in their area. Georgia traditionally celebrates Arbor Day on the third Friday of February.



PRUNING IN FEBRUARY

Annuals: Remove faded blooms from plants as they occur (Just like in January).

Bulbs: Remove faded blooms as they occur. Leave the foliage until it turns yellow and collapses.

Edibles: Blueberries tend to grow tall sprouts in the center of the bush. Now is a good time to remove them. Don't prune branches that are within picking distance. The horizontal branches within 6' of the ground will bear the most fruit.

Houseplants: Most plants will naturally lean toward their light source. Unless they are turned once per month, indoor plants acquire an unbalanced look. Small potted plants can be turned by hand. Larger plants in pots can be placed on wheeled plant holders designed for easy turning. Ungainly plants can be pruned back by half to correct asymmetric growth.

Lawns: Your lawn should be dormant this month and no mowing will be necessary.

Perennials and Ornamental Grasses: While there are no pruning activities this month, it's an excellent time for transplanting, watering during mild spells in the weather, and fertilizing with a liquid 20-20-20 fertilizer.

PRUNING CONTINUED:

Roses: Prune rose bushes severely between now and March 15th. The new growth that is produced will bear most of this year's rose blooms. Wait until June to prune climbing roses. Remove dead, weak, or damaged canes. Make a flat cut $\frac{1}{2}$ in. below the dead or damaged portion. Cut away limbs that rub against each other or cross through the center of the plant. To shorten a living branch, make a 45 degree angle cut $\frac{1}{4}$ in. above a bud that points outward from the plant. If your rose has been pruned every year, prune back the size of the plant by $\frac{1}{3}$. If the rosebush is completely overgrown, $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{2}{3}$ of the plant might need to be removed.

Shrubs: Continue to prune deciduous shrubs to remove dead wood, rejuvenate them, or keep them from getting too big for the space in which they are growing (as when they block the view from windows or spread out into a pathway). One way to avoid the need to prune constantly is to select the right plant for the right place. If shrubs have overgrown their original location or become straggly and spindly in appearance, prune them back severely while they are dormant. Prune back spirea, privet, and Abelia X grandiflora to a height of 12 inches. You may choose to stretch out the pruning over a period of years. Remove $\frac{1}{3}$ of the oldest wood in the first year. In the second year take $\frac{1}{2}$ of the remaining oldest stems and cut back long shoots that grew from the previous season. In the third year, prune out whatever old wood (the oldest wood has the thickest stems) is remaining, and prune new shoots just enough for a pleasing effect. Prune camellias and azaleas once they finish flowering. Remove faded blooms and snip back the tips of branches for an overall pleasing effect. Prune evergreen shrubs like boxwood, holly, anise, leucothoe, and others before new growth begins. Remove dead wood and tip branches to a desired height.

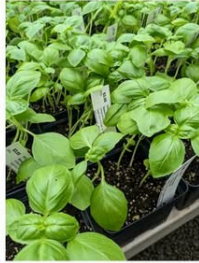
Trees: This is a good month to prune deciduous trees. Because there are no leaves, you can see the form of the tree and determine where you need to prune. When pruning to remove a large limb do so in stages so the branch doesn't tear and split back on the tree, peeling off a section of bark. Do not make a flush cut. Prune back to where the swollen part of the branch comes out of the tree. This is called the branch collar. Sharp, good quality tools are best, and regular maintenance will ensure they last a long time. Hand-pruners are ideal for heading and thinning stems up to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch in diameter. Loppers are ideal for selective pruning of larger branches. Saws are useful for branches over 1 inch in diameter. Tips for pruning your newly planted trees: 1) Remove dead or diseased branches, 2) Remove broken branches below the point of injury back to a healthy branch, 3) Prune to remove branches that are crossing or rubbing. Wounds can develop where branches rub, creating an environment conducive to pest and disease problems, and 4) Remove branches that form narrow V-shaped crotches with the main trunk. These crotches are weak and may break in the future. To minimize the problem, select improved varieties of trees with strong branching habits.

Vines and Ground Covers: This is a good month to get out the lawn mower and cut back your tattered or winter-damaged monkey grass. By cutting it back now there will be a reduced chance of cutting off new growth. Set the mower at the highest setting and mow down the foliage. The grass should be about 3 inches high when you finish. If you have only a small patch of monkey grass, you can cut it back with a pair of sharp shears. Once spring arrives, fresh dark-green leaves will quickly cover up the ragged edges.

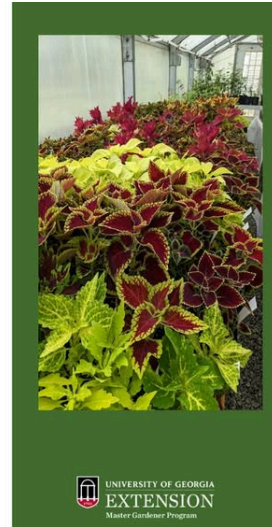
PLANT SALE

Submitted by Cindy Irons

Save the Date!
Coweta MGEV Spring Plant Sale
Saturday April 12th, 2025
Stay tuned for more details.



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Preparation Is Underway At The Greenhouse

The deep freeze did not deter our MGEVs from our first planting session in January. Dedicated volunteers braved what felt like temperatures of 28 degrees to plant tree seedlings from the Georgia Forestry Service.

We all learned a little something about the Overcup Oaks. They have taproots about one foot in length. Key learning: the taproot determines the depth and size of the pot needed to grow the plant in.



Dick Viall, Rhodes Shell, Norbert Snyder



Barbara Schwartz and Dave Granroos



Christina Potts and P Funk

70 Days and Counting Until the 2025 Spring Plant Sale

Thanks to everyone for a great start and your continued support. We appreciate the time that is donated and the advice and gardening treasures that everyone shares. We appreciate those who buy seeds, plugs, and supplies and those who haul dirt and keep the greenhouse watered and warm.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW!

**2025 Fall Plant Sale, Saturday, October 4th.
2026 Spring Plant Sale, Saturday, April 11th.**



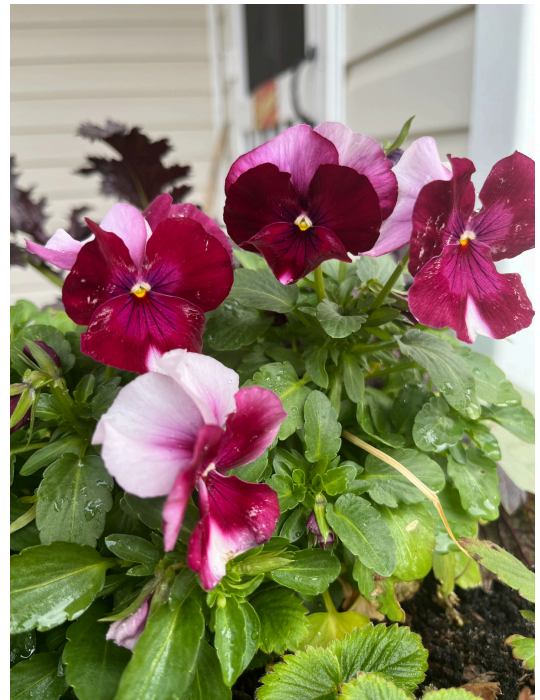
MGEV GARDENS

MELANIE LANDRUM



The garden of Melanie Landrum looks beautiful even in the cold winter months. Melanie grows Meyer lemons, kumkuats, and the always happy violas.

To grow Meyer lemons, plant in well-draining, slightly acidic soil, ensuring it receives at least 6 hours of sunlight daily, preferably from a south-facing window. Water regularly, keeping the soil moist but not soggy, and fertilize with a citrus specific fertilizer during the growing season. Be mindful of temperature changes, bringing the tree indoors during cold weather and gradually acclimating it to outdoor conditions in spring. Maintain humidity levels by misting the leaves or using a humidifier, especially when indoors. And be patient as it can take several months for lemons to fully ripen, usually November or December.



VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION

Submitted by Patty Ellis

Before we talk about 2025, let's look back on 2024. As of this writing on January 20th, Coweta County MGEVs logged 9539.66 hours. This is 185.78 hours more than 2023, and the highest total hours attainment ever for Coweta! Here are a few more statistics from last year:

2024 Annual Summary of Master Gardener Activities Coweta County

- 22 new MGEVs
- 86 returning MGEVs
- 9540 hours valued at \$29.95/hour = \$276,660
- 12 advanced training hours
- 1462 continuing education hours

The following people attained 100 hours in 2024 but were not previously reported: Donna Dietz and Deberah Williams. Congratulations! It was previously reported that Janice Wise had logged 250 hours for 2024, but that has been corrected to at least 100 hours.

We've hit the ground running this year with 232.45 volunteer hours for #2 in the state, behind Cobb and 43 continuing education hours for #1 in the state. During the January meeting Rick Haupt was recognized for completing his initial 50 volunteer hours to become an official MGEV! Way to go Rick!



Congratulations to Rick Haupt, the most recent member of the class of 2024 to become an official Master Gardener Volunteer! Rick is pictured with Dana Selementi, ANR Program Assistant for the Coweta County Extension office.

MGEV Board and Chairpersons

2025 MASTER GARDENER COWETY COUNTY BOARD & COMMITTEE CHAIRS

MGEV BOARD:

President	Jennie Adcock
Vice President	Nan Van Patten
Past President	Diane Cook
President Elect	Kathy Olmsted
Treasurer	Chuck Olmsted
Secretary	Nancy Coats

COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

Ask MG/Market Day	Harley Stewart, Amy Barnes
Backyard Association	Melanie Landrum, Deberah Williams
Boys & Girls Club/Youth Ed.	Rebecca Gibson
Communications	Jerry Allen
Inspiration Garden	Kathy Olmsted, Amy Keller
Education/Speakers Bureau	Cathy LeBar, Nan Van Patten, Patty Ellis
Extension Landscape	Cathy LeBar, Marge Cox, Charlene Rodriguez
Ext. Support/MGEV Help Desk	Susan Mills (Library), Patty Ellis
Fundraising	Open
Garden Tour	Open- No Tour planned until 2026
Greenhouse	Barbara Schwartz (lead), Marge Cox, Rhodes Shell
Hospitality	Amy Sharpe, Susan Mills
Nature Trail	Ed & Melanie Atkinson, Audrey Harrelson
New Leaf	Pat Farmer, Dianne Teer, Patty Ellis
Plant Sales (Fall/Spring)	Cynthia Irons, Mary Pat Geoffrion
Scholarship	Rhodes Shell
Social Media	Patty Ellis
Sunshine	Sara Hanson
Volunteer Awards	Patty Ellis

Photos: Pat Farmer, Dale Senko, Barb Schwartz, Melanie Landrum, Rhodes Shell, Donna Dietz, Patty Ellis
Editors: Pat Farmer, Dianne Teer, Patty Ellis, and Dana Selementi



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