

The New Leaf

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

MARCH 2021

DONNA DIETZ
MGEV PRESIDENT



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

by Donna Dietz

Now that I have “semi” mastered Zoom, which has necessarily become a part of our lives for the past year, I have been enjoying the learning opportunities the app has afforded us. In just the month of February there was our BYA with Walter Reeves, a woody ornamentals presentation with Dr. Bodie Pennisi and an Atlanta History Center’s Cherokee Garden Library talk with Douglas Tallamy. The latter’s book “Nature’s Best Hope”, which was the topic of the presentation, promoted the idea that we need to plant more native species to sustain the declining wildlife population that depend on them to survive. If you haven’t already participated in remote learning, I recommend you give it a try. You never know what you might learn.

With March at our doorstep, I’d like to share a quote by Coweta County’s own Lewis Grizzard.

“Springtime is the land awakening. The March winds are the morning yawn”.

Besides the first day of Spring occurring in March, there are some other noteworthy March dates that may be of interest to you.

March 1 -National Peanut Butter Lovers’ Day

March 3-World Wildlife Day

March 10-National Oreo Cookie Day

March 11-Johnny Appleseed Day

March 12-Plant a Flower Day

March 14-Learn About Butterflies Day and National Potato Chip Day

March 14-Day Light Saving Time starts

March 20-First Day of Spring

March 23-National Puppy Day

March 24-National Cocktail Day

March 28-Respect Your Cat Day

March 30-Take a Walk in the Park Day

So, you see we have a lot to celebrate even in these trying times. Enjoy each day in March as the land awakens. Stay safe and stay well.

February Workday at the Nature Trails



Thanks to the MGEVs who volunteered at the Nature Trail February 10th. We finished top dressing beds with one bag of Soil3 and have another half a cube left to finish at our next workday.

We also removed a number of plants from the beds to redesign the area with additional plants we have started from seed.

We added some red cedars and ferns rescued from another location and planted them on the red trail.

We are happy the weather cooperated and hope the expected rains help our little plants get off to a good start.

Thanks to Deberah, Susan, Liz, Cathy, Gary, Barbara, Lyn, Audrey, Cathy, Paula, Jack

Submitted by Dale Senko

*"The March wind roars
Like a lion in the sky,
And makes us shiver
As he passes by.
When winds are soft,
And the days are warm and clear,
Just like a gentle lamb,
Then spring is here."
- Author Unknown*



MARCH IN THE GARDEN

- Spring arrives on Saturday, 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 UGA Weather site for temperature of soil when beginning to plant. [Georgiaweather.net](http://georgiaweather.net)
<http://georgiaweather.net/?content=calculator&variable=CC&site=WANSLEY>

CR's March Pruning Tips:

As far as pruning goes, you can keep on keeping on. We're kind of in an 'In between' season what with this being very early spring and all. We still have cold temperatures and very cold rain! One thing you might take a look at are your **figs**. You can prune some of the horizontal limbs - being sure to save the verticals - but no more than 25% of the total. That's according to Walter Reeves. Also, UGA says that NOW is the best time to prune your deciduous trees.

Spring is certainly starting to rev up! I see a few sprigs of Bermuda grass coming up in my lawn and I took this picture of a quince in full flower along the side of US 29 just north of the Edgeworth intersection.



“Indoors or out, no one relaxes in March, that month of wind and taxes, the wind will presently disappear, the taxes last us all the year.”

- Ogden Nash

Advice from Dan *The Grass Man* Gentry

As mild days continue to increase and the soil warms, weed seeds have germinated and green weeds, such as chickweed, henbit, hairy bittercress, dandelions and coming-soon crabgrass, stick out defiantly in our brown, dormant lawns. It's a good idea to regularly scout your turfgrass (as you are already doing, right?) in this season to hand pull and/or spray a herbicide on those weeds – towards all proud MGEV's goal of having a (nearly) weed-free yard. One can spray these weeds with common "weed-killer" herbicides used to attack "summer" weeds.

One especially tough weed not killed off by these common products is annual bluegrass (*poa annua*), so hand-pull those while they are small and shallow-rooted to get the complete plant/roots, and definitely before they produce and release their hundreds of seeds for next year's crop. Fall application of pre-emergent is the best means of defense against "poa" in turfgrass.

For warm season grasses, don't get antsy to stimulate growth; don't apply nitrogen fertilizer until the grass is at least 50% "greened" up, typically not until late April. The nitrogen isn't taken up well until the soil is sufficiently warm that the grass starts actively growing. Too-early nitrogen can actually harm grass by promoting early grow of shoots that are quite susceptible to a late freeze and to certain fungal disease.



"March is a month of considerable frustration - it is so near spring and yet across a great deal of the country the weather is still so violent and changeable that outdoor activity in our yards seems light years away."

- Thalassa Cruso

Gardening with Deb the Vegetable Guru!

Master Gardeners all know that timing is very important in any kind of gardening. Right up there with timing is **temperature**. That is why in the past, home gardeners in Georgia used to plant on Good Friday, which this year is April 2. It's almost always after the danger of frost, and the soil temperature is good for germination. We don't really have to plant on that day now, because we just need to know the soil temperature and estimated last frost date. How can we do that?

UGA has weather stations throughout the state that measure soil temperature year-round. The web address is www.weather.uga.edu. The closest location to Coweta is Roopville. You can get daily soil temperature from this site simply by putting in your zip code.

Also, to make it even easier to know when to plant, download **UGA Circular 963, Vegetable Planting Chart**. It's an easy chart to aid you in planting at the right time. If you really *MUST* plant something right now, try these cool season crops:

Asparagus, beets, broccoli, cabbage, carrot, collards, kale, lettuce, mustard, green onions, onions, Irish potatoes, radishes, spinach, and turnips.



March Tasks from UGA extension circular 943

Vegetable Garden Calendar

- Make second plantings of such quickly maturing crops as turnips, mustard, radishes and "spring onions."
- Thin plants when they are 2 to 3 inches tall to give the plants room to grow.
- Treat seed before planting or buy treated seed for protection against seed-borne diseases, seed decay, seedling "damping off" and soil insects such as seed-corn maggots.
- Early-planted crops may need a nitrogen side-dressing, particularly if the soil is cool. Place the fertilizer several inches to the side of the plants and water in. A little fertilizer throughout the growing period is better than too much at one time.
- Before settling them in the garden, harden-off transplants - place them in their containers outdoors in a sheltered place a few days ahead of planting them.
- Get rows ready for "warm-season" vegetables to be planted during the last week of March or first week or two of April as weather permits.
- You might want to risk planting out a few of the more tender crops and keeping them covered during bad weather.
- Watch out for insects, especially cutworms, plant lice (aphids) and red spider mites.
- Put down mulch between rows to control weeds.

SPRING PLANT SALE

Submitted by Kathy Olmsted

I want to welcome Kim Magyar to our SPS team. I'm excited to have her on board.

The Greenhouse is starting to look like this is a plant sale in the future. Little green sprouts abound everywhere you look. It makes me feel renewed just looking at them. The SPS team will be meeting in March to develop a plan for the Spring sale. As you would expect, it will be different this year. The sale this year will be on a smaller scale and will be held down in the Greenhouse area. We will have several volunteer opportunities. Once we have a firm plan, we will share it with you all or y'all as they say here in Georgia. I am so looking forward to seeing my fellow MGEV's. I've missed your smiling faces.

I know that with the weather we've been experiencing lately, it's hard to think that Spring will ever be here! We just have to hang in there for a few more weeks.



GREEN HOUSE NEWS

Submitted by Barbara France and Audrey Harrelson

Small masked teams of bandits...err...Master Gardeners have been busy seeding and taking soft wood cuttings at the greenhouse. They are also keeping watch over trays of starts to be used at the Nature Trail. We started in January with three long empty rows of tables which are quickly being filled with starts of tomatoes, peppers and annuals. It is a true miracle to watch a seed so small that we can barely see it, grow and become a healthy plant.

After several workdays, with more scheduled, progress is being made towards the 2021 Plant Sale, date pending. There are so many plants in the Greenhouse already, and we'll need to ask people to pick up their mother plants, probably the first week in March.

Per usual, there will be vegetable seedlings, unusual coleus varieties, and some new offerings, such as agastaches, to add color and pollinators to Coweta county gardens. There are also pots ready for filling with plants from the yards of MGEVs. They are available at the greenhouse now. There will be 3 upcoming Intake Days. The current proposed dates are:

[Saturday, February 27](#)

[Wednesday, March 3](#)

[Friday, March 12](#)

Please, when you bring plants - no forsythias, crepe myrtles, nandinas, or mahonias - bring in a completed Intake Form, which are in the white mailbox with the "Fill Your Own" pots. Last month's New Leaf had an excellent summary of how to complete the form. Please make an effort to find the scientific/Latin name for the plants you donate.



From December to March, there are for many of us three gardens the garden outdoors, the garden of pots and bowels in the house and the garden of the mind's eye.

- Katherine White

BACK YARD ASSOCIATION

Submitted by Lyn Matthews

The February BYA with Walter Reeves, the Georgia Gardener, was everything we expected it to be. Knowledge, humor and experience are his claim to fame. Even with the new platform of Zoom, he did not disappoint. Whether talking about “crepe murder” or the wrong way to kill weeds, the lessons were evident. We always welcome Walter.

March will have another BYA friend, Mike Cunningham, from Country Garden and Farm. Mike will be speaking on organic vegetable gardening. Please join us on Zoom at seven o’clock, March 9, for another meeting of your backyard friends.

In addition, Mike and his wife Judy have several educational topics they teach at the Farm. Registration is required and can be found on the Country Garden website. Mike recently presented a class on seed starting. He also has a video on the website explaining seed starting indoors.



Backyard Association
 A Virtual Presentation by
 Coweta Master Gardener Extension Volunteers

Registration Required
(See registration information below)

Mike Cunningham
Country Gardens Farm

Tuesday
March 9 at 7:00pm

“Organic Vegetable Gardening”



To register, visit: <https://bit.ly/BYA2021MikeCunningham>
 Meeting ID: 931 1458 1589 Passcode: 326743

Need Information? Contact UGA Extension—Coweta County
(770) 254-2620 / coweta.extension@uga.edu



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SUNSHINE

A note from Julie Bull:

I would like to say a big heartfelt thank you for all the cards and support I received these last few weeks. Master Gardeners are truly a blessing in my life. I hope to see you all soon. Julie Bull

MGEV CALENDAR NEEDS YOUR HELP

We Want Your Photos and Suggestions

Submitted by Dale Senko

Spring is just around the corner. Trees will start budding and some will be showing beautiful flowers. In the coming weeks, please take the opportunity to capture these springtime moments in photos for the next MGEV calendar. You can help with the calendar project in two ways:

Take Photos:

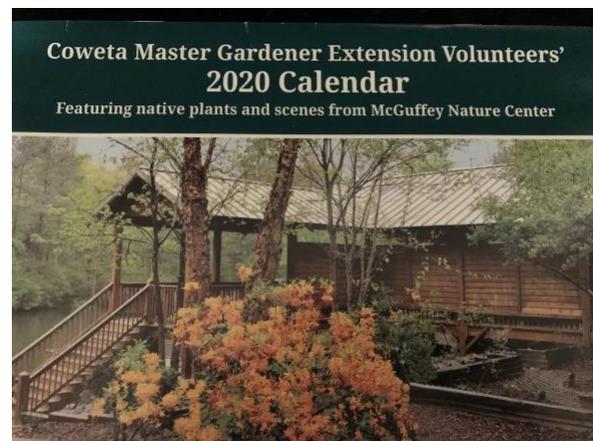
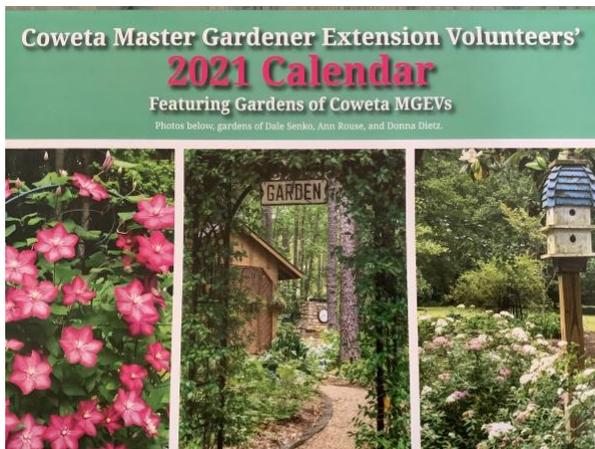
We need photos of trees anywhere in Coweta County. Here are some tips for photo taking: take vertical and horizontal shots of trees, include blue sky or something else attractive near the tree, early morning or late afternoon is usually the best lighting; wildlife and bird activity in trees like woodpeckers on a tree a birds nest, squirrels scampering up a tree trunk, insects on a leaf, closeups of bark and branches with buds about to open, flowering fruit trees, interesting tree shapes and sizes, trees in a green pasture or near a fence and trees near scenic/historic locations around Newnan. Remember, no people shots.

Please email your photos to Deberah Williams at deberah@numail.org

Include the tree species and the location. If you don't know the tree species, take photos of the trees' identifying features, i.e., bark, leaf arrangement (alternate, opposing) leaf shape, leaf type. We will try to identify.

Give Us Suggestions:

If you have admired a tree somewhere in Coweta, please let us know where it is located. We are scouting photo shoots which have significance in Coweta and would like any suggestions; e.g., trees in Downtown Newnan, Senoia, old cemeteries, Grantville, Moreland, Sargent, old homesteads, mills, buildings, churches, subdivisions, parks or golf courses which we associate with Coweta. Please contact Pat Farmer, Deberah Williams or me with the location of the tree.



HOT TOPICS FROM THE MGEV HELP DESK

Submitted by Patty Ellis

A new year means new gardening projects, and the citizens of Coweta County are excited to get out and start digging in the dirt. The remote help desk staff, including Patty Ellis, Kathy Olmstead, Deberah Williams, Dan Gentry, and soon Jerry Allen, are ready to investigate any gardening mystery that comes our way. CR Phillips has been busy following up with soil sample reports. Here is a sampling of the kinds of questions we get from our neighbors:

- With spring getting ready to visit us the excitement over getting vegetables in the ground is palpable. Kathy spoke with a client who wanted information about preparing her vegetable garden for the upcoming season. UGA has a wealth of publications about vegetable gardening and some of these were sent. Kathy also recommended a soil test and the client plans to submit that and follow up with any questions after that comes back.
- We often get questions about plant ID, especially when folks move into a new house and aren't sure what is planted in their landscape. One such client contacted the office at the end of last year, and in January Greg Emerson made a site visit to help with questions about pruning and discuss deer resistant plantings. He'll be following up for further recommendations after plants start leafing out.
- Dan Gentry is always ready to advise clients on when and what to apply for weeds in turfgrass. One client called in with questions about when to apply pre-emergent products and Dan provided information on proper timing and product choice.
- Another client contacted us wanting information about getting rid of *elaeagnus* (aka Autumn Olive) in her yard. This invasive can be tricky to get rid of and involves cutting the plant and applying an herbicide.
- Raised bed gardening is becoming more and more popular and recently a client called in with questions about what materials to use. There are several possibilities including wood, composites, masonry, and metal. I emailed with several UGA publications as well as other information from Clemson, Walter Reeves, and Joe Lamp'l.
- CR often has interesting conversations with clients when he calls them about their soil test results. Lately he has fielded questions about not only amending the soil and fertilizers, but azaleas, tomato leaf spot disease, and plant selection.

If there's one constant with the help desk it's that there is a wide variety of gardening interests in Coweta County which means that the questions that we get run the gamut from brown spots in the lawn to growing fruits in the home orchard. This variety allows us to learn right alongside our clients.



FOR MGEV GLORY CAN ANYONE IDENTIFY THIS MARCH BLOOMING NATIVE PLANT. Hint: It's an ephemeral !

Send response to patfarmer100@gmail.com

Answer and Winner will be published in the April New Leaf

Master Gardener 2021 Committee Chairs

Ask MG/Market Day	Harley Stewart
Backyard Association	Allen Summerlin, Deberah Williams, Melanie Landrum
Scholarship	Jennie Adcock, Karen Mansour
Education: Speakers Bureau,	Dan Gentry
Adv. Training/Continue Ed.	Dan Gentry
Youth Education/Boys & Girls	Vacant
Ext. Support/MGEV Help Desk	Susan Mills (library), Patty Ellis, Kathy Olmsted
Finance	Kris Carpenter
Fundraising	Kris Carpenter, Diane Cook
Garden Tour	Diane Cook
Spring Plant Sale	Kathy Olmsted, Kim Magyar
Fall Plant Sale	Kathy Olmsted
Greenhouse	Audrey Harrelson, Amy Keller, Mark Hess
Demonstration Garden	Kathy Olmsted, Amy Keller
Media/PR/Coweta Shopper	Vicki Sewell, Marci Moore, Martha Woodham, Kim Magyar
Nature Trail Project	Dale Senko, Pat Farmer, Ed Atkinson, Melanie Atkinson
Nominating Committee	2021 MGEV Board/plus other members
Volunteer Management/Support	Donna Dietz, Carol Fuller
Directory	Mark Hess
Hospitality	Kim Magyar, Amy Sharpe
The New Leaf Newsletter	Pat Farmer, Dianne Teer, Patty Ellis
Sunshine	Sara Hanson
Telephone	Roni Wolcott
Volunteer Awards	Patty Ellis

Photos: Pat Farmer, C.R. Phillips, Dan Gentry, Mark Hess, Deberah Williams



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