

The New Leaf

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

MARCH 2022

*MARK HESS, MGEV
PRESIDENT*

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

We celebrated Valentine's Day earlier this month. The traditional gift for my wife has been roses, but this year, I gave her a rhododendron, 'Percy Wiseman.' My planting it was part of the gift. The best time to plant rhododendron is in the early spring. However, this reminds me of a farming adage I can't entirely agree with. It states that "the best time to weed is after a rain." If you weed before a rain, you risk re-establishing the weeds with the precipitation. However, the best time to weed is whenever you have time to weed! We all have busy schedules; "you have to make hay while the sun shines," farming adage I do agree with.

Along with our busy day-to-day activities, MGEV has certainly been picking up this month. We had a successful "Rooting for Newnan" tree pickup this past Arbor Day. The Nature Trail folks are busy weeding! The greenhouse is budding with life! BYA challenged me to think more about dragonflies! The Spring Plant sale committee is working on the upcoming sale. And the list goes on.

All of you probably saw Stephanie's email that we now have an online MGEV calendar, which we hinted at in the last update. Hopefully, this will go a long way in keeping us from stepping on each other's toes. As a reminder, we have a business meeting Wednesday, March 9th at 10:00 at the Extension Office. **YOU ARE INVITED!!** You can count the meeting time towards your MGEV hours if you attend! With everyone striving for hours, every little bit helps. Finally, one of our most vital attributes as a group is "community." With the impact of COVID on all of us, we still have some MGEVs missing in action. I have reached out to some. If you haven't seen one of our fellow MGEVs in a while, give them a call and check on them. Remember, the all-hands-on-deck Spring Plant Sale is next month, April 9th!!



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BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB "I CAN GARDEN" RETURNS



The "I Can Garden" program at the Boys and Girls Club resumes on March 2. This year's program will include Butterflies, Bees, Life of Trees, Field Trip to Greenhouse, and Demonstration Garden as well as the creation of a Salsa Garden at the Club on Wesley Street. Our new chairperson, Rebecca Gibson, is currently organizing the programs and will send out a Sign-Up Genius when helpers are needed. Anyone interested in learning more about this work, please get in touch with Rebecca at rebecca3737@gmail.com

HARDWOOD PROPOGATION AND POTTING WORKSHOP

FEBRUARY 1: A belated thanks to the folks who showed up on a cold Tuesday to pot up and contribute hardwood cuttings and to the heroes who mixed soil for the pots, including Liz Volz's husband, Ron, who mixed multiple wheelbarrows full. A few hardy souls mixed more soil and filled pots.

FEBRUARY 5: Another cold day, but we were inside the GH seeding flowers and a gazillion peppers. The sugar rush of Greg Emerson's doughnuts certainly helped. The Rooting for Newnan volunteers labored in the cold - the trees look great and ready for new homes soon.

FEBRUARY 9: We did soft cuttings from the mother plants MGEV's donated.

FEBRUARY 16: Basil seeded. Intake Day.

FEBRUARY 26: Intake of perennials for Spring Plant Sale.

THANK YOU TO ALL THE HARD WORKING CC MGEVS WHO SHOWED UP TO HELP IN COLD FEBRUARY!

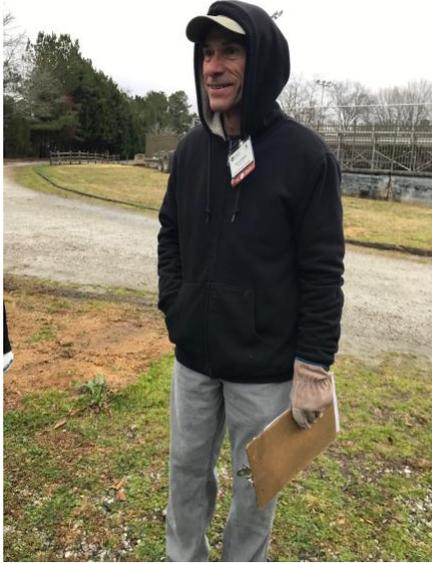
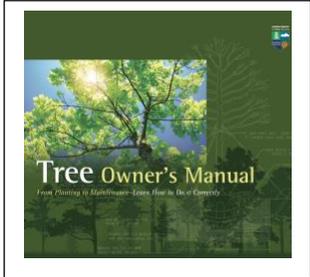


ROOTING FOR NEWNAN

Friday, February 18, was the pickup day for the citizens of Newnan who were impacted by our recent tornado and who needed oak trees to replace their destroyed landscape. Hundreds of Oak trees were planted, watered, and cared for by CC MGEVS and then given to our neighbors. Congratulations, MGEVs, for another successful project.



Special thanks to Ed Atkinson, Don Lambeck, and the Georgia State Forestry Commission Rangers for making this day a reality.



The GA State Forestry Commission provided everyone who picked up a tree with a **TREE OWNER'S MANUAL**



SPRING PLANT SALE

**COWETA COUNTY MGEV SPRING PLANT SALE
SATURDAY, APRIL 9, 2022**

8:30AM-12:00PM



AND MUCH MORE!

MASTER GARDENER PHOTO OF THE MONTH



Jerry Allen, class of 2020, the very picture of a hard working Master Gardener. Jerrry has been a constant participant in all manner of MGEV activities. He also finds time to take pictures of our work. Thanks for all you do Jerry.

THE ESSENTIAL OAK

Submitted by Dale Senko

In Doug Tallamy's March chapter of "The Nature of Oaks," he praises oak leaf litter. With no assistance from us, oak leaves that dropped last fall create a priceless organic layer under the trees. Countless creatures that live in the leaves and form a complex army of decomposers or detritivores. These can include, Moth caterpillars, earthworms, beetles, mites, centipedes, and other organisms. "Detritivores," meaning creatures that derive their nutrition from dead plant parts. Add that word to your vocabulary.

Is oak leaf litter superior to other leaf litter? Yes, according to Tallamy, especially from the standpoint of ecological value. Oak leaf litter decays very slowly, providing housing, food, and humid conditions required for decomposers for up to three years. The 700,000 leaves from a mature oak create the best litter for sustaining decomposer populations.

Oak leaf litter repels some invasive species like Japanese stilt grass and Asian worms. A thick mat of oak leaf litter improves water filtration. It holds water as well as purifies it. As Tallamy points out, "litter" seems like an inappropriate name for something so priceless. Oak leaf litter provides housing, nourishment, and moisture for many species.



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/?content=calculator&variable=CC&site=WANSLEY>

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, and 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 March 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. Waite 'till June to prune climbing roses.

Also, Remove all the dead and diseased branches. Cutaway 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 in their "Month-By-Month GARDENING in GEORGIA."

BACKYARD ASSOCIATION

Submitted by Lyn Matthews

Our February 8 BYA was quite an evening. Giff Beaton was a most engaging speaker. Thank you, Giff, for a wonderful and fun evening with your "little friends." His passion for the dragonflies and damselflies of Georgia was evident in everything he said. I don't think anyone went away without thinking about hunting for these elusive creatures.

If you could not attend BYA and would like to see the presentation, you can see it on YouTube.

Our March 8 BYA speaker is Arty Schronce. Arty is a Fayetteville MGEV, writer, photographer, and columnist. You may remember his presentation a few years ago, "Redneck Gardening." He is going to delight us with "Downtown Abbey Dream, Cabbagetown Reality." Arty is a man of many talents and interests. You can see his photography at a gallery at Davidson College. Also, see his work at artworkarchive.com.

We look forward to seeing everyone Tuesday, March 8 at 7:00 pm.



Backyard Association
A LIVE Presentation by
Coweta Master Gardener Extension Volunteers

Arty Schronce
Writer, Photographer,
Columnist

**Tuesday,
March 8
at 7:00pm**



**"Downtown Abbey Dreams,
Cabbagetown Reality"**

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

Registration is not required to attend, but those who call in advance and register will be entered into a drawing for door prizes.



An Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action, Veteran, Disability Institution

STUMP THE MASTER GARDENER

FEBRUARY CHALLENGE

This month's winners are Greg Emerson, CR Phillips, and Carol Fuller, *Fagus grandifolia*. This small understory tree is an American Beech Tree, and it retains its leaves during the winter (marcescent).

It is an excellent addition to any winter landscape, as Greg will find out. He planted five this year.



AMERICAN
BEECH
TREE
NAMED
GNPS
PLANT OF
2022



1.



2.

Two chances to be a winner this month.

1. This plant blooms in early spring. Looks great with daffodils. But watch out. It can escape to the woods.
2. This spring bulb has a delicate scent that keeps the deer and rabbits away.

Send answers to:

patfarmer100@gmail.com

FROM THE HELP DESK

Submitted by Patty Ellis

Here's a link to the MGEV calendar on the Extension website. It gets updated with events for MGEVs, so if folks want to check the calendar this is the place to

go: <https://outlook.live.com/calendar/0/published/1ef3fa56-4cd5-42fb-a8e0-4350781bfeae/9f5fafa-a-c08a-4e86-aa05-244e9b4738e9/cid-9D97B435A2C10322/calendar.html>

This is a link to the website that has ads for upcoming events and previously recorded events: <https://extension.uga.edu/county-offices/coweta/agriculture-and-natural-resources/coweta-county-master-gardener-extension-volunteers.html>

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

To: Becky Griffin, MPPPM - I read that it was a good practice to wait until the temps are consistently above 50 degrees to clean out your garden beds. It allows pollinators and other insects to hatch before disrupting their winter beds. Has your research proven this true? Dale Senko

From: Becky - Yes, the logic is not to disturb the nesting pollinators. I would wait until 55 degrees as most bees fly by that temperature. Great question!

Becky Griffin is a *Community and School Garden Coordinator, Pollinator Health Associate* at UGA-Georgia Mtn. Research & Education Center

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"Gardening is how I relax. It's another form of creating and playing with colors."

—Oscar de la Renta

2022 Master Gardener Coweta County Committee Chairs

Ask MG/Market Day	Harley Stewart
Backyard Association	Allen Summerlin, Deberah Williams
Scholarship	Jennie Adcock
Speakers Bureau	Dan Gentry
Adv. Training/Continue Ed	Nancy Coats
Youth Education/Boys & Girls	Rebecca Gibson, Kris Carpenter
Ext. Support/MGEV Help Desk	Susan Mills (library), Patty Ellis, Kathy Olmsted
Finance	Colleen Stephens
Fundraising	Diane Cook
Garden Tour	Diane Cook
Spring Plant Sale	Kathy Olmsted, Kim Magyar
Fall Plant Sale	Kathy Olmsted
Greenhouse	Audrey Harrelson, Mark Hess, Jerry Allen
Demonstration Garden	Kathy Olmsted, Amy Keller
Media/PR/Coweta Shopper	Vicki Sewell, Marci Moore, Kim Magyar, Shanna Campbell
Nature Trail	Ed Atkinson, Melanie Atkinson, Audrey Harrelson
Nominating Committee	2022 MGEV Board/plus other members
Volunteer Management/Support	Mark Hess, Carol Fuller
Directory	Mark Hess
Hospitality	Kim Magyar, Amy Sharpe
The New Leaf	Pat Farmer, Dianne Teer, Patty Ellis
Sunshine	Sara Hanson
Volunteer Awards	Patty Ellis

Photos: Pat Farmer, Mark Hess, Ron Gill, Dale Senko
 Editors: Dianne Teer, Patty Ellis

