

**Brian Maddy, County Extension Agent**

## **Landscaping for Curb Appeal**

Springtime temperatures send flocks of folks to our garden centers. We tend to notice all the early flowering plants and trees, the pears, eastern redbuds, spirea and forsythia. This leads us to think that we might need to spruce up our own landscape. A well-landscaped house is very eye catching. Real estate experts say that ten to fifteen percent of a house's perceived value comes from an attractive landscape.

Landscape plants have a dual purpose. Foundation plants not only hide the foundation, make your house more attractive from the street but more importantly, collect the rainfall from the roof and disperse the impact away from the foundation. Other plants may accentuate the more attractive features of your home as well as reducing the less attractive features. Placing eye catching plants that divert your eyes can be very helpful.

UGA has some simple landscape design tips that can help you select plants to improve your curb appeal.

Keep as many mature, natural trees as possible in the landscape. Large trees have a strong impact of the salability of a house and take decades to grow.

Frame the corners of your house with larger, upright, evergreen shrubs. Use odd numbers when massing smaller shrubs. Odd numbers create a better sense of unity and appear more appealing to the eye. Avoid planting shrubs or trees in long, straight lines. Stagger the plants. Make sure that you plant on recommended centers. Always allow for growth.

Keep your color selections simple. Adding multiple colors can result that colors get lost in each other. Use mass plantings of one color, such as white, blooming annuals in front of dark-colored evergreens.

Shoot for plants that provide year round curb appeal. Include trees and shrubs that not only display great fall color but may also have interesting, colorful bark. Add contrast by selecting plants of different textures and shapes.

There are two ways of arranging your plants symmetrical and asymmetrical. Having the exact same plants on either side of your home is referred to as a symmetrical design. Asymmetrical refers to having different plants on the other side. Repeating some plants and colors on both sides create a unified landscape.

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Creating large, broad curving beds that are well-maintained are very eye appealing. Use a garden hose or extension cord to lay out the beds. Make sure you keep in mind that you have to mow easily around them to don't make the curves too wavy or tight.

Keeping it clean and simple can add great curb appeal. Large curving pine beds with hardwood trees and a turf area that looks like a golf green are attributes of an attractive landscape.

To give all your plants the best chance, consider doing a soil test. This is one of the most important things that need to be done, especially if it hasn't been done for several years. Call the office for instructions for taking a representative soil test. The cost is nine dollars and well worth the investment. Applying the wrong fertilizer in the wrong amount is a waste of money.

### **Master Naturalist Extension Volunteer Course**

Troup County Extension in conjunction with the Warnell School of Forestry at UGA will be offering the Georgia Master Naturalist Program from March 31 to June 1st. Ten classes are planned. The MNEV class will explore the many facets of Georgia's ecosystem. Some of the topics will include:

- Native plants and tree identification
- Water ecosystems and how it relates to West Point Lake and the Chattahoochee River
- Mammal, bird, and insect identification and the natural history of Georgia.
- Forest, water and wildlife interaction.

Many field trips and hands-on activities are planned. Cost: \$175.00 Call to Register.

### **What's going on in Extension?**

- Vidalia Onion Sales are back! Help support 4-H by purchasing Vidalia Onions. Onion sales help send kids to 4-H camp. Call the office for more details. \$10.00 per 10 lb. bag. Orders must be received by April 8<sup>th</sup>. 706.883.1675
- Become a Master Naturalist: The program begins March 31<sup>st</sup>. It will run through June 1<sup>st</sup>. Cost of the program is \$175.00. Call the office for more information and the registration packet.
- March 21: Troup County Association of Beekeepers meeting, 7 PM AG Center

If you have any questions or concerns, stop by or call the office.

Brian Maddy is the ANR Agent for Troup County Extension. The Troup County Extension office is located at 114 Church Street, LaGrange, GA. 30240 (706) 883-1675. Monday - Friday/8:00 AM – 12 noon and from 1:00 PM - 5:00pm.

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