

Gardening with the Masters

For the Cherokee County Master Gardeners

Volume XXIV, Issue 1 December 17/January 18

WHAT'S HAPPENING

DECEMBER

Dec 1 - Crafting a Holiday Wreath, 10am, Senior Center
Dec 7 - Demo Garden Workday
Dec 14 - Plant-A-Row (Papa's Pantry)
Dec 15 - Recommitment forms Due to Secretary for 2018
Dec 16 - Holiday Party, 6pm
Dec 21- Demo Garden Workday
Dec 29 - Plant-A-Row (Papa's Pantry)
Dec 31 - 2017 Hours due at extension

JANUARY

Jan 4 - Demo Garden workday
Jan 12 - Plant-A-Row (Papa's Pantry)
Jan 16 - MG Monthly Meeting, Installation of new officers
Jan 18 - Demo Garden workday
Jan 24 - Plant-A-Row (Papa's Pantry)

Master Gardeners: Please turn in your hours for 2017 before the December 29th deadline.

EDITOR'S CORNER

By Marcia Winchester,
Cherokee County Master Gardener



What would we do without gardening tools? At the Demo Garden we're always talking about new tools and trying out each other's new purchase. Last year my husband came home from talking to a neighbor and was excited about the neighbor's new leaf blower. It was lightweight, and instead of a cumbersome cord, it ran on a rechargeable battery. It sounded great for us to blow leaves off the grass and into the back woods without having to mess with an extension cord. We love the new purchase, working as a team with my husband blowing as I rake the leaves onto a tarp dragging the full tarp into the woods where the leaves can naturally break down and nourish the woods. The best feature about this blower is that about the time I start getting tired, the battery runs out and it has to be recharged. I feel this unadvertised trait is its best feature. Those other leaves will just have to wait until next time. Besides half-time is almost over....



Photo by Marcia Winchester

Marcia

IN THIS ISSUE

Editor's Corner	pg 1	Lawn Care	pg 5
Dec/Jan Calendar	pg 1	December Tips	pg 8
Serenity Garden.....	pg 2	January Tips.....	pg 9
Winter Wildlife.....	pg 3	Rainfall	pg 9
Mistletoe.....	pg 4	Recipes	pg 10
Book Report	pg 5		



PLANNING YOUR SERENITY GARDEN

By Stephanie Howard, Cherokee County Master Gardener



Although serenity gardens have been popular since ancient times, installation of private spaces is finally getting the nod from the lay gardener. Much of the time, these gardens are included in the gardener's living space and evolve over time. In my opinion, the gardener needs to consider more effort when planning the Serenity Garden than some other garden spaces. Ironically, plant choice is one of the last steps.

Step One - What is the function of your private space?

We often consider an Asian-style Zen garden synonymous with a serenity garden. In this garden style, we find beauty in the flowing shapes, topographical symbols, whimsical textures, and rustling water. However, there are many more styles to consider.

Do you find sanctuary and solace in observing the natural world in a peace garden?

listening to the trickling water, chirping birds, frog song...

watching the interactions of hummingbirds, butterflies, birds, and bees in their colorful habitats...

enjoying the scents and bouquet of aromatic plants...

Perhaps you want to honor a loved one and find a memorial garden more conducive in your space. Does self-discovery and mystery draw you to the inspirations of the Celtic garden, where stone and trees symbolize life and death? Do you need a spiritual space for use as a prayer or meditative garden? A tranquility garden may be preferable if you want a serene space where muted colors and sounds do not distract from the overstimulation of everyday life. In a healing or aromatherapy garden, one may balance the body's physical needs through planting and tending the garden with the spiritual needs of healing the mind and soul. Plantings may include edibles, spices, and herbs.

Step Two - Once you have determined the purpose of your garden area, it is time to review the space, conditions, and character.

Are you working with a small courtyard? an entire backyard? a corner? Is the space sunny or shady? During what times of the day? Is your space conducive for a water feature? Natural or artificial? In-ground or fountain? Is a dry bed more appropriate? Survey the terrain of the space. Is it flat? If not, will you need to grade the area, design a rolling landscape, or would you prefer to terrace it? Will you need to amend the soil? Alternatively, will you design your space around the existing conditions? Is the soil naturally sandy or rocky? Will the design integrate a container garden? Once you have considered these factors, you are ready for the sketchpad! Design the beds, based on type of serenity garden and character of the space.

Step Three - Although plant and color choice is preferential, your selection is often dependent on the garden style.

Layer the Tranquility or Celtic garden with foliage. Colors are muted. White or pale foliage and/or flowers may be preferable in a memorial garden. Using plants from a celebration of life service might give the gardener a sense of comfort. You may also enjoy a white palate if your reflection time is in the evening hours. Alternatively, brighter colors may be more appropriate to some in a peace garden, but others may rely on wafting aromas for solace. You may consider using color to balance a setting. Plant blues to cool a sunny space or reds to brighten a shady one. Just remember, your garden is your place of reflection and solitude. Color, sound, and odors should not over-stimulate the senses.

Continued on page 6

WINTER WILDLIFE IN CHEROKEE COUNTY

By Patricia Bowen, Cherokee County Master Gardener



Photo by Marcia Winchester

I grew up in the urban Northeast, where the snow came up to my short knees in winter when I walked to school as a little girl. If I ventured out in my neighborhood, I might see squirrel tracks in the park, footprints of dogs being walked next to the sidewalk by their owners, the boot tracks of people; nothing unusual.

While I'm not a fan of even our short winters in Cherokee County, I must say I LOVE any dusting of snow here. It shows the animal traffic on my long driveway, down by the creek, and on the trails in my woods, and I follow wherever they lead, as far as I can. Tracks of deer, opossum, raccoons, rabbits, coyotes, squirrels, turkeys, even bobcat, prove they coexist here with me.

As animals lose habitat in our county due to land development for homes, schools, and businesses, we'll see more and more evidence of their presence. They'll be competing for food and shelter and becoming more acclimated to human company. So, should you break down and feed them and provide them some form of shelter or not? If you do, they'll remember your address and may come back, or even set up residence near your home, eat your plantings, damage your landscape, and become all around pests when you stop trying to attract them.

The only thing I've ever attempted to attract is birds, by keeping feeders full at points near my house where I can see them. That folly alone has cost me big bucks to trap and remove the squirrels, raccoons, and bats that took up residence in my attic over the years, and to finally seal it up to prevent future tenants. I realize the birds did just fine before I started feeding them, but I love to watch them, and I understand how compelling views of nature can be.

Here are some ways to identify and deal with the most common wildlife around your home:

Deer can weigh anywhere from 100 to 400 pounds so they always leave distinctive tracks in soft soil.

Bucks rub their antlers on tree trunks, and you may see worn spots on the bark where this occurs (as opposed to bears which scratch trunks with their claws and tear off slices of bark). Their droppings are often, but not always, pellet shaped, similar to but larger than rabbit droppings. Deer are herbivores and like to feed on shoots, twigs, grass, leaves, and bark, but they will scavenge what they can get when these are not available. While you can purchase 'deer feed,' it is not what they normally eat in the wild, and it may or may not attract them.

Opossum have five toes on their front legs and four on their rear legs, and along with their tracks you'll see drag marks from their tail. Their droppings are similar to that of a house cat. Often confused for a large rat, opossum are among of the most beneficial wildlife since they eat almost anything, including dead animals and trash that would draw less desirables. Do not attempt to attract them though as they can become aggressive if they feel defensive.

Raccoons have footprints similar to opossum, but their rear paws look more like a human hand with a palm. You might see their tracks on your deck, your car, the walls of your house, and the sides of your trash cans. They prefer a nearby water source, such as a stream or pond, but have become ubiquitous in both rural and urban environments. They eat anything and are expert at opening trash cans, outdoor cooking grills, cardboard boxes of food that come in the mail, anything that isn't locked up. As a result your local raccoons may be very acclimated to people; I've had to literally chase them off my deck. Do not corner them and force them to become defensive, and thus aggressive. If one does show up around you or a family member, don't feed or encourage them to come closer. They'll respond to size and sound: make yourself appear larger by waving your arms and shout "go away" to them. They will.

Snakes are cold blooded and need to be warm to digest their food, so it's rare to see them in the winter.

But they don't hibernate; they brumate, which means they're not dormant but are marginally active.

Continued on page 6

MISTLETOE: FRIEND OR FOE IN THE GARDEN

By Karen Garland, Cherokee County Master Gardener

Are you a traditionalist looking to share some Christmas peace, love, and joy? Add a sprig of American mistletoe (*Phoradendron* spp.) to your holiday décor. However, keep in mind that the leaves and berries may be toxic, so keep it out of reach of pets and children.



[Frantisek Soukup, Bugwood.org](http://FrantisekSoukup.Bugwood.org)

This plant has been referenced in many seasonal songs, movies, and poems as a staging area for that quintessential Christmas kiss. The last thing you are probably thinking about during the holidays is the biology and ecology of this plant and the history of this tradition.

Although it is unclear where the traditions of mistletoe began exactly, its lore is said to originate with ancient druid tribes where European mistletoe (*Viscum album*) was thought to have special powers, including boosting fertility and bringing a promise of spring's return. These beliefs were adapted by the English and French, giving us the holiday custom of kissing under mistletoe bunches. Hanging mistletoe is a Christmas tradition in the United States, while in Europe, it is more commonly associated with New Year's Eve.

While many people treasure mistletoe for its decorative qualities, the American mistletoe is one of approximately 1,300 species worldwide that are a hemiparasite, growing on deciduous trees, absorbing nutrients and water from its hosts. A hemiparasite is also capable of performing its own photosynthesis, thus not depending entirely on its host plant for survival. While it can grow on any deciduous tree, it tends to favor the bark of apple (*Malus* spp.), ash (*Fraxinus* spp.), elm (*Ulmus* spp.), hackberry (*Celtis* spp.), hawthorn (*Crataegus* spp.), oak (*Quercus* spp.), sycamore (*Plantanus* spp.), and wild cherry (*Prunus* spp.) trees.

Mistletoe is propagated in many different ways, including gravity and wind, but primarily by hitchhiking on birds that have eaten the sticky berries or excreted them in their scat. Many things must happen for mistletoe to be able to grow in the canopy of a tree. The tree branch that the berry lands upon must be the correct diameter, be fast growing, and have thin bark. If given the chance, the first thing that the plant does is insert root-like structures, called haustoria, to anchor itself into the host (Jefferson Co. Extension, 2013). These haustoria work their way beneath the bark and into the vascular tissue of the tree, depleting the host of nutrients and water.

Generally, a tree is capable of protecting itself from wounds and other invasive damage by a process called compartmentalization, which seals the area from receiving water and nutrients. Mistletoe however, "tricks" the tree into not recognizing that it is a pest by secreting hormones and enzymes to prevent the tree from undergoing compartmentalization. Unfortunately, during times of drought, trees that are infected with large amounts of mistletoe can die due to it appropriating water away from the host tree.

Although mistletoe is present all year, it is usually only noticed in the autumn and winter, after the leaves begin to fall. You can identify mistletoe by the appearance of its signature evergreen leaves and round, white berries containing several seeds embedded in a sticky juice, growing on suspended bushes, 2 to 5 feet in diameter in the tree canopy. When in bloom, mistletoe forms inconspicuous yellow flowers that appear in clumps of three.

Many feel that to safeguard the health of the host tree, mistletoe should be controlled. Because it takes about three years to mature, controlling it before it goes to seed will keep it from reproducing. Once

Continued on page 7

BOOK REPORT: NATIVE PLANTS OF THE SOUTHEAST

By Mary Schuster, Cherokee County Master Gardener

As Master Gardeners here in Cherokee County, Georgia, many of us enjoy the opportunity to participate several times a year with plant sales. Not only do these sales give us some familiarity with many different native plants, they also provide our organization with a valuable source of revenue while providing a resource for folks in the community to expand their individual collection of many specimens of plants. Because they are native to the region, these plants are able to adapt easily to garden cultivation, attract pollinators, birds and other beneficial wildlife, and also provide multi-season appeal.

Native Plants of the Southeast by Larry Mellichamp is a beautiful 354-page volume. It serves as a comprehensive guide to 460 species for the garden and provides thorough background information for the following native plants:

Ferns
Grasses and Grasslike Plants
Aquatic Plants
Bog Plants
Wildflowers
Vines
Shrubs
Conifers
Trees

The book is also full of clear and colorful photographs (by Will Stuart) that will truly educate the reader.

Mr. Mellichamp provides a perfect definition of just what a native plant needs to be: "Simply put, a species is native to the Southeast if it was growing in the region before European settlement. The plant might have come by forces of nature or by the activities of animals and humans, but it lives and reproduces on its own and seems to fit in with other flora and fauna. Furthermore, a native plant is one that cannot be known to have come from an exotic place."

So, while browsing for a good book to add to your library, consider acquiring this lovely book. It also doubles as an impressive coffee table addition for your family and guests to enjoy.

Mellichamp, Larry; *Native Plants of the Southeast*; published by Timber Press, Portland, Oregon; 2014

LAWN CARE - DECEMBER AND JANUARY

by: Rachel Prakash, Cherokee County Master Gardener

Cool Season Grasses (Tall Fescue, Kentucky Blue grass, Creeping Red/Chewing Fescue)

- Keep turf at a length of 2-3". Be careful not to mow more than 1/3 of the total length of the grass at one time.
- If it is a new lawn, make sure to water 1" per week if no additional rainfall is received.
- Now is a good time to test the soil pH and amend according to recommendations.
- Control weeds that are present by either pulling manually or treating with a post-emergent.

Warm Season Grasses (Bermudagrass, Centipedegrass, Zoysiagrass, St. Augustinegrass)

- Test the soil in your lawn and add amendments now so the soil pH is optimum come growing season.
- Spot treat with a post-emergent weed killer for dandelions, violets and other broadleaf weeds present in cool weather before they set seed. As an alternative to spraying, these weeds can be pulled with attention to making sure the root is completely removed.
- Prevent fallen leaves from matting on the surface of the lawn to keep the sod from being smothered.

Serenity Gardens—continued from page 2

Step Four – It is time to unify your space!

If you incorporate water, the feature should fit within your chosen garden style. Consider qualities that address reflection, color, and movement within a water-wise plan. Formal sculptural elements, such as fountains or reflection pools, are better fits for small spaces. In contrast, larger spaces are more appropriate for informal natural features, such as streams or waterfalls. For example, depending on size, a Zen garden would most likely have a combination of fountains, streams, and dry beds, whereas a peace garden may only feature a birdbath or reflection pool. Select plantings that highlight or complement the water feature.

Many serenity gardens incorporate stones, large plantings, and/or large expanses of sand or lawn. Careful selection and placement of stone is critical, as stone integrated in serenity garden design often “symbolizes the eternal, permanent and unchanging”¹ nature of the space. Garden gates, bridges, walls, and pathways bring closure or cohesion to many other spaces. Many small serenity garden designs involve backdrops and overhead features. However, these designs are specific to existing structure and integrated into private home design.

Choose furnishings, statuary, and garden art, which carry a special meaning for you. Depending on your preference, seating may be conventional or made of natural materials that fit seamlessly in the space. As you contemplate furniture placement options, consider size of the space, number of visitors, comfort, views, and focal points. Garden spaces are three-dimensional, so remember to dress your exterior walls for vertical

Continued on page 7

Winter Wildlife— continued from page 3

They may take up winter residence in your attic or basement for years without making you aware of them, enjoying a diet of the occasional mouse or bat. If you see any evidence of snakes, typically a shed snakeskin, call a professional wildlife remover.

Rodents, including squirrels, mice, and rats, which are the most common in and around homes, can do considerable damage. They may nest in attics, chimneys, or dryer vents, and they bear frequent litters of offspring. They chew electrical and phone wires and tear up soft materials like cardboard for nesting materials. (I had one living in the glove box of my car, and it made a nest of paper napkins. It gained access from under the hood, so I had my dealer close up the space it got in through.) You may find their droppings or hear them scrambling through the walls and ceilings of your house. There are strict regulations against trapping and releasing animals, so again, for anything larger than a mouse or rat trap, call a wildlife remover who will trap and transport them away.

A few more general tips:

If you feed your pets outdoors, or if you cook or eat outdoors on a nice winter day, be sure to bring all traces of food in at night. And clean your grill of all scents of food.

If you have a pet door, lock it at night or as soon as your pets come in at the end of the day.

Many critters will winter nest in chimneys, sheds, attics, and under decks and porches, so make them animal-proof with online advice or professional help. Just be sure not to trap any animals inside during the process.

Food is harder to find as winter progresses, until spring shoots appear, insects take wing, and hibernating provisions emerge from the mud and ground. Foragers may become more desperate and less fearful of people the hungrier they get.

It’s natural to want to “help” wildlife by putting out food and creating attractive habitat for it. It’s also exciting to view the animals that share our environment, especially when we so seldom see them and they’re so clever at keeping a safely low profile. But be smart, sensible and aware of how to interact with them, and decide if you want to attract them or just be satisfied when your paths cross.

Mistletoe - continued from page 4

established on a host, mistletoe grows very quickly and can live for years while the host plant is steadily weakened, potentially even dying. Pruning the parasite will help; however, be sure to cut at least 6 inches beyond the point of attachment, as the haustoria can penetrate far into the tree (Culbert, 2008).

Despite suffering from a split reputation of either the decorative prelude to a sweet Christmas kiss or the tree-harming parasite, mistletoe is actually a plant of great ecological importance and is considered a keystone species, vital to the health of a forest. In fact, a vast array of wildlife in the ecosystem largely depend on it for survival, and if it were removed the ecosystem would change drastically.

Many common bird favorites that eat the sticky berries include mockingbirds (*Mimus polyglottos*), bluebirds (*Sialia spp.*), yellow-bellied sapsuckers (*Sphyrapicus varius*), both red-bellied woodpeckers (*Melanerpes carolinus*) and pileated woodpeckers (*Dryocopus pileatus*), and cedar waxwings (*Bombycilla cedrorum*), just to name a few. This source of food for birds is especially important during times of drought and in the winter when food scarcity is commonplace.

Secondly, the tangle of mistletoe twigs serve as nesting sites for many species of birds and squirrels. And lastly, three species of butterflies depend on mistletoe for survival, including the great purple hairstreak (*Atlides halesus*), the thicket hairstreak (*Callophrys spinetorum*), and the Johnson's hairstreak (*Callophrys johnsoni*). These butterflies lay eggs on mistletoe, and the larva eat the leaves of this host plant. The adults of all three species feed on mistletoe nectar, as do some species of native bees.

I have grown to love this plant for what it is ... a fascinating and natural part of forest ecosystem. Friend or foe? It depends on your perspective.

References

Culbert, Dan. "Mistletoe." UF/IFAS Extension: Solutions for Your Life, 2008, solutionsforyourlife.ufl.edu/hot_topics/lawn_and_garden/mistletoe.shtml

Extension, Jefferson County Cooperative. "The magic of mistletoe (Garden Talk)." AL.com, 9 Dec. 2013, www.al.com/living/index.ssf/2013/12/the_magic_of_mistletoe_garden.html.

Mehta, Aalok. "Mistletoe 'Keystone' to Forest Health, Scientists Say." National Geographic, National Geographic Society, 24 Dec. 2007, news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2007/12/071224-mistletoe-research.html.

Puckett, Catherine, and Esque, Todd. "Not Just for Kissing: Mistletoe and Birds, Bees, and Other Beasts." USGS, 12 Dec. 2016, www.usgs.gov/news/not-just-kissing-mistletoe-and-birds-bees-and-other-beasts-0.

Serenity Gardens - Continued from page 6

interest and charm.

As our needs change, our garden spaces evolve in response to these changes, so do not feel bound by choices that you initially make. The serenity garden is your private space—designed to create a harmonious relationship between the garden and the needs of your body, soul, and spirit. It should not only reflect your personality and fit within the character of the space, but it should also address your specific physical, spiritual, or inspirational needs.

Alexander, Rosemary. *The Essential Garden Design Workbook*. Timber Press. Portland OR. 2004.

Davitt, Keith. *Small Spaces, Beautiful Gardens*. Rockport Publishers. Gloucester MA. 2001.

¹Streep, Peg. *Spiritual Gardening*. Inner Ocean Publishing. Maui, HI. 2003.



DECEMBER TIPS



ORNAMENTALS

- Yews, juniper, holly, boxwood, broad-leaf evergreens and many deciduous trees, roses, and shrubs can be propagated this month. Insert evergreen cuttings in vermiculite or sand in a cool greenhouse or tie bundles of the cuttings together and bury in a cold frame. Remove in early spring and plant in a nursery bed.
- December is a good month to replace overgrown shrubs - don't fertilize until early spring.
- Fertilize pansies and other winter annuals with a fertilizer containing nitrate nitrogen. The higher the ratio of nitrate nitrogen the better the fertilizer. https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/B%201359_2.PDF
- Finish winter clean-up by pruning deciduous perennials 3-4 inches from the ground. Leaving part of the stem helps mark the location and size of the plant. https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/B%20961_4.PDF
- When it is too cold to work in the yard, work on putting your landscape on paper; mark existing plants, site conditions (wet, dry, sunny, shade) then make a list of what you want to add. https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/C%201032-4_3.PDF

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

- Pick mummied fruit off trees and rake up leaves under fruit trees to remove insects and diseases.
- December is a good month to construct raised vegetable beds. Any length is fine but it's good to build them no wider than 30-40 inches for easy access and to minimize compacting soil. https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/C%201027-5_1.PDF
- Apply a thin layer of pinestraw or mulch or cover with a row cover to protect winter veggies from extreme cold. https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/C%20984_2.PDF
- Top dress unused areas of veggie beds with 2-4 inches of composted manure or shredded leaves.
- Fruit trees can be pruned at any time during the winter provided the temperature is above 45°.
- Get asparagus beds ready to plant when weather and soil conditions permit. The planting site should be in areas that will not interfere with cultivation of other crops. Bed preparation should include heavy applications of compost or aged animal manure plus 25 lbs of 6-12-12 per 1000 ft² applied broadcast. Till

MISCELLANEOUS

deeply and smooth soil surface. Set asparagus crowns any time in late December or early January when soil is not frozen.

- Keep all indoor plants away from drafts and direct heat sources - inexpensive plastic draft hoods help redirect heat away from plants. https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/B%201318_4.PDF
- Keep checking house plants for insect infestation. Isolate and treat infected plants immediately.
- Winterize your lawnmower, tiller and weed-eater. Drain out gas and replace the oil with fresh oil. Remove the oil filter and either clean or replace it. Check all nuts and bolts to be sure they haven't vibrated loose. Mower blades and tiller tines can be sharpened. Inspect wheels, belts and other moving parts.
- To keep your shears and loppers in good shape for next year, clean them with mineral spirits or Lysol bathroom tile cleaner. Adjust the tension screw and give them a good sharpening. Be sure to use a broad file while sharpening. Tools sharpened by a power grinder will overheat and lose their tempering, making the metal likely to chip or break.
- Clean garden hand tools with liquid detergent and bleach, drying thoroughly. Then oil to prevent rust.
- Blades of shovels and hoes can be sharpened with a file. Apply a light coat of household oil. Treat all wood handles with a coat of linseed oil.
- Drain garden hoses and sprinklers checking for leaks. Replace any old washers. Do not store hoses in direct sunlight or freezing temperatures as both will shorten the life of your hose.
- Clean all pressure sprayers and dusters before putting them away for the



winter. Make sure they are functioning properly prior

JANUARY TIPS

ORNAMENTALS

- Watch for camellia buds that have brown spots on the edges and then spread to the entire flower. This is petal blight. Remove and destroy any buds showing symptoms. Don't confuse it with cold damage. It's a good practice to remove spent flowers from the ground. https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/B%201065_5.PDF



[201065_5.PDF](https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/B%201065_5.PDF)

- January is a good month to plant trees. Do not add fertilizer to planting hole - it could burn the roots. https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/B%20932_3.PDF
- Fertilize annuals in colder months with a fertilizer high in nitrate nitrogen.
- Keep pansies and violas dead headed.
- If squirrels are digging bulbs, cover them with 1" wire mesh so foliage can grow through then mulch over wire.
- Pull up winter weeds now before they form seeds.
- If a few, consecutive warm days have caused your bulbs to nose out from under protective mulch, plan to thicken the mulch layer as soon as cold weather returns to prevent freezing by exposure.
- Analyze last year's planting, fertilizing and spraying

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

records. Make notations to reorder successful varieties.

- Plant B & B, bare-root and container-grown fruit.
- Water newly planted fruit trees thoroughly, even if the ground is wet, so the soil around the roots will settle.
- Prune grapes in January or February. If this job is left too late in the season, bleeding from cut ends will occur. Train them onto a one or two wire fence. https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/B%20807_4.PDF
- Don't plant strawberries or figs until February or March. https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/C%20945_3.PDF
- Some mail order seed companies offer pelleted seed of lettuce, carrot, and a few other small-seeded crops. Pelleted seed has a special coating to make them larger. This is especially valuable for children and gardeners

with arthritic hands, weak eyesight, or poor coordination. Wide spacing of seed helps eliminate thinning. When using pelleted seed, plant in moist soil and keep it moist because the coating has to dissolve before the seed can germinate.

- Organize your seeds for inside planting. Take each seed packet and count back from the last frost (April 14) taking into consideration the number of days for germination.
- Remove brown raspberry and blackberry canes that bore fruit last year; tie up green canes for this year's fruit. https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/C%20766_3.PDF
- Spray dormant oil on fruit trees, per label instructions.
- Prune apple and pear trees. Remove dead limbs first, then the pencil-sized, vertical "water sprouts". https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/C%20740_6.PDF

MISCELLANEOUS

- Sterilize tools, pots, and anything you use around your plants. Use one part household bleach to nine parts water. Soak for about 15 minutes, rinse well and let dry.
- Protect liquid insecticides from cold weather to preserve their effectiveness. If any product is stored below the manufacturer's suggested minimum storage temperature, it loses its potency. The most important factor in determining if the product is usable is the complete absence of crystals. If crystals remain after the product returns to room temperature, do not use it. Dispose of it according to the directions on the label.
- Chop unwanted kudzu, English ivy, and bamboo to the ground. Follow with herbicide on the new leaves in April.
- Clean indoor plant leaves with a damp rag. Sandwich the leaf between folds of cloth and wipe gently. Change the cloth for each plant to avoid transferring insects or diseases.
- Make sure houseplants are misted and not touching



RAINFALL COMPARISONS

	Cherokee County			State Wide		
	Sept 17	Oct 17	YTD	Sept 17	Oct 17	YTD
Actual	3.9	6.1	53.4	3.9	4.3	48.4
Normal	4.1	3.7	45.9	3.6	3.1	40.2
Deficit	-0.2	2.4	7.5	0.3	1.2	8.2

Recipes

Crusty Mac and Cheese (Very rich, very tasty)

- 3 T butter
- 12 ounces extra sharp cheddar, grated
- 12 ounces America cheese or mild cheddar, grated
- 1 lb elbow pasta, boiled until tender, drained and rinsed
- 1/8 t cayenne pepper (optional)
- Salt to taste
- 2/3 cup whole milk

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Use one tablespoon butter to thickly grease a 9 x 13 inch baking dish. Combine grated cheeses and set aside two heaping cups for topping.

In a large bowl, toss the pasta, remaining cheeses, cayenne, and salt. Place in baking pan and pour milk evenly over the surface. Sprinkle the reserved cheeses on top, dot with remaining butter and bake, uncovered, for 45 minutes.

Raise heat to 400 degrees and bake 15 to 20 minutes more, until crusty on top and bottom.

*Makes 8-12 servings.
Goes well with a green salad, plain or topped with salmon or chopped chicken.*

UGA Cooperative Extension—Cherokee County
1130 Bluffs Pkwy, Suite G49

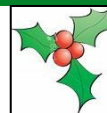
www.ugaextension.com/cherokee
<https://m.facebook.com/cherokeemastergardeners/>



CHEROKEE COUNTY

The University of Georgia and Ft. Valley State College, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and counties of the state cooperating.
The Cooperative Extension Service offers educational programs, assistance and materials to all people without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex or disability.
An equal opportunity/affirmative action organization committed to a diverse work force.

Turkey Croquettes



- For the thick white sauce:**
- 2 T snipped parsley
 - 6 T butter
 - 1 cup whole milk
 - 1 cup chicken or turkey broth
 - 2 t lemon juice
 - 2 T grated onion
 - 1/2 t celery salt
 - Dashed of pepper, paprika, nutmeg

- For the patties:**
- 5 cups cooked turkey, chopped in food processor
 - 1 cup fine bread crumbs
 - 2 beaten eggs

To make the thick white sauce, melt butter in medium sauce pan. Blend in flour, then add milk and broth. Cook and stir until mixture thickens and bubbles, then cook one minute more.

Remove from heat; add lemon juice, parsley and onion. Stir in seasonings. Cool to room temperature.

In a large mixing bowl, combine white sauce with the turkey. Cover and chill several hours or overnight.

With wet hands, shape mixture into balls, around the size of a large meatball. Roll balls in bread crumbs then shape into cones or flatten into burger shapes. Dip into egg then into bread crumbs again. Wash hands when they become too coated with mixture.

Fry croquettes in oil until brown on all sides; drain, and serve with turkey gravy. Or bake on a well oiled metal baking pan at 400 degrees for 15 minutes per *side*, turning once. Or freeze for future meals with waxed paper between each croquette.

This recipe also works well with ground chicken or ham instead of turkey. A great way to use holiday leftovers.

To receive printed copies of the 2017 newsletters, please send a check for \$10 to:

Diane Walton
326 Lauren Lane
Woodstock, GA 30188

GREAT HOLIDAY GIFT IDEA!!



Mission Statement of the Georgia Master Gardener Association:
To stimulate the love for and increase the knowledge of gardening and to voluntarily and enthusiastically share this knowledge with others