

# Gardening with the Masters

For the Cherokee County Master Gardeners

June/July, 2018

## WHAT'S HAPPENING

### JUNE

June 6 & 20th - Papa's Pantry (Plant-a-Row) Workday, 9:30am

June 7 - Demo Garden Workday, Sr. Center, 10am

June 9 - Hydrangea Lectures, Hickory Flat Library, 10am & 1:30pm

June 9 - Lavender Festival, Barrington Hall, Roswell, 10am-5pm

June 13 - Plant Propagation, Lunch n Learn, Rose Creek Library, 11am

June 16 - Gardening for the Birds, 10am, Hickory Flat Library

June 16 - GMGA Field Trip to Joe Lamp'l's, online Registration

June 19 - Papa's Pantry and Hidden Falls Trailer Park Event

June 19 - CCMG Monthly Meeting, Merrily's House, Covered Dish

June 23 - Bees and Other Pollinators, Sr. Center, 10am

June 23 - Summer Plant Sale, Sr. Center, 9am-12noon

### JULY

July 5 - Demo Garden Workday, Sr. Center, 10am

July 11 - Papa's Pantry (Plant-a-Row) Workday, 9:30am

July 13-14 - GMGA Conference/Field Trip, Galloway School, online Registration

July 17 - CCMG Monthly Meeting

July 19 - Demo Garden Workday, Sr. Center, 10am

July 25 - Papa's Pantry (Plant-a-Row) Workday, 9:30am

## Editor's Corner

By Marcia Winchester,  
Cherokee County Master Gardener



Starting over. In gardening those can be daunting words. During the many years of gardening, there are different reasons to "start over" on a garden. In my 20 years as a Cherokee County gardener, I've seen or heard about gardens having to begin again. In the after-effects of 16 inches of rain in 24 hours, a friend had the majority of her garden washed away as her bubbling creek turned into a rushing, violent river. Besides losing a lot of her beautiful plants, they were unfortunately replaced by non-native invasive plants that washed down the creek. Another friend had a tornado knock down her lovely shade trees, which left her collection of hydrangeas and other shade plants in stark hot sun. Your garden can also be changed by plant loss from such things as heavy pinebark beetle damage or plants dying of drought stress.

Expansion of the Senior Center has twice had the Master Gardeners digging up our Demonstration Gardens and gardening out of plastic bags until we could reestablish our gardens. However, if you were to walk through the Demonstration Gardens now after one of our free lectures, you'd never believe that we went through "starting over."

Each time a garden starts over, a gardener can take the opportunity to utilize acquired gardening knowledge and improve the garden. This spring a friend had to have her septic field worked on. The damage to her front and side property was heart wrenching. As we were replanting uprooted shrubs, we started making notes of what shade plants can grow in compacted red clay. Now to walk through my garden and see what I can share with her to start the process of beginning again.

*Marcia*

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## Have You Met Dodder?

By Joan McFather, Cherokee County Master Gardener

You would certainly know if you have. Dodder is an annual seed-producing parasitic vine that looks an awful lot like the orange Silly String my children and their friends sprayed all over the basement in their youth. Unlike Silly String, however, it grows rapidly and horribly around and literally through whatever host plants it can find. I actually did meet dodder one spring years ago on the bank above my driveway. Not bothering to research it, but thinking it ugly, I marched manfully up the bank and pulled it out by the handfuls—successfully eradicating it. Now that I have researched it, I am horrified. I should be drowning in the stuff by now.

<https://ugaurbanag.com/dodder/>

*Cuscuta*, the most common genus, is found throughout the United States, many of the species preferring the warm temperatures of the South. It has many folk names: devil's hair, devil's guts, wizard's net, witch's hair, strangleweed, hellbind...all of them well deserved. One I hadn't heard was love vine. Young women of the South tore off a bit of the plant and threw it onto other plants. If it grew, affection with the young men called out as potential husbands was mutual. Well, of course it grew there—that's what it does.

Dodder is a true parasite. It begins normally enough as a seed germinating in the ground. Lacking the ability to make chlorophyll, seedlings attach to nearby victims, break away from their original root systems, then burrow into their hosts with tiny root-like haustoria. There, acting as vampires, they curl around stems, suck out nutrients, and kill the hosts. Dodder spreads from plant to plant via new haustoria, and while it cannot attack the bark of a tree, it can attach to the leaves, with the same result. Dodder can do great damage to cover crops such as clover, alfalfa, hops, and beans. I found it on the blue star creeper I had planted to control erosion.

Apparently, I found it at an opportune moment, or I wouldn't have been successful at all in eradicating it. Depending on the species, dodder produces white, pink, yellow, or cream colored flowers, anywhere from early summer to early autumn, and seeds...lots and lots of seeds...all having a hard coating that allows them to survive in the soil for five to ten years or longer. While the plant is an annual, it will regrow from its seeds each year. The trick, obviously, is to eradicate the vines before they flower and set seed. Experts tell you that you should probably destroy the host plants as well, since it is difficult to gather all the bits of dodder infesting them—again, I was lucky. Then, of course, scout for any new seedlings and remove them.

An organic solution for continued control, I learned, is to spread corn gluten meal on the soil, wet it, and let it dry out as a natural pre-emergent which will destroy the seeds. The expert's other solution was to torch the soil (and thus the seeds) several times with a propane-fueled flame weeder. I'm not sure I'd be up for that one. If you don't mind an herbicide approach, dodder can be killed with glyphosate—but note it is non-selective, meaning it kills other plants as well.

As a side note, Pennsylvania State University researchers have found that dodder follows the scent of its potential victims in almost animal-like behavior, preferring tomatoes to wheat every time. Maybe we should plant a ring of wheat around our precious tomatoes!



*Master Gardener Summer Plant Sale, June 23, 2018  
at the Canton Senior Center, 9am—12pm*

Come browse our selection of daylilies, perennials, natives, ground covers, herbs,  
pollinator plants, and garden art.

Master Gardeners will be available to answer questions, and give tours of the Demo Gardens.

## NASTY NANDINA!

By Mary Tucker , Cherokee County Master Gardener

Nandina (*Nandina domestica*), or heavenly bamboo as it is often called, is anything but “heavenly.” (And note that it is not related to bamboo.) I have known for years that this small Asian shrub is invasive, but I have recently learned that consumption of the berries can be deadly to birds!!! Unfortunately, this nasty plant is frequently planted in the landscape by either homeowners or landscape companies because of its evergreen foliage, fall foliage color, and red berries.



Let’s take a look at the problems that nandina poses, both for the environment and for wildlife, and then we can use our influence as Master Gardeners to discourage its use and encourage the use of other more beneficial plants.

[www.invasive.org](http://www.invasive.org). Photo by John Ruter, University of Georgia, Bugwood.org.

### INVASIVENESS

Nandina is listed as invasive on many Southeastern states’ lists of pest plants. One factor that makes nandina invasive is the berries. These are eaten by birds, and then seedlings naturally pop up here and yon. Another part of the problem is the fact that the plant is shade tolerant, allowing it to invade woodlands and forests, where it outcompetes native vegetation. In addition to spreading by seed, it also may colonize by underground runners. According to the University of Florida Center for Aquatic and Invasive Plants, nandina will regenerate from root fragments, making it difficult to eradicate.

### TOXICITY TO BIRDS

The University of Georgia has been instrumental in establishing that nandina berries are toxic to birds. The university’s involvement began in the spring of 2009, when many dead cedar waxwings (*Bombycilla cedrorum*) were found in Thomas County, Georgia. Examination of the dead birds by Tifton Veterinary Diagnostic and Investigational Laboratory determined that the cedar waxwings had partially digested nandina berries in their gastro-intestinal tracts. The laboratory determined that the deaths were due to cyanide poisoning, and in fact, nandina berries may contain large amounts of cyanogenic compounds (which are also poisonous to children, and to other animals, including cats and dogs).

Cedar waxwings may be especially prone to this poisoning because they feed almost exclusively on fruits, often eating large quantities at one time. The bright red berries of the nandina are quite attractive to the birds, especially when food supplies are low during winter and early spring. In addition to cedar waxwings, birds such as bluebirds, robins, and mockingbirds are frequent fruit eaters, so these species will also be at risk from nandina poisoning. You can read more about this story at this link from the UGA College of Veterinary Medicine: [http://vet.uga.edu/news/view/toxicity\\_due\\_to\\_nandina\\_domestica\\_in\\_cedar\\_waxwings\\_bombycilla\\_cedrorum](http://vet.uga.edu/news/view/toxicity_due_to_nandina_domestica_in_cedar_waxwings_bombycilla_cedrorum).

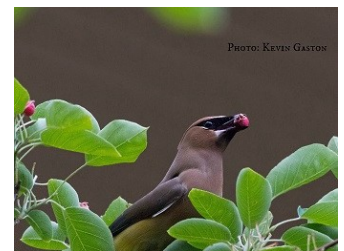


Photo by Kevin Gaston

### ERADICATION METHODS

If you have nandina in your garden, especially one that sets fruit, you should simply and quickly eliminate it. In the meantime, remove any berries to prevent the harmful spread of this noxious plant and to protect the birds.

Small nandina seedling can often be hand pulled, so keep watch in your yard and act quickly. Larger specimens will need to be dug out of the ground, removing any root fragments to prevent re-infestation. Frequent cutting or mowing may weaken the plant enough to control it, though it may pop up from underground runners. Chemicals such as glyphosate or triclopyr may be applied to cut stems for more effective control.

### ALTERNATIVE PLANTS

As noted above, nandina is popular as a landscape plant for many reasons. It is of relatively small size (4 to 8 feet tall), the foliage is evergreen to about 10°F, the leaves are colorfully

*Continued on page 6*

## LADYBUGS

By Mary Schuster , Cherokee County Master Gardener

*Ladybug! Ladybug! Fly away home.  
Your house is on fire. And your children all gone.*

*All except one. And that's little Ann.  
For she crept under the frying pan.*

*--old nursery rhyme dating back to the 1840s*



Photo by Ellen Honeycutt

The literature is just loaded with references depicting the fascination little ladybugs have had on cultures all over the world. The foregoing is just one example.

Ladybugs (*coccinellidae*) are a family of small beetles ranging from 0.03 to 0.71 inches. Readily recognizable by most as little red critters with black spots on their wing covers and with black legs, heads, and antennae, they may also appear as yellow or orange. Ladybug residency spans the world and some 6,000 species of them have been described.

Most ladybug species are considered useful insects in the garden. Many of them prey on aphids or scale insects, which can be pesky. Although they are regarded as purely carnivorous, they can become omnivorous when their eggs become a cannibalistic food resource when alternative prey are scarce.

Here in Georgia, a state famous for its pecan industry, ladybugs consume so many aphids daily that their sheer strength in numbers may greatly reduce the need for pesticides. This task is usually the work of Asian ladybugs that were initially imported into the U.S. in the 1960s to 1980s due to the fact our native lady beetles were not as effective in controlling tree-feeding aphids.

As the weather turns cooler, ladybugs will seek shelter and will hibernate into nooks and crannies of buildings. They are especially attracted to the sunny sides of southwest-facing buildings that are painted white, gray, or yellow. They may appear in large numbers and become a nuisance when they successfully manage to burrow their way to the inside of dwellings. The best way to eradicate them is to simply seal cracks and crevices. If they manage to get inside, try to avoid squashing them as they will emit an orange substance that can stain walls or fabrics.

Fortunately, they do not bite, sting, or eat our food; however, they can trigger allergies in some individuals causing eye irritations and asthma-like symptoms.

Georgia has become famous for its wine production. Due to their noxious odor, even small numbers of beetles inadvertently processed along with the grapes can taint the flavor of the wine.

So, ladybugs can have positive and negative influences on gardening in Georgia—they consume aphids (good) but can become an infestation problem (not so good) or jeopardize the taste of an otherwise nice bottle of wine (amazingly not so good)!

Personally, I'll always give them a pass if they show up in my home just because they are so cute! I simply scoop them up with a dust pan and re-acquaint them with the outdoors reminding them all the while to "fly away home."

### Resources:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wik/Coccinellidae>

<https://forsyth.ces.ncsu.edu/ladybugs/>

<https://entomology.ca.uky.edu/ef416>



## Hydrangea: The Southern Garden Sensation

By Stephanie M. Howard , Cherokee County Master Gardener

Like many, my love of plants started in my grandmother's garden. "Mimi" became the caretaker, as my aged great-grandmother could no longer garden. She unselfishly shared her bulbs, cuttings, and seeds with neighbors, who gratefully returned her generosity.

Photo by Stephanie M. Howard.

Their large backyard vegetable garden sat well behind the outhouse. I remember corn, squash, peas, turnip and collard greens, melons, beans, and cucumbers. Closer to the house were apple, plum, peach, and pear trees; pomegranates, blackberries, and raspberries grew along the fence; and muscadines hung from a homemade arbor. Branches of pecan trees arched over the center of the yard, giving us shade when we wanted to sit outside. My special place was the mulberry tree. I would sit between the branches and eat mulberries for what seemed like hours. The entire front yard was a cottage garden that seemed to bloom continuously. A large magnolia anchored the corner, while colorful roses, azaleas, foxglove, hollyhocks, and phlox covered nearly every space except the stone walkway to the stairs. Wisteria hung from the eaves of one side of the wide sitting porch. My personal favorites, and undeniably the neighborhood sensation were the hydrangeas. I knew that someday these gorgeous shrubs would be the centerpiece of my garden.

My grandmother had few choices when selecting her hydrangeas. I can only recall the soft clusters of pink and blue mopheads—what I now recognize as *Hydrangea macrophylla*. As I plan beds that feature specimen hydrangeas, my choices are much more extensive and complicated. If you are a hydrangea lover, consider mixing a variety of species to add a little excitement to the structure of your garden beds. The changing colors of flower heads and leaves throughout the summer and early fall will also provide added interest. We now have six categories of hydrangea to choose from.



**Bigleaf** – *Hydrangea macrophylla* includes both mopheads and lacecaps and are commonly known as hortensia, florist's, or French hydrangeas. Selections for our USDA Hardiness Zone 7 garden may include 'Blue Wave', 'Lilacina', and 'Veitchii', which are lacecap varieties. Mopheads include 'Fuji Waterfall', 'Endless Summer', and 'Pia'.

*Hydrangea macrophylla*, 'Shooting Star' Lacecap, Photo: S.M. Howard



**Oakleaf** – *Hydrangea quercifolia* is an elegant, hardy species named for the appearance of its leaves. Although its flower shape is panicle, it does not belong to *H. paniculata*. Blooms are initially white, but fade to pinkish-purple. 'PeeWee,' 'Snow Queen', and 'Alice' perform well in our hardiness zone.

*Hydrangea quercifolia*, 'Alice', [botgarden.uga.edu](http://botgarden.uga.edu)

**Mountain** – Because of the lacecap shape of the flower head (corymb), *Hydrangea serrata* is often confused with *H. macrophylla*, but it is actually a different species. 'Blue Bird', 'Preziosa', and 'Grayswood' are options for planting in Zone 7.



**Smooth** – The stunning Annabelle hydrangea, or *H. arborescens*, is often confused with the earlier blooming Chinese snowball viburnum. 'Annabelle', 'Grandiflora', and 'Hayes Starburst' make great choices for the southern garden.

*Hydrangea arborescens*, 'Annabelle', Photo: S. M. Howard



**Panicle** – *Hydrangea paniculata*, or peegee hydrangea, is a standout in the summer pollinator garden. Consider adding 'Chantilly Lace', 'Tardiva', or 'Pinky Winky' to your landscape.

*Hydrangea paniculate*, 'Limelight', [caes.uga.edu](http://caes.uga.edu) (Gary L. Wade)

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### **Nandina**.... continued from page 3

tinged with red in winter, clusters of small white flowers are borne in late spring to early summer, and red berries adorn the plant in winter to spring. There are few other plants that offer all of these benefits; however, given the many drawbacks of nandina, please consider these native plant options:

- Florida hobblebush (*Agarista populifolia*): small evergreen shrub, colorful foliage, small white flowers
- Coastal leucothoe (*Leucothoe axillaris*) and doghobble (*Leucothoe fontanesiana*): small evergreen shrub, colorful foliage, small white flowers
- Dwarf yaupon holly (*Ilex vomitoria* 'Nana'): small evergreen shrub, colorful red berries
- Dwarf wax myrtle (*Myrica pusilla*): small evergreen shrub, fruit for birds
- Blueberry (*Vaccinium* spp.): beautiful fall color, fruit for the birds

If you must have nandina in your garden (and I hope you don't!) you can consider planting some of the dwarf cultivars that rarely bloom or set fruit. If you take this route, please keep an eye on your plants to be sure that they behave as advertised. But why even take a chance when there are other more worthy plants to choose from.

### **RESOURCES FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT INVASIVE PLANTS**

- Center for Invasive Species and Ecosystem Health ([www.invasive.org](http://www.invasive.org)). A joint project of the University of Georgia, the USDA, and other organizations.
- Southeast Exotic Pest Plant Council ([www.se-eppc.org](http://www.se-eppc.org)). Chapters in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee.
- Georgia Exotic Pest Plant Council ([www.gaepcc.org](http://www.gaepcc.org)). The Georgia Chapter of the SE-EPPC; an affiliate of the University of Georgia.

### **Hydrangea**.....continued from page 5



**Climbing** – *Hydrangea petiolaris* is a vigorous climber with white, lacecap blooms. *Hydrangea aspera* or *H. seemannii* (evergreen climbing hydrangeas) will need ample support.

Hydrangea petiolaris, Photo: S. M. Howard

The first three species listed above bloom on old wood and need no pruning. The last three species bloom on new wood and may be pruned in late winter or early spring.

Although at the time, my family lived next door to my grandmother, it never occurred to me to help her or ask questions. I simply enjoyed the fruits of Mimi's garden, but lost an opportunity to start my gardening education early. Today, my two youngest grandsons have their own beds in my garden and tend them when they visit. This is Grandma's Rule #1: It must include at least one hydrangea. I hope that the tradition will continue.

Browne, Michele. "Hydrangea: A Southern Tradition." UGA Center for Urban Agriculture. September 24, 2013.

Church, Glyn. *Hydrangeas*. Firefly Books. 2001.

Lawson-Hall, Toni and Rotherham, Brian. *Hydrangeas: A Gardeners' Guide*. Timber Press. Portland OR 2001.

Winter, Norman. "'Chantilly Lace' and 'Pinky Winky' Dazzle With Blooms, Bees and Butterflies". UGA, College of Agricultural & Environmental Sciences News. August 10, 2017.

Hydrangeas Demystified. <https://www.provenwinners.com/Hydrangeas-Demystified.2015>.

Dyer, Mary H. Caring for Hardy Hydrangeas: Learn about Zone 7 Hydrangea Planting. <https://gardeningknowhow.com>.

## LAWN CARE - JUNE AND JULY

By Stephanie Howard, Cherokee County Master Gardener

### Warm-Season Grasses (Bermuda, Centipede, Zoysia, St. Augustine)

#### For Established Lawns

- Warm-season turf is typically stressed during the summer months. Take care to mow at the proper height and follow appropriate irrigation recommendations to maintain your lawn.
- If needed, you can aerate or dethatch. Remember that these activities are not necessarily required every year. However, if you applied a pre-emergent in June, the chemical barrier will be disturbed.
- It's not too late to apply a pre-emergent for significant weed control. Use a weed and feed product or spot spray for minor weed control.
- Fertilize Bermuda, Zoysia, and St. Augustine at the beginning of July. The Zoysia lawn may not need to be fertilized at this time if it is healthy—dark green and thick. This application should be effective through September. For Centipede lawns, use a slow-release, low-phosphorus fertilizer in early July.
- Follow water-wise irrigation methods to insure a healthy lawn and promote a strong root system. If irrigation is needed, apply 1 inch of water per week. Consider rainfall amounts. Do not overwater.

#### For Newly Installed Lawns

- Irrigate daily for the first two to three weeks until well established.
- Fertilize according to soil test recommendations. To promote good coverage, apply a complete fertilizer monthly.
- To discourage weeds, extract manually or mow often.



### Cool-Season Grasses (Tall Fescue, Kentucky Bluegrass, Creeping Red Fescue, Chewing Fescue)

#### For Established Lawns

- Cool-season grasses are not actively growing during the summer months. Maintenance needs are limited to irrigation, weed management, and mowing as needed.
- Do not aerate during the summer months.
- You may rake your lawn, but do not mechanically dethatch during the summer months.
- If needed, apply a post-emergent for grassy weeds like crabgrass, but take care not to treat drought-stressed turf. You may also spot spray broadleaf weeds like chickweed or dandelion.
- July may be a great time to do a soil test before turf enters the fall growing season.
- Lime may be applied at any time. Apply about 50 lbs. per 1000 ft<sup>2</sup>. **However, do not fertilize during June or July.**
- A healthy lawn needs about 1 inch of water per week. Determine irrigation needs depending on the amount of rainfall received.

#### For Newly Installed Lawns

- You should not attempt to install new cool-season turf during this time, as fall is the best time to seed or install cool-season sprigs/sod.
- If you are considering installing this year, use the summer months to research the best cultivars to fit your needs. Look for the "Blue Tag" certified seed to insure that you're purchasing a high-quality product.

Grass Type	Mowing Height(in)
Bermuda grass	1 - 1.5 to 2.0
Centipede grass	1 - 2
St. Augustine grass	2 - 3
Zoysia grass	1 - 2
Tall Fescue grass	2.5 or more
Kentucky Bluegrass	2.5 or more

#### Disease & Insect Control for All Lawns

If you're using proper irrigation methods, there should not be any major fungal issues during the hot, summer months. However, check for dead or dark patches with clearly defined edges.

Check for webworm, armyworm, and/or cutworm infestations. Webworms leave a veil-like webbing on the turf surface that is easily seen in the morning before the dew burns off. Circular, sunken patches of cut leaf blades might indicate the presence of cutworms. Armyworms leave significant damage by chewing patches of blades to the ground.

Patches of wilted, yellow grass might indicate the presence of chinch bugs. St. Augustine and Centipede are especially susceptible, but other grasses are also at risk.

If needed, treat the soil with an approved product for the specific type of infestation. Control strategies differ, so be sure to follow instructions on the product label.



## JUNE TIPS

### ORNAMENTALS

- Use pliers to pull up tree seedlings after a rain when soil is moist. Grip the stem at the soil line; twist and pull straight up. Watering deeply the day before pulling weeds will make the job easier.
- Climbing roses don't really climb - they have long canes that require support. You will need to loosely tie the canes to trellises with broad strips of material or foam covered wire. Do not use wire as it can damage the cane. [http://extension.uga.edu/publications/files/pdf/B%20671\\_2.PDF](http://extension.uga.edu/publications/files/pdf/B%20671_2.PDF)
- Miniature roses can be propagated from stem cuttings. Take cuttings with 4 leaves and insert them into pots filled with moist potting soil. Rooting hormone is optional. Place whole pot in a perforated plastic bag and place in a shady spot. Water as needed. By autumn, cuttings should be rooted.
- Control black spot and powdery mildew on rose foliage.
- Fertilize your roses at monthly intervals with either granular or liquid fertilizer. Inspect plants frequently for pests such as spider mites, aphids and Japanese beetles.
- Leaf miner larvae tunnel inside leaves, leaving whitish trails as they move about. Holly, boxwood, columbine, and locust are particularly susceptible to damage.
- Disinfection of pruners between cuts is recommended when removing diseased tissue from plants. UGA recommends a one to ten solution of bleach and water, but it can be cumbersome to carry a bucket of this mix about in the garden, and the solution is corrosive and must be rinsed from tools after use. Rubbing alcohol in a spray bottle also works. When spraying tools, spray over a trash can so you don't kill or injure grass or plants.
- Now is the time to prune azaleas and rhododendrons before they set next year's flower buds. <http://www.caes.uga.edu/newswire/story.html?storyid=4729>
- Divide and transplant iris now so they will have a long growing season and a better chance of blooming next year. Cut off and discard the older part of the rhizome that does not have white fleshy roots. Cut the leaves back to six inches so they don't blow over. <http://extension.uga.edu/>



Leafminer damage to *Aquilegia canadensis*, Photo by M. Winchester

### FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

- [publications/files/pdf/B%20918\\_3.PDF](http://extension.uga.edu/publications/files/pdf/B%20918_3.PDF)
- Strawberries picked early in the day keep best. Do not wash or stem berries until ready to use. Store berries in covered containers in the refrigerator.
- Set young melons and cantaloupes atop tin cans or flat rocks - they'll ripen faster, be sweeter and have less insect damage than those left on the ground.
- Yellow crook-neck squash tastes best when 4-7 inches long. Pick when pale yellow (rather than golden) and before skin hardens. [https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/C%20993\\_4.PDF](https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/C%20993_4.PDF)
- Remove cucumbers by turning fruits parallel to the vine and giving a quick snap. This prevents vine damage and results in a clean break. Cut or pull cucumbers, leaving a short stem on each. [http://extension.uga.edu/publications/files/pdf/C%201034\\_4.PDF](http://extension.uga.edu/publications/files/pdf/C%201034_4.PDF)
- Stop cutting asparagus in mid to late June when spears become thin. After the last cutting is made, fertilize by broadcasting a 10-10-10 formula at the rate of 2 lbs per 100 sq. ft. Allow the tops to grow during the summer to store food in the roots for the crop next spring. [http://extension.uga.edu/publications/files/pdf/C%201026\\_3.PDF](http://extension.uga.edu/publications/files/pdf/C%201026_3.PDF)
- Avoid side dressing tomatoes, eggplants and peppers with fertilizer until they have set their first fruit.
- Corn needs water at two crucial times: when the tassels at the top are beginning to show and when the silk is beginning to show on the ear. If weather is dry at these times, you will need to water the corn. [http://extension.uga.edu/publications/files/pdf/C%20905\\_3.PDF](http://extension.uga.edu/publications/files/pdf/C%20905_3.PDF)
- If weed plants are mature, weed your garden early in the morning when moisture is present to prevent the seed heads from shattering and dropping weed seeds in the garden. Hold as much of the seed heads in your hand and do not shake off

### MISCELLANEOUS

extra soil as it may scatter weed seeds.

- To protect bees that pollinate many of our crop plants, spray pesticides in the evening after bees have returned to their homes.
- The best time to harvest most herbs is just before flowering when the leaves contain the maximum essential oils. Cut herbs early on a sunny day. Herbs are best if watered the day before to wash off the foliage. <http://extension.uga.edu/publications/>



# JULY TIPS

## ORNAMENTALS

- If your hosta and azalea stems have a white powder covering them, it is probably the waxy coating of planthopper insects. They don't do much damage, but can spread diseases. Spray with garden insecticide if unsightly.
- Lamb's ear tends to have their lower leaves die after a heavy rain. This forms ugly mats that will rot stems and roots. Pull away the yellow leaves to keep up airflow.
- Fertilize crape myrtles, butterfly bushes, and hydrangeas with 1 Tablespoon of 10-10-10 per foot of height.

## FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

- Pick squash regularly to keep up production. If the vines wilt, check the base of the stem for "sawdust". This means the plant has squash borers in the stem.



Alton N. Sparks, Jr.,  
University of Georgia,  
Bugwood.org

- Remove infected plants (thus removing the borers) and plant new seeds. It is good to change your planting location to hopefully prevent the new plants from being attacked.
- Before you spray an insecticide on your vegetables, check the label. Each insecticide has a waiting period after application before you can harvest.
- Although tomatoes are self-pollinating, they need movement to transfer pollen. If it is hot and calm for several days, gently shake plants to assure pollen transfer and fruit set. Hot temperatures can interfere with blossom set.
- Most fertilizer recommendations are for 100 square feet, so keep your garden's square footage a simple fraction of that. For example, a 4 X 12 foot garden is exactly 50 square feet and would require exactly one half the fertilizer required by a garden of 100 square feet.
- Okra pods get tough if allowed to grow too large. Pick regularly.
- Mulch strawberries heavily to protect them from heat and drought.

- The time of day vegetables are harvested can make a difference in the taste and texture. For sweetness, pick peas and corn late in the day; that's when they contain the most sugar, especially if the day was cool and sunny. Cucumbers are crisper and tastier if you harvest them early in the morning.
- Start a fall crop of Brussels sprouts, broccoli, cauliflower and kale indoors. Outdoors, sow pumpkin, beans, squash, cucumbers, and crowder peas. Plant carrots mid-month. [http://extension.uga.edu/publications/files/pdf/C%201022\\_2.PDF](http://extension.uga.edu/publications/files/pdf/C%201022_2.PDF)
- Sunflowers are ready to harvest when the back of the head turns brown.




tomato hornworm,  
(image courtesy of  
Whitney Cranshaw, Colorado  
State University, Bugwood.org)

- Keep an eye out for tomato hornworm. They can do enormous damage overnight. When you see damage, check under leaves and stems to find them. Hand pick to dispose of them.
- Don't plant all your beans at once. If you stagger the plantings every two weeks you will have fresh beans longer. Soak bean seeds overnight before planting for faster germination. <http://extension.uga.edu/publications/files/pdf/>

## MISCELLANEOUS

If you keep your houseplants indoors all summer, keep them out of the draft of the air conditioner. Plants react to an air conditioner's cool air in various ways. Some drop their leaves, others don't bloom well and some fail to bloom at all.

	RAINFALL COMPARISONS					
	Cherokee County			State Wide		
	Mar 18	Apr 18	YTD	Mar 18	Apr 18	YTD
Actual	3.5	5.4	18.5	3.5	5.3	16.5
Normal	5.1	4.5	20.6	4.7	3.6	16.9
Excess	-1.6	0.9	-2.1	-1.2	2.3	-0.4

# Recipes

Send recipes to Pat Bowen at [woodsgal1007@gmail.com](mailto:woodsgal1007@gmail.com)

## Peach and Tomato Salad

This recipe was a huge hit at last summer's Master Gardener picnic in Ball Ground, featuring the best of the season's harvest.

½ cup balsamic vinegar  
¼ cup olive oil  
1 tbsp honey  
Salt and pepper to taste  
6 medium ripe peaches (about 2 lb), pitted and cut into wedges  
2 lb tomatoes, cut into wedges  
1 cup thinly sliced red onion  
1 cup crumbled feta cheese  
1 cup pecan halves, toasted  
½ cup torn fresh basil

In a large bowl, whisk together vinegar, oil, honey, salt and pepper. Add other ingredients and toss to coat.  
Makes 12 cups.

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CHEROKEE COUNTY

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## Baked Scampi

If you love seafood and garlic but don't like the mess of frying, try this recipe that captures the tastes you enjoy. It's fast and easy to make and to adjust for the size of your crowd. The proportions below are for 4 servings. Takes around ten minutes to put together and is ready in half an hour or so.

Ingredients:  
1/3 cup butter  
5 cloves of minced garlic  
1 pound of large shrimp or scallops (thoroughly thawed if frozen)  
1 cup bread crumbs  
1 tsp oregano  
Juice of one lemon  
¼ cup freshly grated parmesan cheese  
Fresh parsley for garnish

Preheat your oven to 425 and grease a pan, casserole or baking dish large enough to hold the seafood in one layer.

Sauté garlic in butter until soft, but not yet brown

Evenly place half the bread crumbs in the dish and sprinkle with oregano. Place the seafood on the crumbs in a single layer and squeeze lemon juice over it. Top with remaining bread crumbs and drizzle garlic and butter over all. Sprinkle with cheese.

Bake for 20 minutes or until top is golden. Garnish with parsley and serve with salad and crispy bread.



**Mission Statement of the Georgia Master Gardener Association:**

**To stimulate the love for and increase the knowledge of gardening and to voluntarily and**