



Gardening with the Masters

Growing, Gardening and Gaining Knowledge
October/November, 2018

WHAT'S HAPPENING

OCTOBER

Oct 3 - Papa's Pantry
(Plant-a-Row)
Workday, 9:30am

Oct 4 - Demo Garden
Workday,
Senior Center, 10am

Oct 6 - Garden Class,
Making Your Own
Cement Planter,
Senior Center, 10am

Oct 10 - Papa's Pantry
(Plant-a-Row)
Workday, 9:30am

Oct 16 - CCMG
Monthly Meeting

Oct 18 - Demo Garden
Workday,
Senior Center, 10am

NOVEMBER

Nov 1 - Demo Garden
Workday,
Senior Center, 10am

Nov 15 - Demo Garden
Workday,
Senior Center, 10am

Nov 20 - CCMG
Monthly Meeting



Photo of *Carya tomentosa*, mockernut hickory courtesy Marcia Winchester.



Editor's Corner

By Marcia Winchester,
Cherokee County Master Gardener

Most people think that to see beautiful fall color you have to go to New England. Yes, New England has beautiful fall color. But fall color isn't limited to that region of the country. I loved the fall color of the different oaks and maples growing up in the Midwest. Living in Cherokee County the last 20 years I still catch my breath driving north to Canton on I-575



Photo of black gum, *Nyssa sylvatica* provided by Ellen Honeycutt.

when I go over a hill in the fall. This hill has yellow from tulip poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), reds from maples (*Acer* spp.), burgundy from oaks (*Quercus* spp.), and pink/maroon from sourwood (*Oxydendrum arboreum*). What makes all these colors even more spectacular is the soothing green from our native pines (*Pinus* spp.) mixed with the fall colors. If you can

tear your eyes away from the majestic colors of our trees, your eyes might be lucky enough to feast on lavender and white from our native asters (*Symphyotrichum* spp.) mixed with yellow of goldenrods (*Solidago* spp.) and deep purple from blazing stars (*Liatis* spp.). If you don't have fall color in your garden, then you are missing out. Fall is a great time to plant trees and perennials so get out there and add some color to your landscape.

Marcia

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Allium 'Millenium': PPA Plant of the Year, 2018

By Mary Schuster, Cherokee County Master Gardener

Each year, the Perennial Plant Association awards its "Plant of the Year" designation to a perennial that the organization deems to be exceptional. In 2018, *Allium* 'Millenium' is being honored.

This bulbous ornamental hybrid was developed from plants of European heritage by allium breeder Mack McDonough. It is being discussed in this issue because it is a late-summer/early-fall bloomer. Sold as bare root bulbs, it is advised to plant them in the fall—from October to late December.

Photo from Perennial Plant Association

This beautiful flowering plant happens to have not one but two aliases: "Millenium Flowering Onion" and "The Butterfly Magnet." *Allium* is Latin for garlic, and when the leaves of this plant get crushed, they do emit a garlic-y, onion-y scent. As to the butterfly nickname, this perennial is a great pollinator plant because butterflies love it!

The criteria used for nomination to the PPA's Plant of the Year include the following:

- ◆ suitability for a wide range of climates
- ◆ low maintenance
- ◆ relative pest and disease resistance
- ◆ ready availability in the year of promotion
- ◆ multiple seasons of ornamental splash

The many uses of this big and eye-catching plant include borders, bouquets, container gardening, and perennializing.

This beautiful plant has deer-resistant, glossy, grass-like, deep green leaves that grow 10 to 15 inches tall in spring to mid-summer. Generally, two to three flower scapes emerge with showy spherical umbels of rose-purple that last a month or so.



This award winner likes full sun, but in hot climates it will do well with partial (preferably afternoon) shade. The soil should be well drained and not too wet as bulb rot may occur in overly moist soil. It is hardy in USDA Hardiness Zones 3 or 4 to 9.

Finally, one note of caution: Dogs and cats are susceptible to poisoning after the consumption of certain species of alliums.

www.perennialplant.org/index.php/education/plant-of-the-year



Congratulations to the Cherokee County Master Gardeners for winning 1st Place in the 2018 Cherokee County Fair Booth. Their theme this year was "Georgia Grows Native for Birds" and featured live plants in a native backyard bird habitat.



Where Do Insects Go in Winter?

By Karen Garland, *Cherokee County Master Gardener*

In the summer, when the days are hot and humid, your yard is alive with insects crawling or flying around everywhere. Yet, when the leaves fall, days get shorter, and temperatures drop, they seem to vanish... until months later when they reappear again with the changing of the season. Of course, insects do not just vanish and mysteriously reappear the next year. But, where did they go? Each species has developed a unique strategy that ensures its survival.

One reason most people are mystified by the fate of insects in the winter is because the answer is not that simple. Some survive as eggs, larvae, or pupae, while others make it through the winter as fully-developed adults. Additionally, their rate of survival increases when the winter temperatures are stable, not fluctuating through alternate thaws and freezes. In general, though, there are three distinct survival strategies that different species of insects use.

The first survival strategy is to completely avoid the freezing temperatures by migrating. Green darner dragonflies (*Anax junius*), leafhoppers (family Cicadellidae), and some species of butterflies and beetles begin to travel farther south as soon as the weather gets cooler. One of the most famous of the migrating insects is the monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*). The population of monarchs that lives east of the Rocky Mountains makes a 2,500-mile journey to central Mexico each winter.



Photo of green darner, University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee



Photo of grub worm, UGA.

For other insects, avoiding sub-zero temperatures means a journey of inches, not miles. Many aquatic insects, such as stoneflies (order Plecoptera) and mayflies (order Ephemeroptera), have adapted by overwintering on the bottoms of ponds, where they can remain relatively comfortable even when the surface freezes. Others, such as beetle grubs (order Coleoptera), do the same in the soil, by burrowing deep below the frost line.

However, most insects remain here year round, employing other survival strategies to avoid freezing. Insects that are inactive during the winter months undergo a state in which their growth, development, and activities are suspended temporarily, with a metabolic rate that is slightly high enough to keep them alive. This dormant condition is known as *diapause*. In comparison, vertebrates undergo *hibernation*, during which they still experience minor activity of growth and development.

The stage of growth at which an insect overwinters varies across species but can occur at any point of the lifecycle. Some may spend the winter in diapause under loose tree bark, a heavy cover of leaf litter, hollow logs, your house, or other similar shelters in the egg stage, such as bagworms (family Psychidae), aphids (family Aphididae), and praying mantids (order Mantodea). Others overwinter in the larval phase; these include cicadas (family Cicadidae), woolly bear caterpillars (*Pyrrharctia isabella*), and June beetles (*Polyphyla* spp.). Others, such as cecropia moths (*Hyalophora cecropia*) and swallowtail butterflies (family Papilionidae), overwinter as pupae in cocoons or chrysalids.

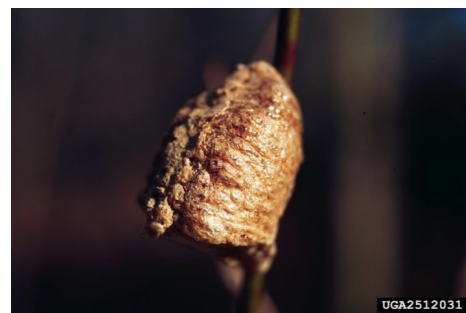


Photo of praying mantis pupae provided by UGA.

Yellowjacket (*Vespula* spp.) and paper wasp (*Vespula* spp.) queens, some mosquitoes (family Culicidae) and the mourning cloak butterfly (*Nymphalis antiopa*) are some examples of local insects that overwinter as adults. Like ladybugs (family Coccinellidae), they seek out a protected spot and become dormant. Lastly, some insects that experience diapause produce a body fluid that acts like antifreeze, replacing the water in their bodies. They can reach temperatures below freezing without forming body-splitting ice crystals.

Yet, for insects to continue to the next life stage, diapause must be terminated. This generally occurs with the arrival of warmer temperatures. However, it could be disastrous for an insect to become active too soon. Therefore, most insects do not come out of diapause unless a long period of cold precedes the warmer temperatures.

Continued on page 6

Weed Watch

By Stephanie Howard, Cherokee County Master Gardener

<https://plantsam.com/oxalis-corniculata/>

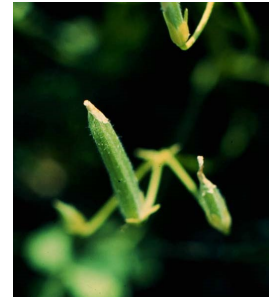
Oxalis, commonly known as woodsorrel, is a large genus with over 550 species. Gardeners grow several species as flowering perennials. *Oxalis articulata* and *O. debilis* are both pink and mounding woodsorrels. The most recognized member of the genus, *Oxalis triangularis*, is often grown as a houseplant.



Photo of *Oxalis stricta*, UGA

Most other members of the *Oxalis* genus are considered weeds. Although they generally reproduce by seed, *Oxalis* species can also spread by rhizomes, which root whenever a node touches the ground.

Yellow woodsorrel (*Oxalis stricta*) is a prolific broadleaf perennial. It has an upright habit and may grow up to 12 inches tall. This delicate-looking plant has a fleshy taproot, but it can also develop an extensive, branching root system if growth is not controlled. Yellow woodsorrel has small, yellow flowers.



Oxalis stricta
seed capsule, UGA

These trumpet-shaped flowers have five petals. Its fruit resembles tiny, okra-like capsules which, when touched, explode—spreading its seeds up to 12 feet away. Branches alternate along the hairy stem and terminate in trifoliate (three-part), heart-shaped leaves. Its compound leaves can grow singly or in clusters. *Oxalis stricta* is often mistaken for clover (*Trifolium repens*). White clover's trifoliate leaves are oval with a white chevron in the center of each leaflet. Its tiny white or pink flowers are tufted.

Creeping woodsorrel (*Oxalis corniculata*) is closely related. It also has yellow flowers, but it differs from *O. stricta* in that *O. corniculata* has a prostrate habit. Its leaves can be green, reddish, or purple. Violet woodsorrel (*Oxalis violacea*) and mountain woodsorrel (*Oxalis montana*) have light blue and pink-striped flowers, respectively. West Indian purple woodsorrel (*Oxalis intermedia*) has purple flowers. Its leaves are also three-part, but each leaflet has pointed corners and folds inward at night.



Photo of *Oxalis corniculata*
courtesy S.M. Howard,
(Note the seed capsule).

Oxalis thrives in sun or shade, during warm or cool seasons, and in dry or moist soils. It is a persistent weed so control is challenging. It can establish in fields, garden beds, and nearly any environment with poor or thinning turf.

Prevention is the best way to control *Oxalis*. That is,

1. Maintain healthy turf through timely application of herbicides and fertilizers for your particular type of turf.
2. Mow at proper heights.
3. Water deeply during the growing season.

Once *Oxalis* is established, control by

1. Manual removal. Digging *Oxalis* weeds will most likely take several seasons.
2. Applying a broadleaf herbicide.

Weeds of Southern Turfgrasses. Cooperative Extension Service. The University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. Athens GA.

<http://caes2.caes.uga.edu/commodities/turfgrass/georgiaturf/WeedMnt/grsweedpages/Oxast.html>

<https://hgic.clemson.edu/factsheet/oxalis-control/>

<https://plants.usda.gov/>

Native Evergreen Ground Covers

By Mary Tucker, Cherokee County Master Gardener

In the August/September issue of this newsletter, I discussed some native plants that serve as excellent alternatives to commonly used invasive evergreen shrubs. This time, we'll be looking at native evergreen ground covers.

In general, we tend to think of ground covers being relatively short in stature and spreading to one degree or another (or easy to plant en masse). Evergreen ground covers are especially in demand for year-round function as low-maintenance plantings, erosion control, and lawn substitutes.

Unfortunately, many of the most common ground covers available in the nursery trade are exotic, and some are potentially invasive to one degree or another. Non-natives with invasive or weedy tendencies include English ivy (*Hedera helix*), periwinkle (*Vinca major* and *V. minor*), winter creeper (*Euonymus fortunei*), Japanese pachysandra (*Pachysandra terminalis*), spotted dead nettle (*Lamium maculatum*), ajuga (*Ajuga reptans*), and some species of liriopse (*Liriopse* spp.).

Fortunately, there are many native alternatives, with options for sun or shade, moist or dry. Below is a list of a few of them (by no means comprehensive) that primarily concentrates on those that are evergreen or in some cases semi-evergreen. Keep in mind that some of these plants may have a bit of tattered or aged foliage during the winter, but it will quickly be replaced with fresh, green foliage in spring.



Photo of *Coreopsis auriculata*, courtesy Marcia Winchester



Carolina jessamine (*Gelsemium sempervirens*) – yellow, fragrant, trumpet-shaped flowers are borne in late winter to early spring and attract hummingbirds; glossy, evergreen, opposite foliage; moist, well-drained soil; sun to part shade; can be used as a ground cover or as a trailing or climbing vine; cultivars have been selected for bloom color or form.

Gelsemium sempervirens photo courtesy Joseph A. Marcus, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center

Christmas fern (*Polystichum acrostichoides*) – evergreen fern that grows in clumps 18 to 30 inches tall; drought tolerant and adaptable to numerous soil types; prefers shade to part sun; effective as a tall ground cover when planted en masse.



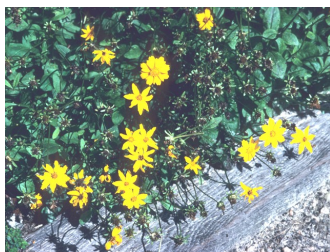
*Polystichum acrostichoides**



Foamflower (*Tiarella cordifolia*) – rich green, fuzzy, mapleleaf-shaped to heart-shaped, evergreen to semi-evergreen foliage 2 to 4 inches wide; leaf veins may have burgundy coloration; grows 6 to 8 inches tall; spreads by stolons; small white blooms are borne on upright flower stalks in mid spring; rich, moist soil; part sun to shade; many cultivars have been developed.

Tiarella cordifolia photo courtesy R. W. Smith, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center

Coralbells (*Heuchera americana*) – evergreen foliage is 2 to 5 inches long and is shaped like a rounded maple leaf; tiny cream-colored flowers are borne on wiry stalks that rise 2 feet above the basal foliage in late spring; tolerates moist to dry soil; prefers partial sun to light shade; many cultivars have been developed that feature dramatic colors and patterns on the foliage.



*Coreopsis auriculata**

Mouse-eared coreopsis (*Coreopsis auriculata*) – low-growing, evergreen to semi-evergreen, basal foliage that is oval in shape with small lobes at the base of the blade; spreads by stolons; in early to mid spring, golden orange daisy-like blooms are borne on 6- to 18-inch stalks; performs best in part shade to part sun in rich, moist, well-drained soil.

Green-and-gold (*Chrysogonum virginianum*) – evergreen, hairy, dark green, oval leaves arranged in short rosettes; spreads by underground rhizomes (var. *australe* spreads by above-ground runners); bright yellow, five-rayed, daisy-like flowers borne just above leaves in early spring; tolerant of dry shade, but prefers part sun to moderate shade with consistent moisture.

Where Do Insects Go In Winter?continued from page 3

The final group of insects consists of the hardy few that remain active all year round. These are primarily aquatic insects that spend the winter as nymphs in rapidly flowing streams that do not freeze all the way to the bottom and small terrestrial species, such as mites (order Acari) and springtails (order Collembola).

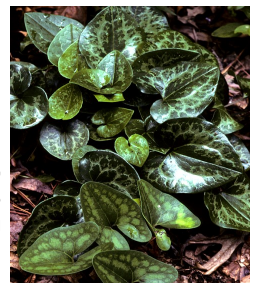
Insects are certainly adaptive, as they endure cold, fluctuating temperatures that may last for extended periods of time. Some people may see their adaptations as bad news, especially if you have ever spent time picking hornworms off your prized tomato plant. Many may think that total annihilation of all insects might be cause for celebration. However, very few insect species are pests. Most are misunderstood in regard to the important role they play in the ecology of our planet. However, having a clearer understanding of how insects spend the winter months can help us better address future concerns in our gardens.

Native Evergreen Ground Covers.....continued from page 5



*Phlox subulata**

Moss phlox (*Phlox subulata*) – small, narrow, evergreen leaves that grow in a low, dense, creeping habit, typically 2 to 6 inches in height; small flowers borne close to the foliage cover the plant in late winter to early spring and are found in shades of pink, lavender, or white; tolerant of dry sunny conditions and poor soils.



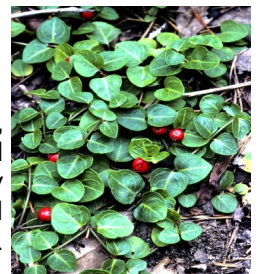
*Hexastylis arifolia**

Wild ginger (*Hexastylis arifolia*) – evergreen, glossy, leathery, dark green, triangular to heart-shaped foliage, usually 3 to 6 inches wide and often mottled with silver; clump-forming habit growing 3 to 6 inches tall, but can be planted en masse for ground cover; inconspicuous, jug-shaped bloom is borne near ground level in spring; shade to filtered sun; moist to relatively dry conditions.



Pachysandra procumbens
photo courtesy
Marcia Winchester.

Allegheny spurge (*Pachysandra procumbens*) – the evergreen foliage is similar in shape to that of Japanese pachysandra but has attractive bluish green leaves with silver venation; foliage grows to a height of about 4 to 5 inches; white panicles of flowers are borne on 4- to 5-inch spikes in spring before new leaves emerge; prefers shady conditions and rich, organic soil; spreads slowly via rhizomes.



*Mitchella repens**

Partridgeberry (*Mitchella repens*) – diminutive, evergreen, creeping vine with round to oval, dark green, white-veined foliage; tiny white blooms borne in spring and followed by red berries; prefers moist, humus-rich soil in shade or partial sun, but tolerates relatively dry conditions.



*Carex plantaginea**

Carex species such as seersucker sedge (*C. plantaginea*) and blue wood sedge (*C. flaccosperma*) – narrow, strap-like, evergreen foliage forming neat clumps 6 to 10 inches tall; insignificant flowers; most *Carex* species prefer moist, well-drained soil in part shade.

Moss (many species) – an effective lawn substitute under the proper conditions; tolerates compacted, acidic, or poorly drained soil; most species prefer full shade to partial shade.



Photo courtesy UGA

<https://ugaurbanag.com/moss-management/>

* All photos courtesy Sally and Andy Wasowski, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center

LAWN CARE-OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER

By Stephanie Howard, Cherokee County Master Gardener

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

For Established Lawns

- Allow Bermuda and Zoysia lawns to grow to 3 inches before the last mowing
- Do not aerate or dethatch during dormancy.
- Use a post-emergent to spot spray for minor broadleaf weed control through October, as well as a winter pre-emergent for St. Augustine.
- There is no need to fertilize or irrigate warm season turfs during dormancy.
- October is the best time to overseed Bermuda lawns.

For Newly Installed Lawns

- Plant early enough to establish the root system before dormancy. If needed, continue to irrigate newly installed turf.

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

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

For Established Lawns

- Mow at the proper height through the growth season.
- For healthy lawns, core aerate during this period, especially if you plan to overseed. October is the best month for aeration, but September and November are possible months.
- If needed, rake and dethatch. Overseed thinning areas and top-dress, if necessary.
- Fertilize Fescue turf. Apply lime (50 lbs./1000 sq. ft.) if needed.
- Use a post-emergent spot spray for broadleaf weeds, such as chickweed or dandelion.
- Reduce irrigation to 1 inch every 10-14 days as the weather cools. Determine irrigation needs depending on the amount of rainfall received.

For Newly Installed Lawns


- Early October is the best time to seed or overseed fescue.
- Look for 'Blue Tag' certified seed, to ensure that you are purchasing a high-quality product.

Disease & Insect Control for All Lawns

This has been an extremely wet season, so check for fungal disease. As nights become cooler, check for dead or dark patches with clearly defined edges. Apply an approved fungicide as needed.

Check for webworm, armyworm, and/or cutworm infestations. Webworms leave a veil-like webbing on the turf surface, which 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. White grubs feed on grass roots. Control them during August with an approved insecticide before they move deeper in the soil. 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.



	RAINFALL COMPARISONS					
	Cherokee County			State Wide		
	July 18	Aug 18	YTD	July 18	Aug 18	YTD
Actual	6.4	4.9	40.1	6.1	5.3	40.7
Normal	4.6	4.0	37.7	4.9	3.8	32.8
Excess	1.8	0.9	2.4	1.2	1.5	7.9

OCTOBER Gardening Tips

ORNAMENTALS

- October is the best month to plant fall annual beds. It is cooler for the transplants and gives their roots time to become established before winter cold hits. Try mixing dwarf snapdragons with pansies for color, and parsley, kale, mustard, and Swiss chard for background color. Make sure your beds have good drainage. http://extension.uga.edu/publications/files/pdf/AP%20105_2.PDF
- Plant love-in-a-mist, poppy, bachelor buttons and larkspur seed now for early spring annuals.
- If climbing roses are in an exposed location, tie them up firmly with broad strips of rags or padded foam tape so the wind will not whip them against the trellis and bruise the bark.
- Don't prune roses this late as new growth would become subject to winter injury. The rose garden should be raked and cleaned, removing all fallen leaves and mulch to prevent black spot and other diseases next year. Replace mulch after the ground has frozen. Continue spraying for fungus.
- Clean up around perennial flowers, such as peonies. If left on the ground, leaves and stems can harbor diseases and provide convenient places for pests to spend the winter.
- Cut down stems and foliage of herbaceous perennials when the leaves begin to brown. Leave 3 inches of stem to ID the plant's location.
- October and November are generally considered the best months to plant trees and shrubs. Garden centers and nurseries usually stock a good selection of woody plants now. Select some accent plants for your landscape that will provide autumn colors. Trees that turn red include chokeberry, dogwood, red maple, red or scarlet oak and sourwood. Shrubs with spectacular fall foliage include viburnum, fothergilla, hydrangea, blueberries, Itea and Amsonia.



Acer leucoderme,
photo by Marcia Winchester

skin, should not affect the quality of most bulbs. Store bulbs in a cool area (below 65° F). Do not plant before Nov. 1. http://extension.uga.edu/publications/files/pdf/B%20918_3.PDF

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

- Tomatoes need an average daily temperature of 65°F or more for ripening. If daytime temperatures consistently are below this, pick fruits that have begun to change color and bring them inside to ripen. Use recipes that require green tomatoes or place a ripe apple in a closed container with green tomatoes to encourage the tomatoes to turn red. Ripe apples give off ethylene gas which causes tomatoes to ripen.
- Cure pumpkins, butternut, and Hubbard squash at temperatures between 70-80° F for two to three weeks immediately after harvest. After curing, store them in a dry place at 55- 60° F. If stored at 50° F or below, pumpkins and squash are subject to damage by chilling. At temperatures above 60° F, they gradually lose moisture and become stringy. [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)
- A final weeding of your strawberries, blueberries, or raspberries will help keep weed problems down to a minimum. Strawberries covered in the fall with a spunbonded polyester material and uncovered in the spring just before bloom produced up to 60% more fruit than plants given the conventional straw or hay mulch cover.
- Make a note of any particularly unsatisfactory or productive varieties or crops. Such information can be very useful during garden-planning time in the spring.
- Clean up home orchard and small-fruit plantings. Sanitation is essential for good maintenance. Dried fruits or mummies carry disease organisms through the winter that will attack next year's crop.
- If there is a threat of frost at night, harvest your cucumber, eggplant, melon, okra, pepper, and summer squash so the fruits are not damaged by the frost.
- Hot peppers store well dry. Pull plants and hang them up, or pick the peppers and thread on a string. Store in a cool, dry place.

MISCELLANEOUS

- Do not apply quick-acting fertilizers while tilling the soil in the fall; nitrogen will leach away before spring. Materials that release nutrients slowly into the soil, such as rock phosphate or lime, can be worked into the soil in the fall.
- When removing disease-infected plant parts/debris, do not place refuse on the compost pile. The disease pathogens will live in the compost pile and can be transmitted with the application of compost to other garden beds, unless compost temperatures reach above 180° F and decomposition is complete. [http:// extension.uga.edu/publications/files/pdf/C%20816_4.PDF](http://extension.uga.edu/publications/files/pdf/C%20816_4.PDF)
- Kudzu, poison ivy and other weedy vines are more susceptible to chemical control this time of year. Be sure to follow the directions, and protect other plants from drift of the spray. http://extension.uga.edu/publications/files/pdf/C%20867-10_4.PDF.

NOVEMBER Gardening Tips

ORNAMENTALS

- Protect the roots of azaleas and rhododendrons with a heavy mulch of organic materials (i.e. oak leaves, wood chips, or pine straw) http://extension.uga.edu/publications/files/pdf/B%20670_5.PDF
- For best growth, plant spring bulbs where they are out of the direct sun during the middle of the day. Bulbs have a chilling requirement that is satisfied by winter soil temperatures, so avoid planting bulbs near heated basements where the soil may not stay adequately cold. Do not plant bulbs before November 1.
- Watch for standing water in perennial beds after long periods of rain. Water that collects on the surface during winter will freeze and can damage perennials. Dig shallow trenches to help drain excess water away. Make a note to raise that bed in spring or plant with plants that like “wet feet”.
- When placing plants around the home, remember as a general rule, plants with thick leaves can take lower light levels than those with thin leaves.
- If there is any evidence of scale on trees and shrubs, spray with dormant oil in late fall and again in early spring. Follow label directions.
- Avoid transplanting shrubs and trees on windy days; the roots can be exposed to too much light or drying winds, putting undue stress on the plant.
- Peonies that don't require a long cold winter perform better in the South. They can be planted now in full sun and fertile, well-drained soil that is rich in organic matter. Dig holes 18” and fill halfway with a mixture of soil, compost, and a handful of 5-10-10 fertilizer. Add a few more inches of soil and set the tubers so the buds are 1-2” below the soil surface. Backfill, firm the soil, and water thoroughly. Peonies do not grow well after being moved and will not bloom for several years.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

- Remove grass and weeds from trunks of fruit trees and grapes to prevent damage by mice and rodents. Leave a bare circle (one foot wide) around tree trunks when spreading mulch to keep mice from feeding on the bark. A collar or fence of poultry wire or a commercial tree guard approximately 18 inches high will deter rodents and rabbits.
- Plant lettuce and hardy vegetables, such as beets, cabbage, and spinach, in cold frames for winter or early spring crops.
- If you use aged manure as a soil conditioner, apply it now and till it under; it can be a source of weed seed.
- Rough plow or spade garden plots containing heavy, clay soil. Add organic matter and lime if indicated by a soil test. Leave the soil rough. Winter's thawing and freezing will break up the clods and kill some of the insects and slugs overwintering in the soil. A rough soil surface also catches more moisture and reduces erosion.

- When time or weather conditions prohibit plowing or cover cropping, you may let your garden lie under a mulch of compost, non-diseased plant wastes, or leaves all winter to be plowed/tilled under in the spring. If using heavy organic matter, chop fine enough so it can break down over the winter.
- Store pesticides in a frost-free location away from food and out of the reach of children. If a pesticide is in a paper container, put the whole package in a plastic container and seal it. Be sure that all bottles and cans are tightly sealed and well labeled. https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/C%20998_3.PDF

MISCELLANEOUS

- Keep an eye out for spider mites on your houseplants; they thrive in dry air. At the first sign of any insect infestation, isolate your plant. Several thorough washings with plain water may bring them under control. If not, apply an appropriate insecticide and follow the instructions on the label.
- During the cooler temperatures and shorter days of winter, the growth of most houseplants slows. Unless plants are grown under an artificial light source that is left on 16 hours per day, new growth will be minimal until spring. Reduce fertilization and water until late April or May when new growth resumes. https://secure.caes.uga.edu/extension/publications/files/pdf/B%201318_4.PDF
- African violets do well when potted in small pots. A good general rule is to use a pot one-third the diameter of the plant. To humidify African violets, surround the pot with moist peat contained in a second pot. http://extension.uga.edu/publications/files/pdf/C%20660_2.PDF
- If you plan to lay newspapers as mulch in the spring, glue them end to end this winter and store them as rolls. The paper mulch unrolls easily and won't be lifted by wind before anchoring.

Daffodil bulbs should NOT be planted before November 1.



Photo “Avalanche Daffodil” courtesy of Marcia Winchester

Easiest Ham Salad /Easiest Chicken Salad

Salad can be comfort food, too, especially when its main ingredient is meaty. You can serve ham or chicken salad as a meal over greens or mixed with small pasta shells or bows, as an appetizer or snack with crackers, or on bread or rolls as a sandwich.

Use a food processor to achieve the salad texture you want. A smoother texture is good for spreading on sandwiches or snacking with crackers. A chunkier texture is nice on a bed of greens or as part of a salad bowl. Adjust amounts of ingredients to your own preferences, according to what you have on hand, and to how many servings you need. Both salads stay fresh for a few days in the refrigerator.

Cook ham or chicken breasts until done, or use leftovers. Cut into cubes or small chunks that will process easily. Then put all ingredients below into a food processor and blend until well mixed and suitably textured.

For ham salad add your favorite flavor of pickles or pickle relish, mayonnaise, and maybe a dash of spicy mustard. It'll be fine with those basics, but feel free to experiment with additions to taste, such as horseradish, peppers, shredded cheddar cheese, cooked carrots.

For basic chicken salad, add chopped celery (including leafy tops), white pepper, and mayonnaise. Some add-ins you might try include arugula, green peppers, chopped tomatoes, raisins or cranberries.

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CHEROKEE COUNTY

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Self-Crust Coconut Custard Pie Makes 1 9" deep-dish pie

This is the easiest pie you'll ever make and you and yours will love every bite.

Ingredients:

2 cups whole milk
4 eggs
½ cup flour
½ tsp salt
1 tsp real vanilla extract
1 cup shredded coconut
¾ cup sugar
¼ cup very soft butter

Instructions:

Put all ingredients in a blender and pulse on high for around 20 seconds. Pour into a buttered deep-dish pie plate or tin. The flour and butter will mix and settle to form a crust.

Bake at 350 degrees for 50 minutes, or until knife placed in center comes out clean.

Serve warm or chilled. Top off with your choice of whipped cream, berries, maple syrup, cinnamon, or just enjoy as is.



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