



# Gardening With The Masters

Growing, Gardening and Gaining Knowledge  
August/September 2022

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**Cherokee County Master Gardener FALL PLANT SALE!**  
September 17, 2022

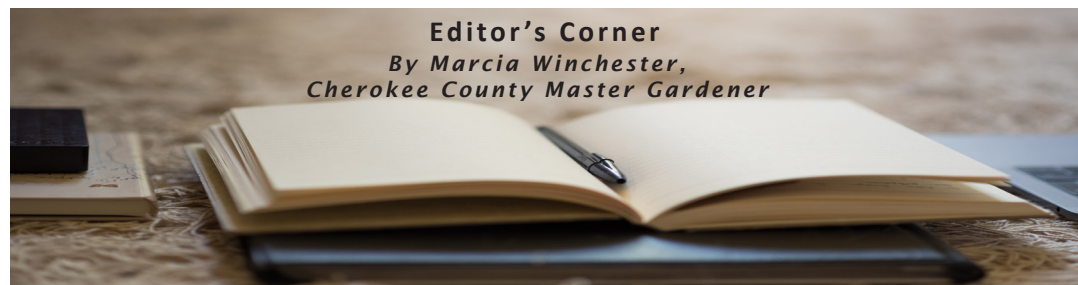


**BEE Counted! Two Locations!**  
Cherokee County Senior Services  
1001 Univeter Road, Canton OR

Cherokee Veterans Park  
7345 Highway 20 E, Canton  
10am until 12noon

Friday, August 19th and  
Saturday, August 20th

Assistance will be provided to help count. Visit <https://ggapc.org/> for more information, and click [HERE](#) for a list of plants to attract pollinators.



**Editor's Corner**  
By Marcia Winchester,  
Cherokee County Master Gardener



When is a rose not a rose? When it is a *Hibiscus mutabilis* or Confederate rose. Now you are wondering how anyone could confuse a hibiscus with a rose. All you need is to observe the beautiful 6-inch ruffled flower, and you will see the similarity.

But this flower is much more. Each blossom opens a clear white resembling an old-fashioned rose. During the day, the flower changes to pink and finally to a deep rose color before closing. Each flower lasts only a day. During the height of blooming, a single stalk can have numerous buds in different stages of color. The show goes on from early fall to frost.

Photo courtesy Marcia Winchester Another interesting fact about the Confederate rose is that it originated in China, despite its common name. It seems that the term "Confederate" comes from its traditional popularity in the Deep South.

The stalks emerge each spring and can reach 10 to 12 feet tall. When first planted, the roots need to be protected from extreme cold. At the end of the growing season, I cut my stalks down to 6 to 10 inches and mulch heavily with pine straw or leaves since it prefers warmer climates and may need protection from extreme cold in northern Georgia's USDA Hardiness Zone 7A. They can even be covered with a large plastic pot for winter insulation.

I received my Confederate rose from my friend Murrel. He would cut the stalks to 18 inches and root the cuttings in a bucket of water in his basement, giving them ample light throughout the winter. He'd also take cuttings of a large, summer-blooming hot pink hibiscus that grows 6 to 10 feet tall. Murrel had the foresight to plant them together in the same pot. I love watching them from my office window, seeing them take turns blooming each summer. I also enjoy rooting them for our fall plant sale so others can enjoy them too.

Marcia

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# What's Attacking My Oak's Leaves?

By Carolyn Puckett, Cherokee County Master Gardener

Oak trees (*Quercus* spp.) are wonderful plants. They provide us with shade, produce acorns for numerous critters, and feed our song birds—even those that do not eat acorns. Oaks are hosts to over 500 kinds of caterpillars, and parent birds feed them to their nestlings. It can take over 5,000 caterpillars to feed a single nest of tiny chickadee babies.

People get alarmed when they see their tree's leaves being attacked, and they want to know what to do to make their tree safe. We are told repeatedly by pesticide companies that we need to kill anything chewing on our plants; after all, they want you to buy their products. But generally, those caterpillars and other critters eating your oak's leaves are not harming the tree and are crucial to our birds.

An insect that has been attacking our oak trees here in Cherokee County this year is the oak leafminer. Leafminer insect larvae get between the upper and lower layers of an individual leaf, consuming plant material there. There are two kinds of oak leafminers.



Photo white oak leafminer courtesy Jennifer Ruscilli

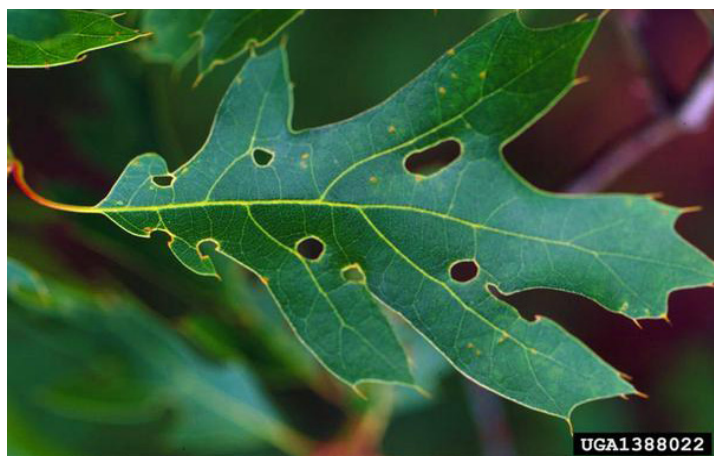


Photo solitary oak leafminer caterpillar courtesy J.R. Baker NC State University

The larvae of the solitary oak leafminer (*Cameraria hamadryadella*; called "solitary" because the adult lays only one egg in a spot) makes round, cream-colored spots on an oak leaf that can easily be mistaken for fungal damage. These spots can grow together until most of the leaf looks whitish from lack of chlorophyll (the green substance in leaves). If sufficiently damaged, the leaf may turn brown and fall off. If it does not become food to feed a bird, the tiny larvae, only 1/4 inch long when mature, will make a cocoon inside the leaf, eventually emerging to become a miniscule adult moth, silvery with bronze blotches on the wings. These moths are so tiny they are termed "microlepidoptera."

Outbreaks of solitary oak leafminer tend to be cyclical, and this year was a heavy infestation year, especially on white oak (*Q. alba*). Two generations per year of the solitary leafminer may occur here, with the late season larvae going dormant and overwintering in the fallen leaves. While your tree may look bad, the tree is in no danger. Cleaning up the fallen leaves will get rid of cocoons to reduce damage next year. No chemical treatment is needed.

Outbreaks of solitary oak leafminer tend to be cyclical, and this year was a heavy infestation year, especially on white oak (*Q. alba*). Two generations per year of the solitary leafminer may occur here, with the



Damage to a red oak by the oak shothole leafminer.

Photo by Steven Katovich, Bugwood.org

The other oak leafminer is the oak shothole leafminer (*Japanagromyza viridula*). The tiny female fly stabs swelling leaf buds with her ovipositor (used to lay eggs) and drinks the sap produced. As the leaf grows, the miniscule puncture wounds expand, making smooth, round "shot holes." The fly's larvae (maggots) feed between the upper and lower layers of the leaf, creating a brown blotch that can be mistaken for damage caused by the anthracnose fungus. Once the larvae are done feeding, they drop to the ground to pupate and remain there until the following year. There is only one generation per year. Parasitic and predatory insects generally keep oak shothole leafminers in check. No chemical treatment is needed.

Another insect that can make holes in your oak leaves is the spiny oak sawfly (*Periclista albicollis*). While they look like small caterpillars, the creatures are actually the larvae of a fly. As they feed on the oak leaves, they create irregular holes with scalloped edges. The main veins of the leaf are left untouched. They usually feed on the bottom of the leaf, so they may go unnoticed. By the time you see the damage, the sawflies are probably gone for the year, so no chemical treatment is needed.

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# What Is This Bird?

By Sue Allen, Cherokee County Master Gardener

Is this bird an American robin (*Turdus migratorius*) that may have gotten splashed with some white paint? I have been on this earth a very long time, and in all my life of feeding birds and observing them, I have never come across an American robin or any other bird for that matter with this type of coloration. So, what causes this condition in some birds and not others? What bird do they attract to mate with? Where do they migrate to? What is their life expectancy?

## Bird Coloration

Color patterns on birds' feathers serve many different functions. Bright, vivid colors serve to attract the opposite sex. Intricate patterns provide a defense mechanism to camouflage their appearance and blend in with their surroundings. Bold and contrasting patterns, such as a white rump, can disrupt the outline of the bird and startle potential predators or prey. Does this American robin startle other birds?



Photo leucistic American robin courtesy Sue Allen

Birds have two common pigment groups: carotenoids produce red to yellow hues, and melanins produce colors from black to gray and brown to buff. Besides melanin being a pigment, it also adds strength to the feathers, protecting the wingtips from wear and tear. It also helps to resist bacteria on the feathers, which is especially important in hot humid climates, such as Georgia. In addition, melanin adds dark spots and streaks on eggs, which strengthens the shell and reduces the need for calcium.

## Leucistic Birds

When one (or more) of the alleles-genes does not mutate properly, leucism occurs. In leucistic birds, intense colors, especially red, orange, or yellow, may show up brightly; however, feathers that are normally brown or black may instead show up pale or white, as in the accompanying pictures of the American robin.

Some leucistic birds can lose all the pigment in their feathers and may appear pure white like an albino bird, but do not get them confused with albino birds. The difference between albino birds and leucistic birds are the eyes. In albino birds, the eyes are pink, whereas leucistic birds have their normal eye color.

The leucistic birds' mutation is for life and will be passed on to succeeding generations. It is difficult for these birds to attract a mate unless the mate is leucistic as well.



Photo leucistic American robin courtesy Sue Allen

## Mating

American robins do not mate for life, but leucistic American robins may because they are attracted to each other.

## Migration

Migration for American robins depends entirely on weather, since they follow the 37-degree isotherm. Fall migration never really ends, since American robins wander throughout the autumn, winter, and early spring. I know in our area they go somewhere because they leave sometime in the fall, and then in the spring, they come back to their nesting place. The only reason I know for certain they return to the same place is because this American robin is leucistic and has returned to our feeder the past three years.

## Life Expectancy

Only about one-third of all American robin nests succeed in fledging one or more young, and only one-quarter of those fledged young will survive to November 1. Most individual birds live to one year, but according to banding records one American robin lived just under 14 years.



Photo courtesy Project FeederWatch

Source: *What It's Like to Be a Bird* by David Allen Sibley; published 2020 by Knopf Publishing Group



# The Joro Spider: an unwelcome addition to the Georgia landscape

By Mary Tucker, Cherokee County Master Gardener

As you have probably heard (since even the national news has picked up the story), Georgia is now home to a huge, non-native arachnid, the joro spider (*Trichonephila clavata*), a member of the orb-weaver group of spiders. It's making the news because the adult female spider is quite colorful and can be as large as 3 to 4 inches across, the size of the palm of your hand! Though they are alarming in appearance, they are not very harmful to humans or our pets. The joro is generally not aggressive and is unlikely to bite. If it does, the effect will be similar to that of a bee sting.



Photo joro spider courtesy [UGA news](#)

The joro spider is native to East Asia, being found in Japan, China, Korea, and Taiwan. It was first positively identified in Georgia in the fall of 2014, when it was found in the Braselton area in Jackson County. The spider was identified by Rick Hoebeke, arthropods collections manager with the Georgia Museum of Natural History. He believes it probably arrived in a shipping container that was delivered to the area.

## EXPANSION IN GEORGIA

In the years since the joro was first seen in Georgia, it has rapidly expanded its territory, and it is now found in at least 25 counties in the state, with a concentration in the northeastern counties, where it appears to have become well established in certain locations.

What about the Cherokee County vicinity? According to the iNaturalist site ([www.inaturalist.org](http://www.inaturalist.org)), the spider has been seen in numerous locations in the counties of Cherokee, Cobb, Forsyth, Fulton, Gwinnett, and Hall. It is also found in Tennessee and South Carolina in counties that are near the Georgia border. It appears to be increasing its territory every year. So don't be surprised if you see this spider in your yard.

This rapid expansion is due to the spider's lifecycle and adaptability. The joro is quite cold-tolerant, and though adults tend to die off in the fall, egg sacs (with hundreds of eggs) overwinter. Hatchlings emerge in the spring and begin to expand their territory. They do this by riding the wind on thin strands of silk, a process called "ballooning." By catching an air current, it is estimated that the spiders can travel tens to hundreds of miles. Joro spiders are also apparently adept at hitchhiking on vehicles, and they can be unintentionally transported great distances.

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

Since this is an introduced species, a big and important question is how its presence will affect our native species and our natural habitats. At this point there are no clear answers. However, it's very clear that these spiders are a nuisance in many ways. They build very large, extremely sticky webs and are often found around the eaves of homes, as well in gardens and wooded areas. And their sheer numbers can be overwhelming to the unlucky homeowners who find them on their property.

Other environmental impacts are unknown at this time, but anecdotal reports indicate that gardeners with joros in their yards are seeing fewer of our native spiders, such as the yellow garden spider or writing spider (*Argiope aurantia*). There is also concern that the strong, sticky webs can entangle small songbirds and hummingbirds.

## IDENTIFICATION

If you want to control the joro spiders on your property, identification is key because you certainly don't want to kill beneficial native spiders.

One important distinguishing feature is the web. Joro spiders build large, three-dimensional, extremely sticky, and messy webs, and when the sun hits them, the silk often appears golden. A Cherokee County friend of mine has observed that the webs of baby spiders don't have this coloration, though they still have a three-dimensional quality. The baby spiders are often found in bushes, whereas adults will generally build their webs in higher locations, such as between trees, on light poles and fence posts, or on the eaves of homes. The webs may be enormous, as much as ten feet across, and they may be communal, with several spiders inhabiting one large web. Only the female constructs the web; one or more males will find her and cohabitate.



Photo joro web courtesy UGA

Continued on page 7



# Poison Ivy: 'tis the season

By Mary Schuster, Cherokee County Master Gardener

“Leaves of three, let it be” is the old saying mentioned in every resource article I read in researching the topic of poison ivy. Even though there are look-alike plants out there similar to poison ivy, do yourself a favor and steer clear of any plant you suspect may be the “Real McCoy.” There are several species of poison ivy, but the one found in Georgia is eastern poison ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*).



Photo poison ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*) leaf spread courtesy R. A. Nonenmacher CC BY-SA 4.0

There are some characteristics of poison ivy that can help you identify it. At maturity, it grows as a small shrub or as a high-climbing vine with rootlets (see left photo) on trees, fence rows, or fence posts. It may also be found simply growing along the ground. Each leaf consists of three bright green, shiny leaflets that are elliptical to egg-shaped and have smooth, toothed, or lobed margins. Big point — the leaves are arranged alternately on the stem (see above photo). The top of the leaf is smooth, while hair is formed on the vein of the underside of the leaf.

## So, what's the difference about the look-alikes?

Getting familiar with the Real Deal will help you to know the difference between this plant and its “look-alikes” and will save you time while you are standing around wondering if this encounter is good or bad. Plants such as the Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*), box elder (*Acer negundo*), and Atlantic poison oak (*Toxicodendron pubescens*) to name just a few may appear similar at close glance, but they have different subtle characteristics such as leaf placement, for example.

The **Virginia creeper** usually has five leaflets, sometimes seven. Poison ivy **never** has more than the three leaflets they are famous for.

The **box elder** leaf arrangements are opposite each other along the stem (see photo at right), where the poison ivy leaf is arranged in an alternate fashion (see photo above).

The **poison oak** has three leaflets, like poison ivy, but they are always lobed, whereas the poison ivy can be smooth, toothed, or lobed.

**Summing up**, a good rule of thumb for any look-alike could be if you're not sure, don't touch it! Coming in contact with poison ivy can leave one with distressing symptoms such as a red, itchy, blistering rash. Should this occur, rinse the affected area as soon as possible with cool water and seek medical attention if symptoms persist.

Avoiding poison ivy may be tricky since it may be found in your backyard and other places enjoyed during the summer, such as forested areas, fields, and gardens. A few tips to keep in mind when venturing out might include:

- ❖ wearing long pants and closed-toe shoes,
- ❖ inspecting tree trunks before touching them,
- ❖ washing immediately upon returning from outdoors using cold water and soap,
- ❖ avoiding burning any part of these plants since an allergen can become airborne and be inhaled,
- ❖ wearing vinyl gloves and long sleeves tucked in when weeding the garden.

Lastly, if you should discover poison ivy in your yard or garden, employ measures such as tillage, cutting, or mowing the plants near ground level throughout the year which should eventually control it.

## Resources:

<https://www.aces.edu/blog/topics/forestry/touch-me-nots-poison-ivy-poison-oak-and-poison-sumac/>

<https://newswire.caes.uga.edu/story/7621/poison-ivy.html>

<https://georgia.growingamerica.com/news/2019/04/do-you-know-what-poison-ivy-looks>



Photo Virginia creeper courtesy Hope Duckworth CC BY 4.0



Photo box elder leaf arrangement courtesy Keith Kanoti via Maine Forest Service, [Bugwood.org](http://Bugwood.org)



Photo Atlantic poison oak courtesy Douglas Goldman, USDA CC BY-NC 4.0

## What's Attacking My Oak's Leaves?.....continued from page 2



Photo orange-striped oakworm courtesy <https://entomology.ces.ncsu.edu/>

A common caterpillar you might see chewing on oak leaves in midsummer is the orange striped oakworm (*Anisota senatoria*). In June and July, adult moths lay clusters of eggs on the underside of oak leaves. When they first hatch, the small caterpillars are greenish-white and feed in groups, eating all of the leaf except for the veins. At maturity, the caterpillar is about 2 to 3 inches long and is black with yellow or orange stripes running lengthwise. It has two long, slender black "horns" projecting from the second segment behind the head, with smaller horns on each succeeding segment. The mature caterpillar is a solitary feeder. In fall, the caterpillar crawls to the ground and borrows into the soil where it overwinters, emerging as an adult moth the following summer.

While healthy mature oak trees can tolerate the orange striped oakworms, and birds and other parasites will naturally control their number, young trees could be weakened if they lose all their leaves several years in a row. With a light infestation, you can handpick the caterpillars. For a heavier infestation, the most benign treatment is with *Bacillus thuringiensis* (BT), an insecticide based on the BT spores. Other choices for treating small oak trees are spinosad, permethrin, cyfluthrin, cyhalothrin, bifenthrin, or acephate.

Many other diseases and insects can afflict oak trees. The University of Georgia Extension Service has an online diagnostic tool that you can use to figure out what is wrong with your oak tree at <https://extension.uga.edu/publications/detail.html?number=B1286&title=Key%20to%20Diseases%20of%20Oaks%20in%20the%20Landscape>.

We love our oak trees and want to keep them healthy. In most cases, insect damage is controlled by birds and other parasites, so do not worry that you need to resort to chemicals.



By Mary Tucker, Master Gardener

There are several species of both poison ivy and poison oak in the United States. All are in the genus *Toxicodendron*, and they vary in their ranges. Found in Georgia are both eastern poison ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*) and Atlantic poison oak (*T. pubescens*), though the poison ivy is more widespread and is the species most likely to be found in Cherokee County.

Not found in Georgia are western poison ivy (*T. rydbergii*) and Pacific poison oak (*T. diversilobum*).



Photo western poison ivy courtesy Dave Powell, USDA Forest Service (retired), [Bugwood.org](http://Bugwood.org)



### Cherokee County Master Gardeners Fall Plant/Bulb One Day Sale

Saturday, September 17, 2022  
9:00am until noon

1001 Univeter Road,  
Canton, Georgia 30115

Choose from nice varieties of plants, shrubs, trees, specialty plants, garden accessories, and garden art, plus expert advice. All plants are propagated by the Master Gardeners and accustomed to our growing climate.

Check our website and Facebook page

[www.cherokeemastergardeners.com](http://www.cherokeemastergardeners.com)

<https://www.facebook.com/cherokeemastergardeners>



Photo Pacific poison oak courtesy Whitney Cranshaw, Colorado State University, [Bugwood.org](http://Bugwood.org)



## The Joro Spider:....continued from page 4

The mature female joro is the easiest to identify. She will have an elongated body with horizontal bands that alternate between yellow and bluish green to black. The abdomen has a red patch on the underside. The long, thin legs are black and typically have yellow banding. Pregnant females will be rounder in appearance.

The males and babies (spiderlings) are more difficult to identify. The males are small, generally brown, and relatively nondescript. The babies can resemble other orb-weaver spiders. For this reason, it's useful to pay careful attention to the web that the spider is in since the joro has a distinct and messy web.



Photo male and female joro spider  
<https://spiderid.com/picture/129806/>



Photo female and male argiopes © 2004  
Troy Bartlett [bugguide.net](http://bugguide.net)

Be sure not to confuse the joro with the yellow garden spider or writing spider (*Argiope aurantia*), a native, beneficial spider. The female yellow garden spider has a bright yellow body with a pattern of black in the middle. The web is white in color and has a notable zig-zag pattern in the center.

The golden silk orb-weaver spider, also known as the banana spider (*Trichonephila clavipes*), is related to the joro. It is considered by some authorities to be native to North America, though other opinions I've read classify it as introduced from Central and South America

and now naturalized in parts the U.S. The banana spider is not as cold-tolerant as the joro. Though it is found in the metro Atlanta area, larger populations are generally found closer to coastal regions.



Photo golden silk orb-weaver © 2009  
Nick courtesy [bugguide.net](http://bugguide.net)

If you have a spider you'd like to identify, or if you just want to learn more about their appearance, a great place to start is iNaturalist ([www.inaturalist.org](http://www.inaturalist.org)). You can find numerous photos on the website to help you learn to identify spiders. On iNaturalist, you can also report joro spiders you have identified, which will be helpful to researchers as they study the spread of these creatures. Look for an App for your mobile device use and reporting.

You can also report your joro sightings to the Early Detection & Distribution Mapping System ([www.eddmaps.org](http://www.eddmaps.org)), which is a web-based system for documenting non-native and invasive species. This site was developed by the University of Georgia's Center for Invasive Species and Ecosystem Health.

### CONTROL MEASURES

Joro spiders are difficult to control due to the hundreds of spiderlings that will emerge from egg sacs that have over-wintered. One approach is to target the female spiders in late summer before they lay eggs in the fall. You can take a long stick or rake and wind it through the web to encase the spider. Then simply bring it to the ground and squash it. Some people use wasp spray that has a long stream of spray, but keep in mind that this may also kill desired species.

There is concern that the strong, sticky webs can endanger some of our native creatures, so keep this in mind as you patrol your yard, and remove any webs that you can reach. Fortunately, I have yet to see a joro in my own Cherokee County backyard, but I know they are nearby. I will keep a vigilant eye on my garden and takes steps to attempt to keep them under control.

### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

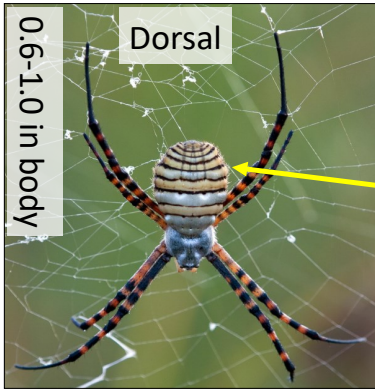
[www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4327315/](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4327315/) - This article was co-authored by Richard Hoebeke and includes much detailed information.

[extension.psu.edu/joro-spiders](http://extension.psu.edu/joro-spiders) - This Penn State Extension website has good photos and descriptions of the joro adults and juveniles as well as information on other orb-weavers for comparison.

[www.inaturalist.org](http://www.inaturalist.org) - Visit this site to see numerous photos and distribution maps and to report sightings.

[www.eddmaps.org](http://www.eddmaps.org) - Use this site that monitors invasive species to report joro sightings.

# Jōro Spider and its SE US Lookalikes



0.6-1.0 in body

Dorsal

**banded garden spider**  
*Argiope trifasciata*

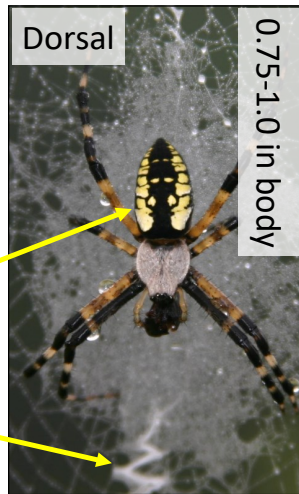
Many thin black, yellow, and silvery white bands on abdomen

Whitney Cranshaw, CSU, Bugwood.org

**yellow garden spider**  
*Argiope aurantia*

Distinctive yellow and black abdomen

Web often has zig-zag above and below dense center

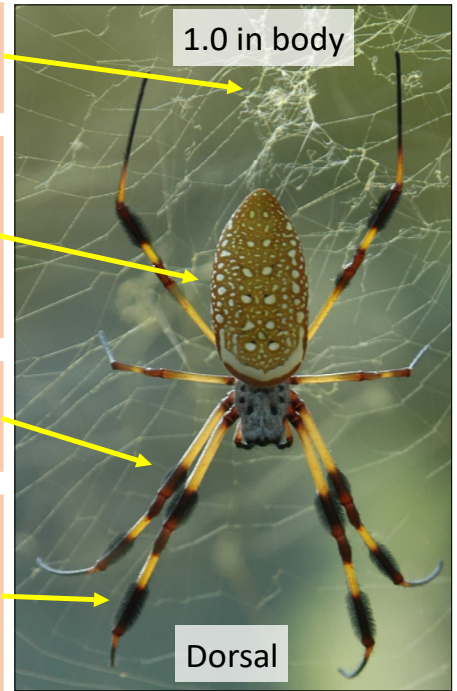


Dorsal

0.75-1.0 in body

Leslie J. Mehrhoff, UCon, Bugwood.org

**golden silk orb-weaver**  
*(Trichonephila clavipes)*



1.0 in body

Dorsal

Large, golden webbing

Abdomen yellow-orange with two rows of silvery white spots

Legs yellow-orange with brown bands

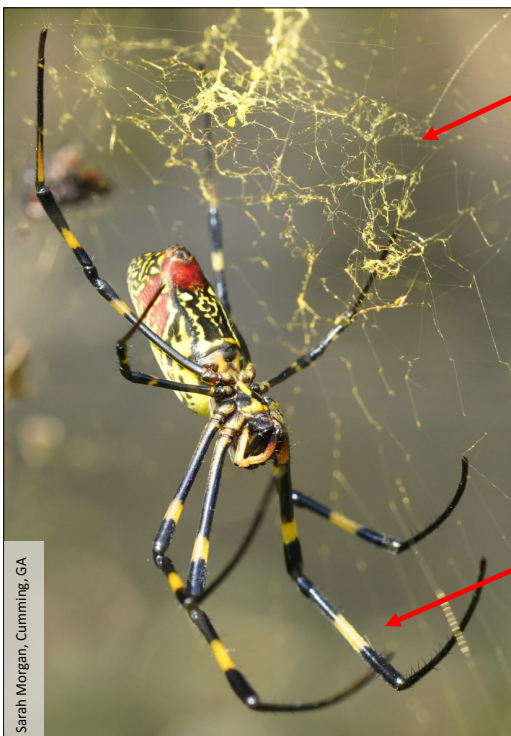
1st, 2nd, and 4th pairs of legs have black tufts of hair near joints

Chris Evans, University of Illinois, Bugwood.org

## Jōro spider

*Trichonephila clavata*

Ventral (belly)



Sarah Morgan, Cumming, GA

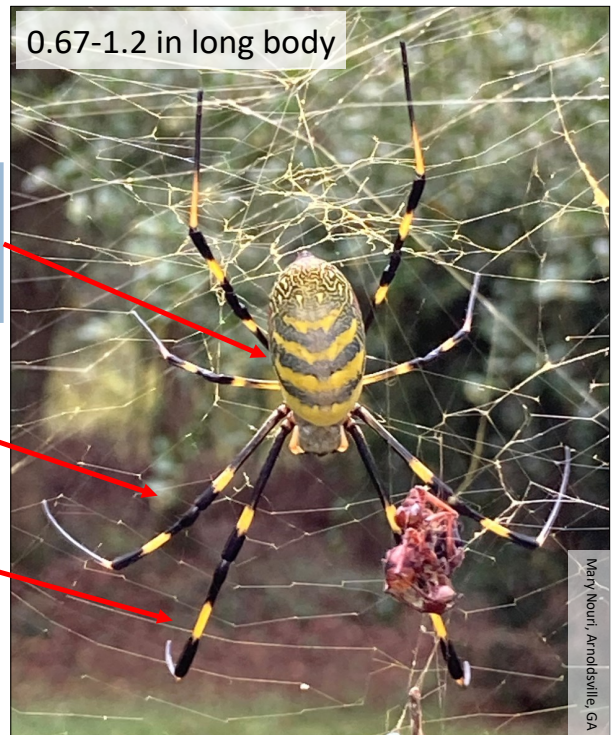
Large, golden webbing

Broad, horizontal bluish-green bands on abdomen

Legs lack hair tufts

Legs black with yellow bands, rarely all black

Dorsal (back)



0.67-1.2 in long body

Mary Nouri, Arundelville, GA





Photo powdery mildew <https://site.extension.uga.edu/dougherty-hort/2020/05/powdery-mildew-on-ornamentals/>

## ORNAMENTALS

- Take root cuttings of woody shrubs and evergreens (such as azaleas, holly, and hydrangeas) to propagate. [Click HERE for growing info.](#)
- Powdery mildew diseases attack a great many ornamentals, most often in late summer when the days are warm and nights are cool. Some mildews, particularly those on roses, apples, and cherries, also are increased by high humidity. Prevention by proper cultural techniques is the first defense. Grow resistant varieties; space and prune plants to improve air flow and reduce shading; water early in the day and at the base rather than on leaves; and reduce nitrogen applications to avoid excessive, late-season growth. [Click HERE for mildew factsheet.](#)
- Water shrubs deeply once a week during August. Many plants including camellias and rhododendrons, are forming buds for next season's bloom at this time. Do not prune or you will be removing the flower buds. Immature berries of hollies may drop if the plants are water stressed. During hot, dry August days, avoid deep cultivation in your flower beds. Loosening the soil under these conditions reduces water uptake by increasing loss of soil water and damaging surface roots. Plants often look much worse after cultivation than before.
- Water roses with at least 1" of water per week. Remove spent blooms (deadheading) to encourage quicker rebloom. Prune 1/4" above an outward facing five-leaflet eye. Watch for spider mites on the underside of the upper leaves. A blast of water from underneath will discourage them. Continue fertilizing once a month for both August and September. [Click HERE for rose growing.](#)

## FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

- Strawberries, blueberries, and bramble fruits are forming buds for next year's crop; keep them watered for better production.
- Fertilize strawberries in August. On plants set out this spring, apply 4-6 oz. of ammonium nitrate (33% actual nitrogen) or 12-18 oz. of 10-10-10 per feet of row. Spread the fertilizer uniformly in a band 14" wide over the row when foliage (not the ground) is dry. Brush fertilizer off leaves to avoid leaf burn. For plants in the second year of growth, increase application rate to 6-8 oz. ammonium nitrate or 18-24 oz. of 10-10-10 per 25 feet of row. [For growing strawberries click HERE.](#)

# AUGUST GARDENING TIPS


- Heavy rains at harvest can dilute the sugars in melons. Watermelons can reconcentrate sugar if left on the vine for a few dry days, but cantaloupes can't.
- Harvest cantaloupes when the melons pull easily from the stem; honeydews when the blossom end is slightly soft or springy; watermelons when there is a hollow sound when thumped and skin loses its shine. Also, run your hand around the middle of the watermelon. When fully ripe, most varieties develop low, longitudinal ridges, rather like flexed calf muscles.
- Start seeds of cool-weather vegetables like broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, collards and lettuce in order to transplant to the garden in early September. [For garden planning click HERE.](#)
- White fly may be a serious problem this month on tomatoes, peppers, eggplants and squash. There are no effective preventive measures, so it's important to control the population before they increase to damaging levels. Hang sticky yellow strips among your plants to trap these pests.
- Plant bush beans now for your fall crop. Watch out for insects, such as Mexican bean beetle.
- If going on vacation this month, be sure to harvest all your vegetables and then arrange for someone to pick fast maturing crops, such as squash and okra; otherwise, they will become overmature and stop producing.
- Spider mites leave webs on the underside of leaves, and eggs are laid in these webs. Spider mites thrive in hot, dry weather. For mild infestations, hose the foliage to wash off the mites. For severe problems, spray with an approved chemical according to the label. [For INFESTATIONS click HERE.](#) The best remedy for spider mites on plants is a good, heavy rainfall. [Click HERE for info.](#)



<https://ugaurbanag.com/mexican-bean-beetles-in-your-garden/>

## AUGUST MISCELLANEOUS

- Water your plants several hours before applying pesticides, especially during dry weather. Drought-stressed plants have less water in their plant tissues. The chemicals that enter the leaves will be more concentrated and may burn the leaves.
- The last two weeks of August is the time to spray kudzu with a non-selective weed killer or mow all visible foliage, since it is at its weakest at this time.

	RAINFALL COMPARISONS					
	Cherokee County			State Wide		
	May 2022	June 2022	YTD 2022	May 2022	June 2022	YTD 2022
<b>Actual</b>	2.9	1.0	25.8	2.8	3.7	24.1
<b>Normal</b>	4.3	4.0	29.1	3.2	4.5	24.4
<b>Deviation</b>	-1.4	-3.0	-3.3	-0.4	-0.8	-0.3

# SEPTEMBER GARDENING TIPS

## ORNAMENTALS

- Fall is a great time to plant and divide perennials and shrubs for next year's garden. Plants planted in the fall do not endure the summer heat during establishment and will form sufficient root systems before winter dormancy. [To plant shrubs click HERE.](#) [For dividing perennials click HERE.](#)
- If you are not sure which end of the bulb is the top, plant it on its side. The stem will always grow upright.



Photo courtesy Marcia Winchester, from left to right: *Lycoris radiata*/spider lily, *Hyacinth*, *Narcissus*/daffodil, *crocus*, *Muscari armeniacum*/grape hyacinth.

- Plant peonies now, but make sure the crowns are buried only 1½ -2" below ground level. Deeper planting keeps the plants from blooming. Look for varieties that perform well in the South.
- Divide, cut back and fertilize daylilies now to promote root growth for next year's flowers.

## FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

- During the fall, be sure to water vegetables adequately; crops such as corn, pepper, squash and tomato won't mature correctly if stressed due to lack of water. Snap bean, tomato and pepper flowers may fail to develop fruit when daytime temperatures rise above 90°F.
- Harvesting guidelines: Pears should be picked at the hard ripe stage and allowed to finish ripening off the tree in a paper bag. The base color of yellow pears should change from green to yellow as the fruit approaches maturity. [For Pear info click HERE.](#)
- Cucumber beetles, squash bugs, Colorado potato beetles and European corn borers pass the winter in debris left in the garden. Remove dead plant material and compost it or till it under. This limits your pest population next year to the insects that migrate into the garden. [To find squash bugs click HERE.](#)
- To harvest sunflower seeds, wait until the seeds are fully grown and firm, then cut the head, leaving one foot of stem. Hang in a dry, airy spot to finish ripening. Do not store sunflowers on top of each other or they may rot. [To grow sunflowers click HERE.](#)
- Winter-type pumpkins and squash, such as acorn, butternut, and spaghetti keep for several months in a cool, medium-dry basement, garage or tool shed. Allow the fruit to ripen fully on the vine, and cure in the sun to form a hard rind. Harvest before frost, and leave a piece of stem on each when they are cut from the vine. If the floor is damp, elevate them to reduce the possibility of rot. The best storage temperature is about 60°F.



Daylily division courtesy Clemson University <https://hgic.clemson.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/word-image-15-828x656.jpeg>

- Keep basil, parsley, garlic, mint and sage producing by pinching off the flowers. Herbs can be used fresh, frozen, or dried. When the dew dries, cut a few stems, tie a strong cord around this little bouquet, and hang in a cool, dry place until fully dry. Place in a jar for use during the winter. [Click HERE for herb gardening.](#)
- Don't prune or fertilize fruits now; it may disturb bud formation.
- Do not store apples or pears with vegetables such as potatoes and squash. Fruits give off ethylene gas that speeds up the ripening process of vegetables and may cause them to develop "off" flavors.
- Beets, carrots, collards, mustard greens, onions, parsley, radishes, spinach and turnips seeds can be planted in the garden all month.
- Near the end of the growing season, pick off all tomato blossoms that won't have time to bear fruit so that plant nutrients go into existing tomatoes.
- Hot peppers will keep best if stored after they are dry. Pull the plants and hang them up, or pick the peppers and thread on a string. Store in a cool, dry place. Wash your hands after handling them.

## SEPTEMBER MISCELLANEOUS

- Autumn is a good time for improving garden soil. Add manure, compost and leaves to increase the organic matter. Before adding lime, have soil tested to determine if your soil is acidic. [For soil testing and amenities click HERE.](#)
- Do not spray pesticides when it is windy or temperatures are over 85°F; and always follow directions carefully.
- Washing clothes worn while applying pesticides is important. Use heavy-duty detergent & hot water ASAP.
- Some pesticides are sold as dusts. Dusts cannot be applied as precisely as sprays and may drift to non-targeted areas.



# August/September Recipes

By Maurya Jones



## Orzo Salad with Watermelon and Feta

### Ingredients:

- 4 cups uncooked orzo
- 8 cups diced seedless watermelon
- 2 cups crumbled feta cheese
- 4 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 2 cups fresh, thinly sliced basil
- 1/2 tsp. ground black pepper
- 1 tsp. salt or to taste

### Directions

1. Boil orzo in salted water, 8 to 10 minutes; drain completely and rinse under cold water.
2. Once cool, toss with remaining ingredients.

## Boiled Red Shrimp

### Ingredients:

- 2 lbs. red Argentinian shrimp (If frozen, thaw overnight in refrigerator)
- 2 Tbsp. Old Bay seasoning
- Cocktail sauce, optional

### Directions

1. Add Old Bay seasoning and salt to boiling water.
2. Place shrimp in water and boil until ends are opaque

This shrimp served hot or chilled has a nice buttery flavor. It tastes good with or without cocktail sauce.

## Corn with Smoked Paprika-Lime Butter

### Ingredients:

- 6 medium ears of corn
- 3 Tbsp. butter
- 4 tsp. fresh lime juice
- 1 tsp. smoked paprika
- 1/8 tsp. salt (or to taste)
- 3 Tbsp. chopped cilantro

### Directions

1. Microwave corn in husks two at a time for 5 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, in a microwave-safe bowl, combine the butter, lime juice, paprika, and salt. Microwave on high until the butter is melted, about 20 seconds.
3. Remove husks and arrange on serving platter. Spread with the butter, and sprinkle with the cilantro. Toss to coat.



Photo courtesy Maurya Jones

<https://extension.uga.edu/county-offices/cherokee.html>

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