

Gardening With The Masters

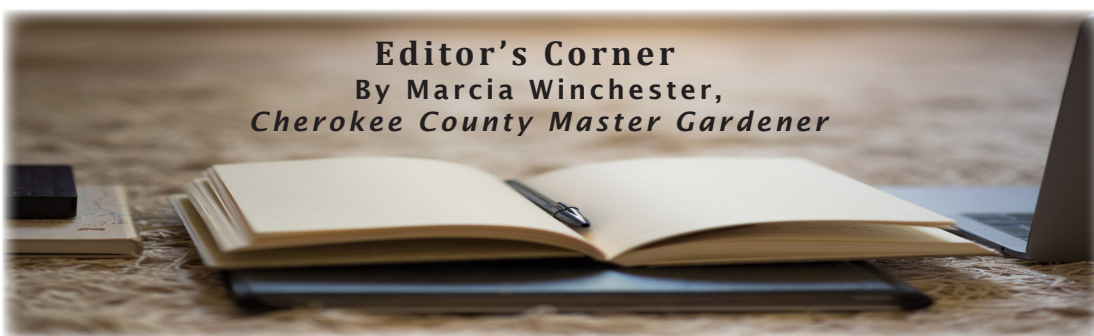
Growing, Gardening and Gaining Knowledge
October/November 2022



This year the Cherokee County Master Gardeners unveiled a new retractable, vertical banner to display the many efforts and activities they represent each year.

The banner features seven photos, the Demonstration Garden, the "Backyard Agriculture Education Station," Plant-A-Row (featured in this issue on page 4), lectures, Farmer's Market and clinic, Senior Education Programs, and our Plant Sales.

Click [here](#) for the website. We are in the planning stages to increase our presence for next year, but reach out to us with any questions you may have and come visit us in the demo garden. We'd love to see you soon.



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



Photo of CCMGs presenting a popular seminar on seed starting at one of the county libraries, courtesy Jennifer Ruscilli.

When Covid hit in early 2020, the Master Gardener lecture series, along with the world, came to a halt. Our lecture series had been in person for 26 years, utilizing our country libraries, Ball Ground Community Center, and the Canton Senior Center as locations for the lectures.

Covid didn't stop the community from wanting to learn or the Master Gardeners from wanting to teach. We looked into, and then began teaching, online gardening webinars. The last Friday of each month from noon until 1:00, the public was invited to learn about a new topic. Classes were picked based on seasonal gardening topics or feedback from the public regarding what they wanted to learn. Visit www.cherokeemastergardeners.com to access these webinars.

The great thing about a webinar is if you missed it, you can go to our website and click on the recorded webinar and watch anytime. To date we have 22 videos posted to our website ranging in length from 30 minutes to one hour.

Now that Covid restrictions have eased, we've added in-person classes at Encompass Ministries in conjunction with our Plant-A-Row garden and at the Woodstock Senior Center working with Woodstock Parks and Recreation, while still filming webinars. Next year, while continuing to add to our YouTube webinar collection, we will have in-person classes at even more locations. It is so exciting to be able to reach the public both in person and through our webinars.

Marcia

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Let's Plant a Tree!

By Carolyn Puckett, Cherokee County Master Gardener

There are many reasons to plant trees in your landscape. They provide shade, reducing air conditioning costs when planted on the southwest side of the house. Trees provide food to caterpillars, which then provide protein for hungry bird nestlings. In addition, studies have shown that being around trees is soothing to people, reducing stress.

While we seem to prefer to plant things in the spring, fall is the best time to plant a tree so it can recover from transplant shock before the hot, dry summer weather arrives months later.

What to consider when shopping for a tree? If the spot where you wish to plant the tree is shaded, you will want to plant a tree that tolerates shade, such as a serviceberry (*Amelanchier* spp.) or a fringe tree (*Chionanthus virginicus*). If the area is poorly drained, plant a species that can tolerate wet roots, such as a river birch (*Betula nigra*).

Photo tree planting UGA <https://newswire.caes.uga.edu/story/5597/tree-planting.html>

Select a tree that will fit without major pruning—topping a tree is not recommended! Do not plant trees that grow tall under a power line or trees that grow wide close to your house. For help in selecting a tree species, search online for “trees for Georgia UGA” to find University of Georgia publications on recommended trees.

We think that roots grow down, but mostly they grow outward in the top 18 inches of soil. We once believed that tree roots spread out to the “drip line,” the outer edge of the tree’s canopy. We now know that tree roots will spread up to three times farther out than the mature tree is wide. Consider root spread to avoid damage to pavement, especially if planting a very shallow-rooted tree such as a maple or southern magnolia.

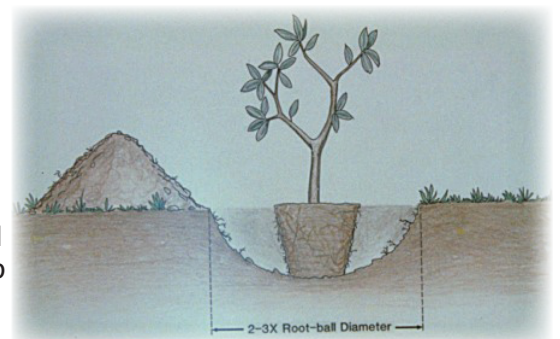
Select a healthy tree. Avoid trees that have obvious injuries to the trunk or are diseased. Also reject plants with roots that are wrapped around the trunk. If feasible, pull the tree out of the pot and make certain that the roots are healthy and not badly circling, as these will eventually girdle and kill the tree. Smaller trees, 3- to 7-gallon size, tolerate transplanting better and seem to catch up with the size of larger specimens in just two or three years. Smaller specimens also save money.



Photo root flare <https://hort.ifas.ufl.edu/woody/root-growth-developing-flare4.shtml>

Dig the hole no deeper than the root ball. The flare where the trunk enters the soil should show above ground after planting. Remove fabric and wires from the roots of balled-and-burlapped plants as some fabrics will not rot, and the fabric and wires can harm roots.

Make the hole two to three times as wide as the root ball and scarify the sides of the hole. Yes, this is hard work, but it pays off. Digging a wide hole breaks up the hard clay so the roots can expand easily. Since the tree roots will



be competing for water and nutrients, getting rid of nearby grass will help the tree establish. Also, mulching a wide area will keep mowers and weed whackers from damaging the tree.

A major misconception is that you should mix in soil amendments before refilling the hole. Research has shown that the tree will do better if you just put back the well-loosened existing soil. You can put a couple of inches of compost on the top of the planting area.

Photo root flare at the surface at proper depth <https://hort.ifas.ufl.edu/woody/root-growth-set1.shtml>



The Multi-Seasonal Charms of the Dogwood

By Mary Tucker, Cherokee County Master Gardener

The blooms of the flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*) are so emblematic of spring that it can be easy to overlook the charms this native tree exhibits during other times of the year. In fact, autumn is one of the tree's loveliest seasons.



The fall foliage colors of flowering dogwood can be quite stunning and variable, with hues ranging anywhere from dark burgundy to scarlet red to vibrant orange. Just as the foliage begins to exhibit a flush of fall color, the fleshy, oval berries turn a bright, shiny red. These showy, ½-inch fruits are borne in small clusters at the tips of the branches and add an ornamental quality to the tree.



The fruits are high in fat content and are an important food source for many birds, making a dogwood tree an excellent feature in a wildlife habitat garden. In fact, you may attract birds that rarely visit feeders, such as cedar waxwings, thrushes, warblers, vireos, mockingbirds, phoebes, flycatchers, and kingbirds. Your regular feeder birds, such as bluebirds, robins, cardinals, grosbeaks, sparrows, finches, nuthatches, titmice, and chickadees, will appreciate the berry treats, too.

In fall and winter you will also see the pea-sized flower buds that have already formed for the following spring's bloom season. Though dogwoods rarely require pruning, if such trimming is necessary, to prevent cutting off flower buds, prune in late spring after the tree has finished flowering and before the buds have formed.



Photo winter flower buds [Chris Evans](https://www.chris-evans.com/), [University of Illinois Bugwood.org](http://UniversityofIllinoisBugwood.org)



Even in winter when the tree is bare of its foliage, the dogwood makes a beautiful statement in the landscape. The form is often quite graceful, with a rounded crown and arching, tiered branches. The bark on mature trees is broken into square, scaly blocks with a distinctive, rough texture similar to alligator hide, adding yet another element of interest in the winter landscape.

The dogwood tree blooms in early spring before the foliage leafs out. What we think of as dogwood flowers are actually large bracts, each about 2 inches long, that surround small clusters of yellowish green, rather insignificant true flowers. The fact that the bracts appear before the foliage makes the floral display all the more striking. In addition to the standard white form, there are also selections in the nursery trade that bear pink bracts.



As the blooms fade, the foliage unfurls, with leaves arranged in an opposite fashion. The foliage is 3 to 6 inches long and is generally oval with a somewhat pointed tip and prominent veins. The leaf margin may be smooth or wavy. The spring foliage is a medium green above and lighter below. As an added bonus, it serves as the host plant for the larvae of the spring azure butterfly (*Celastrina ladon*).



Photo courtesy James Garland Holmes, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center

In their natural habitats, flowering dogwoods are found in woodlands throughout the eastern United States, where they most often occur as understory trees in open, semi-shaded areas or along the edges of woodlands. They can be found growing from southern Maine to Florida and as far west as parts of Texas.

Though the dogwood is tolerant of sun or shade, it appreciates protection from the harsh, hot afternoon sun. The tree will perform best in a slightly acidic soil with ample organic matter. It will not tolerate poorly drained soils or extreme drought. A layer of mulch will be beneficial to keep soil cool and moist during dry seasons.

Continued on page 7

“Pavement” Produce

By Nancy McCarthy, Cherokee County Master Gardener

Food insecurity happens everywhere. It is not limited to age, status, or religion. It’s found in the wealthiest zip codes and the most desperate. Papa’s Pantry aims to meet this need in Cherokee County.

Papa’s Pantry is the food pantry arm of Encompass Ministries, a faith-based non-profit located off Bells Ferry Road in Woodstock. Founded and directed by Lynne Saunders, this organization’s goal is to stabilize local families and individuals. Not only food, but classes and employment assistance are available to all families in need. Papa’s Pantry receives grocery donations from many local businesses, especially Walmart, and from local food drives to meet its needs.

As Cherokee County Master Gardeners, we saw an opportunity to share our skills with our community and fill in some of the “green gaps” in the pantry offerings. We also wanted to share with those who could benefit by learning the advantages of growing their own produce. This is how Plant-A-Row came to be, and a committee was formed to establish a garden.

Since there was no available garden spot on the organization’s property, older raised wooden beds were put to use in the rear fenced parking lot to make a vegetable garden on the pavement. Later the Eagle Scouts undertook adding new raised metal beds and a gravity-fed irrigation system. A new 4 by 18 raised bed was installed in 2022, and we received a grant from Georgia Master Gardeners Association to install another this fall.



A year-round organic garden is currently maintained by CCMG Plant-A-Row volunteers. Our winter crops include cabbage, kale, collards, spinach, and our crowd favorite - broccoli. Broccoli is an easy crop to grow in the fall when the heat and bugs have disappeared. All this crop needs to flourish is some heavy nitrogen fertilizer and time. The same applies to our cabbage crop. Winter vegetables are just less needy.

In spring we grow assorted lettuces, sugar snap peas, etc. Summer crops are more labor intensive and include potatoes, tomatoes (if we are lucky), green beans, and cucumbers. These crops fill just a tiny portion of the vast amounts of food needed to meet local needs.

Since the mission statement of the Cherokee County Master Gardeners is to share our gardening knowledge within our county, we also offer a series of classes each year on timely gardening topics in a classroom at Papa’s Pantry. They include topics such as seed starting, growing tomatoes, and fall gardening. All are free, and a calendar is available on our website: www.cherokeemaster-gardeners.com.



Our Plant-A-Row committee welcomes all volunteers, and Papa’s Pantry welcomes all donations. As home gardeners, this is a great place to share your extra harvest where it is needed. Presently we are in need of a volunteer to help repair our rain collection system. If you are interested, please contact the garden manager by email at papas@cherokeemastergardeners.com.

**All photos provided by Nancy McCarthy, Cherokee County Master Gardener, and Plant-A-Row Chair

Great Georgia Pollinator Census Update

By Jodi Morgan, Cherokee County Master Gardener

The Cherokee County Master Gardeners rocked the Great Georgia Pollinator Census August 19 and 20!

Friday, August 19, we hosted Cherokee County Senior Services and the public in the Demo Garden that we maintain behind the Senior Center on Univeter Road in Canton. Jennifer Ruscilli took the lead for this event. Jennifer has hosted the pollinator census from its inception.

Friday, Master Gardeners Jennifer Ruscilli, Rob Stoy, Mary Ellen Roos, and Jodi Morgan assisted seniors with the pollinator census. Approximately eight seniors from the day program participated. Several members of the public attended with one bringing her child that participated in the count.

The day was overcast, so fewer pollinators were present. Pollinators were found on the sunflowers (*Helianthus* spp.), alliums (*Allium* spp.), and black-eyed Susans (*Rudbeckia* spp.). The sunflowers attracted the most bees and butterflies.

Saturday, August 20, we hosted the public in two locations: the Demo Garden behind the Senior Center and our newest location at Cherokee Veteran's Park Backyard Agriculture Education Station (BAES) next to the tennis courts. Laura Mixson was kind enough to lead the Master Gardeners at BAES.

Master Gardeners Laura Mixson, Susan Carswell, Susan Gum, and Crystal West assisted the public on Saturday at Veteran's Park. Josh Fuder, Boy Scouts, and several other Master Gardeners also showed up to assist. Five families from the public visited BAES on Saturday for the pollinator census.

At this site, pollinators graced cardinal flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*), black-eyed Susans (*Rudbeckia* spp.), coneflower (*Echinacea* spp.), joe-pye weed (*Eutrochium* spp.), and blooming vegetable plants. The plants at BAES are about 10 months old and are doing a wonderful job attracting pollinators.

We had the dubious distinction of hosting a photographer from the Cherokee Tribune on Friday at the Senior Center. Our efforts made the Saturday edition front page.

Several Cherokee County libraries and schools held their own pollinator census on Friday, August 19. The Great Georgia Pollinator Census is becoming a very popular event throughout Georgia, and participation has grown steadily every year since it was initiated in 2019.

Let's start planning the Great Georgia Pollinator Census 2023! And BEEEE Counted!

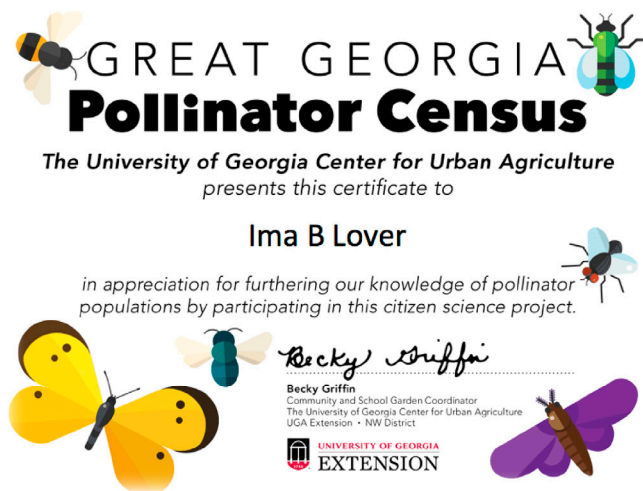


Photo (L to R) Rob Stoy, Mary Ellen Roos, Jodi Morgan and Jennifer Ruscilli hosting the pollinator census count, Senior Services, Cherokee County Master Gardener Demonstration Garden. Courtesy Jennifer Ruscilli.

Let's Plant a Tree!.....continued from page 2



Photo proper soil berm for irrigation <https://hort.ifas.ufl.edu/woody/root-growth-set7.shtml>

Watering is vital. During the planting, once about half the soil is returned to the hole, water the hole well. Return the remaining dirt, and then thoroughly water the plant. Your new tree will need at least an inch of water each week during the first year and even into the second year if the summer is especially droughty. Water deeply and infrequently.



Photo mulch volcano <https://ugaurbanag.com/volcano-mulching/>

Avoid "mulch volcanoes" where mulch is piled up against the trunk. Mulch should be only about 3 inches deep and should be kept at least 2 inches

from the trunk to protect it from fungi. Do not stake the tree unless absolutely necessary to keep it upright. Use nylon webbing to connect the trunk to the stake. Remove all staking after the first year. Do not prune the tree when planting except to remove dead, broken, or diseased branches.

Give your tree the proper planting and care, and you will be rewarded amply.

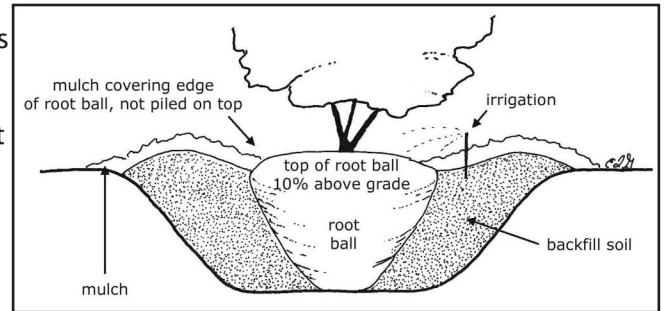
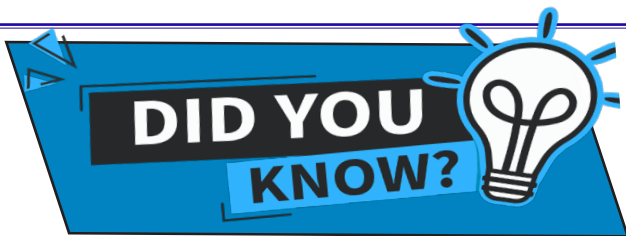


Photo courtesy University of Florida <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf%5CEP%5CEP31400.pdf>



By Mary Tucker, Master Gardener

Though the flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*) is the best known of the native dogwoods, there are also several other species that are native to the Southeast. Among them are alternate-leaf dogwood (*Cornus alternifolia*), silky dogwood (*Cornus amomum*), and swamp dogwood (*Cornus foemina*). These are shorter than flowering dogwood and usually grow more as shrubs than trees. The flowers grow in clusters made up of small, creamy white blooms.




Cornus amomum blooms, Kent McFarland, CC BY-NC 2.0



Cornus foemina flower close up <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/cornus-foemina/common-name/english-dogwood/>



Cornus alternifolia flower and leaves, Jim Robbins, CC BY-NC-ND 4.0

| RAINFALL COMPARISONS | | | | | | |
|---|-----------------|----------|----------|------------|----------|----------|
|  | Cherokee County | | | State Wide | | |
| | July 2022 | Aug 2022 | YTD 2022 | July 2022 | Aug 2022 | YTD 2022 |
| Actual | 8.5 | 3.2 | 37.5 | 5.0 | 5.4 | 37.1 |
| Normal | 4.8 | 2.7 | 36.6 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 33.4 |
| Deviation | 3.7 | 0.5 | 0.9 | 0.5 | 0.9 | 1.1 |

The Multi-Seasonal Charms of the Dogwoodcontinued from page 3

The flowering dogwood is easy to incorporate into the home landscape. It usually grows only 15 to 30 feet tall, making it appropriate for most any size garden. The width may be greater than the height, especially on mature specimens. It has a moderate to slow growth rate, generally reaching about 20 feet in 25 years. It may grow as a single- or multi-trunked tree. Upon maturity, the branches will be horizontally layered and the crown will be rounded, giving the dogwood a graceful appearance.

In the landscape, it is useful as a specimen tree, in a border as an accent, or enhancing a patio to provide shade. It will also look at home in an open woodland setting or at the edge of the woods.



Dogwood borer courtesy [James Solomon, USDA Forest Service, Bugwood.org](#)

Despite the dogwood's wonderful characteristics, it can suffer from some problems, pests, and diseases, especially if it is in less-than-ideal conditions that stress the tree. The dogwood borer (*Synanthedon scitula*) is a native moth whose larval stage can infest trunks and branches of the dogwood and other genera, especially if the tree is young, in poor health, under stress from drought, or damaged, such as by lawn mowers or weed trimmers. Other insects that can affect dogwoods include midges that cause galls, ambrosia beetles, scale insects, and leaf miners. Planting a tree in proper conditions and keeping it healthy will help prevent these pests.

when spring weather is wet and cool. These fungal diseases include spot anthracnose (*Elsinoe corni*), dogwood canker (*Discula destructiva*), and powdery mildew (*Erysiphe pulchra* and *Phyllactinia guttata*). Healthy dogwoods in open conditions with good air circulation are less susceptible to these fungal diseases. Dogwoods are also prone to root rot (*Phytophthora* spp.) if planted in poorly drained locations or sites prone to frequent flooding.



Powdery mildew on dogwood (*Cornus florida*) leaves. James Blake, ©2007 HGIC, Clemson Extension

If you wonder where the dogwood got its common name, there are numerous possibilities. I heard from one esteemed botanist that the name comes from the fact that the sturdy wood was used in the textile industry to make shuttles, sometimes called "dogs." Other sources say it is because the wood was used to make meat skewers, called "doggers" in Old English (similar to our modern term "daggers"). In either case, the common name seemingly attests in one fashion or another to the utility of the tree and the strength of its wood. It has also been a popular wood for golf club heads, chisel handles, and mallets. In fact, the genus name *Cornus* comes from the Latin word *cornu*, which means "horn," a reference to the strength of the wood.

Other historical uses are also reported in literature. I have read that Native Americans used the inner bark as a treatment for malaria and also derived a red dye from it. During the Civil War, a quinine substitute was made by steeping the inner bark to make a tea or tincture.

If you want to add a dogwood to your garden, fall is an excellent time to plant. Dozens, if not hundreds, of cultivars are available in the nursery trade. Selections have been made regarding flower size and color, fall foliage color, foliage variegation, growth habit, and disease resistance. Some cultivars are crosses of our native *Cornus florida* and the Asian C.

By incorporating a dogwood into your landscape, you will appreciate the four seasons of beauty this native tree provides, and wildlife will benefit as well.

**Unless noted, photos are courtesy Mary Tucker



Photo sourwood (*Oxydendrum arboreum*) courtesy Marcia Winchester

OCTOBER GARDENING TIPS

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. For growing tomatoes, click [HERE](#).
- 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. For more info on summer and winter squash, click [HERE](#).
- 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.

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. For more info click [HERE](#).
- 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. For more info on growing dogwoods, click [HERE](#).
- Plant trees at least 6 feet away from sidewalks, concrete pools, and driveways so growing roots do not crack the concrete. Trees that get quite large need to be placed even further away from concrete.
- Small imperfections, such as nicks and loose skin, should not affect the quality of most bulbs. Store bulbs in a cool area (below 65° F). Do not plant before Nov. 1. For more info on flowering bulbs, click [HERE](#).

OCTOBER 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. For a guide to composting and mulching, click [HERE](#).
- 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. For kudzu control, click [HERE](#). For poison ivy control, click [HERE](#).

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) on the surface. For growing azaleas, click [HERE](#).
- 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.



Photo *Narcissus x medioluteus* "Twin Sisters", courtesy Barbara H. Smith, ©2018 HGIC, Clemson Extension

- 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 that 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. For scale management, click [HERE](#).
- 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" deep 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. For more info on growing peonies, click [HERE](#).

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.



Photo open wooden cold frame with lettuce Adobe Stock 262041130

- Plant lettuce and hardy vegetables, such as beets, cabbage, and spinach, in cold frames for winter or early spring crops. For info, click [HERE](#).
- 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 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. For pesticide safety, click [HERE](#).

NOVEMBER 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. For more info, click [HERE](#).
- 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. For more info on houseplants, click [HERE](#).
- 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. For more info, click [HERE](#).

October/November Recipes

By Mageeda Doe, Cherokee County Master Gardener

Banana Tea Bread

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup butter
- 1-1/3 cups sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1/4 cup sour cream
- 2 cups sifted flour
- 1-1/2 tsp. baking powder
- 1/2 tsp. baking soda
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1 cup mashed bananas (about 3)
- 2 Tbsp. light rum (optional)
- 1 tsp. almond extract
- 1 cup nuts

Instructions:

1. Cream butter and sugar. Beat in eggs and sour cream. Sift together flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. Blend into creamed mixture alternately with mashed bananas. Add rum and almond extract. Stir in nuts.
2. Turn into greased 9x5x3 loaf pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 60 to 70 minutes.
3. Remove bread from pan and let cool. This banana bread freezes well.



Photo courtesy Mageeda Doe

Mississippi Pot Roast

Ingredients:

- 2 to 3 lb. beef roast
- 1 packet of dry ranch dressing mix
- 1 packet of dry au jus mix
- 1 stick of butter
- 4 to 6 pepperoncini peppers (a whole banana pepper or mild pepper out of the jar)

Instructions:

Place roast in crock pot. Dump everything on top. Put on lid and let cook for 6 to 8 hours on low. DO NOT ADD WATER.



Photo courtesy Mageeda Doe

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

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