

The Dirt | June, 2024

Mobile County Master Gardeners

The President's Message

by Carol Williams

How is your garden growing? As I compose this June letter, I've just picked my first fresh blueberries. All the rain we had last week has sped up their ripening. How is your garden growing? Feel free to send pictures to us. We are heading into summer with a lot more than fresh blueberries. As MG's, we always have somewhere to serve.

We thank BCMG for hosting our joint May General Meeting. We enjoyed their hospitality and speaker and had a great time. See *Chronicles* (following) for the details. Our next Board of Directors meeting is Wednesday, June 5, at 10:00 AM at ACES in the small auditorium. Everyone is welcome. Our June General Membership meeting is Wednesday, June 12, at 10:00 AM at ACES, and our guest speaker will be **Jack LeCroy** who will demonstrate installation of an irrigation system.

MGs have already manned an info booth at Market in the Park two Saturdays in shady Cathedral Square in Downtown Mobile. I hope you get a chance to volunteer or just visit. It offers so much to buy or enjoy: often great music, beautiful home-grown flowers, homemade treats and crafts, and some of Mobile County's best fresh vegetables from our local farmers at a good price. We are there to answer gardening questions, and a brief chat with one of the vendor-farmers can be priceless. Two-hour shifts are available so contact Bob Howard before all the slots are filled. Parking is free and George's Candy is open if the treats in the Square aren't enough.

On June 8 in Spanish Plaza on Government Street, a couple blocks west of Cathedral Square, we can also enjoy participating in Global Wellness Day sponsored here by Mobile Parks and Recreation. ACES, MCMG, and Mobile Botanical Gardens all plan to be there to share information about the health benefits of gardening, exercise, and other outdoor activities. Sign up to help or just come to visit.

Our MCMG **Carol Dorsey** and Pat Hall of Mobile Urban Growers (MUG) need 4 MGs to help with a garden-themed Summer Camp at George Hall Elementary School Mondays and Tuesdays June 3-27. The Mobile Arts Council is funding this experience. An urban school, George Hall Elementary's students may have had little experience with gardening. If you enjoy watching kids' faces light up when learning something new and fun, contact Carol Dorsey, and get your smiles on!

We are preparing for the MCMG Interns of 2024! **Jackie Jenkins** has announced mentor training class for Wednesday, June 5, at 1:00 PM in the small auditorium at ACES. The word is out about how much fun becoming an MG is. Diane already had a full waiting list before June's sign-up window this year. Those who are contacting us now are being placed on next year's list. The plan is that we will begin the new class August 8 with 30 ready,



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willing, and able new students.

Applicants from our list will be interviewed by Jack LeCroy to make sure they know what is expected of them during the training and after they become certified MGs, including the computer skills they will bring to the table when class begins.

Mentors are there to encourage, answer questions, supervise interns' first experiences with the state Helpline, make sure they are scheduled for Helpline hours and other requisite service as soon as possible, and help them feel at home. You do not need to attend every intern meeting but should contact your intern often to encourage them and offer guidance. When I met my intern last year, we quickly discovered that we both love chickens and had a great time together. Attend the mentor training on June 5 so that you will have the delight of adding a new friend.

Hats off to **Mary Townsley** who continues to update and improve our mobilecountymastergardeners.org website. Lately, Mary has created a Documents section in our Resources section so we can access necessary forms, including our Project Request form. It is fillable on-line and will accept an electronic signature. It's designed to inform our leadership of any outside entity or any MG who might want to start a project and needs volunteers. Below are links to the Documents section of the Resources on our website:

- [MCMGA Bylaws](#)
- [MCMGA Operations Manual 2023](#)
- [Treasurer's Reimbursement Form](#) (this is a fillable form)
- [MCMG Project Request Form](#) (this is a fillable form)
- [Members Directory Jan 2024](#)
- [New ACES Service Report Video Jan 2024](#)
- [2024 Activities to Hours Reporting](#)

Carol Williams, President
251-367-0473

May Riddle:
May's Answer: the rose

June's Riddle

I am green when I'm born in the fields.
I whisper in the breeze and dance through meals.
I can pop with joy or be sweet as a treat.
What am I that's nature's golden feat?

Garden Giggles

- My fear of roses is a thorny issue. I'm not sure what it stems from, but I'm stuck with it.
- Why are frogs so happy? They eat whatever bugs them.

Please email your answer to Carol Williams.
(readingweeder72@hotmail.com).



All Photo sources: Mobile County Master Gardeners.



Chronicles

by Cindy Findlay

What a fun month we have had! Mobile County Master Gardeners (MCMG) were thrilled that the Baldwin County Master Gardeners (BCMG) hosted the 2024 Alabama Master Gardeners Association's (AMGA) Conference: "Paradise Found." Daphne is so close we had many members attend: **Carol Williams, Bob Howard, Harry Surline, Beth Poates, Olivia Reinhaus, Ted Atkinson, Emily Arellano, Jane Finley, Marion Platt, Theresa Davidson, Cindy Findlay, Barbara Boone, Janet Waters, Donna Kelly, Mary Young, Kathy Deckbar, Debra Morrow, Julie Conrey, Lisa Davidson, and Mary Ann Tomberlin!** We also had three MCMG volunteers helping members find their way around the Daphne Civic Center: **Patti Hicks, Lydia Criswell and Todd Golomb.** Thank you for helping our neighbors. Fun was had, so much was learned at all the events outside, and the speakers were excellent. Next year AMGA Conference will be in Prattville (Autauga County). Make plans to attend.

On May 8, MCMG had a joint General Meeting with the BCMG's in Spanish Fort. BCMG showed us so much kindness and a warm welcome. We had good food and made some new friendships. **Jarrold Jones**, the Regional Director of the Gulf Coast Research & Extension Center gave a very interesting presentation on the history of the research center, including history of crops grown in Alabama and how weather and diseases have affected them. Jarrod also shared the currently increasing difficulty for farmers to make a living while meeting government and the public's expectations.

The West Regional Library hosted our Speakers' Bureau May 10 for an "Ask A Master Gardener" panel discussion. **Alice Marty** and **Bill Fink** shared their wealth of knowledge with the attendees. On May 14, **Emily Arellano** presented "Container Gardening."

Market in the Park is going strong in Cathedral Square. It runs every Saturday, 7:30--Noon through July 6. **Bob Howard** and **Catherine Moates** have assembling the MG Info Booth down to a science so it's a quick set-up! On May 7, ?, and Bob Howard recorded 80 contacts! May 14, **Bill Fink, "Mo" Moates, Bob Howard, Glenda Eady, and Jackie Jenkins** met the public and answered gardening questions. They recorded 88 contacts on that Saturday. Be sure to sign up for a two-hour shift at our June meeting or contact **Theresa Davidson** or **Bob Howard**. If you would like to volunteer to help with planning and setup, contact Bob Howard or "Mo" Moates. We want to have at least two more participants on the committee so that Bob and "Mo" can take some Saturdays off.

Moved!!! Our new storage facility is located just south of the Archer Center, across from the Flea Market. The address is "A Schillinger Self Storage," 400 Schillinger Road, 36608, Unit #Y03. Diane has the sign out/in sheet for the key to the unit and

code for the gate. Their hours are 6am – 9pm. This move should help all our Master Gardeners because it is much closer to the Archer Center. Thanks to all the “Storage Warriors” who, despite the weather threat, came out and did what a great team does: We got the job done quickly and efficiently.

Remember

Our Monthly General Meetings are now on 2nd Wednesday.

Volunteers for State Helpline on Monday and Office Helpline Tuesday-Friday are still needed.

Monthly Zoom Class on 3rd Thursday of the month 6-7pm.



Harry Surline, Carol Williams, Lydia Criswell
Gold badges to Harry and Lydia



Jackie Jenkins received a platinum badge, Carol



Alice Marty, Carol



Catherine Moates, Brenda Howard, Theresa Davidson, Carol



Jarrod Jones at BCMC Meeting

Honoring Men in Gardening

Editor's Note: Last month we featured women in horticulture. This month, which includes an honor to our fathers and men in general, check out a few men who made their mark in horticulture, globally and locally.

The Founding Fathers of our nation, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and John Adams were amongst the first to recognize the

importance of crops in our economy and the beginning of conservation techniques in the environment.

Frederick Law Olmstead- the Father of Landscape Architecture.

Jamie Durie- horticulturist and landscape designer.

Peter Crundall- horticulturist, author.

Monty Don- U. K. TV personality and renowned gardener.

Doug Tallamy- professor of entomology U. of Delaware, author.

William Cullina- expert in native plants, author.

P. Allen Smith- TV personality, author.

Walter Bellingrath- originator and developer of gardens located in Fowl River.

K. Sawada- known as a "plantsman" and promoter of camellias in Mobile. (Photo source courtesy of Mobile Botanical Gardens.)



Why Are Blueberries Blue?

Sometimes we imagine scientists are only researching issues like space travel, medical advancements, or volcanic activity. All are worthy of study, however, some research revolves around other esoteric topics such as blueberry color.

Research indicates that blueberry blue originates from internal structures in the waxy coating that coats the berries. These structures scatter blue and UV light to humans and blue UV to birds. Actually, these structures are anthocyanins which are antioxidants, substances that can prevent or slow damage to cells caused by free radicals.

(Free radicals are molecules capable of existing by themselves containing an unpaired electron.)

This external waxy substance also coats other fruit with a blue-like color like plums or grapes.

Besides the attractive color, the coating helps repel water, keeping the fruit clear. Think Mother Nature at work protecting its own!



Mark Your Calendars

What a year! Leap year, eclipse, and now cicada-geddon! Don't forget those 2 cicada broods appearing soon. Although cicada broods are designated on a map north of us, please take photos if cicadas spotted in your area.

Make sure to clean out your hummingbird feeders!

Designated by the United Nations in 2014, May 20 is World Bee Day.

Editor's Note: *The Dirt* welcomes Terra Firma as a new research assistant. Terra's research topics of choice are the environment and sustainability as it relates to horticulture in general and home gardening specifically.

Make sure you scroll down to **Neil Milligan's** article about mosquitoes. So glad to have submissions from MGs Neil, **Debra Morrow**, and **Jes Gearing**.



Sunflower Savvy

Who can resist sunflowers in a bouquet or an entire field? No one can, especially since, in addition to beauty, they are a sign of positivity, good luck, health, and hope.

Most sunflower species, *Helianthus annuus* or *Helianthus debilis*, are considered annuals, but some reseed and perennialize over multiple years. *H. annuus* is stiff while *H. debilis* is relaxed. Stiff varieties include the giant sunflowers which could be 12-15 ft tall, but one was measured at astonishing 30 ft! Relaxed varieties are much shorter and do not produce seeds as large as those in the stiffer sunflower group.

Fortunately, neither group is difficult to grow. Planting in direct sun in well-draining soil and pH about 6.5 with adequate spacing practically guarantees blooms for bouquets or in large fields where harvesting leads to oil or sold as seed snacks.

Gift all your friends and family with these happy flowers. They will thank you!

Compiled by Dirt Diva

Sources:



Master Gardener of the Month

by Bob Howard

Our Master Gardener of the Month is a member of the Class of 2023, and she is also a Master Tailor! Born and raised in West Germany, she served years of training as an Apprentice, then becoming a Journeyman, and ultimately earning the title of Master Tailor. She married and, in 1975, moved to the USA, where she owned a fabric store and specialized in the design, tailoring and sale of women's apparel. She became a US citizen in 2012.

For 20 years she has been involved in volunteer work – fundraising for 15 years for the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Mobile; working for five years with the Ozanam Charitable Pharmacy; and for the last year and a half working with the Mobile Botanical Gardens.

Our Master Gardener of the Month has been a lifelong gardener. She was inspired by her father who always loved being in his garden, growing everything from flowers to vegetables and surrounded by fruit trees. This year she has worked in the greenhouse at the Mobile Botanical Gardens potting and caring for plants and assisting with MBG's Spring Plantasia. She quickly pivoted to taking part in our own effort for the Festival of Flowers, and then she turned right around to make a significant contribution to our Spring Festival. All the while she was a regular at our meetings and has already completed her annual CEU requirements.

Gudrun Russell is an awesome Master Gardener, and she is our Master Gardener of the Month.

Congratulations, **Gudrun Russell**, Master Gardener of the Month!

~~~Edible Flowers~~~

You are in Billy Bob's Diner, but you are Imagining you are in a fine dining restaurant. You know, the bistros with white tablecloths? Billy Bob has a meat 'n' three menu, and it's good southern fare, but chances are you won't find menu options arriving at your table enhanced with an edible flower.

Flowers on a plate have been around for a while because they can add a pop of color. However, many flowers are edible in addition to sprucing up a salad. Many flowers are edible: dahlias, hibiscus, honeysuckle, nasturtium, pansy, rose, and geranium. An actual example is the viola shown below.

Caution when flowers are consumed. Know the provider if the flowers are purchased. Make sure that the flowers have had NO contact with chemicals! If the flowers are discolored, originate near roads, or where animals walk and have likely made a liquid deposit, do NOT use.

Enjoy that pop of color. Bon appetite!

Compiled by Dirt Diva



Sharing Knowledge In Our Community with the Speaker's Bureau

Editor's Note: As the Speaker's Bureau completes the speakership season this spring and regroups in the fall, the newsletter will highlight speakers and topics.

West Regional library was the site for **Karen Ruckert's** Grocery Store Botany program (above) on April 27. Karen above had 7 attendees at her presentation.

The library was also the venue for **Emily Arrellano** to present Containers topic to a group of teens May 10. May 14 the library presented "Ask a Master Gardener."

Gardenometry

No, it's not new math, and, no, y'all, you don't need to dust off your abacus! It is recommended that, using tomatoes as an example only, a tomato plant needs at least an inch of water in soil depth per week. So, how to determine the amount of water to deliver if hand watering:

1. Mark 0.6 gallon in a gallon bucket.
2. Measure 0.6 gallon (80 oz) of water in the bucket.
3. Time how long in seconds it takes to fill 0.6 gallons.
4. Example: # sec it takes to fill 0.6 gallons which is the equivalent of watering a depth of 1 in. of soil.

If it takes 10 seconds, then 10 seconds=1in depth in a square ft; 20 seconds=2 inch depth and area of 2 square ft. Still not sure? Do the tried-and-true finger dipped in the soil test. Clinging soil means soil is moist; no clinging soil means water needed.

Source:
Joe Lamp'l Gardening YouTube



Dirt Under Your Nails

Growing Eggplant

Editor's Note: This newsletter focuses on another iconic vegetable which is a supporting vegetable in the summer garden. It's time to shine, Eggplant, so let Eggplant have a moment, Tomato!

Eggplant belongs to a large family, Solanaceae, which has about 3,000 species. Also known as the Nightshade family, this family also contains tomatoes, potatoes, peppers, as well as tobacco. The vegetable members of this family originated in Asian countries.

Eggplant, also known as Aubergine in other countries, grows best in full sun in well-drained soil. This vegetable needs soil with a pH of at least 6.2. Fertilize seedlings with 10-10-10 about 6 inches from the stem. Schedule your seedlings so that there is about 65-85 days until harvest. Under no circumstances plant during cold temps or frost. Eggplant likes warmth!

Look for pests like potato beetles, whiteflies, and aphids, but also be on the lookout for fungal disease like Alternaria and Fusarium. Bt is effective in most cases for pests; fungicides are generally needed for the listed fungi.

Eggplant has long had favorite varieties like the globe-shaped purple Black Beauty, but gaining interest are the elongated varieties. Both are delicious in ratatouille and especially Eggplant Parm.

Compiled by Dirt Diva

Next month focus will be on our favorite flower standards: marigolds, zinnias, and petunias. Let's bloom on!

Sources:
aces.edu/resources/go/growmore



The Power of Red

Remember the power suits of the 80s? Red is associated with power, used to draw attention and importance to clothing, decor, and the garden.

Gardeners often choose the following red flowers to enhance their gardens because there is nothing quite like a bright red flower. Here are a few easily grown red showstoppers:

- **Geraniums**-known for red umbels (see below). Grow best in sunny locations in moist, well-drained soil.
- **Pentas**-have 5 petals hence the name. Thrive in sun and well-drained soil. Pentas are known to reseed.
- **Zinnias**-Grow well in vegetable and flower beds. Zinnias bloom all season long.
- **Salvia**-bright plumage draws hummingbirds and other pollinators. Salvia grows best in rich, well-drained soil in the sun.
- **Impatiens**-grow in shady locations, are fast growing and are known to reseed.
- **Vinca**-bloom season long into the Fall, growing in full sun to partial shade.

Compiled by Dirt Diva

Source:

Backyard Garden Lover, Serena Manickham, 4/2023



What is "Rewilding"?

The term "rewilding" means restoration of ecosystems and reversal of biodiversity declines by allowing keystone wildlife and natural botanicals to reclaim areas no longer under human management. An example of this movement is removal of lawn grasses like centipede and replacing with native plants which attracts wildlife indigenous to the locale. Photos below illustrate homeowner rewilding. Left illustrates traditional landscape, the right lawn replaced with native plants.

Source: rewilding.org





Editor's Note: Water quality is a topic of importance, especially regarding "forever chemicals." Information and knowledge are the intent here, not panic. Part 1 describes these chemicals and governmental response and Part 2 focuses on impact to our local environment, especially gardeners.

Water, Water Everywhere, But Is It Safe?

Part 1

Those of us of a certain age remember the advent of non-stick pans. It was like the food prep miracle of the decade because it meant no more hard scrubbing. Little did we know that these substances plus many others might have an impact on our lives later.

The substances known as PFAS, which are per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, are a group of man-made chemicals used to make fluoropolymer coatings and products that resist heat, oil, stains, grease, and water. Fluoropolymer coatings can be in a variety of products. These include clothing, furniture, food packaging, heat-resistant non-stick surfaces, insulation of electrical wire, carpet, cosmetics, fabric softeners, and plastics in general. Many PFAS, including common PFAS chemicals perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), are a concern because they:

- do **NOT** break down in the environment, therefore the phrase "**forever chemicals**".
- can move through soils and contaminate drinking water sources.
- build up (called bioaccumulation) in fish and wildlife.

PFAS chemicals, which have been contaminating drinking water since the 1940s and can take up to 1,000 years to break down, have been linked to health issues such as cancer.

The EPA unveiled a new rule in 2024 that includes health safeguards and requires public water systems to monitor and reduce PFAS levels in the drinking water. Water utilities will be required to notify the public if PFAS levels exceed the new standard, which is 4.0 parts per trillion for PFOA and PFOS. The goal is to reduce PFAS exposure to about 100 million people and lessen the potential of chemically induced illness. The EPA also announced \$1 billion in the Investing in America program to assist 56 states and territories in PFAS testing and treatment. Public water systems have until 2027 to respond with testing results.

Compiled by Barbara Boone
Reviewed by Jack Lecroy

Part 2 to follow next newsletter.

Sources:
epa.gov/pfas



Bugs and Hisses

by Neil Milligan

Mosquitos: What good are they? (Those who live in glass houses...)

Directly or indirectly, mosquitos affect the behavior of all species, negatively or positively. In larval and adult form, they are an abundant food source for insect eaters. Several species are confirmed pollinators, including of the Broad-leaf Orchid (*Platanthera obtusata*) in northern wetlands. Aside from being a disease vector of populations, mosquitos also are a driving force in some ecosystems, for example by altering migration and feeding patterns in Arctic Caribou.

Diseases carried by them that can pose health risks to humans include Encephalitis, Malaria, Dengue Fever, Zika Virus, West Nile Virus, Yellow Fever, and Chikungunya – and don't forget canine heart-worm. Most of these diseases are rare with few cases found within the U.S., apart from the West Nile virus. Altered geographic distribution of the diseases in a warmer, wetter climate will likely tax future mosquito control and prevention strategies.

Male mosquitos eat only nectar and fruit juices, they do not bite humans or animals. In addition to nectar, female mosquitos must consume protein to produce eggs, and, depending on the type of mosquito, the female will bite people or animals to get it. Females have receptors that detect carbon dioxide and lactic acid, among other chemicals at distances of 25 to 35 meters. Mosquitos also hunt by sight, detecting host's movement, and by detecting infra-red radiation emitted by warm bodies.

There are natural predators on mosquitos but the Crane Fly or "mosquito hawk" is not one of them. Dragonflies are voracious mosquito predators and Damselflies, their slimmer lookalikes, have the same taste for them. They also feed on mosquito larvae, especially during the aquatic stages of their own life cycle.

Birds "known" for eating the most mosquitos include Purple Martins, Red-Eyed Vireos, Chipping Sparrows, Downy Woodpeckers, Yellow Warblers, Eastern Bluebirds, Eastern Phoebes, Baltimore Orioles, Common Wrens and Nighthawks. Bats are credited with catching hundreds of mosquitos in just one hour in controlled situations, extrapolated to thousands in a night. Bats and birds will more often catch and eat larger prey due to opportunity and the calories gained versus energy expended function. Though these predator species don't rely on them as a substantial part of their diet and they play only a small part in limiting the mosquito population, they are extremely beneficial in many other ways and should be protected and allowed a place in a diverse habitat.

Mosquito larvae thrive in aquatic environments and a permanent body of water supports a greater and varied concentration of natural predators. Tadpoles are mostly herbivorous and compete with mosquito larvae for food sources, so they do have some effect on the mosquito population but the most effective natural predators of mosquitos are fish. Mosquito larvae are eaten by Guppies, Bass, Catfish, Bluegills and even Goldfish. And the most effective species of fish for mosquito control is *Gambusia affinis*, otherwise referred to as the "mosquito fish." These fish aggressively feed on mosquito larvae, thus reducing the surrounding mosquito population. They are considered an effective form of control for properties and locations with bodies of water. Some states provide *Gambusia* hatchlings to landholders free of charge.

Eradicating mosquitos globally is impossible, nor is it a good idea. Of the 3,000 species of mosquito, only around 40 are of concern to human health, about a half-

dozen in the USA's deep south. Here are some measures you can take personally to reduce the local mosquito population.

Depending on the species, adult mosquitos may rest in vegetation, bushes, or other protected shaded areas when not actively seeking a blood meal. Don't rely on adulticide "foggers" to kill them in these retreats as many more beneficial insects will be affected. Instead, trim dense vegetation and keep the grass cut short close to your living space. There are high-tech trapping devices that work with some efficacy but they tend to be expensive and many inadvertently kill non-target species. The most impactful – and sustainable – thing you can do to control mosquitos is to interrupt the breeding cycle before they take wing.

After she obtains a blood meal, the female mosquito lays the eggs directly on or near water and at the base of plants in places that may fill with water. The eggs look like rafts or strings of pinhead-size dots on the surface of still water; when the eggs hatch a mosquito larva or "wiggler" emerges to eat detritus until it pupates. One historic control method floated old shoes soaked in motor oil on impoundments: the sheen across the surface prevented pupa from breathing, but it wasn't a very sound practice. Reservoirs around your yard that collect rainwater will appear as excellent nurseries to Mom Skeeter. Scout your yard for unused buckets, cans, clogged gutters, forgotten toys, pet dishes, tires, wheelbarrows, etc., and empty them or convert them into death traps.

If you keep a suitable container in a convenient location, you can note when eggs are laid and just empty it out and reset the trap. Alternatively, you can spoil the nursery with Bt, *Bacillus thuringiensis*, the most commonly used microbial insecticide in the world. Available in many products, it is sold on the famous instant-gratification website we all frequent under the tradenames Mosquito Bits (for small applications) and Mosquito Dunks (for larger water bodies). The larvae eat the bacteria and die from it though fish, birds and mammals are unaffected, so it is suitable for birdbaths and water features.

You can reduce your exposure to mosquitos by repairing broken screens, wearing protective clothing and repellents, and avoiding outdoor activities when mosquito species are primarily active or whenever disease cases are being reported by local health agencies. Screened rooms and box fans will help to keep the insects away from you. ACES has concise information about various synthetic and natural mosquito repellents, which work by masking the attractant odors we produce.

<https://www.aces.edu/blog/topics/health/methods-to-effectively-protect-you-from-mosquito-bites/>

More Resources:

A paper published in *Journal of Insect Science* compared the effectiveness of commonly available spray-on and wearable repellents to alter mosquito host seeking behavior. Spoiler alert: "The citronella candle had no effect." < <https://doi.org/10.1093/jisesa/iew117> >

The CDC calls the species "the World's Deadliest Animal."

Help For Your Next Scrabble Game

A devoted Scrabble player is always looking for words to populate the Scrabble board to confound opponents and run away with the top score. The following words may do just that. Bonus points because they are gardening terms:

Umbel- a flat-topped or ball-shaped flower cluster in which the stalks of the individual flowers all grow from about the same point on the stem like the ribs of an umbrella. Example: rudbeckia, dill.

Foliar- pertains to leaves. Example: a foliar (leaf) disease such as powdery mildew on leaves.

Indigenous- used to describe plants occurring in a large geographical area.

Example: Eastern Redbud.

Native- species of plants both terrestrial or aquatic that have evolved naturally in a particular region or habitat. Example: native azalea.

Xerophyte- plant adapted to desert conditions. Example: cacti.

Zinnia- blooming plant a member of Asteraceae family. Example: zinnia.

Here's hoping you can use one of these terms to score triple points from multiple directions, especially if you can use 'x' or 'z'.

Compiled by Dirt Diva



From the Greenhouse

Editor's Note: This month "From the Greenhouse" looks at a way to save a little money. This may be a reminder, but we always need a memory jogger now and again.

The Frugal Gardener

Have you priced a bag of quality soil mix lately? Every season it seems more expensive. The following gives good reasons besides saving a few dollars to use a filler in garden beds or containers along with soil.

- Fillers save money since they take up space in raised beds or containers.
- A filler can lighten the container load.
- A filler can add weight if necessary to prevent tipping.
- Fillers offer an opportunity to recycle unneeded items.
- Improved drainage occurs when water is allowed to run through freely.

Materials that can be used as a filler below the soil, compost, and mulch layers: plastic containers, packing materials, crushed cans, and natural materials such as pinecones.

Compiled by Dirt Diva

Source:
Gardening Know How, Mary Ellen Ellis, 4/2023.

Buds2Blooms

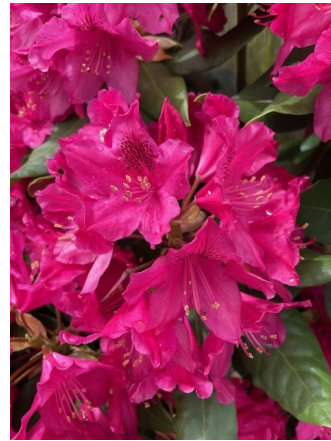
Features Master Gardeners sharing their Spring blooms.



Daylily
Theresa Davidson



Iris
Theresa Davidson



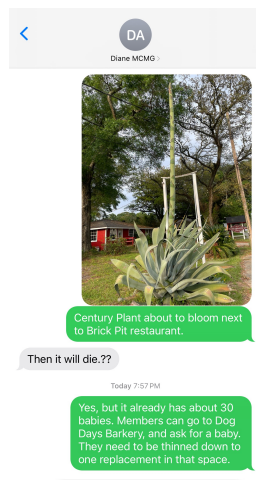
Coleus and Sunpatiens
Barbara Boone

Azaleas in West Virginia in May!
Barbara Boone



Daylilies, Millard, Bromeliads
Cindy Findlay

Echinacea
Mary Townsley



Shrimp Plant
Theresa Davidson

Century Plant
Courtesy of Don Fry



Oxalis
Leslie Maycock



Impatiens
Leslie Maycock



Sweet William
Leslie Maycock



Young Voodoo Lily
Theresa Davidson



Voodoo Lily
Theresa Davidson



Hibiscus
Alice Marty



Hibiscus
Alice Marty

Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities:



June Board of Directors Meeting

Jon Archer Center
Wednesday, June 5, 10:00 am
Carol Williams, 251.367.0473
readingweeder72@hotmail.com
EMG Program Support/Local MGA or AMGA Admin



June General Meeting

Jon Archer Center
OUR Jack LeCroy, Regional Extension Agent, Mobile Co.
DIY Drip Irrigation
June 12, 9:30 am Social time, 10:00 am Meeting
Carol Williams, 251.367.0473
readingweeder72@hotmail.com
EMG Program Support/Local MGA or AMGA Meeting



Global Wellness Day 9:00-2:00

Saturday, June 8
Spanish Plaza, Government St., Downtown Mobile
2 Shifts: 8:00 am - 11:00 am and 11:00 am- 2:30 (Set-up and take-down included)
ACES, Master Gardeners, and Mobile Urban Growers will join forces to man a tent at the Mobile's second annual Global Wellness Day, providing the community with information and resources to encourage living a nature-centric lifestyle. Volunteers will share swag, handouts, and answer questions. The theme is Magenta Nature. Please embrace the theme with clothing and decorations. Visit : <https://www.globalwellnessday.org/magentanature/>
Contact: Carol Dorsey, 251-209-3483, bcdorsey63@gmail.com;
Jack LeCroy, Diane Anthony, 251-574-8445, jda0002@aces.edu;
Theresa Davidson, 251-510-4961, theresadavidson80@gmail.com
Community Partner Event

Market in the Park

Cathedral Square, Downtown Mobile, 300 Conti St.
Man the Master Gardener Tent



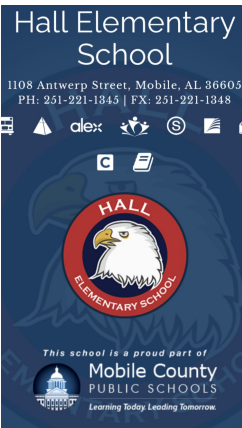
Saturdays: 6/1, 6/8, 6/15, 6/22, 6/29, 7/6
 Bob Howard, 251-423-2605, rhoward51@gmail.com
Community Event/Market in the Park



Marketplace at Mobile Botanical Gardens

Marketplace = Shopping Great Plants for our Gulf Coast Gardens
 Checkers, Sales, Wagon Pullers
 Saturday mornings through May, 9:00-11:00
 Theresa Davidson, 251-510-4961
 theresadavidson80@gmail.com
Community Partner Event/MBG

MAY 25: LAST MP OF THE SEASON, 50% OFF!!



Garden-themed Summer Literacy Camp at George Hall Elementary School

108 Antwerp St, Mobile, AL 36605
 June 3-25, 8:30-10:30 on Mondays and /or Tuesdays
 Carol Dorsey would like a few volunteers to help with outdoor garden activities at this school. The children will plant and water in six already established raised beds and a few barrel planters. You will be using an established curriculum developed for Taylor Park After School and Summer Children's Programming. The sessions will be led by Pat Hall of Mobile Urban Growers on Monday and Carol Dorsey, MCMG and MUG, on Tuesday. Basically it is enjoying, paying attention to, and helping the children in two groups of about 12 in two sessions each day, 9:00 -9:45 then 9:45-10:30.
 Contact: Carol Dorsey, 251-209-3483, bcdorsey63@gmail.com.
Growing Food Plants/Teaching Youth

Ongoing Volunteer Opportunities:



Master Gardener Helpline Tuesday - Friday

Please call Diane Anthony to schedule these shifts.
 Morning shift 8:30 - 12:00
 Afternoon shift 12:00 - 3:30
 Cindy Findlay, 251.786.4245, cndyfindly@att.net
Create & Share Info w/Public/Helpline

Master Gardener Statewide Helpline Mondays

Please commit to Mondays on the Statewide Helpline.
 Sign up online under 'Helpline Calendar'.
 Morning Shift: 8:30 -12:00

Dec	AM Counties	AM Vol
Sat	Dec 02	
Sun	Dec 03	
Mon	Dec 04	Lydia Criswell volunteer All
Sat	Dec 09	
Sun	Dec 10	
Mon	Dec 11	Lydia Criswell volunteer All

Afternoon Shift - 12:00- 3:30.
Cindy Findlay, 251.786.4245, cndyfindly@att.net
Create & Share Info w/ Public/ Helpline



Prepare Snacks for MG General Meetings:
Jon Archer Center
Lydia Criswell, 251.610.5543, criswells2@mchsi.com
EMG Program Support/Local MGA or AMGA Meeting
(Add your round trip drive time to the meeting time.)



Mobile Japanese Garden
700 Forest Hill Drive
Volunteer your MG skills any morning/afternoon.
Text Don to coordinate!
Don Fry, 251.422.8466, don.fry@comcast.net,
mobilejapanesegarden.com
Growing Ornamental Plants/Garden



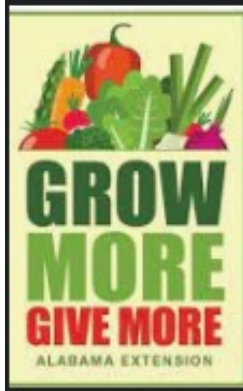
Community Gardens
Grow More Give More with Mobile Urban Growers:
mobileurbangrowers.org
Community gardens in Midtown, Downtown, + other neighborhoods, school sites. Search FB "Mobile Urban Growers" and Community Gardens
Carol Dorsey, 251.209.3483, bcdorsey63@gmail.com
mobileurbangrowers@gmail.com
Growing Food Plants/Garden



Mobile Medical Museum
Robert Thrower Medicinal Garden
Curating and maintaining everchanging collection + gardening with Full Life Ahead, serving adults with intellectual disabilities, usually on Wednesdays
1664 Springhill Avenue
Carol Dorsey, 251.209.3483, bcdorsey63@gmail.com
Growing Food Plants/Therapeutic Horticulture

Grow More Give More

Statewide Master Gardeners initiative to encourage food gardening and sharing produce
2 Ambassadors needed: attend meetings, target areas for grant development/grant funds fulfillment
Carol Dorsey, 251.209.3483, bcdorsey63@gmail.com



Speaker's Bureau

*Alice Marty, 251-709-1125, amarty@comcast.net
*Barbara Boone, 251-680-8263, boonebama@live.com
Create & Share Info w/ Public/ Creating Educ. Materials

**Speaking Opportunities Resume in the Fall*



Office Manager/Phone Lines/MG Helpline
Cindy Findlay, 251.786.4245, cndyfindly@att.net



DREAM GARDEN:
Join a Garden Room (**See below**)
Jon Archer Center
Marsha Stolz, 251.689.5993, marshastolz@msn.com
Contact Marsha **or** a Garden Leader to volunteer and work as needed.

Growing Ornamental Plants/Garden OR Growing Food Plants/Garden

The Gardens:

Grandma's Pass Along Garden

Catherine Moates, 251.366.6163, memo366@att.net
Olivia Reinhaus, 251.458.7383, omcvea@gmail.com

Native Garden

Open

Shade Garden

Bob Howard, 251.423.3108, rhoward51@gmail.com

Vegetable Garden

Marsha Stolz, 251.689.5993, marshastolz@msn.com
Mary Ann Days, 251.391.5806, masdays@comcast.net

Herb Garden

Mary Ann Days, 251.391.5806, masdays@comcast.net

Cottage Garden & Formal Garden

Glenda Eady, 251.342.4248, jerryeady2@comcast.net

Building Garden

Marsha Stolz, 251.689.5993, marshastolz@msn.com

CEU Opportunities:



HORTICULTURE & HOME GROUNDS

**Next webinar is
May 22**

Get Outside with Alabama Smart Yards Webinar Series

Wednesdays at 1:00 PM

www.aces.edu/go/asywebinars

May 15, 2024:

Cover Crops for Home Gardeners

Carole Borowski, Alabama Extension
Advanced Master Gardener



First Friday at the Gardens

(First Friday will return in the Fall.)

You may like these organizations:



Orchid Society Meeting

Mobile Japanese Garden meeting room, 700 Forest Hill
4th Sunday of the month (except June & Dec), 2:00

NEXT MEETING: No meeting in June

Lynn Coleman, 251.622.3939, lynncolman411@gmail



Gulf Coast Herb Society

Mobile Botanical Gardens 4th Tues. of the month,
(except July and Nov.), 5:30 pm

NEXT MEETING: June 25

Beth Poates, 251.342.6508, poates57@hotmail.com

CEU for presentation



K Sawada Camellia Club

Most meetings at Mobile Botanical Gardens

1st Sunday of month: Nov-March, 2:00 pm

Kenny Helton, 251.459.5555, kehelton@comcast.net

CEU for presentation



Camellia Club of Mobile

Jon Archer Center

2nd Sun of the month: Sept. 2023- April 2024, 2:00 pm

mobilecamellia.org, Camellia Club of Mobile FB Group

CEU for presentation

Clarke Root Gardens

~2,000 Waterfront Camellias in Mobile, AL~



Becky Root

Owner/Camellia Enthusiast

251.753.0348

byroot@yahoo.com

RSVP for free tours on most Sundays
in January, February & March at 2pm



**Azalea City Bonsai Society in Mobile,
AL**

For more information, search on Facebook.



Ikebana Mobile, AI - Friendship through Flowers

1.2K likes • 1.3K followers

For more information, search on Facebook.

MOBILE BOTANICAL GARDENS

Come Here To Grow!



Theresa's top reasons to join the Gardens:

1. **DISCOUNTS** on events, classes, plants, and the Artful Gift Shop!
2. First Friday Lectures--**free** (Senior rate is \$45 per year. Senior nonmembers pay the daily admission rate of \$6 to attend the First Friday lectures. Join and save \$27 a year! And, get all the benefits of membership!)
3. The **BEST** weekly newsletter-know **EVERYTHING** that's happening at the Gardens
4. Access to the Gate Code to visit the Gardens *before* and *after* regular hours
5. Reciprocal special admission at 360+ gardens in the US- I've used it in Atlanta and New York City.

Mark your calendars for these SPECIAL EVENTS:

Global Wellness Day

Man the Master Gardener Tent at Mobile's second annual celebration of Global Wellness Day

June 8, 9:00 am-2:00 pm

Spanish Plaza in Downtown Mobile, 401 Government St.

Jack LeCroy, Diane Anthony: 251-574-8445, jda0002@aces.edu

www.globalwellnessday.org

**THE SCIENCE BEHIND
MONARCH BUTTERFLY**

**The Science of Migration and
Migratory Garden.**
May 31, 9:00am - 11:00am
Jon Archer Agricultural Center
 1070 Schillinger Road North, Mobile, 36608

This workshop participants will learn the different research involving Monarch migration, the influence of milkweed in their development and how to build migratory gardens.

**REGISTER
ONLINE**

<https://aub.ie/Monarch>
Cost: \$10

For more information, please contact 251-574-8445.

extension
 ALABAMA A&M & AUBURN UNIVERSITIES
 ACES.EDU

The Alabama Cooperative Extension System (Alabama A&M University and Auburn University) is an equal opportunity educator, employer, and provider. If you need a reasonable accommodation or language access services, contact Carmen Flomini at 251-395-0249 by May 10, 2024

Marion Drummond Lecture Series at MBG

What: A lecture series honoring Marion Drummond (former Director of MBG) and Celebrating the 50th Anniversary year of Mobile Botanical Gardens

Cost: \$35 per event (MBG Members receive discount) or

Season Tickets: \$150 for the series include preferred seating and invitation to Coffee & Pastries with the Presenter.

FINAL LECTURE OF THE SERIES:

Marianne Willburn, opinion columnist for the American Horticultural Society's The American Gardener

Keep Calm and Garden On: Gardening in the Midst of Climate Change

Saturday, June 22, 2024

9:00am – 2:00pm

How can we best adapt to what is, right now, and make our gardens more resilient throughout the seasons? The day includes seminar and lunch.

Did You Know?

Don't forget to shop The Artful Gift Shop at Mobile Botanical Gardens and look for

the work of two of our Master Gardeners: Susan Hilton, Potter, and Sharon Claseman, Jewelry Designer.



Mission Statement

The Alabama Master Gardener Volunteer Program is an educational outreach program provided and administered by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System.

The Alabama Cooperative Extension System (Alabama A & M University and Auburn University) is an equal opportunity and employer. www.aces.edu



