

A Bit of Dirt

Volume 10, Issue 1

Spring, 2002

The Newsletter of the Gwinnett Master Gardeners



Presidents Corner



One of our very own has been honored
by the I.C.P.S.
with her very own carnivorous plant
named in her behalf.

The plant's name is Sarracenia "Dolores Wyland,"
which is a mix of psittacina x rubrawherryi.

If you would like more information, you can find this in the
International Carnivorous Plant Society Magazine.

Congratulations Dolores, YOU MAKE US PROUD!

Sharon Matthews



Say hello to the first real spring in four years! It's a great time to be a Master Gardener. Well, we hit the ground running this year with the Master Gardener Winter Conference. We had an army of volunteers including many spouses. The conference was a great success according to all the wonderful e-mails. Immediately following the conference, we did our share hosting the 2002 Master Gardener training. We had many wonderful compliments that I would like to pass on to all who volunteered in regards to the 2002 Master Gardener class. What a great group of new interns! We are very fortunate to have these people join our group. Our Board has many new and wonderful ideas for this year and will keep you all well informed, so be sure to check your e-mail. Anyone without e-mail will be notified by telephone.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you for your support and concern during these past six weeks. It is an adjustment coming back after a stroke, but I'm working at it full-time. I would also like to thank Michele Templeton for all she has done especially while carrying a double load. We best express our appreciation by continuing to support her in everything she does.

Well, guys get out there and enjoy your gardens and I'll see you at the next meeting.

Sincerely,
Sharon C Matthews

Notice from the Editor

Just wish to let everyone know that I have enjoyed publishing ABOD but recent health issues and personal concerns are taking their toll. The January issue of ABOD was actually early, being mailed in December of 2001. The April issue as you are aware is very late. I am extremely grateful to my support staff for without them ABOD would not have continued to be a successful newsletter. Best wishes to the new publisher.

Marlene Gillman



Garden Club Meetings

Georgia Perennial Plant Association
Fellowship Hall
Peachtree Christian Church
1580 Peachtree Street Atlanta, GA

August 15th 7:30 P.M.

Lecture: Lessons Learned: Indispensable Plants for My Southern Garden

GPPA states that "Plantsman, John Elsey, is Director of Horticulture for Klemh's Song Sparrow Nursery and held the same position at Wayside Nursery for 20 years. He will reflect on the evolution of his own South Carolina garden and his changing interest in plants and their maintenance."



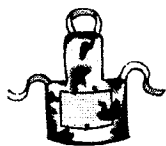
Medicinal Plants: A number of plants have curious medicinal properties. Roses, for example, can cause severe headaches; lawn grasses have been known to produce an acute form of melancholy, and weeds may bring on muscular complaints.



**All Natural
Organic Earthworm Casings**
53 qt. Bag \$5.50

HARRIETT CHANEY

Cell: 404-290-1122 or Pager: 404-871-6959



MG Aprons

Wishing that you could purchase one of those nice aprons that the Master Gardeners wore during the plant sale in April? Now is your chance. They are available in khaki and burgundy, and have nice, roomy pockets. These aprons are embellished with the Master Gardener Logo on the front. Aprons sell for \$15.00. That is a \$4.00 profit for each apron.

Contact Bobbie Higginbotham at 770-972-8588 if you are interested in making a purchase.



From the Desk of Our Vice-President



2002 - The Year of the Rose ... So it only seemed natural that we start the year off by having Consulting Rosarian and Gwinnett County Rose Society's President, Bobbie Reed, for our first speaker.

In March we held our 2nd annual auction and had everything under the sun. Glen Armstrong served as our auctioneer, squeezed every possible cent out of us and everyone went home laden down with new treasures. We purchased \$485.75 of valuable "stuff". This amount is down from the enthusiastic \$610 the previous year.

Our guest speaker in April was Extension Agent Mark Zeigler who taught us some tricks on "Tree I.D.". A fun quiz of was followed by hints to help with actual identification. There are some good handouts in the Extension Office from both the rose and the tree programs.

With the help of President Sharon Matthews and her vast network of contacts, we've lined up a diverse group of speakers to educate and entertain you this year.

June - Katharine Litton's program on "Rhododendrons and Cold Hardy Azaleas".

July - Frank and Gaye Comtois of the Atlanta Koi Club will talk about "Koi and Ponds".

A number of day trips (week days and Saturdays) are in the planning stages and will be announced when they are finalized. I'd also love to have some members open their gardens for a tour, so please contact me if you'd be willing to do this.

I'm delighted to serve as this year's Vice-President. My goal is that you enjoy the programs, participate as much and whenever possible, and most importantly, learn something that you can use in your garden or that can help with your volunteer work.

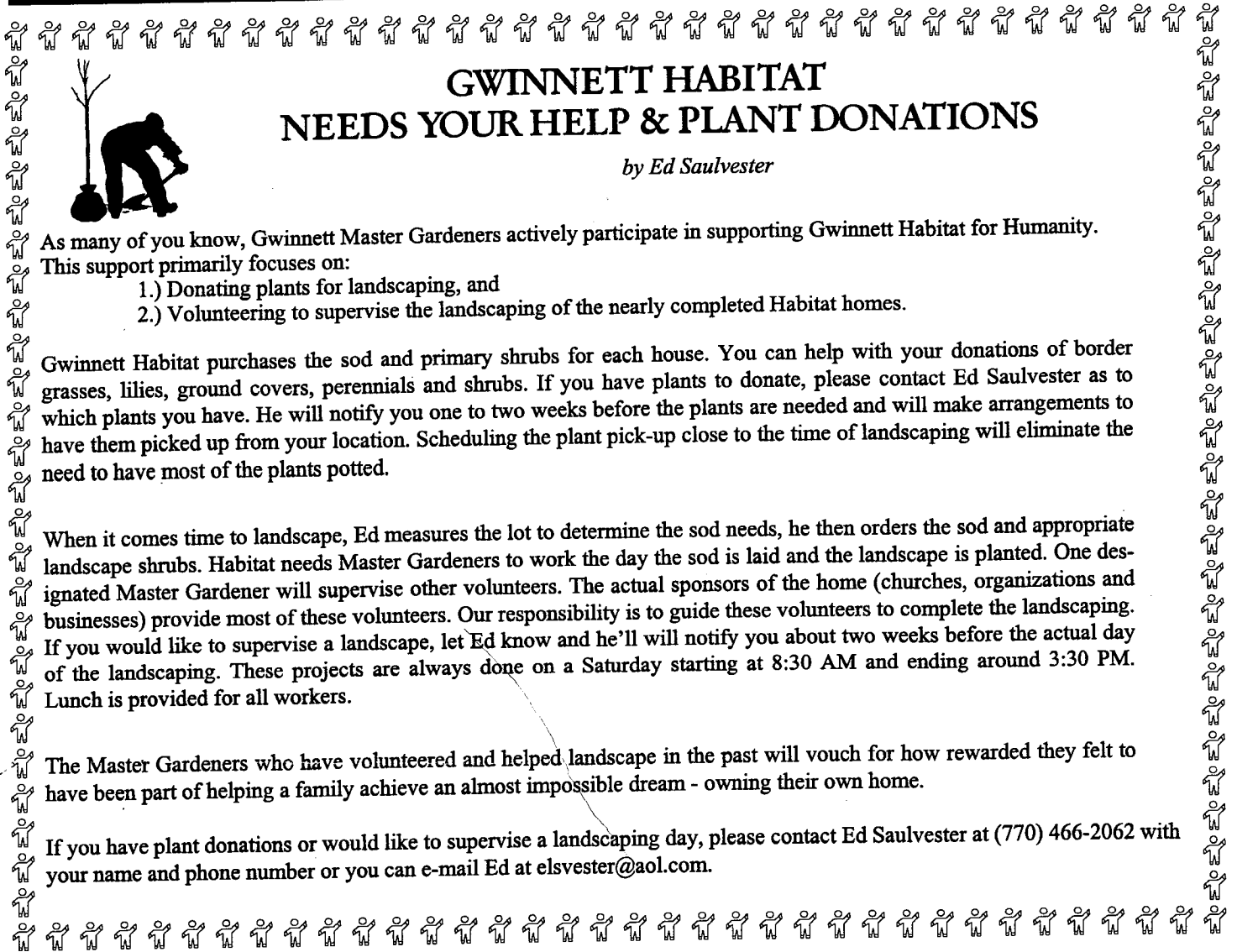
Michele Templeton

Heartfelt Appreciation

Marlene and her children wish to express their gratitude to all who sent cards, food, attended the funeral, visited Marlene's home, or otherwise expressed their condolences for the passing of her husband, D. Cecil Gillman. Your support continues to be very welcome.

Marlene also wishes to thank all the Master Gardeners who arrived early on the morning of May 18th to tackle the jungle she calls home. All efforts are greatly appreciated. You did a fantastic job!!! She continues to be amazed at the progress that was made.

Marlene Gillman



GWINNETT HABITAT NEEDS YOUR HELP & PLANT DONATIONS

by Ed Saulvester

As many of you know, Gwinnett Master Gardeners actively participate in supporting Gwinnett Habitat for Humanity. This support primarily focuses on:

- 1.) Donating plants for landscaping, and
- 2.) Volunteering to supervise the landscaping of the nearly completed Habitat homes.

Gwinnett Habitat purchases the sod and primary shrubs for each house. You can help with your donations of border grasses, lilies, ground covers, perennials and shrubs. If you have plants to donate, please contact Ed Saulvester as to which plants you have. He will notify you one to two weeks before the plants are needed and will make arrangements to have them picked up from your location. Scheduling the plant pick-up close to the time of landscaping will eliminate the need to have most of the plants potted.

When it comes time to landscape, Ed measures the lot to determine the sod needs, he then orders the sod and appropriate landscape shrubs. Habitat needs Master Gardeners to work the day the sod is laid and the landscape is planted. One designated Master Gardener will supervise other volunteers. The actual sponsors of the home (churches, organizations and businesses) provide most of these volunteers. Our responsibility is to guide these volunteers to complete the landscaping. If you would like to supervise a landscape, let Ed know and he'll will notify you about two weeks before the actual day of the landscaping. These projects are always done on a Saturday starting at 8:30 AM and ending around 3:30 PM. Lunch is provided for all workers.

The Master Gardeners who have volunteered and helped landscape in the past will vouch for how rewarded they felt to have been part of helping a family achieve an almost impossible dream - owning their own home.

If you have plant donations or would like to supervise a landscaping day, please contact Ed Saulvester at (770) 466-2062 with your name and phone number or you can e-mail Ed at elsvester@aol.com.

Georgia Native Plant Society Meeting

Tuesday, July 9, 2002, 7:30 P.M.
Place: Peachtree Presbyterian Church
3434 Roswell Road, Atlanta GA

Speaker: There will be a panel of plant experts including:
Walter Reeves, horticulture expert and media host
Tricia Neal, biologist, Fernbank Science Center
Dr. James Spotts, soil scientist

Lecture: How to Create Healthy Soil
Phone: 770-343-6000
www.gnps.org



www.gwinnettextension.org

The Horticultural and Environmental Sciences portion of the Gwinnett County Website has now joined the 4-H pages online. This will hopefully provide another means to help get information to the residents of Gwinnett County.

You can visit the website at:
www.gwinnettextension.org.

Click on the plant logo for the horticultural information. I'm sure you will find a lot of helpful information through the info tree on the site. As the site continues to develop, we will be adding more topics to this section. We are well on our way to having the best county office site in the state.

Please be sure to pass this web address along to your contacts.

Mark Zeigler, Gwinnett County Agent

Gwinnett Master Gardener Annual Volunteer Totals



Volunteer hours: 6,036
Miles traveled: 28480
Plant clinics or fairs: 56
Telephone contacts: 5,195
Community or Demonstration Gardens: 198



The Language of Flowers

submitted by Michele Templeton

For centuries, the language of flowers has been used to express specific emotions, feelings or thoughts to one another. I found this version in a library book entitled "Everything Flowers - Quilts from the Garden" by Jean and Valori Wells and thought you'd enjoy finding out the meaning of some of your flowers.

Anemone - forsaken
Bachelor's Button - celibacy
Bluebell - constancy
Buttercup - childhood
Chamomile - energy in adversity
Carnation, pink - woman's love
Chrysanthemum - cheerfulness
Columbine - resolution
Daffodil - regards
Daisy - innocence
Forget-me-not - true love
Foxglove - insincerity
French Marigold - jealousy
Gardenia - peace
Geranium, pink - partiality
Hibiscus - delicate beauty
Hollyhock - female ambition
Honeysuckle - rustic beauty
Hydrangea - boastfulness
Iris - I have a message for you
Ivy - friendship
Jasmine, yellow - grace & elegance
Larkspur - brightness
Lavender - distrust
Lilac - purity, modesty
Lily-of-the-valley - return of happiness

Magnolia - love of nature
Mint - virtue
Myrtle - love
Narcissus - self-interest, egotism
Pansy - thinking of you
Peony - anger
Peppermint - cordiality
Phlox - agreement
Poppy, red - consolation
Rhododendron - danger
Rambler Rose - only you deserve my love
Rose, white - I am worthy of you
Rose, yellow - departure of love
Rosebud, red - you are young and beautiful
Rosebud, white - a heart ignorant of love
Sage - domestic virtue
Snapdragon - presumption
Sunflower - haughtiness
Tulip, red - declaration of love
Tulip, yellow - hopeless love
Verbena - enchantment
Violet, blue - faithfulness
Violet, white - modesty
Water Lily - purity of heart
Wisteria - regret
Yarrow - solace
Zinnia - thought of friends



MICHELE'S SAUSAGE-WONTON THINGAMADOOEY'S

Breakfast Sausage (mild or hot) 1 lb., cooked and drained
 Wonton Wrappers, 1 pkg. ***
 Garlic Salt, if desired
 Cream Cheese, softened (4 oz. pkg.)



Mix first 3 ingredients together. Place a small ball of the sausage mixture in the center of a wonton and pinch the wonton together (so it looks like a hobo's packet that was tied on a stick and carried over their shoulder). Place it in an un-greased mini-muffin tin and continue until the tin is full.

*** Hint - The unprepared wonton wrappers tend to dry out if left exposed to the air, so keep them covered until ready to assemble. If it's warm in the kitchen, put them back in the refrigerator or they'll become too soft and be difficult to work. ***

Bake at 350° for about 10 minutes. Carefully remove from the muffin tin and serve.

Will the Real Wild Carrot Please Stand Up?

By Shannon Pable

As many of you have probably figured out by now, I am an edible wild plant enthusiast. During the wild edible classes that I have attended, students have often inquired about Queen Anne's Lace (aka Wild Carrot, *Daucus carota*) and its deadly poisonous look-a-likes. Queen Anne's lace has a wonderful tasty root, when harvested at the end of its first year. Also, note that Queen Anne's Lace is considered to be quite an exotic invasive plant...so don't worry about harvesting too much!! It is sooooo important to be absolutely, positively sure on your plant identification when gathering in the wild. Being that these wild carrot look-a-likes are some of the most deadly plants in our area, I think it is extremely important to cover this topic.

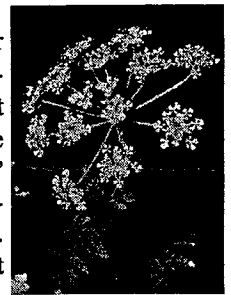


The deadly plants I am speaking of are *Cicuta maculata* (Water Hemlock) and *Conium maculata* (Poison Hemlock). All of these plants are in the Parsley family, Apiaceae (Umbelliferae). There are many other wonderful edible plants in this family such as Angelica, Caraway, Sweet Cicely, and Parsnip to name a few. It would be a shame to avoid this family all-together because of lack of knowledge of the poisonous ones.

Conium maculata (Poison Hemlock - pictures on left) is more often mistaken for Queen Anne's Lace (*Daucus carota*), than *Cicuta maculata* (Water Hemlock-pictures on right). Water Hemlock is most often mistaken for Angelica (*Angelica Autropurea*).



To differentiate between Poison Hemlock and Queen Anne's Lace, I look for small bristly hairs on the stem of the Queen Anne's Lace. Poison Hemlock is hairless (this is what I look for since the Queen Anne's Lace is harvested in its first year). Also, the Poison Hemlock usually has a spotted stem. The umbels of the Queen Anne's Lace is flat and become concave in fruit to form a "bird's nest" look. The umbels of the Poison Hemlock are more roundish on top. Poison Hemlock is found in waste places, occasionally riverbanks. Both are biennial plants. The Queen Anne's Lace should be collected at the end of its first year (before it flowers in the 2nd year), thus making it harder to identify!!!

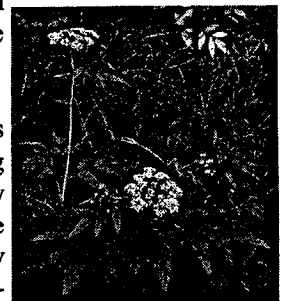


The Water Hemlock has leaflets that are lance-shaped with numerous teeth compound and twice to thrice compound (unlike the Queen Anne's Lace which has the "parsley-like" leaves). The Water Hemlock has flat umbels (unlike Angelica which has more of a roundish umbel) with a mottled (purple) stem. The stem has a chambered pith with several fleshy tuber-like roots. The tuber (to me) of the Water Hemlock smells like carrot with a really strong pungent curry-like smell. Both Angelica and Water Hemlock grow in very wet places. This is a biennial or perennial plant.



The Water Hemlock contains the poison Cicutoxin. The Poison Hemlock contains the poison Coniine. Both are quite deadly; the cicutoxin being the most deadly. One mouthful can be deadly.

For your first time harvesting, I would be sure to have a guide who is a plant ID expert. I would also highly recommend the following books to use for identification: Newcomb's Wildflower Guide by Lawrence Newcomb, Peterson Field Guide for Edible Plants by Lee Allen Peterson and Edible Wild Plants A North American Guide by Elias and Dykeman. Also the following are links to photos and drawings of the *Cicuta maculata* (Water Hemlock) & *Conium maculata*



(Poison Hemlock)

Good photos, description, details on poison: <http://www.ansci.cornell.edu/plants/alphalist.html>
 Good photos of plants including pith: <http://www.psu.missouri.edu/fishe1/waterhemlock.htm>
 Good photo and description of plant: <http://www.caf.wvu.edu/~forage/library/poisonous/page17.htm>
 Pen and ink drawing/ shows seeds, pith, flower: http://www.ag.uiuc.edu/~vista/html_pubs/WEEDS/130.html

Though some of the plants are poisonous, they are very beautiful in their own right.

Sweetwater Middle School's Science Project

The Effect of pH Levels on Hydrangea Blooms

By Wanda Wilburn

The Extension Service contacted me to inquire if I was interested in working with Sweetwater Middle School on a science project. I contacted Mrs. Linda Chapman, a teacher at the school and was advised that her 8th grade Science class (gifted program) wished to plant two hydrangeas and produce a result of one blooming blue and one blooming pink by adjusting the pH level of the soil.



I did some research and met with Mrs. Chapman a few days later. We selected two macrophylla, known as mopheads, for the science project. On December 7th two holes, 36" in diameter by 18" deep, were dug in preparation for planting the hydrangeas. All the loose soil was removed from the hole. A mixture of 1/3 professional planting mix and 2/3 soil was used to fill the hole. A small portion of the soil was removed from four different points in the soil and sent to the Extension Service Office for testing the pH level of each hole. The pH for hole #1 (designated the blue hole) was 5.20 and the pH for hole #2 (designated the pink hole) was 5.50.

On January 10th, 2002, the hydrangeas were planted. One tablespoon of hydrated lime mixed with a gallon of water was added to the pink hole to bring up the pH reading. The soil will be re-tested for pH levels in approximately 60 days. The Horticulture Solution Series website indicates that the target pH level for blue blooms should be between 4.5 and 5.5 while the pH for the pink blooms should be between 6.5 and 7.5.

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Wanda learned from Sara Arnold at the Female Seminary that she was nominated along with Donna Marks for a Public Service Award for their volunteer work planting pansies at the Seminary and making the window floral arrangements for the Victorian Feast.

Good work ladies!

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Containers Make Growing Easier

By Gwinnett County Extension Agent, Robert Brannen



and

it is at its best.

Gardens don't have to be in the ground. Almost any plant can be grown in a container if you provide the right growing conditions. Imagine a patio with dozens of your favorite plants that you can rearrange whenever you choose. Flowers and

veggyes can be mixed and matched and moved to take advantage of sunlight, water or just to highlight each plant when it is at its best.

Choosing a Container: Generally, plants can be grown in anything that will hold soil and allow proper drainage. Some of the most traditionally used containers include clay or plastic pots, wire baskets lined with sphagnum moss, concrete planters, whiskey barrels, 5-gallon buckets and bushel baskets. Don't limit yourself to traditional planters when it comes to choosing a container. Be creative! Choosing a container that fits the look you are trying to create is half the fun of container gardening. Containers can be window boxes, wooden crates, tires, brick structures, garbage bags filled with growing medium (called a sausage garden) or your favorite old boot!

Tips for Selecting Containers:

- 1.) The container must have holes for adequate drainage. Heavy potting soils hold lots of moisture and need to drain well.
- 2.) The container must be large enough to hold the minimum amount of soil required for mature plants to grow to their normal size.
- 3.) The type of container used depends on the location and the plants selected. High impact areas of the landscape call for attractive containers, while a tomato plant in the back of your garden will do just fine in an old bushel basket.
- 4.) You can coordinate container color with plant materials. Containers can be painted to create a different look or to create a cooler surface that will reflect heat.
- 5.) Consider that you may want to move the container to different locations. If so, keep in mind the weight factor. Styrofoam peanuts or aluminum cans can be used in the bottom of the container rather than filling it fully with heavy rocks and soil mix.



Two Types of Fire Ants Now Thrive in Georgia

By Sharon Omahen, Georgia Agricultural Experiment Stations

Red imported fire ants aren't the only fire ants causing havoc across Georgia. Now they've got company. A new hybrid fire ant, a cross between the red and the black imported fire ant, can now be found across northern Georgia. Georgia's northern counties were free of fire ants until 1985 when the county Extension agent in Rome, Ga. reported finding fire ants in his county. Researchers first thought these were black imported fire ants that had traveled from northern Mississippi where they thrive. "We collected a sample of those ants and took them to the (U.S. Department of Agriculture) laboratory in Gainesville, Fla., to be identified," said Wayne Gardner, an entomologist with the University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences.

They Look Alike

"At first they thought the ants were red imported fire ants," Gardner said. "But after a chemical analysis, they discovered they were actually this new hybrid." To the untrained eye, the ants look very much alike. They're so similar, in fact, that scientists have to use laboratory techniques to tell them apart. "The hybrids are almost totally black, so they look more like the black imported fire ants," Gardner said. "But the soil in the area actually dictates the color of the ants. In sandy soils they look lighter, and in clay soils they look darker." UGA entomologists have compared the hybrid and the red imported fire ant and found they're tolerant to the same temperatures. "They both survive the same length of time in cold temperatures, and they can both be controlled by the same pesticides," Gardner said. So why do the black ants seem to survive in the colder areas of the state?



USDA Photo/Scott Bauer

How Are They Different?

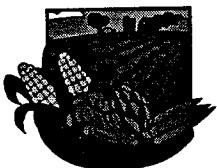
"Sharp changes in temperature really tell a tale on fire ants," said Gardner. "The hybrid forms may have adapted some sort of behavior that allows them to survive when the temperature drops. Or they may travel further underground than the red ants. We just don't know yet." UGA entomologists are continuing to study the ants' differences and similarities. This summer they plan to study the effectiveness of biological control methods on the hybrid fire ant. "We have released a parasite in south Georgia to fight the red imported fire ants, and we know it works," Gardner said. "Now we plan to release a new parasite against the hybrid and see how effective it is." Gardner's research coordinator, Stan Diffie, has collected fire ants across the state and had them analyzed. "Prior to 1980, Interstate 20 was thought to be the northernmost boundary for fire ants in Georgia," Gardner said. "Then fire ants began to appear in areas north of I-20."

Georgia is now home to two types of fire ants: red and black imported fire ants.

All Georgia Counties Infested

UGA entomologists' surveys show that the hybrid fire ant really invaded the state from Alabama. They moved into the northwestern part of Georgia. Now all 159 Georgia counties report fire ant infestations. "Their invasion certainly helped the fire ant to cover our entire state very rapidly," Gardner said. "We have found that Interstate 85 serves as a kind of imaginary boundary between the hybrid and the red imported fire ant. South of I-85, all the ants are red, and north and west of I-85, all the ants are hybrid ants." So which one's worse, the hybrids or the reds? "Both forms are bothersome, but, so far, the black is restricted in its range, and the red is far more aggressive," Gardner said. "But to homeowners, it really doesn't matter. They just want them all dead."

Once again the Extension Service will be collecting your extra vegetables for the hungry in our community. The Extension Service will be calling this project, GIVE (Garden Vegetable Exchange). Be as generous as you can. The Latin American Association was extremely appreciative of the many vegetables that found their way into the Extension Service office. Mr. Brendan Brennan picks up the produce within minutes of receiving a call from Kathy or Marlene. Your produce is then delivered in fresh condition to those in need. Our thanks to the thoughtful Master Gardeners who reliably brought their extra veggies for this cause.





On May 18th, Master Gardeners arrived early in the morning to rejuvenate the trees and shrubs on Marlene Gillman's property. They did a splendid job!



Master Gardeners sold over \$2040 in plants and donated the remainder to Habitat for Humanity. Terrific job, MG

GWINNETT COUNTY FAIR

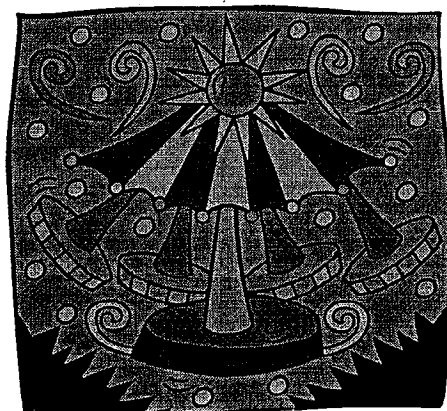


Volunteers Needed

Each year the Gwinnett County Extension Service is heavily involved with the Gwinnett County Fair.

Volunteers are needed to answer phones at the office during this busy time. We will be short-handed in the office during the fair and all volunteers will be greatly appreciated.

Also, the 4-H Department will be needing volunteers to assist them with the Petting Zoo. Other opportunities may be available.



Call Marlene or Kathy for more information for phone volunteering. Call Janice for Petting Zoo volunteering.

678-377-4010

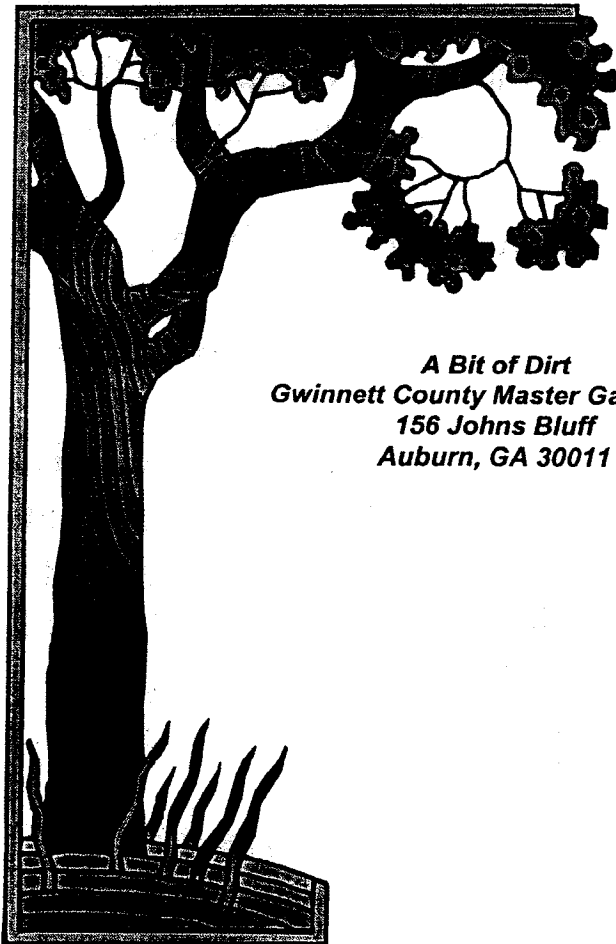
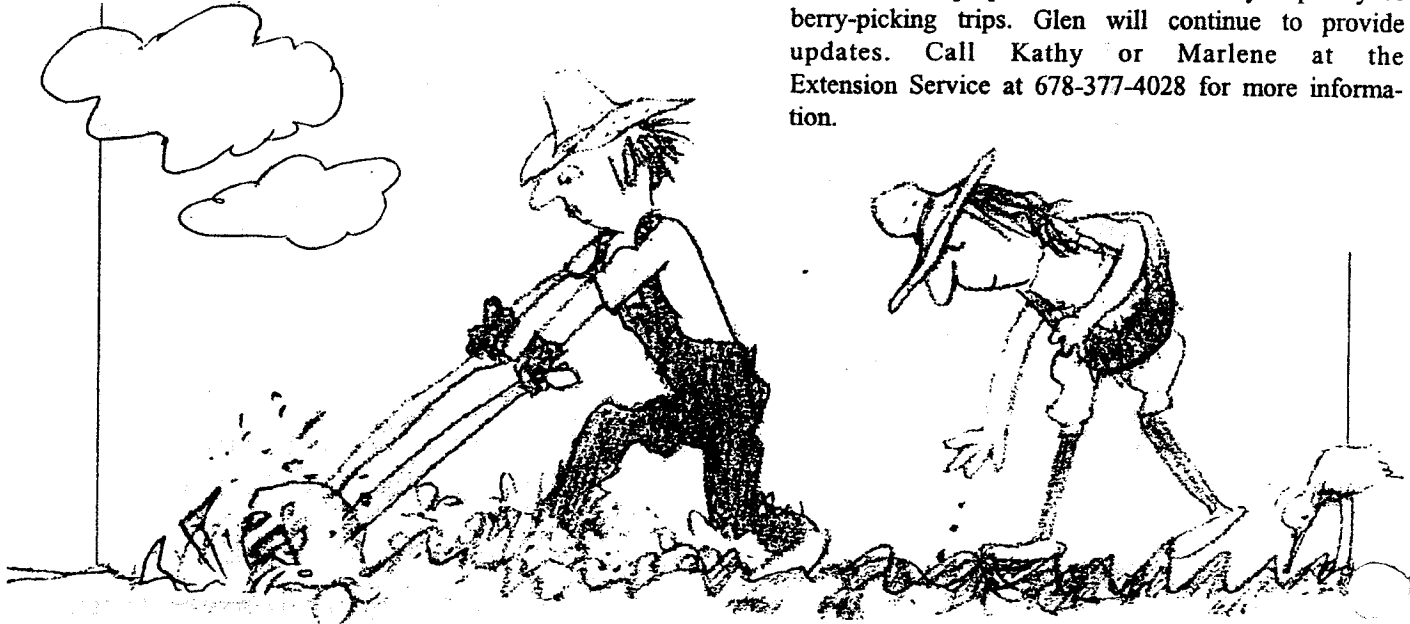
Be the First to Know...

If you are not currently on our ListServe, you may wish to register by calling the Extension Service. Information is often related through the ListServe that may not be available as quickly through other means. If you are having problems receiving these bulletins, call Mark Zeigler at the Extension Service. Mark will be able to help you resolve this problem.

The Blueberry Patch at the Collins Hill Site

On June 20th, Glen Armstrong called to report he had just picked 2 quarts of early blueberries at the Collins Hill site. This is about 5% of the potential crop. He predicts 3 weeks until the remaining 95% will be ready.

Remember to prepare for insects when you plan your berry-picking trips. Glen will continue to provide updates. Call Kathy or Marlene at the Extension Service at 678-377-4028 for more information.



**A Bit of Dirt
Gwinnett County Master Gardeners
156 Johns Bluff
Auburn, GA 30011**