

◆ A Bit of Dirt ◆

Volume 8 Issue 2

Summer 2000

The Newsletter of the
Gwinnett Master Gardeners



A Bit of Dirt is published quarterly. The Editor is Gail Martin. If you have news, or an article you would like to have published, please call me at 770-381-2513 or email me at GailTMartin@compuserve.com



A perfect summer day is when the sun is shining, the breeze is blowing, the birds are singing, and the lawn mower is broken.

James Dent

Do what we can, summer will have its flies.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Summer



Future Meetings

Thursday, June 22

Railroad Garden Tour
Forsyth MG's Charlie and Frances Tidd, Cumming

Monday, July 17

7:00 p.m. - GJAC
Guest speaker Gary Gleeson of McGinnis Farms

Attracting Birds and Animals to your Garden

Monday, August 21

7:00 p.m. - GJAC
(We need suggestions for a speaker on Xeriscaping for this meeting. Please call Karen Brandon or email her at kbbird@mindspring.com with ideas)

The bigger the summer vacation the harder the fall.

Anonymous

A Message from our President

SUCH ENTHUSIASM! I have been truly blessed! I have seen volunteers come forward for every project and function this year. Some are even involved in more than one project.

They have made the plant sale a huge success and have embodied the true spirit of the Master Gardener program. There are too many volunteers to name here but you know who you are and just know that you are appreciated more than words can say.

I just have to thank my Vice President, Karen Brandon, for her hard work providing speakers and some wonderful tours this year, and what would we do without Sharon Matthews, who coordinated and organized all the volunteer programs and is also involved in providing the wonderful food for our meetings.

Speaking of meetings, we have had great attendance this year! Please mark July 17th on your calendar. We will meet and GJAC and will be honoring our past Presidents. Each president added something special during his or her time in office and we want you to help us honor them on this special day.

Also, many of you remember Gary Gleeson from Garden South. He will speak on landscape to attract birds and butterflies. It will be a great evening! See you there.

Judy

Notes from the Extension Office

Is your landscape prepared for summer??? Most of you remember the word Xeriscape...and now is probably a good time to talk about water efficient landscape. Are all your shrubs and trees properly mulched? We still recommend 2 to 3 inches in depth of mulch well out around each plant. If they are in a shrub or flower bed then the whole area should be mulched 2 to 3 inches deep. Watch your neighbors because they may start with good intentions but...end up killing their plants with kindness. What?...kill their plants with kindness? ...how can this be? Those good intentions usually go wrong when your neighbors start placing excessive mulch against the crown of the tree or shrub. The decline does not occur immediately. Decline usually takes years and the first symptom is sectional dieback where just one group of branches or limbs die. In addition, this is usually shortly after some environmental stress such as drought or freeze.

What really happens over the years is that adventitious roots arise in the mulch (excessive) layer. Next the plant becomes almost totally dependent on the shallow roots not in the soil. When the drought or freeze hits, some plants or parts thereof just can not hold up.

Take advantage of what ever cheap mulch you find available and acceptable. Many do not think it is safe to use wood chips as mulch. That is not true...use the chips over old mulch, just remember the proper depth. We are not talking about placing the wood chips up to the foundation of your home (potential termite food), just around the plants in your yard.

There has been a wide variety of calls and even more diverse group

of samples brought into the office. Let me share a few of the samples lately...lizard droppings (yes, lizard droppings), aphids, thrips, one square yard of weak sod and powdery mildew on almost anything.

Don't you miss coming into the office?



Timely Tips from the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Service

For maximum landscape interest in a small space, try annual vines. They can disguise ugly walls and enliven fences. When trellised, they create shade and privacy while hiding undesirable views. Morning glory and its relative cardinal climber (*Ipomoea* spp.) can be started indoors or sown outside after the last frost date. Canary creeper (*Tropaeolum* spp.) can be grown in mountainous areas. For edible ornamentals try scarlet runner beans or Chinese bitter melon (*Momordica* spp.).

Apply post emergent weed controls now to combat summer annual weeds. It is much easier to control them when they are young than to wait until they mature.

Some common ground covers suitable for sunny locations include

Ajuga (*Ajuga reptans*), Moss Pink (*Phlox subulata*), and Creeping Juniper (*Juniperus horizontalis*).

Lobelia (*Lobelia pendula*) is a great annual for hanging baskets or container gardens with its stems that trail about 8 inches. The Cascade series is especially vibrant in colors of pink white, lilac, maroon, violet and blue. Most flowers have a white eye.

Lightly sidedress perennials, including spring bulbs, with a 5-10-10 or 10-10-10 fertilizer, being careful to avoid the center or crown of the plant.

Caladiums need generous amounts of water and fertilizer to encourage continuous production of new leaves during the summer. Apply a light side dressing of 5-10-5 fertilizer every two weeks, and water thoroughly to encourage bright-colored foliage.

Potted plants, when placed outdoors, may need to be watered more frequently than if they were inside. If you place plants in clay pots inside larger plastic pots or cover clay pots with aluminum foil, you will reduce the frequency at which you must water. Remember to punch a drainage hole if foil is used.

Dig and divide dusty miller in the spring and replant the more vigorous outside portions of the clump. Fertilize liberally during the growing season.

Impatiens are the most satisfactory annual for use in shady areas. Begonias, coleus, ageratum, salvia and vinca prefer light shade (5 to 6 hours of sunlight).

Set petunia plants among fading tulips or daffodils to hide the unsightly wilting leaves. After the bulb foliage begins to fade, you can tie the leaves in gentle knots to neaten them, but don't remove them until they have dried completely.

Gardening on the Web

Did you know that Cobb County Master Gardener Eddie Rhoades has his own website? He lists plants he has for sale, his gardening adventures, and pictures of some of his yard art. Also on the web page are articles Eddie has written, including one about UGA legend Vince Dooley, who has lately taken up gardening with a vengeance. He includes pictures of his favorite plants, and talks about gourds. To see his page, go to www.bittersweetgardens.com.

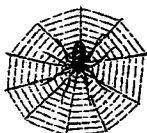
Georgia nurseries on the web include local ones like Habersham Gardens www.habershamgardens.com, with pages on products, new introductions, and a map to find it, and Land Arts Nursery in Monroe with lists of shrubs, trees and vines, located at www.landarts.com.

A little farther afield try the Lazy K Nursery in Pine Mountain, full of native azaleas, and woodland gingers at www.lazyknursery.com.

In TyTy, Georgia is The Nursery at TyTy! selling berries, fruits, grapes, nuts, trees and choice Southern bulbs such as Crinum and Zephyranthes. www.tytyga.com.

You can find a list of nurseries on line for any state using a click on map by logging on to Plant America, at www.plantamerica.com. Plant America also has links to plant auctions at E-bay, a search facility to find a particular plant, a list of their products, and other links of interest.

Besides these nurseries, there are many, many mail order nurseries online that enable you to email your order for quick turnaround.



One of the more interesting of these online mail order nurseries is Trans-Pacific Nursery in Oregon. They are growers of rare, exotic, unusual, newly introduced and long forgotten plants from tropical, temperate, alpine, desert and aquatic habitats all over the world. Many of their plants are found during the owner's collecting trips in Africa, Europe, China and the US.

You can browse through their catalog and view color pictures of many of their plants. Their plants are divided into Cool Climate and Warm Climate plants, the Cool Climate group from zone 8 and below, so many of their offerings may be grown easily in our zone 7.

Some of the Cool Climate trees, shrubs and vines offered are: Acer, Callistemon, Calycanthus, Cercis, Cordyline, Leptospermum, Parahibe, Phygellus, Scutellaria and Syringa.

Cool Climate herbaceous plants include Adenophora, Arenaria, Arisarum, Bletilla, Corydalis, Dianella, Dierama, Eomecon, Gentiana, Lycoris, Mandragora, Paracanda, Penstemon, Roscoea, Sarracenia, and Tigridia.

Even if you don't buy anything, this is a fun place to visit, and can be a real learning experience.

www.worldplants.com

Of all the wonders of nature, a tree in summer is perhaps the most remarkable; with the possible exception of a moose singing "Embraceable You" in spats.

Woody Allen

Your Opinion, Please

Remember the trip to the Birmingham Botanical Gardens? It was great fun, and the kind of thing we as a group need to do again.

Karen Brandon would love to get your ideas on a road trip where we would charter a bus and go somewhere for a day out. She plans a trip like this in the fall, probably in September when the weather is cool. If you have any suggestions as to a destination, please let Karen know. You can phone her or email her at kbbird@mindspring.com. If you do have a suggestion for a trip, do as much research on the location as you can.

Another suggestion for the newsletter is to have a Plants Wanted, Plants Available classified area. For instance, I have Iris fulva for anyone who wants it. If you do, call me (Gail) at 770-381-2513 or email to gailmartin@compuserve.com. I'm sure that many of us have or want plants that others may want or have. Shall we do it??

Deadlines for the Fall and Winter issue of A Bit of Dirt are August 15 for Fall and November 15 for Winter. I would love to have your stories for the newsletter.

Still another suggestion that might let us get to know each other better would be a tour of our own gardens. I don't think any of us would expect our gardens to look like Sissinghurst, so what do you think? Maybe we could have two, one for those MG's in western Gwinnett, and one for those north and east of Lawrenceville. Besides, it would force us to get out there and get those weeds!

Mission Is Possible

By La Donna Benedict

Earlier morning drizzle has given way to misting droplets of water melting across the windshield as Noel and I drive along Gwinnett Highway 20, our eyes anxiously searching for signs we are on the right track. This is our first organized rescue, and we don't want to be the last ones at the point of rendezvous.

Suddenly, we spy the abandoned convoy of vehicles pulled over on the shoulder of the road. A short distance away stand our fellow hunters, milling around the margin of the adjacent targeted field. Pulling in behind the caravan, we exchange greetings and introductions, then unload our gear: recycled plastic grocery bags, gloves, buckets, a hand trowel, and a shovel. The leader of the expedition, Teresa Schrum, checks over the roster and then gives us a status report of previous sightings in this area. She reminds us that time is limited and that we can only save so many. We can only do the best we can. The rest - the meandering stream, the hardwood trees - all will be decimated, victims of the scarred earth campaign of gouging and carnage that will be encroaching any time now. We look around anxiously, silently sizing up the competition and our chances. Some of the participants have driven from as far away as Marietta, Kennesaw, Athens, Decatur. A few of us are from Gwinnett. Some are old timers, veterans; but many are greenhorns. We can tell by their nervous questions. Some even admit they may not be able to identify the target from just a picture. We relax; this is going to be successful.

Who are these intrepid hunters? They are members of the Georgia Native Plant Society, and their rescue targets are the native plants that inhabit woods and fields, many of them ephemerals only above ground

for a few months before becoming dormant. Only this year when they go to sleep, they will not wake up again. The woods and fields that they populate are doomed to be bulldozed and "developed". It is no secret that metro Atlanta is literally losing ground. Ground that falls prey to that elusive concept called progress at the rapid rate of 50 acres of trees a day. And while Gwinnett county in particular is paving its way to progress, 1000's of woodland natives perish under the blade. So to the rescue ride the members of GNPS to literally insure that not all is lost. Working with the cooperation of those in development, they ask permission for land access, sign a hold harmless waiver, and send in the troops led by docents who have undergone classroom training and field internships under supervision. These docents schedule the rescues and allow between 10 to 15 people per trip. Members only, no children, no pets.



At the Highway 20 site alone on one day, specimens of pink piedmont native azaleas, rattlesnake plantain, fly poison, yellowroot, galax, striped pissesewa, ferns, sweetshrub, ginger, turtlehead, spurge, native orchid, and rue anemone were liber-

ated.

Is the process entirely altruistic? Let's just say that virtue in this case certainly carries away its own reward. The rescuers may give their plants to public building landscapes such as libraries, facilities or government building; to fellow gardeners; or place them lovingly in their own or neighbors' yards. These same plants, if propagated and sold by a nursery, would bring between eight and ten dollars, depending on the plant. Ethically, no GNPS members may sell those plants they dig, only those they have propagated. On the GA 120 rescue, some novices were concerned that they would not have a clue what to dig or where. But both the leader and some of the more experienced hunters were glad to show them locations to dig and sometimes to even share some of their plants. No more plants are gathered in a dig than can be promptly replanted. Native plants are durable once they are established in a setting similar to the one from which they are removed, but they cannot withstand a prolonged transfer process.

Three hours after our rescue has begun, it is over. The troops are a muddy mess after having clambered through fallen leaf debris and over fallen trees, into wet areas, through blackberry and briar thickets. They may look a little the worse for wear, and they are understandably tired and still facing the replanting at the end of their ride. But big grins decorate their faces, and scores of bulging plastic bags are snugly and safely tucked into their vehicles. The mission has been accomplished. What an exhilarating feeling it is to know that these at times "sleeping beauties" will reawaken to another spring and be enjoyed in public and private gardens.

Wildflowers Myths and Medicines

Many of our native wildflowers have legends and myths associated with them, a great many of them originating with the Native Americans.

The Indians used Jack-in-the-Pulpit roots to make flour, and also pounded the root into a pulp which was then applied to the forehead to cure headaches.

Unknowing boys used to take a bite of one of Jack's leaves, and found it tasted just fine. After a short while, however, an intense burning sensation would begin in the mouth and throat which would last for hours unless they drank a glass of milk, which somewhat helped the condition. Jack-in-the-Pulpit contains calcium oxalate crystals which cause the burning. Although a bite or two isn't toxic, but it certainly should not be eaten.

Trillium was once commonly used as a love potion. The root would be boiled, then dropped in the food of the desired man. It was believed that he would then fall in love with the woman. There's an old Indian story of a young Indian maiden who wanted the chief's son as a husband. She boiled the root, but on her way to drop it in the young Brave's food, tripped and it fell into the food of an ugly old man. The ugly old man then followed the girl around for months, begging her to marry him.

An old mountain superstition says that if you pick the Trillium you will cause it to rain.

The Indians used Trillium as an effective eye medicine. The juice could be squeezed directly into the eye, or the root could be soaked and an eye wash made of it. The root was also used to ease the pain of childbirth. This practice was so common that *T. ovatum* is also called birthroot.

Cherokee women made a tea from Partridgeberry to hasten childbirth and make labor easier. It was also used in treating coughs, and was used in developing a treatment for yellow fever during an epidemic in Philadelphia.

Violets have long been used as a symbol of humility and constancy in love. Roman matrons would mix them with goats milk and apply to their faces to help their complexions.

Medicinally, Violets were believed to induce sleep, strengthen heart muscles and calm anger. As a tea, they got rid of headache; as a poultice, they cured ulcers and bedsores. Made into a garland for the head, they were said to dispel the odors of wine and spirits.

Violets are high in vitamins A and C. They can be eaten raw or cooked like greens. The flowers can be made into candy, jam or jelly.



Spring Beauty is also edible, and said to be quite tasty. If eaten raw they taste like radishes, and when boiled or baked they have the texture of baked potatoes and taste like baked potatoes and chestnuts.

Wood Betony goes by a host of other names. Some of them are Red Helmet, Elephant Head, Walrus Head, Indian Warrior and Beefsteak Plant. One name, however, leads to

a misconception - Lousewort. It was erroneously believed by farmers that if animals got into the plant they would become covered with lice.

In the 10th Century, however, it was useful for curing sick elves. It was often planted in graveyards or worn in amulets to drive away evil spirits.

The Indians believed that Bloodroot would repel insects. Applying the blood red sap actually served a dual purpose, not only as an insect repellent but also as war paint. The sap was also used to dye cloth and baskets. The rhizome was also dried and sold as a cure for rattlesnake bites.

Bee Balm was used to soothe bee and insect stings, and brewed to make a mint-like tea. It also soothes stomach aches and cool fevers.

Crested Iris was used by the Indians as a poultice applied to sores on legs. Phlox was also crushed and added to water to cure skin diseases, upset stomachs, sore eyes and used as a laxative.

Many believed that Hepatica was put on this earth to cure liver and lung diseases. Toothwort was believed to relieve toothaches. Toothwort can also be eaten as a woodland nibble; it can be added to salads for its peppery flavor.

Pipsissewa is a Creek Indian word meaning "juice breaks down stone in bladder into small pieces" as they believed that the plant could cure bladder or kidney stones.

Trout Lily leaves are edible and eaten as a vegetable. Trout Lily is supposed to cure hiccups. The Romans grew it near their camps to soothe foot sores and corns.

Buenas Plant Sale and Muchas Gracias

Cinco de Mayo turned out to be a good day to celebrate and sunburn during our Perennial Perennial Plant Sale. (I call it "perennial" because we always have one; but since we don't seem to ever have it the same time of year, it's not quite an annual sale.)

We had barely arrived at 8:00 a.m. when customers started swarming in, resulting in some organizational confusion but wonderful sales. This year, which is somewhere around our fifth or sixth sale, was our best ever, thanks to the wonderful participation of so many members.

There is no way to sufficiently give credit to all that goes into a sale like this. But I will at least name some of my many helpers. Much appreciation goes to: co-chair Shelia Wilbur for all her efforts; vice president Karen Brandon for her hands on support and encouragement and garden statuary to sell; Kathy Parent at the Extension Office; Michelle Templeton and husband for our wonderful signs; Gail Martin for printing the Armitage pictures; Susan Hanson for supplying and managing our money supply; Terry Russell and Gail Hollimon for hosting potting sessions; Gail and husband Tommy for his phone committee work and transport of plants; Marlene Hedges for her email work; all the members and non-members who supplied tables and plants, without which we would have had no sale; Sharon Matthews and the refreshment committee who kept us hydrated and snack happy; Glen Armstrong for helping transport plants; and last, but certainly not least, all the helpers who turned out early and stayed late to sell our plants. Pat Longo did an excellent job as cashier for almost the entire sale. Glen Armstrong gets my vote as "super salesman" of the year. He also cheered us on and kept up our spirits through the hot

day. And it was hot!

We had at least fifteen members at any given time selling or rearranging plants on the seven tables. As usually happens, people who weren't even signed up to help showed up to offer assistance. Many Friends of the Master Gardeners were instrumental in working this sale. This year we had only six weeks instead of four months to organize the sale, but in spite of that we cleared approximately \$1,500! Yeah, team! And we also had enough left over plants to give generously to both Glen's Senior landscaping (and volunteer award winning) project and to Habitat for Humanity. The exact amount of our sale will be part of the treasurer's report at the June meeting. That amount may increase slightly, as the rest of the Armitage books are sold.

So thank you, again, everyone, for all of your hard work. And if I've left out anyone, please remind me so I can give you a special thanks later!

LaDonna Benedict
Plant Sale Co-Chair

Still Some Armitage Books

For the special event of the plant sale, Timber Press was kind enough to give our organization a special discount. Normally, Armitage's Garden Perennials would cost \$50 plus tax on store shelves. (Not to be confused with his earlier Herbaceous Perennials book. This one has 1500 color pictures.) We were able to sell it at the plant sale for only \$40, a wonderful savings to our members. We were faced with the problem of how many books to order, since there was no way of knowing how many would sell. Timber Press was kind enough to let me place three orders for ten books at a time as we tried to find our way into book sales.

So far, we have sold the first eighteen to twenty books. In order to insure that all our members had good opportunity to buy a book, an executive decision was made to order ten additional books after the sale. Therefore, for a limited time only, members can buy the book for the plant sale price of \$40. Please call LaDonna Benedict to reserve your book, and I will bring it to the next meeting. These will be sold on a first come, first serve basis.

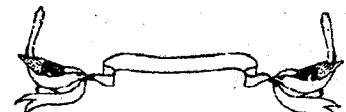
GBBC 2000 Results

The top ten bird species reported in Georgia in this year's Great Backyard Bird Count were:

American Goldfinch	17515
Common Grackle	9461
American Robin	8154
Sandhill Crane	6871
Mourning Dove	5542
Northern Cardinal	4753
American Crow	4392
European Starling	4265
Carolina Chickadee	4123
Tufted Titmouse	3991

The top 10 reporting cities in Georgia, and the number of species reported:

Savannah	101
Marietta	77
Jekyll Island	75
Atlanta	74
Rome	70
Gainesville	67
Roswell	64
Augusta	64
Lawrenceville	62
Tybee Island	61



Champion Trees

The program for the September 1999 meeting of the Gwinnett Master Gardeners was given by Dale Higdon of the US Forestry Service. The Georgia Champion Tree program identifies and records the largest tree of each species in Georgia by measuring the height of the tree, width of crown, and circumference of trunk.

There are four Champion Trees in Gwinnett County. Two trees are in Maria Turk's yard, and one beside Norcross City Hall plus another at an unnamed location. The Gwinnett Master Gardeners decided to mark the tree in Norcross. It is an American Elm, *Ulmus americana*.

We have ordered a bronze plaque that will be mounted on a large granite rock. We plan to place markers for the other trees in the near future.

Susan Hanson



?Dues Paid? If there is a 00 beside your name on the address label, you have paid your dues for this year. If there is a 99 or no year (current interns) beside your name, I do not have a record that you have paid. If you wish to join, please send a check for \$10.00 made out to Gwinnett Master Gardeners to Susan Hanson, 3755 N. Berkeley Lake Road, Duluth, Georgia 30096. This is your final reminder.

Trees: Traditions & Myths

In all of human history, trees have represented the power and mystery of nature. Huge ancient trees demanded respect and reverence, and seemed to man to be immortal. From oaks in central Europe, ash in Scandinavia and shorea in India, trees were thought to be holy, and begged their forgiveness if they were cut down.

In Korea, it was thought that the spirits of women who died in childbirth lived in trees. Greeks believed the first man was made from an ash tree. In Siberia, it was thought that men were created from a larch, and women from a fir. In New Guinea a man was considered a tree that moved.

In ancient times trees were well known for special attributes. Birch was the tree of health, wisdom and safety and was used in baby cradles and cribs, and was also used as a symbol of public office. Cedars were held sacred in Nepal and were symbols of faithful lovers in China. Junipers were planted to ward off thieves and witches. Ash was planted as protection against evil creatures. Hazels protected against lightning. Pine, acacia, white cedar, catalpa and chestnut trees were planted in specific spots for specific gods around Chinese temples. In China, pine was the symbol of friendship in adversity since it remains green all year.

Marco Polo said that the Khan had many trees planted because "he who plants a tree will live a long life". In Germany it was customary to plant a tree at a wedding. As each child arrived, an apple tree was planted for a boy and a pear for a girl.

Trees also played their part in warfare. In China, armies would cut down holy forests rather than tearing down temples as a supreme symbol

of conquest. Many weapons were made of wood from special trees in the hope that the strength of the tree would reside in them.

Our tradition of living with trees continues today. Companies use trees as part of their corporate logos. Real estate developments are named for trees. Streets and shopping centers are named for trees. We cannot live without constant reminders of the symbolism embodied in these plants.

Listed here are some of the meaning or significance of certain trees:

Almond - Biblical staff of Aaron, and staff of the Pope

Ash - Cupid's arrows and tree of rebirth

Beech - Ships and wine bowls

Birch - Symbol of health, wisdom, safety - used for baby furniture

Catalpa - One of four primary trees of the gods in China

Cypress - Tree of mourning, coffins, churches and Noah's ark

Dogwood - The wood of spear and arrows

Elm - Tree of sleep

Fig - Tree of wisdom and creation

Holly - Holy, white wood

Juniper - Protection against thieves, witches and evil

Laurel - Protection from illness

Maple - The emblem of reserve

Oak - Tree of strength, seat of the chair of St. Peter, tree of worship and power

Olive - Tree of security and peace

Persimmon - Chairs of the gods

Pine - Tree of friendship, friendship in adversity

Poplar - Talking or singing tree

Sycamore - Tree of protection and favors

Walnut - Royal tree and tree of prophesy

Willow - Tree of tears and sorrow, tree of enchantment

Yew - Tree of the dead, and bow wood

Meet Your Master Gardeners



Glen Armstrong

Glen has been a Master Gardener for 10 years, qualifying in 1990. He began his MG work in DeKalb County, prior to moving to Gwinnett and becoming one of ours.

Although his formal training was in plant pathology, he spent the last years of his working life in sales, and took the course to, as he said "get the feel of it again".

He is a self-proclaimed zinnia and tomato freak. Several years ago he had, for a short while, the champion tomato in Atlanta and it was shown on Channel 5 TV News. Glen said it weighed somewhere around 5 lbs. He plants zinnias all through the summer, replacing those disease-ridden ones with fresh plants. Glen likes the tall ones better than the little short zinnias, but loves them all, and buys seeds wherever he is. He has lately become enamored by rhododendrons, and these may become his next obsession.

As a Master Gardener, Glen has done it all - phones, talks, blueberry sales. While in Dekalb he became the compost authority, speaking to groups all over Atlanta. He is currently very involved in the Collins Hill Library project, and has helped provide plants for the Gwinnett Senior Center garden.

One of Glen's hobbies is making bird houses, which he gives to various projects, such as the owl house he made for the Collins Hill Library. He enjoys bird walks, and photographs birds in the wild.

Glen also enjoys painting and drawing with pastels.



Fran Robbins

Fran qualified in 1989, giving her 11 years in her MG career. She saw a write-up in the newspaper outlining the course, and decided that it would be a neat thing to do. She wanted to know why what she had done was wrong, and maybe make a better garden as a result.

Living on Lake Norris gives Fran a wonderful background for her garden. Her favorite plant, a very large climbing rose 'Dr. Van Fleet', lives happily on an arch framing a view of the lake. One year she planted one gourd seed, and harvested over 60 gourds.

As a Master Gardener she has done the phones, the blueberry sales, plant clinics and contributed to the newsletter. She enjoys attending the State Master Gardener conferences, and other gardening seminars. Fran attended the International Master Gardener convention last year in San Antonio. Aside from her gardening volunteer work, she has also volunteered at the SeniorNet Computer Learning Center.

Fran has a little Maltese dog named Cho Cho, who is cute as a button and not really big enough to cause any garden damage. She weighs only 4 1/2 lbs.

When traveling Fran likes to visit as many gardens as she can. Her favorites are Buchart Gardens near Vancouver, B.C., and the island of Mainau in Germany. Closer to home she enjoys visiting the courtyard gardens of Savannah and Charleston.

Fran enjoys painting and reading historical novels.



Glenda Patterson

Glenda has been a Master Gardener for 12 years, taking the class in 1988. At that time the class was taught at Berkmar High School two evenings a week. She saw an ad in the newspaper, had started gardening a little, loved to learn, and thought it would be fun.

Although Glenda used to have a sunny garden, it has now turned into a shady one. Her favorite plants are hydrangeas, hellebores and wildflowers, many of which she has rescued from the path of the bulldozer.

Glenda spends a lot of time in Charleston, and loves to visit the little courtyard gardens there.

Almost 95% of Glenda's MG projects have been with children. She has talked to many school groups, helped the children identify plants in their habitats, set up nature trails and given many school groups an introduction to the beauty and diversity of nature.

Her school work has gradually evolved into more general nature related things than gardening. Glenda travels the roads with a shovel and trash bags in her trunk, looking for roadkill animals. She then processes them and retains the bones for her talks. She has skulls of beaver, squirrel, mouse, cat, and deer, as well as antlers of deer and elk and an emu egg that she uses in her talks. Glenda is very excited right now over the acquisition of a bobcat, who is presently at the taxidermist and will soon appear at the schools crouched to spring at unsuspecting prey. She is still looking for an armadillo, so if any of you see one dead on the road...

Annuals for Long Hot Summers

It's forecast to be a hot, dry summer, with possible (probable?) water restrictions. This is bad news for our gardens, but it is still possible to have our gardens awash with color by using heat and drought resistant annual flowers.

Madagascar periwinkle or vinca (*Catharanthus roseus*) is one of the most heat tolerant annuals available. The flowers are a variety of colors, pink, purple, white and bicolors, and rest atop mounds of glossy dark green foliage.

Celosia or coxcomb in its several forms (*Celosia argentea plumosa* or *C. argentea cristata*) is unique for its unusual feathery flowers of bright pink red, yellow and orange. Celosia is an excellent cut flower, both fresh or dried.

Spider flower (*Cleome hasslerana*) can, when grown in full sun, reach 5 or 6 feet in height. The spider-like flowers come in violet, rose or white. Although an annual, this one is a reliable reseeder.

Globe amaranth (*Gomphrena globosa*) blooms in a variety of colors, including red, rose, pink and purple. There are dwarf varieties as well as taller ones that may reach 2 feet in height. This too makes a wonderful dried flower.

Morning glory (*Ipomoea tricolor*), an annual vine grown from seed, can reach 8 to 10 feet tall and requires a trellis for vertical support. Morning glories come in white, blue, pink and red.



Gold medallion (*Melampodium paludosum*) is highly underused in the landscape. This plant has lush green foliage dotted with small, bright yellow daisies. It flourishes in full sun.

Moss rose (*Portulaca* ssp) has fleshy, succulent foliage with delicate, brightly colored flowers of scarlet, pink, fuchsia and orange. This plant craves the heat of summer.

If it turns out that water is not as much of a problem, we have plenty of rain, and watering is not restricted, annuals will still fill the bill for season long color.

For the north side of the house, which is generally the shadiest and coolest area in the garden, nothing beats impatiens for color. They come in many colors and, as long as they get enough water, perform beautifully all summer long. Caladiums add height and color to north facing beds.



On the east side of the house, you will need plants that like a lot of sun but require protection from the heat of the afternoon sun. Begonias do well here, as well as the highly fragrant old-timer nicotiana. If you don't want to have the old fashioned white nicotiana, there are shorter plants available in pink, red, rose and white which are much tidier, although generally not as fragrant.

The south side of the house takes a beating from the heat unless it is

shaded by trees or another house. Salvias, both annual and perennial, are a bright choice for a vertical accent. Four o'clocks make a nice background. Marigold, available in a variety of flower forms, sizes and colors do well in all areas. Petunias are blessed with a wide range of colors, and love to soak up the sun. There are cascading types, stripes, ruffles, large blooms and smaller blooms.



On the west side of the house heat build-up is the most intense, as the bright sun is coupled with maximum temperature. For this site choose rugged flowers. One of the best is vinca as they are virtually impervious to heat. Gazanias are growing in popularity, and new varieties have expanded their flower power in tones of yellow through orange to mahogany. Zinnia linearis, in yellow, gold or white, make non-stop flowering plants for this exposure.



Summer is the topsy-turvy season when the goldfish have to be boarded out while the family goes on a fishing trip.

Anonymous



Georgia Gold Medal Plants 2000

Sun-loving Coleus is this year's winner in the annuals category. These plants tolerate our hot sun, and come in dazzling colors, ranging from deep crimson to brilliant chartreuse and golden orange. Some have three or more colors on a single leaf. Popular selections include Solar Sunrise, brick red with chartreuse veins blending to a halo of yellow and white; Solar Flare, Red Ruffles, Alabama Sunset, Cranberry Salad and Purple Ducksfoot. Use these coleus as bedding plants, in containers or large hanging baskets. Plant in full sun to partial shade. Occasional pinching will encourage branching and thicker growth.

The perennial winners are 'David' Phlox and 'Robert Poore' Phlox. Both of these phlox cultivars are highly resistant to powdery mildew,

the bane of Southern gardeners. 'David' has bright white flowers and blooms over a long period in the summer. 'Robert Poore' bears vibrant rose-purple flowers from May to June, and was introduced by Kim Hawkes of Niche Gardens in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. They grow 3 to 4 feet tall, with a clump that may reach 2 to 3 feet in diameter. Plant these phlox in full sun to partial shade in soil enriched with organic matter. Water plants in the morning, as late watering encourages mildew.

The winning shrub is *Hydrangea quercifolia* 'Alice'. This is a superior selection of the oakleaf hydrangea that is taking the nursery trade by storm. Flowers on 'Alice' average 10 to 14 inches in length and has an exceptionally long bloom period. They make excellent cut flowers, as well. 'Alice' presents a rich burgundy fall color and cinnamon-colored exfoliating bark. This hydrangea grows quite large, 12 feet

high and 12 feet wide. It looks particularly nice in a natural, wooded setting. Plant 'Alice' where it will get morning sun and afternoon shade.

This year's gold medal tree is *Magnolia grandiflora* 'Little Gem'. Our Southern magnolia has long been the aristocrat of southern landscapes, but as property sizes shrink such a large tree no longer fits in the landscape. 'Little Gem' magnolia provides the same essence of the South but on a much smaller scale. Mature height is only 15 to 20 feet with about a 10 foot width. Leaves and flowers on 'Little Gem' are proportionally smaller than its big sister, so leaf litter is less of a problem. The leaves are four to six inches long, dark glossy green above and fuzzy brown below. Flowering begins at an early age, starting in summer and continuing through fall. The flowers are delightfully fragrant and four to six inches wide. Plant this evergreen tree in full sun to partial shade.

A Bit of Dirt

Gwinnett Master Gardeners
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SUMMER