



# GARDEN BUZZZZZ



Volume 33 Issue 2 Central Alabama Master Gardener Association

## February 2024

### Message from Kelly

*Kelly Lafreniere*  
*CAMGA President*



Hello fellow gardeners! I hope everyone is doing well and having a beautiful start to 2024. Although we can have freezing temperatures in February, it is still a good time to start thinking about our spring gardens and maintaining our winter gardens.

Our winter gardens can consist of many vegetables and flowers. A few are cabbages, radishes, broccoli, and onions. We can also plant amaryllis, gladiolus, crocus, iris, spring snowflakes, and camellias. It would be a good time towards the end of February to apply pre-emergent and make sure you water well 1 to 3 days after application. We can also spray our shrubs with fungicide before new growth starts. It's also a good idea to clip away brown dead foliage, so new growth can be kissed by the much needed sunlight!

I was glad to see at our January meeting we had 26 members in attendance even with the freezing rain and mild snow flurries! We are all truly Master Gardeners dedicated and passionate about gardening. I want to thank Jason Mattox for an awesome presentation he gave and I hope everyone who was unable to make the meeting read the email Anida sent out on his presentation about our Executive Board and the MANY ways to volunteer in our organization.

As the weather warms, please consider volunteering or stepping forward to become a membership chair, or even perhaps becoming an officer for next year. ALL of our Board positions are currently filled along with all of our membership chairs except for two! We have a great organization, and only because of all of you who contribute your time and talents to make it so wonderful. Thank you all for everything you do. It is much appreciated.

Please feel free to join us or participate in our Wetumpka Mardi Gras parade on Saturday, February 10th. The Master Gardeners will have a Mardi Gras float with a pollinators theme. Contact Rebecca Ridley for more information.

Next month our speaker is Carol Borowski, a Lee County master gardener who will talk about Cover Crops. We have some really good speakers this year and I'm excited to hear what they have to share with us. Stay warm and I look forward to seeing you at our February 20th meeting. Feel free to bring a plant or item to swap and now is a good time to start your seeds indoors and identify plants from your yard to contribute to our May plant sale!

*Take care,*  
*Kelly*

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*Carol Pugh — Editor*  
*Garden Buzzzz*  
*Newsletter*



## Message from Mallory

Mallory Kelley  
Regional Extension Agent — Home Grounds,

### The War Against Lawn Weeds

Many of you have given up the battle to treat your lawn on your own and many of you are still waging war yourself and wondering what am I doing wrong? Well if you want to get ahead of the game a pre-emergent in February is the way to go! This article will hopefully give you several tips from pre and post emergent products to fertilizers to help you achieve the beautiful lawn you are hoping for.

The most popular product out there that seems to have it all, the “one stop shop” for all your lawn needs is the “Weed and Feed” products. I am often asked if this is the correct way to treat the lawn. In central Alabama, there is not a large window of time when this product would be beneficial, but it can be used in May or early June when an extra application of fertilizer would not hurt and the application of the pre-emergent chemical in the product will help prevent weed seeds from germinating through the summer and into the fall.

The best and most effect control of weeds in the lawn may take a little more effort than the “Weed & Feed”, “All in One” products, but you can save money and time in the long run applying them separately.

Pre-emergent weed killers should be selected based on the type of grass you have. These weed control products are preventative so they should be applied before the weeds are visible in the lawn as they prevent the seeds of the weeds from germinating. These can be applied any time of year except during “Green-up” or to newly seeded or sprigged lawns, but again February is a great month as we will soon have spring like temperatures and spring weeds will start to germinate.

Do not reseed a lawn for 4-6 months after a pre-emergent chemical is applied and remember to always read and follow all label instructions when making applications of any chemical. I have provided information below to access our website for a list of all Pre and Post-emergent chemicals on the market so you can correctly select the chemical that is best for your lawn situation. Don’t forget, a post-emergent herbicide is only going to kill a weed that has already begun to grow in the lawn.

Fertilizers are generally applied twice throughout the year, first in early spring during green-up and then again in mid summer. Fertilizer type and amounts should be based on soil test results, not guess work and anytime is a good time to have a soil test. Soil tests will provide you with the correct type of fertilizer and amounts needed for your specific lawn and if lime is needed, lime can be added at anytime of year. Remember, lime raises the soil pH. A soil test will help you be more accurate in your fertilizer application, provide your grass with the exact nutrients it needs and save you money down the road.

For information on proper care of your turfgrass visit our publications online at [www.aces.edu](http://www.aces.edu) and search for the type of grass you have. Also for a list of pre and post-emergent chemicals that are available and the type of lawn they can be applied to, visit our website and search for: **IPM 0590 Home Lawns Chemical Weed Control.**

# CAMGA Minutes

## January 16, 2024

### Elmore County Extension Office

By: Michelle Sharpton



Today the CAMGA members met at the Elmore County Extension Office. 26 members signed the Attendance Record. In lieu of a guest speaker today, the Chairperson from each group of volunteers will share their job description as well as ways members may volunteer in the coming year. Sign-up sheets have been made available at the meeting and via email.

Jason Mattox created slides to share with the group as well as the contact information for each person that spoke today. An introduction to the new officers for the year was the first slide that included President Kelly LaFreniere, Vice President Jason Mattox, Treasurer Sherri Davidson, and Secretary Michelle Sharpton, to be sworn in today.

Mallory Kelly continues to be our Regional Extension Agent but was unable to attend today's meeting. Mary McCroan, Learning Gardens Chair, spoke about what is happening in the Learning Garden/Demo Garden. She shared ways to further share information to all gardeners in our group as well as our community. Needing new ideas and more volunteers is still needed to maintain and grow the gardens. Workdays are every Thursday 8:00 a.m. - noon, weather permitting. Mary encouraged people to come and stay 30 minutes or 4 hours or any time in between.

Rebecca Ridley, Projects Chair, shared upcoming projects and ways to sign up. They are listed as follows:

1. There will be a workday for the Mardis Gras decorations at Rebecca's home on January 23, 10 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Rebecca shared an impressive handmade flower for float decorations.
2. Mardis Gras float decorating is on Feb. 9, 10am until finished in the barn at the Elmore Extension Office. Pizza and a king cake will be provided. Sherri volunteered to make the king cake.
3. The Mardi Gras parade is Feb. 10, 11:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m. Volunteers will meet at the Wetumpka Farmers Market. Float riders and walkers are needed. Rebecca showed the membership a butterfly cape that can be purchased on Amazon to wear for the parade if you choose. The theme for the overall parade is "Winter Wonderland". Pollinators and flowers will be worked into this theme to create a memorable float.
4. Rose Pruning at the First Presbyterian Church is Feb. 21, 10:00 a.m.-noon. Contact Jane Mobley (334) 462-9291 for more details.

Emails with sign-up genius and more details about these events have been sent to CAMGA membership. Sign-up sheets have also been made available today.

For social distribution of any pictures, videos, or articles, please send to [CAMGAPICS@gmail.com](mailto:CAMGAPICS@gmail.com). If you do not want your name made public, please make sure you mention this in your submission. Stay tuned to the CAMGA Facebook page for a new series of "How-to Videos". The first video will feature Seed Starting at Rhona Watson's home. Notify Rebecca Ridley if you are interested in making one of your own how-to videos to be featured!

**CAMGA Minutes (Continued)**  
**January 16, 2024**  
**Elmore County Extension Office**  
**By: Michelle Sharpton**

The next project meeting will be February 12 at 10:00 a.m. at the Elmore County Extension office. Please join us if you're interested in being on this exciting committee. Rebecca's contact information is (256) 419-3332 or email [rebecca.ridley74@gmail.com](mailto:rebecca.ridley74@gmail.com)

Maria Pacheco was unable to attend today. Volunteer opportunities continue and are needed at the Lanark Gardens in Millbrook. Normal workdays are every Wednesday morning, but Maria welcomes volunteers any time. Please call (334) 657-9414 if you need to schedule a time or email [flyingwindflower@gmail.com](mailto:flyingwindflower@gmail.com)

Jane McCarthy was unable to attend today. Volunteer opportunities continue and are needed at the Governor's Mansion in Montgomery. Normal workdays are Monday mornings. You must call ahead to be put on a list to enter the grounds. This is for security purposes. (334) 221-9936  
[janehmccarthy9@gmail.com](mailto:janehmccarthy9@gmail.com)

Sandy Rosamond spoke about this year's upcoming Lunch and Learn Series which will continue to be at the First Presbyterian Church in Wetumpka the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month 12 noon – 1:00 p.m. Rhonda Miles and Sandy Mikashus will be assisting this year. New this year will be giving away a door prize, so continue to encourage your friends and community to join us. Flyers are being distributed for the schedule of guest speakers. Social media likes and shares are encouraged to get the word out. Sandy wants to also incorporate a greeter this year to welcome attendees. Volunteers are needed to help with being a greeter for a month. Volunteers are also needed to bring snacks or a door prize for a particular month of choice. Sandy circulated a sign-up sheet. [sandrose2007@gmail.com](mailto:sandrose2007@gmail.com)

Robin Snyder was unable to attend today. Kelly spoke for her about volunteer opportunities in assisting with the 2024 Fall Intern Class. Assistance will be needed for food prep and serving. Mentors are needed for each intern. CAMGA will host the 2024 intern graduation and luncheon in August at the First Presbyterian Church in Wetumpka. Hospitality is in need of a volunteer to fill the traditional role as hospitality coordinator. Kelly is currently doing a sign-up sheet for food each month for the meetings. A volunteer is needed for Spotlight on Volunteers and Membership Care. Kelly has been fulfilling the membership care role. The Plant Sale is set for May 4 at the Elmore County Extension Center. Volunteers are needed to become team leaders and are asked to volunteer at the first yearly plant sale meeting which will be held in February. Please contact Robin Snyder at [jmsrgs@gmail.com](mailto:jmsrgs@gmail.com) or Rhona Watson at [rhonawatson@earthlink.net](mailto:rhonawatson@earthlink.net) for more details. All members will be asked to participate in the sale, and we anticipate that all members will be working on plant propagation for the sale throughout the year.

Darlene Dixon, Publicity Chair, encouraged members to think of themselves as an ambassador for CAMGA since advertising is an "everybody" job. If anyone has a contact in the community that works in radio, television, newspaper, etc., please share with Darlene so that we may advertise CAMGA and how to become a Master Gardener. Sandy recommended we set up a booth at the Wetumpka Farmer's Market instead of the Community Market. Darlene's contact information is (334) 275-0486 or [darlenedixon@yahoo.com](mailto:darlenedixon@yahoo.com)

Kelly passed out contact cards for members to share with their friends and the community on CAMGA's contact information and who to contact if someone is interested in becoming a Master Gardener.



## CAMGA Minutes (Continued)

January 16, 2024

Elmore County Extension Office

By: Michelle Sharpton

Dee Turberville spoke about volunteer opportunities with the CAMGA library. An inventory is on the to do list, and she will need volunteers to help with that task. If you are interested in writing a review for a book, please contact Dee for more information. Also, contact Dee if you would like to have the library purchase a particular book you may be interested in. Dee stated she would really like to have an assistant to help with the growing library. Dee's contact information is [Deelighted2@yahoo.com](mailto:Deelighted2@yahoo.com) or (334) 235-4302.

Mary Ann Hatcher spoke about the Master Gardener Helpline and continuing volunteer opportunities. The helpline fields calls about gardening and HomeGrounds for 50 weeks out of the year covering the whole state of Alabama. Mary Ann requests interns sign-up March-April. The regular hours for volunteering are every Thursday 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Call Mary Ann at (334) 300-5512 or

[Spgcrkgirl55@yahoo.com](mailto:Spgcrkgirl55@yahoo.com)

Cindy Augustine, Advisory Council Representative, will attend the AMGA meeting on the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of February. The membership directory is still being updated. Distribution is scheduled for February without the bylaws since they are currently being revised. A CAMGA article on last year's Senior Project will be in the new Pathways (AMGA Publication).

Jane Mobley was present today and shared the new Yearbook that was circulated and will be in the library for viewing.

Michelle Sharpton will continue Reach for the Stars for the year.

Jason concluded by announcing next month's guest speaker will be Carol Borowski from Lee County Master Gardeners. Carol's presentation will be on Cover Crops February 20, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. located in the Elmore County Extension Office. Jason also shared a few of this year's guest speakers including Chip East, Bionca Lindsey, Charles Murray, and Mary McCroan.

The Business Meeting was called to order at 11:32 a.m. by President Kelly LaFreniere. The first order of business was swearing in Michelle Sharpton as the new Secretary for 2024. 26 members signed the Attendance Record.

There were no changes to the minutes report from last month, so a motion was made by Jason Mattox to accept the minutes. The motion was seconded by Rhona Watson. The members unanimously voted in favor of accepting the minutes.

Member Concerns: Casie McGinn's mother passed away. Please remember Casie and the family in your thoughts and prayers. Norma Busby's husband has been undergoing cancer treatments. Norma asks for prayers during this difficult time. Jesse and Rhonda Miles shared that Jesse is doing well and had an encouraging report at the doctor.

President's Report: Kelly thanked everyone who brought food today. She also provided a sign-up sheet for next month's food. Cards were provided and circulated for members to keep in their wallet and share with the community about becoming a Master Gardener and CAMGA's contact information. Kelly also encouraged all members to bring a plant or other item to be donated as door prizes for the next meeting February 20<sup>th</sup>. Free books are available to anyone and are available on the table near the door. Kelly welcomed our new intern, David Heffelfinger.

**CAMGA Minutes (Continued)**  
**January 16, 2024**  
**Elmore County Extension Office**  
**By: Michelle Sharpton**

Vice President's Report: Jason is continuing to work on scheduling the guest speakers for the year.

Treasurer's Report: Sherri is working on a budget with the committee, Cathy Whigham and Rebecca Ridley. Sherri stated there was an issue with Regions Bank, so the report will be available in the Garden Buzzzz as soon as she is able to reconcile the issue. She needs 2 volunteers to "double check" the numbers for the year. Please contact Sherri if you are interested.

Katrina Mitchell welcomed the group back to the Extension Office. She said there will be improvements made to the building including new ceiling tiles, lighting, cabinets, and a few other things. Construction should begin any day. She would like to encourage members to go to the Elmore County-Alabama Extension Facebook Page to learn about ongoing programs and classes offered to the public including a "Getting Started with Chickens" class on January 22. Registration is required. Call (334) 567-6301 or visit [www.aces.edu/elmore](http://www.aces.edu/elmore) for more information.

Jane Mobley has agreed to continue as our Historian for 2024. She requests assistance in taking pictures and emailing them as soon as possible to [Janemobley13@gmail.com](mailto:Janemobley13@gmail.com) or text (334) 462-9291.

If you do not wish your name to be made public, please specify in your submission.

Jane has also brought the new Yearbook for viewing and it will be made available in the library.

Old Business: 0

New Business: 0

Meeting Adjourned: 11:49 a.m.

*Minutes respectfully submitted by,  
Michelle Sharpton, Secretary*



## CAMGA Library News

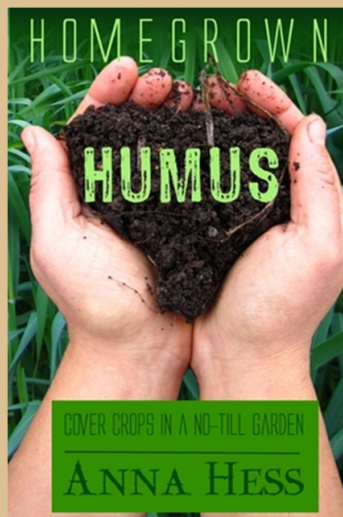
### February 2024

By: Dee Turberville

### Home Grown Humus; Cover Crops in a No-Til Garden

By Ann Hess

Anna Hess' book of *Homegrown Humus* is about cover crops and how they can be used to boost your soil's organic matter, fight weeds, prevent erosion, attract pollinators, and keep the ecosystem in balance. The brief book details five no-til winners – buckwheat, sweet potatoes, oilseed radishes, rye, and oats. It also provides profiles of other species that suggest gardening conditions when you might want to try out sunflowers, annual ryegrass, barley, Austrian winter peas, crimson clover, cowpeas, or sunn hemp as well. Most information on growing cover crops is written for people who plow their soil every year and are willing to spray herbicides. Anna Hess is experimenting with the no-til process in her Virginia garden and sharing what she has learned with her readers.



“In your own garden, I recommend starting small until you learn the intricacies of each cover-crop species you’re using. Once you settle on a few species that work for you, you’ll become adept at keeping an eye out for garden areas going to waste...Finding the best cover crops to fit into your unique homestead ecosystem is an ongoing endeavor.” -- Anna Hess

In addition to this title, Anna is the author of dozens of homesteading how-to-guides, i.e., *The Naturally Bug-Free Garden* and the *The Ultimate Guide to Soil* in paper while others are available as ebooks.





## Governor's Mansion Report For January 2024

By: Amanda Borden



Due to New Year's Day and two weather cancellations, we only worked at the Mansion two days in January. We dead headed pansies and cut back lantana and some of the herbs. In February, we plan to continue our work at usual, with one exception. On February 26 we will be working at the Montgomery Humane Society instead of at the Mansion, starting at 9:00 a.m.



Linda deadheading pansies



Jane checking out camellia



Linda & Ann breaking  
down debris to fit into toter



## Governor's Mansion Report (Continued) For January 2024

By: Amanda Borden



Kathy, Alicia, and Ann trimming back lantana



We hope this means spring is not too far away!



Sue & Linda load the tote with debris





## Learning Garden

January 2024

By: Mary McCroan

Weather has reduced our normal hours in the Learning Garden in January. It's either been very cold or very rainy, but there are still a few things to report.



First, I got to wondering about how quickly the temps in our greenhouse went down on cold nights. So on one windy day, I looked up, and realized for the first time that there was a ridge vent at the top of the greenhouse. Well, that is great for the chickens (our greenhouse used to be a chicken coop), but not so much for plants. And let's not ask why it took me two winters for the light to dawn. Some questions are better left unsaid. Anyway, my solution was to pack three foam pipe insulators up in the ridge. Along with some spray foam for some other cracks. We

will have to pay more attention on sunny days to stop by and open the door to let heat out.

Prior to the fix, temps in the greenhouse got down to the mid 30s and some of the annuals I'd been trying to keep warm are not very happy. They aren't dead though, so I have hopes. After the fix, temps on cold nights went up by twenty degrees. Yay!

Also in the greenhouse, we are propagating hops, lavender, confederate rose and elderberry.

- Confederate Rose and Elderberry cuttings from last fall are in buckets of water--some of them have pretty good roots and are ready to move into pots and soil where they will remain in the greenhouse until spring.
- We put hops cuttings directly in pots (with rooting hormone) and also in water. They have proved to be easy to root in water and we moved those plants to soil this week. The hops that started in soil have also grown roots, but the root systems are much smaller.



We will see which does better in the longer term--the plants propagated in soil may have smaller roots now, but prove to be stronger since they haven't had to deal with the trauma of being relocated from water to pots.

- The Mexican Oregano looks great. As always, it has proved easy to propagate just by taking cuttings and sticking them in pots.



## Learning Garden (Continued)

January 2024

By: Mary McCroan

- We also took cutting this year of Common Myrtle (*Myrtus communis*)--this is a lovely small, dense shrub that had been growing in the Learning Garden for two years. About 75% of it died last year with that late freeze that killed our Rosemary, but then it came back better than ever. So far the stems in water are alive, but not growing roots. Two-thirds of the stems in soil died, but the rest are looking good. I've also planted some berries--fingers crossed we will have plants to share.
- Just before the first freeze last fall, I took a couple dozen cuttings of coleus at my house, and they are looking great.



Sadly, this week the white Natchez Crepe Myrtle to the left of Extension entrance had to be removed because of septic problems. The Learning Garden Team had put a lot of time into pruning this tree so it would stay away from building eaves and the roof. It was looking great, and we are sorry to see it gone.

Feb 14th--Valentine's Day might make you think of roses. But not because we think we will be presented with a bouquet, although that would be nice. But early February is the perfect time to prune roses. And any other trees and shrubs that might need shaping up. We will be doing that in the Learning Gardens and also this week started cutting back perennials that have finally gone dormant after our recent freezes.

The Rain Garden has proved its worth again during our recent heavy rains. The reason visitors can enter the Kitchen/Auditorium next to Extension through its front door, and keep their feet dry after heavy rains, is because of the diversion of water from the downspouts to the rain garden. We continue to experiment with the best plants for this area--so far Elderberry shrubs are a winner.



And last, we are redoing the double height beds that had housed the Turmeric for several reasons.

- The shade fabric at the front of the new gardens was not a good look. We will have a smaller shaded area for the Turmeric demo bed at the back of the garden.
- Some of the wood was in pretty bad shape.
- The new beds will match the rest of the garden and the look will be more harmonious.
- And last--I got some free treated 2x12s from my father-in-law, so it doesn't cost much to do this.





## Learning Garden (Continued)

January 2024

By: Mary McCroan

So far, we've removed the fabric, dismantled the supports and the beds, removed many of the screws from the old material and roughed out where the new boards will be placed. Next up is installing the new boards and adding soil where needed.



In the process of digging the Turmeric, I took some home, washed it, dried it in the oven at 170 for a couple of hours, then ran it through my spice grinder. It smells SO much better than store bought turmeric powder! I put it in my turmeric jar on top of the store bought product--notice the difference in color!



Folks helping out in the Learning Gardens this month include Amanda, Candy, Terry, Darlene, Deb Kelso, Jason Maddox, Rebecca and Virginia. We have a great team, but always room for one more. Come out any Thursday, 8ish to 12ish. Times vary a bit depending on the weather. Give me a call if you want to confirm if the temps or precipitation have shifted our normal schedule: Mary at 334-312-0679





## LUNCH & LEARN: NUISANCE WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT



### NUISANCE WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT CLASS

Nuisance wildlife management is an issue for many homeowners and landowners alike. During this lunch & learn class, Dr. Wesley Anderson will talk about some common nuisance wildlife species and provide you with management strategies for each.

February 7th

12:00PM – 1:00PM

Autauga County Extension Office

2226 Hwy 14 Autaugaville, AL

**Bring Your Lunch! We will provide beverages!**

The Alabama Cooperative Extension System (Alabama A&M University and Auburn University) is an equal opportunity educator and employer. Everyone is welcome! © 2017 by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System. All rights reserved.

Registration for the **Azaleas 101 Workshop** to be held at Auburn University on Tuesday, April 2, 2024 is now open. All details including the agenda can be found at:

**<https://www.aces.edu/event/azaleas-101-workshop/>**

If you would like to become a member and attend the 2024 Azalea Society of America National Convention on April 3-4, also in Auburn, please register at [www.azaleas.org](http://www.azaleas.org)



# February 2024

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

				1 <i>Learning Gardens at the Extension Office 8-12 noon</i>	2	3
4	5 <i>Mansion Gardens Work- day 9-11 a.m.</i>	6	7 <i>Lanark Gardens Workday 8-11 a.m.</i>	8 <i>Learning Gardens at the Extension Office 8-12 noon</i>	9	10 <i>Wetumpka Mardi Gras Parade 1 p.m.</i>
11	12 <i>Mansion Gardens Work- day 9-11 a.m.  Projects meet- ing Extension Office 10 a.m.</i>	13 <i>Lunch &amp; Learn, First Presbyte- rian Church 12-1 p.m.</i>	14 <i>happy Valentine's day</i> <i>Lanark Gardens Workday 8-11 a.m.</i>	15 <i>Learning Gardens at the Extension Office 8-12 noon</i>	16	17
18	19 <i>Mansion Gardens Workday 9-11 a.m.</i>	20 <i>CAMGA Monthly meeting at the Extension Auditorium at 10 a.m.</i>	21 <i>Lanark Gardens Workday 8-11 a.m.</i>	22 <i>Learning Gardens at the Extension Office 8-12 noon</i>	23	24
25	26 <i>Work at Montgomery Humane Society 9-11 a.m. (instead of Mansion Gardens)</i>	27	28 <i>Lanark Gardens Workday 8-11 a.m.</i>	29 <i>Learning Gardens at the Extension Office 8-12 noon</i>		