



GARDEN BUZZZZZ



Volume 34 Issue 6 Central Alabama Master Gardener Association, Inc.

June 2025



Message from Cindy **Cindy Augustine** **AMGA, INC. PRESIDENT**

Happy June everyone! As usual, time is just flying by. The rain has been wonderful for my lawn and garden, but I'm ready for some sunshine!

Just a few reminders for the month of June. First, our CAMGA, Inc. meeting will be back at the Extension Office on June 17th at 10 a.m. Here are some other dates to keep in mind:

- June 9th Projects Committee Meeting – if you'd like to be involved in the Projects Committee, please come to this meeting at the Extension. For more details, contact Rebecca Ridley.
- June 10th Lunch and Learn – CAMGA Inc.'s own Deb Kelso will be presenting on Perennial Herbs. Be sure to attend from Noon to 1 p.m. at Wetumpka First Presbyterian Church.
- June 23rd will be rose maintenance at the Wetumpka First Presbyterian Church at 9 a.m. with a rain date of June 24th.

Please remember to share about our upcoming Master Gardener Intern class. Registration is throughout the month of June, but early bird pricing ends on June 16th, so it's important to register by then to save \$25. The class begins on August 14th and runs weekly through November 6th.

We will need to provide meals for our interns four times, (the Executive Board will provide one meal), so be thinking about what you might be able to bring to share with the interns.

The class will be at our Elmore County Extension office this year, so we really want to show our interns some great hospitality! We also need mentors for our interns. Mentors are an important support system for our interns, so please consider sharing your skills and talents with our future Master Gardeners.

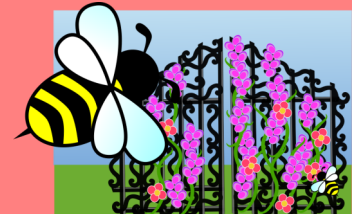
Thanks go out to everyone who brought food for the luncheon honoring Mary Ann Hatcher. As usual with CAMGA, Inc. events, there was plenty of food and it was all delicious! It was a special time to thank Mary Ann for her many (17?) years of dedicated service to the Master Gardener Helpline. We are still looking for someone to take over, so if you are interested, please let me know!

I look forward to seeing everyone on June 17th at our meeting!

Happy Gardening,
Cindy

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Carol Pugh, Editor
Garden Buzzzz
Newsletter



Message from Mallory Mallory Kelley Regional Extension Agent — Home Grounds,

Controlling Weeds in Flower Beds and Vegetable Gardens

A weed can have many definitions, but its true definition is “a plant out of place”. Some weeds are more than just irritating eyesore, some can be aggressive and very difficult to control. Especially in perennial flower beds it is very important that you stay on top of weed control. If weeds get out of hand your only method of control is hand weeding. In the case of an annual bed, since you will be pulling out plants seasonally that does allow more options in controlling weeds in between plantings and with a pre-emergent.

Overall, the best way to prevent or control weeds in your gardens is to mulch. Mulch truly is one of the best things a gardener can do far beyond just the benefits of weed control. Adding mulch helps add organic material and nutrients as it breaks down, creates a barrier between soil fungi and diseases and also helps retain moisture to the plants. All gardeners know weeds love vegetable gardens. There's plenty of sun, the soil is great, water is plentiful, and no competition between rows. So what exactly should you do to control them?

If weeds are in your vegetable garden, beyond mulching, the old proven method of hand pulling, hoeing and tilling are best as many weeds are close to the vegetable plants and you have to be careful about using herbicides. In selecting a herbicide, Roundup is best. Roundup kills all vegetation and starts working immediately. The great thing about this herbicide is that it only affects the green plant tissue it comes in contact with. Once roundup touches the soil it becomes inactive so no need to worry about it getting into the water and affecting other plants. For best results apply roundup when weeds are actively growing. For very hard to kill weeds it will more than likely take multiple sprays before you kill the weed, but generally weeds begin to wilt within hours and are dead within one to two weeks.

Spray roundup when air is calm to prevent drift to desirable plants. One gallon covers approximately 300 sq. ft. Even on a calm day, be sure to use a piece of cardboard or plastic to shield your vegetable plants or shrubs and reserve one sprayer specifically for herbicides so you do not chance residues remaining in the tank.

Roundup can also be used in the landscape around trees and shrubs, but again, make sure to shield all desirable plants from any drift. If you begin to see leaves on plants in your garden or landscape have a puckering in-between the veins and a distorted look it is more than likely the result of herbicide drift. Trifluralin is an active ingredient that can be used as a preventative for weeds in both the vegetable garden and also in shrub beds. If applying in a vegetable bed the application needs to be made at least 6 weeks before planting of any seeds and then can be applied once all plants are up and actively growing for continued control.

When using Herbicides -- Always read and follow label directions.

In the shrub bed, I am often asked about using landscape fabric. This will work well for the first year or two, but will more than likely cause you much more work than just pulling weeds years down the road. Eventually, the mulch breaks down and forms soil build up on the fabric and weeds will begin to grow on top of the fabric. As years pass the fabric will become weak, rip and tear and then when you finally decide to remove the fabric it is almost impossible. So my best suggestion is to stay away from the weed fabric in the landscape.

The best method I have found in either the vegetable garden or in the landscape bed is to use thick sheets of newspaper around your plants and then cover with a layer of two to four inches of mulch (pine straw or pine bark). The while inhibiting weed growth. The more you control weeds this year, the less of a problem they'll be next year.



CAMGA, Inc. Monthly Meeting Minutes
May 20, 2025
Elmore County Extension Office
By: Martha Rodgers, Secretary

CAMGA, Inc. Monthly Meeting Minutes First Presbyterian Church, Wetumpka, AL May 20, 2025, Jason Maddox opened the meeting with our guest speakers, Luan Wesley Aparecido Pereira Alves and Sarah Pz, graduate students from the Department of Horticulture at Auburn University. Luan spoke to members about organic vegetable production focusing on the main purpose for organic gardening and the standards that must be met in order to be certified as an organic grower.

There are currently 25 farms in Alabama with organic crops. Before starting a certified organic vegetable production, it is important to know the history of the land as some chemicals may be in the soil thus disqualifying the land before starting, to have reliable organic seed sources, to have knowledge of organic fertilizing methods, knowledge of pest management without chemicals and weed management. The designated area for growing organic vegetables must have buffer zones to protect crops from outside sources. Those buffers range in size from 7 to 25 feet. In conclusion, a person considering organic vegetable production needs to consider the administrative costs to get certified and the cost of annual inspection fees.

Sarah Paz talked to members about choosing the correct cultivars for Yield/Specialty Markets and IPM strategy (pest and disease)/Increased Revenue. She discussed specific cultivars and their characteristics.

The CAMGA, Inc. Monthly Business Meeting was called to order by President Cindy Augustine at 10:45 a.m. Thirty-five (35) members signed the roster today. There was a typographical error in April's minutes. Martha noted and will correct. The contents were unanimously approved. Sherri Davidson gave the treasurer's report noting income for April was \$962.22 and that total expenses were \$646.05. The total cash balance is \$12,292.98 with an overall balance of \$22,647.37. She asked members to be patient regarding a report on the results of the May 3rd plant sale and that it will be in May's treasurer's report. The Treasurer's Report was unanimously approved.

Mallory reminded everyone that the registration deadline for the Master Gardener Internship Program is the end of June. She also reminded members that the Capitol City Hydrangea Propagation workshop is filling up. If we plan to attend, we need to register right away.

Candy reported that the public education project for garden landscape design was very successful with 30 people attending. She thanked all who opened their gardens for the group tour and the volunteers who supported the project. Garden tours were at the homes of Darlene Branyon, Dee Turberville, Mary McCroan, Lidia Mitchum, and Rhona Watson.

Mary McCroan announced that the plants leftover from the plant sale would be available at the Learning Garden after today's meeting. As AMGA liaison, Kelly announced that the AMGA State Conference would be in Huntsville in 2026. She also announced that there will be an "All About Pollinators" workshop on September 15 in Columbiana. Fall Conference hosted by Blount County Master Gardeners will be on October 2nd. Cindy adjourned the meeting at 11:07 a.m.

*Respectively submitted by,
 Martha Rodgers, Secretary*



Governor's Mansion Report For May 2025

By: Amanda Borden



We have done the typical spring tasks: Pulled old narcissus foliage; pruned azaleas, camellias, and ligustrum (severely); dead-headed snapdragons; planted leftover peppers, tomatoes, vinca, angelonia, salvia, and caladiums; and weeded. Lots of poison ivy this year.



Robin & Darwin trimming in front yard



Bedding plants prior to planting around the grounds



Sue, Rosemary, Linda trimming in side yard



Darwin brings empty tote for yard debris

Robin & Kathy trimming and weeding in Secret Garden





CAMGA Library News

June 2025

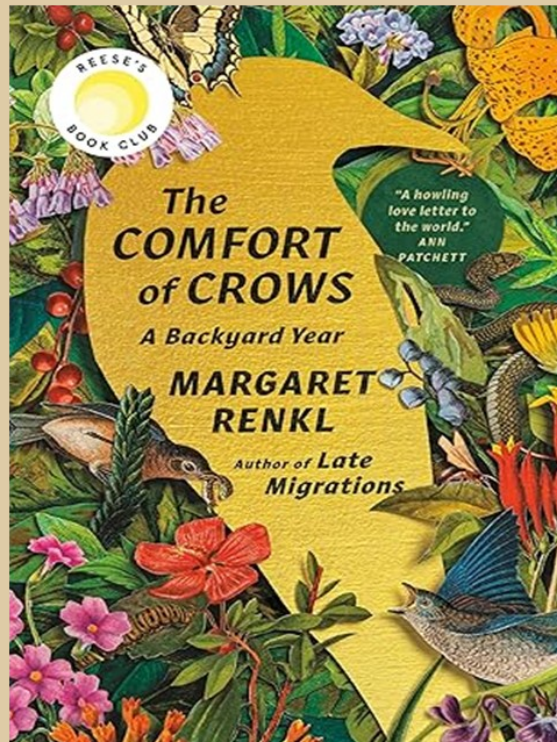
By: Dee Turberville

The Comfort of Crows; A Backyard Year

By Margaret Renkl

Purchased in Memory of Lois Pribulick, Class of 2010

In The Comfort of Crows, Margaret Renkl creates a literary devotional of fifty-two chapters that follow the creatures and plants in her backyard over the course of a year. As you move through the seasons, you will study a crow spied on New Year's Day, watch its resourcefulness and sense of community that develops as a theme for the year. You will end the year with the bluebirds of December, revisiting the nest box they used in the spring. What develops is a portrait of joy and grief – the ongoing pleasures of the natural world and grief over winters that end too soon with songbirds that grow fewer and fewer.



As you read through the chapters, you glimpse the changing rhythms of human life, too. For example, grown children return home during the pandemic and then prepare to depart. The city and the country where Renkl raised her family transform a little more with each passing day. The natural world, now in flux, requires ounces of hope and commitment from the author and each of us.

Illustrated with original artwork by the author's brother, Billy Renkl, The Comfort of Crows is a loving and moving book that traces the passing of seasons, both personal and natural. There is abundant wonder in our own backyard. For example: "Praise Song for the Redbird Who Has Lost His Crest and the Skink Who Has Lost His Tail." Margaret Renkl is an accomplished author and a naturalist with the soul of a poet.



LEARNING GARDEN ADVENTURES

By: Mary McCroan

LEARNING GARDEN - LEANING INTO SUMMER

Flirting with summer, but not quite there yet, the gardens are looking their best. We've had lots of rain, the plants are not yet drooping from heat, some winter/early spring eatables are still going and the summer eatables are just getting started. At the right, the plants in front of the Extension Office provide some ideas for landscaping a home or office that goes beyond the standard row of shrubs at the foundations. Here the mix red Knockout Roses, Purple Lorepetalum and Coral Honeysuckle demonstrate a really nice composition.



Part of the Satellite Pergola project was planting a new rose on a trellis at the back. It's hard to believe that we got this abundant display after just one year! We'll have to try and propagate this one for our sale next year!

As always, there is always weeding going on.
Thanks Bill!



LEARNING GARDEN ADVENTURES (Continued)

Meanwhile, Intern Beth conceived, planned and planted three small beds with edible flowers. A few were uncooperative about growing, but Beth was undaunted and just keep trying more varieties until she found ones that worked. They are called "Learning Gardens" because we learn new things all of the time. Beth is also experimenting with peppers in three more small beds.



Every chance we get, you can find Master Gardeners browsing on eatables. This year the strawberries have been particularly delicious. If you have not have a fully ripe strawberry, warm from the sun, picked freshly off the vine, you are missing out. Stop by the gardens--there are a few left. Blueberries and blackberries are in fruit now and also best picked fresh and sun warmed.

Virginia is always our leader when identifying and terminating (with extreme prejudice) the weeds, but last month she outdid herself digging up several pounds of Smilax vine roots. Smilax is also known as catbrier and greenbrier. There are over 300 species. But most gardeners don't care--they are all equally evil. Digging is the most effective, but hardest way to eliminate Smilax. Another option, is to cut the plant to the ground several times during the growing season. Smilax needs light to survive, so this will work eventually. What doesn't work is Roundup--after the leaves harden up in the spring, they are virtually immune. Any chemical harsh enough to kill the Smilax, will sterilize the soil and kill everything.



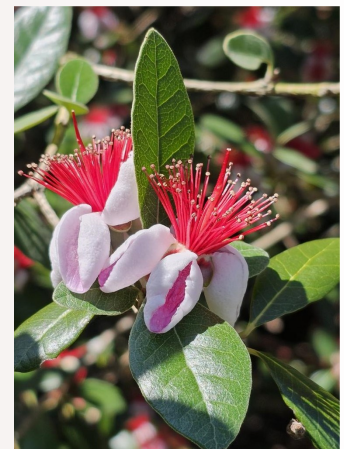
LEARNING GARDEN ADVENTURES (Continued)



The herb garden on the side of the Extension kitchen/auxiliary building is looking particularly fine. The pink yarrow is just getting a bit out of control, but in a good way. It is a wonderful ground cover. And flowering herbs are particularly good as pollinators. Speaking of pollinators, this is also a colorful time of year for the Butterfly Garden in front. Both of these beds require periodic weeding, but this time of year, the diligent gardener reaps the reward! Many thanks to the Learning Garden team. I smile every time I see these gardens. The bees and butterflies smile too.

The Elderberry is worth an honorable mention. This is not my fav plant as I always think it looks a bit weedy. But how cool is it to be able to make your own Elderberry syrup! Reputed to be good for a cold, it is for sure good on pancakes. We have Elderberries growing in the rain garden with frequently wet feet, but also in dry locations with no irrigation. It is an adaptable, easy to grow addition to your eatable garden.

Another eatable in the garden is the Pineapple Guava (*Feijoa sellowiana*/ *Acca sellowiana*). This plant has beautiful flowers in the spring, eatable fruit in the fall and it does double duty as an evergreen screening plant. You can see it in our gardens on the far side of the fenced area. It wants full sun, does not need supplemental water after established and is low maintenance.



And last, there are some plants leftover from the plant sale. Some we plan to “up pot” and keep until next year. Others are available for adoption. Stop by any Thursday morning and Learning Garden volunteers will point you in the right direction



IN DEEPEST SYMPATHY

We extend deepest sympathy to the family of Master Gardener Lois Pribulick. Lois passed on May 8, 2025. She was a member of the 2010 CAMGA Master Gardener Class. Sending thoughts and prayers to the family. Lois will be deeply missed.

Upcoming Workshop




Propagating Hydrangeas

Led by
Jason Powell, Petals from the Past
&
David Doggett, Master Gardener
Aldridge Gardens Volunteer

Join us at Petals from the Past to learn about Growing Hydrangeas, Varieties, and Propagation. Participants are asked to bring an empty, clean, 2-liter clear plastic bottle (Coke or Pepsi). All other supplies will be provided. Lunch will be catered by B&K Bar-B-Que.






June 18, 2025
10:00AM - 2:00PM

60 Participants Max
\$35 Class Fee
Petals from the Past
16034 County Road 29
Jemison, AL 36085



Capital City
Master
Gardener
Association



extension
ALABAMA A&M & AUBURN UNIVERSITIES



ALABAMA
MASTER
GARDENERS
ALABAMA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SYSTEM

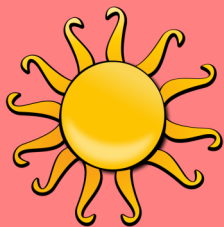
Please sign up today and join us June 18th!
ccmga.square.site

* Refund request must be made 10 days prior to the event to Ann Hamill
hamillhs@gmail.com
* Refunds will be made through Square

* If you have any questions please contact Janell Diggs - (334) 425-9069

* The Alabama Cooperative Extension System (Alabama A&M University and Auburn University) is an equal opportunity educator, employer, and provider. If you need a reasonable accommodation or language access services, contact Mallory Kelley at jones57@aces.edu by 6/6/25

<https://ccmga.square.site/product/propagating-hydrangeas/17>



June 2025

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

1	2 <i>Mansion Gardens workday 8-11 a.m.</i>	3	4 <i>Lanark Gardens Workday 8-11</i>	5 <i>Learning Gardens Workday 8-12, Extension Office</i>	6	7
8	9 <i>Mansion Gardens workday 8-11 a.m.</i> <i>Projects Meeting 10 a.m. Extension Office</i>	10 <i>Lunch & Learn 12-1 p.m. First Presbyterian Church, We- tumpka</i>	11 <i>Lanark Gardens Workday 8-11</i>	12 <i>Learning Gardens Workday 8-12, Extension Office</i>	13	14
15 	16 <i>Mansion Gardens workday 8-11 a.m.</i> <i>Early Bird registra- tion for MG class</i>	17 <i>Monthly CAMGA Meet- ing, 10 a.m. Extension Office</i>	18 <i>Lanark Gardens Workday 8-11</i>	19 <i>Learning Gardens Workday 8-12, Extension Office</i>	20 First Day of Summer	21
22	23 <i>Mansion Gardens workday 8-11 a.m.</i> <i>Rose Maintenance Workday, First Presbyterian Church 9 a.m. — (Rain date June 24)</i>	24	25 <i>Lanark Gardens Workday 8-11</i>	26 <i>Learning Gardens Workday 8-12, Extension Office</i>	27	28
29	30 <i>Mansion Gardens workday 8-11 a.m.</i>					