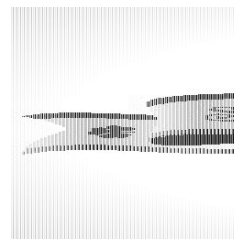


# The Dirt | March, 2024

Mobile County Master Gardeners



## *The President's Message*

by Carol Williams

I am so very proud of all our MCMGs who stood up at the February meeting to receive their stars and confirmation of badges earned! It is certainly the largest single year achievement I have seen in my MCMG years! Thank you all for working so well together and achieving so much for our community. It is an honor for all of us to have such a great group of active MGs!

I also want to thank all of you for coming to learn from **James Miles** at our February General Meeting. I was pleased to greet so many old friends who returned to hear our MCMG founder and former County Agent. He did inspire us with his tools and other gardening helps to keep us gardening even as we age, even in the crazy Mobile heat!

At our March 13 general meeting, recently retired meteorologist, **Dr. Alan Sealls**, will talk of Weatherthings, the name of his website as well as one of three books he just published. Bring your questions and your curiosity as he discusses local weather and its impact on our lives. View his books on Amazon using the QR code below, and he will be available to autograph purchases for you during his visit.

March has many more highlights for MCMG: We begin Festival of Flowers (FoF) display construction on Tuesday, March 6. This year we are celebrating camellias and the people in our area who have MADE THEIR MARK developing new camellia varieties. Some MGs are learning a new craft: waxing camellias. The wax preserves the beautiful blooms for several days, and they will be a beautiful addition to our Festival display this year. We will also need fresh camellias every morning of FoF to keep our display fresh. If you want to help, plan to harvest and deliver to our display downtown any beautiful blooms you can spare. Using a large flat container (like an aluminum roasting pan or plastic crate) place stems in 1/4-to-1/2-inch water in single layer with blooms facing up. Do not remove leaves. If you haven't already volunteered to help with camellias for the display, please contact **Theresa Davidson** at [theresadavidson80@gmail.com](mailto:theresadavidson80@gmail.com) or contact **Jane Finley**, or myself to get the details.

As it's MCMG's year to build the Festival of Flowers display, Baldwin County Master Gardeners will man our display during the FoF, Friday, March 8 through Sunday, March 10, handing out invitations to our Spring Festival at ACES and recruiting interns for our 2024 class. Also, we will need 2 or 3 MCMGs to man the display on Friday evening for Art Walk beginning at 6:00. Remember to bring some cash with you when you visit Cathedral Square March 8-10. Those dollars can be votes for our amazing display to be Best of Show, as well as a generous donation to the Providence Foundation. Contact **Jane Finley** or **Theresa Davidson** to sign up and get the details.

### MCMG Officers

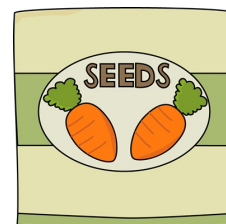
President:  
Carol Williams  
251.367.0473  
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Vice President:  
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251.423.2605  
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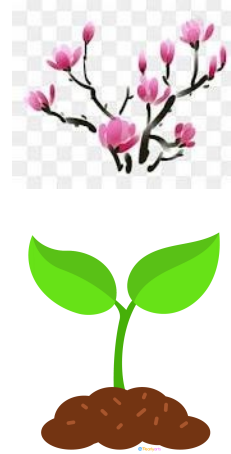
Rec Secretary:  
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Jane Finley  
251.605.0625  
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The following weekend, MCMGs will be staffing the Mobile Botanical Garden's spring plant sale "Plantasia." Our members will be unloading nursery trucks, labeling, and learning about hundreds of beautiful plants, helping shoppers, pulling wagons, filling out sales slips, and loading cars, all while having great fun visiting old friends and making new ones! Remember to get tickets (\$40 or \$35 for members), for their preview party Thursday evening from 4:00 to 7:00 offering hors d'oeuvres and wine and the best choices of new plants. Sign up for one of the Friday or Saturday shifts at our March 10 General Meeting to help out or contact **Theresa Davidson**.



Our own Second Annual Spring Festival is Saturday, March 23 from 9:00 to 2:00. We will have about 3,000 container-ready vegetable plants for sale as well as vendors and food trucks. **Jack Rowe**, the bee man, will be speaking as well as **Alice Marty** and **Leslie Maycock**, **Bill Fink**, and **Harry Surline**. **Bob Howard** asks that all Festival committee chairs report their progress to him by March 1. The next planning meeting will be after the March Board of Directors meeting, about 11:00 in the ACES small auditorium. If you haven't signed up or attended a meeting, please come to this one because the Festival is so much fun!

Remember to finish up entering your 2023 hours, pay annual dues (\$25 no later than February 29), and sign the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for all Extension Master Gardeners no later than February 29. Check with **Mo Moates** ([memo366@att.net](mailto:memo366@att.net)) to find out if you have paid. You can still pay online at our website: <https://mobilecountymastergardeners.org>. While you're there, read Plant of the Month, **Barbara Boone's** description of the beautiful redbud trees we are all enjoying right now.

Everyone is welcome at both our Board meeting, March 6 at 10:00, and our General Meeting, March 13 at 10:00, 9:30 for coffee. Bring treats to help fill up **Lydia Criswell's** tables and \$5 to buy 6 raffle tickets, a donation to our MCMG budget.

**Carol Williams**, President  
251-367-0473



~~~~~Carol's Corner~~~~~

**Riddle:** The answer to February's riddle is *cherry blossoms*.

**March Garden Riddle:**

I wear a crown of petals, in colors bold and fine,  
In gardens of the royals, majestically I shine.  
My scent is quite enchanting, a fragrance that's divine,  
In bouquets and in paintings, elegantly I entwine.

**March smile:** What is the most popular major for plants in college? STEM!

Are you addicted to gardening? Some telltale signs are:

- You have to wash your hair to clean your fingernails.
- You buy a bigger truck to haul gardening supplies.
- You appreciate your Master Gardener badge more than jewelry.
- You would rather shop at a nursery than a clothing store.
- Your preferred reading material is seed catalogs.
- You know the 4 seasons:
  1. Planning the garden.
  2. Preparing the garden.
  3. Gardening.
  4. Planning for the next garden.

See you soon! Wear the **green**.  
Carol

*Please send your answer to [readingweeder72@hotmail.com](mailto:readingweeder72@hotmail.com)*  
All Photo sources: Mobile County Master Gardeners.

## Cicadas...They're Baa-aack!

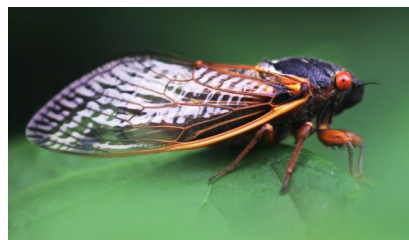
Listen up, gardeners! That identifiable sound is the sound of cicadas and they are heading our way April through June this year. The Midwest and 16 states in the Southeast have not seen an invasion of this magnitude in over 100 years, so be aware and pay attention. According to reports, two broods will emerge, Brood XIX and Brood XIII, so expect trillions of these insects. For us in one of the 16 states, we will never see this occurrence again in our lifetime.

The sound these creatures make are male cicadas trying to attract a female for egg laying purposes to perpetuate the species. Then eggs in tree leaves drop to the ground and burrow underground to begin another long lifecycle. Meanwhile adults die.

A negative consideration is that cicadas eat through leaves and sap, but gardeners can use the dead insects as free fertilizer. If you are concerned about your vegetation during the cicada invasion, place netting around plants.

Compiled by Dirt Diva

Source: US EPA  
BH&G 2023





The Backyard Basics class was held on Saturday, January 27, 2024 at 10:00 a.m. at the Jon Archer Center. Our first speaker of the day was **Dr. Georgios Arseniou**, Asst. Professor & Extension Specialist at Auburn University & ACES. Dr. Arseniou gave an extensive talk on what are the benefits of trees in your yard, what type of trees do you want for your yard, what trees grow well in our area, how to pick out a tree without issues (girdling, double trunks in the pot, etc.), how to correctly plant a tree and tree maintenance.

Our next speaker, **Joel Potter**, Urban Regional Extension Agent, ACES, discussed the basics of tree law - who is responsible for trees on boundaries, right of ways, and limbs that are over fence lines, and what to do about it!

After lunch **William Rowe**, Regional Extension Agent, ACES, discussed creating a backyard habitat for enhancing biodiversity. He discussed in detail what animals you want to attract and how to accomplish it from supplying a water source, hiding places, food sources, plants, trees, and weather protection.

Our final speaker was **Dr. Wesley Anderson**, Assistant Professor & Extension Specialist, Auburn University & ACES. He discussed How to Manage Nuisance in Backyard Wildlife. Dr. Anderson discussed in great detail about how to identify wildlife damage and ways to curb the problems.

**Jack LeCroy** held two successful Soil Test training classes on February 9th and 12th at the Jon Archer Center. The two classes taught students how to read the test results from Soil Test that are offered to the public!. Soil Test Day was held on February 20, 2024, from 9:00 a.m.-12:00 at the Jon Archer Center. Great Job Jack and Master Gardeners!

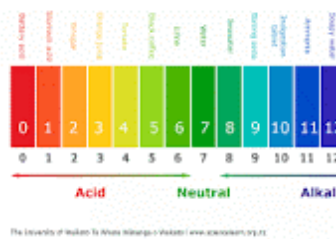
On February 16th, **Marsha Stoltz** along with several other Master Gardeners planted potatoes in the Dream Garden. Upon completion of the potato planting, Marsha and her team placed pine straw in the beds around the Jon Archer Center in preparation for the Spring Festival! Thanks to all that worked this task!

Our monthly Master Gardener Meeting was held on Wednesday, February 14th, at 10:00 AM at the Jon Archer Center in the Large Conference Room. Our Guest Speaker was **James Miles**, our former County Agent. James updated us on the different types of pruning shears (pros and cons) that are available for fruits, vegetables and greenery.

Here is more information on why James is such an asset to us all!  
James graduated with a bachelor's degree in Horticulture from Alabama A&M University in 1990 and was employed by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System in 1991. He served as a Regional Extension Agent (REA) with the Alabama Cooperative Extension System in southwest Alabama for 30 years and retired in 2020. In that position, James was the Commercial Horticulture REA for 11 counties, but his office was in the Jon Archer Agricultural Center, Mobile, AL. He worked in all areas of horticulture on both the home and commercial programming levels.

James was also involved with several On-site Result Demonstrations in the area of Fruits & Vegetables, Turf, and Christmas Trees. He conducted several pesticide meetings over the years, including Worker Protection Standards. Tony Glover and James Miles co-founded the Mobile County Master Program. After retiring from ACES, James was hired in 2020 by NRCS as a Soil Conservation Technician. He assists the Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD) in his assigned area. A major part of his responsibility is to work with landowners to apply and maintain numerous conservation practices.

James loves fishing, traveling, gardening, and cooking. He competes in bass tournaments throughout the southeast U.S.



## What do the letters in pH actually stand for?

Even though we have a clear understanding of what pH means, I realized I did not know what the letters "p" and "H" actually stand for. Seriously, even after many chemistry undergraduate chemistry courses, chemistry

books where I never saw the specific letter terminology, and working in a clinical lab for many years. So, with that in mind, research indicates the following explanation of the letters "p" and "H."

The pH scale was introduced by a Danish biochemist, S. P. L. Sorensen in 1909, using the symbol pH where the "p" meant in German "potenz" or power or exponent of 10 on a log scale and "H" hydrogen. The potential of hydrogen is a measure of acidity or alkalinity of a solution. Pure H<sub>2</sub>O is neutral at a pH of 7, while other solutions below or above 7 would be acidic or alkaline, respectively. Whatever the pH range, it enhances nutrients.

Source: U.S. EPA

## Needed for Dream Garden Native Plants

Master Gardeners! Please note that the Dream Garden needs someone to head the Native Plant section of the Dream Garden. Native plants and shrubs are a hot topic these days, and if you have an interest in this important part of the Dream Garden, please contact **Marsha Stolz**. 251.689.5993 marshastolz@msn.com.

## Is There a Difference in Soils?

Not all soils are created equal. Let's examine each growth medium choice:

**Potting soil** is a mixture of materials like sphagnum moss, bark, perlite, vermiculite, and composted material like coir. It does not include soil and there is a reason for this, which is that potting soil is sterile and absent of fungus, making it safer for containers. The organic material feeds plants while the perlite and/or vermiculite maintains drainage. Some potting mixes are specific for certain plants like succulents, roses, etc. Potting mixes are not recommended for seed starting.

**Garden soil** is topsoil with compost and other organic matter and has a heavier texture than potting soil allowing greater moisture retention. Because garden soil does not contain costlier components like vermiculite and perlite, it is a more frugal choice than potting mix. Just make sure to add necessary nutrients. Garden soil is not recommended for containers due to lack of drainage.

**Seed starting soil** does not contain nutrients required for already growing plants because all that is required is in that seed package. Seed starting medium contains 1 part vermiculite, 1 part perlite, and 2 parts coir, peat moss or peatmoss.

Compiled by Dirt Diva

Source: HGTV  
Just Grow Something podcast

**SAVE THE DATES!**



## **MARK YOUR CALENDARS!**

Mobile County Master Gardener Association, Inc. invites you to **SPRING FESTIVAL and Vegetable Plant Sale** Saturday, March 23, 2024 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM At Mobile County Extension, Jon Archer Center 1070 Schillinger Rd N, Mobile, AL 36608 ♦ Thousands of container compatible vegetable plants will be for sale, including tomatoes, squash, cucumbers, eggplants, and peppers. ♦ What else will be available? Gardening demonstrations, vendors, food, and tours of the Dream Garden. Bring your wagon and join us – **ADMISSION IS FREE** For vendor information, send an email describing what you would like to sell to:

**Bob Howard, MCMGA, at [rhoward51@gmail.com](mailto:rhoward51@gmail.com), or to Diane Anthony, ACES at [jda002@aces.com](mailto:jda002@aces.com) as soon as possible.**

Spring Festival planning update: plans are underway for the festival event. As a MG, if you want to participate, please notify Bob ASAP. Obtain a Spring Festival flyer, post it, and tell your friends, neighbors.

See below is a photo for prepping caladiums for sale at the next MG general meeting and the Spring Festival. Pictured in this activity are: **Mariana Parker, Carolyn Rooks, Tom Rigdon, Susan Hilton, Barbara Boone, Marion Platt, Lydia Criswell, Nina Ward, Kathy Deckbar Donna Kelly, and the official Jon Archer Center Master Gardener dog, Boudreaux, known and loved by all.**



### **Soil Test Day**

February 20, 2024 was designated as Soil Test Day at the Jon Archer Center. The first step for new home gardeners to undertake is a soil test to determine soil nutrients N-P-K, pH, and if indicated, minor soil nutrients. Even previous gardeners should test every 3-4 years. The Soil Test Day purpose was for local residents to come to the center for how to collect a soil sample, and if soil results were already received, how to interpret them, and what nutrients to add to soil based on results. MGs in attendance were the following: **Barbara Boone, Cindy Findlay, Debra Morrow, Lydia Criswell, Leslie Maycock, Bob Howard, Bill Fink, Janine Brunet, and, of course, Jack LeCroy, Diane Anthony, and Joel Potter.**





## 5 Seed Starting Tips

As gardeners, we know each of the following, but it never hurts to be reminded.

1. Avoid planting seeds too deep. \*\*
2. Plant seeds based on days to maturity. \*\*
3. Do not over- or under-water.
4. Avoid planting too densely.
5. Use a good seed starting mix.

\*\* Consult seed packet for details.

Source: Epic Gardening podcast Feb 15, 2024



## Master Gardener of the Month

by Bob Howard

Our Master Gardener of the Month was born and reared in New Orleans, and he received a BA degree from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. **Paul Barnes** moved to Mobile in 1991. He and his wife, Elaine, have three grown children. Paul is retired from Active Duty with the Alabama Army National Guard.

A member of the 2023 Master Gardener class, Paul's hour report really stands out for the month of January. He had 38 hours and has started February strong. In January, Paul installed a rain barrel/water collection system at Beehive Methodist for a vegetable garden. He also volunteered for Taylor Park and Mulherin Home projects, and he participated in revamping the shelving in the greenhouse in the Dream Garden. Paul attended Board and General Meetings as a representative of the 2023 Intern Class. After the February Board Meeting, Paul used his truck to move lattice screens and wreath trees from the Greenery Sale back to the Hitt Road storage for MCMGA.

With his readiness to work hard that he has demonstrated so far, Paul is a real asset to the Mobile County Master Gardener Association.

Congratulations, Paul Barnes, the Master Gardener of the Month!

## Mobile Master Gardeners Reach for the Stars!

At the February 14 Master Gardener General Meeting, **Emily Arellano** announced the recipients of stars which acknowledge the number of hours volunteers have accrued over the last year and/or lifetime cumulative hours. Recipients are listed below, although not all MGs were present for photos.

**Bronze star-** Ted Atkinson, Paul Barnes, Sharon Clasemen, Lisa Davis, Kathy Deckbar, Paul Ezelle, Patti Hicks, Donna Kelly, Carol Mackey, Frank Millsaps, Debra Morrow, Pamela Noerr, Shirley Reynolds, Carolyn Rooks, Gudrun Russel, Mary Ann Tomberlin, and Jeremiah Woolsey

Silver star- Joy Earp, Patricia Ivie, Marion Platt, and Paula Reeves

**Gold star-** Barbara Boone, Janine Brunet, Brenda Howard, Sharon Chambliss, Theresa Davidson, Tracy Duren, Cindy Findlay, Earl Gochey, Earl McLaughlin, Catherine Moates, Karen Ruckert, and Mary Townsley

**Gold Badge-** Barbara Boone, Patricia Gropp, Lydia Criswell, and Harry Surline

Platinum Badge- Jackie Jenkins

Silver with Diamond- Alice Marty

**Top Hours: Marcia Stolz with 9,781.9 hours!!!!**



Silver Star Recipients



Bronze Star Recipients



Gold Star Recipients

## Africatown Heritage House Update

**Dr. Ted Atkinson** (2023) at the Heritage House in Africatown worked with Birmingham Southern College's Southern Environmental Center to address drainage issues, soil amendments, and plant spacing. He helped with mulching the bioswale and went through the medicinal garden with suggestions we had come up with including involving middle school students from Mobile Training School. His community involvement is appreciated by the leaders of the Heritage House, Mobile Training School, and the BSC Southern Environmental Center. See upper and middle photos.

## Strickland Youth Garden Update

Winter greens like bok choy are doing well and are an opportunity for the youth to try new food choices like turnips, radishes, and kale. A social goal for the garden program was met by youth sharing their thoughts about growing and eating the produce versus the lack of fresh produce



in their diet. The youth harvested 8 lbs of turnips which were shared with their Detention Officer and Love All Food Pantry at Central Presbyterian. See lower photo.

Updates by **Carol Dorsey**



## Grafting Demonstration

On February 3, a grafting demonstration was held at **Vaughn Drinkard's** garden and residence at Cornerstone Gardens located off of Government St. Participants included those pictured below.

Photos courtesy of **Patty Hicks** (2022)



Vaughn Drinkard and  
Camellia Grafting  
Choices



Lydia Criswell and  
Kenny Helton



Vaughn Drinkard, Steve  
Hicks and K. Sawada  
members



## A History of "The Fabric of Our Lives"

A field of cotton...  
as if the moon flowered.

-M. Bashu

No wonder cotton, *Gossypium sp.*, is such an important fiber. This genus is composed of at least 50 species, but only 4 are important commercially. First touted as "the fabric of our lives" in 1989 by Cotton, Inc., cotton apparel breathes, it's cool, cost effective, and just plain comfortable. And comfort is essential, especially in the hot and humid South.

No one actually knows precisely how old cotton is, however, bits of cotton bolls and lint have been found in Mexico and estimated to be around 7,000 years old. Cotton may have been domesticated around 5,000 BC in the Sudanese region of the middle Nile basin. In the Indus River Valley area of Pakistan, cotton was grown and woven into cloth about 3,000 years BC. About the same time, cotton was being woven into clothing in the Egyptian Nile region.

Cotton cloth was brought to Europe around 800 AD by Arab merchants. Columbus found cotton growing in the Bahamas in the late 1400s. By around 1500 cotton was known globally.

Cotton seeds are believed to have been planted in Florida in the mid 1500s and in Virginia in the early 1600s. Colonists in the James River region were growing

cotton in the early 1600s.

England was the site of mechanical cotton spinning in 1730 during the Industrial Revolution. Of course, Eli Whitney's cotton gin patent in 1793 spurred along the importance of cotton in the textile industry throughout the world.

Cotton fibers are hair-like structures that grow on the outside of the cotton seed. The longer fibers from raw cotton are called lint. These fibers are the highest quality; shorter fibers of lesser quality are called linters.

Today cotton is the leading fiber around the world and the leading cash crop in the U.S. by virtue of cotton growing supplies, services, and processing, making it America's #1 value-added crop.

Leading worldwide, cotton growers are China, India, Brazil, Pakistan, Turkey, and Uzbekistan. Even though Egypt may not be a leading growing country, Egyptian cotton is a prized cloth. In the U.S. cotton is grown in the states of AL, AR, CA, GA, LA, MS, MO, NM, NC, OK, SC, TN, TX, FL, KS, and VA. Note here that the leading cotton-growing states are in the South. That fact alone brings up historical fodder for another day (think Scarlet O'Hara) which is not the point of this article. Suffice it to say that the listed states provide the climate and the needed soil requirements.

In addition to textiles, cotton is used for paper products, furniture, auto accessories, and from cotton seeds, oil, meal, and cattle feed. Leaves and stalks are usually left in the ground to be plowed under.

Have you ever entered a cotton field merely to pluck a few bolls for a DIY decor project? You will soon find out that a cotton stem is extremely tough, requiring sharp snippers. The bolls have bracts that will definitely cut hands, making you think of all the farm hands that had to pick cotton by hand and hoist a heavy bag over their shoulders. Roots can reach several feet, depending on moisture, aeration, and variety. All in all, cotton is hardy, resilient, and sustainable, becoming a true "fabric of our lives."

Compiled by Dirt Diva

Photo source: Library of Congress  
Source: The National Cotton Council of America  
[aces.edu/resources/cotton](https://www.aces.edu/resources/cotton), Katie Nichols, 2022  
UF/IFAS Extension  
WFU Extension, C. Harvey, 2022



## Bugs and Hisses

### The Boll Weevil

Although attracting other pests such as nematodes, thrips, army worms, and stink bugs, the iconic cotton pest is the boll weevil. Boll weevils left their mark historically and financially.

The boll weevil, *Anthonomus grandis*, is native to Mexico, first detected in Texas probably in the late 1800s, living almost exclusively on cotton plants. In a nutshell, early on what happens is that adults feed on cotton leaves and then bore through the floral bud and lay eggs. When the eggs hatch, the grubs eat their way through everything, leaving no lint valued as cotton fiber.

In the late 1980s the Boll Weevil Eradication Program was initiated and over the next 8 years success was reached in that no major crop destruction was noted in mid to southern Alabama counties.

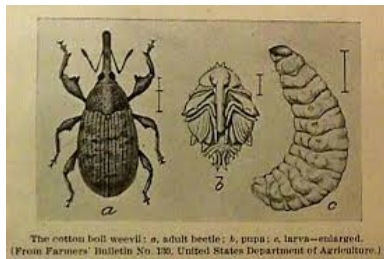
An interesting sidebar to the cotton and boll weevil issue is what took place in the



Alabama Wiregrass. When cotton crops were devastated by the weevils, farmers recovered by planting peanuts. George Washington Carver studied the peanut and saved the day by promoting the peanut as a cash crop, revitalizing the soil and providing an alternative livelihood to farmers. Today Enterprise, AL honors agricultural recovery after the boll weevil with a monument dedicated to the insect. Photos below show businesses with boll weevil caricatures in the store front.

Compiled by Dirt Diva

Photo sources: Bill Stocke, Opp, AL, 2024  
aces.edu/resources/cotton, Scott Graham, et al, 2021  
*Smithsonian Magazine*, 2017



Boll Weevil Life Stages



Boll Weevil Caricatures in  
Enterprise, AL

## Horticulture v. Horti-couture

You may wonder if Dirt Diva has cracked her pottery. Note the similarity of the words in the article title. Is there a relationship between horticulture and horti-couture, e.g. fashion?

There is, in fact, a relationship between gardening and fashion. Legendary fashion designers such as Yves Saint Laurent and Givenchy have often looked to flowers, other plants, and fibers such as cotton for inspiration for clothing floral embellishments, laces, and jewelry. Design choices have



included not only specific plant material, but also color. Design houses publish the annual pantone which this year happens to be fruit-friendly Peach Fuzz.

Having established the gardening to fashion relationship, the other question is the couture to garden connection. There is an impact here to consider, but not necessarily color and design. Here the impact is more of sustainability such as water usage, climate, waste, plastic pollution, and global wages within the fiber industries.

So, whether or not you have ever considered the correlation between gardening and fashion, just take a shopping excursion to your favorite retail apparel or home decor store to observe for creativity generated by flowers and plants.

Compiled by Dirt Diva

Sources: Fashion Institute of America  
[www.kremp.com/floral](http://www.kremp.com/floral) design, C. Kremp, 2023



## The Lonely Bloom

From 8 azalea bushes lining a driveway, one lonely blossom appeared on Valentine's Day. Was this the "scout" bloom waiting to let all its friends know when it's weather-safe to appear? We can't wait to see all 8 bushes full of blooms. Hurry Spring!

Dirt Diva



## From the Greenhouse: The Hoedown

### Soil Blocks

With seed starting season upon us, a small but mighty soil block implement is a very helpful tool to have in your back pocket. Soil blocks have an advantage when starting seeds because it is a fast process and the soil block creates an advantage when transplanting in the garden. The plant establishes itself quicker, since there is less root disruption, and they are less prone to transplant shock. This is due to the increased root surface area and the air pruning of the roots.

The only disadvantage is the cost of the implement, depending on the number of blocks/tool, but usage over time amortizes the cost to a reasonable amount.

Source: U. of Penn Extension



**Needed: high quality photos for the website.  
Please forward pretty flower or shrub pics to  
Mary Townsley: [town8296@bellsouth.net](mailto:town8296@bellsouth.net)**

Note: Gardle scramble results: mulch, mistletoe, seedling, potassium

## In The Loop

by Theresa Davidson

## Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities:



### February Board of Directors Meeting

Jon Archer Center

Wednesday, March 6, 10:00 am

Carol Williams, 251.367.0473

[readingweeder72@hotmail.com](mailto:readingweeder72@hotmail.com)

*EMG Program Support/Local MGA or AMGA Admin*



### February General Meeting

Jon Archer Center

Dr. Alan Seals, Meteorologist

March 13- 9:30 am Social time, 10:00 am Meeting

Carol Williams, 251.367.0473

[readingweeder72@hotmail.com](mailto:readingweeder72@hotmail.com)

*EMG Program Support/Local MGA or AMGA Meeting*

**Festival of Flowers: Planning & Execution**



Jon Archer  
 Tue. Mar 5 noon-4:30/Wed. Mar 6, 8:00 am-4:30pm  
 Cathedral Square  
 Thursday, March 7, 8:00-3:00  
 Multiple volunteer ops: contact Theresa Davidson,  
 251-510-4961, theresadavidson80@gmail.com  
**Community Partner Event/Festival of Flowers**



**Festival of Flowers**  
 Cathedral Square, Downtown Mobile  
 Friday-Sunday, March 8-10  
 10:00 am-5:00 pm  
 2 hour shifts available to man booth  
 Theresa Davidson, 251-510-4961,  
 theresadavidson80@gmail.com  
**Community Partner Event/Festival of Flowers**



**First Friday at the Gardens**  
 First Peek at the 2024 Plant Sale  
 Presentation by the Plant Sale Team  
 March 1, 10:00 am  
 Botanical Center Plaza, under the tent  
 Free for MBG members, otherwise daily admission  
**CEU for presentation**



**MBG Spring Plant Sale: Plant Trucks are A-comin'!**  
 Mobile Botanical Gardens/Marketplace;  
 T, 2-27, 10:30; W 2-28, 11:00; TH, 2-29, time ??;  
 T, 3-5, 8:45; T, 3-12, 8:45  
 Theresa Davidson, 251-510-4961,  
 theresadavidson80@gmail.com  
**Community Partner Event/MBG**



**MBG Spring Plant Sale**  
 Mobile Botanical Gardens, Marketplace  
 Thursday, March 14, Preview Party (ticketed event)  
 Friday and Saturday, March 15 & 16  
 2 shifts: 8:30-noon, noon-3:00  
 Theresa Davidson, 251-510-4961,  
 theresadavidson80@gmail.com  
**Community Partner Event/MBG**



**SPRING FESTIVAL and Vegetable Plant Sale**  
 Jon Archer Center  
 Saturday, March 23, 9:00 am - 2:00 pm  
 Multiple Volunteer Opportunities  
 Bob Howard, 251.423.3108, rwhoward51@gmail.com  
**Growing Food Plants/Host Educational Event**



### Market in the Park

Cathedral Square, Downtown Mobile, 300 Conti St.  
 Man the Master Gardener Tent  
 Saturdays: 5/4, 5/11, 5/18, 5/25, 6/1, 6/8, 6/15, 6/22, 6/29, 7/6  
 Coordinators to share responsibilities needed!  
*Community Event/Market in the Park*

## Ongoing Volunteer Opportunities:



### Monthly Garden Zoom Class

Jack LeCroy  
 3rd Thursday of the month, 6-7 pm  
 Diane Anthony, jda0002@aces.edu, 251.574.8445 or  
 www.aces.edu/go/gardenzoom to register  
**CEU**



### Master Gardener Helpline Tuesday - Friday.

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

| Dec        | AM Counties | AM Help                         |
|------------|-------------|---------------------------------|
| Sat Dec 02 |             |                                 |
| Sun Dec 03 |             |                                 |
| Mon Dec 04 | HELPER      | Lydia Criswell<br>Volunteer All |
| Sat Dec 09 |             |                                 |
| Sun Dec 10 |             |                                 |
| Mon Dec 11 | HELPER      | Lydia Criswell<br>Volunteer All |

### Master Gardener Statewide Helpline Mondays

Please commit to Mondays on the Statewide Helpline.  
 Sign up online under **'Helpline Calendar'**.  
 Morning Shift: 8:30 -12:00  
 Afternoon Shift - 12:00- 3:30.  
 Cindy Findlay, 251.786.4245, cndyfindly@att.net  
*Create &Share Info w/ Public/Helpline*



### Prepare Snacks for MG General Meetings:

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



### Orchid Society Meeting

Mobile Japanese Garden meeting room, 700 Forest Hill  
 4th Sunday of the month (except June & Dec), 2:00  
 Lynn Coleman, 251.622.3939, lynncolman411@gmail  
**CEU for the presentation**



## Upcoming Show and Sale!!



### Gulf Coast Herb Society

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

**NEXT MEETING: March 26**

Beth Poates, 251.342.6508, poates57@hotmail.com

**CEU for presentation**



### Camellia Club of Mobile

Jon Archer Center

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

**NEXT MEETING: March 10**

mobilecamellia.org, Camellia Club of Mobile FB Group

**CEU for presentation**



### K Sawada Camellia Club

Most meetings at Mobile Botanical Gardens

1st Sunday of month: Nov. 5, 2023- March 2024, 2:00 pm

**NEXT MEETING: March 3**

Kenny Helton, 251.459.5555, kehelton@comcast.net

**CEU for presentation**



### Mobile Japanese Garden

700 Forest Hill Drive

Volunteer your MG skills any morning/afternoon.

Text Don to coordinate!

Don Fry, 251.422.8466, don.fry@comcast.net,

mobilejapanesegarden.com

**Growing Ornamental Plants/Garden**



### Community Gardens:

Grow More Give More with Mobile Urban Growers:

mobileurbangrowers.org

Community gardens in Midtown, Downtown, + other neighborhoods, school sites. Search FB "Mobile Urban Growers" and Community Gardens

Carol Dorsey, 251.209.3483, bcdorsey63@gmail.com

mobileurbangrowers@gmail.com

**Growing Food Plants/Garden**



### Mobile Medical Museum

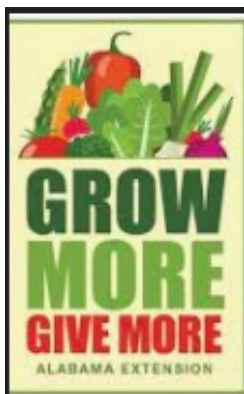
Robert Thrower Medicinal Garden

Curating and maintaining everchanging collection + gardening with Full Life Ahead, serving adults with intellectual disabilities, usually on Wednesdays

1664 Springhill Avenue

Carol Dorsey, 251.209.3483, bcdorsey63@gmail.com

**Growing Food Plants/Therapeutic Horticulture**



### Grow More Give More

Statewide Master Gardeners initiative to encourage food gardening and sharing produce

2 Ambassadors needed: attend meetings, target areas for grant development/grant funds fulfillment

Carol Dorsey, 251.209.3483, bcdorsey63@gmail.com

**Growing Food Plants/Garden**



### Speakers Bureau

\*Alice Marty, 251-709-1125, amarty@comcast.net

\*Barbara Boone, 251-680-8263, boonebama@live.com

**Create & Share Info w/ Public/ Creating Educ.**

**Materials**

(See the table below for a list of upcoming Bureau opportunities and the speaker for each. **Speakers are needed!** If no speaker is listed, please contact Alice or Barbara, if you'd like to volunteer.)

| Date    | Location                   | Time        | Topic                          | Speaker       |
|---------|----------------------------|-------------|--------------------------------|---------------|
| 3-8-24  | MPL West                   | 10:30-12:00 | Down & Dirty: Gardening Basics | Bill Fink     |
| 4-9-24  | Belle Fountain Garden Club |             | Ornamental Grasses             | Barbara Boone |
| 4-12-24 | MPL West                   | 10:30-12:00 | <b>Choose a topic</b>          | ??            |
| 4-27-24 | MPL West                   | 10:30-12:00 | Grocery Store Botany (Kids)    | Karen Ruckart |
| 5-10-24 | MPL West                   | 10:30-12:00 | <b>Choose a topic</b>          | ??            |
| 5-14-24 | MPL West                   | 10:30-12:00 | Container Gardens (Teens)      | ??            |



### Office Manager/Phone Lines/MG Helpline

Cindy Findlay, 251.786.4245, cndyfindly@att.net



**DREAM GARDEN:** Join a Garden Room (**See below**)

Jon Archer Center

Marsha Stolz, 251.689.5993, marshastolz@msn.com

Contact Marsha **or** a Garden Leader to volunteer and work as needed.

***Growing Ornamental Plants/Garden OR  
Growing Food Plants/Garden***

**The Gardens:**

**Grandma's Pass Along Garden**

Catherine Moates, 251.366.6163, memo366@att.net

Olivia Reinhaus, 251.458.7383, omcvea@gmail.com

**Native Garden**

Open

**Shade Garden**

Bob Howard, 251.423.3108, rwhoward51@gmail.com

**Vegetable Garden**

Marsha Stolz, 251.689.5993, marshastolz@msn.com

Mary Ann Days, 251.391.5806, masdays@comcast.net

**Herb Garden**

Mary Ann Days, 251.391.5806, masdays@comcast.net

**Cottage Garden & Formal Garden**

Glenda Eady, 251.342.4248, jerryeady2@comcast.net

**Building Garden**

Marsha Stolz, 251.689.5993, marshastolz@msn.com

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**Did You Know?**

When you shop The Artful Gift Shop at Mobile Botanical Gardens, look for the work of two of our Master Gardeners: Susan Hilton, Potter, and Sharon Claseman, Jewelry Designer.



**Mark your calendars for these SPECIAL EVENTS:**



We Invite You to Join Us  
for the  
**MOBILE AREA ORCHID SOCIETY'S**  
**45TH ANNUAL**  
**ORCHID SHOW & SALE**  
February 23 - 25, 2024

Hosted by



**Friday**

Exhibit Set Up 8 AM  
Orchid Sales 10 AM  
Close 5 PM

**Saturday**

AOS Judging 8 AM  
Orchid Sales 9 AM  
Exhibit Viewing Noon  
Close 5 PM

**Sunday**

Show Open 9 AM  
Orchid Sales 10 AM  
Close 3 PM

For More Information  
[info@maos.com](mailto:info@maos.com) / 251.709.1008



**Vegetable Plant Sale 🍷 Free Admission**

**Saturday, March 23, 2024**

**9:00 - 2:00**

**Mobile County Extension at Jon Archer Center**  
1070 Schillinger Rd. N.  
Mobile AL 36608

Thousands of Container-Compatible Vegetable  
Plants for Sale including: tomatoes, squash,  
cucumbers, eggplants and peppers.

**Gardening Demonstrations, Vendors,  
Food, Tours of the Dream Garden.**

**For vendor information, send an email describing what you would like to sell to :**

Bob Howard, MCMGA, at [rhoward51@gmail.com](mailto:rhoward51@gmail.com), or to  
Diane Anthony, ACES at [jda002@aces.com](mailto:jda002@aces.com) as soon as possible



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

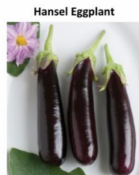




Spacemaster Cucumber



H-19 Little Leaf Cucumber



Hansel Eggplant



White Star Eggplant



Multipik Summer Squash



Black Beauty Zucchini



Purple Beauty Pepper



Cupid Bell Pepper



Black Magic Jalapeno Pepper



Golden Cal Wonder Pepper



Black Cherry Tomato



Sungold Tomato



Cherokee Purple Tomato



## 2024 Alabama Master Gardeners Association State Conference



Welcome to the **2024 Alabama Master Gardeners Association State Conference**, hosted by the **Baldwin County Master Gardeners**. We are thrilled to invite you to join us for our annual gathering of gardeners, educators, and enthusiasts from across the state. This year's conference theme is "Paradise Found," We can't wait to explore the many ways we can cultivate our own little corners of paradise.

The conference will be held on **April 22nd – 24th, 2024**, at the **Daphne Civic Center** located in beautiful **Daphne, Alabama**. Over the course of

three days, attendees will have the opportunity to participate in a variety of workshops, lectures, and networking events, all focused on gardening,

sustainability, and environmental stewardship.

We believe that gardening is more than just a hobby – it's a way of life. By bringing together the brightest minds in gardening and horticulture, we hope to inspire and empower our attendees to create their own little pieces of paradise- a community garden, a backyard oasis, or a thriving urban farm.

So join us in Daphne, Alabama, as we explore the many ways we can cultivate paradise in our lives and communities. We can't wait to see you there!

To Register: On-line registration is preferred. To register and pay on-line by credit card, click on link:

<http://c.planetreg.com/AMGA2024CONF>

NOTE: A personal PayPal account is NOT required to register on-line. PayPal is the credit card processing service and will accept VISA and MasterCard.

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## Marion Drummond Lecture Series at MBG

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

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

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

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**Kathryn Aalto**, New York Times Bestselling Author

The Natural World of Winnie-The-Pooh: A Walk Through The Forest That Inspired The 100-Acre Wood and Writing Wild: Women Poets, Ramblers, and Mavericks Who Shape How We See the Natural World

**Thursday, March 21, 2024**

9:00am – 3:00pm

Morning and afternoon book presentations with lunch included. Kathryn is an American landscape designer, historian, writer, and lecturer living in Exeter, England.

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**Carol Reese**, Horticulturist and nationally-known speaker Native Plants: Facts, Fabrications and Foibles

**Saturday, May 4, 2024**

9:00am – 3:00pm

Carol's program celebrates the many native and non-native plants that provide great beauty, durability and excellent nutrition for our beloved wildlife. The day includes the morning seminar, lunch, and a an after-lunch interactive session: Why Did My Plant Die??

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


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

**Saturday, June 22, 2024**

9:00am – 2:00pm

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

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## Mission Statement

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

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



Mobile County Master Gardeners | 1070 Schillinger Rd. N., Mobile, AL 36608 251.574.8445

[Unsubscribe mobilemastergardeners@gmail.com](mailto:unsubscribe@mobilemastergardeners@gmail.com)

[Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by [info@mobilecountymastergardeners.org](mailto:info@mobilecountymastergardeners.org)