PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE
by John Atkinson
EVERY DAY IS A GIFT!

Where do we go from here? What do we do with this gift?

First: Let me say “thank you” for a remarkable year! My commitment to Gwinnett County Master Gardeners will continue, but it is time for me to “move ahead” to a different area of service. We have a new crew coming in that will keep the boat afloat and steer us on a course that will move us in new directions.

We have a bank of talent in our current membership. Help your leadership tap into your interests and talents. Try something new! This may be your year to take the opportunity you had put aside. Master Gardeners are especially equipped and motivated to train and share their skills with their neighbors about plants and growing things. They can work with youth and elderly in gardening projects that will continue for years.

Gardening and growing things has not changed, but it has been modified by increasing and improving knowledge and scientific research. Research in state university programs gives us insight into things we thought were known, but only suspected before. As we are provided with new research we perfect our plant knowledge and gardening skills.

Learn to listen. Part of teaching is learning. We all learn by listening and doing. We have so much to learn and so little time.

Most folks who “Ask a Master Gardener” simply want to be heard. “I have a question. What do you think?” The solution often not a perfect response, but often a reverse question: Tell me about your situation; “What do you think?”

Listening is an active skill. It is not simply the other person’s turn to talk. We need to connect with that conversation by anticipating what’s next. Get on the level with the person who is speaking. Develop your listening skills by thinking of a response that will
encourage the other party to keep talking.

Finally, let’s learn the language. Learning the common names of plants is not easy, but sometimes two different plants can have the same name in different regions. (How many plants are known as “spurge”?) Using scientific names adds authority to your speaking. Whoever said Latin is a dead language has not spent time in horticulture. Make friends with your garden one name at a time. There is a certain rhythm and melody to the botanical names of plants.

REVERIE

By Helen Bath Swanson

A warm and cheery fire roars merrily
And shadows dance about the darkened room.
Beside the hearth a gardener sits and dreams
Of sunny days, of flowers in full bloom.
Some hollyhocks should tower near the fence,
Bright red. Ones that the bees can’t help but find.
The trellis at the gate again must wear
Blue morning glories or the rosy kind.
To lend a bit of distance to the scene,
Close to the rear I’ll plant in shades of blue:
The tall and stately larkspur, double ones
Of course I’ll put in scabiosa, too.
I couldn’t do without a pansy bed
Snapdragons make such beautiful bouquets
Frilled zinnias and yellow marigolds
Add just the proper touch to autumn days.
The flowers grow and bloom with loveliness
Until a sound destroys the fantasy
A burning ember falls and I must leave
My garden and my charming reverie.
IN MEMORY OF
DON FREIDUS
PRESIDENT EMERITUS
(1935—2008)

Don Freidus, Class of 1993, passed away after a long battle with cancer. He was the Greenhouse Manager at Gwinnett Tech from 1993 to 1994. Many of you will remember Don sitting behind the desk at the annual Gwinnett Extension Plant Sale. Don volunteered at the Extension Office every Friday from 1993 until 2007. In 1994, Don founded the Gwinnett County Master Gardeners Association. He also started our Annual Plant Sale at the Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center. The Gwinnett County Master Gardeners are planning a memorial garden in his honor at Temple Beth David in Snellville where Don was an active member. All who knew the rascal will miss him.

The following is a tribute from Steve Pettis:

Dear Fellow Gwinnett County Master Gardeners:

I was very saddened to hear about Don’s passing. I know that you liked him very much and considered him a good friend. I too liked him very much and still think of him fondly.

In fact, just the other day I was telling a friend about Don, the guy who came in to man the Master Gardener chair one morning per week when I was in Extension. Don would come in early and he and I would be the only ones there. He and I would fix coffee and laugh at the fact that we made it so strong that we were the only ones who would drink it. He would tell me nearly every time we were making coffee about the time Ms. Shirley nearly spit it out on the floor after he had fixed it years ago. In fact she wouldn’t drink coffee on the day Don was in. That one really broke him up and he would nearly fall on the floor laughing.

A story Don told me often was how crazy he used to drive the former county agent. Don would laugh so hard he’d nearly fall out of his chair when he would recount how Steve Brady, after overhearing him giving a caller facetious advice, came running out of his office to yell at him for messing with the customers. It seemed he really liked to give Brady a hard time.

As for me, Don was a pleasure to talk to. We had many discussions on varying topics and they were always stimulating. His razor sharp wit, extreme intelligence and chutzpa made the week for me. Unfortunately circumstances did not allow us to become closer pals and we did not stay in touch. I will remember him and feel privileged to have known him. We were friends despite how brief it might have been.

Sincerely,

Steve D. Pettis
The beautiful water lilies that graced your pond with blooms this summer need special care this winter. They are tropical in origin and will not become dormant to survive our winters unless you live in Zones 9 or 10. There are several methods for over-wintering these plants. One will be just right for you!

The key to successful over-wintering is the following: It is extremely important not to place the water lily into the pond before Mother Nature is ready for it. This means DO NOT place the plant into the pond before the water temperature is at least 70 degrees F even if the air temperature is high! Cold water will bring about the demise of the plant and negate your hard work and patience.

The simplest and most successful way to insure survival of these tropical plants is storage in a greenhouse. There they will over-winter nicely in a tub or other container. The object is just survival not plant growth, so container size is not crucial. Provide only 10% to 20% of the space that you allotted to the plants in your pond. Do not fertilize them. Next year, when the minimum water temperatures reach 70 degrees F, it will be safe to repot and replace the water lilies into you pond.

Very small plants may be over-wintered in an aquarium. For this method, a viviparous lily (one that makes new plantlets at the leaf node) works best. The goal with this method is to keep your lily alive without too much growth.

The small new plantlet should be separated from the parent plant no later than the middle of October. Use a 4” or 6” plastic pot without drainage holes or plug the holes on the ones you already have. Pot the plantlet into it. Place the potted lily into a 20 gallon or larger aquarium. Place a fluorescent grow light over the top of the tank. This must be placed as close as possible to the tank top. The aquarium water will need to be kept warm with a heater. Water temperature should be 70 to 75 degrees. Too high temperatures will encourage too much plant growth and too low temperatures will result in an unthrifty plant for the spring season. When spring arrives and the water temperatures are 70 to 75 degrees, the plant may be potted into a 10 quart or larger container and set into the pond for you to enjoy.

Not everyone has access to a greenhouse or an aquarium, if this is a problem for you, another method is available. This technique is used by plant propagators. It will work because of the lifecycle of the tropical lily in its native habitat. Around the end of September which is the end of the growing season for lilies in our zone, skip the last fertilization. The plant will become stressed (hungry). This stress results in a tuber. Allow the plant to remain in the pond until all the leaves are dead. This is a process that may take several frosts to accomplish. Now search under the crown of the plant for a hard tuber. Successful storage of our lily depends on finding this hard tuber.

There may be a very large tuber about the size of a baseball or a very small one about the size of an acorn. There may also be several small tubers growing around the larger one. The smaller tubers are more likely to produce good plants next spring than the larger ones.

Let the tuber air-dry for a few days if it still has root or stem tissue attached to it. A callus will have formed to protect the tuber from dehydration. The debris will snap clean from the tuber. Wash the
tuber and place it into a jar or plastic bag filled with distilled water and then store it in a cool, dark place. The temperature should be around 50 to 65 degrees F.

Check the container each month. If the water is discolored or foul smelling, replace it with fresh distilled water. If you used a hard tuber and took care to clean it properly, it should survive the winter.

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USING STONE FOR THE BONES OF THE GARDEN
By Shannon Pable

Harmony in the garden is created when there’s balance. In Eastern Philosophy it is the gentle balance of Yin and Yang. Yin and Yang are basically two energies. Yin is the dark, passive, grounding, and a cooler energy. Yang is the light, active, and warmer energy. Notice how the most harmonious gardens will contain a balance of stone, plants, architecture (something man-made), and water (though real water can sometimes be ‘mimicked’ successfully). Occasionally this balance is so subtle, soothing, and perfectly natural, that you may not notice… Bravo!! This is a job well done by the garden designer.

When I see the natural and asymmetrical use of stone in the garden, I’m immediately reminded of how Asian gardens have influenced our western gardens. So often in our Western culture, we naturally want to fill up the space with plants, plants, and more plants. Sure, I’ve been guilty of this too…being a plant addict. But we must remind ourselves of the balance and leave room for stone, water, a dash of architecture, and some ‘space’.
The stone adds structure, grounding, coolness, strength, and mystery of the ancient. Plants soften the edges; add life and light, and sometimes movement when the element of wind is introduced. Water brings animation and the dynamics of activity, an affirmation that your garden is alive! The touch of architecture reminds us of our creativity (though it might be very geometric) and connection to the natural world; an art form created by our hands using Mother Nature’s elements.

We can use stone in a variety of ways in our landscape. Not only is it decorative, it’s highly functional. Stone can be used to create walkways, patios, walls, terracing, architecture, water features, or decorative accents for balance. Stone is available in a variety of shapes, colors, and sizes. Let’s first discuss the different types most commonly available in our area and a few terms you will run across:

- **Field Stone** (typically Tennessee or Pennsylvania) - is an aged sandstone rock that is gray to tannish in color. It’s also from the surface, giving it more of an aged and weathered appearance. Its surface is typically more uneven than a flagstone. It can be used for walls, steps, and stack. Thicker fieldstone works well for water features.

- **Flag stone** (bluff rock) - is also a sandstone rock that is quarried from sheets of sedimentary layers of rock. Flagstone, in contrast to fieldstone, is usually warmer earth tones such as yellow ochre or terra cotta. It has a much smoother surface than fieldstone. It’s often used for dry stacking of barrier walls to sidewalks, pavers, etc. Pavers can be “soft set” (no mortar) or set using mortar.

- **Stack stone** - This can be a field or flagstone. It ranges from thick, medium, to thin (veneer) in thickness. The thin pieces are approximately 1 inch thick, medium 1.5 to 2 inches, and thick is 2 to 3 inches. A stack stonewall can be a dry stack (no mortar) or a mortar stack.
• Boulders- this includes a variety of shapes, sizes, colors, and patinas. My favorite is mossy basket boulders. These are somewhat rounded, smoother than a fieldstone, with a natural moss patina on them. They work well around natural looking water features and dry creek beds.

• River rock - has rounded edges and surface smoothed by the water. It comes in two shapes "rounds" and "flats". It’s in a variety of sizes from "egg" size on up to basketball size. It has a variety of uses from dry creek beds, to walls, and step stones (for flatter stones and can be sunk into the ground).

• Cobbles, rubble, and "brick"- are used for stack walls, paths, borders and typically uniform in shape and size making it easy for installation. The bricks are typically long narrow pieces made from flagstone (used as borders, edging, step risers, walls).

• Aggregates (gravel) and sand - this would include the smaller stones and chips such as pea gravel, marble chips, granite chips, slate chips, Alabama rose stone which can be used in walkways or between pavers. This also includes crushed granite sand, which is typically used for dry laid (soft set) stone.

• Natural shape vs. rectangular (geometric) cut- more often you will find flag stone in a natural irregular shape. However, it can also be purchased in precut rectangular shapes, which works well when laying a patio that is of a rectangular shape. Precut also works well when laying steps or stair treads that are of a consistent size and more formal in appearance.

• Tumbled- typically cobbles (sometimes flagstone) are tumbled in a machine to smooth the edges.

Because it takes years to become a skilled stone mason and a well trained eye to place stone in the landscape, you may want to consult with a professional first and take careful notes as they install your project for you. Or perhaps you can take on a smaller project such as a small terrace, a small soft-set patio, or a small water feature. If you are a Do-It-Yourselfer, here are some general guidelines to follow when using stone in your landscape:

• When building stack stone terraces, angle the wall slightly so it leans towards the slope you’re terracing. And always be sure to have proper drainage installed at the base of the wall/terrace (you will probably want to consult with a landscape architect and a stone mason when building large walls, terraces, and other structures).

• Using fewer but larger rocks in a water feature and as decorative accents is much more appealing and natural looking than a lot of little stones.

• Boulders typically look bigger at the stone yard...so pre measure the space at home to be sure of the size at the time of purchase.

• When setting large boulders, partially submerse the stone into the earth. They are best when laid into a slope. Don’t lay them on top of the ground as if it fell off of the truck.

• Typically groupings of 1 or 3 boulders look best. In Japanese gardens, a grouping of 3 boulders represents the Buddha stone (Mida buhtsu- the male stone), the Goddess stone (Kwannon- the
female stone), Child’s stone (Seishi). These 3 stones are of 3 different heights. The first, tallest, being a vertical looking stone and the others being progressively smaller and horizontal.

- Since stone is available in so many colors, be sure it blends with the colors and materials of your home.

- Avoid laying large boulders at a 90-degree angle perpendicular towards the house or other structures. This is visually unsettling (and a major Feng Shui faux pas!). Rather, lay the boulders parallel or at a slight angle towards the home or structure.

- Stick to the same color scheme of rock. You can successfully use 2 different types of rock if they are in the same color pallet.

- Straight lines and symmetrical layout will yield a formal appearance. Use sweeping curves (no squiggles) and asymmetry for a more natural appearance.

- If laying pavers in a natural area around tree roots, use “soft set” pavers (no mortar). This is a permeable surface that will allow the earth to absorb water. A thin layer (about 1 to 2 inches) of crushed granite sand is evenly spread over the area and the pavers are set on top. Then overlay (by sweeping) more crushed granite sand (or soil if planting a ground cover between pavers) between the pavers.

- If unsure about “where” and “how” to add your decorative stone accents, look to nature for ideas. Go on a hike in the mountains and look at natural formations...Mother Nature is exquisite!

Stone is in the garden for a lifetime...it is ageless. You don’t have to water or prune it, insects don’t eat it, doesn’t lose its color in winter, and it stays the same size and in the same place year after year. Enjoy the new bones of your garden!
EDIBLE WILD LANDSCAPE: COSSACK ASPARAGUS

By Dan Willis

You don’t have to travel to the steppes of Russia to find this wild edible plant. “Cossack asparagus” is another name for the common cattail, sometimes called bulrush. There are probably very few people who don’t know what a cattail is or what it looks like. When mature, the cattail is easily recognized by its brown “hot dog on a stick” appearance.

Technically, male and female cattail blossoms are flowers, but extremely small. When they open, the tiny female flowers are greenish but before long they turn into the familiar brown cylinder. Male flowers don’t hang around very long. They grow on a yellow spike that juts out of the top of the brown cylinder, and when their pollen is ripe, it drops on the female flowers below. Then the male flowers fall off, leaving the familiar hot dog-on-a-stick.

There are even fewer people who know that the common cattail has many edible and medicinal parts. Almost every edible part can be harvested from late spring, through summer, and into early fall. Euell Gibbons in his book Stalking the Wild Asparagus called it the “Supermarket of the Swamps.” The cattail, a member of the grass family, is so versatile it can be used raw in salads, as a cooked vegetable, ground into flour, pickled, and as a substitute for potatoes.

Dense stands of cattails are found from the Arctic to the tropics in shallow water at the low end of farm fields; follow railroad tracks, near ponds, lakes, and marshlands. In North America, it is a single genus with three species, all of which are edible: the Common Cattail (Typha latifolia), the Dominican or Southern Cattail (Typha domingensis), and the non-native Narrowleaf Cattail (Typha augustifolia). If you plan on gathering some cattails, put your boots on since it’s a muddy and messy business. You don’t need to worry about harming the plant by pulling it up since the colony grows from a system of branching, underground rhizomes. If you wish to do some culinary experiments with cattails, avoid those growing in areas exposed to pollution from traffic or chemical runoff.

Young cattail shoots resemble the non-poisonous sweet flag (Acorus calamus), the poisonous wild flag (Iris spp.), and the poisonous daffodil (Narcissus spp.). They are similar in appearance to the cattail but the distinctive fruiting spikes are absent. None of the look-a-likes grow more than a couple of feet tall, so by mid-spring, the much larger cattail becomes unmistakable.

In the early spring when the plants are 4 to 16 inches tall, young shoots (rounded flower stems, not the leaves) can be easily pulled from the rootstocks. Peeling off the leaves reveals a tender white core. These can be eaten raw or in a salad and taste like mild, raw cucumbers. They can also be sliced and sautéed in a little butter for a delightful side dish. The young shoots can be gathered, peeled, boiled, and pickled in hot vinegar. They may also be blanched and frozen for use during the winter. Be aware that while collecting the shoots your hands will end up with a sticky, mucilaginous jelly. The Indians applied this jelly to wounds, sores, boils, external inflammation, and to soothe pain.

As the stalks reach about 2 to 3 feet tall, they can still be harvested and peeled to remove the tough, woody outer layer. When the peeled, white inner stalks are steamed, they taste similar to cabbage.
The Russians have a fondness for the steamed stalks thus the name “Cossack asparagus.” The shoots provide beta-carotene, niacin, riboflavin, thiamin, potassium, phosphorus, and vitamin C.

In late spring and early summer, the young bloom spikes (flowers) emerge that will later form the brown, fuzzy cattail head, popular in dried flower arrangements. The young bloom spikes, found in the center of the plant, form little enclosed cylindrical packages that can be detected only when you’re close to the plant. The young blooms, about 8 to 12 inches long, are about the diameter of your little finger, and enclosed in a papery sheath. Peel back the papery sheath (leaves), as you would shuck corn, and you will find both the male portion at the tip and the female portion lower down. These “cob” spikes inside the papery sheath are what you eat.

You want to eat the male portions of the immature, green, flower head. You can discard the small female portion. Steam these spikes about 7-10 minutes, roll in butter and salt, and nibble the buds off the hard central core. The taste is reminiscent of corn (a distant relative) and asparagus. The flowers have a very dry texture and are almost unpalatable when cold. After cooking, it’s easier to shave the flower buds off the woody core and add some salt and melted butter to keep them warm. I don’t know how to describe the taste except that it’s good. It is a good vegetarian source of protein, unsaturated fat, and calories and also contains beta-carotene and minerals.

The rootstocks or rhizomes are typically ¼ to 1-1/4 inches in diameter and up to 27 inches long. They grow 3 to 8 inches below the soil surface. After digging them, you’ll need to peel the outer spongy layer away to find the white inner core. The edible core is very fibrous and filled with a starchy material. Cut the core into 4-inch pieces and allow them to dry for a day or two. You can then rub off enough “cattail flour” to add it to a biscuit mix for flavor. Unless you’re starving, I can’t recommend going to the time and trouble of harvesting, peeling, drying, and processing the rhizomes.

Just before the summer solstice, the male blossoms, located above the brown female bloom spike, ripen and produce significant quantities of bright yellow pollen as fine as talcum powder. Cattail pollen beats bee pollen not only in price but also freshness and nutrition. This corn flavored pollen is easily gathered by wading through the cattail marshes and gently bending each bloom spike over and dusting it into a large paper bag or a plastic baggy. Do this during a calm, dry day. Gather only enough fresh pollen for immediate use (about 3-4 cups). Use it as a flour extender for biscuits, breads, and cakes. Since the pollen doesn’t rise, a rule of thumb is to mix it with about two or three times the amount of flour in a given recipe. Follow the recipe for your favorite pancake mix, except replace one-third of the pancake flour with the cattail pollen. The pancakes will have a golden color when cooked and an excellent flavor. You can also eat the pollen raw, sprinkled on yogurt, oatmeal, and salads.

One of the uses for cattail leaves is rush seating. The rushes are usually gathered in midsummer when the plants are fully mature, and carefully dried in the open air to prevent molding. They can then be bundled and stored. The dried rushes need to be soaked before using to make them pliable. Archeologists have excavated cattail mats over 10,000 years old from a Nevada cave. The Internet has plenty of information on rush weaving,

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**GRANDMA’S CURES**

By Grandma Moses

**Headache Pain Relief:** Did you know that drinking two glasses of Gatorade can relieve headache pain almost immediately without the unpleasant side effects caused by traditional “pain relievers?”

**Burns:** Did you know that Colgate toothpaste makes an excellent salve for burns?
Stuffy Nose: Before you head to the drugstore for a high-priced inhaler filled with mysterious chemicals, try chewing on a couple of curiously strong Altoids peppermints.

Achy Muscles from the Flu: Mix 1 tablespoon of horseradish in 1 cup of olive oil. Let the mixture sit for 30 minutes, then apply it as massage oil for relief of aching muscles.

Urinary Tract Infections: Just dissolve two tablets of Alka-Seltzer in a glass of water and drink it at the onset of the symptoms. Alka-Seltzer begins eliminating urinary tract infections almost instantly even though the product was never advertised for this use.

Sore Throats: Just mix ¼ cup of vinegar with ¼ cup of honey and take 1 tablespoon six times a day. The vinegar kills the bacteria.

Skin Blemishes: Cover the blemish with a dab of honey and place a Band-Aid over it. Honey kills the bacteria, keeps the skin sterile, and speeds healing. It usually works overnight.

Toenail Fungus: get rid of unsightly toenail fungus by soaking your toes in Listerine mouthwash. The powerful antiseptic leaves your toenails looking healthy again.

Eyeglass Protection: To prevent the screws in eyeglasses from loosening, apply a small drop of Maybelline Crystal Clear nail polish to the threads of the screws before tightening them.

Rust Stain Remover: Just saturate an abrasive sponge with Coca Cola and scrub the rust stain. The phosphoric acid in the coke is what gets the job done.

Bug Spray Killer: If bees, wasps, hornets, or yellow jackets get in your home and you can’t find the insecticide, try a spray of Formula 409. Insects drop to the ground instantly.

Splinter Removal: Pour a drop of Elmer’s Glue-All over the splinter, let dry, and peel the dried glue off the skin. The splinter sticks to the dried glue.

Boil Cure: Cover the boil with Hunt’s tomato paste as a compress. The acids from the tomatoes soothe the pain and bring the boil to a head.

Heal Bruises: Soak a cotton ball in white vinegar and apply it to the bruise for 1 hour. The vinegar reduces the blueness and speeds up the healing process.

Kill Fleas on your Pet: Dawn dish washing liquid does the trick. Add a few drops to your pet’s bath and shampoo the animal thoroughly. Rinse well to avoid skin irritations.

Doggy Odor: Next time your dog comes in from the rain, simply wipe down the pet with Bounce or any dryer sheet, instantly making your dog smell springtime fresh.

Ear Mites on Cats: All it takes is a few drops of Wesson corn oil in your cat’s ear. Massage it in, and then clean with a cotton ball. Repeat daily for 3 days. The oil soothes the cat’s skin, smothers the mites, and accelerates healing.

Pain Relief: Mix 2 cups of Quaker Oats and 1 cup of water in a bowl and warm in the microwave for 1 minute, cool slightly, and apply the mixture to your hands for soothing relief from arthritis pain.

MONTHLY GARDEN SUGGESTIONS
By Dan Willis

SEPTEMBER
Summer reluctantly gives way to fall but the busy gardener is making plans for fall gardening.

1. As the leaves dry following night temperatures of 50 degrees and below, lift the individual caladium clumps and place in a warm, dry, well-ventilated shed or garage with good light for 10 days to two weeks. It is best to remove as much of the soil as possible when lifting, as this will hasten the drying and curing process. Do not wash or wet the tubers. After the drying period, remove the dead leaves. Dust the tubers thoroughly with a fungicide for protection against insects and disease in storage. Store the treated bulbs in nylon stockings in a cool, dark, dry location protected from freezing temperatures.

2. Prepare beds now for planting pansies and violas. Both like a sunny well-drained soil. Obtain healthy plants and plant in October and November.

3. Spring bulbs begin their life in the fall. Bulb beds must be well drained and well prepared prior to planting to insure good results in the spring. Prepare spring bulb beds now. Work in ample amounts of humus and sharp sand, if needed, to insure a loose pliable soil. Select bulbs to be planted in October and November.

4. Continue to water plants as they go into fall. Many flowering trees and shrubs have developed flower buds for next year’s blooms, and if there is a lack of water, poor blooms may be the result. Water fruiting plants such as hollies, pyracantha, etc. to maintain a good berry crop. Remove dead wood from plants that have suffered from the drought and heat. Mulch around the root areas to conserve moisture and protect the plant during winter.

5. If you have not done so, September is a good time to dig and divide overcrowded bearded iris, daylilies, liriope, perennial phlox and groundcover plants. An early fall planting will allow the plants to become well established prior to winter’s cold. Water frequently after transplanting to prevent drying. Moisten soils prior to planting to prevent the plants from drying out until they are established.

6. Begin to prepare some of your houseplants for over-wintering indoors. Repot overgrown plants and feed established pots with a complete liquid houseplant fertilizer to encourage that last flush of growth prior to bringing indoors.

7. Plant fall annuals. Consider planting some of the seeds in the ground during September: Blanket flower, Baby’s Breath, Larkspur, annual Phlox, Cornflower, wildflowers, etc. Be patient since you may not see the results of seeding until next spring.

8. Spray roses at regular intervals for blackspot and mildew control. Water often as fall blooms occur.

9. Propagate your geraniums. Cut 5 to 7 inch stems. Allow to “cure” or the ends to seal off by leaving exposed to open air for 2-3 days. Strip lower foliage and pot in good potting soil. Keep in the shade and do not over-water.

10. Do not prune or cut back spring flowering trees and shrubs since this removes potential spring blooms.

11. Start a compost pile to receive the leaves of fall.

12. Want to experiment with camellias? Camellia flower buds can be forced into blooming early following treatment with gibberallic acid in late summer or early fall. In many instances the treated flowers are larger than normal. A solution of gibberallic acid (gib) must be applied to individual flower buds to stimulate them into action. The time to apply gib differs but is usually in September or early October. Gib weekly intervals rather than in one session. This will ensure that you have flowers over a longer period of time. Most people like to leave about 80% untreated. Apply gib very sparingly to a young plant.

13. Almost every gardener will have a few packets of vegetable and flower seeds left from spring and summer planting or they may have collected seed from some of their favorite plants. Although old seed often has a lower germination rate as well as reduced vigor, many gardeners have difficulty throwing them away. Storing it under the proper conditions can greatly increase the storage life of most seeds. The seed should be air dry and placed in glass containers with airtight lids and kept in a refrigerator or cool area at a temperature range of 35-50 degrees F. When saving seed from plants in the garden remember that many of the new improved varieties are hybrid and there is often little chance that the offspring will resemble the parent.
14. Cleanup established garden beds and replenish mulch materials where needed. Remove faded annuals and cut back perennials that have finished flowering.
15. Be sure to stake mums that have gotten too tall so as to reduce wind and rain damage. Make new mum selections for the garden while in bloom. Keep the plants watered as blooms develop.
16. Plan for new plantings. Don’t forget to make an inventory of landscape needs in your landscape so you are ready to make selections as soon as new nursery stock is received in your favorite nursery or garden center. Select shade trees and shrubs for late fall and winter planting.
17. Watch for scale insects. Many of the eggs hatch at this time of year and the young crawlers are never more vulnerable than at this stage. Ultra-fine horticultural oil or insecticidal soap gives good organic control at this stage. Please read the label carefully. Spray to cover the underside of the leaves. Be sure to read the label and follow instructions. Scale often appears on gardenia, camellias, hollies, euonymus, azaleas, ligustrum, houseplants, etc.
18. Research has proven that fall feeding is very beneficial for ornamental plants. The root system as well as future flower buds continue to develop in winter. A 3-1-2 ratio will help over winter ornamental plants and have them off to a good growing start come spring.

OCTOBER

The short, delightful days of autumn present a new gardening season and the need to accomplish some of those delayed gardening chores.

1. Think spring in October and start planting spring bulbs. October and November is spring bulb planting time (daffodils, narcissi, hyacinth, crocus, and Dutch iris). Choose healthy, sound bulbs from a reliable source. Prepare soils in a sunny, well-drained location.
2. The popular pansies may be planted in October and November for scattered winter blooms and a real display of color come spring. Do not bother with seed but buy healthy plants from your favorite nursery. Pansies go great with spring bulbs. Select varieties that have good heat tolerance and will flower longer in the spring.
3. Prepare the rest of your houseplants for over-wintering. The cool days of October are ideal for good houseplant growth and development. It is a good time to groom and to prepare the plants for bringing them into protected areas for winter. Prune back leggy or overgrown houseplants to induce compaction of growth. Remove damaged foliage. Bring plants indoors prior to winter heat in the home to allow them to adapt to their new location.
4. The winter season from November through February is ideal for planting woody trees and shrubs. Planting in the winter allows the roots to become established before the heat of summer. Plan for those new additions now. Prepare planting beds and visit nurseries to make plant selections.
5. It’s not too late to dig and store your caladium tubers. See the recommendations given for September.
6. If you haven’t established a compost pile yet, now is the time to do so.
7. Order fruit catalogs and make your variety selections now for a winter (January-February) planting.
8. Root-prune wisteria that, even though large, has failed to flower. With a sharp spade, cut into the soil completely around the plant without disturbing the soil to sever the lateral roots.
9. It is time to remove the faded annuals and perennials, overgrown plants, etc.
10. Continue to divide and transplant your favorite perennials such as daylilies, liriope, ajuga, iris, etc.
11. Complete your wildflower seeding.
12. Mulch your plants. A 4-6 inch layer of mulch is an excellent insulation on semi-hardy plants and shallow-rooted plants such as azaleas.
13. Tag native plants while they are still in leaf and easily identified when transplanted in the winter. Root-prune in November (don’t lift the plant) to allow the plant to form new roots prior to transplanting in January and February.
14. Enjoy the wonderful colors of the season.

NOVEMBER
It’s time to prepare for winter’s cold by preparing the garden beds for winter planting. It’s also the
time to watch nature slip into dormancy and to dream of the awakening spring.

1. Continue to plant your spring flowering bulbs such as daffodils, Dutch hyacinth, and Dutch iris.
Mass planting of bulbs gives a big color splash in the spring.
2. Enjoy the blooms of sasanqua and camellia japonica. Select new varieties for a winter planting
while in flower. Take advantage of local camellia shows. Consider time of bloom and cold
resistance when selecting camellias. They prefer semi-shaded location in organic, acid, well-
drained soil. Check for camellia tea-scale on the underside of foliage on existing camellias.
Control with a systemic insecticide.
3. Early winter is an ideal time to adjust overly acid soils by using agricultural lime. Lawn grasses
and vegetable gardens prefer a neutral soil pH or slightly acidic. The only certain way to know
the soil’s pH is to have a soil test done by the local Extension Office. Liming should not be
necessary except every 3-4 years.
4. Prepare Christmas cactus for Christmas blooms by placing it in a cool location with night
temperatures below 65 degrees, if possible. Do not allow the plant to have more that 10-12
hours of light per day, particularly if you are growing the cactus under artificial light. Keep the
soil on the dry side.
5. Check your favorite nursery for a supply of colorful mums for the patio and garden. Plant mums
in a sunny location in the garden. Cut off dead blooms and stems and prune back dead foliage
after the first killing freeze.
6. If you haven’t done so, it’s time to clean the vegetable garden area of dead vegetation that
may harbor insects and disease. Begin to prepare now for a very early spring garden. Late
winter will be planting time for winter vegetables.
7. Mulch plantings to protect against winter cold. Pine needles and dried leaves make an
excellent insulation against cold.
8. Keep wet leaves raked from lawn grasses that may block aeration and sunlight.
9. Begin the selection of fruit and pecan trees for winter planting.
10. Prepare food and winter shelter for our feathered friends of the garden. Food, water, and
shelter encourage birds to stay around the garden and may be supplied in attractive and
effective ways. Place bird feeding stations in protected areas that are visible from indoors.
11. The dormant period, late November through February, is the ideal time to plant or transplant
trees and shrubs. Before planting any tree or shrub, be aware of how the plant grows as to its
potential size and growth habits.
12. Prepare your soil well in advance of planting. Every plant deserves a well drained, well
prepared soil. January and February is the ideal time to plant roses.
13. To cover bare soil in your lawn, consider seeding the bare spots with annual ryegrass.
14. Yellowing leaves on fruiting hollies may be expected now. An application of a complete and
balanced fertilizer will help support the berry crop and keep the foliage green.
APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP OR RENEWAL

Applications are effective for one calendar year, beginning January 1st

Check membership level: _____ GCMG Member ($15) _____ Friends of GCMG ($15)
_____ GCMG 10 Yr. Lifetime ($10) _____ GCMG Member Couples ($25)

TOTAL ENCLOSED: $_________  cash ☐ Check #______________

(Please Print)

Today’s Date_________________     Circle one: New or Renewal       MG Class of_________

Name_____________________________________________________________________________

Street_____________________________________________________________________________

City_________________________________________           Zip Code________________

Home Phone (____) _____________________   Alternate Phone_ (____) ______________

Email_____________________________________________________________________________

Liability and Release Form

I (we) realize that when engaged in Master Gardener activities, that serious physical injury and personal property damage may accidentally occur. I (we) further realize that there is always the possibility of having an allergic reaction to or being poisoned by handling or ingesting plants and that adverse reactions may result in mild or fatal illness.

Knowing the risks, I (we) agree to assume the risks and agree to release, hold harmless, and to indemnify the Gwinnett County Master Gardeners Association, and any officer or member thereof, from any and all legal responsibility for injuries or accidents incurred by myself or my family during or as a result of any and all Gwinnett County Master Gardener activity, field trip, excursion, meeting or dining, sponsored by the association.

Member’s Name (please print clearly) __________________________________________________

Signature____________________________________________________Date:_________________

Additional Member’s Name (print clearly) ______________________________________________

Signature____________________________________________________Date:_________________

Release Form is required for participation in GCMG fieldtrips and activities. Please return completed, signed, and dated form with check payable to “Gwinnett County Master Gardeners”.

Address mail to:  Gwinnett County Master Gardeners, Attn: Anne Heath, Treasurer, Gwinnett County Cooperative Extension, 750 South Perry Street, Lawrenceville, Georgia 30045.