



Douglas County Dirt

Douglas County Master Gardener Association Newsletter

Volume 10, Issue 11



Total Watering Ban in Douglas County~ began 7/1/07

Hello fellow gardeners,

Well as the grip of the drought tightens we must all find ways to conserve, conserve, conserve! There are many suggestions in the AJC and on line. This is a very serious and scary time.

Even with this drought the vegetable garden has produced over 2,000 lbs. We have some excellent gardeners.

The Nature Trail had a work day involving gardeners, scout leaders, scouts and other community civic groups. They worked hard clearing paths and cleaning up the areas. Patches are being purchased to give to the participants.

The Greenhouse is looking good. Money has been approved to get it up and running. The goal is November 1st to be able to house plants. Great job Lorri and Randy.

The nominating committee has met and will be presenting the slate of officers at the November meeting. We will vote on the officers at the December meeting.

Please plan to attend the November meeting. This is an important meeting. Representatives from University of Georgia will be there to talk with us about the new by-laws and finance issues. This does not mean we are thinking about leaving UGA! We just need to understand new information coming from them. Hope to see everyone there. Stay well and pray for rain!

I look forward to seeing everyone at our November 1st meeting.

Let's all go play in the Dirt!

Sharon Morton

Next Meeting:

November 1, 2007

Douglasville, GA

6:30 for pot-luck

dinner

7:00 meeting

begins

How to get to the meeting

site:

St. Julian's

Episcopal

Church

5400 Stewart Mill Rd

Take Chapel Hill Road to Stewart Mill Road (Intersection at Target and Shell gas station)

From I-20 turn right on Stewart Mill Road. Church is about 1 1/2 miles on the right.

November 1, 2007





DC Master Gardeners Minutes of the October 2007 Meeting

President Sharon Morton called meeting to order and welcomed DCMG members and visiting members of Sweetwater Garden Club. Buffet dinner.

Treasurer Judy Cole stated \$ 9,830.39 in checking account.

Vegetable Garden committee presented need and request for 12 x 12 garden shed to be built by DCMG starting Fall 2007. Cost will be \$1400. Motioned and seconded, voted on and passed by DCMG membership.

Greenhouse committee presented need and request for funds to make greenhouse operational by November 1. Needed are 2 circulation fans @ \$128 each, small electric heater @ \$153, propane heater @\$80, boards for raised bed \$426. \$1800 needed total for completion, \$1,000 requested at this time. Motioned, seconded and approved by DCMG membership. It was suggested that committee check into solar heating.

Motion for \$200 to be set aside to use once drought is over, to plant azaleas and bulbs along greenhouse path, voted on and approved by DCMG members.

Cultural Arts committee requested funds for bulbs since Cultural Arts budget is used up. DCMG membership voted on and approved \$82.00

Rose Garden update given by Janet deal. Almost ready for bed preparation pending county decision on exact placement. Looking for cinder block and mulch donations, pending meeting with landfill for mulch.

Nature trail was cleaned up by scouts, Master Gardeners and scout leaders and parents. Patches are being ordered for the scouts.

Next month meeting will be with UGA to explain/discuss new by-law and finance issues. All members are urged to attend.

Speaker Charlotte Lipheart gave an interesting and unique talk about kudzu.

Door prizes given out.

Meeting adjourned.

Water Wise Landscape

What's a gardening lover to do in the middle of the drought of the century? The web is full of water wise tips that can help us enjoy gardening even during the drought.

Here are just a few web pages that are full of up to date tips on the drought and on plants that will survive drought go to some of the following:

www.watersmart.net This site has good tips on water wise landscaping.

www.ddcwsa.com Keep up to date on the current conditions in Douglas County

<http://georgiafaces.caes.uga.edu> As always UGA is a boundless resources on any topic.

Check out the Georgia drought tolerant plant section.

Here are some of the tips that are posted on the Water Smart website.

Avoid added plant stress

- Don't fertilize if you can't water it in. Fertilizer does little good unless it dissolves and enters the soil solution.
- Avoid any sort of soil disturbance that injures roots and reduces their moisture uptake.
- Avoid adding fill dirt over plant roots because roots need to breathe.
- **Mow grass higher than normal to avoid stressing it.**

Reduce Demand for Water

- Cut back plants that wilt or show die back to reduce their need for water from the roots.
- Many annuals and perennials can be cut back close to ground level during drought, and then will bounce back when rain begins.

Use other water sources

- Collect the water that drips from your air conditioning unit.
- Collect rainwater in rain barrels at the bottom of your roof downspouts.
- **Note:** Water from kitchen sinks and dishwashers, bathtubs, showers and lavatories, and the household laundry are NOT allowed for reuse under plumbing and health codes.

Prioritize plants

- High value/must save – Give priority to valuable specimen trees or shrubs that would be impossible to replace.
- Moderate value/try to save - perennials, newly planted trees, shrubs and groundcovers.
- Low value/save if possible – annuals and turf grasses (these can be replaced and some turf grasses will bounce back successfully from a complete dry out.)

(Continued on page 5)

Mulch (Continued from page 4)

- Cover the entire area under the plant from the trunk to the ends of the branches. This keeps the soil cool, combats weeds, conserves water, and creates more visual appeal than trying to grow grass in the area.
- Good mulches to use are pine straw, pine bark mini-nuggets, bark chips or shredded hardwood mulch. Avoid using rock, gravel or marble in sunny areas because they absorb and radiate heat and increase moisture loss.
- Enhance your mulch, by placing two to three sheets of saturated newspaper underneath it. This will help the soil retain moisture.
- Mulch! Using pine straw, bark chips or ground hardwood mulch on the roots of plants and trees helps the soil retain water.

Submitted by Janet Deal



Did you know that the public is always welcome to attend our monthly meetings?



See the first page for times, program topic, and location.



THEY'RE HERE!

By Debbie Jones, **Master Gardener**

I have heard about them and I have read about them but I never I thought I would see them in Georgia. But they are here, and they have been spotted in Douglas County. What am I talking about? Why it is the *Dasyus novemcinctus* better known as armadillos. The word **amardillo** is a Spanish word that means “little armored one” because it is covered with thousands of bony scales that cover most of its body. Frankly, they look like the ideal pet for one of those armor-head Klingons, like Lieutenant Worf from Star Trek Voyager.

First and foremost, the armadillo digs for food and the primary sources are larvae and insects. They are always on the lookout for turf worms and grubs. An untended lawn is an ideal target for the Armadillo family that desires to relocate to our community. The most effective way to keep the invaders away is to eliminate the food source by treating your lawn for insects on a regular basis.

Second, they are looking for dense, shady areas with a lot of brush, woodlands and forest, and areas near creeks and rivers. Always examine your yard to make sure that you are not creating an ideal habitat for armadillos. Limiting access to water sources and removing dense brush and vegetation will let the “armored wonder” know that you are not putting out the welcome mat.

(Continued on page 5)
Page 4

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www.dcdirt.org

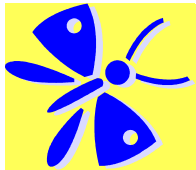
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Douglas County Court House

Your input is needed.

For newsletter articles, tips, hints, anecdotes, recipes, book reviews, website reviews, gardening and/or shops or online sources, and ideas: Email: MJ_Cardell@yahoo.com Newsletter deadline is the 20th of each month.

Did you know this newsletter is also posted at our web site in full color, so you can get your dirt online?

GMGA Mission Statement:



To stimulate the love for and increase the knowledge of gardening, and to voluntarily and enthusiastically share this knowledge with others.

Please call Randy with questions on the Cultural Arts Center 770-920-2193, Jan for the greenhouse 770-489-9276 and James for the veggie garden at 770-489-4680 or MaryJane at 770-944-2780 Thanks everyone! Jan

(Continued from page 4)

Other measures can be taken as well such as installing a fence around the area you wish to protect. The fence must be a foot or more deep to minimize tunneling. Some experts suggest using an ultrasonic pest deterrent device as well. For more aggressive measures to combat armadillos, please contact your local County Extension office or contact a professional animal removal service.

Armadillos are here to stay and we will probably see more of them in our community because the adult female armadillo produces one litter of quadruplets each year. Routine care and maintenance of your lawn and surrounding areas is the best approach to stop the prolific diggers from visiting you and staying to raise a family.

References:

Landscape in America; Armadillos in America
Armadillo Problem; Armadillos: Funny animals, or destructive pests?
Internet Center for Wildlife Damage Management, Armadillos
Humane Society of the United States, Armadillos
Randy Cooper, Douglas County Georgia Master Gardener

