



Douglas County Dirt

Douglas County Master Gardener Association Newsletter

Volume 10, Issue 2

Let's Talk Dirty Observations from The President of DCMGA

Hello fellow gardeners,

The Georgia Master Gardener Association Winter Conference in Savannah on January 13th was a resounding success. Savannah is a beautiful city and the weather was beautiful as well with warm temperatures. I met some really nice and energetic gardeners from all over the state. The speakers were good although I just wish they would have talked more about plants that we all could use.

The greenhouse project is moving along with concrete scheduled to be poured Thursday, January 25th. A new project has come up in cooperation with Alexander High School. We met with Ryan Adams from AHS about reclaiming an area of land between AHS and Bill Arp Elementary School. The goal is to create an outdoor environment conducive to learning throughout the kindergarten to 12th grade curriculum. It is a very ambitious exciting project.

With the number and variety of projects we have, I encourage all to get involved and experience the joy of learning and working next to people who have the same interests in gardening. I hope to work with you soon.

Let's all go play in the dirt.

Sharon Morton

Congratulations to our Douglas County Master Gardener of the Year: James Sims

You are such an asset to our club and to Douglas County!
Thanks for all you do for us!

Next Meeting:

February 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 ½ miles on
the right.**

February 1, 2007



MG Continuing Education & Learning Opportunities

UPCOMING PROGRAMS



Make Your Own Rain Barrel

2nd Saturday @ EHC! Join us as our very own Karen Alexander, (also a Gwinnett MG) teaches us about rain barrels on Saturday March 10 at the Gwinnett Environmental & Heritage Center! Make your own rain barrel and take it home the same day. This workshop will be held at 11:00 am and 2:00 pm and is limited to 20 participants for each workshop. The cost is \$35 per person. Please pre-register for this event by calling 770-904-3500 or emailing environmentalheritage@gwinnettcountry.com



2007 CREATIVE CONTAINER COMPETITION

Employ your gardening talents and creativity to make a container garden for the 2007 Creative Container Competition at the Bamboo Farm and Coastal Gardens during the annual Spring Garden Festival, March 24, 2007.



Individuals, families, garden clubs and civic groups are encouraged to submit an entry. There is no age limit, and no limit on creativity.

Here is how the competition works:

Each participant will be provided a container and soil mix (at no cost), so that everyone in the competition starts on the same level! A limited number of containers will be available January 2007, on a first come first served basis. (Participants must return these supplies if they do not enter the competition.) You add plants, fertilizer, tender-loving care and your creative talents to produce a container in peak condition for judging. You may choose to use

herbs, vegetables, ornamental grasses, vines, annuals and perennials, or even dried material and ornate objects. Containers must contain at least 80% living materials of some type.

Containers must be returned to the Bamboo Farm and Coastal Gardens by Thursday, March 22nd by 4:00 PM, where qualified judging will be on Friday, March 23rd by horticultural experts from the region.

Participants must be willing to donate their creative gardens for auction at the Spring Garden Festival on March 24th with all the proceeds going to support the Bamboo Farm and Coastal Gardens. To obtain more information and/or reserve a container, email mfarley@uga.edu or kdeloe@uga.edu or call (912) 921-5460.

The Georgia Native Plant Society's 12th Plant Symposium



The Georgia Native Plant Society's 12th Plant Symposium: 'Native Plants for Today's Gardener' will be held on March 10th, at the Atlanta campus of Mercer University. Please see the following links for additional information: Symposium program: <http://www.gnps.org/sym07.htm> Speakers and directions:

<http://www.gnps.org/sym2007b.htm> Registration form: <http://www.gnps.org/sym2007c.htm>

For more information, go to www.gnps.org, or email Ellen Honeycutt, GNPS symposium chair at ehoneycutt@bellsouth.net.



Witch hazel

NAME: Witch hazel *Hamamelis* sp.

USDA HARDINESS ZONES: 3 -8, depending on variety

HEIGHT: generally 8 - 10', but can grow to 20'

WIDTH: about equal to height

FLOWER COLOR: yellow, burnt orange, coppery red

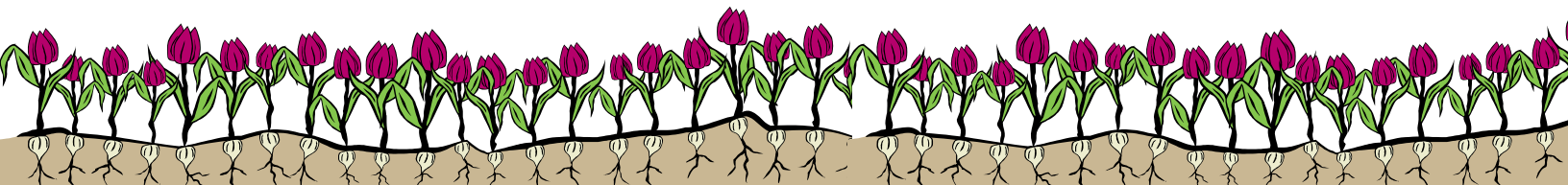
FALL COLOR: yellow to orange and red

CONDITIONS: full sun to part-shade, average soil and moisture, will tolerate clay soil

Witch hazel, the genus *Hamamelis*, is a deciduous woodland shrub that blooms from late fall into winter. There are four species in the genus that are generally found in cultivation. One is native to China (*H. mollis*), one from Japan (*H. japonica*) and two from the United States (*H. virginiana* and *H. vernalis*). There are also a number of cultivars available resulting from a cross of *H. mollis* and *H. japonica* (*H.x intermedia*). A couple of my favorites growing in my garden are 'Arnold's Promise' (bright yellow) and 'Diane' (coppery orange). All witch hazels have about the same growth patterns. They are deciduous, have a slow to moderate growth rate, height about equal to width, growing in sun to part shade. They require medium moisture and very little maintenance. However, it should be noted that some of the cultivars are grafted onto species rootstock, so pay careful attention to removing suckers from the rootstock. If you cannot determine where the suckers are originating, check the flowers. If the flowers are not the same color as the rest of the plant, they come from the rootstock. Remove them or you will have, in time, a species plant rather than a more desirable (and expensive) cultivar. The flowers of witch hazel are probably the reason we cultivate this plant. The flowers are in clusters along the branch, with each having four 1/2 - 3/4" long, narrow petals. Think of Loropetalum (which is in the same family) flowers, that are yellow, orange or coppery red. The fall leaf color varies from yellow to orange to red. Some plants retain their dried brown leaves on the stem until just before new leaves appear in the spring.

Although witch hazel is not for every garden, if you have a spot that does not get full sun, is at least 10' wide, and you want a plant of interest in the late fall and winter, try *Hamamelis*.

Randy Cooper





Walter Reeves To Do List for February

If you want to know what to do for weeks two through four in February, then go to WALTER REEVES' web site at:

<http://www.walterreeves.com/calendar.phtml>

- Prune apple and pear trees now - but postpone peach pruning until mid-March. Visit www.walterreeves.com for UGA factsheets.

- It's not too late to lightly and carefully spot-spray *completely dormant* Bermuda grass with glyphosate (Roundup, KleenUp, Klee-Away) to kill green winter weeds. Make sure no green Bermuda sprouts are near the soil line.

- Look for blooms on your Lenten rose (*Helleborus orientalis*). Few other plants can supply the year-round interest of this evergreen groundcover.

- Redesign your lawn for easier mowing. Eliminate sharp angles and narrow turf areas. Use mulch, new flower beds or a groundcover like mondo grass there instead.

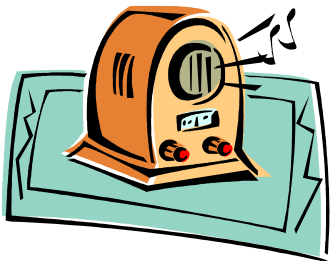
- Water poinsettia, Christmas cactus and amaryllis plants with houseplant fertilizer diluted to one-half strength.



To get the other three weeks' tips and to dos, go to his web site, but be prepared to spend some time enjoying all the information there!

While you are at Walter Reeves' web site, be certain to check out his books for sale, look at the gardening How-to archives, and sign up for his newsletter. The current issue includes links to pruning crape myrtles correctly and shows photos of good pruning and bad pruning. There are design tips by Theresa Schrum on how to have blooms all ear round. There is another article by Theresa on Red Winterberry Holly.

On his web site there is a link to check not only the local weather, but also the local soil temperature! Now we know exactly when to plant those finicky plants that demand preferential treatment!



"The Lawn and Garden Show with Walter Reeves" on NewsTalk 750 WSB

"The Lawn and Garden Show with Walter Reeves" is Atlanta's best source of weekly gardening information. Airing each Saturday from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m., the show is a must-listen for

those who want to be successful with their lawn, landscape or garden. Walter's practical, and sometimes humorous, advice is understandable by the novice as well as the experienced gardener. Tune in each Saturday to learn what's going on in the garden world!

Douglas County Master Gardener Association

President: Sharon Morton 770-949-4797

Vice President: Jan Thomas 770-489-9276

Treasurer: Judy Cole 770-489-0567

Newsletter: Melanie Cardell 770-920-1278

Secretary: **Web site:** Lori Mason 770-948-9294

Archivist: Rachel Hendee 770-577-3493

Yard of the Month: James Kirkwood 770-942-1663

Douglas County Extension Office: 770-920-7224

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.



This past Thursday, January 18, we poured the concrete for the center walkway in the greenhouse. There are also a few ribs/posts going up!

This a great experience for DCMGs!

Remember to pay your dues if you want to continue receiving the newsletter and the email updates.



*DC MG Plant Sale is
May*

Continuing Projects & Works Days

Greenhouse Work ~ All on hold at the present

Butterfly Garden at Deerlick Park ~ Generally Tuesdays at 9:00 a.m.

Children's Garden at DC Library ~ Thursdays at 10:00 a.m.

Nature Trail Work Day ~ Generally Tuesdays at 9:00 a.m.

Vegetable Garden Work Days ~ Definitely On hold at the present

www.dcdirt.org

Putting Knowledge to Work