

Master Gardener Clippings

A Newsletter for Columbia County Master Gardeners

July 2009



Inside this issue:

Upcoming Events & Volunteer Opportunities	1
MG Library Series Schedule	1
Library Series Report by Shirley Bellows	2
Gardening Tips by Dianna McDonnell	2
Email from a Friend by Diana Roder	3
Honey by Mae Brandt	3
Caladiums in Rose's Garden by Rose Pavey	4

Upcoming Events & Volunteer Opportunities

July 10—**Compost Class Planning Meeting** 9-11:00 am at Extension Office

July 14—**Butterfly Garden Class for Senior Services Planning/ Brainstorming Meeting** 1:00 pm at Extension Office

July 14—**MG Advisory Meeting** 3:00 pm Extension Office

July 16—**Alumni Meeting** 9:00 am Extension Office

July 16—**Preparing Rain Barrels Work Session** after Alumni Meeting (Lunch provided—please RSVP)

July 18—**Display Garden Work Morning**

July 30—**Composting Workshop** 6-7:30 pm at Extension Office

August 4—**MG Advisory Meeting** 3:00 pm Extension Office

August 6—**Rain Barrel "Make & Take" Workshop** 6-7:30 at Ft. White Community Center

August 18—**MG Advanced Training** with Alachua & Suwannee MGs, hosted by Columbia County MGs at Berea Baptist Church, Lake City

August 20—**MG Alumni Meeting** 9:00 am Extension Office

November 2-4—**Florida Master Gardener Continued Training Conference**, Hilton Ocala, in Ocala Florida

MG Library Series Schedule

July 18—**Butterfly Gardening**, Judy Futch & Aileen Allen

August 15—**Cottage Gardening**, Betsy Martin & Judee Swihart

September 19—**Vegetable Gardening**, Gerry Murphy

October 17—**What to Do in Your Garden in October**, Yvette Graham

Library Series Report

By Shirley Bellows

On **May 16th**, **Betsy Martin**, assisted by **Vicki Canterbury**, presented an excellent and comprehensive program on **“Rain Gardens.”** Many notes were taken during the program, along with many Q & A’s. There were 16 people present, including 7 Master Gardeners.

A Hydrangea plant was given to each guest. The results of the questionnaire were most favorable and rated Betsy a “BIG 10.” Suggestions for future programs were native plants and retaining trees in the county, because of so many are lost due to development.

GREAT JOB, BETSY & VICKI!



On **June 20th**, Master Gardener **Aileen Allen** presented, at the Public Library, a program on **“Composting, Black Gold.”** We only had 6 in attendance, including 3 Master Gardeners; however, it was a scorching hot day.

After the presentation we held an open discussion between the 6 of us. We shared our own ideas on composting and everyone seemed happy with the info.

Remember, Master Gardeners, if you attend these sessions you can count them as educational hours.

No suggestions for future programs.

GREAT JOB, AILEEN!!

Gardening Tips for July

Vegetables to plant in North Florida

1. Beans, lima
2. Eggplant
3. Okra
4. Peas, Southern
5. Pepper
6. Watermelon

Some practices that can be used are:

Every effort should be made to keep the plants vigorously growing and in a state of good health by supplying appropriate amounts of water and fertilizer. A healthy plant is often able to survive insect attack. Too much nitrogen can make plants more inviting to aphids, however.



Happy Veggie Gardening

Diana McDonnell

Email from a Friend

Submitted by Diana Roder

From: [Mary Mary Quite Contrary](#)

To: [Diana Roder](#)

Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2009

Subject: Vacation plans

Hi Diana,

I need a small favor. . . If it's not too much trouble.

I'm going away on vacation and I need a friend to come over to water my plants while I am gone.

The plants are mostly geraniums and begonias. In the hot weather they'll probably only need water twice a day.

I'll be gone only 21 days.

I've attached a photo for your reference.

I'll send you a post card OK?

Thanks.



Honey

By Mae Brandt



At our last Alumni Meeting, Glen Hague, Suwannee Master Gardener, gave a talk on Beekeeping. Here are some interesting facts on honey that I found.

Uses: for the treatment of indigestion, coughs and colds, insomnia, headaches, general weakness and skin wounds.

Therapeutic Effect: Honey helps restore energy, has a general calming effect and helps to dissolve mucus. Applied externally to the skin, it disinfects and heals minor wounds.

Honey provides a healthful pick-me-up. The glucose and fructose in honey have been predigested by the bees that produced it. These simple sugars are quickly and easily absorbed in the human digestive tract and they have an overall soothing effect. Honey may be a healthy treat, but take care when using it as a sweetener. Just 1 tbsp. of honey has 64 calories, compared to 46 calories in 1 tbsp. of granulated sugar.

Caladium's in Rose's Garden

By Rose Pavey

The caladium originated in the Amazon jungles of South America. It is a summer bulb (tuber) that should be planted when all danger of frost is over and the soil temperature has reached 65 Fahrenheit. They will thrive in the hot summer and paint your gardens with heart-shaped leaves of red, white, pink and green until the first cold nights.

Caladiums are easy to plant and are beautiful as a ground cover or border, or in pots, hanging baskets and planters on your deck and inside your home. Mix several varieties in your landscaping for a colorful contrast.



Rose's flower garden with her showy caladiums.

Outdoor Planting: Planting for your area can be determined by the [planting zone map](#). Caladiums need warm weather to sprout. Once the ground temperature reaches 70 degrees Fahrenheit, plant the bulb, eyes up, plant #1s 7-8 inches apart, and jumbos 14-18 inches apart and cover with 1 1/2 inches of soil. Planting more densely will increase the height of the stem. Cooler weather will delay sprouting. Use a well-drained high peat soil. Water frequently to keep soil damp, not soaking. Lightly fertilize every six weeks with the fertilizer you normally use (or 6-6-6 slow release fertilizer). In the fall, let the leaves die back, then before the first freeze, dig up the bulbs, leaving the leaves on. Store in mesh or paper bags between 65-70 degrees Fahrenheit.

Indoor Planting: Plant the bulb, eyes up, in a plant mixture and cover with 1 1/2 inches of soil. Moisten soil and keep moist. For three weeks, keep the pot in as warm an area as possible with temperatures from 70 degrees Fahrenheit at night to 90 degrees during the day. After three weeks, your pots will have spiked. As soon as you can see color, put them in a light, bright area indoors (artificial light is ok) or preferably outdoors if its warm enough.

Landscaping Tip: My sister, in Antwerp, Ohio, puts her pots down outside in individual holes. After the first cold knocks the leaves down, she brings them in and stacks them in a pantry which stays between 65-70 all winter. In May, she puts them in a warm area, starts watering them and puts them out again in June.

Arrangements: Cut leaves will keep indoors for 2-3 weeks and are odorless and non-allergenic. Leaves should be soaked for 24 hours before using in arrangements. Florists should be cautioned not to put caladium in coolers with temperatures less than 60 degrees Fahrenheit.

Caution: This is a hot weather, summer bulb. The bulb will be damaged causing dwarfed leaves if the temperatures reaches below 60 degrees for a prolong period of time.