



The Potting Shed is a free monthly newsletter from the University of Georgia Extension in Bryan County. We provide science-based information to help Coastal Georgia gardeners. Have a question or need help, contact your local County Extension Office.

David Moulder dmoulder@uga.edu



David B. Moulder
Bryan County Extension,
CEC



Barbara S. DuBose,
Secretary

Bryan County Extension

P. O. Box 250

131 N. College Street

Pembroke, GA 31321

Phone: (912) 653-2231

Fax: (912) 653-2236

E-mail:

dmoulder@uga.edu

or: uge3029@uga.edu

Hummingbird Heaven

I have a friend back in Mississippi that must be using 3 pounds of sugar a day just to supplement and draw hummingbirds, but you can bet she will also had every plant a hummingbird loves in glorious bloom.

Sure, I like the artificial feeders, but I'm moved when hummingbirds come to my plants. I get a thrill setting and watching all type of birds, but I really love watching humming birds, by planting a garden with a long season of overlapping bloom, you can play host to these miniature birds.

You can use some artificial feeders, but in the flower garden, choose plants like the petunia, annual red salvia (*Salvia splendens*), blue anise sage (*Salvia guaranitica*), the yellow shrimp plant (*Pachystachys lutea*), Sonset lantana and firebush (*Hamelia patens*).

Many native plants like the cardinal flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*); coral honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*), trumpet vine (*Campsis radicans*) and Indian pink (*Spigelia marilandica*) are much loved by hummingbirds. Even in shady flower gardens, we can attract hummingbirds with hostas and impatiens.

If you who want the best of both worlds -- hummingbirds and butterflies that is -- choose plants like lantana, butterfly bush and butterfly weed. The same recommendation for butterfly gardens holds true for hummingbird gardens – **No Pesticides**

The hummingbird can ingest the pesticide, but something many gardeners aren't aware of is that these little birds also feed on small insects and spiders.

There are a lot more to artificial feeders than simply hanging one in a tree. Nectar from flowers provides more nourishment than sugar water. To provide a better diet, buy packages of instant nectar solution or make your own. To make your own, use 1 part white granulated cane sugar to 4 parts water.

You need to bring this solution to a boil for 1 1/2 minutes, and then let it cool down. It is not necessary to add food coloring. Now you have a mixture much more similar to that of the flower nectar. Our hot weather can cause rapid bacterial growth, so change solutions every three to five days.



Camellia Page



Master
Gardener & Naturalist

The next Bryan County Master Gardener meeting will be on June 13th The meeting will be on Propagation, we will show different techniques to use for multiplying plants for the October Plant Swap.



What to do in Summer

In Summer keep a careful eye out for pests. Spider mites tend to be a problem in the early, dry part of the summer and less of a problem after the Summer rains become regular.

Irrigation is especially important before the Summer rains begin. Do not let your plants go until they show signs of drought stress. By then it may be too late. Keep your plants well mulched but remember to keep the mulch away from the trunks.

The Homeowner Horticultural Academy will begin in October if you are interested let Dave Linvill or David Moulder know as soon as possible. dlinvill@uga.edu or dmoulder@uga.edu

June

Planning on a Vacation

Vacations in the middle of the summer can mean coming back to a colorless landscape. Getting water to your plants while you're gone will be essential. Here are a few tips. A day or two before the trip, bunch all outside container plants and hanging baskets together in a shaded spot or covered patio. Place the planters very close together to help them conserve moisture. Water thoroughly the day before you leave. It won't hurt for there to be water in the saucer reservoir, which is not normally recommended. Have a friend come by every couple of days to check on them and water if necessary. Water the landscape plants and lawn prior to leaving if the weather has been dry and no rain is expected.

Make sure that the flowerbeds have 3 inches of mulch to help conserve moisture. Mulch also keeps the soil temperature cooler and discourages weed growth. There are many different types of mulching material available: peanut or pecan hulls, newspaper, pine straw or bark, shredded hardwood. In general, mulch should be 3 - 4 inches deep and readily available if you need to get more. (Pine Straw is my favorite)

Flowers

Most of your annual and perennial flowerbed plantings should be done. Use the larger, 4-inch sized container plants to fill in the gaps. Don't overlook those empty plastic and clay containers in the back of the shed. Pull them out, clean them up and fill them up with colorful annuals for enjoyment on the patio. Pinch off spent blooms and prune back spindly plants to get more blooms or a tighter shaped plant. Apply a liquid or hose-on application of fertilizer to boost growth of slow performers. Regular fertilization of bedding and container plants is often necessary throughout the year. Remember to fertilize in moderation because over doing it causes loads of new growth but few flowers.

Perennials are harder to get established when the weather gets hot. Buy only the healthiest, largest transplants (1 gallon or larger) with a good root system, but not pot bound. Disturb the roots as little as possible when transplanting and keep it well watered for a month. Do not try to split or transplant perennials growing in the ground until the weather cools down in mid-October. The next 3 months are very tough for plants. It will either be too wet or too dry. Helpful Hint: Plant in raised beds and cover soil with mulch. The raised beds help drain water away, preventing root rot and mulch helps retain moisture between watering.

Cut Flowers

Select blooms that are not fully opened for a longer indoor life. In the afternoon, cut the flower stem at a slant with a sharp knife or clippers. When cutting roses, clip the stem just above the second five-leaflet leaf from the bottom of the stem. This keeps the shrub blooming longer with large, fully shaped roses. Remove the leaves from the lower half of the stem then crush the end of the stems and place in warm water. Do not put the arrangement in direct sunlight. Recut the stems and change the water every two or three days.

Pest Control

Insects are out in full force. Caterpillars skeletonizing or chewing holes in leaves are easily controlled with Bt (*Bacillus thuringiensis*), acephate (Orthene) or carbaryl (Sevin). White flies are very difficult to control when populations are high. The adults are tiny and white in color. Mix some granular, systemic insecticide (Di-Syston) with the soil around the plant and then water. The plant absorbs the insecticide and any insect feeding on the plant will be poisoned. For a contact kill, spray the underside of the leaves with Orthene, Malathion or dimethoate (Cygon). Aphids suck the sap from plants and are easy to kill. The problem is that more individuals show up, requiring additional applications of insecticide. Treat the soil with Di-Syston and spray with Malathion or Orthene. Spider mites love dry, hot weather. For control, spray with dicofol (Kelthane), endosulfan (Thiodan), Malathion or Cygon.

(Many of these products are for commercial recommendations and may be hard to find)

Snails, slugs and pill bugs do their damage under the cover of darkness. The best control is broadcasting metaldehyde bait and lightly watering it in at dusk. This method gets overnight results.

Bulbs

Pull out or cut off brown foliage from your spring bloomers (daffodil, hyacinth). Dig up and divide spring flowering bulbs every 3 or 4 years to prevent overcrowding and fewer blooms. Transplant actively growing bulbs in containers. Dry, unsprouted bulbs are probably not worth bothering with unless they are fall bloomers (spider lily, naked ladies). The natural result of flowering is for a seedpod to be produced. Remove the old flower stalks or seedpods as soon as possible. They are basically wasting the plants energy, unless of course you want to grow some from seed. Plants grown from seed take 3 years before they are old enough to bloom.

Fruit

Georgia grown, fresh blueberries are hitting the market and very plentiful. Pick more than you can currently eat and freeze the rest in pint size bags. It's best not to wash the berries before freezing. Blueberry bushes make great landscape plants. They bloom in the spring, give fruit in early summer, make a nice green hedge throughout the summer and then the leaves turn maroon in the fall. Always plant more than one variety for improved pollination.

Thinning out the fruit on your apple or pear trees may be necessary this year. Some trees are really loaded. Two fruit per cluster is more than enough for all your fresh fruit and canning needs. Removing excess fruit by hand ensures that those remaining will be of good size, shape and color.

Lawns

Four types of grasses are commonly grown in Coastal Georgia: bermudagrass, centipedegrass, St. Augustinegrass and zoysiagrass. Only bermudagrass types are used on ball fields and golf courses. It recovers the fastest from abuse. It can be seeded or sodded. In a yard situation, bermudagrass is limited to sunny areas. Centipedegrass and St. Augustinegrass are the most prevalent home lawn grasses. Zoysiagrass will generally be in only one or two lawns per town. In June, lawns may begin to show signs of disease or insect problems. All grasses are susceptible but the degree of damage depends mainly upon how quickly you react with corrective action, i.e. spraying, watering, liming, etc. Be on the look out for chinch bugs in St. Augustine lawn. Discolored, yellowish / brown spots that are in open sunlight several hours a day may be chinch bug damage. The chinch bug seldom attacks grass in the shade. Also look for Mole Crickets in Centipede.

Trees and Shrubs

Finish trimming back spring flowering shrubs. Cuttings taken from ornamental plants may be rooted this month. This includes azalea, forsythia, althea, deutzia, mock orange, euonymus, camellia, hydrangea, jasmine, mahonia, pyracantha, sweet shrub and weigela. The cuttings should be 4 to 6 inches of the current years growth. For better rooting, dip the cutting in a rooting hormone before sticking in the media. June and early July is the time to prune evergreen trees and shrubs to maintain size and overall shape. Evergreen plant cuttings may also be propagated this month.

Native Plant of the Month



Coral Honeysuckle *Lonicera sempervirens*

Want to festoon a sunny arbor, fence, trellis, porch rail, or mailbox with flowers? Then plant coral honeysuckle. This easygoing, drought-tolerant vine is loaded with red flowers in spring, and blooming continues on and off until frost. The flowers are a high-quality nectar source and a favorite of ruby-throated hummingbirds. Bluebirds, mockingbirds, cedar waxwings, evening grosbeaks, and gray catbirds feed on the shiny tomato-red berries in summer and fall. Coral honeysuckle is a host plant for the lovely violet-blue spring azure butterfly; keep an eye out for tiny pea-green eggs and brown-headed caterpillars.

Description: Semi-evergreen woody vine with rounded blue-green leaves in an opposite arrangement. Red, tube-shaped flowers bloom heavily in spring and sporadically in summer and fall; orange-red berries are available in summer and fall.

Size: 15 to 25 feet high. **Growth Rate:** Fast. **Light:** Full to part sun.

Planting and Care: Coral honeysuckle is tough, drought tolerant, and adaptable to a variety of habitat types. For best results, plant in moist, well-drained, acidic to neutral soil and lots of sun; provide support.

Ornamental Value: Assets include semi-evergreen leaves and a profusion of bright red flowers in spring.

Landscape Usage: A great choice for mailboxes, arbors, trellises, and fences. A must-have for the hummingbird garden!

Wildlife Benefits: Flowers attract ruby-throated hummingbirds; songbirds eat the berries.