



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

Web Site:

[http://www.caes.uga.edu/
extension/bryan/](http://www.caes.uga.edu/extension/bryan/)

E-mail:

dmoulder@uga.edu
or: uge3029@uga.edu

Golden Rain tree

Exotic? Yes, but still a great plant.



“Chinese Flame” is a very adequate, descriptive name because these trees erupt into long 12- to 15-inch sprays of yellow blossoms.

Here are two more descriptive words that should get everyone’s attention this year:

Drought tolerant.

There are a lot of trees already defoliating and giving an almost fall look, yet the golden rain is in full bloom, showing off for everyone who drives by.

They are great landscape trees, especially considering the bright yellow blossoms that hang down in late summer when everything else looks like toast. But, for some reason these trees are still rare. *Koelreuteria paniculata* is hardy in zones 6 through 9 and blooms in early summer around here. There are also varieties that reportedly bloom later.

The golden-yellow flowers each have a touch of red at the base. When the bloom is through and the puffy fruit capsules are formed, they too color up in shades of cream with rose-pink and salmon. The fruiting structures of the *paniculata* turn dark brown. There are little-to-no insect or disease threats to these trees. It is deciduous, and many years they obtain a striking yellow fall leaf color. They also are tough in the heat like we experienced this summer. Use them to provide welcome shade to the patio or deck.

The golden rain tree is small, reaching 20 to 40 feet in height and flattens out at the top. It fits nicely in urban landscapes. Choose a site in full sun and set out nursery-grown plants anytime into well-drained soil. Fall is a good time to plant these trees. After planting, water deeply and mulch.

Camellia Page

2007 Master Gardener Program

Classes will start on Jan 11, '07 and conclude on Mar. 29th. Class hours are 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. every Thursday. Program will be held at the Bamboo Farm and Coastal Garden.

For more information on this program, visit our web site at: <http://www.caes.uga.edu/extension/bryan>

Bryan County Master Gardeners

Tuesday, October 10th, 6:30p.m. at the Bamboo Farm and Coastal Gardens, the Bryan County Master Gardeners will be having a plant swap. Bring your excess plants and trade them for some plants that you may have never seen.

Everyone is invited!!

What to do in October



Spray this month to control scale insects and spider mites. If the weather is still hot and you have a heavy spider mite infestation you might consider using Kelthane. If you can wait until the weather cools, you may use dormant oil. Repeat the treatments in two to four weeks. This is an excellent time to cut any air-layers that you might have started last Spring. October can have weather as hot as our Summer, but much drier. Make sure that your plants get sufficient water during the fall. Camellias do not show visible signs of drought stress, (wilted leaves), until they are very thirsty. Plants that are drought stressed at this time will have smaller and/or malformed blooms next spring.

Gibbing: Application of gibberellic acid to camellias produces different results depending on variety and flower form. For instance, the Tomorrow family opens flowers reluctantly unless the weather is cool. In warm weather, gibbed buds of the Tomorrow family will swell, show some color, and then in most instances fall to the ground unopened. Also, the singles and semi-doubles are easier to open with gibberellic acid in warm weather than the more heavily petalled forms such as the formal doubles. Whenever gib is used, in warm or cool weather, lots of water is essential to enable the blooms to open to their maximum size.

You should have been gibbing since Labor Day for earlier and larger blooms. Treat several buds on large bushes at weekly intervals. To promote growth next spring, do not gib more than 1 or 2 buds on small bushes.

Plant Savers

The first half of October is your last chance to dig tender plants that you want to save from the first killing frost. Transplant them into decorative pots and continue to enjoy them indoors. There is more to saving a tender plant than just digging it up. A topical hibiscus that is 4 foot tall is not going to appreciate you shoving its feet (roots) into a 1-gallon pot. Before you dig, find a pot that is big enough for the root ball. When reusing pots make sure to sanitize them first. Knock out the dry, crusty soil from the pot. Then, using a soft bristled brush or sponge and a water hose, begin to clean it up. The final step is to wash the pot with a 10% bleach solution. The bleach will help prevent the spread of disease or fungus from the pot to the transplant.

Annual Flowers

October is the month of cooler weather and signals a transition for annual flower plantings. Many warm season annuals are still very attractive and you may want to wait until November to replace them with cool season varieties. If this is the case, fill in any bare spots with a splash of new color. Cell-pack transplants of snapdragons, dianthus, petunia, marigold and calendula should be plentiful. Although Chrysanthemums are actually perennial, many people treat them like annuals. You can't beat mums for instant color, if you need to dress up the patio, deck or a table arrangement. Generally, garden people have a hard time throwing away any plant, much less just because it has completed its reproductive cycle (flowering). So, to read more about mums drop down to the perennial flower section, where the plant belongs.

Statistically, the first freeze for Southeastern Georgia will occur sometime around the second week in November. For frost proof, fall color, refurbish flowerbeds early. The sooner the new bedding plants become established, the less down time you will have in your garden color.

Some cool season annuals do better if directly seeded in place, such as: Poppy, sweet pea, alyssum and larkspur. These annuals perform best in full sun, well-drained soil with moderate moisture. Seeds sown in the fall and early spring will bloom from winter until summer during mild years.

Bulbs

Bulb planting time is fast approaching. If ordering from catalogs or the internet, make sure that the bulbs can be delivered before December. Tulip and hyacinth bulbs need to be refrigerated by late November to meet their chilling requirements. Daffodil, crocus, iris, anemone and ranunculus are dependable selections and can be found at local nurseries. Mass plantings of one particular bulb or color produce the most impressive, car stopping displays. The flowers stand out when placed in a setting of contrasting colors. Yellow daffodils towering over a bed of red pansies; pink hyacinths standing in green ivy or a backdrop of iris for a meadow of thrift. Ground covers such as periwinkle, ajuga, strawberry begonia, alyssum and English ivy make great companion plants for bulbs.

Dig up and save caladium tubers for next year. Lift the entire clump; remove excess soil and place in a warm, dry spot to cure. After the tubers have dried, clean off any dirt clods and papery foliage. Dust them with a fungicide and place in dry sawdust for the winter.

Lawns

A little care now can reduce problems with weeds, bare spots and cold damage to your lawn next year. Annual bluegrass is the most common cool season weed. For control, broadcast a pre-emergence herbicide before bluegrass seed germinate. Southern grasses may not go dormant until January. Layers of fallen leaves can block sunlight from the turf causing large bare spots next spring. Rake up or use a mulching mower to remove leaves. If you plan on putting out a lawn winterizer, then choose one with very little nitrogen, such as a 0-20-20 fertilizer.

Perennial Flowers

Divide and replant crowded perennials this month. Transplant shock is less severe and plants recover quicker if dug in the fall. Basically, re-establishment is easier because the soil is still warm. Yarrow, daisies and daylilies will begin to take over a flowerbed if left untouched for more than three years. Prepare the new flowerbed a few weeks before the actual planting takes place. A good soil amendment recipe for a 100 square foot area in South Georgia is: (1) Till in 3-4 inches of organic matter (compost, humus, peat moss), (2) Add 2-4 pounds of a complete fertilizer, such as 5-10-10. One-fourth to one-half of the nitrogen should be in a slow release form, (3) Add ¼ cup of dolomitic lime and 1/8 cup of super-phosphate to every 5-gallon bucket of backfill soil. Till to a depth of 12-18 inches and then level. Top with a layer of coarse mulch. The most productive flowerbeds will typically be located in well-drained soil that is exposed to full sun or light shade.

Football weather and chrysanthemums go together like being an American and eating apple pie. The 'mum' catches every gardener's eye during the fall. This plant has so many good qualities such as, easy to grow and propagate; bugs do not care for the taste; it blooms twice annually; it's evergreen and not invasive. The flower colors range from red, purple, white, yellow, pink and lavender to bronze. Every color except blue can be found. Many different flower forms are available. 'Pompons' produce rounded, tight flowers usually 2 inches across and 'Buttons' are just miniature pompons, 1 inch or smaller. 'Rayonettes' have a spidery, open look with long slender petals. The large football game mum is known as the 'Commercial.' Some other forms are 'Spoons,' 'Cushions,' 'Singles,' and 'Decorative.'

Trees and Shrubs

Fall is the absolute, research-based, best time to set out permanent plants. Spring is the second best time to plant. Why? Because South Georgia typically has a mild climate during the fall and winter. This means that root growth continues until the soil temperature dips below 40°F, thus giving the plant from October until Feb to establish a strong hold. When planting in the spring, there is generally very little time for the plants to become established before summer stresses arrive.

The bold fall leaf colors of trees and shrubs will generally last for a month or longer. Spring flowers don't even last that long, so the smart home landscaper should find a place to tuck in a few fall performers. The leaves of deciduous trees and shrubs change color as a result of a breakdown in the food making cells called chlorophyll. As the green chlorophyll is broken up and food is sent to the trunk of the tree for storage, the other pigments begin to show up. Ginkgo, Eastern redbud, beauty-berry and forsythia leaves will turn bright yellow. If red is your favorite fall color, then plant reds such as Japanese maples, black gum, dogwood, hydrangea or blueberries. Other plants with great fall color are witch hazel, sassafras, crepe myrtle, sourwood and bald cypress. It makes perfect sense when selecting trees and shrubs to emphasize fall color.

Vegetables

Some cool seasoned vegetables are not easy to transplant. Plant beet, radish, lettuce, spinach, mustard and turnip seeds directly in the garden soil. Set out young onion and cabbage plants. Harvest green tomatoes before frost and bring them indoors to ripen. Gourds and pumpkins are mature when the skin gets hard.

Native Plant (or maybe not???)



***Ipomoea macrorhiza* Indian-Midden Morning Glory**

I know when you see this beautiful vine you are going to say where can I get one. The answer is: I don't know! I found this vine at an old home place. I liked the looks of the vine leaves before I even saw the flower. After extensive looking and asking and a little help from my friends I finally came up with its name. This plant is tough and drought resistant. Insects feed on a few of the lower leaves but have not affected the looks of the plant. No diseases. I watered overhead for a period of time just to see if it would get diseases. The only thing I can find wrong with the plant is it blooms at night and the flower drops off around 10:00 each morning so for any of you late sleepers this is not one of your most desirable plants, but for you early risers this is a great plant. I am in the process of collecting seeds and I will try to propagate some for next year.