MEETING SCHEDULE for October 20th

Linda Fraser is a botanical illustrator of native plants in the southeastern United States. Although her paintings can be a means of identification, they are also enjoyed simply for the beauty of the flowers and the fun of finding the colorful insects and other critters hiding or chewing on the plants.

Linda’s prints and notecards are carried in the State Botanical Garden of Georgia gift shop. Come enjoy Linda’s interesting stories about the flora and fauna that inspire her illustrations.

Unless otherwise notified, our meetings will take place at 6:00 pm for a potluck supper and at 6:30 pm for the meeting. They are held on the third Tuesday of each month and in the Gardenside Room downstairs below the Conservatory level.

Mike Sikes
Vice President & Program Chair

Mike’s favorite fall blooming bulb is the Oxblood lily.

Executive Board

President - Anne Walker
Vice President - Mike Sikes
Secretary - Kay Petroff
Treasurer - Shirley Baker
Athens-Clarke County Extension Agent: Amanda Tedrow

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Elizabeth Thurmond
Newsletter Publisher & Listserv
AAMGAlistserv@gmail.com
The Monthly Newsletter of the Athens Area Master Gardener Association

AAMGA Committees

Audit: Ruth Smith, Chair
Members: Jackie Williams, Susan Drinkard

Budget: Doug Lair, Chair
Members: David Hoechst, Merry Anderson

By Laws: George Watson
Members: Bob & Carol Wolf

Historian: Betty Rice

Hospitality: Heather Gray-Jordan
Cheryl & Frank Johnson

Membership: Jean Ryan, Chair
Members: John Aitkens

Nominating: Jean Colquett, Chair

Programs: Mike Sikes, Chair
Members: Gary Wade and Jean Colquett

Photography: Andrea Fischer

Publicity:

TREASURER’S REPORT
Aug 19 to Sept 15, 2015

Beginning Balance 19,319.50

Deposit-Member Dues 10.00
Deposit-Bulb Sales 0.00
Deposit-Raffle Sales 0.00

Total Deposits 10.00

Expenses:
Oconee PAR 50.67
Clarke PAR 50.66
Athena Gardens 50.66
Hostess Supplies 64.91

Total Expenses: 216.90

Ending Balance: 19,112.60

Submitted by
Shirley Baker, Treasurer
Shirleybaker555@gmail.com

AAMGA Projects

Projects: Barbara Turner, Chair
BarbaraTurner@mac.com
Co-Chairs: Gary Wade and Dortha Jackson

Clarke PAR: Merry Anderson & Pam Bracken, Co-Chairs
Merry: merry.anderson@att.net
Pam: pamb824@aol.com

Winter Garden: Gary Wade Gwade@uga.edu

Flower Garden at Clarke PAR: Jill Hyche, Chair
jillhyche@gmail.com

Flower Bulb Project: Andrea Woodall & Jean Colquett, Co-Chairs
Andrea: aawoodall58@gmail.com Jean: greent39@yahoo.com

Oconee PAR: Gary Wade & Frank Johnson, Co-Chairs
Gary: Gwade@uga.edu Frank: frankandcherylj@bellsouth.net

Junior Master Gardener Classes:
Gaines School Elementary - Brenda Beckham, Chair
BBbeckha2@bellsouth.net
Dortha Jacobson: dorthafjacobson@yahoo.com

AAMGA Plant Sale: Heather Gray Jordan & Donna McPipkin, Co-Chairs
Heather: hgheather29@gmail.com Donna: DYates01@yahoo.com

Horticultural Therapy Project: Brenda Beckham, Chair
BBbeckha2@bellsouth.net

Backyard Pollinator Garden at SBG
Co-Chairmen: Jackie Williams, Shirley Baker
Jackie: jkwill82@hotmail.com Shirley: ShirleyBaker555@gmail.com

Barnyard Demonstration Garden at U Garden
Co-Chairmen: Shirley Baker, Petty Thomas
ShirleyBaker555@gmail.com PettyThomas@gmail.com

Salvation Army Vegetable Garden
Chairman: David Hagaman
dchagaman@gmail.com

Athena Gardens Retirement Community Vegetable Garden
Chairman: Gary Wade Gwade@uga.edu

NEW HISTORIAN

Betty Rice has taken over the Historian duties. Be sure to get any publicity items (newspaper clippings, flyers, magazine articles, pictures) to her so they can be added to the scrapbooks. Our members do a lot of worthwhile gardening in the area that never gets recorded in our history. Take a few minutes and make sure Betty gets items to save. Betty can be reached at betty_rice@hotmail.com or by phone at 214-924-8570.

“Woods in Your Backyard” Workshop

Would you like to enjoy recreation, aesthetics and wildlife on your property? Hosted by Athens-Clarke County Extension, this free workshop will discuss ways to enhance existing natural areas in your yard as well as steps for transforming a section of your lawn into a natural or woodland area. The workshop will take place at the Athens-Clarke County Library from 6-7:30 p.m on Wednesday, October 21. To register, please email atedrow@uga.edu or call 706-613-3640.
MINUTES FOR September 15th, 2015 MEETING

Kay Petroff, Secretary

The meeting was held in the Gardenside Room of SBG with President Anne Walker officiating. She welcomed a good crowd and stated the business meeting would follow the program. She then introduced Wilf Nicholls, Director of the State Botanical Garden of Georgia, who thanked members for working at SBG. He then talked about the “Connect to Protect” program in terms of pollination. He related the decline in bees to economic decline and stressed the importance of creating “pockets of habitat” in our yards. At the end of the program, Anne added that there had been a pollinator session at the recent GMGA Conference.

Business Meeting:

Secretary’s Report- August report was in the newsletter. There were no corrections so it is filed as reported.

Treasurer’s Report- August report was in the newsletter. There were no corrections so it is filed as reported.

Unfinished Business- None.

Project Reports:

Clarke PAR- Merry Anderson reported 1100 pounds of produce have been donated to the Food Bank this season. One focus for the fall and winter garden is to involve Clarke Middle students in the planting. Andrea Woodall is in charge of this project and a planning meeting has been scheduled with teachers.

Oconee PAR- Frank Johnson reported that 58 pounds was gathered today to bring the Summer Garden total to 1701 pounds. Some plants have been pulled out and replaced with transplants of peas, beans, and okra in hopes they can be harvested before frost. The plans are to begin transitioning to fall plants.

Salvation Army Garden- No report.

Horticultural Therapy- Brenda Beckham asked for volunteers to join the project. Currently Brenda, Gary Wade, and Petty Thomas are leading the weekly sessions. Ideally, two persons are needed for each session. To recruit helpers, Gary has sent an email to all members of the last Master Gardener class. Members are encouraged to visit a session to get the idea. Contact Brenda or Gary to volunteer.

UGarden- Shirley Baker reported the sunflowers have been pulled and they are planning a day to clear weeds in an area for flowers next spring.

Athena Gardens Retirement Community Garden- Gary Wade reported working with the residents to pull out some of the summer crops in order to transition to fall crops. The residents want to let the crops continue to produce. Of the 12 beds, only 4 were cleared. Gary thanked Bob Quinn for his hard work in clearing the beds.

Pollinator Garden at SBG- Shirley Baker said plants will be purchased at the Native Plant Sale and added to the garden.

Bulb Order- Jean Colquitt reported that the committee has not heard when the order will arrive.

Announcements:

SBG Events- BJ Garrett had fliers on the table at the front of the room with information about upcoming events at the garden as well as Friends membership information. She also announced that the recent Flea Market was very successful. A Christmas Flea Market will be held on October 24. Items for sale will be Christmas related and a few toys. Additional donations will be accepted October 19 -23 from 10am-2pm.

PR Person for Special Events-BJ introduced Juliette who will take her place at the Trial Garden and be in charge of contacting volunteers. Juliette announced the Evening in the Garden, October 22.

Native Plant Sale- Connie Cottingham announced that the plant list will be on the website for those wanting to plan purchases before the sale starts.

Update on Mike Sikes- Mike is out of rehab as of last week. He is beginning to venture out and has an upcoming meeting with his medical team. He hopes to be back in the garden soon. He sends thanks to everyone for the support he has gotten.

Name Badge Pick-up- Liz Lohmueller had new name badges at the back of the room. Members are encouraged to get an up-to-date name badge.

Master Gardener Class- Enrollment for the 2016 class has started. The classes begin in early January and will be held on Tuesday and Thursday mornings.

Trial Garden Rose Help- Karen Radde is looking for help dead-heading the Trial Garden roses. The work can be done independently and is usually 2-4 hours per month. She will train volunteers. Contact Karen or BJ Garrett for more information.

Insectival- Andrea Fischer needs volunteers for Insectival, Saturday, September 26, from 9-1. Contact her to help.

PreK Field Trips- Anne Shenk needs help with stations for PreK Field Trips. She will hold orientation on September 22. Let Andrea know if you are interested.

Plant Sale- Heather Jordan-Gray reminded members to dig plants now for the Spring Plant Sale. Anne Walker has Creeping Raspberry for anyone wanting it.

October Program- Watch for information.

Anne thanked members for attending and adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted, Kay Petroff, Secretary
Those Lazy Limas!

We’re all shaking our heads and wondering what is going on at the Oconee Plant-a-Row garden when we look at the lima beans. We planted them on May 20, 2015, and as of September 23 have not harvested a single bean pod. We tried threatening to throw them in the compost pile, but the verbal abuse just has not worked!

Searching the web for answers to this dilemma, I discovered from several credible references that lima beans have a problem with the heat and humidity of summer, particularly warm humid nights. There are many reports, and some research projects, that show that hot days, above 90 degrees, and warm humid nights, either will prevent pods from forming all together or will prevent the beans from enlarging in the pods. Guess what we typically experience during the months of June, July and August in Athens?….hot days and warm, humid nights!

One study at the University of Delaware concluded that the hot, humid weather can cause two physiological problems in lima beans; a failure for the pollen tube to extend into the ovary, or cause the pollen to become clumped and unable to move through the pollen tube for fertilization and bean development. The study concludes that lima beans like cooler weather….dah!

Obviously the research has pinpointed our problem because we are now seeing a prolific pod set on the plants as we move into the cooler days and nights of fall. Cooperative Extension’s Vegetable Planting Guide suggests planting lima beans from March 15 to June 1 for a spring crop, or from July 1 to August 15 for the fall crop. However, the Guide does not provide separate planting dates for North and South Georgia. Therefore, since we can have spring frosts in Athens as late as April 15, I would not plant lima beans before April 10 just to be safe. The problem with waiting that late to plant is that they take about 75 days to mature, which carries them into the hot, humid days of June, which, as we have seen, can cause a podless and disappointing crop. On the other hand, I think the likelihood of producing a successful crop is increased by planting them on or about August 15 so they can experience the cooler days and nights of fall and mature a crop before the average first frost date of November 15 in the Athens area.

The bottom line, based on our experience and the literature, is that lima beans are a better fall crop than a spring crop. Next year I think we will plant pole lima beans to replace pole snap beans and bush lima beans to replace bush snap beans in late August. It’s a natural transition in seasonal crops and one that promises to be more successful. Our experience also proves, once again, that you can have good seeds, great soil and abundant moisture, but Mother Nature always has the last word and is the supreme Master Gardener!
**Athena Gardens Project Update**  
**Gary L. Wade, project chair**

Athena Gardens is a senior retirement complex on the east side of Athens. There are 12 raised beds within a chain-link enclosure. Residents interested in gardening are assigned one or more raised beds, depending on the number of residents requesting space. This is the first year Master Gardeners have been involved with this project. Currently we are helping them clear the summer crops and transition to the fall crops. At the last work day we also moved and re-constructed a compost bin. Our mission is to help them prepare and plant their beds and get the crops off to a good start. Each resident has a long list of crops they want to grow, so I am scrambling to grow transplants and find the seeds they want to plant in their spaces.

The next work day will be Wednesday, September 30th at 9am. On that day, we will continue to help them clear their summer crops, add additional compost to their beds, and get some of the first fall crops in the ground. Special appreciation goes to David Berle from UGA Horticulture for bringing us a load of rich compost from the UGA Bio-conversion Center. The “Black Gold” will certainly help the fall crops thrive.

At the September 30 work day, we will set a weekly schedule to continue planting the beds. We will work a half day each week while the crops are getting established. The residents are responsible for watering, weeding and harvesting their crops. We don’t tell them what to plant, but help them learn about the cultural requirements of the plants they want to grow.

We need volunteers to help with the fall garden, so if you can spare 2 to 3 hours each week, please come September 30 if you are available, or contact me for additional work days and times (gwade@uga.edu).

Athena Gardens is located behind the Publix shopping center on the east side of Athens. Traveling east on Barnett Shoals Road turn left at the stop light at Rite-aid. After the next stop light, take a left onto Dennis Drive. The road dead-ends at Athena Gardens. Continue driving to the end of the road and park behind the complex next to the garden.
Ocone Plant-a-Row Update
Gary Wade and Frank Johnson, co-chairs

The summer harvest at the Ocone Plant-a-Row for the Hungry garden is still going strong, providing much appreciated produce to low-income seniors in Oconee county. To date 1,805 lbs. of produce have been delivered to the Action Agency in Bishop.

Currently, the garden is in transition from the summer to the fall crops. Pole bean and cucumber plants have been composted, and turnips, cabbage, onions and mustard greens are being planted in their places. The tomatoes are finishing up as are the crowder peas, but the okra and peppers are still going strong. By mid-October, our 20+ rows of summer crops will be transitioned to fall crops.

Volunteers work each Tuesday morning at 9 am at Thomas Orchards, Hwy. 441 S. in Watkinsville. Please come out and help if you are available. Pickers are also needed for Saturdays to keep up with the okra. There is a web site for signing up for the Saturday shifts, http://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0d4dada92cabfa7-ocone.

Gary Wade
GWade@uga.edu

Frank Johnson
frankandcherylj@bellsouth.net
ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY PLANT A ROW FOR THE HUNGRY
AMAZING GOURDS MATURING AT THE BARNYARD GARDEN

In south Florida it is considered a noxious weed, but as a subtropical it goes away when the temperature slides below 50 degrees here in Georgia. I only had 3 dried-up air potatoes from last year’s crop, but they quickly grew into these impressive vines. They do have a short life, but I really enjoy watching the speed of their growth and the fact they are not at all concerned about getting water or food! They will climb on anything. In this photo they are growing up a rain chain, a wind chime and a wrought iron wall hanging. Elizabeth Thurmond
PHOTOS FROM BOB & CAROL WOLF’S GARDEN
OCTOBER GARDENING CHORES

If you want your poinsettia to turn color by Christmas, now is the time to begin giving it 14 hours of darkness and 10 hours of bright light each day.

**Trim** back by one fourth any woody plants you've kept outdoors during the summer, to help them fit inside your home for the winter.

The pansy planting season begins now! Plant “six-pack” pansies eight inches apart, larger plants can be spaced ten inches apart.

**Cut** brown flower stems of purple coneflower, black-eyed Susan, daylily and hosta back to leaf drop. Fore bringing them inside. This will help prevent seeds from sprouting.

**Rake** planted cool-season flowers to prevent weed seeds from sprouting.

**Applying** booster, etc) when you feed in two weeks. Contains nitrate nitrogen (Osmocote, Pansy houseplant fertilizer. Switch to a product that contains nitrate nitrogen (Osmocote, Pansy Booster, etc) when you feed in two weeks.

**Clean** fallen fruit from the ground under pear and apple trees. Remove from the tree any fruit that you don’t intend to harvest.

**Plant** spring flowering bulbs, like tulip, daffodil and hyacinth. Old, crowded beds can be loosened and the bulbs divided and replanted now.

**Finish** dividing daylily clumps, iris rhizomes and peony roots. Plant them into a well-dug bed immediately.

**Remove** faded rose blooms. Clip wayward stems back so the plant has a compact form, ready for winter wind and ice.

As chrysanthemum and aster flowers fade, cut the plants back to six inches tall.

**Rake** out and replace all of the mulch and dead leaves under roses, red tip photinia and crabapples. You'll prevent diseases on next year's leaves.

**Root** cuttings of geranium, impatiens, begonia and other "outside" plants to bring indoors for the winter.

**Fertilize** pansies again with water-soluble houseplant fertilizer. Switch to a product that contains nitrate nitrogen (Osmocote, Pansy Booster, etc) when you feed in two weeks.

It has evolved over time to refer to the harmonious integration of landscape, people and appropriate technologies, providing shelter, energy and other needs in a sustainable way. Permaculture integrates biology, ecology, geography, agriculture, architecture, technology, gardening and community building.

There are three guiding principles for permaculture design:
- Each element of the system performs multiple functions
- Each desired function is supported by multiple elements
- Everything in the system is interconnected to everything else

**Applying Permaculture Design to Your Garden**

Elements of permaculture that can be applied in a backyard garden include such things as water catchment, sheet mulching, companion planting and chicken tractors:

**Water catchment** - The average roof receives over 22,000 gallons of rainwater. From rain barrels to a complex system of large water storage containers, a garden can be irrigated entirely, or in part, with rainwater. An aqueduct system can transport water from a cistern down to specific areas, such as a vegetable garden, that would benefit from a natural irrigation system.

**Working with the existing topography** - The permaculture approach uses the existing topography, its naturally established drainage patterns, existing slopes, etc. and employs such things as swales and terraces to maximize the land’s usefulness.

**Sheet mulching** - This involves laying on newspapers, cardboard and straw, watering thoroughly and then making planting holes in the mulch, inserting soil and seedlings and letting the worms, bugs, fungus, micro-organisms and roots do the rest.

**Companion planting** - Planting two or more species of certain plants near one another can result in such benefits as attracting beneficial insects, repelling harmful nematodes (roundworms) or increasing yield or taste of edibles. Examples include planting tomatoes (shallow-rooted) next to carrots (deep-rooted), so they are not competing for nutrients from the same soil level. Planting Monarda near tomatoes helps improve the taste, attracts beneficial insects and bees, as well as butterflies. Planting petunias repels leaf hoppers, certain types of aphids and tomato worms.

**Chicken tractors** - Chickens are a perfect example of multiple functionality. A chicken eats insect pests and weeds, provides food, tills the soil with its scratching, and provides fertilizer. A chicken tractor is a small, portable enclosure that the chicken lives in that are placed over an area to be ready for planting. The chicken prepares the soil and eliminates pests from the area covered by the "tractor," which is then moved from spot to spot until an entire plot is ready for planting.

Permaculture is an environmentally responsible approach to sustainable living in an age of ecological crisis. It is a vision of cooperation and interconnectedness that can be applied to our own back yards as well as to the larger community.
Cottingham: Arkansas amsonia is bold and delicate

I never noticed Arkansas amsonia until I saw it a few years ago in a native wildflower border, on a slope, with little supplemental water at the State Botanical Garden of Georgia here in Athens. In fall, this plant was a feathery mound of gold that contrasted vividly with the browning wildflowers around it. And, of course, anything with “Arkansas” in the name would catch my eye. Arkansas amsonia also is called 'Arkansas Blue Star,' named after its native state and the pale blue clusters of star shaped flowers that appear in April and May.

How could I have lived in Arkansas so long and missed this beauty? It may have been easy to miss because it is a relative newcomer to home landscapes.

Arkansas amsonia was discovered by Leslie Hubricht in the early 1940s in the Ouachita mountains of west central Arkansas. Hubricht was on a collecting trip for the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago, but he was there to collect mollusks, not plants. A botanist at the Missouri Botanical Garden grew the plant and named it after Hubricht (Amsonia hubrichtii). It was later introduced as a garden plant by Woodlanders Nursery in South Carolina and is now quickly gaining popularity as a low maintenance, deer-resistant wildflower with three seasons of interest.

This perennial matures into a massive mound three feet high and four feet wide. The narrow, three inch long, needle-like leaves along the stems create fine-textured, feathery foliage that catches the breeze. The mid-green foliage contrasts well with wider leafed plants in the summer, then turns a bright golden yellow in fall before going dormant. This fall display goes well with asters or mums, the willow-like foliage contrasts well with coneflowers or sedum 'Autumn Joy.' It also blends beautifully with the bold foliage and red fall color of Virginia sweetspire (Itea).

Two- to three-inch clusters of 3/4-inch pale blue flowers show up in late spring. The long lasting blooms make good cut flowers. It is not necessary to divide this plant, although you can propagate it by division as well as cuttings. Although they can be planted from seed, few have space for more than one plant, so just buy this plant in a 1 or 3 gallon pot.

Arkansas amsonia is a tough plant that does not wilt in hot Southern summers. Plant it in sun or part shade. Lots of sun with some afternoon shade would be ideal, since it can get floppy with too much shade. Sun or shade, a haircut to about 8 inches after it blooms would encourage a tighter, bushier form, making a better fall show.

Relatively pest-free and adaptable to a broad range of growing conditions, Arkansas amsonia looks good in a perennial border, shrub border or wildflower meadow.

Arkansas Blue Star hubrichtii

Originally published in the Athens Banner-Herald in October, 2004. Written by AAMGA member Connie Cottingham. Sign up for her free weekly garden tips: Love Notes from the Garden at conniecottingham@gmail.com. Connie is a landscape architect, registered in Georgia, who lives and gardens in Athens.
Drawings at Monthly Meetings

If you want to bring something for our drawing at the next meeting, please give Anne Walker a call. She wants to be sure we don’t have more than 20 prizes at a meeting.

3 tickets for $2!

Anne Walker

cell: 404.852.8910

home: 706.342.9471
gardenanne1@gmail.com

The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago.

The second best time is now.

-Chinese Proverb