



UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

EXTENSION

# Shades of Green

Athens-Clarke County Agriculture and Natural Resources E-Newsletter

September 2022



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# A note from Athens-Clarke County Agriculture & Natural Resources

Hello Readers!

We will be hosting our [Green Thumb Lecture](#) on Gardening for Wildlife, on September 14th.

We are excited to announce the applications for our Masters Programs will be going out in September. We have three Masters Programs happening this Winter/Spring! Please check out the flyers for the [Master Gardener 2023](#), [Master Naturalist 2023](#), & [Master Composter 2023](#) courses later in this issue for more information.

Farmers Markets are going on throughout the Fall, & we've added a new market-

[Oconee Farmers Market](#) to our [Market Page](#).

Thank you for reading this month's issue of *Shades of Green*.



# Room to Grow, an Organic Farm Experience

By Reham Azab, Abby Jensen and Audree'Auna Morris-Garrett

A cohort of undergraduate students from around the country joined together at The University of Georgia this summer to participate in a Research and Extension Experience for Undergraduates (REEU). This fellowship in Crop Genetics and Genomics provided us with several new experiences, including the opportunity to visit and tour the Sundance Family Farm. While many of us have backgrounds in agriculture, visiting the farm was a learning experience for us all. Ed Janosik, the owner of the farm, was a great tour guide and truly enthusiastic about his business.

Upon arrival at Sundance Family Farm, it was impossible not to notice the diversity in the crops being grown there. Different colors peeked through the vast rows of green crops. Ed had fledgling peanuts growing in a plot next to large tomato plants that were just starting to fruit. One small plot had all different kinds of peppers, from green bell peppers to scotch bonnets. All of this was accompanied by the occasional rooster crows and turkey gobbles.

The diversity in his crops is not only aesthetically pleasing, it also allows Ed to produce crops no matter what the growing season holds. If squash bugs are particularly bad, his tomatoes won't be affected. Such a natural way of managing pests is exciting to see. A technique that seems so simple can be fairly effective.



Ed talked to us a lot about his motivation behind organic farming as well. He and his family mostly subsist off of their own farm, rarely having to buy groceries. They live a true farm to table way of life. It is clear that farming isn't just a job to Ed, it's a lifestyle.

He described how he believes that a lot of pesticides used on traditional crops can be harmful to the people who consume them. He has a sense of comfort knowing where his food comes from and that it is safe. He also enjoys being able to provide organic food to the community.



While the REEU students have varying opinions on the necessity of organic farming in order to have safe food, we can all relate to the interest in agriculture. Ed employs many practices on his farm that were fascinating to learn about. All of us are just as passionate as Ed about continuing to develop healthy and plentiful crops for consumers. We all agreed that visiting Sundance Family Farm helped us understand what it takes to get food from the field to the table. Whether an expert or new at something, there is always room to grow.



# Fall is the Best Time to add new Trees to the Landscape

By Josh Fuder

The transition of leaf color symbolizes an end to the growing season, but it is also the best time of year to start trees in our landscape. When correctly sited and planted, a fall-planted tree will perform better than a spring-planted tree because the fall tree will establish roots before the warm summer temperatures draw moisture from and cause stress to the tree.

University of Georgia Cooperative Extension offers these tips to successful tree planting.

## Plant and site selection

Select trees that are well adapted to the individual planting site. Soil drainage is critical, as most trees don't like "wet feet." To ensure proper soil drainage, dig a test hole and fill it with water. If the hole drains at a rate of less than 1 inch per hour, choose a different species of plant or raise the planting site.

## Site preparation

Dig your planting hole at least two times as wide as the root ball. Do not dig holes deeper than the root balls or put loose soil beneath the roots because the soil will compact over time and the tree will be planted too deep.

In heavy clay soils, it is recommended to score the edges of the hole so roots can penetrate out of the planting hole. Backfill the holes with native soil as too much organic matter can cause differences in pore size and create water and drainage issues. Fertilization at planting time is not recommended. A slow-release fertilizer can be added if needed the following spring.

## Tree preparation

Remove all wrapping and closely inspect the root ball for girdling roots. If roots are circling around the root ball exterior, cut through the roots in a few places. Remove all tags and labels to prevent girdling of branches.

## Water and mulch

Thoroughly water the tree after planting, and water when needed during the winter. Mulch should be put down in an area at least equivalent to the drip line of the tree. Two to 3 inches of mulch is best, and mulch should be kept from touching the trunk.

For more information on planting shade trees in Georgia, see UGA Extension publication number C1013 at [extension.uga.edu/publications/](http://extension.uga.edu/publications/).

**Josh Fuder is the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Agricultural and Natural Resources Agent in Cherokee County**



Fall is the perfect time to install new trees or shrubs or to move existing ones to new locations. University of Georgia Cooperative Extension experts recommend digging the planting hole two to three times the diameter of the soil ball.

# Summer Project Investigates Spiders' Suppers

Authored by:  
Michaela DiGiovanni

Priscilla Smith peers into a group of holly bushes on the University of Georgia's South Campus. Nestled between the leaves, she spies a young Joro spider clinging to its web. With her hand, she gently guides the spider into a plastic container—web and all.

Smith, a rising fourth-year student in UGA's College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, is working this summer alongside researchers in the Forest Entomology Laboratory at the UGA Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources. She's helping search for answers to a big question: How will the presence of Joro spiders affect overall forest health?

The lab is part of a cross-campus collaboration of researchers looking at ways the Joro spiders may affect the larger environment. The Forest Entomology Lab tackles insect-related issues that affect trees, and as the yellow and black spiders take up residence in them—and bushes, and front porches—across the Southeast, they become an issue for landowners.



Priscilla Smith cups her hands around a Joro spider to be used for research.

The study consists of three components:

- A gut analysis to understand what the spiders are eating and how that might compete with na-

tive spiders

- A citizen science project to help area residents better identify and understand Joros
- An "exclusion" study, which will take place over several years to measure how many Joros return to a specific place

Smith will be involved with all aspects of the lab's latest research. She said she is particularly excited about the citizen science portion and is organizing an event that will teach Athens' residents about the Joro. "We want to get people to pay attention to what's happening in their yards since (Joro spiders) are everywhere," she said.

Smith is also planning and conducting field work as part of the gut analysis. She selected a variety of sites in developed and forested areas, where she is collecting spiders for sampling. "We went to 20 sites the past couple of days to get spiders from all different habitats," said Smith. "Then we're going to send all the samples down to a UGA lab in Tifton where they will get dissected to see what they are eating." Prior research has established that the Joro is invasive, but little is known about the spider's eating habits and other aspects of its natural history.

"We don't really know anything about them here in North America," said Brittany Barnes, a research professional in the Forest Entomology Lab. "We've been reading a lot of things about how they may help with mosquito or stink bug control—those are the positives that have been written, but we don't know this for sure, and we don't know what they are actually eating."

The third and final component of the Joro research is the exclusion study, which is specific to forested areas. Once a week, researchers will count all the spiders within a forested plot, including native species. All Joros will be identified and killed on site.

[\(Continued on page 6\)](#)

# Summer Project Investigates Spiders' Suppers

Authored by:  
Michaela DiGiovanni

"We're going to keep coming back to these sites because we want to see how many native spiders start coming back," said Barnes. "This will be part of a multiyear study."

The research is just in the beginning stages, but both Smith and Barnes say they are hopeful that it will shed light on an invasive spider that we know very little about. "We've really moved into an interesting place of looking at things that no one has really looked at when it comes to the health of our forests," said Barnes.

Written by Michaela DiGiovanni



A Joro spider sits in a tube.

# Planning Your Georgia Fall Vegetable Garden

by Becky Griffin

Although the thermometer is rising above ninety on a daily basis and our Georgia humidity is, well, the typical Georgia humidity, it is time to do some serious thinking about your fall garden.

**Did you make notes on your summer garden?** Making notes about which varieties performed well for you, what pests plagued you, and your overall satisfaction from your warm-season garden will be useful as you plan for 2020. Also, make note of plant arrangement so you can practice crop rotation next year.

**Think Green.** Fall is the time for [lettuce](#), spinach, collards, mustard greens and kale. Your seed catalogs will show you that there are so many varieties of lettuce that you couldn't possibly grow them all. Do try a few new ones. They could make a real difference in the taste of your salads. I really enjoy the lettuce variety Drunken Woman!



**Bush beans can be a part of your early fall garden.** A planting of bush beans towards the end of summer may produce a nice crop for you if we don't get an early frost. Take note of the days until harvest count and look for something in the lower numbers. Look for varieties that are resistant to rusts and keep a close eye on them for pests like Mexican bean beetles.

**Don't forget root crops.** [Short day onions](#) and [garlic](#) are a MUST for any cool-season garden. Plant these root crops as sets and let them go until the spring. It is easy to grow all the garlic you will need for the year by careful planning. Make sure to mulch the crop.



**Finally, if you don't plan to grow a cool-season crop consider growing a cover crop.**

[Cover crops](#) can hold down weeds while enriching your soil. At the very least please be courteous to your fellow community gardeners and clean out your plot, removing plant debris that could harbor pests and weeds that could produce seeds that you will deal with later.

Cooler weather is on the way! *Happy Gardening!*



[Becky Griffin](#)  
Community and School Garden Coordinator  
at [UGA Extension](#)

Becky Griffin helps school and community gardeners succeed! This includes organizing school garden teacher training with county agents, assisting schools with STE(A)M goals, and creating resources on starting and sustaining successful gardens.

Becky is a Georgia Certified Beekeeper and works with community and school gardeners to increase beneficial insect habitat. She is the coordinator of the Great Georgia Pollinator Census, happening this year on August 19th and 20th, 2022. She is also part of UGA's Native Plants and Beneficial Insect Working Group.

Athens-Clarke County Extension  
**Virtual Green Thumb Lectures**  
2022 Free Monthly Gardening Class Series



## September: Gardening for Wildlife

Please join us online for an informative presentation on topics including:

- Basic wildlife needs.
- Plants that best attract and encourage wildlife to benefit your landscape.
- Planning your wildlife garden for all seasons.

Gardeners of all experience levels are welcome.

### WHEN:

Wednesday, September 14  
6:00 -7:30 pm

### WHERE:

ONLINE via Zoom.com  
Specific link to join Zoom meeting will be sent to the email you register with.

### TO REGISTER:

Registration is required. Please register by September 13th by visiting [www.accgov.com/gardening](http://www.accgov.com/gardening)

### For questions:

Contact Laura Ney, Extension Agent at [lney@uga.edu](mailto:lney@uga.edu)  
or Educator, Cari at [cmisseri@uga.edu](mailto:cmisseri@uga.edu)  
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# Stay in the loop! (local or online activities and events)

## ACC Community Tree Council

Online tree identification Zoom lecture: Friday, September 2, 2022, 10am-11am

UGA campus tree identification walk: Friday, September 9, 2022, 10am-noon, meet up location TBD

This hybrid class includes one online Zoom lecture introducing participants to tree identification characteristics. A second in-person session includes a guided tree walk on UGA campus along the UGA Campus Arboretum trail to identify several tree species.

Holly Campbell is a Public Service Assistant faculty member at the UGA Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources where she instructs several undergraduate courses in dendrology, natural history, community forestry, and prescribed fire. Ms. Campbell also provides outreach education to professionals and the public in the same subject areas. Ms. Campbell is a member of the Athens-Clarke County Community Tree Council

[ACC Tree Council \(athenstreecouncil.com\)](http://athenstreecouncil.com)

## [Georgia Urban Ecologists - Georgia Audubon](#)

Georgia Urban Ecologists is for youth in grades 8 through 12. This school-year long program will guide students in the discovery of the fascinating, rich ecology of Georgia, providing opportunities for hands-on field experiences and fun with their peers.

### Program fees:

**\$400 early bird registration for those registering on or before September 5, 2022**  
**\$450 after September 5**

Need-based scholarships are available. **Please apply for a [Georgia Audubon Scholarship](#) if cost is a burden.**

If you have questions regarding the schedule or program, please [email Melissa Paduani](#), Education Program Coordinator



**2022 GREEN SCHOOL KICK OFF!**

You are invited to join us as we kick-off the 2022-2023 school year with a Green School celebration!

**Fun | Food | Prizes & Giveaways**

All teachers, paraprofessionals, PTA/PTO representatives, or interested community members are invited to attend.

Learn about the environmental education resources available in ACC, network with fellow teachers, and meet your Green School Program contacts.

For more information visit [www.accgreenschools.org](http://www.accgreenschools.org)

E-mail: [greenschools@accgov.com](mailto:greenschools@accgov.com)



Thursday  
**September 15**

**4 to 6 PM**

Drop in!

**La Puerta Del Sol**

1254 Cedar Shoals Drive

Drop in event!  
RSVP Requested



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## ATHENS WATER FESTIVAL

**Saturday, September 10**  
**10:00am - 2:00pm**



**Sandy Creek Park**  
**400 Bob Holman Road**  
**\$2 per person park entry**

Music  
&  
Magic

Splash with  
Water Trucks

Swim in  
the Lake

Meet  
Animals



**Bring a bathing suit  
& water bottle!**



[AthensWaterFestival.com](http://AthensWaterFestival.com)

The State Botanical Garden of Georgia has great local events occurring each month. Make sure to check out their [event calendar](#) or [discover education activities for home](#).

UGA Extension offices around the state are working hard at developing quality online presentations on various topics.

Visit the UGA Extension [event calendar](#) to see events happening local to our county as well as virtual opportunities.

# Local Farmers Markets



The **Athens Farmers Market** is taking place on Saturdays from 8am-12pm at Bishop Park. Make sure to visit [their website](#) for updates and details.

Find them on Facebook: [@AthensFarmersMarket](#)

Follow them on Instagram: [@athensfarmersmarket](#)

## West Broad Farmers Market

Online ordering with pick-up and delivery options are available on Saturdays.

Visit [their website](#) to find out how to order online.

Find them on Facebook: [@WestBroadMarketGarden](#)



## MARIGOLD



## MARKET

The **Winterville Farmers Market** is taking place on Saturdays from 10am-2pm at Pittard Park. Visit [their website](#) for more information.

Find out more on

Facebook [@marigoldmarketwinterville](#)

Instagram: [@marigoldmarketwinterville](#)

The **Oconee Farmers Market** is

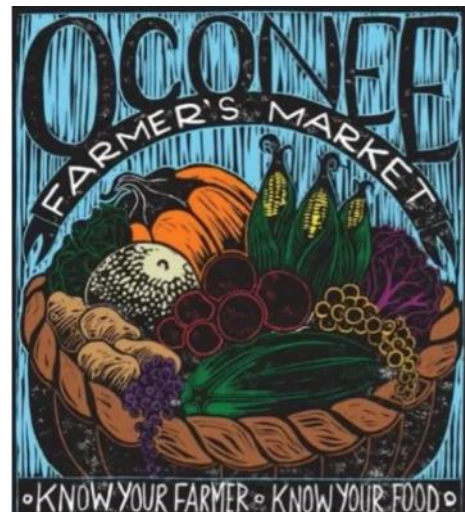
Open 9-Noon every Saturday

from April– October 15th.

Located in front of the

Watkinsville Courthouse

[Oconee Farmers Market - Farmers Market - Watkinsville, Georgia](#)



# Master Gardener January 2023

Join UGA Extension  
as a Master Gardener  
Extension Volunteer  
for Athens-Clarke County

[Apply Online](#)



Established in 1990, the Athens Area Master Gardener Program provides novice and seasoned gardeners with an intensive educational experience in horticulture principles, practices and pest management. Classes are taught by UGA faculty and other subject area experts.

## Position Summary

### Master Gardener Extension Volunteers

- Answer gardening questions at the ACC Extension office
- Staff informational booths at farmers markets and local events
- Conduct plant clinics, help with Plant a Row for the Hungry gardens
- Assist curators at the State Botanical Garden of Georgia
- Teach Junior Master Gardener programs at local schools and more

## Job Responsibilities

- After completing the educational component of the program, participants perform 50 hours of volunteer service in their community before the end of the calendar year.
- Each year thereafter you must volunteer for 25 hours per year to maintain active status.
- 6 hours of Continuing Education per year

Questions? Contact

Extension Agent Laura Ney at [lney@uga.edu](mailto:lney@uga.edu)  
or Educator Cari Misseri at [cmisseri@uga.edu](mailto:cmisseri@uga.edu)  
Applications will be emailed in September 2022



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learn more &  
apply online

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# Master Naturalist January 2023

## Join UGA Extension as a Master Naturalist for Athens-Clarke County



Are you a nature enthusiast? Take the Georgia Master Naturalist course! Developed in 2004 by UGA Extension and the Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources, the Georgia Master Naturalist Program is an adult environmental education course exploring the ecosystems and natural environments of the Athens area and our state.

### *Position Summary*

#### *Master Naturalist Program*

- This program is a combination of lectures and hands-on field studies taught by UGA faculty and field experts.
- Classes are customized to local habitats such as granite outcroppings, ponds, mountains, forests and urban landscapes.

### *Course Topics may include*

- *Geology*
- *Ecology Principles*
- *Environmental Awareness*
- *Native Plants*
- *Birding*
- *Wildlife Issues*
- *Entomology & Herpetology*
- *Local Agriculture*
- *Water Issues and Stream Monitoring*
- *Invasive Plants and Pests*

Questions? Contact  
Extension Agent Laura Nev at  
[lnev@uga.edu](mailto:lnev@uga.edu)  
or Educator Cari Misseri at  
[cmisseri@uga.edu](mailto:cmisseri@uga.edu)

Applications will be emailed in  
September 2022



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# Master Composter January 2023

Join UGA Extension  
as a Master Composter  
Extension Volunteer  
for Athens-Clarke County



If you enjoy working with people, digging in the dirt and are interested in teaching others about composting, then the Master Composter program is for you! You will become part of an elite group of volunteers that uses the information learned in this training program to teach others how to turn their organic material into a beneficial soil amendment.

## ***Position Summary***

### ***Master Composter Extension Volunteers***

- Teach or assist with compost workshops.
- Staff composting informational booths at various public education and outreach events.
- Give lectures and hands-on presentations on composting to various civic, community, and garden groups

## ***Job Responsibilities***

- ***Complete the training course and field trips.***
- ***Complete a class project***
- ***Volunteer a minimum of 40 hours back to the program in the first year.***
- ***Build compost bins***

Questions? Contact  
Extension Agent Laura Ney at

[lney@uga.edu](mailto:lney@uga.edu)

or Educator Cari Misseri at

[cmisseri@uga.edu](mailto:cmisseri@uga.edu)

Applications will be emailed in  
September 2022



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# Join Athens-Clarke County 4-H!



Students in 5<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> grades in Athens-Clarke County can sign up for 4-H now. The mission of Georgia 4-H is to assist youth in acquiring knowledge, developing life skills, and forming attitudes that will enable them to become self-directing, productive and contributing members of society. 4-H meetings will look different this year and are online. There is no charge to be a member or participate in a competition.

To start your 4-H Adventure e-mail the ACC 4-H Agent, Elizabeth Conway, at [ebarber@uga.edu](mailto:ebarber@uga.edu) today!



Virtual 4-H Programs can be viewed on the ACC 4-H website:

<https://tinyurl.com/acc4hvirtual>

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Concerned about the state of your garden?

Are weeds taking over your landscape?

No need to fear, Clarke is here!

Follow @gardenwithclarke on Instagram  and learn how to battle pests, identify weeds, build your soil and so much more as you garden alongside Clarke, Athens-Clarke County's super gardener!



**gardenwithclarke**  
UGA Extension Athens-Clarke County





## Helpful resources online:

[Find My Local Extension Office](#)

[Bugwood— Pest Images](#)

[Landscape Alerts Online](#)

[Georgia Turf](#)

[Pest Management Handbook](#)

[Pesticide Applicator Info](#)

[Free Online Webinars](#)

[SE Ornamental Horticulture Production & IPM Blog](#)

[UGA Center for Urban Agriculture](#)

[Georgia Certified Plant Professional](#)

[Extension Publications](#)

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## Athens-Clarke County Extension Agriculture and Natural Resources

### Mission Statement

The UGA Athens-Clarke County Extension's mission is to respond to the people's needs and interest in Agriculture, the Environment, Families, and 4-H/ youth in Athens-Clarke County with unbiased, research-based education and information.

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Visit us online:



Contact us:

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Bogart, GA 30622  
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