



President's Message

Carol Cook Hagood, Editor

As I write this, January is almost over and I look forward to February, which I hope will be at least a little warmer.

Our February meeting will be our annual "Reach for the Stars" celebration and luncheon. We will enjoy celebrating our Master Gardeners' achievements, and I for one will really enjoy the pot luck luncheon. MG's eat the best of any group I know.

We can look forward to several events in February, including the Camellia Show, a tree planting in Red Mountain Park, pruning the rose garden, which is actually March first, and one of my favorites: a plant "rescue" from the New Georgia landfill. I hope you can volunteer and enjoy all of them.

I really encourage you to participate, or at least go out on the plant rescue dig. Yes it's at the landfill, but it is as scenic an area as you will find in central Alabama. As you wander those beautiful hills in search of plant treasures, as Beth and I intend to as we have in the past, and realize soon this will be cleared, dug and filled with trash, it makes us realize the cost of disposing the detritus of our modern life is high indeed.

If you have not visited our terrific new website go to www.jeffcomg.org and check it out. There are several great pages and links, including a link to the volunteer hours reporting system, which will personally save me much time finding the site every time I need it.

I look forward to seeing you at on the eleventh for "Reach for the Stars" and remember:

**"You can bury a lot of troubles
digging in the garden."**

Happy February!

Roger

Roger Clarke
President

JCMGA February Program Notes

February 11 at BBG
Meeting begins 10 a.m., Awards Program 10:30 a.m.
Covered Luncheon to Follow

Celebrate your MG colleagues and friends on February 11 as we "Reach for the Stars"! Bring a dish and join your JCMGA friends in awarding recognition for many hours of work and the accomplishments of our organization.

As calendars are opened to mark the February meeting, please hold a couple of dates in March, as well. Our regular meeting will be on March 11. There will also be an evening meeting on March 18.

As we look forward, now is the time to begin to consider the plant/plants that we might want to bring for the plant exchange in May. If something needs to be transplanted or repotted while dormant, now is the time. Also, thinking ahead will allow each of us to make inquiries if there are questions about what to bring and how to avoid bringing invasive or other discouraged plant material.

Congratulations to all for the accomplishments of 2013 and let's challenge ourselves to continue to make a positive difference in 2014.

Ann Gray

Ann Gray Harvey
First Vice President

Bethany's Extension Extra

Mark your calendars now for a special meeting on Tuesday, February 11. This is the date of our annual Reach for the Stars Awards program and pot luck lunch. Many of you will be recognized for achieving various award milestones. Come join your fellow MG's in celebrating countless hours given to numerous worthwhile endeavors.

The Master Gardener program is one that "enables participants to serve their communities through education in environmental sciences, plant clinics, demonstration gardens, phone information, community projects, and continued training of Master Gardeners. Each year, about 2,000 Master Gardeners donate several thousand hours of community service in partnership with Extension." You all help to make up that number, and you are a large part of what makes this community and surrounding areas better!

Happy Gardening!
Bethany O'Rear



Master Gardeners Needed for Pruning in the Dunn Formal Rose Garden

The annual pruning of the Birmingham Botanical Gardens' Dunn Formal Rose Garden will take place on Saturday, March 1, from 8 a.m. to noon.

Instructions will be given on pruning and spring care. Bring your pruning tools, do a great service for the BBG rose garden, and enjoy fun and fellowship.

Rain or other bad weather makeup day will be Saturday, March 8 at the same times listed above.

Thanks,
Robert Eskew
Birmingham Rose Society

Photographs are needed for the JCMGA Web Site!

www.jeffcomg.org

As you participate in Master Gardener events and service projects at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens, Aldridge Gardens, all around town, or on the road, be sure to share any great photographs you may take with your fellow Master Gardeners.

Contact Diane Remick for information on how to best submit your photos for possible use in our beautiful new web site, documenting some of the good work in the community our MG's are doing.

Come join a Pre-Plant Dig Orientation BBG Lecture Hall

Saturday, February 15, 10 a.m. to noon

Master Gardeners and members of the City of Birmingham horticulture department will be on hand to help everyone get prepared for a successful plant dig at the Georgia Landfill, to take place later in the month on February 22, 10 a.m.—2 p.m.

Admission for this orientation is free, but space is limited, so please call or email to reserve your spot.

Master Gardeners are needed to volunteer on Feb. 22, assisting the public in plant identification. Contact Taylor Steele, tsteele@bbgardens.org or 4414-3962.

Treasurer's Report

Dec. 2013/Jan. 2014

Beginning balance January 1, 2014	\$10,002
Deposits	\$484
Disbursements	\$1,600
State dues \$1,110	
2014 scholarships \$300	
Other \$192	
Ending balance January 28, 2014	\$9,009
Certificates of Deposit	\$10,349

---Submitted by Lisa Ennis, Treasurer

Cumulative CEU Hours from 2014 Meetings

January 14 (James Horton) 1.0 CEU

January 2014 Minutes

The monthly meeting of the JCMGA was held on Tuesday, January 14, 2014 at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens (BBG). It was called to order by President Roger Clarke. Guests were welcomed. The Picardis were thanked for the work they had done in setting up for the meeting.

President's Report:

- The February meeting will be "Reach for the Stars." Anyone who can come early to help set up would be appreciated.
- Door prizes are needed. Please contact Ann Gray Harvey if you can provide one.
- Dues are 'way' past due. They should have been paid by December 31, but you have until January 17 for 2013. These are important, not just for individuals, but as support and validation of the work being done by ACES.
- Bethany needs information on those MG's who work with children and youth. Required background checks are to be done.
- Fletcher Harvey asked that all of us take a look at the Master Gardeners website (jeffcomg.org). All submissions should go to Roger. Pictures are needed.

Upcoming events:

- **January 22** – Peach Production, in Clanton
- **February 1** – Tree planting at Red Mountain Park
- **February 4 and seven Tuesdays following**— classes on beekeeping and invasive plants
- **February 7 & 8** –Fruit and Vegetables Growers Association Meeting, in Clanton
- **February 11** – JCMGA meeting at 10 a.m. – "Reach for the Stars"
- **February 15** – Training class for those who can/will be helping with the plant dig. The class will be at BBG from 10 a.m. to noon. Volunteers are needed.
- **February 22** – Plant Dig at New Georgia Landfill
- **March 1** – Rose pruning at BBG from 8 a.m. to noon. Rain date is March 8. Bring your pruners. Learn about Spring plant care.
- **April 10-13** – *Tentative dates for BBG Spring Plant Sale*

Program: Ann Gray Harvey introduced the ACES staff:

Bethany O'Rear is the Regional Extension Agent who also arranges the Master Gardener classes and does programming (among other things). Her programs are on backyard orchards, landscaping, and "Ready, Set, Grow" for community gardens.

Gary Gray is the Regional Extension Agent for commercial horticulture. He is responsible for twelve counties and deals with commercial production of fruits and vegetables.

Sallie Lee is the Urban Extension Agent, whose work deals with "more asphalt and more zoning." She also deals with rain barrels and chickens.

Hunter McBrayer is the lab technician who works with **Dr. Jim Jacobi**, the plant pathologist. He also deals with insects and snakes.

Annette Drummonds is Administrative Support. She is "the glue that holds the operation together."

Our program speaker was **James Horton**, Director of the Birmingham Botanical Gardens. James gave a talk and slide show presentation on the state of the gardens.

The Gardens are open every day from sunrise to sunset, and although the buildings may not be open on major holidays, the gardens are. The Gardens are a joint public/private venture. The physical facilities are owned and largely maintained by the City of Birmingham. The Botanical Society does the educational programming and fundraising. In addition, volunteers of all types play a major part in the operations. Docents lead tours, Scouts work on special projects, and Master Gardeners work regularly in all areas of the Gardens.

James described a number of the projects, both large and small, that have been completed recently:

- An informational kiosk was built by Natalie Lee's son, Cameron, as an Eagle Scout project. (There are many more possible projects for Scouts. If you know someone interested, contact James.)
- Three students from Parker High have added information to the self- guided tours.
- The Day Lily garden is being re-landscaped and re-graded to halt runoff and erosion.
- A new porous surface which has been tried elsewhere in the Gardens will be used here as well. The surface is a "cookbook mix" of ground rubber, aggregate and binder. It is poured cold and can handle the weight and traffic of the work carts. It can also be used around trees.
- There is a new arbor constructed by Robinson Ironworks, a memorial to Sara Askew Jones, that ties together two trails and two portions of the Gardens.

(Continued on following page)

(January Minutes *continued from previous page*)

James also spoke of some projects that are being planned or are already underway:

- The bamboo fence in the Japanese Gardens is to be rebuilt.
- The Japanese pavilion has been repaired, with a new roof and new side panels.
- The stream in the Japanese Gardens now runs. This was a major task, most of which was done by City workers.
- There is a new amphitheater in the Japanese Gardens.
- There are new wooden benches.
- The Torii gate has been repaired and a cherry tree alley is to be planted. The trees are onsite.

The biggest recent project has been work on the conservatory. Phase I has been completed. All of the glass has been replaced with tempered, laminated glass. There is a new curtain that serves to shade and to retain heat.

The next phase of work will see all of the plants come out of the Conservatory, the soil replaced, new watering systems and in-ground heating installed. Needless to say, this will be a major expense.

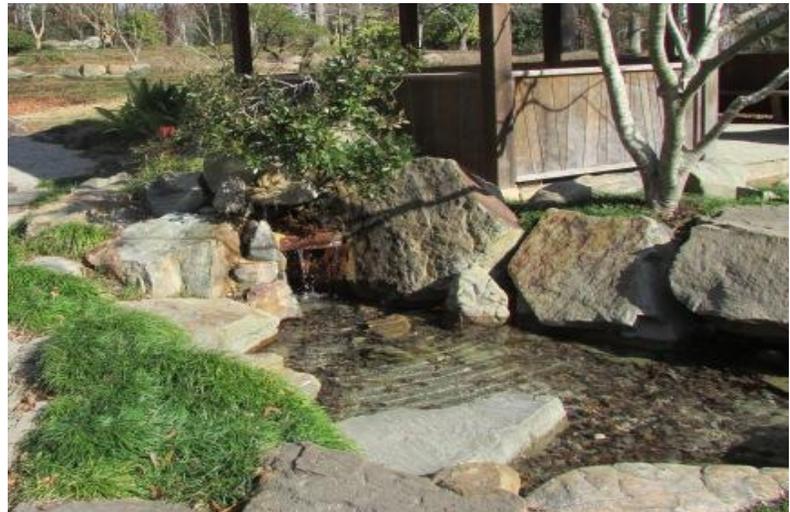
The Gardens are working on the creation of an endowment to provide ongoing maintenance.

James was asked about the Frank Fleming clock. He said the statues will be re-purposed. The long-range plans call for a garden entrance to the Conservatory. James was also asked about the “concrete pond.” Possibilities, he said, are being pondered.

Our next meeting will be February 11 and will feature the annual “Reach for the Stars” Awards Program and Luncheon.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

---Respectfully submitted,
Hope I. Cooper, Secretary



At selected times, water is now once more running through the Japanese Gardens at BBG, bringing this wonderful garden to life with the sparkling reflections and inviting sounds of living streams. The hard work behind this transformation is only one of the many major projects at the Gardens that James Horton described to us at the January 2014 MG meeting.

Educational Opportunity at Aldridge Gardens

Register online at <http://aldridgegardens.com>.

Amazon: Earth's Greatest Wilderness

Tues., Feb. 25: Salon Talk with Wine and Cheese
Refreshments at 6:30 p.m.; Program at 7 p.m.

Presenter: Richard Ryel, Ph.D.

Founder, International Expeditions and

Past-President, International Ecotourism Society

\$14 Members/\$17 Non-members

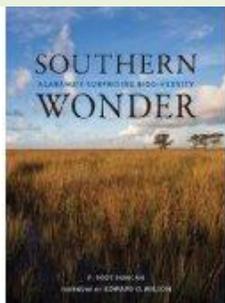
Preregistration suggested.

Join us for presentation and conversation about the Amazon Basin. At close to 3 million square miles, the sheer immensity and biodiversity of the region is virtually incomprehensible. The mighty Amazon River, with 1,000 tributaries in nine countries, flows over more than 4,000 miles across the South American continent.

Dr. Ryel spent more than a year experiencing many of the natural and cultural wonders of this wilderness area, where the abundant diversity of wildlife is unequalled anywhere else on Earth. Join us to learn more about one of the great natural wonders of our planet, the threats that challenge its survival, and what must be done to conserve this natural treasure.

News from the Library at Birmingham Botanical Gardens

For more information, visit www.bbgardens.org/library.



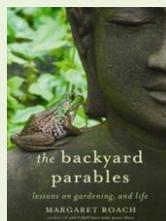
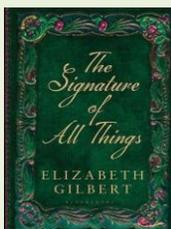
Author Talk: R. Scot Duncan, *Southern Wonder: Alabama's Surprising Biodiversity*
Feb. 6, 6 p.m., Ireland Room, BBG; Free event, but registration is required,
www.bbgardens.org/classes or 205-414-3950.

Southern Wonder explores Alabama's amazing biological diversity, the reasons for the large number of species in the state, and the importance of their preservation. Following the lecture, Scot will be signing his book, which is available for purchase at Leaf & Petal at The Gardens.

Thyme to Read book club:

The **Thyme to Read** book club will not meet in February, but will be discussing two books on March 4 at 6 p.m. in the Library at BBG:
The Signature of All Things by Elizabeth Gilbert and
The Backyard Parables by Margaret Roach.

Come join the group!



Edward O. Wilson has said of this book: "Scot Duncan has delivered one of the most important books ever written about Alabama. Beautifully composed, it is a revelation about one of the most biologically diverse regions in North America and a call to Alabama's people to treasure and protect the state's living heritage."

Meet Scot Duncan, author of the new book *Southern Wonder: Alabama's Surprising Biodiversity* at the BBG Library's Author Talk on Feb. 6.



Educational Opportunities at Birmingham Botanical Gardens

Register online at www.bbgardens.org or, for more information, call Dawn Coleman at 205-414-3958.

Among upcoming classes at BBG:

Mix It Up at The Gardens: Chocolate Making with Chef Mair

Instructor: Chef Thomas Mair

Location: Birmingham Botanical Gardens

Friday, February 14, 2014 | 6 - 8:30 p.m.

\$35 Single | \$60 Couple

Learn about the tempering of chocolate and the difference between a snap and a bloom, with some history of chocolate. Then grab your spoons and get your aprons ready as we mix up our own homemade chocolate candy perfect for sharing at Valentine's Day! You will take home a box of homemade chocolates in a do-it-yourself Valentine chocolate box with a marzipan rose on top! Limited Spaces available!

Photography Class: Seasonal Series

Instructor: Hank Siegel

February 15 | 9 – noon

Location: Birmingham Botanical Gardens – Exploration Classroom

\$65 Members | \$75 Non-Members

This course will introduce the participant to techniques, tools and skills necessary to capture visually stunning and interesting images through the creation of a seasonal series of landscapes/nature scenes.

Photography Class: Walking Class-Water Features

Instructor: Hank Siegel

March 8 | 9 – 1 p.m.

Location: Birmingham Botanical Gardens - Conference Room

\$65 Members | \$75 Non-Members

This class will start with a short presentation in the classroom, then proceed to the various garden water features to actually experiment and experience different techniques: manipulating zoom focus, controlling shutter speeds and aperture (f-stop), and the use of ND filters; all towards getting the images that reflect their creative vision.

Yoga In The Gardens

Instructor: Suzanne Graham

Every Wednesday | 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.

Location: Birmingham Botanical Gardens - East Room

\$72 Yoga Six Class Series

\$15 Single Class

Suzanne Graham combines a flowing style with a focus on strength, breath, light-heartedness and a quiet spirituality. She finds that yoga provides the connection between the physical body, the true self, and the divine energy of the universe.

Suzanne is an ERYT 200 Kripalu lineage and a level 2 Thai Yoga facilitator.

This multidimensional approach to relaxation facilitates deep integration of the mind, body, and spirit. This practice is appropriate for anyone, regardless of physical condition.

Certificate in Native Plant Studies Program

Find more information or register for classes online at <http://www.bbgardens.org/native-plant-studies.php>.

Among upcoming CNPS classes:

(You don't need to be enrolled in the entire series attend these, or any other CNPS events.)

Winter Identification of Native Woody Plants (elective)

Instructor: Fred Spicer

Location: Birmingham Botanical Gardens

Saturday, February 8 | 12:30 - 4:30 p.m.

\$40 Members | \$45 Non-Members

Using The Gardens' extensive living collections as a hands-on resource, we will focus on attributes and identification features of species found naturally or in cultivation in Alabama. Attendees will examine and learn to identify ~20 plants whose key traits are evident in winter, as well as learn which of these plants make good sense to use in your landscapes. This is largely a walking class, held outdoors; please dress appropriately for the weather.

Fossils to Ferns to Flowers – and Everything in Between The Story of Plant Evolution (elective)

Instructor: Brian Axsmith, Ph.D.

Saturday, February 22 | 12:30 - 4:30 p.m.

Location: Birmingham Botanical Garden

\$40 Members | \$45 Non-Members

When did plants first invade the land and what did they look like? Where were they found, and how did they evolve into what we see today? How do researchers determine relationships between groups of plants? This class will answer these questions between groups of plants? This class will answer these questions and offer access to fossils of the earliest known seed and leaf, fossil conifer cones and herbarium specimens - to help us understand how the fascinating world of plants evolved. Time will be spent in The Gardens to corroborate with live plants.

Other Upcoming CNPS Events include:

Making New Plants: All about Plant Propagation (elective) Saturday, April 5

Almond Granite Outcrop (field trip) Saturday, May 17

Prairie Grove Glades (field trip) Saturday, May 24

Introduction to Mycology (elective) Saturday, May 31

Surprise Two Night, Three Day Field Trip – to be announced soon!

Volunteer Opportunities at Birmingham Botanical Gardens

Join our Garden Docent family! Make plans to attend our docent orientation and training on February 18 from 9:30-11 a.m. Garden Docents promote interest and excitement for The Gardens through informational tours. Our docents provide tours for garden, community groups, and other organizations who visit The Gardens year round. Each month, informative and fun meetings are held to learn more about The Gardens as well as other interesting topics relating to nature, gardening and the environment.

For more information, visit www.bbgardens.org/volunteer or contact Volunteer Coordinator Taylor Steele at tsteale@bbgardens.org or 205.414.3962.

Volunteer Workdays – On Feb. 13, 18, 20, 25, and 27, Kaul Wildflower Garden Curator John Manion will lead volunteer sessions in the Kaul Wildflower Garden, beginning at 9 a.m. On Friday mornings, a plant propagation group has been meeting, as well. John says: “If you are not a ‘regular’ participant in these volunteer activities, it’s best to let me know you plan to attend in case we cancel.” For more information, write John Manion at jmanion@bbgardens.org.

Reach for the Stars!

REACH FOR THE STARS PROGRAM AND LUNCHEON ON TUESDAY, FEB. 11

The **Reach for the Stars Awards Luncheon** is a high point in our Master Gardening year, the one time that WE are the program. We get to honor ourselves for our involvement in those activities that we love to do!

CONGRATULATIONS to **19 Bronze Star** (>100 hours); **5 Silver Star** (>300 hours) and **5 Gold Star Recipients** (> 500 hours.) **Also to 5 members who have earned their Gold Name Badge** (> 1000 hours) **and 4 who have earned their Platinum Name Badge** (> 2000 hours).

Jefferson County Master Gardeners reported 17,064 hours for 2013!

We also get to show off our cooking magic with great recipes. **Plan now to bring your favorite dish to share with your fellow gardeners.** The meeting will start at 10 a.m. with the Awards Program at 10:30, followed by our covered dish lunch.

If you are eligible to receive a new Star or advance to a Name Badge, don't forget to bring your old Star for recycling, and be sure to wear your name badge.

Congratulations to everyone!

Reach for Stars Award Committee

Ken Hall, Bruce Steele, Madelon Rushing, Anne Thomas



JEFFERSON COUNTY
Master Gardeners

Bethany A. O'Rear
Regional Extension Agent
Alabama Cooperative Extension System
C. Beaty Hanna Horticulture and
Environmental Center
2612 Lane Park Road
Birmingham, AL 35223-1082

We're on the Web! Visit us at www.jeffcomg.org.

**Also see Facebook pages for *Jefferson County Extension System*
and *Jefferson County Master Gardeners Association***