

Roots and Shoots

MARCH 2014



Carol Cook Hagood, Editor

President's Message

After the tumultuous weather in February, I am hoping March will be a little nicer. My mother always used the adage for March "In like a lion, out like a lamb; in like a lamb, out like a lion," so we will see. Winter may not be over yet.

If the weather is kind, Beth and I are more than ready to get out into the garden to get digging, and with Mardi Gras and St Patrick's day to celebrate and the beginning of Lent it will be a busy month.

Our meeting on March 11 will be our annual "Reach for the Stars" celebration postponed, due to the weather, from February. Come and celebrate the Master Gardeners who have achieved their next level, from the nineteen who earned bronze stars to the four who have earned platinum name badges. I heartily congratulate all the Master Gardeners who have accumulated the hours to reach the next level.

As always, our Reach for the Stars celebration will be followed by lunch provided by our members. If there is one thing I *do* know about Master Gardeners, ever since my class in 2010, is that you all can *really* cook, so bring your favorite dish to share and enjoy great company and a fabulous lunch.

Don't forget the upcoming evening meeting on March 18; Su Reid-St. John will demonstrate how to make strawberry pots.

Finally, the Alabama Master Gardeners Association has a new membership and dues tracking data base, which we are responsible to keep updated. Any member whose dues are not current per the data base will not receive the state newsletter, or other official communications, such as the annual conference schedule and registration.

Happy March gardening,

Roger

Roger Clarke
President

JCMGA March Program Notes

**March 11 at BBG
Meeting at 10 a.m. with Fred Spicer;
Awards Program and Luncheon to Follow**

What a difference a month makes! It appears (knock wood!) that we might have a meeting without needing tire chains, skis, or metal runners to get to the BBG. Since our February meeting was cancelled with the threat of winter weather, we have a double agenda for March 11. Please plan to be at the meeting for longer than usual!

At 10 a.m., Fred Spicer, Executive Director/CEO of the BBG, will talk on pruning, a very timely topic. Fred is always a good speaker, and this topic is one for which many of us can use guidance! Because of the February cancellation, March will also be our month to celebrate the volunteer work of our members. Please bring a dish and join fellow Master Gardeners as we recognize members' service achievements. We'll plan to have lunch and "reach for the stars" after Fred's talk.

March also brings our first evening meeting, March 18 at 6 p.m. at BBG—a family-friendly program on planting strawberry pots led by our own Su Reid-St. John. Feel free to bring children or grandchildren who might enjoy observing or helping Su with the demonstration.

April showers will bring a program on Hydrangea Flowers (and the rest of the plant, as well!), with David Doggett. The timing is perfect for anyone who, like me, digs for the smart phone when looking at the myriad of hydrangea varieties at the plant sale! Join us on April 8 at 10 a.m. at the BBG to learn more.

Our May meeting will be our usual plant swap with Linda Emerson. It's time now to consider what to bring; no one wants to miss this opportunity! Remember that invasive plants are not on the "wanted list" for this event. If you have questions about what to bring, check with friends at the next few meetings.

One final note: door prizes! Patricia Cosgrove and I are looking for a few good people to have fun providing door prizes—each to take responsibility for one meeting (or to recruit a group of friends to help). Bring a couple of prizes or arrange a "dirty garden gift exchange" (think "Dirty Santa") with humorous or serious prizes—it's up to you! Patricia will lead the March door prizes. Let us hear from you (or groups of friends) for future meetings.

See you on March 11!

Ann Gray

Ann Gray Harvey, First Vice President

Bethany's Extension Extra

Mark your calendars (again!) for our special meeting on Tuesday, March 11.

This is the rescheduled (due to weather) date of our annual Reach for the Stars Awards program and pot luck lunch. **Join your fellow MGs in celebrating many hours given to numerous worthwhile endeavors.** We'll also get some timely tips from Fred Spicer on spring pruning.

Speaking of service hours, we have recently received a number of requests for Master Gardener volunteers to help in a variety of projects around town.

Check the boxes on this page for opportunities for more service to the community.

Happy Gardening!
Bethany O'Rear

If you would like to get exercise, grow healthy food, and help the community while you're at it, you're invited to volunteer with the **Oliver Elementary Farm Lab.**

You can visit the Farm Lab at Oliver on **Tuesday afternoons between 1:30 – 4 p.m.**, or join the Oliver group **every 1st and 3rd Saturday of the month through May**, from 9 a.m. – Noon. (The dates for these workdays are **March 1 and 15, April 5 and 19, and May 3 and 17.**)

Plan to wear weather-appropriate clothes that can get dirty, and bring gloves, a water bottle, sunscreen, hat, and any other items that can help you stay comfortable in a variety of weather conditions. If there's a thunderstorm, volunteer hours and workdays will be cancelled; but work will go on in a light drizzle.

Contact Steph Munkachy at 334-717-1860 or at steph@jvtf.org if you'd like to volunteer.

Looking ahead to next month, the **Women's Ministry at Faith Chapel Christian Center** would like to have a MG booth at the Women's Expo they are scheduling for **Saturday, April 26**, from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

They are planning for an attendance of 600 women, and would like MG's to answer gardening questions and provide publications. The group is hoping to provide life-changing information to their community, and would welcome your help. For more information, you can contact Tammy Young at 930-1467.

Treasurer's Report

Jan. 2014/ Feb. 2014

Beginning balance February 1, 2014	\$9,484.91
Deposits	\$386.00
Disbursements	\$5.37
Ending balance February 28, 2014	\$9,504.53
Certificates of Deposit	\$10,349

---Submitted by Lisa Ennis, Treasurer

At **Petals from the Past**, customers have preordered tomato plants this year; the pickup date is **March 29**. The folks at Petals would be happy to have MGs on hand that day to help educate home gardeners on how to have success in growing their new tomato plants. To assist, contact pat@petalsfromthepast.com.

Norwood community gardens folk are planning another garden workday on **Saturday, March 8**, to put in fruit trees, berry bushes, and posts for espaliers. They have invited MG's to come out and volunteer. Volunteer check-in (with snacks) begins at 7:30 a.m., and work begins at 8 a.m., at the first garden, located at 3301 Norwood Blvd, Birmingham 35234. The work will be planting pear and plum trees, muscadines and blackberries, and digging holes for the espalier posts. Bring gloves and a favorite digging shovel, if you have one. There will be extra gloves and equipment on hand if you don't. Once work is finished at the first garden, the group will move on to the second (Steve's garden at 3400 13th Ave. N., where the work will be planting figs, blueberries, and a persimmon), and then the third (Brian's garden at 3433 17th Ave. N., where the group will be planting blackberries, blueberries, and figs.) If you have questions about the workday, contact Sarah Bettinger at s_bettinger@hotmail.com.

Cumulative CEU Hours from 2014 Meetings

January 14 (James Horton)	1.0 CEU
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February 2014 Minutes

The monthly meeting of the Jefferson County Master Gardeners' Association for February 11, 2014 was cancelled. Mother Nature pitched another winter fit and President Roger Clarke felt that discretion was the better part of valor.

The "Reach for the Stars" program has been rescheduled for our next meeting, Tuesday, March 11.

Hope to see you there.

Respectfully submitted,
Hope I. Cooper, Secretary

Reach for the Stars Awards Announced

Anne Thomas, on behalf of the Awards Committee, has announced that the following awards will be presented to Jefferson County Master Gardeners at the March 11 meeting, in recognition of their service:

BRONZE STARS

(100 – 299 HOURS)

Julie Adams	195.50
Sarah Bettinger	185
Merry Bise	102.50
Margaret Bish	118
Christina Boles	99.50
Elissa Capps	154.25
Mary Cathy Connolly	173.70
Hope Cooper	249.00
Janet Cox	111.25
Katherine Harper	196.0
Brian Hawkins	184
Jennifer Hicks	238.75
Karen Holmes	108.10
Diana Jones	147
Miriam Newman	146
E. W. Phillips	136.5
John St. Clair	116
Ruth Varnell	105.5
Cathy Wald	108.5

SILVER STARS

(300 – 499 HOURS)

Bertice Brown	345
Lisa Ennis	302
Carol Hagood	356.75
Raymond Jourdan	412.5
Robin Mansfield	409.75

GOLD STARS

(500 – 999 HOURS)

Archie Blackman	653.75
Hope Long	539
Anne Parrish	504.50
Diane Remick	828.30
Katherine Rostand	592.50

GOLD NAME BADGES

(1000 – 1999 HOURS)

Alicia Hall	1198.25
Ken Hall	1339.50
Yvette Heath	1011
Natalie Lee	1114.3
Donna Taylor	1326

PLATINUM NAME BADGES

(2000 – 3999 HOURS)

Pat Cosgrove	2239.55
Fletcher Harvey	2068.50
Dale O'Connor	2015.45
Mike Rushing	2243.50

Conservatory reopened to members Feb. 28 [from a BBG Garden Dirt report]

The Conservatory at Birmingham Botanical Gardens has been closed to the public since April of 2011 due to safety concerns. Following a \$1.3 million upgrade in 2013, it's now being given new life, and the iconic Birmingham landmark is preparing to open its doors once again as both an attraction and a classroom.

On Sunday, February 23, members, donors and media were invited to tour the 50-year-old facility. From noon - 4 p.m., refreshments were served as Executive Director & CEO Fred Spicer, Director of Education Henry Hughes, and Volunteer Coordinator Taylor Steele showed off improvements made. On the following Monday, the Conservatory opened to the public for the first time in nearly three years.

To learn more about the project, the improvements made and the donors who made it possible, [check out the story from AL.com](http://al.com).



Monthly Garden Docent Update and Training:

On March 18, our special guest speaker will be Hayes Jackson, Regional Extension Agent with ACES. He is a noted expert on tropical and sub-tropical plants, and will give us a walking tour and talk, "A Walk Through the Tropics," in the recently renovated BBG Conservatory, as part of the training.

The meeting begins at 9:30 in the first-floor conference room in the Garden Center.

Any Jefferson County Master Gardener interested in becoming a docent and learning more about the tropical plants housed in the conservatory is welcome!

For more information, please contact Taylor Steele, volunteer coordinator, at 414-3962, or email tsteele@bbgardens.org.

Volunteer Opportunities at Birmingham Botanical Gardens

For more information, or to volunteer, contact Taylor Steele at tsteele@bbgardens.org or 205-414-3962.

Need hours?

Taylor Steele, Volunteer Coordinator at BBG, has lots of great ideas for you, but particularly needs your help with two large upcoming events. He asks that you

SAVE THE DATE: April 8 – 13, for the **Annual Spring Plant Sale at BBG**. Volunteers will be needed all week to help with set-up, the public sale, and break down. More information to come.

and

SAVE THE DATE: April 26, for **Earth Day at The Gardens**—the JCMG Table. The focus this year for EDATG will be on urban agriculture and community gardening, with displays and demonstrations on healthy foods, sustainable living, pollinators, native plants, and eco-friendly family activities that relate to our theme: **Growing Community Roots**.

This free event will include interactive demonstrations featuring topics such as organic vegetable gardening, raised bed construction, urban permaculture design, vermiculture, composting, backyard chickens, rainwater irrigation, beekeeping, and much more!

All activities will be in the Bruno Vegetable Garden, and around the Formal Garden in front of the Conservatory. While helping at Earth Day, you'll have the chance to learn a great deal about all of these topics, and to meet many involved in community gardening in Birmingham.

Need still more ideas for volunteering at BBG?

Looking for a Linguist: The Gardens is currently searching for volunteers that speak more than one language. If you or someone you know fits the description, please contact us.

Lobby Flowers Program: If you are interested in either making a donation to the Birmingham Botanical Gardens Lobby Flowers Fund, or would like contribute your time and expertise in floral design, please contact Taylor Steele. These flowers will be displayed each week in the urn at the base of the stairwell in the Garden Center lobby.

Hikes for Tykes: A Saturday morning field trip at The Gardens geared toward preschool children and their parents. The program is a partnership between Birmingham Botanical Gardens and Fresh Air Family that engages children and their parents in an outdoor educational adventure.

Get Into The Gardens!: An informal public education program for garden visitors. No previous horticultural or teaching experience required. Volunteers must enjoy working with both adults and children, as well as sharing information about gardening, nature and the environment.

NOTE: While at BBG (see CNPS classes below), Carrie Wiles, a premiere wholesale grower of native plants, based in Pennsylvania, will present two "Get Into the Gardens!" demonstrations on Sunday, March 23, on using native plants and culinary herbs in containers. At 1 p.m. she will demonstrate creating beautiful containers using culinary herbs; at 3 p.m., she will demonstrate designing containers for shade using native plants.

Educational Opportunities at Aldridge Gardens

Register online at www.aldridgegardens.com.

Snakes: The Unhuggables

Tuesday, March 11: 6:30 – 8 p.m.

Presenter: Ken Marion, Ph.D.

Professor of Biology at UAB

Members: Adult \$10, Child \$5, family maximum \$20

Non-members: Adult \$13, Child \$7, family maximum \$26

Teachers: Member price with professional development hours

Preregistration suggested.

Snakes get a bad rap and are misunderstood animals. But in reality, they're often important players in the natural world. Dr. Ken Marion, Biology Professor at UAB will show us these amazing creatures up close, and help us learn all about the secrets of Alabama snakes and how they have vital roles in our ecosystem.

This Family Nature Program is intended for both individuals and/or families to enjoy.

Volunteer Opportunities at Aldridge Gardens

Volunteers are needed for two large annual events coming soon at Aldridge Gardens—**Whispers from the Past: A Native American Experience**, on Sunday, April 16, and the **12th Annual Spring Plant Sale** on Friday and Saturday, May 2 and 3.

To offer your help, contact Peggy McVay at pmcvay@aldridgegardens.com or volunteer online.

News from the Library at Birmingham Botanical Gardens

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

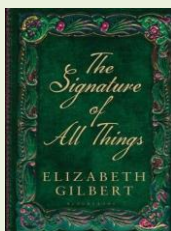
Main Art Gallery:

The work of Danette Steele Jones will be featured in the art gallery in March and April. To see examples of Danette's work online, visit danettejoneswatercolors.wordpress.com/2/.

Thyme to Read book club:

The **Thyme to Read** book club will meet March 4 at 6 p.m. in the Library at BBG to discuss *The Signature of All Things* by Elizabeth Gilbert and *The Backyard Parables* by Margaret Roach.

Come join the group!



Brown Bag is Back!

March 26: Trees and Shrubs
Mike Rushing

April 2: Eat Your Yard
William Randle

April 9: Medicinal Gardening
Cameron Strouss

Lunch and learn at BBG; each free session is 11:30 – 12:30. Drinks and dessert provided.

Library Volunteers Needed

The Library at the Gardens has immediate need for volunteers in the following time slots:

3rd Saturday (1 – 4 p.m.)

5th Saturday (10 a.m. – 1 p.m.)

If you or someone you know may be available during these hours, please contact Jason Kirby at jkirby@bbgardens.org.

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:

Photography Classes:

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.

Up Close & Personal

Macrophotography in the Gardens

Instructor: Hank Siegel

Saturday, March 22 & 29 | 9 - noon

Location: Birmingham Botanical Gardens

\$100 Members | \$120 Non-Members

This class will focus on all aspects of capturing, processing and displaying macro-photographic (extreme close-up) images using the plants, features and environment of Birmingham Botanical Gardens as the subject matter.

Cherry Blossom Festival:

Each year, the Japan-America Society of Alabama brings the Cherry Blossom Festival to the Birmingham Botanical Gardens. This year's festival will be held on March 22 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and will feature a variety of events.

Following, at 3:15 p.m., a Japanese anime movie will be shown in the Garden Center.

Additionally, BBG and JASA partner with the Birmingham Public Library and the Birmingham Museum of Art each year to host other events leading up to the Cherry Blossom Festival; for more information on these events at various venues, see www.jasaweb.org. The sushi class at BBG listed below is one of these events:

Sushi 101

Instructor: Shota Tanaka

March 15 | 10 – 11 a.m.

March 15 | 12 – 1 p.m.

Location: Birmingham Botanical Gardens – Adventure Classroom

\$35 Members | \$45 Non-Members

Learn the art of sushi making from Sekisui's own Shota Tanaka. You'll master the basic and the techniques of rolling. Then take time after class to visit our Japanese Gardens and enjoy your freshly made sushi.

Note: Be sure to check online for a variety of other interesting classes available at BBG in April; some may fill quickly, so visit www.bbgardens.org to plan ahead.

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 to attend these, or any other CNPS events.)

Movable Plants: Creating Beautiful Container Gardens with Native Plants

Instructor: Carrie Wiles

Location: Birmingham Botanical Gardens

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

\$40 Members | \$45 Non-Members

Gardening in various types of containers can offer many advantages, especially for those who live in apartments, condominiums, or for those who don't have space to garden in the ground.

Gardening in movable vessels also enables one to use containers as accents in varied locations.

This class will show you how to plant a variety of themed containers:
for sun, shade, bog, winter, butterflies, hummingbirds and other forms of wildlife.

Lists of recommended plants for each type of planting will be distributed.

Other Upcoming CNPS Classes and 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!

What's That Plant? A Workshop for Learning How to Identify Plants (elective) Saturday, June 14

Summer Identification of Native Woody Plants (elective) Saturday, August 9

Note: CNPS classes often fill quickly, so if any of these future classes or events interest you, check them out now online; it may be advisable to register right away in order to secure a place.

Volunteer Opportunities in Native Plant Studies

Volunteer Workdays – On March 4, 6, 11, 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, March 7, 14, 21, and 28, the plant propagation group will meet, 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.

Annual Spencer Lecture at BBG is March 6

The 16th annual Spencer Lecture will be held on Thursday, March 6, at 6:30 p.m. in the Linn-Henley Lecture Hall at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens. It will feature a reception from 5:30-6:30 p.m. prior to the evening lecture.

This free annual event this year brings noted botanist David Price to BBG for an intriguing talk on “A Sense of Place: Bok Tower Gardens.” Price recently co-authored *Bok Tower Gardens—America’s Taj Mahal*, published by Rizzoli Press.

As Bok Tower Gardens (in Lake Wales, Florida, situated between Tampa and Orlando) celebrates its 85th anniversary, this Olmsted-designed garden and National Historic Landmark looks to its past and present to vision the future. Sited on Lake Wales Ridge, the Garden is surrounded by rolling hills of citrus, expanses of nature preserves, and some of the rarest plant habitat in North America.

Price, who is president of the Bok Tower Foundation, will talk on ongoing historic preservation efforts as well as the Gardens’ rare plant conservation program.

The Spencer Lecture Series is made possible by the Virginia Beeland Spencer Lecture Fund at the Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham. The fund was started by the late William M. Spencer III in honor of his wife, the late Virginia Beeland Spencer.

Visit www.bbgardens.org/spencerlecture or call 205-414-3900 for more information or to register.
[from the BBG *Garden Dirt*]



JEFFERSON COUNTY
Master Gardeners

Bethany A. O’Rear
Regional Extension Agent
Alabama Cooperative Extension System
C. Beaty Hanna Horticulture and
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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***