

NOVEMBER 2013

# Roots and Shoots



Carol Cook Hagood, editor

## President's Message

With changing (and falling) leaves, and more than a few plant sales, seminars, workshops, and symposia, October has worked its magic and is settling into the record books.

The folks from the Community Gardens Coalition for Birmingham held forth at our October meeting, explaining the mission of the coalition as well as some interesting volunteer opportunities. New officers of JCMGA were elected at the meeting, and we extend hearty congratulations to Roger Clarke and his crew. They will be duly installed at the banquet in November.

Our own Karen Mitchell presented a very interesting program on drip irrigation at a meeting of the Alabama Hydrangea Society at Aldridge Gardens. Several Master Gardeners were in attendance.

Our thanks are extended to Master Gardener Hope Long, director of the Library at BBG, for bringing us Amy Stewart, author of *The Drunken Botanist*. Amy discussed her latest book and attendees sipped representative libations from her recipes. Those present agreed that this was truly a special evening with a very special speaker. Several local Master Gardeners were joined by MGs from Mobile, Nashville, and beyond.

We are looking forward to graduating our newest Master Gardeners at our November banquet and look forward to words of wisdom from Gary Gerlach, longtime director of Birmingham Botanical Gardens, now retired.

Until then...happy gardening...and raking,

**Fletcher**

Fletcher Harvey, Twoharveys@ aol.com

## JCMGA November Program Notes

**November 12, 6 p.m. at  
Birmingham Botanical Gardens  
2013 Annual Banquet**

**Graduation of 2013 Jefferson County  
Master Gardeners Classes  
and the  
Installation of JCMGA's 2014 Officers  
Special Remarks by Gary Gerlach**

Our November meeting will be **our annual Banquet honoring the graduates of the 2013 Intern Classes and installation of officers for the upcoming year.**

For the few who don't know him, **Gary Gerlach** retired "several" years ago after more than thirty years as Director of the Birmingham Botanical Gardens. "Aha," you said? "Could that be his name attached to the Plant Information Center?" Indeed, **Gerlach is the G in GPIC!**

**Reservations and payment for the dinner are required by Friday November 8.** The cost is \$12 per person; guests are welcome!

Mail your check—to arrive by the deadline—to Roger Clarke, JCMGA, 414 Norfolk Lane, Homewood, AL 35209, or drop it by the ACES office at the BBG. (Feel free to also include an extra \$22 to cover your 2014 MG dues).



Amy Stewart signing copies of her latest book.

**Dear Jefferson County Master Gardeners,**

This year has certainly passed in a flash, and we are nearing the time when our newest interns will become full-fledged Master Gardeners. I hope you are planning to attend their graduation event on Tuesday, Nov. 12, at the BBG.

Dinner is at 6 p.m., but please come early to visit and catch up with each other. The dress code is very flexible, but in the past, most folks have opted for “Sunday go to meeting” attire. Dinner will be catered by the Char House, and the cost is \$12 per person. We encourage you to bring your spouse or guest.

Reservations must be made and paid by Friday, November 8. When you send your payment for the banquet, why not include your 2014 JCMGA dues (\$22—that’s \$12 for the local association and \$10 to be sent to the state). We would like to have all dues collected by December 31, 2013.

Mail your check to Roger Clarke, MG Treasurer, 414 Norfolk Lane, Homewood, AL 35209 (to arrive by 11/8) or drop it off at the Extension office at the BBG.

The night’s program is sure to be a treat! We are pleased to announce that Gary Gerlach, former director of the Birmingham Botanical Gardens, will be our featured guest. Now is a good opportunity for old friends to renew contacts and for some of our younger members to meet this fascinating individual whose name emblazons the wall of the Gerlach Plant Information Center.

Please make plans to come and celebrate with your new fellow Master Gardeners and welcome them into the Jefferson County Master Gardener Association.

I am very pleased with the enthusiasm of this class and I know they will appreciate your support on November 12

Thanks for all that you do!! Happy Gardening!

**Bethany A. O’Rear**  
Regional Extension Agent, ACES

**Cumulative CEU Hours from 2013 Meetings**

January 8 (Tom Creger)	1.0 CEU
January 24 (Kerry Smith)	.5 CEU
(Fred Spicer)	.5 CEU
February 12 (Awards Celebration)	.0 CEU
March 12 (David Doggett)	1.0 CEU
March 19 (Michelle Schaffert)	2.0 CEU
April 9 (Dan Spaulding)	1.0 CEU
May 9 (Pat Dye Field Trip)	2.0 CEU
May 14 (Linda Emerson/Plant Swap)	1.5 CEU
June 6 Hydrangea Soc. Seminar-full event	5.0 CEU
June 11 (Herb Lewis)	1.5 CEU
June 18 (Hope Long)	1.5 CEU
July 9 (James Spann)	1.0 CEU
July 9 Cullman Extension Tomato Workshop and Field Day (remember to record drive time)	5.0 CEU
August 8 Terrific Tomato Workshop at BBG	3.0 CEU
August 13 (Doug Unkenholz)	2.0 CEU
September 10 (Henry Hughes)	1.0 CEU
September 17 (Wendy Ulrich)	2.0 CEU
October 8 (Community Garden Coalition)	1.0 CEU
October 25 (Amy Stewart, <i>Drunken Botanist</i> )	2.0 CEU

**It’s Time to Celebrate being part of JCMGA!**



**Treasurer’s Report**

<b>Checking account:</b>	
Beginning balance Sept. 21, 2013	\$9,082
Deposits	\$980
Disbursements	\$226
Ending balance Oct. 21, 2013	<u>\$9,836</u>
<b>Certificates of Deposit:</b>	\$10,347

---Submitted by  
*Roger Clarke*, treasurer

## October Minutes

**The regular monthly membership meeting of the JCMGA was held on Tuesday, October 8, 2013, at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens (BBG). President Fletcher Harvey noted that there was a quorum present and opened the meeting at 10 a.m.**

### President's Report:

- Fletcher reminded everyone to sign in and to pick up membership cards, badges and stars.
- Visitors were welcomed to the meeting.

**Secretary's Report:** The minutes of the September 10, 2013 JCMGA meeting were published in the newsletter. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes as written and published.

**Treasurer's Report:** The treasurer's report for September was also published in the newsletter. A motion was made and seconded to accept the report as written and published.

### Committee Reports/Announcements/Volunteer Opportunities:

Fletcher Harvey shared the following:

- The Nominating Committee report was presented. They proposed the following candidates for JCMGA officers for 2014:  
 President: Roger Clarke  
 First Vice President: Ann Gray Harvey  
 Second Vice President: Pat Cosgrove  
 Treasurer: Lisa Ennis  
 Secretary: Hope Cooper  
 Fletcher asked for any additional nominations. There being none, the slate was elected by acclamation. Fletcher thanked the committee – Bruce Steele, Camille Becker, Gary Walker and Jan Schulz –for their work.
- The annual banquet will be held on November 12, 2013 at a cost of \$12 per person at the BBG. Please submit payment to Roger Clarke with 2014 dues (due by Dec. 31) included as well, if possible.
- Regarding the directory, Natalie Lee will have the new directory available soon.
- From Bethany O'Rear and the ACES program: A Tree and Shrub workshop will be held Oct. 12 if there is enough registration, and volunteers are needed for the Master Gardeners booth at the BBG Fall Plant Sale.
- Aldridge Gardens is having their plant sale this weekend. Please see Lynda Systrom or Peggy McVay for information.

- Riverchase Elementary is looking for Master Gardeners assistance.
- On October 24, Pat Cosgrove and Fletcher Harvey represented the JCMGA at the State Advisory Committee meeting. Fletcher noted that there will be a program in Fairhope on Oct. 24 called "Growing in Alabama," at which Fred Spicer and James Miles will be speaking.
- After last month's ask for help, Anne Thomas reported that Jeff Tarrant's planting challenges have been met and he is mending.

### Old Business:

- Fletcher reiterated requests for all members to enter hours and pay dues if they have not already done so. Inclusion in the directory requires payment of dues.

### Speakers:

Fletcher asked Taylor Steele to introduce the program. Taylor opened by thanking those present who helped with the Antiques in the Garden event. He also noted that volunteers are still needed for set up for the BBG Fall Plant Sale. He also asked for help in the BBG Library; Monday morning and weekend shifts need volunteers if anyone is available. Taylor also noted that a luncheon to honor volunteers will be held on December 5. The BBG will be kicking off its 50th anniversary celebrations at that time, as well. On October 12, Su Reid-St. John, from Bonnie Plants (and also a JCMGA member) will be demonstrating straw bale gardening.

Taylor then introduced Leigh Ann Hargrove and Deanna Cummings from the Community Garden Coalition for Birmingham (CGCB). He reported that the BBG has implemented a formal education partnership with the CGCB. Deanna and Leigh Ann are with the Eastlake Garden Program, and were present to provide information about the CGCB to the JCMGA.

The two began by sharing a history of the Coalition with those present. It was founded in 2009 as a "catalyst of Birmingham" project with the Norwood and West End community gardens as its initial focus. It languished over the years and, in 2012, was revamped with renewed interest from various community gardens wishing to share information, experience and opportunities.

Today, the CGCB seeks to strengthen communities in Birmingham through gardening. Their mission is to support local community gardens, foster establishment of new gardens, and empower people and neighborhoods through gardens.

*(Minutes continued on following page)*

(October Minutes, continued)

Leigh Ann and Deanna reported that there are over 20 gardens in Birmingham participating in this coalition. Leigh Ann, as a nurse, has a particular interest in both education and advocacy for fresh food and its healing/nutritional properties.

The group's first efforts have been to network existing gardens. They are doing this via meet and greet opportunities, a website ([www.cgcbham.org](http://www.cgcbham.org)), a Google map of garden locations, Face Book interactions, calendars for various workdays and volunteer opportunities, a community garden gathering, and a bicycle tour.

In response to a question, "What is a community garden?" Deanna and Leigh Ann noted that previously, "community gardens" were simply interested people coming together for a garden. Today, the city of Birmingham is defining "Community Gardens" and has set forth permitting requirements. These include soil testing and other requirements. Guerilla gardening, or taking over empty lots in communities for neighborhood gardens, was briefly discussed.

Leigh Ann and Deanna discussed the garden for which they work, as well. They are located at 601 West Boulevard behind the health clinic. In response to questions, they shared information on how community gardens are structured and how plots may be divided and rented. They noted that gardens vary as to how they are overseen and developed. Each creates what works for its members; some are larger; some use raised beds; rental rates vary; some grow for individuals, others for the community; some use water retention, others supply city water. They noted that the more interest a community takes in its gardens, the less need there seems to be for formal protection measures.



Current projects for the CGCB include tool sharing, updating the online map, developing a composting program, education—both talking to public groups and identifying expert help—fund raising (all are volunteers at present), working as urban agriculture ordinance advocates, and joining in Earth Day celebrations with the BBG.

They asked for help for the CGCB from local Master Gardeners. MGs may help with plant identification, planting, composting, harvesting and preserving produce, seed saving and potentially working with a seed swap, pruning (what needs pruning and how), and weeding.

They also need help with giving lectures for the coalition, creating gardens, conducting research, training CGCB members, general community education and community involvement.

There will be a bike tour and fundraiser on Oct. 26 for any interested. It will be a 10 mile tour of 7 community gardens. Please email [info@cgcbham.org](mailto:info@cgcbham.org) for more details.

Fletcher thanked Leigh Ann and Deanna for the program and noted that the JCMGA will make a contribution to the BBG to be used with the CGCB partnership.

Fletcher reminded those present of the program on October 25 with Amy Stewart, author of *The Drunken Botanist*. Also, he note that on November 1 and 2 the Central South Native Plant Conference will be held here at the BBG. He also asked for a volunteer to act as chairperson for the Speakers' Bureau.

Door prize drawings were held and prizes awarded.

Those present may receive 1 CEU for this program. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ann Gray Harvey, Secretary

# October Memories: BBG Fall Plant Sale



## Volunteer Opportunities at Aldridge Gardens

For more information, check the Gardens website at <http://aldridgegardens.com>.

Every Tuesday from 9 a.m. until Noon is a **Volunteer Work Day at Aldridge Gardens**. Volunteers should check in at the Volunteer Office. For more, contact Peggy McVay at [pmevay@aldridgegardens.com](mailto:pmevay@aldridgegardens.com), 682-8019, ext. 2.

## Volunteer Opportunities at Birmingham Botanical Gardens

### New Opportunity to Volunteer with the BBG School Field Trip Program

The Birmingham Botanical Gardens is adding a middle school program to its Discovery Field Trips, the flagship of the Gardens' educational mission. Over the last decade, The Gardens has provided a free, curriculum-based science education to nearly 100,000 Birmingham students, largely elementary-aged. Now, The Gardens is expanding its mission with programming designed for middle school students. Your help is needed! To be a docent in this new program, no science background is required—just a love for sharing nature with students and helping them excel. To learn more, contact Taylor Steele at [tsteele@bbgardens.org](mailto:tsteele@bbgardens.org) or 414-3962.

### Workdays in the Bruno Vegetable Garden

For information on ongoing workdays, contact Amanda Clark at [Amanda.Clark@ci.birmingham.al.us](mailto:Amanda.Clark@ci.birmingham.al.us).

### Ongoing Kaul Wildflower Garden volunteer sessions

For information on volunteering in the Kaul Wildflower Garden or elsewhere working with native plants in the Gardens, contact John Manion at [jmanion@bbgardens.org](mailto:jmanion@bbgardens.org). John is currently planning workdays on November 5, 7, 12, 14, 19, 21, and 26, but contact him by e-mail if you plan to attend. Also, check with him if you would like to be part of the Friday morning group propagating native plants; he plans to resume activities with this group.

### Master Gardeners Needed for Weekend Library Shifts in the Library at BBG

Volunteers are needed immediately for various weekend shifts in the Library, including 1st Saturday, 1-4 p.m.; 2nd Saturday, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.; 3rd Saturday, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.; 5th Saturday, 1-4 p.m.; and 5th Sunday, 2-5 p.m. Please contact Hope Long at 205.414.3931 or [hlong@bbgardens.org](mailto:hlong@bbgardens.org).

## News from the Library at Birmingham Botanical Gardens

For more information, visit <http://www.bbgardens.org/library>.

**Volunteer Opportunities at the Library:** Volunteers are needed immediately for a number of open slots in the Library schedule. For specifics, see "Volunteer Opportunities at BBG" above.

**Main Art Gallery, November:** Will feature the work of watercolor artist Beth Evans.

**Thyme to Read Book Club:** Discussing the book *Founding Gardeners* by Andrea Wulf on November 5 at 6 p.m. For those who might want to read ahead, December 3rd's meeting will feature *A Year in the Village of Eternity*.

**And a special event: Fifth Annual Southern Tales at the Gardens:** Once again this holiday season, renowned local actress and story performer Dolores Hydock will team with Three on a String's Bobby Horton for *Southern Tales: Songs, Stories and Sing-a-longs*. In 2013, the Christmas carols will remain the same, but the collection of stories and songs is all new, and the duo brings three additional performers: storytellers Nina Reeves and Sammye Hill and musician Tuck Kornegay. December 8 at 2 p.m. Reserve tickets online today at [www.bbgardens.org/southerntales](http://www.bbgardens.org/southerntales).

## Educational Opportunities at Birmingham Botanical Gardens

Check [www.bbgardens.org](http://www.bbgardens.org) for a full listing of classes available to Master Gardeners. To keep informed about opportunities at BBG, subscribe to *E-Dirt Alert* newsletter: on BBG home page, scroll down to enter your email address.

### Adult Education

**Handmade Soap** with the Burks – With Winfield and Elinor Burk, learn how to make handmade glycerin soaps for the holidays. Participants leave with a snowflake soap in a box and felted soap, in which wool strands are wrapped around wet soap to create an exfoliating surface. While waiting for these projects to dry, try your hand at making a peppermint foot scrub. To register online, visit [www.bbgardens.org](http://www.bbgardens.org). *November 12, 1:30 - 3 p.m. \$15 Individual, \$25 Family.*

**Holiday Wreaths** taught by Casey Thomas – It's amazing what you can do with a little mesh, wire hangers, and a few ornaments. Freshen up your living space by making your own mesh wreath for the holidays. All participants will learn how to make a holiday wreath and leave with their product finished! All supplies provided. For a personal touch, bring old ornaments or family mementos to add to your wreath. To register online, visit [www.bbgardens.org/classes](http://www.bbgardens.org/classes). *November 15, 4 – 5:30 p.m. \$25 Members, \$35 Non-Members.*

**Photography Class: Memorable Images** - This class, taught by Hank Siegel, is designed to introduce students to basic concepts in photography and digital camera operations including: image capture, image transfer, image processing, and image sharing. Register online at [www.bbgardens.org/classes](http://www.bbgardens.org/classes). *November 16 & 23. 9 a.m. – Noon. \$100 Members, \$120 Non-Members.*

### Get Into The Gardens

**Cool Greens!** – Come to Blount Plaza for a wonderful garden demonstration on “Growing Cool Greens.” Jefferson County Master Gardener Elmira Elmore will demonstrate the “coolness” of fall vegetable gardening. *November 9, 1:30 p.m. Free.*

### November/December Classes in the Certificate in Native Plant Studies Program

*Here are the next few CNPS classes. A majority are core classes, so it's important for those completing the certificate to sign up.*

**Autumn Identification of Native Woody Plants (elective)** Instructor: Fred Spicer.

*November 9, 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 approximately 20 plants whose key traits are evident in Autumn.

**Alabama's Ecology (core)** Instructor: Scot Duncan, Ph.D.

*November 16, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. \$80 Members | \$90 Non-Members*

With 64 types of terrestrial ecosystems shaped by an unusual climate and rich geological history, Alabama's native plants number nearly 3,000 species. They are an important part of our state's biodiversity, which ranks fifth in the nation overall. This class explains how ecosystems work, reviews how they are classified and mapped, and gives an overview of the state's ecological diversity. An easy hike through the BBG – with a focus on Alabama's endemics – will illustrate many of the in-class concepts.

**Introduction to Native Plant Conservation (core)** Instructor: Bob Boyd, Ph.D.

*November 23, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. \$80 Members | \$90 Non-Members*

A general introduction to plant conservation, focusing particularly on Alabama plants. Covers a broad set of topics, including rarity ranking systems, invasive species, restoration ecology, conservation ethics, plant conservation legislation, and conservation techniques such as safeguarding. Alabama Plant Conservation Alliance projects will be emphasized as examples where possible.

**Introduction to Plant Taxonomy/Classification (core)** Instructor: Todd Rounsaville

*December 7, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. \$80 Members | \$90 Non-Members*

Taxonomy embodies the human desire to discover, differentiate, classify, name, and share the natural world. The fantastic diversity of the plant kingdom provides a model for illustrating these concepts of floristics, phylogenetics, systematics, nomenclature, and preservation. Through activities and instruction on the principles of classification, the use of scientific names, the systems of taxonomic hierarchy, and the use of keys in plant identification, participants will gain a practical understanding of plant taxonomy, with a focus on native plants of the southeastern U.S.

**Edible and Medicinal Native Plants (elective)** Instructor: Jimmy Triplett, Ph.D.

*December 14, 12:30 - 4:30 p.m. \$40 Members | \$45 Non-Members*

Explore the traditional uses of native plants with an emphasis on edible and medicinal plants in Southern Appalachian and Native American cultures. Participants will acquire hands-on experience making plant preparations such as tonics, tinctures, and medicinal teas, while learning about the science and folklore of edible and medicinal plants.

***Make your reservations today—**deadline is Friday, Nov. 8!*****

## ***Announcing the 2013 JCMGA Banquet***

Birmingham Botanical Gardens  
November 12, at 6 p.m.

*Our November meeting will be our Annual Banquet,  
this year marking the graduation of the 2013 Intern Classes  
and the installation of officers for 2014.*

**Advance reservations and payment for the dinner  
are required by Friday, November 8.**

The cost is \$12.00 per person. Guests are welcome!

Make your check payable to JCMGA and mail to arrive by the deadline to  
Roger Clarke, JCMGA Treasurer, 414 Norfolk Lane, Homewood, AL 35209, or drop it by the  
ACES office at the BBG. (Feel free to include an extra \$22 to cover 2014 dues.)



JEFFERSON COUNTY  
*Master Gardeners*

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

**We're on the Web! Visit us at <http://jeffcomg.org>.**

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