



## Dirty Digs

June



**ACMGA President  
Rose McCauley**

June has arrived and with it some much warmer temperatures. We experienced actual spring weather in May with cooler temperatures and rain and rain and more rain!

I know our members were tired after working the 2025 Conference, but everyone stepped up and made our plant sale a success! Patrons were lined up early as usual.

We were able to spread out the plants by utilizing the area outside

the fence. Many thanks to Michael Camire and interns who dug many Hostas from a home in Montgomery. The homeowner was grateful.

We have voted to hold a fall plant sale this year.

Survey your yard to determine plants you might provide for the sale. I dug about 300 daffodil bulbs from two of my beds recently. Guess that tells you I haven't been thinning my bulbs.

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### Special points of interest:

- *Hydrangeas*
- *Perennial Beds*
- *Prattvillage Garden*



AMGA Website  
[Alabamamg.org](http://Alabamamg.org)



Autauga MG Website  
[autaugamastergardeners.org](http://autaugamastergardeners.org)



Extension Website  
[mg.aces.edu](http://mg.aces.edu)



Mallory Kelley is planning a Tomato Workshop for July 30th at the extension office with BLT sandwiches and tomato desserts.

Put on your thinking caps to come up with a sweet tomato dessert recipe. A flyer will be sent out soon.

Also remember our interns graduate at our August meeting.

Soyna Moore has been busy making Butterfly presentations this year. Presentations were made to Camellia Society of Greenville; Forest Avenue Elementary Magnet School; Central Alabama Master Gardeners Lunch and Learn and 2025 Natural Resources Youth Camp (a free 3-day camp for outgoing 6th graders in Butler County). Her contacts totaled 275.

Rose

### Lunch and Learn Vicki Williamson



ACMGA hosts Lunch and Learn the 3rd Wednesday at 12 Noon. The location is Trinity Prattville Church, 610 Fairview Ave, Prattville, AL.

Our schedule for the 2nd Qt. opened in April with Susan O'Conner, Advanced Master Gardener from Capital City MGA, who encouraged us to grow Violets.

May brought Jane Mobley, Advanced Master Gardener from Central Alabama MGA, sharing her expertise on Butterflies and planting to encourage Butterfly visits to our gardens.

June will bring our own, Debbie Boutelier, Advanced Master Gardener, who will share her knowledge and experience of Landscaping with Herbs.

We are averaging 35-40 in attendance each month. Special Thank you to those bringing door prizes.

Bring a sack lunch and join us for a free hour of your favorite garden topics!

Vicki

### Demonstration Garden Glenn Huovinen



As of June 12, we have donated 327 pounds of fresh produce to AICC.

We harvested the last of our spring veggies and our summer fruits and vegetables are actively growing.

We have Okra, Tomatoes, Peppers, Sweet Potatoes, Bush Green Beans (including Asparagus Green Beans that grow to a length of 20 inches), Cucumbers, Blackberries, Cantaloupe, Summer Squash, Pink Eye Purple Hull Peas, Bok Choy, Concord Grapes, Swiss Chard, Blueberries and a volunteer Watermelon.

We have a great time in the Demo Garden. We welcome visitors, answer questions and we learn from each other. Come join the fun each Tuesday morning.

Vegetables  
Glenn Huovinen



# Propagating Hydrangeas

## Petals from the Past

Jason Powell and David Doggett

June 18, 2025

Photographs by Mallory Kelley

Big successful program and many Master Gardeners in attendance from Montgomery, Autauga and Elmore.

Mallory









**Autauga County  
Master Gardeners Association**

**Lunch & Learn 2025**

**3rd WEDNESDAY of EVERY Month  
12:00-1:00 P.M.**

**Trinity Prattville Church, 610 Fairview Ave., Prattville 36066**



**BRING A SACK LUNCH**

**FREE PROGRAM**

**DRINKS PROVIDED**

- |                     |                                                                                                   |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>15 January</b>   | <b>Seed Starting for Your Summer Veg</b><br>Mallory Kelley, Horticulturist, ACES                  |
| <b>19 February</b>  | <b>Garden Tools &amp; Maintenance</b><br>Mike Forster, Capital City Master Gardener               |
| <b>19 March</b>     | <b>Hydrangeas in the Southern Garden</b><br>David Doggett, Advanced Master Gardener               |
| <b>16 April</b>     | <b>African Violets</b><br>Susan O'Conner, Advanced Master Gardener                                |
| <b>21 May</b>       | <b>Planting for Butterflies</b><br>Jane Mobley, Advanced Master Gardener                          |
| <b>18 June</b>      | <b>Landscaping with Herbs</b><br>Debbie Boutelier, Advanced Master Gardener                       |
| <b>16 July</b>      | <b>Daylilies for Your Garden</b><br>Terese Goodson, Capital City Master Gardener                  |
| <b>20 August</b>    | <b>Muscadine Season is Here!</b><br>David Lawrence, Commercial Horticulturist, ACES               |
| <b>17 September</b> | <b>Techniques for Growing Sprouts &amp; Microgreens</b><br>Janell Diggs, Advanced Master Gardener |
| <b>15 October</b>   | <b>Zone Maps: New, Old &amp; Untrue?</b><br>Hayes Jackson, Horticulturist, ACES                   |
| <b>19 November</b>  | <b>Holiday Decorating with Nature</b><br>Jane McCarthy, Horticulturist & Master Gardener          |
| <b>17 December</b>  | <b>Plants off the Beaten Path</b><br>Robin Snyder, Central Alabama Master Gardener                |



**ALL ARE WELCOME! For more information, contact the  
Autauga County Extension Office (334) 361-7273.**

# Moth Observations

Kerry Steedley and Meredith Shrade

Original Article

<https://www.aces.edu/blog/topics/forestry-wildlife/moth-observations/>

Cooler summer nights present an opportunity to observe an often overlooked group of insects — moths. Alabama has an incredible diversity of moths with more than 1,000 species. Some people may consider moths drab in appearance, but certain species have striking coloration, including the luna moth (*Actias luna*) and the rosy maple moth (*Dryocampa rubicunda*). Other moths like the Pandorus sphinx moth (*Eumorphia pandorus*) effectively use camouflage to prevent predation. Moths vary in size. Large species, such as the Polyphemus moth (*Antheraea polyphemus*), possess wings spanning several inches. Smaller species with wings less than an inch long such include the southern emerald moth (*Synchlora frondaria*).

## Observing Moths

There are several methods used to attract or trap moths for closer observation. One is a simple light trap. Hang a white sheet on a clothesline or over a tree branch. Turn off all nearby lights and shine a light onto the sheet. Keep in mind that some moth species are attracted to black lights and will not appear when using standard white lights. Battery powered black lights can be bought for approximately \$20. Aim the light toward the sheet and observe the moths that appear.

Also, adding strips of cloth soaked with wine or juice from rotted fruit will attract certain types of Noctuid moths (also known as Owlet moths). More and more moths will be attracted as the night goes on so be sure to check periodically throughout the evening.



Another method of attracting moths is to make a moth bucket trap using a five-gallon bucket. Place a paper egg carton in the bucket along with a funnel and light source. Turn on the light at night and come back to find the moth species living nearby. An online search for do-it-yourself moth bucket traps should provide numerous results for additional inspiration.

### Recording Observations

Moth observations can be tracked and reported through iNaturalist, the crowd-sourced nature observation platform. For 2025, **National Moth Week is July 19 – 27**. This is a great time to get out and observe these insects. Then, upload moth observation pictures into iNaturalist and contribute to the annual assessment of moth species.

NOTE: The iNaturalist web site is: <https://www.inaturalist.org/>

In either the browser version of the iNaturalist platform or the app, use the search bar to find the “National Moth Week 2025: Alabama” project and click the join button to add your moth observations during this week. If observing moths outside of Alabama during this time, it’s still possible to join other state’s projects and contribute findings. During other times of year, join the “Moths of Alabama” project on iNaturalist and add observations to the growing record of moths in our diverse state.

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Addition information about Alabama moths can be found at:

### **Alabama Moths**

<https://www.butterflyidentification.org/moths-by-state-listing.php?reach=Alabama>

### **Moths in Alabama**

<https://www.mothidentification.com/moth-in-us/moths-in-alabama>



# Home Garden Questions?

We've got answers.

Connect with the  
Master Gardener  
Helpline

**(877) 252-4769**

[www.aces.edu/go/MGHelpline](http://www.aces.edu/go/MGHelpline)



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# Adding Perennial Beds to a Landscape

Allyson Shabel, J. Raymond Kessler, and J. David Williams

Original Article

<https://www.aces.edu/blog/topics/lawn-garden-urban/adding-perennial-beds-to-a-landscape/>

The best time to install perennials and perennial beds is the fall. The process of installing a new perennial bed or border takes eight steps.

## Designing a Perennial Bed

The traditional way to display perennials in the landscape is to plant them in beds or borders in front of a backdrop of larger shrubs and trees. Planning a perennial bed can be easy or fairly complex. There are many approaches to developing beds and borders. Here are a few ways to incorporate perennials into your landscape:

- Plant for season-long color. Choose many different perennials with varying bloom times. This way, color will be present in the bed all season long.
- Create a season-themed perennial bed, such as a spring flowering bed or a summer flowering border.
- Create a color-themed border. Use one (monochromatic) or two (complementary) colors and the tints and shades of those colors.
- Base your perennial beds on a theme such as a butterfly or rock garden.



Figure 1. Choosing perennial plants with varied textures makes for an attractive garden.



Figure 2. Buy plants with healthy, white-tipped roots that reach the edge of the pot.



Figure 3. Creating raised beds insures good drainage in the perennial garden.

## When to Install Beds

Good timing is critical to success. The best time to install perennials and perennial beds is the fall. Newly planted perennials will have all winter for their root systems to become established before the heat of summer.

For North Alabama, plan to add perennials six weeks before the first hard freeze. In Central Alabama, plant in October, and in South Alabama, from September through November. Plan to prepare beds and let them sit for a month or two before planting. This will allow all the added nutrients to dissolve and the soil to settle.

## Steps to Installing a Perennial Bed

The process for installing a new perennial bed or border is as follows:

- Develop a site plan. Use graph paper to lay out the planting design to scale. Include plants to be used as well as focal points and features. Research plants by looking for information, such as mature height and width, growth rate, and cultural requirements. Plants should be grouped in quantities of three, five, or seven, with taller plants in the back and shorter plants in the front. Repeat a few groupings of the same varieties throughout the bed to create a cohesive look.
- Soil test the bed site. Contact your local county Extension office for information on soil testing. Most perennials prefer a pH of 5.5 to 6.5.
- Remove ground covering in the area. This can be accomplished with an herbicide such as glyphosate or by digging up plants by hand or machine. Removal of turf is particularly important; grasses such as Bermudagrass will reliably return if not removed correctly.
- Till the area eight to ten inches deep, going first in one direction, then the other.
- Add four to six inches of organic matter, such as soil conditioner or compost, as well as any amendments and limestone suggested in the soil test. Till amendments into the soil.

- After the soil has rested, planting can begin. Choose plants with healthy root systems. Plants should have white-tipped roots and pots should have a good amount of roots, but not be pot-bound. If roots are wound around the edges of the pot, tease them out and open the root ball up before planting. Plant crowns at soil level or one inch higher than soil level.
- Add two inches of mulch to the planting bed, taking care not to mulch plant crowns or stems.
- Water deeply; after watering the soil should be wet four to six inches down. Newly planted perennials will need to be carefully monitored for watering needs.

Visit Alabama Extension’s website [www.aces.edu](http://www.aces.edu) for more information on perennials.

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Allyson Shabel, Urban Regional Extension Agent, Alabama A&M University.

Original authors: J. Raymond Kessler and J. David Williams, Auburn University.

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## Related Articles

### Herbaceous Perennials in Alabama

<https://www.aces.edu/blog/topics/lawn-garden-urban/herbaceous-perennials-in-alabama/>

### Keeping Perennials Healthy All Year

<https://www.aces.edu/blog/topics/lawn-garden-urban/keeping-perennials-healthy-all-year/>



# Upcoming Birthdays



## JULY

Angie Nabors 07/02  
Beverly Coutts 07/06  
Anthony Yarbrough 07/07  
Elissa Davis 07/08  
John Carrick 07/10  
Carolyn Gray 07/13  
Adrienne Yarbrough 07/18  
Cindy Salyer 07/21  
Judy Preston 07/21  
Linda Hicks 07/23



## AUGUST

Bionca Lindsey 08/02  
Margaret C. Smitherman 08/04  
George Walthall 08/06  
Robin Snyder 08/09  
Jane Boysen 08/12  
Bob Sheffler 08/13  
Sue Brasel 08/25  
Linda Moscetti 08/25

## SEPTEMBER

Vicki Williamson 09/03  
Glenda Harris 09/14  
Lori Terrell 09/20  
Bettye Hyde 09/23



Please let us know if we missed your birthday



# Protect Your Crops: Whitefly Numbers May Increase in Alabama

Henrique Grossi Bovi, Andre da Silva, and Paulo Cremonez

Original Article

<https://www.aces.edu/blog/topics/crop-production/protect-your-crops-whitefly-numbers-may-increase-in-alabama/>

As summer approaches, weather conditions may become favorable for whiteflies in Alabama. Vegetable and specialty crop growers are encouraged to begin monitoring fields for potential whitefly activity, despite the common rainfall events of summer across the entire state. Whiteflies, more specifically sweetpotato whiteflies, are tiny, white, flying insect with adults typically around 1 millimeter long. They feed on plant sap, which weakens plants and reduces overall yield (figure 1). More concerning, whiteflies are known vectors for several plant viruses in tomatoes and cucurbit crops, which can completely devastate fields.



Figure 1a. Whitefly female (left) and male (right).



Figure 1b. Tomato leaf infested with whiteflies.

The peak of whitefly activity is usually observed from July through October. Hot and dry weather conditions create a favorable environment for a rapid reproduction of the insect. Crops such as squash, zucchini, tomato, cucumber, and cotton are particularly vulnerable. If left unmanaged, whitefly populations can also persist into early winter inside or under protected growing environments, such as greenhouses.

## Early Detection is Key

Whiteflies can multiply quickly, making early detection critical. Alabama Extension specialists recommend that growers closely inspect the underside of leaf surfaces for the presence of eggs, nymphs, and adults, especially during warm, dry periods when whitefly populations are most active. Monitoring fields regularly allows growers to make timely management decisions before populations surge out of control.

Taking proactive steps early can help protect yields and limit the spread of plant viruses. Recent studies have identified effective cultural practices that can help Alabama growers manage whitefly infestations. Using silver, reflective plastic mulch significantly reduced whitefly populations compared to traditional white plastic mulch. Also, early season use of row covers delayed whitefly colonization and lowered overall insect pressure. However, insecticide spraying programs are still the best option for growers to keep their fields clear of the insect.

In general, nonchemical strategies serve as valuable tools for Integrated Pest Management (IPM) programs. Incorporating cultural controls, silver, reflective plastic mulch, and the rotation of insecticides with distinct modes of action minimizes selection pressure on pest populations, thereby decreasing the likelihood of resistance development, supporting a more sustainable crop production system.

For more information on whitefly management, or to request assistance with field monitoring, contact your county Extension office at [aces.edu](http://aces.edu).



### Related Articles

Identification and Scouting

<https://www.aces.edu/blog/tag/identification-and-scouting/>



## Prattvillage Garden

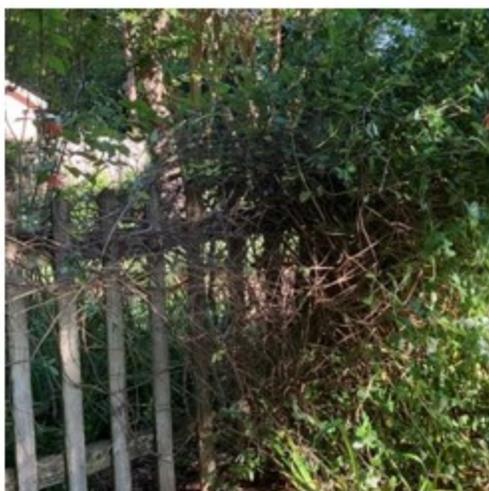
### Jane McCarthy, Chair



The Prattvillage Garden Master Gardener volunteers have been enjoying the many treasures of the garden as we work.

Here are our main activities in the 2nd Quarter of 2025:

- Continued making the garden ready for the evening Alabama Master Gardener Conference Meet 'n Greet at the garden and for the ACMGA annual plant sale
- Laid path of large stones in the back bed to draw visitors in to explore that area
- Re-laid ballast stones to refresh the herb garden border
- Restorative pruning the coral honeysuckle, wisteria vines and trimming boxwood hedges (3 big projects!)
- Planting annual summer flowers and herbs
- Deadheading any spent blooms and mowing the lawn
- Fertilizing all beds and the lawn
- Rescued four newly fledged baby Eastern Bluebirds by safely removing a 4-ft rat snake from the property
- Talking with the numerous garden visitors as they enjoy the fruits of our labor



Coral Honeysuckle before pruning



Coral Honeysuckle after restorative pruning



Wisteria before pruning



Wisteria after restorative pruning

(Photos by Jane McCarthy)



Coreopsis & Nasturtium



St. John's Wort



Daylilies 'Red Volunteer'



Scarlet Bee Balm



A few of the dedicated weekly volunteers at Prattvillage Garden after morning's work  
Clockwise from upper left corner:

Jane McCarthy,

Ange Trimble,

Dian Owens,

Adrienne Yarborough and

Nancy Waggoner

Photos by Jane McCarthy

# Tasty Tidbits: Cucumber

Kristen Sanders and Sofia Sanchez

Original Article

<https://www.aces.edu/blog/topics/home-family/tasty-tidbits-cucumbers/>

Live Well Alabama

## Nutrition Nuggets

- Cucumbers are a low-calorie and low-sodium food.
- They support a healthy immune system, normal nerve and muscle function, and strong bones.
- The peel provides fiber for a healthy digestive system.



## How to Store

- Store away from gas releasers, such as avocados, bananas, apples, and tomatoes.
- Store cut slices in a container in a refrigerator for 7 days.

## How to Prepare

- Wash and dry.
- Cut into rounds or dice into cubes.

## How to Enjoy

- Add to salads and salsas or add to water for a refreshing beverage.
- Use for dipping or pickling.

# Tomato Cucumber Salad

## INGREDIENTS

### Salad

- 4 large tomatoes, cubed
- 1 large cucumber, chopped
- 1 cup red onion, chopped
- 1 cup green pepper, chopped
- 1/3 cup parsley, chopped



### Dressing

- 1/3 cup apple cider vinegar
- 1 tablespoon olive oil (or oil of your choice)
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon honey

## DIRECTIONS

1. In a large bowl, combine the salad ingredients.
2. In a small bowl, mix the dressing ingredients.
3. Pour the dressing over the salad. Mix well.
4. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour before serving.



Visit the Live Well Alabama web site

<https://www.aces.edu/blog/category/home-family/nutrition/live-well-alabama/>

# Editors Corner

John Carrick



After much rain, summer has arrived. Hopefully your garden is thriving and you are having success in all your gardening endeavors.

Given all the rainfall, heat, and humidity it's a good idea to watch for fungal and bacterial disease in your vegetable garden. I found the ACES article 'Beware of Fungal and Bacterial Diseases Developing on Vegetables in June' helpful:

<https://www.aces.edu/blog/topics/crop-production/beware-of-fungal-and-bacterial-diseases-developing-on-vegetables-in-june/>

## ACMGA Web Site Note

Around mid June, the web team was notified of an issue with the ACMGA web site. Unfortunately it appears this issue had existed for some time. Our apologies for any inconvenience this issue may have caused. Hopefully, the issue is now fixed, and everyone is able to access the ACMGA web site.

If you encounter an issue with the ACMGA web site, have a question or a suggestion, please contact the web team by sending an email to:

**[web@autaugamastergardeners.org](mailto:web@autaugamastergardeners.org)**

It is important to contact the web team directly, because we cannot address any issues that we are not aware of. Sending an email helps us track issues and minimizes gaps in communication.

Finally, if you have any articles, pictures, etc., to be included in the Dirty Digs newsletter, please email them to: **[dd@autaugamastergardeners.com](mailto:dd@autaugamastergardeners.com)**

Newsletter feedback and suggestions are always welcome.

May God continue to Bless each and every one of you.

Johnny

## Autauga County Master Gardeners Association

Autauga County Extension Office

2226 AL-14 W, Suite E  
Autaugaville, AL 36003

Phone: 334-361-7273



### *Autauga County Master Gardener Volunteers are...*

**Motivated** – to share their knowledge and expertise.

**Accessible** – to other Master Gardeners, horticulture and Extension professionals, and the public.

**Service-oriented** – to enhance their communities and the environment.

**Trained** – by Cooperative Extension in current horticultural practices.

**Excited** – about meeting other people who enjoy gardening.

**Research ambassadors** – who provide cutting-edge horticultural information to consumers.

**Next Issue September 31st**  
Please submit articles, no later than September 15

Prattvillage Garden  
139 1st Street, Prattville, AL 36067

Images courtesy of Wikimedia Commons  
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/>

You can reserve the garden for an event—contact Party in the District

Honor Bricks:  
<https://donationbricks.com/acmga>



AMGA Event Page:  
<https://mg.aces.edu/autauga/events-calendar>

