

# JUNGLE TAMING

MONTHLY HORTICULTURAL NEWSLETTER

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*Monthly Horticultural Newsletter is distributed free of charge each month by Jungle Taming, LLC, an upscale yard restoration landscaping company proudly serving the Columbia, SC area.*

*Visit [www.JungleTaming.com](http://www.JungleTaming.com) for more information.*

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## Amy's March Horticultural Tasks

*Written by Amy Bledsoe*

Plan to attend the Greater Columbia Home and Garden Show March 9<sup>th</sup> through 11<sup>th</sup> at the State Fairgrounds. This a great way to learn which local vendors are in the Columbia area and to check out some great gardening seminars. Chances are good you'll be able to catch me there!

Here's your outdoor checklist for March:

### **Annuals**

Annuals



Spring is just around the corner. Blustery March blowing winds can dry out winter annuals, so keep them well watered. It's too early to plant warm season annuals, but planting beds can now be prepared:

- Mix in compost.
- Determine sun and shade conditions. There's big difference to your plants between morning sun and afternoon sun. If your bed receives afternoon shade, then plant shade-loving plants.
- Measure the size of your bed. Use this figure to calculate how many plants to buy based on spacing guidelines on plant tags. Save money by not buying too many plants.

### **Turf**

#### **Pre-Emergent Herbicide and Fertilizer**

- Warm season grasses such as Centipede, Bermuda, Zoysia, and St. Augustine need to have a pre-emergent herbicide applied when the Forsythia (Yellow Bells) shrubs are blooming.
- Avoid purchasing combination "weed and feed products" offered in many big box retail stores. They are purchased by the store for the entire nation, and are inappropriate for our warm season grasses.
- Do not fertilize warm season grasses until they come out of dormancy or "green up", which will likely be in April.
- If you wait until April to apply pre-emergent herbicide, it will be too late to prevent weeds in your lawn.
- To determine how much herbicide to buy, measure the length of the yard and multiply by the width: This will give you the square footage. Generally, a bag covers 2,500 to 5,000 square feet.

Turf



*Continued on Page 3*

## Upcoming Events

Bill and the Jungle Taming gang are very active in community activities around the Columbia area. They will be providing gardening information at a variety of events.

Details about each event are located on the website:

[www.jungletaming.com](http://www.jungletaming.com)

### **Adaptive Gardening Seminar**

**Thursday, April 5, 2012**

**9:00 a.m.**

**Robert Mills Carriage House**

**Registration:** (803) 296-2273

**<http://www.palmettohealth.org/body.cfm?id=3302&oTopID=3095>**

### **Greater Columbia Landscape Assoc.**

**Speaker for Member Meeting**

**Thursday, April 9, 2012**

**6:30 p.m.**

**Catoe's Power Equipment, Inc.**

**4012 W. Beltline Boulevard**

**For more information:** (803) 254-3711

### **Midlands Plant and Flower Festival**

**Thursday through Sunday, April 19, 20, 21 and 22**

**8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Thurs-Sat;**

**12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., Sun**

**S.C. State Farmer's Market**

**3483 Charleston Highway**

**West Columbia**

**Admission and parking: FREE**

**<http://agriculture.sc.gov/content.aspx?ContentID=736>**

### **Sparkleberry County Fair**

**Saturday, April 28, 2012**

**9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Sat.**

**Clemson Research Center, Two Notch**

**and Clemson Roads, Columbia, SC**

**Admission: \$5.00 per carload**

### **Palmetto Health Employee Discount Advantage Fair**

**Tuesday through Thursday**

**May 29, 30 and 31, 2012**

**Palmetto Health Employees Only**

## Gardening for Everybody

*Written by Donald McInnes, Ph.D.*

### E-Answers for Everyone!

In any aspect of gardening, if you have any doubts about what you're doing, it pays to do some research before acting. There are myriad magazines, books and websites devoted to providing you with garden wisdom. There are, in fact, too many resources to choose from; it's too easy to find conflicting, useless and inappropriate advice. Some of the local retailers also add to the confusion. One might assume that the plant material, fertilizers, etc. offered for sale here would be appropriate for our climate. But that's not always the case—Alberta spruces, fescue grass seed, winterizing fertilizers (to give but a few examples) are for sale in numerous establishments in Columbia, but none of them are good choices for our gardens—they're all more suited for colder climes.



I want to offer a piece of advice and also point you to one of my favorite resources to track down sound, unbiased, gardening advice.

**First the advice:** Try to remove conflicts of interest from those folks that are helping you make gardening decisions. An example of such a conflict of interest would be using a landscape designer attached to a nursery. I'm not disparaging the design talents of



such persons--some of them are very gifted and educated designers. But I don't think they can be trusted to make design decisions with the client's best interest paramount—they have the incentive to choose plants for the client's landscape that maximize the profits of the nursery. A designer working with a nursery who gets paid a commission by the nursery on the plant material installed also has the incentive to suggest larger, more numerous and more expensive plants than necessary. If you want to hire one of these designers, see if you can come to an arrangement that removes these incentive problems. If you can't pay for the landscape design independent of any plant purchases, try to

*Continued on page 3*



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## Amy's March Horticultural Tasks

Cont'd from Page 1

### Fire Ants

Late March and April are great times to treat for fire ants. Fire ants will burrow down deep when the weather is cold or hot, but will be very active in spring and fall.

One of the best products on the market is "Over & Out". It takes about six weeks to completely remove the ants, but control can last for up to three years because it kills the queen. Well worth the wait!

### Perennials

Overcrowded perennials can be divided now.

Perennials



### Roses

Roses



Keep your newly planted roses watered and fertilized. As a general rule, avoid getting the leaves wet to prevent the leaf spot that many roses are prone to getting. If you want to plant a rose that seems resistant to leaf spot, try the 'Knockout' roses. Another rose to try is the next generation of rose that has the 'Knockout Red' as one of its parents. It's called the 'Home Run' Rose. It has all the great qualities of long blooming time and disease resistance, but it stays more compact than the 'Knockout' roses. Like a fabulous pink rose? Try 'Belinda's Dream' Rose. This rose can be seen on Gervais Street in medians throughout the Vista area. Developed in Texas, this rose has impressed me with its drought and heat tolerance and the oversized blooms in contrast to its compact size. This rose does not need pruning to control its size. The foliage has a bluish tint that contrasts beautifully with its pink flowers.



### Shrubs

Shrubs



There's much confusion about pruning shrubs. As a general rule, only prune spring blooming shrubs after they have finished blooming. For non-spring blooming shrubs, cut back before spring growth. To maintain the shape of a hedge, clip off the lighter green growth when it emerges in the spring. Monitor shrubs for insects.

### Trees

March is still a great month for planting trees. Don't forget to consider the mature size of the tree when choosing the type of tree you are considering purchasing. Always call 811 to have your utilities located before you dig.

## Gardening for Everybody

Cont'd from Page 2

find another designer. This may cost you, a few hundred dollars, but it may save you much more in the long run—by avoiding less than optimal choices. Alternatively, try to get a second opinion before you commit to any plant purchases by hiring another garden designer by the hour to look over your proposed plans to make sure all the choices made are the best.

**And now the resource:** One of the most useful sites on the web for gardeners to find unbiased, research-based information is



called E-answers. It is a website that functions like a search engine where the results are limited to articles produced by state Extension Services. If you search for "iris" on Google or Yahoo, you'll come up with millions of hits for all sorts of things, from eye surgery, to music and book titles, to scantily clad models of that name. Using E-answers, you'll find a few dozen articles limited to gardening topics, like pest control, propagation and choosing varieties. And you won't find sites trying to sell you stuff, not even any ads. You can find E-answers at <http://e-answers.adec.edu>.



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## Miss Patsy's Southern Cornbread

- 1 ½ cup self-rising corn meal
- ½ cup self-rising flour
- ¼ cup oil
- 1 cup milk
- 1 T water
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 3 dashes Texas Pete hot sauce

Whisk corn meal and flour together. Add oil and mix with fork until crumbly. Add 1 tablespoon water to diced onions and microwave 2 minutes, covered. Add to mixture. Stir in milk and Texas Pete. Divide and pour into 2 greased 10 inch heated baking pans and cook simultaneously at 450 degrees until golden brown. Enjoy!



## Professor Ron's Timely Tips

*Written by Professor Ron Cowart*

Spring is in the air, and March is the time for planting your spring garden!

- Purchase your vegetable seeds and transplants from a reputable seed and plant supplier. Visit your local feed and seed stores and the State Farmers Market. Good seed and transplants results in mouth-watering produce.
- For cole crops (beets, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, lettuce, mustard, onions, radish and spinach), incorporate 3 lbs. of 10-10-10 fertilizer per 100 square feet.
- This is the month to plant Irish potatoes and garden peas.
- Plant veggies as soon as possible after broadcasting fertilizer and tilling the soil. This ensures better absorption of the fertilizer nutrients and keeps weeds at bay.

- Make sure to firm the soil over the seed - this results in quicker germination.
- Water your seeded rows with a fine spray to avoid washing out the small seeds.



*Remember:  
"Plant well, Eat well and Enjoy!"*



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## Growing Little Green Thumbs

The article is an activity from her book under production, **Growing Little Green Thumbs**

Written by **Ruby Haycock DeLoach**



Hear the word GARDEN and memories will come to mind of a special person who introduced you to playing in the dirt. If you have a passion to be remembered fondly and have a love for gardening, help young children grow green thumbs. March is the time to plant seeds indoors. The 2012 seed packets are already at the Dollar Store. For only a \$1 your child can get 3 packets to start a lifelong hobby. Save the seed packet covers for the front of a gardening journal. Use the child's drawings and take photos to illustrate. When a significant adult writes simple sentences in a journal, it helps young children understand beginning language concepts and learn science concepts related to plants. The journal will be a treasured keepsake. Older children can write their own entries and measure and graph the growth to add math to the experience.

### Getting Started

Make plans to gather items needed: seeds, soil, planting containers with drain holes, a spade and a three-hole folder with paper to make a garden journal. Herbs, tomatoes and peppers are good first planting experiences because they germinate quickly and can be eaten. Colorful, flowering plants are a joy to young eyes. Find empty pots or make them from milk cartons. Plastic food containers are good to catch runoff water. Pictures flash to mind of Mom's tomato plants growing in cans lined up on the shelf of the screened back porch. She used a fine topping of vermiculite to prevent damping off of seedlings at the soil line. Label, date and cover the seeds with plastic wrap until seedlings pop through the soil. Water when soil is dry to the finger. Overwatering is a hazard to seedlings. Basil, chives and alyssum are renewing our spirits as we watch them grow in pots sitting in a sunny window. After the last frost and the seedlings have grown into adult plants, the spade is used to transplant into larger pots or directly into the garden.



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## About the Authors

**Amy Bledsoe**, who has a degree in horticulture, is a Certified Nursery Professional, Pesticide Applicator, Environmental Landscaper, Arborist, and Landscape Technician. She is currently the landscape designer for the City of Columbia. She has consulted on gardening articles for Columbia Metropolitan magazine and The State newspaper, appeared on ETV's "Making It Grow," and has also been a radio guest on "The Andy Thomas Show" to answer questions on gardening. Email Amy at [abledsoedesign@msn.com](mailto:abledsoedesign@msn.com).

**Ron Cowart** has 40 years of landscaping experience. Since 1975, he has owned and operated Tookeedoo Farms, a landscaping and nursery business. With two degrees from Clemson University, he is also a horticulture and landscape teacher at Midlands Tech, and owner of Cowart Landscaping Consulting, LLC. To contact Ron, call (803) 513-4242 or email [cowartconsulting@gmail.com](mailto:cowartconsulting@gmail.com). You can visit Ron's website at [www.cowartconsulting.com](http://www.cowartconsulting.com).



**Ruby Haycock DeLoach** has an Ed. D. in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of South Carolina. After retiring as an educator, she developed her artistic abilities and illustrated her first nonfiction children's science book, **Earth Turns on Its Axis, and...** She has another book under production called **Growing Little Green Thumbs**. To contact Ruby, email [rhdeloach@aol.com](mailto:rhdeloach@aol.com). Also visit her website at [www.crookedcreekart.org/deloach.htm](http://www.crookedcreekart.org/deloach.htm).

**Donald McInnes** has three degrees in Biology (B.S., M.S., Ph.D.) and works for Clemson Extension, assisting consumers with landscape, garden, wildlife and pest control questions. He is also the owner of Southeastern Environmental Design, a landscape design and consulting service, and chairs the City of Columbia's Tree and Appearance Commission. Email Dr. McInnes at [seenvdes@aol.com](mailto:seenvdes@aol.com).



## About Jungle Taming

**Jungle Taming, LLC** is an upscale yard and garden restoration company that specializes in pruning, cultivating and uncovering hidden beauty from overgrown landscapes. Call Jungle Taming for fence line cleaning, ivy and weed removal, bed improvement, trimming and cleaning shrubs, tree trimming, debris removal, herbicide application and much, much more.



Owner **Bill Kunze**, certified in Landscape Management, has over 15 years of hands-on experience in the Midlands area. For more information, contact Jungle Taming at (803) 463-2655 or email [info@JungleTaming.com](mailto:info@JungleTaming.com). Or visit the website: [www.JungleTaming.com](http://www.JungleTaming.com).



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