

Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission Region III



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Our Favorite Time of the Year!

Spring has come and gone, and Summer is just kicking off and for the Region III office it brought planning and planting gardens and a variety of workshops throughout our Districts.

We have been busy getting a community garden project off the ground in Soperton, GA with our Ohoopee District; Brier Creek SWCD's Urban Agriculture workshop in Waynesboro; Pond Management Workshop in Coastal District in Ludowici, GA; NRCS's Timber Management 101 Workshop in Emmanuel County; and Altamaha District's Grain Drill Demo and Pollinator Plot Planting Workshop in Hazlehurst, GA; Ag days at schools throughout the Region; Installing Pollinator Information Centers in Altamaha Districts county offices and our own pollinator garden butterfly habitat and atrium.

Please visit our Facebook for details on all of the above and more at:

<https://www.facebook.com/GASWCCIII>



This Checklist Will Help You Prepare Your Garden for Next Spring:

Know Your Gardening Zone. - Research should be the first task on your list. ...

Purchase and Start Seeds. ...

Clean Your Garden Beds. ...

Prepare Your Soil. ...

Lay Down Mulch. ...

Prune Plants. ...

Divide Perennials. ...

Check Your Gardening Tools. ...



1. Understanding Your Gardening Zone

- Research should be your initial step. Gardening expert Molly E. Williams advises, "Before you start working in your garden, ensure it's the right time based on your agricultural zone." Different zones correspond to geographical locations, guiding not only when to plant but also what to plant as certain crops thrive in specific zones.

2. Buying and Starting Seeds

- Procuring seeds before spring allows for ample planning time, crucial for successful planting. Williams notes, "Each seed has unique germination requirements. Some need to start indoors, while others can be directly sown. Create a calendar highlighting planting and starting times."

3. Cleaning Garden Beds

- Clear out fallen leaves, debris, and weeds from garden beds during fall and winter to prepare for spring. Adrienne Roethling, garden director for Paul J. Ciener Botanical Garden, emphasizes the importance of removing weeds before they seed to prevent future issues. Additionally, remove dead material from plants like hydrangeas and ornamental grasses to ensure they thrive.

4. Soil Preparation

Preparing your soil for spring is essential. If your soil has compacted during the winter, till it until workable. Conduct a soil test to check the pH level for suitability. Based on the results, apply fertilizers and soil amendments in spring. For instance, adjust acidic soil by adding compost mix or other materials to correct pH levels.



Tips for Preparing Your Garden Before Spring:

- Lay down mulch in late winter to avoid stepping on emerging plants and prevent weed growth. Ground mulch is recommended for its nutrient benefits.
- Prune plants before spring to manage size, encourage flowering, and remove diseased branches. Prune summer flowering shrubs during the dormant season.

Check gardening tools at the end of winter to ensure you have all essentials, clean tools monthly to prevent disease spread, and invest in sharpening tools like stones and lubricating oil.



Pollinator Garden -

Sponsored in part by Ohoopee District

This project has been quite an undertaking. My thoughts were that we support and encourage planting pollinator gardens throughout our Region. We assist many groups in the planning and planting of the gardens. We always need plants or seeds, so why not grow our own to have for future use? Additionally, Ohoopee District supported our Butterfly Atrium where we are creating our own butterfly exhibit. So having plants butterflies need readily on hand is a must.

The pictures shown in the previous section show the soil prep and the compost being added to the soil. The following pictures show where we are as of June. It has been quite a learning experience and so very rewarding.





And the best is yet to come...

Milkweed plants are being made ready to move into the atrium in preparation of the arrival of our caterpillars. We are very excited! Our hope is to be able to continue this lifecycle of butterflies to take to classrooms and use as other learning opportunities.

The atrium is in our office in Soperton, and we will be happy for anyone to stop by to see it.

We are anticipating everything to be in place by the first week of July.



Upcoming Events

Ohoopee District :

Community Garden Meeting June 18th 6:00 - 7:30 PM
First Baptist Church; 4991 S.Third Street; Soperton, GA

Weed Wiper Workshop June 25th 9AM to 1PM
1449 Second Street; Soperton, GA Lunch Provided
Register or contact Katelyn Poppell 386-205-5508 or
Katelyn.poppell@gacd.us

Ogeechee District - July 11 6:00 Pond Management
Workshop at Bulloch County Center for Agriculture

The Georgia Association of Conservation Districts
(GACD) will host its Annual Meeting this year on August
4-6, 2024 at Chateau Elan Resort in Braselton, Ga.

And as always if you have an event you would like
promoted please send it to
miki.smith11@gaswcc.ga.gov

Happy Summer!