



Leaf



Notes



The Newsletter of Lee County Master Gardeners

Presidents Message

Dear Gardening Friends,

“Money can’t buy you happiness, but it can buy you plants and that is just about the same.” I saw this quote a few days ago and started thinking about plants, friends, happiness, and Master Gardeners. Working in my garden I do so enjoy the many plants others have shared with me at our Master Gardeners meetings, I enjoy the native plants I now have in my garden, knowing I am helping nature by incorporating natives, information I learned in our training, I look out in my garden and realize I now know how to select plants, plant them, then fertilize, prune, and mulch, again all I learned in MG training. Money can’t bring happiness, but Master Gardener training certainly has brought me happiness and many friends.

Lee County Master Gardeners and friends are an amazing group. We have welcomed 24 interns into our group, we have supported extension through staffing the Help Line, answering all sorts of interesting and challenging questions and helped fund a part time agent. We have provided education through our delightful, eye catching, informative booths at Home and Garden Show, Festival in the Park, and City Fest. We have provided monthly very knowledgeable interesting educational programs and provided over \$5,000 in scholarships and grants within our community. We have maintained beautiful demonstration gardens, so folks can enjoy the quaintness, the variety of plants, and wildflowers as they stroll through the gardens. And, held mulch sales, native azalea sales and our fabulous very successful 2018 Garden Tour. We have current funds raised more than expected. But most important we are still friends that love being together and sharing our horticulture knowledge with others.

I suggest the logo should be: **“Being a Master Gardener brings happiness”**. Thank you, great friends, for being Master Gardeners and for all you do to support our work. Certainly, has been an honor to serve you as President.

Happy Gardening,
Nancy Golson
President

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Quarterly Quote

Blessed are the curious, for they shall have adventures. - Lovelle

Editors note: I

In early April, I noticed an ugly problem with my Beni Kawa, a beautiful Japanese Maple. Turned out to be Ambrosia Beetle damage, for which there is no other option but to remove the tree.

These beetles have now invaded Alabama, after destroying many avocado trees in Florida.

Please see the article on pages 13-14 of this publication.



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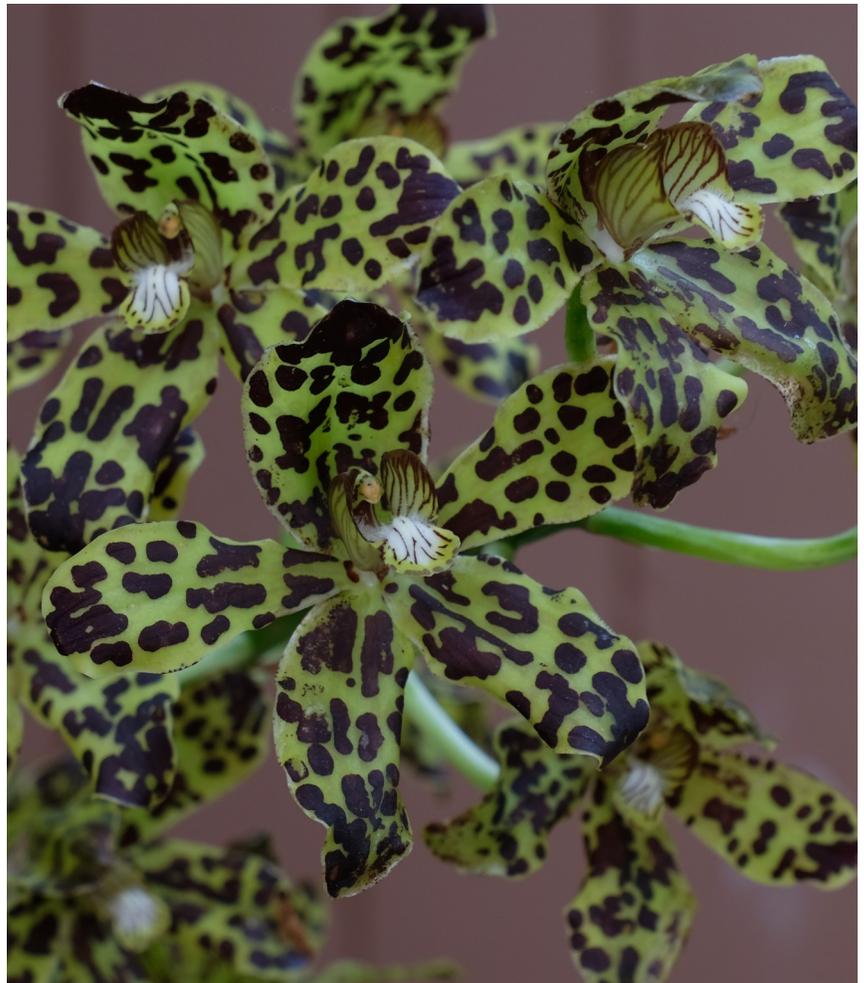
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The Master Gardeners Program educates volunteers in science-based gardening and landscape practices and helps them effectively extend research-based information to the public as Master Gardeners. The Master Gardener's role is primarily that of "educator."

There are many different ways our volunteers in Lee County help the Alabama Extension System (ACES) expand outreach to the community. We construct and maintain community demonstration gardens and help implement community projects. A variety of garden-related programs and workshops are offered to the public.

Quarterly Quiz

Can you see anything special in this orchid picture ?





Memories of the 2018 Garden Tour

—Linda Nowin

The 2018 Master Gardener Tour was a wonderful success. Co-chairmen Shelia Allen and Ronda Hardgrave worked for hundreds of hours to find the perfect mix of gardens, to produce posters and a beautiful tour booklet, to organize committees and to take care of all the details that made the tour so special. Almost one hundred volunteers worked during the tour weekend to put up and take down tents, put up signs, assist at Chicken Salad Chick, greet visitors and answer gardening questions.

This year's garden owners not only shared their gardens, they went out of their way to welcome visitors and volunteers. On Saturday morning Phil Raley had his homemade cinnamon rolls waiting for the garden volunteers. Joel Pittard manned his greenhouse and patiently answered visitor's questions about his beautiful orchids. The visitors at Bel Canto were welcomed by elegant flower arrangements and musicians on the deck. At the Vintage Gem garden the owner's adorable daughters shared their amazingly calm parakeet, Matilda. The warm hospitality at each garden made visitors feel like honored guests.

Guests were interested in different areas at each garden. Some decided to start planting blueberries after visiting Trillium Creek. Several visitors had their pictures made in front of the huge Loblolly Pine at Toad Hill. The whimsical flower bed and resident goats at O Grows got lots of attention.

Here are some comments from people touring the gardens:

“ Please extend our thanks to everyone involved in the Garden Tour. We had a wonderful time and learned so much.”

“I wish you all would do this every year. I loved it.”

“The group at each garden was so warm and welcoming.”

A couple from Gulf Shores who have two adult daughters living in this area said they always make plans to attend the Lee County Master Gardener Tour. They mentioned that they enjoy attending garden tours all over the Southeast and our tour is their favorite.

The Garden Tour provides a way to share our love of gardening and showcases Lee County in a wonderful way. It connects our members to each other and to our community. All these memories of the 2018 Garden Tour make one realize that this project is so much more than just raising funds for our organization.



Co-Chairman: Ronda Hardgrave and Shelia Allen



Garden Tour Flowers

Can you identify these flowers, or the garden they were photographed in?



Photos by David Peterson



Rose Campion

From Gardeningknowhow.com Submitted by Margaret Holler

Rose campion (*Lychnis coronaria*) is an old-fashioned favorite that adds brilliant color to the flower garden in shades of magenta, bright pink and white. Rose campion flowers look at home in cottage garden settings and more. Read on to learn more about these interesting plants.

Native to northern Africa, southern Europe and the Middle East, rose campion has become naturalized in many parts of the United States. It grows naturally on rocky, scrubby hillsides. The plants do well in rock gardens, xeriscaping, wildflower meadows and cottage gardens.

The genus name 'Lychnis' (Greek for lamp), comes from the fact that the felt-like leaves were used as lamp wicks in olden days. The soft, pale, gray-green foliage makes the perfect backdrop for the brightly colored flowers, with each blossom lasting only a day. The foliage adds soft texture in the garden when the flowers are not in bloom.

Flowers are sparse the first year but numerous in the second year. In the third year, the numbers of blossoms begin to decline, but they are eager re-seeders that regenerate themselves every year.

Rose Campion Care

Growing rose champions is a snap if you choose the right location. The plants prefer full sun but tolerate partial shade, where they produce fewer blossoms. The plants survive winters in USDA plant hardiness zones 4 through 8, but they may not survive particularly severe winters in zone 4.

Rose campion prefers poor, dry soil over rich soil, and tolerates alkaline or calcareous soil. Dry soil is best, but the plants may need supplemental watering during extended dry periods. If you have to water, apply the moisture slowly, making sure the water sinks deep into the soil.

The seeds need a chilling period before they will germinate, so plant them in the fall for spring germination. If you live in an area that typically has warm periods in fall and winter, plant the seeds in winter, several weeks before the last expected frost date. The seeds need light to germinate, so press them onto the surface of the soil without covering them. Deadhead the plant regularly to keep the flowers blooming. To encourage the plant to reseed itself, remove the mulch from areas where you want seedlings to take root, and leave the last flush of summer flowers in place to form seed heads. In spring, thin the seedlings and move some of the excess to other locations.

The only additional care the plants need is late fall or early winter pruning. Cut them back to about one-third of their original size. The trimmings are fine for the compost pile.





“Harvest for Health”—Healing Gardens for Cancer Survivors

Posted by: [Katie Nichols](#) February 19, 2018 in [Gardening in the South](#), [Living](#)

AUBURN, Ala.—Cancer recovery can feel like a long and lonely road. For the 14.5 million people living with and beyond cancer in the United States, daily struggles are a reality.

Auburn University’s Department of Horticulture, the Alabama Cooperative Extension System’s Home Grounds Team, Alabama Master Gardeners and the University of Alabama at Birmingham’s Comprehensive Cancer Center have partnered together to bring hope and healing to cancer survivors through Harvest for Health, a mentoring program. This new, five-year project is poised to mentor 425 cancer survivors through growing a home vegetable garden. While the program has partial funding from the National Institutes of Health, funding is \$30,000 short of the total need.

Harvest for Health

Harvest for Health began in 2013 when the University of Alabama at Birmingham’s

Comprehensive Cancer Center partnered with Alabama Extension agents to create a gardening intervention pilot study.

Each survivor partners with an Extension-trained Master Gardener mentor to tend a home garden. For 12 months, survivor and mentor plant, grow and harvest the vegetable garden.

Program Benefits Both Survivors, Mentors

Recently, one participant wrote a letter to her Master Gardener mentor.

“I enjoyed the Harvest for Health program so much,” she said. “Gardening has become the first thing I do every morning. I think the best thing you taught me is to ‘have fun with your garden.’”

Kerry Smith, the Harvest for Health Program Coordinator for Auburn Horticulture and Alabama Extension, said with the generous donations to date, program funding has reached the halfway point.

“It takes a special person to be drawn to a volunteer activity where you are helping a person with medical difficulties,” Smith said. “It’s not a fit for everyone, but the volunteers who do choose this activity are priceless. They have a gift, so it is a blessing to be able to work with these people. The Master Gardeners volunteers feel rewarded too. Some say they feel they get more out of this than the cancer survivors.”

One mentor said, “What can seem so simple in sun, soil, water, and a seed can be a miraculous life-changing point. This was my cancer survivor’s garden.”

Special Award

[UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center](#) has been named as one of the nation’s “100 Hospitals and Health Systems with Great Oncology Programs.” The UAB Cancer Center was selected as an organization dedicated to treating cancer patients as well as researching the deadly disease. It was recognized for its clinical outcomes, multidisciplinary care teams, clinical expertise and oncology research. The UAB Cancer Center was also noted for its influential cancer education and prevention efforts.



Raised Bed for Harvest for Health **Installation and Planting**



Preparation—cardboard place on bare ground



Bed assembled (easy)



Soil applied



Mixing soil



Mulch applied, planting



Planted!!



Photos from 2018 Gardens on Tour



Phil's Reprieve



Bel Canto



Caroline Dean Wildflower Trail



Kimberly Surprise

Photos by Pat Giordano

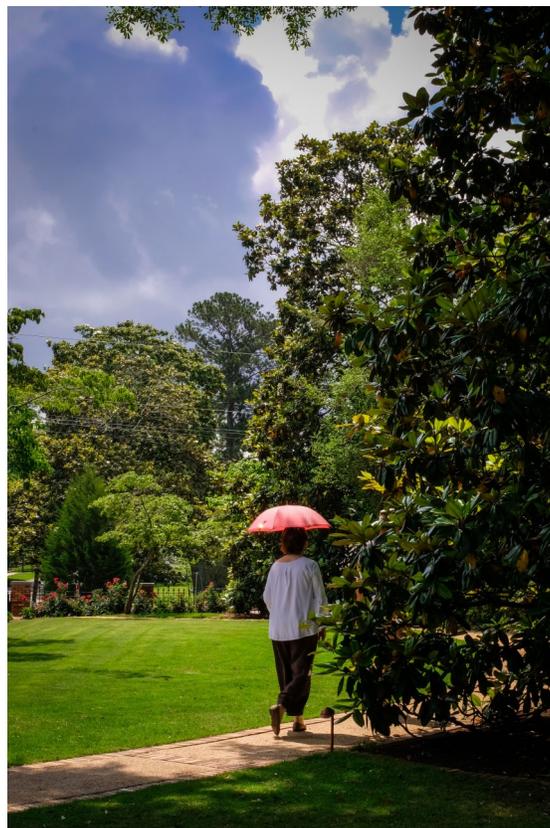


Photos from 2018 Gardens on Tour

— Continued



Vintage Gem



Toad Hill



Trillium Creek



Carolyn's Grace



Photos from 2018 Gardens on Tour

— Continued

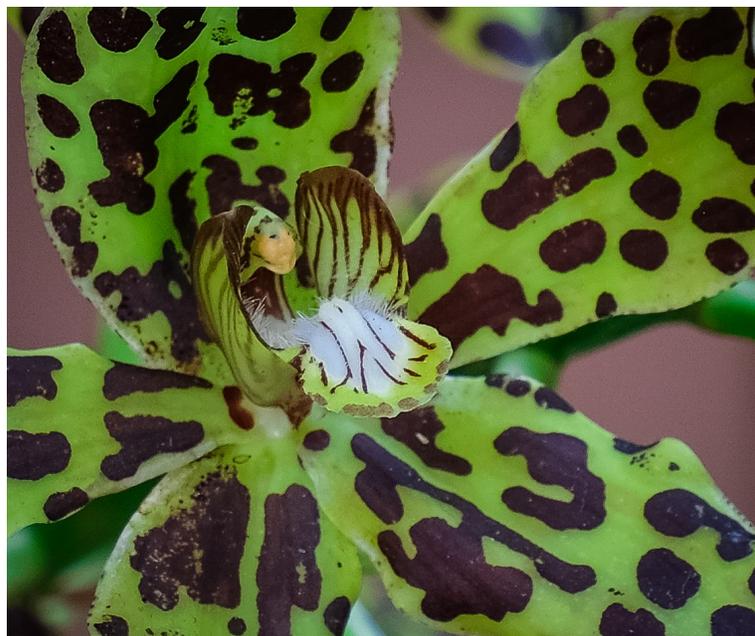


Anna Belle Rose



Lakeview Garden

Answer to Quiz on page 2



Do you see the face? Resembles an Indian Princess



Potpourri

Charlot Ritenbaugh class of 2010

An early June visit to NYC allowed me to wander through several areas of Central Park under restoration. There were newly planted borders of columbine (aquilegia,) fothergilla, itea, native azaleas, elderberry and oak leaf hydrangeas in bloom, fragrant sumac, winterberry, arrow wood (and other viburnum species,) and flowering rhododendron and mountain laurel. At 161 years of age, manmade Central Park is visited by an estimated 45 million guests each year.

Also impressive was the lush growth covering 195,000 square feet of the perennial gardens along the water's edge on the southern tip of Manhattan. At Battery Park, the weather and water create an environment where hostas, amsonia, allium, heuchera, and astilbe flourish. It was all so grand and felt like it was there just for me!

The folks at the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation are doing many things well. This planting guide on native species that will grow in NYC's climate is an amazing example.

Native Species Planting Guide for New York City

<https://www.nycgovparks.org/.../nrg-native-species-planting-guide-121213.pdf>

Surprise! There are catalogs for fall planted bulbs waiting for you in your mailbox. At least I was surprised. It seems like I am always playing catch up with my gardening. Below are several ideas of inexpensive bulbs than I have enjoyed over the years. Most naturalize or return at least twice before needing replaced.

Did I mention I really like spring blooming bulbs? Beyond daffodils, one of my favorites is *muscari* or blue grape hyacinth. Look for *M. comosum*, tassel hyacinth or *M. comosum plumosum*, feather hyacinth in your catalogs. Blooming later than most, bees love them and deer do not. They cost about \$.40 each.

One supplier suggests a new offering, *M. neglectum* 'Baby's Breath.' They recommend this icy blue be "interplanted" with Ipheion uniflorum 'Alberto Castillo,' which is snow white. Some years I give away this spring starflower to as many gardeners as possible. The tiny bulbs of Ipheion have never failed to bring me joy in the chill of late winter.

Another treasure found in the back of your catalog is *Corydalis solida*, fumewort. Planted in a container so I could provide more even moisture than my sandy soil, these made both the bees and my heart happy when they bloomed.

This week I learned that the correct wording in a familiar quote from *A Mid-Summer's Night Dream* is, "I know a bank where the wild thyme blows." Did you know it was blows and not grows? In Shakespeare's English blows means to flower or bloom. Hmm.



Dogwood Cornus Kousa from Asia

Photographed in Central Park June 7, 2018 by DP



Potpourri

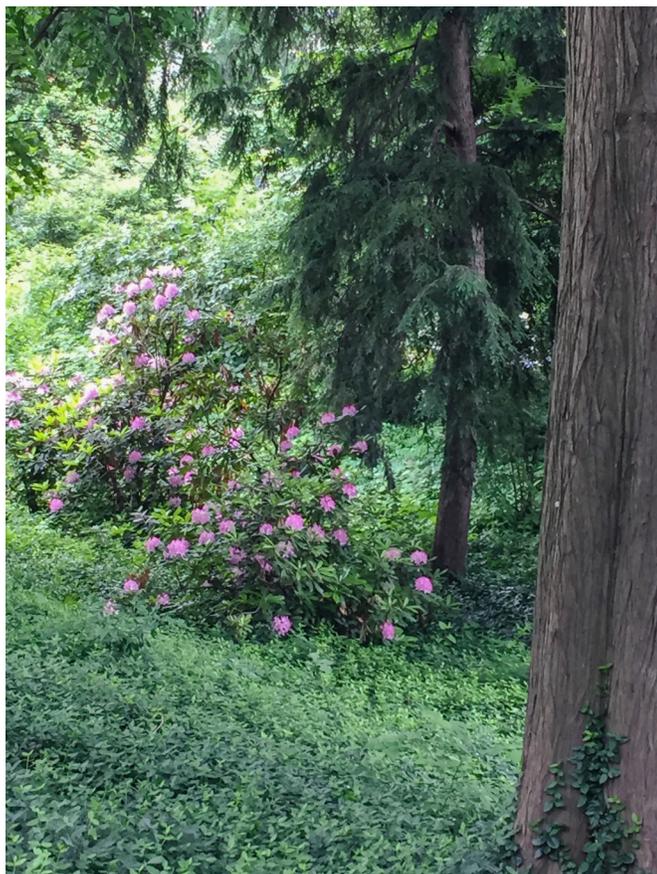
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This earthenware Crocus Pot from the late 1860's, was on display in the Americana Arts section of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. It fits perfectly into this potpourri. Imagine the blow from some 'tommies' forced inside this fella. Tommies is the nickname for *C. tommasinianus*, woodland crocus, which can also be found in your catalogs at very reasonable prices.

You might want to reference Scott Ogden's **Garden Bulbs for the South**, if you want to know what has a chance of survival in our muggy, steamy summers.

Happy shopping!



Flowering Rhododendron photographed in Central Park June 7, 2018 by DP



Native Azalea photographed in Central Park June 7, 2018 by DP



Ambrosia Beetles

- Clemson Cooperative Extension

Ambrosia beetles are a specialized group belonging to the family Scolytidae. They differ from the bark beetles in this family in several ways. While bark beetles burrow in the phloem layer or at the juncture of the bark and sapwood, ambrosia beetles bore through the bark and into the sapwood. The ambrosia beetles are highly specialized and feed on fungi that they cultivate on the walls of the tunnels. Both the adults and larvae feed on the fungus. In many cases, the fungi are specific to a given beetle and the spores are carried from site to site in specialized pouches (mycetangia) in the body of the female. As the female excavates a new tunnel, the spores are deposited on the walls.

Most ambrosia beetles attack weakened, injured or dying trees and shrubs. Some attack fresh-cut wood as well. A few species attack apparently healthy trees and shrubs. Some of the more common ambrosia beetles will be described.

The black twig borer, *Xylosandrus compactus*, and the Asian ambrosia beetle, *Xylosandrus crassiusculus*, are two species that attack apparently healthy trees and shrubs.

The black twig borer is an introduced species native to Southeast Asia. The first report in this country was from Florida in 1941. It is widely distributed throughout the world in tropical and subtropical regions. This beetle attacks twigs and small branches of host trees and shrubs. Dogwood, magnolia, and redbud are some of the common ornamental shrubs and trees attacked by this beetle. It is known to attack over 200 different host species. Adult females begin to emerge about the time dogwood blooms. The females bore into the twigs and small branches and form brood chambers in the stem pith. As many as six generations per year are produced.

The first signs of damage by this beetle are fading or wilting of the foliage on the terminals of infested twigs and branches. Close inspection will reveal the presence of a tiny entry hole on the underside of the affected branch.

All stages of the beetle may be found in infested branches. Dark stains from the ambrosia fungus will be found in the central pith as well.

Small infestations can be controlled by pruning out the infested twigs and branches. Because of the many overlapping generations, spraying is of limited value.

The Asian ambrosia beetle is also a native of southern Asia and is now found world-wide. It was first detected in the U.S. in Charleston, SC, in 1974. This beetle attacks over 200 broadleaf trees, shrubs, and vines.

The initial attack by this beetle occurs in the spring. As the female bores into the wood, a thin, toothpick-like strand of sawdust is pushed from the tunnel. This may extend an inch or more from the surface of the bark. While the females prefer to attack stems under three inches in diameter they will attack stems up to eight inches in diameter. The entry hole is about 2 mm in diameter. The tunnel goes straight into the heartwood and then opens into a cave-like brood gallery with one or two side galleries.

A major emergence of females occurs in early spring. This is often around March 1 in South Carolina. Host plants may be heavily attacked at this time. If the host is vigorous enough, the beetles may be drowned or forced out by heavy sap flow. If the host is weak or not producing large amounts of sap, the attack will be successful.

Control of the Asian ambrosia beetle is difficult. Heavily infested plants should be removed and destroyed. Insecticide sprays are of limited value. They must be applied prior to adult emergence and attack on new hosts. Using proper horticultural practices to ensure healthy plants will help prevent attack.



Ambrosia Beetles

- continued

There are several other ambrosia beetles that attack weak or dying host plants. The most common of these is *Xyleborinus saxeseni*, sometimes referred to as the lesser shothole borer. Almost any broad leafed tree or shrub may be attacked by this beetle. The first major adult flight is in mid- to late-February when temperatures exceed 65°F. As many as five generations per year are produced.

Maintaining healthy trees and shrubs is the first line of defense against the ambrosia beetles attacking weak hosts. This includes proper fertility, maintaining proper soil pH, and adequate soil moisture. Chemical control is not an option for these beetles since the host is already very weak or dying.

Damage

Part of plant damaged: Trunk

Ambrosia beetles burrow into tree trunks, stems and branches. Infested trees are regularly stressed before the attack, but frequently the trees appear to be healthy and vigorous.

Management

The largest portion of the ambrosia beetle population is found inside infested trees. Contact insecticides have not been shown to prevent ambrosia beetle emergence from already infested trees or wood and only a few contact insecticides have been found to provide good control of ambrosia beetles on wood surfaces. Chipping and burning wood can eliminate ambrosia beetles inside tree stumps and wood and stop their reproduction. However, to kill ambrosia beetles outside of the tree stumps and wood, applications of contact insecticides and/or biopesticides are recommended to help control or prevent further beetle movement in the grove (e.g., Malathion, Danitol or Hero), plus adjuvant (i.e., NuFilm, Vapor Gard or Pentrabark). Some biopesticides (e.g., BotaniGard) have also shown promise as detrimental to ambrosia beetles. Avocado groves under organic production should chip and burn all wood (including the chips).

Prepared by Clyde S. Gorsuch, Extension Entomologist/ Professor, Department of Entomology, Soils, and Plant Sciences, Clemson University.



Beetle damage to Editor's Bene Kawa Japanese maple.