March 2025

Gardening & Beautification

A Publication of the Spartanburg Men's Garden Club



Welcoming Men & Women

Officers

President Phil Abers
Vice President Beth Waddell
Secretary Denie Crowder
Treasurer Shelia Middlebrooks

Directors

Will Hawkins Ben Waddell Mark van Natta Ed White Roberta White Darvin Helvy Charlie Covert Curtis Marshall

Communications

Linda McHam Webmaster@DirtDaubers.org

Phil Abers
President@DirtDaubers.org

Mark Carlson
PlantSales@DirtDaubers.org

Gardening & Beautification

is the newsletter of the Spartanburg Men's Garden Club. It is published monthly except in December, and is available to the public free of charge. Sign up for the emailed newsletter by sending your request to:

Webmaster@DirtDaubers.org

President's Corner

Have you invited a guest to one of our Garden Club Meetings this year.? This is one way we can grow the club. We have some good initiatives underway to bring in new members. We just completed planting trees along the Butterfly Creek Trail and the Mary Wright Greenway in conjunction with PALS (Play, Advocate, Live Well). We have also been more involved with social media and have grown the number of followers this year.

Our meetings and quality presentations are a very good way to attract new members. We have the list of programs scheduled for the year that guests will find of interest. Our upcoming plant sale in early April is a good venue for us to showcase our skills. Where else can you find good plants at reasonable prices? Put on your recruiting hat and let's invite our friends, family, neighbors and acquaintances to our upcoming events. Please feel free to contact me or our Membership Committee Chair, Mark van Natta, with ideas to increase our membership.

Walker Miller SMGC Speaker March 17, 2025



The March 17 program will feature Walker Miller from The Happy Berry located within a mile of pristine Lake Keowee in Pickens County. This is a 22.5 acre family enterprise started by Walker and Ann in 1979 that features blueberries, blackberries, seedless grapes, figs, muscadine, persimmons and pussy willows. They desire to contribute to healthier lifestyles and eating habits. Come join us as we all learn more about this healthy lifestyle!



Post Office Box 1502 Spartanburg, SC 29304

DirtDaubers.org

Founded in 1948 as the "Dirt Daubers" the Spartanburg Men's Garden Club welcomes men, women and corporate members with an interest in nature.

As well as sharing gardening interests, the club has planted over 5,000 trees in Spartanburg, assists with many area beautification projects, and conducts a twice-yearly Tree & Shrub sale.



2025 Litter pickup schedule

June 14 " " Jun 21 September 13 " " Sep 20 December 13 " " Dec 20

Our area for litter control is Pine St. from Palmetto St. to McCravey Dr.

We meet at 8 AM in parking area behind Chamber of Commerce (off Oakland Av.)

Renew Now **2025 Membership**

Single \$20 Family \$28 Student \$5 Corporate \$100

Forms are located at DirtDaubers.org/Membership and will be available at the next general meeting.

Bring check or cash & completed form to Shelia Middlebrooks.



Upcoming Events

Presentations for 2025

April 21- Linda McHam "The Chelsea Flower Show"

May 19- Christopher Thompson, "Bugs and Crawly Things vs Skin Care"

June 16- Nicole Goodman, Urban Horticulture Agent

July 21- Hallman Farms and grafting

August 18- Dan Whitten, "Highlights of 2023 Plant Survey of Glassy Mountain"

September 15- Picnic

November 17- Joyce Harrison, "Conservation, Litter and Microplastics"

Our Corporate Members are listed below. Please support them.

Creekside Garden & Nursery Hatcher Garden & Woodland Preserve Piedmont Farm & Garden Peggy Wilson, Realtor Wofford College

ohttps://www.instagram.com/spartanburgmensgardenclub/

https://facebook.com/groups/smgc1948

Spartanburg Men's Garden Club & SCC present our Tree, Plant and Shrub Sale!

Sale

April 4 and April 5 (Friday and Saturday) 8:00am – 1:30pm



Azaleas, Dogwoods, Native Plants And lots more!

complete plant list at

DirtDaubers.org

cash/checks/cards

Hundreds of plants

Reasonably priced





at the Horticulture Gardens SCC I-85 Business at New Cut Road

Dirtdaubers.org

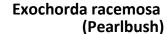
SC-41357336



Photography by Linda McHam



Magnolia 'Elizabeth'





Aphelion uniform (Spring starflower)

Member Musing By Kekona Novak

New Invasive Species in GA/SC: Yellow-legged Hornet

In 2023 a yellow-legged hornet hitched a ride on a cargo ship and landed in a Georgia port. It was first reported to the Georgia Department of Agriculture in August by a beekeeper who noticed a hornet was 'hawking' the entrance to his beehives. And, this was the first live sighting of yellow-legged hornets in the United States. Immediate action was taken to prevent the reproduction and spread of the yellow-legged hornet by installation of trap systems and spreading awareness. The Georgia Department of Agriculture partnered with the United States Department of Agriculture Plant and Animal Health Inspection Services (APHIS) to take immediate action to try to trap and prevent the hornets' establishment in the USA. Both Georgia and South Carolina installed a system of traps with a lure mixture of two parts grape juice and one part brown sugar. The first trapped yellow-legged hornet was discovered along the SC/GA border in November 2023.



The yellow-legged hornet originates from Southeast Asia where the climate is quite temperate, making South Carolina a perfect climate to thrive in. Similar to other pollinators, the yellow-legged hornet populations begin to dwindle in fall and the majority of the hive die with the exception of the queens. The queens overwinter and once the weather begins to warm the queen builds a small nest that is the size of a tennis ball. This is called their primary nest. The queen begins to raise brood and the nest size grows roughly to the size of a mailbox. The season continues and the worker population expands rapidly and the construction of a secondary nest is built and inhabited throughout summer. During this time the population becomes the highest as they forage for resources. If you are familiar with one of our native species, the bald-faced hornet, the nests look similar. The bald-faced hornet nest is a suspended basket-ball sized, rounded, papery, grayish-brown nest. The yellow-legged hornet's nest looks similar except for one major difference, the size. The yellow-legged hornet nest is usually suspended very high up and has been found in pine trees in South Carolina. They can get as large as a car engine.

Although there has been a very quick response to eradicate the yellow-legged hornet, locating the primary nest before they expand into a secondary nest can be challenging. Additionally, the secondary nest population can thrive at 6,000 hornets! That is a massive population compared to a bald-faced hornet population which can reach up to roughly 700. Also, in late summer/fall the colony produces drones which mate with future queens. A single hive can produce 200-500 queens which will leave, mated, to overwinter. In 2023 the Georgia Department of Agriculture found 5 yellow-legged hornets. In 2025 they found 47 nests within a 25 mile radius. The only hornet caught in South Carolina has been found in Jasper county.

There are tons of invasive species that have been introduced to the United States so why is this hornet such a big deal? The yellow-legged hornets are excellent hunters and can decimate populations of native pollinators along with honey bees. To be clear, honey bees are not native to the United States but they do have a significant impact on our agriculture and economy. Honey bees contribute to over \$300 million annually in honey crops. That is just in honey alone, excluding other products such as candles, pollen, beekeeping as a hobby, bees, propolis, royal jelly, and bee venom therapy. That also excludes the pollination services that honeybees and other native pollinators provide to commercial agriculture, especially crops like almonds, peaches, apples, and brassicas. Many beekeepers are especially concerned about the introduction of the yellow-legged hornet. After it was introduced into France it was estimated that 30% of beekeeper's hives were impacted by this invasive species.

There are several species that can easily be confused with the yellow-legged hornet including the bald-faced hornet, paper wasp, European hornet, Southern yellow jacket, red paper wasp and Eastern cicada killer. When identifying small flying insects it can definitely be a big challenge but also a good way to learn our local insects. Take a moment to observe the infographic and get a bit more familiar with their field marks. Lastly, I hope you won't ever get a chance to see a yellow-legged hornet in real life..... unless you're traveling to Southeast Asia!

History of the club continues on the following pages.

Appendix

Appendix 9

Birmingham Article "Spartanburg Boasts of MGC". 1973

This article appeared in *The Birmingham News* in 1973. Birmingham's interest in this activity in Spartanburg was probably because Joyce Ezell Kidd (Mrs. Benny Kidd, III) is a citizen of Birmingham and also a native of Spartanburg, a daughter of the famed W. O. Ezell of the article.

Spartanburg boasts of Men's Garden Club

Nov. 14, 1973 The Birmingham News BY ELMA BELL News staff writer

DON'T LAUGH at the idea of a men's garden club until you have been to Spartanburg, S. C. What visitors see there sends them home determined to get a men's garden club started in their city.

"We get credit for a lot of things we don't really do," Henry Pittman, president of the Men's Garden Club of Spartanburg, modestly says. However, he admits the club is the catalyst that causes a lot of good things to be done.

The driving force behind the garden club is W. O. Ezell--a little man with white hair and twinkling blue eyes. "He towers over all of us," Pittman says. "His great ability to work with people lies in the fact that he may do 99 per cent of the work, but he likes to give credit for it to the people who do the other one per cent."

Ezell became the unpaid city beautification director a number of years ago. He had no official status, but he had statue and willingness and he wasn't just a director—he was a gardener also. When the townspeople saw the changes in their city—streets free of litter, highways beautified, pocket gardens where a field of weeds had been—they began to refer to Ezell as "Mr. Beautiful."

"It's a term of endearment," Pittman says. "Everyone loves Mr. W. O."

This is evident when you enter .the city on the highway that joins Spartanburg and Greenville, S. C., and realize you are on W. O. Ezell Boulevard. "It used to be West Main, but the Spartanburg Lions Club, the Men's Garden Club and a lot of other clubs joined in having it renamed as a living tribute to Mr. W. O.," Pittman explains.

Now retired, Ezell came to Spartanburg in 1912 and was in the wholesale drug business. One of his daughters is Mrs. B. E. Kidd III of Birmingham.

James E. King, a member of the board of directors of the Men's Garden Club of Spartanburg, joined Pittman in outlining the club's work.

"WE HAVE three -kinds of members," Pittman explained. "A great many men pay dues and never come to meetings. They want their names on the roll and they want to back the work the club does. We don't complain about this group ...they are very valuable. They add clout.

"Then we have men who come to the monthly meetings to hear the horticulture oriented programs given by authorities, and third, we have the hard-core working group of members. It is a relatively small, dedicated group that really keeps the program going. Each group is important . . . there is a place for everyone and each group gives something."

In an effort to bring together all groups interested in beautification, the city formed Piedmont

Appendix

Beautification, Inc. A coordinator is appointed by the mayor of Spartanburg.

"This eliminates overlapping. The chairman of the Woman's Garden Club Council and a representative from the Men's Garden Club and all other interested groups attend."

Projects carried out by the Men's Garden Club include an annual industrial landscape rating and awards program.

"It is sponsored by The Chamber of Commerce," King said. "Twice a year, in the spring and the fall, about 150 large businesses, professional buildings and government buildings are surveyed by club members. Their grounds are rated—good, bad, medium— and suggestions are made on what can be done to improve them."

"The awards have become highly coveted citations," Pittman added. "They are always hung in a very prominent place by the firms that receive them. This is an example of being a catalyst . . . we don't do the actual work here, but we like to think we inspire it being done."

The club sponsors an annual community garden course open to the public for a very small fee. It is a two-hour course, one night a week for four or five weeks.

"The course has become very popular. We lean heavily on Clemson University, local county agents and our own members who are authorities to teach the course," Pittman says.

Booklets published by the Men's Garden Club of America and the Soil Conservation Society of America to give young people a better understanding of environmental problems and programs are provided for 48,000 high school pupils in Spartanburg County by the club. The booklets are paid for by ads sold to local businesses. Mr. Ezell sold enough to pay for 101,000 booklets, more than half of the total sold by the membership of the national organization in the year.

CLUB MEMBERS work individually and collectively on beautification. Duncan Park, 50 acres of city-owned property, has become an area of rolling lawns dotted with flower beds and trees due to beautification initiated by the club.

William J. Neisel of Hendersonville, N. C., a director of Men's Garden Clubs of America, describes the work done by the Spartanburg club as terrific. The national organization puts out a little card that reads, "Give us your tired, your tense, your up-tight executives. We will put the spring back in their step, the light in their eyes, the tone in their muscles, the charm in their smiles and the dynamism in their personalities."

To which EzelI adds, "It is the most rewarding hobby of anything you can find. It helps children, it makes your city beautiful and people do seem to appreciate it. When I had my shoulder operated on, 1,605 people sent me get well folders.