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## Athens Select 2007-08

The University of Georgia Trial Gardens in Athens grow hundreds of plants that are being evaluated for their ornamental qualities and their unique heat and humidity tolerance. Dr. Allan Armitage selects a few of the best varieties each year for the coveted Athens Select name. These varieties are released for propagation from virus-indexed stock to members of the Athens Select Marketing Association. Only a few selected growers in the United States are licensed to propagate these plants. Dr. Armitage says "We evaluate each and every potential variety to meet very strict criteria, foremost among them are heat and humidity tolerance. And they've got to add something special to the landscape . . ." Of the many possibilities they have evaluated this year, only three plants have been selected for release for the 2007-08 production and growing season. Look for them in local garden centers.

## Viburnums for Southern Gardens

It's taken me a long time to love Viburnum's. Yes, I read Dr. Michael Dirr's comment in *The Manual of Woody Plants*: "A garden without a viburnum is akin to life without music and art." Never really got viburnums back then. But I get 'em now. I've come to appreciate their quiet strength and value in the landscape. Plus they typically have few insect or disease problems. One can observe how the flowers, form and fruit of the useful species changes as one moves from north to south in the US. Northern gardeners get so much more value in

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*Abutilon* x 'Fairy Coral Red' is trouble-free in the landscape, grows no more than 18" tall and has blossoms of salmon to pink. Called flowering maples for their foliage which is reminiscent of maple leaves, these plants have long been grown as house plants. Cold hardy varieties are also a part of old-fashioned southern landscapes. The whole genus is getting a second chance these days, with prolific-flowering selections like 'Fairy Coral Red' being used in both beds and containers. Grow it in full sun; cold hardy in USDA Zones 7b - 11.

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terms of floral display and, especially, fruit display than do southern gardeners. We simply cannot use many of the varieties that do well in the north. We do, however, have some very useful viburnums for the coastal south - but it's usually the same three over and over. I want to mention three viburnums for your consideration. (1) Breeding work in Texas (where it's also hot and often wet) may give us a new player in the hybrid, 'Lord Byron', a cross of *V. obovatum*, Small Viburnum, with *V. rufidulum*, the Rusty or Southern Blackhaw. Small Viburnum is

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## Stops Along the Way

*Research and Education Garden, UGA–Griffin*

This garden is located on the grounds of the former Experiment Station, now UGA's Griffin campus. The garden's mission is one of "cultivating minds and the environment." Research plots are scattered over the 65 acre facility where faculty from the College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences develop and evaluate plant varieties, pest management strategies, and landscape management practices while preserving and improving environmental quality. The focal point of the garden is the Demonstration Area where the visitor will find a series of theme gardens ranging from Butterfly Gardens, Bog Gardens,



Perennial Gardens and more. These themes were developed and selected by the Griffin community. Visitors are welcome on weekdays (except holidays) from 8 am to 5 pm and Sundays from 1–4, May through September. For more information, visit the website or call 770–233–6107.

<http://www.caes.uga.edu/campus/griffin/garden/VisitGarden.cfm>

## Programs of Interest for Green Industry Professionals

### GA/FL Green Industry Updates

*October 16–18 Jacksonville and Quincy, Florida*

Staying up to date on new plants, pests, products cultural practices and production techniques is an important part of being a Green Industry professional. Get the latest information on a wide variety of topics at this seminar series sponsored by UGA and the University of Florida. Classes on October 16 are at the Duval County Extension Center in Jacksonville. The classes move to the North Florida Research and Education Center in Quincy on the 17th and 18th. The classes on October 18 are primarily for nursery personnel. Pesticide recertification credits will be given. Space is limited so register early. Cost is \$40 per day if postmarked before October 9, or \$50 thereafter. Registration includes the classes, handouts, refreshments and lunch. Contact the UGA Tifton Campus Conference Center (229) 386–3416 or visit the website to download the brochure or to register online.

[www.caes.uga.edu/campus/fifton/conferences](http://www.caes.uga.edu/campus/fifton/conferences)

### Georgia Certified Landscape Professional (GCLP) Training Field Day

*December 14 at The Bamboo Farm and Coastal Gardens, Savannah*

The GCLP program is a voluntary testing program than acknowledges those in the landscape profession who have mastered a thorough knowledge and understanding of job skills required to be successful in the industry. This full-day seminar will cover some of the

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*Mark your calendar so you'll remember these educational opportunities.*

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*Hibiscus* 'Panama Bronze' has deeply cut, bronze to burgundy foliage with occasional flowers of deep red. This ornamental hibiscus is grown mostly for its foliage alone. It tops out around 4 feet and is hardy in USDA Plant Hardiness Zones 8 – 11.

The third selection is known as *lochroma cyanea* 'Purple Queen'. *lochroma*'s have been grown by collectors and in conservatories for years, but have not made their way into the landscape market until now. This variety is particularly prolific with its blooms which are tubular and a clear, medium purple. They appear in a dense cluster at the tips of branches. The leaves are large and have the texture of velvet. *lochroma* 'Purple Queen' is native to Central and South America, with an expected hardiness range of zones 7 – 11. Photos courtesy of Athens Select. [www.athensselect.com](http://www.athensselect.com) &



IOCHROMA 'PURPLE QUEEN'



ABUTILON 'FAIRY CORAL RED'

## The Case of the Missing Camellias

*This article is excerpted from the online magazine Ornamental Outlook, September 10, 2007 and can be found in its entirety at [www.ornamentaloutlook.com/news/index.html](http://www.ornamentaloutlook.com/news/index.html)*

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) is seeking help in locating more than 200 camellia plants that have been reported missing from Esposito's Garden Center in Tallahassee, Florida where the plants were being held under quarantine. The camellias were infected with or exposed to *Phytophthora ramorum*, Sudden Oak Death (SOD.) This is a very serious fungal disease that may be deadly to certain oaks and other hardwoods. It also adversely affects other plants, including camellias, azaleas, and viburnums. Unlawful movement of

quarantined plants is a violation of state and federal law. FDACS, along with the US Department of Agriculture, is seeking to prevent the establishment of SOD in Florida, and therefore locating these missing plants is a priority. Establishment of SOD in Florida and/or adjacent states is a real possibility and would be devastating to both natural and man-made landscapes.

The spread of the causal organism, *Phytophthora ramorum*, likely occurs by movement of infected plant material, wind-blown rain, and contaminated irrigation water. Symptoms on infected plants vary considerably by species and it is difficult to tell SOD from some other diseases. Infected plants must be destroyed because no chemical control measures Please see *Missing Camellias* on page 4

*Viburnum* from page 1

native from SC to FL and AL while the Rusty Blackhaw is native from VA to FL. Dr. David Creech of Mast Arboretum says: "Created by Paul Cox of the San Antonio Botanical Garden . . . this interesting cross has performed well in [East Texas] . . . features pleasing mid-March flowers and is essentially evergreen." (2) Way back in 1968, the evergreen *V. japonicum* was crossed with the deciduous, red-fruited *V. lobophyllum* or *V. dilatatum* 'Catskill' as part of the US National Arboretum's breeding program. The result of this

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are currently available. If SOD is confirmed at nurseries or other facilities, infected plants and all susceptible plants within 2 meters of the infected plants must be destroyed. All susceptible plants within 10 meters must be held for 90 days and re-inspected.

A January 2007 survey of Esposito's indicated that a number of camellias were showing symptoms of SOD. Approximately 964 plants were identified for destruction or quarantine for a minimum of 90 days. In February, 406 plants were destroyed. The remaining plants showed no signs of disease at that time. In March, a subsequent survey showed the remaining plants were also infected; they were slated for destruction. When agents of FDACS returned on

was *V.* 'Chippewa' and 'Huron'. These are easy to grow, adaptable to diverse soil and climatic conditions, and both have abundant flowers and fruit. Plant the two together for best pollination. I predict 'Chippewa' and 'Huron' will be evergreen in Zone's 8 and 9, and produce a good display of red fruit. (3) Useful in the Coastal South is one of my favorites, *V. x pragense*. It would make a good screen with its glossy, evergreen foliage and rapid growth rate. The leaves are elliptic, 2-4" long. All together, it is a very handsome plant. Give these varieties a try. 🌿

April 5, they found 206 of the quarantined plants were missing. The owner of Esposito's then reported that the plants had been stolen around March 30. If they were stolen, the chances of recovering them are extremely low. These 3-gallon camellias include *hiemalis*, hybrids, *japonica*, *sasanqua* and *vernalis*. Planted in the landscape, these plants could lead to the establishment of SOD in Florida.

A state and federal investigation into the matter was initiated. As a result of the investigation, Esposito's Garden Center was fined \$5000 for being in violation for the unlawful movement of quarantined plant material. Additional charges may be filed by the USDA. If anyone has information about these missing plants, please contact the Gadsden County Sheriff's Office or the FDACS Division of Plant Industry helpline at 888-397-1517. 🌿

*Quarantined camellias infected with Sudden Oak Death (SOD) have been stolen from at a Tallahassee garden center.*

Southern Plant Diagnostic Network  
[http://spdn.ifas.ufl.edu/sudden\\_oak\\_death.htm](http://spdn.ifas.ufl.edu/sudden_oak_death.htm)

APHIS-USDA National Pest Alert  
[http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant\\_health/plant\\_pest\\_inf/opr/am/downloads/pdf\\_files/nationalpestalet\\_.pdf](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/plant_pest_inf/opr/am/downloads/pdf_files/nationalpestalet_.pdf)

Georgia Forestry Commission Sudden Oak Death  
<http://www.gfc.state.ga.us/ForestManagement/documents/SuddenOakDeath0607.pdf>

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topics in the written component of the test as well as the outdoor-hands on portion of the test. It is highly recommended for those who are studying to take the exam. *You do not have to be registered for the exam to attend this Field Day.* Contact Susan Thornhill at Georgia Center for Urban Agriculture at (770) 233-6107 or email at [sthorn@griffin.uga.edu](mailto:sthorn@griffin.uga.edu) To learn more or to get a registration form, visit the Center for Urban Agriculture's GCLP website <http://apps.caes.uga.edu/urbanag/GCLP/index.cfm> For more information about the GCLP Field Day, contact Jeff Webb, Area Extension Agent for Commercial Horticulture at [jkwebb@uga.edu](mailto:jkwebb@uga.edu) or call (912) 921-5460. You can also contact your local county agent for more information. To locate your local county agent, you may call 1-800-ASK-UGA1.

**Level 1A Fundamentals of Erosion & Sedimentation Control**

Many courses are being offered across the state during October, November and December for level 1A testing and certification.

**Brunswick Area** – Oct 18, Nov 29, Dec 13: Contact Coastal Georgia Community College Continuing Education at 912-264-7260 or 1-800-603-1278.

**Savannah** – Oct 11, Dec 6: Call 770-358-1040 or visit [www.georgiatraining.com](http://www.georgiatraining.com) to register.

November 1: to register visit [www.guca.com](http://www.guca.com)

**Jesup** – Nov 5: For information call William Webb at (678) 953-2228 or email [spiderwebt@charter.net](mailto:spiderwebt@charter.net)

The best sources of information on when and where this certification will be taught are the Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission website [www.gaswcc.georgia.gov](http://www.gaswcc.georgia.gov), the Georgic Utility Contractors Association website at [www.guca.com](http://www.guca.com), or Georgia Training at [www.georgiatraining.com](http://www.georgiatraining.com).

## This Hardy Orchid Blooms Like a Miniature Cattleya

Writing for the Herb Society of America, Scott Kresge says of *Bletilla striata* "This hardy orchid is a true workhorse in the garden . . . it will naturalize into a swath of architecturally shaped foliage and early in the growing season will reward you each year with exotic purple orchids reminiscent of the tender *Cattleya*..." The flowers are small at 1½ inches long but are carried in 3-7 flowered racemes on stems that are up to 15" tall. The specific name, *striata*, refers to the shallowly pleated leaves with are striate (marked with parallel bands or lines.) The delicate, folded quality of the foliage lends charm to this small but sturdy plant. It slowly spreads by rhizomes to forms dense clump. While it grows best in moist-to-damp soils and would appreciate an organically rich soil, it is really one tough garden performer. I know from experience that it will thrive in much

less kind conditions. This East Asian native is very important in traditional Chinese medicine. There is a white flowered form; *B. striata* 'Alba'. Several variegated forms are available from catalogs. ☞



Bletilla striata

Photo: Missouri Botanic Garden

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## Bamboo Farm and Coastal Gardens Calendar

### *Fall Festival, Saturday October 27<sup>th</sup>*

*Roast pork, plant vendors, events for the kids, hayrides - the popular Fall Festival is back for another year. Pumpkins, face painting, old-fashioned cane syrup making and lots of other fun events make it a great day for the whole family. Parking \$1.00.*



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