



Sustainable Gardening Symposium

Sustainable Gardening for the Southeast
at
The Monastery of the Holy Spirit

Featured Speakers

Father Francis Michael, OCSO: Land Manager of the Monastery woodlands and resident naturalist will open the symposium with remarks on “*Laudato Si: On Care for our Common Home*” Pope Francis’ environmental encyclical. He will also speak on the *Sustainable Initiatives at the Monastery of the Holy Spirit*.

Susan Varlamoff is a biologist, environmental scientist, and the retired Director of the University of Georgia Office of Environmental Sciences in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences where she worked for 18 years. Previously she held positions as a Pollution Prevention Specialist for the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and as leader of a grassroots effort to shut a toxic landfill in her Eden Prairie Minnesota neighborhood. She is the author of three books, *The Polluters – A Community Fights Back* chronicling the landfill fight, *Sustainable Gardening for the Southeast* and co-author, the *Laudato Si Action Plan* for the Archdiocese of Atlanta, created for Pope Francis’ environmental encyclical. Susan is also a Lifetime Gwinnett County Master Gardener.



Talk overview: Susan will highlight gardening practices that restore and enhance local ecosystems while creating a beautiful landscape. These practices include increasing soil fertility, using diverse native plants to attract wildlife and keep pests in check, grouping plants according to water needs, maintaining a sustainable but small lawn and planting trees to sop up greenhouse gases and grace the garden with beauty. Susan will also focus on minimizing chemical use in garden maintenance.

Ellen Honeycutt has been gardening with and appreciating native plants for 18 years in north metro Atlanta. She is especially fond of native shrubs and trees but is willing to learn to love herbaceous plants as well. Helping others to see the beauty and versatility of Georgia's native plants, whether it be in the wild or the garden, is both a passion and a compulsion – just ask her kids! Ellen is an active member of the Georgia Native Plant Society and the Georgia Botanical Society. She uses her blog,

<http://usinggeorgianativeplants.blogspot.com/>, to share seasonal ideas and pictures about native plants in her area.



Talk overview: Gardening for the birds is so much more than stocking your yard with plants that have berries. From hummingbirds to goldfinches to warblers to cedar waxwings to turkeys - there's a native plant (or a dozen!) for every kind of bird. Learn more about how using native plants in your garden can attract and support a variety of native birds and their chicks in ways that non-native plants can't.

Mario Cambardella served as the city of Atlanta's first Urban Agriculture Director for the Mayor's Office of Resilience. A licensed landscape architect and planner, Mario provides professional consulting services in design and community engagement to ensure successful projects. More broadly, Mario is responsible for agriculture-related policy development, program management, and land use expertise for food production, aggregation, and distribution in the city. Mario holds a master in Landscape Architecture and a master in Environmental Planning from the University of Georgia and is a current member of the Urban Land Institute, American Society of Landscape Architects, American Planning Association, and the American Community Gardening Association. Background info on the "Grows-A-Lot" program. [Www.aglanta.org](http://www.aglanta.org)



Talk overview: Mario will discuss his role as Atlanta's first Urban Agriculture Director to help cultivate a resilient, equitable, and accessible food system in Atlanta. He will talk about how Food is now part of the Resilient Atlanta Strategy, as well as other city-sponsored policies, projects, and programs.

Ted L. Wynne: Administration Agriculture & Natural Resources ANR County Extension Agent/Coordinator will highlight gardening practices that restore and enhance local ecosystems while creating sustainable gardens.



Talk overview: Ted will discuss how to grow vegetables in your backyard or farm. His presentation has the following learning objectives for vegetable gardening: site selection, benefits of organic matter/soil amendments, warm and cool season crops, basic vegetable gardening techniques - transplanting, cultivation, fertilization, harvesting, the importance of crop rotation, raised bed and container gardening, succession planting, benefits of cover crops, best vegetables to grow in Georgia, diagnosis of problems.