

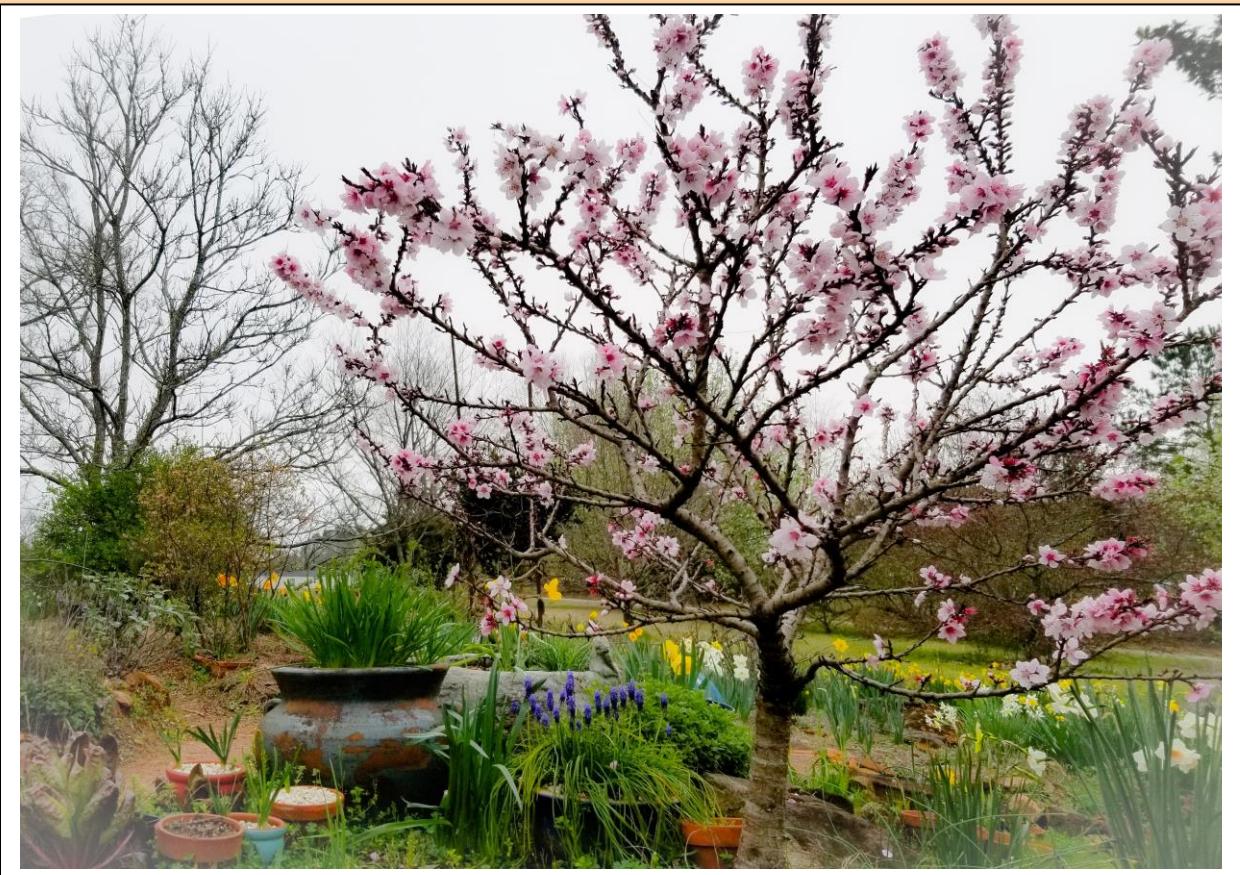
Greg Freeman's **Garden Chronicle**



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Taken on March 18, 2020, this view of part of my garden shows a few of the daffodils and grape hyacinths in bloom. Difficult to see in the photo were the awakening oregano plants that begin to clump up into lush mounds each spring. The containers were still a week or two from being in full bloom, and the catalpa tree anchoring one end of the garden was still naked. Its leaves would come just as the daffodils were beginning to ebb. Most striking in this photo is *Prunus persica* ‘Garden Sun’, the delightful dwarf peach tree flowering in the foreground near the garden entrance.

In my last *Garden Chronicle*, I discussed the loss of my father on November 29, 2019 and talked at length about learning to ‘seize the day’ because tomorrow can be so uncertain! I admitted that I might be powerless to forecast a New Year devoid of loss or disappointment, but I wished you all the best, nonetheless. I wish I could have done more than merely wish!

Following a late January or early February news report on National Public Radio (NPR) about a mysterious, “untreatable” virus in Wuhan, China, I mentioned the seriousness of such a virus during prayer concerns in my Sunday school class and how it could easily spread globally through airport terminals. Little did I know that my words would prove prophetic due to slow response on the part of our world leaders! Even our own president here in the USA initially called the virus a hoax.

It did not take long for the world to feel like it had all but stopped turning. New COVID-19 diagnoses and daily death tallies increased exponentially. Supply chains subsequently broke down, the global economy stalled, employees faced layoffs and some businesses, including major corporations, shuttered. Public schools, colleges and universities implemented e-learning. Houses of worship came to rely almost exclusively on social media or drive-in services to meet. Boardrooms, get-togethers, some newscasts and even certain physician visits were transformed into Zoom room experiences. Milestones such as graduations, weddings, birthday celebrations and even funerals have all been affected by the virus.

Additionally, other disasters have occurred so far this year, including an outbreak of tornadoes across the American South (including one that brought devastation just minutes from my home); major flooding; a deadly jet crash in Pakistan; a cyclone slamming into Bangladesh and India; and a seemingly unprecedented rash of deaths among some of our most celebrated thinkers, artists, actors and musicians. And I haven’t even mentioned the upheaval going on due to systemic racism and rioting in my country.

I could go on about the disruption that has resulted from coronavirus. I could even complain because I did not get to make it to a single daffodil show this year. However, something special happened instead. Forced to keep my distance from others, I had more time to “stop and smell the roses,” to “look for the beauty beneath the skin,” as I say in one of my songs. For the first time in a long time, I actually enjoyed my garden without the pressure of picking my best blooms on time for exhibition. My garden became a place of peaceful contemplation, as it had once been. I shared gorgeous vases of blooms with a friend who is battling Parkinsons and another who only recently lost her bout with cancer. My garden could not have brought more pleasure, if I had taken another Best in Show!

Am I still all for seizing the day in 2020? Does Donald Trump have a Twitter account? You better believe it. My faith has been tested, and I remain as hopeful as ever. I trust that time in the garden has brought you solace and a sense of renewal, too. Until we meet again, Happy Gardening!

Greg Freeman, Publisher

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Late Nineteenth Century Atlanta Nurserymen to Be Featured in Article Series

In November 2019, I was invited by Sara Van Beck to write an essay on one of the prominent nurseries in Atlanta during the late nineteenth century. My article would be one of several to be published individually in issues of *The Magnolia* and *Garden Citings*, and possibly collectively in book form. I accepted her invitation, but put the task in the back of my mind due to my father's sickness and hospitalization at that time. Only recently, I began working on the article. My assignment is a piece on Atlanta Nurseries, focusing particularly on the era during the 1870s when Moses Cole and Son ran the company. I hope to complete my installment in the series in the very near future.

Sara Van Beck, former president of the Georgia Daffodil Society and past board member of the American Daffodil Society, is a Midtown Atlanta resident who owns the Memorial Drive bistro, Petit Chou, with husband, Ron, and daughter, Lindsay. She and I share a passion for gardening and history. In fact, I have published several of her articles at Southern Edition, my digital publication devoted to the American South, and Sara was instrumental in helping me secure the position as editor of *The Daffodil Journal*, the quarterly magazine of the American Daffodil Society. While editing the *Journal*, I interviewed Sara about her latest book and also published several of her articles. With a special affinity for historic daffodil cultivars, Sara is a repository of information and has approached her many articles and at least two authoritative books, *Daffodils in Florida: A Field Guide to the Coastal South* and *Daffodils in American Gardens: 1733-1940* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2015), with the sort of fastidiousness one might expect from a tenured professor. Her research is exhaustive, but her writing is not so academic that a layman might find it overwhelmingly tedious to read. Still, when Sara Van Beck recommends me for a task, I feel compelled to set my standards quite high.

When one thinks of Atlanta and gardens today, the stunning Atlanta Botanical Garden at Piedmont Park in Midtown instantly comes to mind. Also, one thinks of the expansive Oakland Cemetery in Cabbagetown, just a few blocks down the street from Downtown's towering skyscrapers and Sweet Auburn's Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Park. Then there are



Be sure to check out www.GregFreeman.garden for original video content and other helpful information.





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In this March 2009 photograph, the Atlanta Botanical Garden's Dorothy Chapman Fuqua Conservatory, completed in 1989, stands beyond steps and stonework remaining from the Cotton States and International Exposition, which was held in 1895, a decade or more following the era in which the Atlanta nurserymen essays will delve.

any number of other public spaces or beautifully landscaped private residences, too numerous to mention, especially in the affluent and historic Druid Hills neighborhood, a place of prominence in the motion picture, *Driving Miss Daisy* (1990).

However, when one thinks of Atlanta in the context of post-Reconstruction, it bears pointing out that Piedmont Park was still in relative infancy, and the Atlanta Botanical Garden, now occupying land once used for the Cotton States and International Exposition of 1895 where Booker T. Washington (1856-1915) delivered his controversial “Atlanta Compromise” speech, was not founded until 1976! Today, only relics of the 1895 world’s fair, the grounds of which were once abuzz with activity and festooned with plants and flowers procured from one or more local sources, can be seen. Michael Rose writes, “Portions of the original terraced steps and large stonework plant pots remain from the Exposition” (2001, 121). Even the stunning Druid Hills area was not fully envisioned until the mid-1890s. Frederick Law Olmsted (1822-1903), the “father of landscape design” and designer of New York City’s Central Park and North Carolina’s Biltmore Estate, had consulted with the city in 1890 regarding the Cotton States expo, and was later commissioned to draw up plans for Druid Hills, a suburban project at the time. The *New Georgia Encyclopedia* states, “Olmsted’s design for Druid Hills is Georgia’s most complete and masterful

example of his artistic principles, which were employed by others in a number of Atlanta developments, including Ansley Park, Peachtree Battle, and Garden Hills” (Lawliss, 2013). Indeed, Atlanta became a much different place in the years that followed the destructive onslaught of General William Tecumseh Sherman (1820-1891) and his forces, and, no doubt, the phrase “ever-changing place” has been employed thousands of times since the American Civil War to describe the city.

As the nurserymen essays are bound to reveal, Atlanta underwent a renaissance, experiencing a transformation from railroad town and regional hub to a cosmopolitan place of diversified commerce and burgeoning culture where garden design and pleasure gardening would become more commonplace and perhaps even *en vogue*. With 1900 approaching, more people had expendable income to splurge on ornamental plants and expansive gardens, and the group of nurserymen to be explored by myself and others quite literally had a hand in giving Atlanta a makeover. Oddly enough, I am also finding in my research that they marketed some of the same plants we enjoy growing today, proving that in an ever-changing metropolis some things actually have stayed the same.

The forthcoming essays, as mentioned previously, are expected to appear in *The Magnolia and Garden Citings*, respected publications produced by the Cherokee Garden Library at the Atlanta History Center. Contributors will include Editor Staci Catron, Sara Van Beck, Adam Martin and others. This is proving to be a fascinating journey into Atlanta’s past, and I look forward to sharing my discoveries.

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Latest Daffodil Seedlings Fail to Disappoint

Plant hybridists, like responsible breeders of racehorses, show dogs or livestock, breed to improve or reinforce good health, soundness and certain desirable characteristics. A keen eye, knowledge of genetics, lots of patience and a generous heaping of luck, some insist, are critical for success. Since I have reached that point as a hybridist that I have something new blooming for the first time practically every year, I watch with anticipation and, admittedly, a little trepidation each time daffodil bulbs of my own breeding attain blooming size and make their garden debuts. After all, daffodil hybridizing is a long-term commitment, a years-long process to see that tiny seed

become a flowering bulb that could just as easily prove suitable for the compost pile as the show bench. So far, I am fortunate that I have bred some lovely daffodils from very limited crosses, and I have the show ribbons to prove that my fellow judges have concurred.



Greg Freeman

**GSF-10B-20-03
(‘Bailey’ x ‘Red Storm’)**

One seedling (a yet-to-be-named daffodil cultivar) bloomed in my garden for the first time this year. Its two siblings had previously been the subject of an April 15, 2017 *Garden Chronicle* article. Why this bulb waited until 2020, three years later than its siblings, to flower for the first time is beyond me, but it was worth the wait. Given the number GSF-10B-20-03, the seedling is a cross between the English-bred ‘Bailey’, an all-orange daffodil, and ‘Red Storm’, a cultivar with yellow perianths (petals) and red corona (cup). ‘Red Storm’ was bred by my friend Steve Vinisky of Cherry Creek Daffodils near Portland, Oregon, USA, and acquired prior to its being named when the bulb was known only by number. GSF-10B-20-03 is beautifully formed with broad, smooth yellow perianths. Its reddish orange corona, I am quite sure, would be more intense in color in the American Northwest or perhaps the United Kingdom. This flower, so far, appears to

be the best from this cross. I look forward to exhibiting this seedling in future years. It should make a great flower for both single entry classes and collections, and I am pleased that the bulb is already showing signs of increase, as are its siblings.

Another seedling daffodil of mine actually experienced its maiden blooming last year, just days prior to my departure for the Kentucky Daffodil and Bulb Society Show. GSF-07A-19-01 was expected to have multiple florets due to its pollen parent, but the bulb only had one bloom. And it only had five perianths (petals). I was impressed by its form, otherwise, but disappointed overall. Knowing that maiden blooms are not always representative of what a flower might turn out to *really* look like, I knew that I had better give the seedling more time to come into its own. When the bud developed this year, I knew soon enough that the stem would have at least two florets, as I had expected in 2019. Ultimately, it had three.

GSF-07A-19-01 and its siblings, which have yet to flower, came about from a March 28, 2007 (yes, 2007!) cross between seed parent ‘Sugar and Spice’, one of the original daffodil cultivars I acquired from John Pearson of England, and a wonderfully-formed selection of the species, *Narcissus jonquilla*, the pollen parent. The all-white seedling opens with creamy perianths and yellow coronas, before transitioning to pristine white. There is some jonquil fragrance, but it is not as pronounced as the heavenly-scented *N. jonquilla*. While the florets are of good size, I believe the seedling is close to miniature in size, if not well within the parameters. Compared to standard jonquil hybrids such as ‘Hillstar’, ‘Pipit’, ‘Quail’ and ‘Limequilla’, my seedling is quite small. As the bulbs develop, time will tell where the flower is best suited for classification purposes. Another distinguishing characteristic about this seedling is that it has flat leaves (foliage akin to its seed parent, ‘Sugar and Spice’, a small-cupped



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GSF-07A-19-01
(‘Sugar and Spice’ x *Narcissus jonquilla*)

cultivar with plenty of small-cupped and poeticus heritage), whereas the siblings all have rush-like leaves like *N. jonquilla*. Also, this seedling's leaves grow considerably taller than the siblings as well, but this probably has less to do with genetics and more to do with microclimate.

In recent years, I have enjoyed successes with my own daffodil seedlings, and as a hybridist that is very gratifying. However, I have experienced some disappointments, too. Seedlings from two different crosses between 'Hot Gossip' and 'Hampton Court' have all been decimated due to natural selection. Also, my quest to breed poet daffodils has resulted in literally one or two seeds in two years (and they didn't germinate!), in spite of making multiple crosses using recently imported bulbs for seed parents and 'Actaea', a Dutch poet that thrives in the American South, as a pollen parent.

When I take a ribbon at a show with one of my seedlings or share photographs of my latest breeding triumph, do not be deceived into thinking that all of this is easy or that I am simply bragging as if I think I am some life-long expert. Hybridizing daffodils is neither for the impatient nor the faint of heart. And one can't help but share his enthusiasm when a long-awaited outcome meets or exceeds one's expectations. Just as generations of dedicated, selective breeding have gone into producing the next Kentucky Derby winner or Westminster Kennel Club's Best in Show or even that premium steak you are having at your favorite fine dining restaurant, I must remain dedicated and selective if I am to achieve my goals with daffodil hybridizing, and I will claim every little victory that comes my way.

Classic Films, Classic Gardens

Are you a fan of classic movies? You know. The great ones such as *Casablanca* (1943), *The African Queen* (1951) or *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1962)? I am, and I have a long list of favorites. I am drawn to the mystery and suspense of the Alfred Hitchcock-directed films, especially the early war year movie, *Suspicion* (1941), starring Cary Grant and Joan Fontaine, and motion pictures adapted from Tennessee Williams (1911-1983) plays are by far my favorites. Due in large part to my intense fascination with India and the British Raj, I also like *Passage to India* (1984), a more recent but classic film, nonetheless, based on the 1924 novel by E. M. Forster (1879-1970). So what do old movie standbys have to do with gardening? Not much on the surface, I suppose. However, if you are like me, you are immediately mesmerized by certain scenes captured in beautiful garden settings. Perhaps it's a formal English garden or a container chockfull of flowers or even a water fixture that grabs your attention. Whether intentionally or unwittingly, I am sure you have taken note as the plot thickened.

For me, two films, in particular, stand out because of their gardens, patios and terraces. Who can resist a New Orleans courtyard or French Quarter wrought iron balcony adorned with hanging

or climbing plants? More so, who can view the ‘primordial garden’ (“like the dawn of creation”) in *Suddenly Last Summer* and not be a bit envious. Starring a dazzling Elizabeth Taylor (1932-2011), Katharine Hepburn (1907-2003) and Montgomery Clift (1920-1966), the 1959 film, based on Tennessee Williams’ play is set in 1937 New Orleans. As with nearly all of Williams’ works, there are some autobiographical elements, whether they pertain to sexuality, mental illness (based on his sister, Rose), sensitive souls or temperamental artistic characters. The garden in *Suddenly* is as much a verdant oasis and place of tropical beauty as it is mysterious, haunting and even dark. I find it incredibly alluring and would love to visit such a place.



Columbia Pictures movie still

Dr. Cukrowicz (Montgomery Clift) and the fabulously wealthy Mrs. Venable (Katharine Hepburn) meet in the primordial garden of her estate to discuss her niece, Catherine (Elizabeth Taylor), whose mental health issues, it turns out, are the result of suppressed memories of the gruesome death of her cousin, Sebastian, while on holiday.

The Roman Spring of Mrs. Stone (1961), adapted from Tennessee Williams’ novel, is another film where botanical beauty is evident, albeit on patios, verandas and terraces. Vivien Leigh

(1913-1967), of *Gone with the Wind* (1939) and *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1951) fame, plays washed-up actress, Karen Stone, while a studly young Warren Beatty (b. 1937) is Paolo, a pouty, impeccably-dressed, money-grubbing gigolo. The film captures some beautiful settings, ranging from the restaurant scene, where the mismatched and incompatible couple go to dine *al fresco*



Warner Brothers Pictures movie still

Widowed and lonely, Karen Stone (Leigh), a former stage actress, consults with the Contessa Magda Terribili-Gonzales (Lotte Lenya), who procures Paolo (Beatty), a handsome, young, virile male companion, for her. While Karen falls in love with him, he wants her only for the things her money can buy him. The terrace is the site of at least one of their big arguments, but it is also the place where Karen, having given up on Paolo and life itself, tosses her apartment key within reach of a mysterious young man below on the Spanish steps, who has been stalking her for some time. A premeditated victim, if you will, she returns inside of her apartment from the terrace and waits for the strange figure to appear, ultimately leaving the viewer to assume the worst about her fate.

amid the lush foliage, to a most memorable scene on Karen's luxury apartment's terrace, where sculpture and a plethora of terra cotta pots filled with plants of varying shapes, sizes and textures serve to further enhance the panoramic view of Rome and the Spanish Steps below.

Whether on movie sets or in our own backyards, gardens are so essential to the human experience, in fiction and in reality, it would seem. It is no wonder that gardens figure prominently in any number of films, many of which are more deserving of analysis or critical study than mere vignettes from *Suddenly Last Summer* or *The Roman Spring of Mrs. Stone*. Once the serious garden enthusiast begins to really notice plants and gardens in certain films, especially within the realm of classic cinema, answering questions such as "Who did it?" or "Who is cheating on who?" or "Who the heck is Stella?" could really prove distracting!

Gardens Abuzz

In recent years, much has been written about honeybees and how they are threatened by the very ones who depend on them for survival: human beings. Perhaps you have given more consideration to growing plants that attract pollinators, or maybe you have eliminated the use of certain chemicals in your garden shed arsenal. So often, all of the emphasis is placed on honeybees, and we are subject to overlooking other beneficial insects that are equally worthy of our stewardship and support within the ecosystem, particularly within our own backyards and gardens.

I thoroughly enjoy observing the various honeybees, bumblebees, wasps, yellow jackets and hornets that visit my garden, and I try to be as accommodating as possible....except for yellow jackets who viciously guard their underground nests and attack perceived intruders in what can feel like carefully coordinated, quantitative assaults. That said, only rarely have I gotten stung or bitten by bees and wasps, which is more than I can say for those darn fire ants that have invaded the American South.

The honeybees that visit my garden are clearly of a gentle, domestic Italian strain, undoubtedly traveling from a neighbor's apiary less than a mile up the road from my house. However, I am pleased to say that an abundance of other pollinators fill my garden with activity. I had spotted mason bees only on occasion until I introduced *Helenium flexuosum*, a native wildflower collected from a nearby riverbank where it grew unimpeded during a year of severe drought when the waters had significantly receded. With several plants well established in my garden by the following year, I could not count the mason bees because there were so many. In addition to the black/yellow striped variety (*Anthidium oblongatum*), I saw them in colorations I had never seen before, namely metallic hues of blue (*Osmia malina*) and even green (*Osmia granulosa*). In 2019, I acquired a mason bee house, which was utilized almost right away by the diminutive bees, to my delight.

Often overlooked as beneficial insects, because they are not regarded as critical pollinators, are paper wasps (*Polistes* species). Chances are, you have probably sprayed or torn down their nests under the eaves of your house or outbuildings, or you have been annoyed by their presence on the ceilings of your verandas. Though some individuals rush out and buy wasp spray at the first sign



Greg Freeman

Tiny mason bees visit this miniature sunflower.

of them, it is interesting to note that southern homeowners once touted a different solution. From Charleston to New Orleans, you will be hard-pressed to find a grand old southern house with wraparound porches where the porch ceilings are not painted sky blue. Part of the reasoning behind this is that wasps might be fooled into thinking the ceiling is the sky. This theory is not likely to stand up to scientific scrutiny, but I admit I have never seen paper wasp nests hanging from the ceilings of the old estates I have visited. Whether to discourage their nest-building on a porch ceiling is entirely up to the homeowner. Left undisturbed, paper wasps are generally not aggressive toward passersby, and they can benefit gardeners because they prey on caterpillars. While they feed on the larvae of beautiful butterflies, they will dine on destructive caterpillars of various moths, making them good for the garden overall and providing balance to the ecosystem.

Of the wasps, the great golden digger wasp (*Sphex ichneumoneus*) is among my favorites. If you live in North America, perhaps you have seen evidence of them in your garden. Tell-tale signs each spring are round holes in the ground about the diameter of a pencil. It is from these holes that a new crop of digger wasps have emerged, having overwintered in the ground. If you see a hole and a little mound of dirt, watch closely. The female digger wasp is either at work digging a nest with rooms into which she will carry paralyzed insect prey to feed the larvae that hatch from the eggs she subsequently lays, or she has flown away momentarily in search of prey to return to the nest. Prey often includes crickets, but I've observed them returning to the nest with destructive grasshoppers, too. Scientists have studied digger wasps, taking note of their methodology, with some likening their seemingly preprogrammed nature to mindlessness, hence the coining of the term *sphexishness* to describe mechanistic behavior that is presumed to be thoughtful yet far from free will.



Greg Freeman

A female *Sphex ichneumoneus* (great golden digger wasp) expertly digs a nest, kicking soil out of the hole with her legs as she burrows deeper into the ground. The nest will contain compartments, in which she will carry insect prey she has paralyzed, not killed. The larvae from her hatching eggs will feed on the prey and emerge as a new generation of wasps. (Incidentally, I have not found the wasps to be very photogenic. Human presence during this nest-digging ritual was reluctantly tolerated. When I attempted to move in closer for a better shot, she would fly away only to return moments later, clearly annoyed by my continued presence.)

Mud daubers are particularly fascinating to me, and they share commonalities with paper wasps and the great golden digger wasp. They are similar to paper wasps in that they fashion their “mud” cells on walls and molding along the undersides of porches and eaves, the same locations where paper wasps might build. They are similar to great golden digger wasps because they fill these cells with paralyzed prey (spiders) and lay their eggs. Commonly seen are the black mud daubers (*Sphex pensylvanicus*), but on occasion the attractive blue mud dauber (*Chalybion californicus*) can be observed.

Over twenty years ago, I was admiring a sizable patch of *Thymus praecox* ‘Coccineus’

(creeping red thyme) in my herb garden when a mud dauber, like none I had ever seen, alit on the thyme, moving from one tiny bloom to another. Mud daubers, like other wasps, will gladly drink flower nectar, but I was struck less by its interest in thyme and more by its unique coloring. It was black with reddish orange antennae. I was convinced that I had witnessed something rare, perhaps even a never-identified species or undocumented color variation within a known species. Since then, I have discovered www.insectimages.org, a joint project of the University of Georgia, Georgia Museum of Natural History, Entomology Society of America and USDA Identification Technology Program. From among the site’s hundreds of bee and wasp photographs, none closely resemble the mud dauber I saw that day. On the other hand, I encountered a mud dauber earlier in May 2020 that possessed a brilliant red abdomen, something I had never seen. I rushed back into the house to grab my smartphone to take a photograph, and it had moved on when I returned to the garden. A search at *Insect Images* revealed that I had caught a glimpse of the attractive species, *Sphex jamaicensis*.

It is important to realize that various species of insects can be of benefit to gardeners, not just the celebrated pollinators. Learning to recognize one species from another requires time and study, but it is worth the effort and quite rewarding to note the different ones and better understand the



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One year I noticed insect damage to my *Iris sibirica* foliage. The culprits were not seen at first. Upon closer examination, I realized a gang of hungry grasshoppers had sidled up to my plants for a family feast. A friend of mine even declared that this photo belongs in a magazine! In a way, I suppose it's a bit funny, especially that little guy in the lower left, peeking over the leaf. Nonetheless, I am pleased that the larvae of the great golden digger wasp enjoy munching on rascals like these as much as the grasshoppers enjoy my irises.

roles they play. If you are fortunate, you might even learn to differentiate between the subtle differences within a species and feel the excitement I have felt upon encountering a specimen not often seen. Most of all, you will have developed a new appreciation for the buzz of activity among your own plants.

A Few Highlights from Spring 2020

When 2020 began, I was anxious for spring to arrive. I anticipated daffodil season like a child might look forward to Christmas and Santa Claus. I planned to attend several shows and made hotel reservations. I also received invitations to judge in Atlanta, Knoxville, Nashville and Lexington. Attending the American Daffodil Society National Convention and Show in Dallas in mid-March had been out of reach for me, financially, and circumstances dictated that I could not even attend the Georgia Daffodil Society Show near Atlanta the following week. By the time the Dallas and Atlanta shows were over, the coronavirus pandemic was well underway and other shows were subsequently cancelled. Michael Brook, whom I had first met in 2014, had flown over from England to attend the Dallas convention and he contracted the virus after returning home to the United Kingdom. Mike was a much admired figure throughout the ADS, and news of his death saddened and shocked us all.

Meanwhile, as the COVID-19 shutdown began in earnest and “social distancing” became a necessity, I had more time to enjoy my garden. I made a number of successful daffodil crosses, almost all of them involving seedlings



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This vase of daffodils includes ‘Lemon Puff’, ‘Hot Gossip’, ‘Sammy Girl’, ‘Treasure Hunt’, ‘First Born’ and ‘Mesa Verde’. *Camellia japonica* and *Loropetalum chinense* blooms are strewn below.

of my own breeding as seed or pollen parents. I took plenty of photographs, paused to take in the little things and added a few plants to the garden. Pictured are some of the standouts. In hindsight, I realize my spring gardening was enjoyable in spite of a global pandemic, and I am grateful for the stress relief it brought me on several much-needed occasions.



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***Iris x flavescens* with *Wisteria frutescens* 'Amethyst Falls' in the background**



Greg Freeman

Hippeastrum 'Ackermanii'

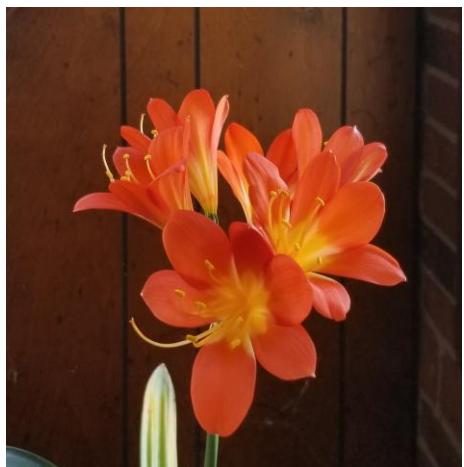
This attractive cold hardy amaryllis is an offspring of *H. x johnsonii*, the subject of an April 2017 [issue](#) of the *Garden Chronicle*.



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Narcissus 'Dena'

In response to seeing this photo on social media, fellow daffodil lover and songwriter friend, Tori Taff, exclaimed, "Now THAT is a beauty!"



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Clivia miniata



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Benny, the rooster, and his hens enjoy visiting the garden.



On February 4, 2020, I addressed the [Spartanburg Garden Club Council](#) at the beautiful [Chapman Cultural Center](#). The presentation, “A Century of Daffodil Hybridizing: Using Advancements in Color, Form and Size to Advantage,” included some freshly picked, early-blooming miniature daffodils from my garden.



[PHILLY DALLY](#), a developing digital publication devoted to Philadelphia, is one of my latest Greg Freeman Media projects. On February 22, 2020, my article on the Philadelphia Flower Show was published. Fellow daffodilians Kate Carney and Don Caton offered insights and/or photographic contributions regarding the event. Interestingly, the 2020 Philadelphia Flower Show was among the few major horticultural events scheduled during the first half of 2020 that did not fall victim to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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Photograph: *Stars of Bethlehem*



Greg Freeman (b. 1974), *Stars of Bethlehem*, 2020, Digital Photograph.

Native to Europe and Northwestern Africa, *Ornithogalum umbellatum*, commonly known as “Stars of Bethlehem,” is a low-growing, flowering bulb. When given free reign, the bulbs spread like weeds, which is great for naturalizing. Otherwise, they can prove to be a nuisance. Each spring, my backyard is dotted with clumps of them, and I fill small vases and other containers such as this former spice jar with handfuls of blooms.

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In addition to being an avid gardener and daffodil hybridist, judge and exhibitor, Greg Freeman is an author, editor, recording artist, songwriter, amateur visual artist and life-long horse lover. His nonfiction writing on a number of subjects has appeared in magazines, encyclopedias and books of academic and scholarly interest, as well as *Southern Edition*, Freeman's digital publication devoted to the American South. Recently published academic/encyclopedic contributions by Freeman include a chapter in Nadine Farghaly's edited volume, *Gender and the Modern Sherlock Holmes: Essays on Film and Television Adaptations Since 2009* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland and Company, 2015), as well as multiple entries in *Race in American Film: Voices and Visions That Shaped a Nation* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO/Greenwood, 2017), edited by Dr. Daniel Bernardi and Michael Green. Most recently, Freeman contributed to *The British Empire: A Historical Encyclopedia* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO/Greenwood, 2018), edited by Dr. Mark Doyle, as well as *Music around the World: A Global Encyclopedia* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2020), edited by Drs. Andrew R. Martin and Matthew Mihalka. In 2015, Freeman released a country music radio single, "Sunlight and Shadows," garnering international airplay, and his gospel music has received national exposure through television, radio and commercial recordings. His gospel EP, *Blessing and Blessing*, featuring guest vocalists Babbie Mason, a Grammy-nominated artist, and Gospel Music Hall of Famer Calvin Newton, released in December 2018.

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