



Camellia Club of Mobile

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November 2024

At our October meeting, President Larry Heard provided an update on the number of potted camellias that will be available for sale at our annual show in January. Exciting news: we'll also have food trucks at our event this year! Larry also confirmed George Davis will be our November speaker, with a presentation on Davis Nursery. Additionally, he shared tentative speakers for our upcoming meetings.

Don Oyler led an engaging discussion on how to harvest and plant camellia seed pods, outlining the steps to successfully sow and grow seeds—or, as Don and Jim humorously suggested, let the squirrels plant them for you! Don also explained that while it can take 6-8 years for a plant grown from seed to bloom, if there is hardwood available, you can cut scions and graft them, potentially seeing blooms in just 1-2 years. Don's presentations are always packed with knowledge, and we learn something new every time!

We wrapped up the meeting with our usual raffle, where this month we raffled off six camellia plants, gardening tools, a bag of chestnuts, and a fun Halloween basket.

Meeting Info

November 10, 2024

Building opens 1:00 p.m.

Potluck prep 1:30 p.m.

Potluck Social 2:00 p.m.

Meeting begins 2:30 p.m.

Meeting Location

Jon Archer Agricultural Center

1070 Schillinger Rd N

Mobile, AL 36608



Blooms: Please bring your blooms to our meeting for show and tell (even if you have only one bloom).

We are thrilled to announce that our very own Camellia Club of Mobile President, Larry Heard, was recently installed as the President of the Gulf Coast Camellia Society during their annual conference last month. Larry's dedication and passion for camellias have been recognized on a broader scale, and we couldn't be prouder. Here's to a successful tenure and continued growth of the camellia community under his leadership!

DON'T MISS OUT!

To participate in our **EXCLUSIVE, MEMBERS-ONLY** camellia plant raffle, your dues need to be paid **NOW!** If you haven't paid your \$5.00 dues yet, please send them to Treasurer Debbie Smith ASAP. (Good news: Debbie's super nice and might even let you pay at our November meeting and still be eligible for the raffle – but don't push your luck!)

Camellia Sinensis Tea Cultivation in Alabama: A Growing Trend



Camellias are not only known for their beautiful flowers but also have a rich history. One fascinating fact about camellias is that the *Camellia sinensis* species is the plant from which tea is made. All true teas, including black, green, white, and oolong tea, come from the leaves of this camellia variety. The differences in tea types result from how the leaves are processed rather than the plant variety.

The *Fairhope Tea Plantation*, the *Mobile Botanical Gardens*, and the *Mobile Tea Garden* are playing pivotal roles in reviving and promoting tea cultivation in Alabama, showcasing the region's potential for growing *camellia sinensis*, the tea plant.

Located in Fairhope, Alabama, the *Fairhope Tea Plantation* is a notable example of the resurgence of tea growing in the United States. What sets this company apart is its commitment to producing locally grown, organic tea. The climate in Fairhope, characterized by mild winters and long, warm summers, is ideal for cultivating *camellia sinensis*. *Fairhope Tea Plantation* is dedicated to sustainable and eco-friendly farming practices. By using organic methods and avoiding harmful pesticides, the company not only ensures environmental sustainability but also produces high-quality tea leaves. This approach places *Fairhope Tea Plantation* at the forefront of the growing trend of American-grown teas, which are gaining popularity for their distinctive flavors and sustainable cultivation methods.

Complementing these efforts, the *Mobile Botanical Gardens* feature a unique tea garden that underscores the significance of tea cultivation in the region. This garden showcases *camellia sinensis* and highlights the historical and cultural importance of tea production in Alabama. The *Mobile Botanical Gardens* initiated this project to explore the potential of growing tea in the Gulf Coast climate, which shares similarities with some of the world's renowned tea-growing regions. The tea garden serves both educational and experimental purposes, demonstrating the suitability of local conditions for tea production. It offers visitors a comprehensive understanding of the tea-growing process, from plant to cup, making it an important educational resource.

Adding to the local tea cultivation landscape is the *Mobile Tea Garden*, another significant initiative in Mobile. This garden focuses on cultivating various types of tea plants, providing insights into the diversity and adaptability of *Camellia sinensis* in different conditions. The *Mobile Tea Garden* plays a crucial role in educating the public about the art and science of tea growing. It often hosts workshops, tours, and tastings, allowing visitors to experience the journey of tea from the garden to the cup. By integrating both traditional and innovative cultivation techniques, the *Mobile Tea Garden* enriches the understanding of tea production and helps promote local interest in this ancient beverage.

Together, the *Fairhope Tea Plantation*, the *Mobile Botanical Gardens*, and the *Mobile Tea Garden* illustrate the potential of Alabama's climate for tea cultivation. Through sustainable practices, educational initiatives, and community engagement, these institutions are paving the way for a vibrant, locally grown tea industry in the region, contributing to the broader trend of tea farming in the United States.

Read the unusual history of Fairhope Tea Plantation >> [Fairhope Tea Plantation](#)

Learn more about Mobile Tea Garden >> [Mobile Tea Garden](#)

Enjoy a cup of tea at the whimsical *Copper Kettle Tea Bar* in Foley >> [Copper Kettle Tea Bar](#)

Visit the **Mobile Botanical Gardens Tea Maze** with its enchanting and inviting entrance gate...a quaint wooden gate, adorned with a decorative circular window at the end of a charming stone path --



A cup of locally sourced loose-leaf tea from the *Mobile Tea Garden* in a commemorative Camellia Club of Mobile 70th Anniversary mug – a beautiful tribute to tradition and local flavor --



Camellia sinensis plant, shown in bloom two months ago, donated to the Richards-DAR House Museum in the De Tonti Square Historic District, downtown Mobile --



For additional information regarding
Camellia Club of Mobile please visit
our website:
<http://www.mobilecamellia.org/>

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