

# The Resource

A Publication of the City of North Augusta  
Stormwater Management Department

## Compost at Home

Every year, city residents dispose of tons of organic material. According to South Carolina's Department of Health and Environmental Control, up to 30% of residential waste, an average of 650 pounds per household per year, is suitable for composting.

Commonly discarded organic wastes can easily be converted to compost for excellent plant fertilizer. Compost also increases aeration and increases the water holding capacity of the soil which enhances plant growth. Compost around plant roots reduces watering needs and aids in nutrient absorption.

### What can be composted?

Items commonly composted include fruit and vegetable peelings, shredded newspapers and cardboard in limited amounts, coffee grounds, eggshells, rabbit and hamster manure, lawn clippings, and leaves.

### What should not be composted?

Items that should not be composted include meat products, dog and cat manure, non-recyclable or glossy paper, and large woody debris.

### How to get started

1. Buy or build a bin. Many commercial bins are available, but a homemade bin can also be effective. A homemade bin can be made by cutting the bottom out of a plastic trashcan and drilling holes in the side for aeration.



2. Combine yard wastes with selected food scraps. Keep the pile moist but not soggy. Stir the pile with a pitchfork every few weeks to improve aeration and accelerate the composting process. The compost is ready for use when it becomes dark, crumbly, and uniform in texture; usually three to six months.

3. Heat and the presence of insects in the bin are a normal part of the composting process. Red wiggler worms may be added to the bin for even richer compost.

4. It is often a good idea to have two bins so that when one is full and in the composting process, new wastes may be added to the other.

## Stormwater Pollution Solution

Mud from construction activities, laundry discharges and other debris entering city streets create temporary driving hazards as well as more long term effects on the environment. Many of these pollutants enter the storm drainage system and are channeled into our streams and, eventually, into the Savannah River. The result is a negative impact on aquatic organisms.

The City Stormwater Management Department is developing ordinances to more effectively prohibit these types of dis-

charges to protect public health and the environment. Any citizen or business having concerns about a source of pollution to the storm drainage system or an interest in reducing their own contribution to stormwater pollution should contact the Stormwater Management Department for a complimentary site visit and information on reducing stormwater pollution.

# Endangered Species

## Relict Trillium - *Trillium reliquum*

Several endangered species make their home in or near North Augusta. Endangered species are protected by state and federal laws. In compliance with state regulations, the city must ensure that stormwater discharges do not significantly impact endangered species. Future issues of *The Resource* will profile other local rare or endangered species.

**Relict Trillium** is a perennial herb of the lily family. It has three elliptical, pointed leaves growing from a reclining stem 2-10 inches long. Each 2-5 inch leaf is mottled in several shades of green and has a silver streak down its center. Between March and April a single flower arises without a stalk from the top where the leaves form a whorl. The flower has three slightly twisted, dark purple to greenish-yellow petals. Between May and June the plant develops a round, fleshy fruit about 1/3" in diameter. Like other trillium plants, this species dies back to a bulb after the fruit matures.

On the federal endangered species list since 1988, a total of 21 relict trillium populations exist in Alabama (four populations), Georgia (14 populations), and South Carolina (three populations). These populations range from 20 to several thousand plants. Aiken and Edgefield counties are the only South Carolina counties with known populations of this rare, plant. The largest known site, containing 50,000-100,000 plants, is located in Aiken and Edgefield Counties including portions of North Augusta. A portion of this population is located just outside the North Augusta City limit in the Savannah River Bluffs

Heritage Preserve. The Preserve is an 83+ acre tract of land owned by the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources and protected under Heritage Preserve Regulations. Relict trillium thrives in mature, moist, undisturbed hardwood forests relatively close to creeks or rivers. Primary threats to Relict Trillium include loss of habitat due to development, logging, fire, invasive vines such as kudzu, Japanese honeysuckle and English ivy, and taking for personal use in home gardens. For additional information about Heritage Preserves, including important rules and regulations and directions, contact the Wildlife Diversity Section of the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources at 803-734-3893 or visit their website at [www.dnr.state.sc.us/wild](http://www.dnr.state.sc.us/wild).



Photo: James Henderson

### References:

Freeman, John D., 1975, Revision of a Trillium Subgenus Phyllantherum (Liliaceae, Brittonia 27:1-26.; 1985, Status Report of Trillium reliquum, Unpublished report to the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Southeast Regional Office, Atlanta, GA, 36pp.

NatureServe Explorer: An online encyclopedia of life (web application), 2002, Version 1.6, Arlington, VA; [www.natureserve.org](http://www.natureserve.org).

US Army Corps of Engineers, Endangered Species; [www.sas.usace.army.mil/endspec.htm](http://www.sas.usace.army.mil/endspec.htm).

Currie, Robert R., 1991, Recovery Plan for Relict Trillium, Prepared for the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Atlanta, GA 29pp.

## Household Hazardous Waste Collection



The Stormwater Management Department recently sponsored a Household Hazardous Waste Collection at Crossroads Market Shopping Center on Martintown Road. Representatives of a national hazardous waste handler, volunteers from the Department of Health and Environmental Control, and city staff were on site to provide residents an opportunity to safely dispose of unwanted paint, motor oil, pesticides, solvents and other potential pollutants. Those who missed the event should call the Stormwater Management Department to be notified of future collection days.



For additional information contact:

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