

Lantana Experiment (Variety: *Miss Huff*)

Briarlake Elementary
Decatur, GA

Conducted: January – June 2012

Question: When should *Miss Huff Lantana* be cut back
- early winter or late spring?



Methodology

- The Experimental plant was cut back severely in January 2012. The Control plant was cut back in late May to remove the dead branches from the previous season.
- Both plants received the same amount of water during the experiment period. Neither plant received fertilizer or any other nutrients during the experiment.

Notes: The winter of 2012 had milder than usual temperatures. According to the *State of Georgia Climate Office*, there was an overall pattern of above normal temperatures and below normal precipitation that persisted across the state through the months of January – April 2012.

Lantana Experiment

Briarlake Elementary
Decatur, GA

Experimental Plant - Cut Back Jan'12

Control Plant – Cut Back May'12

Jan 2012

- Experimental plant was cut back severely in early January.
- Control plant was not cut back at all.



Feb 2012

- Experimental plant – no visible difference vs. previous month.
- Control- no visible difference vs. previous month.



Mar 2012

- Experimental plant – some visible green growth vs. previous month.
- Control- some visible green growth vs. previous month; somewhat more green growth than experimental.



Experimental Plant - Cut Back Jan'12

Control Plant – Cut Back May'12

Apr 2012

- Experimental plant-has filled out significantly vs. previous month.
- Control plant-has filled out significantly vs. previous month; Experimental plant is not as wide as Control plant.



May 2012

- Experimental plant – notable visible growth difference vs. previous month.
- Control- notable visible growth difference vs. previous month. Experimental plant is smaller than Control plant by about 40%.



Jun 2012

- The Experimental plant (left) and Control plant (right) grew significantly vs. the previous month, so much that they grew together and could no longer be measured separately.
- Both plants look similar in height. The Experimental plant (left) looks slightly shorter than the Control plant (right), but not significantly so.



Question

When should *Miss Huff Lantana* be cut back - early winter or late spring?

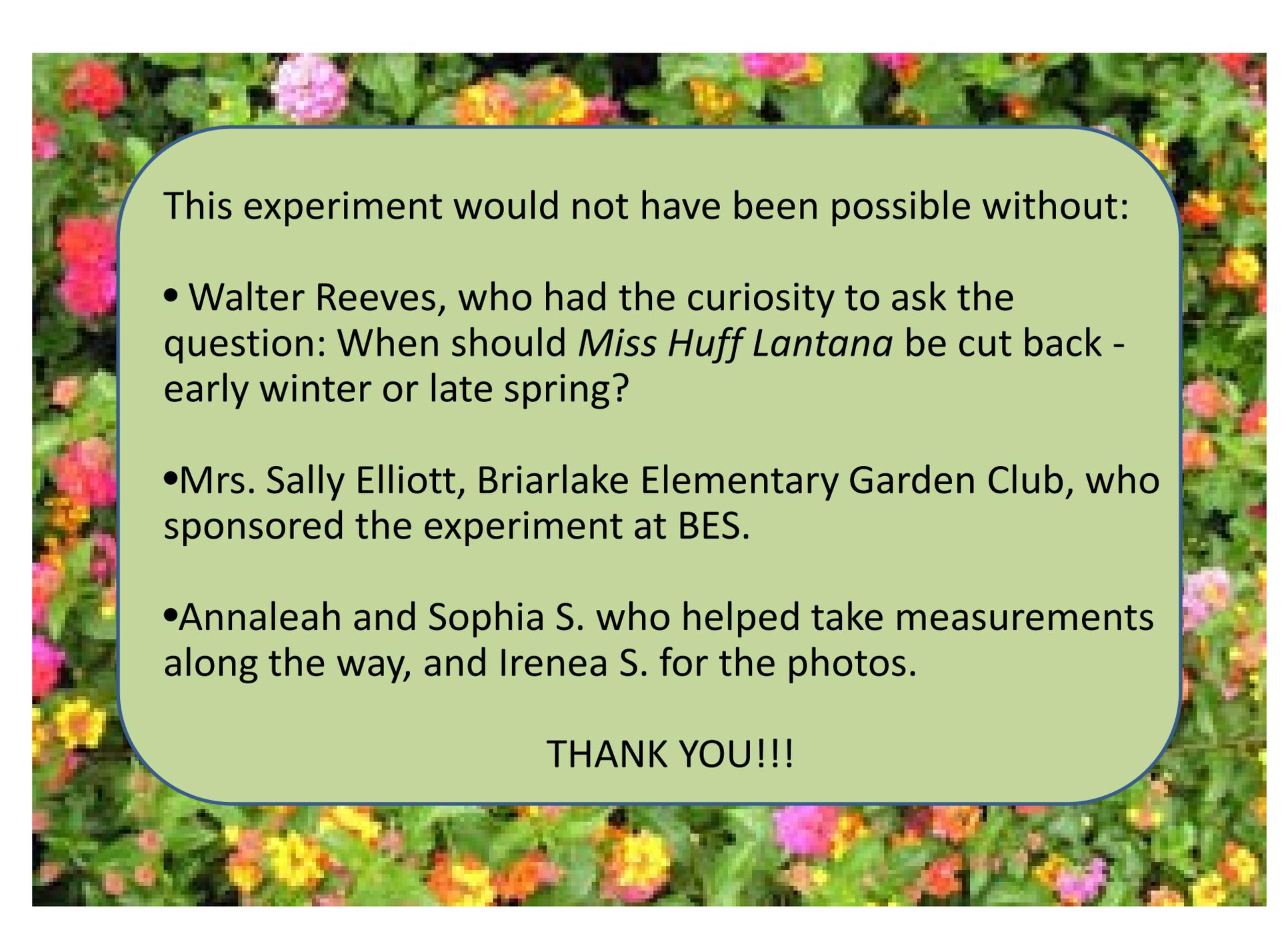
Conclusions

For a more lush plant in the spring, cut back Miss Huff Lantana in late spring, not winter. The Control plant (cut back May '12) was notably larger in April and significantly larger by May than the Experimental plant (cut back Jan '12).

However, by mid summer (June), both plants were similar in size. It is unclear what impact the above average temperatures had on this experiment.

Implications

If you want to get to a larger plant faster (spring), wait till late spring to cut back your Lantana. But if the dead branches bother you, cut them back in the winter and your plant will still look good in the spring. By the mid/end of summer, either technique would likely produce plants of similar size.



This experiment would not have been possible without:

- Walter Reeves, who had the curiosity to ask the question: When should *Miss Huff Lantana* be cut back - early winter or late spring?
- Mrs. Sally Elliott, Briarlake Elementary Garden Club, who sponsored the experiment at BES.
- Annaleah and Sophia S. who helped take measurements along the way, and Irene S. for the photos.

THANK YOU!!!