

# Peach Cobbler

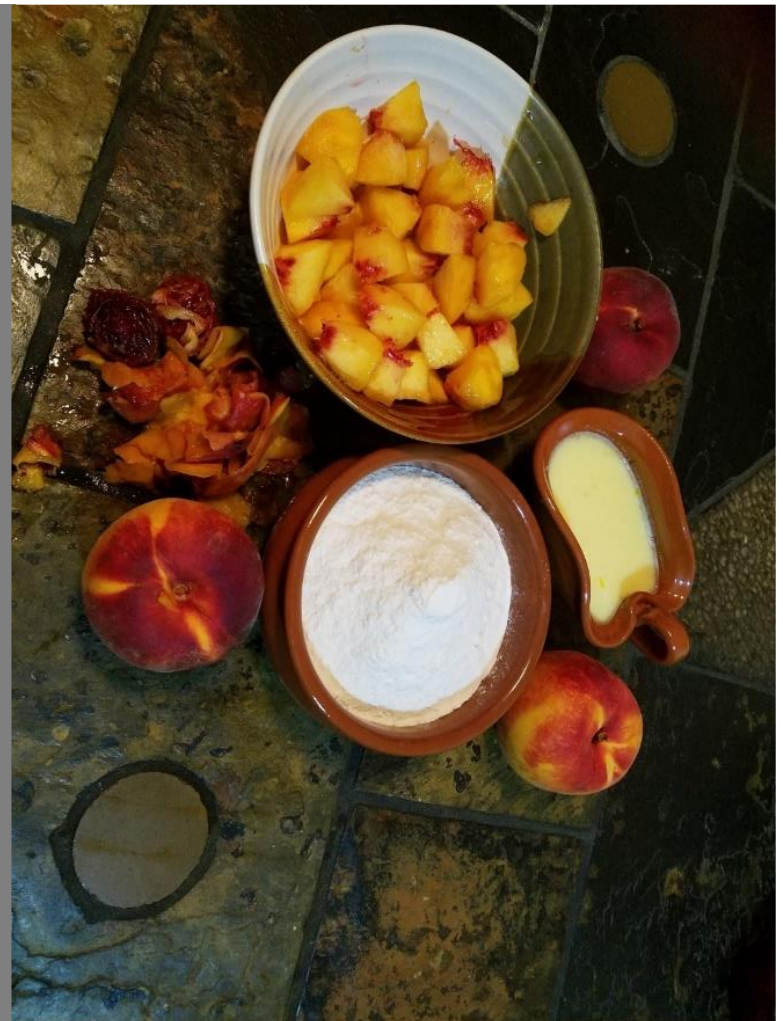


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## FALL 2020

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- Volunteers and Visitors
- Secondhand Scrounging
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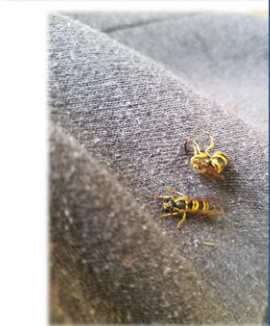






## Throwback Titbits: *Fall 2017*

Clearing and digging the test house area was commenced. We picked up a whole load of pool tarps and ropes from a local pool company looking to throw old tarps out. We started cutting and spreading the tarps out to control the stilt grass. We visited a local retreat called ZigBone farm where the owners had added a strawbale extension to their building. We learnt a lot by talking to the manager even though the owner herself was not around. Mice got into our outdoor grill and stinkbugs made an appearance – so we had to work on cleaning the grill and understanding how to control the bugs. Girija had to drive to NJ for personal reasons and to put miles in her car for an oil leak test drive; so Alan spent some time alone on the land. Girija walked the trails again using the Terrain Navigator app and prepared her first Land Layout draft on Google maps. The garden tractor was fixed multiple times. Unfortunately Girija ran over a yellow jacket nest with it and got attacked viciously. The garden drip lines had to be unentangled, the water tank emptied due to moss growth and foam sprayed to close the yellow jacket nests. We also cleared the mulching area and garden area and designed the garden layout. A barn door and some windows for the test house along with a swing set, pebbles and tiles for the garden were obtained from Craigslist, Nextdoor and Community Forklift. We scavenged and moved some logs from the forest to the garden area to use as edgers. The garden lines were laid down on the ground using ropes and the actual garden work using edgers, landscaping fabric and pebbles was started on the far end of the garden. We obtained DE powder and had to empty out the storage shed to locate and remove any stink bugs followed by spreading of DE to control future infestations.











## Construction Corner

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We finally got around to doing our first cob mix of the season. It was used for widening the start of the long cob wall, connecting the off-shoot wall to the test house corner and about a foot and half of the cob wall. Pipe conduits to pass underfloor heating pipes were integrated in the long cob wall in the study area. We also finished the off-shoot wall cobbing including integration of the arch using the wooden stump and its roof frame. The stone wall was cleaned up again to level it once more. We cut up wooden covers for the bathtub and then primed and painted it with a red outdoor coat. The house floor was leveled for the most part and we have ended up with 3 levels instead of the original plan of 2. The bond beams were completed and we managed to build a test truss and mount it up manually to verify measurements. Once we were confident about the truss design, we ordered the wood for the truss/framing, OSB sheets, underlayment and frost sheeting from 84lumber. Once it got delivered, we moved it up to the well area and finished cutting the wood. We setup the trail camera for a few days to periodically snap photos of the sun cover in order to determine the best location for the solar-thermal collector.



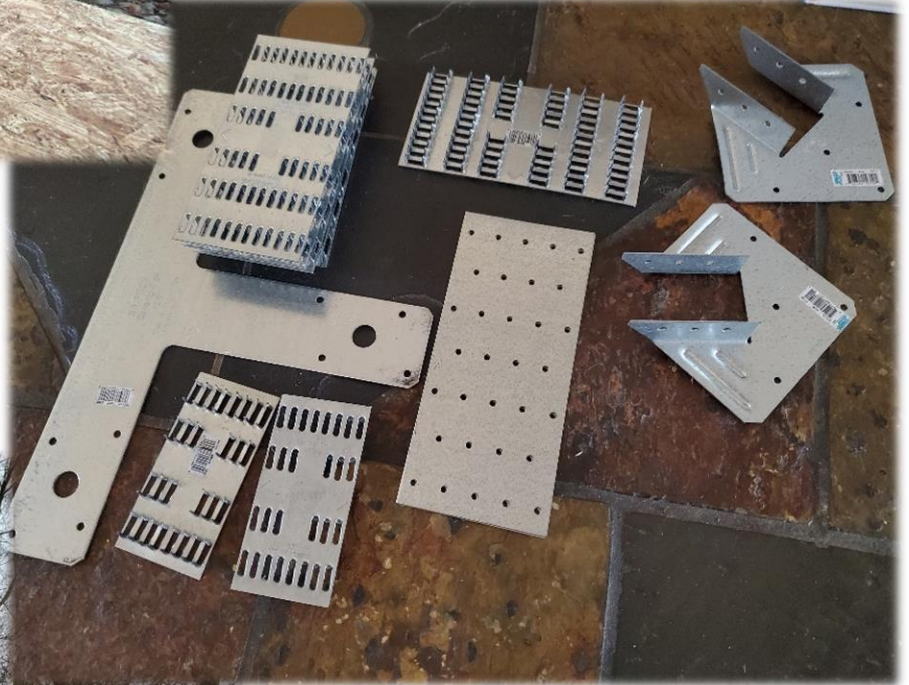


# Construction Corner cont....





# More Construction Corner...

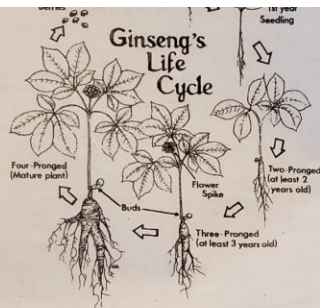






# Horticultural Haven

We harvested a few cucumbers and quite a few squashes. Most of the corn was again destroyed by deer and they even chewed on a butternut squash. We did some research into mushroom growing and have located an online store to order spores for next year. Girija experimented with harvesting spores from store bought baby bella mushrooms and placing them directly in sterilized straw. Note that she did not bother making spore syringes and did not end up having any success though she got a good spore print. We ordered American ginseng and planted some seeds and rootlets in 2 areas along the green trail and have planted one pot indoors. We put in some work in the arbor area of the garden, created a rock garden and clamped clay pots to the garden fence as you can see in the photos. Alan did some trail work on the rear orange trail by laying logs down and marking arrows.



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Jeanine M. Davis

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Kit 1  
6 two yr rootlets





# Horticultural Haven cont....







# Repair and Recovery

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Our truck gave intermittent starting problems on the land one day; but we were fortunate enough to be able to drive it home. Putting in a new battery did not help, and we had to tow it to the mechanic to change the negative cable of the battery. Going forward we should probably not let the truck stay parked without powering it on for too many days in a row in case this was caused by rodents. We also decided to add 4 more verticals along the straw bale wall because it seems to be too unstable. When Alan had to go on a 2-week business trip, Girija worked on fixing some of the weed growth in the garden paths (where we hadn't put down cardboard). She did not finish as much as she hoped since she ended up doing a lot of major cleaning at home. At one point a tree branch fell on our bamboo fence during a rainstorm and we had to fix one vertical stump and re-weave one end of the fence. One good discovery made by Alan is that our backhoe startup issues go away when we press down on the accelerator during startup. We also had to clear growth in the mixing area before we could commence building work for the season.







## Volunteers and Visitors

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Kaushal showed up once and he helped us with the cobbing. A mouse had built a nest in our newly built wooden storage shed and Alan got rid of it. There was also a bad stench and signs of rat urine in the metal shed. Fortunately it was isolated to the cat cage and we were able to clean it out. Deer and racoons have been caught on camera nibbling on our veggies and we will need to completely fence off certain sections.







# Secondhand Scrounging

Alan located a good secondhand nail gun with a set of nails on Craigslist which can be of good use for roofing.

We obtained a good amount of cardboard from a Nextdoor listing of a person who had just moved into the neighborhood.

We have dumped it in the garden and hope to cover a few more of the paths to prevent weed growth. Even though this can't be called secondhand scrounging, it's worth a mention that we obtained two 8-foot fiberglass ladders at half price during the November sales season from Home Depot.





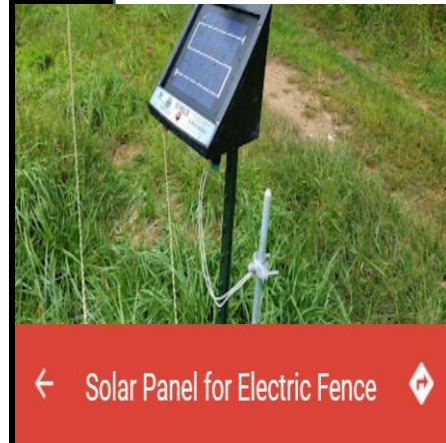


# Tracking with Tech

A detailed map layout of the land is built in google maps and you can access it by going to FAQs→Where.

This shows locations of fruit trees and berry plants, the trails, locations of all planned buildings and things like the wood pile, well and the solar panel for the fruit trees. If you click on each logo, you will get a photo and description of what is at that location. These photos will be updated periodically on the map. For e.g., some trees have grown whilst a few have been removed due to damage. The wood pile content and the status of the test house changes over time.

The trails currently listed on the map consist of mainly the red, pink and green trails. The yellow and orange trails were mapped and cleared later. Currently the map doesn't show the color coding of the maps. Girija hopes to retrace her steps in the trails using the terrain navigator app on the phone and then update the trail routes on the map.



name  
Solar Panel for Electric Fence

