



Ellis County Master Gardener's E-Gardening Newsletter



Volume II, Issue 5

Official E-letter of the Ellis County Master Gardeners Association, Waxahachie, Texas

July, 2008

Welcome to the Ellis County Master Gardener's **E-Gardening** newsletter. The purpose of this newsletter is to give you a month by month agenda of what you should be doing to your landscape. We will be featuring horticulture articles that we hope you will find interesting, important dates where you can find the Master Gardeners speaking, demonstrating and passing out information relative to your garden. If you would like to receive this newsletter monthly via your email address, log onto our website www.ECMGA.com, click on subscribe, and it will be sent around the 1st of every month. Best of all; it's FREE!

Melinda Kocian, editor

What's Happening in July?



Friday, July 3, H-E-B Fireworks Show & Concert, Lumpkin's Stadium Parking Lot at Waxahachie High School. Gates open at 6:00 pm.

Saturday, July 4, Patriotic Parade, down Main Street. Begins at 10:00. Arrive early; parking is a premium!

Tuesday, July 8, 7:00 p.m., The Green Thumb Organic Club at The Greenery. "Protecting our Environment" presented by Scott Jackson. Everyone invited. Call 972-617-5459 for more information.

Saturday, July 12, 9-noon, Pettigrew Academy, 806 East Marvin, Waxahachie. **Dallas Zoo Nature Exchange**. Settles Nature and Science Center—Come explore the world of bugs. Make your own firefly lantern to take home. Eat some snacks with legs! 972-923-1633.

Cedar Ridge Preserve, 7171 Mountain Creek Parkway, Dallas 75229

Saturday, July 19, 9:00-noon. Come and join in the fun as we work in the butterfly garden and on the trails, and perform other chores. For more information and to tell us you are coming - even if it is for just part of the morning: volunteers@audubondallas.org or 972-709-7784.

Friday & Saturday, July 18-19, 8:30-after lunch, Cedar Ridge Preserve. Volunteers needed to help with 2007 census of Hexalectris Orchids. For more info and to RSVP reply to Jim Varnum at jvarnum@aol.com, Dr. Marcy Brown Marsden at 972-438-2445, or bio-marcy@winwaed.com.

Monday, July 21, see above—info is the same.

August 29 - 31, (Friday thru Sunday) Garden Retreat, Milford, TX. Hosted by "Garden Inspirations" (Marilyn Simmons from The Greenery and her daughter, Donelle). Lucy Harrell will present her organic garden workshop series. For more information go to website: www.gardeninspirations-tx.com, email: duchess@gardeninspirations-tx.com or call 214-566-6862.

Summer Moonlight Movie are returning to downtown Waxahachie at 9:00 p.m. The movies will be projected onto a large inflatable screen located in front of the Courthouse Café on Franklin Street. Residents are encouraged to bring blankets or lawn chairs and join in the family-oriented event.

The Lions Club will have concessions available, including water, pickles, popcorn, snow cones and soft drinks. The movies are free to the public.

- June 13 "Places in the Heart"
- June 27 "Shrek"
- July 11 "Field of Dreams"
- July 25 "Bee Movie"
- August 15 "Back to the Future"



For more info call the city of Waxahachie at 972-938-2101.



Listen to KBEC.....

Saturday mornings at 9:00 a.m. on 1390 AM.

The Ellis County Master Gardeners have a 5-minute segment every week, offering you helpful information on what you need to be doing in your landscape, as well as "happenings" around the county. Be sure to listen in!

Melinda Kocian

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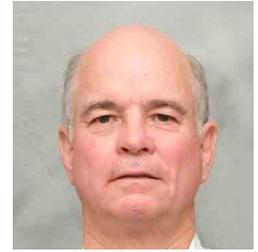
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For Immediate Release:

Date: 6-19-08

Contact: Glen C. Moore

Texas AgriLife Extension Service
972-825-5186



Timing Crucial for Treating White Grubs in Turf

Glen Moore, Extension Agent - Entomology-IPM

White grubs are the larval stage of insects commonly known as May or June beetles (or Junebugs). Texas has almost 100 species of these beetles, most of which do not cause significant economic damage to crops or horticultural plantings. A few species, however, commonly damage turfgrass and other cultivated plants. White grubs, sometimes referred to as grub worms, injure turf by feeding on roots and other underground plant parts. Damaged areas within lawns lose vigor and turn brown. Severely damaged turf can be lifted by hand or rolled up from the ground like a carpet. The most important turfgrass infesting white grubs in Texas are the June beetle, *Phyllophaga crinita*, and the southern masked chafer, *Cyclocephala lurida*. Warm season grasses like Bermuda grass, zoysia grass, St. Augustine grass and buffalograss are attacked readily by both types of white grubs, with most lawn damage occurring during summer into fall.

Cool season grasses such as the fescues, bluegrass and ryegrass are also susceptible to the June beetle and southern masked chafer, though such grasses tend to be attacked more frequently by a May beetle, *Phyllophaga congrua*. Damage from May beetles often appears in the spring and early summer, before injury from other white grubs becomes evident.

Most turfgrass-feeding white grubs in Texas, such as the June beetle and southern masked chafer, require 1 year to complete their life cycle. Once a year, in late spring or summer, adult beetles emerge from the soil to mate. Mated females then return to the soil to lay eggs. Within about two weeks the eggs hatch into small white grubs that feed on grass roots. The pupa, or intermediate stage between the larva and the adult, occurs the following spring and is the last immature phase of the insect's development cycle. Adults subsequently emerge from the pupal stage when environmental conditions are favorable in early- to mid-summer. Most damage from white grubs occurs during mid-summer to early-fall when the larger larvae are actively feeding.

White grub damage can be detected by the presence of irregular- shaped areas of weakened or dying grass in the lawn. Less severely damaged turf lacks vigor and is more vulnerable to invasion by weeds. Depending on location within the state, damage may appear any time between the months of June and October. Turfgrass damaged by white grubs has a reduced root system and is easily pulled from the soil. Grubs should be readily found in the top few inches of soil, in the turfgrass root zone. To confirm whether you need to treat for grubs, examine several soil sections at least 3 to 4 inches across and 4 inches deep (sample sandy soils to greater depths). A good rule of thumb is to examine several soil plugs (up to one square foot per 1000 square feet of turf) from widely scattered parts of the lawn. Take care to include areas at the edges of suspected grub damage. Finding more than five white grubs per square foot justifies treatment, although some lawns with even higher numbers of grubs may show no damage.

Non-chemical control. For residents who prefer not to use an insecticide, beneficial nematodes may be a consideration. Nematodes within the genera *Steinernema* and *Heterorhabditis* are tiny worms that attack white grubs and other soil inhabiting insects. These microscopic worms can be purchased in stores or through garden supply catalogs. Commercial nematode products are usually designed to be mixed with water and applied to lawns using a hose-end or hand-held sprayer. Recent research shows that under good conditions commercially-available nematodes can reduce white grub populations by 50% or more. Nematodes must be supplied with adequate moisture to help them move down into the soil where grubs are feeding. At least 1•4 inch of water should be applied before, and another 1•4 inch of water applied just after, nematodes are sprayed on the lawn. These worms pose no threat to humans or landscape plants and are an environmentally sound alternative for those who prefer not to use pesticides on their lawn.

Chemical control. Proper timing and chemical application are critical to suppressing white grubs. New white grub insecticides are more persistent and less toxic to beneficial arthropods and earthworms. However, these treatments must be applied early enough to kill the smaller (less than 1•2-inch long) larvae. Once white grubs reach the third-instar life stage, they are more difficult to control with the new products. The insecticides imidacloprid and halofenozide are used most today for white grub control. Imidacloprid is most effective against small and medium-sized grubs but may kill some grubs larger than 1•2 inch long. Imidacloprid trade names include Merit®, Bayer Advanced Lawn™ Season Long Grub Control and Scott's® Grub-Ex®. The lethal effects of the insect growth regulator halofenozide are limited to early white grub life stages. Halofenozide is ineffective if applied too late, after grubs have reached the third-instar life stage.

Halofenozide trade names include Mach 2, Spectracide® Grub Stop™ and Hi-Yield® Kill-a-Grub™. Fortunately, both halofenozide and imidacloprid can be applied early and persist in the soil. Ideally, both products should be applied within six

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It's July - What Needs to be Done?



Featured Plant for July

Veronica "Sunny Border Blue"

Also known as "Speedwell". This herbaceous perennial is a prolific long-blooming hybrid plant. It has long, purple spikes from spring through summer. Cut back old blooms to stimulate new ones and keep the plant shapely. Use in the middle or back of the flower garden. .

Exposure: Sun, can tolerate some afternoon shade
 Size: 18" – 24"
 Spacing: 3-4 ft.

Planting and Sowing

- Blooming crape myrtles and other summer annuals to provide fall color can be planted this month, as long as extra care is taken to keep them thoroughly watered.
- Plant the fall tomatoes that you started in June very early this month.
- Also very early this month, sow seeds for small and medium-sized pumpkins to be ready for Halloween.
- Set fall pepper transplants mid-month.

Fertilizing and Pruning

- Fertilize plants that bloom on new growth, such as crape myrtles, tropical hibiscus, and roses, with a high-nitrogen fertilizer to promote late-summer growth and fall blooms. Apply the same fertilizer to give a boost to summer annuals and fall-flowering perennials, as well.
- While major pruning should be postponed until mid-winter, erratic spring growth may be lightly pruned from shrubs to maintain their natural form and shape.

Garden Watch

- Spray Bermuda lawns with MSMA this month to eliminate Dallasgrass, grass burs, and crabgrass.

- Cicadas are noisy but do no damage to landscape plants. They are, however, the main food source of very large, wasp-like insects, known as cicada-killers. Although cicada-killers look threatening, they are actually beneficial and generally harmless.
- Galls on the leaves of live oaks, hackberries, and other trees are caused by many species of gall-forming insects and are the result of the female stinging the leaf tissues as she lays her eggs. Although they look unusual, they are harmless, and no control is called for, since the insect doesn't feed on the plant tissues
- Cinch bugs (small black insects with white diamonds on their backs) prefer the hottest and sunniest areas of St. Augustine lawns. The turf will appear dry, but doesn't improve with watering. Apply a registered turf insecticide to control them.

Tip of the Month

To insure that you have an EARTH-KIND product, you should not only look for the "slow-release" on the bag, but you should also examine the Guaranteed Analysis, which indicates what percent of nitrogen (the first number on the bag) is derived from sulfur-coated or plastic-coated urea.

Don't forget!! Waxahachie Downtown Farmer's Market!



Saturday, May 31 through the end of October
 Hours: 8:00 a.m. thru 1:00 pm.

Visit the Ellis Co. Master Gardener's booth

Free handouts • Help with gardening questions
2008 Gardening Calendar • Flower and butterfly wheels for sale
Master Gardener Cookbooks • plus many more items of interest.

Landscape Checklist

By Jackie Wilhite, Ellis County Master Gardener



June landscapes are some of the most beautiful and picturesque. The flowers shrubs and trees are at their glory with full display. Rainfall has been adequate and pests have yet to take a toll on the lawns, gardens and flower beds. But, that can change as quickly as our Texas weather.

Check for insects and disease invading the landscape daily. It doesn't take long for them to destroy a lot of hard work. Remove and destroy any badly infected plants to prevent the spread of disease. Spider mites are also known to destroy plants in no time at all. Select a chemical or organic control method or use insecticidal soap.

Continue to watch for powdery mildew on these plants: roses, euonymus, photinias, zinnias, and crape myrtles.

Removing all faded flowers from plants before they set seed will keep them growing and producing flowers. Fertilize lightly every 4-6 weeks to keep plants healthy. Roses especially like a light application of cottonseed meal.

Heat tolerant annuals can still be planted. Direct seed zinnias and portulaca along with purchased plants of salvia, periwinkle, marigold and purslane. Mulch the young plants for best moisture retention and water conservation. Mulch should be 2-6 inches deep depending on the type used. There are a lot of choices for mulch and all do the job of protecting the soil from the sun and reducing water usage. Watering deeply and thoroughly on an infrequent basis works well for most plants as well as most gardeners. Not even the most enthusiastic gardener wants to be watering the yard every day.

Looking for a beautiful evergreen shrub that likes the Texas heat and humidity has a wonderful fragrance that bees like and pests dislike, not to mention withstands the North Texas winters. Try planting Rosemary. The herb *rosemarinus officinalis* is native to the Mediterranean but adapts to Texas like a native. It is drought tolerant once established and makes a great addition to the landscape.

Bring the birds to the landscape to help control insects. Placing suet feeders around your yard will keep the insect eating birds coming back to feed. They will help with grasshopper control as well.

If grasshoppers are a concern, and looks like they will be a concern once again this year, just place plants in the landscape that they don't care to eat. There is a complete list of plants that are preferred and not preferred at this web site <http://dallas.tamu.edu/insects/Ent-1040.html>.

The Ellis County Extension Office at 972-825-5175 has volunteer Master Gardeners available to assist with any questions on trees, shrubs, flowers, turf grasses or herbs.

Extension programs serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability or national origin. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.

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## Shade Favorites

By Kim Ellis, Ellis County Master Gardener



As the temperature races towards 100 degrees, Texans race toward the shade. Our mornings are still somewhat pleasant but boy oh boy, the afternoons are really getting tough to handle. I feel fortunate that I have a backyard that is easily 80 percent shade. Even when it is 100°, it's not too bad. It is great having so much shade to help beat the heat. It does, however, pose a difficult task; finding colorful plants that do well in shade. Sure, there are many plants like the fern I could put in, and the variegated leaves of the Hostas can add some color. But I want some pizzazz, maybe some yellow, red or even a crisp white. If you have a shady area and can't quite figure out what plants to plant, check out some of my personal favorites. The following plants all take well-drained soil and a medium amount of water. You may find just the mix of color you've been searching for.

- **A splash of white:** Strawberry Geranium. This is not actually a strawberry plant. The large leaf of this geranium resembles the leaf of a strawberry plant, hence the name. As a perennial ground cover, it only grows to about 1 - 1 1/2 inches tall. Don't discount a ground cover for your shady spot just because you have already placed your lawn furniture there. With small white blooms, lime green leaves, and an unusual red underside, you'll have a great conversation piece when your friends come to join you in the shade.

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- **A spark of red:** Turks Cap. Who doesn't love the light green leaves and bright red trumpets of the Turks Cap? Not only will the hummingbirds think you're the greatest for planting it, so will the butterflies. A plant that can get as big as 3 ft. by 3 ft. may spread into a sunny spot. Don't worry; this shrub-like plant can grow in sun or shade. It will die back when the frost hits but will reappear in the spring to prepare for more scarlet, cap shaped trumpets in July. Here is a plant that can bring color to your yard for years to come. It has survived in the demonstration garden at Weston Gardens in Fort Worth for over 60 years!
- **Eye popping yellow:** Columbine. From March to May the sun won't be the only thing that is yellow in your garden. Columbine grows 12-24 inches tall and spreads out to two feet. The fine textured, lacey leaves may need to be cut back during the most intense heat of the summer, but it will come back to bloom again in the fall. Like the Turks Cap, it is a Texas native. This too can grow in partial shade to full shade. If yellow is not your color, Columbine comes in blue, purple, pink and white.

Making the most of the shady areas in your yard does not have to be difficult. With a little imagination and planning you can create a haven from the heat for you, your family, and the wildlife that comes to visit.

## Tomatoes: It's not too late

By Kim Ellis, Ellis County Master Gardener

With the recent scare in the tomato industry, many folks are looking again to backyard gardening as the answer to the problem. With the heat of summer in full swing, you may be thinking it is a little too late to start growing tomatoes. Guess what, it's not!

With the first fall frost more than 4 months away, now is a great time to start planning for that fall garden. It may seem a little early, but if you did not plant a spring garden then you have a little work to do to get ready for fall. Everyone is extremely busy during the summer, so spreading out your planning over a few weeks will ease the stress you might have about starting a new garden. A good way to know when you need to get started planting the seeds is to figure out when you want to harvest your tomatoes. The first good, hard freeze can wipe out a tomato plant. The average first frost fall date for Ellis County is between November 16<sup>th</sup> and December 1<sup>st</sup>. Why the difference? Ellis County lies on the dividing line used to determine the dates. Part of northern Ellis county tends to freeze sooner than parts of Southern Ellis County. To see a map of first fall frost date zones visit <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/extension/homeguide/frostfall.html>.

Tomato plants do well in a raised bed. They need good drainage and adequate light. A raised bed can be constructed of railroad ties, landscape timbers, or even bricks. With our clay and rock soils, it may be necessary to bring in a better soil to the raised

bed. Once you have your bed built and filled you need to know what type of tomato you want. Do you want one for salads? A cherry tomato might be good for you. Do you like to make spaghetti sauce? Try a Roma. If you are planning a square foot garden, plant 1 plant (bush) per 9 square feet. If you are planting a vine, you can put 4 plants per square foot. Are you trying to go "green" with your new garden? Try the tomatoes recommended for EarthKind gardening. Bingo VF, Carnival VF, Heatwave VF, Celebrity VFNT, President, VF, Merced VF, Sunny VF, Surefire VF, Cherry Tomato - Small Fry, Cherry Grande. These varieties are disease and pest resistant. Since you are planning early, you can decide what will be easier, planting seeds or buying transplants!

Don't forget to put this nice new raised bed near a water source. Nobody wants to drag a water hose across the yard. Control your weeds by applying 3-4 inches of mulch. Planting disease and pest resistant plants will lessen the workload too. A plant can be wiped out overnight when hit by a disease.

The tomato, in all its varying shades of color and size, is the most popular plant grown in the backyard garden. Gardeners all over the country enjoy growing them in pots, on patios, and in multiple rows. It is a great plant for Texas gardeners because we can grow it practically year round! So, take a break from the daily grind, give yourself a special treat this fall and plant some juicy red tomatoes.

### Garden Humor ~ by David Hobson

- The best to garden is to put on a wide brimmed straw hat and some old clothes. And with a hoe in one hand and a cold drink in the other, tell somebody else where to dig!
- When weeding, the best way to make sure you are removing a weed and not a valuable plant is to pull on it. If it comes out of the ground easily, it is a valuable plant!
- A weed is a plant that has mastered every survival skill except for learning how to grow in rows.
- Gardening requires a lot of water; most of it in the form of perspiration.
- Any self respecting rock will break at least one shovel before accepting its new home.

## Web Worms in Pecan Trees

By Kim Ellis, Ellis County Master Gardener



**D**o you remember the last time you were stung by a wasp? I have never been stung but I remember my sister being stung as a child. It was not the most memorable bike ride of my childhood. However my 7-year old's vocabulary was broadened that sunny spring afternoon by learning a few new and colorful words. The following Monday I was informed, by a very understanding principal, that those words would not be on the spelling test that week. This all happened before epi-pens were invented so we were off to the emergency room. I have since learned that like my sister, my own daughter is allergic to all things that sting.

I'm sure you can imagine my discomfort when I learned that wasps are actually beneficial little pests. Integrative Pest Management is the systematic use of one insect to control another insect that is harmful to a specific plant. When my pecan trees became infested with bag-like webs, I did what I always do when I have gardening problems, I called my grandmother! She planted her pecan trees over 30 years ago, from seed, so I figured she would know what to do. Her advice, poke it with a stick and let the wasp eat. After the IPM class during my training to become a Master Gardener, I called her to tell her that Texas A&M gives a similar recommendation.

The bag-like webs are made by web worms, the caterpillar state of a one inch white moth. Poking holes in the webs allows their natural predators access. As you have probably guessed, those seemingly not so friendly wasps are a natural predator. Birds and hornets like to dine on them too. If you are trying to attract butterflies to your yard consider this option before turning to BT.

BT (*Bacillus thuringiensis*) is a bacterium that occurs naturally in soil. When used as an insecticide, it is sprayed onto the tree's leaves to be eaten by the caterpillars. While the EPA has stated that BT is safe for use around the monarch, there are other caterpillars/butterflies you may be trying to attract that it is not. BT is usually mixed with water and attached to a garden hose sprayer for application. It is probably best to do this in the afternoon as the bacteria can burn off when exposed to bright sunlight. Being the smart gardeners that you all are, I am sure you will remember to follow the manufacturer's instructions for use and application.

While I am not a huge fan of creepy crawlies, I understand their importance to our environment. So I try to live by the following rule. If they stay out of my habitat, I'll do my best to stay out of theirs!

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Crape Myrtles—The Lilacs of the South

By Nancy Fenton, Ellis County Master Gardeners

It's July already and I hope you have driven through Waxahachie and admired the beautiful Crape Myrtles. They have been called the Lilacs of the south and they are blooming like mad. If you haven't got a few, it's not too late. They bloom for three months or more and are available in many colors and sizes. They love the sun and are perfect for a hot, dry spot. They need water the first year or two but after that they do well on their own. A little nitrogen in the spring and fall will support the growth and give you fat and sassy blooms. The main problem with our Crape Myrtles around here seems to be powdery mildew. It gets on the new growth and turns the leaves gray to white. One can always spray with a good fungicide if you already have it, but the best solution to this disease is prevention. Sun and lots of air circulation will help but choosing a variety that is resistant is even better. The good guys at A&M in conjunction with the good guys at LSU have come up with a list of varieties that are extremely hardy and disease resistant for our area of the country. Their favorites are as follows:

- Natchez Gorgeous plant with "weeping" like branches that will reach 30 feet tall with white blooms.
- Basham's Party Pink Upright to 30 feet with lavender- pink blooms
- Tuscarora Upright to a height of 25 feet with coral pink blooms
- Muskogee Upright plant reaching 20 feet with lavender blooms.
- Sioux Vivid pink blooms reaching to 15 feet
- Tonto Smaller plant reaching 12-14 feet with deep red flowers
- Acoma Smaller" weeping" plant with white blooms reaching to 14 feet.

Notice there is all different sizes. This will help with the need to prune and prune and prune. Crape Myrtles don't need a lot of cutting back if the plant is the right size to begin with. I like mine upright so I lop off the suckers at the bottom as soon as I see them. Like many other plants in my garden, anywhere the branches rub on each other is a good place to consider cutting one of them. The severe cutting back in the spring is not needed to promote blooms nor is the trimming of the spent blooms.

This is my kind of plant, one that loves the heat, blooms and doesn't require much other than my admiration.

The Many Names of a Flower

By Kim Ellis, Ellis County Master Gardener

While visiting with some friends this past week the topic of flower names came up. The question was asked "why do flowers have so many names?" I didn't have one of those "all knowing Master Gardener" answers; I really had never given it much thought. Since our group consisted of women of varying ages and from different places across the country, we concluded it was probably because everyone hears the name their mother or grandmother called it and assumes everyone else calls it by the same name.

The plant we were talking about is the *Scabiosa Atropurpurea*, also known as the Scarlet Pincushion, Sweet Scabios, Red Double-Flowered Mourning Bride, Mourning Widow, and Egyptian Rose. With so many different names, you can see how we ended up on this topic. This flower is not only diverse in color, ranging from white to deep purple, it can be classified as an annual, perennial, and a biennial depending on the zone you live in. It may be a native of Europe but Texas has made a wonderful home for this now naturalized beauty. We have an abundance of sun and heat; just what it likes. Growing it as a border plant, for cut flowers, or for dried flowers is made easier when you place it with your other drought resistant plants. The bees and butterflies like it too. Even though it doesn't need a great deal of water, it does need a well drained soil.

The pincushion name comes from the rounded pompom shape with speckles of white which really do look like a pincushion. An upright plant, it can reach a height of 2'-3'. Ellis County can sure bring the heat, but *Scabiosa Atropurpurea* remains an annual. Letting the flower go to seed and reseeding can increase your chances of having it again the next year. With these growing conditions I can see how it has been given the name Egyptian Rose.

So how did the other names come about? During the mid 1800's flowers were widely used to symbolize many things. Sweet Scabios was symbolic of grief. The Widows of the time period would wear the pincushion flower, and so the names Mourning Bride and Morning Widow were adopted. Other pincushion flowers were used to symbolize bad luck in love! Don't be discouraged by folk-lore and confusing names and histories. The Scarlet Scabiosa can bring a showcase of color to any garden!



Featured Flowers of the Month

Submitted by Melinda Kocian
Ellis County Master Gardener



White Forsythia *Abeliophyllum distichum*

White or Pink Forsythia, known botanically as *Abeliophyllum distichum*, is the only species in this genus. It is only distantly related to Forsythia, even though they share a common name.

This deciduous, multi-stemmed shrub was discovered in Korea in 1919. Its almond-scented blooms appear in late winter; they may be white or rose-pink along the arching stems. The stems may be cut and brought indoors early for forcing. *Abeliophyllum* is hardy to zone 5, but an untimely cold snap may damage the flower buds, which appear earlier than yellow Forsythia.



Abeliophyllum distichum received the Royal Horticultural Society's Award of Merit in 1937, followed by a First Class Certificate which was awarded in 1944. It is an interesting element in the landscape; unfortunately the plant has become endangered in its native habitat.

Type of plant:	Shrubs
Bloom color:	White/Near White
Bloom time of year:	Late Winter/Early Spring
Sun requirements:	Sun to Partial Shade
Cold hardiness:	Zone 5a to Zone 8b
Height:	36-48 in.
Spacing:	24-36 in.



Corn Poppy

Papaver rhoeas

Papaver rhoeas is native to Europe and covered the scarred and barren battlefields of Flanders and France before becoming an introduced, naturalized wildflower throughout many areas of the U.S.

Before becoming an emblem of WW II, the Reverend William Wilks discovered a single flower of *Papaver rhoeas* with a white edge to the petal in the late 1800s. He harvested the seed pod and spent two decades breeding new strains from it. He named his new varieties "Shirley" after his Surrey parish.

The Corn Poppy is an annual that grows quickly and easily from seed, producing spring and summer blooms in shades of red, pink and white that wave proudly on erect stems above the foliage. Deadheading will reduce the volunteer seedlings in subsequent years.

- Type of plant: Annuals
- Bloom color: Pink, Red, Orange, White/Near White
- Bloom time of year: Late Spring/Early Summer, Mid Summer
- Sun requirements: Full Sun
- Cold hardiness: Not Applicable
- Height: 12-18 in.
- Spacing: 2-15 in.



Osage Orange

Maclura pomifera



Maclura pomifera is a paradox plant. It is one of the most widely-planted trees in North America, especially on the plains, yet it has no commercial value as timber, lumber or even pulpwood. Instead, it was used to make high, thick, thorny, termite- and rot- resistant hedgerows. It did such an admirable job as hedging material, it provided the inspiration for the barbed wire fence that eventually replaced it.

Maclura pomifera fruit is known alternately as "Osage orange" or "hedge apple" and is inedible to almost every animal except squirrels. Bois d'arc (Americanized into bodock) and boxwood are common names that hint back to the native American Indian's use of the wood to make bows.

The fruit is often used as a natural insect repellent, especially for cockroaches and crickets, as well as a dye.

- Type of plant: Perennials, Trees
- Bloom color: Pale Green
- Bloom time of year: Mid Summer
- Sun requirements: Sun to Partial Shade
- Cold hardiness: Zone 4a to Zone 9b
- Height: over 40 ft.
- Spacing: 30-40 ft.

F lowers...are a proud assertion that a ray of beauty out-values all the utilities of the world.

~ Ralph Waldo Emerson, 1844

A Morning Glory at my window satisfies me more than the metaphysics of books.

~ Tennessee Williams

Living Stones

Lithops aucampiae

Living Stones were discovered in the early 1800s, when John Burchell picked up a stone in South Africa, and realized it was a plant he was holding. Each small plant is 1/2" to 1" across and consists of two succulent leaves attached at the outer edges; a fissure separates them in the middle.

In the wild, the Lithops plants are adaptable to extremely arid conditions, and tend to hunker down. As a result, they are easily overlooked by a casual collector hunting for them.

Lithops flowers are daisy-like and appear in fall. They vary from species to species; some are white, yellow, or peach-colored. After the plant flowers, it enters a dormant period and the old leaves become nourishment to the new plant, which begins to emerge from

These are fascinating plants. Full sun and proper watering will ensure they thrive

Type of plant:	Cactus and Succulents
Bloom color:	Bright Yellow
Bloom time of year:	Mid Fall, Late Fall/Early Winter
Sun requirements:	Sun to Partial Shade, Light Shade
Cold hardiness:	Zone 10a to Zone 11
Height:	under 6 in.
Spacing:	3-6 in.



dormant period and the fissure.



in cultivation.

(Continued from page 2)

weeks of egg-laying. In central and north Texas, the optimal treatment time is early- to mid- July. Where grub damage is already evident in lawns and larger grubs are present, use products containing trichlorfon or carbaryl. Because they bind to soil particles and remain close to the surface even after irrigation, pyrethroid insecticides (such as permethrin, esfenvalerate, cyfluthrin and bifenthrin) are less effective against white grubs, especially in clay soils. Post-treatment irrigation is essential for all grub-control products. To ensure that insecticides reach the root zone, water-in liquid formulations with 1½ to one inch of water immediately after application. Irrigate granular formulations within 24 hours to wash the insecticide into the soil and minimize the chance for exposure to people, pets and wildlife.

Irrigating the soil prior to insecticide application, particularly when the soils are dry, can improve the effectiveness of insecticides. For dry soils, apply 1¼ to 1½ inch of water the day before a treatment to improve spray penetration of the soil and to encourage white grubs to move closer to the soil surface. This makes grubs easier to contact with the insecticide treatment.

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I wandered lonely as a cloud
 That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
 When all at once I saw a crowd,
 A host, of golden daffodils;
 Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
 Fluttering and dancing in the breeze
 Continuous as the stars that shine
 And twinkle on the milky way,
 They stretched in never-ending line
 Along the margin of a bay:
 Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
 Tossing their heads in sprightly dance,
 ~ William Wordsworth, "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud", 1804

It's July - What Else Needs to be Done?

By Gayle Doyl, Ellis County Master Gardener



- Watering is important during the hot month of July. Proper watering is probably the most important practice in caring for your plants. Over-watering or under-watering causes stress and kills more plants than pests. Check the soil by sticking your finger in a few inches to see if it is moist. Looking at the leaves of the plants is also a good way to check for stress and the need to water. Try not to get water on the plant leaves. If this is not possible, water in the morning hours so that the sun will rapidly evaporate the excess water from the leaf surfaces.
- High pressure water sprays directed at the undersurface of the leaves can be effective in dislodging small insect pests, such as aphids and spider mites. Take care not to harm the plant or to distribute pests around the garden. Repeated treatments are usually needed to keep pest numbers low.
- White grubs are the immature stage of the June beetle. Grubs feed on roots resulting in irregular dead areas within the lawn. Generally 5 to 10 grubs per square foot of turfgrass will cause visible damage. Damage may appear anytime between the months of June and October. Mid-July is an excellent time to apply an insecticide for these insects. There are many products available to treat grubs. Be sure to read and follow label directions.
- Apple trees grown under favorable conditions will set more fruit than they are capable of successfully carrying to maturity. Remove excess fruit from the trees to ensure good size and shape of the apples that remain. The sooner hand-thinning is completed, the more effective will be the desired results. Leave one apple per cluster and space the clusters about every 6 inches. Start at one end of a branch and work outward.
- Apples picked with their stem attached to the fruit will keep longer. Fruit picked too soon does not store well and does not develop full flavor.
- Mulching plants with 4 – 6 inches of mulch will help retain moisture, deter weeds and protect roots from the hot July sun.
- Prune Blackberries when they have stopped producing. Cut the canes that produced berries back to the ground. They won't bear fruit again. Pruning is usually not needed in the first year.
- During the growing and production period, strawberries need a continuous supply of moisture. When the leaves begin to wilt, it is time to water. Water after each picking if no rain occurs.
- Water is essential for the survival and rapid growth of young pecan trees and for consistent production of quality nuts on bearing trees. The root system of a pecan tree is about 50 percent wider than the width of the tree canopy. The entire root soil area should be watered for maximum growth and production. Water at least weekly, especially in midsummer.
- Watch out for early blight on tomatoes. Look for large yellow blotches and defoliation. If your tomatoes have sunken spots or dried brown areas, this indicates moisture stress; water deeply and add mulch.
- Herb gardening is very rewarding. Leaves of many herbs such as parsley and chives can be harvested for fresh seasonings. Gradually remove some of the leaves as needed, but don't remove all leaves at once. These herbs produce over a long period of time if they are well cared for.
- On rosemary and thyme, clip the tops when the plants are in full bloom. Leaves and flowers can be harvested together.
- Basil, fennel, mint, sage, sweet marjoram and tarragon are harvested just before the plants start to bloom.
- To extend their culinary use for winter, harvest and dry herbs.
- Chervil and parsley leaves can be cut and dried anytime.
- To dry herbs; after harvesting, hang them in loosely tied bundles in a well-ventilated room. You can also spread the branches on a screen or cheesecloth. To keep dust off, use a cloth or similar protective cover that allows moisture to pass through.
- When completely dry, seal the herbs in air-tight containers such as fruit jars and store in a cool, dark place. Store foliage herbs either pulverized or as whole leaves.
- Some herbs can be potted and grown indoors during the winter months. Place in a sunny south window and care for them similar to other house plants.

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