

# The Green Thumb



## Newsletter of the Nacogdoches Master Gardener Association

Summer 2011



Jo Ann knee deep in intern instruction

### Presidential Ponderings

*Jo Ann Carter*

Hello from our newly reorganized newsletter! Who can believe that it is nearly August? Despite uncooperative weather, this year has been a blur of growth both in the gardens and in our organization.

Thanks to our dedicated members, the garden thrives despite extreme heat and drought. Our beautiful gardens and the hiking and biking trail continue to bring new visitors to our space.

We've had a wonderful year of Lunch and Learn speakers and food. I have heard many compliments about the program and our guests have been really enjoying themselves.

I want everyone to know I am thankful for all you contribute to our group. We have good momentum going so let's keep on gardening and see what the next five months bring us.

### From the Desk of Your Extension Agent: Termite Swarming Season *Crispin Skinner*

Subterranean termites are the most destructive insect pests of wood in the United States. In nature, subterranean termites are beneficial. They break down many dead trees and other wood materials that would otherwise accumulate. The biomass of this breakdown process is recycled to the soil as humus. Problems occur when termites attack the wooden elements of human structures homes, businesses and warehouses. Their presence is not readily noticed because they hide their activity behind wallboards, siding or wood trim. Homeowners in all areas of Texas should watch for subterranean termites and take precautions to prevent infestations. TAMU Department of Entomology has an excellent web site for Termite information. Information that can be found on this site includes their identifying characteristics, the type of damage done, as well as their distribution. <http://termites.tamu.edu>.

*"It is a good thing gardeners are such optimists. It doesn't matter what season it is, the next one will certainly be better than this one." ~Jo Ann Carter, NCMGA President*

## Chinch Bugs



July and August are prime time for a chinch bug infestation. Expanding islands of yellow or dead grass may indicate a problem.

A chinch bug infestation can be easily confused with certain lawn diseases. Checking your lawn for chinch bugs is a cinch. Remove both ends of a coffee can, force it into the soil through turf grass thatch and fill it with water. If you have chinch bugs, then they will float to the top of your coffee can.

Chinch bug and treatment information from TAMU AgriLife Extension:

- Field Guide  
<http://insects.tamu.edu/fieldguide/aimg55.html>
- In San Augustine Lawns:  
<http://insects.tamu.edu/extension/publications/epubs/e-420.cfm>



## Armyworms

Internet news is plastered with headlines about armyworm invasions and information about these pests that “march” across and destroy lawns and crops.

*“The armyworm, which is actually the caterpillar or larva of the night-flying moth, do the most damage in the fall, when they're at their peak, nearly fully grown at about an inch-and-a-half long. They'll chomp on any plant, but prefer grasses, especially the lush and well-fertilized hay meadows and pastures in North, East and Central Texas.”*

~Linda Stewart Ball, “Army Worms Marching on East TX”

Armyworm damage consists of defoliation of plants. Small larvae will chew the green layer from plants creating a window pane effect. For information on detection of an infestation and treatment please visit:

- Armyworms in Texas Pastures and lawns  
[http://insects.tamu.edu/extension/publications/epubs/eee\\_00009.cfm](http://insects.tamu.edu/extension/publications/epubs/eee_00009.cfm)

## Member Spotlight

Sylvia St. Andry, Master Gardener & Artist

I grew up helping my mother plant vegetables in the garden. When I moved to East Texas three or four years ago, I knew I wanted to be involved with the Master Gardeners Association, and I wanted responsibility for an area in the demonstration garden. Over the last few years, I have developed a garden to attract butterflies and hummingbirds to our shared space.

I find the beauty and freedom of butterflies inspiring. I have visited other butterfly gardens on my travels to St. Maarten, and St. Thomas. I have learned much about what plants foster butterflies. I am always looking for more plants to fill in the blank spots. If it is full of bushes, then I don't have to spend too much time weeding it!



I spend a lot of time down at the garden, I have seen sulphurs, swallowtails, monarchs and many other butterflies fluttering from plant to plant in the garden. I like to paint flowers and many times I will add a butterfly in my pictures.



*Stand By, Sylvia St. Andry*

Are you interested in learning more about Texas butterflies and butterfly gardens?

- Butterflies of Texas information from The TX Natural Science Center - <http://www.utexas.edu/tmm/tnhc/entomology/butterfly/index.html>



## Summer Garden Report

*By: John Makow*

As a Texas “immigrant”, this year was a challenge to my gardening skills. But, I'm proud to announce that I had a bumper crop of tomatoes and cucumbers. To achieve this, I used an incredible amount of water from my pond. Also, and this is very important, I used a lot of pine straw and old hay (at least four inches thick) to mulch everything. I believe that another reason my tomatoes did well, is that I took a gamble and planted them before the last frost date. I also had a good crop of green beans early in the season. But, as soon as the heat arrived, they stopped producing.

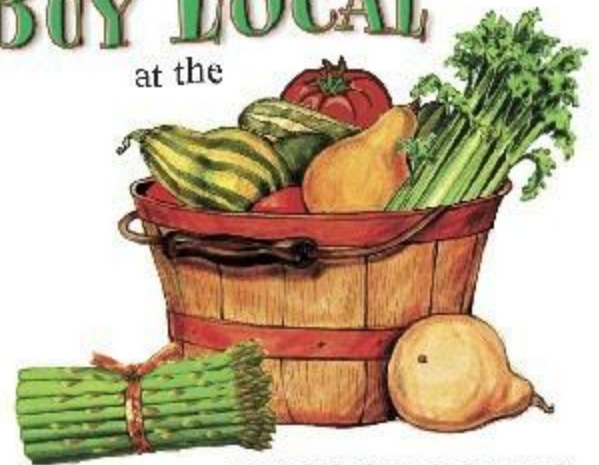
I'm doing some experimenting to see if I can grow a new crop of beans under a canopy of 'burlap' sack material. They've been in the ground for about a month and are doing well -many blooms but no beans. I wonder if it's the heat, or maybe that the canopy is too low preventing pollinators from getting to the flowers.

I also have a “volunteer” water melon. What's amazing about that is that one plant covers about a hundred square feet or more. The foliage is very thick and there are six melons in different stages of growth. I will be harvesting the first one this week, and It's huge! This is my first attempt at growing water melons. I know I did not plant it, but if it's this easy to grow them, then I will plant them next year.

The rest of my plants, this includes flowers, are just surviving.

It's not just the lack of water, but the creatures of the night take their toll on everything. I am waiting for the deer to ring the doorbell and ask me for a hand out, because they sure have devastated my fruit trees and flowers. Also, if anyone has a solution for armadillos, besides a twelve gauge shot gun, I would love to hear from you. In closing, if you have plants that survived this year, then save them, because they will be able to survive under the most adverse conditions.

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at the



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FARMERS' MARKET**

Visit Wednesdays and Saturdays  
At West Main & Pearl Street  
<http://www.farmermktnac.blogspot.com/>

# Fall Gardening

## Fall Gardening Resources

Prepare in July for Fall/Winter Vegetable Gardening; by Keith C. Hansen, Extension Horticulturist  
<http://easttexasgardening.tamu.edu/homegardens/fallveggarden.html>

What to Plant Now; Mother Earth News  
<http://www.motherearthnews.com/Organic-Gardening/What-To-Plant-Now.aspx>



**Miriam Galan, Age 9**

Forward your pictures, artwork and stories to [galanrache@gmail.com](mailto:galanrache@gmail.com) so you can be published in the Green Thumb!

## Fall Planting Schedule

Beets - 9/1 - 10/15	Mustard - 9/15 - 10/15
Broccoli plants - 8/1 - 9/15	Parsley - 8/15 - 10/1
Brussels sprouts - 8/1 - 10/1	Peas, English - 8/15 - 9/15
Cabbage plants - 8/15 - 9/15	Peas, Southern - 7/1 - 8/1
Carrots - 8/15 - 10/15	Pepper plants - 7/1 - 8/1
Cauliflower plants - 8/15 - 9/15	Potatoes, Irish - 8/15 - 9/15
Chard, Swiss - 8/1 - 10/15	Pumpkin - 7/1 - 8/1
Collard/Kale - 8/15 - 10/1	Radish - 9/15 - 10/15
Corn, Sweet - 8/1 - 8/15	Spinach - 9/1 - 10/15
Cucumber - 8/1 - 9/1	Squash, Summer - 7/15 - 8/15
Eggplant plants - 7/15 - 8/1	Squash, Winter - 7/1 - 7/15
Garlic - 9/1 - 10/15	Tomato plants - 7/15 - 8/1
Kohlrabi - 8/15 - 9/15	Turnips - 10/1 - 11/1
Lettuce (leaf) - 9/15 - 10/15	Watermelon - 7/1 - 8/1

## Calendar of Events

Theresa and Les Reeves Lecture Series  
(SFASU)/ Third Thursday of the month

AUG 18 – Fred Davies, *PhD - Spaced Out: Challenges of Growing Horticultural Crops for NASA in Lunar and Martian Agriculture*

SEPT 15 – Aubrey King – *My solution for all the problems in the economy*

OCT 20 – Jim Kamas, *Overcoming Pierce's Disease, A New Lease on Life for Growing Grapes in the Gulf Coast*

NOV 17 - Keith Johansson, *Metro Maples, Fort Worth – A Maple for Every Spot – the abridged version*

DEC 8 – Dr. Dave Creech– *SFA Gardens and critical mass – understanding the physics of Nacogdoches Naturally*

### Lunch N Learn



Second Thursday of each month  
12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m.  
Courthouse Annex, 203 West Main.

August 11	Dr. David Creech
September 8	Dawn Stover
October 13	Jeff Abt
November 10	Trey Anderson
December 8	Kimberly Wright



After many, many failed attempts, I think I have finally found the perfect FGT recipe. FGTs are one of those things that make me happy to welcome summer. Enjoy! Rachel

### Fried Green Tomatoes ~*Southern Living*, July 2003

1 large egg; ½ cup buttermilk; ½ cup flour; ½ cup cornmeal; 1 tsp salt; ½ tsp pepper; 3 tomatoes; vegetable oil or bacon fat

- Combine egg & buttermilk; set aside
- Combine ¼ cup flour, cornmeal, tsp salt & pepper in a shallow bowl
- Dredge tomato in remaining flour, dip in egg, and dredge in cornmeal mixture
- Cook (best in a cast iron skillet) in hot oil about 2 minutes each side
- Drain on paper bag

### Editor's Note

Hello! I'm excited to be the newly minted editor of the Green Thumb. Many thanks to Lynn Teague for the work she did before me. With my growing knowledge of the Master Gardener organization, its members and programs and your insight and input, I hope to publish a newsletter that will inform, entertain and possibly help us recruit new interns.  
Best, Rachel Galan