



**Aransas/San Patricio
Master Gardener Association**

June 2009

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Website:
www.aspmastergardeners.org

***Seeking Serious
Plant Lovers***

Texas Master Gardeners are a team of volunteer horticulture educators who are under the auspices of:



Green Acres is our award winning demonstration garden located at 611 E. Mimosa, Rockport, Texas. The gardens showcase plants and landscape schemes suitable for the Coastal Bend. For help with plant problems, or for class information, please call (361) 790-0103, or email aransas-tx@tamu.edu

Editors

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The President's Corner



Lonnie Matthew

Once again our great group of Master Gardener volunteers brought home the "prize." We were awarded 3rd place in Keep Rockport Beautiful - Rockport In Bloom contest. We were entered in the government category and were beat out by Fulton Mansion (whose gardens were designed by a Master Gardener and are tended by Master Gardeners). First place went to the new Rose Labyrinth garden across from Little Bay. Our organization prides itself on the quality and quantity of its volunteer efforts and rightfully so. However, it would be good if everybody considered that someone has to agree to be president of this wonderful group of volunteers. Someone questioned why I am president again and the answer to that is virtually everyone else was asked before me, and no one wanted to step into the role. As Nan pointed out last December, we have to have a president. We have many excellent people who would make good presidents, and I hope when the nominating committee starts working on this next fall, someone will say "Yes." Please be thinking about it.

**MG Meeting
6 pm
June 2**

**Beachfront Pavilion
at Rockport Beach
Bring a salad for pot
luck dinner.**

**Green Acres
Garden Days
June 5th & 17th
8:30 - 11 am**

**Rainwater
Harvesting Seminar
Saturday, June 6th
8:30-11:30 am
Old Rockport School,
619 N. Live Oak,
Karen Ivey,
Administrator, San
Patricio Municipal
Water District.**

June Brown Bag

Tuesday, June 16 11:30-12:30 pm
Weeds to Watch For
by Lonnie Matthew, Master Gardener
Aransas County Library, 701 E. Mimosa, Rockport

In Area Newspapers this month watch for...

Weeds - Lonnie Matthew
Invasive Plants - Anita Garrett-Roe

Happy Birthday !

Sharon Watkins, 2nd
Susan Thompson,
10th
Jeanna Godfrey, 15th
Phoebe McNeill, 17th
Annette Fowler, 27th
Thea Edmundson,
30th

Educational programs of Texas AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, or national origin. Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.

Our Mission: *Improving the lives of people, businesses, and communities across Texas and beyond through high-quality, relevant education.*

From Our Writers

Invasive Plants

By: Anita Garrett-Roe, Master Gardener, Aransas/
San Patricio Master Gardeners

Most of us here in the Coastal Bend are so grateful to see something actually growing that we give little thought to whether or not the pretty plant we are looking at is classified as an invasive species or not. We tend to think of our property as our own little corner of the world, blissfully minding its own business with no connection to anything else. But our yard could be secretly harboring invasive plants, many times planted by someone else besides us, before we even bought our property.

Invasive species are like alien invaders who are looking to do harm to our environment. It is up to each person to watch out for these invaders and eradicate them from our property whenever possible.

A plant is labeled "invasive" because it tends to spread over large areas without assistance from humans and chokes out other native plants thus reducing habitat and food for wildlife.

Invasive plants with berries or seeds may be eaten by birds which then produce droppings sometimes miles away. The wind causes seeds to become airborne, creating the same result. It is a chain reaction. Sometimes invasives spread through their root systems, like bamboo, for example.

According to www.texasinvasives.org, invasive species are a form of biological pollution. Invasive species decrease biodiversity by threatening the survival of native plants AND animals. They interfere with ecosystem function by changing important processes like fire, nutrient flow and flooding. Invasive species hybridize with native species resulting in negative genetic impacts. As renowned biologist E.O. Wilson states, "On a global basis... the two great destroyers of biodiversity are, first, habitat destruction and second, invasion by exotic species."

Invasive species also have economic consequences and can endanger human health. Invasive species contaminate agricultural seed crops and reduce their value, pose health threats to livestock, and necessitate costly repairs to harvesting machinery. Control of these plants whether

chemically, biologically, or mechanically exacts great expenditures of time and money. In the United States alone, these expenses may total tens of billion dollars annually.

Certain birds look for particular types of insects to consume. These insects may not be around if an invasive plant takes over. Insects are also picky and will starve to death if the kind of plant leaf they prefer to eat is not available. So you can see a whole cascade of things that can happen if the environment is disrupted by invasive species.

In some parts of our state, invasive plants are thriving and choking out our beautiful native plant. These fast-growing invasives create too much shade and thus decrease the amount of sun available to our native plants, and some invasives are vines that grip and choke off the nutrient supply of native plants. It is astonishing to see acres and acres of an invasive species, and we are beginning to see signs of this in certain parts of our state.



Even if you have an invasive species in your yard and it does not seem to be bothering anyone, think again! If every homeowner were to analyze his or her yard and eliminate all invasive species, it would make a big impact on our environment.

I have been astonished to see some of my childhood favorites appearing on the Invasive Species List. I grew up in neighborhoods with Chinaberry, Japanese Honeysuckle, Salt Cedar, Nandina, Japanese Wisteria, Golden Bamboo, Castor Bean, Wax Leaf Ligustrum, Mimosa, Red-tipped Photinia, Pyracantha, Elephant Ear, English Ivy, Pampas Grass, and Asian Jasmine. These plants were sold by plant nurseries and some are still being sold. If you see an invasive plant for sell at a plant nursery let them know about alternatives they can carry instead. Identifying the invasives in your yard can be a fun family project. If you are not sure of what you have, you can look up photos of common invasive species

Continued from page 2

on the internet. Some website addresses are included at the end of this article. If you are still not sure what you have, you can take a piece of the plant to the Texas AgriLife Extension office to be identified. Include a length of stem with leaves attached in order to make identification easier.

Once you have identified what invasives you have, gradually start replacing those plants with alternatives. In time, you will create a beautiful yard and habitat for birds and beneficial insects.

Here are some of the worst invasives with suggested alternatives:

Cats Claw Vine (*Macfadyena unguis-cati*)

Native Alternative: Crossvine

Brazilian Pepper (*Schinus terebinthifolius*)

Native Alternative: Southern Wax Myrtle

Chinaberry (*Melia azedarach*)

Native Alternative: Sugarberry Hackberry

Chinese Tallow (*Triadica sebifera*)

Native Alternative: Chinaquapin Oak

Japanese Honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*)

Native Alternative: Coral Honeysuckle

Salt Cedar (*Tamarix aphylla*)

Native Alternative: Bald or Montezuma Cypress

Giant Reed (*Arundo donax*)

Native Alternative: Common Reed

Water Hyacinth (*Eichornia crassipes*)

Native Alternative: Arrowhead

Water Lettuce (*Pistia stratiotes*)

Native Alternative: Water Lily

Australian Pine (*Casuarina equisetifolia*)

Native Alternative: Mesquite

Nandina (*Nandina domestica*)

Native Alternative: Barbados Cherry

Russian Olive (*Elaeagnus angustifolia*)

Native Alternative: Wild Olive

Chinese and Japanese Wisteria (*Wisteria sinensis/ Wisteria floribunda*)

Native Alternative: Texas Wisteria

Air Potato Vine (*Dioscorea bulbifera*)

Native Alternative: Passionvine

Golden Bamboo (*Phyllostachys aurea*)

Native Alternative: Bamboo Muhly Grass

Castor Bean (*Ricinus communis*)

Alternative: Split Leaf Philodendron

Other Invasives to Avoid:

Invasive to avoid -----	Non-invasive alternative
Wax Leaf Ligustrum-----	Barbados Cherry
Japanese Ligustrum-----	Yaupon Holly
Mimosa-----	Desert Willow
White Mulberry-----	Red Mulberry
Chinese Photinia-----	Yaupon Holly
Red-tipped Photinia-----	Cape Honeysuckle
Common Privet-----	Dwarf Yaupon Holly
Pyracantha-----	Yaupon Holly
Tree of Heaven-----	Chinquapin Oak
Vitex-----	Mexican Buckeye
Elephant Ear-----	Caladiums
English Ivy-----	Virginia Creeper
Pampas Grass-----	Big Muhly
Asian Jasmine-----	Wedelia, Frogfruit
Elaeagnus-----	Texas Sage
Giant Salvinia-----	Water Lily

For more information on Invasive Plant Species: Texas Parks And Wildlife Department:

Inland Fisheries, 4200 Smith School Road, Austin, Texas 78744

[www.tpwd.state.tx.us/landwater/water/ environconcerns/ nuisance_plants](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/landwater/water/environconcerns/nuisance_plants)

Texas Wildscapes 4200 Smith School Road Austin, Texas 78744

www.tpwd.state.tx.us/wildscapes

Native Plant Society of Texas

www.npsot.org

The Nature Conservancy Invasive Species Initiative <http://tncweeds.ucdavis.edu>

Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center 4801 LaCrosse Avenue Austin, Texas 78739

www.wildflower.org/
www.texasinvasives.org/
www.invasive.org/



Brazilian Pepper



Air Potato Vine

MG Happenings

Live Oak Learning Center Field Trip

We once again provided our award-winning field trip for about 235 students and teachers from Live Oak Learning Center. Students enjoyed their visit so much, they chose Green Acres as their favorite field trip destination.



Worm Composting with Frances Frizzell



Stem, Roots, Etc.—YUM! with Ellen Reisinger



Take a Plant Home with Sharon Watkins



Parts of Plants with Susie Morrison



Plant Needs with Richard Snyder & Lu Lu



Glow Rocks with Pat Baugh



Good vs. Bad Bugs with Barbara Mahan



Butterfly Wheel in the Children's Discovery Room

Frances Frizzell shows off our new interactive addition to the Children's Discovery Room. The exhibit allows visitors to spin the wheel and then try to match the butterfly with its caterpillar.

Many thanks go to Danny Hubbell of Coastal Aluminum Designs who graciously made the aluminum arm portion of the flapper so the wheel works like a charm.

Around the State

'Cool New Plants that can Take the Heat' seminar at South Texas Botanical Gardens & Nature Center—June 6

Want some really cool plants for the hot summer months? This seminar will be from 10 am to noon, Saturday, June 6, in the Visitors Center, 8545 S. Staples St.

Debbie Pinkerton, Certified Nursery Professional from Gill Landscape Nursery, discusses the latest plants which can really take the heat in your landscape, without requiring all your spare time! Class fee is \$6, \$3.50 members and includes admission. For reservations, call 361-852-2100.

Popular *Passion for Plumeria* seminar encores at Gardens & Nature Center July 11

Plumeria Society of South Texas will once again present "*Passion for Plumeria*" seminar from 9 to 11 a.m., Saturday, July 11, at the Gardens & Nature Center, 8545 S. Staples.

The Plumeria Society members will discuss tips on purchasing and raising these exotic, tropical beauties, lead a tour of the Gardens & Nature Center 100-plant Plumeria Garden & Willoughby Viewing Platform, and preview the Society's July 18 sale to be held from 10 am to 2 pm at the Garden Senior Center, 5325 Greeley.

Seminar fee is \$6, \$3.50 for Center members, and includes admission. For seminar reservations, call (361) 852-2100.

Permaculture Camp Workshops at Gardens & Nature Center July 11-12 & July 18-19

In July, the Center offers *permaculture* (cob-building) workshops to local artisans, both youth and adults, taught by Sara Schmidt, a student of internationally recognized cob builder/artist **Elke Cole**. Cob construction uses clay, sand, straw and earth (similar to adobe mixture) to create permanent artistic sculptural forms, an ancient technique revived recently by natural building and sustainability movements.

Underwritten by a City of Corpus Christi *Arts & Cultural Commission* grant, these educational sessions include a two-day weekend **adult** workshop on basic cob construction, for **ages 15 and up**, 8 am to 4 pm, Saturday and Sunday, **July 11-12**, (\$75); and another two-day **adult** session on finishing and adding artistic elements, 8 am to 4 pm, Saturday and Sunday, **July 18-19**, (\$75).

Between the two adult sessions will be a five-day kids workshop/day camp teaching young artists the techniques, providing an opportunity to help build a lasting monument for Botanical Gardens visitors and the community. The Permaculture Day Camp for **ages eight through 14**, will be 9 am to 3 pm, Monday through Friday, **July 13-17**, (\$100). All fees include Gardens & Nature Center admission.

Prepaid registration only. For more information, see www.elkecole.com, or call 361-852-2100.

For Continuing Education Learning Credit: Sick Plants in a Hungry World

This non-credit course is completely online and has 10 modules with topics ranging from basic concepts in plant disease to prehistoric man and plant diseases, and from the Irish Potato Famine to bioterrorism. The course will be online for 10 weeks once you begin the program. Assignments consist of supplied module readings and self-tests. You will receive a certificate from the Ohio State University Office of Continuing Educational upon completion. There is a charge for the class. To register for the class, visit:

<http://osucedreg.com/profile/form/index.cfm?PKformID=0x15405241>

June 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i> 6 pm MG meeting - Beachfront Pavilion	<i>3</i> 8:30 am Propagation Committee	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i> 8-11am Green Acres Garden Day 11 am Landscape Committee	<i>6</i> 8:30-11:30 am Rainwater Harvesting Seminar, Old Rockport School
<i>7</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>9</i> 1:30-3:30 pm Bylaws, Policies and Procedures Committee	<i>10</i> 8:30 am Propagation Committee	<i>11</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>14</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>16</i> 11:30-12:30 pm Brown Bag Program 1:30 pm Board Meeting	<i>17</i> 8:30 am Propagation Committee 8:30-11am Green Acres Garden Day	<i>18</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>21</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>23</i> 1:30-3:30 pm Bylaws, Policies and Procedures Committee	<i>24</i> 8:30 am Propagation Committee	<i>25</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>28</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>30</i> Time Sheets Due				