



**Aransas/San Patricio
Master Gardener Association**

July 2009

2009 Officers

President: Lonnie Matthew
1st VP: Sandy Stanley
2nd VP: Ellen Reisinger
Secretary: Susan Lopez
Treasurer: Beth Wilson

Extension Agent:
Amy Freeman
Extension Office Manager:
Ernie Edmundson
Secretary: Thea Edmundson

Website:
<http://aransas-tx.tamu.edu>

**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

The President's Corner



Lonnie Matthew

Are you all as tired of these unbearable hot days with no rain in sight as I am? It is really a great time to stay inside with garden design books and plan the way we want things to look when the weather is tolerable again.

Of course, as Master Gardeners, there are always organizational things to do. The Policy and Procedure (Strategic Planning) committee, under the able direction of Vice-President Sandy Stanley, is making good progress. I want to thank those of you who are taking the time to revise the guidelines for our group.

Elayne is doing her usual outstanding job updating the changes in the education committee's schedule and getting the word out. And if you haven't looked at our new website yet, you will really feel a sense of pride in our fellow volunteers.

Marsha gets the newsletters out in a timely fashion, month after month. And the Landscape committee keeps on making the gardens worth visiting. And for all the other outstanding work done by all of you - Thank you so much!

**Green Acres
Garden Days**
July 10th & 22nd
8 - 11 am

Happy Birthday !

- Loretta Brandt, 3rd
- Mike McClure, 4th
- Lois Atwood, 5th
- Darlene Gooris, 5th
- Harold Henley, 6th
- John Jenkins, 15th
- Theresa Rios, 16th

**Master Gardener
Hours Due**
July 31st

**New Master
Gardener
Class**

**Information and
Master Gardener
Showcase Session**
July 28 at 1:30 pm
Classes start
August 11th

July Brown Bag

Tuesday, July 21 11:30-12:30

**Xeriscape Gardening with Native Plants
Special Gardens**

by Karen Ivey, San Patricio Municipal Water District

In Area Newspapers this month watch for...

Become a Master Gardener - Anita Garrett-Roe
Irrigation - Richard Snyder

Editors

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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

Irrigation

By: Richard Snyder, Master Gardener, Aransas/San Patricio Master Gardeners

OK, I confess I'm a car guy. You know – I wash, I polish, I shop and I dream. And we car guys hate spring season for one reason – BUGS! Scraping them off the bumper, prying them out of the radiator and from under the windshield wipers – some fellow car nuts won't even drive until the bug season is gone. But this year something has happened. The bugs didn't come – or are at least late.

As of early June, the Coastal Bend is one of only two areas (the other is in south-central Texas) classified as in an "exceptional" drought condition. Even the bugs are suffering (except the mosquitoes). Folks, this is as bad as it gets. And we've been there for a while. And that brings me (finally) to the subject of this article – irrigation.

Home irrigation systems are a recent phenomenon – the impact sprinkler wasn't invented until the mid 1930s. I remember growing up in Corpus Christi in the 1950's and dragging hoses all over the yard during droughts. Irrigation systems existed but were expensive. Now, modest systems are well within the reach of many homeowners and should be especially considered if you are building a new home. Originally, what started out as a convenience has become an ecological opportunity to conserve a dwindling resource.

Here's the basic layout. Irrigation systems consist of a hookup to the water system (well or municipal), a backflow preventer (keeps possibly contaminated irrigation water from backing up into the municipal system), main pressure line, valve(s) to release water to the zones to be watered, and delivery devices (sprays, rotors, or drip). The valves can be either manually controlled or, more commonly, controlled by a clock timer that can turn them on automatically at set intervals.

Delivery devices include the spray, rotor, and drip. For smaller lawn areas (under 8 feet) the spray is the best choice – over that size and the rotor wins due to its larger coverage area and droplet size, wind

resistance and slower application rate.

Drip is the choice for beds. This is not your grandfather's soaker hose. Drip was invented in the 1960s in Israel as a response to their need for efficient watering in a desert area. Openings in the tubing every foot or so let water drip out at a regulated rate. While somewhat more costly to install initially, the water savings are about 30% over sprays. And plant leaves stay dry, reducing disease. One note – consult an irrigation professional before installing drip with well water as mineral deposits may plug the openings in the drip system.



Watering frequency could be an entire article on its own. There are even home irrigation systems with weather stations to calculate actual plant needs. But simpler is usually better. If you're going to be around, turning off the irrigation clock and watering as needed is probably the best way to save water. Just walk on your grass – if it shows your footprint, doesn't spring back, or is looking dull, give it water. Michael Womack, Ed.D., the executive director of the South Texas Botanical Gardens & Nature Center, recommends double-cycling. Water thoroughly one day and follow up the next day with the same amount. Then wait to water until needed. For more information on this and other great Michael Womack gardening topics, go to <http://www.caller.com/> and search for Womack.

Other tips for conserving water include (1) watering in the early morning when the heat and wind are more favorable, (2) adjust the height of the mower up (removing no more than 1/3 of the grass blade) and sharpening the blade, (3) monitor the system regularly for broken or misdirected spray heads and leaks, and (4) in beds, group plants together with similar water needs – for an extreme



example, don't put a cactus together with a banana tree.

Wanted: Location of Soapberry Borer Infestations in Texas

The Texas Forest Service needs your help.

Please keep your eyes open., and we'd appreciate a report if anybody comes across this pest.

The Texas Forest Service is attempting to determine the current distribution of the soapberry borer in Texas . The soapberry borer, *Agrilus prionurus*, is an invasive wood-boring beetle recently introduced from Mexico that has been attacking and killing western soapberry trees in various counties of Texas . If you spot dead or dying western soapberry trees, please report the following information to Dr. Ron Billings at rbillings@tfs.tamu.edu. If possible, attach digital photos of the bark chips, larval galleries, D-shaped exit holes or other signs of attack, together with a close-up photo of the tree's leaves, so we can confirm the identity of the pest. Thanks for your cooperation.

Name of observer: _____ County of infestation: _____

Date first observed: _____ Address of infested tree(s) or GPS location if available: _____

Attack signs noted: _____ Dead soapberry tree with bark removed
 (check all observed) _____ Dying soapberry tree with some yellow or green leaves
 _____ Chips of bark at base of tree
 _____ White larvae beneath the bark
 _____ Winding galleries beneath the bark
 _____ "D"-shaped exit holes in bark
 _____ Sprouting of new leaves along trunk
 _____ Adult soapberry borers

Number of trees infested: _____ Average diameter of trees infested: _____ inches

Are there uninfested soapberry trees (> 3" in DBH) at this site? _____ Yes; _____ No; _____ Don't know

Return questionnaire by e-mail to rbillings@tfs.tamu.edu or regular mail to:

Dr. Ronald F. Billings
 Manager, Forest Pest Management
 Texas Forest Service
 301 Tarrow, Suite 364
 College Station, TX 77840-7896
 Phone: (979)-458-6650



D-shaped exit hole



Soapberry borer galleries under bark

MG Happenings

2009 Hidden Garden Tour

The Saturday, May 9 Garden Tour opened to a sun filled day and eight households ready to display their gardens! The Tour Committee was delighted with the number of people who attended the Tour and also with their remarks about how much they enjoyed the gardens. There were at least 100 attendees at all eight gardens, and several gardens had more than 120 people come through. Many of the garden owners expressed their surprise and happiness at the turnout.. All enjoyed showing off their hard work to the gardening community.



Now the signs are all down and put away for another year. We came in under budget and earned approximately \$9,000 for the education programs at the Aransas/San Patricio Extension Office. The auction/raffle of in-kind gifts will bring in additional funds.

The Hidden Garden Committee and the Fund Raising Committee thank you, the members, for your support and help throughout the Tour. We couldn't have done it without all of your efforts.

Now its time to begin thinking about the 2010 Hidden Garden Tour. We have already told the Rockport Chamber of Commerce that it will be held May 8, the day before Mother's Day, because we had so many families treating their mothers to the 2009 tour.



Out there someone in our membership is thinking, "I would like to chair the HGT in 2010. I have all of these great ideas about how I would lead the Tour and I will get so-and-so to co-chair with me. I know of several gardens I would like to showcase, and I have just the perfect person to be in charge of the garden selection. We should look at the gardens no later then mid November so we have lots of time to plan. We will talk with the new Interns and get them all enthused to work on the Tour. We'll contact the local nurseries who design gardens and ask them for garden owners

whose gardens we might use. We'll contact nurseries in Portland too and get their ideas. We want to be ready in January when the Fund Raising committee meets so we can tell them all about our plans. Oh! It's so exciting."

Who will this person be?

And thus the Hidden Garden Tour is planned for 2010!



Aransas/San Patricio Master Gardeners Policy & Procedure Reminder

Volunteers who belong to two organizations, both requiring volunteer service, may not count the same work hours twice, getting credit from both organizations. Volunteer work must be performed as a Texas Master Gardener rather than as a member of another organization.

Volunteer work that profits another organization or a business cannot be approved. Volunteers will not count work for a nonprofit organization that results in the organization earning money for its own programs. Volunteers will not count volunteer work for a for-profit organization. Paid work will not count as volunteer hours.

Interim Master Gardener Coordinator

Until the Extension Service hires a new Extension Agent-AG/Natural Resources, Ernie Edmundson has been appointed to serve as Interim Master Gardener Coordinator. This is only part-time due to her current duties as Extension Office Manager. Amy Freeman, CEA.

Around the State

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

The 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.

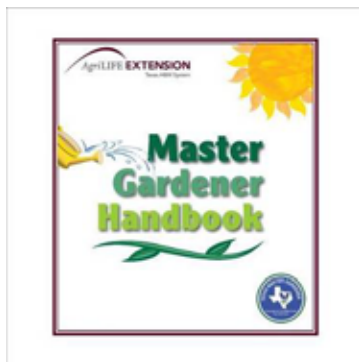
The Plumeria Society members will discuss tips on purchasing and raising these exotic, tropical beauties, lead a tour of the Gardens & Nature Center 100-plant Plumeria Garden & Willoughby Viewing Platform, and preview the Society's July 18 sale to be held from 10 am to 2 pm at the Garden Senior Center, 5325 Greeley. Seminar fee is \$6, \$3.50 for Center members, and includes admission. For seminar reservations, call (361) 852-2100.

Landscape Design Study with Dr. Bill Welch Number III, Series XXI College Station September 14-15

Co-sponsored by Texas Garden Clubs, Inc. and Texas AgriLife Extension Service, Texas A&M University, each course has been approved to qualify for 12 hours of continuing education toward maintaining certification for Master Gardeners. This is the third course in a four-part series, although participants can begin with any of the four. Cost of the course is \$100; cost of the textbook (good for 4 sessions) \$40.

For more information:

<http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/southerngarden/sglandex2.html>



International Master Gardener Conference in Charleston, West Virginia October 10-14, 2011

Plan Ahead for the 2011 International Master Gardener Conference. Some information is now available on the 2011 web site; <http://imgc.ext.wvu.edu/>

West Virginia University Extension Service and the West Virginia Master Gardener Association invite you to join us in sharing gardening information, history and Appalachian culture. The event will provide opportunities to learn gardening techniques that will help increase biodiversity, control exotic weeds, make the most of native plants in the landscape and improve gardening methods. Pre and post tours will help you discover the splendor of the Appalachian Mountains and the beauty and history of West Virginia.

Historic downtown, hotels, restaurants, and our regional shopping mall are within an afternoon stroll. Please come early and stay late to experience our local hospitality and to enjoy fall foliage, festivals and fairs.

The Sixth Edition of the Texas Master Gardener Handbook

is now available!

New features include:

Chapter 3 Earth-Kind

Landscaping

Weeds and weed management

Updated plant lists

Master Gardeners can purchase the latest edition through our Extension Office at a price of \$43.00.

The 6th edition "Text Only" (no binder or tabs) can be purchased for \$28.00.

July 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 8:30 am Propagation Committee	2	3 County Holiday - Extension Office closed	4
5	6	7 9 am MG meeting 10 am Fall Plant Sale Committee	8 8:30 am Propagation Committee	9	10 8-11am Green Acres Garden Day 10:30 am Landscape Committee	11
12	13	14 1:30-3:30 Policy & Procedure Meeting	15 8:30 am Propagation Committee	16	17	18
19	20	21 11:30-12:30 Brown Bag	22 8-11am Green Acres Garden Day 8:30 am Propagation Committee	23	24	25
26	27	28 MG Class Information & Showcase, Green Acres	29 8:30 am Propagation Committee	30	31 MG Hours Due	