



# Green Acres Newsletter

Aransas/San Patricio  
Master Gardener Association

November, 2010

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\*\*\*\*  
**Website:**  
[www.aspmastergardeners.org](http://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](mailto:aransas-tx@tamu.edu)

**Editors**

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## The President's Corner



That sure was a long, hot, humid summer. As much as I love gardening, it was hard to do any kind of work outside in that heat. Thank goodness the cooler air has arrived. Pretty soon the year will draw to a close. We have accomplished a lot this year, including the never ending Fall Plant Sale! Everyone has worked very hard to make this a successful year. All the various standing and special committees have contributed greatly in helping accomplish our goals. The intern class of 2010 will wrap up at the end of next month. We want all of you in the class to know that we are glad that you are here. When your classes are over, please consider joining a committee. Committees are very important for us to function as an association in order to reach our goals and objectives. We all will look forward to working with you in the future.

Ellen

## November Brown Bag Tuesday, November 16

12:00-1:00 pm

### Holiday Decorations

By Sandy Walker, Floral Designer,  
Aransas Flower Co.

Aransas County Library, 701 E. Mimosa, Rockport

## Green Acres Garden Days

November 5th & 19th

## November 2nd General Meeting

9 am

**Important Meeting**  
**Vote on the revised**  
**Bylaws and Policies**  
**& Procedures.**

**Sign up for a**  
**committee or Project**

**Texas AgriLife**  
**Extension Office**  
**611. E. Mimosa**

## Happy Birthday !

Laura Clark, 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Joyce Scott, 6<sup>th</sup>  
Marilyn Vaughan, 7<sup>th</sup>  
Christine Grohman,  
14<sup>th</sup>  
Suzannah Barnebey,  
22<sup>nd</sup>  
Sally Gale, 23<sup>rd</sup>  
Suzy Wallace, 27<sup>th</sup>

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

### CITRUS GREENING – THE YELLOW DRAGON

By Anita Garrett-Roe, Master Gardener and Citrus Specialist

Rabbit ears mean something different to different people. To the young, they come on plush toys; to older folks the words conjure up memories of some v-shaped wires on top of their ancient black and white TV sets; to the rest of the folks, they come atop the head of rabbits and the Easter Bunny.

But “rabbit ears” that come on citrus trees in the form of pairs of “v’s” have a completely different meaning, one that strikes fear into the minds and hearts of those who know about citrus greening. It is The Yellow Dragon.

Citrus greening, or Huanglongbing, which means Yellow Dragon in Chinese, is a bacterial disease that can greatly reduce fruit production and kill citrus trees. This is one of the most serious citrus diseases in the world. It was first identified in Florida in 2005 and has since been reported in the states of Georgia, South Carolina, and Louisiana.

A single tree can die within 3 or 4 years of the time it is infected. This disease was first noticed in China and has become a scourge in citrus producing areas all over the world. If something is not done to stop it, it is possible we are going to lose ALL our citrus trees. This is hard to believe but true!

One way you can tell if a citrus tree has this deadly malady, is that somewhere on the tree there will be some pale lime-green leaves. But there is more to notice: a tell-tale set of leaves that stick up together, like a pair of rabbit ears, are a dead giveaway that the tree may be infected. Some of the tree’s leaves will look blotchy and the green color is unevenly distributed. The main vein going down the leaf will seem somewhat tough looking and raised. Additional symptoms are



indentations of the leaves, small fruits, lopsided fruit, or even blighted areas on the tree where there are no leaves.

Today, it is against the law for nurseries in Texas to raise citrus trees from their own seed, since these tree seedlings could be from contaminated stock. All nurseries that sell citrus trees in Texas are required by law to buy clean certified stock from the special screened-in nurseries that are set up in Texas. Of course, once the new seedling trees leave the facility, it is possible that they could become infected by a psyllid insect carrying the bacteria.

Experts do not think we have citrus greening in Texas right now, based on the steps they have taken to protect our citrus crops. But they all agree, it is a matter of time before we get it in Texas. It is already in Florida. Heroic efforts have already been taken by the Texas Department of Agriculture and the US Government, as well as Texas A&M, to do everything possible to keep citrus greening out of our state.

The insects that carry the bacteria are called psyllids. These are normally harmless insects minding their own business, but some have unfortunately been infected



with the bacteria due to feeding on an infected tree. They then go to a healthy tree and will feed on it.

These infected psyllids carry the germs in their bellies, and when they feed on a citrus tree, after about 30 minutes of feeding, the germ is transmitted to the tree. There is no cure. Even if you cut off the branch that is turning light green, it is too late because the bacteria is traveling up and down the tree inside the bark, systemically.

There is NO current report of this disease in Texas, but we are asking all residents who have citrus trees to take a look at their trees. We know we do not have citrus greening in the tree nurseries, since these are inspected, but we are not certain about citrus trees that are growing at private residences. For pictures of infected trees and the psyllid and more information, go to <http://texascitrusgreening.org/>. If you suspect you might

## From Our Writers Continued

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have this problem, contact the Texas Department of Agriculture (800-835-5832) or the Texas AgriLife Extension Service for assistance. Early detection of citrus greening will help reduce the spread of this pathogen.

Scientists are hopeful that somehow a new strain of citrus can be developed that will be immune to this bacteria. They are in a race against time. There is discussion about using spinach genes with the citrus genes because no human is allergic to spinach (no matter what your kids have told you!). So far, no fruit has been developed using this approach, and until that happens, we won't know if the citrus fruit using a spinach gene will be green or orange!

Scientists believe that it is matter of time before we get citrus greening in Texas, since infected psyllids could blow in on winds from a storm. But in the meantime, we are doing everything we can to be vigilant. Take the time today to go inspect your citrus trees and give one of the above numbers a call if you think you have detected citrus greening – The Yellow Dragon!



### November Master Gardening Classes

Nov. 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Soils & Fertility **Extension Office <i>Plant ID: Xeriscape</i>	Speaker-Dr. Dan Fromme, Assoc. Prof. & Extension Agronomist	<u>Homework for Nov. 9<sup>th</sup>:</u> Chapter 1: 1-12 thru 1-20 & 1-24 thru 1-32
Nov. 9 <sup>th</sup>	Propagation I – Seeds Propagation II- Vegetative *Green Acres Greenhouse	MG Propagation Specialists Annette Fowler, Vicki Coble, Sandy Stanley, Jeanna Godfrey – A/SP MGs	<u>Homework for Nov. 17<sup>th</sup>:</u> Chapter 6: 6-1 thru 6-82
Nov. 16	Home Vegetable Gardening **1st Methodist Church, 801 E. Main	Tom LeRoy, Montgomery Co. Extension Agent-Horticulture	<u>Homework:</u> Study for Post-test
Nov. 30	Rainwater Harvesting Overview-MG Phone Desk & Common Homeowner Questions MG Post Test & survey	Karen Ivey, San Patricio Municipal Water District Ginger Easton Smith, Aransas CEA	

# Around the State

## SPECIALIST TRAINING

### Vegetables

**Weslaco, November 3-4**

**Hosted by:** Barbara Storz, County Extension Agent-Horticulture, Hidalgo County

**Meeting Location:** USDA-ARS, Bee Building  
2413 E. Highway 83, Weslaco, Texas 78596  
Texas AgriLife Extension Service – Hidalgo County  
Office: 956/383-1026, email: Barbara Storz, CEA-Horticulture  
email: [b-storz@tamu.edu](mailto:b-storz@tamu.edu)  
<http://hidalgo-tx.tamu.edu>

The purpose of the MG Vegetable Specialist training is to provide advanced training whereby Master Gardeners can obtain specialization in Vegetable Gardening that support or expand designated educational programs of Texas AgriLife.

This training was created as an intensive multi-day, hands-on course to provide Master Gardeners with knowledge and skills required to communicate vegetable production information to others.

Completion of the course and other requirements results in recognition as a Master Gardener “Vegetable Specialist”. This certification does not empower the individual with supervisory or administrative authority within his/her local county programs.

**Course Fee:** \$250

#### **Course Fee includes:**

Pocket Loupe, Book - Garden Insects of North America, Book - Commonsense Vegetable Gardening for the South, Book - Identifying Diseases of Vegetables, Jump Drive that includes about 1200 pdf files on all aspects of gardening (Catered lunch, snacks, and drinks over the 2 days of meeting)

Sit down dinner at a local restaurant

Reimbursement of \$50 from the Master Gardener secretary upon completion of all requirements



**From Our Extension Agent**

How exciting! Two projects the Aransas/San Patricio Master Gardeners are involved in have been in the Caller-Times this past month; the Native Grass Demonstration Garden and CONE Garden at Welder Wildlife Refuge and the xeriscape garden at the San Patricio County Fairgrounds.

The A/SP Master Gardeners were recognized as a partner in the demonstration gardens at Welder in a dedication of the gardens on October 18. The MGs awarded an educational grant to help with installing the native grass garden and funding for supplies for the CONE garden as well as many volunteer hours on both.

The CONE ([Collaborative Observatories for Natural Environments](#)) garden includes a telerobotic camera that viewers can operate online, as well as a variety of wildlife feeding and watering stations and a native plant garden, according to Welder's website. All of these things can be viewed through the website, <http://cone.berkeley.edu>.

The gardens at Welder Wildlife Refuge are one of the three public demonstration gardens that MGs can earn volunteer hours working in. The other two are Green Acres Demonstration Garden at the Extension office and the demonstration garden at Fulton Mansion.

The landscaping surrounding the events center at the Fairgrounds in Sinton was designed by the MG landscape design team and is a xeriscape garden with a rainwater harvesting system and tank which provides the small amount of irrigation needed. Karen Ivey, San Pat Municipal Water District, is featured in the article about this project. The articles can be viewed at <http://www.caller.com/news/2010/oct/24/san-pat-water-district-secretary-mixes-with/> and <http://www.caller.com/news/2010/oct/18/welder-wildlife-refuge-debuts-its-native-grass/>

Unfortunately, in both articles the reporters did not mention the Master Gardeners, so it looks like some education is needed there, but we know who was involved. Congratulations to everyone involved and thanks to all of the hardworking A/SP Master Gardeners! Happy Thanksgiving, Ginger

# November 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b> 9 am MG meeting 1:30-5 pm MG Class, Ext. Office 6pm-9pm Earth-Kind Class, Ext. Off.	<b>3</b> 10 am Education Committee	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> 8-10am Green Acres Garden Day 10:30-11:30am Landscape meeting	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> 1:30-5 pm MG Class 6pm-9pm Earth-Kind Class	<b>10</b> 10 am Budget meeting	<b>11</b> <i>County Holiday</i>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> 10 am Board Meeting 12-1pm Brown Bag 1:30-5 pm MG Class 6pm-9 pm Last Earth-Kind Class	<b>17</b> 10 am Education Committee 10 am Tree Team Visits	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> 8-10 am Green Acres Garden Day	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> <i>Holiday</i>	<b>26</b> <i>Holiday</i>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> 1:30-5 pm MG Class MG Hours Due				