

BELL COUNTY MASTER GARDENER
Tip of the Week
By Mary Lew Quesinberry
“Using White/Gray Plants in the Garden”

White gardens seem so pure, ethereal, and dare I say boring, but they are magical as they glow at daybreak and in the evening light!

White blooming plants and plants with silvery gray foliage act as exclamation points and will set off your more colorful plant selections. Most gray plants are deer resistant, and gray foliated plants are usually drought tolerant. Care must be taken not to plant them too deeply. Plant them on a berm or slightly elevated with good drainage. Add decomposed granite, expanded shale or coarse builders' sand to the soil to help keep our Bell County soil loose. Many gray plants don't like water on their foliage so you may prefer to water them at ground level.

Texas Kidneywood (*Eysenhardtia texana*) and Anacacho Orchid Tree (*Bauhinia lunarioides*) are small native trees with white blooms and all are wonderfully scented. They will fill your garden with fragrance. Mexican Orchid Tree (*Bauhinia mexicana*) is another small, white blooming tree. White blooming vines such as Sweet Autumn Clematis (*Clematis terniflora*), Angel's Trumpet (*Brugmansia*) and the nocturnal bloomer, Moonflower Vine (*Ipomoea alba*) are all fragrant.

White Earthkind roses, Ducher and Sea Foam, are fragrant and Ducher, with its small size, can be grown in a pot. Sea Foam is one of the roses planted at the White House. Glamis Castle, a David Austin rose, is another fragrant rose with white blooms. Tough, native, silvery gray shrubs, Cottoneaster, Cenizo, Gray Bush Germander, Lavender, and Woolly Butterfly Bush all do well in Central Texas. The soft, fuzzy, gray Lamb's Ear (*Stachys lanata*) is a favorite of children, and Dusty Miller (*Artemisia*) and Gray Santolina (*Santolina chamaecyparissus*) are carefree perennials that will add beauty to your garden.

Have any questions about gardening in Central Texas? Contact ask.bcmga@gmail.com

□ In the photo: The beautiful blooms of the Anacacho Orchid Tree will fill your garden with fragrance. This small native tree will grow 8-12 feet tall, in sun or shade and does well in our alkaline soil.

