

The Blooming Bell

July 2013



**Bell County
Master Gardener
Association**



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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3 NO Work Day NO Burger Wednesday		5	6
7	8	9	10 Work Day 7:30 am with meeting to follow General Meeting on Bees, 11 am	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24 Work Day 7:30 am Board of Directors Meeting 9 am	25	26	27
28	29	30	31 Whistle Stop			

Banner Photo of Terrie Hahn's Blue Bells.

The President's Corner

I had the privilege to visit Bracken Bat Cave this past month. As several million bats flew from the cave, an individual from Bat Conservation International presented information on bats and their importance to agriculture and the environment. Hopefully our chapter will soon have a BCI program presented at a chapter meeting. As you attend events this summer and fall, if the program would be appropriate for a monthly meeting, please contact Randy. He is in search of interesting monthly programs for Master Gardeners.

With the July 4th holiday this week, the usual Burger Wednesday will not be held. Everyone needs a holiday, the landscape crew and the cook. Thanks to the landscape crew for keeping our grounds looking good even in the heat of summer. If you attended the monthly meeting in June, you know that the membership has overwhelmingly voted to host the State conference in 2015. Our bid for the conference will be presented at the December 2013 meeting. Though it is not definite, we will begin to make plans. Please present your ideas for speakers, workshops, and special events to Gary Slanga.

Though the temperature is getting warmer, gardening continues. Some of you are planning a fall garden and preparing to plant a few things before the end of July. The Killeen community garden crew has just harvested 474 pounds of onions. The potato harvest is pending as I write this article. The municipal gardens have provided 1350 pounds of fresh produce to local food pantries and soup kitchens the first six months of this year. Congratulations garden crew!

The July monthly meeting will be a program on Bees. This

is always an interesting and informative program. There will be a sign up sheet at the July meeting to survey the interest in a fall field trip to the Dallas Botanical Garden.

Annual dues (\$25.) are due at this time. Mail your check to our treasurer Gail Christian or to the extension office. Thanks for paying your dues on time.

Pavers can still be ordered. If you have a friend or family member that is difficult to gift, consider giving them a paver for their garden for Christmas. The purchase of a paver helps to fund landscaping for the new building and it is also a unique gift.

Registration is now open for the 2013 State Master Gardener Conference in the Rio Grande Valley. The host city is McAllen. The agenda looks interesting and the locale is interesting too. I hope you will consider attending.

Stay cool as summer has arrived.....Laura

Photo by Terrie Hahn



Memories of Janelle Burson

By Beverly Wickersham and Edie Campbell

Although Janelle Burson contributed many work hours to the various Bell County Master Gardener projects, we are most familiar with her contributions to the planning and development of the Killeen Municipal Court Garden. She was one of several Master Gardeners eager to see the project get underway, and asked each time I saw her at a Monthly Meeting or elsewhere how soon we would be getting to work developing the Garden. Once the project was "on the ground," Janelle provided excellent ideas for garden design, plant selection, and gardening tips. The students who came to the Garden on Saturday mornings for three hours of garden work obviously enjoyed the time spent with Janelle. Not only were they learning essential gardening skills, but they felt happily at ease under her gentle teaching.

One other of Janelle's contributions to the Master Gardener organization was a Christmas gift of time and talent. The most spectacular spot in the Christmas Party room was always the Salad Bar which was beautifully decorated under the direction of and with materials provided by Janelle.



Killeen Community Garden's Big Veggie Haul!

- Jerry Lewis

Pictured here are a few of the 674 pounds of onions we harvested in June at the Killeen Municipal Court Garden. (Note: We did not grow the football. Its in the picture for size comparison.) The varieties of onions planted were Early White, Yellow Granex, and 1015y. We harvested over 1350 pounds of produce in June, all of it going to soup kitchens, food banks, and senior centers.

Photo to the right is by Jerry Lewis, all others on this page, next page and front cover are from Randy Brown.



Big Haul...continued



Fennel: A Decorative Culinary Herb

- Beverly Wickersham

Although Fennel may be a stranger to your garden, you are probably very well acquainted with Fennel's relatives: Dill, Coriander, Caraway, Cumin, Anise, and Carrot. All are members of the Umbelliferae (Apiaceae) family. Most Fennels grow from 3 to 5 feet high when in bloom. Once the seeds from tiny flowers are harvested, the bloom stalks can be cut down to the ground along with any straggly leaf stems. New growth will emerge quickly.

The most popular common Fennel is Sweet Fennel which has green foliage. Bronze Fennel, another popular variety, has copper-tinged to purplish foliage. Both are easy to grow in a well cultivated fertile soil and are much used as an herb as well as ornamental garden plant. These attractive plants may grow from 3 to 6 feet in height and are topped with yellow umbels of tiny flowers followed by aromatic seeds which can be harvested when mature and stored in a dry glass container. Before the plant flowers, the leaves can be clipped and used as you would use dill. Fennel has an anise-like flavor with varying degrees of sweetness, depending on the amount of oils present. It is an excellent herb for flavoring fish, chicken broth, and salads.

Another Fennel species is Florence Fennel which forms a bulbous base and can be used like Sweet Fennel. However, it is primarily grown as a vegetable. This Fennel species has bulb-like stems which have combined flavor of licorice and celery. Florence Fennel needs a long growing season with plenty of moisture. Sow seeds about ½ inch deep in the late spring. Thin seedlings to 8 inches apart. "Dirt up" the plant to blanch the "bulbs" once they have reached

the size of golf balls. Flower heads should be removed unless wanted for the seeds. The bulbs should be ready to harvest by late summer. The bulb is delicious when sliced and cooked in a little chicken broth. Add a bit of sour cream on top of the cooked Fennel bulb before serving.

I plant Fennel for its culinary use and because it is a favorite food for the Swallowtail Butterfly caterpillars.

**Note: Fennel should not be eaten during pregnancy because of possible estrogenic effects.*



Yet Another Tomato Problem

- Werner Hahn

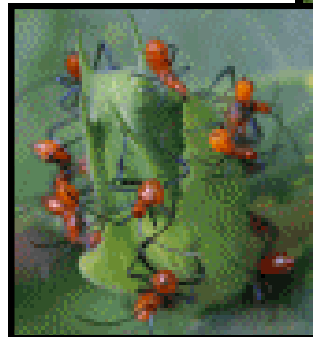
So, you've managed to keep your tomato plants relatively healthy, nursing them through early blight, ungodly heat, minimal rainfall, a horn worm or two, spider mites and bird pecks. Your yield is good and you start to enjoy the fruits of your labors and you pat yourself on the back and think you're home free. But alas, during early and mid harvest a new nemesis makes itself known, lurking in the weeds, waiting until your tomatoes start to ripen, the **leaf-footed bug**!

This pest is also referred to as a leaf-footed stink bug, because it emits a foul odor like the smaller green or brown shield shaped stink bugs. The adults tend to show up later in the season when the tomatoes begin to ripen. They pierce the fruit and suck the juices, leaving rough discolored areas on the surface as well as damage to the flesh beneath. The tomato is still edible if you cut away the damage, however large infestations can ruin whole tomatoes.

A good organic solution to the problem is to pick them off by hand, but remember to wear gloves unless you don't mind the aroma of stink bug on your fingers. The method I prefer is to knock them off the plant with a small trowel or weeding tool into a container of soapy water. It is very satisfying. The best time to do this is early in the morning. The earlier the better, because the bugs tend to be very sluggish at this time, especially if we have an early morning dew. As the morning warms up and the sun dries them off, they become much more active and they will take flight and buzz away before you can dispatch them. If you make it out too late, a fine misting from the garden hose helps to some degree.

As is the case with most problems, prevention is the best solution. These bugs like to hang out in weedy areas during the winter so it may be helpful to keep the weeds and tall grass out of the garden and to provide a mowed buffer zone around the garden. (Maybe I'll try that for next year!)

Happy hunting!



Photos by Werner and Terrie Hahn. Photo of eggs by Wildlifetheater.com.
Photo of Nymphs by <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/weekly>

Q & A

Editor's note: Let's learn from one another. Submit your questions and answers to me at moom-pie45@hotmail.com or call me at 512-863-9837.

Last month's question from:

- Susan Terry

Amazing wildflowers in Marble Falls in late April/early May. Tried to identify, but they don't match any descriptions I found. Acres of foot high, quarter size yellow "daisy's", saw tooth edge, with small, brown, slightly raised centers. Foliage is very grassy. Saw similar flowers along the front-age roads in Salado.



And the answer may be:

I received replies from Gail Christian, Mary Ann Everett, Jerry Lewis, Darla Menking, Joan Hinshaw, Sandra Wilson, Frances Idoux and Beverly Wickersham. It seems to be a tie between *Helenium amarum* (Brown Bitterweed) and *Thelesperma filifolium* (Greenthread). Purple Sneezeweed and Brown Eyed Susans were also mentioned. [These photos and info are from the Wildflower Center](#) with height information from [Wildflowers of the Texas Hill Country by Marshall Enquist](#).

Helenium amarum* var. *badium

Yellowdicks, Brown Bitterweed, Basin sneezeweed
Asteraceae (Aster Family)

6"-8" tall

Photographer: (Not verified)
[Bransford, W.D. and Dolphia](#)



Thelesperma filifolium* var. *filifolium

Stiff greenthread,
Showy Navajo tea,
Greenthread

Asteraceae (Aster Family)

6" - 24" tall

Photos from Wildflowers
Center Data Base

Right: (not verified) [Marcus, Joseph A.](#) Inset
photo: (verified) [Smith, Sandy](#)



Helenium flexuosum Raf.

Purplehead sneezeweed,
Purple-head sneezeweed

Asteraceae (Aster Family)

Photographer: (Not Verified)
[Bransford, W.D. and Dolphia](#)



Unfortunately, the original photo doesn't show the leaf structure too well or the height. So, your guess is as good as mine, however, I'm leaning towards the Brown Bitterweed camp. Everyone did agree that this flower is in the Aster Family! - Terrie Hahn

Q & A

This Month's Question from:

- Cindy Allen

What is this crazy crab-claw looking succulent I saw when I was visiting a succulent collector near Boerne? It's green when it's new, but turns purp-
pley black with age....almost reptilian!



This and That

Rose Talk

- Cindy Allen

Mary Ann Everett presented a program on Earthkind and heirloom roses to residents at Cornerstine Gardens nursing home in June. She was assisted by sweet Lily Henry of Colorado, (pictured right) and her grandmother, Cindy Allen.



Sunflower Crops?

- Gail Christian

Tom and I were on our way back from Ft Worth and saw these interesting fields of sunflowers. We are wondering if it is a new crop for Texas in this area. There are several large fields of the flowers. Several cars were pulled off the highway taking pictures.



The Duelbergs'

- Terrie Hahn

I bought a Henry Duelberg Salvia last year from a well known Austin nursery, and when it started blooming, much to my chagrin, it was white! I had fallen into the pitfall of buying a mismarked plant. When a group of MG's went to the Herb Forum in Round Top, I asked one of them to get me a **Henry** Duelberg and this time, it was really a **Henry** Duelberg. I did some research and realized the first one I bought was an **Augusta** Duelberg. Greg Grant wrote about **Henry and Augusta Duelberg** on *Plant Answers.com*. Below is a segment of the story. For the full story go to:

http://www.plantanswers.com/salvia_arcadia.htm

Salvia, Henry Duelberg

- Greg Grant

"One of the (Super Star) promotions, the Duelberg sage (Salvia 'Henry Duelberg') happens to be a plant that I found

and introduced to the Texas nursery trade. I'm a decent plant breeder but my forte seems to be stumbling across improved plants in unlikely places. For instance, the Gold Star esperanza came from a yard in an impoverished neighborhood in San Antonio.

The Marie Daly rose was a sport in my mom's backyard in the Pineywoods of East Texas. And the VIP petunia came from a flower bed in



front of a pay toilet in Stuttgart, Germany!

'Henry Duelberg' salvia is about three feet tall with fairly dark blue flowers, darker than typical native populations of *Salvia farinacea*. As a matter of fact, the leaves are wider, more serrated, and not as gray as native mealy cup



sage either. This has led to the speculation by some that it is of hybrid origin. I can't imagine for the life of me what other species would be involved. Although

the cemetery where it was growing was a bit east for *Salvia farinacea*, there were no other salvias in the cemetery, or even native in the area. I'm not sure how long they had been growing there but it seemed to be for some time. The plants had reseeded quite prolifically in the grass and even in the cracks of the concrete curbing. Henry Duelberg died in 1935 and his wife Augusta in 1903. I have this theory that Mr. Henry was a botanical sort and was dabbling in salvia breeding (you know "the father of Texas botany", Ferdinand Lindheimer, was German too). When Mr. Duelberg died, I supposed they planted his handy work on his grave. Long live Henry! Just in case I'm wrong, I named a white flowered seedling 'Augusta Duelberg' from the same grave for his wife. Who knows, SHE may have been the horticultural wonder woman. Despite the origins of these salvias I do know one thing. Unlike other German salvias on the market, Henry Duelberg lives!"

Photos of Henry Duelberg, left, and Augusta Duelberg, right, by Terrie Hahn

Announcements

June Monthly Meeting

- Randy Brown

The program for the July 10th Monthly Meeting will be on Bees.

The meeting starts at 11 am with social time starting at 10:30.

Monthly Dues

- Gail Christian, Treasurer

It is time to pay your annual dues. The amount is \$25.00, payable to BCMGA. You can give your check or cash to me, leave it at the extension office or mail to:

Gail Christian

3426 Bob White Lane

Belton, TX 76513

Please pay by the deadline of July 31, 2013.

Remember that you do not have to be certified in order to stay a member of BCMGA. But you do have to pay your dues. I hope you decide to stay a member and come to our monthly meetings and stay involved in our activities.

JMG teachers are exempt from paying dues, as well as the new class that just graduated. Your dues were included in your tuition.

Grounds Committee Action

- Brenda Albro

Because **July 4th** is on Thursday and a lot of people will be unavailable, there will not be a Burger Wednesday or a Work Day on **the 3rd of July**.

July:

10th- 7:30 workday and short meeting following.

17th – Not a scheduled workday but if we need it we will send out an email.

24th – 7:30 workday

31st – Whistle Stop (Kathy will probably give you that info.)

August:

7th – Grounds work day and Burger Wednesday

14th – 7:30 Grounds workday

21st – Not a scheduled workday but if we need it we will send out an email.

28th – 7:30 Workday

We are beginning to work on the plans for the first section to be landscaped inside the fence. All of the hardscape is now in place, so plans can be made. Charles is going to talk with us about the way the area at the front entrance needs to slope for drainage ease so that we can start building the beds. Included in this front entrance section will be the pavers that have been purchased. Hopefully this section will be in good shape by the time of the Plant Sale.

If you would like to offer suggestions, please email Brenda at Brenda.albro@sbcglobal.net or write them on paper and give them to Brenda or Sophia.

What's Happening in Your Yard?

- Frances Idoux

The agave stalk from the picture in June's Blooming Bell is much taller now with a dozen "branches." Each branch has blooms of small yellow flowers, and there seems to be a part at the tip of the stalk that will bloom but hasn't yet. It's too tall for me to measure!



What's Happening in Your Yard?

- Charles Newsom

Below: my compost pile and screen to sort out the large items;
right: the compost pile at 140 degrees; bottom of page: Water
Harvesting off the shed using a salvaged 900 gallon tank;
the fennel crop for the butterflies.



What's Happening in Your Yard?

- Charles Newsom



Peas will be ready to pick soon. We use drip irrigation, the black pipe in the photo above. Fresh corn from the garden. Below is our wall of Coral Vine.



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Corresponding Secretary	Peg Fleet
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Contributing Writers:

Laura Murphy
Beverly Wickersham
Edie Campbell
Werner Hahn
Jerry Lewis
Cindy Allen
Susan Terry
Randy Brown
Brenda Albro
Charles Newsom
Frances Idoux
Gail Christian
Terrie Hahn

Contributing Photographers:

Randy Brown
Beverly Wickersham
Charles Newsom
Gail Christian
Frances Idoux
Cindy Allen
Susan Terry
Werner Hahn
Terrie Hahn
Jerry Lewis

Editor:

Terrie Hahn

Proofreader:

Werner Hahn

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1605 N. Main St.
Belton, Texas 76513
(254) 933-5305

Please submit articles and photos for the Blooming
Bell to Terrie Hahn at:

moompie45@hotmail.com
321 Logan Ranch Rd.
Georgetown, TX 78628