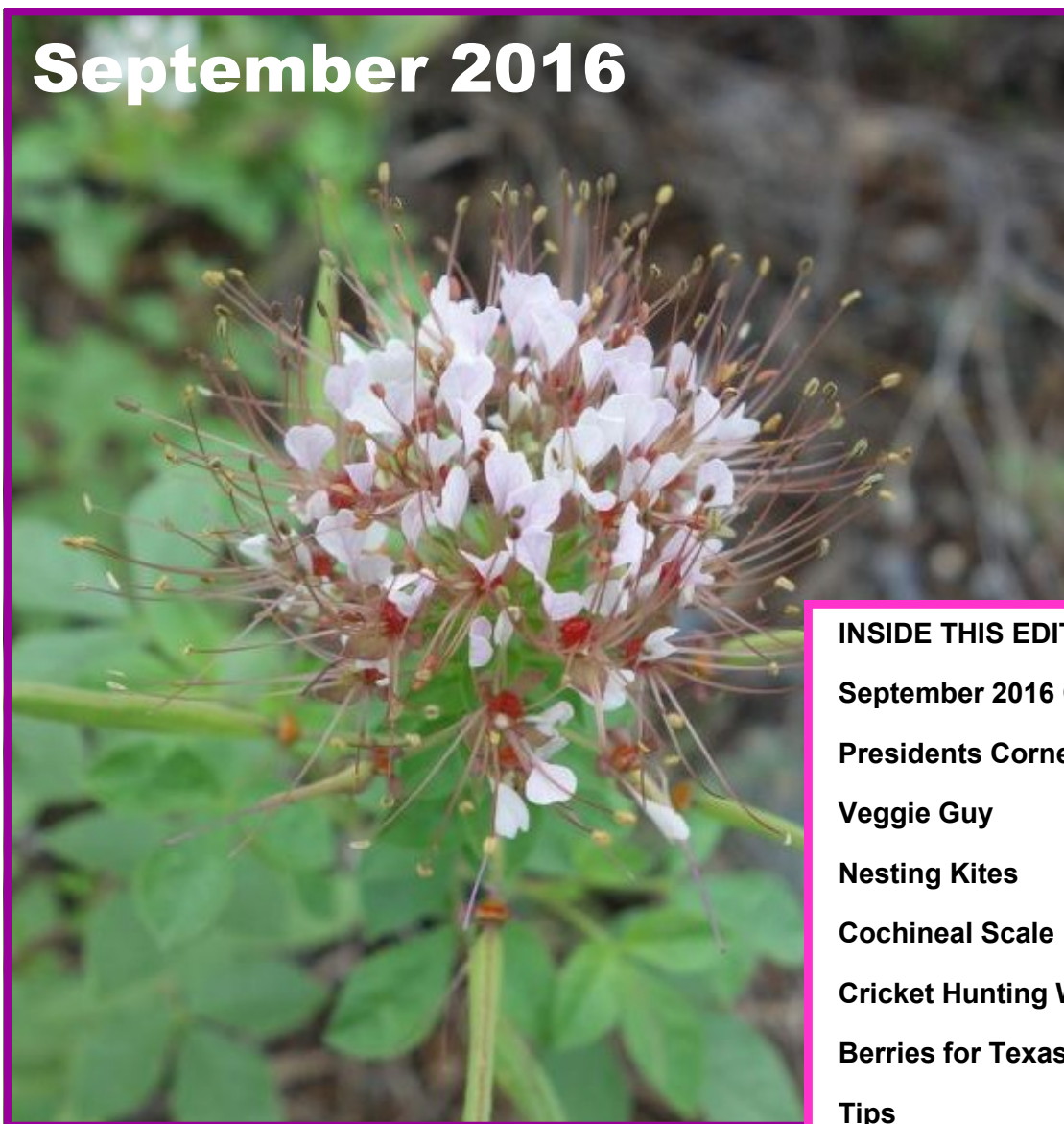


The Blooming Bell

September 2016



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**Bell County
Master Gardener
Association**



Photo by Terrie Hahn of
one of the many late
summer/fall blooming
wildflowers-Clammy
Weed that Humming-
birds and Bees love.

September 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5 Labor Day	6	7 Work Day 7:30 am* Burger Wednesday 10:30 am	8	9	10 Plant Sale 8 - 1
11	12	13	14 Work Day 7:30 am* General Meeting 9 am Speaker is Dirk Aaron Social time 8:30 am Plant Swap 7:30 am	15	16	17
18	19	20	21 Work Day 7:30 am*	22	23	24
25	26	27	28 Work Day 7:30 am* BOD Meeting 9 am	29	30	

Upcoming events: Salado Garden Tour is October 8th.

Photo of Rain Lilies by Terrie Hahn.

* in the event of rain, there will be NO Workday.

Remember to record volunteer/education hours.

The President's Corner

The greenhouse is now a little closer to completion thanks to Carla Harmon, Charles Newsom and others. They installed the vent and fan system to improve air circulation in the building.

Wayne Schirner, Gail Christian, Jan George and I attended the State Board of Directors Meeting. We learned a little about using social media to promote master gardeners and also found out that Colin county is surveying members about the Volunteer Management System (VMS) that we use for tracking hours. There are several improvements that could be made to improve its usability. Maybe they will be instrumental in getting the improvements implemented. I hope that everyone feels comfortable using the system now. Just a reminder that you need to keep your hours in the VMS updated on a timely basis. Very soon we will be closing out the hours for the end of year reports and you will want to get credit for all your hard work.

Gail Koontz and I attended the East Texas Fruit Conference in Overton. They had several good speakers. Aquaponics was the main draw for me. What I learned is that raising plants using aquaponics is not for the faint of heart. May be too complicated to do on a small scale. However Hydroponics is a viable alternative.

Also the 2016 Texas Fruit Conference is coming up on October 31st in New Braunfels for those who may be interested.

Last but not least, the Fall Plant Sale is only two weeks away. We have a lot of work to do around the grounds so we will be ready to welcome our guests attending the sale. If anyone can spare some time during this period, your help will be greatly appreciated.

Thanks to everyone for all your hard work. Because of your good work we have the best Master Gardener Organizations in Texas.

- Gary

Coming Next Month...

- **Herb Party Photos and Tips**
- **Olive Leaves for Tea?**
- **Fall is for Planting**
- **Plant Sale Photos**
- **Plant Swap Photos**
- **Hula Hoop Queen**

Remember
The Plant Sale
September 10th
8 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Plant Swap

- Jane Van Praag

TEENY-TINY LITTLE HINT

**TUCKED RIGHT HERE IN BIG
BOLD PRINT:**

REV UP, THEN GIDDYUP HOP

TO OUR 09-14 BCMGA PLANT SWAP!

The Veggie Guy

- Wayne Schirner

Strawberries & Rhubarb

There is so much to do in September concerning vegetable gardening. This is really the beginning of our “second spring” in Central Texas, with almost as many different crops to plant as there are in February and March. Many of the crops that can be planted in September through October will benefit from the cool, mild winters we have and continue to produce through December and January. We truly can have a 12-month gardening season. I encourage everyone to look again at the Vegetable Garden Planting Guide for Travis County to see what crops should be planted now. The first and last frost dates for Travis County vary from ours by only a few days, so this is a great guide to save and look at often.

I want to write about two different crops this month, strawberries and rhubarb. I grew up in Iowa, where these crops were planted and maintained as perennials. Every spring we harvested buckets of strawberries and more rhubarb than we could eat. Strawberry-rhubarb pie was a favorite of mine growing up, as it was for many who grew up in colder climates. About 5 years ago, when I saw strawberry plants available at a local store in March, I got excited about growing strawberries. I prepared the soil and placed the plants as directed, watered, and waited. Needless to say, that was a miserable failure. As I learned, strawberries don't do well in the blistering summer heat of Texas. I have since learned that the same is true for rhubarb. I learned a valuable lesson that just because a store is selling plants at a certain time of year doesn't mean that those plants will do well if planted then. To be successful with these crops in our climate, grow them as annuals, planted in the fall. After harvesting in the spring, remove the plants and plant something else in that space until the next fall.

Strawberries are categorized into two types: spring bearing, and everbearing or day neutral. Spring bearing plants are what we should plant in the fall in central Texas. Dormant transplants are set by late Sep-

tember in our climate, and as late as November in extreme south Texas. There are hundreds of varieties available, but only three are recommended for the home gardener: Chandler, Sequoia, and Douglas. (We should have Chandler and Sequoia plants available at the Fall Plant Sale.) The everbearing or day neutral varieties are, at best, mediocre producers in this part of the country, so I recommend you not waste your time or money on these.

Although the strawberry is not very exacting in its soil requirements, it will not tolerate poorly drained waterlogged soil. It does prefer a slightly acidic soil, but a good crop can still be produced with a soil pH as high as 7.8. Strawberries do best in a raised bed of sandy or sandy loam soil that is neutral or slightly acid. They are a perfect crop for the Square Foot Garden using Mel's Mix. The standard recommendation is to place plants with 12" spacing, so in a 4'x4' bed you could plant 16 plants. I plan to do some experimenting in my garden this fall to see if closer spacing will provide as much produce per plant. Water daily for the first two weeks after planting, especially if the weather is hot and dry. Water infrequently as needed during the winter months. Provide protection from severe winter freezes with organic mulches or commercial grow covers. They will tolerate mild freezing temperatures, but protection must be provided when tem-



peratures drop into the teens. Uncover the plants when the temperature warms again. Commercial growers typically place a black plastic cover over the bed prior to planting. This can help keep the soil warmer, improve weed control, improve moisture con-

Continued on next page...

Strawberries and Rhubarb...continued

servation, and protect berries from soil contact. An alternative to black plastic would be straw, which is why these berries are called strawberries. You should be able to harvest your crop over a one-month time frame, beginning in late March or early April.



Many Texas gardening books say that you can't grow rhubarb down here because it is too hot. As with strawberries, in northern gardens, it is grown as a perennial and harvested from late spring through summer. Southern gardeners who have purchased dormant roots and tried to grow this vegetable as a perennial have failed miserably.

The key is to rethink the traditional culture and grow it as an annual, starting from seed in September. The seed most readily available is 'Victoria'. Soak the seed in warm water for a few hours prior to planting. Fill 4" pots with a good potting or seed starting mix, place 2 seeds in each pot and cover then with about ¼" deep with the mix. Keep them indoors at room temperature until they sprout, and then place in a very bright window or under a grow light. Keep the soil moist but not soggy wet. When the plants are about a week old, start using a dilute liquid fertilizer each time you water. After the plants are about 4" tall, or have 3-5 leaves, you can plant them out into the garden. Rhubarb is fairly tolerant of a wide soil pH range, and as with strawberries, it does best in a raised bed to facilitate drainage. If the weather is still hot when transplanting into the garden, provide a makeshift shade structure to help plants through the transition. Watering is critical and the plants need to stay fairly moist, but not soggy wet. Rhubarb is susceptible to several fungal rots and if you overwater the plants they will quickly succumb.

As the weather moves into the milder days of fall, the plants will slowly start to take off. Fertilize plants monthly from September through April. While the plants will tolerate considerable cold, a hard freeze will damage the above ground leaves and petioles. Gallon milk jugs for smaller plants or low clear plastic

tunnels for larger plants will give you a head start on the spring season. By late winter, the plants will resume rapid growth and reach a respectable size by March or April when you can start harvesting. The edible portion of the plant is the long leaf stalk. **Only the stalks are to be eaten, NOT the leaves on the end of the stalk** because of high levels of a substance in the leaves that has the potential to be harmful. Texas grown rhubarb will generally be more green than red in color. This is partially due to our warm climate and partially because the reddest varieties are not available from seed.

Rhubarb is not eaten fresh but rather is cooked in pies, tarts, and sauces. The most famous dish of course is strawberry rhubarb pie. By a fortuitous coincidence only explained as divine design our Texas rhubarb season and strawberry season run concurrently. You can plant a strawberry-rhubarb patch this fall and enjoy a great harvest next spring. If all goes well, I will share a strawberry rhubarb pie at the April or May 'Burger Wednesday.'

Photo of Rhubarb by Mister GC, and Strawberries by Rak-ratchada Torsap from freedigitalphotos.

Early Blight on Tomatoes

- Joe Masabni

Wayne Schirner received permission to forward this article from Dr. Masabni, Extension Small Acreage Vegetable Specialist at the Overton Research and Extension Center

You will get early blight in tomatoes every year. I know I do. Therefore, I put together some basic information on the disease and control options as a quick reference to use.

Survival and Dispersal

The fungus spends the winter in infected plant debris in or on the soil where it can survive at least one and perhaps several years. It can also be seed borne. New spores are produced the following season. The

Continued on next page...

Tomato Blight...continued

spores are transported by water, wind, insects, other animals including man, and machinery. Once the initial infections have occurred, they become the most important source of new spore production and are responsible for rapid disease spread.

Control

1. Use only clean seed saved from disease-free plants.
2. Remove and destroy crop residue at the end of the season. Where this is not practical, plow residue into the soil to promote breakdown by soil microorganisms and to physically remove the spore source from the soil surface.
3. Practice crop rotation to non-susceptible crops (3 years). Be sure to control volunteers/susceptible weeds.
4. Promote good air circulation by proper spacing of plants.
5. Orient rows in the direction of prevailing winds, avoid shaded areas, and avoid wind barriers.
6. Irrigate early in the day to promote rapid drying of foliage.
7. Healthy plants with adequate nutrition are less susceptible to the disease.
8. Minimize plant injury and the spread of spores by controlling insect feeding.
9. Hand picking diseased foliage may slow the rate of disease spread but should not be relied on for control. Do not work in a wet garden.
10. Use resistant or tolerant varieties.
11. The preventative fungicide chlorothalonil (Bravo) used on a 7-10 day schedule gives effective control.

Fungicides for Early Blight Control

Fungicide	Typical Application Interval	Examples of Trade Names
azoxystrobin,pyraclostrobin	7 to 14 days	Quadris,Amistar,CabrioEG
Bacillus subtilis	5 to 7 days	Seranade(Organic)
chlorothalonil	7 to 14 days	Daconil, Bravo, Echo, Fungoniland others
copper products	7 to 14 days	Bordeaux Mixture,Kocide,Tenn-Cop,Liqui-cop, Basicop, Camelot
hydrogen dioxide	Commercial only, see label	Oxidate(Organic)
mancozebandmaneb	7 to 14 days	Dithane,Penncozeb,Manex,Mancozeb,Maneb
potassium bicarbonate	5-14 days as needed	Armicarb100,Firststep
ziram	7 to 14 days	Ziram

Nesting Kites

- Gail Christian

Editor's note: In the July issue of the Blooming Bell, we had Gail's photos of this Kite when it was quite a bit younger.

I was gone for 8 days, but when I got home, I found my baby Mississippi Kite two houses down in the top of a big old Oak tree. I could hear him calling for food. Can't believe, as big as he is, they are still feeding him, but when I was trying to take his picture this morning, one swooped in and left him some food. I didn't catch it, as I was zooming in my camera at the time. Darn it! Sort of startled me, it was so quick. Right now I can hear him pleading for food and we have three adults resting in the Mulberry tree across the street from us. They are tired, I am sure, of feeding this big bird. He is in a really good tree, It sits up high by this house and looks out over the lake. The north side has several dead limbs and you can really see him when you drive by. I called the neighbors to let them know what was in the tree and making the noise. They said they could hear the noise, but didn't know what it was and appreciated the information.

I wonder when they will head for Central America? I will miss looking for them.

[Photos by Gail Christian.](#)



Speaking of Birds!

- Terrie Hahn

We found this bird in one of our Live Oaks. I sent Mary Ann Everett, our resident bird expert, a photo and she said it's a young Green Heron! He only hung around a day or two. A week after that, I saw a Spotted Sandpiper hanging out. An interesting year for birds!



Wizzie's Wonderful World of Insects

Cochineal Scale

- **Wizzie Brown, Travis County AgriLife Extension Entomologist**

Cochineal scale insects are found on prickly pear cactus. These insects can be mistaken for fungus as they exude a cottony white covering to protect themselves. If you decide to take a closer look, under the cottony mass you will discover a small, oval insect that is wingless and has piercing-sucking mouthparts. Females are about 1/16 of an inch in length with males being around 1/32 of an inch long. Males look more like typical insects in that they have wings and legs (adult females do not). Males also have two filaments that extend from the tip of the abdomen.



Cochineal insects feed exclusively on prickly pear cactus. The insects insert their mouthparts into the cactus pads and suck out plant juices. Feeding can cause yellowing of cactus pads and heavy infestations can lead to browning and possible death of the plant.

As the female feeds, she produces eggs underneath the protective covering. Once the eggs hatch, first instar nymphs, called crawlers, emerge. Crawlers can move to different areas before they settle down to feed. They may stay near their mother, move to nearby cactus pads or be dispersed by wind to new plants. Once crawlers are settled in their new location, they begin to spin the waxy filament that creates their protective covering.

Since cochineal insects are only mobile in the first instar, control can be as simple as removing infested

pads from the plant and disposing of them. Another non-chemical option would be to use a high pressure water spray to dislodge insects from the plant. Less toxic methods could include pesticides such as insecticidal soap, horticultural oil (when temperatures are below 85 degrees), or botanicals with active ingredients such as azadirachtin, d-limonene or pyrethrum. Synthetic products are also available, but are often unnecessary.

If you don't mind a bit of plant damage or the sight of the scale insects, you can grow them to obtain a beautiful red dye called carmine. These insects have carminic acid in their bodies that creates a bright red dye. The insects were harvested by native peoples from the Southwestern United States, Mexico and South America for their dye. This dye is used in various cosmetic products or food products as coloring for hues of red, pink and purple.

For more information or help with identification, contact Wizzie Brown, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist at 512.854.9600. Check out my blog at www.urban-ipm.blogspot.com

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TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION

The Cricket Hunting Wasp

by Kathy Love & Ann Wagner

While heading out after the August Burger Wednesday, Jan George, Gail Christian and I met with Scarlot Barreras and Belton resident, George Highsmith, who had a sandwich bag containing two small black wasps. Mr. Highsmith asked for help identifying the wasps which he reported had been invading his apartment in large numbers since late June and early July. He told us the wasps started coming in through the bathroom vents and were now coming in through every vent and opening in his apartment. He said he had probably killed between 200-250 of the wasps in his apartment at the rate of 10-15 per day.

He also reported that his apartment complex had used three different exterminators on the wasps, with each identifying the wasps differently. Apparently one did identify the wasps correctly as Sphecidae but thought the problem unresolvable as they thought the wasps were living in the walls of the complex where they could not be treated. Bottom line, none of the exterminators were successful in managing the pests. Jan, Gail and I kicked around a few ideas, but in the end we all agreed we had never seen the wasp we were looking at which was between ½ to 5/8-inch-long, black with dusky translucent wings. It looked a little like a dirt dobber but considerably smaller.

When I got home, I pulled out my trusty computer and went to aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu and started trying to identify the wasp. After about 20 minutes of research, I found the critter and identified it by

- Size, ½ inch to 5/8-inch long
- Color, dull black body with dusky gray or brownish translucent wings
- Habit, commonly invade homes in urban areas through bathrooms and other living areas

- Timing, most often appear in later summer or fall during warmer weather, and

- An unusual wasp, not commonly found in Texas outside of the Dallas-Fort Worth area

The article I used to identify what we now know is the cricket-hunter wasp was written by Michael E. Merchant, PhD, BCE, Professor and Extension Urban En-

tomologist, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service on his entomologist blog "Insects in the City". Interestingly, at the conclusion of his article, Dr. Merchant asked for samples of any of the wasps found outside of the Dallas-Fort Worth area where he offices.



Sooooo, after getting Jan and Gail's agreement that there was a high probability that Mr. Highsmith was having an invasion of cricket-hunter wasps, I located Mr. Highsmith and copied Dr. Merchant's article to him. He immediately agreed with the identification so I emailed Dr. Merchant and hooked them up.

As of August 15th, Dr. Merchant has received samples of the wasps forwarded to him by Mr. Highsmith and positively identified them as cricket-hunter wasps. He stated in an email to Mr. Highsmith and copied to Lyle Zoeller that "This will be a new record for Bell County. . ." and further advised Mr. Highsmith he will be using his samples and story in a paper he is preparing. Dr. Merchant also offered the following to Mr. Highsmith and his apartment complex for control of the wasps:

"Control can be difficult. Possible solutions include: screening "weep holes" in the outer brick veneer of the home, filling-in open holes under the house foundation, sealing gaps or openings where wasps might enter around baseboards, bathtub, or toilet."

Continued on next page...

Cricket Wasp...continued

The following information was excerpted from Dr. Merchant's blog by my co-author Ann Wagner:

"Liris beatus (Hymenoptera: Sphecidae) is an unusual wasp that occasionally becomes a pest in Texas homes. Known as the cricket-hunter wasp because of its habit of catching and feeding crickets to its offspring, these wasps are common outdoor insects. They are a member of the solitary wasp family. So far they have been found in and around homes in Dallas and Ft. Worth, Texas.

Identification: *Cricket-hunter wasps are ½ – 5/8 inches long, dull black in coloration, with grey or dusky-colored wings. They spend much of their time searching for crickets, which they attempt to sting, capture, and transport live to their nest. After a cricket victim has been subdued and carried to suitable shelter, the female lays on it a single egg. After hatching, the larva begins feeding immediately on its paralyzed cricket prey. One cricket probably provides enough food for a single wasp to develop.*

Damage: *Cricket-hunter wasps can be found actively climbing up and down walls of bathrooms and other living areas. They can appear indoors year-round, but are most common in late summer, fall, and during warm spells in the winter. Infestations can be persistent and annoying. Though not normally aggressive, when prompted these insects can occasionally sting.*

So what are these wasps doing in homes? In nature, female cricket-hunter wasps establish nest sites in holes in the ground, such as rodent burrows. In urban areas, where natural nesting sites are rare, these wasps take advantage of man-made cavities in the walls of buildings. Good sites include weep holes in brick facings or other openings in walls or under house foundations. A single female may deposit several crickets, each with egg, in a nest site. In addition, other female wasps may share the same site, building cricket stashes up into the hundreds or possibly thousands."

The purpose of this cricket-hunter wasp article is actually two-fold:

- 1) Educate our readers about this less than common pest, and
- 2) Encourage my fellow Master Gardeners to get involved with answering citizen calls and questions fielded by the extension office.

I started taking calls and emails a few months ago. It is undoubtedly my favorite part of being a Master Gardener! I've gotten questions about lawns, trees, bugs and pests, vegetables and fruits. With the exception of those questions I have addressed more than once (white grubs in the lawn), I have had to research every single call to be able to give accurate information. A great way to learn! The citizens I have spoken with are always appreciative of the help, even when I didn't have good news (Yes, that tree is definitely dead!)

I have handled 99% of the questions with either a telephone call or email, having made only one visit to the caller's home to address the question, so your time and effort commitment is very manageable. In my opinion, the main commitment you need to make is to treat the calls like a job. Be thorough and timely with your responses and if you need help, check with another member who has expertise in the area you are addressing. This is a great learning exercise and I am personally gratified to know I am using the knowledge I gained from my Master Gardener training to help others. If you want to get involved in this fun and educational opportunity, let me know or contact Gary Slanga or Scarlot and Janice in the extension office.

**CHECK OUT BCMGA FACEBOOK
PAGE! GO TO**

<https://www.facebook.com/BCMGA>

Berries For Texas

- Kathy Love

In Texas, the most planted and best adapted berry is the blackberry. They are relatively easy to grow in small areas, tolerate hot Texas summers, and bear good fruit in spring, summer, and fall

Cultivated blackberries are an improved form of wild southern blackberries, or dewberries. All blackberries are biennial plants—flowering plants that take 2 years to complete their biological life cycle. Blackberries have two types of canes: primocanes, which grow during the current season and floricanes, which are 1-year-old, flower-bearing canes that die after the berry crop matures. They are classified into two fruiting types, floricanes, which flower and set fruit only on floricanes in the second year, and primocane-bearing, which flower and set fruit on primocanes late in the growing season (July-August), and then bear on floricanes the following spring (May).

Three categories of blackberry varieties can be grown in Texas. Thorny varieties are generally most productive and bear larger fruit than do thornless types. Some of this variety are Brazos, Brison and Kiowa. Thornless varieties are easy to harvest, train, and prune. A few of this variety require between 300-500 chilling hours such as Natchez, Arapaho and Ouachita, making them adaptable to our area. Primocane-bearing varieties have been introduced in Texas only recently, and their potential for long-term performance is not well understood. Varieties include Prime-Jim and Prime Ark 45. They should be considered experimental and planted in limited quantities.

Blackberry plots may be established from rooted cuttings, bareroot plants, or small, tissue-culture plants, however nursery plants in containers are generally bigger and have more extensive root systems. With appropriate watering, they can be established in fall, winter, or spring.

While the blackberry is the current "Top Choice" berry for Texas, berry lovers in the state are being encouraged to try their hand at growing the ever popular and healthy blueberry. However, blueberry production is not without challenges which must be addressed.

First, the soil or growing medium pH is critical for successful blueberry culture. Blueberries cannot thrive in a soil pH of 7.1 and above, which is pretty much all of the soil in our area, so container planting is recommended. Choose a well-draining 20-30-gallon container since rapid drainage is a must. Ideally water should be coming out of the bottom of the planter as you are pouring it around the base of the plant.

A peat moss soilless mixture containing no native soil—no matter how wonderful you think your soil may be, will successfully grow blueberry plants! Plant your blueberries in a peat-base mix that is disease and weed-free, retains adequate moisture and which will be lightweight even after watering. When you plant your blueberries in this mix, you are essentially creating an "acid bog" and they will thrive in this medium. There is no limit to how much peat moss you can use so if you are doubtful about the pH of the mix you are using, simply add more peat moss.

Second, be sure to incorporate a slow release fertilizer into your peat-base potting mix. Avoid the use of rapid-release nitrate fertilizer. Use an acid-based, water soluble fertilizer once a month during the growing season after the plants are established.

Third, be sure to locate your blueberries in full sunlight. All berries require full sunlight all day for maximum production. Minimum is eight to ten hours of direct (not filtered) sunlight a day. Not only do the plants require full sunlight when they are planted, but also as they continue to grow. Over time if they become shaded by trees in your landscape, their production will be reduced.

Next, keep in mind that some blueberry varieties require cross pollination so variety selection is critical. However, the rabbiteye variety Tifblue has been shown to be self-fruitful and is the best rabbiteye blueberry grown to date. Tifblue fruits are large, light blue and ripen late in the season. The bush is vigorous and very productive. It is more cold hardy than most rabbiteye varieties and receives adequate chilling (cold temperatures) to be able to fruit as far south as Pleasanton, Texas.

Then, try to use rainwater or air-conditioner condensate for watering since much of the water across the state is high in salts especially calcium. Water large plants thoroughly once weekly rather than daily and

maintain a deep layer of mulch, such as sphagnum peat moss. Water is especially important during the long fruit-ripening period.

Finally, the berries should be allowed to ripen on the bush over a 4 to 6-week period. A normal season can extend from late May to late July. Pick the fully ripe berries from the vine every 3 to 5 days. Green berries will not ripen and will be bitter. Birds will be the chief competitors for your ripe berries so bird netting can be used to keep the fruit for you and your family.

Strawberries can be difficult to grow in our area, often leaving gardeners very frustrated. However, with proper growing techniques, transplant timing, and tender loving care, high yielding and quality strawberries can be achieved.

Strawberries do not survive our hot Texas summers, so the best time to plant strawberries is in the fall, and they should be treated as an annual rather than a perennial plant. They prefer a slightly acidic soil, but will tolerate a soil pH as high as 7.8. The most important thing is to have good draining soil. Strawberries do best in a raised bed of sandy or sandy loam soil. They can also be planted in containers.

Water daily for the first two weeks after planting if the weather is still hot and dry. Water infrequently as needed during the winter. Strawberries need protection from severe winter freezes. This can be accomplished with mulches or grow covers. Protection must be provided when the temperatures drop into the teens.

Fall planting of strawberries works well throughout Texas, and with good care, a spring crop can be harvested in most years. Some strawberry varieties recommended for the home gardener are Chandler, Sequoia, and Douglas, which are all spring bearing varieties. Everbearing or day-neutral varieties should be avoided.

Some of the blackberry, blueberry and strawberry varieties mentioned above, suitable for growing in our area, will be available for purchase during the Bell County Master Gardener Fall Plant Sale on September 10, 2016 from 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. at the Learning Center adjacent to the Bell County AgriLife Office, 1605 North Main, Belton. Visit www.txmg/bell/ for a list of these plants and more which will be available at this important community event.

Tips

Rounding Up

- Jann Dworsky

Gardening tip one:

how to use Roundup safely next to your flowers. Take a box folded open, and cut a hole right in the bottom. Then put the box over weeds that you want to kill, right beside plants you love, and spray Roundup weed killer through the hole. Count to 10 and slowly lift the box. Weeds will die in about a week and your plants will be just fine!!

Second gardening tip: how to use Roundup carefully next to your plants. Take a stick and a \$0.25



foam paint brush and tape them together. Put the nozzle of The Round Up right on the foam of the paintbrush and squeeze till the paint brush is wet. Carefully paint the Roundup on weed right next to your plants.

Editor's Note: Werner took a piece of a sponge and wired it onto kitchen tongs you use for bacon and that works well for this same purpose-especially those long blades of Johnson Grass in amongst your flowers.



Hamburger Wednesdays

- Terrie Hahn

Back when the BCMGA was young, Hamburger Wednesdays were a time for getting together with MG friends you hadn't seen for a while and for meeting new MG's. It was a time for everyone in the Association to come together and exchange ideas and tips about plants in their yards and to find out what MG project they'd been working on. And of course, it was a time to eat yummy food. The Association provided the main dish, like burgers or chili, and everyone brought something to go with. But if you didn't bring something, it was alright, because there was always loads of good food. If you didn't work on the grounds or in the Greenhouse, it was okay, you were welcome to come just for lunch. That seems to have changed over the years, and several of us who remember those fun, social Hamburger Wednesdays would like to see them return.

So, please consider coming to Hamburger Wednesday even if you're not working that day. Meet new people, say hello to those you haven't seen for a



while. If you can't bring something to share for lunch, please come for lunch anyway. If it will make you feel better, there will be an envelope for optional donations. You could donate a buck or two to help pay for the condiments or plates and cups that the Association pays for. The idea is to make our Association one filled with members who know each other and have fun together and learn from one another. [Cartoon by Steve Sack, Star Tribune.](#)

Q & A

- Terrie Hahn

Q. We were in Burlington, Vermont lately. There were new trees planted along a walking/bicycle path along the lakefront. These containers were placed at the base of the young trees. Are any of you MG's in the know about these things?



A. Diana Wood, from the Burlington Parks and Recreation Department, wrote and told me that, "Yes those plastic containers are used to water the trees. They do have small holes in them. And with the dry weather, those new trees sure needed them!" We thought this could for watering, but we didn't see any holes. They must have been *really* tiny.

Q. We found this on a pathway in our yard. Does anyone have any idea what it is? The dark part is hard and about 2 inches across. The spherical part has a very thin wall with a hole at the top. If you push on the sphere, it dents, but then goes back to its original shape. If you push it harder and it doesn't go back right away, you can blow into the hole and it reshapes itself.



BOTANIC GARDEN

- Janice Gibbs, Temple Telegram

These are excerpts from Janice Gibbs article on the future Bend O' The River Botanic Garden posted August 23rd www.tdtnews.com

SWA Group, the landscape and design firm hired by the city of Temple to develop a master plan for the Bend o' the River property, held its fourth and final community meeting at the Gober Party House, sharing how the project could look in years to come. On August 23rd, the designers illustrated the land's potential — lighted trees, a pier extending out over the river, a canopy walk over a forested area with bird blinds, performance spaces, outdoor sculptures and a variety of gardens, with the city's hike-and-bike trail playing a role.

"This is the very beginning and there's a long way to go," Kinder Baumgardner, principal project manager said.

The property is located on the south side of town, bordered by Interstate 35 on the west and the Leon River

on the south and east. It is made up of the 30 acres donated by the Rueben and Bernice Talasek family and 58 acres donated by the neighboring property owner.

During the months-long process of meeting with the project steering committee and community, the designers have documented what the community wants and what it doesn't want.

A botanical garden is a specific type of public space,



but is not necessarily a place that people go to study plants. It needs to be a place where people go to be with family and friends, offering a variety of events and activities, Baumgardner said.

Planning for such a space has to include back-of-the-house activities, such as an infrastructure that sup-

ports delivery trucks and maintenance vehicles, parking and places for composting. The property does have some constraints, such as noise from Interstate 35, which can be tamped down with the construction of a berm that wraps around the west and south sides of the property, said Michael Robinson, project manager.

Some of the soil is contaminated with arsenic and antimony that blew across the river from a former manufacturing plant. The preference is to have the soil re-



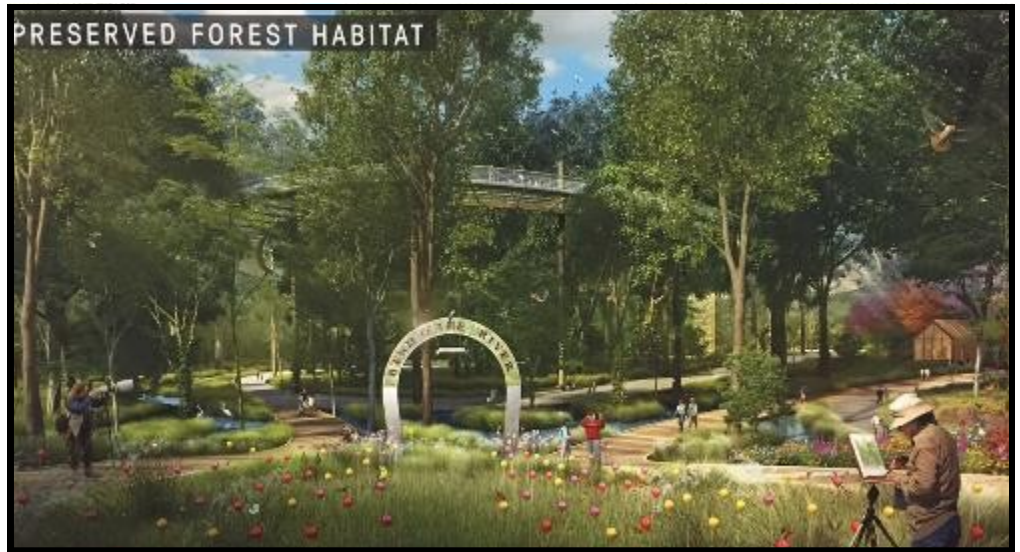
moved, he said.

Design Manager, Amna Ansari said after visiting the site, the designers wanted to take advantage of the terrain and hoped to preserve the wetland and forested area along with the mature trees.

The group was deliberate in where it needed to remove trees, mainly in the contaminated zone where parking is planned and in the forested area where paths would need to be carved out, she said.

The forested area, where native species would be introduced, makes up about 40 percent of the site and also helps determine programmed zones on the property, Ansari said.

“A lot of the active programming would be closer to the freeway, such as parking and the plaza area,” she said. A central zone would include the garden collections surrounded by the native forest. “More serene programs would be introduced in the preserved forest, such as the canopy walk,” Ansari said.



The master plan consists of many meandering paths that set the pace on how the site is experienced, she said. There will be places to introduce iconic nature landmarks that would complement and enhance the area.

The garden will be built in phases and will likely start with the removal of the contaminated soils, said Robinson. Since that area will be disturbed it makes sense to have that become phase one of the build out, which would include the event space, community space, plaza, main building, parking and service road, as funding allows. Future projects would move east toward the forested area.



The final document with expected costs will be presented to the Temple City Council in September.

This and That

More Gardening at Mary Ruth Briggs Library in Morgan's Point

- Gail Koontz

On the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Saturdays in August, Master Gardeners continued to work with and train future Master Gardeners. The 2016 Summer Reading Program in Morgan's Point Resort featured the topic of gardening. Twenty enthusiastic and energetic children joined us each Saturday to learn about paper towel gardening (square foot gardening), making a rainmaker and newspaper hats, playing the secret smells game

(learning about insects), fruits and vegetables.

On the last Saturday, August 13, City Manager David Huseman came to read to

the children, and all the children received a backpack full of school supplies.



Many, many thanks to Dawn Orange, Barbara Dalby, Wayne Schirner, Suzanne



Boyer, Mary Ann Everett, and Jo Carlsen for your help and to librarian, Jimanne Durke.

Sharing pictures taken by Jim Ann, the volunteer librarian at MPR, and Wanda Ludlow, who brought her grandson each Saturday.

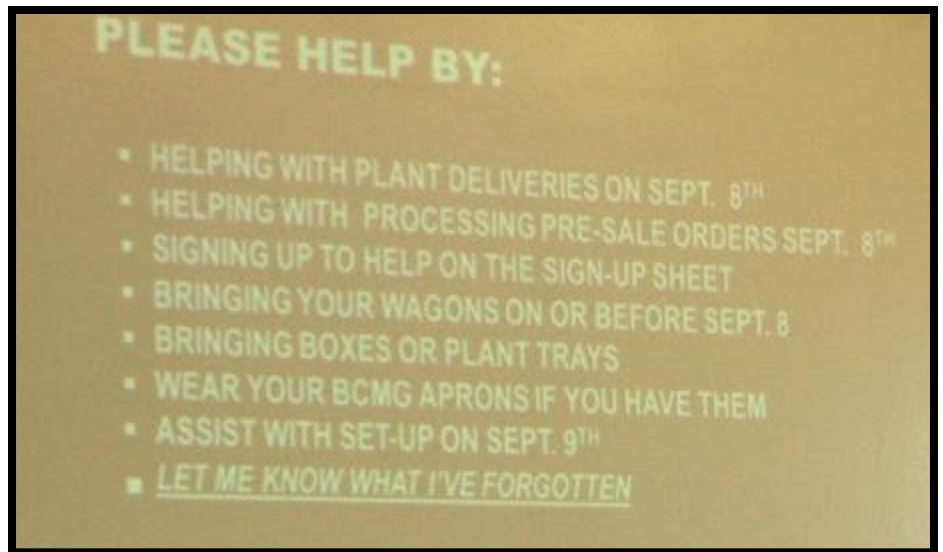


This and That

August General Meeting

- Randy Brown

Kathy Love spoke at the August meeting about the upcoming Plant Sale. She and several other MG's gave us some info on the needs of a selection of plants that will be for sale.



Greenhouse Update:

- Carla Harmon

We put in the fan/shutter system and are working on getting the electricity connected.

Walter Ponder was still out there working at rebuilding one of the walls around a bed near the Education Building after the General meeting around 11:30. It was getting pretty hot out there!!! - Terrie Hahn



The Emerald Isle

- Frances Idoux

Ireland is called the "Emerald Isle" for good reason. With abundant rainfall and longer days of sunshine, this island blooms beautifully in spring and summer. My brother has lived there and taught at the University of Dublin for many years. And for many years, he invited me to visit. Two years ago, I accepted that invitation and visited my brother Wayne and his family in Dublin. Enchanted by Ireland's cooler temperatures and beautiful flowers, I returned this summer.

One of the places that I had not seen previously was the "Airfield" - not an airport, but a lovely area near their home in suburban Dublin. The Airfield includes gardens, a garden shop, a restaurant, and a working farm. The food served at the restaurant is raised at this farm, and dairy products come from the resident herd of Jersey cows. There's also a playground section for children, and school tours are encouraged. Cooking classes for adults are given in a large kitchen, as well

The backyard garden of my Irish family is always a delight. Flowers flourish there, as well as vegetables and a young pear tree, which now has a first crop of pears. The love of flowers, which is so evident in Dublin, is



Emerald Isle...continued

also shown in the smaller towns and villages of western Ireland. My Irish sister-in-law Bernadette came from western Ireland, and I wanted to see the area where she grew up. We took a tour along the western shore, from beaches to the imposing Cliffs of Mohr which shelter many varieties of seabirds, and then beyond. As I found out, flowers can also flourish in the stones of Ireland. Wildflowers are abundant in an area called the Burren, which means "Rocky Place." Even in late summer, bouquets bloom amid the stones.

The last stop on the tour was a resort in Castlebar, where my brother and Bernadette held their wedding reception years ago. Once again, I found an abundance of flowers, overflowing arrangements in containers, and a grove of apricot

trees. Yes, there were some scattered showers, but my trip to Ireland was worth packing an umbrella and poncho!





Bell County Master Gardener Cookbook Fundraiser



The Bell County Master Gardener Association has decided to publish a cookbook filled to the brim with the best recipes from the best cooks in our organization and we need your favorite recipes, especially those that you have shared with our classes, parties, and meetings!

The best news of all? All of the profits from the sale of the cookbooks, will go into our treasury for our current fundraising projects. These 6.75" x 9.25" hardbound 3-ring binder cookbooks will most definitely become a cherished keepsake on your kitchen shelf! They also make great gifts and should be here in time for Christmas.

We would like to have three or four of your favorite recipes as soon as possible and no later than September 28th. It would help us tremendously if you would type your recipes online at the web site - www.cookbookpublishers.com/utypeit2/. We will select one or more of your recipes to be included in our cookbook; with your name printed by your recipe! These should be your recipes and not those that are trademarked or copied from a copyrighted author. The cookbook categories are: Appetizers/Beverages, Soups/Salads, Vegetables, Main Dishes, Breads/Rolls, Desserts, and Miscellaneous.

We will need your email address so we can email you your username and password if you would like to submit your recipes online yourself; it is very easy. Or, if you do not have internet access, you can carefully print or type your recipe on the opposite side of this flyer; submit only one recipe per form, you can make copies of the form. However, you will need to turn in your hardcopy recipes to the Bell County AgriLife Extension Office no later than September 9th so we may consider them and type in your recipes for inclusion in our cookbook.

We are anticipating a great demand for these cookbooks, so we want to be certain we are ordering enough cookbooks. The cost of the cookbooks will be \$18. It would help us immensely if you would indicate below how many cookbooks you want us to reserve in your name . . . remember, if you don't reserve your copies now, we may not have a cookbook for you! Or you can purchase your cookbook in advance at a discount for \$16. The cookbooks should arrive by December 1st in time for Christmas gift giving. If you have any questions, please contact Sylvia Maedgen, Cookbook Coordinator at – txgrammy4@outlook.com or at (254) 624-6171.

Thank you so much for participating in our fundraising efforts.

Please reserve _____ copy(ies)

Name _____

Phone No. _____



One Recipe Per Page

In case we need to contact you for additional information, please provide the following:

RECIPE CATEGORY (select one)

***OPTIONAL ICONS** (select one)

- | | | | | |
|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appetizers, Beverages | <input type="checkbox"/> Diabetic | <input type="checkbox"/> Quick and Easy | <input type="checkbox"/> Freezes Well | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Soups, Salads | <input type="checkbox"/> Vegetables | <input type="checkbox"/> Gluten-Free | <input type="checkbox"/> Heart Healthy | <input type="checkbox"/> Heirloom |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Main Dishes | <input type="checkbox"/> Breads, Rolls | <input type="checkbox"/> International | <input type="checkbox"/> Kids Recipes | <input type="checkbox"/> Low Fat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Desserts | <input type="checkbox"/> Miscellaneous | <input type="checkbox"/> Slow Cooker | <input type="checkbox"/> Hot & Spicy | <input type="checkbox"/> Vegetarian |

RECIPE TITLE

INGREDIENTS

(Please use these abbreviations: c., tsp., Tbsp., pkg., qt., pt., oz., lb.)

[illegible]

Method

[illegible]

**Please return hardcopy recipes to the Bell County AgriLife Extension Office - Attn: Sylvia Maedgen -
no later than September 9, 2016**

You may submit your recipe online at - www.cookbookpublishers.com/utypeit2/ - but you will need to send an email to:

Sylvia Maedgen at - txgrammy4@outlook.com - to request your username and password.

If you are submitting your recipes online, do not complete the following information sections:
Sub-title, Contributor Information, and Title to the Ingredients.

Announcements

Grounds Workdays

- Walter Ponder

Here is the Workday schedule for September:

7:30 a.m. September 7, 2016 Workday

10:30 a.m. September 7, 2016 Burger Wednesday

7:30 a.m. September 14, 2016 Workday

7:30 a.m. September 21, 2016 Workday

7:30 a.m. September 28, 2016 Workday

September Meeting

- Mary Ann Everett

The speaker for September 14th is Dirk Aaron, speaking on Clearwater Underground Water Conservation District and what they do. Please come for social time at 8:30 a.m. and for Dirk at 9 a.m.

Revisions to Award Criteria

- Bernie Hurta

To the Membership,
Here are the revisions to the criteria for the Golden Trowel, Green Thumb and New Master Gardener of the Year Awards. These were discussed and agreed upon at the Board of Directors meeting on July 27th. If you have any questions, please contact Bernie Hurta. Thank you!

* Number of **Golden Trowel Awards** awarded stays at three. Number of nominations a certified Master Gardener may submit is one. Members of the New Class are not eligible to submit nominations during their class year for this award.

* Number of **Green Thumb Awards** awarded stays at six. Number of nominations a certified Master Gardener may submit is three. Members of the New Class are not eligible to submit nominations during

their class year for this award.

* Number of **New Master Gardener of the Year Award** awarded is one. The old criteria listed one, but more have been given out the last few years. One will be awarded from now on. Number of nominations a certified Master Gardener may submit is one. Members of the New Class are not eligible to submit nominations during their class year for this award.

Friendly Reminder

- Gail Koontz

BCMG Christmas Party

Save the date: December 2, 2016

Location: Special Events Room-Expo Center

Time: 6 pm

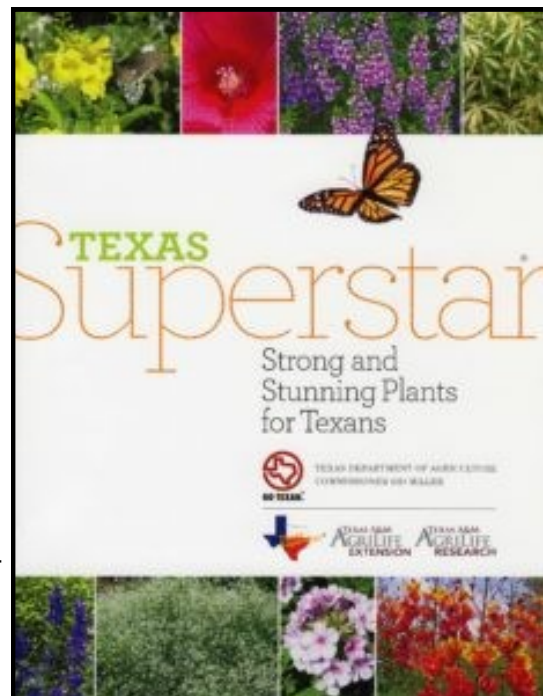
Salad bar, dessert bar – more details soon on menu and cost.

Silent Auction: Be thinking of a special item you can contribute.

SuperStar Brochure Available

A list of wholesalers and retailers who stock Texas Superstar plants and labels can be found at <http://texassuperstar.com/> where one can also download the new brochure.

The Texas Superstar brochure is also available online at GOTEXAN.org.



FYI

Education: Native Landscape Certification Program (NLCP)

Register now for the Fall 2016 Williamson County Chapter NLCP classes! The Native Plant Society of Texas created the Native Landscape Certification Program (NLCP) to encourage a migration of Texans back to nature that will reap priceless benefits for our families, environment, and economy.

NLCP is a series of day-long classes that teaches best practices for native plant landscaping – including wildlife habitat gardening. Each class consists of an indoor training session and a 2-hour outdoor plant walk.

For information on the statewide program and to register for classes, go to: <http://npsot.org/wp/wilco/2016/07/21/education-native-landscape-certification-program-nlcp/>

Level 1, Introduction to Native Landscapes – Saturday, September 17, 2016

Level 2, Design and Development with Native Plants – Saturday, October 1, 2016

Level 3, Installing and Maintaining Native Landscapes – Saturday, October 22, 2016 (NEW class)

Note: must take Level 1 class to register for Level 2 or Level 3 classes. All classes are 8 am to 4 pm; Georgetown Public Library, 402 W 8th St, Georgetown, TX 78626

hours of credit toward their requirements for continuing education.

This is the first in the current series which is offered in four separate schools, approximately six months apart, each with 10 hours of instruction, in the Bryan-College Station area. These courses offer an opportunity to learn from professional landscape architects and horticulturists about how successful landscapes are designed.

For more info: http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/southerngarden/LDSep16/lds1_announcements_sep16.pdf

Questions: EMAIL Michele Wehrheim: texaslandscapedesignschool@gmail.com

Southern Region Master Gardener Conference Coming Up

The 2016 SRMGC will be held in Arlington and Fort Worth, November 1-4, 2016! Check out the information at: <https://2016southernregionmg.com/>

Landscape Design Course I

The George Bush Presidential Library at Texas A & M University will be the site of Landscape Design School I, September 26-27, 2016. The Schools are sponsored by Texas Garden Clubs, Inc. & the Texas AgriLife Extension Service, Texas A & M University. Master Gardeners who complete a course and pass the test may apply to their MG Chapter to receive 12

What's Happening in Your Yard

Where's Waldo!?

- Louann Hight

See if you can find the anole lizard in this photo.



Winning Combination!

- Jann Dworsky

This is my rainbow sorbet rose and a passion vine that has grown across it. Just love that combination.



What's Happening in Your Yard

- Pam Dragoo



Couldn't resist sharing some pictures of my Mexican petunias and salvia. Check out the bumblebee hard at work.



What's Happening in Your Yard



**Quick, Get a Photo Before the Birds
Eat All the Berries!**

- Elaine Passman

Rare Dogwood Specimen

- Gail Pierce



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A publication of the Bell County Master Gardener
Association sponsored by Texas AgriLife Extension of
Texas A & M University

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*Please submit articles for the Blooming Bell as Word
Documents with **photos separate as JPG files** to
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