



The Blooming Bell

May 2018



Photos by Sylvia Maedgen



The Texas Master Gardeners 40th Anniversary State Conference was held at Texas A&M in College Station on May 3-6, 2018. The many speakers gave wonderful and inspiring presentations. Several members participated in field trips outside of the conference.

Twenty-four Bell County MG's attended the conference. BCMGA received 6 awards with 1 being 1st place in the Large category of MG Associations in Texas. Related article on page 14.

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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 Work Day - 8 am* Burger Wed. 10:30 am	3	4	5 SPJST Car Show - Kid's Camp
6 	7	8	9 Work Day - 8 am* Social - 9:30 am General Meeting - 10 am	10	11	12 Bees & Pollinators Class - McLane Children's Hospital - 2 pm
13	14	15	16 Work Day - 8 am* BCMG 2018 Intern Graduation - 1 pm	17 Gardening in Bell County - Water Efficiency	18	19
20	21	22	23 Work Day 8 am* BOD Meeting - 9 am	24	25 Blooming Bell deadline	26
27	28	29	30 Whistle Stop Playground Clean-up 7:30 am	31		

Upcoming events:

- ♦ Un-included Club, Temple, May 18, 23
- ♦ Gardening in Bell County, Insects in your Garden, Belton, June 21

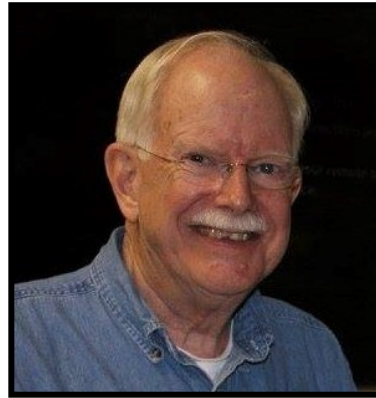
* In the event of rain, there will be No Workday.

Remember to record volunteer service hours and education hours separately. You may include your travel time to meetings and work projects as service hours.

Photo by Sylvia Maedgen

The President's Corner

- Wayne Schirner



The BCMGA was exceptionally well recognized at the Texas Master Gardener Association State Conference at the beginning of April. We left with six awards out of the seven that we competed in. Most notably, for the second year in a row we were recognized as the Outstanding Association in the large association category. I attribute this to the outstanding work done by all of our members. Several of the members were interviewed for an upcoming issue of Bell County Living, and a photographer was at the April general membership meeting to capture photos of the members in action. I can't repeat enough how proud I am of everyone's contributions to truly making us an outstanding association, and we have fun too. I have been out of town for the past 2 weeks, so this month's article will be a short one. I know there will be others reporting in this issue on all the great things going on. Thanks again for all you do.



1 More Thing...

The Science of Gardening

- Wayne Schirner

Last month I introduced a course I am taking called "The Science of Gardening." This month, I would like to encourage you to become familiar with the web site www.gardenmyths.com. The author of this site looks at many common gardening recommendations and determines what evidence (or not) exists behind these recommendations.



Another great site is www.puyallup.wsu.edu. On this site, Linda Chalker-Scott provides the lack of scientific evidence behind many horticultural myths. She is the same professor who teaches "The Science of Gardening." As I said at our April meeting, our mission includes "providing high quality, relevant, research-based horticultural education...." It is incumbent upon us to be aware of the science (or lack of) behind the recommendations we provide to the public and to ourselves.

We should all be willing to challenge statements others make that cannot be supported with evidence. I certainly expect you to challenge me if I make statements that are contradicted by the science. "Science is not always right, and the scientific facts of today may be different tomorrow, but it is a good system and the only system we have" from Garden Myths by Robert Pavlis.

Wizzie's Wonderful World of Insects

Glassy-winged sharpshooters

- Wizzie Brown, Travis County AgriLife Extension Entomologist

Glassy-winged sharpshooters are large, dark colored leafhoppers. While these insects usually do not cause much damage from feeding, they are capable of transmitting the bacterial disease, *Xylella fastidiosa*. This bacterium is responsible for Pierce's disease, various forms of leaf scorch, phony peach disease, and variegated citrus chlorosis. At this time there are no cures for these diseases. When a sharpshooter feeds on an infected plant, it can get the bacteria in its mouthparts. The bacteria can then be transferred to a different plant when it feeds again.

Glassy-winged sharpshooters are large in comparison to other leafhoppers at about ½ an inch in length. The insects are usually dark brown to black in color with clear wings that have red venation. Wings may appear brown in color due to wings folding over the brown body. Females secrete a chalky white substance before laying eggs. She transfers this substance to the upper wings, creating white spots. Once she lays eggs, she uses the chalky substance to cover eggs.



Eggs are laid in masses of about 10-12 under the lower leaf surface. They are laid in a single layer, side-by-side. Eggs look like a greenish blister below the surface of the leaf, but after the eggs hatch the leaf tissue turns brown and remains as a brown scar on the plant.

Glassy-winged sharpshooters can be found in a wide variety of habitats- from urban landscapes to cropland to woodlands- and can feed on hundreds of plant species. Plant hosts can range from woody plants to annual and perennial herbaceous plants.

The main reason for managing glassy-winged sharpshooters is to control the bacterium *Xylella*. Unfortunately, it does not take high population levels of sharpshooters for disease transmission to occur, so it is unknown if management with insecticides can help to reduce disease spread. If you feel the need to manage glassy-winged sharpshooters, try using insecticidal soaps or horticultural oils to conserve beneficial insects in the landscape.

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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Do You Know About...?

Can Nutsedge and Kyllinga Be Controlled?

- Fran Sheppard

Why do we cringe whenever we see nutsedge or kyllinga coming up in our lawns? Is it because these sedges can be so very difficult to control?

These sedges are perennials that grow from underground rhizomes and/or tubers. When soil temperatures increase, they emerge in spring or late summer. Whenever the first frost hits, they disappear.

There is an annual sedge, which does not develop rhizomes and tubers. It persists throughout the warm season months.

Sedges and kyllingas belong to the sedge family and can look like grasses. Upon investigating more closely, however, they are quite different from grasses. They have pith-filled triangular stems and three-ranked leaves. They lack other grass features as well. The leaf blades of sedges also appear waxy and have a v-shaped groove.

The sedge is one of the largest families of monocots in Texas and contains hundreds of different species. Included in this family are these that are most commonly found in turfgrasses: yellow and purple nutsedge, annual sedge, green kyllinga, and false green kyllinga. These sedges are found in plant beds, ditches, and low lying wet areas.

Purple and yellow nutsedge are named for the distinct coloration of their inflorescence. (seedhead). You won't see the seedheads in frequently mowed turfgrass, but they can easily be seen in unmowed areas as well as bedding areas and ditches.

The leaf tips also aids in telling the two apart: the yellow nutsedge leaf tips gradually taper to a fine point, while the purple nutsedge leaf tips end abruptly in a blunt tip.

Purple nutsedge tubers often have dense hairs on them and are connected by rhizomes. Yellow nutsedge lack the hairs and are not connected by chains.

Kyllinga is a perennial weed, with a compact, rounded head like inflorescence, grows from rhizomes, and tolerates low mowing heights. This is because they are smaller and persist even if the turf is mowed to one inch or less.

You can remove by hand, but, you must get all the underground tubers and rhizomes. With soil moisture, it is easier to remove the tuber. Even with the soil moisture, the purple

nutsedge is still more difficult to remove, due to the rhizomes, and pulling can stimulate germination of dormant tubers, and thus exacerbate the problem.

Selection of herbicide

In order for the herbicide to control the weeds, it must be applied to healthy, actively growing turfgrass, and used according to the label. Always read the product label before application.

Some of the products for treatment of these weeds include Halosulfuron-methyl (Manage/Sedgehammer), Imazaquin (Image), Sulfosulfuron (Certainty), and Sulfentrazone.

Manage/Sedgehammer can be applied to most cool and warm season turfgrass species. Results may not be seen for up to 2 weeks after application, and multiple applications are often required for long term control. Adding a suitable nonionic surfactant will improve control by allowing water droplets to spread more easily on the leaf surface.

Image can be applied to many warm season turfgrasses, including buffalograss, centipedegrass, and St. Augustine grass. Results may not be seen for up to 2 weeks after application, and adding a nonionic surfactant may improve control.

Certainty can be applied to most warm season turfgrasses. Results may not be visible for up to 2 weeks, and, as with other systemic products, should be applied with a suitable nonionic surfactant to maximize leaf uptake. Also may take several applications for control. The homeowner is cautioned to be sure to apply at the proper rate when using with St. Augustine grass.

Sulfentrazone (Ortho Nutsedge Killer for Lawns) can be applied to most turfgrass species. If other herbicides are combined with sulfentrazone, the product will increase control of other weed species, such as crabgrass or broadleaf weeds. Results are likely seen within 48 hours, and it will suppress sedges for 2-4 weeks. Repeated applications may be needed for long term control.

For more information for Nutsedge and Kyllinga Control, please refer to Texas A&M AgriLife Extension publication ESC-027.



What's Been Happening...

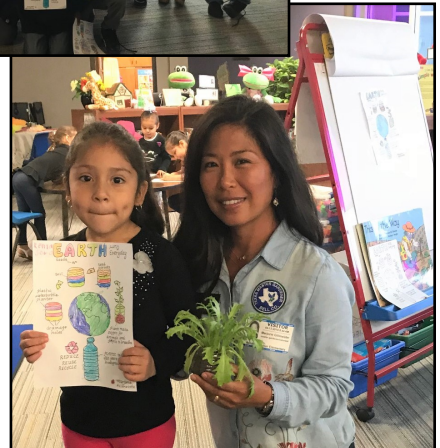
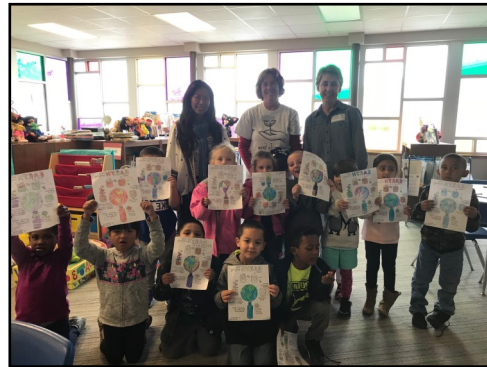
Meridith-Dunbar Early Childhood Academy - Recycle-Reduce-Reuse Days

- Marjorie Gillmeister Photos by Marjorie Gillmeister

Children learned how to recycle and reuse a plastic water bottle as seed starters to take home as Mother's Day gifts in a few weeks. Many planted flowers and vegetables for their school garden as well. I created an "Earth Day" color sheet for the children to share the lesson with their families. Special thank you to Janice Smith and new class intern 2018, Laura Pope for supporting our youth programs.



Aubriella and Jeremiah of MDECA sharing their auto-graphed stories they draw after having an Eggshell Gardening Day with Marjorie Gillmeister. If you can inspire a child you can inspire many!



What's Been Happening...

Montessori School

- Marjorie Gillmeister

Photos by Marjorie Gillmeister

We taught 58 children ages 2-6 the importance of recycling and to care for Earth everyday. All the children planted seeds in plastic water bottles for their school garden and flowers as a gift for Mother's Day. Special thank you to Kellie Hussman and Baby Everett for assisting with the children.



What's Been Happening...

Austin Trip to the Great Outdoors

- Sylvia Maedgen

Several members ventured out to Austin on April 10th and visited the Great Outdoors Nursery.



Cavazos Elementary

- Marjorie Gillmeister

What a colorful bunch, Special thank you to Sandra Blankenship MG class of 2017, and new class interns 2018 Sandi Remson and Kathy Harte sharing Eggshell Gardening with about 100 children at Cavazos Elementary in Nolanville for their career day.

Photo by Marjorie Gillmeister



What's Been Happening...

Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center - bus trip

Photos by Juan Anaya and Sylvia Maedgen

- Larry Causey

The New Class Field Trip to Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center and Boggy Creek Farm in Austin was a great success.

Trip coordinator Gail Koontz said she hoped everybody enjoyed it as much as she did.

Dorothy Thomas, one of the 2018 Master Gardener Intern's attending, said she has been a member of the LBJWC since the early days, but hadn't been back in a couple of years.

"They've made a lot of changes for the better," she said, adding that Lady Bird Johnson was a great lady. "I think that keeping the wildflowers and native plants in Texas became the whole purpose of her life."

The interns split into three groups, with Docent Douglas Soltau leading a group of 13. He handed out a pocket guide on plants favorable to monarch butterflies. It included three native milkweeds: antelope horns, zizotes milkweed, and green antelope horn.

"Why would we want to use native plants?" he said. "We get about 35 inches of rain in Texas. The native plants know this, and they're OK with it."

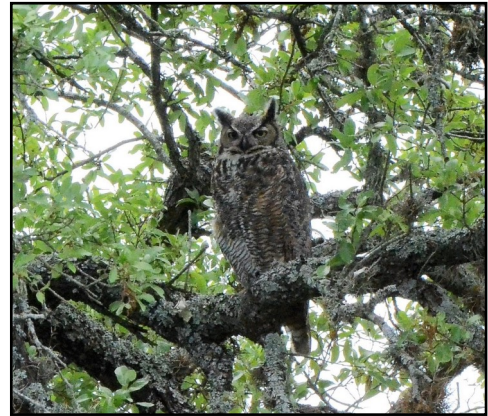
But tropical plants, for example that might grow in other parts of the state, don't do well in the Austin area during the hot, dry heat of August.

To illustrate, he said he and his wife have been natural gardeners for years. "We're changing out a lot of things we planted by mistake."

They had a sweet gum tree that was dying. He asked someone, "What can I do about my tree?" He was told, "Move it to East Texas."

In 1985 Mrs. Johnson and actress Helen Hayes started the wildflower center with 29 acres, he said. Now it has 286 acres, about 50 employees and 830 volunteers. Members benefit from a reciprocal agreement with about 600 gardens in the U.S.

"This is much more than a garden," he said. "This is a research and education center." More information is at wildflower.org/Texas.



What's Been Happening...

Boggy Creek Farm - bus trip

Photos by Juan Anaya and Sylvia Maedgen

- Larry Causey

After a two-hour tour of the wildflower center, the class took a short bus trip to Boggy Creek Farm. Spokesperson Marissa Lankes guided the class to various parts of the five-acre operation. Carol Ann Sayle and her husband Larry Butler took over the farm in 1992, she said, and still live in the old farm house, built in about 1841. It has two chimneys and four fireplaces, and Sam Houston is supposed to have eaten dinner there one Christmas eve.

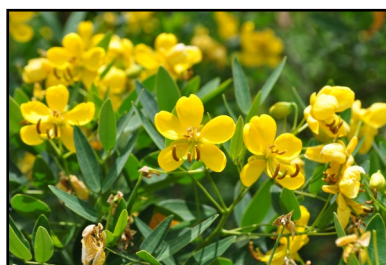
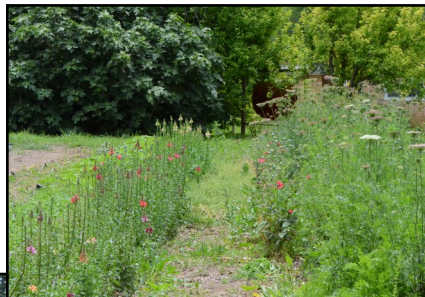
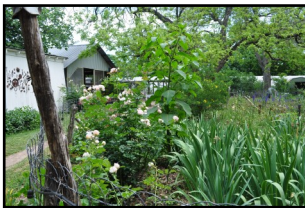
On most of their crops, special water-permeable tarps cover the soil between the rows. The farm starts most of the plants in greenhouses.

"We're working the land with love," Lankes said.

Using tillers or tractors builds up a hardpan, so they stopped tilling altogether, she said. When a crop is through bearing, they leave all of the organic material in place.

Through irrigation and composting, the decomposition process begins. It is chemical-free agriculture, she said, although not technically certified as organic.

One of their biggest crops is tomatoes. The farm also produces a lot of salad greens and beans, and everything is sold in their on-site farm stand.



What's Been Happening...

Propagation Class #2

Photos by Daisy Klassy



What's Been Happening...

Photos by Janice Smith

The Unincluded Club

- Janice Smith

The Unincluded Club Garden project got off to a good start this spring, with their first raised bed vegetable garden planted on Good Friday. With help from Master Gardener Wayne Schirner and 2 interns from the Class of 2018, the kids learned proper tomato planting and watering techniques, and got their hands dirty planting a variety of peppers. The garden receives support from Rotary Club of Temple-South, Texas A&M Agrilife Blacklands Research Center, Lowe's, and BCMG. Pat Johnson, one of our own and also a Rotarian, has been directly involved with helping the club get needed supplies for the gardens.

Regular work days in the gardens are scheduled through April and May, and Marjorie Gillmeister demonstrated eggshell gardening with the youth on April 25th. For more information about the Unincluded Club or to volunteer to help with the gardens or other educational activities, please contact Janice Smith, or sign up for the Unincluded Club project on the VMS system.



What's Been Happening...

Photos by Randy Brown

2018 Spring Plant Swap

- Crystal Fisher

The success of this past Spring Plant Swap is due entirely to those great volunteers on April 11th who came forward once more to assist all those with their extra plants. I just can't imagine our having that much fun and being able to get Volunteer credit on our VMS program at the same time.

Jan Upchurch, Carol Morriset, Rose Harris, and Gena Winston were all champs that day... and, of course, Jane Van Praag who saw this event through for the past couple of years to keep it going. We might have gotten off to a rocky start, but they all rose to the occasion and pulled it off successfully as BCMGs are known to do. Thank you so much ladies for all you do to help our organization in so many ways beyond this one event. Aren't we all so fortunate to be a part of the best "club" in our area!

Congrats to the one who got the leftover plants to take to one of the schools.

When the Fall Plant Swap comes around, let's do all our swapping before the Monthly Meeting and get it wrapped up pretty quickly. We'll continue to make improvements along the way. If you have any suggestions to make, please pass them on. Once again... a big thank you to all those terrific ladies!!



What's Been Happening...

Photos by Randy Brown
and Sylvia Maedgen

2018 Texas State MG Conference



What's Been Happening...

Photos by Sylvia Maedgen
and Randy Brown

Texas Master Gardener State Conference Awards for 2018

- Kathy Love



Dear BCMGA Members: Congratulations!!!!!! For the 2nd year in a row you have been recognized by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Texas Master Gardener Association as the Outstanding Association in the Large County category (100-199 members)!

But that is not the only award we are returning with. Our JMG/Youth Program is bringing home another 1st place for the Chisholm Trail Elementary School Field Trip-Gail Koontz Youth Director.

Further, our Project nomination, the Killeen Municipal Court Community Garden-Edie Campbell and Larry Moehnke took 2nd place, Wayne Schirner took 2nd place for his Research Project on strawberries and Kathy Love received 2nd place as Outstanding Individual Master Gardener.

But that's not all, Pat Johnson's gardening column, Gardening In Central Texas is a 3rd place winner in the Written Education category.

In all, the Awards committee submitted seven nominations in eight available categories and BCMGA received awards in 6 of those categories!!!! When all the results are posted on the State website, I will confirm this, but I do not believe any other single association received more awards in any category, than BCMGA.

I will again posts all of our written nominations on our website in the coming week for any of you who wish to read them.

Lyle Zoeller was on-hand to receive the Outstanding Association Award with Wayne and he passed on his congratulations to all of you with his customary, "GOOD JOB!" I join him in thanking all of you for another year of success in at the Search for Excellence Awards at the State Conference!



What's Been Happening...

Photos by Daisy Klassy

Intern Class Local Field Trip

- Larry Causey

The Master Gardener's class of 2018 got a luscious double dip for their local field trip on April 18—the highly productive vegetable garden of Bill and Nissa Walker and the beautiful, expansive home garden of David and Mary Lew Quesinberry.

Class Director Mary Ann Everett somehow got everybody loaded in cars and out to the Walkers' Live Oak Ridge Farm on State Highway 95 this side of Holland. The class marveled over how the Walkers raise blackberries, peaches and loads of vegetables, distributing them directly and through local farmer's markets.

"My objective is to raise a quality product and have it in front of the consumer," Bill said. He tells the farmer's market people to give his peaches away to new customers and they will come back and buy them next time.

"This is Blackland Prairie here," he said. "It has some alluvial deposits. Characteristically it has a lot of water-holding capacity." "We supplement it with organic matter," he said. "From December to January, 16 bales of hay are worked into the ground."

He led the class of about 20 students to rows of determinate tomatoes, covered with sheets of black plastic. He adds liquid fertilizer via the drip hoses, and strings climbing lines about every six inches of height.

The Walkers grow three types of blackberries: Ouachita, Kiowa and Rosborough. The Ouchitas should be ready about May 15, he said. The Kiowas, which are the best, he said, will come in about a week later. "We pick them by hand," he said. "We look for about 400 pints. I water them when I feel they need water."

The Walkers have rows and rows of peach trees. He said they'll probably remove two thirds of the peaches from the limbs this summer. Otherwise it stresses the tree, and next year will be a poor yield.



"It's still going to be a pretty heavy load," he said. "We're trying to have about 500-600 peaches on a tree."

After planting a dormant tree, they cut it off to a height of about 18 inches. "You want strength," he said. "We wanted to be able to pick everything from the ground."

Other crops include yellow squash, green beans, dill peppers, broccoli, cucumbers, radishes and onions. He's planting sweet corn about once a week. He recommended a book, "The Lean Farm," for help with saving steps.

Just as impressive, in a different way, was the trip to the wonderful garden at the Quesinberrys' home in Temple. It stretches from the front yard to the back. Annuals, perennials, grasses, shrubs, vines, trees—it's like a movie set for "Columbo." The class couldn't get enough of it. The back yard garden had a lot of artistically arranged rock shelving. David Quesinberry said none of the rock was part of the original site, but all had to be brought in.



What's Been Happening...

Photos by Daisy Klassy
and Sylvia Maedgen

Intern Class Local Field Trip - con't.

- Larry Causey

Just as impressive, in a different way, was the trip to the wonderful garden at the Quesinberrys' home in Temple. It stretches from the front yard to the back. Annuals, perennials, grasses, shrubs, vines, trees—it's like a movie set for "Columbo." The class couldn't get enough of it. The back yard garden had a lot of artistically arranged rock shelving. David Quesinberry said

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What's Been Happening...

Fort Hood Earth Day

Photos by Gail Pierce and Marjorie Gillmeister

- Gail Pierce

MG Gary Slanga, Kerin Grimes, Marjorie Gillmeister and Gail Pierce talked about herbs at the Fort Hood Earth Day event on Friday 20 April to about 200 4th and 5th graders from various elementary schools in the Killeen ISD and Copperas Cove ISD.

The children learned about the herb dill in pickles, basil and oregano in spaghetti, sage for seasoning stuffing, rosemary for meats and mint in gums and everyone's favorite chocolate mint. We had many different reactions to the smells. Everyone agreed they like dill pickles on Hamburgers and basil and oregano in spaghetti sauce and the mint in gum.



Member Spotlight

- Larry Causey

Kelby Kosel , 2018 MG Intern

At 16, Kelby Kosel is the youngest member of the Bell County Master Gardeners graduating class of 2018.

Kelby wants to be a doctor, and although home-schooled, she is enrolled in a dual credit program, Texas Bioscience Institute. She attends morning classes at Temple College. "I grew up in a farming and ranching community where we always had a garden," she said.

Where she now lives with her mother, Caroline Hoelscher, in Cyclone in east Bell County, they had been into floral gardening, not vegetables. Kelby was looking for something educational to do in her free afternoons. "I just found the Master Gardener page," she said. "I'd heard some Master Gardeners in the area." It worked out that she started the program two weeks behind. She credits her mentor, Gail Christian, for helping her catch up. "I love the whole mentor-intern relationship idea," Kelby said. "I think that's a great idea. I know Gail has helped me so much."

Since joining the class, Kelby has started a small vegetable garden at home, a la no-till. She has lettuce, red cabbage, tomatoes and broccoli, and is proud that she planted it all from seed. "I knew that people did it," she said of the no-till method. "I didn't know the extent of it—the whole process. I'm trying it out."

During the class field trip to Austin, she was inspired by the tour of Boggy Creek Farm. "Their no-till method was really inspiring, especially because that's what I'm doing," she said. She also liked the tour of Ladybird Johnson Wildflower Center.

"Everything was so beautiful, just to see the care people put into taking care of those gardens, preserving those wildflowers and those native plants," she said.

Learning about plants is helping her with her medical studies, Kelby said. "I'm taking a college biology class right now," she said. "I think it's awesome how the two can align."

Kelby said the Master Gardeners class has taught her a lot. "For the most part, I think it's the interaction with the people—all the people that come and talk, as well as the different people in the class," she said. "I think that's where I've gained most of my knowledge." She particularly liked the class on Plant Propagation, because it was all new to her. "I've tried some actually since the class," she said. "I don't know if it's successful yet, but I should know in a couple of weeks."

The Mother Earth News Fair at the Bell County Expo Center was her favorite volunteer project, she said. "It was such a good learning experience." She also liked the Landscape Design class by Diana Kirby. She and her mother have several raised flower beds—roses, geraniums, chrysanthemums and more—so the idea of backyard landscaping appeals to her.

This and That...

Now That I Have 7-Spice Powder, What Do I Do With It?

- Jane Van Praag

Those in our BCMGA Herbal Group are glad the membership enjoyed those refreshments we prepared for the last general meeting, all of which featured the spice, Ginger. Sylvia Maedgen and I were happy to provide the 7-Spice Powder-making exercise (repeated from a recent workshop) and to see that many of you bagged up the mixture and took some home. However, not until afterward did we realize the need for elaboration on use, other than that "it's a frequent ingredient in Asian cuisines" and Terrie Hahn suggested this newsletter follow-up article.

The following information, occasionally abridged by me, is primarily from a handout prepared by Billi J. Parus who conducted the 2018 Herbal Forum workshop, "Ginger - The Root of Fabulous Flavor":

7-Spice Powder (used in many Asian cuisines)

Traditionally this blend contained five spices--cinnamon, crushed star anise seed, ground fennel seed, freshly ground pepper (Szechuan if possible)--and cloves; but more contemporary recipes have added ginger and nutmeg. This recipe is for ground, dried spices, to be stored in airtight containers: 1 tablespoon each of the above spices except only 1 teaspoon of nutmeg.

Five-Spice Chicken, but using 7-Spice Powder instead)

(modified from the original recipe by Marie Helm Sinskey published in *Bon Appetite*)

Ingredients

4 garlic cloves, pressed
1 teaspoon 7-Spice Powder
1 large onion, peeled and cut into 16 wedges
2 tablespoons coarse kosher salt
2 tablespoons EVOO (extra-virgin olive oil)
1 cut up chicken (8 pieces, about 3-1/2 pounds)

Method

Combine garlic, salt, olive oil, and 7-Spice Powder in large bowl. Add chicken pieces; turn to coat. Cover and chill at least 1 hour or overnight. Preheat oven to 425F. Arrange onion wedges in 13"x9"x2" roasting pan. Arrange chicken with skin side up on top of onions. Roast until chicken is cooked through, basting occasionally with pan juices, about 50 minutes. Remove chicken from oven and let rest for 10 minutes. Arrange chicken on a platter and serve.

Jane's notes

I substituted skinned/boneless chicken breasts, then cut them into tenders and used a small round enameled roasting pan with cover. Melt-in-your-mouth tender!

Also, I've experimented successfully with chicken tenders dredged in a mixture of 7-Spice Powder and flour, dipped in a milk/beaten egg wash, then dredged again in the flour mixture, and finally dropped into a pot of hot peanut oil to deep-fat fry until done/the crust is golden brown.

This and That...

Now That I Have 7-Spice Powder, What Do I Do With It? - con't.

- Jane Van Praag

Chinese 5-Spice Oatmeal Cookies (but using 7-Spice Powder instead)

ingredients

1 cup butter, at room temperature
1 cup granulated white sugar
1 cup firmly-packed brown sugar
2 large eggs
1 teaspoon baking powder
1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
2 cups quick-cooking rolled oats
2 teaspoons vanilla
2-1/2 teaspoons 7-Spice Powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup coarsely ground toasted almond slivers

method

Pre-heat oven to 350F. Butter baking sheets (or, instead line with parchment paper). In a bowl, with an electric mixer on medium speed, beat butter, sugar, and brown sugar until well blended. Beat in eggs and vanilla until smooth, scraping down sides of bowl as needed. In another bowl, mix flour, baking powder, 7-Spice powder and salt. Stir or beat into butter mixture until well incorporated. Stir in oats and almonds. Drop dough in 1-1/2 teaspoon portions, 1-1/2 inches apart, onto the baking sheets. Bake cookies at 350 F until golden, approximately 12-15 minutes. If baking more than one sheet at a time, switch pan positions halfway through baking. Transfer cookies to racks to cool. If cookies seem chewy right out of the oven, allow to cool completely so they 'crisp up'. Makes approximately 5-6 dozen cookies.

So there's a place for 7-Spice Powder whether you're making something sweet or savory!

As to ginger by itself, one final fact: we were shown how it is so much easier to remove the skin from fresh ginger root by using the edge of a flatware spoon than a paring knife or vegetable peeler. That one tip was worth the cost of the course!



This and That...

21 Plants That Bloom All Summer Long

- Crystal Fisher

As spring wears off and summer heat picks up, most gardeners find it rather tiring to work in the garden. That's why you need to look for flowering plants—both annuals and perennials—that bloom profusely throughout the season without much pampering from you. Fortunately, you have a wide selection of summer bloomers to choose from.

1. Petunia - grown as annuals have one of the longest flowering seasons, right from mid-spring to late fall. Hybrid petunias with the trailing habit, commonly known as Purple Wave petunias, are extremely floriferous and versatile.
2. Zinnias - love warmth, so they are reliable summer bloomers, filling the garden with long lasting flowers in jewel colors
3. Gaillardia - is another summer flowering plant that never seems to get tired of blooming all through the season and beyond. These North American natives come in bright yellows,
4. Globe Amaranth - The compact mounds of globe amaranth are usually covered in globular flower heads all through summer and fall since they continue to persist on the plants.
5. Hydrangeas - Nothing can beat these perennials when it comes to filling up your garden with a profusion of long-lasting blooms starting from spring.
6. Rose of Sharon/Hardy hibiscus - Rose of Sharon is a perennial hibiscus for USDA zones 5-8. It blooms in various shades of pink, peach, and red. Individual flowers may not be as large as that of tropical hibiscus, but this hardy relative makes it up by the sheer profusion of the flowers they produce.
7. Coreopsis - Commonly called Tickseed, the low growing coreopsis is an old-time favorite. It is actually a perennial in warmer regions but is more often grown as an annual elsewhere.
8. Marigold (Tagetes) - Often grown in vegetable gardens to keep off pests, French Marigolds are well known to gardeners. They are compact in size, with a bushy, slightly spreading habit. Their yellow-orange flowers, often having varying amounts of red-maroon, usually have a single or double layer of petals.
9. Yarrow - Common yarrows with off-white or yellow flowers and weed status have undergone a transformation with several new color choices in shades of pink, cream, peach and red.
10. Candytuft - These hardworking, ground hugging evergreen plants can brighten up any nook and corner in the garden with its clusters of tiny flowers that start appearing in spring.
11. Purple coneflower /Echinacea - No garden should be without this native flowering plant producing large, purplish pink flowers.
12. Eryngium (Sea holly) - Silvery blue and spiky, the flowers and foliage of sea holly are strikingly different from those of usual garden plants. Consider adding it to your summer garden.
13. Aster - The delicate daisy-like flowers of asters in pinks, purples, lavender, and white bring cheer to your garden from early summer to fall.

This and That...

21 Plants That Bloom All Summer Long - con't.

- Crystal Fisher

14. Daylilies - bloom from spring to fall. Each flower lasts for just one day, but a succession of them open up day in and day out, ensuring that your garden looks cheerful throughout.

15. Rudbeckia - This is a wildflower that earned a rightful place in our gardens by its large flowers and profuse flowering habit.

16. Catmint - Whether you have cats or not, this aromatic plant makes a good addition to your summer garden. The bluish-purple flowers are tiny, but they are borne in abundance on long,

17. Snapdragon - Another reliable annual with a long flowering season, snapdragons were an old favorite in summer gardens.

18. Bee balm/Monarda - This North American native blooms from early summer to fall, producing whorls of tubular flowers around the tip of each branch.

19. Dahlia - These old favorites are making a comeback in new avatars. You can now choose from large, dinner plate dahlias to small daisy-flowered bedding dahlias, with pom-poms and ruffled ones in between.

20. Gaura - This wildflower is a North American native, forming large perennial stands, crowding out all the competitors.

21. Canna lilies - They are perennials with bold foliage and bolder flowers. They start blooming from late spring or early summer depending on the zone and continue through summer and fall.

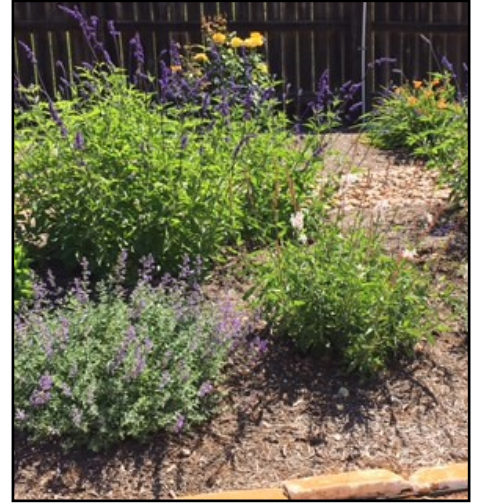
Source - <http://www.naturallivingideas.com>



What's Happening in Your Yard

- **Gail Pierce**

Photos by Gail Pierce

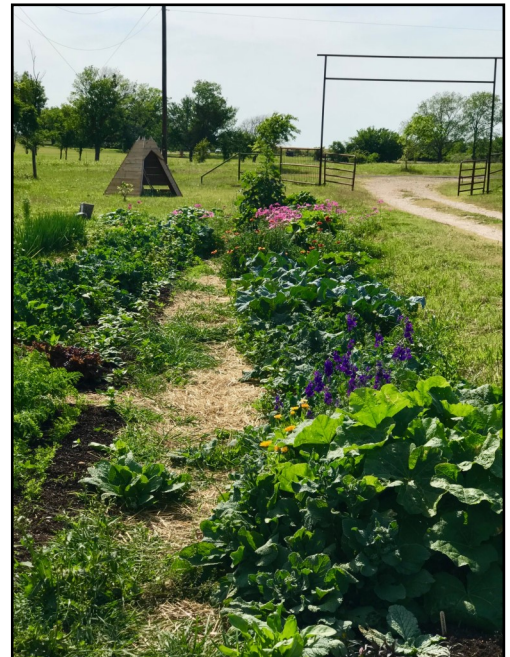


- **Marjorie Gillmeister**

Photos by Marjorie Gillmeister

Wolfgang's Garden

Spring is our favorite time of the year and the first garden is blooming with love. 12th of an acre in size where Wolfgang direct sowed seeds and transplanted many varieties of eggshell seed starters. This garden plot is a no till no plow garden and is tended to daily by hand watering and no drip system. It is purely a work of heART.



Announcements

Bamberger Ranch Tour - October 3, 2018

- Jan George

SELAH
Bamberger Ranch Preserve

This is probably one of the most educational tours we will have. It will teach use how to care for our environment and improve our natural resources. Bamberger ranch is a 5,500 acre educational and teaching facility located in Blanco County; therefore, it is very difficult to obtain a reservation. They can only take 40 people per tour. I will start taking reservations the first of Aug. The cost will be about \$50.00. I don't know exactly. I will have the exact figure in August. We will have to bring our lunch and eat on the bus since they do not allow food on the grounds. The tour will be from 9:30-1:00. You can visit the Bamberger Ranch web site at <https://bambergerranch.org/> to gain more information.



and Wine Tour - October 13, 2018

- Jan George

The Wildseed Farm located in Fredericksburg will have a Monarch butterfly release and give us a demonstration on how they band the butterflies. This should be a wonderful and unusual experience. We will also visit a couple of wineries. You do not have to wine taste. You can enjoy the beautiful grounds. You will be able to purchase a sandwich, drink, and ice cream at the Wildseed Farm or bring your lunch. Once again, food and drink is not allowed to be brought onto the property so you will have to eat on the bus. I will have all the details and prices by the first of August and will start taking reservations at that time.

Gardening in Bell County

- Carol Morisset and Jan Upchurch

We are proud to present the following educational opportunities for our neighbors and fellow gardeners:

- | | | | |
|-------------|------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------|
| • May 17 | Water Efficiency | • September 20 | Greenhouse Basics |
| • June 21 | Insects in Your Garden | • October 18 | Texas Native Gardening in the Winter |
| • July 19 | Fall Gardening | • November 15 | Raised Bed Gardening |
| • August 16 | Propagation of Plants | | |

Location: Bell County Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Office - Conference Room
1605 N. Main, Belton, TX

Time: 6:30-8:00 pm

Cost: Our seminars are free of charge but the BCMGA will accept donations of up to \$5.00 per class
Seminars are limited to 25 participants so register early.

For information, contact one of the following: j-upchurch@sbcglobal.net OR carol.j.morisset@gmail.com

Announcements



Central Texas Vines & Wines Program Country Spring Vineyard and Wine Garden 1625 Country Spring Road Lorena, Texas May 17, 2018

*Hosted by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Horticulture
Committee and Master Gardeners of McLennan County.*

Registration opens at 8:30 a.m. and program starts at 9:00 a.m. Registration fee is \$20 per person. Registration fee includes breakfast sponsored by Capital Farm Credit, lunch sponsored by Lone Star Ag Credit and the program will have sessions on the following topics:

- *Basics of Vineyard Establishment – Fran Pontasch, Viticulture Specialist*
- *Importance of Soil and Tissue Testing – Jake Mowrer, Soil Nutrient Specialist*
- *Everyday Vineyard Management – Mike Latimer, Latimer Vineyard*
- *Grape Varieties, Root Stock & Table Grapes – Justin Scheiner, Viticulture Specialist*
- *Vineyard Disease and Pest Management – Michael Cook, Viticulture Specialist*
- *Virus and Trunk Disease – Professor David Appel, Plant Pathology Specialist & Sheila McBride, Plant Pathology Associate Specialist*
- *Lessons learned from the Vineyard – Central Texas Vines & Wines Growers*

Interested persons **Must Pre-Register before May 11, 2018** by calling the McLennan County Extension Office at (254) 757-5180. 2 IPM CEU's will be offered.

The members of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension will provide equal opportunities in programs and activities, education, and employment to all persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identity and will strive to achieve full and equal employment opportunities through Texas A&M AgriLife. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.

Refreshment Roster for General Meetings - Looking for a Few More Volunteers

- Jane Van Praag

The July and August general meetings each still need some additional volunteers to prepare refreshments. The menu for July will be built around Bill Walker bringing us fresh corn on the cob; you'll be working alongside him, Wayne Schirner, and Claudette Hawkins. There is no set theme as yet for August so whomever signs up will get to join Sharon Hardin and Kathleen Lester in developing one. Please use my e-mail above to let me know you're willing to do your part!

Announcements

May General Meeting

- Kathy Love

The May general meeting will be held on the 9th. The education presentation will be on "Strawberries" by Wayne Schirner.

Social time is 9:30 a.m., meeting at 10 a.m. in the learning center building. If you have non-member friends whom you believe would be interested in this program, bring them along. Remember, our monthly education program is always open to the public.

Board of Director's Meeting

The May Board of Director's Meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 23th at 9 a.m. in the class/meeting room of the AgriLife Building. Please submit your agenda items to Stacye Parry, Recording Secretary by Friday, May 18th.

Grounds Workdays

- Johnny Jones and Tom Rennels

Here is the workday schedule for May:

May 2, 2018 8:00 a.m. Workday
10:30 a.m. Burger Wednesday
May 9, 2018 8:00 a.m. Workday
May 16, 2018 8:00 a.m. Workday
May 23, 2018 8:00 a.m. Workday
May 30, 2018 8:00 a.m. Workday

In the event of rain, there will be No Workday.

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

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

Advanced Learning

Upcoming Specialist Training

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| May 23-25 | Greenhouse Management
Specialist Training
Kerrville - Cost \$185
Deadline to register - May 1 |
| June 11-12 | First Detector (Pest & Pathogen Surveillance)
Angleton - Cost \$125
Deadline to register - June 1 |
| Sept. 4-6 | Vegetable Specialist Training
San Antonio - Cost \$TBD
Deadline to register - TBD |
| Sept. 18-20 | Texas Superstars Specialist Training
Tyler/Overton - Cost \$TBD
Deadline to register - TBD |



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Jan Upchurch
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*Please submit articles of less than 500 words for the Blooming Bell as Word Documents with **photos separate as JPG files** to Sylvia Maedgen at:*

txbikerchic7@gmail.com

Please do not send PDF documents.

Photo by Carla Harmon



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