

The Blooming Bell

August 2020

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Flowers of the Month Gladiolus and Poppy



Stock photo— Orange Gladiolus

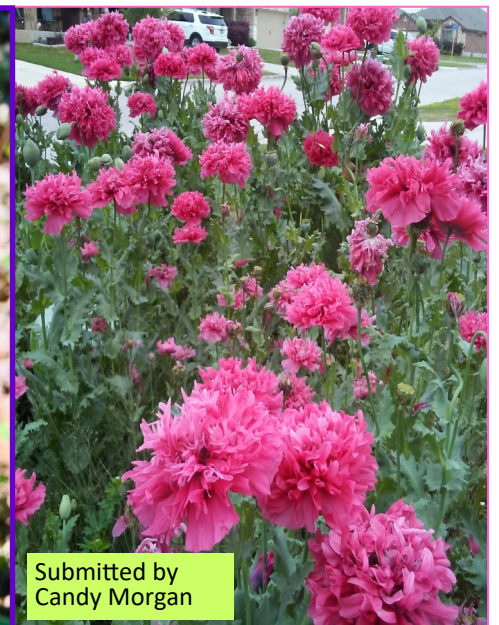


Double Poppy

Photos submitted by Jan George.






"Love the color of this poppy." Jan

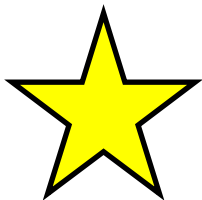


Submitted by Candy Morgan

August 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 Fall begins in 52 days!
2	3 Full Moon  Nat'l Watermelon Day	4	5	6	7	8
9	10 National S'mores Day	11	12 General Membership Online Business Meeting	13	14	15 National Honey Bee Day 
16	17	18 New Moon 	19 General Membership Online Educational Session	20	21	22
23	24	25 National Banana Split Day	26 Board of Directors Meeting via Telecon 9 AM	27	28 Stuffed Green Bell Pepper Day	29 More Herbs, Less Salt, Day
30	31					

To help prevent the spread of COVID-19, please continue to practice social distancing, wear a mask, and as much as possible **STAY AT HOME!** We will see you all soon.



Remember to record volunteer service hours and education hours each month.

VIRTUAL HUGS



STOP THE BUGS

President's Corner

Glenn Melton



I hope everyone is staying safe and well. Unfortunately, this pandemic may be with us for quite some time. Don't lose hope; it will eventually end. And it looks like the Dog Days of summer are upon us. It is probably just as well since our vegetable gardens are mostly burned up by now (at least mine is) and there is no pressing need to keep them going. Hopefully, we will be able to start a fall garden soon and enjoy some cooler weather in a couple of months.

I would like to thank everyone for their participation in our monthly online General Membership and BOD meetings. I believe we have the procedures finalized now and everything is running much more smoothly. If anyone has any input for either of these meetings, please contact me or Jan Upchurch and we will be sure to include it. Remember that the deadline for submissions of agenda items is one week prior to the actual meeting.

Work on the Learning Center is completed, and that facility is fully functional and ready for use. But we are still having difficulty with the irrigation system. Several leaks have been identified and repaired. We hope to have all repairs addressed soon and have an efficient and cost-saving system up and running in the near future. All of this due to some very hard-working members, such as Paul Carter, Karen Colwick, Wayne Schirner, and many others who have dedicated their time and energy to ensure we have fully functional and operational facilities. It could not have happened without them. On another note, we will not hold a Fall Plant sale this year. There are just too many unknowns to contend with at this time. We are however discussing a Spring 2021 Plant Sale and will begin the planning process soon. It will not be held at the Expo Center. Stay tuned.

Lastly, the Master Gardener Class of 2020 will finally graduate come September 2nd. This is a celebration long awaited and will be like no other we have ever held. Gary Slanga is working on a virtual program with a drive through diploma presentation. By my count, sixteen interns will graduate and certify however, some members may not have entered all earned hours in VMS so the numbers may be higher. I hope so. We heartily welcome our newest members and look forward to working with each and every one to ensure they feel a part of this organization.

Hope to see you all at the next General Membership meeting on August 12th!

..... Glenn

How to provide water for insects

by Wizzie Brown

The Death Star has arrived in Texas and I know that my gardening now takes place in very short spurts during morning hours when it may not be so blazing hot. I'm getting questions on various types of insects moving indoors which tells me that it's hot and dry outside- as if I didn't already know- and that it's important for me to provide water for animals in the yard.

I have several ways of providing water and it varies depending upon what group I am targeting. I have a traditional bird bath for birds to enjoy. My dogs, not that the spoiled turds stay outside, have a baby pool for cooling off and drinking water from in addition to a tub of a water dish in another location. I also have a few dishes of water near the sidewalk for any thirsty dogs that people are walking. My hubby saw two immature screech owls drinking from one of these a few nights ago, so they have an additional purpose.



Insect water dish

Then, there are the insects (of course). While insects are capable, and certainly will, of drinking from the above mentioned areas, it can be a risky undertaking for them. There is the possibility of drowning as well as being eaten by other animals that are also visiting regular water sources. To provide water for insects, you can use shallow containers filled with sand or pebbles or deeper containers with larger stones to allow a safer way for insects to access water without drowning. Another option would be to place a single large rock in a container of water.



Puddling dish

How to provide water for insects

by Wizzie Brown

If you want to go a step beyond water, you can provide sugar sources or ways for insects to get minerals or salts. For sugar sources, you can put out hummingbird feeders as you would for humming birds or you can try suet feeders holding slices of citrus or melon. To provide minerals and salts, you can create a puddling dish by mixing soil, compost, sand, and manure (this one is optional). Place the mixture in a shallow dish, create a small divot that can hold water, add a rock and water and you are good to go.

Melon
(sugar source) in
suet basket



There are a variety of ways to help insects that come to your yard. If you want more ideas, watch this recent webinar that I held.

<https://agrilife-tamu.webex.com/webappng/sites/agrilife-tamu/recording/play/ebc08f13abd3477bba4feb38bfc47c7b>

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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Wayne's Page



Growing Strawberries in Bell County

By Wayne Schirner

When I first moved to Belton in 1998, one of the first things I tried to grow was strawberries. I had grown them successfully in other parts of the country, so I figured why not here. The first spring I was here, I saw lots of strawberry plants for sale at multiple locations, so I just assumed that was the right time to plant them. The varieties sold in all the locations were the ever-bearing varieties, so I again assumed that those varieties must be the best for our area. I bought a bunch of plants and put them in the garden I had prepared using mostly native soil with some amendments added. I didn't know about soil tests, so I just bought some garden soil products that were designed to be used in an in-ground garden. The plants grew, and I got a few (very few) berries before the heat of the summer did them in. My impression was "boy that was a bust." I didn't try growing strawberries again until 2016. By then I had become a Master Gardener and had learned about the need for doing a soil test. My garden, that I had been amending for 17 years, had a pH of 7.8. Before trying to plant strawberries again, this time I did some researching. I started with a simple search "can you grow strawberries in central Texas?" The results from that search were positive, so I refined my search to "how to grow strawberries in central Texas." The results from that search revealed why my attempt in 1999 had been such a bust.

If you want to grow strawberries in Bell county, you need to plant spring bearing (AKA June bearing) strawberries in the fall. Protect them from low temperatures that get into the low teens, and harvest in the spring. Then, because strawberries don't do well in our hot weather, pull the plants and start over the next fall. Strawberries like to grow in a slightly acidic soil, which definitely didn't apply to my soil. I built raised beds and filled them with the mix I use for Square Foot Gardening, which has a pH in the 6.5-7.0 range. I planted at the right time and had a great harvest the following spring.



March 2017 after a fall
2016 planting

The articles I found recommended three varieties for central Texas: Chandler, Sequoia, and Douglas. I planted Chandler and Sequoia, to see if there was a significant difference. Both varieties grew well, but I learned that the Sequoia variety didn't keep well and pretty much had to be eaten the day of harvest.

Wayne's Page



Growing Strawberries in Bell County

By Wayne Schirner

The other thing I learned was that if you continue to irrigate them, they WILL survive the summer heat and you can get a second crop the following spring. You just need to manage the runners to keep your bed from having too many plants. Who would have ever thought you could have too many strawberry plants? Now, I replant every other fall and get two harvests before I replant.



The hoops on the beds are what I use for frost cloth to protect plants from freezing weather.

The photo to the left was taken October 2017 following the Fall 2016 planting showing that they can survive our hot Summer.

One day's harvest this spring, along with some snow peas.



It still boggles my mind that for the most part, all the local stores still only offer ever-bearing plants in the spring. That only shows that just because something is sold at the big box stores doesn't mean it is the right variety or right time of year for us to plant. Fortunately for us, Gabriel Valley Farms in Georgetown sells spring bearing plants in the fall. That means that even if we can't have a fall plant sale this year because of the coronavirus, there will be places around that we can get the right plants at the right time.

Because one of the new Texas Superstars is a strawberry called Festival, I'm looking forward to finding some of those to plant this fall. The original link to the best article I found in 2016 is no longer available, but here are a several links to sites that have great information on growing strawberries in Texas.

<https://travis-tx.tamu.edu/about-2/horticulture/edible-gardens-for-austin/fruits-and-nuts-for-austin/growing-strawberries-in-austin/>

https://theeagle.com/townnews/agriculture/strawberries-easy-to-grow-in-the-fall/article_cd2a3026-d426-5f48-b64a-892c9ddee0dd.html

<https://www.hunker.com/13427288/how-to-plant-strawberries-in-texas>

Texas Blue Bells *Eustoma exaltatum russellianum*

Dr. William C. Welch, Professor & Landscape Horticulturist
Texas AgriLife Extension Service, Texas A & M University

Texas Blue Bells are having a fabulous year! They appear during our hottest season and are too often mowed down. Their blooms are iridescent and velvety. Blues and purples are the most common colors but pinks and whites also occur. I remember first seeing them as a child. My Aunt Stell was a school teacher in Hope, Texas that had a two room independent school near Yoakum and always noticed wildflowers. She brought in a bouquet in the heat of summer and I was amazed. Long ago thriving colonies along river banks and open grassy fields were common. Blue bells were one of Lady Bird Johnson's favorites.



I have heard blue bells described as a weak perennial. The seed is as fine as ground pepper. The foliage is bluish green and they are usually 1-3' tall. Shortly after arriving at Texas A & M University in 1972, I was contacted by the Japanese government requesting that I locate a native site where blue bells were growing. At the time there were some large plantings between Navasota and Conroe on Highway 105. The site has since become a public school and the bluebells were destroyed.



Blue bells vary widely from year to year. Their use as cut flowers was what interested the Japanese visitors. They collected seeds and did some work toward making them available because they are not only stunningly beautiful but last a long time as cut flowers (two weeks is not uncommon). In early July of 2020, my wife and I noticed some really beautiful fields of blue bells along Highway 390 near Independence, TX (Washington County). We saw a tractor with a mowing attachment in the area and were saddened to notice several days later the field had been completely mowed and the blue bells destroyed.

Native American Seed is listed as a source. Late summer or winter is probably the best time to start seed. Either cool season transplanting or direct sowing is probably best.



What's Happening...

Killeen Municipal Court Community Garden "Short, Hot, Saturday Workday"

July 11, 2020

Photos and text by Randy Brown



1 of 2

What's Happening...

Killeen Municipal Court Community Garden "Short, Hot, Saturday Workday"

July 11, 2020

Photos and text by Randy Brown



Butterfly Weigh Station



Clearing cactus for bed makeover



Elaine McSpedon

Jack McSpedon

What's Happening...

Work Day at Killeen Municipal Court Community Garden July 18, 2020

Photos by Randy Brown



Okra growing nicely!



Jack McSpedon and Paul Carter clearing the succulent bed (see story next page)

What's Happening...

Killeen Municipal Court Community Garden - Memorial Garden -

by Virginia Bargas

Photo by Randy Brown



Edie Campbell
KMCCG Director

Photos taken in
2010 submitted
by Gail Christian

Several members, including me, know very little about the Killeen Municipal Court Community Garden (KMCCG) and have not yet been to visit or participate in a workday. In this edition of the newsletter, there are photos of work being done on two weekends in a succulent bed. The plants appeared very large and mature and it made me very curious to know more.

What I have learned is that the KMCCG was started in 2008 and the succulent bed was part of the initial portion of the garden. It was designed by several Master Gardeners (MG) that no longer participate for various reasons. Edie Campbell and Bob Gordon are the two dedicated KMCCG MGs that started in 2008 and continue to maintain the garden. Ursula Nanna, MG 2002, was the main designer and started the succulent bed with plants from her home, donations she obtained from several stores in the Killeen area, and others that she picked up along the way.



Sadly, Ursula passed away in January 2015. The succulents have continued to grow and have become hard to maintain. Two years ago the Century plants bloomed and then died. They had several small 'pups' around the bottom which could not be removed.

MG David Carpenter suggested a plaque be made to honor Ursula and provided a piece of granite for this purpose. He had the piece cut and made a concrete slab to mount it on. Edie Campbell took the granite piece to the extension office and had Ursula's information engraved on it.

During a KMCCG monthly planning meeting, Edie Campbell proposed clearing the succulent bed and, with the plaque for Ursula already in the bed, making it a memorial garden for the dedicated members of the KMCCG and their immediate families. The membership voted for the garden and work began.



What's Happening...

Killeen Municipal Court Community Garden

- Memorial Garden -



Some of the plants removed

Trouble was encountered in getting equipment to help remove the large vegetation. MG Paul Carter decided to just jump in and get it done. MGs Jack McSpedon, Elaine McSpedon, and Rebecca Caldwell have been real troopers in getting things cleared. Bob Gordon plans to bring his tractor with a front-end loader to help pull the real big plants out.

The Memorial Garden is not intended to be for all the BCMGA as there are many and the bed is not that large. It is for the members that have continued to support the Municipal Court Garden and immediate family, spouse and children.

“I would like for it to be a quiet place to just stand or sit and reflect on those that are no longer with us. Unfortunately David Carpenter's daughter died during a surgery. Her favorite color was purple so I plan on a purple Crape Myrtle tree for her. The other plants should be small flowering perennial and drought resistant plants with extra to be added as needed for someone else. A small bench would be extra nice to just sit awhile and/or a birdbath. We do not have a water source so we need things that can survive on their own except in extreme hot months.”

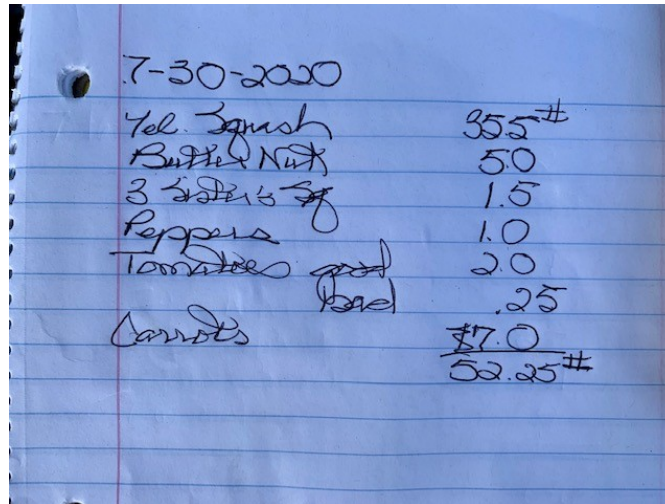
Eddie Campbell

What's Happening...

Work Day at Killeen Municipal Court Community Garden July 30, 2020

Photos and reporting by Randy Brown

52.25 pounds of vegetables harvested, as noted on list to right.



7-30-2020	
Yel. Squash	35.5#
Butter Nut	5.0
3 Sisters Sp	1.5
Peppers	1.0
Tomatoes	2.0
Carrots	.25
	<u>\$7.0</u>
	52.25#



Above, Tristan and Caleb, grandsons of Kathy and Randy Brown, were big helpers with the day's harvest.

What's Happening...

Temple College Phi Theta Kappa Community Garden

Text and photos by Marjorie Gillmeister

This Summer season we've had an abundant harvest—in June 31 lbs., 0.76 oz. and in July 22 lbs., 0.23oz.

The harvests consisted of a variety of tomatoes, squash, cucumbers, okra, garlic, lettuce, mint, and peppers.

Since the school pantry has been closed, the harvest has been shared with elderly neighbors of the PTK students and PTK students working the garden.

The garden had it's one year anniversary on June 27th. The harvest total thus far is 207 lbs., 0.81 oz.

The actual one year anniversary from the time we had our first harvest was in October 2019. We look forward to sharing the yearly harvest in October of 2020 soon!

Special thank you to our devoted Master Gardeners, Marjorie Gillmeister, Carla Harmon, Mike Butts, Jack McSpedon, and Sandra Carney, for helping to maintain the garden's bounty.

In July, Master Gardeners and PTK students will seed start indoors for the fall garden plantings. They will utilize recycled materials such as eggshells, newspaper pots, and plastic water bottles as pots.



Borage and wild garlic weaving in and out of neighboring tomatoes



San Marzano tomatoes

What's Happening...

Temple College Phi Theta Kappa Community Garden

Text and photos by Marjorie Gillmeister



Chocolate Cherry
Tomatoes



Bountiful beets harvest



Chiogga
beet



Aromatic wild garlic bulbs

What's Happening...

Temple College Phi Theta Kappa Community Garden

Text and photos by Marjorie Gillmeister



PTK student harvesting wild garlic



MG Sandra Carney pruning the foliage of tomatoes to provide airflow for the plants



PTK student harvesting Asian cucumbers and having fun

What's Happening...

Temple College Phi Theta Kappa Community Garden

Text and photos by Marjorie Gillmeister



Black eyed Susan: students planted seeds in December



Delphiniums: students planted seeds in December



Squash blooms



Delicata squash also known as bohemian squash



Banana Peppers

In the Texas heat the native wood mulch and mushroom compost have a symbiotic relationship that has helped maintain the gardens' bounty. Moisture holding capacity, protecting the plants' roots and available nutrients for the plants.



What's Happening...

Temple College Phi Theta Kappa Community Garden

Text and photos by Marjorie Gillmeister

Blueberry tomato row



Blueberry tomato plants loaded with blooms

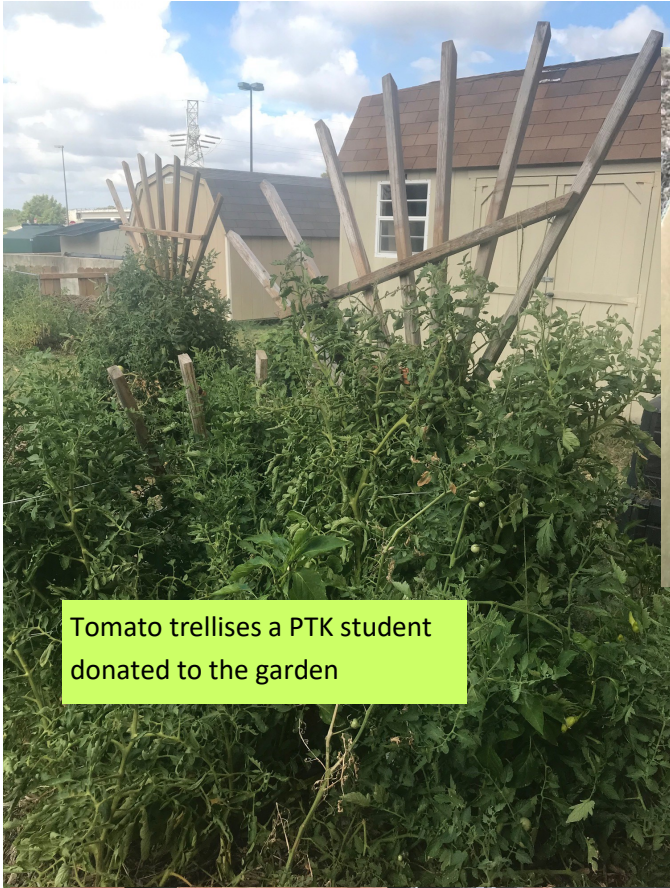
Blueberry tomatoes getting ready to ripen



What's Happening...

Temple College Phi Theta Kappa Community Garden

Text and photos by Marjorie Gillmeister



Tomato trellises a PTK student donated to the garden



PTK students propagated mint cuttings



Mint cuttings will be one of the plants the PTK students will use to raise funds for the garden at a plant sale.



Sweet potato slips Teri Marceau donated to the garden are growing!

What's Happening...

Temple College Phi Theta Kappa Community Garden

Text and photos by Marjorie Gillmeister



Vermicompost bin is loaded with happy red wigglers. PTK students have been freezing vegetable scraps to feed our friends and keep them cool for the summer.

Thank you Teri Marceau for teaching the students how to make and maintain a vermicompost bin and donating the worms and bin.

Mystery Seeds

Mystery seeds arrive in Texas Recipients advised to report unsolicited seed shipments

Texas residents are now among those across the nation receiving mysterious seeds delivered by mail in tiny bags marked as jewelry. [U.S. Department of Agriculture](#) officials are on alert because these seeds are unsolicited.

Mystery seeds with labeling from China. (Source: Washington State Department of Agriculture)

Kevin Ong, Ph.D., [Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service](#) plant pathologist and director of the [Texas Plant Disease Diagnostic Laboratory](#) in College Station, said the concern arises because these packages have seeds in them instead of what is listed, and there is no information on what type they might be.

“We don’t know what kind of seeds they are,” Ong said. “Not knowing what the seeds are could potentially open our agriculture industry up to noxious weeds. If that proves to be the case, if they take hold, they could impact agriculture negatively.”

According to [USDA-Animal, Plant Health Inspection Service, APHIS](#), the [Plant Protection and Quarantine](#), PPQ, regulates the importation of plants and plant products under the authority of the Plant Protection Act. PPQ maintains its import program to safeguard U.S. agriculture and natural resources from the risks associated with the entry, establishment or spread of animal and plant pests and noxious weeds. These regulations prohibit or restrict the importation of living plants, plant parts and seeds for propagation.

“Seeds for planting can be produced all over the world and some you buy may come from other countries,” Ong said. “Companies that sell these seeds have the necessary permits. In this situation, the source is not readily known. What USDA wants to know is why are people getting these and are they noxious weeds.”

What to do with mystery seeds

“Do not simply discard these seeds as they can potentially germinate and escape into nature”, Ong said. All cases should be reported to USDA and all packages should be kept secure until USDA gives further instructions.

All incidences of receipt of these unrequested seeds in Texas should be reported to USDA-APHIS by sending an email to Carol Motloch, USDA-APHIS’ Texas PPQ state operations coordinator, at carol.m.motloch@usda.gov. Other states should send emails to SITCMail@usda.gov. The email should include a contact email and phone number as well as a description of package information. Sending a photo of the label and material would also be helpful.

What's Happening...

Mystery seeds arrive in Texas Recipients advised to report unsolicited seed shipments

“First, if you didn’t order it, we don’t want anyone planting these seeds or even opening the packages,” said Larry Stein, Ph.D., [Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service](#) horticulturist, Uvalde. “It could be a scam, or it very well could be dangerous.”

“We recommend anyone receiving the seeds send an email to USDA and then wait to see if they are asked to send them in,” Stein said. “We would not advise throwing them away until more information is known because they might contaminate the landfill.”

To date, packages containing these mystery seeds have also been received in Washington, Virginia, Utah, Kansas, Louisiana, and Arizona.

Advice from [Texas Department of Agriculture Commissioner](#) Sid Miller is that anyone receiving a foreign package containing seeds should not open it. Keep contents contained in their original sealed package.

“I am urging folks to take this matter seriously,” Miller said in a press release. “An invasive plant species might not sound threatening, but these small invaders could destroy Texas agriculture. TDA has been working closely with USDA to analyze these unknown seeds so we can protect Texas residents.”

An [invasive species](#) is an organism that is not native to a particular region. The introduction of this “alien species” can cause economic or environmental harm. In agriculture, an invasive species can destroy native crops, introduce disease to native plants and may be dangerous for livestock.

Some of these packages have been reported in the Bell County area.

All incidences of receipt of these unrequested seeds in Texas should be reported to USDA-APHIS by sending an email to Carol Motloch, USDA-APHIS’ Texas PPQ state operations coordinator, at carol.m.motloch@usda.gov. Other states should send emails to SITCMail@usda.gov. The email should include a contact email and phone number as well as a description of package information. Sending a photo of the label and material would also be helpful.

From The Help Desk

INSECTS

By Kathy Love

Well over 50% of calls to the BCMGA Help Desk are tree and lawn concerns, but the runner-up to those two issues is insects, most generally insect identification.

In June and July, the desk has logged 9 contacts from citizens concerned they have seen the recently publicized Asian Giant (Murder) Hornet (AGH) *Vespa mandarinia*. In all but one instance we were able to assure the concerned citizens they were seeing either the Eastern Cicada Killer *Sphecius speciosus* (7 calls), the Western Cicada Killer *Sphecius grandis* (1) or in 1 case a bald faced hornet *Dolichovespula maculata*.



Stock photo of Bald Faced Hornet submitted by Kathy Love.

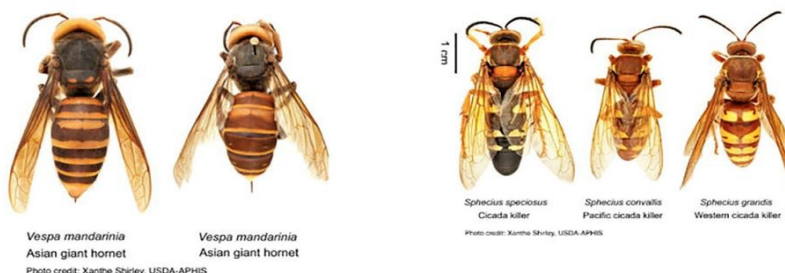
To help assure our concerned citizens that they are not being invaded by the AGH we refer them to a May 2020 blog by Dr. Michael Merchant, Professor and Extension Urban Entomologist <https://citybugs.tamu.edu/2020/05/05/giant-hornets/>.

In this blog post Dr. Merchant explains "The bottom-line is that the chance of Asian giant hornets invading Texas soon is slim, given that at the moment only a few wasps have been found in only one county in the far northwest corner of the U.S." He goes on to address the issue of the pest being transported by humans to other areas as unlikely since they are social insects and a lone hornet transported in a container, etc. cannot survive away from its nest. Likewise the possibility of an entire nest being transported undetected is unlikely. He explains that the most likely scenario for transport by humans would be a mated queen going to sleep in the winter by burrowing into a potted plant and coming to Texas -- so take care when unpotting your plants in 2021!

When we identify cicada killers, we ask folks not to kill them as they are not aggressive and generally do not bother people. They are beneficial as they provide control of the cicada population. The female uses her stinger to sting and paralyze the cicada which she takes back to her nest, lays her egg and the larvae feed on the cicada.

The male does not have a stinger and may be aggressive around the nest but he can't pop you! The adults feed on flower nectar.

Is it an Asian giant hornet or one of the look-alike insects?



TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION

Holly Davis and Patrick Porter, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension
With images from USDA-APHIS and others

From The Help Desk

INSECTS

By Kathy Love

Then there is the Flatid Planthopper! Yeah, that's its common name, the Flatid Planthopper, *Metcalfa pruinose*. Our first contact with this interesting little non-pest was on June 3rd on a boxwood shrub (see photo below). We identified it as the nymph phase of *Metcalfa* although we thought we could also make out some adults when enlarging the photo. Dr. Merchant has also blogged on *Metcalfa* at <https://citybugs.tamu.edu/2017/06/15/citrus-flatid-planthopper/>. Since this was our first encounter with this fella we submitted our photo to Dr. Merchant who confirmed we got it right.



Boxwood photo submitted for ID by Michael Murphy.

Adult planthoppers insert their eggs into the bark, and then the nymphs feed on plant sap with their piercing, sucking mouthparts. As they feed they secrete a protective white waxy substance that covers their body and the surrounding stem. This fluffy white substance may look unsightly but does not harm plants. Nymphs can jump 12-18" which is why they are called planthoppers.



Stock photo of nymph stage of flatid planthopper submitted by Kathy Love.



Stock photo of flatid planthopper adult submitted by Kathy Love.

They do not generally cause significant harm at any stage of their life but if you don't like the look, they can be washed off with a stream of water or use insecticidal soap or horticultural oil to remove them.

They only have one generation a year and it seems at least in our area, they are more numerous in some years than others. After this initial case, we saw them two more times in the following weeks, in one case on member Teri Marceau's plants.

From The Help Desk

INSECTS

By Kathy Love



Every year I have worked the help desk someone brings in the biggest, ugliest bug imaginable! It is the adult stage of the hardwood stump borer beetle *Malodonthus dasytomus*. (see stock photo on left)

<https://www.insectidentification.org/insect-description.asp?identification=Hardwood-Stump-Borer-Beetle>

These have come to the help desk collected from one citizen's wooden deck and from pecan and elm trees. It is the larval stage of this big guy that does the damage as it eats through the wood surface and the adults make a sizeable hole when they emerge. The larvae can take 3 to 4 years to reach the adult stage. We tell citizens to let the adult stage carry on unless the larvae are causing significant damage to trees, deck, lawn furniture, etc. and you need to disrupt the life cycle. If I had a dead or dying tree and found these guys, I'd keep them around as one of their favorite foods is ants, like fire ants!

Finally, just a reminder to keep your eye out for any sightings of the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB). It has not been found in Bell or any of our surrounding counties but has been found as near as Tarrant and in May of this year, Denton counties. We have had calls about possible sightings but so far what we have seen have been green longhorn beetles and green tiger beetles.

Emerald
Ash Borer
Adult



Emerald
Ash Borer
Larvae



Stock photos

We have seen a very similar larvae but were pretty sure it was not the EAB because it was found on the stump of a dead red oak tree. Google Lens identified it as EAB but we doubted it because it was on an oak tree. To be sure, we sent the larvae photo to Dr. Merchant who responded as follows: "This is some species of flat headed borer (family Buprestidae)—same family as EAB, but not EAB. These borers are common in dead and dying trees, but rarely are the cause of death—with a few notable exceptions like EAB. The emerald ash borer, BTW, is only found in ash or white fringe tree (*Chionanthus*)."

This link to Dr. Merchant's Insects in the City blog will give you more information on this exotic pest <https://citybugs.tamu.edu/2020/05/18/emerald-ash-borer-in-denton/>.

If you are not already signed up for Dr. Merchant's blog, you should consider doing so as he is certainly a wealth of entomology knowledge and he stays on top of new topics, like the Asian Giant Hornet, etc.

Sharing is Caring... 😊 😊

Tomatoes—July 9, 2020

Photos and text by Juan Anaya

“The last of my purple Cherokee tomatoes. It was a very productive year. But the always dependable Juliets will keep producing until a hard freeze.”



Sharing is Caring... 😊 😊

Black Spanish Grapes July 13, 2020

Photos and text by Gail Pierce

"Harvested Black Spanish Grapes today, best crop in 3 years. Last couple of years they were plagued with Black Rot. After spraying early and keeping up a spraying regiment, I finally got a good crop. These grape vines I propagated when I took the BCMG class in 2012. I'm so proud!"



Sharing is Caring... 😊😊

Bath Time Female Black Chinned Hummingbird July 15, 2020

Photos by Juan Anaya



Sharing is Caring... 😊😊

Juvenile Ruby Throated Hummingbird on Red Yucca Plant July 25, 2020

Photos by Juan Anaya

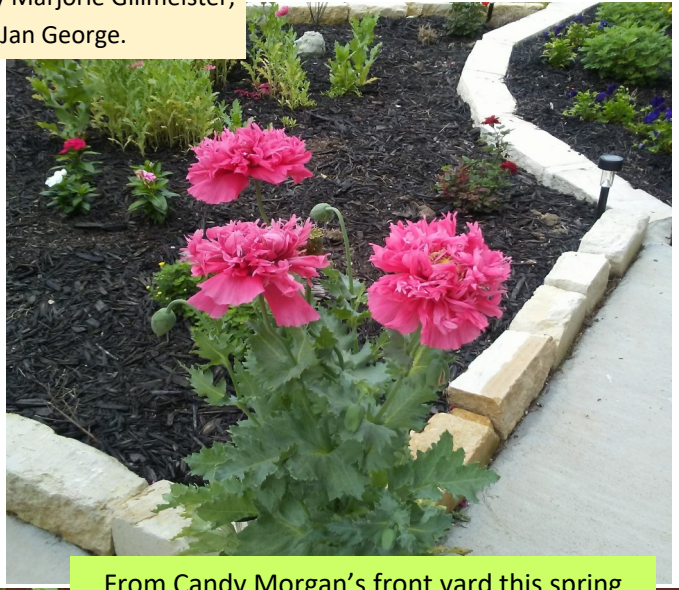


Sharing is Caring... 😊 😊

Photos submitted by Marjorie Gillmeister, Candy Morgan, and Jan George.



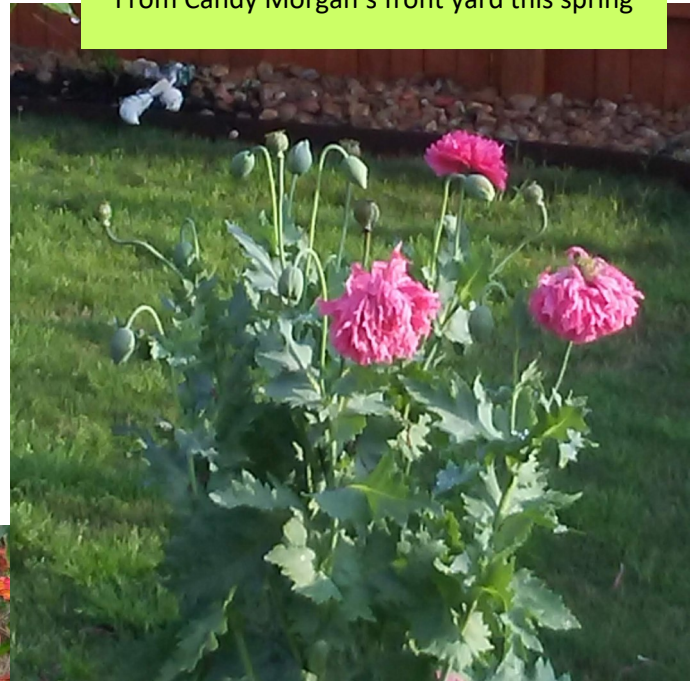
"Lauren's Grape Poppy" grown at Temple College Garden—submitted by Marjorie Gillmeister—Seed from Botanical Interests Seed Company



From Candy Morgan's front yard this spring



Jan's Poppy Garden



Sharing is Caring... 😊 😊

Snapdragons at Temple College Garden

Submitted by Marjorie Gillmeister



What's Coming Up!

Bell County Youth Fair – FCS Superintendent Needed

The Family and Consumer Science (FCS) Division of the Bell County Youth Fair needs a Yeast Bread superintendent for our upcoming 2021 Bell County Youth Fair.

Some of the superintendent responsibilities are recruiting judges knowledgeable in the specific divisions, answering questions from students, and organizing the entries in the Fair; on check in day and during the week of the Fair.

If you have questions or are interested or know of anyone who might be interested in being a superintendent, please contact Betty Nejtek at bnejtek@gmail.com, or Christy Reese at hotmixworld@yahoo.com.

Backyard Bug Hunt Webinars Continue in August. Join in FREE, Fridays at 10AM.

Wizzie Brown will continue her interesting and informative webinars through the month of August, but has had to make changes, as she advised us via email this week.

First, moving to Zoom and we will need to register for EACH webinar we want to attend. This will allow Wizzie to be better able to track numbers for reporting purposes.

Second, Wizzie has moved her email list to Mailchimp. We will receive an email from Mailchimp asking us to confirm that it is okay for Wizzie to send us the emails. Be on the lookout for this. If you don't get one, check your SPAM folder. When you receive the message, click through that you are willing to receive the emails.

The schedule for August is as follows:

August 7- bed bugs

August 14- turf pests

August 21- beneficials ID

August 28- giant silk moth ID

The Zoom link for August webinars, Fridays at 10:00 AM:

Register in advance for each meeting you want to attend so attendance numbers may be tracked:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZY1duuorD8iGNbi8B59D7mFSrG9vRKQNFyy>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

**Webinars presented by
Wizzie Brown, BCE
Extension Program Specialist- IPM
Texas AgriLife Extension Service**

Announcements...

August General Membership Business Meeting

When: August 12, 2020

Where: [Via Online Meeting](#)

Time: 10:00 AM

General Membership Educational Session

When: August 19, 2020

Where: [Via Online Meeting](#)

Time: 10:00 AM

Topic: **Will be announced when confirmed**

Board of Directors Meeting

The Board of Directors Meeting will be held on **Wednesday, August 26 at 9 a.m. via teleconference.**

Members are welcome to join the call.

Please submit your agenda items to Sylvia Maedgen, Recording Secretary, by **Wednesday, August 19.**

Grounds Work Days

Karen Colwick and Paul Carter

We are all advised to make any day a work day. Karen has posted a list of "to dos" on the Annex gate. Please check the list before "digging in".



In the event of rain, there will be no work day.

Communications

While restrictions are in place, please send photos of your garden with a note about your photos to TeriMMarceau@gmail.com or to [Bell.mg@agnet.tamu.edu](mailto:bell.mg@agnet.tamu.edu) and Teri will post them on Facebook.

If you know of someone in our organization who is ill, scheduled to have surgery, or has lost a loved one (including fur babies) please email Teri Marceau at bell.mg@agnet.tamu.edu, or our correspondence secretary, Debbi Harris, at dcharris99@yahoo.com.

An appropriate card will be sent.

~~Refreshment Committee General Membership Meeting~~

~~A minimum of 7 volunteers are needed for each meeting. Future meetings are on hold until further notice.~~



Upcoming Events

Advanced Training

Online Courses

Sep 11, 18, 25	Rainwater Harvesting	Fort Worth
Oct 16, 23, 30	Greenhouse Management	Fort Worth
Ongoing	Earth-Kind® On-Line Master Gardener Training modules	https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/earthkind/training/

Extension Events



There are no upcoming Bell County Extension events at this time.
Stay tuned!



Directors

Communications	Teri Marceau	2020-2021
Facilities	Paul Carter & Karen Colwick	2019-2020
Membership	Sherry Oermann	2020-2021
KMCCG	Edie Campbell	2019-2020
Outreach	Christy Reese & Carol Morisset	2019-2020
New Class	Gary Slanga	2019-2020
Projects	Barbara Ishikawa & Stacye Parry	2019-2020
Youth	Janice Smith	2020-2021

Executive Board

President	Glenn Melton	2019-2020
1 st Vice President	Jan Upchurch	2020-2021
2 nd Vice President	Bill Walker	2019-2020
Recording Secretary	Sylvia Maedgen	2020
Treasurer	Barbara Ishikawa	2020-2021

AgriLife Agent Lyle Zoeller

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Glenn Melton	Edie Campbell	Scarlot Barreras
Wizzie Brown	Kathy Love	
Wayne Schirner	Marjorie Gillmeister	
Randy Brown	Candy Morgan	
Juan Anaya	Paul Carter	
Gail Pierce	Gail Christian	
Jan George	Betty Nejteck	

Editor: Virginia Bargas

Please submit articles of less than 500 words as Word documents. Photos should be sent separately in a folder through a link using OneDrive, Dropbox, Google Photos, or in a zipped file. **Photos must be in the JPEG format.** Do not text your photos. *(If texting is preferred, please let me know in advance.)* Email your documents and pictures to Virginia at bargasv@hotmail.com.

***Please do not send PDF documents.
I will send them back to you!***

BCMGA Webmaster: Rachel Glass - glass.rachel@gmail.com

Please send your updates for the BCMG website to Rachel.

CHECK OUT BCMGA FACEBOOK PAGE! GO TO

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

Texas Master Gardener website

<https://txmg.org>

Bell County Master Gardener website

<https://txmg.org/bell/>

Texas Master Gardener Volunteer Management System

<https://texas.volunteersystem.org/UniversalLogin.cfm?logout=1>



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