

The Blooming Bell

NEWS . EVENTS . GARDENING TIPS. EDUCATIONAL ARTICLES

SPECIAL AWARDS / CHRISTMAS PARTY EDITION!



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Have Gardening Questions? Submit your questions and photos at: bell.mg@agnet.tamu.edu

THE BLOOMING BELL DECEMBER 2022

UPCOMING EVENTS

December 2022

STARTING 2023 WITH A BANG!

Speakers Bureau & Monthly Outreach Seminar

Here is a tentative schedule for 2023. Please note the bureau will be adding hands-on classes on Saturdays and working on classes on the West side of the county.

January 19 - Spring Gardening Starts Now with Wayne Schirner

January 24 - Harker Heights - Wayne Schirner on Spring Gardening Starts Now

February 16 - Honeybees, Native Bees & Gardening

February 25-26 - Home & Garden Show (topics and schedule to be determined)

March 16 - Peaches & Plums

April 20 - Drip Irrigation

May 18 - Landscaping with Native Plants

June 15 - Soil Health

July 20 - Hummingbirds & Pollinators

August 17 - Blackberries

September 21 - Migrating Monarchs

October - Onions & Garlic

November 16 - Planting Trees

Stay tuned for a new Speakers Bureau email address coming soon, **BCM GASpeakers@gmail.com**. If you are interested in teaching a class please contact Debra Thompson at the above email address or text her at (210)441-0237.

WEDNESDAY WORKDAYS: The **First & Third Wednesdays, 8:00 am to 11:00 am**, are Master Gardener workdays at the Extension Office. We have demonstration beds all around the facility and new projects every month.

Board of Directors Meeting: Meets on **January 25th**, at 10:00 a.m., in the Education Center (which is in the AgriLife Building).

General Membership Business & Education Meeting: Meets on **January 11th**, at 9:30 a.m.; Fellowship time at 9:00 a.m. The meeting will begin with the educational portion of our meeting.

This month we will hear from Camille Wiseman on Native Grasses. Invite a friend! You won't want to miss out on this.

We will meet at the Harris Community Center, 401 N. Alexander St., Belton, TX 76513

Burger Wednesday: Occurs the **1st Wednesday of every month at 11:00**. Bring a dish to share and donations are accepted.

For more information, please contact Melissa Johnson at (484)767-1730 or shinyone1966@gmail.com.

Herb Study Interest Group: Meets on the **3rd Wednesday** of the month, **10:00-11:30 AM**. See the Calendar of Events for location as it may fluctuate between the learning center and the extension classroom. Please contact Tracy Brown for further information: bcmgtabrown@gmail.com.

Killeen Municipal Court Community Garden: Meets every Saturday, time varies according to the season.

Please contact Dave Slaughter slaughtd915@gmail.com.

HELP DESK: Monday through Thursday, 9:00 am to Noon & 1:00 to 3:00 pm.



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Executive Board

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New Class	Pat Johnson
Projects	Wayne Schirner
Youth	Susan Burchfield
Outreach/Speakers Bureau	Debra Thompson Melissa Johnson





Lifetime Achievement: Stacye Parry



Lifetime Achievement: Pat Johnson



Lifetime Achievement: Randy Brown



Meritorious Service: Jane Van Praag



20 Years Service: Mary Lew Quesinberry



15 Years Service: (Not all pictured) Edie Campbell, Gail Christian, Wayne Baker, Kathy Patterson, and Brenda Smith, presented by Kathy Love



10 Years Service: Gail Garner and Barbara Dalby, presented by Kathy Love



5 Years Service: (Not all pictured) Paul Carter, Rachel Glass, Kerin Grimes, Laura Ladd, Kathleen Lester, Kathy Lovelace, Nancy Novakowski, Jeanne Richard, Dorothy Thomas, presented by Kathy Love



800-899 Service Hours: Kathy Love, presented by Jan Upchurch



400-499 Service Hours: Teri Marceau, Karen Colwick, Debra Thompson, Melissa Johnson, presented by Kathy Love



300-399 Service Hours: April Marek, Carol Morisset, Pat Johnson, presented by Kathy Love



200-299 Service Hours: (Not all pictured) Louann Hight, Susan Burchfield, Bill Walker, Ann Beauchamp, Wayne Schirner, Betty Nejtek, Rebecca Caldwell, Susan Fogelman, Jan Upchurch, Janice Smith, Stacey Parry, Charlotte Nunnery, Paul Carter, Randy Brown, Barbara Ishikawa



100-199 Service Hours: (Not all pictured) Christy Reese, Walt Schneider, Annette Shubert, Andi Bowsher, Larry Moehnke, Sherry Oermann, Michael Butts, Joan Bumgarner, Nancy Novakoski, Gail Koontz, Gail Christian, Crystal Mears, Sylvia Maedgen, Gary Slanga, Lee Ann Smith, Jane Van Praag, Misti Daniel, Terrie Hahn, Susan Terry, Mary Ann Everett, Tracy Brown



New Master Gardeners Of The Year: Melissa Johnson, Misti Daniel, April Marek, Debbie Thompson, presented by Kathy Love



State M.G. Recognition: Stacye Parry



Golden Shovel Award: Dave Slaughter



Green Thumb Award: Randy Brown, Jan Upchurch, and Wayne Schirner



Friend of Master Gardener:
David Quesinberry



Friend of Master Gardener: Chris Duncan



How to help overwintering insects

If you want to help insects survive winter, there are some things you can do to provide them with shelter during colder times of the year.

First of all, why should you provide shelter for insects during winter? Not all insects are pests! It is estimated that less than 5% of insect species are considered pests which means the majority of insects are beneficial or just hanging around the landscape. Any of you that have heard me speak before know that I say that you can't pigeonhole an insect as being bad or good based on what the insect is. You need to consider where the insect is located and what it is doing. Now that everyone is on board with helping insects out over the winter, let's get into what you can do to help.

Leave the leaves. There seems to be a movement on social media with this particular slogan (hopefully it's not trademarked). Essentially, it asks people to leave the leaves that fall to the ground in the fall as overwintering habitat for various animals. I do this in my own yard- although I have live oaks and those leaves don't drop until spring. Fortunately, my neighbor across the way has a burr oak that drops leaves in the fall and all those leaves magically blow into my yard. Leaf litter makes great habitat not only for insects but also a bunch of other ground dwelling animals. I usually rake my leaves into my beds and then mulch over top of the leaves in the late spring.

Leave the stems. I know this doesn't flow off the tongue as well as the previous slogan, but it's of similar thought. This requires you to leave any hollow stemmed plants to allow insects that overwinter/ nest inside to have spaces that are cozy to spend the winter. I do this in my landscape as well, and if I get a letter from the HOA, I write them back with an explanation as to how I am helping native pollinators as there are numerous native bees that nest in hollow stemmed plants. Once new plant growth begins to emerge the following spring, I cut back the old stems, but I don't throw them away just yet. I place the cut stems into a back corner of my yard for any stragglers that may be taking their time to emerge.

Partially bury a log in your yard. Do you still have logs leftover from Snowpocalypse? If so, choose one to partially bury in the yard to create a habitat for various arthropods. This is another strategy that I am using in my yard, although I think that I need to move my buried log to a location that gets better sunlight in the morning. By partially burying the log, you allow moisture in which allows it to be more habitable to a larger number of arthropods. You can have arthropods overwintering in the log, under the bark, or under the log itself.

Create or buy an insect house. Insect houses can be as large or as small as fits your landscape and can fit any budget. I have both purchased insect houses- these are specifically native bee houses/ nurseries- and made insect houses. You can upcycle any water resistant container into an insect house by filling it with other recycled items such as toilet paper tubes, shredded paper, pine cones, twigs, leaves, bamboo, paper egg cartons, or other natural materials. Insect houses can be placed on the ground, in the crotch of tree branches, or attached to fences or other objects.

By providing a few simple things as overwintering areas for insects, and having to do a lot less yard work, you can ensure that you create a more insect-friendly landscape.

For more information or help with identification, contact Wizzie Brown, Texas AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist at 512.854.9600.

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KILLEEN MUNICIPAL COURT COMMUNITY GARDEN REPORT



As of December 3, we have harvested 4997 lbs. of produce. Currently we have swiss chard, kohlrabi, turnips, cabbage, carrots, and radishes to harvest.

November 19 was a frigid, windy, and cloudy day in the garden. A 90-foot row of garlic was planted; cabbage and turnips will probably be ready for harvesting in coming weeks. Expended squash plants were pulled. New bio-soil was added by the students, and then gardeners tilled the rows. The surprise of the day was that over nine pounds of potatoes were found under the squash, volunteers from the spring harvest that were missed, and over four lbs of radishes.

