

# What's Growin' On . . .

The BCMGA Newsletter

May 2003

Vol. 3, Iss. 5

I bet you thought this wasn't coming!

## **At the Meeting:**

**Graduation** - Congratulations to everyone who graduated in May:

Glen Comiskey  
Roy Compton  
Phillip Hollenshead  
Lawrence Lewis  
Karen Lynch

Tom Nolan  
Marvin Petter  
Linda Sanders  
Clayton Terry

**Spring Plant Sale** - Thank you letters will be put in local papers for those who donated raffle prizes and cash for the plant sale.

**Extension Office Gardens** - The gardens were tilled by Tony and Cindy Erndt. We are attempting to set up a committee to discuss what type edging to install and then get some dirt. Any volunteers to be on the committee should call or email Don or Pat Gerard.

**SPROUT Program** - Paula has visited all the surrounding school districts explaining the SPROUT program. Some teachers did not even receive the information, and the districts seem unwilling to pay teacher tuition. A grant has been applied for to cover this.

**4-H Beach Fun Day** - Date: June 6. Time: 9 am to 2 pm. Location: Quintana Beach County Park. Volunteers are need to supervise things like t-shirt dyeing, painting pots, discuss garden activities, etc. To volunteer, contact Rich Tillman or Paula Craig.

**Vegetable Show** - Help is needed with the judging of the Vegetable Show on June 7<sup>th</sup>. If you can help, contact Paula Craig.

## **At the Demonstration Gardens:**

The future of the A&M Experiment Station property is being discussed with the county and with the Angleton school district. These talks are ongoing. The electricity, water and gas are being left on for us so we can continue to use the Master Gardener supported portions (greenhouse, display gardens, CEMAP, etc). We have been given a key to the restroom, so that is no longer a problem.

Vegetables are coming along great at the greenhouse gardens. Lots of squash is available for anyone who comes out to work on the regular work days.

**Work Days** - Tuesdays and Fridays from 7:30/8:00 a.m. until noon.

**mark your calendars for these  
June work days:**

June 3	June 6	June 10
June 13	June 17	June 20
June 24	June 27	June 31

## Calendar of Events:

*\*see below for details*

*new items in bold*

### 2003 Dates:

**June 5: Gardening, Cooking, and Living Chinese Vegetables\***

**June 6: 4-H Beach Fun Day**

June 7, 14,  
21, & 28: Farmers Market

**June 7: Basic Birdhouse Building\***

June 7: Favorite New Perennials

**June 7: Plumeria Society Plant Sale\***

June 10: June Meeting

**June 11: Lunch Bunch: The Mysteries of Herbs\***

**June 12: Growing the Latino Vegetables\***

**June 12: How to Attract Butterflies and Hummers\***

**June 15: Wonders of Water and Bog Gardens\***

June 16-21: SPROUTS

June 18-21: International Master Gardener Conference

**June 19: Oko to Agbo ('From the Garden Plot to the Medicine Pot')\***

**June 21: Ginger Workshop\***

**June 16: How to Create a Certified Wildlife Habitat\***

July 5: Buchanan's Annual Scratch & Dent Sale

July 8: July Meeting

**July 7-11: Master Gardener Specialist Training in Entomology\***

August 2: Gorgeous Gingers

August 12: August Meeting

September 9: Fall Master Gardener Classes begin

September 9: September Meeting

September 20: Fall Plant Sale

October 4-11: Brazoria County Fair

October 14: October Meeting

November 11: November Meeting

November 18: Brazoria County Pecan Show

December 9: December Meeting

**Gardening Around the World Series: Gardening, Cooking, and Living Chinese Vegetables** - Date: June 5. Time: 6:15 p.m.-8:15p.m. Location: Urban Harvest, in the MECA building at 1900 Kane. Phone: 713-880-5540 (Monday through Friday). This class teaches how to grow, prepare, and benefit health-wise from the many delicious Asian vegetables that grow easily and abundantly in our climate. This class will describe both warm and cold season vegetables, give tips on how to cook them, and explain how they fit into Chinese life. Emily Chen Dunbar is an organic gardener who has been eating and enjoying Chinese vegetables since she was a child in Taiwan. Together with John Dunbar, she operates a small home garden that helps them achieve their dietary goal of preparing their food as close to its naturally found state, as fresh and organic as possible. Over the last few years, Emily has trained herself to avoid unhealthy, but tasty bought food and reaped significant health benefits.

**Basic Birdhouse Building** - Date: June 7. Time: 9 a.m.-11 a.m. Location: Mercer Arboretum, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Phone: 281-443-8731. Join Greg Harmison as he demonstrates how to build a basic birdhouse. Learn what birds require for a happy home and get some decorating tips for Mercer's Birdhouse Building Contest.

**Plumeria Society Plant Sale** - Date: June 7. Time: 9:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m. Location: Bay Area Community Center, 5002 NASA Road 1, Clear Lake.

**Lunch Bunch: The Mysteries of Herbs** - Date: June 11. Time: Noon-1 p.m. Location: Mercer Arboretum, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Phone: 281-443-8731. Bring a sack lunch and join Susan Wittig Albert, author of The China Bayles Herbal Mysteries, as she discusses the history and lore of many well-known herbs.

**Gardening Around the World Series: Growing the Latino Vegetables** - Date: June 12. Time: 6:15 p.m.-8:15p.m. Location: Urban Harvest, in the MECA building at 1900 Kane. Phone: 713-880-5540 (Monday through Friday). The native peoples of the Americas developed a large part of what the modern world eats-potatoes, tomatoes, sweet peppers and chiles, most beans, and squash are just some of the many that are famous. This class talks about growing and eating vegetables that in Houston at least are lesser known: yuca or tapioca root, sora Jamaica or Red Zinger Plant, tomatillo or husk tomato, and chaya-the amazing Mayan spinach tree. John Jacob, Ph.D. (a.k.a. Juan Jacobo) is a Texas Cooperative Extension Specialist working with the Sea Grant Program. He is bilingual bicultural and was raised in Central America.

**How to Attract Butterflies and Hummers** - Date: June 12. Time: 6:30 p.m.-8:00 p.m. Location: City of Bellaire, Recreation Center, 5125 Laurel, Bellaire. Phone: 713-662-8280. Speaker: Jay Kolvensoky. Fee: \$20 - Bellaire resident, \$30 - non-resident. Class minimum 3.

**Wonders of Water and Bog Gardens** - Date: June 15. Time: 2:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m. Location: Houston Arboretum and Nature Center, 4501 Woodway, Houston. Phone: 713-681-8433. Speaker: Jay Kolvensoky. Free to public.

**Gardening Around the World Series: Oko to Agbo ('From the Garden Plot to the Medicine Pot')** - Date: June 19. Time: 6:15 p.m.-8:15p.m. Location: Urban Harvest, in the MECA building at 1900 Kane. Phone: 713-880-5540 (Monday through Friday). In this Juneteenth class we will use science and folklore to study the cultivation and care both of African foodstuffs that have become common in the Americas, and Native American foods that have become staples in Western Africa. The class will study New World African and Continental African mainly meatless recipes such as a watermelon ginger drink and the black-eyed pea dish moi-moi. Alafiya Gaidi is a third generation Griot ('a historian, musician, and traditional healer').. As a 5-year old child, he studied under Mme. Dafine, a Garifuna of Dangiga, Belize. Mr. Gaidi is an initiate of both the Ifa Society of West Africa and the Mayombe Society of Central Africa. He is also the founder of a New Orleans George Washington Carver Horticultural Society; the former owner of the New Orleans Nubian Kitchen in a jazz club, has cooked professionally for 15 years, and is a former gardening instructor with Urban Harvest. In his traditional training, he studied planting and harvesting songs, the preparation of the agbo or 'medicine pot', and other holistic methods of growing and preparing foods.

**Ginger Workshop** - Date: Saturday, June 21. Time: 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Location: Mercer Arboretum, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Phone: 281-443-8731. Enjoy this all-day workshop that includes guest speakers on a variety of ginger-related topics, including culture, propagation, and which species is best for your yard. Lunch is provided. Class size is limited to 50. Reservations guaranteed through payment on a first-come, first-served basis. Workshop is at, fee \$45. Make checks payable to The Mercer Society.

Sidenote from Donie on this seminar: a great opportunity for anyone needing advanced training hours. Carol Farmer, Ted Cooper and I attended this workshop last year and it was great! We sampled ginger chicken, ginger snaps, ginger ice cream, candied ginger and ginger tea. A lot of fun and a lot of good information about gingers.

**How to Create a Certified Wildlife Habitat** - Date: June 26. Time: 6:30 p.m.-8:00 p.m. Location: City of Bellaire, 5125 Laurel, Bellaire, TX, 713-662-8280. Speaker: Jay Kolvensoky. Fee: \$20 - Bellaire resident, \$30 - non-resident. Class minimum 3.

**Master Gardener Specialist Training in Entomology** - Date: July 7-11. Location: Texas A&M University. See special section below for further information.

**Specialist Program Purpose:** To provide advanced training whereby Master Gardeners can obtain specialization in areas that support or expand designated educational programs of Texas Cooperative Extension.

**Master Gardener Specialist - Entomology:** In an effort to truly provide advanced training, the Master Gardener Specialist - Entomology training was created as a hands-on, intensive multi-day training that will empower Master Gardeners with knowledge and skills required to effectively support and multiply Texas Cooperative Extension efforts in educational programs.

Master Gardeners who fulfill specified training and volunteer requirements will be recognized as a Master Gardener Specialist in the specific field of entomology. This certification does not empower the individual with supervisory or administrative authority within her/her local county programs.

**Participation Requirements:** To be eligible for the Master Gardener Specialist - Entomology training, an individual must possess an up-to-date Master Gardener certification, or be an employee of the Texas Cooperative Extension. Master Gardener applicants must be approved by their local County Extension Agent.

**Master Gardener Specialist - Entomology:** The Master Gardener Specialist - Entomology program is designed to train and certify Master Gardeners to become part of a state corps of entomology experts and educators. To become a certified Master Gardener Specialist - Entomology, Master Gardeners are required to

attend the Master Gardener Specialist - Entomology training to fulfill training requirements and subsequently meet service requirements described below. Training activities during the academy will empower Master Gardeners to complete these service requirements.

**Position Description:** The Master Gardener Specialist - Entomology is charged to increase awareness, provide training in entomology, and facilitate implementation of community/neighborhood integrated pest management projects in Texas.

**Time Commitment:** The Master Gardener is required to serve a minimum of one year as a Master Gardener Specialist - Entomology.

**Training and Service requirements:**

- Attend the Master Gardener Specialist - Entomology training
- Serve as a local Master Gardener Specialist - Entomology resource
- Assist with entomology training for Master Gardeners and trainees
- Organize and conduct community/neighborhood entomology education programs
- Increase clientele awareness and implementation of recommended insect pest management (IPM) strategies through: presentation, training, and mass media efforts (i.e. radio, newspaper, television, newsletters)

**Specialist recognition and certification:** Upon completion of the Master Gardener Specialist - Entomology service requirements, the Master Gardener will be formally recognized at the annual Texas Master Gardener Conference, at which time they will be awarded a Master Gardener Specialist certificate and lapel pin.

**Resources available to Master Gardener Specialist - Entomology:**

- Entomology training
- Educational materials on entomology
- Direct access to Texas Cooperative Extension insect experts

**Master Gardener Specialist - Entomology** training will include experts speaking on insect identification, insect diversity, insect pest management, pesticide safety, insects in the garden and landscape, butterfly gardening, digital photography for insect identification, biting and stinging insects, collecting methods and shipping techniques. Participants have the option of improving their own collection during the course.

**The Department of Entomology** is located in the Heep Building on the **TAMU Campus** across the railroad tracks from the bell tower in sight of the Veterinary Clinic. The course will be conducted primarily in the Heep Building.

**Transportation** to College Station will be on your own. There will be some local travel to field trip sites and we are relying on participants to provide rides for those short trips.

**Field trips** planned for Lick Creek Park to collect insects and demonstrate collecting techniques. A night collecting trip is planned for Monday night and will include black-lighting and sugar-baiting for insects. This will be conducted at a nearby site in the country. Participants will visit the TAMU Insect Collection, which is the largest public insect collection in the southwest - over 1M specimens! We will also visit the Horticulture Gardens.

**Cost:** Registration fee of \$250 per person includes:

- three lunches (TWT), four breakfasts (TWTF), snacks and drinks during the week.
- a personalized vest
- Extension entomology bulletin set
- a copy of the Master Gardener Training for Entomology (2 CD set)
- a copy of "A Field Guide to Common Texas Insects"
- insect collecting gear to start your own reference collection.

**LOTS OF FUN!!!** Bring your boots, flashlights, collecting gear, insect repellent, and personal items.

**For more information, contact John A. Jackman, Extension Entomology, 979-845-7026**

## News to Know:

**Master Gardener Ethics** - Please note and remember the following excerpts from the BCMGA Bylaws:

The Brazoria County Master Gardener Association shall not be affiliated with any commercial enterprise for the profit of an individual member or group of members.

No member shall use their position with the Association to further the manufacture, distribution, promotion or sale of any material, product or service in which they have either a direct or indirect financial interest.

**The Useful Wild Plants Encyclopedia** - Full name is: The Useful Wild Plants of Texas, the Southeastern and Southwestern United States, the Southern Plains, and Northern Mexico. Eventually, there will be a series of 12 volumes which will be a systematic chronicle of economically useful wild plants of the region centered in Texas and radiating through the southern half of the United States and northern Mexico. The complete series will include descriptions, photographs, distribution maps, and use information on over 4,000 species of native Texas plants. The contents of Volumes 1 through 11 contain extensive scientific data and cultural lore on native and naturalized plants. Volume 12 will cross-reference uses, chemical components, plants, and common names. The series' Volumes 1 and 2 are now available:

Volume 1 covers 78 genera in alphabetical order (267 species and varieties from *Abronia ameliae* (sand verbenas) through *Arundo donax* (giant cane).

Volume 2 covers 79 genera in alphabetical order (254 species and varieties) from *Asclepias* (milkweed) through *Canavalia* (sea bean).

This work underscores the unique position of Texas' wild plant life as it relates to North America in general. It is co-authored by Scooter Cheatham and Marshall Johnston, with Lynn Marshall. The foreword is by E. Arthur Bell, Director Emeritus, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, London. The authors are creating a hands-on resource for botanists, field researchers, foresters, ranchers, landowners and leaseholders, archeologists, teachers, biochemists, chefs, naturalists, and many others. It will illustrate thousands of uses of native plants for food, medicine, pharmaceuticals, oils, rubbers, fuels, fibers, landscaping, and many other domestic, industrial, and commercial purposes. Usefully designed, each entry contains a thumbnail summary for quick reference of both common and scientific names for genus and family, marginal notes with flagged key words, location maps, and color photographs for each species discussed in the comprehensive, descriptive text.

For more information about Volume 1 and 2 or subsequent volumes, contact Useful Wild Plants of Texas, Inc., at 512-928-4441; leave an e-mail message at [uwp@jumpnet.com](mailto:uwp@jumpnet.com); or check out the website: <http://www.main.org/uwp/index.html>.

Source: <http://www.main.org/uwp/index.html> on 6-2-03.

## In the Garden:

I haven't had any takers on my requests for articles on gardening, so I thought I'd share what's going on in my garden with you:

**Something That Seems to Have Worked in my Garden** - Sadly, I decided to give up my compost piles this year. I don't have time to go out and turn them, and they were infested with all kinds of weeds and millions of fireants. I was struggling, though, with letting all of the grass clippings go to waste. Sure, we could leave them spread around the lawn, but I really would rather they go to work in my veggie garden. My other problem was that the same weeds that were thriving in my compost piles were doing the same among the vegetables. In the past, when the weeds have gotten tall, I basically stop visiting and caring for the garden. As I watched the nutgrass take over earlier this spring, I remembered an article in the *Texas Gardener* about killing weeds at the end of the season by spreading newspaper over them. (I had even followed it up with a call to the printing department at the *Houston Chronicle* to confirm that the ink they used was not toxic. They said it would be fine to use but suggested that I stay away from the glossy papers.) I also remembered that last year my husband started dumping the grass clippings in the garden as mulch. Not only did they work as mulch, but they seemed to reduce the weed population. I decided to pull the larger, more offensive weeds, lay down newspaper and then cover the newspaper with grass clippings. I started first in the areas where I walk and have worked my way up to the base of the plants. Finally, a victory! My weeds have been immobilized! I can actually walk through the garden without having weeds growing up to my knees. I also have an inexpensive mulch which can be tilled into the soil to compost. Talk about lazy gardening!

**Something That Didn't Seem to Work Very Well** - I tried planting beans in between my pepper plants, but the peppers grew more quickly than I expected. The beans got very little sun and I ended up with scrawny little plants which didn't produce many beans.

**Something That I Don't Know Whether it Will Work** - I planted basil and oregano around my tomato plants to stink out the stinkbugs, like the McGinity's suggested. The oregano died, but the basil has flourished. The stinkbugs are just now starting to assert themselves and so far they've been on my cucumbers and sunflower plants. Even if the basil doesn't work, I plan on including it in my veggie garden in the future because it smells so wonderful. The down side is that it makes me hungry! I have seen a lot of stink bug skeletons, so I must have a lovely critter who has an affinity for them. Of course, I don't want to kill any bugs because I don't know which one is the good guy.

That's all I have to share about my garden for now. Feel free to send me anything you would like to tell about your garden. That's what it's all about!

## On The Herbal Side:

from DiAnna Munson

### Rosemary

*Rosmarinus officinalis*

Thousands of years before refrigeration, meat wrapped in crushed rosemary leaves didn't spoil, and it had a pleasing flavor. Today, research has shown that rosemary leaves have the preservative power of the commercial food preservatives - BHA and BHT. Because of this ability to preserve meats, Greek students thought it would also preserve their brain, so they wore garlands of rosemary to help them recall their studies. Rosemary has also been used as a love charm - tapping another on the shoulder with a sprig containing open blossoms would ensure the couple would fall in love. Placing a twig under your pillow would repel bad dreams and ward off witches. By the 16th century, planting rosemary around the home became a bone of contention in England, where the belief developed that it signified a household where the woman ruled. Men were known to rip out rosemary plants as evidence they - not their wives - ruled the roost. The French hung rosemary around sickrooms and in hospitals as a kind of healing incense, calling it incensier. As recently as World War II, rosemary was used as an antiseptic in French hospitals.

For the record, Germany is famed for its aggressive approach to herbal medicine. Approximately 70% of German health care consists of herbal treatments. In Germany, rosemary is used for Adult Respiratory Distress Syndrome, septic shock and as a chemotherapeutic agent. (Don't expect to see any of these treatments in the US anytime soon.)

Research has shown rosemary contains antibacterial, antiviral, and antifungal properties. It inhibits the gram-positive and gram-negative organisms commonly responsible for food spoilage. It helps relax the smooth muscle lining of the digestive tract, making it an antispasmodic effective in treating gastric reflux. It helps relieve nasal and chest congestion caused by colds, flu, and allergies. Rosemary also helps reduce bruising by decreasing capillary fragility. It has been shown to have 3 times the anti-oxident properties of vitamin C. When used in the bath, rosemary soothes sore, tired muscles and relieves arthritic joint pain. It clears facial blemishes, shrinks facial pores, and nourishes the skin for a more youthful look.

Suggested dosage is 1 tsp. crushed leaves / 8 oz. water. For the bath, a mixture of crushed leaves and Epsom Salt (1:4 ratio) in a cloth bag does wonders for "after gardening" relaxation. Don't try this without the cloth bag. It takes about 30 minutes to remove all the rosemary leaves if you just throw them in the bath loose! Ortho's All About Herbs even lists it as an effective aphid repellent when used in the tea form.

## Meet a Master Gardener (or two):

from Viki Brushwood

The Dynamic Duo - This month we are featuring two Master Gardeners - Pat and Don Gerard! Many of us already know Pat and Don because they are involved in so much of the Master Gardener Program. They have been married for 22 years and between them they have 8 children, 14 grandchildren, and 2 great grandchildren. (Almost enough people to start their own MG program!) Pat was born in Kentucky but moved around the states as her father worked in construction. They ended up settling in Houston. Don was born in Washington, D.C. His family moved to Texas, and he attended Texas A&M. They have lived in the Brazosport area for over 35 years and now live in Lake Jackson. Pat attended the 1999 MG class and graduated in 2000. Pat joined the program to learn about plants and had decided beforehand not to get very involved. BUT after meeting such nice people who were fun, entertaining and intelligent, she jumped in with both feet! She told me "If you are not involved, what is the point?" After taking the course, Pat would give gardening instructions to Don. He didn't believe what she was telling him to do was right, so he decided to join the MG program the following year. (Just to show her that what she was



telling him was wrong.) He found out what she had said is true! And he has been an active participant ever since. He feels the MG's are lots of fun, and it is a great way to meet a lot of fun people. He has also learned how to keep plants alive. They are both involved in the greenhouse, plant sale, redoing the flowerbeds at the extension office, and class coordinators for the interns. They also are active in the Rose Rustlers. We really appreciate their involvement and are happy to have them!

### **On The Herbal Side - Special Edition:**

from DiAnna Munson

Since it's mosquito season, I asked DiAnna if she could give us a list of herbs to plant to ward off mosquitoes, so she sent me this great article:

#### **Botanical Solutions for Uninvited Insects**

Mosquitoes are usually the number one uninvited insect in our area. A few facts about mosquitoes may prevent their crashing your party. First, it is the female that inflicts the bite because she requires blood for reproduction. Second, she is attracted to the CO<sub>2</sub> factor. No, I don't plan on holding my breath that long, but that would work. Any strong odor that will mask the CO<sub>2</sub> will stop her from hunting you down.

**Marigolds** repel most of these undesirable insects. They are heavy characters that do not only repel insects, but also simply kill the plants they don't like by poisoning them. In non-commercial and small-scale farming they are, therefore, used as a highly effective means in weed and pest control. I grow a couple of large pots filled with various marigold varieties just to insure I have the right one for this year, and I can move them to the area I want.

**Tansy** is an herb that usually grows wild throughout the U.S.A. and most European countries. It looks ugly and has a very unpleasant smell, but it is one of the best insect repellents around. The only problem that I've had growing it is keeping my dog from eating it. It is an excellent remedy for intestinal worms and parasites, especially fleas.

**Sage** is an ancient European method of insect control. It is a strong smelling herb that is easy to grow yourself with a minimum of maintenance. Recent research suggests that it may also help with PMS. Need I say more?

**Wormwood** was formerly used to spice different types of liqueurs, specifically the French Absinthe, until they found out that excess use causes brain damage. Since I don't care about insect brain damage, it still makes an excellent insect repellent, and it even looks quite attractive. Just make sure it is out of reach of pets and children.

**Castor Bean** near a door will keep them outside and the same for any plant that emanates a citric or mint aroma. The stronger the better. Quite effective are **Citronella**, **Lemon Grass**, **Lemon Balm**, **Geraniums**, and **Pennyroyal**.

### **Plant Feature - *Aristolochia fimbriata*: Dutchman's Pipe:**

The white-veined hardy Dutchman's pipe (*Aristolochia fimbriata*) has such intricate blossoms that it is worth getting down on the ground to get a close look. This pipevine happens to be fairly cold-hardy, simply dying back to the ground, while the large, tuberous root remains intact. It also weathers droughts well.

Originally from South America, Dutchman's pipe grows only about 6 inches high, has rounded, white-veined leaves, and very strange flowers, resembling the leaves of pitcherplants. Even the seeds and the pods are rather interesting. The flowers are pollinated by small flies that are attracted to their pungent odor. Most flowers are pollinated and produce little one-inch long pods resembling a horizontally ribbed watermelon. When the pod dries, it splits open between all the ribs, but the ribs remain intact, forming a little cage, with the seeds slipping out through the openings. The seeds are triangular, with an exposed hard white part embedded on one side of the larger dark segment. When the seed is wet, this dark part expands like a sponge and is thick and sort of slimy. The seeds are easy to germinate by just pressing them into the soil.

Pipevines are the host plants for the caterpillars of the pipevine swallowtail, a large black and metallic blue butterfly. In places where the butterflies are numerous, the caterpillars eat the vines all the way to the ground, but the plants survive because of their large root system. On a small plant like this, it is almost impossible to miss the large, fleshy caterpillars of the swallowtail. When they are small, the larvae are a bright orange color, but they darken as they get bigger, reaching a length of about two inches.

A closely related plant that is a native here in central Texas is the swanflower (*Aristolochia erecta*). This plant also grows from a large root, which sustains it through drought and insect attacks. The pipevine caterpillars feed on this plant as well, and in fact, it is easier to find the insects than the plant itself, since it looks just like grass and grows in sunny, grassy areas.

***Aristolochia fimbriata*** is an excellent hanging basket plant. Its prostrate habit and small stem, usually up to 18 inches long, make it more suitable than other *Aristolochia* for basket culture. It is native to Argentina, Paraguay and Southern Brazil.

**Blooming Time:** Flowers are solitary and are formed under the leaves. It blooms throughout the summer.

**Culture:** *Aristolochia fimbriata* like to grow in a light and airy place, but not in direct sunlight. Keep summer temperatures from 68-78 degrees and winter temperatures above 50 degrees. Water regularly during the growth period, once or twice a week. Water no more than once a week during winter. Fertilize with a balanced fertilizer every third watering throughout the growing season. It grows best in rich, well-drained soil. Young plants need to be repotted every other year, older plants every 3-5 years. Cut back in fall after blooming.

**Propagation:** *Aristolochia fimbriata* is best propagated by cuttings, but it can be grown from seeds. Take cuttings in the fall when flowering is nearly completed. Softwood cuttings should be 4 to 5 inches long. Treat with rooting hormones and place them in a fast draining propagating mix. Put them in a warm place, preferably with bottom heat. Softwood cuttings must be kept moist. Start seeds by soaking in water for 48 hours and surface sow them. Seeds need light to germinate.

Sources: <http://home.att.net/~larvalbugbio/pipevine.html> on 5-31-03  
<http://www.plantoftheweek.org/week076.shtml> on 5-31-03

*Cindy Erndt and Don Gerard are unwitting contributors of this article. Cindy emailed the question of how to propagate this plant from seed and Don emailed her some websites to check out. See how easy it is to contribute?*

## *Happy Birthday!*

**June Birthdays -** Kitty Gray - June 12

**James Smith - June 16**

Glenn Comiskey - June 17

If you haven't already given Viki your birthday please get them to her.

## **Happy Gardening!!!**

Newsletter Editor: Anna Gawlik



Paula Craig  
CEA - Horticulture  
Brazoria County