



What's Growin' On . . .

The BCMGA Newsletter

March 2004

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At the Meeting:

Speaker - The March speaker was Galveston Master Gardener, Jackie Reeves, who gave an interesting presentation on "Planting by the Moon."

Citrus Leafminer Study - Paula announced that Dr. Carlos Bogan, A&M, is conducting a "citrus leafminer" study. The conditions are that the volunteer has to have at least two of a species and be willing to treat only one with supplied pesticide and report results. If you are interested in participating, please contact Paula.

Presentation Requirements - According to Paula, from now on, due to requirements from A&M, anyone giving formal presentations for MG hours credit needs to have a "sign in" sheet for documentation which would be turned in to her.

Speaker Request - The Women of ELCA, Pearland, have asked if anyone from BCMGA would give a presentation at their meeting on May 11. They are looking for a program called "Bloom Where You Are Planted." If you are interested in this opportunity, contact Paula.

Bulk Herbs - DiAnna Munson told the group that she can order bulk herbs for anyone interested and is going to get some catalogs to pass out at the next meeting.

5-4-3-2-1 to the SPRING PLANT SALE!

from Kathy Walton

While lots of dedicated Brazoria County Master Gardeners are hard at work in the greenhouse preparing the merchandise for the annual Spring Plant Sale, others are rounding up the customers--and we need your help! We are implementing the Marketing Strategy for the sale starting the week of March 8. It takes all of us to "get the word out"--so plan to join in the fun!

The following are components of the Marketing Strategy:

1) Newspapers: When reporters/photographers from The Facts, Brazoria County News, and Houston Chronicle show up at the greenhouse, be helpful, informative, and photogenic. They are looking for "news worthy" stories and an easy answer deals with successful plant choices for the area, techniques for success, what to avoid, etc. Use your Master Gardener skills to provide the expertise. We are focusing our communications on:

- a) Press releases
- b) Feature Articles
- c) Advertisements

2) E-mail distribution: Hopefully each of you received a PDF file containing the Plant Sale ad. I will be sending another one as a WORD document that will be easier to email. Please forward it to everyone in the area on your email list. Encourage them to share the news with their friends and contacts. Also, forward the information to your church or employer newsletters and include our website address for more information.

3) Flyers/posters: We are distributing flyers and posters at the March 10 meeting. The goal is to post them in area store windows, public places like libraries, schools and post offices, high visibility areas, etc. Be sure to ask store managers for permission before posting and bring your own tape/thumb tacks.

4) Public Service announcements via radio and TV: Radio and television stations are required to provide some free air time to non-profit organizations. I have a contact to Channel 19, but could use some leads to radio stations.

5) Street Signs: On the day of the sale, we will need to post some street signage along the main highways in Angleton, leading to the new location. We will need to post a sign at the VA Gazebo to re-direct people to the new location. The signs will be reusable and will have balloons for highlight. We will need some members to position the signs and attach the balloons, and collect them at the end of the day.

6) Display unit: At the sale, we will be setting up a table display that promotes the sale and the Master Gardener organization.

If we all work together, we can attract the largest crowd ever at the Brazoria Master Gardeners Plant Sale! If you have any additional ideas, contacts or want to help, please contact Kathy Walton.

At the Demonstration Gardens:

Spring Clean Up Time - Barbara Brown and Barbara Ross stress that we need people to get out to the greenhouse and help with weeding and sprucing up. We have photographers coming from several newspapers and so need to do a lot of "spring cleaning," and, of course, the Spring Plant Sale is just around the corner and the public will be judging us on the appearance of the place.

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

**Mark your calendars for these
April work days:**

April 2	April 6	April 9
April 13	April 16	April 20
April 23 *	April 27	April 30

*Third Friday

Spring Master Gardener Training:

We had 32 students in our spring MG training class, which finished up on Thursday, March 18. The final meeting included a plant swap between the students and a "pot luck" lunch (to give them a taste of the fun side of being Master Gardeners.) The classes went really well until the field trip to Mercer, which had to be postponed because of a scheduling conflict, but we made it up there on the 16th - and that was probably a better date since more plants were starting to bloom. We also got kicked out of the Extension Office building on March 9th since it was a voting place, so we got a room free at the Angleton Hospital Annex. The class is now starting to do their "hotline" hours. We look forward to working with all of the new interns. They are a great group.

News and Notes from the Coordinator:

from Paula Craig. CEA

INTRODUCING THE CLASS OF 2005

Wow! What **BIG** class!!! So big that I decided to have individual conferences so that I could get to know people better. Why have I never done this before? Every single Master Gardener intern I've met so far has an interesting story to tell. I can't wait to meet the rest. And when I do, I'll pass along the introductions to you. Please warmly welcome our newest members.

Cathy Chalfant. Cathy is one of our youngest members. She's already well known out at the Gardens, eager to help and learn. Cathy lives in Pearland, and works at St. Luke's Hospital as an ultrasound technician. She is an avid shutterbug and has volunteered to be the BCMGA photographer. We will be sure to forward photos on to Anna so that everyone can see them on the website.

Perry Wollam. Perry is sort of a gypsy, having lived throughout the Western United States from Oregon and Idaho to the Texas Gulf Coast. He's recently retired from WalMart's management team and has settled (for a while, I hope) in Alvin. Perry is an avid vegetable gardener and is eager to try some new varieties out at the Gardens. If you know someone who needs a lawn man, Perry is also known as The Grass Barber. His motto is, "You Grow It. I'll Mow It." Perry has tillers, tractors, a brush hog and other equipment that he would be happy to put to work at the Gardens.

Marianne Inman. Marianne is a Sweeny gal, by way of Pagosa Springs, Colorado, who enjoys singing with the Sweet Adeline beauty shop quartet. She is interested in contributing to the newsletter, working at the Gardens, helping the JMG kids and working on the Habitat for Humanity homes. She loves roses and wants to learn more. Marianne is waiting to see if she will need to donate a kidney to her son. Marianne, we wish you the best, and send our prayers for a speedy recovery of you and your son. We'll be here when you get back.

Bernadette Maness. Miss B is an Angleton native, mom to two boys and a long-time vegetable gardener. She is interested in organic gardening and composting. As a Master Gardener, Bernadette has expressed interest in public speaking, hands-on veggie gardening, herbs and fruit trees. John A., Smitty and Ray M. will love working with this very sweet and enthusiastic lady.

Ann McLain. Ann is a transplant from Utah and Wisconsin before that. She has an impressive horticultural resume that includes working with 4-H kids on garden projects, lecturing on fresh water ecology, and writing a weekly garden column for the Ann Arbor News. She's had several years of course work in landscape architecture and experience with grant writing. Her passions are fragrant plants (including scented geraniums), herbs, and house plants. Ann is enthusiastic, energetic and loves to learn and share her knowledge. She wants to work with the JMG kids and design children's gardens. I hope that someday we can also talk her into doing some teaching and some columns for the newsletter.

Next month, meet Betty Van Hoeven, Barbara Harding, Jennifer Landreneau, Mary Ann Vance and Martha Schaatt.

R&B Rocks!

Many Thanks for Our New Road

The road to the Demonstration Gardens has been repaired. Yeah! Thanks to the combined efforts of Marine Agent and County Coordinator, Rich Tillman, Wayne Williams of the Texas Ag Experiment Station and Mr. Terry Novak, Head of Precinct 2's Road and Bridge Division, an interlocal agreement between Brazoria County and TAES was made. Terry did one heck of a job for us, going the extra miles to acquire donated materials from Cherry Crushed Concrete. We owe Cherry, Terry and the R&B crew huge, huge thanks and lots of goodies.

Thank you to those Master Gardeners who patiently waited for the wheels of this system to turn. As representatives of the BCMGA, and of Texas Cooperative Extension, it is so important that we treat others with respect and kindness. It is the good people of the BCMGA that Rich, Wayne and Terry were so willing to help. Thank you to all those Master Gardeners who make the BCMGA shine.

News to Know:

Volunteer Opportunity - TCECU (the credit union by the mall in Lake Jackson) is having an informational event on April 24. It's a good opportunity for exposure/promotion of the Master Gardener program. If you would like to do an hour or two of booth time, please call or email Paula.

Cookbook - I'm still collecting recipes for the MG cookbook, so please bring any you would like to submit to the meeting or you can email or snail mail them to me.

CPR Class - DiAnna Munson has offered to teach an adult CPR class for BCMGA members, if there are enough people in the class. If you are interested in participating in the class, please contact DiAnna and let her know, so she can work on scheduling one. She suggested that with people working out in the heat at the greenhouse, it would be good for several people to know what to do in the event of an emergency.

Master Gardener State Conference - The registration materials for the Master Gardener State Conference in Corpus are available at the Extension Office and at the greenhouse. Early registration is due by April 15. The conference is May 6-8. Copies can be obtained at <http://nueces-tx.tamu.edu>.

Condolences - We all offer our condolences to Pam Peltier, who lost a beloved brother.

We also send our condolences to Jeanie Jahnke, wife of Ernie Jahnke, and their family. Sadly, Ernie, who was in the MG class of spring 2001, died on Monday, March 8.

TMGA Spring Newsletter - Check out the Texas Master Gardener Association website for the Spring '04 Newsletter. The url is: http://www.texasmastergardeners.com/spring_2004.html. Go down to the bottom and click on "County by County" to see what was written about Brazoria County MG's.

March Tomato Seminar - The March 4 *Tomatoes for Gulf Coast Texas* seminar went great. Tom Leroy is such a wonderful speaker and top notch gardener. Even Ray Michalik and David Peltier learned something! We had about 40 people, sold quite a few tomatoes and had a good time.

Congratulations!!! - Viki Brushwood now has her first granddaughter, and Christine Kern has a new grandson.

Birthdays - Hey - there are many, many, many people for whom we have no birthdate. If you are due for a birthday and your name isn't listed in our birthday section, please get your birthdate (just month and day) to Don Gerard.

Planning Meeting - January 29, 2004:

This section obviously would have been more timely in a February newsletter, but that didn't happen, so here are some of the highlights:

Sandra Taylor presented an application as a starting point for offering scholarships, of which different points were discussed. Sandra and her committee will fine tune the application and present recommendations to the Board at February's meeting.

John Alcorn is working on gathering information involved in applying for grants.

We agreed to try to hold a seminar on growing vegetables on March 20, 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Marti Graves and her committee will work on this. (This turned out to be the tomato seminar.)

The Junior MGs will be graduating on April 16, 2004. A graduation ceremony with the JMGs and their parents is being planned. The JMGs are planting radishes and will have them judged.

John Alcorn would like to have a citrus sale February 2005.

Demonstration Gardens:

- It needs to be decided where to put another vegetable garden.
- We would eventually like to plant a bog garden around a boggy area that has been discovered east of the greenhouse, and we would like to plant a southern heirloom garden within the next 2 years.
- We plan to move the compost bins behind the headhouse and to eventually build concrete bins for compost, soil and mulch.
- We are looking into getting crushed concrete for our roads.
- We want to put in irrigation system for the gardens.

Calendar of Events:

**see below for details*

new items in bold

2004 Dates:

April 8: How to Create a Certified Wildlife Habitat*
April 10: Flowering Trails*
April 10: Beyond the Basics Workshop - Advanced Wildflower Identification Skills*
April 10: The Mystical Swamp as an Ecosystem*
 April 12: The Mysterious Hibiscus & Plumeria-Brazosport College
April 12: How to Start a Community Garden*
 April 13: April Meeting
April 13-18: Nature Quest 2004*
April 14: Permaculture: Gardening and More for a Sustainable Texas; an Introduction*
April 14: Lunch Bunch: Preparing for Summer*
April 16: JMG Graduation
April 17-18: Spring Plant Sale & Gardening Festival*
April 17-18: Spring Open House - Tours of the Growing Fields*
 April 17: Spring Plant Sale
April 17: Spring Garden Tour*
April 17: Beyond the Basics Workshop - Wildflower Identification in the Field*
April 17: Texas City Prairie Preserve Open House*
April 18: Urban Nature Series – “Bromeliads”*
April 18: Native Plant Society of Texas Field Trip-ONC's Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary*
 April 19: Pecans-Brazosport College
April 19: How to Start a Community Garden*
April 20: Naturalist Class – “The Lore of Wildflowers”*
April 21: Permaculture and the Sustainable Society Series begins*
April 22: How to Attract Butterflies and Hummingbirds*
 April 23: Third Friday
April 23: Endangered Species Garden Grand Opening*
April 24: Trees Of Texas Book Signing*
April 24: Herb Affair*
April 25: Urban Nature Series – “Butterflies and Hummingbirds”*

May 1: Rainwater Cisterns and Other Ways to Use Rainwater in the Landscape*
May 1: Childrens' Day in the Garden*
May 1: Basics of Plant Propagation*
May 1: Family Day at Mercer: Education Stations*
May 1-2: Cactus Society Show and Sale*
May 2: Urban Nature Series – “Care of Cacti and Succulents”*
May 2: Native Plant Society of Texas Field Trip-Nash Prairie*
May 5: Native Host Plants for Southeast Texas Butterflies*
May 6: The Dark Secret of Texas' Native Palm Trees*
 May 6-8: State MG Conference
May 8: Daylily Show*
May 10: How to Start a Community Garden*
 May 11: May Meeting
May 12: Flower Arranging Seminar*
May 13: Native Ornamental Trees for Houston*
May 14-16: Oleander Festival*
May 17: How to Start a Community Garden*
 May 21: Third Friday
May 22-23: Oleander Festival*
May 27: How to Create a Certified Wildlife Habitat*
 June 8: June Meeting
June 14: How to Start a Community Garden*
 June 18: Third Friday
June 21: How to Start a Community Garden*
 July 13: July Meeting
 July 23: Third Friday
 August 10: August Meeting
 August 20: Third Friday
 Sept 14: September Meeting
 Sept 17: Third Friday
 Sept 18: Fall Plant Sale
 Oct 12: October Meeting
 Oct 22: Third Friday
 Nov 9: November Meeting
 Nov 19: Third Friday
 Dec 14: December Meeting
 Dec 17: Third Friday

How to Create a Certified Wildlife Habitat - Dates: April 8 and May 27; Time: 6:30 p.m.-8:00 p.m.; Location: City of Bellaire, Recreation Center, 5125 Laurel, Bellaire; Phone: 713-662-8280. Observe a habitat as it was being developed. Learn ancillary techniques that accompany the development of this type of habitat. Min 3 participants. 1 day. Instructor: J. Kolenovsky. Fee: Res: \$20; NRes: \$30.

Flowering Trails - Date: April 10; Time: 9:00 a.m.; Location: Jesse Jones Park. Enjoy a morning hike along the wooded trails and discover some of the spring flowering native trees and wildflowers. Free. For more information, call 281-446-8588.

Beyond the Basics Workshop - Advanced Wildflower Identification Skills - Date: April 10; Time: 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Location: Extension Office, 3033 Bear Creek. Presented by Kate Hillhouse. This is a continuation of the basics presented at the March Chapter meeting. Contact Teri MacArthur at texasnaturelover@earthlink.net if you plan to attend. Free.

The Mystical Swamp as an Ecosystem - Date: April 10; Time: 10:00 a.m. Taught by Eli Tate through Lamar University. On this tour, students will view all types of swamps from heavily wooded to open fields of flowers and what causes the swamps to differ. Students will meet inhabitants of the swamp (gators, eagles, wading birds, Spanish moss and cypress trees) up close and personal, and observe how they have adapted to living in the wetland wilderness. Cost: \$50. To register, visit <http://lulearn.net/> or call 409-880-2233. Course: ENVR5002.

How to Start a Community Garden - Dates and Times: April 12, May 10, June 14 - 4:00p.m.-6:30 p.m.; and April 19, May 17, June 21 - 1:00 p.m.-3:45 pm; Location: Urban Harvest, in the MECA building at 1900 Kane; Phone: 713-880-5540 (Monday through Friday). Have you or your group been thinking about starting a community garden at a school, place of worship, in a park, or on vacant land? In this class you will learn about the history of community gardens, the basic ingredients for a successful one, how to get them planned and started and problems to avoid. Pre-registration is required two or more working days in advance. Gary Edmondson is the School & Youth Gardens Coordinator for Urban Harvest. Dr. Bob Randall, the director of Urban Harvest, has advised over 150 community gardens over the last 15 years.

Nature Quest 2004 - Date: April 13-18; Location: Texas Hill Country. Select from a wide array of workshops and field trips on Texas flora and fauna. For detailed information and registration, call 800-210-0380 or visit www.thcrr.com/quest.htm.

Permaculture: Gardening and More for a Sustainable Texas; an Introduction - Date: April 14; Time: 7:00 p.m.-9:30 p.m.; Location: 2990 Richmond, 6th floor (not at Urban Harvest); Phone: 713-880-5540 (Monday through Friday). Permaculture is practiced all over the planet and is the most advanced design concept available for creating sustainable gardens, ecosystems, buildings, and societies that prosper while minimizing energy and materials use. The Permaculture Guild of Houston consists of Permaculture Design Certificate holders. Those teaching in the courses include John Dunbar, Gary Edmondson, Diana Liga, Shawn McFarland, Dr. Bob Randall, Ray Sher, Kevin Topek, Jennifer Walker, Cas and Gita Van Woerden. Free class.

Lunch Bunch: Preparing for Summer - Date: April 14; Time: 12:00 p.m.-1:00 p.m.; Location: Mercer Arboretum, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble; Phone: 281-443-8731. Are you ready for summer? You have dusted off your swimsuit and blown up the kids wading pool, but what about your garden? Join us at Mercer Arboretum and learn what you can do to have a beautiful garden to enjoy throughout the summer. Bring a sack lunch to enjoy during the program.

Spring Plant Sale & Gardening Festival - Date: April 17-18; Time: 9:00 a.m.- 5:00 p.m. Location: Ladybird Johnson Wildflower Center, Austin; Phone: 512-292-4100. Here's your chance to buy native plants and seeds and get expert advice that will help your garden grow. At Wild Ideas: The Store, Geyata Ajilvsgi signs her book Wildflowers of Texas from 12:00 p.m.- 4:00 pm. Official festival artist Clara Newby signs T-shirts and art prints, 12:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m.

Spring Open House - Tours of the Growing Fields - Date: April 17-18; Time: 9:00 a.m.- 6:00 p.m.; Location: Antique Rose Emporium, 10,000 Highway 50, Brenham; Contact: Lynn Smith - 979-836-5548. Tours of our growing fields and live music can be enjoyed throughout the day. Featured guest artists (Donna Emery, pottery, San Antonio; Julie Marshall, watercolors, Austin; Merrick Bonewietz, acrylics, Burton) will be displaying works in the Chapel.

Spring Garden Tour - Date: April 17; Time: 9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m. Location: Mercer Arboretum, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble; Phone: 281-443-8731. Join Greg Harmison as he leads a tour of the gardens in the spring. April is one of the best times to enjoy Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens and what better way to do it than with a guided tour.

Beyond the Basics Workshop - Wildflower Identification in the Field - Date: April 17; Time: 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.; Location: to be announced. Presented by Ralph Taylor. You will learn the skills you need to identify your favorite wildflowers in their habitat. Location: To be announced. Contact Teri MacArthur at texasnaturelover@earthlink.net if you plan to attend. Free.

Texas City Prairie Preserve Open House - Date: April 17. Located just north of Texas City, the Texas City Prairie Preserve is a rare remnant of the vast coastal prairie that once stretched from south of Corpus Christi to Louisiana's shores. Come visit the preserve and see our Attwater's Prairie Chicken recovery program working to save this Texas natural treasure. The open house will include van tours of the preserve; walking tours of native plants and coastal birds; and presentation and demonstrations of Texas natural history. Contact Mitch Philpot at 409-941-9114 or mphilpot@tnc.org for additional information.

Urban Nature Series – “Bromeliads” - Date: April 18; Time: 2:00 p.m.; Location: Houston Arboretum and Nature Center, 4501 Woodway, Houston; Phone: 713-681-8433. Members of the Houston Bromeliad Society will be giving advice on selection and proper care of bromeliads at this semi-annual sale. A portion of the sale's proceeds benefit the Nature Center. Free.

Native Plant Society of Texas Field Trip-ONC's Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary - Date: April 18; Time: 8:30 a.m.; with Dr. Larry Brown. The sanctuary is 655 acres of wilderness near Cleveland, TX. Meet at the Houston Arboretum for an 8:30 am departure or meet at the sanctuary at 9:30 am. (Directions to sanctuary: Take US 59 to Cleveland; turn left on FM 2025; go 5 miles and turn left on FM 945. Go 11 miles to the sanctuary entrance on your right. Watch along the side road for the entrance sign: Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary). Free. Bring a sack lunch and water. For more information, contact Glenn Olsen at Houstan@npsot.org or call 281-345-4151.

Naturalist Class – “The Lore of Wildflowers” - Date: April 20; Time: 7:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m.; Location: Houston Arboretum and Nature Center, 4501 Woodway, Houston; Phone: 713-681-8433. Instructor: Pat Marks, Education & Conservation Manager, Houston Arboretum & Nature Center. Identification of local species provides the framework for this class that explores the beauty and ecological importance of wildflowers. Fee: \$15 for members; \$20 for non-members. Pre-registration required, call 713-681-8433.

Permaculture and the Sustainable Society Series - Dates: April 21, 28, May 1 (field trip) 12, 26; Location: 2990 Richmond, 6th floor (not at Urban Harvest); Phone: 713-880-5540 (Monday through Friday). The class includes a review of the global ecological situation, principles for improving things, and information on ways to reduce our ecological impact through eco-architecture. There are hands-on sustainable housing activities using local materials such as straw bale and renewable energy such as solar. Note: this is one of four permaculture courses that lead to a permaculture designer's certificate. This class does not require having taken other permaculture classes. The Permaculture Guild of Houston consists of Permaculture Design Certificate holders. Those teaching in the courses include John Dunbar, Gary Edmondson, Diana Liga, Shawn McFarland, Dr. Bob Randall, Ray Sher, Kevin Topek, Jennifer Walker, Cas and Gita Van Woerden. Fee: \$95.

How to Attract Butterflies and Hummingbirds - Date: April 22; Time: 6:30 p.m.-8:00 p.m.; Location: City of Bellaire, Recreation Center, Craft Room, 5125 Laurel, Bellaire; Phone: 713-662-8280. Explanation of larval and host plants that attract this type of wildlife. Learn tips on what plants to acquire in order to attract them to your home. Min 3 participants. 1 day. Instructor: J. Kolenovsky. Fee: Res: \$20; NRes: \$30.

Endangered Species Garden Grand Opening - Date: April 23; Time: 10:00 a.m.; Location: Mercer Arboretum, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble; Phone: 281-443-8731. Come out to Mercer Arboretum and help us celebrate the grand opening/ribbon cutting of the new expansion as well as the 10th anniversary of the endangered species garden. Garden tours will be held on the half hour and a pictorial display will be set up to give visitors information on the conservation efforts of Mercer Arboretum as a member of the Center for Plant Conservation. Learn how you can help sponsor these endangered plants and support our efforts to save them from extinction.

Trees Of Texas Book Signing - Date: April 24; Time: 1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.; Location: Ladybird Johnson Wildflower Center, Austin; Phone: 512-292-4100. Ria McElvaney and Carmine Stahl sign Trees of Texas. In honor of Earth Day (April 22), our good friends from Earth Share of Texas will also be here to show you how to support the environment at your workplace, 12:00 p.m.- 4:00 p.m.

Herb Affair - Date: April 24; Time: 1:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.; Location: Antique Rose Emporium, San Antonio Display Gardens, 7561 East Evans Rd., San Antonio; Contact: Robbi Will - 210-651-4565; The Comal County Master Gardeners will be with us to share their great ideas, samples and recipes for tussie mussies, herbal vinegars, herbal butters, bath salts and dream pillows.

Urban Nature Series – “Butterflies and Hummingbirds” - Date: April 25; Time: 2:00 p.m.; Location: Houston Arboretum and Nature Center, 4501 Woodway, Houston; Phone: 713-681-8433. Gardeners and nature lovers alike will enjoy a PowerPoint presentation to learn some natural history about these wonderful creatures of flight and what plants will attract them. Free.

Rainwater Cisterns and Other Ways to Use Rainwater in the Landscape - Date: May 1; Time: 9:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.; Location: Urban Harvest, in the MECA building at 1900 Kane; Phone: 713-880-5540 (Monday through Friday). The Houston area has periods with high rainfalls and equal periods with practically none. When the rain stops in summer, drought is especially bad because high heat dries up what is left of ground moisture and plants are weakened or killed. The sensible strategy is to catch water when it rains and then use it later during times of drought. This class discusses very low cost methods to absorb water on your property as well as the more expensive but still very cost effective methods. In addition to saving yourself a lot of irrigation money, you will do your part to reduce flooding and conserve the rivers that we eventually drink. Jennifer Walker is a civil engineer that has studied rainwater retention for flood control professionally, a certified permaculture designer, and an organic vegetable specialist. Fee: \$20, \$10 for members, free for community gardeners.

Childrens' Day in the Garden - Date: May 1; Time: 9:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.; Location: Antique Rose Emporium, San Antonio Display Gardens, 7561 East Evans Rd., San Antonio; Contact: Robbi Will - 210-651-4565; Bexar County Master Gardeners will offer hands on children's activities based on garden themes

Basics of Plant Propagation - Date: May 1; Time: 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Location: Texas Cooperative Extension Office, 3033 Bear Creek. Hosted by the Harris County Master Gardener Association. The topics will include seed propagation, leaf cuttings, division of pups, seed collection and storage, stem cuttings, grafting, layering, and after care. Cost: \$45. Class size is strictly limited. Register early!! For registration, call 281-855-5635 or email oshume@ag.tamu.edu.

Family Day at Mercer: Education Stations - Date: May 1; Time: 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.; Location: Mercer Arboretum, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble; Phone: 281-443-8731. Join us for fun filled family activities at Mercer Arboretum. Visit “Education Stations” where kids will be able to make and take home garden crafts, and learn about plants and their uses. This is a great opportunity to make a gift for Mothers Day. Free of charge.

Cactus Society Show and Sale - Date: May 1-2; Time: 9:00 a.m.– 5:00 p.m.; Location: Houston Arboretum and Nature Center, 4501 Woodway, Houston; Phone: 713-681-8433. Members of the Houston Cactus Society will be on hand to consult on general care of cacti and succulent plants. A portion of proceeds from the sale benefit the Nature Center's educational programs.

Urban Nature Series – “Care of Cacti and Succulents” - Date: May 2; Time: 2:00 p.m.; Location: Houston Arboretum and Nature Center, 4501 Woodway, Houston; Phone: 713-681-8433. Members of the Houston Cactus Society will discuss potting media, pests, diseases and general care of cacti and succulents. Free.

Native Plant Society of Texas Field Trip-Nash Prairie - Date: May 2; Time: 8:30 a.m.; with Dr. Larry Brown. This is a rare opportunity to visit this private ranch. It is 17,000 acres of prairie and bottomland forest a few miles south of Brazos Bend State Park. Meet at the Houston Arboretum for an 8:30 am departure or meet at the Nash Prairie. (Directions: Take 288 south to FM 1462. Turn west and go to Cow Creek Road. Cow Creek Road is just past the Brazos River. Turn left (south) onto Cow Creek Road. The ranch is several miles south.) Free. Bring a sack lunch and water. For more information, contact Glenn Olsen at Houston@npsot.org or call 281-345-4151.

Native Host Plants for Southeast Texas Butterflies - Date: May 5; Time: 7:00 p.m.; Location: Nature Discovery Center, 7112 Newcastle, Bellaire; Phone: 713-667-6550; with Glenn Olsen. Here is your chance to learn how to enhance your butterfly watching experiences in your own yard through host plant cultivation. Free.

The Dark Secret of Texas' Native Palm Trees - Date: May 6; Time: 7:30 p.m.; Location: Texas Cooperative Extension Office, 3033 Bear Creek. Presented by April Proudfit at the GCTMN Chapter Meeting. Free.

Daylily Show - Date: May 8; Time: 1:00 p.m.-4:30 p.m. Location: Mercer Arboretum, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble; Phone: 281-443-8731. Come to Mercer to see the Cypress Creek Daylily Club's Flower Show. See 200 beautiful varieties of daylilies in all colors and sizes.

Flower Arranging Seminar - Date: May 12; Time: 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.; Location: Antique Rose Emporium, 10,000 Highway 50, Brenham; Contact: Lynn Smith 979-836-5548. Debbie Woltmann, local designer and co-owner of Brenham Floral will share her innovative flower arranging techniques. Your \$40.00 seminar fee includes lunch and one Free two gallon rose of your choice. Reservations required by May 7th.

Native Ornamental Trees for Houston - Date: May 13; Time: 6:30 p.m.-8:00 p.m.; Location: City of Bellaire, Recreation Center, 5125 Laurel, Bellaire; Phone: 713-662-8280. Learn about great native ornamental trees that would grow in this Gulf coast prairie/marsh eco-region and enhance your habitat setting. Min 3 participants. 1 day. Instructor: J. Kolenovsky. Fee: Res: \$20; NRes: \$30.

Oleander Festival at Moody Gardens - Date: May 14-16; Location: One Hope Boulevard; Phone: 866-220-1691. The event opens May 14 with a kick-off luncheon at Moody Gardens Hotel, and continues May 15-16 at Moody Gardens Visitors Center. The Moody Gardens events include: gardening lectures by master gardener experts, a floral design contest and display, floral art show, craft workshops, children's activities and a sale of oleanders and other tropical plant varieties, plus exhibits by environmental organizations, gardening societies and gardening-related vendors. For more information, see www.oleander.org. All Oleander Festival 2004 events have free admission, except the May 14 luncheon.

Oleander Festival at Sealy Pavilion - Date: May 22-23; Location: behind Ashton Villa, 24th Street at Broadway; Phone: 866-220-1691. The Oleander Patio Sale at Sealy Pavilion is when the bulk of the hard-to-find oleander plants go on sale to the public. Free guided walking tours will visit historic garden sites in that area of Galveston. For more information, see www.oleander.org. All Oleander Festival 2004 events have free admission, except the May 14 luncheon.

Meet a Master Gardener Intern -

or Two or... How Many Are There Again?:

from Viki Brushwood

(Note: Hopefully, I matched the pictures and names the right way. If not, please let me know and I'll put a correction in next month! Anna)

Welcome to the Master Gardener Class, Spring 2004 -

This month our featured Master Gardeners are the members of our spring class!



Mary Anna Vance, Marianne Inman, Delano Jennings, and George Gabriles

Louise Head, Ann McLain, Betty VanHoeven, and Bernadette Maness



Sandra Kuykendall, Edna Davis, Mildred Schebaum, and Martha Schatt

Cathy Chalfant, Dick Merrifield, Lisa Darby, and Barbara Harding



Elizabeth Lee, Pattye Rhodes, Pearl Younger, and Katherine Cratin

Perry Wollam, Dorothy Babbington, Howard Watson, and Lee Withers



Jesse Knight, Sr., Toni Blackstock and Frank Seidule

Garden Checklist - February:

- ✿ Prune spring-flowering shrubs soon after flowering. Keep the natural shape of the plant in mind as you prune, and avoid excessive cutting except where necessary to control size.
- ✿ Roses have high fertilizer requirements. For most soils, use a complete fertilizer for the first application just as new growth starts, then use ammonium sulfate, or other high nitrogen source, every 4 to 6 weeks, usually just as the new growth cycle starts following a flowering cycle. For organic sources use cottonseed, rotted manures or alfalfa meal.
- ✿ Continue to spray rose varieties susceptible to black spot, using a spray containing triforine (Funginex). Use every 7 to 10 days. Many of the Old Garden Roses and some of the newer ones have considerable resistance to black spot.
- ✿ Climbing hybrid tea roses may be pruned as soon as they complete flowering.
- ✿ Removing spent flowers, trimming back excessive growth, and applying fertilizer to an established annual bed can do wonders towards rejuvenating and extending the life of the planting.
- ✿ As soon as azaleas have finished flowering, apply an acid type fertilizer at the rate recommended. Don't over fertilize, as azalea roots are near the surface and damage can occur. Water thoroughly after fertilizing.
- ✿ Seeds of amaranthus, celosia, cosmos, marigold, portulaca, zinnia and other warm-season annuals can be sown directly in the beds where they are to grow. Keep seeded areas moist until seeds germinate. Thin out as soon as they are large enough to transplant. Surplus plants can be transplanted to other areas.
- ✿ It will soon be time for bagworms to attack junipers and other narrow-leafed evergreens. Control measures, such as Sevin dust or spray, should be applied while the insects and the bags are about one-half inch in length.
- ✿ For instant color, purchase started annual plants. Select short, compact plants. Any flowers or flower buds should be pinched to give plants an opportunity to become established.
- ✿ Check new tender growth for aphids. A few can be tolerated, but large numbers should be controlled. Always follow label instructions on approved pesticides for control. Washing them off with a strong spray of water may be all that is necessary for adequate control.
- ✿ Many flower or vegetable seeds left over after planting the garden can be saved for the next season by closing the packets with tape or paper clips and storing in a sealed glass jar in your refrigerator.
- ✿ Start weeding early in the flower garden. Early competition with small plants can delay flowering. A mulch will discourage weed growth and make those that do come through easier to pull.
- ✿ Soil purchased for use in beds, low areas, and containers should be examined closely. Often, nut grass and other weeds, nematodes, and soilborne disease are brought into the yard through contaminated soil sources.

- ✿ Watch newspaper and other publicity for information regarding wildflower trails, and open garden days. Plan to take a trip to enjoy beautiful gardens and trails that are abundant in many areas of Texas.

Source: <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/extension/newsletters/hortupdate/apr03/art6apr.html>
Date: April 7, 2004

On the Herbal Side - Botanical Solutions for Uninvited Insects

from DiAnna Munson

Mosquito season is coming soon - I've already gotten some bites, so I thought I'd run this article again:

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 CO₂ factor. No, I don't plan on holding my breath that long, but that would work. Any strong odor that will mask the CO₂ 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 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**.

Happy Birthday!

Happy April Birthday Wishes...

Anna Gawlik - April 18

Roy Compton - April 20

Barbara Brown - April 27

Donie Stowers - April 29

Happy Belated March Birthday Wishes...

Barbara Ray - March 4

Thanks - Anna Gawlik, Editor

Happy Gardening!!!

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.



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