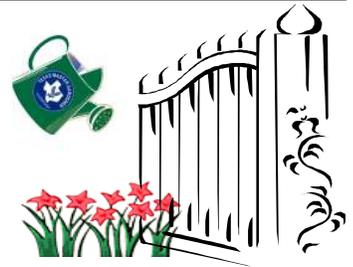




# Ellis County Master Gardener's E-Gardening Newsletter



Volume III, Issue 4

Official E-letter of the Ellis County Master Gardeners Association, Waxahachie, Texas

May, 2009

Welcome to the Ellis County Master Gardener's **E-Gardening** newsletter. The purpose of this newsletter is to give you a month by month agenda of what you should be doing to your landscape. We will be featuring horticulture articles that we hope you will find interesting, important dates where you can find the Master Gardeners speaking, demonstrating and passing out information relative to your garden. If you would like to receive this newsletter monthly via your email address, log onto our website [www.ECMGA.com](http://www.ECMGA.com), click on subscribe, and it will be sent around the 1st of every month. Best of all; it's FREE!

Melinda Kocian, editor

## What's Happening in May

### Saturday, May 9 - Cedar Ridge Preserve – Painted Bunting Walk

**Description:** Biologist and CRP researcher Marcy Brown Marsden leads a walk to find some of the most brilliant birds of the spring. The walk will go through the mixed prairie area of the preserve and locate territories of both Painted and Indigo Buntings. Other birds we may encounter include Black-chinned and Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, White-eyed Vireos, and perhaps some warbler species. **Field Trip Details:** Walk will start at 7:30 AM and will last approximately 2 hours. We will drive as a group to the opposite side of the preserve, so on-time arrival is essential. Bring your binoculars and camera. Wear sturdy boots or shoes with good ankle support. **More info?** Marcy Brown Marsden, [mebrow@udallas.edu](mailto:mebrow@udallas.edu), 214-492-9409. Please RSVP if you are bringing a group.

**Saturday, May 9, 9:30 am,** Petal Pushers Garden Emporium, Cedar Hill, 972-291-7650. Hello Veggie Gardeners! Our 6<sup>th</sup> class; Topic: **Good Bugs – Bad Bugs!** How to identify beneficials and pests and what you can do about them. Remember, these classes are **free** and you don't need to sign up in advance.

**Thursday, May 14, 7:00 pm, Green Thumb Organic Club** - Field trip to James and Melinda Kocian's property. Ellis County Master Gardeners; the Kocian's 17-acre property backs up to a 30-acre water conservation lake. A pavilion, pecan orchard, arbors, perennial beds, raised box vegetable garden, and EarthKind roses all await you. For directions call Marilyn Simmons at 214-497-3918.

### Saturday, May 16, 10:00 to 2:00 pm, 7th Annual Ovilla Garden Club Tour

Tickets will be on sale at Heritage Park in downtown Ovilla. Cost is \$10.00 each. Drinks will be available for sale at the park. You will receive a map and directions to each of the 5 gardens on the tour. Bottled water will be available at all the gardens; no charge. Garden Club members will also have plants from their yards for sale. Vendors interested in selling **garden-related** items at the park, please contact Bobbie Mason @972-742-0738.

**Monday, May 18, 7:00 pm,** Green Thumb Organic Club. Chef Jeri will be cooking up a tasty vegetable dish. There will be a tour of the vegetable and flower gardens, and a short garden class. Marilyn and Donelle will have fresh compost tea for sale. For directions, call Marilyn @ 214-497-3918.

**Saturday thru Monday, May 23-25,** Lavender Ridge Farm's Lavender Festival. For more information, go to [www.lavenderridgefarms.com](http://www.lavenderridgefarms.com).

**Saturday, May 30, 8-1 pm,** Downtown Farmer's Market Begins!

**Saturday, May 30,** Ellis County Art Association will be on the Square doing their annual "Painting Historic Waxahachie" *En Plein Aire* Quick-Draw painting; there work will be judged and awards given! The paintings will be for sale.

**Saturday and Sunday, June 6-7,** The Waxahachie Gingerbread Trail...more info in June's newsletter.

**Friday thru Sunday, June 12-14,** 5th Annual Blanco Lavender Festival. For lots of information on lavender in Texas visit [www.blancolavenderfest.com](http://www.blancolavenderfest.com).



### Listen to KBEC.....

Saturday mornings at 9:00 a.m. on 1390 AM.

The Ellis County Master Gardeners have a 5-minute segment every week, offering you helpful information on what you need to be doing in your landscape, as well as "happenings" around the county. Be sure to listen in!

Melinda Kocian

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## It's May - What Needs to be Done?



### Rain Lily

From the garden of Micki Roark

### Planting and Sowing

- Plant summer- and fall-flowering perennials from nursery stock.
- Plant sweet potatoes early this month.
- There's still time to plant summer annuals from 4-inch and 6-inch nursery stock. For sun, include purple fountain grass, alternanthera, firebush, and crotons. For shade, don't overlook caladiums, torenias, elephant ears, ferns, nicotiana, and other tropical foliage plants.

### Pruning and Fertilizing

- Early this month, manually thin peaches and plums, and perhaps pears, so that remaining fruit are 5 to 6 inches apart on the branch.

- Although it is a bit unsightly, allow the foliage of spring flowering bulbs to turn yellow and dry up before removing. This helps nourish the bulb in preparation for next year's blooms. Overplant with summer annuals to help hide the withering foliage.
- Pinch back the growing tips on newly planted annuals and perennials for compact, better branched plants with more flowers growth.
- Remove flower buds on caladiums, coleus, lamb's ear, and dusty miller to maintain their vegetative growth.

### This and That

- Place support rings around clumps of gladiolus before they flower to hold the bloom stalks erect.

### Garden Watch

- Trim unsightly new webworm colonies in pecans and other trees with a pole pruner.
- Spray applications to control pecan nutcase borers should be made this month. Contact your County AgriLife Office for exact spray dates.
- Control early blight on tomatoes with a listed fungicide. Look for large yellow blotches that start on lower leaves and move up the plant. Fresh, thick mulch around your plants will help prevent the problem.

### EarthKind™ Tips for May

A tolerance level is a major factor in determining a course of action in an integrated pest management program. Cultural, physical and biological practices are always preferred over chemical solutions. For more information please visit: <http://landscapeipm.tamu.edu/>.



### Well, it's that time again...!

Time for the opening of the Waxahachie Downtown Farmer's Market! Beginning Saturday, May 30, from 8 a.m. until 1 p.m. Just think...fresh tomatoes (yumm!)...and of course lots of fresh-grown vegetables from local farmers. Also, food-related items such as canned preserves, jellies, jams and salsas.

And as always, the Ellis County Master Gardeners will be on hand at their booth with timely, free hand-outs with info for all your landscape and garden information. They will have, for sale, landscaping manuals, bird and flower identification wheels and of course, their brand-new cookbook: "*Treasured Recipes*". This much sought-after cookbook will be available for purchase every Saturday. The cost is \$10.00. (p.s.-they make **GREAT** gifts!

## Vegetable Gardeners Monthly

By Rick Daniel

Ellis County Master Gardener/Vegetable Gardening Specialist

Hello, and welcome to the May edition of the Vegetable Gardeners Monthly. If you have questions that this article doesn't address, just give us a call at 972-825-5175 or contact us via the web at [www.ecmga.com](http://www.ecmga.com) and ask for one of your Master Gardener Vegetable Gardening Specialist.

Old Mother Nature threw us a curve ball again this April. Most of the old timers recommend waiting to plant your garden until after Easter. I like to get an early start on those vegetables that are sensitive to heat, such as tomatoes and peppers, and I will plant mine in late March, as long as the ten day forecast looks good after our last freeze date. For the second year in a row, we've had a freeze in April and I had to replant all my tomatoes and some of my peppers. Oh well, sometimes you win and sometimes you start all over again.

Plant sweet potatoes early this month. Continue to plant hot season vegetables (okra, and black-eyed peas early to mid month. Control early blight on your tomatoes with an approved fungicide. You will notice large yellow blotches that start on the lower leaves and move up the plants. Harvest ripe crops such as squash and beans. Release green lacewings and lady bugs for general pest control.

### Featured Vegetable of the Month

By Rick Daniel  
Ellis County Master Gardener



## Vegetable of the Month

### SQUASH:



**General Information:** Squash are one of our favorites. My wife and I usually eat all year on the squash we plant in the spring. As the yellow and zucchini squash ripens, we eat what we can and freeze the rest. We make squash casserole out of the yellow squash, and zucchini bread with the zucchini. We also raise spaghetti squash and use it in place of spaghetti when making casseroles. Squash comes in summer and winter varieties. The summer squash is picked from the vine when young and tender, and the winter squash is left on the vine until ripe and mature, and they are suitable for storing. The winter type can be grown in the spring, they are just harvested at a different time.

**Planting dates:** For spring, plant after all danger of frost (4-1 to 5-15) for fall, (7-10 to 9-15).

**Planting Method:** Seed is the most common method, but can be started from transplants. Plant 3-5 seeds per hill about ½ to 1 inch deep. The bush-type squash should be planted in rows at least 3 feet apart with spacing of 24 to 30 inches between plants. Vining types need more space and should be planted in rows 6 to 8 feet apart with spacing of 36 to 40 inches between plants

**Varieties: Summer:** Multipik, Dixie, Sun Drops, Burpee's Butterstick Yellow Straightneck and Yellow Crookneck, Tatume, Butterbar, Spaghetti, and Zucchini. **Winter:** Early Butternut, Acorn, Buttercup, Tahitian, Turban, Table Ace and Hubbard.

**Culture:** Use as many plants as you have room for. Pests seem to hit the smaller plantings for some reason. Does best in sandy soil, but will grow in most any soil that is well prepared and healthy. The most common problem growing squash is pollination. Bees are the best pollinator's when available, but if you don't have enough bees at the right time, you might need to self pollinate. Use a Q-tip, cotton swab or a small brush, and remove the dust-like pollen from the male bloom and place in the female bloom. The male bloom comes off the end of a stem, while the female bloom has a small fruit that it protrudes from. It's best to pollinate in the morning before 10 AM. If successful, you will be eating fruit in 3-5 days.

**Fertilizer:** Heavy feeder. Use lots of compost and lava sand. Use a handful of organic fertilizer per plant. Side dress one week after blossoming begins, and repeat every three weeks. For non-organic growers, use high nitrogen fertilizers and place half on each side of the plant or in a circle around the plant.

**Harvest:** Harvest and eat summer squash anytime the fruit is large enough to eat. Best picked when young and tender. Yields are greatly reduced if mature fruit is left on the plants. Winter squash is picked when ripe and the skin is hard and impervious to scratching with your fingernail.

## Herb of the Month

By Arlene Hamilton  
Ellis County Master Gardener



## Lavender

By Arlene Hamilton, Ellis County Master Gardener

The **Lavenders** (*Lavandula* spp.) are a genus of 39 species of flowering plants in the mint family, native to the Mediterranean region south to tropical Africa and to the southeast regions of India. The genus includes annuals, herbaceous plants, subshrubs, and small shrubs. Because the cultivated forms are planted in gardens world-wide, they are occasionally found growing wild, as garden escapees, well beyond their natural range. Because Lavender cross-pollinates easily, however, there are countless variations within the species.

Historians found lavender in use since the days of the Roman Empire. Its scented flowers have been gathered for their healing and soothing properties as well as for use as a culinary herb. Queen Elizabeth I of England used lavender tea for treatment of severe migraine headaches, and Cleopatra was known to favor lavender in her bath. Sweet and savory, the delicate scent of lavender enlivens food dishes and is found in the classic herbes de Provence mixture.

Growing Lavender in this part of Texas can be a challenge. The plants require sandy or rocky soil with a pH of 7.0. The limestone soil of west Ellis County is ideal for growing lavender while those of us with sticky black clay must amend. For heavy clay amend with well decomposed organic matter. Plant on mounds or hillsides to increase drainage. While lavender is considered drought tolerant when mature, new plants need regular watering until they are established. Overhead watering can promote fungal disease, and too much mulch will cause water retention and root rot. Ideally, mulch with sand, stone or white rocks. Plant lavender in full sun.

Plants are ready for harvest when the bottom third of the flower head is blooming. After the sun has dried the morning dew from the plant clip the stems down close to the foliage using sharp shears. Lavender stays fresh for about 3 days in water which should be changed daily. Each year after flowering, cut back the plant by one-third to one-half. Always prune or harvest plants with sterilized tools.

English lavender, known as *L. angustifolia* and *L. x intermedia* 'Provence' tolerate extremes of hot dry summers and wet springs as long as the roots don't stay wet for more than a few days. Chefs tend to prefer *angustifolia* and Provence because of their lower camphor content. Good choices for the culinary garden are Munstead and Hidcote. Varieties with more robust scents are *L. x intermedia* such as Grosso.

French lavender (*L. dentata*) tends to prefer a more southern climate and will not survive our winters in the garden They make great potted plants or must be lifted from the garden before the first frost.

Spanish lavender (*L. stoechas*) is gray leaved and blooms with a broad, flat-topped cluster of flowers instead of a spike. It is winter hardy and thrives in our summers. The plant and flowers are beautiful but it is not suitable as a culinary.

The Ellis County Master Gardeners invite photographers from all levels of expertise to enter our first ever Photo Contest.

### Photo Contest

**CATEGORIES:**  
Single specimen  
In the Garden  
Garden Bounty

Contest runs  
May 1 – September 30, 2007

For a complete copy of the rules and application form, please log on to: [www.ECMGA.com](http://www.ECMGA.com)

Presented by  
Ellis County Master Gardeners and  
The Waxahachie Daily Light

**Watch for more information...!**

**Ellis County Master Gardeners will be having another Photo Contest.....keep posted, read the E-Garden newsletter as well as info on the contest in the Waxahachie Daily Light!**

## Texas Wild Flower of the Month

*Submitted by Melinda Kocian  
Ellis County Master Gardener*



### Winecup, Low Poppy Mallow

*Callirhoe involucrata* (Torr.) Gray

**Mallow Family (Malvaceae)**

**Size:** 18 inches

**Blooms:** February - July, Perennial

Several species of winecups in Texas vary in color from deep wine to pink or white, but the blossoms are always recognizably similar. They flower on long stalks from leaf axils, at first cup- or goblet-shaped, then flattening out as the blossom matures. Their flowers open at midday and close near dusk, but the exact flowering period may be related to water availability. The incised leaves are shallowly or deeply cut into five to seven lobes, and are wider than they are long. Both leaves and flowers of winecup yield a dye, but whether the color is orange or gray depends upon the mordant used. Winecup often grows in mixed stands with other wildflowers.

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## Highlighting the 2009 Ellis County Master Gardener Interns

### Herbs

*By Doreen Delgado*

Ellis County Master Gardener Intern, Class of 2009



**M**y love for cooking brought me to my love of gardening. It is such a great treat and flavor to use fresh herbs with your cooking.

Using fresh herbs just gives you the added touch that can make your plate appear like you have completed a gourmet meal. Herbs such as fresh mint can be used to decorate your plate and make the presentation of your meal the likes of those prepared by chefs such as Emeril or Paula Deen. Other herbs that can be used for presentations are chives or parsley. Snip some chives over your sunny side eggs; it will make your breakfast presentation really stylish and elegant!

Using different herbs can dramatically change the flavor of your meal. Have you ever tried an out-of-the-ordinary herb with a comfort food? For a different taste, put some fresh dill in your potato salad or tuna fish salad. The dill will give your salad an extra boost of taste. If you don't like dill, try cilantro. The cilantro gives the potato or tuna fish salad an extra kick to your taste buds not usually found in these dishes.

Herbs can also be used for other purposes. Did you know that some herbs are natural pesticides? If you place bay leaves randomly thrown around in your pantry, it will keep the ants and other little bugs away especially out of your flour and rice. Catnip is a natural repellent to cockroaches. Catnip is found in many stores as a sachet or you can make your own small catnip sachets with fresh catnip. Place the sachets around your home; you will not see a cockroach again. You do need to change the sachets as they get older. So just monitor the smell of the sachet and replace. Say goodbye to roaches. Catnip can also be used for another purpose. Catnip in a sachet and placed around the home will deter mosquitoes in no time! Rosemary and sage also can be used to get rid of mosquitoes. If you have a pool, plant some rosemary nearby; you will be able to enjoy those beautiful summer nights outside without the fear of getting those pesky mosquitoes!

Look at herbs with a different set of eyes. They can be used for many other reasons. Some are easier to grow, need minimal care and look at all the possibilities that will open up for you.

## Highlighting the 2009 Interns (cont'd)



### Butterfly Gardening

By Patricia Brown,

Ellis County Master Gardener Intern, Class of 2009

**B**utterflies have been called “Nature’s Jewels” and flying flowers. Whatever you call them, they are one of nature’s most beautiful wonders. There are about 160 species of butterflies and Texas has the distinction of having the most species.

A butterfly garden is the best way to invite these wonderful creatures into your yard. These gardens can range from simple, such as a container garden, or a flowerbed, to an elaborate ornate complete yard garden.

In planning your garden there are certain factors to take into consideration. The first should be how much money and time you are willing to put into the project. The location of the garden is also a very important requirement and then the proper plant selection.

The location should be a sunny open space. Butterflies enjoy the sun, and they need the sun to keep their bodies warm so they can fly. For ultimate enjoyment, place the garden where it can be seen during the daytime when butterflies are most active. The area should be free of all insecticides as they can harm all stages of butterfly development. Researching to know what species of butterflies are prevalent in your particular area will aid in the selection of plants.

Plant selection is crucial for a successful butterfly garden. Butterflies need host plants and nectar producing plants.

The first stage of a butterfly’s life is an egg, which then turns into the caterpillar. The caterpillar eats hosts of non-flowering plant material which is referred to as host plants or larval plants. These plants attract the female on which she lays her eggs. Then the caterpillar will eat the leaves of the host plants. The next stage is the pupa and then ultimately the butterfly which will feed on the nectar producing-plants. Each species of butterflies have a preference to host and nectar producing plants. That is why it is best to know what species are prevalent in your area.

The arrangement of the plants in the garden is also important. Nectar plants need to be planted in masses of the same colors. Butterflies respond better to solid colors rather than scattered colors. They will drink the nectar from one color mass and then move to another. Plants that are continuous bloomers are also a good selection choice.

The garden site should be protected some from winds. Butterflies like to have water to drink, and a shallow container of water is ideal. Place the container in the garden with some rocks in it so the butterflies can rest on the stones while drinking. They also enjoy basking in the sun; therefore placing flat stones in different spots in the garden will allow butterflies to enjoy the sun more.

Now sit back and enjoy these flying flowers in action. Since many of the flowers in this garden also attract hummingbirds, watching closely you may have the opportunity to spy a beautiful humming bird also.



### Good Trees in Bad Places

By Megan Ford

Ellis County Master Gardener Intern, Class of 2009

**M**y husband and I purchased a home that has all of the qualities we want. It has a big lot that we can garden and the dogs can run fast in a long straight line and it has trees and birds and lots of things to do there. Most important are the trees; over 200 of them. Several years ago when it was professionally landscaped for the first homeowners, someone made a mistake. Actually they made five big mistakes. Four trees that were placed like hedges, just three feet from the foundation of the house had since grown into 25 feet tall and more. These were probably thought to be hedges or bushes, not trees. They were trees with big root systems heading right toward the foundation of the house. They were trees that were pushing against the rain gutters and that were very close to the windows. The fifth tree was sick and growing into the power lines above. They were trees that had to go.

Now we pride ourselves on taking the organic means to gently care for our garden without making a large “footprint” on the environment. Like many organic gardeners, we are gentle with plants and wildlife and humans unless there is serious damage taking

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place. When that happens we do not pussyfoot around the situation. When the problem is serious, eradication becomes the next method of choice.

First we cut down the beautiful Yaupon holly in front of the dining room that was pushing against the window and rain gutter and large roots raised above the surface aimed menacingly toward the edge of the foundation, then the giant crape myrtle was cut to the ground at the corner edge of the front of the house, and another crape myrtle pressing against the outer wall of a bedroom. The fourth tree removed was growing at the corner of the garage and the root system had caused a crack to develop across the patio and the limbs grew into the satellite dish on the roof. The fifth tree removed was a 65-foot hackberry tree that gave plenty of green shade in the warm months of the year. The problems were that the hackberry on the west side was on the edge of the road that our neighbors drive by and the limbs not only had mistletoe but other maladies that caused large branches to weaken. They were hanging over the passing cars of our neighbors going to and from their homes. Not only were these problems enough to remove the tree, but it was positioned right under power lines that it had grown to reach, but no quite touch. We removed the hackberry tree because it was diseased and because we will not be part of the scarring of the horizon by another "V" shaped tree pruned to grown around the power lines above.

In the interest of balance, we planted new trees to replace those that were removed and we placed them 30 feet from the edges of the house. To soften the edge of the property on the west side where the hackberry tree had grown under the power lines, we planted a row of bushes to outline the corner of the lot edge. The hedges soften the landscape but will never grown near the power lines, nor will they scar the beautiful sunset that colors the sky beyond.

A friend of mine has a tree farm and she has often repeated the importance of crape myrtle trees being properly labeled. It is a common mistake that a homeowner or landscaper makes; thinking he has purchased a bush, but instead has purchased a crape myrtle variety that reaches 25-35 feet tall. Proper plant identification and labeling are the responsibility of the seller but the consequences go to the homeowner after several years when the misidentifications become obvious.

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## BUTTERFLY GARDENING WITH A PURPOSE

By Nancy Prikryl  
Ellis County Master Gardeners

I think it's safe to say that everyone loves butterflies. You can't help but be captivated when you discover the very first butterfly of spring floating through your garden. Your current gardens may already attract a few butterflies, but how would you like to design a garden that butterflies absolutely cannot resist? You can easily convert your present garden into a butterfly habitat that will meet all their needs. And when all their needs are met, they won't want to travel anywhere else. Can you imagine relaxing in your favorite place outdoors or walking down a path and being surrounded by these flying beauties? Well, if that interests you, you might want to get started soon on a butterfly habitat. Once you have met the needs of the butterflies you can apply to certify your property as an official Texas Butterfly Habitat. It is rewarding to know you have played a part in preserving butterflies, and you deserve some recognition for your efforts. So let's get started! There are ten steps that will help you be a successful butterfly gardener.



**Step One:** Learn what species of butterflies are native to your area. A good butterfly handbook will help. Identifying them will assist you in knowing what specific plants they must have to thrive.

**Step Two:** Assess your current garden to determine which established plants are a good food source for butterflies. Some of your trees, shrubs, flowers and vines could be just what butterflies need.

**Step Three:** Select a variety of plants. Butterflies need two kinds of plants to survive; larva plants to host their eggs and caterpillars, and nectar plants for food and energy. (See following chart of [Recommended Host and Nectar Plants.](#))

**Step Four:** Choose an area for your garden that has five to six hours of sunlight. Butterflies are sensitive to cool temperatures, especially spring and fall mornings. They need to warm their bodies in order to take flight. Placing a few large stones in a sunny area of your garden will give them a warm place to bask.

**Step Five:** Choose an area with a natural windbreak such as a building or large trees. You may need to plant a row of fast growing shrubs to provide a windbreak. Butterflies are delicate and find it difficult to fly in our heavy Texas winds.

**Step Six:** Plant for a continuous bloom from early spring to the first frost in fall. The blossoms will continue to entice butterflies and provide beauty for your garden from February through November. Water regularly, especially until the plants are established. You will experience diminished blooms if the plants suffer from lack of moisture.

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**Step Seven:** Use groups of plants to display large splashes of color to attract more butterflies. Butterflies can see the color and smell the scent of blossoms. A single plant will not be as showy.

**Step Eight:** Plant flower varieties that have flat tops where butterflies can easily perch to rest while sipping nectar.

**Step Nine:** Include a source of water for puddling. Many species of male butterflies require extra nutrients to mate. You will often see them sipping water from a muddy area or a damp gravel walkway. Dissolved minerals from the mud and gravel attract them. If there is not a natural source available in your yard, a shallow dish filled with gravel that is kept damp will sufficiently meet their mineral needs. You can also provide rotted fruit, banana peels or cantaloupe rinds for sap-feeding butterflies.

**Step Ten:** Abstain from pesticide use on your property. What kills those pesky insects in your garden will also kill butterflies in all four of their life cycles.

After completing these ten criteria, you have met all the requirements to certify your gardens as a Texas Discovery Gardens Butterfly Habitat. An application for certification is available at [www.texasdiscoverygardens.org](http://www.texasdiscoverygardens.org), or call 214-428-7476. After being certified you may order a garden sign designating your property as a Certified Butterfly Habitat. The sign will tell visitors, "This garden provides the proper nectar sources, host plants and environmental conditions for all stages of a butterfly's life cycle: egg, caterpillar, pupa and adult".

Much of the natural habitat of butterflies is disappearing. By providing a safe haven for butterflies, you will not only have an important impact in sustaining these beautiful and unique insects, but you will receive the dividend of unsurpassed pleasure as you walk through your garden full of winged beauties.



**Recommended Butterfly Host and Nectar Plants for Ellis County**

<b><u>Butterfly</u></b>	<b><u>Larva Plants</u></b>	<b><u>Nectar Plants*</u></b>
Eastern Black Swallowtail	Fennel, Parsley, Dill	Butterfly Bush, Butterfly Weed, Penta
Giant Swallowtail	Hop-tree, Prickly Ash, Citrus Trees, Rue	Butterfly Bush, Coneflowers, Lantana, Milkweeds, Penta
Pipevine Swallowtail	Dutchman's Pipe, Pipevine	Butterfly Bush, Mexican Sunflower, Summer Phlox
Tiger Swallowtail	Ash trees, Mexican Plum, Cottonwood, Black Cherry, Hop-tree	Coneflowers, Mexican Sunflower, Penta, Butterfly Bush, Butterfly Weed
Gulf Fritillary	Passion Vine	Butterfly Bush, Texas Thistle, Mexican sunflower, Golden-eye, Zinnia
Question Mark	Elm and Hackberry trees, False Nettle	Prefer to sip tree sap, rotting fruit and animal droppings. Butterfly Bush, Milkweed
Buckeye	Snapdragon vine, Frog-fruit	Frog-fruit, Ruellia
Painted Lady	Thistle species, Annual Sunflower, Artemisia	Mexican Sunflower, Purple Coneflower, Zinnias
Red Admiral	Nettles, Pellitory	Prefers to sip tree sap and rotting fruit, Milkweeds, Butterfly Bush, Coneflowers
Silvery Checkerspot	Common Sunflower, Frostweed, Black-Eyed Susan	Cosmos, Sunflowers, Brazilian Verbena
Red-spotted Purple	Black Cherry, Willow trees	Butterfly Bush, Lantana, Milkweed. Also feeds on carrion, sap and animal droppings
Viceroy	Black Cherry, Willows, Cottonwoods	Butterfly Bush, Milkweeds, Coneflowers, Plains Blackfoot
Monarch	Milkweed species	Butterfly Weed, Penta, Zinnia, Blue Mist-flower, Mexican Sunflower
Queen	Milkweeds	Blue Mist-flower, Butterfly Bush, Lantana, Zinnia
Cloudless Giant Sulphur	Senna, Partridge Pen	Turk's Cap, Cardinal Flower, Lantana, Butterfly Bush
Texan Crescentspot	Flame Acanthus, Shrimp Plant, Ruellia	Frog-fruit, Golden-eye, Indian Blanket
Pearly Crescentspot	Aster Family	Aster Family
Hackberry Butterfly	Hackberry species	Sips on tree sap, rotting fruit and dung
Tawny Emperor	Hackberry species	Sips on tree sap, rotting fruit and dung.
Mourning Cloak	Willows, Cottonwoods, Elms, Hackberry	Milkweed, Goldenrod, sips on rotting fruit and tree sap

This list contains the butterflies that are most likely to be seen in our area. There are many more, especially small butterflies that frequently go unnoticed like the Hairstreaks and Elfins. Others are uncommon here, but occasionally stray into Ellis County.

\* Most butterflies have a large variety of plants from which they sip nectar. Only a few are listed here.

## *It's May - What Else Needs to be Done?*

By Carolyn Foster  
Ellis County Master Gardener



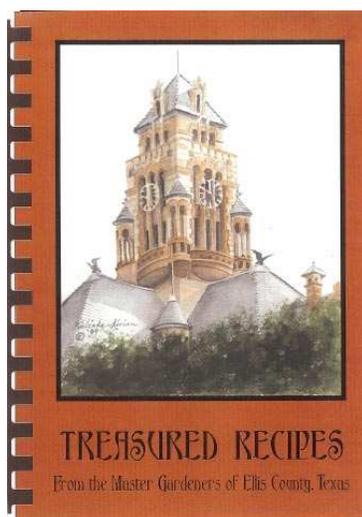
### Let's Talk Annuals

Annuals complete their life cycle in a single season. They provide an instant garden giving color and bloom. Most produce lots of flowers over a very long season. Aside from planting and deadheading, they are carefree. Pest and disease can be a problem if you locate them in an unsuitable spot. Plants are easy to grow from seed or starter plants and most are very inexpensive. No matter what the design need or environment you can find an annual to fit it.

Annuals are categorized as tender, hardy or half-hardy, warm-weather or cool-weather plants. For example, Mexican sunflowers won't do well if it's less than 75° degrees, while bachelor's buttons and some African daisies stop blooming in hot weather. You must protect tender annuals from frost. Hardy annuals can survive light frost. Half-hardy annuals succumb to cold before hardies.

Tender annuals cannot tolerate temperatures close to freezing. Plant after the frost-free date and dig them out before the fall frost or you may lose them. Hardies can take some frost but seedling may be damaged, especially if started indoors. So protect them if temperature drop to near 28° degrees. This includes zinnias, nasturtiums and impatiens.

Direct-seeded and volunteer seedlings will withstand cooler temperatures than transplants. Some are larkspur, calendula and bachelor's buttons, so plant these early. Half-hardies will succumb before hardies. Don't plant until after the frost. Petunias and cosmos are in this category; they can take 30° degree nights. Call the Ellis County Master Gardener's office at 972- 825-5175 for more information.



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**Ellis County Master Gardener's Cookbook**

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**They will also be available from May 30 -October 17 at the Waxahachie Downtown Farmer's Market**