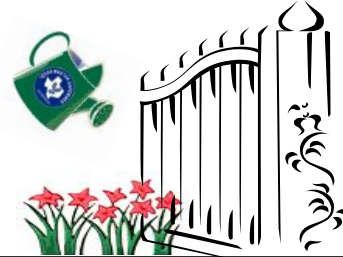




Ellis County Master Gardener's E-Gardening Newsletter



Volume IX, Issue Nine

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

September, 2016

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 with your landscape. We will feature horticultural articles that we hope you will find interesting, and 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 and click on subscribe. Best of all; it's FREE! Susan Clark, Editor

What's Happening in September?

Every Saturday from April to October from 8am-1pm.



410 S. Rogers (across from City Hall in the old lumberyard building)
Visit the Master Gardeners' Booth!

- Useful gardening tips
- Plants and herbs for sale
- Free handouts...Some items for a fee
- Tell a friend to sign up for the **E-Garden Newsletter**... it's **FREE**!

The Farmers Market is still going strong and will be open until October 29th. Each week there is a special theme and events to go with it. Here's the schedule for the rest of the season. Visit downtown Waxahachie and the Farmers Market for a great selection of goods and edibles!

- ◆ **September 24: Taste of Market: Pick a Peck of Pickles**
- ◆ **October 1: Healthy Whole Grains**
- ◆ **October 8: Kid's Krafts**
- ◆ **October 15: Fall Décor from the Garden**
- ◆ **October 22: Golden Harvest Soups**
- ◆ **October 29: The Pumpkin Patch**



Indian Trail Master Naturalists Events



Join the **Indian Trail Master Naturalists** at their monthly meeting on **Monday, September 26**. The program for the evening is entitled **"Water Resource Management"**. Tina Handon will present a program on Water Resource Management in the Richland-Chambers Reservoir watershed, including a hands-on demonstration of "how streams work" using the Water District's stream trailer.

Tina Hendon is the Watershed Program Manager for Tarrant Regional Water District. She has over 25 years of experience in aquatic resources and watershed protection. Previously, she worked in the Nonpoint Source and Water Quality Standards programs at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, in environmental consulting, and applied research on the effects of land use practices on Texas waterbodies.

The program is free and follows the 6pm Master Naturalist meeting that is also open to the public. Meeting location: First United Methodist Church, Family Life Center 505 W. Marvin Ave., Waxahachie. For more info, call (972) 825-5175 or email ellis-tx@tamu.edu.



Listen to KBEC

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

The Ellis County Master Gardeners have a five 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

Inside this issue:

<i>It's Sep, What Needs to be Done?</i>	2
<i>Wildflower of the Month</i>	3
<i>DMGA Annual Garden Tour</i>	3
<i>Fall Ideal for Trees and Shrubs</i>	4
<i>Fall Lighthouse for Learning</i>	5
<i>TX Superstar: Basham's Crape</i>	6
<i>Mapping the Sun</i>	7
<i>Garden Checklist for September</i>	7
<i>In the Vegetable Garden</i>	8
<i>ECMGA Pop-Up Horticulture</i>	9
<i>Eclectic Gardening</i>	10
<i>Lawn Care in September</i>	11



Pink Sensitive Briar (*Schrunkia uncinata*) The sensitive briar or shame vine sends runners over the ground up to two to four feet long. The leaflets are sensitive to touch and immediately fold up against each other. They also close at night and in cloudy weather. The fragrant flowers look like small pink balls. Perennial blooms April to July.

It's September....What Needs To Be Done?

Planting

- ♦ Winter overseeding of perennial rye on established Bermudagrass lawns may be done any time in the month.
- ♦ Plant these fall-blooming annuals from bedding plants before buds have opened: marigolds, petunias, asters, dianthus, snapdragons, and mums. Wait until the weather is cooler to plant pansies, violas, and ornamental kale and cabbage.
- ♦ Spring- and summer-blooming perennials such as container grown roses, salvias, phlox, and most all of the varieties of vines, can be planted at this time. Remember to amend the soil and keep plants watered if rainfall is not sufficient for plants to become established.
- ♦ Complete sowing bluebonnets this month to ensure spring flowers. Buy acid-scarified seed (process that softens external seed coat) for uniform germination. For season-long color, consider purchasing a wildflower mix that includes bluebonnets, black-eyed Susan, blanket flower, Indian blanket, Indian paintbrush, Mexican hat, plains coreopsis, purple coneflower, and evening primrose—just to name a few. Look for mixes that contain annuals and perennials, as well as cool-season and warm-season plants. Sow seeds into areas that are free of grasses and lightly tilled. Sow seed and lightly rake area to get seed into contact with soil before watering.

Fertilizing and Pruning

- ♦ Apply high-nitrogen fertilizer (3-1-2 ratio) on lawns and shrubs to prepare plants for fall and winter. Container plants will benefit from using high-nitrogen, water-soluble fertilizers.
- ♦ Tidy up summer perennials by removing dead and faded flower stems and seed stalks. Continue through fall.
- ♦ Root-prune native and established trees and shrubs that you intend to transplant this winter. Cutting the roots around the plant with a spade will stimulate new root growth prior to the move.

Garden Watch

- ♦ Check for spider mites on fall tomatoes and newly planted transplants. Treat with a strong stream of water or insecticidal soap.
- ♦ Apply a pre-emergent herbicide to lawns early in the month to control winter weeds. Depending on the type of weeds targeted, it may be necessary to apply two products, one for grassy weeds (annual bluegrass, ryegrass, etc.) and another for broadleafed weeds (chickweed, clover, dandelions, henbit, etc.).
- ♦ Make final application of Image or Sledgehammer before mid-month to control nutsedge in lawns and landscape beds.
- ♦ Remove webworms from pecan trees. Cut off the ends of branches as soon as the webs appear. Tear open large webs to expose worms for the birds. Spraying is not practical.

Prairie Sunflower (*Helianthus petiolaris*) The prairie sunflower is a tap-rooted annual with much branching and grows five to six feet tall. Leaves are alternate leaf blades, two to four inches in length.

Flower heads are about two inches across with 20 to 25 yellow rays; disk flowers are red-purple turning brown, growing on terminal stalks that are three to four inches long. Seeds are readily eaten by quail, dove, and other songbirds. Blooms May to October.



Featured Texas Wild Flower of the Month

Submitted by Melinda Kocian
Ellis County Master Gardener



Sawtooth Daisy – Sunflower Family (*Asteraceae*)
Prionopsis ciliate (Nutt.) Nutt.

Region: 1, 3-5, 7-10 (Ellis County if Region 4)
Size: 2-5 Feet
Blooms: August through November, Annual



Sawtooth daisy is a stout, erect plant. Its stems branch near the top, with each branch supporting several crowded flowers near its end. Stalkless alternate leaves are thick, with coarse, sharply toothed edges. The stems are ridged and stiff.

The plant is sticky and derives another common name: gumweed, from the sap that oozes from any wound. Indians used to collect, ball, and chew this sap. Flowerheads of sawtooth daisy are about an inch or more across, with many yellow petals and disk flowers. Plants are found on roadsides, plains, prairies, in deserted areas and in fields.



Save The Date!
Saturday, March 25, 2017

ANNUAL FALL GARDEN TOUR **October 1, 2016, 10am - 4pm**

Five Gardens by Dallas County Master Gardeners

- ◆ Formal English Garden
- ◆ Butterfly Garden
- ◆ Cottage Garden
- ◆ Garden Rooms
- ◆ Edible Landscape

2016
GARDEN
TOUR

Dallas County
Master Gardener
Association

Five spectacular gardens by members of the DCMGA will be featured on the 2016 Garden Tour set for Saturday, October 1, rain or shine. Visitors will see formal English gardens on Swiss Avenue, edible landscaping in Preston Hollow, a buzzing pollinator garden in University Park, native perennials and ornamental grass in Old East Dallas, and landscaping for gracious entertaining in Bluffview.

***New this year: Garden Brunch!** Make your tour complete by enjoying a seasonal Garden Brunch featuring recipes from *A Year on the Plate*, the new master gardener cookbook. Guests will be treated to a menu chosen from fall produce, including Iced Herb Gazpacho and Artichoke Bites. Brunch will be served at 5030 Shadywood Lane, on a lovely Bluffview patio shaded by live oak trees from 11am to 1pm the day of the tour. Visitors can also pre-order a copy of *A Year on the Plate*, the new DCMGA cookbook, at the same location.

For complete details, visit <http://www.dallascountymastergardeners.org/index.php/what-we-do/fall-garden-tour>.

Fall Ideal for Planting Trees and Shrubs

by Dr. Doug Welsh, Landscape Horticulturist, TX Agrilife Ext Service

(Reprinted from: <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/newsletters/hortupdate/2009/oct09/FallIdeal.html>)

Fall is almost here. The weather is becoming slightly cooler, and gardeners are slowly migrating back outdoors after the heat of summer. Now is a perfect time to add a new tree or a grouping of shrubs to the landscape. Or perhaps you have an area in the landscape that needs 'remodeling' or rejuvenating. The fall may be the best season to plant, surpassing even the spring.

Many people prefer January through March for planting, but the fall months of September through December have distinct advantages. Fall planting follows the heat of summer, before a cool winter season, and trees and shrubs planted in the fall use this to good advantage. Plant roots grow anytime the soil temperature is 40 degrees or higher, which may occur all winter in Texas. During winter months, the root systems of the fall-planted specimens develop and become established. When spring arrives, this expanded root system can support and take advantage of the full surge of spring growth.

Fall is the optimum time to plant balled and burlapped trees and shrubs. Balled and burlapped plants have ample time to recover from transplanting and proliferate roots before spring growth begins. Remember, however, all bare root plants, including roses and pecan and fruit trees, should be planted in late winter when they are completely dormant.

When buying plants for your landscape, be sure to get healthy, well-grown plants. Always buy from a reputable dealer. Those in the plant-selling business year-round depend on repeat customers, and only by selling customers qual-

ity plants can there be assurance of future business. Beware of plant bargains. They can easily turn out to be real headaches. A bargain is no good if it dies. The price tag, especially the cheapest one, is not the best guide to quality.

All plants have growing requirements. Think about the plant's needs before you invest. Is it adapted to your area's soil? Will it grow in sun or shade? Does it need a wet or dry location? Is it cold hardy? Some nurseries have this type of information on tags beside the plant. If not, ask a nursery professional or the county Extension agent.

'Plan before you plant' is always a good rule of thumb. Whether you are planting a single plant or an entire landscape, plan first, then plant. Good planning is a worthwhile investment of time that will pay off in greater enjoyment of attractive and useful home grounds, and in increasing the value of your home. It's much easier to move plants on paper than to dig them after planting in the wrong place. A plan saves many planting mistakes.

Every plant in the landscape should serve a purpose. Ask yourself if you want a plant for screening, for privacy, or for shade. How large will it be five years from now? Plants, like people, grow up. Remember, that a small one-gallon-size plant will look entirely different after a few years of growth in your landscape.

Plant properly for success. Here are a few guidelines on getting the job done right:

Dig a hole large enough in diameter so that the root system has at least six inches of clearance on all sides. The root ball should rest on a solid soil foundation, so don't dig the hole much deeper than the ball.

Plant the tree or shrub slightly above the level of the surrounding soil, to allow for settling and increased soil drainage.

Carefully place the tree or shrub in the hole. Handle the plant by the root ball, not by the trunk. A broken ball of earth can

mean a dead plant. Always remove any container before you plant.

Backfill the hole, using only the native soil removed from the hole; do not use soil amendments when planting large shrubs and trees. Fill the hole, and firm the soil around the plant. Water thoroughly to settle the soil around the roots and to eliminate any air pockets.

Do not fertilize your tree or shrub after planting. Wait until early in the spring to do this, and even then, go lightly. Heavy applications of fertilizer may burn and

injure the root system, and could possibly kill the plant.

Watering has been and remains paramount in transplanting. At the time of transplanting, soak the root ball and surrounding soil. A thorough watering every seven to ten days dramatically increases the success ratio. More frequent watering may encourage root rot. Remember more trees and shrubs fail from overwatering than from underwatering.

Before calling it a day, add four to six inches of mulch around the base of newly planted trees and shrubs. This helps to keep down weeds and conserve soil moisture. Use pine bark, compost, grass clippings, or leaves.

Fall is for planting. Visit your nursery today, and beautify and add value to your home.

Earth-Kind® uses research-proven techniques to provide maximum gardening and landscape performance while preserving and protecting the environment. For more information on Earth-Kind® Landscape Management Practices, see the Earth-Kind® website: <http://earthkind.tamu.edu>.



Basham's Party Pink crape myrtle was introduced in the 1960s and is now classified as a Texas Superstar. Read more about this great selection on page six. (Photo provided by Dr. Bill Welch)

Light House for Learning

(With the Ellis County Master Gardeners)

For reservations, call Melissa Cobb at (972) 923-4631.

Register online at http://www.wisd.org/default.aspx?name=CO_LighthouseforLearning



Join Ellis County Master Gardeners and Ellis County Extension Agency in a variety of classes to prepare your gardens and your yards for fall.

Thursday, September 29, 6pm–7:30pm, Greenhouse Care and Maintenance. Have you ever thought about building or assembling a greenhouse or extending your growing season by growing your plants from seeds instead of buying plants? Then come get an overview on maintaining and growing in a greenhouse. Instructor: Raymond Pouliot ♦ Cost: \$12.00

Thursday, October 6, 6pm–7:30pm, Drought Tolerant Plants of North Central Texas. The purpose of this class will be to describe and show some drought tolerant plants that do well in our area and how to grow them. The goal of the class will be to encourage students to grow more drought tolerant plants. Incorporating drought tolerant plants contributes to more efficient use of our water resources while providing beautiful landscapes. Instructor: Ted Ryder ♦ Cost: \$12.00

Monday, October 17, 6pm–7:30pm, Composting. This class will cover all aspects of backyard composting including: why we should compost, how to begin a compost pile, what should be added as well as what should not be added to the compost pile. The class will include how to care for your compost pile and the best way to add compost to your garden. The instructor will answer questions on all aspects of composting. Instructor: Jane Sloan ♦ Cost: \$12.00

Monday, November 7, 6pm–7:30pm, Chickens 101. Backyard chickens have become very popular. If you are thinking of starting a flock or adding to an existing one, this is the class for you. The class will cover planning the addition of chickens, basic set up needed for baby chicks, where to get baby chicks, and how to care for them. City ordinances, health issues and how to keep your flock healthy will also be covered along with appropriate food and treats. Instructor: Jane Sloan ♦ Cost: \$12.00

Thursday, December 1, 6pm–7:30pm, Creating a Butterfly Garden. Creating a butterfly garden can be fun and easy for everyone, from the novice to the experienced gardener. This class will guide participants through all the phases of planning for and creating garden environments that attract and support butterfly populations. This includes garden layout, host plant selection, plants that provide nectar, and other butterfly friendly environment tips. Instructor: Bea Rocha ♦ Cost: \$12.00

Monday, December 5, 6pm–7:30pm, Herbal Vinegars, Butters and Spreads. A common challenge for herb gardeners can be how to utilize all those wonderful herbs in the kitchen. Dried or fresh, herbs lend a wonderful flavor, aroma, and even healthful factor to foods we enjoy on a regular basis. In this class, we'll do a quick review of how to grow and harvest herbs, then discuss how to use herbs to create tasty herbal vinegars, butters, and spreads. This is a hands-on class where you will come away with recipes and your own herbal vinegar to take home. Instructor: Susan Clark ♦ Cost: \$12.00 + \$5.00 supply fee pay to instructor.

Tuesdays, October 11–November 1 (four classes), 6pm–8pm, Beginning Farmer/Rancher. If you are a landowner or have recently acquired a farm or ranchland and are seeking information for the best way to utilize your property, join this experienced instructor for advice. Topics covered include: soils and soil fertility, soil testing, pasture management, basic livestock productions and pond management. This class will be taught at the Ellis County Texas A&M Agri Life Extension Office at 701 S. I-35E, Suite 3 in Waxahachie. Instructor: Mark Arnold, County Extension Agent, Agriculture & Natural Resources ♦ Cost: \$22.00



**Interested in becoming a
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Expo Exhibitor?**

Contact James Kocian at
expo.ecmga@yahoo.com

Reserve the date: March 25, 2017!



Basham's Party Pink Crape Myrtle—Granddaddy of Texas Hybrid Crape Myrtles

By Shirley Campbell, Ellis County Master Gardener



"Crape myrtles have been one of the most popular ornamental plants in the U.S. since they were introduced around 1790 by the French botanist Andre Michaux", said Dr. Bill Welch, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service landscape horticulturist in College Station. A Texas-born variety, Basham's Party Pink, is being promoted as a new Texas Superstar for its disease resistance, vigor, and colorful display.

Basham's Party Pink crape myrtle (*Lagerstroemia indica* × *Lagerstroemia faurei*) is one of the best large crape myrtles for USDA zone 8 and warmer locations in Texas. This beautiful, tree-form crape myrtle can be grown as a single or multiple trunk specimen maturing with beautiful fluted smooth bark, which exfoliates in shallow plates to expose predominantly light tans, gray, and silver-gray bark highlighted with some reddish-brown undertones.



patios and outdoor entertainment areas, street trees with training, in cut flower arrangements, or in very large landscape containers. Bark, trunk, and branch architecture can be nicely highlighted with night lighting.

Special notes: Water during establishment and in severe drought. To reduce foliar disease problems, plant where it is mostly sunny and there is good air movement. Avoiding direct irrigation spray on the foliage will also reduce disease incidence and lessen the potential for foliar damage where salty irrigation water is a problem. Plants are cold tolerant in USDA plant hardiness zone 8 and warmer, but should be used only in protected locations in colder climates. If frozen to the ground in a severe winter, established plants will usually regrow several feet in a single growing season.

"Basham's Party Pink is a particularly nice, tough crape myrtle," Bill Welch said. "There are so many crape myrtle varieties on the market, we just feel this one deserves wider acceptance. In my observations over the years, it's the best of all crape myrtles of that size. It has nice lavender, silvery-pink blooms and attractive, peeling bark on the trunks. It has cold hardiness and mildew resistance, which is important in the South, and is a low maintenance, water-efficient tree that deserves to be promoted more."



The graceful canopy is covered in spring to early summer with one or more flushes of large, soft lavender-pink terminal flower clusters. The handsome dark green foliage appears to have inherited some resistance to pests and diseases from its *L. faurei* heritage and a lesser propensity for seed pods than some of the other hybrids from its *L. indica* parentage. It was introduced to the nursery trade by the legendary Texas plantsman and nursery professional, Mr. Lynn Lowrey in 1965, making Basham's Party Pink the granddaddy of Texas hybrid crape myrtles and a time tested Texas Superstar®.

Exposure: Full sun for optimum flowering.

Height: 20 to 30 feet tall with two-thirds to similar spread.

Plant type: Small to medium single or multiple stem deciduous tree.

Planting time: Fall or early spring planting is best, but plants can be readily established from containers or balled-and-burlap at any time of year with appropriate irrigation.

Soil type: Tolerant of all, but very alkaline soils as long as the soil is well-drained.

Suggested uses: Specimen flowering tree, small shade tree, near

To be designated a Texas Superstar, a plant must not only be beautiful but must also perform well for consumers and growers throughout the state. Superstars must be easy to propagate, which should ensure the plants are not only widely available throughout Texas but also reasonably priced. Texas Superstar is a registered trademark owned by AgriLife Research, a state agency that is part of the Texas A&M University System. A list of wholesalers and retailers who stock Texas Superstar plants and labels can be found at <http://texassuperstar.com/>.

More information on Crape Myrtles may be found at <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/databases/crapemyrtle/>.

Contact: Dr. Bill Welch, (979) 845-8564, wc-welch@tamu.edu.

Mapping the Sun

By Jennifer Heiser
Ellis County Master Gardener



Living in Texas, I am aware of where the sun is when I spend time outside. My fair skin and the fact that it is a couple of degrees cooler in the shade demand it. If you pay attention to your plant's behavior, you will notice how they feel about the sun. We know that plants have different light needs. Some plants need shade, some partial shade, and others full sun. I can assure you that Texas full sun is not the same as in the northern parts of the country where I originated.

Full sun is six or more hours direct per day; partial shade is three to six hours direct; and shade is less than four hours of direct sunlight. Have you taken time to notice where and how much each part of your yard gets sun? This will affect the choices you make; from the grass you grow to where you put your flowers and vegetables, even where you put your grill. For example, St. Augustine can stand shade, Zoysia a combination, and Bermuda grass can take the beating of the Texas sun. Choosing the right grass for your sun profile can save time and money.

The front door of the brick duplex I live in faces south, therefore I do not put potted plants in that area. I do have a nice Flame Acanthus (*A. wrightii*) in the ground that can take the full sun and heat reflecting off the building. Heat reflection is another consideration when tracking your sun profile. I have lost a few potted plants to heat reflection coupled with full sun. Pots dry out too fast and can make low maintenance plants high maintenance in full sun. I moved my pots to where

they get full sun all morning long, but are protected from the afternoon sun. At this time of year, they get dappled sun at sunset, although during winter months, the trail of the sun will change to where there is no direct sunlight.

A few times a year, get your pen and paper, or use a note taking app, and pay attention to where the sun is at various times during the day. Where does the sun rise? What season is it? The sun appears to do a figure eight throughout the year rising in one section of the sky in spring and another in fall due to the Earth's axial rotation. How high does the sun rise throughout the year in your yard? Summer has short shadows when the sun is at its zenith. An area that gets plenty of sun in summer may not get any in winter, and spring and fall will be somewhere in between. Paying attention is important far how to deal with protecting your plants during a freeze warning.

Knowing where sunny and shady parts of your yard are is good for planning and solving current problems. Does that one area stay wet because the sun doesn't get to it? Mold and mildew and other moisture problems may be prevalent. Or do you have a plant that likes the humidity in that spot and will soak it up? That one area that never gets a break from the sun could use a heat tolerant plant or maybe use decorative rocks with an art piece. Your notes will go a long way in saving time, money, and plants. For online tools, try suncalc.net or findmyshadow.com

GARDEN CHECKLIST FOR SEPTEMBER

by Dr. William C. Welch, Professor & Landscape Horticulturist, TX A&M

- ◆ Coleus and caladiums require plenty of water this time of year if they are to remain lush and attractive until fall. Fertilize with ammonium sulfate at the rate of 1/3 to 1/2 pound per 100 square feet of bed area, and water thoroughly.
- ◆ Rejuvenate heat-stressed geraniums and begonias for the fall season by lightly pruning, fertilizing and watering.
- ◆ Now is the time to sow seeds of the many cool-weather vegetables, greens and herbs that thrive through Texas' relatively mild winters. The fall and winter cool season is often more dependable for growing these crops than the spring season.
- ◆ Nick the seedcoats of Texas bluebonnets before planting to hasten germination, or purchase started seedlings such as the popular "Maroon" variety.
- ◆ Don't allow plants with green fruit or berries to suffer from lack of moisture. Hollies will frequently drop their fruit under drought conditions. Some vegetables such as cucumbers or eggplants also become bitter if underwatered during peak growing times.
- ◆ Remove weak, unproductive growth and old seed heads from crape

myrtles and roses to stimulate new growth for fall beauty.

- ◆ Prune out dead or diseased wood from trees and shrubs. Hold off on major pruning until mid-winter. Pruning now may stimulate tender new growth prior to frost.



Fall blooming rain lily *Zephyranthes grandiflora*

- ◆ Sow seeds of snapdragons, pinks, pansies and other winter flowers in flats for planting outside during mid-to-late fall.

- ◆ Prepare the beds for spring-flowering bulbs as soon as possible. It's important to cultivate the soil and add generous amounts of organic matter to improve water drainage. Bulbs will rot without proper drainage.

- ◆ Christmas cactus can be made to flower by supplying 12 hours of uninterrupted darkness and cool nights (55 degrees F) for a month starting in mid-October. Keep plants on the dry side for a month prior to the treatment.

- ◆ Divide spring flowering perennials such as iris, Shasta daisy, gailardia, rudbeckias, cannas, daylilies, violets, liriopie and ajuga.
- ◆ Continue a disease spray schedule on roses as blackspot and mildew can be extremely damaging in September and October.

In the Vegetable Garden: Broccoli

By Pam Daniel
Ellis County Master Gardener



It's time to add to that already growing fall garden. Fall vegetable gardens are one of my favorites, as it means summer is ending and cooler weather is upon us. I much prefer facing the cool winters than I do the scorching hot summers! It's time to sow beets, lettuce, mustard, and English and snap peas early this month and you can plant transplants of broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, and cauliflower this month as well. Garlic cloves and onion seeds can be started mid-month. You can sow kale, parsley, radish, spinach, and turnip seeds throughout the month.

Broccoli is an ideal choice for the fall garden. Here's some details for a successful crop.

Broccoli:

Planting dates: For spring, set out transplants in early spring (Feb 1-March 15) and for fall plant late summer or early fall. (August 20-Sep 15).

Planting method: Transplants are easiest, but if using seeds, plant $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch deep.

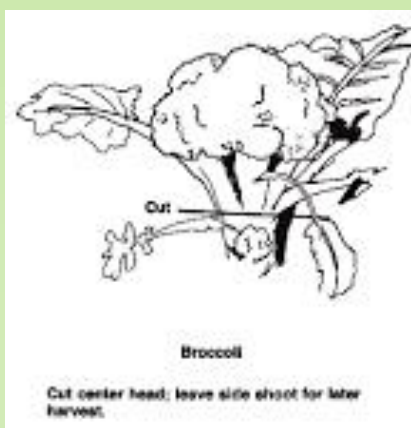
When the fifth leaf emerges, transplant seedlings to four-inch pots before transplanting to garden. Plant 12-24 inches apart, but 15 inches is considered to be ideal. Broccoli transplants should be planted deeply, just below the first leaves. Soil should be moist when transplanting. Can plant in full sun to light shade.

Varieties: Packman, Galaxy, Green Comet, Heirloom, Calabrese, Early Green, Emperor, Waltham.

Culture: Likes cool weather, moisture and plenty of fertilizer. The best quality broccoli is produced when temperatures are 45-70 degrees. With mild winters, broccoli can be harvested throughout the winter. Plants should be large and

vigorous before the heads start to form, and this is ensured by well-prepared soil, plenty of moisture, and fertility.

Fertilizer: Several weeks prior to planting, prepare soil with lots of organic matter and fertilizer. Spade in two to three inches of organic matter about eight inches deep. Use starter fertilizer when transplanting. Fertilize when the heads begin to form and are about the size of a fifty cent piece. Sprinkle a handful of organic fertilizer around each plant. Continue to fertilize after first harvest. For fall gardens, consider using a high-nitrogen fertilizer.



Harvest: 50-80 days from transplants. Harvest heads when they are about two-thirds of their potential size, which is six to eight inches. Use a sharp knife and cut above the side buds, which will continue to mature into smaller heads that can be harvested later. If

yellow blooms appear on the heads (see picture to left), you waited too long.

If you have questions that this article doesn't address, call the Agrilife Extension office at (972) 825-5175 or contact us via the web at www.ecmga.com and ask for one of your Master Gardener Vegetable Gardening Specialists.

Gardening Tip

Many of the winter weeds that don't normally sprout until September have started to sprout after the generous rains we received this summer. Watch for them in your growing beds and remove them when they are small. Of course, desirable wild flowers will sprout after the rain as well, so it is important to be able to identify the young seedlings. You don't want to hoe up Bluebonnets!

POP-UP HORTICULTURAL CLASSES AT THE WAXAHACHIE FARMERS MARKET

In August, Master Gardener Mattie Thompson discussed the exciting and diverse group of plants called "succulents". Mattie shared how they can easily be started and grown from cuttings. She had a number of cuttings of plants from her own garden that she handed out to market visitors.

Thanks to Mattie for sharing her time and gardening expertise on a rainy day at the Farmers Market!
Stay tuned for October's class on the subject of raised beds.



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facebook®

Ellis County Master Gardeners are on Facebook and we'd love to have you join us. Use our page as your point of contact to ask us gardening questions or get information about flowers, vegetables, and herbs, and more! You'll find us at the link below; then click the "Like" button to see our daily posts! Post pictures of your gardens and landscape projects. Submit questions or comments. We look forward to hearing from you!

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

Eclectic Gardening

With Jane Slone, Ellis County Master Gardener

THIS MONTH:

The Vine Dilemma



I need a vine for my yard. What should I plant?

It is a nice sunny day and you venture into the nursery. You are awed by the array of vines and blooming beauties that you could plant in your yard. Your own oasis. You see beautiful large blue, red, or purple blooms. Are these the best choices?

The plant speaks to you. It says, "buy me and take me home. Plant me. I'm so pretty!"

The tags are ignored and you take the plant home, only to find that it is not well suited to your backyard environment. With hope and longing, you want it to come back year after year. These varieties might make it through one summer, and then it does not bloom or it dies.

I am guilty of doing this myself, and have spent my fair share of \$\$, only to discover that if they are not native to our area, extended seasons of growth that we hoped for may be lost to one single season.

Before I make that same mistake again, I will ask questions. The following is a good basic list of facts to research before you select any plant, be it vine, shrub, or tree.

- ◆ What is the purpose for planting the plant?
- ◆ Is it just for beauty?
- ◆ Am I looking for shade?
- ◆ Do I want it to provide privacy?
- ◆ Where will the plant be planted in the landscape?
- ◆ Will it be the correct placement when it is fully grown?
- ◆ If other plants are in the area, will the grouping have similar needs for soil, water, and fertilizer?
- ◆ Is it native to my area?

After answering the above questions, I have determined that the vine that would be best for my yard is Sweet Autumn Clematis. The scientific name is *Clematis paniculatis*. It is from the Family: Ranunculaceae. It is a Texas native, which makes it one of the best varieties. It is an investment in a vine that will return each year, with proper care and planting.

You will find that it is a great vine to plant if you want butter-

flies or hummingbirds visiting your yard. The attraction is due to its great fragrance and nectar. It is a vine that will also produce blooms in late summer and early fall.

Sweet Autumn will be a great addition to any yard if planted in the correct place. This plant is a true-climbing vine, and will spread out and grow if given the space.

Blooms will be bountiful if planted in full sun, but it likes to have its roots shaded. Soil should be well-drained, but remain moist. It does best if the soil is slightly alkaline, but will adapt if nutrients are provided. If you have acid soil in your area, you can always amend the soil with calcium, to reduce the acidity

Clematis is a fast grower and may need lots of pruning in fall or early spring. It can be invasive if not managed. It will quickly establish itself and cascade over a fence or structure, such as a pergola. Clematis can reach a height of 20 feet.



Overall, Sweet Autumn Clematis is a great option for a flowering vine in Ellis County. When you head out to the garden center, don't let the colorful charmers turn your head away from a proven Texas native!

Genus: *Clematis*

Species: *Terniflora*

Zone: 5–9

Bloom Start to End: Late Summer to Mid-Fall

Clematis Pruning: Needs pruning if it is to be contained in a specific area

Habit: Vining

Plant Height: 20 ft.–30 ft.

(Continued on page 11)

Lawn Care in September

By Pat Cheshier
Ellis County Master Gardener



August rains were great and brought much needed moisture, cooled the temperatures, and brought back vibrant colors to our landscape. As summer begins to wind down, we can begin to think about the transition to the next season.



It's time to feed our lawns and shrubs with a good timed-release fertilizer. For our soils, an all nitrogen or high nitrogen fertilizer serves our soils best. This will prepare grass and shrubs for winter. This is one of the most important feedings of the year.

One of the most necessary tasks is to treat lawns with a pre-emergent herbicide as early in September as possible. This will prevent various types of weeds from germinating in your lawn. Typically, two types of pre-emergents should be applied. Broadleaf weeds (dandelions, henbit, and many others) can be prevented by using a product that is designed for these types of weeds. Look for the term "Gallery" or "Halt" on the bag. Grassy weeds (ryegrass,

annual bluegrass) may be prevented by using a product that includes "Dimension".

If you wish to plant turf grass, it should be done as soon as possible. The roots need to get established before winter. Wait to apply fertilizer for a few weeks after planting. Do NOT apply pre-emergents to newly laid sod. They act to prevent roots from developing well.

In established St. Augustine lawns, look for brown patch development. It is a fungal disease that sometimes develops in the fall. Usually, the areas affected are circular and are about two feet wide. The grass will turn yellow or brown and the blades can be easily pulled from the runners. Check with a garden center for a fungicide that will treat diseased areas. One way to help prevent brown patch is to not water in the evenings. Morning water is best as the blades can dry and prevent the fungus from developing.

At this point in the year, we can begin to recount the gains and losses in our landscapes. It's a good idea to take note and write down things you would like to remember for next year's growing season. What annuals/perennials did or did not grow well for you and which ones have you read about that you

would like to try? Do you want to try flowering shrubs or shrubs that require less maintenance? Last, October will soon be here. Be thinking about those cool weather plants that you want to see in your landscape throughout the fall and into winter months.

Gardening is always a work in progress!



Landscape Gardening (Continued from page 10)

Plant Width: 6 ft.
Bloom Color: White
Foliage Color: Dark Green
Light Requirements: Full Sun
Moisture Requirements: Moist, well-drained
Resistance: Cold Hardy, Deer Resistance, Heat Tolerant
Season of Interest: Summer to early fall
Soil Tolerance: Clay, Normal, Loamy
Uses: Border, trellis and can be used as a ground cover

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Photo: http://bygl.osu.edu/bygl_archive2015/printit/1855



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