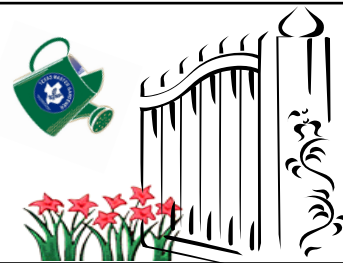




# Ellis County Master Gardener's E-Gardening Newsletter



Volume VIII, Issue Nine

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

September, 2015

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](http://www.ECMGA.com) and click on subscribe. It will be sent around the first of every month. 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!**



**September 12th**—It's the 2nd Saturday of the month and that means there's a children's activity planned. If you have a young one shopping with you, be sure to visit Mary Lee next to the MG booth as she has a fun spider project planned. If you're unable to attend the market in the morning, it will reopen at 4:30pm for the evening's Poker Sip & Stroll event. With the poker game ending next door at the Waxahachie Architectural Supply, well, there's just no reason not to come by to visit and shop your local FM vendors.

**September 19th**—To celebrate the theme of "A Healthy You" this week, members of the Master Wellness and market chefs Arlene and Cheryl will be sampling a wheat berry salad. The salad is made with locally grown wheat berries from The Yellow Farmhouse as well as veggies from the sellers at the market. There's honey, vinegar and oil in the recipe, which are also available at the market. Fall squashes have arrived as well as many other market delights.

**September 26th**—While it's the last day of the Crossroads of Texas Film Festival, there's no reason not to get a Texas style hat from Mark at the market today. Vance is ready to sharpen knives of all kinds. Plus there's locally made cheeses, locally milled flours, locally grown vegetables plus a variety of baked goods as well as canned goods, local honeys, gift items and more. Come visit and support your Farmers Market vendors.



## 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



## Ellis County Master Gardener Monthly Meeting—You are invited!

At our monthly meeting on **Tuesday, October 13**, the program will focus on **Bonsais**. If you have ever wondered how those beautiful trees are created and maintained, plan to attend. Social time begins at 9:30am and the program begins at 10am. Please be our guest! The meeting takes place at

the First United Methodist Church, 505 W. Marvin Ave., Waxahachie. For complete details, call (972) 825-5175.



## Indian Trail Master Naturalists Events

Join the ITMN at their monthly meeting on **Monday, September 28 at 7pm**. The program is entitled "**Intro to Dragonflies and Damselflies**" with Omar Bocanegra, U.S. Fish and Wildlife. Omar will present the biology and life history of the dragonfly and damselfly insects along with a short look at some common species in Texas. The program is free and

follows the 6pm MN meeting, open to the public. Location: First United Methodist Church, 505 W. Marvin Ave, Waxahachie. For info, call (972) 825-5175 or email [ellis-tx@tamu.edu](mailto:ellis-tx@tamu.edu)

**Saturday, September 19, 9am, Nature Walk.** Members of the ITMN will lead a walk at Mockingbird Nature Park. Join in this ½ mile stroll along the trails to identify wildflowers and birds. Free to the public. Participants should bring drinking water and binoculars. The walk will be canceled if raining. Info at: <http://txmn.org/indiantrail/> or email: [Information@itmnc.com](mailto:Information@itmnc.com)

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## Vegetable Salad

By Edena Hintze

- 2 cans kitchen sliced green beans
- 2 cans white shoepeg corn
- 1 (16-oz.) can lima beans
- 1 can carrots, sliced
- 1 c. celery, diced
- 1½ c. green pepper, chopped
- 1 purple onion, finely chopped
- ½ c. red wine vinegar
- ½ c. white vinegar
- 1½ c. white sugar
- ½ tsp. paprika

Drain the canned vegetables and put in a bowl. Add the celery, green pepper and onion. Mix the vinegars, sugar and paprika and pour over vegetables. Place in a covered dish and refrigerate overnight or longer. Serve cold.

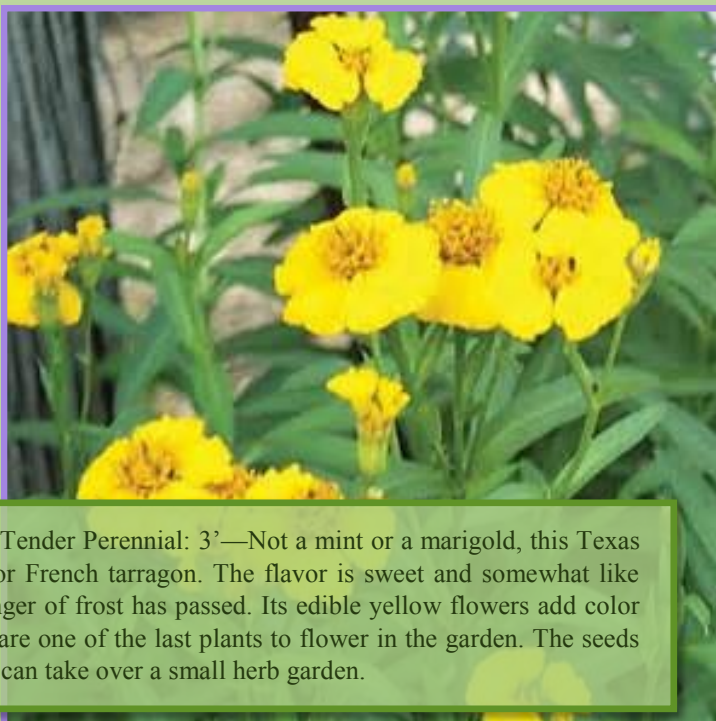
## It's September....What Needs To Be Done?

### Planting

- ❖ Plant all types of grass this month. Warm season grasses such as Bermuda, St. Augustine, zoysia and buffalograss should be completed early in the month. Winter over-seeding of rye can be done any time in the month.
  - ❖ Dig, divide and replant spring-flowering perennials such as iris, daylilies, Shasta daisies, coneflowers, oxalis and verbena by mid-month before the new root growth begins in preparation for fall and winter.
  - ❖ 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.
  - ❖ Wait until October when the weather is cooler to plant pansies, violas (Johnny jump-ups) and ornamental kale and cabbage.
  - ❖ Make landscape changes at this time. Select tree and shrub varieties needed to complement or renovate your landscape. Fall planting of all trees, shrubs and perennials will allow them to establish roots before hot and dry weather arrives next year.
  - ❖ Sow wildflower seeds early in the month 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. Purchased acid-scarified (a process that softens external seed coat) bluebonnet seeds will germinate easier.
- ### Fertilizing and Pruning
- ❖ Continue mowing lawns at recommended height and don't forget the most important fall feeding.
  - ❖ Apply high-nitrogen fertilizer (3-1-2 ratio) on landscape lawns and shrubs to prepare plants for fall and winter. Container plants benefit from using high-nitrogen water soluble fertilizers.
  - ❖ Remove dead and faded flower stems and seed stalks to prolong flowering season.
  - ❖ Root-prune (cutting the roots around the plant with a spade to stimulate new root growth) trees and shrubs to be transplanted this winter.

### 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 weed control to lawns early in the month before weed seeds germinate, especially to areas where grass is thin due to summer stress. Be sure to read the product label to ensure getting the right one for the type of grass being treated.
- ❖ Remove webworms from pecan trees. Cut off the ends of branches as soon as the webs appear. They are difficult to control once established. Tear open large webs to expose worms for the birds. Spraying is not practical.
- ❖ Spray roses suffering from black-spot and powdery mildew.



Mexican Mint Marigold, Tender Perennial: 3'—Not a mint or a marigold, this Texas native is our substitute for French tarragon. The flavor is sweet and somewhat like anise. Sow seed after danger of frost has passed. Its edible yellow flowers add color to the fall landscape and are one of the last plants to flower in the garden. The seeds will reproduce freely and can take over a small herb garden.



## Featured Texas Wild Flower of the Month

*Submitted by Melinda Kocian  
Ellis County Master Gardener*



**Silverleaf Nightshade**—Nightshade Family (Solanaceae)  
*Solanum eleagnifolium* Cav.

**Region:** 1-10 (Ellis County is Region 4)

**Size:** 1–3 feet

**Blooms:** March through October, Perennial

The stems and leaves of this prickly plant are covered with tiny stellate or star-shaped hairs that give it a silvery green or gray-green appearance. Leaves are one and one-half to six inches long with shallowly wavy edges. The five petals of the blue to purple flowers unite at the base for about half their length then separate into five wide lobes. They look a little like fat, one-inch stars.

Flowers are centered with very conspicuous, erect, yellow anthers. Silverleaf nightshade is considered a problem plant by farmers. The wildflower enthusiast, however, can appreciate the beauty of the blue and silver plants growing in masses along roads, in pastures and abandoned places. This relative of the tomato is highly toxic to livestock and humans. Its fruit, a half-inch yellow berry, is sometimes used as a substitute for rennet in making cheese.

## PUMPKIN CIRCLE: The Story of A Garden

**Submitted by Shirley Campbell**

The Story of A Garden is an award-winning video and picture book, produced by George Levenson. This project is designed to show elementary school children the miraculous cycle of nature in a backyard pumpkin patch.

**Pumpkin Circle** is a 20-minute live action video narrated in verse by **Danny Glover** with original music by **George Winston**. The video shows the changes in the plants over the four seasons with seeds sprouting, flowers opening, bees buzzing, pumpkins growing and jack-o-lanterns glowing. The picture book, also written in verse, is filled with dramatic color photographs and allows children to learn the story of this amazing plant at their own pace.



The video and book are perfect for fall pumpkin studies, springtime planting, science, environmental education and language arts. Suitable for ages four and up. The book and video are also available in Spanish: **EL CÍRCULO DE LAS CALABAZAS: Historia de un huerto.**

For more information and reviews, visit the **PUMPKIN CIRCLE** website at:

<http://www.informeddemocracy.com/pumpkin/growing.html>

## Herbal Pet Care and Pest Control

By Arlene Hamilton  
Ellis County Master Gardener



If your family includes cats, dogs or other backyard pets, you can keep them healthy and insect-free using some common herbs. Herbs are multi-talented members of the plant world. Aside from being the source of both natural and synthesized medicines, they spice up our food and supply us with an array of sweet-smelling perfumes and potpourris.

Another use of these wonderful plants is their ability to safely control unwanted insects. Unlike synthetic chemicals, whose ingredients and quantities must be continually revised and increased in response to insects' immunities to them, pests don't become tolerant of botanical repellents.

Many herbs emit powerful aromatic and volatile oils, which may appeal to humans, but are disliked by many insects. Because of their acute sense of smell these aromas are unpleasant to insects. These pests will abandon areas where such herbs are used in fresh, dried, powdered or essential oil forms. These same herbs are often tolerated, if not enjoyed, by pets.

The strongest herbal repellents against pests such as fleas, lice, ticks, chiggers, mosquitoes and gnats include Citronella, Eucalyptus, Pennyroyal, Rosemary, Southernwood and Wormwood. Milder ones include Basil, Bay, Lavender, Sage and Thyme.

**Citronella.** Although there are many lemon aroma plants in garden centers and nurseries labeled as citronella, the one thought to be the most effective as a mosquito control is **Lemongrass** (*Cymbopogon citratus*). Lemongrass grows well in North Texas and will winter over down to 10 degrees with heavy mulch. It grows best in full sun with good drainage and requires little water af-

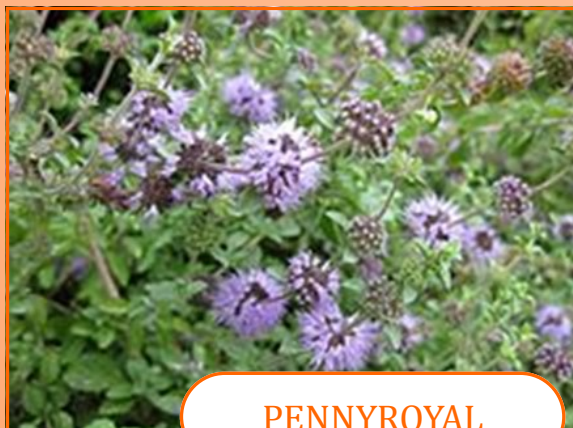
ter established. Plant around sitting areas or harvest the long grass stems, chop into pieces and scatter in areas where pets and people like to rest. Exercise caution when handling, as the long blades of grass are sharp and can cause cuts.

**Pennyroyal** (*Mentha pulegium*) is used to repel mice and insects, such as fleas. Traditionally, pennyroyal was planted around doorways, used in bedding and as a strewing herb. Its oil is used commercially in soaps and detergents. A strong infusion of its leaves can be used as an insect spray. Pour two cups of hot water over one cup chopped leaves, let steep for 30 minutes, strain and use as a rinse on your pet. Pennyroyal needs moist, semi-shady conditions for best growth in the south. Note: Pennyroyal leaves should NOT be ingested by pets or people.



WORMWOOD

Wormwood planted around the garden's perimeter repels slugs, snails, and small animals.



PENNYROYAL

Pennyroyal is used to repel mice and insects.

**Rosemary** (*Rosmarinus officinalis*) leaves, along with lavender flowers, make an excellent, soothing, healing and pest-repellent conditioning rinse for pets. With four cups of hot water, steep one cup fresh, chopped herbs. Steep in a covered container for at least one hour. Cool and strain. Use within one or two days. This tea can also be poured into a spray container and used as a room freshener. Rosemary leaves are gentle enough that fresh leaves can be rubbed directly on pet's skin to provide temporary insect-repelling relief. Rosemary thrives in the North Texas sun and soil. Give it lots of room in the landscape, as it will grow to four feet or more.

**Southernwood** (*Artemisia abrotanum*) and **Wormwood** (*A. absinthium*) have been used since antiquity to repel

(Continued on page 5)



## 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](http://www.wisd.org/default.aspx?name=CO_LighthouseforLearning)



**Monday, September 21, 6pm–7:30pm, Starting Seeds for Succession Planting.** Learn how to start seeds and have a succession of plants through the seasons. This is especially useful when square foot gardening or keeping the garden looking fresh as spent plants are removed from the garden. **Instructor: Ginger Cole.** Cost: \$12.00

**Monday, September 28, 6pm–7:30pm, Seed Saving.** Learn to harvest, clean and store seeds for successful germination. Learn how to save heirloom vegetable and perennial flower seeds. Determine what plants are best for seed saving and when to propagate from existing plants. **Instructor: Monica Nyenhuis.** Cost: \$12.00

**Monday, October 12, 6pm–7:30pm, Perennials for All Seasons.** Learn about perennial plants that will return winter, spring, summer and fall. The class will cover soil prep, types of plants and the pros and cons of planting perennials. A slideshow presentation of perennials will be shown and live plants will be available for attendees. **Instructor: Pam Davis Young.** Cost: \$12.00

**Monday, October 19, 6pm–7:30pm, Planning Ahead for a Spring Vegetable Garden.** Do you want to start a vegetable garden with confidence? The fall is the best time to plan and prepare for your spring garden. This class will provide information on determining the location and size of your garden as well as tips on preparing the soil, digging your beds or building raised beds, best vegetables for our area and how to maintain your garden. **Instructor: Susan Knapp.** Cost: \$12.00

**Monday, October 26, 6pm–7:30pm, Good Bugs in the Garden.** It's common for gardeners to go out with chemicals and try to kill all the insects. But wait!! Not all insects are bad; in fact, most have a very important place in the food chain and can be used to your advantage. After all, when you spray, you kill the good as well as bad. This class will help you learn to identify some of the common good and bad insects. You will also get some non-chemical ideas on how to keep them from taking over your plantings. Bring insect samples if you want! **Instructor: Susan Gilliland.** Cost: \$12.00

**Monday, November 2, 6pm–7:30pm, Irrigation Efficiency.** You CAN have a green lawn without spending so much money. Come learn how to efficiently use sprinkler systems and save money. Learn about different types of sprinkler systems and what is right for your situation. We'll also discuss how to check your water pressure, learn why you need a back flow valve for your sprinkler and how to winterize your system. **Instructors: Alan Paxton and Jim Derstler.** Cost: \$12.00

**Tuesdays, October 13–November 3, four classes, 6pm–8pm. Ag 101—Beginning Farmer/Rancher.** Join this experienced instructor as you cover topics: soils and soil fertility, soil testing, pasture management, basic livestock productions and pond management. This class will be held at the Ellis County Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Office at 701 S. I-35E, Suite 3 in Waxahachie. **Instructor: Mark Arnold, County Extension Agent, Agriculture & Natural Resources.** Cost: \$22.00

*Herbal Pest Care and Pest Control (Continued from page 4)*

insects. Many gardeners find that Artemisias, extremely aromatic herbs, inhibit the growth of neighboring plants. However, set around fences or perimeters of gardens, they can be useful to repel slugs, snails, rodents and certain small animals. They are also a repellent to garden and cloth moths.

**Save The Date!**  
**Saturday, March 19, 2016**



**LEMONGRASS**

Lemongrass is thought to be an effective mosquito control when planted around sitting areas.



# Grill Fest 2015



Saturday, August 15 was Grill Festival Time at the Waxahachie Downtown Farmers Market. Bright and early that morning, Mark Arnold, Ag Extension Agent fired up the grills. The Ellis County Master Gardeners gathered fruits and vegetables from their gardens as well as from the market farmers. Vegetables were washed, chopped and seasoned. Free samples were offered by about 9a.m. and continued until the food ran out. If it was for sale at the market, we grilled it!

The Grill Fest has been an annual event since the market opened in 2003 and has always offered some unusual flavors, and a wide variety of samples. The okra, squash, tomatoes, eggplant, onions and peppers were tossed with herb-infused olive oil. The peaches, cantaloupe, melons and various fruits were topped with honey, brown sugar and a little butter. This year the market grill masters pre-



pared watermelon wedges drizzled with lavender honey for a new treat. It's always fun to offer different ways to taste vegetables and fruit. We had a lot of repeat customers and lots of children trying things for the first time.









## Why We Should Care About Trees

By: Shirley Campbell, Ellis County Master Gardener



Trees clean our air, water and soil. They also add greatly to our health, sense of well-being, quality of life and our economic future in many ways. As a result, the presence of trees and healthy ecosystems provide a strong foundation for a sustainable urban infrastructure in the future. The very essence of nature provides sound guidance for reaching urban sustainability. To quote Mr. Albert Einstein, "look deep into nature and you will understand everything better."

### Improved Air Quality

Rising levels of carbon, specifically carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), are accelerating global warming and our urban forest offers the opportunity to mitigate the problem by sequestering (or storing) carbon as

well as ozone, nitrogen oxides and sulfuric oxides plus filtering particulate pollution. Trees are long-term carbon storehouses, or carbon "sinks"; however, they also release the carbon as they die and decompose or when they are burned.

As an urban forest declines in health or significant populations are lost over time, they must constantly be replaced to increase the net carbon storage capacity.

Failure to conserve trees or replant what is lost can cause an increase in the release of carbon. Conservation is important because larger, healthy trees (over 30 inches) sequester 90 times more carbon than smaller trees (under four inches) and store 1,000 times more carbon. Also, poor air quality results in increased health care cost to treat the associated problems.

### Reduced Energy Use

Planting deciduous trees on the west, south and east exposure of homes and buildings can save up to 30 percent on our energy bills. If we can shade our air conditioners, we can save an additional 10 percent on our energy bills. By planting dense evergreen trees on the north side of a building or home to slow the cold winter winds, additional energy savings can be gained. By reducing energy use, we decrease emissions from regional power generation plants and their negative effect on our air quality.

### Reduced Urban Temperatures

By strategically placing trees in problem areas such as parking lots and vast expanses of grey infrastructure, we reduce urban temperatures as well as evaporative emissions from the fuel tanks and fuel systems of our vehicles.

Heated fuel tanks and fuel systems release hydrocarbons and 16 percent of all hydrocarbon emissions are created by evaporative emissions. By reducing urban temperatures, air quality improves because the formation of ozone is dependent on higher temperatures.

### Reduced Storm Water Runoff and Flooding

Large amounts of grey infrastructure greatly increase the amount of storm water runoff which can lead to flooding. Trees reduce storm water runoff by allowing the rain to slowly filter through the foliage which decreases the potential for flooding. Strategic shading of grey infrastructure not only reduces flood potential, but it can also extend the life of asphalt by 60 percent. This offers a very large return on our investment in tree planting and care plus reduces the impact that asphalt has on the environment.

ment in tree planting and care plus reduces the impact that asphalt has on the environment.

### Improved Water Quality

Trees, plants and biological agents remove or neutralize contaminants in polluted water or soil. Leaves, twigs and limbs that lie on the ground stimulate biological activity, which also helps to remove pollution. Removing the organic layer on the top of the soil reduces its capacity to grow healthy plants and trees as well as its ability to remove various types of pollution.

### Increased Economic Benefit

Trees offer many tangible economic benefits such as increased property values and a better quality of life, which will attract corporations and the general public to an area. The result is an increased tax base due to the establishment of a more desirable area to live

and conduct business. The more green and sustainable an area becomes in the future, the more successful it will become in economic terms.

As far as a return on investment, for every dollar spent on tree planting and care, we receive up to five dollars in benefits according to research. Studies across the nation show that residential home prices can be up to 20 percent higher due to the presence of trees. Also, a home will sell faster with healthy trees as opposed to others with few or no trees.

Source: North Central Texas Council of Governments and Steve Houser, Dallas Urban Forest Advisory Committee Chair.





## Butterflies: Grace in Motion

By Jackie Wilhite  
Ellis County Master Gardener



What a concept! We want to actually attract an insect to our gardens that will feed off the plants, sometimes consume the entire plant. This is exactly the opposite scenario that a gardener usually faces when they repel insects that want to devour plants. The best idea is to devote some space in the landscape just for a butterfly garden. Butterflies will need specific plants to feed on, lay their eggs on as well as feed the caterpillars while they grow into adult butterflies.

There are more than 440 species of butterflies from Texas. This is more than one-fourth of the known species from around the world. Lifecycles of the butterfly, also known as a complete metamorphosis, can range from 25 days to 10 months, with most living just little more than a month.

Once butterflies mate, the metamorphosis begins with eggs being laid on a host plant. From the egg emerges a caterpillar that feeds and grows at such a rapid rate that it may devour the entire plant that is hosting

They all can quickly be overshadowed with the arrival of the Monarch, sometimes in very large numbers. The Monarch migrates about 3,000 miles from Canada to Mexico yearly and likes to feed on milkweed that grows wild in our fields. but can also be found feeding on decaying fruit under peach, pear or plum trees.

Plants that attract adult butterflies are vital to the life cycle continuation. Butterfly bush, blue mist flower, butterfly weed, paintbrush, lantana, milkweed, scarlet sage, Mexican mint marigold, salvia greggii (reds are the best) and verbena are a few. Also, food plants like bluebonnets, cabbage, dill and fennel, parsley, passion flower, thistles, lantana, mustard, hackberry and elm are necessary for the growth of the caterpillar. The butterfly garden should contain plants vital for all stages of the metamorphosis to keep the butterflies from leaving to find the food sources they need.



A monarch butterfly nectars on the beautiful orange blossoms of butterfly milkweed.



it. At the end of the caterpillar or instar stage, it will attach itself onto a stem or branch to transform into a pupa or chrysalis. This is the most fascinating of the stages because from the pupa, the butterfly slowly emerges freeing itself and bringing life into its wings.

The butterfly species represented here in North Central Texas are as varied as their life cycles. They are Swallowtails, Sulphurs, Emperors, Monarchs, Skippers, Brush Footed and Gray Hairstreaks. The Black Swallowtail is one of the most visible butterflies around, feeding on carrot plants, parsnips, dill and parsley. Sulphurs flutter around without too much notice because of their small to average sizes and very light colors of yellow, gray and blue.



The Ellis County Master Gardeners maintain a butterfly garden for your enjoyment along the hike and bike trail in Waxahachie. Parking is available behind the

rodeo grounds on Howard Road. One reason we all love gardening is to enjoy the wonderful wildlife that's attracted to our gardens. Among the most beautiful surprise guests are the butterflies. Come enjoy these little acrobats in our garden.







## Landscape Gardening

From: Gail Haynes, Ellis County Master Gardener

Ellis County Master Gardeners have a website at [www.ecmga.com](http://www.ecmga.com). Check it for information on gardening in Ellis County, sign up for this monthly newsletter, or access other websites, including the Texas A&M Horticulture website. Questions for Master Gardeners will be answered with a return email or telephone call when you leave a message at (972) 825-5175.

### Growing Columbines (*Aquilegia*)

by Cynthia W. Mueller

Columbines are a favorite spring wildflower for Texas gardeners. They have the ability to grow in both sun and light shade, and under good growing circumstances will survive for several years. Flower types range from the dainty bloom with "spurs" projecting to fully double bells composed of many petals in contrasting colors.

Not all varieties of columbines are suitable for Texas gardens. Two of the best are the hybrid 'Texas Gold' and the native species *Aquilegia canadensis*. 'Texas Gold' is a very heat resistant plant with golden-yellow flowers that was bred from the rare *Aquilegia hinckleyana*, which grows only along a few mountainous streambeds in West Texas. Its tough qualities and many large, showy flowers have earned it the right to be called one of the Texas Superstars®.

The native *A. canadensis* produces a mound of foliage and delicate red-and-gold flowers several feet in height over a long period in the spring. It is found in nature from Canada through the U.S. into Texas. These two columbines often will cross with each other, creating a range of softly colored hybrids. The classic English columbines, such as the McKana strains, the blue-flowered European varie-

ties or the doubles such as 'Nora Barlow' are more suited to moist soils in light shade and would prefer cooler temperatures than most Texas gardens have to offer.

Set out plants in the spring to early summer. They may be placed from one to two feet apart with generous mulching between plants. During the blooming season the mounds of finely cut, soft green foliage with flowers may reach as much as three feet in height.

Trim off spent flower stalks before the capsules shatter to release seed, or leave them to provide fresh plants for a later season. In times of drought, the plants may go dormant for a time in the midst of the summer.

Seeds shed into the flower bed have a bad habit of trying to germinate after odd summer rains, then perishing in the heat of the summer. It's a good idea to save some seeds for sowing in flats or in place near mature plants in the late fall. These should have no trouble becoming established.

Fertilize established columbines monthly during the growing season with a good soluble all-purpose

fertilizer. There are few pests to be reckoned with. Low-growing shrub roses, perennial coreopsis, penstemons or ferns make good growing companions.

### Garden Checklist for September

Dr. William C. Welch, Professor & Landscape Horticulturist  
Texas AgriLife Extension Service

❖ Sustaining adequate moisture in the garden and landscape is the number one priority for late summer and fall. Water trees and shrubs by giving them at least one inch of water per week, delivered slowly, around the plants as far out as the dripline extends.

❖ Rejuvenate heat-stressed geraniums and begonias for the fall season by lightly pruning, fertilizing and watering.



*Aster oblongifolius* is a good source of blue for the fall garden



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Contact James Kocian at  
[expo.ecmga@yahoo.com](mailto:expo.ecmga@yahoo.com)

Reserve the date: March 19, 2016!

(Continued on page 11)



Landscape Gardening (Continued from page 10)

- ❖ Don't allow plants with green fruit or berries to suffer from lack of moisture. Hollies will frequently drop their fruit under drought conditions.
- ❖ Prune out dead or diseased wood from trees and shrubs. Hold off on major pruning until midwinter. Pruning now may stimulate tender growth prior to frost.
- ❖ Divide spring-flowering perennials such as irises, Shasta daisies, gaillardias, cannas, day lilies, violets, liriopse and ajuga. Reset divisions into well prepared soil with generous amounts of organic material worked into the top 8 to 10 inches. Water in thoroughly.



Find us on:  
**facebook®**

Are you a Facebooker? You should be! Ellis County Master Gardeners are on Facebook and we'd love to have you join us. Check in to find out where and when our local events will be held—events like the Downtown Waxahachie Farmer's Market or Lighthouse for Learning Classes. Drop by our page after an event to see pictures.

Use our page as your point of contact to ask us gardening questions or get information about flowers, vegetables and herbs...we cover it all! Some of the recent articles posted include a fall vegetable planting guide, tips for late summer and fall gardening, herbs for fall and updates on local events that gardeners will find interesting and educational. You can also post pictures and let us know what is happening in your gardens and landscape.

You'll find us at this link, and all you have to do is click the "Like" button to see our daily posts! We look forward to hearing from you with questions and comments. If you have a QR Code reader on your smartphone, you can scan our code and be taken directly to our Facebook page.



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



*Aquilegia Canadensis*

- ❖ Prepare the beds for spring-flowering bulbs as soon as possible. It is important to cultivate the soil and add generous amounts of organic matter to improve the water drainage. Bulbs will rot without proper drainage.
- ❖ Plantings at this time can provide landscape color for three seasons in central, east, and south Texas. Annuals set out early enough will bloom as soon as Thanksgiving, and frequently last until Memorial Day. Annuals that should soon be available in nurseries and garden shops include petunias, calendulas, pansies, snapdragons, stock, sweet peas and violas (from seed).
- ❖ 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 treatment.
- ❖ Replenish mulches around trees and shrubs.
- ❖ Start cool-season vegetables, such as mustard, lettuce, arugula, broccoli, carrots and turnips, from seed in well-prepared beds.
- ❖ Harvest okra, peppers, squash and other vegetables often to encourage production.



**Save The Date!**  
**Saturday, March 19, 2016**



## Thank You All!!

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Ellis County Master Gardener's Lawn & Garden Expo  
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