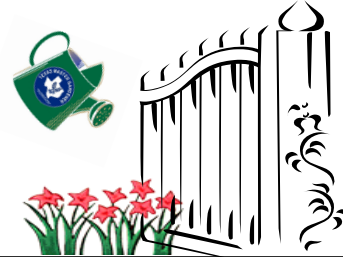




Ellis County Master Gardener's E-Gardening Newsletter



Volume IX, Issue Six

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

June, 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 June?

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 Waxahachie Farmers Market is bustling with locally grown produce, eggs, honey, a wide variety of baked goods, flavored vinegars, jams, jellies, salsas, pastas, local beef and grains plus coffee and aguas frescas (refreshing fruit drinks). The market also offers healthy plants, both indoor and outdoor varieties and unique gift items, many made locally and so much more.

The market is full of breakfast, lunch and dinner ingredients...from omelet making to dinner desserts and everything in between. Need a gift? The market is chock full of giftable items. Need a new top for an outing later? The market has cute tops, leggings and dresses. The market is open rain or shine Saturday's from 8am to 1pm.

June 18th is the annual Master Gardeners' Grill Fest. Mark Arnold, our county extension agent, is the grill master! Mark, along with many of the Master Gardener members grill up vegetables and fruits from local growers at the market for you to sample. New this year is beef sampling from The Yellow Farmhouse! It's a great day to support the market, enjoy the samples and listen to live music by Chaz Mangan.

June 25th—Arlene and Cheryl are featuring tomato tapas. Sound intriguing? Stop by the Taste of Market booth for samples, recipes, flavored water and conversation. Today is also the Cow Creek Classic Bike Race. Bikers, please stop by and say hello!

Coming in July! The MG Pop-Up Horticulture Class for July will be a lesson on irrigation and water harvesting. Plan to stop by the Market to take part in this informative session with MGs and Irrigation Specialists, Allan Paxton and Jim Derstler.

Ellis County Master Gardener Monthly Meeting You are invited!



Master Gardener, Scherle Barth will be speaking at our monthly meeting on Tuesday, June 14th. Scherle is a seasoned gardener and will share from her many years of experience on three interesting subjects. Her presentation is entitled, "Roses, Butterflies and Tomatoes; Attracting, Protecting & Cultivation". If you missed Scherle at the MG Expo this year, here is your chance to catch her presentation again!

Social time begins at 9:30am and the program begins at 10am. Please be our guest! The meeting takes place in the Family Life Center of the First United Methodist Church, 505 W. Marvin Ave., Waxahachie. For info, call (972) 825-5175.



TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION



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 June, What Needs to be Done?</i>	2
<i>Wildflower of the Month</i>	3
<i>MGs at the Market ➤ Pop-Up Class</i>	3
<i>Moringa-Tree of Life</i>	4
<i>Newest Texas Superstar</i>	5
<i>When is a Lily Not a Lily?</i>	6
<i>In the Vegetable Garden-OKRA</i>	7
<i>* NEW! Eclectic Gardening</i>	8
<i>June Garden Checklist</i>	9
<i>Okra Recipe</i>	10

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



Skullcap (*Scutellaria drummondii*) This perennial flower has small oval rounded leaves with bluish-purple flowers. Some varieties grow up to 12 inches tall. Flowers grow in the axils of the leaf-like bracts. They have five sepals and five bluish-purple petals united to form a two-lipped blossom. Excellent low growing flower for the garden. Blooms April to May.

Planting

- ✧ Buy and plant crape myrtles in bloom to be sure you are getting the color you want. Know the variety's mature size to avoid future pruning. Look for varieties that are resistant to powdery mildew.
- ✧ Plant seeds for fall tomato transplants in containers; and look for varieties that mature early.
- ✧ This is the best time to plant vinca (periwinkle) in full sun. Look for the variety 'Cora' since it is resistant to soil-borne diseases. Water with drip irrigation or soaker hoses to keep water off the foliage.
- ✧ Plant these tropical annuals for their flowers: tropical hibiscus, 'Gold Star' esperanza, mandevilla and Mexican heather. Use croton, bougainvillea and variegated tapioca for their foliage color.

Fertilizing and Pruning

- ✧ Prune back autumn sage and mealy cup sage by one-third their size. Deadhead salvias, as well as annuals and perennials, to stimulate more growth to allow the plant to continue re-blooming until late fall.
- ✧ Continue to prune as necessary, fall blooming plants such as Mexican bush sage, mountain sage, Mexican mint marigold, copper canyon daisies, asters and mums to keep them compact and prevent buds from forming prematurely. Don't prune after September when buds begin to form.

- ✧ Remove flower stalks on coleus, caladiums, lamb's ear and basil before buds open. This will promote new stem and leaf growth.
- ✧ This is the second time to use an all-nitrogen, slow-release fertilizer on turf grasses. Cut the amount by half to prevent excessive growth, which means more water and more mowing!
- ✧ Fertilize container plants and hanging baskets with a water-soluble fertilizer every one to two weeks.

Garden Watch

- ✧ Control aphids on crape myrtles with a strong spray of water.
- ✧ Spider mites can be especially troublesome at this time, especially on tomatoes. Treat with an appropriate organic or chemical pesticide, if needed.
- ✧ Control webworms in pecan and other trees using a long-handled pole pruner. Remove while webs are small.
- ✧ To deal with the hot weather, water deeply and less often and hand-water newly planted trees and shrubs.
- ✧ Take a good look at your landscape while at the height of summer development. Make notes on how the landscape can be better arranged; plants that need replacement, overgrown plants that need to be removed; or possibly, areas that can be converted to more family-friendly activities. Save this information for implementation later in the year or next spring.

Mexican Hat (*Ratibida columnifera*) Mexican hat is perhaps the most easily identified of all the wildflowers. Its "sombbrero", an elongated disk sometimes two inches high, sets Mexican hat apart from other coneflowers. The disk/column is gray-green at first, turning brown as it matures. Its base is surrounded by drooping, velvety petals.

Petal color varies from all yellow to all red-brown, or assorted mixtures of red-brown painted on a yellow petal. Leaves up to six inches alternate up slender stems, but the top third of the stem is bare, accenting the flower head. Perennial blooms February to July.



Featured Texas Wild Flower of the Month

Submitted by Melinda Kocian
Ellis County Master Gardener



White Milkwort - Milkwort Family (Polygalaceae)

Polygala alba Nutt.

Region: 2 – 10 (Ellis Co. is Region 4)
Size: 8 – 16 inches
Blooms: March through October, Perennial

Milkworts do not have the sticky white sap that oozes from milkweeds when they are cut, so don't let the similar names confuse you. White milkwort has many erect stems growing from a woody base. The tiny leaves are sparse. They alternate up a stem that ends in a spike-like raceme of densely clustered, quarter-inch white flowers.

Certain species in this family were believed to increase the flow of milk when grazed by cows. The botanical name is from the Greek words *poly* (many) and *galu* (milk). The dried, powdered root is commercially marketed for the treatment of respiratory ailments. Over twenty-five species of milkwort are found in Texas.

NEW at the Waxahachie Farmers Market Master Gardener Pop-Up Horticulture Events!

Each month, ECMGA will highlight a particular subject on the third Saturday (except June because of the Grill Fest). Master Gardeners will share valuable information about landscape techniques. Watch your newsletter (page one under What's Happening) for details or check the ECMGA Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/ECMGA/>.



Here's some pics from our May class on Container Gardening with MG Micki Roark.



Moringa: "The Tree of Life"

By Rose Harris
Ellis County Master Gardener



Moringa is a plant that is native to India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan. It is also grown in the tropics and that is where I became familiar with this plant. Born and raised in the Virgin Islands, Moringa is a staple in everyone's garden due to its medicinal benefits. It is often referred to as "The Tree of Life".

Moringa is used for various illnesses and ailments including anemia, arthritis, asthma, cancer, diabetes, epilepsy, heart problems, high blood pressure and bacterial, fungal, viral and parasitic infections. It is widely used with pregnant women who deliver healthy, well-nourished children. Months later after delivery, apparently there are no problems with breast feeding as Moringa is believed to enhance the milk production of lactating mothers.

Moringa is sometimes applied directly to the skin as a germ-killer. It is also used topically for treating pockets of infections, snakebites and even athlete's foot. It's an amazing plant that helps with different types of healing.

Moringa is an important food source in some parts of the world. Because it can be grown cheaply and easily, Moringa is used in India and Africa in feeding programs to fight malnutrition. The immature green pods are prepared similarly to green beans while the seeds are removed from the more mature pods and cooked like peas. The leaves are cooked and prepared like spinach. This is the amazing work of what God has provided for us. This miracle tree, as described by scientists, is the most nutrient packed plant ever discovered.

The Moringa Tree thrives on very little water and in African language, Moringa tree is known as the tree that never dies. This is because of its ability to survive in acute dry conditions. It is a perennial softwood tree with timber of low quality, but for centuries has been advocated for its traditional medicinal uses.

sess anti-cancer properties. Now that Moringa is emerging as a popular supplement for health enhancement, the science on this plant is accelerating. The Tree of Life through John Hopkins School of Medicine encourages people of various backgrounds and experiences to perform and report small scale studies to continue to assist them in their efforts to report the positive results of using this amazing tree.

The Moringa story is a remarkable one of a humble plant that made strides in the ancient world for many years and whose secrets are being made available to modern science.



Save The Date!
Saturday, March 25, 2017



Over the past two decades, reports from the John Hopkins School of Medicine, have described its nutritional and medicinal properties. Its utility as a non-food product have also been extensively described.

Studies show that Moringa leaves pos-

Sources: www.m.webmd.com; John Hopkins School of Medicine-
www.tfljournal.org



Little Ruby Alternanthera

An annual grown for its colorful foliage

By: Shirley Campbell, Ellis County Master Gardener



The ground cover plant, Little Ruby alternanthera has been named the newest Texas Superstar plant.

"A lot of old-timers will probably recognize this group of plants as 'Joseph's Coat,'" said David Rodriguez, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service agent for horticulture in Bexar County and member of the Texas Superstar selection board. "But this selection is about a third the normal size of the older selections of Joseph's Coat, so it's a much smaller, compact, thicker, fuller type of a seasonal ground cover."

Little Ruby is typically planted in late winter or spring, but it can also be planted throughout the summer and fall and be expected to give good results. This long planting season, among other traits, is one reason it was selected as a Texas Superstar.

To be designated a Texas Superstar, a plant must not just be beautiful, but also perform well for consumers and growers throughout Texas. Superstars must also be easy to propagate, which should ensure the plants are not only widely available throughout Texas, but reasonably priced as well.

Rodriguez said Little Ruby does perform very well in landscapes, in containers, alone or to contrast with other plants. Its color varies from green to red to a deep burgundy, depending upon how much sunlight it receives during the day.

"In an area that gets bright sunlight for much of the day, it will

reddish or burgundy, Little Ruby contrasts well with plants that have yellow, gold or even white blooms, he said.

Little Ruby is also easy to grow and tolerates a variety of soils.

"The main thing is to provide a soil rich with organic material, good drainage, and maybe add some slow-release fertilizer at the initial planting," Rodriguez said. "And maybe every second week or so supplement with a water-soluble fertilizer."

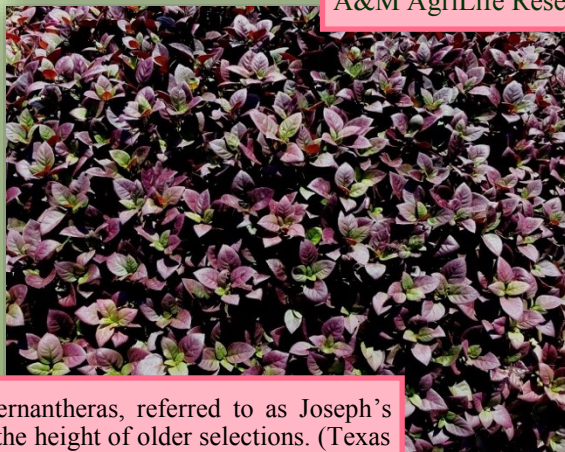
Little Ruby is considered an annual in North Central Texas. In flowerbeds in most winters, it will freeze and have to be replanted every year. During a mild winter, it may be nipped back by the cold, in which case the gardener need only prune back the killed off plant tops, apply a water soluble fertilizer and it will come back and establish a full ground cover.

New plants should be planted about 12 inches apart, he said. If you plant them early in the spring, they should establish a good cover in four to six weeks.

"We have seen them have little white flowers, but that's not the main feature



Little Ruby alternanthera, the newest Texas Superstar selection, can be grown as a landscape cover plant or in containers. (Texas A&M AgriLife Research photo by Dr. Brent Pemberton)



Little Ruby is related to older alternantheras, referred to as Joseph's Coat, but grows to about a third of the height of older selections. (Texas A&M AgriLife Research photo by Dr. Mike Arnold)

produce real attractive burgundy or 'maroon-ish' foliage," Rodriguez said. "The more sun it receives, the darker, more intense the color."

In a shady location, the color will be more greenish, which is attractive as well, he said.

"It's a real versatile plant," Rodriguez said. "You can grow it in a landscape by itself, in a container, in sun or shade, and with or without other plants." For example, when its foliage is more

of the plant," Rodriguez said. "If they do bloom, it's usually in late fall, and they make a really good contrast with the foliage. I think this is a 'must' plant for people to try."

Texas Superstar is a registered trademark owned by AgriLife Research, a state agency that is part of the Texas A&M University System. More information about the Texas Superstar program, including retail outlets where Superstar varieties may be purchased, can be found at <http://www.texasuperstar.com/>.

Source: Robert Burns, Texas A&M

JUNE 18TH-WAXAHACHIE FARMERS MARKET

Master Gardeners' Grill Fest

*Free samples of fresh veggies, fruits and
NEW this year, locally-raised, grass-fed beef!*

When is a Lily not a Lily? Part One

By Kathy Johnston
Ellis County Master Gardener



When is a lily not a lily? When it is a Canna Lily! *Canna*, commonly known as the Canna Lily, is not a true lily, but rather is a genus of 19 species of flowering plants and the only genus in the family *Cannaceae*. The closest living relations to canna are from other plant families of the order *Zingiberales*, that is the *Zingiberaceae* (gingers), *Musaceae* (bananas), *Marantaceae* (known as the prayer-plant family), *Heliconiaceae* (Hawaii's Macaw Flower and Lobster Claw), *Strelitziaceae* (best-known species is the bird-of-paradise flower and Madagascar's Traveler's Tree), etc.

As well as their large, opulent and attractive foliage, Canna is one of the world's richest starch sources and is an agricultural plant.

In addition to food, Canna have a variety of other uses. Canna seeds are pea-sized, round, brown or black in color and exceptionally hard. They have been used as shotgun pellets in India (hence the common name "Indian Shot"). The seeds are used as beads in jewelry and rosaries and have been incorporated into baby rattles and musical instruments.

A purple dye can be extracted from the seed, and fibers extracted from the stem of the plant are used to make jute and paper. Canna have been used for phytoremediation (the use of plants to absorb toxins from soils), in order to remove toxic heavy metals such as copper and zinc from pig waste, and to remove excess fertilizer and insecticides from greenhouse runoff.

Canna are lavishly bold herbaceous (no woody stalk) perennial plants that bloom over a long summer period. They can be characterized by their height: Pixie grow from one and a half to two feet, Dwarf reach heights from two to three feet, Medium three to five feet and Tall grow up to seven feet tall.

The immense paddle-shaped leaves can be solid green, and others a dark purple. Variegated leaves can be found in combina-

tions of green and white stripes, yellow and green stripes, while others bear a purple and green pattern. Then there are the show stoppers with kaleidoscopic colors of burgundy, gold, yellow, pink and green.

Flaccida Canna



Ehemanni Canna



Tama-Tulipa Canna



Apricot Dream Canna



Not only do canna come in all sizes, their abundant florets (clusters of flowers on a single structure) come in all colors, hues and combinations except for green, blue, black or pure white. The flowers may be solid, striped, streaked, spotted or splotted with contrasting colors and are favored by the hummingbirds.

Canna identification depends greatly on flower color and shape. Some flowers have two different main colors, or are rimmed or edged with a second color. Flower shapes are of two basic types. Canna flowers with wide petals that are closely spaced on flower stems are called gladiolus-type flowers. Cannas with narrow petals spaced more loosely on the flower stalk are termed orchid-flowering cannas.

With their huge leaves and summer long vibrant blossoms on tall stalks, you will be hard pressed to find a more cold hardy, tropical-looking foliage specimen. There is no easier way to give your pool area a lush, exotic tropical look than to include several varieties of these beauties in your beds or pots.

Paired with Elephant Ears and a Mexican Windmill Palm, you'll be relaxing in your hammock, sipping a piña colada forgetting you're in North Texas!

Stay tuned next month for the second installment on canna lilies including information on planting, care and more.

References: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canna_\(plant\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canna_(plant))
<http://www.plantdelights.com/Article/Canna-Lily>
<http://homeguides.sfgate.com/identification-guide-different-varieties-canna-x-generalis-104732.html>
Photographs courtesy of www.plantdelights.com.

In the Vegetable Garden: Okra

By Pam Daniel
Ellis County Master Gardener



Tips for Vegetable Gardening in June

Continue to plant hot season vegetables (peppers and black-eyed peas). 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



In hot weather, okra pods grow fast. Keep them harvested by cutting them off at their short, woody stems with scissors or clippers. The leaf hairs are prickly, so you may want to wear gloves.

lady bugs for general pest control. Due to the warm fall and winter we experienced, don't be surprised to see a few more bugs this spring. Keep your eyes open for any pests.

Sow tomato seeds for your fall transplants early this month. Continue to harvest ripe vegetables. Onions should be harvested, as they don't do well with hot temperatures like we see towards the end of June and throughout the summer. It is critical this time of the year to apply the right amount of water at the right time. As the weather warms, you might need to water every three to four days and not once a week, like you can get by with during a wet spring.

OKRA—Vegetable of the Month

Planting dates: Plant when soil temps are between 75-90 degrees. In general, April 1–June 1 in the spring and July 15–August 15 for fall crops.

Planting method: Soaking the seed in room temperature water for 24 hours before planting speeds germination. Sow seeds at four to five per foot of row and $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ inches deep. Thin plants when about two inches tall to about six to nine inches apart, and again when about six inches tall to about 12-18 inches apart. Rows should be spaced at least three to four feet apart. Okra should always be directly seeded into the garden rather than transplanted, as transplants tend to grow slowly and offer no advantages of earlier production.

Varieties: Clemson spineless, Emerald, Blondy (compact), Lee, Louisiana green velvet, Red velvet

Culture: Enjoys hot weather and is easy to grow in healthy, well-drained soil. If your soil is not well-drained, you should plant in raised beds to improve drainage. Okra does not require a large amount of water and does not like to have wet feet. Okra does well throughout the summer, or you can cut it back in the summer and it will bush out again for the fall garden.

Fertilizer: Likes to be fertilized a few times with organic fertilizer. Fertilize when you complete the final thinning, and again when the plant blossoms in the spring and again about at first harvest. Continue to fertilize every two to three weeks. Use a handful of compost and organic fertilizer per plant. For non-organic gardeners, use a handful of high nitrogen fertilizer per plant each time you fertilize.

Insects: Sevin is a synthetic insecticide; organic options include sulfur and Bt-based insecticides. Follow directions on label.

Diseases: Are most severe in cloudy, damp weather. Check the plants daily and treat with an approved fungicide. Neem oil, sulfur and other fungicides are available. Always follow label directions.

Harvest: Pick when pods are young and tender. Harvest daily, or at least every other day. Harvest pods when they are about three to five inches long. If you leave pods on the plant too long, they will decrease production.



Okra flowers look like the blooms of a hibiscus, a close relative to okra.

For further information on proper planting, insects and diseases and their control, an Extension publication (E-513) can be found on the Web at AgriLifebookstore.org or visit the Texas AgriLife Extension Service at AgriLifeExtension.tamu.edu.

If you have questions that this article doesn't address, give us a call 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.

NEW COLUMN!

Eclectic Gardening

With Jane Slone, Ellis County Master Gardener

Ellis County Master Gardeners have a website at 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.



I LIVE IN ELLIS COUNTY AND I WANT AZALEAS! YES, I KNOW THEY ARE NOT NATURAL IN THIS AREA, SO WHAT SHOULD I DO?

We live in an area where *Forsythia* (Oleaceae) are more likely to grow and flourish rather than the beautiful azalea (*Rhododendron*). With hard work though and the correct amendments to the black clay soil, we increase the chance of growing azaleas. The flowers that are found in abundance during the spring time in East Texas, AND NOT NATURAL growers for us, can be grown with the help of soil amendments.

Remember, never make changes in your soil without a soil test first. This is the only way that you will know if you are providing a good environment for your coveted flowers. (Remember all parts of the plant are poisonous if eaten.)

There are two different types of azaleas; one is an evergreen and the other is a deciduous shrub. They are related to the rhododendrons and both would do well in the same environmental area and soil. This makes East Texas, and the Tyler area a good choice, to grow the coveted azalea. Tyler is often called the rose capital, but should you visit in the spring, you can enjoy the beautiful azalea flowers blooming that grow best in the East Texas acid soil.

The Ennis/Waxahachie area have black clay. With this type of soil, you will not find an abundance of acidic lovers growing. This area contains a very alkaline soil that is heavy and does not support acid-loving shrubs. So what can be done? First, let's explore the difference between an acidic soil and an alkaline soil. That means we need to look at the pH of soils.

OVERVIEW OF pH

So what is pH? How is pH measured? How do we change the soil?

The pH translates into power (or potential) of hydrogen. We begin with a scale of 0 to 14 with the number 7 being neutral. The scale is then divided into two basic types. From 0 up to 7, but not including 7, is on the acidic side. This would be like having a vinegar type of soil. Above this number, and not including 7, up to 14 is considered alkaline and would be like having ammonia in your soil.

WHAT IS THE FIRST STEP TO SUCCESS OF AZALEAS IN ELLIS COUNTY?

Plants have adapted to a particular soil type and typically do not do well in a different type of soil. As mentioned earlier, before making any changes to your soil, you should consider getting a soil test. This can be done through the County Extension Office. This will allow you to make changes correctly without harming the environment or your planting area.

If you are advised to change the pH of your planting area, you can begin with how much change you need for the plants to survive and grow. The first step would be to make changes to the alkaline soil, by adding products, such as decayed plant matter, and sphagnum.

This can be added to the hole before planting.

Should you need to make changes later on, household vinegar can be added to the water you use around the plant. Be sure you do not overcorrect the problem. Normally, it is recommended that no more than one to two tablespoons be added to a gallon of water. If using water from the hose, it would be best, to allow the water to sit for 24 to 48 hours, to let the chemicals in the water dissolve. Rainwater would be a better source to begin your pH changes.

SOME THINGS TO CONSIDER

- ☼ What is the pH, and how are you going to change the pH?
- ☼ Finding the correct location to place azaleas in your landscape.
- ☼ Choose/research for a tried and true variety for your area (if possible).
- ☼ How many are you going to plant?
- ☼ Are they going to be in the ground, or in a container? (Do not crowd.)
- ☼ How much sun will the plants receive each day?
- ☼ What type of soil drainage exists in the area? They do not like wet feet.

PLANTING DIRECTIONS

- ☼ Dig the hole to the proper depth and wide enough for roots

(Continued on page 9)



Eclectic Gardening (Continued from page 8)

to spread out easily.

- ⊗ Make sure you have sphagnum in the hole.
- ⊗ Place the plant in the hole, no deeper than the original soil level and preferably, about one inch above the soil level.
- ⊗ Fill in the soil around the plant and make sure the soil is evenly placed with no air holes present.
- ⊗ Use a good mulch (acidic) around the plant.
- ⊗ Water thoroughly when planting, allowing roots to become saturated. It should not dry out, nor stand in water.
- ⊗ Mulch.

NOW ENJOY THE FRUITS OF YOUR LABOR!



For more information, check these references: aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/archives/parsons/trees/azaleas.html
www.calloways.com/plant/shrubs/azalea
<http://rhodyman.net/rhodynho.php>
<http://www.gardenguides.com/102225-grow-azaleas-texas.html>

GARDEN CHECKLIST FOR JUNE

by Dr. William C. Welch, Professor & Landscape Horticulturist
Texas AgriLife Extension Service, Texas A&M University

- ⊗ Supplemental irrigation is essential for all but the hardiest plants in times of extended drought. Water lawn and garden thoroughly, but not too frequently. As a general rule, soak to a depth of eight inches. Finish watering by early afternoon, to lessen the chance of disease.
- ⊗ Check watermelons for ripeness regularly. They are usually ready when the bottom portion is definitely yellow green or even yellow in color.
- ⊗ Check for insects and diseases. Destroy badly infested plants. Spider mites can be especially troublesome at this

time. Select a chemical or organic control, or use insecticidal soap.

- ⊗ Especially during dry summers, soil moisture becomes extremely important and essential for good plant production. Because continual watering is oftentimes costly and time consuming, it pays to conserve the moisture around plants. This is best done by mulching. A good mulch will retain valuable moisture needed for plant growth, and improve overall gardening success.
- ⊗ Mulches are usually applied two to six inches deep, depending on the material used. In general, the coarser the material, the deeper the mulch. For example, a two-inch layer of cottonseed hulls will have about the same mulching effect as six inches of oat straw or four inches of coastal Bermuda hay.
- ⊗ There is still time to plant some of the colorful, heat-tolerant summer annuals. Direct-seed zinnias and portulaca, and purchase plants of periwinkle, salvia, marigold and purslane. Be sure to water transplants as needed until roots become established.
- ⊗ Removing faded flowers from plants before they set seed will keep them growing and producing flowers. A light application of fertilizer every four to six weeks will also be helpful.
- ⊗ Houseplants can be moved out of doors this month. Sink the pots in a cool, shaded garden bed to prevent them from drying out so quickly. Water pots, container plants and



WATERMELON VARIETY 'MOON & STARS'

(Continued on page 10)

Garden Checklist (Continued from page 9)

hanging baskets often. Monthly feedings with houseplant fertilizer will encourage continued growth.

- ✧ Now is the time to plan for next spring. Consider digging and dividing any crowded spring bulbs. Once the bulbs have matured and the foliage has turned brown, it is time to spade them up and thin out the stand. Crowded bulbs produce fewer and smaller blooms. They usually need thinning every three to four years.
- ✧ June is the time to select daylily varieties as they reach their peak of bloom.
- ✧ Fertilize roses every four to six weeks. Apply a high-nitrogen fertilizer immediately after a flush of bloom.

- ✧ Continue to spray susceptible roses with a black-spot control such as Funginex every seven to ten days.
- ✧ Re-blooming salvias, such as *Salvia greggii* and *S. farinacea*, should be pruned back periodically during the summer. To make the job easier, use hedging shears, and remove only the spent flowers and a few inches of stem below.
- ✧ Fall-blooming perennials, such as Mexican mint marigold (*Tagetes lucida*), chrysanthemums, physostegia, and *Salvia leucantha*, should be pruned in the same manner during the summer to keep them compact, reducing the need for staking. This type of pruning should be completed prior to September 1, since flower buds begin forming about that time.



Interested in becoming a
2017 Expo Sponsor Or
Expo Exhibitor?

Contact James Kocian at
expo.ecmga@yahoo.com

Reserve the date: **March 25, 2017!**

Sauteed Okra with Quick Tomato Sauce

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 pound small okra (no more than 3 inches long), stems removed
Salt and ground black pepper
4 medium cloves garlic, minced or pressed through a garlic press
1/2 teaspoon hot red pepper flakes
1 (14.5 ounce) can diced tomatoes
1 teaspoon sugar
1 tablespoon minced fresh basil leaves

1. Heat 2 tablespoons of the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat until almost smoking. Add the okra and cook, stirring occasionally, until the okra is bright green, 3 to 4 minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste and transfer the okra to a bowl.

2. Add the remaining 1 tablespoon oil to the empty pan. Add the garlic and pepper flakes and cook until fragrant, about 15 seconds. Stir in the tomatoes and sugar, bring to a simmer, and cook until slightly reduced, about 2 minutes. Stir in the okra and cook for 1 minute longer. Stir in the basil and adjust the seasonings, adding salt and pepper to taste. Serve immediately.



RECIPE TIP

This recipe works best when the okra is cut on the bias, or diagonal. While sautéing, do not stir the okra. Only turn the okra once midway through the cooking time. The okra will not get slimy using this method.

Thank You All!

Thanks to the sponsors, exhibitors and visitors for making the
2016 Ellis County Master Gardener's Lawn & Garden Expo
a great success!

Gold



Bronze



Green

AmeriGrafix ♦ Boyce Feed & Grain ♦ CNB of Texas
Holcim ♦ Renewal by Andersen

Roland's Nursery & Landscape ♦ Tex-Scapes Greenery

Exhibitors

Advantage Academy
ARK Country Store
Artisan Outdoor Lighting
Backyard Magicians
Best Bug Bait
Betha's Best
Bluemoon Soaps
Boyce Feed & Grain
Brazos Valley Equipment
Brim Seed
Bug Bouncer
C & J Farms
Central Kubota
CKB Designs
Cocos Discount Windows
Concrete and More
Creative Quilters Guild, Ellis Co.
Crystal Connections

Cutting Edge Curbing
Derksen Buildings
Dessert Creek Honey
DFW Custom Decks
Earth Tones Greenery
Ellis County Engineering
Ellis County Power Wash
Ennis Garden Club
Friendship's Garden Inc.
Garden Variety Organics
Gardenscapes by Diane
Green Mountain Energy
Habitat for Humanity, Ellis Co.
H-E-B
Hershy & Sons Decks
Homestead Equipment & Maintenance BCS
Homestead Gristmill
Hot Produx

Imagine That
Indian Trail Master Naturalists
Invisible Fence of Texas
Jams, Jellies and More
Jim's Produce
Just Nuts
Kaitlyn's Styles of Pasta
KA-Ranch
Landmark Equipment
Living Magazine
Mower Depot
Neil Sperry
Ovilla Garden Club
Pastamore Gourmet Foods
Praeland's Groundwater GCD
R&E Plants
Renewal by Andersen
Roland's Nursery & Landscape
Rolen's Honey Bee Removal

S & S Sandblasting Arts
Splash Away Pools
Stone Cre8tions
Sweet Sister Enterprises
Texas Bluebird Society
Texas Toffee
Texas Tree Farms
Tex-Scapes Greenery
The Greenery
Tommy's Bird Houses
Tommy's Hot Dog
Travis Equipment
Waxahachie Care
Waxahachie Chautauqua Preservation Society
Waxahachie Daily Light
Waxahachie Equipment Co.
WHS Project Graduation
Wimbish Tree Farm

We couldn't do it without your support!