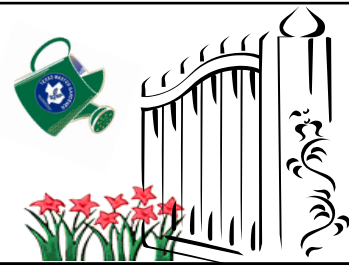




Ellis County Master Gardener's E-Gardening Newsletter



Volume XI, Issue 5

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

May, 2018

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! Editors and Newsletter Team: Susan Ellis, Donna Hubbard, Bree Shaw

What's Happening in May?

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!**

Every week at the Market, there is a unique theme designed to highlight vendor products, in-season produce, children's activities, or interesting garden subjects. Following are the upcoming themes for May and early June:

May 5: Cinco de Mayo Fiesta

May 12: Kids Activity

The Master Naturalists will be on hand to help kids of all ages make Mother's Day cards using decorative items from Mother Nature.

Bring children of all ages for a fun and educational time.

May 19: Pop-Up Horticulture—Vegetable Gardening

May 26: Taste of Market-Very Blueberry

June 2: Garlic Festival

Ellis County Master Gardener Monthly Meeting—You are invited! Second Tuesday of the month



Steven Chamblee of Chandor Gardens in Weatherford, Texas will be speaking at our monthly meeting on Tuesday, May 8, 2018. Steven is a horticulturist and garden writer with a love for discovery, whether on the road giving presentations across Texas or at home, walking his familiar meadow. He seeks connections between hard science and matters of the heart, often chronicling them in his Native Son articles in Neil Sperry's e-Gardens. His presentation will be on Great Garden

Ideas: form, texture, contrast, framing, detail, and whimsy from some of the finest minds in horticulture today

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



Listen to KBEC

Saturday mornings at 8:10 a.m. on 1390 AM.

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

Melinda Kocian

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

Planting

- ✧ Plant heat-loving annuals including copper plant, firebush, gomphrena, lantana, pentas, purple fountain grass, and ornamental sweet potato in sunny areas.
- ✧ In shady spots plant caladiums, begonias coleus, impatiens (mildew-resistant types).
- ✧ Seeds of celosia, cosmos, marigold, morning glory, portulaca, and zinnia can be sown directly in the beds. Keep seeded area moist until seeds germinate.
- ✧ Achimenes, cannas, dahlias, and other summer flowering bulbs can be planted now.
- ✧ Establish new lawns before summer heat sets in. Sow seeded varieties of Bermuda grass early in the month, or sod Bermuda or St. Augustine grass. Water daily for first few weeks to develop a good root system.

Fertilizing and Pruning

- ✧ Feed fruit trees, perennials, annuals, ground covers, and vines with a lawn fertilizer (3-1-2 or 4-1-2 ratio).
- ✧ Fertilize tomatoes and most other vegetables every other week for productive and vigorous plants.
- ✧ Manually thin the fruit on peaches, pears, plums, and apples to 5-6 inches apart early in the month.
- ✧ Prune spring-flowering shrubs and vines soon after flowering. Keep the natural shape of the plant in mind as you prune and avoid excessive cutting except where necessary to control size. Deadhead roses and other reblooming plants.
- ✧ Allow foliage of daffodils and other spring-flowering bulbs to mature and yellow before removing.

Garden Watch

- ✧ Allow bluebonnets and other reseeding, annual wildflowers to die, and the seeds to dry before mowing the stubble. Delay mowing until end of growing season if other wildflowers are growing in the area.
- ✧ Check tomatoes for signs of early blight (yellow blotches on lower leaves). Apply a labeled fungicide if needed. Keep soil adequately moist to prevent blossom-end rot (browned tissue on bloom end of fruit).
- ✧ Look for squash bugs in early morning. Destroy eggs found on underside of leaves by hand. Vegetable pests can often be controlled by mechanical or biological means rather than by synthetic pesticides.
- ✧ Watch for bagworms on junipers and other narrow-leaved evergreens. Apply Bt (*Bacillus thuringiensis*) or general insecticide at first sign of larvae feeding. Remember that once the bag has formed, your only option is to manually pull them off.
- ✧ Make initial application of Image or Sedge Hammer to control nutsedge in established warm-season lawns.

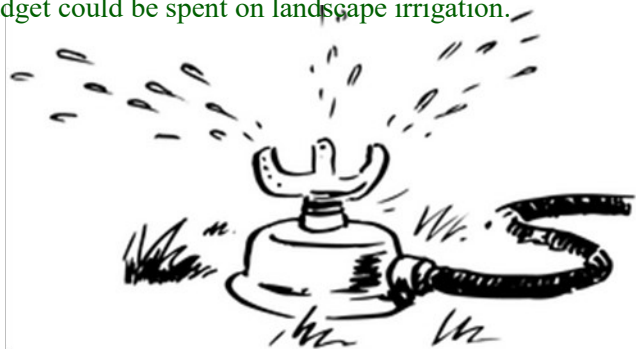


Conservation-Wise

- ✧ *Efficient irrigation is essential!* Inspect your automated watering system. Look for pipe and valve leaks, breaks, sprinkler heads clogged or misaligned. Consult a licensed irrigator for repairs and/or upgrades.
- ✧ Replace older irrigation controllers with new models equipped with water-conserving settings, or a smart controller which uses evapotranspiration or moisture sensors to determine runtime.
- ✧ Apply 1"-2" of compost (mushroom, cotton bur, etc.) or wheat straw as mulch in your vegetable garden to conserve moisture.

Trivia

Texas household's outdoor water use can exceed the amount of water used for all other residential purposes. In some households, during summer, as much as 60% of a total water budget could be spent on landscape irrigation.



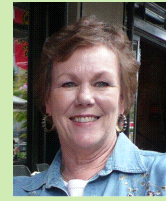
Find us on:
facebook®

Are you a Facebooker? 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...we cover it all! You'll find us at the link below, 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.

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

Featured Texas Wild Flower of the Month

*Submitted by Melinda Kocian
Ellis County Master Gardener*



Cobaea Penstemon – Figwort Family (Scrophulariaceae)
Penstemon obaea Nutt.

Range: 2 - 8 (Ellis County is in Region 4)
Size: 1 – 2 ½ feet
Blooms: April – June, Perennial



Cobaea penstemon is an impressive, clump-forming plant with solitary or several downy stems. It is often found in colonies along roadsides. Plump, tubular flowers may be nearly white, pink or pale lavender, with purple lines on the floor of the throat. They are clustered in small leaf axils on the upper two-thirds of the stem. Opposite leaves are two to three inches long and waxy-shiny, with coarse teeth on the margins. From mid-stem upward, leaves become smaller and stalkless. Another common name, beardtongue, refers to the plant's infertile stamen, which is covered with a "beard" of soft, yellow hairs. Seventeen *Penstemon* species are found across Texas and are among our showiest flowers. Indians made a penstemon tea to use as a laxative. A salve made of penstemon is used for skin irritation, both in preventive care and as a treatment.

FARMERS MARKET

Waxahachie

May 28



GRAND
OPENING



SAVE THE DATE!

The Ellis County Master Gardener Association
announces a Private Garden Tour 2018

Saturday June 2, 2018 9:00 am until 2:00 pm
Midlothian TX

Five gardens will be open to the public with
Master Gardener docents.

Tickets \$10 Adults, children under 16 are free
when accompanied by an adult.

Purchase tickets at the gardens.

Additional information please contact:
Mattie Thompson at
mattiethompson540@gmail.com



Bat Facts

*By Jamey Guarascio-Cosper
Ellis County Master Gardener*



With spring in full swing, mosquitoes are on the prowl and in full force! Fortunately, for those of us that love spending time outside, bats are also returning for the summer from their winter roosts. As you may know, bats are a top predator of the mosquito. In one hour, one bat eats 600—1,000 mosquito-sized insects. Therefore, 50 bats are capable of eating a minimum of 180,000 bugs in six hours with no ill effects on livestock, household pets, or children. No pesticide on the market can match that claim!

Bat cuisine consists of mosquitoes, flies, June bugs, ants, termites, moths, scrub beetles, crickets, and spotted cucumber beetles (the adult stage of corn rootworm), to name only a few. Some species even consider grasshoppers fine dining—there is no accounting for taste.

For those of you that cringe at the mere thought of bats being in the area, let me dispel some ridiculous rumors and share some interesting facts.

Bats do not intentionally fly into your hair. Bats are shy and avoid people whenever possible. However, if you have ever been to an evening football game, you are well aware that mosquitoes and gnats hover close to people. Thus a low-flying bat is most likely catching his dinner and probably saving someone from an itchy bite (and possibly West Nile virus) if he flies close by.

North American bats have no desire to suck blood. They are all insectivores. Of the 1,108 species of bats currently identified, only three rely on blood as a food source and those three species reside in Central and South America.

Bats make up a quarter of the mammal species.

Bats are not blind. Most bats have good eyesight; however, due to the nature of their nocturnal flight times, insect-eating bats rely on echolocation for navigation. They are so efficient that they can detect a strand of hair in complete darkness.

Bats are meticulous; they clean themselves more thoroughly than cats.

Fruit bats are responsible for 80- 85% of reforestation of the world's rain forests through seed dispersion.

Tequila traditionally comes from a cactus pollinated by bats. Numerous medicines are harvested from plants solely pollinated by bats.



The bat colony at Bracken Cave in San Antonio (pictured left) eats several TONS (some reports show 250 tons) of insects each evening.

The majority of the 1,108 species of bats are listed as Endangered or Threatened, primarily due to destruction of roosting sites.

The final point is what brings me to share this information. I would challenge anyone interested in gardening, species conservation, or outdoor sporting events to put up a bat house to attract the mosquito eradicator! You can purchase a bat house through Bat Conservation International's website or by building a bat house of your own. Specifics on what color to paint, how high to hang, and which direction to face the house can be obtained from these sources as well.

Most people fear bats because of their rumored "link to rabies." Statistics show that less than one-half of one percent of bats contract rabies. Additionally, bats are not a carrier for the disease, but die from it just like any other animal. However, you should NEVER handle a bat. As I stated earlier, healthy bats are shy creatures and normally avoid humans. Therefore, if you come upon a bat lying on the ground or roosting unusually low on a building or tree, do not touch it. Instead, call a rehabilitator and have the bat rescued. Although the bat may simply be suffering from dehydration or disorientation due to being blown off course, bats ARE wild animals and should not be handled. They may bite if they feel threatened. You can locate a rehabilitator through www.batworld.org or www.batcon.org.

If you would like more information, please check out these two bat conservation organizations. Bat World, based in Mineral Wells, website www.batworld.org or Bat Conservation International, based in Austin, website www.batcon.org. Happy Bat Watching!



Sun or Shade
By Carolyn Foster
Ellis County Master Gardener



Shade

How does your garden grow? Do you have lots of sun or lots of shade?

Remember sun loving plants do not do well in shade, and serious shade lovers don't do well in too much sun. We do have lots of plants that will do well in part sun/part shade. Before making a choice, determine how much sun you get and is it morning, afternoon, or all day sun. The afternoon sun can burn tender plants. When it comes to shade, determine what kind of shade you have. You see all shade is not created equal. To

help you decide, check descriptions listed below.

Light shade: It is completely shaded for 2 -4 hours during the heat of the day (10am – 6pm).

Filtered shade: May seem shaded all day, but sunlight squeezes through tree branches or arbors.

Part shade: It receives 4 – 5 hours of shade per day; often blocked by trees or walls.

Full shade: It's shaded all day; but may have reflected light from nearby sunny areas.

Dense shade: These are the darkest areas with day-long shade and no reflected light.

Catalogs and plant tags will help with sun requirements, plant habits, and temperature tolerances. So read before you buy.

For annuals that do well in shady conditions look for begonias, impatiens, pentas, coleus, and caladiums. Looking for perennials try daffodils, purple oxalis, summer phlox, purple heart, spiderwort, crinum lilies, oxblood lilies, violets, and ajuga.

Small areas are subject to root rot and fungal diseases where drainage or air circulation is poor. Hostas can replace plants if you replace our native soil with a highly organic soil.

Bugs

Want to get rid of slugs, flies, mosquitoes, cutworms or other pest bugs? Invite a toad to live in your garden. They eat approximately 3000 per month. Provide shelter (broken clay pots) and a saucer of water (toads drink through their skin so make sure they can get into the water) and you're good to go. You may only see them in the cool of the evening or on rainy days. Also, try to avoid chemical pesticides, which can disrupt the food supply and can be toxic to toads. Then just sit back and let them feast.



UPCOMINGEVENTS

FUN WORKSHOPS

May 5 Star Wars Galaxy Workshop

May 12 Mom's Secret Garden Workshop

May 19 Jurassic Garden Workshop

June 2 Mermaid's Magic Garden Workshop

Each workshop beings at 3pm; 1 hour long

\$35 per Creation

Family Fun, Kid Friendly,
Wholesome, Hands-on
Activities! Less Video
Games, More Gardening!



We extend a sincere apology to Earth Tones for omitting them from our sponsor page in April's newsletter. Earth Tones is one of our Gold Sponsors, and we certainly want them recognized as such. Thank you Earth Tones!!



Save The Date!
Saturday, March 30, 2019



Invite Insects into Your Vegetable Garden

By Maureen Nitkowski
Ellis County Master Gardener



After a season of fighting invasions of squash bugs, stink bugs, grasshoppers, cucumber beetles, and all of the other hexapod villains of the veggie patch, a gardener might be puzzled by the idea to bring more insects into the garden. My suggestion is to encourage beneficial insects to come to work with you to produce those vegetables. By beneficial insects I refer to those insects that are pollinators or predators.

Often the vegetable gardener wonders why the cucumbers, squash, or tomatoes have flowers but no fruit. The most likely answer is that insect pollinators are lacking. An effective way to keep pollinators in your neighborhood is to diversify the plantings in your surroundings. If you have plants in bloom almost all year long, you will have a supply of pollinators at the ready for your vegetables. You can choose among low maintenance herbaceous annuals or perennials, flowering vines, trees and shrubs that are native or adapted to Ellis County.



In addition to habitat for pollinators, plant diversity supports predators both insect and avian to feast on the insect pests on your produce. Ladybugs dine on aphids on your pepper plants just as readily as they do on your roses or milkweed. Birds devour caterpillars and beetles if they have nesting rights near you. Remember that the “good guys” are present but will need some time for their numbers to increase to effectively deal with the pests. Be patient and be vigilant so you will know early when insect pests have arrived. Frequently check beneath leaves for eggs and on all plant surfaces for damage or frass. Be able to identify the beneficial insects in their various life stages.

One last suggestion to tip the balance toward beneficial insects rather than insect pests is to engage good sanitation practices in the vegetable patch. Remove infested or infected plant material after the growing season, rotate crops, cultivate the soil, and keep the weeds out.

Help the “good guys” to help you.

Beneficial insects: lady beetles, praying mantis, honey bees, assassin bug, lacewing (*pictured right*) damsel fly

Insect pests: grasshoppers, stink bugs, weevils, aphids, thrips, squash vine borers



Indian Trail Master Naturalists Events



The **Indian Trail Master Naturalists** will not have a meeting in the month of May. Look for June's program next month.

Saturday, May, 19, 9am, Wildflower & Bird Walk. Members will be leading 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



Happy Memorial Day
Monday May 28



GARDEN CHECKLIST FOR MAY

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

♦ Experiment with a container of Bougainvillea this summer. It is a plant that prefers conditions that are hot and dry! Full sun and a rest period without too much watering are usually necessary before a burst of new blooms

♦ Pinch back the terminal growth on newly planted annual and perennial plants. This will result in shorter, more compact, well branched plants with more flowers

♦ Replace or replenish mulch materials in flower beds and shrub borders to conserve moisture and reduce weed growth

♦ Prune climbing roses as they complete their spring bloom season. Remove dead or weak wood as needed.

♦ Take a critical look at your landscape while at the height of summer development. Make notes of how you think it can be better arranged, plants that need replacement, overgrown plants that need to be removed, and possible activity areas that can be enjoyed by family members

♦ During the summer, 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 2 to 6 inches deep, depending on the ma-



terial used. In general, the coarser the material, the deeper the mulch. For example, a 2-inch layer of cottonseed hulls will have about the same mulching effect as 6 inches of oat straw or 4 inches of coastal Bermuda hay.

♦ Prune spring-flowering shrubs soon after flowering. Keep the

natural shape of the plant in mind as you prune and avoid excessive cutting except where necessary to control size.

♦ It will soon be time for bagworms to attack junipers and other narrow-leaved evergreens. Control measures, such as Sevin dust or spray, should be applied while the insects and the bags are about one-half inch in length.

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



Featured Recipe of the Month

Summer Berry Pudding

From EatingWell Text Kitchen

A summer pudding is a British warm-weather wonder—not steamed like a sticky pudding but an easy dish that sets up thanks to the pectin in the berries. Be sure to use firm, bakery-quality bread.”



Ingredients

4 small slices firm white bread, crusts removed
1 cup sliced fresh strawberries
1 cup fresh blueberries

1 cup fresh raspberries
2 tablespoons sugar
2 tablespoons water
Pinch of salt

Directions

1. Place a 1-cup (8-ounce) ramekin or similar-size dish on top of a slice of bread and cut around it to trim the bread to fit the dish. Repeat with the remaining 3 slices of bread.
2. Combine berries, sugar, water and salt in a medium saucepan and cook over medium-high heat until the berries break down, 5 to 6 minutes. Reserve $\frac{1}{3}$ cup for garnish; cover and refrigerate.
3. Place 1 tablespoon of the remaining berry mixture in the bottom of each ramekin. Top with a slice of bread. Divide the remaining berry mixture between each, then top with another slice of bread.
4. Put the puddings on a large plate to catch any overflowing juices. Cover each with plastic wrap, then place a 15-ounce weight, such as a can of beans, on top of each pudding. Refrigerate for at least 6 hours or up to 2 days.
5. To unmold, remove the weight and plastic wrap, run a knife around the inside of the ramekin, and invert onto a dessert plate. Spoon the reserved berry mixture over the puddings.

Eclectic Gardening

With Jane Slone, Ellis County Master Gardener

THIS MONTH:

ROSES



Roses in the month of May are bountiful in the Dallas area. They were trimmed in February. This gives them a fresh start for the new year. There is a saying that all roses should be trimmed around Valentine's Day. Texas weather is not always cooperative, and this can set the roses back and delay blooming.

To get the roses ready for their new blooms: feed the modern, repeat-bloom rose varieties first in the spring right after pruning; second feed when they have developed flower buds, and lastly approximately two months before the first frost in your area.

What to feed the roses, may depend upon the person you ask. Rose food is available from stores and nurseries and should be used according to the directions on the label.

Use a commercial rose food, or a general-purpose fertilizer such as 10-10-10 or 5-10-10, for the first two feedings. A formulation like 0-10-10 is best for the last feeding before frost.

Apply the rose food, as well as the water-soluble and foliar fertilizers available, according to the manufacturer's directions. Dry fertilizers should be scratched into the soil beneath the leaves - but not touching the canes or bud union - then watered in well.

Yet another popular mix requires a few more ingredients. With this recipe mix:

- 1 part alfalfa meal
- 1 part fish meal
- 1 part greensand
- 1 part gypsum
- 1/2 part bone meal
- 1 tablespoon Epsom salts
- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 2 tablespoons molasses
- 1 teaspoon kelp extract
- 3 cups water.

Mix the ingredients together into a quart measuring cup. Pour the mix into a two-gallon bucket or watering can. Fill the bucket or can with water and use it as a foliage fertilizer. You can also pour it around the roots. Give each small rose bush about 1/2 gallon. Larger plants use a gallon.



Rose rosette

Posted by: <https://plantclinic.tamu.edu/>

What is rose rosette? This is a disease of roses that was described in the 1940s and manifest itself with “witches-broom” symptoms. Usually, the infected rose branch/cane will also be extra thorny. Just recently, research from a group lead by researchers at University of Arkansas reported on identifying a virus that is believed to be causal agent of this disease (Journal of General Virology 2011 92:1727-1732) [article online limited to subscribers]. Yet in another paper published in 2010, there were suggestions that this disease may be caused by phytoplasmas (see <http://www.akademai.com/content/g3j4053660j33787/>) But over the years, it was believed that rose rosette was caused by some kind of virus. The story is not all said and done because no one has been able to show

conclusively the cause for this disease. To prove that a pathogen is the disease causal agent conclusively, one must satisfy Koch's postulate. In simple terms, it means that one must isolate the causal agent from a diseased plant. Infect a healthy plant with the pathogen and get similar symptoms as in the diseased plants. Isolate the pathogen from the newly infected plant and demonstrate that it is the same organism as the one originally isolated.

So what can you do if you find it in your yard? Not much. Here are a few suggestions:

1. Prune out the cane/branches when first spot rose rosette symptoms....and hope that it has not spread.
2. Rose rosette virus is believe to be transmitted by eriophyte mites (this is a really tiny mite). Some miticides/insecticide such as abamectin (Avid), cabaryl (Sevin) and/or petroleum-based horticultural oils. The catch is that you need good complete coverage and this is hard to do against these mites that hide in some very difficult to access places on the plant.
3. The best solution that have been recommended so far is the removal and complete destruction of an infected rose plant.

Thank You All!

Thanks to the sponsors, exhibitors and visitors for making the 2018 Ellis County Master Gardener's Lawn & Garden Expo a great success!

Gold



Bronze



Green

AmeriGrafix, Boyce Feed & Grain, CNB of Texas, Gerdau, Holcim, Living Earth Technologies, Renewal by Andersen Roland's, Nursery & Landscape, Tex-Scapes Greenery, Texas Tree Farm, Waxahachie Civic Center

Exhibitors

360 Painting of South DFW
Adam Rope State Farm
Angie & Teresa's Garden Store
Artisan Outdoor Lighting
Barris Pottery & Ceramics
Beldon Dallas
Best Bug Bait
Bertha's Best
Blue Moon Soaps
Bluebonnet Worm Farm
Boyce Feed & Grain
C & J Farms
Central Kubota
Chautauqua Preservation Soc
Concrete and More
Costco Wholesale
Creative Quilters Guild, Ellis Co.
Custom Fence & Pergola

DFW Custom Decks
Earth Tones Greenery
Ellis County Engineering
Ellis County SPCA
Ennis Garden Club
Flamingo Food & Beverage
Garden Charms
Garden Variety Organics
Gardenscapes by Diane
Girl Scouts NETX
Goss, Karl & Jim
Greenery, The
H. Summit Enterprises
Habitat for Humanity, Ellis Co.
H-E-B
Hollyberry Herb Farm
Homestead EQ./Maint-BCS
Hot Produx

Imagine That
Indian Trail Master Naturalists
Jams, Jellies and More
JL Glass Designs
KA-Ranch
Koke Gardens
Landmark Equipment
Lazy River Pool Co.
LeafFilter North Texas
Living Earth Technology Co.
Native Solar
Ovilla Garden Club
Peachy Page Farm
Perline Company Inc.
Prairielands Groundwater GCD
Rain Drop Studio
Real Time Pain Relief
Renewal by Andersen

Rigsby's Garden Center
RiverMist Pools & Spas
Rolen's Honey Bee's
Silverado Lawn & Landscape
Skinkle Tools
Synthetic Turf of North Texas
Texas Rustic Works
Texas Toffee
Texas Tree Farms
Tex-Scapes Greenery
Tommy's Bird Houses
Tommy's Hot Dog
Travis Equipment
Waxahachie Equipment Co.
Wimbish Tree Farm

We couldn't do it without your support!