



# E-Gardening Newsletter

<p><b>Come and see us this month! Page 1</b></p>	<p><b>It's June, What to do in the garden? Page 2</b></p>	<p><b>A Workday at the Learning Garden Page 3</b></p>	<p><b>Ask a Master Gardener: Four O'clocks Page 4</b></p>
<p><b>Wildflower of the Month &amp; Trellis to make you Jealous Page 5</b></p>	<p><b>Grillfest Recipes for Fruits and Vegetables Page 6</b></p>	<p><b>Try these culinary herbs for grilling Page 7</b></p>	<p><b>Garden Guilt! (an editorial) Page 8</b></p>

## Come and Meet your Ellis County Master Gardeners ~ Saturdays at the Waxahachie Farmer's Market

**June 4** – If you haven't been this year, come see the improvements the City has made. Sidewalks! Parking! Restrooms! Bigger Dog Park! Improved interior! Check out the vendors and bring your gardening questions to us.

**June 11** – Ask us about watering options for your plants going into summer.

**June 18** – Pop Up Horticulture Day  
 Featuring: *Plant Your Halloween Pumpkin Patch!*  
 Early? Not at all. Most pumpkins take 90 to 120 days from planting to harvest, so if you want to grow your own Jack O'Lantern get your patch planned and planted! Come by our booth for how-to information on pumpkins and other fall vegetables that need an early start.



**June 25** – Fighting stubborn weeds? Master Gardeners can help, or at least, we can share war stories.



# What To Do In...



# June

## Planting

- Buy and plant crape myrtles in bloom to be sure you are getting the desired color. Know the variety's mature size to avoid future pruning. Ask for varieties that are resistant to powdery mildew.
- 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 hose to keep water off 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.
- June is the time to select day lily varieties as they reach peak bloom.

## Fertilizing and Pruning

- It is time for the second application of an all-nitrogen, slow-release fertilizer on turf grasses. Cut the amount by half to prevent excessive growth which means more water and mowing!
- Fertilize container plants and hanging baskets with a water-soluble fertilizer every week or two.
- Prune back autumn sage and mealy cup sage by one-third their size. Deadhead annuals and perennials to stimulate new growth and reblooming 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 should be kept compact, and pruning will prevent buds from forming prematurely. Do not prune after September 1, when buds begin to form.
- Remove flower stalks on coleus, caladiums, lamb's ear, and basil before buds open. This will promote new leaf growth.

## Garden Watch

- Take a critical 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.
- Control aphids on crape myrtles with a strong spray of water.
- Spider mites can be troublesome, especially on tomatoes. Treat with an appropriate organic or synthetic pesticide.
- Control webworms in pecan and other trees using a pole pruner. Remove while webs are small.
- Wrap the trunks of newly planted Shumard oak and Chinese pistache trees to prevent sunscald and borers.

## Learning Garden Workday in May

### power washing and pergola painting

### Getzendaner Park

Thanks to Josh Hershey the wooden bridge at Learning Garden is now power washed, clean, and ready for wood staining.

Also, thanks to Mary Ann Mezzapelle and her husband Chris for handcrafting cedar signs for the pergolas and making the Learning Garden a place where everyone is welcome to learn and grow.

We also had help from Julien Ramos, a 6th grader, who took care of painting the hard to reach lower parts of the two pergolas.



Pam and Dan Wheeler weed the star garden.

**The Learning Garden  
appreciates all of you!**



## Master Gardeners Ask a Master Gardener:

We found flowering shrubs at the Learning Garden that we didn't recognize. Can someone tell us what they are?

### Four O'Clocks (Mirabilis jalapa)

Mirabilis means wonderful in Latin and Jalapa is the state capital of Veracruz in Mexico. This plant made its way to Spain and then to England. Thomas Jefferson grew it when it was known as Marvel of Peru.

This is a very easy plant to grow. It produces large tubers which make it a Perennial for most of our winters. It also produces lots of seeds which have a high germination rate. It will wilt but perks up after watering. Despite the wilting, it is drought tolerant. It also isn't picky about soil.

The tubular flowers come in purple, magenta, white, yellow, pink and stripes. They open in the evening or earlier on cloudy days. Hummingbirds and moths like them.

They are excellent flowers for children or for the young at heart. The flowers only last a day, so they are great to pick for making leis or crowns.

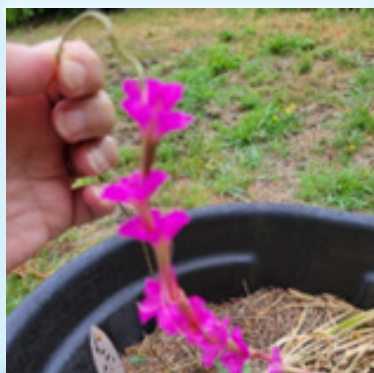
You can find packets of seeds easily or go by the Master Gardeners' Demonstration Garden in Getzendaner Park in Waxahachie to see them growing. Feel free to take the seeds which are loose and black when ready to be picked.



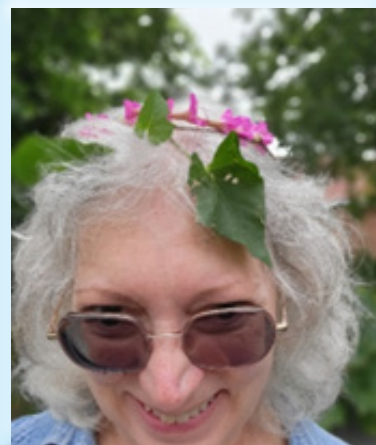
**For the  
Young  
or  
Young  
at  
Heart!**



Find a vine such as Bindweed (wild Morning Glory) and clip the leaves off.



Pinch off the end of the Four O'Clock flowers and thread on the vine.



**Be a Princess!**

# Wildflower of the Month

**Prairie Bluebell – Gentian Family (Gentianaceae)**  
*Eustoma grandiflorum*, (Raf.) Shinnery

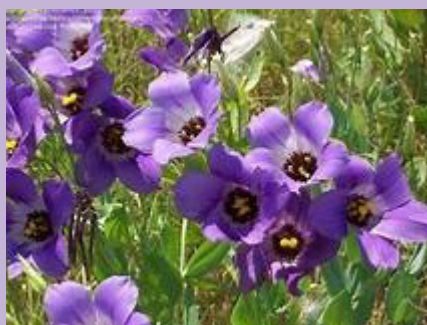
**Region:** 1 through 10 (Ellis Co. is Region 4)

**Size:** 1 – 2 feet

**Blooms:** June – September, Annual/Biennial



Melinda Kocian



Texas has two species of *Eustoma*. Both have paired, smooth, bluish green leaves that clasp the stem. Bluebells (*E. exaltatum*) are difficult to distinguish. Flowers are cup-shaped, with five to seven blue to deep blue-violet petals, although the color can vary from pinkish to light blue or white. A dark, purple blotch surrounded by a light halo is centered in the cup, as is a prominent two-lobed yellow stigma. Flowers are two to four inches across. These handsome plants are available in nurseries. They were first cultivated by the Japanese, who recognized their horticultural merit more than thirty years ago. Bluebells prefer seasonally stands, such as roadside ditches, meadows or prairie swales. Sometimes a single plant or only a few are seen at one location; in other places, bluebells may blanket many acres.

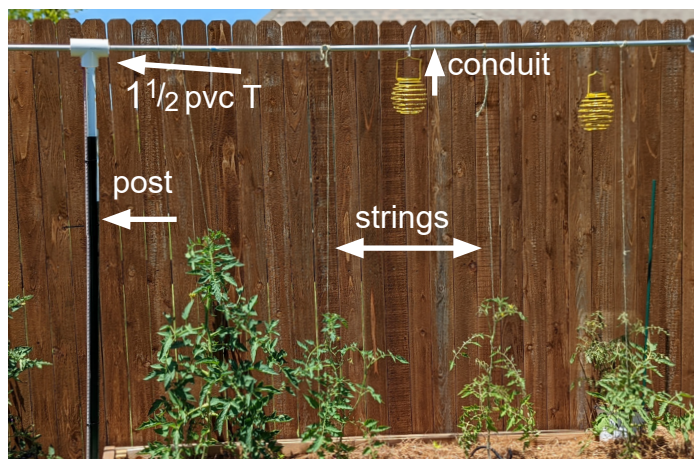
**I love to watch  
 YouTube videos  
 about gardening  
 techniques!**

Kim Rainey, MG

## A Trellis to Make you Jealous

But I will be the first to admit that when watching YouTube you sometimes get lame information, or sometimes you get great information but for a completely different climate than where we live. And then, sometimes you get a wonderful little gem that's worth pursuing.

One of my happy "gems" has been a "new-to-me" technique for holding up tomatoes. It may not be for everybody, but I'm using it this year and so far, I'm very happy with the results.



Posts were put in at each end of my raised tomato bed. Half inch conduit was run through pvc T's on the posts. Strings are dropped down from the conduit to each plant and attached to a tent peg. This string is wound around the main stalk of each tomato vine. Suckers are trimmed off regularly.

**For more detailed information check out [“A Trellis to make you Jealous”](#) on YouTube.**

## Grillfest Recipes

### Grilling Fruits and Vegetables

Following are the fruits and vegetables grilled by Master Gardeners at the Waxahachie Farmers' Market Grillfest:



#### Okra

Washed but not trimmed – skewered together in a “raft” for ease of turning on grill.  
Grill then season with a mix of Garlic Powder, Salt, Coarse-ground black pepper and parsley



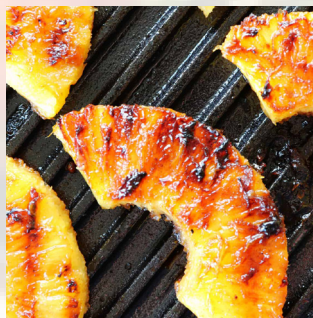
#### Carrots

Cut diagonally at ½” and slightly parboil before grilling  
Season after grilling with Citrus Pesto:  
Juice and zest of one each: lemon, lime, grapefruit and orange  
Lemon Balm – 1 cup packed leaves  
½ Cup Olive oil  
1 cup Pepitas roasted and salted



#### Peaches

Half and remove pit. Sprinkle on citric acid/sugar (1:3) to prevent browning  
Place on grill cut side down first, then flip and season with Cinnamon



#### Pineapple

Place rings on grill and brush with Ginger Butter:  
Ginger paste 3 tsp  
Light brown sugar 1 cup  
Melted butter ½ cup, browned



#### Tomatoes

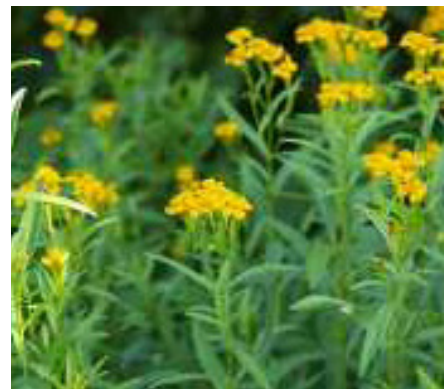
Slice to ½” slices  
Season with  
Basil 1 cup chopped  
Oregano 1 cup chopped  
Freshly grated parmesan 1 cup  
Pinch smoked salt

## Try These Herbs to Grow and Cook This Summer

**Lemon Balm** (*Melissa officinalis*) This is an easy to grow herb for our area. Grow it in a container because, as a member of the mint family, it will spread. It is a perennial in our area and spreads by seed. Lemon Balm will grow in sun or partial shade. This herb is good in herb teas served either hot or cold and the leaves are good in fruit and green salads, cold soups and vinegar. It also works well with citrus juices and spices as a marinade or sauce. Try a few leaves in pesto for a lemony surprise.



**Mexican Mint Marigold** (*Tagetes lucida*) Neither a mint nor a marigold, this Texas native is our substitute for French tarragon which doesn't grow well here. Plant from transplants or sow seed after danger of frost has passed. Depending on the severity of winter weather, it may come back in the Spring. Use this herb in dishes that call for tarragon or when you need a sweet, anise-like flavor. Enjoy the yellow flowers in late Fall.



**Coriander/Cilantro** (*Coriandrum sativum*) This annual plant is easy to grow from seed but doesn't like to be transplanted. It is attractive to pollinators in the garden. The leaves are the herb Cilantro which is a go-to herb for Mexican food. Use it with your salsa or pico de gallo. As the Summer heats up, Cilantro turns bitter and goes to seed. Let it do so because the seeds are the spice Coriander. Use ground coriander in Middle East and Asian foods or in curries and pickling spices. It is also a good addition to your favorite grilling rub.



**Thyme** (*Thymus* spp.) This perennial herb comes in a variety of types, each subtly different. It makes a great container plant if grown in a sunny location. Use sprigs to flavor sauces, marinades and oils, or scrape off the small leaves to use in rubs for grilling, salads or stuffing. Try English, French, Lemon, Lavender, or Nutmeg thyme. One favorite recipe is to pan sear a steak in butter with garlic and several sprigs of thyme then finish in the oven.



# GARDEN GUILT

What is wrong with me?

By Dottie Love, Master Gardener Intern



It was so bad one year I had to get my elderly mini zebu steer Bucky to help me.

I have a flower garden. That's the "Ornamentals" category of horticulture. Criteria for success? Pretty. *Yeah yeah yeah: design, scale, harmony, variety, "mood"; it all comes down to "Pretty".*

But all I can concentrate on is all the work I haven't done because I'm lazy and no-account. I can't be trusted to shop responsibly and I've wasted my money by not keeping up with anything. New plants planted? *No, and they'll die any second.* Hose leak fixed? *No, and the water bill will be ecstatic.* Pruning, fertilizing, weeding, dividing, etc., etc., etc.? *Uhh, no...uhh, I'm thinking of a nap.*

Drooping leaves accuse me. *You call it 'hydration' and haul around a \$40 mug. We call it 'life', lady.* Mounds of pulled weeds and twigs slyly snicker. *It's fine, just ignore us. We're busy killing your grass and dropping seeds for next year.* The thistles stand tall and laugh and laugh. *Sure, kick us over. We'll be right back.* The trumpet vine is silent; it's occupied strangling anything alive or dead.

The only gratitude I get is from the fire ants.

Last night I made iced tea. I nonchalantly strolled to the patio and pinched off a dozen spikes of spearmint. *But of course! Don't all gardeners have herbs at their back door?* The tea was marvelous. After the ice melted, I noticed an odd shape in the glass. No, not a crawly bug. It was a bagworm cocoon.

Yes, I need help. But I can't trust a helper to not cut down my smooth-leaved sumac saplings, spread willy-nilly by rhizomes. Or my lantana cuttings entwined with the grass that needs pulling. And my Mutabilis rose just might come back, you never know!

My garden is my albatross. I created this monster. Now it's that vine that eats people in that movie. Back inside, in my chair with my heating pad, I Google: *Gardener +lazy. +bad. +lame. +loser. +spendthrift.*

**+overwhelmed.**

We're putting June's  
newsletter to bed.  
Watch for the  
conclusion of this  
editorial next month.



**Next month watch for information about the  
upcoming Master Gardener Intern class.**