

Gulf Coast Gardening

WRITTEN BY GALVESTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS IN COOPERATION
WITH THE GALVESTON COUNTY OFFICE OF TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION SERVICE

Beauty Belies Toxicity

Pink Angel's Trumpet

Issue 203 - November/December 2016

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It's funny how you go through the year day by day but nothing changes, then when you look back, everything's different.

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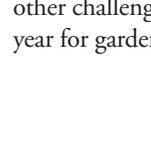
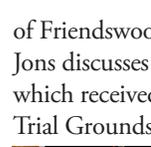


*By Camille Goodwin
MG 2008*

Another year seems to have screamed by! As the newsletter team brings you the final newsletter for 2016, it's interesting to look back to see all the topics we covered to bring you the latest research and topical educational articles. We hope this information has been useful to home gardeners in general. Our target audience also includes our Master Gardener volunteers to augment their outreach efforts in their local communities and to enhance their horticulture-related competencies.

Some of my personal favorite topics included Smartphone Apps for Weed Identification, How to Build a Human Sundial, Pocket Gardens, Aquaponics and How Flower Color Influences our Moods. You can look back anytime, to see all our published newsletters by visiting our website. If you have any comments, questions or ideas for upcoming newsletters, please contact me at mrgmsc@comcast.net or Linda Steber steber8@msn.com

Turfgrass is often a challenge in our region, one of the most destructive diseases is Take-All Root Rot, read about it on page 4 to see if there's hope of recovery for your lawn. Patsy Jewell tells us about the Tersa Sphinx Caterpillar on page 5. The adult stage of the Tersa Sphinx Caterpillar is a distinctive that moth reminds me of a stealth bomber! Lisa Belcher describes her misfortune with poison ivy on page 6 and Margaret Canavan shares some interesting history on the one surviving Cottonwood tree in Galveston (page 8). Just because it's now the fall season, we can't be sitting around doing nothing; Donna Ward gives a list of activities (page 9) we should be taking care of now in our gardens including several ideas on trees and other plants to



put in the ground now. Jan Brick gives us a heads-up on Flamboyant and Fanciful Foliage (page 12). Our Best Shots article this newsletter is on Toxic Plants (pages 10 & 11) and provides information on how and where to plant some of the more common toxic plants that are actually lovely additions to your gardens. Tea drinkers: Did you know you can actually grow and easily process your own fresh tea? See how to do this on pages 14 & 15. In our ongoing series that feature garden clubs in the Houston/Galveston region, Kaye Corey provides information on the Heritage Gardeners of Friendswood (page 17). On page 19, John Jons discusses a rose variety he developed which received an American Rose Society Trial Grounds Winner award. Please enjoy meeting Master Gardener A. Lynette Parsons on page 16. In The Last Word, Dr. Johnson tells us about the moths that have over-run lawns in the Houston/ Galveston region over these last few weeks and the destruction caused by the tropical sod webworm on page 26.

As always checkout our monthly video calendar (page 18), the Carbide Park Update (page 20), Seasonal Bites (page 21) and the Upcoming Events and Bulletin Boards for updates on events and volunteer opportunities (pages 23 & 24).

I'm looking forward to 2017 and know it will be another challenging, exceptional and successful year for gardening!

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Cover:
Pink Angel Trumpet
Photo courtesy MG Digital Library



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we are all about the joy of gardening.
Thanks for your interest!



By Laurel Stine
MG 1996

ask a master gardener

Q&A

Take All Root Rot - What?

Traditional grass lawns, being monocultures, are bound by default to be more difficult to maintain than other more diverse plantings. One of the most frequent problems I see these days is a fungal disease of St. Augustine grass called Take All Root Rot. The name is apt; many times it will “take all” of the lawn.

Take All Root Rot (*Gaeumannomyces graminis*) is a disease which occurs worldwide on members of the grass family, such as wheat, barley, oats and turfgrasses. This fungal disease pathogen is present in many of our soils (i.e., a soil-borne fungal pathogen).

Over the years it seems that more and more lawns are becoming infected by this pathogen. By the time the leaf symptoms appear, the pathogen has been active on the roots for several weeks, probably longer; the disease has been there potentially for years. If the turfgrass is not stressed, leaf symptoms may never be observed.

Leaf symptoms will first appear in large irregular patches as yellowing of lower leaves accompanied by a decrease in leaf growth rates. Eventually, the lower leaves turn brown as they die. Other fungi may attack the grass and the affected turf will begin to thin. The final symptom is patches of dead grass. It is common for the patches to recover completely; however, these patches often appear year after year, expanding in size, as the pathogen moves via the root system from the initial infection site.

Take All Root Rot is not simple to identify since other diseases and insects can cause similar symptoms. The overall above ground leaf symptoms may look like Brown Patch, a fungal disease caused by *Rhizoctonia solani*. With Brown Patch (also known as Large

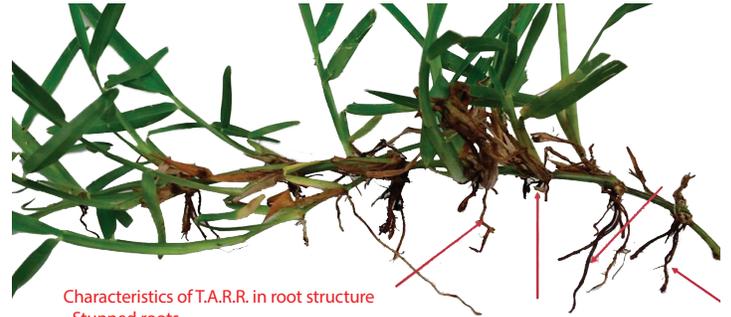
Patch) disease, leaf sheaths become rotted, and a gentle tug on the leaf blade easily separates the leaf from the runner. In contrast, leaves will remain firmly attached on St. Augustine grass infected with Take-All Root Rot.

Nematodes will also cause a root decline and subsequent top growth decline. However, the roots will normally be simply discolored and malformed, but not black and rotted as is the case with Take-all Root Rot. Chinch bug damage may cause patches of dead grass, but chinch bug adult or nymphs will likely be present to confirm this pest.

Take All Root Rot is almost always exacerbated by a cultural problem. If you do not fix the cultural problem, the disease will probably return. Unfortunately, it can be any cultural problem—cultural problems include too much or too little moisture, too much or too little of a soil nutrient(s), too much shade—you get the idea. The occurrence of other insect pest and disease problems can further stress turfgrass and thus make turfgrass more susceptible to Take All Root Rot.

Take All Root Rot is a tenacious disease which tends to return unless cultural conditions are ideal for turfgrass. Be aware that the fungal pathogen can “travel” (be disseminated) from one yard to another. The fungal pathogen is not usually transported by foot traffic; it is more likely to be spread when infected grass, thatch, or soil is moved elsewhere.

Turfgrass often shows the first symptoms of the disease from



Characteristics of T.A.R.R. in root structure

- Stunted roots
- Brown or Black color
- Appearance of burned roots

Photo courtesy of UF/IFAS

spring green-up through early summer, which suggests that the fungus infects the turf grass in the fall or early spring. However, the disease can occur at any time during the growing season, especially when the weather is warm and moist and grass is under stress.

Here is our website about Take All Root Rot: <https://www.agrilifebookstore.org/v/vspfiles/downloadables/E615.pdf>

Here is our website about maintaining your St. Augustine lawn: <https://www.agrilifebookstore.org/v/vspfiles/downloadables/L5340.pdf>

While irrigation is essential to prevent drought damage during the dry season, the amount of water and the timing of its application can prevent or contribute to disease development. Lawns should only be irrigated when necessary to maintain adequate soil moisture levels. The above publication contains excellent information about watering.

Some of our Master Gardeners have benefitted by applying humic substances, like MicroLife’s Root Protector. They recommend ap-

plying 3 times a year, doubling the application over the affected areas and several yards beyond. The first application is March, and the last is in September.

If this disease has literally “taken all” of your existing lawn, you may be looking at the possibility of replacing the sod. Be aware that Take All Root Rot overwinters in thatch and infected living plant material, so all turf plant material should be removed before you install the new sod.

According to Florida Extension, it will be necessary to remove the infested sod and soil to a 6" depth plus an area that is one to two feet beyond the symptomatic sod. However, there is no guarantee that new sod will not reintroduce the pathogen. Avoid spreading known contaminated material into unaffected areas.

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ask a master gardener



By Linda Steber
MG 1991

Tersa Sphinx Caterpillars Q&A

Question: What is this strange caterpillar?

While working in her yard, MG Patsy Jewell discovered a very unusual caterpillar near her penta plants. He was very long, brown in color and had large spots which resembled eyes which seemed to be staring at her. She proceeded to take pictures and sent them to Dr. J. In talking with him, he asked that Patsy feed the caterpillar some of the penta leaves and bring the caterpillar, along with her camera, to the Extension Office. She said that he was too kind to say

that what she really needed was a photo lesson. He showed her how to get the best resolution, how to select the macro setting, then followed with a lesson on placing the subject in the garden, getting down close and taking many, many shots. They then moved the subject to other areas in the garden and the caterpillar caught on "real quick" and started posing for them. He would stretch, stick out what appeared to be his nose, twist and moved all around. Dr. J

kept telling her to "Click, get closer, click again, watch out for her shadow," and so on.

The Caterpillar was identified as the caterpillar stage of *Xylorhynchus tersa*, commonly known as Tersa Sphinx Hummingbird Moths. The Tomato/Tobacco Hornworm is a Sphinx Moth also. When full-grown, the caterpillars tend to "wander" to seek a suitable site to pupate, and thus end up on people's sidewalks, porches, living

rooms, etc. In fact, it started to pupate the next day and used the leaves to camouflage itself! These caterpillars also pupate underground. He actually had been feeding on the pentas. They also feed on other plants and weeds in the Rubiaceae family (of which pentas are a member).

Patsy said it was a very informative lesson from Dr. J and to think it is all in a day's work for him. She expressed that we as Master Gardeners are so lucky to have him as our County Agent to be able to experience his knowledge and expertise.



Before Photo



After



Photos

Photos by MG Patsy Jewell



Poison Ivy...trust me you *never* want it between your toes!

Photos courtesy MG 2014 Lisa Belcher

By Lisa Belcher
MG 2014

On Thursdays at the Master Gardener Demo Garden many of my fellow gardeners have noticed the array of Frio River T-shirts I wear. You see, my family has been going to the Frio River since I was 9 months old. We go there a couple times a year. Recently, we had been traveling to Uvalde County to look and purchase our “forever home” property. I had always dreamt being so close to my beloved river. This last trip, however, is one I shall not forget and hope to never repeat.

The 5 acres were beautiful. As we were walking the land, all I was thinking was “here is where I will put my vegetable garden” or “which way will the sun set.” We took photos. We took measurements. We climbed over, around and through brambles and scrubs. For the next few days all I did when I came home was plot until the wee hours of the morning house plans, grand designs for ponds, fire pits. Then one day I had a slight itch. Then that slight itch became a bigger itch and a bigger problem. Unfortunately, as I was walking the property, dreaming big and plotting for our future home, I unknowingly came in contact with a little plant called *Toxicodendron radicans* or Eastern Poison Ivy. I can honestly say I did not suspect for a single moment I had come in contact with the plant. I don't recall seeing the ivy growing up a tree or a small bush or a sign warning me to stay away. The plant itself is a woody plant with vines that grow up a tree or wall, with green, glossy deciduous leaves of three per sprig in the spring and with autumn colors in the fall. I remember the rhyme, which interestingly was first printed in Nature Notes in October 1907, “leaflets three, let me be,” but I didn't have my radar tuned in that day. All parts of this plant are toxic to humans. Birds and wildlife eat the white berries, but those too are toxic to humans. The first known published account of this plant dates back to 1624 when explorer John Smith wrote an account based on an unpublished manuscript from the governor of Bermuda. His brief description was “The poisoned weed is much in shape like our English Ivy, but being touched, causeth redness, itching, and lastly blisters.” It's hard to believe, but both authors defended the ivy, since the plant, in Smith's words “after a while passes



away of themselves without further harm, yet because for the time they are somewhat painful, [the plant] hath got itself an ill name, although questionless of no ill nature.” Both writers agreed the plant was not itself toxic or poisonous, but almost 400 years later the word poison stuck.

For the next several decades, poison ivy remained in the Americas until seeds were gathered and sent to Europe where the plant was considered an exotic oddity.

Kew Gardens in London, the gardens of the Faculty of Medicine in Paris, and a few other locations are where this ivy was propagated and put on display.

Originally, poison ivy, oak and sumac were all categorized and placed in the genus *Rhus* (the sumacs), but by the 1930s, botanists began to separate these irritating plants from the other sumacs, assigning them to the appropriately named genus *Toxicodendron* (Greek for “poison tree”). There are two species of poison ivy: *Toxicodendron radicans* (formerly *Rhus toxicodendron* or *Rhus radicans*), and *Toxicodendron rydbergii* (nonclimbing poison ivy), a shrub found throughout North America except in the southeastern states. The two species of poison oak—*Toxicodendron pubescens*, or Atlantic poison oak, and *Toxicodendron versilobum*, western or Pacific poison oak—earn their common name from their oak-shaped leaves. Poison sumac (*T. vernix*), an eastern swamp-dwelling shrub or small tree, is far more toxic than its relatives.



It is not those shiny leaflets three that make you break out and itch but the oil from the plant itself. Japanese artists in the early twentieth century used tree sap from Lacquer trees without knowing this sap contained urushiol, resulting in terrible side effects for its artists. It's those effects of the sap which intrigued Japanese chemist Rikou Majima. He studied the tree, sap and urushiol oil from 1907-1922 and found that it was not a single substance, but rather oily compounds known as alkyl catechols. These compounds allow the urushiol to penetrate the skin. Once exposed, little can be done. Immediate washing of the



body is recommended. There are products on the market to purchase, but you must use these within hours of exposure; however, for me, I never saw the ivy. Little did I know the oil can be easily transferred not only by hands, but from your shoes and clothes, even from the vehicle in which you're sitting. Frequent oatmeal baths were my salvation as well as calamine lotion, but I still needed to go to the doctor. Steroids are usually prescribed, two lots for lucky me due to my sensitivity to this lovely ivy. Most cases can be cleared in two to three weeks. Urushoil can remain inert and not break down for months; there has been documentation of the presence of urushoil for up to two years. Soon there will be many wives, whose husbands come home from their hunting weekends, who will do the laundry and will come in contact and break out with poison ivy. Camping equipment used from last year not properly cleaned from your previous foray into the woods might be hiding the unwanted urushoil oil.

So how do you eradicate the ivy if you have it on your property? One recommended method is pulling it out of the ground. Drench the area where poison ivy is lurking to loosen the soil. Wearing long sleeves and trousers and wearing gloves, put your hand inside a plastic shopping bag and tug the plant out of the ground. Turn the bag inside out so the plant is not exposed to you and immediately throw it into a lawn bag. Repeat until all ivy is out of your garden. This is a safe, but by no means guaranteed, poison ivy removal method for small to medium size plants.

So back to my trip to the Frio, the last thing we did that day was walk down to the river. Naturally, I had to put my toes in my beloved Frio. I had worn my British Wellie boots. I stepped into the river for a moment or two, then stood on top of my boots while my husband went to the car to get another pair of shoes. Yes, I had another contact with poison ivy! And trust me, you do not want it between your toes. *Ever.*





Remember the Cottonwood

There is a very special Ike survivor tree in Galveston — and it may be the only one of its kind on the island. This huge beauty is an Eastern Cottonwood (*Populus deltoids*) in residence at the corner of 46th Street and Avenue R½.

Photos courtesy MG 2003 Margaret Canavan

*By Margaret Canavan
MG 2003*

A Texas legend (unproven of course) claims that a shrine of Texas independence may be named for this member of the Poplar family. The Spanish word for poplar is “Alamo.” Founding Spanish missionaries were supposedly so impressed by a grove of cottonwood trees growing along the San Antonio River that they named their mission for them.

Galveston’s Women Health Protective Association planted 400 cottonwoods in 1921 during their reforestation efforts following the multiple damaging hurricanes of the early 20th century. It is unlikely that our current specimen dates back that far, as the lifespan of the cottonwood can occasionally reach 70, but rarely 100. The current homeowner says it was there when he arrived 20 years ago, and neighbors say it has been there “forever.” The tree has certainly been through many hurricanes, droughts and floods and remains in remarkable shape. Despite its relatively short lifespan, cottonwoods are very fast growing, so big trees are a common sight. However long it’s been there, this tree is well-loved and the homeowner has supported large limbs to prevent their loss.

Cottonwood is a Texas native usually found near water throughout the eastern half of the state. Large leaves provide cooling shade and shake from the slightest breeze with a soothing, watery sound due to their flexible flat leaf stems. Bark on young trees is silvery-white, smooth or lightly fissured and our Galveston tree has the dark gray and strikingly deeply fissured bark of older specimens.

Cottonwood gets its name from seeds covered with tiny cottony hairs which do not increase its popularity with neighbors. The spring “cotton” travels easily on the wind, providing somewhat messy deposits on car windshields, lawns, window screens and in air conditioner filters. Dark

green leaves of summer often turn yellow to provide fall color prior to leaf drop.

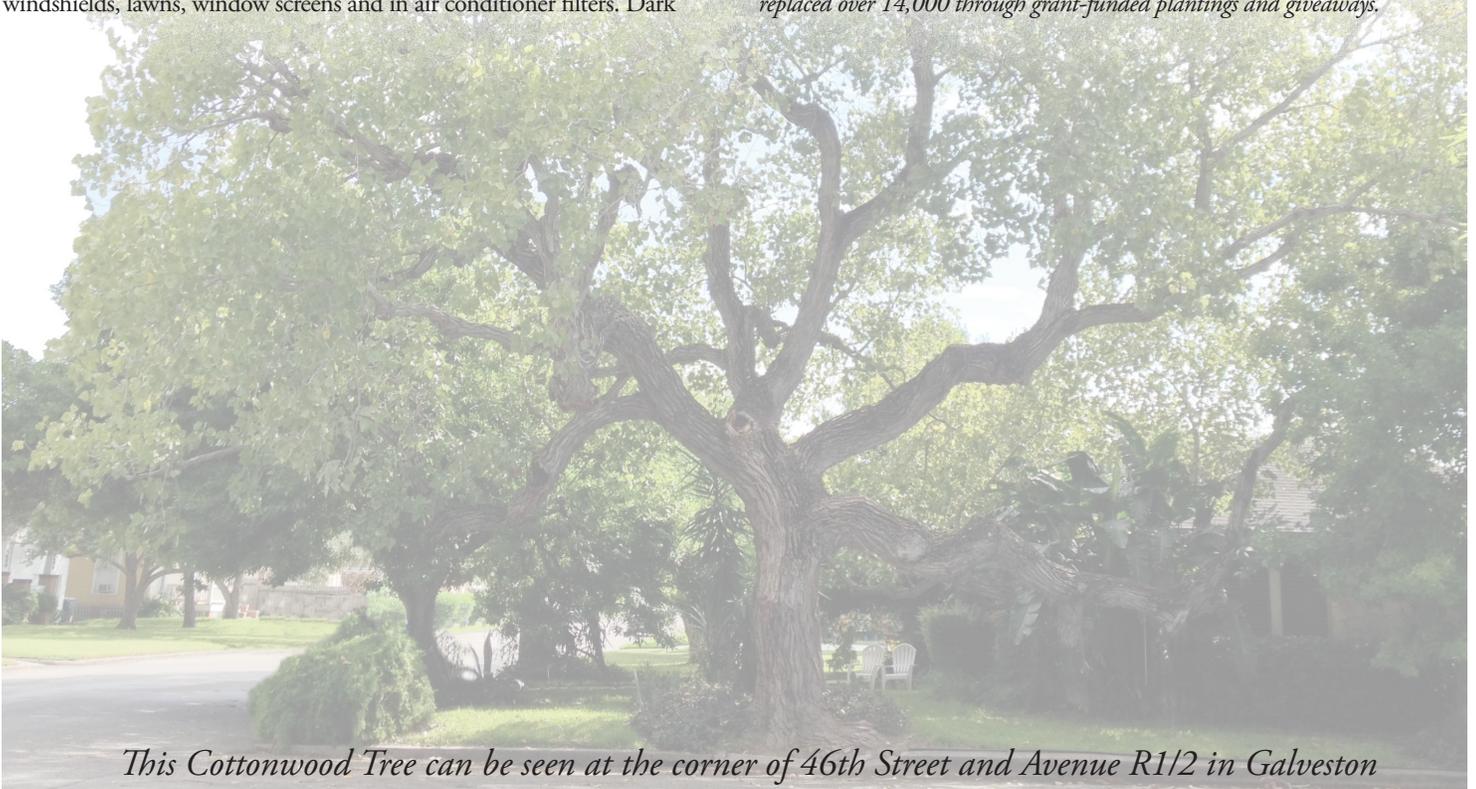
The tree is generally tolerant of imperfect drainage and various soil types, although it prefers sand or sandy loams with decent moisture, but not constant flooding. It can survive moderate, but not extended drought. Its popularity for street or landscape use is diminished by a shallow root system, weak and brittle wood, messy “cotton” of female trees and a relatively short lifespan.

Cottonwoods are part of America’s history as they welcomed early pioneers moving west. Their welcome sight promised shade for comfort, timber for building, and leaves and bark for livestock food as well as a bitter medicinal tea. In regions with few trees, the highly visible cottonwoods often served as gathering places and trail markers and as sacred objects for several Plains tribes. Today, its lumber may become plywood, matches, crates, boxes and paper pulp. Nature lovers appreciate the tree as a host plant for the caterpillars of several butterflies.

This rare Galvestonian is worth a visit. See a bit of history and perhaps glimpse some fall color!

“Tree Stories” is an ongoing series of articles about island trees, tree care and tree issues. If you have or know of a special tree on Galveston Island that should be highlighted, please email treesforgalveston@gmail.com.

Margaret Canavan is a Galveston resident, a Galveston County Master Gardener and a member of the Galveston Island Tree Conservancy Board. Hurricane Ike caused the loss of 40,000 trees on Galveston Island. The Galveston Island Tree Conservancy was formed to address that loss and has replaced over 14,000 through grant-funded plantings and giveaways.



This Cottonwood Tree can be seen at the corner of 46th Street and Avenue R1/2 in Galveston

Trowels and Tribulations

In a Suburban Garden

This is a reprint of Donna's article for La Ventana del Lago, the City of El Lago's neighborhood newspaper



*By Donna J. Ward
MG 1996*

Step outside, breathe deeply and take pleasure in the coolness of the early morning air. The sluggishness that beset us during summer is forgotten on a crisp November morning. And if it's a work day, you'll have a hard time not calling in sick. Wouldn't it be a perfect day to put on your grubbies and dig in the dirt? After all, you did pick up a few plants over the weekend that need to go in the ground.

When it comes to planting – most people think spring. But in my opinion fall is a better time for many reasons. Oh sure, you can plant those adorable little summer annuals in spring, and some vegetables if

More plants die from lack of water than cold temperatures.

Of course you can't go wrong with any of the oaks if you're looking for shade. The shumard oak and the nuttall oak are two of the best red oaks for this area. Both will provide attractive red fall color. Of the white oaks - the live oak, swamp chestnut and the bur oak are also good choices for our landscape. They are spreading in growth habit, and make excellent shade trees. Keep in mind that a mature oak tree can spread anywhere from 50 to 80 feet, so plant accordingly. Don't put two or three on a postage stamp sized front lawn!

tion, flawed pruning schedule, or maybe they were just planted in the wrong place. If it's the latter – now is the time to make the move. Just remember to keep them well watered and mulched to prevent winter damage.

Show off your green thumb and delight your neighbors at the same time. Let them see your bloomers - the floral kind of course. It's time to put in transplants of snapdragon, pansy, pinks, candytuft, calendula, alyssum, stock and many, many more available right now at your favorite nursery. A mass planting of colorful cyclamens (although a bit pricy) will certainly



you've a mind to, but when it comes to serious landscape planting – fall is the season for you.

Think trees – they are currently on sale at most nurseries and this is the best time to put them in the ground as our winters are relatively mild. They'll just sit there looking bare for a few months, but while you're not looking they will be spending the winter months establishing a healthy root system before temps start to warm and Mother Nature tells them to put on top growth. As a result they'll have a head start over any trees planted in spring. But just because it's winter, they still need water.

Instead you may prefer a smaller tree such as an American holly, river birch, chinquapin oak, or winged elm. These will spread a maximum of 30 feet, and are all adapted to or native to this area. Trees in the landscape can represent as much as 15% of your home's value should you decide to sell. A mature shade tree planted on the west side of your home can reduce your air conditioning costs by as much as 40% - what more encouragement do you need?

If your azaleas and camellias didn't perform up to your expectations this spring, there could be several reasons. Too much sun, not enough water, improper fertiliza-

get noticed by your neighbors and anyone passing by.

Farmers - if you hurry, put in transplants of broccoli, beets, cabbage and seeds of pumpkin and kohlrabi. All this month you can plant seeds of mustard, radish, spinach, turnips, and both English and snap peas. If you're planning on inviting the family for a Thanksgiving feast, sage, rosemary and parsley fresh from the herb bed are looking to be introduced to the roast turkey and stuffing, thyme wants to meet up with the creamed peas, dill would like to get acquainted with some cucumbers and sour cream - you get the picture...

Webster's New World Dictionary defines the term "toxic" as follows: "of, affected by or caused by a toxin. A poison produced by microorganisms and causing certain diseases. Any poison secreted by plants or animals."

What exactly is a toxic plant? There is no doubt that some of our favorite plants are dangerous. Some plants produce toxins and those toxins can cause us harm and be fatal, but that doesn't mean we can't enjoy their beauty. We just need to know what issues might arise in the handling of them. The toxicity of certain plants varies with the conditions under which they grow. The season of the year, how much light they require and the trace elements in the soil affect their makeup. Like each of us, we differ in our sensitivity to particular toxins. The most common victims of plant poisoning are children. Also, pets tend to be victims as well. It is important to educate our children and to teach our pets what plants are safe and what plants are dangerous.

If you have a poisoning emergency or question, please contact the TEXAS POISON CENTER NETWORK www.poisoncontrol.org. Do not wait for symptoms to appear which may include nausea, headache, disorientation and/or vomiting.

If you think you might have been in contact with a toxic plant, the recommended treatment is the following:

FOR MOUTH: Remove any remaining portion of the plant, berry or mushroom. Save a piece of the plant in a dry container for identification. Have the person wash out their mouth with water. Check for any irritation, swelling or discoloration.

FOR SKIN: Remove contaminated clothing. Wash skin well with soap and water.

FOR EYES: Wash hands with soap and water to avoid further irritation to the eye and rinse your eyes with lukewarm tap water for 10-15 minutes.

FOR PETS AND PLANTS: Dogs and cats frequently ingest plants. Some plants are not harmful to people, but are harmful to pets. Call the Poison Center if you believe your pet has eaten a poisonous plant.

There are HUNDREDS of toxic plants. Below is information about six of them.

1. Angel's Trumpet
2. Castor Bean
3. Dieffenbachia
4. Mother-In-Law Tongue
5. Oleander
6. Philodendron

Angel's Trumpets (*Brugmansia* spp.) add exotic beauty to sunny Texas Gulf Coast garden beds with their pendulous, trumpet-shaped flowers and dense foliage.

However, their beauty and resilience belies the extreme toxicity of their flowers and leaves, which can cause serious illness and death if consumed.

Angel's Trumpets (also spelled as Angel Trumpets and Angels Trumpets) should be wisely positioned in the home landscape to prevent interactions with pets and young children.

They are excellent grown in containers. Angel's Trumpet grows better away from other plants, too. They should always be placed away from children and pets.

Castor Bean (*Ricinus communis*) is a beautiful specimen plant beloved for its bold look, continuous color and easy care. The large glossy foliage is an attractively-textured addition to your garden. The small pom-pom flowers are followed by prickly husks filled with bean-like brown speckled poisonous seeds. Ingesting 3 seeds can be fatal. However, there is a process that denatures and deactivates the toxic protein. For topical application, you can apply a few drops of 100% pure castor oil to your skin and massage as needed. If you are in need of an all-natural emollient, 100% castor oil is expeller pressed from the seed of the castor bean and is odorless and tasteless. There are many uses of castor oil. It is considered by many to be one of the finest natural skin emollients. It is also known as Palma Christi (the "Palm of Christ"). Castor oil celebrates a history of use that dates back to biblical times. Since then it has been used therapeutically to help support and soften healthy skin and hair and is commonly used in some of today's most popular cosmetics and beauty formulas.

Dieffenbachia or Dumb Cane (*Dieffenbachia* spp.) if ingested can cause pain and irritation to lips, tongue and mouth, making it difficult to talk or swallow. The poisonous component is the white milky liquid that comes out of the plant if the leaf or stem is broken. Avoid allowing this liquid from touching your skin as it will cause



Angel's Trumpets (*Brugmansia* spp.)



Castor Bean (*Ricinus communis*)



Photos by Elayne Kouzounis

Mother-in-Law Tongue (*Sansevieria trifasciata*)

MG Best Shots and Narrative *Toxic Plants*



By Elayne Kouzounis
MG 1998

irritation. It is a beautiful houseplant but should be placed away from children and pets. Avoid ingestion or contact with eyes. It can produce burning of mucous membranes, numbing of the vocal cords, and permanent corneal damage.

Mother-in-Law Tongue / Viper's Bowstring Hemp / Snake Skin plant / St. George's Sword (*Sansevieria trifasciata*) is an easy-care houseplant and is becoming very popular in landscapes due to the ease of growing and caring for them. It is a native of West Africa. The plant contains saponins which are mildly toxic to dogs and cats and can lead to gastrointestinal upset if consumed and can cause numbness to the vocal cords.

Oleander (*Nerium oleander*) is poisonous. All parts of the Oleander are extremely poisonous. A few leaves are enough to kill an adult. Also, poisoning has occurred from using branches to roast hot dogs. There are chemicals that affect the heart if ingested. The plants do provide wonderful shade, require little or no care and produce a variety of beautiful flowers. Galveston is known as the Oleander city.

Tree philodendron (*Philodendron bipinnatifidum*) is also known by two other common names: cut-leaf philodendron and selloum. Tree philodendron is one the most commonly grown philodendron in Texas Upper Gulf Coast landscapes. This philodendron grows as a large semi-woody shrub with enormous glossy leaves and single or multiple erect unbranched stems that tend to fall over and sprawl when the plant gets large. The robust stem bears stout aerial rootlets between conspicuous leaf scars. Philodendrons are poisonous if eaten and the sap may irritate sensitive skin. Avoid ingestion or contact with eyes. The plant can produce severe burning of mucous membranes and cause permanent corneal damage. Some species of philodendrons have been used as houseplants. There are more than 200 species of philodendrons and even more hybrids.



Dieffenbachia or Dumb Cane (*Dieffenbachia* spp.)



Oleander (*Nerium oleander*)



Tree philodendron (*Philodendron bipinnatifidum*)

Preventative measures you should take when handling toxic plants:

1. Wear gloves.
2. Keep plants out of children's reach. A leaf can block an infant's airway.
3. Mistletoe and Holly can be dangerous. Poinsettias are now known as non-harmful plants.
4. It is important to make your family aware of what plants they should not eat.
5. Wild mushrooms should not be eaten unless they are purchased from the grocery store.
6. The leaves of many food-type plants like potato and tomato leaves should not be ingested.
7. Be knowledgeable of plants that can cause rashes such as poison ivy, poison oak and bull nettle.
8. If you burn your plants or shrubs, avoid inhaling the smoke.
9. If you have jewelry made from nuts, seeds, beans or grass, do not chew or suck on them.

To grow these poisonous plants in pots, take into account the following:

1. A suitable container.
2. Suitable soil.
3. Consideration should be taken on where the pot is placed.

In conclusion, there are many plants that are beautiful, offer wonderful shade and are used as a healing product. A lot of those plants are toxic, too. It is important to be aware of what plants can cause us harm and what we need to do to keep our children, pets and us safe. Knowledge is everything.



By Jan Brick
MG 2001

Flamboyant and

Reprint from The Island Garden - Oct. 2016

Foliage can be an exciting and colorful boost to any garden. We plant shade trees to cool our landscapes resulting in wide swathes of shadowed spaces once they are developed. Ornamental, impressive and ornate, some plants have little or no blossoms nor do they need them. Their flushes, blushes and colorations speak for themselves. Sunny sites or shady spots may be enhanced by their unconventional features. There are any number of beautiful options for plants that shine in the shade, inject bold texture and provide striking focal points. Not only are there stunning foliage plants for shade, there are many more highly colored floras that thrive in sunlight.

Hawaiian Ti (*Cordyline fruticosa*) is an evergreen plant in the asparagus family that may be labeled as cabbage palm, palm lily, or good luck plant. It is not native to Hawaii but was introduced there by Polynesian settlers from its indigenous areas of Asia, New Guinea, Australia and parts of Polynesia.

The native cultures appreciated and made use of the Ti plant in several ways...as a food source enjoying the sweet starchy rhizomes of the mature fruit...as a practical application when using the leaves to thatch roofs of homes. The leaves were also woven into skirts for ceremonial dance performances as well as into the familiar lei worn as a necklace.

Although the smooth, fresh-smelling Ti leaves do not have much flavor, they are used nearly daily in Hawaiian kitchens, mainly as a wrap (in place of foil) for cooking. A delicious dish served today as a plate lunch meal with pork, beef or chicken with an accompanying side of rice and macaroni salad is steamed-prepared using taro and Ti leaves.

This is a woody plant that may grow to ten or more feet with leaves up to twelve inches long in colors of rich green to magenta to purple...one of the most colorful of foliage plants. Hawaiian Ti plant may be potted and grown inside your home in an area of good air circulation while bearing in mind that it must be kept away from heating and air conditioning vents. For out-of-doors, choose a site with full to partially shaded sunlight in well-draining soil. Water your Ti plant at soil level keeping the foliage as dry as possible. Water deeply, do not saturate but do not allow it to dry out completely. Fertilize monthly with a balanced formula and protect the Ti from temperatures of fifty degrees F or less. Diseases and insect infestations may be treated with the appropriate fungicides or insecticides available at your local nurseries or plant centers.

Propagation is easily accomplished with stem cuttings that can be inserted directly into a pot...mist often to prevent drying of leaf tips and leaf loss...larger leafless stem cuttings of several inches may be utilized as well.

The striking leaves can be used to complement a floral display by adding them to an arrangement of pink flowers for an interesting



Photo courtesy MG 1983 Herman Auer

appearance or to a collection of multi-colored blooms for a dramatic floral composition.

The Leopard plant (*Farfugium japonicum*) also called "ligularia" should be considered for the bold texture mentioned above. The name is adapted from the conspicuous bright yellow spots on the large almost heart-shaped leaves. This two to three foot tall, two foot wide clump-forming perennial evergreen is valued for the waxy, deep green (with shades of mahogany) foliage. Native to Japan and China, it has a long history of use in traditional Chinese medicine in the treatment of fever and inflammation but it must be noted that all parts of this plant have been designated as poisonous if ingested. The leaves resemble rounded kidney beans or a plump heart-shape. In late summer and early fall yellow daisy-like blooms rise from the stalk, bringing bright color to shaded spaces. New foliage emerges every spring as long as temperatures remain above twenty degrees.

Leopard plants with their charming foliage and bright yellow flowers can be highlighted in many ways...in containers, as border plantings, as an accent in water gardens as well as the aforementioned specimen plant for shady areas. Placing a single leaf with an individual stem of a colorful bloom in a simple vase of water can create a strikingly contemporary floral statement.

Place in light shade (under a tree is suitable for instance) in well-draining enriched soil; protect from strong winds, water and mulch well; keeping the soil around the plant evenly and consistently moist...do not allow the leopard to dry out. Fertilizer should be used only sparingly as it can cause weakened vitality and less attractive foliage.

Leopard plants self-sow readily or may be propagated by division in the fall or sown directly in the garden by seed...collect the seed pods before they fall from the stem.

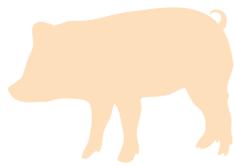
NOTE: Take precautions against snails and slugs as they can quickly devour the foliage!

Fanciful Foliage

Huli Huli Pig Recipe

INGREDIENTS

- 4 lbs pork butt
- 4 tablespoons liquid smoke
- 2 tablespoons sea salt
- 1 banana leaf
- 4-6 large Ti leaves, rib removed



1. Score pork on all sides by slashing diagonally and making slits that are 1/4 inch deep and 1 inch apart. Rub sea salt into the slits, then rub well with liquid smoke on all sides.
2. Wrap pork in the banana leaf, then wrap in ti leaves. Overlap ti leaves to completely cover the pork. Tie securely with kitchen twine.
3. Wrap and seal in aluminum foil. let pork stand at room temperature for 30-45 minutes.
4. Place wrapped pork on rack in shallow roasting pan. Roast at 500°F for 45 minutes then at 400°F for 3 1/4 hours longer. Shred pork and let stand in mild brine solution with a few drops of liquid smoke before serving. Makes 8-10 servings.

NOTE: Wash the Ti leaves well before wrapping pork. Do not use leaves from plants that have been treated with an insecticide, fungicide or other pesticide.



Photo courtesy MG 1983 Herman Auer

Popular Ti Plant Cultivars

- "Baby Doll" ...small maroon leaves trimmed with pink
- "Firebrand" ...large leaves with dark burgundy color
- "Kiwi" ...medium to small leaves with a tracery of red around a green leaf



Photo courtesy MG Billy Jenke

Cultivars

- "Aureomaculata" ...random yellow spots
- "Argenteum" ...leaves mottled with creamy white margins
- "Crispula" or "Crispata" ...ruffled leaves
- "The Rocket" ...tall flower spikes



Photo courtesy MG 1983 Herman Auer



Tea and Tisane Theme Gardening

By Camille Goodwin
MG 2008

If you enjoy drinking tea or herbal teas, you can easily design and grow a sustainable garden to produce your own yard-to-cup brew. Let's start with the tea--

Did you know that, following water, tea is the second most consumed drink in the world? More interesting is that Black, Green, White and Oolong tea come from the same plant that produces all of the world's commercial teas, the *Camellia sinensis*. It's related to that popular sub-tropical garden shrub that produces beautiful flowers during the fall and winter when little else is blooming in our gardens. Two main varieties of *Camellia sinensis* are grown for harvesting tea, *Camellia sinensis* var. *sinensis* from China and *Camellia sinensis* var. *assamica* from Assam, India. Each type of tea (green, black, white, oolong) is made using different processing methods before drying of the leaves. Tea is defined as anything derived from the *Camellia sinensis* plant. Anything else, while sometimes called "tea," is more accurately referred to as an herbal tea or tisane. Tisanes include herbs, such as chamomile, rooibos and fruit, but usually no tea leaves.

Tea can be grown anywhere ornamental Camellias grow. Our Gulf Coast region is the perfect place to harvest your own tea. Plant in half-day sun or partial shade, acidic soil (pH 6-6.5 or lower), and a well-draining bed. Fertilize lightly in early spring with Camellia/Azalea mix, use slow-release nitrogen if you are harvesting heavily (no later than July). Excess fertilizer is NOT recommended but regular rainfall or watering encourages new growth. Your plant should be around 3 years old before you start harvesting leaves.

Processing tea takes five steps: plucking (by hand) the very youngest leaves and leaf buds, withering (allows fresh leaves to dry), rolling (breaks the leaves to release the natural juices, activating enzymes that help to initiate fermentation. Rolling also gives the leaves a curled appearance.), oxidizing (leaves turn black), and firing (dries leaves to stop oxidation process).

Green Tea

- Blot the leaves dry, and let dry in the shade for a few hours.
- Steam the leaves (like you would vegetables) on your stove for about a minute.
- For a different flavor, try roasting them in a skillet for 2 minutes instead of steaming.
- Spread the leaves on a baking sheet and dry in the oven at 250 degrees F. for 20 minutes.
- Store the dried tea leaves in an air-tight container

Black Tea

- Roll the leaves between your hands, and crush them until the leaves start to darken and turn red.
- Spread them out on a tray, and leave them in a cool location for 2-3 days.



Tea Leaves: fresh plucked, rolled oxidized, dried

- Dry them in the oven at 250 degrees F. for about 20 minutes.
- Store in an air-tight container.

Oolong Tea

(falls between Green & Black teas on oxidation scale)

- Spread them out on a towel under the sun and let them wilt for about 45 minutes.
- Bring your leaves inside and let them sit at room temperature for a few hours.
- Make sure to stir the leaves every hour.
- The edges of the leaves will start to turn red as they begin to dry.
- Spread the leaves on a baking sheet and dry in the oven at 250 degrees F for 20 minutes.
- Store the dried tea leaves in an air-tight container.

White Tea (the least processed) The freshly plucked leaves are spread out and allowed to wither until they're completely dry. No oxidation takes place.

Harvesting and Pruning

- Tea is produced from the new growth of the plant, e.g., the first two leaves and the unopened leaf bud. Plucking stimulates the plants to produce new shoots, so during the growing season you can harvest again within a few weeks.
- Tea plants grow slowly and require several years of growth prior to a productive harvest; don't harvest until your plant is at least 3 years old.
- Prune during late fall or winter after flowering to promote spring growth. Plants can be kept low (2-3 feet) for harvesting.



Tisanes

A tisane is any herbal infusion other than from the leaves of the *Camellia sinensis* tea bush. Tisanes are made with fresh or dried flowers, leaves, stems, seeds or roots, generally by pouring hot water over the plant parts and letting them steep for several minutes. Tough stems, seeds and roots must be boiled on a stove after being mashed. The tisane is then strained, sweetened if so desired, and served. Just about any herb or flower can be used for tisanes including anise, basil, dill, cardamom, lemon verbena, scented pelargonium (scented geranium), cilantro/coriander seeds, fruits like raspberry and blueberry, lemon, rose hip, strawberry and flowers such as calendula, honey-suckle, hibiscus, jasmine, lavender and rose. Roots like *Echinacea* and licorice can also be used. Here are some delightful possibilities to add to your garden (start with transplants, seeds take longer). Both fresh or dried leaves can be used (dried may be stronger flavored than fresh). For all beverages, in general: fill kettle with fresh water, bring to boil, pour into teacup or teapot to warm it up, discard water. Put tea leaves, seeds, or flowers into cup or teapot and pour boiled water over them, steep, strain before drinking.

Lemon Balm (*Melissa officinalis*) – Pinch off freshest youngest growth. Put two pinches of either fresh (about 5 leaves) or dried into a teabag or teapot, pour the boiled water over the leaves. Cover and allow to steep for 3 minutes. Using a tea strainer pour into cup.



Lemon Grass (*Cymbopogon citratus*) – Put three pinches of fresh or dried lemongrass into a teabag or teapot and pour the boiled water over it. Cover and allow to steep for 3 to 5 minutes. Strain into cup and enjoy, or refrigerate until chilled and serve over ice and lemon grass leaves.



Mint - Any mint of your choice – process like lemon balm.



Fennel Seeds - When flower petals die off, they leave tiny oval seed pods. Collect seeds when they turn from green to brown with ridges on seeds. Take a teaspoon or two pinches of dried fennel seeds,



crush them, place in teapot, pour boiled water over them, cover with lid or saucer and steep for three to four minutes; strain and enjoy.

Chamomile Flowers – Cut from base of stems for your tea, chopping stems and flowers into manageable sizes and use fresh or dried. Put three or four flowers and a pinch of stems and leaves into teabag or teapot. Flowers are very strong; if too many are used, tea can be bitter. Pour boiled water over plant parts and allow mixture to steep for 3 to 5 minutes; strain before drinking.



Ginger (*Zingiber officinale*) – Grate ginger rhizome; use fresh or dried. Put two pinches of ginger into teabag or teapot, pour boiled water over it, cover with lid or saucer, steep 3 minutes and strain before drinking. Can also be used as iced tea; lemon is a great addition.



Some other tisane themes might include the following:

Relaxation Garden - Plant hibiscus, borage, oregano, lavender, lemon verbena, oregano.

First Aid Garden – Plant bay, bee balm, betony, burnet, comfrey, goldenrod, sarsaparilla, thyme, yarrow.

Arthritis Care Garden – Plant alfalfa, cayenne, clover, meadowsweet, white willow.

Special Thanks to Christine Parks from
Camellia Forest Nursery who allowed us to use her
interview video of tea leaf processing:
www.camforest.com



By Barbara Canetti
MG 2016

Our Hotline Volunteer.... Meet GCMG Master Gardener A. Lynette Parsons

For several decades, MG A. Lynette Parsons was a librarian. She learned where to find valuable sources of information and directed people with questions to those existing resources. It had always been a learning experience – for her as well as the public.

Now, in retirement, she continues her quest to answer questions and seek information. For the past five years, Lynette has been one of Galveston County MG program's Hotline volunteers. She is part of an active team of five who reach out to the public and help them solve their gardening problems.

And she's good at it. She listens, researches, investigates and then relays the information in a pleasant, conversational manner. She's helpful and sounds genuinely interested in each caller's question.

"This is not really that hard and right up my alley. We do the research and answer the questions or pass the caller on to someone who has developed a specialty in the area," she says. "Most of our calls fall into the three T's – tomatoes, turf and trees."

Sometimes she gets stumped by a caller.

"The bug IDs are difficult. I can identify fungus, trees and plants, but the bugs and caterpillars can be challenging. Sometimes we get walk-ins with baggies of crushed bugs and they say 'what is this?' and we have to find out. But in this job at the Hotline, we learn so much – everyday," she says.

Lynette, a 2011 graduate of the Galveston MG program, lives with husband Hank Gup-ton in Anahuac, Chambers County – a 90-minute ride to the Carbide facility for the Hotline. She assists in several areas with the Galveston MG program – mostly in a clerical manner. But in Chambers County, she is spreading the word about plants, vegetables, trees and gardening. She writes a monthly gardening column for a string of community newspapers and corresponds with a long list of gardeners on her email blog. She shares tips and announcements about gardens, growing seasons, greens and grounds to her ever-expanding network of green thumb enthusiasts.

Since Chambers County has such a small Extension Office, she opted to do the MG program through the larger Galveston office. However, she supports the office in Chambers County by doing presentations on a variety

of topics at libraries and community centers, and does site visits for the extension agents, whose specialties are different than hers. She is also a volunteer at the Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge and is assisting the Chambers County Museum by cataloging its collection. Additionally, she is a member of the Friends of the Chambers County Library System and on the Leadership Advisory Board for Chambers county Agrilife Extension. Then in her spare time, she fosters dogs and cats through the Baytown Humane Society and has been a volunteer with the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life for two decades. And now and then, she dabbles in politics.

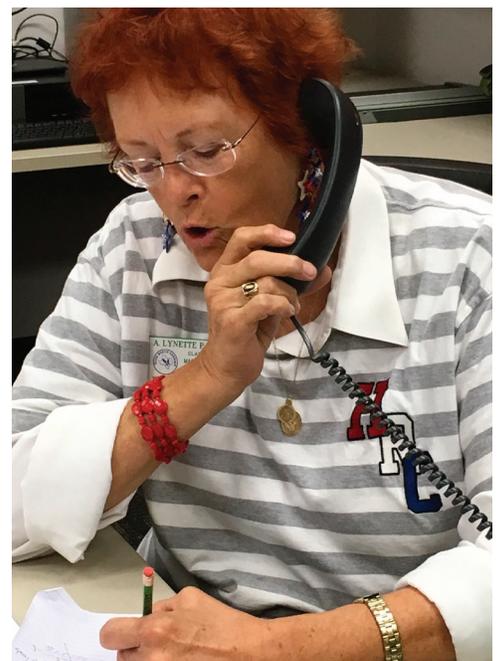
Lynette tells people she comes from a long line of dirt farmers in Indiana – some for sustenance and others for pretty flowers. And although she has been gardening her entire life – in South Florida for 10 years as well, once she enrolled in the MG program she realized "I knew absolutely nothing!"

"What I did learn is that you must keep learning, otherwise it is not worth doing," she says.

For instance, she is testing and experimenting at her 3-acre yard at home with bale farming, in which she plants her seeds in a hay bale and nurtures her plants in that medium.

"I had an unbelievable zucchini crop! They were huge," she says. "And this year I am looking forward to a bumper crop of strawberries." She says she rides around her yard on a lawnmower, singing "Green Acres" to herself, surveying her veggie garden, fruits, flowers and trees and "identifying all the weeds in my St. Augustine grass."

Here's something interesting about Lynette. Although she is extremely gregarious and friendly, she is rather humble. Shortly after leaving a message for a concerned gardener during Hotline duty, she took another call. During that conversation, a voice mail message was left from a previous caller. The woman thanked Lynette profusely and said the advice she received helped her make a major real estate decision. Thank you - thank you - thank you. Lynette listened to the message, smiled and then deleted it before anyone else heard it. She didn't need anyone else hearing the praise; she said she was just happy to help.



Heritage Gardeners

Friendswood Garden Club Series



By Kaye Corey
MG 2001

Heritage Gardeners, Friendswood's garden club, is a large 50-member garden club that recently celebrated its 50th Anniversary with an open house reception. Displays of past and present activities and civic projects were open to the public. The club began meeting in homes in 1966 and was "federated" (i.e., became a member of the state and national gardening organizations) in June of that year.

After the club's organization, Cecil Brown Sr. (son of Frank J. Brown, a co-founder of the Quaker community in Friendswood) donated property for the reconstruction of the Brown's original home built in 1895. Through the efforts of the garden club and community leaders, The Frank J. Brown Heritage Garden Center and Museum was replicated utilizing parts from the original home, on the donated property at 108 Skyview.

The completed home museum /clubhouse was dedicated on April 3, 1971, and opened to the public on July 3, 1971. For more than a decade the Frank J. Brown Heritage Garden Center and Museum served as "home" to the Heritage Gardeners. The museum now is operated by the Friendswood Historical Society.

Having outgrown the meeting space in the Museum, Heritage Gardeners club members began seeking larger spaces to meet and another larger "homesite" for the club and its many garden and community-related activities. Community rooms in banks, the library and churches served well for Heritage Gardeners meetings.

In the spring of 1989, the Heritage Gardeners purchased their current home located at 112 West Spreading Oaks. They were able to pay cash from earnings through multiple luncheons and bake sales and freshly-prepared corsage sales for Easter, plus hundreds of ticket

sales from their annual Christmas Tours of Homes.

The building itself had been abandoned, sitting among waist-high weeds. Members went to work clearing the property and planning the conversion of the dilapidated building. It should not be surprising that there is a connection from the club's past, intertwined with the club's present. This newest home building, that was soon to be renovated, had originally been built in the early 1940's by Cecil Brown, for his son Cecil Jr. and daughter-in-law, Mary Baker Brown. The heritage is a circle unbroken. Cecil Brown, if you will remember, donated the property for the first garden club home and museum.

The Marie Workman Garden Center and (Ed and Ruby) Briscoe Gardens were dedicated in outdoor ceremonies in June 1992. The Garden Center's name is a memorial to members whose dedication and volunteerism made a dream a reality for Heritage Gardeners.

The Marie Workman Garden Center and Briscoe Gardens reflects the interests of the Club...it is surrounded by beautiful gardens which are open to the community and provide a living demonstration of the lessons of horticulture, landscaping, and civic improvement nurtured by the Club.

Both the Heritage Gardeners and its counterpart-club Heritage Junior Master Gardeners meet in the club home each month. And work goes on, year-round, in preparation for the Club's annual Christmas Home and Spring Garden tours. Proceeds from these two activities support the upkeep of the Garden Center and Gardens, as well as many other civic projects, including scholarships to college bound students in horticulture-related studies.



49th Annual Christmas Tour of Homes

The Heritage Gardeners will conduct their 49th Annual Christmas Tour of Homes in Friendswood on November 19 & 20, 2016. Six beautifully decorated homes will be on the tour. Come experience real snow on the ground in Falcon Ridge and enjoy the antique cars on display as you tour Christmas in their home. Venture into an African wildlife-like Christmas and then Santa Comes to Town at another home. Have lunch in the club tearoom, join in the raffle, enjoy the Christmas bazaar and bake sale all at 112 W. Spreading Oaks in Friendswood.

*** Remember ***
this is the weekend before Thanksgiving.

Tickets may be purchased from any member, at the Garden Center and throughout the city including the Chamber of Commerce on Friendswood Drive across from Stevenson Park.
Call 713-553-7607 for tickets.

Heritage Gardeners are eager to welcome you to their club meetings that are open to the public. Club meetings are held on the first Thursday of each month from September through May at 9:30 a.m. There you will enjoy refreshments, view flower designs/decor and hear fine speakers on gardens, gardening, landscaping, floral design and other horticulture topics.

Visit the Heritage Gardeners' website
heritagegardener.org
for more information.

Gardeners who like to dig in the dirt and share gardening secrets are always needed!



2016 MG Re-certification (Continuing Education) Hours Available Through the AgriLife Extension Office

Date	Name of Program	Speaker	CEUs for MGs
1/7/2016	Wedge Grafting - MG ONLY	Sue Jeffco	2.00
1/9/2016	Growing Avocado and Papaya	Jerry Hulbert	3.25
1/9/2016	Growing Peaches in Galveston County	Herman Auer	2.25
1/14/2016	Care & Pruning of Bamboo	Tish Reustle	1.00
1/16/2016	Wedge Grafting	Sue Jeffco	2.00
1/16/2016	Kitchen Gardening	Mary Demeny	2.25
1/19/2016	Gardening by the Square Foot	John Jons	1.75
1/21/2016	Adult CPR Certification Class - MGs Only	Jaelyn Jones	4.00
1/23/2016	Spring Vegetable Gardening	Luke Stripling	2.50
1/23/2016	Growing Blueberries	Dr. David Cohen	1.75
1/28/2016	Anyone Can Grow Roses	John Jons	1.50
1/28/2016	Fig Tree Pruning & Propagation	Terry Cuclis	1.00
2/2/2016	Propagation of Plants by Cuttings	Bill Cummins	1.50
2/6/2016	Growing Backyard Citrus	Chris Anastas	2.00
2/6/2016	Citrus Greening	Robert Marshall	0.75
2/6/2016	Growing Great Tomatoes (Part 2)	Ira Gervais	2.25
2/11/2016	Rose Pruning	John Jons	1.50
3/12/2016	Tomato Stress Management (Part 3)	Ira Gervais	2.00
3/12/2016	Vermiculture - Worm Castings for your Garden	Linda Brown	1.50
3/15/2016	The ABC's of Composting	Susan Meads-Leahy & Rodger Allison	1.50
3/19/2016	Honeybees Around the Garden	Robert Marshall	1.25
3/19/2016	Turning Dirt into Soil	Jim Gilliam	1.50
3/24/2016	Peach Thinning	Sue Jeffco	1.00
3/29/2016	Texas Tuff - Landscape Plants	Sandra Devall	2.00
4/7/2016	Vegetable of the Week Educational Series in the Demo Garden - Potatoes	Barbara Lyons	0.50
4/9/2016	The Culture & Care of Palms	O.J. Miller	2.50
4/9/2016	A Passion for Plumeria	Loretta Osteen	2.00
4/14/2016	Vegetable of the Week Educational Series in the Demo Garden - Green Beans	Barbara Lyons	0.50
4/14/2016	Grafting Pecan Trees	Herman Auer & Various MGs	1.00
4/16/2016	Olive Oil Production	Randy Brazil	1.00
4/19/2016	Rainwater Harvesting	Tim Jahnke	1.50
4/21/2016	Vegetable of the Week Educational Series in the Demo Garden - Eggplant	Ira Gervais for Barbara Lyons	0.50
4/21/2016	Chemicals for the Home & Garden - MGs ONLY	Rod Mize	1.25
4/28/2016	Vegetable of the Week Educational Series in the Demo Garden - Cucumbers	Herman Auer for Barbara Lyons	0.50
5/3/2016	Chemicals for the Home & Garden	Rod Mize	1.50
5/5/2016	Vegetable of the Week Educational Series in the Demo Garden - Peppers	Gene Speller for Barbara Lyons	0.50
5/5/2016	Canning Class	Jackie Auer, Gloria Funderburg, Barbara Turner	2.50
5/7/2016	Plan Before You Plant	Karen Lehr	2.00
5/12/2016	Vegetable of the Week Educational Series in the Demo Garden - Corn	Barbara Lyons	0.50
5/19/2016	Vegetable of the Week Educational Series in the Demo Garden - Garden Soils	Barbara Lyons	0.50
5/26/2016	Vegetable of the Week Educational Series in the Demo Garden - Squash	Barbara Lyons	0.50
5/31/2016	Bamboo Uses in the Landscape	Tish Reustle	1.25
6/2/2016	Pruning Peaches - A Hands-on Demonstration	Sue Jeffco & Robert Marshall	1.00
6/7/2016	Drip Irrigation - Easy & Efficient	Susan Roth	1.00
6/9/2016	Pruning Peaches - A Hands-on Demonstration Session 1	Herman Auer & Sue Jeffco	0.75
6/9/2016	Pruning Peaches - A Hands-on Demonstration Session 2	Herman Auer & Sue Jeffco	0.75
6/11/2016	T-Bud Grafting - A Hands-on Demonstration	Sue Jeffco	2.25
6/11/2016	Planning For Your Successful Fruit Tree Orchard	Herman Auer	2.00
6/18/2016	Design Principals for Landscapes	Karen Lehr	2.00
6/21/2016	Growing Cucurbits: Summer & Winter Squash, Cucumbers, & Cantaloupe	Herman Auer	1.50
6/23/2016	Vegetable of the Week Educational Series in the Demo Garden - Okra	Barbara Lyons	0.50
6/30/2016	Vegetable of the Week Educational Series in the Demo Garden - Vegetables: All-American Selections	Barbara Lyons	0.50
7/7/2016	Vegetable of the Week Education Series in the Demo Garden - Seed Catalog Review	Barbara Lyons	0.50
7/12/2016	Insects & S'more	Emmaline Dodd	1.25
7/19/2016	A Homeowner's Guide to Weed Control	John Jons	1.25
7/23/2016	Aquaponics	Robin Collins	1.25
7/28/2016	Orchids - Educational Programs in the Demo Garden	Clyde Holt	0.50
7/28/2016	Flower Arranging - MG ONLY	Jackie Auer	1.50
7/30/2016	Successful Fall Vegetable Gardening	Luke Stripling	3.00
8/16/2016	Gardening by the Square Foot	John Jons	1.50
8/18/2016	Vegetable of the Week Educational Series in the Demo Garden - Southern Peas	Barbara Lyons	0.50

2016 MG Re-certification (Continued on page 19)

2016 American Rose Society Trial Grounds Winner

At the American Rose Society's (ARS) Spring National Convention, in Harrisburg, PA., on July 29th, 2016, it was announced that a rose that Master Gardener John Jons had hybridized was an ARS Trial Grounds Winner.

To enter this competition, you have to first hybridize a unique rose. The rose has to then be propagated so that there are three copies of the rose. These roses are then delivered to the ARS trial grounds and planted in three different rose beds. The roses are then evaluated for two years by a panel of experienced rose judges. The roses are evaluated on attributes that include; bud form; flower form; bloom quality; color opening; color finishing; substance; vigor/basals; stem length; stem strength; foliage; disease resistance; flowering effect and fragrance. Roses may receive over 20 evaluations.

The judges described John's rose as 'a really nice rose' and a 'great rose.'



DON'T FORGET TO GET YOUR HOURS POSTED

You are not a Master Gardener in Good Standing if you have not posted your hours for the year on the county VMS website. It's very important to do this as it helps determine some of the funding AgriLife Extension receives for needed programs. I'm looking forward to 2017 and know it will be another challenging, exceptional and successful year for the Galveston County Master Gardeners!

2016 MG Re-certification *(Continued from page 18)*

Date	Name of Program	Speaker	CEUs for MGs
8/25/2016	Vegetable of the Week Educational Series in the Demo Garden - Managing Mites	Barbara Lyons	0.50
8/27/2016	Flower Arranging	Jackie Auer	2.00
8/27/2016	Growing Strawberries	Robert Marshall	1.00
9/1/2016	Gardening with the Masters Tour of Demonstration Garden	Various MGs	2.00
9/10/2016	Kitchen Gardening	Mary Demeny	2.50
9/10/2016	Composting	Jim Gilliam	1.75
9/17/2016	A Passion for Plumeria	Loretta Osteen	2.50
9/24/2016	T-Bud Grafting Citrus & Fruit Trees	Sue Jeffco	2.00
9/24/2016	Unusual Edible Plants	Ed Naspinski	1.25
10/1/2016	Cruciferous and Other Favorite Vegetable for Fall Gardening	Gene Speller	2.00
10/1/2016	Herbs in the Garden	Cindy Croft	2.00
10/1/2016	Tour of Demonstration Garden after Herbs in the Garden	Cindy Croft	0.75
10/4/2016	Easy Butterfly Gardening	Phyllis Koenig	1.25
10/8/2016	Bulbmania!	Dodie Jackson	1.25
10/8/2016	Gardening for Jewels...Hummingbirds	Deborah Repasz	1.75
10/11/2016	My Favorite Perennials	Sandra Devall	1.50
11/1/2016	Daylilies	Michael Mayfield	1.25
2016 Recertification Hours for MGs		Total CEUs (Hours)	115.25

Last Updated: November 14, 2016

Reminder: In order to maintain your status as a certified Texas Master Gardener, each year you must complete a minimum of **6 hours continuing education**, as well as **12 service hours**. Additionally, those hours must be reported through the online Volunteer Management System or other means. The website to log your volunteer hours is: <https://texas.volunteersystem.org/UniversalLogin.cfm>. Contact MG **Wayne Elliott** at gcmghours@gmail.com for more information.



November/December "Things To Do"

by Jenifer Leonpacher
MG 2010

Gardening Calendar Video

Click on the "Play Video" icon (right) to see what a "group effort" can do by the aforementioned Master Gardeners to prepare an exceptional "Things to Do" Calendar.



by Gregory Werth
MG 2012



Demonstration Garden

Carbide Park Update



By Tom Fountain
MG 2008

You can see that fall has arrived by looking at the fall colors in the garden. However, temperatures have continued to be three to four degrees above normal for the past few months. Our afternoon highs were about normal for this period, but the overnight lows remained well above average. Despite our plentiful rains this summer, once the rain ended, it just quit. Rainfall across this area the past few months was almost five inches below normal. Outlook for late fall and early winter indicates more of the same, in fact the NOAA outlook indicates we could easily slip into a drought in the next few months. So, it is time to make sure your irrigation system is working, or decide how you are going to keep your plants watered.

1 As you can see, garden activity has been quite hurried. We scrambled to deal with the remaining plants from our fall sale, get our beds ready for fall planting, and put the starter plants from the greenhouse in the ground. Those plants are already looking good and will be producing lots of cabbage, broccoli, mustard greens, and kale.

Pictured are: 2 Joe tiling beds, Wes preparing beds, and 3 Venise and others planting the starter plants. It was a team effort and they made quick work of it all.

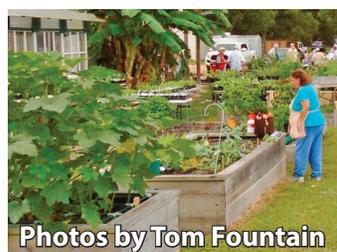
I understand we were very successful with our biannual plant sale in October. Our gardeners worked really hard to put on a great sale and a big part of the success was the work

done by all of the greenhouse crew. They did an exceptional job of growing plants for the sale, and producing starter plants for many of our fall gardens. Pictured are a few of the greenhouse crew: 4 Stewart, Lisa and Denny.

The cover for the patio grill is now online, keeping the cooking crew sheltered while they turn out some yummy luncheons. 5 Greg is pictured grilling on that patio. If you haven't heard the call, we should all be volunteering to help with washing the dishes a few times a year. This normally takes about 30 minutes after lunch. Here are some of the cooking crew preparing lunch, 6 L to R; Jane, Greg, Ed, and Linda.

One of the many benefits of being a Master Gardener and working in the garden is that you have some great opportunities to experiment and learn new things from others who have had lots of growing experience. 7 A good example of this is pictured of Luke explaining to Rachel how to tell when a tomato is mature enough for harvest.

The winter growing season is upon us. I hope your holidays are filled with joy and good fellowship. Until we meet again in the garden, stay warm, and prepare your beds for cooler, drier weather.



Photos by Tom Fountain



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



The cooler weather tells us that summer is finally over. While we are happy that the Gulf Coast does not face the prospect of bitter cold and snow, the lower temperatures, shorter days, and falling leaves all announce that our south Texas winter is near. Though we may miss the stunning flame and gold colors of the north, our moderate winter temperatures more than compensate and give us another reason to be thankful. Here is an easy recipe for pralines that Master Gardener Jane Carter loves. Fresh pecans make this a perfect holiday treat for everyone.



Louisiana Pralines

from the kitchen of
MG Jane Carter

- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup light brown sugar (packed)
- 1/2 cup light cream (20%) or use regular Carnation evaporated milk
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons butter or margarine
- 1 cup pecan halves or pieces

- Lightly butter a sheet of aluminum foil
- Combine sugars, cream/milk and salt in 2-3 quart saucepan.
- Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, until mixture reaches 228° F on a candy thermometer (Or until mixture spins a thread about 2 inches long when dropped from a spoon)
- Stir in butter and pecans. Continue cooking, stirring constantly, until mixture reaches 236° F (Or until a small amount of mixture dropped into very cold water forms a soft ball that flattens when removed from the water)
- Remove from heat and cool for 5 minutes
- Beat mixture with a wooden spoon until slightly thickened
- Candy should just coat nuts but not lose its gloss
- Drop by spoonfuls onto butter foil

Makes about 18 candy pieces.

The next recipe comes from the files of one of the original GCMG, Sam Scarcella. It's an old recipe but apart from "oleo" being more commonly called Margarine or "marg," everything else is the same today. Turkey leftovers easily take the place of the cooked chicken to make good use of holiday leftovers.



King Ranch Chicken

from the kitchen of
MG Sam Scarcella

Preheat oven to 325° F

- 1/4 cup oleo (margarine)
- 1 medium green pepper, chopped
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 can cream of mushroom soup
- 1 can cream of chicken soup
- 1 regular size can of Rotel tomatoes
- 2/3 cups cubed cooked chicken (or turkey)
- 12 corn tortillas, torn or cut into pieces
- 2 cups (8 oz.) shredded Cheddar cheese

- In large skillet, sauté onion and green pepper in oleo until tender
- Add both soups, Rotel tomatoes, and chicken
- Stir until blended
- Spray or lightly grease a 9" x 13" pan
- Alternate layers of tortillas, soup mixture and cheese
- Make three layers. (Add more cheese to the final top layer)

Bake at 325° F for about 40 minutes or until hot and bubbling

Note: This can easily be made spicier by using the hotter variety of Rotel tomatoes or by sautéing and adding hotter peppers. If you taste anything really yummy this holiday season, send us the recipe so we can pass it on.

Though GCMG's love to grow things, they also like to eat!



September 2016 Meeting

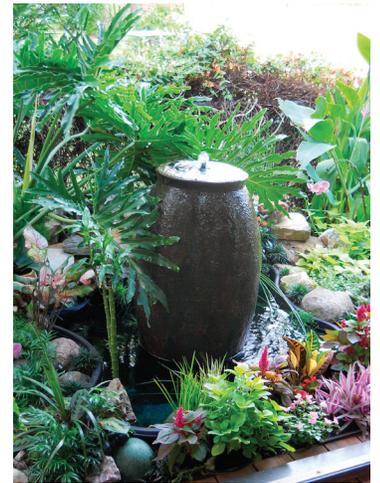
Galveston County Master Gardener Meeting Minutes September 13, 2016

By Mary Lou Kelso
MG 2000

The September 13 meeting of the GCMGA was held at the home of MG Robin Collins (MG 2016) in Kemah. Dr. Johnson welcomed everyone and guests were introduced and he thanked Robin for hosting the meeting and opening her home and landscape to the Master Gardeners. The MG Fall Plant Sale (to be held Saturday, October 15, at Jack Brooks Park) was discussed. Robin then introduced her invited guests: County Commissioner Ryan Dennard (Pct. 1), County Commissioner –Elect Darrell Apffel (Pct. 1), County Commissioner Ken Clark (Pct. 4), and Carl Joiner, City of Kemah Mayor, and his wife Colene Joiner were present to welcome all the Master Gardeners to Kemah. Robin gave a huge thanks

to Brian Harris for cooking some great fajitas! MG Clyde Holt provided a blessing of the meal and everyone partook in a delightful dinner.

Mexican Fiesta was a hit!



Upcoming Events - Nov/Dec 2016

Galveston County Master Gardener Educational Programs for Interested Gardeners

The following Master Gardener Programs are free to the public.

Location: Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office in Carbide Park

4102 Main Street (FM 519), La Marque Texas 77568

GPS location: 29.359705, -95.003591

For course reservations, call 281-309-5065 or email galvcountymgs@gmail.com

Website: aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston

NOVEMBER

DAY LILIES

Tuesday November 1
6:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Brazoria County Master Gardener Michael Mayfield will present a program on the different types of daylilies, what they are and what they are not. He will also show how to produce seeds for propagation of more plants, as well as the wonders of the different colored lilies you may develop and name. He has been a Lone Star Daylily Society member for 20 years.

TOOL CARE

Tuesday, November 29
6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Galveston County Master Gardeners Tim Jahnke and Henry Harrison, III, will give a “tool talk” program that will include information about the care of your garden tools to prolong their lives, what to look for when buying tools while keeping safety in mind, and how to make tools easier to work with and “user friendly.”

GROWING TOMATOES FROM SEEDS

Saturday, December 3
9:00 – 11:30 a.m.

Galveston County Master Gardener Ira Gervais' presentation will include seed variety selection, as well as the care needed to

DECEMBER

have tomato plants of your choice ready to plant in the garden in February for a bountiful crop of tasty tomatoes. Seating is limited to 90 persons.

SOIL HEALTH & EVALUATION

Saturday, December 3
1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Galveston County Master Gardener Jim Gilliam will present the 18 important indicators that can reveal your soil's health. It has been estimated that 75-80% of plant problems begin in the soil with the “plant root zone.” A soil assessment to identify soil problems can be done armed with only a shovel and a wire flag. Strategies to improve your soil's health for a better garden will be addressed.

CITRUS SEMINAR & TASTING

Monday, December 12
6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Texas A&M Extension Specialist Monte Nesbitt will be the speaker for this presentation. He will cover such topics as rootstock, variety selection and establishment, production, cultural practices, and typical disease and insect pest problems. **An update on Citrus Greening and Citrus Canker issues in Galveston County and surrounding counties will be included.**

SAVE THE DATE!

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18

“Galveston County Master Gardener Annual Spring Plant Sale”

8:00 – 8:50 a.m. Presale presentation
Jack Brooks Park youth Building

9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Annual sale of plants and trees that perform well in Galveston County

LOCATION

Galveston County Fair Grounds | Jack Brooks Park – Rodeo Arena | located at Hwy 6 and Jack Brooks Road, Hitchcock, TX.

Check the website for details and updates: aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston

For Galveston County residents needing help on horticultural issues -
Call the help line 281.309.5061 to ask a Master Gardener.



bulletin board



Volunteer Opportunities

- For the **MG Phone Desk** contact Ginger Benson by
- e-mail at galvcounymgs@gmail.com or call the office at 281.309.5065.

Volunteer Opportunities

- **Tideway is a program of the Transitional Learning Center**
- Dr. Johnson has approved Tideway Transitional Learning Center (644 Central City Blvd., Galveston, Texas 77551) as a location where Master Gardener service hours may be earned. Plans to prepare the gardens at Tideway for spring planting are ready and volunteers are needed.
- Volunteers can contact Brack Collier at bcollier@tlc-galveston.org.
- The focus is on the long-term needs of individuals with an acquired brain injury. The program offers accessible horticultural experiences, through which individuals with a brain injury can improve sensory awareness, motor skills, range of motion, endurance and flexibility as well as regain confidence, and learn new skills. This provides the opportunity for our residents to develop the necessary skills to gain and maintain a productive lifestyle whether it is on site or volunteering in the community. The residents at Tideway are very much "hands on" in building the different garden beds, in fact some of the residents came up with the designs. **And they have chickens!**



Volunteer Opportunities

- **Libbie's Place Adult Day Care** has been designated as a Demonstration Garden for the Master Gardener Association. It is located at 5402 Avenue U in Galveston and is part of Moody Methodist Church outreach ministries www.moody.org/libbies-place-senior-day-program. A crew is needed to maintain and upgrade the garden as needed with your time spent counting towards MG volunteer hours. MG Pam Windus is heading up the crew and will determine the day, time and frequency of the work days. If you are interested, or have any questions, please contact Pam at 409.771.5620, email DrPGilbert@aol.com to let her know the day/times (AM/PM) that would work best for you. Thank you for your time and consideration in this great new endeavor for the Master Gardeners.

SPECIALIST AND OTHER MG RELATED TRAINING

Please see the Texas Master Gardeners Website for details. By visiting the website you can find up-to-date information on Specialist Programs that were added in between editions of the newsletter. txmg.org. You may download the application forms from that website. **Note** all applications for the Specialist Training courses must be approved and signed by Dr. William M. Johnson. **Note** fees do not include lodging or food unless specified otherwise.

Now accepting applications for the 2017 Master Gardener Training Course!!

Deadline
5:00 p.m., Wednesday
December 21, 2016

Follow link below for more information
aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/MG_Program/index.htm

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Tour Guides for "First-Thursday-in-a-Month" Public Access and Tour of our Demonstration Garden
Long-winded title but it says what we will be doing. Our Demonstration Garden will be open for touring by the general public on the first Thursday of each month from 9:00 -11:00 am. MGs are needed to serve as tour guides for our demonstration Garden. Contact MG Robert Marshall 281.993.5595, email rbrtm01@att.net or MG Bobbie Ivey 713.748.8564, email blivey@sbcglobal.net to volunteer.

Volunteers are needed to help with the Saturday programs and the Tuesday evening programs. If you can help please contact Herman Auer 409.655.5362, e-mail hermanauer@comcast.net

AgriLife Extension Office Demonstration Garden needs volunteers!
The gardens around the AgriLife Extension Office are maintained by Master Gardeners under the team leadership of MG Peggy Budny. This is an opportunity to make a good impression on the many visitors to the AgriLife Extension Office. Come out and have a good time while learning more about ornamentals. Please contact Peggy at 281.334.7997, email fbmab@verizon.net to find out the schedule and join her team.



WeatherLink® Network
Galv. County Master Gardener Demo Garden

84° HIGH 84°F at 11:59 AM
LOW 68°F at 7:33 AM

Wind Calm High Gust 1 mph at 12:23 AM
Humidity 76% Feels Like 94°F
Rain 0.00" Seasonal Total 37.45"
Barometer 30.11" Rising Slowly

Current Conditions as of 12:10 PM Wednesday, November 2, 2016

Don't forget to put the link for our weather station on your smart phone and computer:
www.weatherlink.com/user/gcmga



Here is a great way to support our GCMGA Amazon will donate 0.5% of our personal purchases to Galveston County Master Gardener Association. All you have to do is: Go to smile.amazon.com - Choose Galveston County Master Gardener Association as your charity. Save smile.amazon.com to your favorites. - Always start from this site to do your amazon shopping. - You should see your chosen charity in the top bar on amazon's website. - If you have any problems, search smile on amazon's website

2017 ANNUAL SPRING PLANT SALE Seminar & Craft Sale



Saturday, February 18, 2017

Galveston County Fairgrounds ~ Hwy 6 ~ Hitchcock, TX
Galveston County Master Gardeners

8 a.m. Educational Seminar
Ed Pickett Hall

9 a.m. Plant Sale
Rodeo Arena

1 p.m. Close

Spring Vegetables, Flowers, "Texas Tough" Perennials,
Citrus & Fruit Trees, Bulbs, and more!



For a complete list of plants visit
aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/index.htm

Limited Wagons Available,
You Are Welcome To Bring Your Own

TEXAS A&M
AGRILIFE
EXTENSION



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Galveston County Master Gardeners



TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION SERVICE | GALVESTON COUNTY OFFICE
4102-B Main Street (FM 519) | La Marque, Texas 77568 | 281.534.3413 | aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/index.htm

the last word . . .

Mystery of Moth Sightings in Lawns... Tropical Sod Webworms



Tropical sod webworms are insect pests that feed on turf grass. Caterpillars have translucent green coloration and rows of dark spots along their back.

Photos by William Johnson



Click on photos to enlarge.

I received a surprising number of e-mails and phone calls over the past week regarding the sudden appearance of small moths in lawns and nearby shrubs **2**.

The most generic e-mail inquiry simply asked "Why do I have a lot of moths on my bushes and in my yard?" When I contacted the exasperated homeowner, he conveyed a description that other concerned homeowners also expressed including having large areas of tan to brown-colored grass which seem to continue to expand and enlarge. In most cases, these areas were reported to have changed almost overnight or over a very short period of time.

Not so coincidentally, I was able to tour several home landscapes recently that were on the League City Garden Club's Annual Garden Walk. I must admit that I was as interested in touring the home landscapes as I was in determining if any of the lawns had sustained damage from tropical sod webworms. I think the tour guide at the first site was a bit disappointed with my interest in looking first at the lawn instead of the beautiful landscape and the striking palette of colorful flowers that framed the landscape upon entering the backyard.

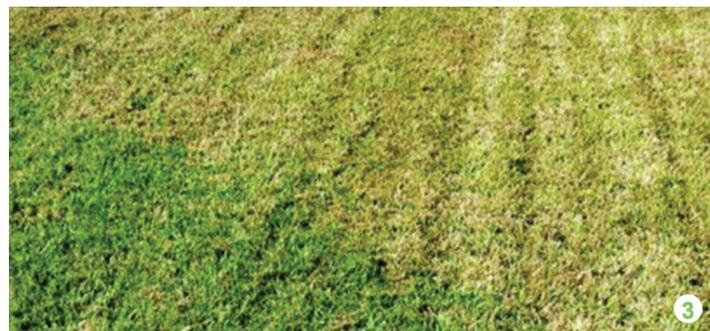
I would not have been surprised if the tour guide had surmised that I might merit additional scrutiny given my focus. I initially focused on one large circular area of the lawn that was noticeably brown in color and missing blades of lawn grass.

Determining a definitive cause for the missing lawn grass required additional inspection. To get a closer look at the damaged area, I parted

the St. Augustine grass similar to how a person might part their hair. It did not require much time before I found my first tropical sod webworm caterpillar (*Herpetogramma phaeopteralis*). Then I found several more caterpillars of varying sizes in short order **1**.

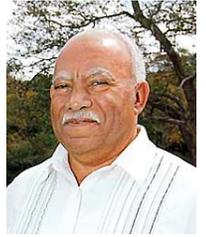
Now it was picture taking time to document my finding. The tour guide was very friendly and accommodating but I think she was understandably perplexed at my horticultural investigation.

Then it was on to the next home. The lawn did not appear to sustain any damage from tropical sod webworm caterpillars feeding. But when I returned to my vehicle, I made a visual survey of neighboring lawns and quickly identified two nearby lawns that appeared to have tropical sod webworm damage **3**. An up-close inspection of the two lawns revealed tropical sod webworm damage.



*Editor's Note:
This article is a reprint of Dr. Johnson's Weekly Gardening
Column in The Galveston County Daily News*

*By Dr. William M. Johnson
CEA-HORT & MG
Program Coordinator*



I would not expect every lawn in the county to suffer damage from tropical sod webworms but based on the phone calls and e-mails to my office and my on-site inspections, homeowners should be on the alert for visual signals of tropical sod webworm damage.

Signs of tropical sod webworm damage

Sorting out turf damage takes some kneeling (this may look suspicious, especially if done while on a home tour). Damage begins in small patches of short-clipped grass, about 1 to 3 inches in diameter. The grass may look ragged, as if someone randomly used a weed-eater here and there **4**, and irregularly-shaped, larger brown patches may form if there is severe defoliation.

Injured grass blades initially appear notched and ragged as the outer edges of grass blades are eaten first with entire leaf blades being consumed in time. Injured turf is usually spotty within a lawn but damaged areas enlarge as caterpillars migrate in search of more food.

The damage looks unusual and shocks most homeowners because it appears to happen overnight. A lawn may have a few chewed up circular areas or browned out areas that are several feet in diameter. At first glance, homeowners might believe it is a fungal disease problem.



When high populations of tropical webworm caterpillars are present, examination of sod will likely reveal copious amounts of green pellets of frass (an entomological term meaning "fecal pellets" or insect poop!). The frass **5** is loosely bound by strands of silk produced by caterpillars. One thing you will find is that just looking carefully through the grass during midday may not turn up any webworms. However, if you make up a solution of soapy water (one tablespoon of dishwashing liquid per one gallon of water) and pour it in a transition area (where damaged or browned turf area transitions to healthy, green turf), the tropical sod webworms will start moving upwards, making them easier to spot as they move out of the sod and thatch.

Tropical sod webworm life cycle

The immature caterpillar stage of the tropical sod webworm can grow up to a half-inch in length **6**. Caterpillars have translucent green coloration and will have rows of dark spots along their back. The head section is dark, yellowish-brown in color.

The adults are frequently seen darting across the lawn, especially when disturbed. One homeowner reported seeing small clouds of moths appearing as he was mowing his lawn during the evening.

How to control tropical sod webworms

The good news is that control is possible. Tropical sod webworms are readily controlled by several types of liquid insecticides approved for turfgrass use. Synthetic insecticides labeled for use include but are not limited to: bifenthrin (such as Ortho's Bug B Gon Insect Killer For Lawns), Sevin, and permethrin. Since these are caterpillars, organic controls such as spinosad and *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt) insecticides, can be effective although synthetic insecticides will have quicker results. Repeat applications are required to control next generation larvae.

I look forward to touring home landscapes on "A Garden Walk" in League City (small photo previous page) again next year. I hope my attention will not be distracted by tropical sod webworms or some other new insect pest outbreak.





By Judy Anderson
MG 2012

2016 MGA MONTHLY MEETINGS

November 15, 2016 6:30pm

Ira Gervais - Annual Meeting,
Election of Officers; Updating by-laws
Pot Luck
Extension Office
Carbide Park - La Marque

December 13, 2016 6:30pm

Holiday Meeting - Mikey & Allen Isbell
1715 35th Street, Galveston Island

MG Judy Anderson thanks MGs for
hosting backyard meetings.

You may contact Judy at
jande10198@aol.com
for information.

January 2017 Mark Your Calendar!!

Please join the Galveston County Master Gardeners for the **January Meeting** where the newly elected officers will be installed. Installations are important for the membership as the aims, goals and purposes of the organization are defined while the new officers are challenged to work in harmony as they lead our Master Gardener Association. In addition, the plans for the upcoming events will be discussed, including the **Spring Plant Sale** and the Galveston connection to the **“Ahoy Texas Master Gardeners-We’re Taking our 2017 Conference to the High Seas!”**

News about the state conference at sea and events and activities planned for Galveston.

Because this is the first event for the 2017 Galveston County Master Gardeners, we are going to have a party! Please bring an appetizer, desert, or non-alcoholic beverage to celebrate the occasion. A cake will be provided!

February 18, 2017

As February rolls around the Master Gardeners know to mark their calendars for the Spring Plant Sale. The Plant Sale Educational Presentation will be planned prior to the event.



DECEMBER 13, 2016 - 6:30 p.m.

Mark your calendar for the **Master Gardener Holiday celebration,**

Tuesday December 13 at 6:30 p.m.

Mikey and Allen Isbell will host the festivities in their historic home decked out in holiday splendor.

The evening gets lively when the holiday gift exchange begins.

To participate, bring a wrapped, generic, gardening gift. Donations of unwrapped children’s toys would be enthusiastically welcomed.

November 15, 2016

5:30 p.m.

Please join the Galveston County Master Gardeners for a pot luck dinner at the **Annual Meeting, Election of Officers and**

Updating the Association Bylaws.

This is an important meeting for all members of the Association and you are encouraged to participate.

Dinner will begin at 6:45 p.m. with the meeting to follow.

FEEDBACK

We Want Your Feedback

We would love to hear from you. Send us your comments or suggestions for future articles, or just let us know how you are using our newsletter. To make sending feedback easy, just click on the button with your response



MG 2017