

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

# GULF COAST *Gardening*

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I am so glad I live on the Gulf Coast where the winters are, thankfully, short. Still the rains and gray days, even here, become tiresome for a girl who likes sun. I am looking forward to spring and have some new ideas for my landscape that I'd like to try. Our first newsletter of the year has several interesting and timely articles for getting started on the new growing season and others that remind us of landscape issues and of beneficial insects to be on the lookout for, as well.

*"February, when the days of winter seem endless and no amount of wistful recollecting can bring back any air of summer."*

*Shirley Jackson,  
Raising Demons*

*"Why, what's the matter, That you have such a February face, So full of frost, of storm and cloudiness?"*

*William Shakespeare,  
Much Ado About Nothing*



The Q&A pages provide information on two diverse topics. The first, page 4, is on wedge grafting peaches by Herman Auer. Herman is quite the expert and we are fortunate he continually shares his knowledge with us. There are many different grafting techniques but if you are new to grafting, this method has higher success rates and you don't need any special equipment. The second topic is the deadly Citrus Greening disease and what you need to know about it and what to do if you find this in your yard (page 5). Do you know what Black Rot is? The bacterium that causes Black Rot on crucifer vegetables is discussed on page 6 where Lisa Belcher teaches tips for identifying and controlling this problem. Sago palms enhance our landscapes, but can suffer, badly, from scale. Linda Garren-McKillip's article on page 7 tells us how to recognize and treat it. Jan Brick tells us about the hardy and attractive Cyclamen for cool weather color on page 8. Planting regrets – I know I've had a few (or several). Donna Ward tells us about some of her planting regrets on page 12 that sound like they could star in the *Little Shop of Horrors* movie!

Now that winter will soon be over for us, we should begin identifying beneficial insects in our gardens and commit to applying safe Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices. The Best Shots article this month provides information by Candice Hawkinson on some of the beneficial spiders that occur in our region (pages 10-11). They are attractive and industrious and deserve a place in our gardens. Rober flies are another beneficial in our landscape that help maintain balance in our gardens even if they eat some things we consider beneficial now and then (page 13). Are you still looking for a way to volunteer and make an impact in our community? Check out the "Help Wanted" story on page 14. Being a Junior Master Gardener Leader just may be your "thing"! Don't forget to check out our updated help wanted, monthly calendars, upcoming events and bulletin board sections.



By Camille Goodwin  
MG 2008

2017 offers lots of volunteer opportunities. Carbine Park is gearing up for 2017 and the current update is relayed on page 20. If you are ever curious about freeze-safe dates for our region, check out page 16 where Janet Lachman fills us in. I guess our winter this year will be two days long (OK by me!). According to a report from our weather station in the Demonstration Garden, we had 13 hours below 32 degrees between Jan 6 -7, 2017 (see chart page 17). Dr. Johnson in his "Last Word" article on page 27 tells us how to care for plants that may have experienced freeze damage. GCMGA is hosting the after-events for the Master Gardening State Conference Cruise—check this out on page 25. Save the dates as we'll need volunteers to help with these events. As always, if you have comments or ideas for our newsletter, please let Linda Steber know (steber8@msn.com). Recently we've had some requests and the newsletter team is looking to see how we can incorporate these ideas. I'm looking forward to seeing you all in this new year!



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Cover:  
Peaches for the Spring  
Photo courtesy MG Digital Library



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Thanks for your interest!

# Q&A ask a master gardener

## *How can I wedge graft peaches?*



By Herman Auer  
MG 1983

As a Galveston County Master Gardener and public speaker, I believe you have an impact when you are able to say, "This is how I do or did it." It is certainly worthwhile to read about a subject, but there is nothing that can surpass actual experience. I have wedged or cleft grafted known peach varieties on known peach rootstocks with other grafts.

Years back during a very early January, I dug up an unwanted horizontal dormant *Nemaguard* rootstock from my home landscape. *Nemaguard* is a stone fruit rootstock that is resistant to nematodes.

It is available from Womack Nursery located in De Leon, Texas, and it is a good rootstock for peaches grown in Galveston County.

I took some of the pencil-size horizontal roots and wrapped them in wet cloth to keep them moist. I then cut dormant scions from Tropic Snow, a 200 hour or less white flesh peach. The scions should be pencil-thick and pencil-length straight sticks collected from a dormant, disease-free plant.

Then, on the patio in the shade, I wedge grafted the scion onto the *Nemaguard* root that had been horizontal in the garden. I taped the union and inserted it back into the garden soil. The tape at the union was barely covered with soil.

About four weeks or so later, the buds on the scion started to break and leaves started to grow. After another month, I removed the tape, and then I removed the soil to just below the graft union as I did not want the scion to develop roots.

I still use this method fairly often as it has always been successful for me.

This is a method that can be used to increase the number of stone fruit in the backyard at a low cost. The real goal is not the savings, it is the knowing that you can do it.



Tropic Snow Peach



Green buds on Scion



Nemaguard rootstock



The wedge graft

Photos courtesy of Herman Auer



# Q&A ask a master gardener

*Can you give me some information on citrus greening?*



By Laurel Stine  
MG 1996

Citrus Greening (*Candidatus Liberibacter asiaticus*) is a bacterial disease on citrus trees. It is also known as huanglongbing, which is Chinese for “Yellow Dragon.” Yellow Dragon describes a particular form of growth associated with trees infected with this disease.

It originated in India in the 1700s, and was found in China in the late 1800s. It was first found in Florida in 2005.

Citrus Greening occurs on plants in the citrus family (Rutaceae). Once a tree is infected, there is no cure. Trees will decline over the next months or years, until they eventually die.

The insect vector for this disease is the Asian Citrus Psyllid (*Diaphorina citri*). This is an invasive insect first found in Florida in 1998.

How is the disease transmitted? A tree is fed upon by an infected psyllid. It takes approximately 15-30 minutes of feeding to acquire the disease. Symptoms manifest in the foliage after a 6 month to 2 year latency period. During the latency period, the tree will inoculate the psyllids that feed upon it.

Unfortunately, the foliage will not test positive for the disease until it manifests symptoms. A psyllid, however, will test positive immediately upon acquiring the Citrus Greening bacterial pathogen.

What is the best defense against this disease? At this point, controlling the insect vector (the Asian Citrus Psyllid) is the best way of controlling the spread of Citrus Greening. Commercial growers of citrus have been following a spray program for this pest for a while now. Homeowners also need to do their part.

Asian Citrus Psyllids are susceptible to a variety of insecticides. Timing of sprays is important. Spraying in January helps control any overwintering psyllids, which overwinter as adults. They tend to overwinter in the interior of the tree canopy.

The psyllids need new growth for laying eggs and for the sustenance of nymphs. During the growing season, it is important to watch for those flushes of new growth, and to time the sprays accordingly. Here is a chart of materials for controlling Asian Citrus Psyllids in the home landscape: [http://hidalgo.agrilife.org/files/2012/01/Home-Psyllid-Control\\_revised-Nesbitt\\_latest-2-8-12.pdf](http://hidalgo.agrilife.org/files/2012/01/Home-Psyllid-Control_revised-Nesbitt_latest-2-8-12.pdf)

There is one systemic product on the chart - Bayer Advanced Fruit Citrus & Vegetable Insect Control. Be aware that on citrus it can only be applied once a year and, according to Texas A&M University, is effective on the psyllids for 6 to 8 weeks. They advise applying it in the early summer, after bloom, to coincide with the biggest flush of new growth.

Note that Orange Jasmine, Chinese Box Orange and the spice Curry are hosts.

Here is a website which can help you determine whether you have Citrus Greening or some other problem: <http://texascitrusgreening.org/>.

Is there any hopeful news? Here is what the A&M AgriLife Extension Citrus Specialist (Monte Nesbitt, Extension Specialist in Pecans, Fruit and

Citrus) has to say: “We remain hopeful that the HLB will remain contained within those Texas counties already quarantined. It is more important than ever throughout Texas to manage psyllids and continue to attempt to prevent introduction of the problem. The longer we can forestall the problem, the more likely that research will find a cure before we have infected trees to contend with. No cure is known to date, but one focus to delaying tree decline (still an area of research) is use of foliar fertilizers and plant hormones to keep the trees very, very healthy.” Has Citrus Greening been confirmed to be in Galveston County? No. However, quarantine was issued by TDA [Texas Department of Agriculture] for Citrus Greening on Sept. 9, 2014, for nearby Harris, Ft. Bend and Montgomery Counties.

It has almost been 3 years since that time and Citrus Greening has not been confirmed outside those Texas counties. It is up to us, one homeowner at a time, to control the spread of Citrus Greening. Is it life threatening to humanity? No. But anyone who has eaten sweet, luscious citrus fresh from the tree would give a resounding “yes!” to the question of whether it is worth the effort to control this deadly disease.

## THERE IS A QUARANTINE IN EFFECT TO PREVENT MOVEMENT OF INFECTED PLANT TISSUE INTO OTHER COUNTIES:

You cannot move (i.e., via purchase, gift, pass-along plant, etc.) citrus trees out of quarantined counties while the quarantine is in effect..

## WHAT ARE SYMPTOMS?

One of the most perplexing things about Citrus Greening (CG) is that the symptoms can be similar to those of other citrus problems.

Here are some that tend to be hallmarks of CG:

- Asymmetrical Blotchy Mottling of Leaves.
- As a general rule, the pattern of the mottling is asymmetric across the leaf midrib.
- Raised, Dzcorkydz Veins Veins of the midrib may be raised; some may have a Dzcorkydz appearance.



# Black Rot on Broccoli Leaves



By Lisa Belcher  
MG 2014

I was so looking forward to my winter crop of vegetables this year. I fondly remember planting my purple cauliflower, a favorite of my nephews who thinks it looks cool. To the dismay of my brother, they will eat purple but not white cauliflower.

As I was tending my vegetable bed at the MG Demonstration Garden in Carbine Park on a beautiful sunny day a few weeks ago, I noticed some discoloring of the leaves of my cauliflower. I then noticed it on my broccoli. "Oh no!" I thought

"It's on my cabbage as well. Am I over watering? Under watering? Is it this bipolar Texas winter weather that is affecting my vegetables?"

I saw Dr. Johnson nearby taking some photographs and beckoned him over to my bed. "What have I done wrong" I asked. "But more importantly, what can I do to fix this?" Dr. J's expert diagnosis came with a condition...thus began my next writing assignment for this newsletter on what I had learned. I tend to ask Dr. J a lot of questions and I likewise tend to get a lot of writing assignments for our MG newsletter.

I had never heard of *Xanthomonas campestris* pathovar *campestris*, the bacterial pathogen that causes Black Rot. Black Rot is a devastating disease of crucifer vegetables which includes the abovementioned vegetables in addition to Brussel sprouts, Bok Choy, Mustard Greens, Arugula, Kale, and Turnip.

Black Rot was first described by botanist and entomologist Harrison Garman in Lexington, Kentucky, USA in 1889. Since then, Black Rot has been the number one destructive disease of crucifers worldwide. But what exactly is Black Rot? It is a bacterial disease in which infection can take place at any stage of a plant's life. This pathogen thrives in warm, humid conditions (unfortunately for us here in Galveston County). I was surprised to learn that Black Rot has been present every year since 2005 when the Demonstration Garden was established except the disease level was very low in most years. We just did not see it. This winter's high rainfall and unusually warm temperatures provided ideal conditions for a major Black Rot disease outbreak to occur.

In seedlings, disease symptoms include blackening (necrosis) along the margin of the cotyledons. The leaves later shrivel and drop off. Any affected seedlings will later turn yellow, wilt and collapse. In mature plants, tale-tell signs include a V-shape

discoloration at the leaf edge (see photo below) which will eventually creep towards veins of the leaf, and then into the stem. Dwarfing of the plant usually occurs when plants become severely infected. As Black Rot sets in, there is nothing you can do to stop the disease. The infection is spread by a variety of ways including splashing rain or irrigation water. Yes, splashing water. Another way the infection is spread is through hydathodes which are small and specialized pore opening located along the margins of leaves. It is recommended that at the very first sign of Black Rot symptoms that you remove each and every leaf on an infected plant and keep a close eye on the disease progression. This will not guarantee you have a successful crop of vegetables. *Xanthomonas campestris* pathovar *campestris* cannot be controlled by chemicals, but you can take these steps to curtail its progression this year and in years to follow:

- You must diligently remove any diseased leaves that have fallen from stricken plants and dispose in the trash. It is NOT recommended to compost diseased leaves and plants.
- The bacterium pathogen has a very high chance of being seedborne, so using clean seed is essential. To sanitize seeds, use a 3% Hydrogen Peroxide solution warmed to 140 degrees F. Submerge the seeds for five minutes, then rinse and allow to dry.
- Control weeds in your beds and avoid irrigating early in the day when dew is present. Irrigate later in the day after any dew has dried.
- Crop rotation of non-cruciferous plants for 2-3 years is highly suggested because the bacterial pathogen readily overwinters in the soil as well as in diseased plant debris left in our beds.
- You can also practice soil solarization to help kill the bacterial pathogen.
- When watering your vegetable beds, avoid water hitting the foliage.

Water low, near the soil and avoid splashing water on the leaf.

- Remove any leaves from your vegetable plants that are touching the soil in your raised bed.

Oh, there was another equally severe disease problem as well occurring on most of the crucifers this year in the Demonstration Garden. It's known as Alternaria Leaf Spot and is caused by either of two fungal pathogens (*Alternaria brassicae* and *Alternaria brassicicola*) but that's another problem to be covered in another writing assignment. This has been a difficult year for growing cruciferous vegetables but it has provided unexpectant learning opportunities for this Master Gardener!





# What is that Nasty Stuff on my Sago Palms?



By Linda Garren  
McKillip  
MG 2003

I think those were my exact words when I contacted a very knowledgeable member of the AgriLife team at Carbide Park, Laurel Stine. I walk by three large sago in clay pots in front of my home every day, but failed to notice the white scaly substance that gave them a whitewashed look. Laurel reminded me that a sago isn't really a palm tree at all; it is a member of the family Cycadaceae. She said that most likely, the infestation was "Asian Cycad Scale (*Aulacaspis yasumatsui* Takagi), an armored scale which was first discovered in Miami in 1996. It originated in Thailand and Southern China, and is believed to have been imported in legal shipments of Sago Palms."

When we moved to Galveston County in 2000, we embraced our new tropical paradise by acquiring half a dozen sagos. It was 'the look' we wanted. They grew huge in the ground, pups sprouted with rapid abandonment and one even grew a second head. The ones in pots grew to be top-heavy and frequently blew over in our breezy climate. I began rethinking my landscape choices; then this scale arrived and sealed their fate. From Laurel I learned, "This scale is difficult to control because it infects the roots at depths of up to 2 feet and it spreads easily from adjacent properties." She added, "This pest multiplies quickly and the crawler stage spreads with the wind. A medium-size sago palm left untreated may be killed within a year. If the pups (small plants around base of trunk) are coming up white, there is a heavy infestation below ground."

When I heard this news, I knew that I wasn't up for the recommended spraying schedule. She said I could "try washing the plant with a hard stream of water". OK, I confess; I attacked them with a pressure washer. I was frustrated. The resulting mangled fronds took 'ugly' to new depths. And you just can't throw away infested fronds. You have to bag or bury them like hazardous waste. I started looking in my neighborhood; infested sago palms seem to outnumber healthy ones. It makes sense; this scale is spread by the wind and we have enough breeze here to blow porch furniture into the pool.

Over the years, I had developed a theory that sago palms were indestructible. I believed that they and cockroaches had both been around since the beginning of time. I still think that might be true, but when I understood that heavy infestations also require an application of a systemic insecticide, I was ready for a trip to our Master Gardener sale in February to choose something different.



# Cyclamen for Cool Color!



By Jan Brick  
MG 2001

Tucked amid the pansies, petunias and snapdragons of cool weather gardens, the cyclamen will add depth, dimension and a splash of vivid color to the home landscape. This enchanting low-growing perennial tuber is originally from the eastern Mediterranean area, has blooms with “swept-back petals that resemble shooting stars” in colors of white, pink, red or purple. The beautiful and uniquely shaped blooms will provide an exuberant display while the exceptional patterns, shapes and shades of the irregularly formed foliage will create additional interest.

Although it is unrelated to the violet, Cyclamen is sometimes called the Persian Violet and because it is said to be a favorite meal of wild pigs, it has been referred to as “sowbread.” The colors and shapes of the leaves may vary considerably. *Cyclamen hederifolium* has leaves shaped like ivy, with angles and lobes, *Cyclamen coum* has nearly round leaves, and *Cyclamen persicum* has the familiar heart-shaped leaves with a pointed tip. Variegated shades of silver and green in irregular patterns of blotches are characteristic of the foliage and are thought to be “a natural form of camouflage to reduce grazing damage by animals.”

Cyclamen have been in cultivation since Plato’s time, several hundred years B.C. They are members of the tuberous plants in the Primrose family. In the wild, they are natives of parts of Europe, western Asia and North Africa. The genus is notable for the fact that although it is small, there are species that flower in every month of the year. In many areas cyclamen populations have been severely depleted by illegal harvesting from the wild for the horticultural trade; as a result some varieties are now endangered. Diligent plant conservation experts have worked with local growers in efforts to control the harvest and to include sowing seed for future crops, thus sustaining the wild populations.


Hardy cyclamen that is sold in plant nurseries for outside use is preferred for adding color to your patios and gardens as they can tolerate a variety of conditions even temperatures below forty degrees. Check the plant label for hardiness information. Hardy cyclamen needs to be planted where they are protected from hot sun and severe weather. This is one of the few flowering plants that will tolerate shaded dry soils. Cyclamen can be planted among the roots of trees as the trees will provide needed shade and protection from extreme weather conditions and will absorb excess moisture while improving drainage for the small cyclamen plants. Since they are low growing, place them near the front of your beds where you can see them...along walkways, entrances, and outdoor seating areas. Plant the tubers about a half-inch deep, four to six inches apart in well-draining sandy or clay soil. Overly wet or soggy settings will cause the tubers to rot. The addition of bone meal and a layer of mulch is all that is needed for fertilization. Cyclamen will enter a dormant stage in summer months; leaves will yellow and the plant may appear lifeless...they will usually re-sprout in the fall. A little extra water in late summer will break up the dormancy period and encourage new growth. Cyclamen experience few problems with pests although aphids may be a temporary concern as the plants enter dormancy.

Appearing in florist’s shops in the early holiday season, a showy species, *Cyclamen persicum*, is commonly called the Florist’s Cyclamen, and often given as gifts during the holiday season. These plants can make attractive and charming statements when included in arrangements on dining tables or as stand-alone décor in any room in your home. The plants will bloom continuously for several months; many growers collect cyclamen for display under glass domes placed in a bright window for maximum light exposure. Let the soil dry somewhat between watering; water when the pot feels light or the soil feels dry. Keep your plant tidy and fresh by removing spent blooms and yellowing leaves. As the plant enters dormancy in the spring, let it dry out and place in a cool dry spot for its summer rest. The tubers should remain hard and plump during this time...resume a regular watering schedule in the fall to encourage regrowth, place in a bright window and enjoy another season of lovely blooms. When given proper care it is not unusual for this plant to continue to grow and flower for several years. Whether you choose the smaller hardy cyclamen for your garden or the showy florist type, you are sure to be showered with compliments on the beauty and uniqueness of this delightful and eye-catching plant.

Stories of superstition, of medicinal and culinary use abound in the history and folklore of the cyclamen. *Cyclamen hederaefolium* is a species associated with love spells designed to bring joy and happiness to a relationship but may also be used in a spell to send away a lover who may no longer be fancied. A person who eats cakes made of it may become violently ill or fall violently in love with the person who made the cakes...said to be suitable for adorning the bedroom as a way to increase libido and fertility; also believed to prevent nightmares and counteract negative spells from taking effect. The oil is thought to protect one from a broken heart, while also building confidence and self-esteem. Cyclamen was prescribed as a treatment for many issues from snake bite to a cure for cataracts and boils, these cures must all be viewed with an eye for what may be reality or only fantasy. So called “healing attributes” of cyclamen in medicinal folklore include use as a remedy for bringing on late menstruation, medication for vertigo or dizziness and various irritations of the head and as a therapy for expelling worms. It is a very powerful







purgative and as there are other safer alternatives for the above mentioned ailments, should not be considered for ingestion or applied to the human body in any way... it is however a lovely addition to the shady spots in your garden!

*Hardy Cyclamen for the Garden*

*Hederifolium*: white to pink blooms with dark centers, easy to grow, frost tolerant, self-seeding, shady locations, sandy soil, colorful ground cover, long living, fall blooms

*Coum*: white to pink or crimson blooms, easy to grow, frost tolerant, self-seeding, tolerates most soil conditions, winter to early spring blooms

*Purpuracens*: fragrant  
lowers in rose pink to red, frost tolerant, late summer and fall blooms, shade plant

*Pseudibericum*: two tone lowers in shades of crimson or purple, frost tolerant, late winter or early spring blooms

Editor's Note: This is a reprint from Jan's article in *The Islander Magazine*

# MG Best Shots and Narrative!

## Spiders in the Garden



By Candice  
Hawkinson  
MG 2003

**Black-and-Yellow Argiope:** The black-and-yellow argiope spider (*Argiope aurantia*) is quite attractive and one of the more conspicuous species of orb weaving spiders. They are also known as golden orb-weaver, yellow garden orb-weaver and the writing spider.

This is the largest size spider in the Galveston-Houston region (they are very prominent during late summer into fall) with females from  $\frac{3}{4}$ " to 1" inches and males from  $\frac{1}{4}$ " to  $\frac{3}{8}$ ". Both have a cephalothorax (small front body section) covered with short, silvery hairs. The shiny, egg-shaped abdomen is yellow or orange on a black background with matching legs. Like other orbweavers, each leg has 3 claws per foot, one more than most spiders. Orbweavers use this third claw to handle the threads while spinning. These spiders prefer sunny places with little or no wind to build their webs. Once they find suitable sites, they will stay there unless the web is frequently disturbed, or they can't catch enough food. Their orb webs can be up to 2 feet in diameter and are very complex.

*A. aurantia* is most active during the day. They have relatively poor vision, but are quite sensitive to vibration and air currents. This carnivorous beneficial preys on flying insects including some wasps (especially mud daubers). Their web traps flies, grasshoppers, mosquitoes and bees. *A. aurantia* is very beneficial and quite attractive—unless the mere sight of a spider triggers a case of arachnophobia!

**Banana Spider:** *Nephila clavipes* is a large, brightly-colored species of the orb-web spider family. Commonly called banana or golden silk spiders, other names are calico spider, giant wood spider, golden silk orb weaver and writing spiders. 'Golden' refers to the color of the silk, not the color of the spider, for the web of a mature female has yellow threads that look like rich gold in the sunshine.

*N. clavipes* is the only species of the genus to be found in the Western Hemisphere. It lives in warm regions, preferring high humidity and relatively open space, and is one of the two most common orb-weavers seen in citrus and pecan groves. Near the coast, there are some arboreal or swampy nooks where large numbers of adults and their webs reside in almost frightening numbers. Adult males begin to come out in July with most mature females following later, during late-summer to early fall. *N. clavipes*' females are among the largest non-tarantula-like spiders in North America. Females are about 3 inches long and their color pattern consists of a silvery carapace (outer body wall) with yellow spots on a muted orange to tan cylindrical body. Her long legs are banded brown and orange with feathery tufts or gaiters on the lower segment, making her one of the most easily recognized. The slender males, on the other hand, are a rather inconspicuous dark brown averaging less than a  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch in length and would often go unnoticed if not for the fact that they are often found in the webs of females.



Argiope Spider • Photo courtesy of William M. Johnson



Banana Spider • Photo courtesy of MG Herman Auer



Banana Spider • Photo courtesy of MG Margie Jenke





Orchard Spider • Photo courtesy of MG Margaret Canavan



Orchard Spider • Photo courtesy of MG Margaret Canavan



Argiope Spider with June Beetle • Photo courtesy of MG Laura Bellmore

The strong web of banana spiders is complex. They make big webs, about 3 feet wide. Some scientists suggest that the silk's color serves a dual purpose: sunlit webs ensnare bees that are attracted to the bright yellow strands and in shady spots, the yellow acts as camouflage. Webs are woven anywhere from eye-level upwards; into shrubs, trees or between the wires of utility lines. Their golden webs annoy hikers and hunters, as they make a sticky trap for the unobservant.

The banana spider preys on a wide variety of small to medium-sized flying insects, which include bees, butterflies, flies, grasshoppers, leaf-footed bugs, mosquitoes, small moths, stinkbugs, and wasps. Banana spiders have even been seen feeding on beetles and dragonflies.

**Orchard Orbweaver Spider:** "Orchard Orbweaver" is the common name adopted by the American Arachnological Society, but this little spider is also called Mabel Orchard Spider, Orchard Spider, Venusta Orchard Spider and long-jawed orbweaver. Its scientific name is *Leucauge venusta*.

I have observed orchard orbweavers in my home landscape during mild winters. The colorful orchard orbweaver may be seen living on a 1 foot-wide web built low in the underbrush of shrubs or small trees. How can one tell if it is a *L. venusta*? Easy. They are small. Female orchard orbweavers are only around 1/4 of an inch, and males are half that size, but their green legs are quite long, overall making this spider just under an inch.

However, it is the orchard orbweaver's markings where this beneficial spider stands out amongst its brethren. They carry their bulbous, oval abdomens high. The top is silver-white, with overlapping streaks of bright yellow and green on its side. A single black stripe spreads, then separates, into three lines about a quarter of the way down its back, then flows parallel to its posterior. The end of the abdomen is often a variety of neon orange, yellow and/or red. The underside has an orange smile-shaped design on the rear of the abdomen. All of these colors and markings are variable in size and sometimes are not even present. If one has a magnifying glass, and if one can get a *L. venusta* to hold still long enough, there is a delightful fringed edge of comb-like hairs along its back legs, right next to the spider's abdomen. So why is this species of spider considered beneficial? Because they eat small insects, just like all other orbweavers. Unfortunately, they are prey to other spiders.

## PLEASE NOTE

*Although people are concerned about being bitten; most spiders (with a few exceptions) are not dangerous. Nearly all spiders are shy. They may bite when harassed, held or pinched but the bite itself is not harmful to a healthy adult. The bite may produce localized pain with a slight redness, which quickly goes away. On the whole, spider bites are much less severe than a bee sting. Most spiders are considered medically harmless to humans; however, very young and very elderly individuals or those with compromised immune systems, should exercise care and seek medical attention as appropriate.*

# No Regrets? Lucky You!



By Donna Ward  
MG 1996

*Regrets, I've had a few, but then again too few to mention, I did what I had to do...* Frank Sinatra evidently wasn't singing about the regrettable plantings he had made over the course of his singing career. I'm not sure if Frank ever planted anything, but anybody reading this column probably has regretted planting a number of things from the time they first became aware that a seed planted in the ground resulted in a living plant.

I've planted several things in my gardening days that I thought was a good idea at the time, but turned out to be a horticultural catastrophe. I could probably start with the fig ivy (*Ficus pumila*) that I thought would soften the vertical starkness of a wooden fence delineating the most outer perimeter of our property. It also seemed to be just what was needed to downplay the roughness of the solid brick wall on the east side of our home. It took a while to become established, but once it took hold, we became aware that a verdant monster had been created. This fig relative climbs with strong aerial roots that hold fast to surfaces made of stone, brick, cement block or wood. If you were to remove it from a painted wall, you would find that the roots will pull off paint and that if there is even the most miniscule opening into a brick, block or concrete wall, the roots will enter. It also has no problem with creeping into your attic through soffit vents. I might also mention that moisture accumulates under its cover, and we all know what happens when wood stays continually damp. When we knew for sure that we had lost control, the base of the plant was the size of a small child's wrist. We cut the trunk about 4 inches above the soil line and applied a vine and stump killer. Several fresher cuts and applications finally but slowly eliminated the offender.

Morning glories (*Ipomoea* spp.) produce some of the most spectacularly colorful blossoms. Their simple flowers are so abundant that sometimes the greenery is blocked out by a profusion of color. They seem to know no bounds when it comes to height. I've seen them cover an ugly telephone

pole. An early morning vision over your coffee cup may see purple, red, blue, pink or white trumpet shaped blossoms trailing over a fence or climbing a trellis - great way to start your day. The seed packet says to scarify the seed and soak before planting, but in my experience, they self-sow readily and once you have grown them they appear in the most unexpected places for years and years thereafter.

I love the late summer/fall blooming glory bower vine (*Clerodendrum* spp.). A wooden trellis at the end of the wooden deck seemed to be the ideal spot to plant this hardy vine. The trellis was attached to an outer wall of the greenhouse, and helped to shield the view of the wooden fence which needed a bit of improvement. By its second season, we knew it was not well behaved. It sends up shoots as far as twenty feet away - not a problem if they come up in a regularly mowed lawn. But its propensity to come up between the bricks of the greenhouse floor creates a problem. We dug out the vine, but ten years later, it still appears between the bricks of the greenhouse floor. Even a concentrated herbicide only makes it sulk - and that's only temporary, it's soon back to its old tricks!

If ever a plant could be characterized as a 'bully' - wire vine (*Muehlenbeckia* spp.) would qualify. This delicate looking, creeping plant with its tiny glossy leaves and dark slender stems can fool even the most experienced gardener. Mine is planted in a wide terracotta bowl, and sits on a 2-ft. tall heavy wooden pedestal. Cascading over the edge it looks like a cool green waterfall. I give this New Zealand native a haircut when it grows to within an inch or two from the ground. "Why?" you ask. Well, once it touches the soil its aggressive tendencies take over. It spreads outward, rooting as it goes - and it goes, and it goes, and it keeps on going! One of its common names is 'mattress vine' as it makes a thick, almost impenetrable covering over anything in its pathway.

The moral of this story is to do some research before you put an unfamiliar plant in the ground or in a pot. Or - if you've just got to have it, be prepared to maintain it. In the alternative, get ready to do an awful lot of digging - or head to the Big Box store herbicide department. Don't be singing along with Old Blue Eyes.



Photo courtesy of MG Donna Ward





# Beneficial of the month...

## Robber Flies



By **Betty Gray**  
MG 2006

If you initiate a discussion on beneficial insects in the garden, the first example to likely come to most gardeners mind is the lady beetle. Beyond a few other examples (such as the praying mantis), most gardeners would be hard-pressed to name many of beneficials that serve as allies in our battle to control insects that harm our vegetables, fruits and landscape plants.

Robber flies are a perfect example of a very effective insect predator that is likely to be patrolling our gardens and landscapes. Why is it that we do not see them in abundance? It's likely because they are remarkably fast flyers that tend to fly away when approached. Some species of robber flies are frequently mistaken for bumblebees or wasps. Robber flies are present in our Demonstration Garden at Carbide Park.

Robber flies are members of the family Asilidae. Adult robber flies and their larvae are voracious predators of a wide variety of pests: beetles, wasps, grasshoppers, leafhoppers, wasps and others. The family is an abundant one, with nearly 1,000 species in North America, 250 of which live in Texas.

The most commonly seen species of robber flies have gray or black bodies. However, some are orange and some are black and yellow, mimicking their prey, the bumblebee. They range in size from 3 mm to 50 mm (about 2 inches)! I sort of hope the largest-size species does not live in Texas!

Robber flies are true flies (Order: Diptera), having two wings. The characteristic that distinguishes them from other flies is a hollow space between the two large eyes. In that space are found three simple eyes.

Most robber flies have a long, narrow, tapering abdomen containing

segments. Most robber flies also have a distinctive "bearded" appearance, with fine hairs covering their long, piercing mouthparts. The six legs are usually long, bristled, and strong for grabbing and holding prey. Adult are active in the warm summer months and they like sunny, arid hunting grounds the best.

The life cycle of the robber fly is a complete metamorphosis. An adult female lays whitish eggs in a mass that she then covers with a chalky protective covering. Eggs can be found on low plants, grasses or in crevices within soil, bark or wood.

Robber fly larvae are seldom seen, even though they can grow to 13 inches long. They resemble long, slender, light-colored worms with knobby projections on the six center segments of their bodies. Living in the soil or decaying wood, this immature stage consumes organic matter, white grubs, beetle pupae, grasshopper egg masses and other soft-bodied organisms.

Robber flies overwinter as larvae and pupate in the soil. As the weather warms up, the puparia migrate to the surface and emerge as adults. The entire life cycle takes at least a year.

Robber flies are among the few insects that catch their prey in mid-flight. An individual establishes a perch zone. From there, it swoops out to snatch the unsuspecting victim that is often larger. After injecting the hapless meal with saliva that paralyzes and digests the prey's bodily contents, the robber fly retires back to its perch and slurps up its insect smoothie.

Robber flies are just one of the many beneficial insect predators likely to be present in your landscape and gardens without your awareness. You will not see adult robber flies during the winter season; however if you wish to see the variety of robber flies that occur in our area, be sure to view the preserved robber fly specimens maintained in the insect collection at the Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office in La Marque.

Photos courtesy MG 2006 Betty Gray



Some species of robber flies resemble bumblebees.



Robber flies are among the few insects that catch their prey in mid-flight.



Robber flies have long, strong legs for grabbing prey



Robber flies have prominent eyes and excellent vision.

# Help Wanted!

## Junior MGs and Gayle McAdoo



**By Judy Anderson**  
**MG 2012**

Have you ever read a help wanted ad for a Junior Master Gardener (JMG) Leader? Many schools are going without Junior Master Gardener after-school programs for lack of leaders.

Consider the following roles for the JMG leader as described in the Junior Master Gardener Handbook:

- Participate in training as needed
- Submit the JMG Registration Packet to the JMG Headquarters
- Request handbooks and remit payment
- Serve as instructor or coordinator
- Distribute information to JMG participants and parents
- Participate in evaluation and reporting of JMG activities
- Provide recognition for JMG participants.

Several of the Galveston County Master Gardeners have accepted the JMG Leadership role and more are needed. Gayle McAdoo has been a JMG Leader at Robinson Elementary in CCISD since 2012. She became involved as a leader through the urging of her teacher friends at the school. The school was searching for a JMG leader to help revive their neglected garden and serve as a teaching resource tool. Gayle accepted the challenge and with the support of a dedicated team including the principal, teachers, parents and students, they tackled the overgrown area. After several missteps, a plan came together and the Robinson JMG after-school program came together.

Gayle remembers a remarkable 9-year-old boy who wanted to grow vegetables. He designed a "School Vegetable Garden Beautification Project" and he presented the request to the PTA for \$300.00; the PTA authorized \$500.00! He talked to the teachers; he recruited other school children. They worked together and prepared a garden to grow veggies. That boy has moved on, but many others have taken his place. The after-school garden club targets the 4th and 5th graders who are enrolled in the after-school program. Each student pays \$15.00 for the school year participation. The fee provides a tee shirt for each child, a certificate of participation and end-of-year pins of recognition.

When Gayle began working as the JMG leader, she talked with the school principal about her goals for JMG. With that information, Gayle met with the teacher-sponsor and assistant-sponsor to talk about the JMG opportunity and how to make it work at Robinson. The JMG Leader Guide was the designated plan, while other resources are used for specific lessons. As the JMG leader, each year Gayle meets with the teacher-sponsor and her assistant to plan the lessons and activities. The coach participates as an adult member of the team. The after-school garden club meets twice a month with Gayle attending one of those meetings. As the JMG Leader, Gayle serves as a consultant; she helps



clarify roles – who does what, when down to who establishes and keeps the watering schedule; she has helped build an ownership of the garden to the school among its students, teachers, parents, and volunteers.

The meetings are closely planned for one hour; presentations are done in the science lab with activities in the garden. The leaders work to get the garden club members outside as much as possible. Time management is a priority as well as adapting to the group requirements. Weather and the needs of the children are included in the planning of the garden club lessons, which often require some flexibility. Some work days are scheduled on Saturday, but the garden club meets twice a month from 3:15-4:15 p.m. after school.

During the school year, classes are taught about growing vegetables, healthy nutrition, conservation and environmental awareness. As the vegetables grow, they are harvested by the students to take home and sometimes given to the school staff. As the students learn about gardening, they also learn about good nutrition as they sample the vegetables and herbs they grow. In a time when students often do not know where their food comes from, this program teaches about the food cycle - seeds, soil, sun and water. It is not just about digging in the soil, but developing good life long habits. In addition to gardening, the after-school program encourages community service, and it fits with the goals of the school, which has been designated a 2016 Texas School of Character.

Donations have been given to support the JMG program. Gayle has spoken with members of local garden clubs to tell them of the Robinson after-school program. From them, the Robinson JMG program received donations for \$1300.00 and \$250.00 that help maintain the garden. Gayle has worked with the Galveston County Master Gardeners to acquire plants for the JMG garden. She has provided MG print material to the sponsors



on gardening topics such as Planting Guides, and Texas Home Vegetable Gardening Guide. She also has encouraged attendance at the *Gulf Coast Gardening* seminars at the County Extension Office. They have attended the plant sales and purchased plants; Gayle advised them on plant selection during the sale. She introduced other MGs to the leaders who assisted with instructions for growing conditions.

With her hands-on activities, Gayle has helped develop a love of gardening in these students, perhaps even creating a lifelong passion for gardening and healthy eating. Her lessons in the classroom helped create an understanding of the need to protect our big blue planet. As respectful citizens training, the students have expressed their appreciation to those who have helped their JMG organization; they've written thank-you notes for donations to garden clubs and community leaders. As part of their awareness of service to others, creative cards of appreciation were designed and mailed to military members in Afghanistan. Through her years of service with the Robinson JMG garden club, Gayle has observed students grow and develop as individuals, while learning to work with others; the time spent in the JMG program helps students learn about chores and taking care of their tools.

In May of 2015, the garden club participated with several other elementary schools at a market held at Mossman Elementary School (CCISD). Robinson had a booth, which the JMG Leader, teacher sponsors, parent volunteers, and kids set up and worked. The kids made posters to advertise what they had for sale with prices, etc. They sold veggies and herbs they had harvested and others that parents donated, such as basil, sage and lettuce. Gayle donated eight jars of home grown and homemade blackberry jam, which all sold for \$3.00-6.00. The kids had made awesome bird feeders in the shapes of Texas, stars, trees, and hearts; these sold for \$4.00. The unsold items were put in the teacher's lounge for the after-sale. The market project was a huge success for the kids who made over \$100.00.



Robinson Elementary recognizes the participation of the students in the after-school program at the fourth/fifth grade assembly. The teacher-sponsor presents the pins and certificates to the participants; afterwards, the group is asked to stand and be recognized at the assembly. As the JMG Leader, Gayle attends these recognition ceremonies. Having the recognition ceremonies in the assembly is another opportunity to raise awareness of the after-school gardening program and motivate other students to participate. The garden club celebrates the end of year with a pizza party with veggies picked from their garden. Gayle contributes to the celebration with a blackberry cobbler she makes with her homegrown blackberries and lemon verbena. Yum!

In the past, Gayle completed a workshop for Junior Master Gardener Leaders. Gayle has also been recognized for her work with high risk students in the JMG garden club by the Clear Creek ISD School Board during 2016. The principal of Robinson Elementary in CCISD and a 2016 Texas School of Character award have recognized Gayle for her work as a JMG leader.

Evaluations of the national JMG program provide the following data:

- Over 75% increase in interest in science
- Over 70% increase in higher academic standards
- 64% of teachers and leaders encouraged students to perform community service
- Over 50% of students tried new food
- Significant increases in leadership and attitudes toward volunteerism
- Additional studies show gardening
- Increased self-esteem in the students
- Helped students develop a sense of ownership and responsibility
- Helped foster relationships with family members
- Increased parental involvement at school.

A special thanks to MG Kaye Corey, MG Barbara White and MG Gayle McAdoo for their many contributions to the young people in our community.



# So, what are those “Freeze Dates” anyway?



By Janet L. Lachman  
MG 2003

Many gardening articles make reference to the “first killing frost” or the “last killing frost.” These dates provide guidelines for when to plant various kinds of seeds or transplants, when to fertilize, and when to apply weed control products. You might think it would be easy to find the fall and spring “freeze safe dates” for any particular area, but it isn’t. If you dig for it, you can extract the information online from maps maintained by the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

In the fall, gardeners want to know when the first freeze is likely to occur. If you have cold sensitive tropical plants that you move indoors or to the garage during dormancy, this date is the one by which you should routinely plan to relocate them. According to NOAA, there is no more than a 10% probability that a freeze of 32° F or colder will occur earlier than November 15 in the northern portion of Galveston County, or earlier than December 1 in the southern portion of Galveston County, in any given year.

In other words, if you plant a vegetable that cannot survive a light freeze and you plant it so that you can harvest your last crop earlier than November 15 in Kemah or December 1 in Galveston, you have a 90% chance of not losing any of your vegetable to a killing frost. If you move your tender tropicals indoors by the above dates and locations, they are unlikely to be freeze-nipped in the fall before you get them inside.

NOAA’s maps indicate that there is no more than a 10% chance of a temperature 28° F or colder occurring before December 1 in the southern portion, and December 15 in the northern portion, of Galveston County. If you have plants or crops that can survive a light freeze but not a hard freeze, this is the date by which you should plan to move them or harvest them.

Gardeners also need to know the average last freeze date in the spring. This date is a guide for applying pre-emergent weed control products, getting the tropicals out in the sun, and setting out freeze-tender transplants. NOAA’s maps indicate that there is at most a 10% probability of a temperature of 28° F or less occurring after February 15 in the southern portion and after March 1 in the northern portion of Galveston County. So, for example, if a pre-emergent herbicide calls for application “2 weeks before the last killing freeze date”, you may apply it around February 1 in Galveston and around February 15 in Kemah, with a 90% probability that your application will work as the directions suggest.

For setting out tender transplants, gardeners want to know when the last light freeze is likely. The NOAA maps indicate that there is at most a 10% probability of a temperature of 32° F or less occurring after March 15 in the southern portion, and after April 1 in the northern portion of Galveston County. This means that if you live in Galveston, you can safely transplant your tomatoes after March 15, and if you live in Kemah, you can safely transplant them after April 1. “Safely” in this context means that you have a 90% probability that your plants will not be destroyed by an unusually late freeze.

## Freeze Dates for Galveston County

90% safe date for:	Northern Galv. County	Southern Galv. County
First fall freeze, 32° F	November 15	December 1
Last spring freeze, 32° F	December 1	December 15
First fall freeze, 28° F	February 15	March 1
Last spring freeze, 32° F	March 15	April 1

For additional information, go to NOAA’s website:  
<http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/oa/documentlibrary/freeze/frost/frostfreemaps.html>.





## January/February "Things To Do"

### Gardening Calendar Video

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



by Jenifer Leonpacher  
MG 2010



by Gregory Werth  
MG 2012



#### 2017 Freeze Hours at Demo Garden

Date	Time	Temp (°F)
1/6/2017	10:30 PM	32.2
1/6/2017	11:00 PM	31.9
1/6/2017	11:30 PM	30.7
1/7/2017	12:00 AM	30.9
1/7/2017	12:30 AM	30.3
1/7/2017	1:00 AM	30.0
1/7/2017	1:30 AM	29.2
1/7/2017	2:00 AM	28.8
1/7/2017	2:30 AM	29.2
1/7/2017	3:00 AM	29.1
1/7/2017	3:30 AM	28.8
1/7/2017	4:00 AM	28.7
1/7/2017	4:30 AM	28.2
1/7/2017	5:00 AM	27.9
1/7/2017	5:30 AM	27.7
1/7/2017	6:00 AM	27.2
1/7/2017	6:30 AM	27.1
1/7/2017	7:00 AM	26.9
1/7/2017	7:30 AM	26.6
1/7/2017	8:00 AM	26.9
1/7/2017	8:30 AM	27.3
1/7/2017	9:00 AM	27.9
1/7/2017	9:30 AM	28.3
1/7/2017	10:00 AM	30.3
1/7/2017	10:30 AM	31.0
1/7/2017	11:00 AM	32.1

Temperature data from weather station in Demo Garden

# 2017 ANNUAL SPRING PLANT SALE Seminar & Craft Sale



**Saturday, February 18, 2017**

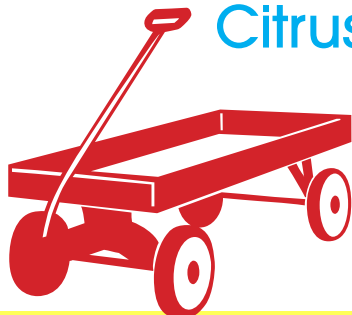
Galveston County Fairgrounds ~ Hwy 6 ~ Hitchcock, TX  
Galveston County Master Gardeners

**8 am Educational Seminar**  
Ed Pickett Hall

**9 am Plant Sale**  
Rodeo Arena

**1 pm 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](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/index.htm)

**Limited Wagons Available,**  
You Are Welcome To Bring Your Own

TEXAS A&M  
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Galveston County Master Gardeners



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# easy recipes

## Seasonal Bites



By Sandra Gervais  
MG 2011

I love our Master Gardener potluck meetings. Where else can you visit with good friends, learn about plants and gardening, and enjoy great food? The November meeting was a good example.

When members started asking for the following two recipes, I knew we had to share them in the newsletter. These recipes have one thing in common; both makers said the dishes are very easy to prepare. Definitely my favorite kind of recipes.

**These two recipes go nicely together and would make a great make-ahead meal for either family or company. And they are so easy!**



### Green Chili. MG Bettie Moss

1-1/2 lbs. ground meat (she used a combination of beef and venison)  
1 can (33 oz.) Cookwell & Co. Green Chili Stew seasoning (from H.E.B.)  
6 oz. sour cream  
1 regular size can cannellini beans  
Note: these are Italian white beans so another type of white beans could definitely be used.

Brown meat in a Dutch oven on top of the stove.  
Add other ingredients and heat well.  
Let dish sit for a while before serving for the flavors to meld.

For the potluck, the recipe was doubled.

Serve with cornbread and a salad, and it's a full meal.



### German Chocolate Pie. MG Connie Webb

4 oz. German chocolate	2 eggs, beaten
1/4 cup butter (that's half a stick)	1 teaspoon vanilla
1-1/2 cups evaporated milk	1-1/2 cups flaked coconut, divided
1-1/2 cups sugar	1 cup chopped pecans, divided
3 tablespoons cornstarch	1 deep dish pie shell
1/8 teaspoon salt	

Melt chocolate with butter over low heat.  
Remove from heat and stir in evaporated milk.  
In a separate bowl, combine sugar, cornstarch, salt and eggs.  
Add this sugar mixture to the melted chocolate.  
Stir in 1 cup of the coconut, 1/2 C of the chopped pecans and the vanilla.  
Pour into pie shell that has been placed on a cookie sheet.  
(The cookie sheet will help the pie to cook more evenly and prevent spillover.)  
Sprinkle remaining 1/2 Cup of coconut and 1/2 Cup of pecans over top of pie.

Place in 350° oven.  
Bake for 50-55 minutes or until top puffs and starts to brown and crack a bit.

Cool for at least 3 hours before serving.

# Upcoming Events - Jan/Feb 2017

## Galveston County Master Gardener Educational Programs for Home 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](mailto:galvcountymgs@gmail.com)**

**[aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston)**

## JANUARY

### COLLECTION OF DORMANT PEACH AND PLUM GRAFTWOOD

Thursday, January 5

9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

e-mail [galvcountymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountymgs@gmail.com)

The demonstration of collecting and storing useful graftwood (scions) for future use will be presented by Galveston County Master Gardeners Sue Jeffco and Herman Auer. This presentation will take place in the GC Master Gardeners Research and Demonstration Garden in Carbide Park.

### WEDGE GRAFTING

Saturday, January 7

9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

e-mail [galvcountymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountymgs@gmail.com)

Interested in grafting your home fruit trees or ornamental plants? Galveston County Master Gardener Sue Jeffco will present the when, how, why's, and step-by-step procedure for wedge grafting. If weather permits after the classroom session, join her in the GC Master Gardener Research and Demonstration Garden in Carbide Park for more hands-on grafting. Master Gardener grafting specialists will be on hand to provide one-on-one assistance. NOTE: Class is limited to 32 participants; therefore, pre-registration is required in order to participate. Others may attend to observe.

### PROPAGATION OF PLANTS BY CUTTINGS

Saturday, January 7

1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

e-mail [galvcountymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountymgs@gmail.com)

This is the time of year when many plants propagate very well by cuttings. Galveston County Master Gardener Bill Cummins will discuss and lead a demonstration of propagation by cuttings. NOTE: Class is limited to 24 participants; therefore, pre-registration is required in order to participate, bring small, sharp knife, if you can. Others may attend to observe.

### GROWING GREAT TOMATOES

(Part 2 of a 3-part series)

Saturday, January 14

9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

e-mail [galvcountymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountymgs@gmail.com)

Galveston County Master Gardener Ira Gervais will reveal his secrets of successfully planting and producing great tomatoes. Learn about the various varieties that do well in this area, making your selections, when to transplant your seedlings and various growing techniques. Information about soil requirements, needed nutrients and the temperature range for best tomato fruit set will be included. With this knowledge, you can become the tomato king or queen on your street.

### SUCCESSFUL SPRING VEGETABLE GARDENING

Saturday, January 14

1:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

e-mail [galvcountymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountymgs@gmail.com)

Topics to be presented and discussed include how to plan and start a vegetable garden, location, and the best plant varieties for Galveston County. Also included will be pollination, mulching, and the effects of full sun and shade on leafy and fruiting vegetables. Garden failures will also be addressed. Galveston County Master Gardener vegetable Specialist Herman Auer will present this program. He has over 50 years of hands-on experience with growing vegetables.

### GARDENING BY THE SQUARE FOOT

Tuesday, January 17

6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

e-mail [galvcountymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountymgs@gmail.com)

This program, presented by Galveston County Master Gardener John Jons, is an introduction to the method of gardening by the square foot. Discover this unique way of planning the bed, selecting plants, building the bed, maintaining the bed, and renewing the bed. This is an ideal program for anyone who would like to learn a simple, productive method of gardening that will enable one to teach children or adults with limitations how to learn and enjoy gardening.

### FIG TREE PRUNING AND PROPAGATION

Thursday, January 19

9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

e-mail [galvcountymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountymgs@gmail.com)

Galveston County Master Gardener Terry Cuclis will demonstrate fig tree pruning and propagation. He will share with you his lifetime of knowledge about figs and how to prune them. Bring your gloves. This presentation will take place in the GC Master Gardener Research and Demonstration Garden in Carbide Park.

### GROWING PEACHES IN GALVESTON COUNTY

Saturday, January 28

9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

e-mail [galvcountymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountymgs@gmail.com)

Presented by Galveston County Master Gardener Herman Auer. Learn the best peach varieties (both white and yellow flesh) for growing in Galveston County, what to look for when buying your peach tree, and the best planting locations (drainage is important). Topics will include chill hours, rootstock, pruning to shape, and thinning methods that lead to larger fruit. Also, learn how to judge ripening dates and the best time to harvest. Herman has been producing peaches in Galveston County for over 35 years.

### KITCHEN GARDENING

Saturday, January 28

1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

e-mail [galvcountymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountymgs@gmail.com)

Galveston County Master Gardener Mary Demeny will present vegetable gardening in the backyard, with an emphasis on gardening close to the back door on a smaller scale and making use of vegetables inter-planted in flower beds and in pots. Attendees will benefit from her 60 years of vegetable gardening experience.

### ANYONE CAN GROW ROSES

Tuesday, January 31

6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

e-mail [galvcountymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountymgs@gmail.com)

Galveston County Master Gardener and American Rose Society Consulting Rosarian John Jons will cover the basics of successfully growing large, healthy roses in Galveston County. The presentation will include rose bed design and building, rose variety selection, and ongoing care.



## FEBRUARY

**GROWING CITRUS IN YOUR BACK YARD** e-mail [galvcountymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountymgs@gmail.com)  
**Saturday, February 4**  
**9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.**

Presented by Galveston County Master Gardener Robert Marshall. The presentation will feature varieties of citrus trees that grow well in this area, rootstocks, and the planting of trees. He will also present information on the care of citrus trees, including diseases such as citrus greening, insects and fertilization needs.

**GROWING BLUEBERRIES** e-mail [galvcountymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountymgs@gmail.com)  
**Saturday, February 4**  
**1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.**

Dr. David Cohen, an accomplished home grower of blueberries by avocation and a practicing physician by profession, has an impressive "blueberry patch" as part of his home landscape. He has gained considerable hands-on experience with successfully growing blueberries in our Gulf Coast region's growing conditions. Dr. Cohen will present varieties of blueberries recommended for this area, site selection and preparation, planting, spacing, fertilizing, and pruning. The program will include harvesting and help with understanding the problems and costs of growing blueberries here.

**GROWING AVOCADO & PAPAYA** e-mail [galvcountymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountymgs@gmail.com)  
**Saturday, February 11**  
**9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.**

Presented by Jerry Hurlbert, Moderator and Coordinator of the Texas Rare Fruit Growers Association, with 35 years of experience growing avocados in Galveston County. He will recommend the best varieties for the Gulf Coast growing region, how to start plants from seeds, and tips on tree planting and cultivation methods. He will include the best methods for protection of plants from the cold and sun, especially for young trees.

**SOIL HEALTH & EVALUATION** e-mail [galvcountymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountymgs@gmail.com)  
**Saturday, February 11**  
**1:00 p.m. – 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 wire flag. Strategies to improve your soil's health for better gardening will be addressed.

**PRUNING ROSES** e-mail [galvcountymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountymgs@gmail.com)  
**Thursday, February 16**  
**9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.**

Hands-on rose pruning will be taught by Galveston County Master Gardener John Jons, Consulting Rosarian and member of the American Rose Society. It will take place in the GC Master Gardener Research and Demonstration Garden in Carbide Park, 4102 Main Street, La Marque.

## SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18

### SAVE THE DATE

### "Galveston County Master Gardener Annual Spring Plant Sale"

**8:00 – 8:50 a.m.**

Presale presentation

Jack Brooks Park Youth Building at the County Fairgrounds

**9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

Annual sale of landscape plants and fruit trees that perform well in Galveston County

### LOCATION

Galveston County Fairgrounds | 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](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston)

For Galveston County residents needing help on horticultural issues -  
Call the Garden HotLine 281-309-5061 to ask a Master Gardener.

# Carbide Park Update



By MG Tom Fountain  
MG 2008

The first half of December our daily temperatures were near normal and we even had a light freeze. However, the month ended with a string of record high temperatures across our area, and we had twice the normal rainfall. So, for the year 2016, our average temperature was a few degrees above normal and our rainfall was about 6 inches above normal. The outlook for the remainder of the winter season indicates that temperatures are likely to continue above normal, although there may be another short freeze or two and rainfall is expected to be below normal.

Lately, most of our gardeners have been busy winterizing the garden beds. In December, over 90 pounds of cabbage, broccoli and other cold weather veggies were harvested for a local food pantry. The garden maintenance crew has been rebuilding garden benches. Pictured are: Sharon and John finishing one of the new benches.

A lot of behind-the-scenes planning by various committees has been taking place for the spring plant sale. The greenhouse crew has also been busy starting some plants for the spring sale. Pictured is Brenda labeling the new bedding plants.

The garden will be the site of several exciting projects coming up this year. The first project to start will likely be the aquaponics garden, as we already have the fish tanks on site. The largest project will be the construction of a state of the arts restroom facility. This will replace the porta-potty and make lots of folks happy.

As always there are learning opportunities at the garden. Pictured right is Herman giving a how-to demonstration on harvesting graft wood to some interested folks. Next is Sue giving Joe hands-on instructions on how to graft fruit. On the left is Barbara giving her interested audience a presentation on the vegetable of the week.

Photos courtesy of Tom Fountain





# Distinguished Extension Career Award

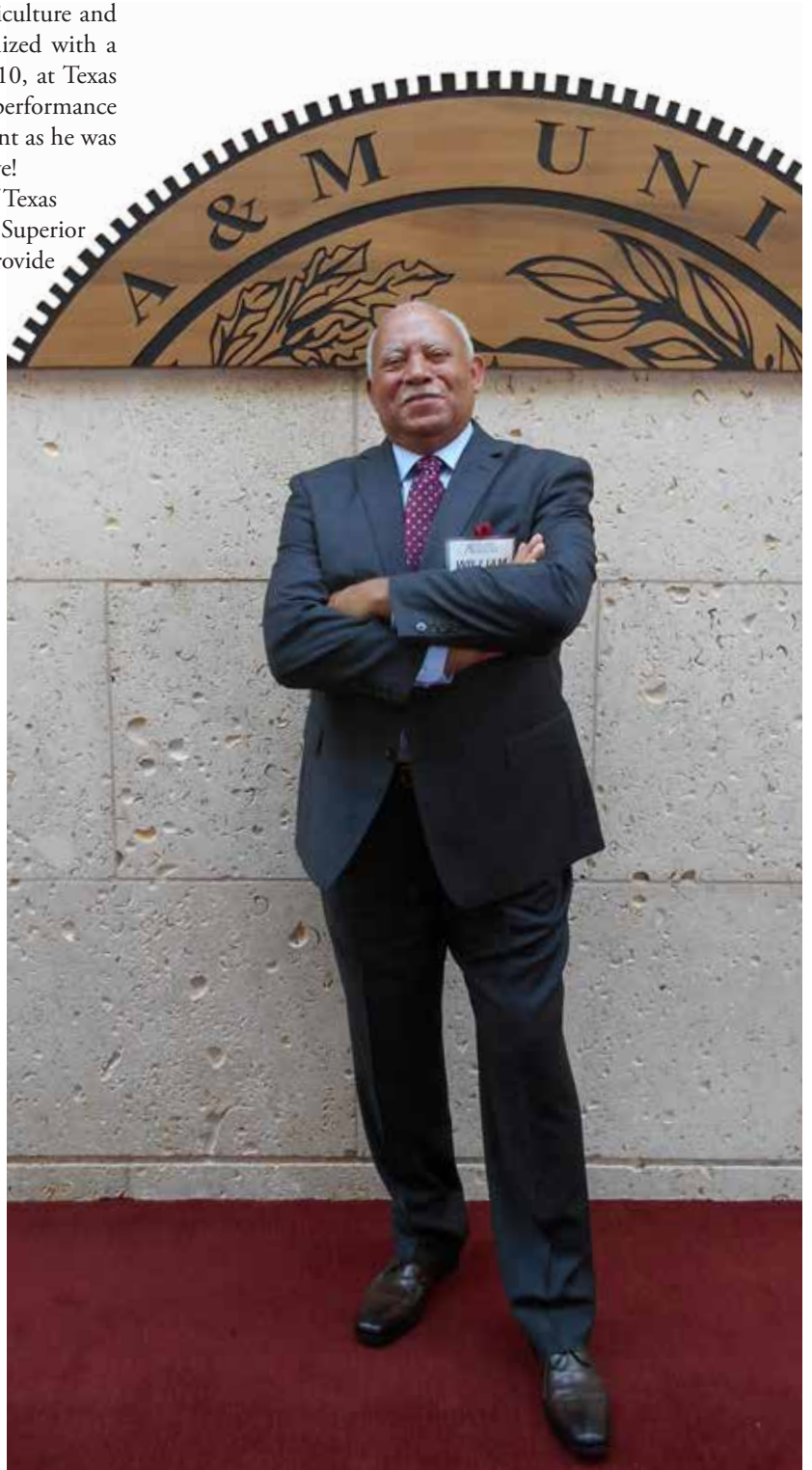
Dr. Johnson (aka Dr.J, our County Extension Agent-Horticulture and County Master Gardener Program Coordinator) was recognized with a Distinguished Extension Career Award on Tuesday, January 10, at Texas A&M University in College Station for his continued stellar performance in AgriLife Extension. Several MG's made the trek to be present as he was presented a very coveted award that very few employees receive!

Dr. J's award was presented by Dr. Doug Steele, Director of Texas A&M Extension Service (pictured below). Dr. Steele said that Superior Service Awards recognize AgriLife Extension personnel who provide outstanding performance in education or other outstanding service to the organization and Texans.

Congratulations Dr. J/



Photos courtesy of Herman Auer



# Monthly Meeting Minutes



By Cindy Croft  
MG 2000

The Master Gardener monthly meeting was conducted on Tuesday, November 15, 2016, in the County AgriLife Extension Office in Carbide Park. The meeting was called to order by President Ira Gervais at 6:30 p.m. after which Clyde Holt gave the blessing for the pot luck dinner.

**The business of the meeting** consisted of election of officers and budget reports on income and expenses in addition to a review of programs and activities conducted over the 2016 calendar year.

Proposed changes to the bylaws were unanimously

approved. The motion to accept the changes was made by Linda Steber and seconded by Ed Klein.

## **Current officers were reelected.**

- Frank Resch and Camille Goodwin were elected to the Board of Directors for 3 year terms commencing on January 1, 2017.
- Terry Cuculis was elected as TMGA State Association Delegate II for a 2 year term.

## **New officers were recommended to the nominating committee by GCMGA members.**

- Henry Harrison III was nominated as Senior Vice President for a 2 year term.
- Ed Klein was elected as Assistant Treasurer for a 2 year term.
- Bernice Shirey nominated as Secretary for a 2 year term.
- Julie Cartmill (to replace the Ken Steblein, who passed earlier in the year) and Tim Jahnke (to replace Henry Harrison) were nominated for Board of Directors to serve out the remaining terms of 2 officers, as referenced.

The motion to accept the slate of officers as submitted was made by Connie Webb and seconded by Bobbie Ivey. The vote to approve was unanimous.

## **Highlights of 2016** were presented by Dr. William Johnson as follows:

- So far there are 18,233 volunteer hours reported for the year. If you have not reported your hours, please do so immediately. If you need help, just ask.
- So far 15,505 educational hours have been logged by Master Gardeners.
- Test trials of tomatoes by the Interns were successful.
- The Demonstration Garden has, on average, between 45 - 50 people every Thursday.
- We had successful spring and fall plant sales.
- The Master Gardeners have donated over 2,470 pounds of food to the food bank to date. Expectations are that MGs will slightly exceed 3,000 lbs. by the end of the year.
- The Bylaws have been updated.
- There are new programs in the Demonstration Garden every week on different topics presented by Master Gardeners for ½ educational credit hours each.

- A First Aid Training, Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Training and an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) Use Training were provided for Master Gardeners.
- We are participating in the Kemah Boardwalk Garden Show.
- We have extended the Demonstration Garden south by 133 feet on the south end.
- We have donated vegetables to 3 JMG programs.
- The re-purchased Southern Greenhouse is complete and operating.
- The Hoop House is complete with tables and fencing to keep the rabbits out.
- A light BBQ shelter station has been built.

## **Plans for the future:**

- New restroom facilities are planned to replace the port-a-potty.
- An aquaponics unit suitable for home landscapes is being designed.
- A cut flower bed near the MG parking entranceway is being considered.
- Plans to modify the kitchen hut are being worked on. This will allow the accommodation of more MGs that can eat or assemble in one sheltered space.
- We are hosting the 2017 State MG Banquet at Moody Gardens on May 1. The State is in the process of putting the bookings online. Appreciation was extended to Mary Lou Kelso for getting this organized.

## **Financials:**

- The total gross for the calendar is \$116,864
- Greenhouse sales brought in \$3,523
- Donations were made of \$3,343, which include \$1000 from State Farm and \$500 from Conoco Phillips
- Amazon Smile contributed \$59 from sales made online. A reminder was made to please sign up for Amazon.Smile if you have not already done so.

## **Our next Spring Plant Sale will be at the County Fairgrounds in Hitchcock on Saturday, February 18, 2017.**

## **Newsletter Editor: Linda Steber**

The newsletter has been in production since 1983. A new initiative has been started to catalog and index all of the articles that have been published. Anyone interested in joining the team or just coming to the meetings is welcome.

## **Survey:**

It is time to do another survey. It has been 2 years since the last survey. Monica Martens is preparing the next survey instrument to be sent to all MGs.

## **Welcome:**

Judy Preston has come to us from Georgia and comes with glowing recommendations as a Master Gardener there. Look for her and give her a big Texas-size Welcome.

## **Thank you:**

Ira Gervais for the wonderful PowerPoint prepared for the meeting. The meeting was adjourned 8:15 p.m.





# bulletin board



## Volunteer Opportunities

- For the **MG Phone Desk** contact Ginger Benson by
- e-mail at [galvcountymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountymgs@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](mailto: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](http://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](mailto: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](http://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.

## The Galveston Connection

Make plans to join us in Galveston after disembarkation for our Annual Awards Luncheon featuring a Smokehouse Buffet and our Search for Excellence winners. After the luncheon, the Galveston Master Gardeners have procured a variety of delightful Island Tours. Register for all events today on the conference website!

**Check out the Lodging page for special conference pricing at the beautiful Moody Gardens Hotel.**



## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

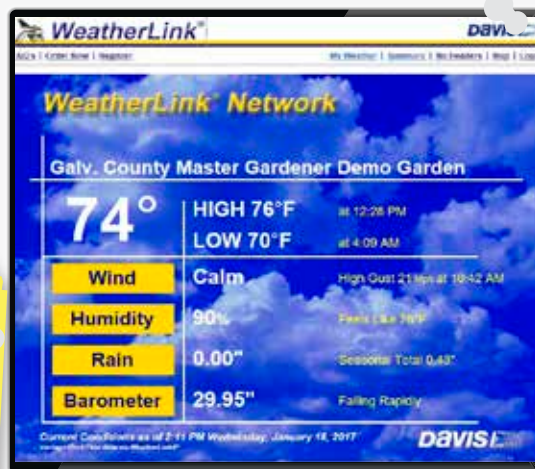
Tour Guides for "First-Thursday-in-a-Month" Public Access and Tour of our Demonstration Garden  
Long-winded title but it says what we will be doing. Our Demonstration Garden will be open for touring by the general public on the first Thursday of each month from 9:00 - 11:00 am. MGs are needed to serve as tour guides for our demonstration Garden. Contact MG Robert Marshall 281.993.5595, email [rbrtm01@att.net](mailto:rbrtm01@att.net) or MG Bobbie Ivey 713.748.8564, email [blivey@sbcglobal.net](mailto: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](mailto: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 Giger Benson. 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 Ginger at 281-309-5065, email [galvcountymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountymgs@gmail.com) to find out the schedule and join her team.



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





# Join Us in Galveston!

## List of Tours

The **Annual TMGA Awards Luncheon** will be held at **12:30pm on Monday, May 1st, 2017** at the Moody Gardens Hotel in Galveston after the disembarkation of the cruise ship.

We welcome everyone to join us for a superb luncheon prepared by the renowned chefs at Moody Gardens.

- Galveston Tours
- Vendors
- Commemorative T-Shirts
- Discounts to area attractions and merchants

This event is brought to you by the Galveston County Master Gardener Association.

- Galveston Master Gardener Demo Gardens
- Moody Gardens Attractions
- East End Tree Sculpture Tour
- Historic Mansions
- 1894 Opera House
- Broadway Cemetery Historic District
- Shopping the Strand
- Moody Golf Course
- Saltwater Fishing Experience

For more information, please visit the Galveston Connection link on the conference [website](#).

Looking forward to seeing you there!

**The Galveston County Master Gardeners**  
and the  
**Texas Master Gardener Association**

**Reserve Your Spot Today!**

Moody Gardens Hotel  
1 Hope Boulevard  
Galveston, TX





# the last word...

## Care of Freeze Damaged Plants

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**

When did our landscapes move North? Are we not situated on the balmy Gulf Coast of Texas? Should our USDA Plant Hardiness Zone Map rating be changed?

Temperatures dipped low enough and for long enough to exact a toll on cold-sensitive landscape plants in Galveston County a few days ago. What's a gardener to do? It's easier said than done but do not panic at the miserable appearance of cold-sensitive plants just after a hard freeze.

Several factors influence the extent of cold injury suffered by ornamentals and even certain types of fruit, especially citrus. Such factors include variety (some may be more cold tolerant than others), and age (recent plantings that are not well-established are more susceptible to freeze injury). A very important factor is the general health of a plant.

However, homeowners can take steps now to help reduce the occurrence of additional injuries to ornamental and fruit plants resulting from the latest cold snap. These activities include the following:

- Keep plants well-watered. Watering is an extremely important plant-saving practice for winter. It is very important that plants—those in containers, as well as in the soil—be provided adequate moisture throughout the winter season. The wind in the winter, like the sun in the summer, will dry soils. Be especially sure that soils are well-watered if another cold snap appears to be forthcoming to prevent plant roots from drying out.

- Even though woody plants may appear to be in poor condition, do not do any pruning until late winter or early spring—this applies to all citrus and ornamentals, including palm trees. Heavy pruning now can stimulate new growth which could easily be burned back if another cold snap occurs. Also, it is easier to prune and shape ornamentals after the full extent of damage is known.

- Proper fertilization is a key to winter hardiness for many perennial landscape plants. Our local soils are usually low in nitrogen and potassium, the elements plants use to boost their cold protection defense during winter. Even if it's been a while since you fertilized your perennial landscape plants, do not start fertilizing cold-stressed plants until they have resumed active growth in the spring. The use of fertilizer now may stimulate new growth which is very susceptible to cold injury. Also, fertilizer salts may cause further injury to stressed root systems.

- Damage to most citrus fruit occurs when temperatures fall below 28 degrees for at least four hours. Grapefruits are the most cold-hardy citrus fruit in part because of their thick skins, followed by oranges, mandarin types, lemons and limes. Large and thick-skinned fruit are more cold tolerant than small, thin-skinned fruit. When fruit freezes, it can still be used for juice if quickly harvested.

- Do not be in a hurry to prune plants like hibiscus, pentas, lantana and plumbago. They can be cleaned up a little if they look unsightly or the

neighborhood association sends a letter, but don't cut these plants all the way back unless you're willing to give up a security layer for the plant. Leave some of the damaged material intact.

Try to be patient and, where feasible, don't remove dead leaves and twigs of bananas, umbrella plants, etc. until at least mid-March. Should yet another cold snap occur, the dead foliage can help protect the rest of the plant from cold temperature damages and can aid the plant in a quicker recovery.

- Plants with thick, fleshy roots like cannas, firespike, four o'clocks and gingers can be cut all the way to the ground, and they will regrow next spring. Even after severe freezes, most plants like bougainvillea and hibiscus come back from the roots, so don't give up on them.

- Most cool season vegetables fared well during the cold snap, with broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, collards, kale, mustard and onions coming through fine. The cold temperatures can make these cool season vegetables taste even better. Unless they were protected, warm season vegetables bit the dust, and it's time to remove them from the garden.

- Some plants, of course, won't stand any freezing weather regardless of how many toughening techniques you employ. That's one of the reasons for using only thoroughly hardy plants in the basic framework of your landscape (such as for shade trees, and screening and foundation plantings). Use the less hardy, more tender plants (i.e., flowering annuals, bougainvillea, hibiscus, etc.) as filler to add interest to entryways, flower beds or borders.

The full extent of injury to many plants may not become apparent until summer. It will be of utmost importance that cold-stressed plants also be provided good care throughout the 2017 growing season to safely achieve a full recovery.

Temperatures dipped low enough and for long enough to exact a toll on cold-sensitive landscape plants in Galveston County. Several factors will influence the extent of cold injury suffered by cold-sensitive plants in the landscape including variety, maturity and overall health.



Photo courtesy of Dr. William Johnson

# 2017 MGA Monthly Meetings



By Judy Anderson  
MG 2012



**January 10, 2017** **6:30pm**  
Ira Gervais - Annual Meeting,  
Election of Officers; Updating by-laws  
Pot Luck  
Extension Office  
Carbide Park - La Marque

**February** **TBA**  
Plant Sale Preview  
Extension Office  
Carbide Park - La Marque

**March 14, 2017** **TBA**  
Master Gardener Aquaponics  
Extension Office  
Carbide Park - La Marque

**April 11, 2017** **6:30pm**  
Backyard Pot Luck  
Home of Rod and Lynee' Mize

**May 9, 2017** **6:30pm**  
Backyard Pot Luck  
Home of Barbara and Gary Hankins

**May 9, 2017** **6:30pm**  
Graduation and Recognition  
Home of Mikey Isbell

**July 11, 2017** **6:30pm**  
Tinsley Guinnshaver,  
Urban Gardening  
Pot Luck  
Extension Office  
Carbide Park - La Marque

**August 8, 2017** **TBA**  
Moody Gardens

**September 12, 2017**  
Backyard Pot Luck  
Home of Gail and Armin Cantini

**October 10, 2017**  
Plant Sale Preview  
Extension Office

**November 14, 2017**  
MG Annual Meeting  
Extension Office  
Carbide Park - La Marque

**December 12, 2017**  
Christmas Party  
Home of Mikey Isbell

MG Judy Anderson thanks MGs for hosting  
backyard meetings.

You may contact Judy at  
[jande10198@aol.com](mailto:jande10198@aol.com)  
for information.

