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GULF COAST *Gardening*

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May Day is here!

It is celebrated in many cultures with festive ceremonies and parades to welcome the fullness of spring. Whatever our grand plans are for spring or the month of May, it might be a time for us to look at what goals we might have in our gardens. For me, I plan to “take charge” of my yard, keeping a watchful eye to make sure it doesn’t become overwhelmed with weeds, now that I have a fresh layer of mulch.

This edition has several great topics. Check out Page 4 where Karolyn talks about the Do’s and Don’ts of Mulch, and Page 5, where Betty discusses a “pretty little shrub” which might turn out to be a quite invasive plant!

Also in this issue, Elayne shares Gulf Coast springtime blooming trees to bring more color to our landscapes (Pages 10-11). She talks about my favorite, the Southern Magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*) as well as others. Also,



Betty makes us question the history of plants in our yards, namely the origin of Galveston’s Oleander (*Nerium oleander*) with a little bit of ancient history on Page 13.

For those of you who are mystery readers, check out Karolyn’s entertaining article on Page 16 for a garden “who done it” – a good plant tale.

Our own Galveston County Master Gardener Intern Class has just completed a 10-week course and MG Intern Karolyn, talks about her journey through the classroom which offers many topics presented by Texas A&M professors sharing their knowledge and experiences. She also shares information on how you might become a Master Gardener (Page 16). She also learns that through this new-found knowledge comes responsibility.

The *Island Garden* article (Pages 8 & 9) in this issue shares a most unusual series of plants which have recently found favor among gardeners, commonly called “air plants” or epiphytes. They require absolutely no talent, aptitude or green thumb to grow these varieties. Donna’s article, Trowels and Tribulations (Page 12), has a variety of topics from wildflowers going to seed, leaf drop on evergreen trees, and her favorite shade annual.

Trish does a MG interview (Page 14) with Mary Lou, who needs no introduction, and Kaye has an article on one of the oldest and most historical garden clubs of the Bay Area, Dickinson’s Weed N Wish Garden Club on Page 15.

Barbra talks about small tools in the Tool Primer article (Page 17). Be sure to have a look at our bulletin board for volunteer opportunities, our monthly gardening calendar video and upcoming events sections. You will find two great recipes in the Seasonal Bites section (Page 19) – Master Gardeners are great cooks!

Tom gives us an update of the many activities going on in the Demo Garden at Carbide Park - construction projects, status of spring and summer gardens, mulching, pruning, and planting (Page 20).

We continue to welcome feedback for improving our newsletter. Send us an email at steber8@msn.com with any comments, suggestions, or if you are interested in learning more about certain topics/subjects.



By Linda Steber
MG 1991

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Cover:
Edibles from the Garden
Photo courtesy Dr. William Johnson



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Thanks for your interest!

ask a master gardener

Dos and Don'ts about Mulching



By Karolyn Gephart
MG Intern 2017

Mulch is a material spread on top of the ground to benefit soil and plant health, and make landscape maintenance easier. Mulching is a long-established horticultural practice and is vital in Texas.

Mulches can be classified as inorganic or organic:

- **Inorganic** mulches include plastic, rocks, rock chips, and other nonplant materials. Plastic is the only inorganic mulch used in vegetable gardens.
- **Organic** mulches include straw, bark chips, wood chips, newspaper, sawdust, and similar materials.

DO know the benefits of mulching

1. A mulch layer on the soil surface allows the soil to soak up more water. It also reduces the rate of water loss from the soil. A 4-inch layer of mulch on the soil surface dries much faster than the soil below it. It prevents water from moving into the air.
2. Organic mulches enrich the soil as they decay and improve the environment for plant growth.
3. Reduces soil compaction and erosion.
4. Suppresses weeds.
5. Protects roots from the sun's heat.
6. Protects plant crowns from winter cold.
7. Protects and stimulates microbial activity in the soil.
8. Modifies the soil temperature in home gardens.
9. Creates a barrier between the soil and the plant, which keeps the disease-causing pathogens (such as fungal spores) from splashing on plant leaves.
10. Gives your yard a fresh appearance.

DO choose color by time of year

Select light-colored mulch during the summer and early fall to reflect heat. Use dark-colored mulch in early spring to help warm the soil to permit earlier planting and hasten early growth.

Soil covered by black or clear plastic or dark organic mulch in early spring warms faster than bare soil to allow earlier planting of warm season crops. To keep the soil cooler in summer, use light colored mulch such as newspaper. Organic mulches such as compost and sawdust also keep soil under the mulch layer cooler in summer. Dark soil warms much faster than does light colored soil.

DO know when is it best to mulch

Applied in late fall, winter mulch insulates the roots, crowns, and stems of winter crops from extremely low temperatures. In the summer, proper mulching helps keep the soil cooler.

DON'T mulch with the same plants that are currently planted

Never mulch with material from the crop or plant that is to be protected. For example, do not use potato vines from the spring crop to mulch fall potatoes. This increases the possibility of transmitting diseases to the current crop or plant.

DON'T mulch near the foundation of a home/building.

If you mulch your landscape shrubs located around the home foundation, be sure that the mulch does not make contact with bricks, weep holes, exterior wood, etc. The existence of one or more of the above situations creates a very inviting and easy route for subterranean termites to gain access to homes. If you have any of these conditions, they should be corrected.

DON'T create volcano mulching.

Mounds of mulch that are 10, 12, 18 or more inches thick, piled up around the trunk at the base of trees have earned the name "mulch volcano." Harmful to trees, this ill-advised yet well-intentioned practice is becoming more commonplace. Mulch applied too thick on top of tree roots results in suffocation of the existing uppermost roots. In a struggle to survive, the tree then grows new roots into a mulch volcano. Trees growing under these stressful conditions can actually appear healthy for a while. Eventually though, these above ground roots can encircle the tree and strangle it to death as the trunk increases in diameter. The root zone of an established tree extends far beyond its drip line, so mounding the mulch against the trunk does little for the roots. The mulch volcano can hold the water that was intended for the roots. Also, moisture trapped by the mulch can soften the bark of trees, opening the door to insect pests and disease problems.

Follow the DO's and avoid the DON'Ts and you will be successful with mulching your garden.



Wood Chips



Bark Mulch



Compost



Pine Needles



Shredded Hardwood Mulch

Q&A ask a master gardener

Saltcedar - *Tamarix* spp.



By Betty Webb
MG 2013

About a month or so ago, I was out walking around our new fish pond. As I walked, I started to notice these pretty little bluish-green shrubs all around the edge, and some were even in the shallows of the pond. I wondered what wonderful gift is this? Was it a Cedar, or maybe a Juniper?

As luck would have it, I mentioned my discovery to some of my Master Gardener friends, and we decided that I should bring it in to the Extension Office. I potted up a nice size specimen and brought it in to MG Laurel Stine. Laurel got right on the job. Her findings were very painful, as I had fallen in love with my 20 – 30 little shrubs. Laurel told me what was growing in and around my new pond. She also told me that she would send me a report on her findings; along with some websites about my invasive shrubs, and how to control them.

Yes, I was growing a crop of Saltcedar (Tamarisk Family). According to my research, from the information Laurel sent me, I found that Saltcedars are very invasive shrubs or small trees with scale-like leaves. They produce a beautiful pale pink to white flower.

"Saltcedar (*Tamarix* spp.) taxonomy is currently in a state of confusion. The number of species in the genus has fluctuated widely because members of the genus have few constant differentiating features, and taxonomists have disagreed over which features are most important. Eight species have been listed as introduced into the United States and Canada. These species can be effectively divided into two groups. *Tamarix aphylla*, an evergreen tree, does not sexually reproduce in this climate, so it is not seriously invasive. Deciduous, shrubby species, including *T. pentandra*, *T. tetrandra*, *T. gallica*, *T. chinensis*, *T. ramosissima*, and *T. parvifolia*, as described by various authors, are more serious invasive threats. Some authors continue

to distinguish many species, while others consider these shrubby plants as one variable species or hybridizing group best designated by the single name *T. pentandra*."

TEXAS INVASIVES.ORG says "Saltcedar spreads vegetatively, by adventitious roots or submerged stems, and sexually. Each flower can produce thousands of tiny seeds that are contained in a small capsule usually adorned with a tuft of hair that aids in wind dispersal. Their seeds can also be dispersed by water. Seedlings require extended periods of soil saturation for establishment. Like a Pond? Maybe...?"

I also learned that these pretty little jewels are a fire-adapted species, and have long tap roots that allows them to intercept deep water tables and interfere with natural aquatic systems. Saltcedars crowd out native plants through their prolific reproductive systems, thereby impacting the native wildlife habitat. In other words, they can suck your lake or pond dry; kill off native plants, and dislocate wildlife. Saltcedars are so good at what they do, that China is considering using them to create more useable land by planting them in their wet lands!

Remember to walk your property and know what is growing in your space. If you find that pretty little plant, find out what it is and if you want to keep it! If you decide not to keep it, find out how to get rid of it! Your Extension Office can help you with both!

It is my hope, that each of you will think twice before planting pretty little plants that pop up in your yard, garden, or flower beds. If you are not sure of what it is, take it to your Extension Office before you plant. It could be the start of trouble for you, your neighbor, and the wildlife in your area. Plant safely now, so you are not creating a monster later. Remember, everything pretty is not good to grow.

Happy planting!



SaltCedar



SaltCedar



Tamarix Chinensis

Fulfilling a dream: Becoming a Master Gardener



By Karolyn Gephart
MG Intern 2017

Time will tell....

I met my first Master Gardener 20 years ago. It was Doris Heard. I told her I wanted to be a Master Gardener but I had just started a new job and the time was not right. A few years later a good friend, Gail Rodgers, became a MG. I wanted this but again, not the right time.

I retired and joined the Heritage Gardeners Club in Friendswood and four things happened in a fateful spiral. I met two MGs, Patricia Martin and Kaye Corey. We had Dr. William Johnson, Galveston

County Horticulture Agent, do a presentation on Beneficials in the Garden and I found an old clipping I had saved from years ago that Dr. Johnson wrote on how to apply to become a MG. Then at my husband's high school reunion that summer in Indiana, his second grade girlfriend told me her best achievement recently had been to become an Indiana MG.

It was time.

Listen... & watch it come true

Classes ran this year from February 1 to April 4. The class totaled 24 interns. Many more had applied. We felt very special. We came in as open minds, ready to be filled with knowledge but I don't think any of us realized how much there was to learn and how interesting each section could be. Master Gardeners, our new mentors, told us we would be given so much information about so many topics and that we should enjoy such an experience. They were right. Dr. J and his support team told us we would meet people who would become lifetime friends. So true. We would be a diverse group filled with so many different backgrounds, careers, towns, likes/dislikes. Yes, true. We would need to work together on projects, and getting to know each other better was the easy part. Such a variety of skill sets and as time went by, everyone began to see what the others could do, and could do very well. Not everyone can use large garden tools but some immediately grabbed the right tools and worked. Some knew so much about tough plants that grow in the county and others did not. I did not come with a mind full of knowledge. I was more the empty clay pot ready for quality soils of knowledge and plants that would stay with me and not cause mind erosion of facts. I was happy to find out how much the Extension Office provides as a source for information. I didn't HAVE to remember everything....just know WHERE to find information when it was needed. I can do that!

Prepare to be amazed....

The journey through the classroom part offers many topics and is presented from Texas A&M professors who share their knowledge and experiences. They opened my eyes to the hidden beauty and power of the Earth...the amazing world of insects and the incredible way plants have their own living world. A tiny seed is a living organism that is waiting to be planted at the right time. Everything in nature strives to live, defend and reproduce, forming a new copy of themselves. It was magical and reminded me that we are just one small part of a HUGE creation and we are given the role of stewards of this planet.

I think this encouraged the 24 interns and gave us a purpose for learning, then educating, and sharing the knowledge we were being given.

People are watching....

Probably all 24 of us told our families, our friends and even acquaintances that we were becoming Master Gardeners. Suddenly, people were sharing plant problems with us, asking for landscaping help, and looking at our yards and thinking we were instantly EXPERTS. It's fun to be able to share this new dilemma with classmates but also comforting to know answers for questions live at the Extension Office.

Angels among us.....

Having more than 250 Master Gardeners in the Galveston County area willing to help a MG Intern is comforting. MGs are around us during classes and help in any way they can. We can get gardening tips, the dos and don'ts about particular plants, landscapes, and techniques and probably the best recipes I have had in a long time.

As different and interesting as our class of interns, so multitalented are the MGs who run the office programs, work in The Discovery Garden, the greenhouse, the community areas where MGs are needed and the staff areas. Just ask 250 MGs what their favorite plants are and you will get almost 250 different answers. Everyone seems to like something different and everyone likes to do different things in the program.

What will be the area of most interest for each intern? After classwork, this is the new journey we are taking to find that answer.

With knowledge comes responsibility....

The knowledge we receive will be absorbed and shared. We are here to educate our families, our neighbors, our towns. We are fortunate to have access to information based on university research and cannot only help those who want to grow healthy trees, shrubs, and plants but can also help sustain the Earth with living things that function for a purpose.

Educational classes are offered by MGs for the County and this *Gulf Coast Gardening* newsletter is available online for area gardeners. Education is key at the Agrilife Extension Office in La Marque.

And now the work begins....

Just when we got so used to being a classroom of students who were given so many great topics of information, the classroom part ends and the outdoor world becomes our new arena. The orchard is a new topic of work, the serenity garden, the community garden, the greenhouse, The Discovery Garden, the helpline phone attendant and more. The soil is our textbook and the plants our teachers.

The learning continues at a nonstop pace. The experience just keeps getting better....

Are you destined to be in the Class of 2018?

Email interest in the MG program and they will mail you a packet around December. Classes will begin in February 2018. Go to the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension – Galveston County Master Gardener program website at http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/MG_Program/index.htm

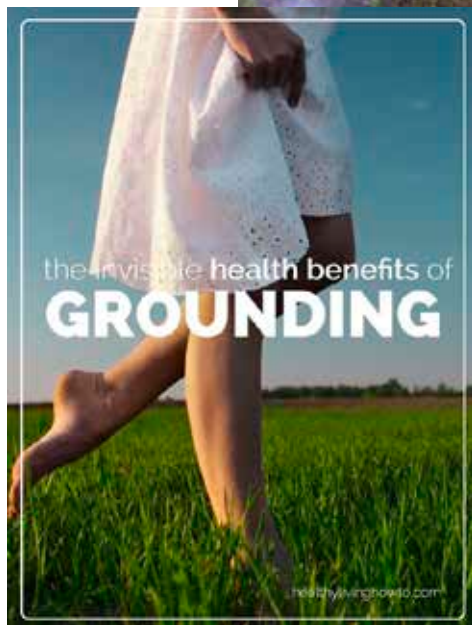
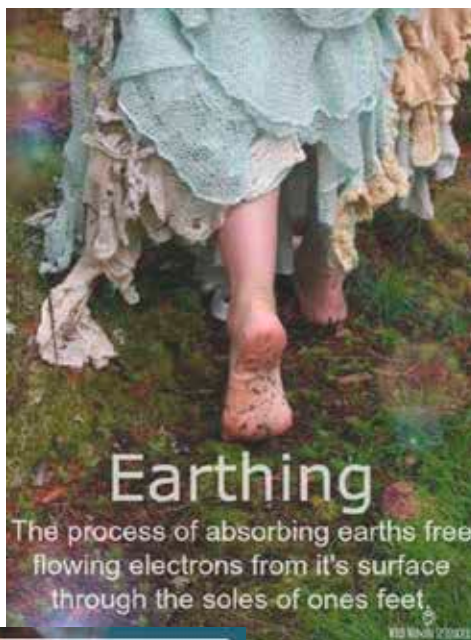
I did it. It was my time!

Gardening and Grounding (Earthing) for Improved Health or Maybe Just Fun ---



By Camille Goodwin
MG 2008

As Master Gardeners we know that gardening has many health benefits, but have you tried Grounding (also called Earthing) while working in your landscapes or while relaxing in your yard or maybe at the beach? Basically, “Earthing” involves your body being in contact with the earth’s surface energy by walking, sitting or sleeping outside (in your birthday suit!) in direct contact with the earth. There is some evidence in the holistic health world that walking barefoot outside, with the soles of your feet free to directly connect with the surface of the earth, where you can dig your toes into dirt or sand, or walk across pesticide free grass, natural unfinished tile or unpainted concrete lowers stress, inflammation and pain. Grounding is an energy healing technique for reconnecting your auric field to the earth. It’s based on the principle that we and everything on the planet are part of the earth. However, in our busy lives we no longer live connected to nature. Our modern lifestyle includes the widespread use of insulating rubber or plastic soled shoes and we live our lives above ground in our homes or offices disconnecting us from the Earth’s surface energy. We all have electrical energy, and modern technology has a way of throwing that energy off at times. Positive electrons from just living a modern lifestyle and having daily exposure to pollutants, technology (EMFs), and more can build up in the body as free radicals and can cause inflammation. Our bodies are electrical first and chemical second. Our brain, heart beat and neurotransmitter activity rely on electrical signals, so when our electricity is off, so can certain health aspects. With grounding, your body is naturally able to absorb electrical charges from the earth because your skin acts like



a conductor. Your feet, specifically certain points in the balls of your feet are believed to be especially good at receiving the earth’s electricity. The idea is that by being in touch with the planet, the electrical force coming off the earth is able to help lower inflammation and fight free radicals. The premise about Earthing’s benefits is that negatively-charged electrons can be absorbed from the bottom of your feet touching the ground, and then these can move anywhere in your body to neutralize where free radicals are forming. The antioxidant electrons help cancel out free radicals and halt damage. Recently, the term “Earthing” has earned a patent as a natural method for reducing disease-causing inflammation. This energy infusion from our earth is often referred to as “Vitamin G” for ground! It can restore and stabilize the bioelectrical circuitry that governs our physiology, organs, and biological rhythms. Some researchers feel Earthing is the easiest and most profound lifestyle change anyone can make. Enough science! Here are some ways you can make Earthing part of your daily routine.

Whether you believe in holistic methods or not, Earthing is very simple, completely free, can be done anywhere, at any time. It requires nothing but your bare body (or parts of it) and it just sounds fun!

- Get in the water, (we live in the perfect location) - Go fishing barefoot on the beach or dive in for a swim. Having all or part of your bare skin submersed in water is an excellent way to practice Earthing. Saltwater is the best as it is highly conductive
- Build a sand castle by sitting on the beach
- Go barefoot for one minute to one hour
- Stand or walk on grass, sand, dirt or unfinished/painted concrete, preferably wet, for greater conduction of the Earth’s electrons. (Wood, asphalt, glazed tile and vinyl are not conductive)
- Sit down on the grass. If you are unable to sit down on the ground then sit in a chair with your bare feet on the ground
- Work in the garden. Let your knees rest in the dirt and your hands touch the Earth
- Play a sport barefoot on grass or concrete
- Hug a tree (I know we have some old hippies in our group) for one to five minutes

Disclaimer - The information herein is for informational purposes only. Individuals must exercise caution when swimming, wading or walking in saltwater. Individuals who have cuts, abrasions, sores, rashes, etc. on their skin should not enter coastal saltwater along the Gulf Coast due to vibriosis. Caution must be exercised regarding walking barefoot in lawns and other areas frequented by pets. Consult your health care provider for further recommendations.

"Grow an Air Show...Epiphytes"



By Jan Brick
MG 2001

This is the season for a most unusual display from a most unusual series of plants. A curious and unique family of plant life has recently found favor among gardeners, designers and homeowners who are always seeking extraordinary and singular approaches to enhance their spaces. Commonly called "air plants," these remarkable plants can now be found in dozens of gift shops and nurseries, even grocery store floral sections, waiting to delight any and all of us alike. No talent, aptitude, green thumb, knowledge or ability

with plants is necessary to grow and enjoy these varieties. A special flair for designing a display might be helpful to get that artfully arranged expression but with the marketing skills of those in the business of selling them none is required since they have found distinctive means of display for us...visit your favorite shop and choose what looks elegant, chic or flamboyant to you.

Bulbous, feathery, or spiky, sometimes resembling an "upside down octopus," members of the epiphyte genus, *Tillandsia* (air plants) have evolved a distinctive adaptation allowing them to thrive in harsh environments. Though epiphytes live on other plants, they are not parasites, they attach themselves to plants for support...holding their structures in place while they acquire nutrients and moisture from the atmosphere around them.

Spreading across North and South America, *Tillandsia* is the largest genus in the bromeliad family with more than four hundred species including Spanish moss, orchids and ferns (like the staghorn). Other harmless epiphytes that are not tree-huggers include mosses and lichens that can be seen growing on rocks and other inorganic surfaces. The term epiphyte is derived from the Greek words "epi" that means upon and "phyton" that means plant. The leaves absorb the minerals, nutrients and moisture needed while the roots are used for attachment. Air plants use photosynthesis and some leaching from leaf litter and organic debris that collects on the host plant to produce nourishment but also have developed trichomes (white fuzzy hairs) that catch moisture and particles from air and water allowing the plant to feed and hydrate itself. Air plants take in carbon dioxide at night through stomata (minute openings) on the leaves, then use photosynthesis during the day turning that carbon dioxide into energy and sustenance. Water your plants during the daytime hours to avoid disrupting this schedule...do not overwater. Humid conditions may provide all that is needed but misting your air plants can be helpful in dry weather or when displaying your plants indoors. If the leaves seem more curled than usual, they may need watering. These tiny delightful plants are also resistant to insect pests and disease. An occasional spritz of liquid orchid fertilizer will ensure continued growth and vigor.

Typical *Tillandsia* Cultivars

"Eric Knobloch" grows to eight inches with leaves that turn rose colored before the plant blooms.

"Malemontii" is a clumping miniature series with fragrant blue flowers (prefers out of doors).

"Tenuifolia Silver Comb" grows stems up to two feet long before clumping leaves form (may dry out quickly).

"Curly Slim" displays two foot long banana peel-like leaves with an enchanting form.

"Showtime" is prized for thick stems and symmetrical clumps.

"Xerographica" is considered the king of air plants with its growth reaching eighteen inches in height and fifteen inches in diameter.

"Blue Flower" bears beautiful pink bracts with bright blue blooms and needle-like foliage.

"Neglecta" sports thick succulent leaves and a prolific production of off-shoots.

"Crocata" generates tiny yellow blooms with a delightful honeysuckle-like fragrance.

"Duratii" flaunts exceptionally fragrant and long lasting purple blooms.

Since epiphytes are not planted in the ground or in pots, they offer great design flexibility and can be moved around at will. Methods of display could include the following:

- Epiphytes will perform well in a small saucer or decorative vase filled with teeny rocks and water. Place the plant on the rocks but not in the water. Try the same technique using a large conch shell or several large shells each with its own plant for a tabletop display. The addition of a little moss will provide some interest and depth.
- Some type of mount for support is another method of display. Affix the plant to a wooden board, cork, or driftwood with wire or fishing line woven through the leaves and around the base. Attach a hanger to the back and hang on a fence out of doors or place in moderate light in a bathroom where they can absorb water from the steam of the shower or bath.
- Place a small amount of hot glue to a vine wreath and to several air plants for an interesting twist on traditional wreath presentation.
- Tuck into branches or trunks of trees.
- Suspend by wires for a living mobile.

Air Plant Facts

- *Tillandsia* spp. are pollinated by hummingbirds.
- Some species can take up to two years to produce flower spikes.
- The seeds are very tiny and borne on a webbing much like a dandelion seed.
- These plants are most often found on the north side of the tree host as protection from sun.
- Indigenous tribes in the Amazon used some species of epiphytes in poison dart mixtures as well as in dyes decorations, and natural remedies.

Coveted not only for their unusual shapes and forms as well as ease of care, epiphytes are pleasing in their variety of colors of foliage...silver, green and some rusty reds. This fascinating collection of plants is a pleasure to grow indoors or out in the garden. Think of them as “garden ornaments.” Place them on tables as an alternative to potted plants or cut arrangements in your outside living areas.



I have always been a fan of these “air plants” and have a collection that I display out-of-doors year round. An outing to the annual Moody Gardens Herb Show is usually when I find additions to my collection and this year was no exception. One exhibitor had such a spectacle of plants to choose from that it was difficult to take only two or three!

Editor's Note: This is a reprint from Jan's article in The Island Garden Magazine May 2017



Photos courtesy Linda Steber

MG Best Shots and Narrative!

Gulf Coast Springtime Blooming Trees



By Elayne Kouzounis
MG 1998

Southern Magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*)

Southern Magnolia is considered by many as the world's most beautiful flowering tree. The large leaves are evergreen and glossy, its height can easily reach 100 feet and it is a slow grower. It needs full sun and lots of room to spread. In May huge white fragrant blossoms appear for several weeks; then after the blooms, there appear russet-colored cones

that have bright red seeds which squirrels and birds eat. Magnolias prefer to be grown in an open area and take a pyramidal form with low branches that may hide the trunk entirely. It is a beautiful landscape tree. Old Magnolia trees attract wildlife such as raccoons, possums, and squirrels who may live in the hollow of the trunk. Early March is a good time to plant them. If you get the plant the exact depth it grew in the nursery you will hardly go wrong. Use any good commercial fertilizer. The Southern Magnolia is susceptible to scale. Mine faces south. I always water my tree with the hose on the ground.

Vitex (*Vitex agnus castus*) also known as Chaste Tree

The Chaste Tree has grayish, aromatic foliage and dark green leaves resembling the fingers of a hand. The flowers appear in long spikes of bluish-lavender and are usually at their height in May and June. A rapid grower, it can reach 10 feet if planted in a moderately rich loam in a sunny spot. Feed at least once during the growing season with a balanced fertilizer. It may be pruned to any shape and is practically free of pests and diseases. Propagate by softwood cuttings in the spring and hardwood cuttings in autumn. Don't be alarmed if your Chaste Tree does not come into bud in early spring; it does not produce its leaves until warm weather. I placed my Chaste tree in the south part of my yard.

Desert Willow (*Chilopsis linearis*)

The graceful beauty of this arid country tree commands notice. It is a deciduous, fast growing tree that can reach up to 30 feet. The tree has slender, one-inch long willow like leaves. For several weeks it produces delicate trumpet-shaped flowers that are lavender, white, and violet with two yellow stripes in the throat which attract bees and hummingbirds. Each of the long, thin pods, which follow the flowers, contain a number of seeds. These seeds have feathery edges which are enjoyed by several bird species and are dispersed by the wind. The desert willow is not a true willow. It is a member of the Catalpa family which includes the trumpet creeper vine. The highway department utilizes the tree extensively for beautification and soil stabilization. It needs a well-drained location. In Mexico, crafts people use the branches for weaving. Native Americans once favored them for hunting bows. This tree in my yard is facing the southwest.



Southern Magnolia • Photo courtesy of MG Herman Auer



Vitex or Chaste Tree • Photos courtesy of GCMG



Desert Willow • Photo courtesy of GCMG

White Fringe Tree (*Chionanthus virginicus*)

In May, before the leaves emerge, this plant is covered with six- to eight-inch long, fleecy panicles of flowers that are slightly fragrant. This is one of the finest spring-flowering trees; it can reach 12 to 20 feet at maturity with an equal spread. The leaves are bold, up to eight inches long, and turn golden in the fall. In August and September the black berries are in abundance; they are attractive to many species of birds. This rounded small tree has a very open habit and is one of the last trees to leaf out in the spring. It prefers deep, moist, acid, fertile soil in full sun to part shade. No pruning is required. It is somewhat susceptible to leaf spot, cankers and powdery mildew. I do not have a Fringe Tree but plan on purchasing one soon.

Southern Wax Myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*)

Semi-evergreen leaves and a crooked trunk characterize this fast-growing small tree that can reach heights to 30 feet. Also known as Southern Bayberry, it possesses many attractive qualities that make it popular in landscapes. A waxy coating which surrounds its tiny blue fruits has been important in the past for candle making. We still enjoy the delightful fragrance of bayberry candles during the Christmas holidays, but today these are scented with New England bayberries (*Myrica pennsylvanica*), a related species that occurs very rarely in Texas. The female Southern Wax Myrtle produces the fruits. Forty species of birds feed on these berries, which may stay on the twigs until consumed. The bushy branches offer good nesting sites. The bronze green leaves reveal small oil dots when held up to the light and release a slight aroma when crushed. They make a good spice for seafood gumbos and enhance almost all crab boil and shrimp boil seasonings. My Wax Myrtle is in a flower bed on the SW side of our yard and has never had issues with insects or any disease.

Ginkgo, Maidenhair Tree (*Ginkgo biloba*)

This grand tree reaches 80 feet with a spread of 30 to 80 feet. The distinctive bright green, fan-shaped leaves turn a rich golden yellow in the fall. The habit is pyramidal when young, becoming picturesque as the tree matures and spreads. The male does not fruit and is the better choice since the fruits are messy and malodorous. It grows in almost any situation, and it tolerates air pollution, a wide pH range and salt. It is heat tolerant and performs well in the South. It grows best in sandy, deep, moderately moist soil. It is pest and disease free. The tree is in the front of our home on the east side. i

If all else fails, invest in a bottle tree!!!!



Photo courtesy of Elayne Kouzounis



White Fringe Tree • Photo courtesy of GCMG



Southern Wax Myrtle • Photo courtesy of GCMG



Ginkgo, Maidenhair Tree • Photo courtesy of GCMG

Trowels and Tribulations

In a suburban garden

Editor's Note: This article is a reprint from Donna's article
for *La Ventana Del Lago*, The City of El Lago's neighborhood newspaper



By Donna Ward
MG 1996

May not only looks good, she smells pretty good too. If your morning routine is anything like mine, you're carrying that morning cup of coffee and crisp buttered toast to the patio or deck. The morning is still somewhat cool and the scent of magnolia blossoms drift on a light breeze. I lament the inability to grow my beloved sweet-scented lilacs, but magnolias and gardenias almost make up for that failure.

If your wildflowers have stopped blooming, don't rush to cut off the faded blossoms. Do as Mother Nature does, let them go to seed and die back naturally. For those non-blooming roses and daylilies, maybe they need a sunnier location, and it's not too late to move them (if you hurry). Both of these bloomers do best with 6-8 hours of sunshine. But be aware they are going to need plenty of TLC to get them through the sizzling heat which is sure to come. Water, a light fertilization and mulch is the key to their re-establishment.

We all expect leaf drop to be a fall affair, but it happens again each spring. 'Evergreen' trees such as Magnolia and Live Oak drop some leaves in fall, but the remainder is pushed off in spring by emerging new growth. Evergreen is a misnomer – all leaves eventually expire. Don't be upset when that gorgeous Magnolia Grandiflora starts to drop yellow, spotty leaves. It's Mother Nature's way of replacing the old with the new - I just wish she would wait until the flowers fade before the leaves begin to yellow and drop.

One of my favorite annuals for shade just happens to be impatiens. They come in a variety of colors, bloom almost continually, and never have to be deadheaded. They look equally great in the ground, in patio pots, or hanging

baskets. But don't do like a neighbor of mine did last spring. She very carefully planted dozens of impatiens in a bed bordering her shaded patio. By mid-summer there was very little new growth to be seen. When I questioned her as to whether she had slightly broken the small root ball before planting, she responded in the negative, saying she had carefully lifted each from its small six-pack slot trying not to disturb the roots and very gently placed each in the small hole she had dug. As a result, the roots continued their circuitous route, rarely venturing out into the surrounding soil. If she had broken the root ball slightly the plants would have been forced to produce outward growing roots. All of our annual bedding plants will benefit from having their root ball disturbed before placing in their prepared bed.

I was browsing a garden department the other day and overheard one of the department's employees extolling the virtues of a well known fertilizer manufacturer's 'weed and feed' formula to a customer. My mother taught me not to interrupt conversations, but I forgot my good manners, and proceeded to tell the customer that weed and feed formulations don't know the difference between his landscape trees, shrubbery and weeds. The herbicide contained in those formulas is not selective and will kill his trees, shrubbery and weeds equally. I felt bound to tell him that a well-fertilized healthy St. Augustine lawn will choke out unwanted weeds and suggested a bag of 15-5-10. Don't forget to set the mower blades to 'High.' Taller grass keeps the stolons shaded from the sun, and helps prevent excessive moisture evaporation. And when you water - water deeply, a light sprinkle is almost worse than no water at all.

Not much wants to go into the veggie garden this month except for okra. This member of the mallow family loves hot weather, and does produce some pretty attractive flowers, although nothing to compete with the magnolia. And I don't even know if they are sweetly scented, but the resulting pot of gumbo smells pretty darn good.



Photos by Donna Ward

History of the Oleander Flower of the Island

By Betty Head

Betty Head was born in Galveston – a B.O.I. (born on the Island). She has been a Medical Technologist from 1948 to present (64 years). Betty has been a part of the International Oleander Society since 1970, President Emeritus. The Betty Head Oleander Garden Park, located at 2624 Sealy in Galveston, has been named after her with her years of dedication and fundraising to make the park a reality with so many oleander specimens in the park that are seen all around Galveston. Betty Head has worked on plantings over the years at the Oleander Gardens, Sea Arama, Gaido's, Moody Gardens, Open Gates (The Sealy Mansion on Broadway), UTMB, and Moody Mansion! Betty continues to be a very popular speaker on oleanders in Galveston.

Have you ever thought about the history of the plants growing in your yard? Do you just accept that they always were there? If you had been one of the early settlers of Galveston Island what would have been your reaction to what was found? A beautiful tropical island? An island paradise just waiting for someone to come and enjoy a good life?

Think again!

This time imagine a flat, sandy barrier island off the coast of Texas. Except for a small raised area with three small trees that stood out on the horizon as a marker for ships, there were no other trees, not even palms. Saltwater was all around. Indians were close by as well as snakes and other wild animals. Top it all off with a hot, hot sun! Would you have stayed to plant a garden? One person is recorded as saying that all that grew well here were fleas and mosquitoes! The island had to become a big garden grown by a lot of people to look like it does today. Just where did all these plants come from and how did they get here?

We know that the oleanders came here not long after the plans were drawn and laid for Galveston to become a city in 1839. They came on a sailing ship from Jamaica and adapted to the island well. They have lived and prospered here even through hurricanes, draught, disease and wars only through the efforts of determined gardeners.

Where did this hardy bush originate and who carried it around the world? Some plants have very interesting histories and the oleander is one of them. It can be traced as far back as 4000 BC where it began to evolve and take its place on the earth. It was written about in the Bible about 3700 BC. It has been known by many names such as Rose of Jericho, Dafna rose, Rhododaphne, Nerion, and finally as its botanic name *Nerium oleander*. The science of ethnobotany studies how plants migrate with people and shows that the oleander has truly made a journey around the world from its origin in the Levant. In 1565 it arrived in Florida brought by Spanish traders. Recently it has become very popular in Hungary and many new varieties have been reported.

The first blooms were described as a single white and a double pink. Now we have five major colors of white, pink, red, yellow and salmon with numerous shades and combinations. In Europe, they have described one as blue but we have found it to be a pale lavender. The petals take many forms



Photos courtesy of MG Herman Auer

and some are fragrant. There are over 100 varieties growing on the island and we have over 40 growing in our Betty Head Oleander Garden Park.

The oleander bushes range from dwarf to tall, from upright to sprawling. The blooming season begins in the early Spring with some being short and others blooming on into the Fall. Turner's Nursery in Corpus Christi has developed a whole group of new dwarf and semi-dwarf varieties that have long blooming seasons. Some of the dwarf varieties are more susceptible to freeze damage.

Oleanders grow well in the light sandy soil of the island and do not like a heavy clay-type soil. They need the sunlight to bloom well but will survive with some shade. They are easily cultivated by seed and by cuttings. Some varieties produce many seed pods that are filled with aerial seeds. The sap is poisonous but contains a natural emetic.

The International Oleander Society was organized in Galveston and celebrated its 50th anniversary on April 28 with a luncheon in the Viewfinders room at beautiful Moody Gardens Hotel, followed by a celebration at the Betty Head Oleander Garden Park. www.oleander.org

Meet Mary Lou Kelso

MG, Class of 2000



By Trish McDaniel
MG 2001

It is true. Mary Lou Kelso needs no introduction. You already know her as a fellow MG, class of 2000. She currently hosts lunch for visiting professors who teach the MG Intern classes. In addition, in concert with Dr. J., she is immersed in planning key local activities for the Texas Master Gardener State Convention. Whatever the mission, it's clear that Mary Lou tenders her time, love and great focus to all her commitments.

Since reengaging to the MG program, I was unaware of what this interview would represent to Mary Lou. I could not guess it would be my most poignant sit-down ever. Mary Lou agreed to be interviewed, tentatively, not knowing if she was ready for the outlay of emotion that could likely arise.

Mary Lou and her husband Horace, MG 2001, had been interviewed 10 years prior by Rose Marie Smith, also MG 2001. It was with excitement that she and her husband awaited the newsletter, looking forward to reading it together and then sharing it with their family.

The evening came when their neighbor and fellow MG 2003, Bebe Rizo, delivered the newsletter to their door, hot off the press. But before reading their interview, agreeing to finish the day's work in their lush back garden, the Earth turned. In a stark, cruel reminder of how our lives can change in an instant, Horace suffered a stroke and tragically passed away after just three days in the ICU.

It was during this heartbreaking, uncertain time that Dr. J paid them a visit in the hospital, newsletter in hand. Later, by Horace's bedside, holding his hand, Mary Lou read the interview to him, hoping he could hear her words. With a responsive squeeze of his hand and the doctor's assurance, Mary Lou knew he could still hear her voice.

And then Hurricane Ike hit.

Another truth - Mary Lou possesses astonishing strength and an innate ability to carry on.

History in a Nutshell: Mary Lou is a fifth-generation Galvestonian. Her paternal great, great grandfather arrived from Ireland in 1836, a baker by trade.

She and husband, Horace, worked across the hall from each other in the Internal Med. Dept., UTMB, and were married in 1965, after one year of dating. Horace retired from his position in cancer research after 34 years of service.

Their two daughters - Jennifer, attended Rice University, married with two children in Sewanee, TN. Amy, attended University of Pennsylvania, Wharton School of Business, now self-employed in the field of oil and gas, lives in The Heights in Houston.

In addition to her MG commitments, Mary Lou has served on the Board for the Friends of Moody Gardens for sixteen years and as President for seven years. She is a member of Friends of Rosenberg Library and steadfast volunteer at the annual used book sale. She also serves as Vice President of the Top 50 Board in Galveston which annually recognizes Galveston's top students at a ceremony at UTMB.

Mary Lou was a "stay at home mom" until their daughters were teenagers. She then worked part time at Moody Memorial Preschool as a teacher, loving her seven years with 16 three-year-olds, then at Oppe Elementary School for ten years.

She's traveled extensively to many countries in Europe as well as Dubai, Jordan, Hong Kong, Turkey, and Croatia seeing Zagreb where her maternal grandmother lived. This past Thanksgiving, she and Amy spent time in London and Edinburg. Favorite place visited: Bosnia: Herzegovina and Kraków.

Favorites: MG volunteer project - Greta's Garden, Oppe Elementary. Garden visited: the small, productive home gardens in Croatia and Herzegovina. Garden book: Heirloom Gardening for the South, a special presentation by the author, Dr. Welsh, to replace the one she lost in Ike; and - The Very Hungry Caterpillar, notwithstanding.

Began gardening: Early age - always helped Mom and Dad. They practiced a self-sufficiency bestowed by her maternal grandmother who emigrated from Yugoslavia as a girl, never to see her parents again.

Currently reading: Galveston Reads, Train to Crystal City.

Favorite Dr. J. Anecdote: She admires his philosophy that "everybody always brings something to the table" and his annual introduction to MG Interns of his "Rules of decorum." Mary Lou teases Dr. Johnson that upon retirement he should launch "Dr. Johnson's Manners School" to the corporate world. So much more to report, so little space...You must ask Mary Lou about grandfather's house on Homes Tour, her great great grandfather's baking awards and, of course, her gorgeous and lush garden.



Photo courtesy of MG Lisa Belcher

Weed N Wish Garden Club, Dickinson, Texas



By Kaye Corey
MG 2001

One of the oldest and most historical garden clubs of the Bay Area is Dickinson's Weed N Wish Garden Club. Organized in 1960 with 142 members, they celebrated their 50th Anniversary in November, 2010 at their original home, the Holy Trinity Episcopal Church.

In 1966, after years of meeting at the church and raising funds, the Garden Club members began to explore ideas for their own Garden Center home. They wanted a Center for their meetings, flower shows, and fund raisers. To this end, the Garden Club founded the Dickinson Railroad Museum for their Center but presented it to the City of Dickinson in 1995.

This is a story of the determination of Texas Garden Club ladies with a dream. The Dickinson Historical Society tells the history of the project in its entirety. This is a brief history of how the ladies of the Weed N Wish got their Garden Center.

In 1966, the club members heard the Dickinson Railroad Depot was to be demolished. They asked the GH&H Railroad if it would donate the Depot to the club for their Garden Center. The Depot was theirs if they moved it off GH&H property. The Railroad not only donated the Garden Club the Dickinson 1897 Depot but the 1902 League City Depot that was also due to be demolished. The land on FM 517 was a gift by a local developer. Moving the Depots to their new location was accomplished with much community help, cooperation and shouts of joy.

Possession of their Depots meant their work had just begun. Fundraising for renovations was not easy. Good news came when the Moody Foundation awarded the Club a \$25,000 grant. Hard work and the dedication of many gave Weed N Wish Garden Club a home. The Garden Club struggled for many years to operate and maintain their Garden Center. Eventually, in 1995, they approached the City of Dickinson to accept the Garden Center and the \$6000 in their treasury. A Citizen's Committee working with the City decided to develop the area into the Community Center and Museum that we see today.

Do you remember the Weed N Wish award winning gardening radio show? Their home tour, "Christmas in the Pines" was an annual widely anticipated event to be followed by 15 years of their "Southern Teas." We have all enjoyed their garden tours, plant sales and gardening programs. Weed N Wish Garden Club has truly kept gardening and horticulture alive in Dickinson and the Bay Area for the past 57 years and they are still going!

President Dixie Flint says the 51-member club still holds its meet-

ings at the Railroad Museum every second Thursday of each month, September through May at 9:30 a.m. Visitors and new members are always welcome.

Currently, they are planning their annual tree planting for Arbor Day and planning to help the clean-up and refurbishing of a local rain garden. Support of the Museum and scholarships are continual. They have an auction at their monthly meetings to raise a little money. What fun! Join them, won't you?



Diagnosis: Murder?

A garden who done it for mystery readers who love a good plant tale



By Karolyn Grphart
MG 2017 Intern

Case #9726: The Kemah Tomato Caper

Victim: A once healthy thriving tomato plant suddenly looking mysteriously and possibly fatally ill. Kemah owner knew what to do when the crime was discovered. Take it immediately to problem solver and plant detective Laurel Stine at the Agrilife Extension Service Center in Carbide Park in La Marque.

Can YOU determine what happened?
Here are the clues:

Here are 3 possible solutions to the above tomato crime.



Photos courtesy of MG Robin Collins

WHICH SOLUTION IS THE CORRECT ONE?

A. The tomato is suffering from Herbicide Damage.

In addition to commercial applications, herbicides from home gardeners or their neighbors can drift onto sensitive tomatoes or other vegetables. Weed killers for lawns and landscapes often contain broad-spectrum herbicides such as glyphosate and growthregulators such as 2,4-D and dicamba. Examples are Ortho Weed-B-Gon and Fertilome Weed Free Zone. Tomatoes are very sensitive to these herbicides even when applied at extremely low rates. Though the plants may look healthy, drift from these products can reduce the number and the quality of the fruit.

Remedy:

There is no remedy for leaves that are already injured by 2,4-D. If new growth continues to show injury symptoms, harvest any salvageable fruits and pull up the plants. If new shoot growth is normal, and there is still at least 4 to 6 weeks left in the growing season, the plants may be able to outgrow the injury. New buds and leaves should begin growing within about a week. If not, pull the affected plants and replant.

For more information on this

<https://www.agrilifebookstore.org/v/vspfiles/downloadables/E-626.pdf>

B. Cold/wind damage caused this to happen to a good tomato plant.

Since the time of the tomato's planting, Galveston County had a couple of cold fronts accompanied by northern winds. This has affected this tomato plant in a negative way.

C. Early Blight is the culprit.

Early Blight (caused by *Alternaria solani*) a fungal leafspot disease, which can cause leaf, stem and fruit lesions. Leafspots can start out brownish-black and then expand to show concentric color zones with a yellow halo.

The disease typically starts on the lower leaves, closest to the soil, which harbors the initial inoculum that starts the disease spring cycle. Splashing water, as well as heavy rains, can help spread early blight, so only water the root zone of the plant and avoid wetting the foliage as much as possible. Mulching and staking can also help reduce the splashing effects.

Early Blight is an annual problem for most gardeners. It normally develops into a problem when plants have a heavy fruit set and the area has received heavy rainfall. Spores from the fungus are spread to the lower foliage by wind and splashing rain. Leaves must be wet for infection to occur. At 50 degrees F. the leaves must be wet for 12 hours for infection, but at temperatures above 59 degrees F., the length of time for infection is only 3 hours. Leaf spot development is most severe during periods of cloudy days and high humidity.

Once early blight is present, your only option is to slow the rate of disease transmission. Scout your garden regularly and remove infected leaves or severely infected plants because they provide inoculum (spores) for the disease to spread.

Fungicides typically used to help control early blight include chlorothalonil, fixed copper, mancozeb, and maneb and should be applied on a 7- to 10-day spray schedule. It is important when using fungicides to adhere to all label directions. A possible organic control product would be Serenade. Serenade™ biofungicide is a wettable powder formulation of *Bacillus subtilis*, QST-713 strain. *B. subtilis* is applied as a preventative fungicide and works as an antagonist against many pathogens.

ANSWER: A, B, & C: It was a triple crime. Thanks to Detective (and Administrative Assistant-Horticulture) Stine, the case was solved and closed.

How are the tomato plants today? Owner and Master Gardener Robin Collins reports: She followed the instructions from Laurel Stine and the tomato plants in her garden are doing great (20 tomatoes so far!)

Stumped by a plant problem?

The Galveston County Agrilife Extension Office will try to SOLVE YOUR MYSTERY!

Tool Time - Small Tools



By Barbra Markey
MG 2013



"A person's a person, no matter how small."

Dr. Seuss, *"Horton Hears a Who."*

To paraphrase, a tool's a tool, no matter how small. You know PEQUENO [SPANISH], PETITE [FRENCH], KLEIN [GERMAN]

The word small can be found in any language. Small tool sets come with just 3 tools and are a great place to begin. Collections are available with 3 pieces, or can be purchased separately. Prices are most reasonable, no matter what you decide. Most contain a 4-prong rake, spade and shovel, with appropriately sized handles.

Sets are light weight and easy to use in outdoor areas of succulents, cactus gardens or any undersized plants found in a small space in the landscape. Previously, we defined a shovel as having a broad, flat front, and in regular sized tools, a D handle which aids in digging. In this smaller version, the shovel does not allow for much digging and does not have the D handle; they are still useful in small spaces. The heavy digging would have been completed when preparing the site. Spades are a type of shovel with a pointed end, used mainly for digging. This little spade will be helpful for removing small, unwanted plants that magically appear in every garden.

Perhaps you would consider gifting a set to an older grandchild, niece or nephew, or child to encourage a love of gardening and possibly some free labor. Individual pieces are available at Big Box stores in early spring; each tool is painted in a pastel color, which makes locating them quite easy. The tools are priced separately which allows you to pick and choose the perfect tools for your little helper. Specific small tool assortments are available for working in your potted plants. Groups vary in selection and can be located according to need. Sets range from those used for kitchen gardening, succulents and miniature Fairy Gardens to Terrariums.

I own a garden tool set with 7-8 miniature tools, including a trowel, spade, aerator, leaf and flower snipper, branch and twig pruner, as well as a mister. I added a small pair of scissors for snipping seed packets and the like. All the tools are housed in a durable canvas bag, with its own specific pocket. On a good day, I return each tool to the proper pocket, after I clean them. Finding them is a breeze, when next I need them. I often bring the bag to my patio and use the tools on my outdoor, potted plants. The tools are the perfect size and it is so easy to carry the bag from pot to pot. The canvas bag lends itself to cleaning and looks new when the task is done. A squirt of liquid soap and a heavy duty, small brush do a great job removing unwanted dirt and stains; the bag always looks great, and I feel like I have a new bag for the upcoming season. Is small tool shopping in your future? Happy hunting!

MAY/JUNE "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



MG Meeting Minutes



By Mary Lou Kelso
MG 2010

GCMGA Meeting Minutes, January 10, 2017

The January 2017 monthly meeting of the GCMGA was called to order by President Ira Gervais.

Ira discussed the annual Fruit Tree sale and reported the citrus and vegetables were ordered. One of the vendors cut their amount by 150. There will be a meeting next Thursday for team leaders to meet. Ann Anderson will chair the volunteers. The sale will be held Saturday, February 18 at Jack Brooks Park and begins promptly at 9 a.m. Volunteers were asked to be there by 8:30 a.m. unless, otherwise, requested by their team leader.

The Demo Garden renovation was discussed regarding bathrooms.

The plans have been approved with FEMA rules. The County architect will look over the plans. It is important that they be ADA approved.

The Aquaponics system location and design is being redone by MG Robin Collins. They will be moved to the north side of the hoop house. They will be resembling the existing hoop house with an arch.

The Texas Master Gardener Conference will be held in Galveston with its headquarters at Moody Gardens Hotel with the banquet at 12:30 p.m., Monday, May 1. The banquet and all the tours were discussed by Mary Lou Kelso, Moody Gardens Conference Coordinator. Rod Mize will help with the orchard at the Demo Garden.

A request went out for Libbie's Place in Galveston for MG's to volunteer to help with the horticulture program in place by the GCMG. You can speak with Bobbie Ivey if you are able to participate.

Dr. Johnson reported the number of volunteer hours for 2016 was 31,563.55 through Jan. 31, 2017. Last year's hours were 27,000. Congratulations!

There was freeze damage in the Demonstration Garden with frost.

It was discussed there will be signage in place for the Demonstration Gardens Tour for the May 1 and 2 tours for the State Conference.

Gene Speller reported on his Soil Solarization Study.

The meeting was adjourned.

GCMGA Meeting Minutes, March 14, 2017

The GCMGA monthly meeting was called to order by Dr. Johnson. He welcomed everyone and introduced the speaker for the meeting and provides some little background history. In 2013 Casey McAuliffe of Moon Dog Farms came to the Extension Office to meet Dr. Johnson and also ask him to view their Farm located in Santa Fe. She and her husband, Alex, were developing a "certified naturally grown" orchard of about 11 acres with their wanting use about 6 acres to grow vegetables as a business. Casey showed a PowerPoint presentation of the farm during her presentation and discussed all the issues they confronted along with way with becoming "organic farmers." They sell their produce and are at the Galveston Farmers Market on Wednesday afternoon as being one of their vendors.

GCMGA Meeting Minutes, April 11, 2017

The April meeting of the GCMGA meeting was held at the lovely home and gardens of Lynne' and Rod Mize in Dickinson Texas. In spite of the rain during the afternoon, the skies cleared with everyone being able to be outside to view their beautiful yard and enjoy the potluck dinner.



easy recipes

Seasonal Bites



By Sandra Gervais
MG 2011

Once again we want to showcase recipes from the kitchens of our Galveston County Master Gardeners. It makes me wonder if other organizations have this many good cooks! The first is a “Chicken Pot Pie Casserole” that Mary Gonzales brought to one of our meetings. There were many requests for it and she was gracious enough to share.

The next recipe comes from one of our current interns from the class of 2017, Theresa Blackwell. It was a big hit at one of the Intern classes.



Chicken Pot Pie Casserole

MG Mary Gonzales

Preheat oven to 400°
1/3 cup chopped celery
1/2 cup chopped onion
1/3 cup unsalted butter
1/3 cup all-purpose flour
2 3/4 cups chicken broth
3 1/2 cups of cooked chicken, chopped
1 10 oz. package of frozen mixed vegetables, thawed
1/3 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon black pepper
1 prepared pie crust (Mary used a Ritz prepared crust)
1 egg

Sauté the celery and onion in the butter on medium heat until tender. Add flour and continue cooking for about one minute. Add chicken broth and reduce heat. Stir until mixture boils and thickens. Add thawed vegetables, chicken, salt and pepper. Stir until well mixed and heated. Transfer to a buttered 9" X 13" casserole dish. Cool. Meanwhile, place pie crust on floured surface and cut into one-inch strips. Lay pastry strips on top of filling in a lattice pattern. Beat egg and brush top of pastry strips. Bake for 35-40 minutes, or until crust is golden brown.

This would be a great way to use leftover chicken or turkey during the holidays. And a store bought chicken would work well also. As to the seasonings, adjust them to your taste but remember, regular chicken broth can be salty.



Broccoli Delight Salad

MG Intern 2017 Theresa Blackwell

2 bunches of fresh broccoli, rinsed, drained, and chopped
1/2 cup raisins (or dried cranberries)
1 cup pecans, chopped
1/2 cup red onion, chopped
12 slices bacon, crisply fried and crumbled

Dressing

1 cup mayonnaise
2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
1/2 cup sugar

Directions

Mix all ingredients for dressing. Leave in refrigerator overnight for flavors to meld. To serve: Mix first four salad ingredients together in a bowl. Before serving, pour dressing over salad. Top with crumbled bacon. Mix and enjoy. Between these two recipes, there should be something for everyone. And best of all, they are both easy to prepare.

Carbide Park Update now known as The Discovery Garden



By Tom Fountain
MG 2008

Wow, more months of above-normal temperatures. This year our average daily temperatures have continued five-to-seven degrees above normal for the season in the Galveston County area. Recording sites continue to break record high temperatures.

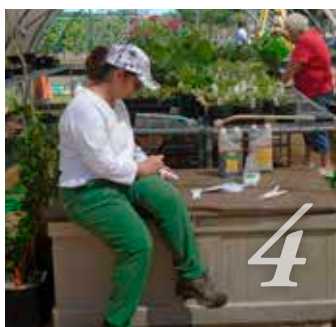
So far, this year in the Galveston County area we have set from 12-to-18 record-high temperatures. Rainfall across our area was still slightly above normal, and expected to continue above normal into the summer season. The outlook also indicates that temperatures are likely going to continue above normal into summer.

At the end of April, we will be hosting the Texas Master Gardener Conference that will include a tour of our Discovery Garden in May. With so little time and lots to do, Henry and Ira put out an "all hands" request for help in the orchard. This resulted in an army of Master Gardeners joining with the orchard crew for several workdays creating a "madhouse" of mulching, pruning, and planting which made the orchard look great. This army has spread into other areas with similar results. All who have worked on these projects deserve a round of applause. David and others are waiting for more mulch (Fig 1). Joe is pruning one of the orchard trees (Fig 2).

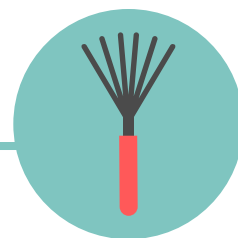
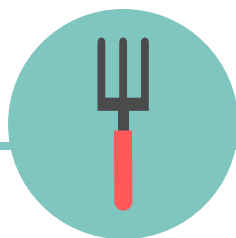
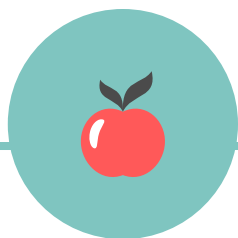
We will continue to be very busy in the Discovery Garden for quite a while. The spring and summer gardens are starting to come on strong and some are starting to produce. Weeding and harvesting always need to be done. We also always have tours like the seniors group from Harris County Precinct 1 (Fig 3). The greenhouse crew has been fully engaged as ever growing new plants, and holding a few garden sales of herbs, vegetables and bedding plants. Brenda is watering plants and Joanne is making labels for new plants (Fig 4).

We also have several construction projects underway or in the queue. Sharon is attaching a railing at the aquaponics garden facility that is well underway at this time (Fig 5). Jim is making repairs to the compost bins (Fig 6), while sprinkler repairs are being performed by Bobby (Fig 7).

A mountain of work gets done but we have great fellowship in the garden and we get to learn new skills. Hope to see you in the garden soon.



Photos courtesy of Tom Fountain



REMEMBER

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 approved means. Contact MG Wayne Elliott at gcmghours@gmail.com for more information.

Date	Name of Program	Speaker	MG CEUs
1/5/2017	Collection of Dormant Graftwood	Herman Auer & Sue Jeffco	1.25
1/5/2017	Veg of the Wk.: Broccoli & Cauliflower	Barbara Lyons	0.50
1/7/2017	Wedge Grafting	Sue Jeffco	2.50
1/7/2017	Propagation of Plants by Cuttings	Bill Cummins	1.00
1/11/2017	Highlights of Soil Solarization Study	Gene Speller	0.25
1/14/2017	Growing Great Tomatoes (Part 2)	Ira Gervais	2.00
1/14/2017	Successful Spring Vegetable Gardening	Herman Auer	2.50
1/17/2017	Gardening by the Square Foot	John Jons	1.50
1/19/2017	Fig Tree Pruning & Propagation	Terry Cuclis	0.50
1/26/2017	Veg of the Wk.: Cabbage & Brussels Sprouts	Barbara Lyons	0.50
1/28/2017	Growing peaches in Galveston County	Herman Auer	3.00
1/28/2017	Kitchen Gardening	Mary Demeny	2.50
1/31/2017	Anyone Can Grow Roses	John Jons	1.50
2/4/2017	Growing Backyard Citrus	Robert Marshall	3.00
2/4/2017	Growing Blueberries	Dr. David Cohen	1.25
2/10/2017	Spring Plant Sale Pre-Sale Preview	John Jons	1.00
2/11/2017	Growing Avocado & Papaya	Jerry Hurlbert	2.00
2/11/2017	Soil Health & Evaluation	Jim Gilliam	2.00
2/23/2017	Rose Pruning	John Jons	1.25
3/9/2017	Veg of the Wk.: Radishes	Barbara Lyons	0.50
3/11/2017	Bonsai	Clyde Holt	2.50
3/11/2017	Composting	Jim Gilliam	2.00
3/18/2017	Tomato Stress Management	Ira Gervais	2.25
3/18/2017	Culture & Care of Palms	O.J. Miller	2.00
3/25/2017	Turning Dirt Into Soil	Jim Gilliam	2.75
4/13/2017	Grafting Pecan Trees	Herman Auer & Sue Jeffco	1.25
4/25/2017	Beneficials in the Garden	Dr. William Johnson	1.50
2017 Recertification Hours for MGs		Total CEUs (Hours)	44.75



GULF COAST GARDENING EDUCATIONAL SEMINARS

Upcoming Events - May-June 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

<http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/index.html>

MAY

TOOL TIME HANDS-ON WORKSHOP

Saturday, May 6, 2017

9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

e-mail galvcountymgs@gmail.com
to pre-register

GC Master Gardeners Henry Harrison, III, and Tim Jahnke will demonstrate the use and maintenance of garden tools. There will be a talk on garden tools, followed by hands-on cleaning, sharpening, and using them. Topics covered will be: selection of quality tools, ergonomics, basic sharpening, rust prevention and removal, safety, rehab of antique tools, fluids/oils/solvents, techniques for tool use, and storage. Bring 2-3 of your garden tools to the Workshop. We will help you get your tools ready for a productive garden season and provide knowledge about keeping them in top working condition.

NOTE: Class size is limited to 30 students and will take place in the Galveston County Master Gardener Demonstration Garden in Carbide Park. Pre-registration is required. Workshop will take place rain or shine.



GALVESTON COUNTY HOME FRUIT GROWERS TOUR

Saturday, May 20, 2017

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 Noon

e-mail galvcountymgs@gmail.com
to pre-register

Three fruit orchards are on the tour this year. Vegetable gardens at each site will also be open. The tour sites contain a wide variety of fruit trees, ranging from a peach orchard in Dickinson, the Galveston County Master Gardener Demonstration Orchard in La Marque, and a sizeable home orchard in Santa Fe.

Each site will be open from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 Noon.

Visit sites in any desired order.

Orchard locations:

- 1) Galveston County Master Gardener (homeowner) at
5202 Highland Road, Santa Fe, TX 77517
- 2) The Discovery Garden in Carbide Park,
4102 Main Street (Hwy 519), La Marque, TX 77568
- 3) Wilson and Renee Hillman's Fruits 'n Such Orchard ph. 832-443-6733
6309 Ave. U, Dickinson, TX 77539; located off Bowerman Road and FM 517.

JUNE

PEACH TREE PRUNING FOR THE HOME ORCHARD

(a hands-on demonstration)

Thursday, June 1

9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

e-mail galvcountymgs@gmail.com
to pre-register

GC Master Gardeners Herman Auer and Robert Marshall will give a hands-on demonstration showing how to prune your peach trees and other stone fruit trees to create a good scaffold and to prepare for next year's fruit production. The program will be held in The Discovery Garden Orchard located inside Carbide Park.



PLUMERIA (The Fabulous Fragrant Frangipani)

Saturday, June 3

1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

e-mail: galvcountymgs@gmail.com
to pre-register

Presented by GC Master Gardener Loretta Osteen, the program will include information about the history of the Plumeria and tips for growing and caring for them. Also included will be information about the different flower shapes, fragrances and colors of the different varieties of Plumeria successfully grown in our area. Methods of propagation, proper winter storage and care will be presented





bulletin board



Volunteer Opportunities

- For the **MG Phone Desk** contact Ginger Benson by
- e-mail at 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.
- 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.

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 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 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

Welcome to The Discovery Garden

Knowledge Not Shared is Knowledge Lost

GALVESTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS



Open on Thursdays, 9-11 a.m. • Other Days by Appointment • 281-309-5065



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.

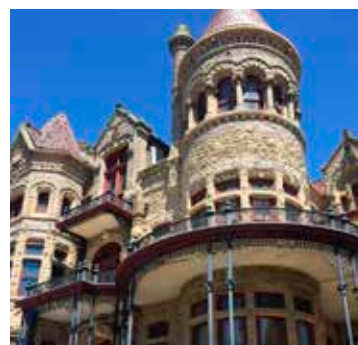
- Save **smile.amazon.com** to your favorites.
- Always start from this site to do your amazon shopping.
- You should see your chosen charity in the top bar on amazon's website.
- If you have any problems, search smile on amazon's website



Texas Master Gardener 2017 State Convention Snapshots



Texas Master Gardener State Convention cont'd



Texas Master Gardener State Convention cont'd



Texas Master Gardener State Convention cont'd



Weeding advice from the masters...

A survey conducted among Galveston County Master Gardeners



By Lynette Parsons
MG 2011

WHAT ARE YOUR FAVORITE TOOLS FOR WEEDING?

For some gardeners either bare-or-gloved hands work best. Some other favorite tools include a dandelion tool, Cobra Head, circle hoe (both long and short handles), a scuffle hoe, a Ken-ho

surface weeder; long two-pronged fork, short fork, sharpshooter; Garden Claw; 3-pronged rake and, for really tough weeds, a small hatchet.

The knives preferred include a kitchen knife, a Japanese garden knife, and a butcher's knife. One choice was a flat head screwdriver. Another effective tool can be the two-gallon pump spray bottle with Roundup or Stop Weed.

DO YOU PREFER THE CHEMICAL OR ORGANIC APPROACH?

Those taking an organic approach offer numerous suggestions. When starting a new bed, be sure to remove all weedy growth from the top layer. Be sure to inspect soil, compost, mulch, and plants that you add to your beds. Mulch, mulch, then mulch some more. Make lawn care services clean the blades of their tools before entering your yard. Non-chemical approaches also include turning over the beds often. Keep the bed so full of plants that weeds do not have space to develop. Pull weeds when soil is wet. Use organic sprays with cinnamon, vinegar, or clove oil. For large areas, use clear plastic to cover weeds thus letting solar energy kill the weeds and pasteurize the soil. Pour boiling water on cracks in driveway and sidewalk.

For a chemical approach, apply Roundup with a q-tip or a paint brush. Be careful to not use Roundup when there is wind. Some prefer to only use chemicals on poison ivy and poison oak. The bucket/glyphosate method involves coiling the weed inside a bucket; spraying with glyphosate, removing the bucket and leaving the weed coated. Another preferred weed killer is Amaze by Green Light.

DO YOU HAVE A WEEDING SCHEDULE?

The preferred approach is to attack in the spring or at the seedling stage before seeds are produced and have a chance to spread. Some gardeners weed as they see the weeds developing. You might also try setting a weekly time. Or, once the clover shows up, you might prefer daily. Set certain areas for certain days, such as the front on Monday and Friday, and the back on Tuesday and Thursday. Every couple of days you might check out your vegetable garden and then attack your flower beds monthly. Just a few minutes consistently each day should help.



Photo courtesy of GCMG Library

DO YOU USE DIFFERENT METHODS FOR SMALL BEDS, GARDENS, LAWNS?

Use newspapers around plants and several organic mulch layers in the garden. Limit the soil turning in your garden as it may bring more weeds to the surface. Be sure to mulch small beds. Under shrubs, paint weeds with undiluted herbicide. Repeated mowing in lawn should help eliminate weeds. Bag the weedy grass and dispose. Stop Weed or Wipe Out can be used on the lawn.

DO YOU HAVE ADVICE ABOUT WHAT NOT TO DO?

Do not stress about weeds. They are an ongoing challenge. Do not turn the weeds over into the soil; this binds nitrogen while they rot. Do not plant what you cannot eat. Do not plant invasive plants. Make sure you get the whole root when pulling weeds. Be cautious with synthetic chemicals as the residues may have a long-term effect on the natural soil life. Do not neglect the garden. Even if nothing is growing right then, mulch or cover to keep the weeds at bay. Mix chemicals carefully. Be sure to read and follow the directions.

ANYTHING ELSE?

A question was asked: When will they develop a pre-emergent for vegetable gardens? Weeding is the least favorite of garden activities! It is an exercise in patience and perseverance and helps you to decide what is truly undesirable. Amendments, fertilizers, and soil builders keep the plants you want strong to compete with the weeds. Dense ground covers help to control weeds. Have the right attitude and enjoy the beauty when the weeds are gone. God gave us weeds so we would go outside and play, doing what we love...working in the garden! Weeding is mostly therapy. Listen to the birds, talk to your neighbors or put on your iPod and enjoy the outdoors! Read the entire chapter on Dandelions in All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten by Robert Fulghum which says that in the end, Mother Nature wins!

CONTRIBUTORS

Chris Anastas, John Anderson, Laura Bellmore, Penny Bessire, Martha Bigley, Lilian Canouet, Susan Clasen, Cathy Conlon-Townsend, Mary Demeny, Sandra Devall, Linda Garren-McKillip, Sandra and Ira Gervais, Jim Gilliam, Barbara Hankins, Doris Heard, Carol Jean Hebert, Clyde Holt, Tim Jahnke, John Jons, Nancy Mitchell, Karen Morris, Frank Resch, Susan Rismiller, Edda Scott, Linda Steber, Ken Steblein, Laurel Stine, Wes Thompson, Connie Webb, Anna Wygrys.

Dr. J's advice: "The best thing to put on your garden is your shadow - good way to keep an eye out for those pesky weeds".

the last word...

Edible flowers from the garden

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

Magazine articles often show attractive displays of flowers as food this time of year. So, just what are the guidelines for munching flowers?

There are some basic guidelines when it comes to edible flowers. Much of this information is pure common sense, but it's important to be mindful when venturing into new gastronomic pursuits. Many of us do not have a family connection of an experienced "elder" to tell us which flowers might be safely edible, so it's good to review some basics.

It's important to be cautious. If you have allergy issues or a compromised immune system, it's best to skip these adventures with edible flowers unless you have absolute control over their production.

Identify the flower exactly and eat only edible flowers or edible parts of those flowers. Tulips, for instance, can be eaten, but only the petals. If the taste of any flower is objectionable—too bitter, too sour, too spicy, or just plain weird—don't swallow it.

Flowers can vary in edibility depending on the time of year. Once you have established that a flower is safely edible, experiment with its flavor and texture at different times of the year.

Do not place a nonedible flower on the edge of a plate. Hungry diners may assume that if they see it on the plate, it's there for eating.

Toxicity is a major concern. Some ornamental plants are distinctly poisonous though beautiful, including several adorning gardens at this time of year: bleeding hearts, lily-of-the valley and oleander. Even though a lovely daffodil may seem to be just the thing to top a birthday cake, stay away from using those. Other beauties to avoid eating include hydrangea and Texas mountain laurel.

Be sure flowers are free of pesticides. Regulations for how to use pesticides on food crops differ from regulations for ornamental crops. Be sure that the rose or pansy flower you have your eye on has not been treated with any pesticides which are illegal to be used on a food crop. Roses, for example, are sometimes given a granular soil treatment with a systemic insecticide. This should not be regarded as safe for human consumption due to the use of a systemic insecticide that can be present in most or all parts of a plant for several weeks after application.

When choosing flowers for edibility, look for those grown

safely. Don't pluck a flower at random from an unfamiliar location or make the assumption that flowers in florist displays are edible - florists are, after all, not grocery stores.

Also avoid flowers picked from roadsides where pesticides may have been used. Herbicides to control weeds also affect potentially edible plants. Don't eat large quantities of any one flower (especially if allergies are present).

In most cases, the petals are the palatable part of the flowers listed as "edible." Remove the stamens and pistil from larger flowers such as daylilies (the stamens are covered with pollen, which may aggravate allergies).

Reliably edible flowers include calendulas, dandelions, geraniums, nasturtiums, pansies, roses, squash blossoms, and sweet violets. This is only a partial list of edible flowers.

One flower that is particularly abundant in many area landscapes is the daylily. While the daylily nowadays is considered a delicacy by wild food gatherers and knowledgeable chefs, it has a long history in Chinese cuisine in addition to Chinese medicine.

Daylily flowers can be used in a variety of ways. They add sweetness to soups and vegetable dishes. Flowers that are half opened or fully opened may be dipped in a light batter of flour and water and fried in a wok. You can add the petals to egg dishes and salads. An ingredient in many Chinese recipes, including hot-and-sour soups, is called golden needles which are dried daylily petals.

Some food preparers have suggested that varieties with pale yellow or orange flowers produce the sweetest, most delectable taste. However, it appears that daylily taste is related to type of cultivar more than flower color according to serious taste trials.

Eating flowers is not a weird or unusual gastronomic endeavor—if you like broccoli or cauliflower, or artichoke, then you are already a flower connoisseur since a head of broccoli or cauliflower is composed of a few hundred un-opened flowers! The general rule is that the flowers of most herbs and veg-

etables are safe to eat (with flowers of tomato, potato, eggplant, pepper and asparagus being notable exceptions). Always check first, because as with any-thing in life, there will always be exceptions.

The guidelines provided here are definitely related to a common-sense approach to selecting other types of flowers as food. Adding flower petals to a salad or garnishing a stack of pancakes with a small rose can be fun and effective, but it's necessary to become informed before ingesting your floral creations.



Got daylilies? Many flowers produced in the home landscape—including daylilies—are edible but some basic guidelines must be observed in selecting flowers for consumption
Photo courtesy of Dr. William Johnson

2017 MGA Monthly Meetings



By Judy Anderson
MG 2012

April 11, 2017 6:30pm

Backyard Pot Luck
Home of Rod and Lynee' Mize

May 9, 2017 6:00pm

Backyard Pot Luck
Home of Barbara and Dr. Gary Hankins
Arrive at 6:00 p.m.
Dinner at 6:30 p.m.

June 13, 2017 6:30pm

MG Graduation and Recognition
Home of Mikey Isbell



July 11, 2017 6:00pm

Tinsley Guinnshaver,
Urban Gardening
Pot Luck
Extension Office
Carbide Park - La Marque

August 8, 2017 2-7:00pm

Moody Gardens Visitor Center
Greenhouse, Rainforest, 3D
Dinner, Hotel Reception 7-8:30pm
Mary Lou Kelso

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

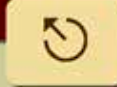
Christmas Party
Home of Mikey Isbell



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 Judy Anderson thanks MGs for hosting backyard meetings.

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