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By Camille Goodwin
MG 2008

"Deep summer is when laziness finds respectability." - Sam Keen

With this issue of *Gulf Coast Gardening*, the entire newsletter team hopes everyone is well during this extraordinary year of masks and stay-at-home orders. I

know I miss seeing everyone, but I've so enjoyed the updates of what our Master Gardeners have been up to during the last several months. Special thanks to Linda Barnett for keeping us informed! It's hard to believe we're already entering the dog days of summer and the year is quickly screaming by since we've been locked at home. You all know summer is my favorite time of the year. I hate to lose one because of an unthinkable pandemic. Like everyone, I've had time on my hands lately to think about other summer memories and realize there are more summers behind me now than in front of me. I don't like to miss a summer!

Your newsletter team continues to work hard to bring articles to inspire, entertain and inform



you. We hope you'll have time to read and enjoy them. One story I found very interesting was about the intriguing palmetto tortoise beetle, learn about their nests that aren't nests and their Velcro-like feet (page 4). As Master Gardeners, we have access to many resources, including the very best Horticulture Agent, Dr. William Johnson, in all of Texas! Read how he helped with identification of the venomous Southern Flannel moth (page 5). The versatile okra plant is featured on page 6. You might not know there is a James Beard Foundation award winning book written just about okra!!

Many gardeners love orchids. Checkout the Chinese Ground Orchid. It can be planted in the ground in your landscape (page 7). Jan Brick fills us in on hibiscus "cousins" that you might not think of for your garden (page 10).

Some are natives for our area, meaning they are great for your pollinator areas. With the heat of July and August, many people like to take a break from garden activities.

Donna Ward isn't having it! She's got lots of tips for proper watering during the heat, feeding and mulching our plants, pinching tomatoes for our fall gardens and directions for building a rain garden. Let's get busy people (page 12)!! Many of us have problem areas in our landscapes where not much will grow. Perhaps a ground cover will solve the issue. Several varieties are presented on pages 8-9. Sevin is one of the most popular insecticides many have used over the years. Sevin is still available in the marketplace, but it's been changed. See page 15 for the up-to-date information.

Our Garden Helpline and insect identification requests keep several Master Gardeners busy and engaged educating our community. The article on page 16 talks about some of the most common insect questions we receive along with Integrated Pest Management (IPM) when required. It's been twelve years since Galveston withstood Hurricane Ike. 40,000 of the Island's trees were lost. Restoration efforts continue to this day. One tree helping in the renewal on the

Island is the Retama (page 14).

John Jons continues to bring gardens of the world to us. Read about his travels to the International Rose Garden at the Adelaide Botanic Garden in South Australia (page 18). Learn about the industrious mason bee and the bee houses Larry and Debbie Brizendine build on page 22. In our continuing series on our Master Gardener's "green genes," enjoy reading about Ronnie Corley, Hedy Wolpa and Lisa Davis (page 19) and how gardening is in their DNA. We have a couple of great recipes for you to try on page 27 and the Discovery Garden update is on page 24. Our calendars and volunteer activities have been updated for your review.

Stay safe everyone, I'm looking forward to when we can get together again.

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Cover:
Photo courtesy of MG Vicki Blythe



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Thanks for your interest!

ask a master gardener

Palm Tree Problems? Palmetto Tortoise Beetle



By Laurel Stine
MG 1996

Q: I keep seeing a small bird's nest type growth on my palmetto. Is this a fungus?

A: It certainly looks as if something built a nest, doesn't it? However, this isn't a nest. This is the fecal shield (in Figures 1 & 2) produced by an insect called Palmetto Tortoise Beetle *Hemisphaerota cyanea*.

This is a handsome beetle. It is dark blue to purple in color and has alternating longitudinal rows of pits and ridges on the wing covers. Its antennae are mostly yellow.

Palmetto Tortoise Beetles are members of the Leaf Beetle (Chrysomelidae) family. While most leaf beetles enjoy herbaceous plants, these beetles prefer to feast on trees, notably palm trees. If homeowners do not spot the "nests," many times they notice the grooved appearance of the fronds, which is the beetles' feeding damage. Do you see the troughs in the leaf in Figure 3?

One interesting defense this beetle has is its "velcro," which I experienced firsthand in the lab when trying to pry it off a leaf to see its underside. I was afraid I'd have to destroy the insect.

These beetles have specially modified tarsi ("soles" of the insect's feet) with thousands of bristles tipped with adhesive pads on the undersides (in Figure 4). Normally only a few of the pads contact the leaf surface, but when the beetle is threatened it clamps all of them against the leaf and secretes an oil that strengthens the adhesive capabilities of the pads. Thus secured, the beetle clamps its body down tightly against the leaf and is able to resist the efforts of ants and other predators to pry it from the leaf. This beetle has been demonstrated to withstand pulling forces of approximately 60 times its own weight for up to two minutes.

Should you find the damage inflicted by these beetles intolerable, there are various products available for the control of leaf feeding beetles, such as pyrethrins and neem oil. There are also those containing acetamiprid, beta-cyfluthrin and carbaryl. Follow the label directions on whatever products you use.



Palmetto Beetle Fecal Shield – Photo Credit Bill and Marcia Boothe, NatureInFocus.com



Eggs and larva - Photo Credit: J. F. Butler, UF/IFAS



Palmetto Tortoise Beetle - Photo Credit Ted C. MacRae



Note the Tarsi - Photo Credit: J. F. Butler, UF/IFAS

Southern Flannel Moth



By Ann Anderson
MG 2013

I was reminded recently about one of the major lessons I have learned as a Master Gardener.

As soon as someone hears we're Master Gardeners, they assume we know all about everything with leaves, flowers, fruit, and insects. It's a good thing, really, and I don't mind being asked questions. It happens all the time, and I'll bet it happens to you, too.

A few weeks ago a friend sent me a picture of an innocent-looking fuzzy critter crawling up the side of his house, and asked me what it was. Like so many of us during these days of COVID-19 confinement, my friend was spending a lot of time around the house and noticing things he might not have noticed before . . . including insects. The picture was small, and I could say it was low-resolution and a bit out of focus, but truth be told, I didn't know what it was.

So, I sent the picture to Dr. Johnson. The sun hadn't set before he got back to me with an identification. It was a Southern Flannel Moth. He not only told me what this little monster was, he warned me that the immature stage is considered the most highly venomous caterpillar in North America.

I got back to my friend right away, and he properly dispatched the little devil before having to learn an excruciating entomology lesson.

The takeaway is this: Master Gardeners may not know everything, but we have access to resources. In this case, I could have taken a guess or guided my friend to an Internet site, but I knew Dr. Johnson would provide definitive and reliable information I could trust. I remembered how they taught us to answer the phone when someone called the Extension Office Hot Line with a question: "Please give me your information. I'll get an answer and get back to you."

I was also reminded that while wise people don't necessarily know it all, they know what they don't know, and they learn where to look for answers. Whether it's a printed guide, a continuing education course, a fellow Master Gardener, or Dr. Johnson himself, we have a network of sound and reliable resources at our fingertips. I was able to use that network to help a friend and probably save him a whole lot of pain.

The Master Gardener program is a lifelong learning framework that provides informational resources, encourages volunteerism in our community, and guides us as we share the joys of the grown environment with others.

Gardening is fun. It's healthy, a benefit to the environment, relaxing, and an artistic outlet. Those are some of the reasons I enrolled in the program in the first place, some eight years ago. Over the years I have learned how to grow a tomato, sharpen a shovel, propagate a plumeria,

cultivate a Meyer lemon, and much more. I've learned that while I may not have as green a thumb as some of my classmates, I do like to play in the dirt. I've made friends and we've exchanged plants, cuttings, and ideas that have enriched my life.

In the case of my friend with the Southern Flannel Moth on his wall, Dr. Johnson and the Master Gardener program prevented a painful sting. My friend is grateful I'm a Master Gardener, and so am I.



Low resolution photo sent to MG Ann Anderson



Photo by MG Laura Bellmore

Plant of the Month

Okra - *Abeloschus esculentus*



By Lisa Davis
MG 2018

Okra is the perfect plant for this time of year in Galveston County! It does well in the heat, doesn't ask for much water and tolerates our clay soil. Historians believe okra originated in Ethiopia, crossed the Red Sea into Arabia, and went to Egypt with the Moslems during the seventh century prior to spreading to North Africa. Okra was documented growing in Philadelphia as early as 1748. In *Notes on the State of Virginia*, Thomas Jefferson wrote of okra being established in Virginia in 1781. By 1813 Jefferson recorded growing Cows Horn okra at edge his "square," or plot of "tomatas."

You may be familiar with okra fried, stewed, pickled, roasted and in gumbo. But, did you know young okra leaves can be eaten raw in a salad or cooked like other greens? Seeds can be roasted and used as a caffeine-free coffee substitute. The fiber of okra has even been used as reinforcement in polymer composite. If you want to learn more about this fascinating plant, get a copy of *The Whole Okra: A Seed to Stem Celebration*, a James Beard Foundation book winner by author Chris Smith. Smith tested 76 cultivars and provides variety notes on each one. He also discusses okra cosmetics, how to preserve okra, and more. A quick search on Amazon showed four cookbooks just on okra. They may come in handy with your abundant harvest.

Common Names: *Ladies' Fingers* due to the long, slender pods
Location: Multiple Vegetable beds in the Discovery Garden

Plant Characteristics

Type: annual Height: 6 - 10 feet
Family: Malvaceae (Mallow) Spread: 12-18 inches

Bloom Information

Color: cream, white or yellow, usually with red or purple spot at the base of each petal

Size: 1/2 - 3 inches

Time: 50-65 days after planting

Fruit: Edible pods follow 3-4 days after flowering. Harvest when pods are 3-4 inches long. Pick every 1-2 days to encourage production. Expect 20-30 pods per plant.

Culture

Exposure: full sun

Soil Moisture: fertile, well drained

Drought Tolerance: Yes, but will produce more with adequate moisture

Maintenance: After thinning, apply nitrogen fertilizer at the rate of 1 cup per 35 feet of row then mulch around the plants with 2-3 inches of organic matter. Given the height of mature okra plants, harvest can be difficult. Plants may be cut back to 2 feet in late summer. Side dress with nitrogen fertilizer and thoroughly water the pruned plants. They will rebound soon resulting in bush-like plants and provide high yields of okra.

Problems: Infrequent but may include verticillium wilt, powdery mildew,



Photos by Lisa Davis



leaf spots, or root-knot nematodes.

Benefits: Garden Uses: Shorter varieties make attractive container plants, taller varieties can be grown in the back of beds as part of an edible landscape.

Propagation: Seeds can be planted in the Spring or Fall in Galveston County. Soak seeds 24 hours and direct sow when soil temperature is above 68 degrees and night temperatures are above 50. Plant seeds 1-inch deep, 12-18 inches apart with rows 3 feet apart.

Recommended Varieties: 49-day Cajun Delight, 50-day Silver Queen, 55-day Clemson Spineless & Louisiana Green Velvet, 58-day Emerald, 60-day Dwarf Green Long Pod, 70-day Zeebest, 75-day Alabama Red, 85-day Long Horn and two 70-day heirloom varieties: Bowling Red and Choppee.

Seed Saving: Allow some of the pods to get very large. Remove them and allow the pods to dry out. Shell and store the seeds.

If you are not a vegetable grower, consider other plants in the Mallow family. George Washington grew Great Red Hibiscus, *Hibiscus coccineus*, at Mount Vernon. Thomas Jefferson grew both Rose mallow, *Hibiscus moscheutos*, and Scarlet Pentapetes, *Pentapetes phoenicea*, at Monticello. An heirloom from Biltmore Estate in Ashville, North Carolina, *Abutilon* 'Biltmore Ballgown' also known as Flowering Maple, can be grown indoors or outdoors. Althea, Rose of Sharon, *Hibiscus syriacus*, has showy, late blooming flowers in a wide range of colors including white, pink, red, lavender, purple and blue. And, last, but not least, our native Texas Rock Rose, *Pavonia lasiopetala*, is in the Mallow family along with okra. Rock Rose is drought tolerant and is a good nectar source for moths, butterflies and hummingbirds.

Chinese Ground Orchid

- *Bletilla striata*



By Pam Hunter
MG 2018

Chinese Ground Orchid, also known Hyacinth Orchid, is a species of a flowering plant in the orchid family Orchidaceae, native to Japan, Tibet and China.

A deer-resistant, woodland beauty, Chinese Ground Orchids have smallish-purple flowers for weeks in late spring to early summer. The petite blossoms reflect the plant name and look like orchids growing along thin stems that stand 18 inches tall. A great plant for rock gardens or the front of part-shade borders, the Chinese Ground Orchid spreads slowly to form a carpet of foliage.

The idea of growing an orchid out in the flower bed would astound and amaze most gardeners, but since the Chinese Ground Orchid is a plant hardy in U.S. Department of Agriculture Zones 5 through 9, it is possible for many gardeners to do just that. Chinese Ground Orchids prefer well-draining and organic soil, partial shade (ideally morning sun, protected from afternoon heat and sun) and regular watering of at least once a week during growing season.

Chinese Ground Orchids grow from corm-like pseudobulbs, which are actually modified portions of the plant's stem. Large clumps of 3-to-6 slender, pointed leaves spread 1/2 to 1-1/2 feet wide and 1 to 1-1/2 feet tall. The leaves are pleated with some ridges running throughout their length, thinly textured and reaching out about 12 inches.

Dozens of small, orchid-like flowers appear above the leaf clumps in pinkish-purple, light pink, white or bluish lavender. The flowers themselves are about 1 to 2 inches long and grow in clusters of 3 to 5 flowers on stems rising about 18 inches. Blooms last about 8 weeks beginning in late spring to early summer.

Even after the flowers fade, the leaves on a Chinese Ground Orchid will continue to remain attractive and in early fall; as the weather cools, they begin to turn yellow. Reduce watering at this point and stop altogether when the leaves die. Make a note of exactly where your plant is in case you want to divide it in early spring before new growth starts. Dividing is easy, but the plants actually bloom best when you plant them in their dormant stage in late fall to early spring. Plant the corms 1 inch below the surface if you live in a mild climate and up to 4 inches below in colder climates. Mulch keeps the Chinese Ground Orchid healthy wherever it grows.

Because the Chinese Ground Orchid is a terrestrial orchid, meaning it grows in soil, a typical orchid potting mix meant for epiphytic orchids that grow on other plants is not suitable. Give your orchid the same soil you would outdoors. Water it as you would an outdoor plant and make sure that the soil dries before rewatering. As with an outdoor plant, a Chinese Ground Orchid houseplant will go through a spring blooming stage and a winter dormant stage. They use their roots to attach themselves to a tree or a rock. Most people think about epiphytic orchids when they think about orchids. This is understandable considering that many of the most popular types of orchids, including Phalaenopsis and Cattleya, are epiphytic orchids. Different terrestrial orchids have different needs and can look very differently from each other. There are some very large species and some very small species. Some ground orchids have regular roots that grow in the ground but most species have pseudobulbs.

There are more than 200 species of terrestrial orchids. This might sound like a lot but the orchid family has more than 28,000 recognized species. Less than one percent of all orchid species are terrestrial.

British gardeners started growing hardy Chinese Ground Orchids in the 1990's and these hardy garden orchids now happily exist in many U.S. gardens.



Photos by Pam Hunter

Grow Chinese Ground Orchids in soil that drains well. Amend the soil with well-composted material prior to planting, if needed. Limit fertilization when growing this specimen.

Let's Plant Ground Covers



By Elayne Kouzounis
MG 1998

Ground covers are becoming more popular every year. They are our number one garden trouble shooter. They are ideal substitutes for grass because they thrive in places where grass will not grow. We plant grass under trees, in dense shade, where soil is too wet or too dry, and on slopes where it is too hard to mow. All this is foolish. Put grass where it will flourish, but for trouble spots, try one of the many ground covers.

The fact that ground covers will thrive where grass will not grow is recommendation enough. Yet they have much more to offer. They enable us to reduce the time and energy we give to yard care. Some require an annual pruning, some need virtually no care at all, and none of them require the weekly barbering and babying we give our grass.

The varied forms and growth habits provide texture contrasts that add interest to the gardens. Some flower, some have interesting foliage, and in this area most of them are evergreen and free of diseases.

Ground covers add so much to a bulb garden. The low growing creeping plants are ideal for this purpose. They cover the bare earth and fallen leaves, and help keep the blooms free from splattering mud caused by heavy rains. Ground covers discourage the growth of weeds and form a living mulch that helps protect roots from heat in the summer and cold in the winter. They are quite effective when grown under shrubs and foundation

plantings. Here again they mulch and control weeds. For wooded areas where a naturalizing effect is desired and where the gardener wants to keep maintenance to a minimum, ground covers are ideal.

Choosing a ground cover is more complicated than choosing grass. Selecting one is more like selecting ornamental shrubbery. Both appearance and growing habits must be considered. You will need to know what kind of soil they require, how much moisture they need, whether they like sun or shade, and if they are fast or slow growers.

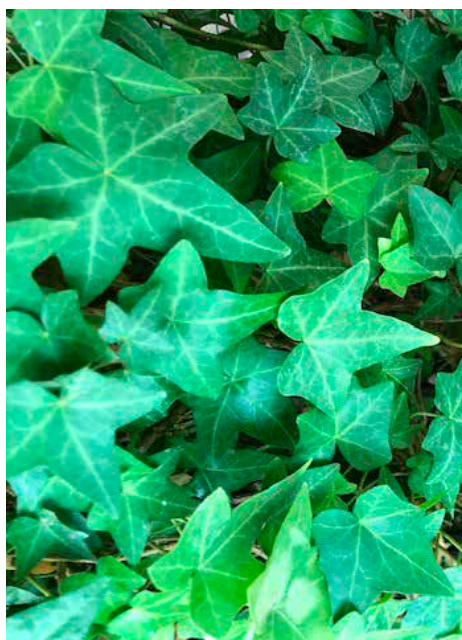
Your choice of ground cover depends also upon whether you want low creeper or whether you prefer something a foot or more in height. The place of use will largely determine the choice. Do you want something to enhance a bed, something to cut down the weeding? Try Ajuga or Saxifrage. Are you looking for a plant to cover the bare spots under a tree where "nothing ever grows?" Then try Ivy and Ajuga. Or do you want to use a plant instead of bricks or corrugated edging to hold the soil and form the boundary of a bed? Think about Liriope.

In the following list you may find just the plant you want. I have selected only a starter for you, but all have been selected because they will thrive in the Gulf Coast area. If you do not find one that you would want, just search further and I feel sure you will find many that will fit your particular needs.

English Ivy, *Hedera helix* and its sub-tropical relative that is tolerant to salt sprays, the Algerian Ivy, *Hedera canariensis* are both ground-hugging and



English Ivy - *Hedera helix*



Algerian Ivy - *Hedera canariensis*



Baltic Ivy - *H. canariensis* 'Variegate'

lovely when eventually established. Although the English-Ivy is really a plant of cool climates it is fairly hardy in the lower South. The variety from the Baltic provinces, *Hedera helix baltica* has very small leaves and is perhaps the hardiest of all Ivy. The silver variegated Baltic Ivy, known in the trade as Stardust is very beautiful. *H. canariensis* 'Variegata' has green leaves edged in creamy-white and it too is attractive. Use hair pins to keep the runners pinned to the ground until they take root. Make cuttings of all of these and root them in open ground in the fall. Keep close watch for their chief enemies, the red spider and related minute organisms. Hose them off with a forceful spray of water.

There are several other ground covers that do well in either sun or shade and my favorite is Ajuga or the Carpet Bugle plant, *Ajuga reptans* is an herbaceous perennial member of the Mint Family. It grows from one to three inches high; it likes a loamy soil and good drainage. It produces small spikes of blue flowers in the spring. The Ajuga dates back to the Biblical days, has a new variety, Rainbow, which is just as colorful as its name implies. The variegated foliage has a metallic sheen and appears in rosettes of white, green, pink, and bronze, the colors changing with the season and the amount of sun it receives. Growing to 4 inches, it is a hardy perennial that produces low spikes of purple flowers in May and June. Watermelon Begonia, not really a begonia but actually *Peperomia sandersii* var. *argyreia* is a stemless creeping perennial member of the Pepper

Family. The dark green leaves are fuzzy and round with lighter stripes between the veins. I use mine under my Pyracantha bush where it has come through extreme cold with no setback.

Saxifrage is a hardy perennial that looks most attractive in the bed and in the rock garden. There are a number of species, each with varieties of its own. *Saxifraga decipiens* is dwarf and mossy, producing white blossoms in summer and foliage turning a deep rose color in winter.

S. sarmentosa, popularly known as the Strawberry Geranium, spreads by runners, grows to 6 inches and may also be used in hanging baskets. These plants need no winter protection, thrive in moist earth and are particularly attractive with the sedums.

There are many more choices, these are just a few of my favorite that I actually grow and have in my garden.

Advice from a Garden: cultivate lasting friendships, sow seeds of kindness, listen to sage advice, and don't let the little things bug you, be outstanding in your field, take thyme for yourself. No vining!



Ajuga - *Ajuga reptans*



Strawberry Geranium - *S. sarmentosa*



Saxifrage - *Saxifraga decipiens*

Rose of Sharon, Swamp Mallow & Texas Star

(Editor's Note: this is a reprint of Jan's article in the *Galveston Monthly*)



By Jan Brick
MG 2001

Galveston gardeners share a love of hibiscus as evidenced by the proliferation of these plants in gardens across the Isle. There are, however, three varieties that are sighted less often...the cousins. Hibiscus is the largest clan (with over three hundred species) belonging to the family of Malvaceae, a group of flowering plants with over four thousand species that include okra, cotton and cacao. Hibiscus like *H. rosa sinensis*, the Bahama Bay Collection, hollyhocks, confederate rose and turk's cap are cousins to the althea, the mallow

and the Texas Star.

Althea (*Hibiscus syriacus*) commonly called Rose of Sharon or Chinese hibiscus was quite popular in Grandmother's time but seems to have lost ground to the more contemporary and flamboyant selections now featured at garden centers. Native to China, India and Japan, it produces large eye-catching blooms from summer to fall. This is a hardy, low maintenance shrub or specimen plant that is tolerant of various soil types, hot weather and wind. This national flower of Puerto Rico and Korea is an ornamental upright shrub or tree with a vase-shape growth habit that can reach to ten feet with a six-foot spread. The blooms are typically three to six inches in diameter in shades of white or red to violet or blue with red centers that boast a prominent white stamen.

Attractive to hummingbirds and butterflies, althea favors hot summers and full sun but will tolerate partial shade. Called "urban-tolerant" because of its ability to withstand heat, humidity, drought and poor soils, this species is hardy and vigorous; plant in spring or fall in well-draining

soil, add compost and mulch in spring, then prune before new growth begins. The Rose of Sharon is easily transplanted or rooted by stem cuttings with few pests or diseases (any aphids, spider mites or whiteflies can be readily controlled with commercial or organic sprays).

Popular Cultivars of Althea (*Hibiscus syriacus*)

'Aphrodite'...pink-mauve single bloom, dark magenta eye

'Ardens'...mauve-purple double bloom, dark magenta eye

'Blue Bird'...blue-lavender single bloom, dark magenta eye

'Diana'...white single bloom

'Minerva'...lavender-mauve single bloom, red eye

'Red Heart'...white single bloom, scarlet eye

Swamp Mallow (*Hibiscus moscheutos*) is a "hardy" hibiscus (as opposed to the tropical type that we see every day) and is commonly called the giant rose mallow as the blooms are truly "dinner-plate" size. The flowers range from six to twelve inches across and appear primarily in shades of red, rose, pink or white. These unusual and showy blooms continue their extravagant display from May through October. The leaves are dull rather than shiny with some cultivars boasting bronze or purple foliage. With its forceful growth habit, the Swamp Mallow may develop to five or six feet in height. After the blooming cycle, the plants stop their growth and enter a dormant stage; the upper growth dies back to the ground with crowns and roots remaining living over winter. The new growth appears in March or April.



Althea - *Hibiscus syriacus* 'Aphrodite'



Althea *Hibiscus syriacus* 'Blue Bird'



Althea *Hibiscus syriacus* 'Red Heart'

The hardy hibiscus is native to the southeastern United States and well-adapted to our climate thriving in the heat and humidity of our summer months. They are long-lasting and robust in Zones 5-10, prefer full sun for maximum performance but will grow and bloom in partial shade. Plant in a moisture retaining soil, add compost or other organic material. Water regularly and often to establish a healthy and dynamic root system (do not allow a mallow to dry out as they will stop blooming immediately). Mulch heavily to help maintain moisture and fertilize with a balanced formula to encourage peak development. Cut back to the ground in winter. Mallows can be easily propagated by dividing the root mass, from seed or by tip cuttings (clip the cuttings in early July, keep moist).

Medicinal and culinary folklore abounds concerning hibiscus in general and according to natural medicine enthusiasts, the Swamp Mallow may be used in the treatment of dysentery, lung and urinary ailments and the flowers are edible with a mild but bitter after taste...the leaves are also edible but their hairiness may be off-putting. Mostly disease resistant, Swamp Mallow can become a target of aphids, scale, whiteflies and mites especially on ones with the largest blooms. Insecticidal soap, neem oil or insecticides can quickly address the problem.

Popular Cultivars of Swamp Mallow (*Hibiscus moscheutos*)

'Lord Baltimore'...bright red bloom, ruffled foliage

'Kopper King'...white bloom, copper-red with orange underside maple-leaf shaped foliage

'Peppermint Schnapps'...pink bloom with red streaks, red eye

'Blue River II'...oversized pure white bloom

'Southern Belle'...red, pink, white or bi-colored bloom

Texas Star (*Hibiscus coccineus*) is a Texas native that matures to heights of three to six feet with a four-foot spread. It will die back in winter leaving lifeless looking stems visible...do not cut these stems out until warmer weather in the spring. Mulch well around the plant to protect from a hard freeze. New growth will emerge after the spring pruning. Plant in full sun or part shade in any well-draining soil; this plant acclimates very well to most soils and needs little maintenance other than a balanced fertilizer applied monthly during the summer.

Pests and disease are rare. Hummingbirds and butterflies are especially attracted to it. The blooms of the Texas Star are large with five very distinctive petals while the leaves have a similar shape to that of the illegal cannabis. Texas Star presents well in containers, although more frequent watering may be required; the Star will thrive for many years delivering reliable blooms and lush green foliage.

Popular Cultivars of Texas Star (*Hibiscus coccineus*)

'Alba'...white bloom, yellow eye

'Red Flier'...deep pink bloom

'Scarlet Rosemallow'...bright red bloom



Swamp Mallow *Hibiscus moscheutos* 'Lord Baltimore'



Swamp Mallow *Hibiscus moscheutos* 'Peppermint Schnapps'



Texas Star *Hibiscus coccineus* 'Scarlet Rosemallow'

Trowels & Tribulations In a Suburban Garden

(Editor's Note: This is a reprint of Donna's column for *La Ventana del Lago*, the City of El Lago's neighborhood newspaper.)



By Donna Ward
MG 1996

Well, here it is again – July – with its heat, humidity, mosquitos and the prediction to be even hotter than usual. Our seasonal temperatures vary considerably from year to year. Last winter was milder than usual but the gigantic gardenia in my back garden died (yes, even Master Gardener's plants do succumb to Mother Nature). Spring coaxed the southern magnolia in the front yard to bloom gloriously. I cut several blossoms and brought them inside. The aromas drifting throughout the house were intoxicating.

But now it's July – the real start of summer and what seems like a never ending maintenance chore. The critical need at this time of year is water. Forget the light sprinkle – water deeply. Sprinkling causes more problems than it cures. A stingy watering causes roots to come to the surface looking for moisture. You'll need a good soaker hose to accommodate elevated beds and hard to reach places; and I can't say enough good things about root feeders for trees and shrubs. Remember to deep water your shade trees at least once a week during extended dry spells.

Azaleas are shallow-rooted and should never be allowed to dry out. Water slowly once or twice a week with a soaker hose or let the garden hose dribble slowly at the drip line. This is a dangerous time for these plants. Failure to provide sufficient water during the summer will surely deprive you of blooms when the curtain goes up for their spring performance. Lack of water now could be fatal long before the curtain is scheduled to rise.

The camellias would appreciate a little extra attention as well. They'd like to be on the same watering schedule you have for the azaleas. If their buds drop in winter, you can bet it's because they dried out the previous summer. They like plenty of water, but don't like their feet to remain wet for an extended period of time. Lots of water and good drainage will result in healthy, blooming plants. They'd also like a light foliar feeding – a hose end sprayer is the easiest method to accomplish this.

A good way to conserve moisture and keep roots cool is spelled – M-U-L-C-H, but never let it touch the bark of a tree or shrub. Mulch holds down moisture – but what happens when bark stays damp? Can you spell – R-O-T?

You've been too busy to feed the St. Augustine – right? You've still got a chance to give it a light feeding and pump up that beautiful green color. A 15-5-10 formulation should do the job quite nicely. Notice I said "light feeding." Don't be a member of the club that believes if a 'little is good – a lot is better' – it doesn't work that way. A St. Augustine lawn wants your mower blade raised to "High" so that the blades of grass shade the roots from the intense summer sun.

If you have an irrigation system, check to be sure that your sprinkler heads are delivering water droplets – not mist. If they are emitting a mist – you're wasting water and money. Mist evaporates before it can be absorbed down into the soil, and a light breeze just blows it to your neighbor's yard.

Aren't those tomatoes right out of your garden superior to the ones trucked across country to your grocery store? The heat of July will probably bring on their demise, but if the variety you planted has done well for you, why not plant the same variety for your fall garden? Hurry and pinch out the top few inches of your existing tomato plants and root them in small pots to be ready for planting when fall arrives. I planted a Beefsteak in a large pot - never again. That's too much plant for a pot as I had a difficult time keeping it within bounds. Next time I'll go for a 'patio' variety.

You might have noticed that your cucumbers are tasting bitter. Not much you can do other than just yank 'em out – they're not going to get any better. You can plant more seeds in mid to late August for a fall crop. Has COVID -19 caused you to cancel your summer travel plans? Many of us have opted to stay closer to home this summer. If this is the case, and you're looking for something to do – think about building a rain garden. What's a rain garden? I'm glad you asked. It's a low or shallow depression you create in your landscape strategically placed to catch water that runs off of your rooftop, driveway, or lawn. Water collects in this rain garden and allows it to soak into the soil slowly, filtering and purifying it before it enters the underground water channels. Did you know that harmful oils from your driveway, herbicides, fertilizers, and pest control chemicals from your lawn run directly into our sewers which drain into Galveston Bay? Our yards are the source of as much as 50% of the pollutants which enter our sewer system. So you can see, there's a good incentive for building a rain garden.



First off, you have to determine the right location. Next time it rains, grab your umbrella, go outside and try to pinpoint the areas where water collects naturally or where you could persuade it to collect. You may find it necessary to excavate a swale or lay a pipe to direct the runoff to the rain garden, but be sure to avoid any damage to existing tree roots when you dig. Ideal depth should be 6-to-8 inches at its deepest point and shallow at the edges. Bigger is not always better – but in this case it is. The larger your rain garden, the more polluted water collected and purified.

Well, you didn't think I was going to let you just stand there looking at a hole in the ground did you? There are many plants suitable for a rain garden. You might consider planting, calla and crinum lilies, cannas, mint, lizard's tail, yellow flag iris, liriope, and of course many ferns. Natives are best as they are adapted to thriving in our weather, soil and ecosystem. Your favorite nursery will have more suggestions.

As in all conventional gardens, mulch is also an important ingredient in a rain garden. The idea is to let the water soak into the soil, not evaporate.

Just as the mulch around your shrubbery deters weeds, it does the same in your rain garden. In this case you'll want to use a heavier mulch such as pine straw or shredded hardwood – something that won't have a tendency to float away. Of course your rain garden won't stay damp – you may have to water occasionally. After all, it is a garden! And it can look like one – spiff it up a bit with some rocks, a boulder or two, or maybe a piece of garden art.

What is she thinking? – you ask yourself. She wants me to build a mosquito maternity ward? Not to worry. It takes about three days for the critters to hatch, but the water will have soaked in before they do, thereby killing any larvae. Think about it - this could help to downsize the mosquito population in our neighborhood. If you want to learn more about rain gardens, and I hope you do - there is plenty of information on the internet. This could keep you busy for a good part of the summer. In the meantime, have a safe and happy summer.



Photos by GCMG Digital Library

Tree Stories: Retama's Blossoms



By Dr. Margaret
Canavan MG 2003

Hurricane Ike caused the loss of 40,000 trees on Galveston Island. The Galveston Island Tree Conservancy was formed to address that loss and has replaced almost 16,000 through grant-funded plantings and giveaways.

Recent rains have been a real gift to our trees. Our relatively wet winter and spring with June rains have provided a boost that will help them thrive during our scorching summer and boom-or-bust rainfall season.

Rainy events following a dry period causes many flowering plants to rebloom. A tree that responds in this way is the Retama (*Parkinsonia aculeata*). In nature Retama is a desert dweller, native from Texas south to northern South America and west to Arizona and knows how to take advantage of rainfall. It blooms primarily in spring, but rainy periods may cause intermittent flowering through autumn. Showy clusters of small bright yellow flowers resemble pea blossoms. There is a particularly striking specimen on Postoffice Street at the corner of 15th. There are several others around town, many installed during Neighbor Woods plantings.

Retama is a rapidly growing mostly evergreen tree that can reach 15-to-20 feet in height and width. Its small leaves and multi-trunked growth habit create a graceful and lacy canopy that casts dappled shade. This desert survivor is drought-, heat-, and salt-tolerant and requires full sun and good drainage to thrive. It adapts to poor soils and a variety of weather conditions. Galveston is not desert but it can seem that way if summer rain eludes us.

One of Retama's common names is Palo Verde, which is Spanish for "green pole" or "green stick," so named because their trunks and branches are green. The green trunk and branches perform photosynthesis even when leaves are dropped due to drought or extreme cold. You may recall from science class that photosynthesis is the process by which green plants and some other organisms use sunlight to create food from carbon dioxide and water and generate oxygen as a byproduct. This is a boon for these trees when leafless during times of drought or extreme winter cold.

Retama is also known as "Jerusalem Thorn," which suggests a certain prickliness. Indeed, the native version of this tree has some impressive thorns. A modern thornless hybrid, "Desert Museum," is available in the nursery trade but does tend to sell out quickly during planting season.

Bees and other pollinators adore this plant and during blooming the tree will be swarming with them. Blossoms are followed by seed pods which are a food source for small animals and birds. The plant's seeds have been used as a food source by some native people, and the wood used for creating food implements.

Retama is popular as a landscape plant for its rapid growth, floral display and its open, airy canopy of bright green leaves and unusual green trunk. It can

be a good choice for the right spot given Galveston's unpredictable rainfall. Trees are available in the nursery trade but can be propagated from seeds if you are patient. This true desert plant requires a minimum in the way of cultivation, given the right growing conditions.

"Tree Stories" is an ongoing series of articles about Island trees, tree care, and tree issues. If you have or know of a special tree on Galveston Island that should be highlighted, please email treesforgalveston@gmail.com. Margaret Canavan is a Galveston resident, a Galveston County Master Gardener, and a member of the Galveston Island Tree Conservancy Board.



Photo by Dr. Margaret Canavan

Retama - *Parkinsonia aculeata*

When is Sevin not Sevin?

(Editor's Note: This article is a reprint from Dr. Merchant's article in Texas A&M AgriLife Extension column *Insects in the City* <https://citybugs.tamu.edu/author/mike-merchant/>)



Dr. Mike Merchant, Professor & Extension Urban Entomologist

Any gardener who's been around the block a few times has probably used the insecticide Sevin[®] known generically as carbaryl. First introduced to the public in 1956, carbaryl was the first commercially successful product in the carbamate insecticide class. Since then, it has been a pest control workhorse for vegetable gardeners and fruit growers. It's relatively low cost, broad spectrum activity, and relatively short (usually 3-day) interval between application and harvest made

carbaryl a popular choice for growers. Its relatively low oral and skin toxicity to mammals also made carbaryl a favorite treatment choice for on-pet use against fleas.

In recent years, newer, more powerful pyrethroid insecticides have come to dominate store shelves, making carbaryl harder to find. A few years ago the Sevin[®] trade name was purchased by the pesticide distributor GardenTech. This year, GardenTech is switching the active ingredient in Sevin[®] Insect Killer from carbaryl to zeta-cypermethrin, a newer pyrethroid insecticide.

According to one industry rep, GardenTech "upgraded" the active ingredient in most Sevin[®] products to zeta-cypermethrin this year. Sevin[®] Insect Killer Lawn Granules are changing their active ingredient to bifenthrin + zeta-cypermethrin. The Sevin[®] Ready-to-Use 5% Dust is not changing immediately. It is still carbaryl, though this may also change.

Manufacturers commonly change ingredients in brand name products; however I can't recall a similar name change in an insecticide active ingredient so closely tied to a trade name as carbaryl and Sevin[®]. It will be hard for me to disassociate myself from thinking of Sevin[®] as anything other than carbaryl. It is something akin to changing the active ingredient in Tylenol[®] to something other than acetaminophen.

So if you expect to be getting car-

baryl the next time you go to the store, look carefully at the label. If it's a GardenTech product you may be getting a different active ingredient than what you expected. That's not to say the change will be bad. Zeta-cypermethrin and bifenthrin are both excellent active ingredients with longer staying power than the old carbaryl. In some, if not most, cases, it will likely perform better than carbaryl. But for some pests it may not.

To verify the active ingredient in Sevin[®] or any other insecticide, look in the list of active ingredients at the bottom of the front label. You should see a generic active ingredient name followed by its percent content in the product by weight. This is one of the first things I look for when shopping for a pesticide. It's a wise gardener who knows what they're spraying on their plants. *For more information, see our fact sheet on [Understanding Common House and Garden Insecticides](#).*

One Response to When is Sevin not Sevin?

mike.merchant says:

Note: Since this blog was published, Garden Tech has acknowledged that this spring there was a plant safety problem with the new RTU (Ready to Use) version of their Sevin (zeta-cypermethrin) product on young plants. They have since issued a recall and are answering consumer questions through their Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/SevinByGardenTech/> and their Consumer Call Center.



Product labels often look very similar even when the ingredients change. On the left is the product containing zeta-cypermethrin; the one on the right contains carbaryl.

Photo Credit: Belinda J. Messenger-Sikes

Most Common Insect Pests and Beneficials



By Hedy Wolpa
MG 2018

I was curious about the most frequently occurring insects (pests and beneficials) in our area, so with help from three MGs who talk to the public about insects almost every day, these lists came together, along with suggestions about how to identify and treat the worst of them. Thank you Gene Speller (MG 1997), Briana Etie (MG 2017), and Laurel Stine (MG 2002) for sharing your wisdom and suggestions with us.

Gene and Briana both work tirelessly on the Garden Helpline in the Extension Office, as well as their other activities in the Discovery Garden. Laurel is the Extension Office horticulture assistant, taking calls and emails about insects from people all over the county and beyond. She opens a lot of envelopes and packages containing insect larvae, leaves, eggs, etc. and responds to all sorts of common and uncommon questions about insects and plant diseases.

Gene responded to my request to name frequently discussed insects on the Helpline with bees at the top of his list, especially during swarming season.

Scale insects on citrus leaves
Leafminers on citrus leaves
Whiteflies on citrus trees
Ants, various types
Leaf-footed bugs on tomatoes

Stink bugs on tomatoes
Spider mites on fruits and ornamentals
Chinch bugs in turf grass
Sod webworms in turf grass
Pine bark beetles in dying pine trees

Briana named the following insects as the most frequently asked about pests:

Grub worms, causing the most damage by feeding on the roots
Leafminers and rust on citrus
Leaf-footed stinkbugs on tomatoes and citrus

Armyworms, cutworms
Grasshoppers, leaf cutters
Snails
Aphids

Laurel's "insects du jour" (depending on the time of year, or any given year) include:

Pantry and Closet Pests
Indian Meal Moths
Carpet Beetles
Cigarette Beetles
Ants
Scale

Mites
Termites
Whiteflies
Webworms
Wasps
Galls

A close look at the damage caused by insect pests will go a long way in deciding how to treat them. As you know, that's part of good Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices. Arguably, some of these insects are real pests. But some are good actors in our gardens and deserve some latitude when it comes to control. Suggestions from our Hotline experts include using the safest, least toxic chemical treatments whenever possible, since using them may also harm good insects and small animals. Briana told me that when she responds to questions on the Helpline, younger folks are interested in protecting the environment when it comes to insect control, and older people are often looking for the "best weapon."

Other advice includes growing beneficial plants and insect-detering plants and herbs in your garden that will attract insects away from the plants you wish to protect. This is called companion planting, maybe a good topic for future discussion and study.

Integrated Pest Management practices range from benign and practical to more complex techniques. Cultural controls are those gardening practices that prevent pests and diseases from becoming problems from the start: Healthy soil, the use of composted material to supplement the soil; choosing disease resistant plants or native plants; timing your planting and rotation planting; companion plant selections; and good hygiene in the garden and with your tools are all best practices that limit or prevent the onset of problems. Physical controls are readily employed



Photo by Vicki Blythe

Carpenter Bee



Aphids



Photo by Hedy Wolpa

Southern Green Stink Bug



Juvenile Stink Bugs on Tomato

by gardeners who don't mind a hands-on approach to getting rid of insects. These include setting traps that use baits, light, or pheromones; mulching with organic materials; or using aluminum foil, cardboard or plastic as diversions. Manual controls, like physical controls, require your time and patience. They are also for the strong-willed, tenacious gardener. These include hand-picking insects off plants; pruning, aeration of soil with tools or shoes; shaking plants; vacuuming insects; and water sprays.

Biological controls are all about finding balance in your garden with the use of insects' natural enemies to keep pests and diseases at a minimum. Typically there are more beneficial insects already thriving in your garden than pests! You can attract more beneficial insects and birds to your garden with food sources (pollen and nectar), providing water and shelter from extreme weather, and companion plants that discourage pests with their smell or taste. Some folks invest in beneficial insects that they release into the garden, such as ladybugs, mites, spiders, and lacewings, but when the food source is gone, they often leave the garden.

Most backyard gardeners are willing to tolerate a certain amount of insect damage during the growing season to avoid the use of pesticides. However, that may not be true for your home structure (termites and ants) or inside your home (pantry pests). Sometimes professional intervention is a good idea for your home, but in your yard and garden, there are some reasonable biological or organic choices to consider.

Bacillus thuringiensis (*Bt*) is often recommended for biologic control of worms and caterpillars, the larvae of butterflies and moths, as well as beetles, mosquitos, flies, and gnats. *Bt* is safe to use on foliage, food, soil, and water environments. The bacteria in *Bt* occur naturally and target very specific insects. It is relatively inexpensive and safe around humans, birds, fish and most beneficial insects. There are different strains of *Bt* that can be used to target specific insect pests, so read and follow direc-

tions carefully if you use one of these products to get rid of specific pests. *Bt* only kills insects that eat the toxin as it's applied to plants or soil. It's best to use this product in the evening, as it is rapidly inactivated by UV radiation in sunlight.

Another product frequently recommended for biologic control is *Bacillus subtilis*, sold as Serenade. It is a preparation of naturally occurring and common soil fungi that acts organically to control specific fungal problems as well as mildew, blight, rust, and mold problems on flowers, fruits, vegetables, and medicinal herbs. It can be used up to the day of harvest. It does not harm beneficial insects, including bees.

Sucking insects like aphids and whiteflies can be managed with help from other insects that prey on them, such as lady beetles, assassin bugs, and lacewings. Wasps are on Laurel's list of frequently discussed pests, and many are beneficial, including parasitoid wasps that lay their eggs on or in the bodies of other arthropods, which ultimately kills them. Insecticidal soaps, home-prepared or purchased, is a good solution for mild infestations of soft bodied insects such as mites, aphids, scale, thrips, and whiteflies.

So it boils down to making good choices about managing the most common insect pests. Consider letting Mother Nature be your ally in getting rid of your most common insect pests. Or use the most effective and least harmful pesticides or seek professional help.* Understanding your tolerance for insects, and determining if they are truly pests or if they are beneficial to your home or garden, will help you make the best decisions.

*Always wear protective gear and read and follow label instructions on any pesticide products that you or professional exterminators use in your yard and home.



Adult Lady Beetle



Red Velvet Ant (male)



Banana Spider



Lacewing

Photos by GCMG Digital Library

A Visit to the International Rose Garden - Adelaide Botanical Gardens



By Jon Johns
MG 2003

While visiting Adelaide in South Australia, I had the opportunity to visit the International Rose Garden of Australia. This acclaimed rose garden is located within the Adelaide Botanical Garden (also referred to as the Botanical Garden of South Australia).

This rose garden contains over 5,000 roses, with rose garden sections devoted to Australian bred roses, single roses, old garden (heritage) roses, and climbing (pillar) roses. The rose garden also has a section called the "Charity Rose Garden" where all proceeds from the sale of roses in this section are donated to charity. Among the beds are many arches and trellises that add decorative features to the garden and are designed to accommodate climbing roses. Well laid out garden paths wander throughout the garden enabling visitors to enjoy all the roses. Along the fence between the rose garden and the public highway is a 100 yards or longer bed of red roses that provides a stunning border of color to the rose garden.

A key and very unique feature of this rose garden is that it contains the "National Rose Trial Garden of Australia." This trial rose garden was established in 1999. It is a joint venture between the Botanical Gardens of Adelaide, the Rose Introducers of Australia, the Australian Rose Breeders Association, and the National Rose Society of Australia. The trial garden's purpose is to evaluate how well new roses (not yet for sale to the public), perform in the Australian climate. The evaluative intent of the trial garden is: 1) To identify and promote roses best suited to Australian growing conditions. 2) To develop and promote Australian rose breeding. 3) To provide general information on roses to the public. 4) To provide feedback to rose breeders, growers and retailers as to those roses judged by the public to be the most popular.

This rose garden is also a very popular site for events and weddings.

In 2021, Adelaide will be hosting the World Rose Convention. Rose enthusiasts from all over the world will attend this public horticultural expo and obviously get to also enjoy this outstanding rose garden.

To see more pictures of the entire Botanical Garden's Rose Gardens go to YouTube - "A Visit to the International Rose Garden, Adelaide Botanical Gardens, Australia" - <https://youtu.be/Ox-Cm2B7RJ> and to "A Visit to the National Rose Trial Garden of Australia, Adelaide Botanical Gardens, Australia" - <https://youtu.be/9jSEfoS3M5I>.



Rose Garden's Trellises



Photos by J. Jons © 2020

Overview of the Rose Garden

Green Genes

MGs have 'green genes' thanks to childhood experiences



By Karolyn Gephart
MG 2017

Master Gardeners love to garden in a wide variety of ways. Many enjoy fruit and vegetable gardening while others carry photos on their phones of flowers they enjoy having in their landscaping. Some study horticulture and share it with others through presentations. Helpline MGs take problems into consideration and respond to the community to help solve their problems.

While all MGs have their own areas of expertise, one common characteristic seems to thread through the group: they all had role models growing up who presented positive memories of gardening and plants.

MG Ronnie Corley from the Class of 2018 grew up in Marshall, Texas. Both of his grandfathers were farmers at one point in their lives. His father raised cattle and kept a vegetable garden. His mom grew flowers and ornamentals.

"My parents and both grandparents loved growing animals, plants, vegetables, and everything that entailed, so it was pretty much a given for me to love it too. I can remember riding on the drawbar of my grandfather's Farmall Cub tractor while he plowed. That was before all the warning stickers were on equipment," Ronnie said.

He can remember the amazing vegetables from his dad's garden. Now in Texas City with his wife Teresa, two daughters, and five grandchildren, Ronnie himself is raising vegetables with his grandchildren helping.

"I came close to a Voc Ag degree from SFA and worked in the greenhouse and Ag Farm there, but life had other plans for me," Ronnie said. Before retiring, he worked pipeline construction, operations and maintenance, and was the pipeline construction inspector for cathodic protection installations.



As an MG, Ronnie enjoys working in the greenhouse, shop, and helping out wherever needed. "After retirement, I am trying to return to my roots," Ronnie said.

MG Hedy Wolpa is a Corpus Christi native, but moved to Houston as a young child.

"I come from a long line of 'do it yourselves.' My parents kept a beautifully landscaped yard and garden. They did it all: the planting, pruning, transplanting, mowing, propagating. Dad is an engineer, so it was all manicured and tended on a weekly schedule. I loved how it looked, smelled, and thrived under their diligence," Hedy remembers.

Her Florida grandparents grew backyard citrus and other fruits. When they visited, they brought suitcases full of their homegrown grapefruit, oranges, and huge avocados. Her Texas grandparents, along with her parents, always grew figs. Hedy and her husband, Jeff, now have a lovely tree at their Kemah home that started as a cutting from one of those trees.

Her childhood memories instilled in her a love for order in the landscape. "I still love landscape planting: the balance, symmetry, placement of plants and objects, but I work in a small space, with herbs mixed with other green plants and flowers, and lots of containers," Wolpa said. "I knew that when I retired from a regular work experience that I wanted to make gardening my special interest. I was thrilled to join the 2018 MG class, and I'm grateful for the opportunity to work with many talented and experienced gardeners."

She shares Bed #11 in the Discovery Garden with MGs Vicki Blythe and Sue Bain, where the three put their best efforts into a vegetable and flower garden.

“I love that they share my optimistic enthusiasm with every seed and transplant that goes into that bed,” Hedy said. “Sue, Vicki, and I also maintain the Butterfly/Pollinator Garden space. We want to continue to build on past success there by developing a plan to garden with intention, so that we’re planting and grooming the space for year-round beauty and service to the insects that we attract.”

Hedy’s interest with insects began in 2018 when she attended the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension entomology training course and earned her entomology specialist pin.

She speaks about beneficial insects to students and garden clubs and takes care of the insect boxes in the lab, using the stereomicroscope to look at interesting and sometimes scary insects, she reports.

“My insect motto is: Insects are neither good nor bad; each serves its purpose to keep Earth in balance and should be respected and preserved in any way possible,” Hedy said.

Before retiring three years ago, Hedy enjoyed a career in retail for more than 30 years in various administrative positions at Foleys and Macys



Hedy's Garden

as well as 11 years with the historic East End District in Houston. She and Jeff raised two sons and now have two grandchildren, Maddox and Adaline, both 4. (Hedy refers to them as future bugologists.)

She is instilling in her two grandchildren a love and respect of nature as well as memories of gardening and bug detecting with her – the grandmother they call Honey.

MG Lisa Davis was also part of the Class of 2018. A native of Port Arthur, she now lives in League City. She is a former teacher, having taught kindergarten, first, and second grades. She was also the teacher-mentor for the Garden Club at the school.

Being involved in gardening is certainly part of her DNA. “My paternal grandfather always had a large vegetable garden. I remember his compost bin made of hog wire that was full of leaves. His wife, my paternal grandmother, had a birdbath planted with ghost succulents. She gave all the women family members a piece to grow their own,” Lisa said. “She also had daisies along the side of the garage which I loved. I now have different daisies (natives Ox Eye and Fleabane) scattered in my flower



Lisa's Ghost Succulents that she received from her grandmother years ago

beds as a tribute to her.”

Her grandparents had a second home on Lake Sam Rayburn and would take Lisa there over school holidays and during the summers. Her grandmother would take walks with Lisa and would often dig up wild violets and replant them at home in Port Arthur.

“She would give me cultivated violets when I was young which were fun to grow. I still have violets both indoors and outside. They remind me of her,” Lisa said.

Her maternal grandparents were also instrumental in making garden memories. On a farm in Glenmoore, Pennsylvania, her great grandpa, Bill, would take her out to the long rows of vegetables and talk to her about what he was growing.

“I remember digging potatoes with him which was just magical for a kid. Great Grandma had a strawberry patch, raspberry patch, and cutting garden (just rows and rows of flowers). I want a cutting garden like that now. I have one flower bed designated as a cutting garden, but it isn’t anything like Great Grandma’s” Lisa said.

As an adult and still having fun in the garden, Lisa was introduced to the Galveston County Master Gardener program by Class of 2017 MG Mary Jane Fortney. Davis had taught Fortney’s son years before in kindergarten.

Since becoming a MG, Lisa has played an active role in the organization. “I love going to the Discovery Garden on Thursdays to tinker in my veggie bed that was just started with beets, potatoes, radishes, and, currently, okra; volunteer in the Greenhouse; and visit with people,” Lisa said. She

continues to learn from the many MGs that are out in the garden working in their own areas.

Lisa will be installing an all-new bulb bed in the Discovery Garden in the fall with Fran Brockington. She writes Plant of the Month in the Discovery Garden for this newsletter. She has presented seminars on Butterflies & Natives, and, coming in August, will present What to Plant in the Fall for a Spring Garden. In September, she and Fran will present Bulbs for the Gulf Coast.

She has also attended two of the four Landscape Design courses with fellow Master Gardeners Lynn Shook, Nancy Greenfield, Judy Anderson, and others.

She enjoys fairy gardens after visiting one in Maine 12 years ago. She has a little fairy village near her garden shed where she enjoys working. Lisa also enjoys growing heirloom plants and unusual vegetables.

With all this, she still fits in other interests. “I love, love, love to travel. I enjoy reading, cross stitching, and cooking. I had my first foray into canning during the COVID-19 lock down. I had a lot of time and lots of tomatoes,” Lisa said.



Lisa

The Latest Buzz Mason Bee Houses

(Editor's Note: This is a reprint from the July *Coast Monthly* magazine by MG Barbara Canetti - Photos by Stuart Villanueva)



By Barbara Canetti
MG 2016

Santa Fe residents Larry and Debbie Brizendine build tiny houses. Really tiny houses. But the houses are large enough for several dozen mason bees to live in — each in its own “apartment.” “They are made of bamboo and last several years,” said Larry Brizendine, an electrical designer who has been constructing bee houses for about five years and donates them to the Galveston County Master Gardeners organization to sell at its bi-annual plant sale. “They fly off the shelf each year.”

Mason bees are larger and hairier than honey bees, but they’re the best neighbors a gardener can have. They’re solitary, meaning they don’t live in a hive, and their entire mission in life is to pollinate — all day, every day.

Best of all, mason bees aren’t aggressive to humans unless seriously threatened, and if they do sting, it isn’t much worse than a mosquito bite.

There are 4,000 bee species in North America, and about 140 of those are mason bees. They have been categorized as masons because they use mud or masonry products for their nests, which in nature are found in crevices in rocks or dark cavities. But they’re also attracted to the type of mason bee houses Brizendine builds and return to their nests each day. These gentle bees, which are a metallic blue or blue-black in color and resemble a large fly, flit around the garden indiscriminately pollinating a variety of flowers and plants. Unlike honey bees that gather pollen carefully on their legs, the mason bees do a belly-flop into the stamen of the flower, covering its underside with pollen and then distributing it into

the next plant. A mason bee can pollinate hundreds of flowers in a day, everything from a dandelion to a fruit tree bloom. Consider this: a fruit tree orchard needs about 30,000 honey bees to pollinate the grove. A mere 400 mason bees can do the same job in the same amount of time. These docile and industrious bees can take the pressure off the honey bee population, which is under severe strain. Beekeepers across the United States lost 44 percent of their honey bee colonies from April 2015 to April 2016, according to beeinformed.org. A loss of pollinators is a direct threat to the food supply.

Mason bees don’t live long. The male emerges from its cocoon and lives only two weeks with its sole purpose of mating with the female. The female, larger than the male, lives about six weeks, does all the pollinating, food foraging, egg laying and nest building. They’re gregarious insects and like living next to each other, but not in the same chamber.

It isn’t difficult to hire these workers. They are prevalent in the Gulf Coast area and eager to work. They live in the cracks and rock crevices naturally, but gardeners can easily provide homes similar to the ones the Brizendines make. The bee house is for the female to lay her eggs. She enters a narrow tube — a bit wider than a pencil — and lines the nest with pollen, lays her egg and then closes that cell with mud. The mother bee repeats this process over and over, until the tunnel is filled with individual nests. The larvae feeds on the pollen inside the tube. The eggs in the back of the tunnel will become female bees; the males come from the eggs near the front. When the eggs hatch and reach adult stage, they chew their way to the tube entrance, crossing through the other nests.



Larry Brizendine Hammers Sections
Of Bamboo Into A Mason Bee House
In His Garage Workshop. Photo By
Stuart Villanueva

To create a mason bee house, use either rolled paper, about ½-inch thick and about 6 inches long, or select dried bamboo shoots or reeds as the tunnels for the bees. The bamboo should be dried out at least six months so it won't shrink once placed inside the structure. Only one end of the tunnel should be open, Brizendine said. Assemble all the tubes into one "house" — it can be a rectangle, triangle, circular or any shape in which the tubes are snugly fitted so they don't move around or get wet. Hang the bee haven either on a wall or dangle from a nearby fruit or blossoming tree, facing east to the sunrise and the bees will find it. It can be moved indoors in the winter to avoid predators or mites while the eggs inside are maturing.

Bamboo is preferred over paper because the tubes can be cleaned and sanitized between seasons. Brizendine builds the house from cedar wood, which never needs painting and naturally ages in time. He also

uses pine, which should be primed and painted to keep the wood from rotting, he said.

"Just make sure they don't get wet," he said.

Brizendine suggests constructing a roof with a bit of an overhang to protect the nesting bees.

To ensure the bees' safety, don't spray pesticides or in the area. Be sure there's a place where the bees can find clay soil or even a clay-based kitty litter to use as masonry. Remember, they're native pollinators and prefer native plants, but will help pollinate almost anything that blooms.

This year, perhaps, Brizendine might even get to keep one of the bee houses he makes. They don't have any in their own garden, Debbie said. "I make them and donate them and everyone seems to like them," he said.



Larry And Debbie Brizendine With One Of The Mason Bee Houses They Built At Their Santa Fe Home. Photo By Stuart Villanueva



A Female Mason Bee Finishes A Nest In A Bamboo Tube. Getty Images

The Discovery Garden Update



By Tom Fountain
MG 2008

Summer has arrived in Galveston County; and the COVID-19 Pandemic, continues to challenge our area, even as the state of Texas starts reopening. There has also been a big surge in the number of new cases since the reopening began so we may be taking a step backwards. In case you haven't heard, we will not be having our fall plant sale.

Please, stay safe, practice social distancing, stay at home when you can and heed the advice to wear a mask in public.

On a recent trip to the Discovery Garden, I found the plants to be very healthy looking. There are lots of wonderful flowers and butterflies such as this Admiral Butterfly in the zinnias around the gazebo (Fig. 1). Interns are pictured (Fig. 2) talking and enjoying the flowers after working in garden.

Despite the Pandemic, many of our Master Gardeners have continued to filter out into the garden, to take care of it, while getting a little fresh air and sunshine. On one of our sunny hot days Judy, Tish, Sue, Hedy and Vicki were seen (Fig 3) taking a much-needed break from working in the low water and serenity gardens. Robert pictured in the orchard (Fig. 4) seems to be trying to decide what to do next. I saw Phil out on the tractor the other day (Fig. 5) and almost didn't recognize him with his beard and mustache. Many others that I know of are cautiously slipping out into the garden

Weather-wise during the past two months the temperature has averaged almost 2 degrees above normal across our area with rainfall between 1 and 4 inches above normal. This combination has kept the area from sliding into drought conditions. The extended forecast from NOAA indicates temperatures will likely continue above normal through the summer and rainfall could be slightly above normal. We are also entering hurricane season so be prepared.

Well if you haven't guessed, the new kitchen in the Discovery House is ready. Look how fantastic it looks (Fig 6). Thanks to all the donations from our Master Gardeners and the hard work of Sharon, Keven, Kathy, Linda, and all the others who had a hand in this project. It will be a great place to get together. I for one am looking forward to that time - a time when we can come together, have visitors and do tours. So stay safe until we can meet again.



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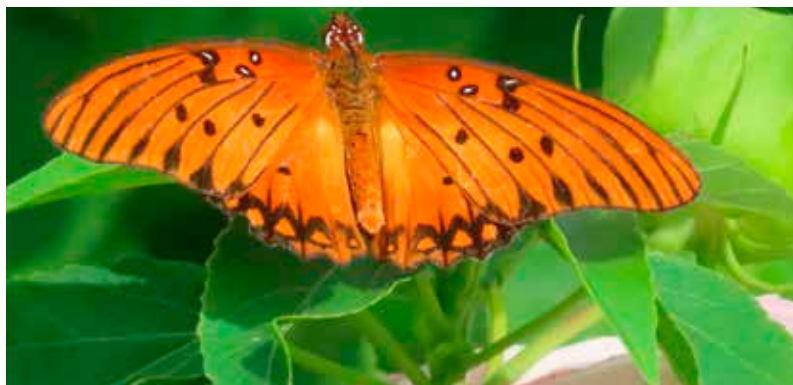
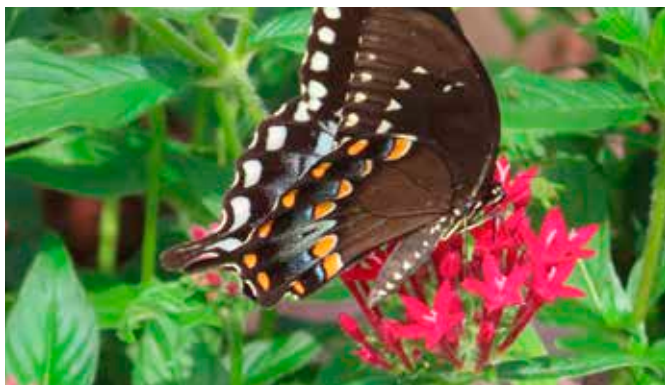
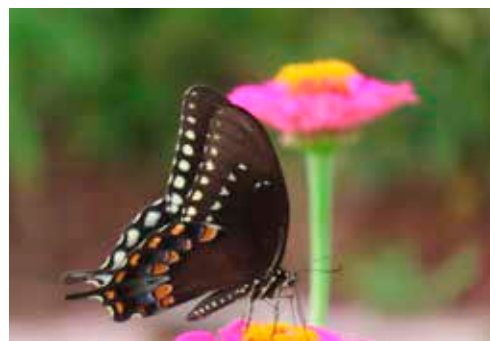
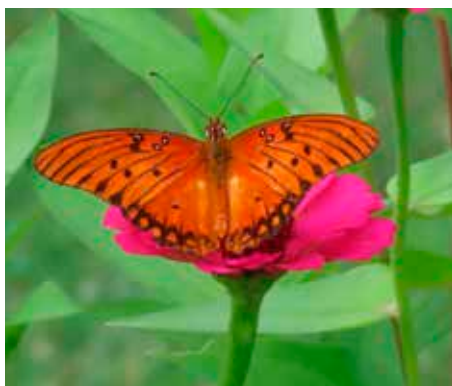
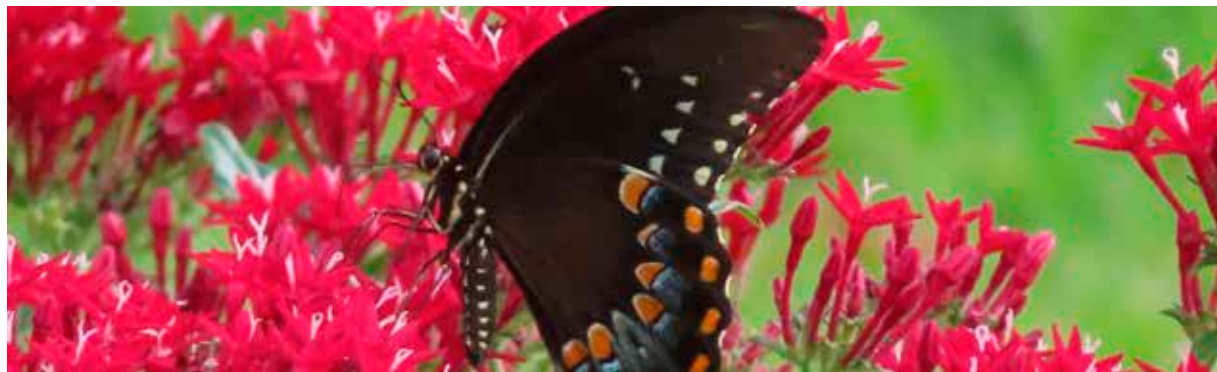
Photos courtesy of
MG Tom Fountain

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Butterflies in the Garden



By Vicki Blythe
MG 2018



Heritage Jr. Master Gardeners – Texas Youth Garden Club



By Kaye Corey
MG 2001

Not every member of the Heritage Gardeners Friendswood's garden club is an adult. The club's youth garden club, Heritage Jr. Master Gardeners, is honored to have been named Texas Garden Clubs' district first place, Texas Youth Garden Club. In addition, they were awarded first place for their "Ladybugs at Tea" flower show. These same young gardeners also won first place in the Texas Master Gardener Association Search for Excellence for 2018.

In 1961, when organizing the Heritage Gardeners garden club, the gardeners also established Heritage Youth Gardeners with the belief that children are our future gardeners. That club has been active all these years. These garden club members were teaching the children garden-related activities but needed a more in-depth curriculum. In 2001, I became a Master Gardener and was introduced to the Jr. Master Gardener program. It is fashioned after the adult Master Gardener program. Heritage Youth Gardeners soon became Heritage Jr. Master Gardeners (Heritage JMG Kids).

Heritage JMG Kids is jointly sponsored by Heritage Gardeners, who provide a space to meet, a garden to maintain, activities in which to participate and an annual budget. Galveston County Master Gardeners provide the program and Master Gardener leadership. At present, MG Kaye Corey is Leader with MG Terri Winter and MG Jason Porterfield as assistants.

The program is unique and unlike other JMG programs in that participa-

tion is open to all children in Friendswood as well as nearby towns and not grade specific. Most unique is the requirement that parents participate in all meetings and activities with their children. This level of family involvement recognizes another target audience by extending the education to the entire family. Parents say they are learning with their children.

We meet once a month, 2nd Thursday, 4:00 p.m., sharing refreshments provided by the honored birthday Kid of the month. We pledge the flags, and the Kids present their at-home assignments. They participate in a teacher-lead discussion, and group activity. The Kids enter their garden to maintain their personal container gardens, their butterfly garden and their pond. Fieldtrips are regular events for our entire families.

Their annual lemonade and craft booth at the Heritage Gardeners Spring Garden tour teaches teamwork and public relations. They sell their created craft projects, pressed flower greeting cards, herbal recipe brochures and shell plantings. Volunteerism is part of the program. They maintain a flowerbed in Stevenson Park and help in the park's Pollinator Garden. You will see them tending the wagon patrol at the Master Gardeners Plants Sales.

Certification by Texas A&M AgriLife as Jr. Master Gardeners represents approximately three years of creative and fun studies in horticultural and environmental science education. Of the 60 children enrolled in our JMG program over the years, 38 have earned their certifications as Jr. Master Gardeners. Membership averages about 5 years with the older Kids helping the younger children.

To learn more about the JMG Program, please contact me, Terri or Jason. Let us help you start your own program. Visit JMGKids.com.



Seasonal Bites

easy recipes



By Sandra Gervais
MG 2011

Summer has arrived here in Texas but so far hasn't hit triple digits. That's coming all too soon. So, let us look on the good side and enjoy the bounty that our hot and relatively wet weather is bringing us. This year's plentiful tomato crop is just about over; the few stragglers still on the plants have little time left and are losing the stink bug battle. Other summer vegetables are producing happily, ready to be eaten now or put up to brighten a dreary winter day.

Coming into their own now are the peaches and plums, great for eating out of hand and even better for making jam, cooking or baking. Below is a recipe from Laura Bush for her Peach Cream Pie. Even the name sounds good! And since the oven will be hot from baking the pie, here's another recipe to put in after it. These are simple Cheddar Popovers that are light and lovely right out of the oven but can also be reheated and happily eaten later.

Let's see...fresh vegetable salad, cold leftover chicken, hot popovers and pie for dessert. Sounds like summer.



Laura Bush's Peach Cream Pie

Preheat 400-degree oven to start

3-4 cups of fresh, ripe peaches, peeled,
sliced and sweetened to taste
2 eggs, well beaten
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 cup heavy cream
1 pie crust, unbaked (your favorite homemade or frozen)

Note: Size of pie crust depends on amount of peaches used.

Check oven temperature is set at 400 degrees.
Fill unbaked pie crust with sliced, sweetened peaches.
Mix beaten eggs, sugar and heavy cream.
Pour over peaches.
Bake pie on a cookie sheet for 15 minutes at 400 degrees.
Reduce heat to 350 degrees and bake for 30 minutes more.

Remove from oven.

Let cool before slicing.



Cheddar Popovers

Preheat 450-degree oven to start

3 large eggs
1 1/2 cups whole milk
1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon salt
3/4 cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese

Place popover pan or muffin pan on middle rack in oven to preheat.

Combine eggs and milk in a large bowl.
Whisk until frothy, about 1 minute. (Can use blender to mix.)
Add flour and salt.
Whisk vigorously and blend evenly. (Add ingredients directly to blender if using one.)
Scrape down sides of either bowl or blender as you work.
Remove hot pan from oven.
Lightly coat each pan opening with cooking spray.
Fill each opening with batter, 3/4 full for popover pans and less for muffin pans.
Top each popover with the shredded cheese.
Bake for 20 minutes at 450 degrees.
Reduce heat to 350 degrees.
Bake for an additional 20 minutes.
Remove from oven and turn out popovers.

Notes:

If using a popover pan, this size yields about 6 popovers.
If using a standard muffin pan, reduce second baking time by 5 minutes.
This size yields about 10 muffin size popovers.

Variations of these popovers can be made by changing to Pepper Jack Cheese or by also adding finely chopped ham.



bulletin board



Volunteer Opportunities

For the **Master Gardener Hotline** contact Ginger Benson by email at galvcountrymgs@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 Jennifer Pinard at jpinard@tlc-tideway.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 <http://www.moody.org/libbie-s-place-senior-day>. 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.

GalvCity Master Gardener Discovery Garden
Conditions as of: 03:46 PM Thursday, Jul 16, 2020

91°F

HIGH: 94°F at 01:26 PM
LOW: 77°F at 06:54 AM

Wind: 2 mph SSE High gust: 14 mph at 02:59 PM

Humidity: 56% Feels like 101°F

Rain: 0.00 in Seasonal Total 22.98 in

Barometer: 30.02 in Hg Falling Slowly

Don't forget to put the link for our weather station on your smart phone and computer:

<https://www.weatherlink.com/embeddablePage/show/269c8db099654c0fa522d3420104b173/wide>

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Tour Guides for Thursday Public Access and Tour of our Discovery Garden

Our Demonstration Garden is open for touring by the general public on each Thursday from 9:00 - 11:00 am. MGs are needed to serve as tour guides for our Discovery Garden.

Contact MG Denny Noh at 281.723.2830 or dnoh@aol.com to volunteer.

Volunteers are needed to develop and deliver presentations on various horticulture topics of interest to the public in our surrounding communities and our Master Gardeners. Classes are given at the Extension Office on Tuesday evenings and on Saturday. This is an excellent opportunity to contribute, develop and use skills from life experiences as well as contribute to one of the main GCMG missions of Education. We have experienced GCMG Mentors and Specialist available to guide and support. Please contact if you have any questions and so we can get you scheduled to present a class. Volunteers are also needed to help with the Saturday programs and the Tuesday evening programs. If you can help, please contact

Denny Noh @ 281-723-2830 or dnoh@aol.com
Nancy Langston Noh @ 832-289-7087 or nancylnoh@aol.com

AgriLife Extension Office Discovery Garden needs volunteers!

The gardens around the AgriLife Extension Office are maintained by Master Gardeners under the team leadership of MG Ginger 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 galvcountrymgs@gmail.com to find out the schedule and join her team.

SmugMug

To see lots of photos of what the Galveston County Master Gardeners are up to, we now have access to browse and search photos in SmugMug. Use the following link in your favorite web browser to access: <https://gcmg.smugmug.com/>

Please see the

Texas Master Gardeners Website for details.

By visiting the website you can find up-to-date

information on Advanced Training 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 Advanced Training Programs must be approved and signed by

Dr. William M. Johnson. **Note** fees do not include lodging

or food unless specified otherwise.



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



Banana plants add tropical accent to landscape

(Editor's Note: This is a reprint of Dr. William M. Johnson's article in the *The Daily News*.)



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

Last fall, Kevin Lancon, a good friend as well as a Master Gardener volunteer, asked me what I thought about a banana cultivar known as "Ice Cream." Kevin wanted to know if Ice Cream bananas would perform as well as I have claimed they would.

He explained his bed of Ice Cream bananas had been growing for a while but had not yet produced any fruits. I advised him to be patient and continue to provide good care of his banana plants.

Producing a crop of bananas is not an undertaking for the impatient gardener. Kevin stayed the course,

and on Tuesday, July 7, at 7:47 p.m., I smiled as I saw an incoming text from Kevin that contained a photo of an impressive crop of bananas. Kevin's text message stated, "Well, I got my first bushel of 'Ice Cream' bananas!"

While producing a crop of bananas is a plus, home gardeners also enjoy the tropical accent that banana plants add to the home landscape. When growing conditions are favorable, banana plants will bear edible fruit. But first, here are some basics on banana culture in general.

Bananas have several varieties that can be grown in local landscapes that will provide a striking tropical accent. For residential production, "Goldfinger" is an excellent eating fruit and is more resistant to common banana diseases. This garden cultivar was developed in Honduras. "Lady Finger" is another recommended cultivar, which grows tall (20 to 25 feet), has excellent-quality fruit and is tolerant of cool conditions.

Banana plants are extremely rapid growers and are easily established. Bananas are propagated by suckers, which are profusely produced at the base of well-developed plants. In selecting suckers for transplanting, select ones with 3- to 4-inch diameter trunks for maximum success.

Producing a banana crop is certainly a source of pride and amazement to those unfamiliar with banana culture. While getting the plants to grow is easy, producing a banana crop is rather the exception than the rule. Should an extended hard freeze occur during the winter months, the existing top growth of unprotected bananas may freeze back to ground level.

Depending on the cultivar grown, it takes at least 14 to 16 months of favorable growing weather to produce ripe bananas. The bananas we buy at the grocery store are grown in the tropics where they have a year-round growing season.

The trick to large banana plants with ripe fruit is to begin in the spring with a plant 6 to 8 feet tall. Even though it may sound odd to discuss freeze injury to plants at this time of year when daytime temperatures have been near 100 degrees, you should be aware the trunk of a banana plant must be protected from freezing back to ground level in the event of a harsh winter cold snap.

The mild temperatures over the past winter season have certainly increased the probability of locally grown banana trees producing fruit this year.

While bananas may produce flowers at any time of the year, the majority

of flowers are typically produced in April, May and June. The flowers are quite distinctive and are produced on a long, pendulous stalk with dusky purple bracts.

The first clusters of flowers are female and they develop into the fruit. This occurs without pollination and the fruit are seedless. The clusters of fruit are called hands. A number of hands form on each stalk, and all together they are called a bunch.

Once the bunch is set, the flowering stalk will continue to bloom and lengthen, but only male flowers are produced and no more bananas will form. You may allow the flower stalk to grow or cut it off just below the bunch of developing bananas.

Bananas will generally take four to six months for fruit to reach full size after flowering, depending on temperature, variety, moisture and culture practices. There is normally a slight yellow tint to the fruit as it reaches maturity. The color change may be so slight that it is hard to see.

Once the upper layer of fruits begins to turn yellow, cut off the entire fruiting stem. You can hang the stem, with its attached fruits, in a cool, dry place to ripen. The fruits seem to develop their flavor better when removed from the plant before ripening.

Once a banana tree flowers and its fruit has been harvested, you may cut it down to the ground to make room for new, productive trees to grow up from the creeping underground stem. Each individual tree will only flower and bear fruit once.

Banana trees are as much a part of the tropical look of many local landscapes as palms. We are fortunate to live in one of the few places in the United States where, with proper care and mild winters, these beautiful plants also will produce delicious fruit.

While you should not expect to produce a crop large enough to depress banana prices on the world market, the challenge of producing your own backyard bananas can be satisfying and tasty.



While producing a crop of bananas is a plus, home gardeners also enjoy the tropical accent that banana plants add to the home landscape.
KEVIN LANCON/Courtesy

2020 GCGA Monthly Meetings



By Judy Anderson
MG 2012

We are in the heat of summer and this year brought the added misery of the COVID-19. Texas, along with many other states, is seeing an increased rate of the virus. At this time, the Galveston area is practicing safe distancing, masking and hand washing; with these guidelines we are going to cancel the scheduled backyard meeting for August at Orchids Unlimited.

The scheduled meeting for July was held by ZOOM with Dr. Andrew King, Texas A&M; the presentation was "Medicinal Landscapes: Producing a functional, safe, and beautiful Medicinal Garden. During the presentation, Dr. King reviewed the history of medicinal plants, and the many contributions different periods contributed to the knowledge of medicinal plants. Unfortunately, Dr King did not cover the gardening part of his presentation.

Because the August Backyard meeting has been cancelled, an invitation has been extended to Dr. King to present another ZOOM program that will include the remaining presentation for Creating a Functional Safe and Beautiful Medicinal Garden. He will present an overview of the medicinal plants that grow well in Texas, their traditional uses, and their landscape attributes. Watch for announcements by email for the August program.

If you have not tried ZOOM, check it out. There are many presentations available for Master Gardeners from Gulf Coast Gardening. This is a great opportunity to get Advanced Training during the time of COVID-19.

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



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.



**Be KIND,
Be RESPECTFUL,
Be HEALTHY**
the Master Gardener Way.

**Facemasks
REQUIRED**
When Visiting
Our Discovery Garden

- Wash with soap and water.



OR

- Clean with alcohol based hand cleaner.

