

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

# GULF COAST *Gardening*

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**TEXAS**  
**MASTER  GARDENER**  
**TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION**  
Galveston County



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By Camille Goodwin  
MG 2008

### *You Might Be a Master Gardener if:*

You believe that the best kinds of plants originate in a friend's garden. You believe that every flowerbed should include some kind of stone path. Killing slugs is a pleasurable and fulfilling pastime. Hunting for squash bugs with duct tape becomes a favorite sport. You've given sections of your yard their own names (as if you are running your own personal arboretum): the Woodland Garden, the Hosta Garden, the Moon Garden. You have some sort of compost operation set up in your yard even if you haven't yet figured out how to produce actual compost. You've found yourself weeding a friend's garden and having a great conversation with someone you just met at the party who is also weeding the garden. You're harvesting in a thunderstorm or you deadhead in your undies. The guy who mows your lawn says he can't understand how your green thumb doesn't include your lawn.

You go home on your lunch break to water and return to the office in your "yard shoes."

When your friends tell YOUR gardening stories for you at dinner parties!

The bizarre freeze in February was a learning experience on many levels. We are now about 4 months beyond the freeze and have figured out what persevered in our landscapes. Sadly, like everyone else, my citrus is gone, except my Ujukitsu tree is going gangbuster. Most of my non-tropical perennials and bulbs survived and are a crazy two to four feet taller than normal! My yard has been so beautiful with all the recent blooms; but they are about gone for summer now.

I have also noticed boat loads of both poison ivy and weeds in my gardens. I'm not seeing as many crazy ants, but fire ants seem to be back. My Alphonse Karr bamboo is growing something at the base. I haven't attempted to remove the dead culms yet and am not sure that's ever going to happen. I was happy to see the Discovery Garden bamboo update article (pg. 6); I learned about what may be going on with my bamboo. You can relive more horticultural agony from the freeze with the stories on pages 5 and 18 that describe many plants that survived and those that didn't.



Have you seen toothpicks sticking out of your trees? Are your squash plants failing? Pages 4 & 16 feature the very strange Granulat Ambrosia Beetle and the nuisance Squash Vine Borer. Educate yourselves on how to recognize and control them. Our Discovery Garden has a new bulb bed and the Louisiana Iris beds are putting on stunning displays. Bulbs are fun, not much work and add so much beauty to your landscape (page 8). Irises are favorite flowers of many. Page 12 fills you in on the Louisiana iris species and hybrids in the Discovery Garden and the metrics gathered, to date, that identify the best environment for max blooms and healthy irises.

The feature on page 10 is about the importance of bees and lists plants we should plant to help them survive. Basil is an excellent and easy to grow herb. Page 14 lists several different types and a few recipes to try. Our Plant of the Month is Liatris, a native that might fit in an empty space in your garden (page 7). I am featured in the Green Genes article (page 17) this month. John Jons brings us a story about another international rose garden (Rymill Park Rose Garden) in South Australia (page 13).

Our Master Gardeners placed in all nine award categories they entered at the State Awards ceremony. See page 23 for how exceptional our MG's are. If you are looking for a volunteer project, perhaps the Seeding Galveston Kitchen Gardeners Project would be the perfect fit. Catch up with current triumphs and mentor needs (page 22). In this challenging past year, we've had great success with our on-line plant sales. We have three additional online sales scheduled for the fall. The article on page 26 lays out the schedule. Try a couple of great summer recipes on page 20. The Bulletin Board has been updated (page 28) and Upcoming Events are featured on page 25.

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Cover:  
Photo courtesy of MG Dr. Margaret Canavan



Galveston County Master Gardeners are on Facebook with information about upcoming programs, Dr. Johnson's weekly column and more.

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## How to Reach Us



### Extension Office:

281-309-5065

[galvcountymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountymgs@gmail.com)

### To Submit Newsletter Articles:

Contact Karolyn Gephart

713.416.6126

[kbgephart@comcast.net](mailto:kbgephart@comcast.net)

We encourage your articles!  
Due the 20th of each month.

### Speakers Bureau:

Nancy Langston-Noh

@ 832-289-7087 and

Betty Webb @ 281-630-0103

[gcmg.speakersbureau@gmail.com](mailto:gcmg.speakersbureau@gmail.com)



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Thanks for your interest!



# Ambrosia Beetle



By Tish Reustle  
MG 2008

Many landscape trees are still recovering and remain in a weakened condition. This is not unusual considering the freezing temperatures we had in February. The MG hotline has had several calls from residents that talk of damaged trees now having “toothpick-like” spikes appearing on them.

These white things look like the county has been hit by a possible invasion by the Intergalactic Toothpicks!

In a previous freeze, the Orchid Tree in the MG Discovery Garden had succumbed to a severe cold spell we had just been through and was, most likely, dead. While I checked carefully for any sign of emerging life, I saw a truly strange sight. A large number of what looked like toothpicks sticking up at an angle from the main trunk and some of the lower branches. I checked with some other gardeners, but nobody had seen anything quite like it or had a good explanation. Research was needed. A few hours in the company of Google provided the answer. I didn't need to go into outer space for an explanation; just as far as the insect Family of Coleoptera.

The invader is known as the Granulate Ambrosia Beetle (*Xylosandrus crassiusculus*). It arrived in the USA in the 1970s in South Carolina; most likely from Asia and was initially called the Asian Ambrosia Beetle. Since its arrival it has moved across the Southern States attacking a wide variety of ornamental trees and shrubs and causing a lot of damage to nursery stock as well as home gardens. It attacks a wide variety of trees such as fruits, nuts, magnolias, maples, and crape myrtle.

Although the beetle seems to prefer dead or dying wood and stressed trees, it is perfectly capable of attacking live wood as well. The beetles are very small, less than ½ inch long, and reddish-brown to black in color. They take flight in groups in early spring and, having selected a tree, burrow through the bark and make an extensive tunnel system with many galleries. As it chews up the wood it excretes frass out of the tunnel which hardens in the air to form the visible “toothpicks.”

When the tunnel is finished the beetles lay eggs which hatch into larvae. The larvae then pupate, emerging later as adults who mate and leave, flying off to find another host tree. Very often all stages of metamorphosis are present in one tunnel system and the whole life cycle takes about fifty-five days.

This is not the entire story, however. It gets even stranger. This unusual little insect does not actually feed on the tree and neither do the larvae. The adult brings fungal spores into the tunnel when it burrows, carried in special structures on its body and this fungus multiplies and provides food for both adults and larvae. This ambrosia fungus thrives on the beetles' frass as the larvae thrive on the fungus, in a process called “nutritional symbiosis.”

Unfortunately for homeowners and nursery growers, treatment is extremely difficult. A healthy tree with a small infestation may well survive, but a stressed tree with a large number of beetles is likely to show leaf wilt and finally die. Once the beetle has plugged its tunnel up, there is no way that any chemical can reach it. Since the larvae are eating the fungus

and not the tree itself, systemic insecticides are also useless. Prevention is the only cure.

This is where “Integrated Pest Management”, commonly referred to as IPM comes in. If trees are well watered and fertilized and other diseases are adequately treated, the tree will be in good condition to survive an attack. On severe infestations that cannot be practically remedied, the trees should be quickly removed.

There are traps available for those willing to try to capture this insect which is less than one-half inch long that flies mostly at night. If you successfully trap several of the adult beetles then pyrethroids can be used as a preventive if they can be applied just before the beetles arrive.

This seems to be a fascinating story without a very happy ending. Gardeners, though, are as enterprising as the Ambrosia Beetle and a lot smarter! Now that we know that we are not dealing with space invaders we can put good preventive practices into place, keep our trees “stress free” and deal with infestations quickly. We can learn to contain the problem until a better solution comes along.



# Survivors of the Freeze



By Briana Etie  
MG 2017

Four months have gone by since the bitter winter storm brought below freezing temperatures. Many of us were patiently watching our brown plants and shrubs hoping to see a green sprout or any sign of life. We have waited, clipped, scratched, and prayed. Regrettably, we know what did not return in our yards. After waiting for signs of life, many of us realized it would take longer than we wanted. I thought sharing what did survive could be beneficial if you are still looking for something for that brown hole in your landscape.

A survivor would be many of our favorite perennials that returned from their root after lying dormant and were tested for their true cold tolerance. Our soil temperature never went below 58° allowing many root hardy perennials to return; Angel Trumpet (*Brugmansia*), Asters, Bee Balm (*Monarda*), Blue Mist flower (*Conoclinium coelestinum*), Bi-Color Iris (*Dietes bicolor*), Buddleia (*Buddleja davidii*), Butterfly Weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*), Canna, Cat Mint (*Nepeta*), Cone flower (*Echinacea*), Coreopsis, Corral Bells (*Heuchera*), Crinum, Day Lily (*Heemerocallis*), Flax Lily (*Dianella*), Fig Ivy (*Ficus pumila*), Foxtail Fern (*Asparagus aethiopicus*), Gay Feather (*Liatris spicata*), Giant Milkweed (*Calitropis gigantea*), Hardy Hibiscus (*Hibiscus moscheutos*), Leopard Plant (*Ligularia*), Lily of the Nile (*Agapanthus*), Mexican Mint Marigold (*Tagetes lucida*), Mexican Hummingbird Plant (*Dicleptera suberecta*), Passion Vine (*Passiflora*), Rangoon Creeper (*Combretum indicum*), Black-Eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*), Rain Lily (*Zephyranthes*), Salvias (*farinacea*, *greggii*, *guanitica*, spp.), Spider Lily (*Lycoris radiata*), Naked Ladies (*Amaryllis belladonna*), Society Garlic (*Tulbaghia violacea*), and common Verbena (*Verbena officinalis*).

For those of us who stayed the course to wait and see, these shrubs, after being pruned to the ground, returned from the root; Almond Verbena (*Aloysia virgata*), Skyflower (*Duranta repens*), Esperanza (*Tecoma stans*), Golden Thryallis (*Galphimia speciosa*), Oleander (*Nerium Oleander*), Orchid Tree (*Bauhinia variegata*) and Chase Tree (*Vitex agnus-castus*).

Thrivers are the plants that stayed mostly green, maybe their tops were brown, or were hardly bothered by the temperatures. Azaleas (*Rhododendrum*), Bay Laurel (*Laurus nobilis*), Boxwood (*Buxus microphylla*), Carolina Jessamine (*Gelsemium sempervirens*), Cast Iron Plant (*Aspidistra*), Chinese Fringe Flower (*Loropetalum chinense*), Confederate Rose (*Hibiscus mutabilis*), Guara (*Oenothera lindheimeri*), Hydrangea, Japanese Blue-

berry (*Elaeocarpus decipiens*), Mexican Oregano (*Poliomintha longiflora*), Obedient Plant (*Physostegia virginiana*), Oregano (*Origanum vulgare*), Parsley (*Petroselinum crispum*), Plumbago, Rosemary (*Salvia rosmarinus*), Most Roses (*Rosa* spp.), Rose of Sharon (*Hibiscus syriacus*), Sage (*Salvia officinalis*), Winter Savory (*Satureja montana*), Mexican Bush Sage (*Salvia leucantha*), Yaupon Holly (*Ilex vomitoria*) and Red Yucca (*Hesperaloe parviflora*).

Plants that surprised us! Some tropical Hibiscus (*Hibiscus rosa-sinensis*) returned from the roots, and yet some did not. The same with Little John Bottle Brush (*Callistemon viminalis*), Cestrum, Sago Palms (*Cycas revoluta*) and Wisteria (*Hygrophila diffusa*).

Of course, not all of us had the same results. I have interviewed many gardeners and spoke with many of our Master Gardener Specialist including Laurel Stine our Horticultural Administrative Assistant. They all agree the health of our plants before the freeze is a good reason why some plants of the same species survived better than others in our yards. A well hydrated plant would have fared better. Location, location, location, contributed to the variables. A low-lying area will allow cool air to settle. Northern exposure, with no protection from cold wind increased the damage. Plants under a tree were protected, for the tree held warm air near the ground. Plants near a pool, heated pool even better, survived or sustained less damage.

Our Citrus was the biggest disappointment. As Texas A&M has suggested, the citrus grown on Trifoliata and Flying Dragon (*Poncirus trifoliata* L.) rootstock is our first defense for our normal climate and soil conditions. However, we have learned these past couple of years have not been normal. Sadly, we all said goodbye to some of our favorite citrus trees. Many of our gardeners reported the Clementines and Mandarins were some that survived this freeze. Robert Marshall, our Citrus Expert, reported 'Orange Frost' Satsuma, a Texas Superstar, lived up to its name and stayed green. One of our potted citrus, a Kishu Seedless Mandarin, survived unprotected in Aquaponics. If you wondered, all our fish in the Aquaponic Garden survived the 2021 freeze.

As I walked through my friend and Master Gardener, Stacey Phillips Drott's, perennial paradise and she showed me her Survivors and Thrivers, I plucked a Calamondin Orange from her tree and enjoyed its tiny tart flavor. A limequat along with this small tree, situated next to her heated pool, earned the #unfazed honor.



Fig Ivy sprouting from root



Fig Ivy dead



Little John Bottle Brush sprouting from root



# Rescuing the Bamboo



By Tish Reustle  
MG 2008

I learned a lot from the freeze of February 2021. I learned that there are some plants that quickly rejuvenate themselves and laugh at temperatures of 16 degrees, that there are others that take soooooo loong to resprout that even a Master Gardener could be forgiven for pulling them out, and another group that re-leaves in a fit of enthusiasm only to give up and die a few weeks later. But the big lesson I learned concerned the genus *Bambusa* and its survival strategies.

We have nine species of *Bambusa* at the end of the Discovery Garden at Carbide Park. I helped dig them in back in 2010 and have been helping to care for them since then. Most clumps had reached a height of 15 to 20 feet and provided wonderful shade and atmosphere for the Japanese-style garden they surrounded. New canes, or culms, usually start appearing in May and June and break through the ground as thick shoots with a diameter that depends on the type of bamboo. These new culms shoot upwards at great speed while their diameter remains the same. Small branches and new leaves usually do not appear until the culm has reached four or five feet in height. Most bamboo in the *Bambusa* genus are described as hardy down to about 20 degrees F but during the February freeze, many places in our area reported temperatures around 16 degrees for a significant length of time.

My first trip down to the garden after the freeze provided a very sad sight. The entire garden was carpeted in about a foot of dead bamboo leaves so deep that the understory plants could hardly be seen. The bare culms were varying shades of yellow through black. The dominant color throughout the garden was brown, brown, and more brown! I think that gardeners must be optimistic by nature, however, so I grabbed the rake and tried to hope for the best. By the time I had raked all the dead leaves up, I could begin to see that life was beginning to return here and there and small amounts of green were showing up amidst the brown. The big surprise came a few weeks later when I noticed a lot of new growth appearing at ground level at the base of the old dead culms. These new

sprouts were quite different from anything I had seen before. They were spindly, flopped all over the place and, while they grew quickly taller, the stems remained thin and immediately began to sprout new leaves. They looked like branches shooting directly from the ground. (Photograph 3 shows the difference between a standard culm and these new shoots). Since this was new to me, I turned to Master Gardener Google to try and find out what other people were experiencing with post-freeze bamboo. I found that the *Bambusa* all over this part of Texas had taken a beating and several sites mentioned what were called “rescue” or “survival” shoots that sounded exactly like the new growth I was seeing in the Serenity Garden.\* Most individual culms had died, but the underground root systems had not, causing the clumps to send up these new sprouts in an effort to provide nutrients to the whole.

In the following months, I learned that each *Bambusa* species had reacted differently to the extremes of cold we had experienced. *Bambusa textilis* ‘Gracilis’ and *Bambusa multiplex* ‘Alphonse Karr’ had some culms that re-leaved with time. The Fernleaf bamboo hedge, *Bambusa multiplex* ‘Fernleaf’, also recovered. *Sinobambusa tootsik* also re-leaved but has never sent up rescue shoots. *Bambusa oldhamii*, *Bambusa chungii*, *Bambusa tulldoides* ‘Punting Pole’ and *Bambusa ventricosa* ‘Kimmei’ did not fare well. All their culms appear to be dead.

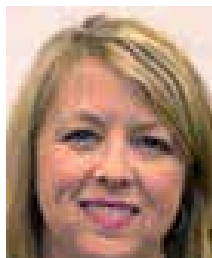
After much discussion, we decided to try to cut out most of the dead culms at ground level in order to provide better sunlight and air circulation while leaving the “rescue” shoots alone to provide for the root system. I have still seen no sign of any new true culms and believe it may be next spring before I see that kind of new growth. I have already applied a high nitrogen grass-type fertilizer to each clump and will add a top dressing of compost later on in the year.

Hopefully by next year, the Serenity Garden will once more be serene, and graceful bamboo will again shade our end of the Discovery Garden while we sit and think about all the things we have learned during the Pandemic and the February freeze of 2021. \*[bambooweb.info](http://bambooweb.info)



Photo by Tish Reustle

# Plant of the Month in the Discovery Garden - Gayfeather



By Lisa Davis  
MG 2018

*Liatris* is native to North America and can be found all the way from Canada, the United States, Mexico and the Bahamas. Of the 37 species, 30 are native to Texas. *Liatris* is a showy plant with white, pink or purple flowers that look like feather boas held erect on several spikes per plant. The flowers open in succession from top to bottom over a span of several weeks. They have stiff, upright, unbranched stems. There is no fragrance to the flower but the narrow, thick, fleshy leaves have a distinct vanilla odor when dried.

Native Americans historically consumed the corms raw, which are similar to tubers or bulbs, raw, baked and boiled. They also used *Liatris* for a number of medicinal purposes including backache, pain in the limbs, venereal disease, dropsy, as a diuretic, cough stimulant and expectorant.

**Common Names:** Gayfeather and Blazing Star

**Location:** Butterfly Garden and Bulb Bed

**USDA Hardiness Zones:** 3-9

## Plant Characteristics:

**Type:** Herbaceous perennial

**Family:** Asteraceae (Aster)

**Height:** 1-3 feet

**Spread:** 1-2 feet

## Bloom Information:

**Colors:** Purple, Pink, White

**Bloom Size:** 6-12 inches long and 3/4 inch across

**Bloom Time:** Varies by species but generally late spring through fall

## Culture:

**Exposure:** Sun

**Soil Moisture:** Dry

**Soil:** Calcareous, rocky, gravelly, sandy, limestone-based, medium soil

**Drought Tolerance:** High

**Deer Tolerant:** yes

**Salt Tolerant:** yes

**Maintenance:** *Liatris* is an easy-to-care for native that thrives on neglect and is virtually pest and disease free. The worst thing one can do is use additional fertilizer, soil amendments or water. Too much water leads to root rot. Cut the tall flower stems back to the ground once the leaves have died back in late fall, leaving the corms underground to produce new growth in the spring.

## Benefits:

**Wildlife Use:** Nectar source for bees, butterflies and hummingbirds. Provides seeds for migrating birds. Species of *Liatris* are used as host plants by the larvae of some Lepidoptera species including the flower

moths *Schinia gloriosa* and *Schinia sanguinea* (Wheeler, 2017) <https://xerces.org/blog/plants-for-pollinators-blazingstar>, both of which feed exclusively on the genus, and *Schinia tertia* and *Schinia trifascia*.

**Garden Uses:** *Liatris* provides a strong vertical accent in perennial borders and to fill in around the bottom of early blooming perennials. It makes a nice addition to prairie and rock gardens as well as native plant gardens and meadows. *Liatris* also provides nice texture and color in xeriscapes.

**Human Uses:** Beautiful in flower arrangements and bouquets. According to Dr. Mark “Merriwether” Vorderbruggen of Foraging Texas (Vorderbruggen, 2021) <https://www.thegardenpathpodcast.com/author/misti>, ‘*Liatris* can be eaten boiled or roasted, just like potatoes. However, only a few species produce tubers big enough to be worth the trouble to forage and eat. *Liatris spicata* is the best variety. Tubers grow larger each year but only the most recent growth is tender enough to eat.’ Dr. Vorderbruggen recommends memorizing the location in your garden of a clump in the summer when it is in bloom, then harvesting the corms in the fall and winter. Finally, *L. pycnostachya* is reported to be one of the few Texas native species that can grow in saturated soils.

**Propagation:** Plant corms 18 inches apart in the fall. *Liatris* will self-seed and grow by spreading clumps.





# Bulb Bed Update



By Fran Brockington  
MG 2018

After the Fall 2019 Galveston County Master Gardener Plant Sale, my fellow Master Gardener, Lisa Davis, and I began discussing some of our favorite flowers, especially bulbs. Camille Goodwin has, for many years, researched and ordered the bulbs for the Master Gardener's plant sales that sell like hotcakes. Lisa and I thought we would like to grow those and others in a bed at the Discovery Garden for the public to be able to see how they thrive in our area.

Sharon Zaal and Dr. Johnson announced at a Thursday luncheon about adding a bed to help keep people from parking and interfering with the tractor path, as well as protecting the main water shut off valve which is also in that area. She asked for a volunteer to take on the task, and Lisa's hand went up immediately! The rest is history; our dream was coming true.

Lisa prepared and presented a proposal to the Budget Committee in December 2019 for a 4' x 40' bulb bed. This included pavers, topsoil garden mix, mushroom mulch and bulbs, bulbs, bulbs!

Then we began planning. Starting with some of our personal favorites, we began listing bulbs we wanted, including many Camille had been ordering for the plant sales, as well as bulbs known as "pass-along plants," not easily found for sale. During the time we researched bulbs, Dr. Johnson not only inspired us to plant heirlooms and bulbs for our area, but also requested we put together a PowerPoint for an in-person workshop. Due to COVID-19, this workshop became a "TEAMS" presentation for Master Gardeners and the public, called "Bulbs for the Gulf Coast."

In April 2020, Sharon gave us the good news that the Budget Committee had approved the plans. We were organizing our lists considering attributes such as blooms for all seasons, full sun/part sun, colors, size of foliage, and planting schedules. About the same time, ideas for other beds were being developed that we did not want to duplicate, such as a new iris bed by Monica Martens, and a new water garden by Briana Etie.

In July we put cardboard down to get rid of the grass. Lisa and I met all summer, designing placement of our chosen bulbs. We also began hunting for the bulbs. We found out that many bulbs we wanted were sold out for the season. Several Master Gardeners, including Pam Hunter, Patricia Martin, and Lisa Belcher, graciously donated bulbs that were on our list. By this time, the expansion of the Discovery House had begun, and all volunteers were quite busy. Then, we were given a date: October 27. We arranged delivery of pavers, soil, and mulch, while Kevin Lancon sent out an email for volunteers to help.

October 27, 2020, dawned a beautiful morning for building a bulb bed. Many volunteers went to work and finished the bed in one day! Photos captured all the hard work and the good camaraderie.

By November, Lisa and I were planting bulbs according to our diagram. Camille gave us amaryllis bulbs which became our first big blooms. We were happy to have some January color when Lisa found out cyclamen grows from a bulb-like tuber. Other Master Gardeners, especially Helen

Mabe, helped us plant and label. We are very intent on labeling the bulbs with their scientific name and their common name. Education is important to both of us.

In January 2021, our first narcissus bloomed! Even after the freeze in February, we still had blooms from grape hyacinths, snowflakes, and ornamental onion. In April, when the soil was above 70 degrees, we planted caladiums, liatris, and lilies. Crinum are beginning to show foliage and the rain lilies, true to their name, are popping up. Plans are to continue planting according to season and our diagram when the bulbs become available. We also have plans for a trellis to grow a bulb that is a climbing vine, the gloriosa lily. As our Bulb Bed continues to develop, we welcome your interest.

Images:

1. Pavers and soil arrive October 22, 2020
2. Check measurements – Monica Martens, Kevin Lancon, Lisa Davis, Debie Lambson
3. Setting the line for the pavers, removing edge grass – Nancy Peterson, Debie, Kevin, Lisa
4. Debie, Sharon Zaal cleaning out the water meter and Wendy Stratton setting pavers
5. Monica and Barbara Canetti adding sand to keep pavers level
6. Nancy getting more sand to put under pavers
7. Laying the final pavers – Joyce Maxwell, David Eskins, Kathy Maines
8. Making sure the last paver fits – Joyce, David, Debie & Lisa
9. Debi and Lisa congratulate Kevin bringing in the first load of soil!
10. Kevin tops off the bed with the steaming mushroom mulch
11. We're finished! Fran, Kevin, Debie, David, Joyce, Lisa
12. Lisa & Fran planted first bulbs and watered them in
13. Phil Haught proves the tractor will fit
14. Amaryllis "Picasso"
15. *Narcissus tazetta* "Grand Primo"
16. Snowflakes (*Leucojum aestivum*)
17. Maria Abad & Alysha Davila checking on what's sprouting
18. Blazing Star (*Liatris spicata*)
19. Rainlily (*Zephyranthes citrina*)









# Bee's Knees

*The Islander Garden: Editor's Note: This is a reprint of Jan's article in the Galveston Monthly*



By Jan Brick  
MG 2001

"Well, I'll be a bee's knee" is an old nonsensical phrase that can express feelings of exasperation, frustration and irritation! That was my exact thought as I was once again without bees in my garden. Neither in my gardens on the west end of Galveston Island where I have a thriving vegetable and herb garden as well as blooming plants of a mixed variety and several fruit trees nor in my east end garden where there are more fruit trees as well as blueberries and an avocado in full bloom.

I seem to have had bees only every other year in the course of the past five years. Where have all the bees gone and how can we get them back?

The phenomenon called "hive collapse" in which large numbers of bees suddenly disappear has been a widely discussed issue since 2006 when beekeepers noticed the loss of bee colonies. Alarmed and puzzled, researchers began investigating possible causes. Some authorities attributed the problem to mites and insect diseases, others to environmental change-related stresses, malnutrition and pesticides. Several speculative possibilities have also been suggested including cell phone radiation and genetically modified crops. No research has supported either of these propositions.

The problem of a lack of bees for pollination of crops is of interest worldwide as the United States provides foodstuffs to many other nations. Articles have been written in the foreign press expressing the concern of their populace. The Taipei Times reports: "Unless someone or something stops it soon, the mysterious killer that is wiping out many of the US' honeybees could have a devastating effect on the country's dinner plate..." Honeybees do not just make honey; they pollinate more than ninety of the tastiest flowering crops the country has. Among them: apples, nuts, avocados, soybeans, asparagus, broccoli, celery, squash and cucumbers as well as citrus, peaches, kiwi, cherries, blueberries, cranberries, strawberries, cantaloupe and other melons. In fact, about one-third of the human diet comes from insect-pollinated plants, and the honeybee is responsible for 80 percent of that pollination, according to the US Department of Agriculture.

US beekeepers in the past few months have lost many of their colonies because of what scientists have dubbed Colony Collapse Disorder. The problem started in November and seems to have spread to 27 states, with similar collapses reported in Brazil, Canada and parts of Europe. Even before this disorder struck, the US' honeybees were in trouble. Their numbers were steadily shrinking, because their genes do not equip them to fight poisons and disease very well, and because their gregarious nature exposes them to ailments that afflict thousands of their close cousins. Of the 17,000 species of bees that scientists know about, "honeybees are, for many reasons, the pollinator of choice for most North American crops," a National Academy of Sciences study said last year. They pollinate many types of plants, repeatedly visit the same plant, and recruit other honeybees to visit, too."



Aster



Honey Bee on Dandelion



Coneflower



Bees are four-winged, flower-feeding insects with enlarged hind feet, branched or feathered body hairs, and generally a stinger. Honeybees and bumblebees are the most common with the bumblebee being larger and stronger. Bees are considered beneficial insects because they produce honey and pollinate crops. Sociable and quite extroverted, they will even invite lone bees to join their colony. Honeybees live in hives or colonies that may contain 20,000 to 100,000 bees. Hives include one queen that creates all the babies for the hive, hundreds of male drones, and thousands of female worker bees.

Made of wax cells, the hive is where the queen bee can lay up to 1,500 eggs a day! When the larvae hatch, the worker bees feed them as they collect pollen and nectar from flowers. The pollen is used as a protein source and the nectar as an energy source. The bees turn the nectar into honey. Pollen lands on the pistils of the flowers resulting in cross-pollination, important for crops and blooming plants. Using the sun for navigation and dances for communication with one another about food sources, worker bees must visit over four thousand flowers to make a tablespoon of honey!

Pulitzer Prize-winning insect biologist E.O. Wilson of Harvard has said that “the honeybee is nature’s workhorse—and we took it for granted.”

With that said, how can we help? What plants do the bees need to make honey, feed their workers and sustain the hive? We should employ organic gardening techniques as much as possible; insecticides are used to eliminate insects that eat your plants, but they are also poisonous to bees. Try not to use these chemicals when gardening unless you really have to. Include wildflowers and native plants in your garden and landscapes. They will provide bees with an excellent source of both pollen and nectar. Flat or shallow blossoms, such as daisies, zinnias, asters and Queen Anne's lace, will attract the largest variety of bees. Keeping a list of flowers and herbs that are especially attractive to bees should be helpful when selecting plants for your garden with bees in mind.

Having finished this missive, I went for a stroll through my garden where I spotted a bee on my bottlebrush tree! Not just one... but a thriving horde of bees! I know now that quaint little phrase can also be used to express surprise and delight... Well, I'll be a bee's knee!

(An interesting note... A bee's “corbiculae,” or pollen-baskets, are located on its tibiae (midsegments of its legs). The phrase “the bee's knees” means a source of excellence!)

#### “Killer Bees”

It has been reported that the Africanized Honeybee, also known as the “killer bees” have been known to chase people for over a quarter of a mile once they get excited and aggressive. “Killer bees” can only sting once, because their stingers are barbed and tear off when they try to get away. Their venom is no more dangerous than regular honeybees—they just tend to attack in greater numbers, dramatically increasing the odds of having an allergic reaction to the venom. If you are chased by Africanized honeybees run in a zigzag pattern and seek shelter in a house or car. Do not jump in the water! They will just wait around until you come up for air. There has actually been a decrease in the number of “killer bees” in recent years.



Photo by Herman Auer

Mexican Butterfly Milkweed



Snapdragons



Photo by Herman Auer

Sweet Alyssum



# Louisiana Iris Project



By Monica Martens  
MG 2013

Two years ago, with the assistance of the Society for Louisiana Irises, our Discovery Garden gained a living museum of hybrid and species irises. Irises are a beloved flower, often shared amongst friends and family who usually have a story to tell about their plants. This is remarkable given that their bloom season is so short—about six weeks in a home garden with the right combination of irises. Hybrids have been cultivated by small family businesses mainly in southern states. Their work enriches our choices about what to plant at home beyond the usual yellow and purple varieties sold commercially.

Bloom season can begin as early as late February in Galveston County. The majority of early blooming hybrids start around mid-March. During our first bloom season in 2020, the earliest Louisiana iris bloomed on March 3rd. Then color exploded from mid-March to mid-April, with another flower appearing during the second week of May. Of the original 57 plants, 80% bloomed, and we looked forward to 2021.

The plants had received a high dose of fertilizer in early January and looked healthy at the beginning of February. Bloom season seemed on track and was anticipated to begin at the end of that month. On February 25, a full week after the storm had passed, the plants had taken a beating. Many of the leaves were white from frost damage. But by March 13, the beds at the Discovery Garden had recovered and grown tall green leaves. On March 25, the first iris bloomed. Ironically, it was a "white cemetery iris" but the wrong color—a surprising purple. This iris is thought to be the only bearded cultivar that blooms dependably in our area. A special exception is made for it in our beds. It was followed in late March through April by a burst of blooms from the hybrid and species Louisiana irises, representing most of the colors we planted: white, blue, yellow, pink, bicolor, and red. We did not record orange or lavender.

We had collected so many irises in 2019 that we also planted some at two overflow locations in San Leon and League City. Across the three locations—the two private gardens and our LaMarque Discovery Garden—it seemed that about 65-70% of the plants bloomed in 2021. If the irises were planted in raised beds with some fertilizer and full sun, color variation was not affected by the cold weather. Contrary to other years, there were no blooms very early in the season, when February yields to March. Overall, blooms did not appear until late March with the majority of blooms occurring during April. Flowering was delayed but concluded as usual during early May. The species Louisiana irises did as well as the hybrid Louisiana irises. In one overflow location, very few plants bloomed. These represented an array of color and had been transplanted during Fall 2020 to an area that was not a raised bed and with adequate but not full sun. This group of irises took the 2021 bloom season off, except for a few representing commonly seen colors—purple, white, or yellow.

The modern-day Louisiana irises have developed from breeding techniques that take advantage of certain qualities found in wild Louisiana irises. This creates hybrids that are able to survive without a bog, represent a hard-to-find color (red), have a stem framework that allow the flowers plenty of room to open, or improve tolerance to cold. It's not surprising that our irises survived the storm. What we learned is that the better the environment for the plants—full sunlight, raised bed, and no recent transplanting—the better the chances for blooms after an unusual period of cold temperatures.





# A Visit to the Rymill Park Rose Garden, South Australia



By Jon Johns  
MG 2003

About half a mile away from the Adelaide's Botanical Gardens that contains the International Rose Garden and the National Trial Rose Garden of Australia is another outstanding public rose garden called Rymill Park Rose Garden.

I discovered this rose garden while on a tour bus that was enroute to my hotel. As soon as I arrived at the hotel, I checked in, then headed out to visit the Adelaide Botanical Gardens. While I was exploring the International Rose Garden in Adelaide's Botanical gardens, I had the opportunity to speak with a gardener and enquired about the roses in the garden and the rose garden that my bus had driven by. He noted that it was just up the road. After my visit to the International Rose Garden, I went looking for this garden.

I found the rose garden discreetly located at a corner of the large city park called Rymill Park. The rose garden is called Rymill Park Rose Garden, also known as Murlawirrapurka and numbered as Park 14. It consists of

about 36 acres of well-manicured lawns and majestic shade trees. The park contains a lake, a cafe, children's playgrounds, and the rose garden. It is one of the most popular public city parks within the Adelaide Park Lands.

The Rymill Park Rose Garden was established in 1960 with the cooperation of the National Rose Society of South Australia. It covers about 4 acres and includes a trellised wisteria walk. Within the beds are artwork trellis for the climbing roses. There were about 3000 roses in the garden. The rose garden has been used as an horticultural educational "Create Care Program" for local school children. It is also used by the Rose Society of South Australia for its annual rose pruning demonstrations.

While I was visiting the garden, I noticed that most of the garden was fenced off as the park was getting ready to host the annual Adelaide International Horse Trials and Events.

To see pictures of the entire garden and its roses, go to YouTube - "A Visit to the Rymill Park Rose Garden, Adelaide, South Australia" - <https://youtu.be/q823yMFv5nc>



# What to do with an Abundance of Basil



By Elayne Kouzounis  
MG 1998

During my years of growing and learning about herbs, I have met so many wonderful people who wanted to know how to use and grow their own. I hope this article will be useful in addressing some of those requests. Herbs are so broad in their appeal and usage that there are no boundaries for knowledge. They enrich lives by bringing joy and delight through taste, touch, aroma, and health. I will share my knowledge and experiences with you and bring you a glimpse of the bounty we have been given with an article about basil. May

it encourage you to learn more about these fascinating and glorious gifts with which we have so graciously been blessed.

For centuries, people have been relying on various types of basil not only to enhance their cooking, but also to ward off evil spirits, soothe tired bodies, and relieve stomach aches and frayed nerves. It is no wonder that these beautiful, aromatic, and delicious herbs are so popular. There are ways of preserving the fresh taste when used in cooking. Fresh basil is recommended and is always added to the recipe at the last five minutes. Fresh chopped basil may be frozen as a means of preservation and although the leaves will turn black, the taste is left intact. When using frozen basil, simply add it directly to a sauce or soup during cooking. An even better way to preserve basil is to put one cup of leaves in a food processor and add just enough oil to form a paste. Put it in an air-tight container and store in the refrigerator. The paste will keep up to six months. Basil can be dried, but much of the taste is lost.

Sweet basil is the best-known and is used in Thai, Italian, Greek and other Mediterranean cuisines. It has a slight clove taste and blends well with pesto, tomato sauces, soups, stews, cheeses, poultry, beans, and vegetables. Over your favorite pizza, mince a half cup of sweet basil just after taking it out of the oven.

Opal basil is a dark purple plant with smooth or ruffled leaves. It is more aromatic than sweet basil, and has a lighter, more minty quality. Opal basil is ideally added to plain or creamed pastas, chicken or shrimp salads, and vinegars or marinades.

Lemon basil is a much more delicate plant with smallish leaves and a distinctive lemon fragrance and taste. It is an excellent choice for seafood, poultry, salads, vegetables, desserts, and teas. Add a teaspoon of fresh minced lemon basil to one cup of cooked vegetables just before serving.



Basil Vinegar



Basil

## Basil Vinegar Recipe

**16-oz amber jar**

**1-lb fresh basil**

**16-oz distilled white vinegar**



Add basil to jar, macerating with a wooden spoon after half has been added. When the jar is full of basil, macerate again to bruise the leaves further. Add vinegar. Secure lid and set jar in a sunny window. Turn the bottle over every day and for two weeks duration. Decant the vinegar into jars and store in a cold and dark area until ready for use.

### **Basil Butter Recipe**

**1 stick unsalted butter, room temperature**

**1/3-cup minced basil**

Place the butter and the minced basil in a blender or food processor and puree. Put in an air-tight container and store in the refrigerator. Use on grilled meats, in cooked vegetables, as a spread on sandwiches, and in desserts as a substitute for plain butter or shortening.

### **Cosmetics**

Basil can be used as a skin freshener or toner. Use basil tea as a wash. Basil can also be used in potpourris, sachets, and wreaths. The clove and minty aromas associated with the different varieties add depth and interest. Opal basil is especially beautiful when added to floral arrangements or as a wreath.



Basil Butter



Dark Opal Basil



Honey Bee on Sweet Basil



Lemon Basil

# Squash Vine Borer: Unwelcome in the Garden



By Hedy Wolpa  
MG 2018

There is a good reason why backyard gardeners find growing squash challenging: the squash vine borer. Several MGs recently spotted and captured a few in the Discovery Garden, which led to a lot of discussion and a little research to get the facts on these sneaky pests.

Squash vine borer, *Melittia* sp, is a diurnal moth of the Lepidoptera order. They're active during the day while most moths are active only at night. Their larvae most commonly complete their growth and development on zucchini and pumpkins, but usually not melons or cucumbers. Larvae burrow inside the vine, disrupting the flow of water and nutrients, causing wilting and the probable death of the plant. At this stage, the pest is mostly unseen, even by the most astute gardener. The overnight wilt of your plants may be the first and only clue of infestation.

The adult moths are seen as early as April/May and can remain active as late as November/December. There are at least two overlapping generations, meaning they can be active throughout the summer and into fall.

**Eggs** are laid on the lower part of the main stem of the host plant, as well as on the stalks and leaves. They are reddish brown, ovoid and slightly flattened.

**Larvae** are white, with a dark head, three pairs of thoracic legs and five pairs of prolegs. Newly emerged larvae are 1.5 mm (1/16 inch) long and covered with hairs.

**Pupae** are brownish, approximately 14 mm (9/16 inch) long, and enclosed in silk cocoons. They will overwinter below the soil surface at the end of October and emerge in spring.

**Adults** resemble a red and black wasp in flight. About 16mm (5/8 inch) long with bright reddish-orange scales, they have a row of black spots visible on the dorsal side of an orange abdomen. The front wings are covered with scales that appear to reflect a metallic sheen.

We need to control this pest if we want our squash to make it to the dinner table, and there is no single treatment for any stage of the borer's life. Experts recommend a combination of several treatments and deterrents, IPM including cultural and chemical methods.

Non-chemical control methods include tilling the soil around the vines after your fall or spring garden is finished. This will expose the remnant

pupae to the elements and hungry birds. If you have a perennial infestation in your garden, consider skipping a year of production to clear the soil of pests.

Cover plants with floating row covers to keep the adult moth from laying eggs on young squash vines. If your garden had a previous infestation and the insect has been eradicated, some of last year's borers may emerge under the fabric. Keep in mind you may need to hand pollinate squash blooms or remove the row cover once the plants start to bloom, if you want bees to pollinate your flowers.

Gardeners have had success laying aluminum foil around plant stems to deter larvae that are in the soil.

Consider planting varieties that are less attractive to the borer such as pest resistant Summer Crook Neck, Early Summer, and Butternut Squash. Stagger your planting cycles: as you remove older vines succumbing to the borer, the younger, healthy plants will take their places and continue producing.

Hand-remove larvae by slitting the stems with a knife. Look for stems with oozing frass and carefully pry out the larvae. Then pile moist soil over the cut area and water well. New roots may grow along the cut stem, allowing the plant to survive.

Adult moths are attracted to yellow-colored objects. Set out yellow bowls of soapy water to attract the adults, or hang sticky traps made of yellow plastic that contain pheromone pellets to attract male insects.

Consider organic chemical controls such as *Bacillus thuringiensis*. Bt can be sprayed or injected into squash stems. Bt degrades quickly in sunlight, so it will not provide much residual control and will need to be reapplied frequently.

Spinosad is another organically derived insecticide with low toxicity. Spray plant stems weekly in the evening when bee activity has ceased.

Always follow label directions on the pesticide container you are using, and make sure cucurbits are listed on the label. Also be sure to observe the number of days between pesticide application and harvesting your crop.

Consider beneficial insects such as Entomopathogenic nematodes which are microscopic roundworms that specialize in killing insects. In some studies they have been as effective as synthetic insecticides.

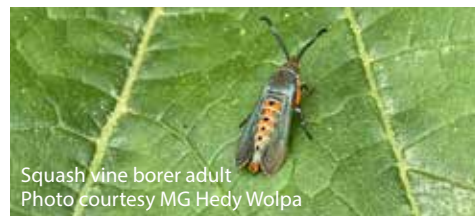
Thanks to Texas A&M AgriLife, the University of Minnesota, and the University of Florida as resources for this article.



Squash vine borer eggs  
Photo courtesy MG Kevin Lancon



Squash vine borer larvae in stem  
Photo: University of Kentucky Entomology



Squash vine borer adult  
Photo courtesy MG Hedy Wolpa



# Green Genes: Camille Goodwin Inherits the Love of Flowers



By Karolyn Gephart  
MG 2017

It is not surprising to find out the camellia is Camille Goodwin's favorite flower. The gardens at her home are filled with not only camellias, but also many other blooming plants.

"One of my aunts loved flowers. I always remember flowers at her home. I used to visit her in New England and she would tour me around her town to show me gardens she planted and maintained. She mostly did churches and they were all beautiful. Many of my relatives tell me I'm like my aunt in many ways," Camille said.

Both of her grandfathers came to the United States from Italy in the early 1920s and she remembers visiting one of her grandfather's vegetable gardens.

"He grew things from his home country like chicory, broccoli from Calabria, artichokes, rapini, different colors of beans, and Italian herbs to cook with. He also grew apricots. Personally, I've given up on vegetable growing because there are too many wild animals like armadillo, opossum, raccoons, squirrels, and rabbits in my yard and, of course, birds and insects," she said.

Her gardens have camellias, roses, bulbs (varieties of lilies, amaryllis, Byzantine Gladiolus) and blooming perennials like salvias, coreopsis, wand flowers, gardenias, gingers, magnolias, and tea olive. She is converting a back garden to a pollinator garden with herbs and scented geraniums. Camille became a Master Gardener in Galveston County in 2008 after she retired from NASA where she had worked 36 years as a program analyst managing the financial aspects of various projects. She also developed portions of the agency's congressional budget. She previously worked in commercial real estate with her father.

In retirement, she wanted to learn something that was not space related and chose to become a Master Gardener.

"I've enjoyed all the assignments I've had as a MG. Initially, I was part of a team that built the Serenity Garden. I researched and authored many of the topics in the *Gardening Problems and Solutions Handbook*, and wrote a small publication on the most common weeds in our area. I've assisted Dr. Johnson with award write-ups and submissions for the state conferences," Camille said.

She is on the newsletter team, has served on the Board of Directors, performed financial audits for our association and, since 2015, has been the lead for the bulb sales at the spring and fall sales. "I have a magnificent team of MGs who help make our bulb sales successful," Camille said.

When GCMGs accepted Camille as a team member, they also acquired her husband Ken to help. He installed the garden's Davis weather station and solves any problems that might pop up with it. While gardening is a favorite pastime, Camille also enjoys cooking, baking, and reading mystery thrillers. But adventure travel is probably next to gardening as something she and Ken love to do. They are both 40-plus members of the Clear Lake Area Ski Club and have skied or hiked in most of the US, as well as many European countries.

"Hiking for a few weeks at 15K feet in the Mt. Everest National Preserve in Nepal, was beautiful beyond description. The Taj Mahal in India is a wonder and the underground cistern and the old section of Istanbul are amazing," Camille said. "We had a trip planned to visit the pyramids in Egypt this year. It was recently cancelled because of the pandemic, but we've rescheduled still hoping to get there when traveling is safe again." For the past year, a trip to the Extension Office and Discovery Garden seemed to be the only safe travel when it finally reopened, but it does connect GCMGs with their team members and gardening.

"I like the science of things, and gardening is a science," Camille said. "I have learned so much from Dr. Johnson, the TAMU horticulture experts, and our MGs. I feel honored to be in their company and a member of the GCMGA."



Camille at Serengeti  
National Park



Camille's Camellia



Camille's La Iris



Camille's Side Gardens

# Trowels and Tribulations In a Suburban Garden



By Donna Ward  
MG 2017

The February Freezeamageddeon had some interesting results – some good, some not so good. A few admired plants that I thought were history were tenacious enough to put up new growth from below the soil line. The ming fern that had turned totally brown now exhibits a fine feathery growth that tells me my cut flower arrangements will have a nice complement to their colorful blossoms. The carnation of India that was six feet high and covered with fragrant gardenia-like white blossoms each summer appeared as brown upright branches

just begging to be cut to ground level, which I did. But around the first of May sprouts began to appear at the soil line, and I think it's going to be a broader specimen than it was originally. And who would have thought that the azaleas that were just hinting at a bloom when the disaster struck would have survived much less put on a performance – although sparse? Talk about determination!

One of my favorite shrubs is the natal plum whose close, oval, glossy, dark green leaves make a nice back-drop for colorful perennials. They succumbed to the freeze and were cut back to about six inches, but signs of life have appeared and they are growing again. The downside is they are slow growers, so it will be a while before they add to the landscape. When mature they do get a five petaled white flower, and plums will form which turn wine red when ripe. The pittosporum that grew to tree form with a trunk diameter of approximately eight inches now looks like a background skeletal player in a horror movie. It's about 30 years old and has provided much shade to the garden. I'm going to miss the almost overpowering sweet scent it spread all over the back yard each spring. The honey bees are going to be disappointed also.

There were so many I could sit on the deck with my morning toast and coffee while hearing the hum of a gazillion tiny wings vibrating. But determination strikes again.....a small green sprout appeared at the base of the trunk and is showing signs of becoming again an attractive resident of the back yard. The bay laurel shadowed by yearly increasing shade under the pittosporum now shows its appreciation for some sunshine.

The wildflowers in a half barrel took a hit, but coreopsis and gaillardia persevered. The tropical milkweed didn't make it, but that's a good thing, they have been replaced with native milkweed. The tropical milkweed harbors a parasite fatal to butterfly larvae if not cut back in the fall.

The host of a local radio gardening program stated that if you had mint of any type – he guaranteed it to be gone. He apparently was clueless about my grandmother's mint that froze each year in rural Missouri and always reappeared in spring. My bucket of mint is doing just fine and enhances my iced tea on a regular basis. Mother Nature scared the bejabbers out of the magnolia grandiflora, and it outdid every blooming exhibition it has performed for the past thirty-six years. Now you may wonder why that happened, and why so many plants were not terminated by the freeze. A plant has one goal and one goal only – that's to procreate. Plants bloom and form seeds; even the lowly mushroom produces spores. The yellow dust that settles on our cars in spring is the pollen from the blossoms of our oaks. Those flowers can't compare to the magnolia, but they have the same purpose. Mother Nature directs our landscape plants to procreate, but sometimes she just makes it a bit more difficult.

A “not so good result” is the unbelievable number of camphor seeds that sprouted in the azalea bed – trying to reach that reproductive goal. I know, I know – camphor is a trash tree, but this one was here when the home was purchased and shades the west windows from the summer sun. I was hoping the freeze would have taken out some of the nandina. Fresh out of the Midwest I had never heard of nandina and had no idea how easily it spreads, but I thought it attractive, so I planted it. But the most unwanted result of the freeze is the proliferation of poison ivy in both the back and front yards; it's often mistaken for Virginia creeper. But believe me I lived in a very wooded area of Missouri for a good portion of my life and I'm well acquainted with poison ivy and how to eradicate it. I'm not big into chemical herbicides, but there are some plants that are deserving!

I'm probably preaching to the choir in regard to what has suffered and what has thrived, but as time goes on our memories of the freeze and its effect will fade. Next spring we may be talking about the mild winter we experienced, and we'll be down on our knees, trowel in hand doing what gardeners do best.



Magnolia



Monarch Butterfly



Mushroom on a tree  
Photo by Tish Reustle



# The Discovery Garden Update



By Tom Fountain  
MG 2008

We have had a very stressful year with the COVID-19 pandemic and the late spring freeze which wiped out most of our citrus trees, tropical foliage, some early spring vegetables, and several water lines. Things are looking up now. We have more normal weather. Most of us are vaccinated and we have visitors in the garden again. However, what I am most excited about is having more

Master Gardeners returning to take care of garden projects, to visit, and share lunch together again.

Our first luncheon held in the garden was a going away event for Clyde Holt, who was moving back home to Utah. In (Fig. 1), Clyde is sharing some memories and parting thoughts with us. It was good to see Wes, Jim, Jenni, and a lot of members that we had not seen for awhile.

Louie McDaniel, President of the Texas Master Gardener Association (Fig. 2), is being shown around the garden by Robin Collins. Louie came to the Discovery Garden to present top awards to members of our GCMG Association, who were winners in all nine categories. Our association was awarded first place of large groups in the state of Texas. We received four first place awards, two second place awards, and two third place awards. An additional award, The Marva E. Beck JMG Leader of the Year, went to Kaye Corey, in (Fig. 3), for her work with the Heritage Junior Master Gardeners of Friendswood. The HJMGs were also awarded first place in the youth competition.

I caught Kevin (Fig. 4) taking a turn mowing the garden. Kevin is not quite as fast or as scary as Clyde. Elsewhere in the garden (Fig. 5), Kathy, Linda, Sharon, and two others were busy putting netting around a bed trying to keep stink bugs and other insects away from the tomatoes. Summer is here with "feel like temperatures" climbing into the triple digits. Remember to take frequent breaks, drink plenty of water, and find a shady place to sit and rest awhile, like Judy and Linda are doing in (Fig. 6).

Weather wise, during the past several months the temperature has averaged five degrees above normal across our area. Rainfall was two to three inches below normal and drought conditions were looming. That all changed in early summer with eight to ten inches of rain. The extended forecast from NOAA indicates temperatures will likely be above normal into fall and rainfall could remain slightly above normal. The peak of hurricane season will soon be on us, so be prepared and be safe. Looking forward to seeing you in the garden.



Photos by MG Tom Fountain

# Seasonal Bites

## easy recipes



By Sandra Gervais  
MG 2011

I can hear Dr. Johnson's voice in my ear right now:  
"We don't have a drought problem...we have a water distribution problem!"  
As usual, he was right, and our recent overabundance of rain is proving it again.

Though we are drowning from all the rain right now, we know that the heat and drought of a hot Texas summer will soon be here to wilt us all. So, I'm thinking of dishes that are tasty, can be served hot or cold, and use some of our plentiful summer veggies. Who wants to do a lot of cooking when heat and humidity are unbearable?

Here's a pie recipe that's great with tomatoes right out of the garden but can also be made using ripe store-bought tomatoes. Debra Brizendine brought it to the Discovery Garden, and it disappeared quickly. Also here is a pasta dish that I think of almost as a hot salad since it uses a lot of vegetables and requires very little cooking time.

### Tomato Pie

- 1 9-inch pie shell  
(use your favorite  
homemade recipe or a  
store-bought crust)
- 1/2 C diced onion (red or  
yellow to your taste)
- 3-4 tomatoes  
(to yield about 3 cups  
chopped small  
and drained)
- 1/2 t kosher salt
- 1/4 C chopped basil leaves
- 2 C grated cheese  
(pick or mix whatever you like—Mozzarella, Italian Mix, Sharp Cheddar  
Monterrey Jack, Gruyere)
- 1/2 C mayonnaise (not salad dressing)
- 1 t hot sauce (more or less to your taste)
- Dash of freshly ground black pepper



1. Pre-bake store crust until lightly browned, 8-10 minutes if not frozen, longer if frozen. (Follow directions on package.) Or pre-bake homemade crust with pie weights for 15 minutes, remove weights, prick crust and bake another 10 minutes until lightly browned.
2. Slice tomatoes in half horizontally, and roughly chop. Then lightly salt and squeeze to remove excess juice. Set them cut side down in a colander to drain. Squeeze as much moisture out of tomatoes as possible and end up with about 3 cups of chopped, drained tomatoes. Freeze or save juice for another use.
3. Spread vegetables in pre-baked pie shell in this order: bottom—chopped onions (you can also caramelize more onions to take it up a notch)  
next—drained tomatoes  
last—chopped basil
4. In bowl, mix together the 2 cups of grated cheese, mayonnaise, hot sauce and dash of black pepper. It will be gooey. Spread over vegetable pie filling.
5. Bake at 350 degrees until brown and bubbly. This will take 25-45 minutes. Cool and serve.

Note: You can add more vegetables such as carrots, mushrooms, etc. but use a bigger pan so they don't get crowded and steam. You may also need to increase oil. For even more flavor, use bacon or duck fat instead of oil. I like to make this with fresh rosemary bits tucked in with chicken.

### Pasta Primavera

Mix together for a seasoning  
mix and put aside:

- 2-1/2 t Dried basil
- 1-1/2 t Salt
- 1 t Dried thyme
- 3/4 t Pepper
- 1/2 t Garlic powder
- 1/2 t Onion powder

Ingredients:

- 9 oz Pasta, cooked and drained
- 2 t Olive oil
- 1 C Prosciutto in thin strips
- 2 C Chopped cauliflower florets
- 2 C Thin sliced fresh mushrooms
- 1/2 C Thin sliced carrots
- 2 C Thin sliced zucchini
- 6 T Butter
- 1 t Minced garlic
- 3/4 C Snow peas or asparagus tips
- 1 C Chopped green onions
- 2 C Heavy cream



Heat olive oil in 12-inch skillet on high heat until very hot.

Add prosciutto, cauliflower, mushrooms, carrots and zucchini.

Add butter, then slowly stir in garlic and seasoning mix.

Stir in snow peas and green onions.

Stir well and cook until vegetables are crisp-tender, about 5 minutes.

Add in cream and bring to a boil.

Lower heat to medium and cook, stirring, until sauce has thickened, about 3 minutes.

Add cooked pasta to skillet, toss well and remove from heat.

Note: To vary vegetables, use red bell peppers, green beans, yellow squash, broccoli.



# "The Hidden Life of Trees"

## by Peter Wohlleben



By Pat Forke  
MG 2010

### Who is the author?

Peter Wohlleben graduated from forestry school in Germany in 1987. He became a government wood ranger. As he grew more familiar with the woodlands he was overseeing, he became disenchanted by the damage caused by the techniques and technologies he was expected to employ. The felling of mature trees and the use of insecticides were particularly disturbing. Peter currently manages a beech forest on behalf of the municipality of Hummel, Germany. Peter has written several books that have been translated into English and several of which are for children.

### What is this book all about?

This book is about thinking of trees in a different way. Trees are very social creatures and in many ways like people. There are trees that are planted not in their natural environment and then trees that grow in a forest. A forest tree communicates with other trees by olfactory, visual and electrical signals. Forest trees protect other trees and warn of danger from insects, animals and harsh weather conditions. Forest trees share nutrients with those who are sick or struggling. As trees age they increase their girth. In young trees of all species, the outer bark is smooth, but as they age the wrinkles and cracks appear. These cracks deepen steadily as years progress. Algae forms on the mossy cushion of older trees. The algae capture nitrogen from the air and processes it into a form the trees can use. This natural fertilizer washes down the trees and fertilizes the soil. This helps their offspring get a better start in life. This enriches the soil of the forest and creates an environment that in a handful of soil contains more life forms than there are people on earth. The forest becomes a social network with tree parents living with, communicating with and supporting their offspring. Trees share materials and warn other trees of impending danger. Even in death, a tree is vital to the health and well-being of the forest. A dead tree continues to provide habitation to birds, insects and small animals. It will take a large tree from 30 to 100 years to totally break down and will provide nutrients to one-fifth of all forest insects, fungi, and small animals.

### How does this relate to our work as Master Gardeners?

Simply put, as Master Gardeners we are charged with often finding the right tree for the right place.

### How can I apply this knowledge about trees?

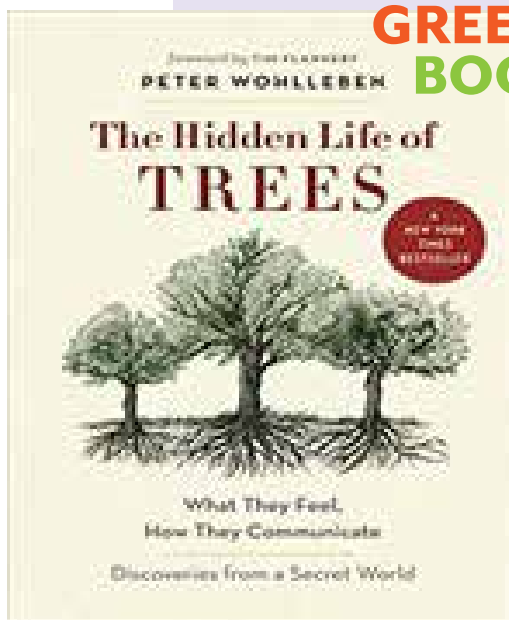
We should be encouraged to plant more trees and be aware of the impact of trees on our environment. We should research the correct way to water and otherwise take care of our trees.

The Master Gardener Book Club zoom at 1 p.m. the last Wednesday of each month (meeting earlier in November and December). The next five books we have chosen for our first year are *Passalong Plants* by Rushing and Bender, *The Plant Hunters* by Carolyn Fry, *the Bulb Hunter* by Chris Wiesinger, *Wicked Plants* by Amy Stewart, and *A Rich Spot of Earth* by Hatch and Alice Waters. Contact Lisa Davis at 281 450-3169 or [lnicklow@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lnicklow@sbcglobal.net) for more information.

We are fortunate to have among our Master Gardeners group Margaret Canavan who is one of the founders of the Tree Conservancy of Galveston. This group was formed after Hurricane Ike when they assessed the damage to the trees in Galveston and began tree giveaways, doing neighborhood planting and educating the public about the importance of and care of trees. Margaret also writes articles for the Galveston Daily News and many of her articles have appeared in our Master Gardener newsletter.



**GREEN THUMB  
BOOK CLUB**



# Seeding Galveston: Awards, Master Gardener Mentors, and Spring Kitchen Projects



By Cheryl Watson  
MG 2018

Recovery from the brutal February freeze is well underway at the Seeding Galveston (SG) Urban Farm nonprofit (<https://seedinggalveston.com/>) has been spectacular. The last 5 of the original “100 kitchen gardens” project raised beds are being installed in May at Galveston homes or organizations. So far we have matched 8 Master Gardeners (MGs) as mentors for our Kitchen Gardeners (KGs). There are still many opportunities to earn MG volunteer hours (recording your hours in a specific SG category in the on-line system). A new set of group beds were completed before the freeze at the Galveston Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) for retirees, at 13th and Market Streets on the UTMB campus. This OLLI KG program is being organized by 2020 MG Debbie Valdez. If you are an OLLI member and a MG (as Debbie and I are) you can volunteer to be an additional mentor for these large beds (at the back, north side of the main building) serving many senior clients.

Many people have expressed concern that during the pandemic conditions it may be difficult to mentor KGs. Usually, mentors make at least one initial in-person outdoor visit, masked and socially distanced, to view the garden to be mentored and meet their KG mentees. However, we have also been effectively using email and text (easy to include photos), and phone to handle this situation. I’m sure that the current MG mentors (B. Etie, R. Cunningham, K. Sandor, V. Blythe, C. Watson, J. Hall, S. Roth, D. Valdez) would be happy to share their experience and advice.

Some additional MGs have made inquiries about the program. I have emailed them about available KGs in specific Galveston Island geographical areas of their interest, but I’ve not heard back from them. Please let me know if you connected with a KG mentee that I don’t know about so I can include you in MG emails, such as for providing seasonal plants for the KGs, and events for our project gardeners. We hope that rapid pandemic recovery conditions will allow us to continue our outdoor picnic dinners at the Urban Farm at N and 33rd Streets in Galveston. We are open to short, hands-on demonstrations from MGs at these events (examples: starting seeds, composting, planting partners in confined spaces, vegetables/fruit trees for our coastal areas). I’m open for questions any time. Contact me at [cherylswatson@yahoo.com](mailto:cherylswatson@yahoo.com) and please put “MG mentor” somewhere in the subject title of the email so I don’t miss it. Did I mention that there continue to be baby goats on site (nine so far this spring)? Most now have new homes, but there will always be more to maintain the milking herd. The goats at Seeding Galveston are very tame and love to have visitors. The many varieties of chickens, guinea fowl, and turkeys are also interesting to see. The best time is during Wednesday morning vegetable and herb markets that are open to the public from 8-10:30 am (and other times by arrangement). Ask me for a tour.

Finally, some congratulations are in order for Debbie Berger and John Sessions, the SG founders/managers, and all their volunteers. The SG Urban Farm Project was recently selected as one of two second place winners of the 2021 Texas Medical Assn. Foundation John P. McGovern Champion of Health

Awards. (For context -- other awards were a Univ. of North Texas project on COVID 19 Solutions, and a Dallas project that pairs persons experiencing homelessness to volunteers who help them secure necessary healthcare.) SG also received an award in the fall from the Galveston Planning Commission in its environmental category. There are also many other programs and projects that can be viewed on the SG website ( <https://seedinggalveston.com> ). These awards wouldn’t be possible without the assistance of our volunteers. Thanks for helping us to foster healthy eating, and agricultural and ecological sustainability for decades to come for Galveston Island residents.





# GCMG's Really Know How to Shine During State Awards!



By Karolyn Gephart  
MG 2017

The Texas Master Gardener Association 2020 Search for Excellence Awards were announced May 18 via a virtual awards ceremony from College Station. Galveston County Master Gardeners entered nine categories for awards. They placed in all nine.



- The GCMGs received first place as the Outstanding Master Gardener Association.
- Master Gardener Kaye Corey received the Marva E. Beck Junior Master Gardener Leader of the Year award for her work with the Heritage Gardeners Junior Master Gardener program in Friendswood.
- Heritage Gardens Junior Master Gardeners "Heritage JMG Kids" led by Kaye Corey won first place in Youth-Junior Master Gardeners category.
- Master Gardeners Hedy Wolpa and Fran Brockington won first place in the Youth-Other Category with Night Creatures in the Garden program.
- Master Gardeners Gene Speller and Bill Cummins won first place for Research with their A Corn Sugar Content Study Using a Refractometer.
- Dr. Margaret Canavan (MG 2003) won second place in Written Education for her Tree Stories series.
- Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar Series...from classroom to virtual learning in 2020 with Herman Auer, Monica Martens, Fran Brockington and Lisa Davis won second place in Educational Program category.
- The 2020 Annual Spring Plant Sale won third place in the Project category.
- GCMG President Sharon Zaal won third place in Outstanding Individual Master Gardener Category.

Galveston County Master Gardener Association competes as an 'Extra Large County' division for State Awards.

The GCMG in person award presentations took place Thursday, June 10 in the Discovery Garden in Carbide Park in La Marque. President of the Texas Master Gardener Association Louie McDaniel attended and presented the nine awards

GCMGA Service Milestone awards were also presented.



# Intern Class

2020 Intern Classes: The 2020 Interns have resumed classes to complete their final requirements for certification. The first of four remaining classes was held on June 2 and presented by Dr. Don Wilkerson on EarthKind Gardening. MG Pam Hunter is the new MG Intern Class Team Leader replacing Peggy Bundy. Graduation date is to be determined but will likely be scheduled for October.



# GCMG's



By Judy Anderson  
MG 2012

You may be checking this area for the minutes of the Galveston County Master Gardener's, Monthly Meetings. However, we have not been meeting in person, but using ZOOM to host a Monthly Program. I have prepared a short review of the monthly programs for the year to help with any updates with educational hours. I hope this will be helpful. Each one of these programs is for one hour of Educational Certification.

**January** – The GCMG Online Sales Team presented the preview for the Spring online plant sale.



Lauren Simpson

**February** – Lauren Simpson presented her "Wildscaping" program featuring pollinator-friendly organic plants that provide food or shelter for insects and birds.



Greg Cooper

**March** – Greg Cooper of Microlife spoke to the Master Gardeners about the products featured in the Plant Sale. He also gave an overview of the company.



Justin Schiener

**April** – Justin Schiener gave his "Grape State of Texas" presentation.

**May** – Diane Hume gave her "Trash in America and Around the World."



Greg Grant

**June** – Greg Grant talked about "Plants and Nature."



# Upcoming Events

## AUGUST

### PLUMERIA PROPAGATION (a hands-on workshop)

**Saturday, August 7, 2021** 9 - 11 a.m.

Galveston County Master Gardener Loretta Osteen will lead a hands-on workshop demonstrating the propagation methods for Plumeria from cuttings and seeds. You'll also learn how to make a Hawaiian Lei with Plumeria blooms. \*\*\*NOTE: Class is limited to 12 attendees. You must pre-register in order to attend. NOTE LOCATION - Master Gardener Discovery Garden in Carbide Park, 4102 Main St (FM 519), La Marque, 77568\*\*\*

### SMALL TREES FOR SMALL YARDS

**Saturday, August 28, 2021** 9 - 11 a.m.

Galveston County Master Gardener Briana Etie's presentation will feature small trees recommended for small yards in the Gulf Coast Area. Fall is approaching and is the perfect time to plant trees. This program will outline these trees that are under 40 feet, their shape and other attributes that are desirable for your landscape and wildlife. Small trees can be a beautiful addition to your yard, without the worry of large roots and extensive shade.

### GROWING STRAWBERRIES

**Saturday, August 28, 2021** 1 - 2:30 p.m.

Presented by Galveston County Master Gardener Robert Marshall, this program will cover the history of how strawberries arrived in this area, as well as how to successfully grow strawberries in the Galveston County area. It will include the correct time to plant, choosing the best varieties for this area, and planting bare root vs plugs. Also covered will be how to prepare your garden beds, water and fertilizer needs, and disease and pest control.

## SEPTEMBER

### SUMMER SUNDOWN SALE

**Sept 10-11, 2021 from** 12 - 12 p.m.

We will have a selection of fruit trees, landscape trees, perennials, fall tomatoes, squash, cucumbers, & herbs available for purchase.

### GROWING ONIONS & GARLIC

**Saturday, Sept 11, 2021** 9 - 10:30 a.m.

Galveston County Master Gardener Herman Auer will present a program highlighting the elements for successfully growing of bulbing onions, garlic, leek, and multiplier shallots. Auer will share his experience, knowledge, as well as mistakes he's made over the years while perfecting the art of growing onions and garlic.

### GARDEN BULBS FOR GALVESTON COUNTY

**Saturday, Sept 11, 2021** 1 - 3p.m.

Presented by Master Gardeners Fran Brockington & Lisa Davis. Fran and Lisa will introduce participants to true bulbs, corms, tubers and rhizomes that can be grown successfully in Galveston County. The history of bulbs, gardening techniques and calendar care will be covered. Come discover the joys of gardening with bulbs both in the garden and in containers. This is Garden Bulbs for Galveston County.

## BACKYARD CITRUS

**Saturday, Sept 25, 2021** 9 - 11 a.m.

Galveston County Master Gardener Robert Marshall's presentation will feature the following topics: variety selection of citrus trees that grow well in this area, root stocks, nutrients, disease (citrus canker and citrus greening), insect problems, control of birds and critters, and freeze protection. Robert, our Citrus go to Person has years of experience in many facets of growing and propagating citrus trees in this area. Many of the citrus trees included in the presentation will be offered for sale as transplants at the Galveston County Master Gardener Fall Plant Sale on the 15th and 16th of October.

## T-BUD GRAFTING OF CITRUS & FRUIT TREES

**Saturday, Sept 25, 2021** 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Galveston County Master Gardener Nancy Langston-Noh and Hazel Lampton will present a hands-on workshop on T-bud grafting. This method is used on smaller peach, plum, pear, apple and other trees as well as roses. \*\*\*Hands-on workshop is limited to 20 participants, others are welcome to observe. You must pre-register to participate.\*\*\*

## GROWING BLUEBERRIES

**Saturday, Oct. 2, 2021** 9 - 11 a.m.

Galveston County Master Gardener Robert Marshall will begin his program covering some facts about fertilizer, what the numbers tell us, macro and micro nutrients, acidity and how to change the pH of the soil. He will then dive into blueberries and cover rabbiteye and southern high bush plants, growing blueberries in raised beds or container, how to plant and fertilize your blue berries, how to mix the soil to provide the proper pH, and some of the diseases and pests you face. \*\*\*NOTE: Class is limited to 42 attendees. NOTE LOCATION - Master Gardener Discovery Garden in Carbide Park, 4102 Main St (FM 519), La Marque, 77568\*\*\*

## OCTOBER

### FALL FAVORITE VEGETABLES

**Saturday, October 9, 2021** 9 - 11 a.m.

Galveston County Master Gardener Gene Speller will present a program on Cruciferous and other favorite vegetables usually grown during fall and winter months. These include popular varieties of broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, collard, kale, mustard and turnip greens, all members of the Cruciferous family. Other vegetables included will be several varieties of lettuce, spinach, and Swiss chard. Many of the vegetables discussed in the presentation will be offered for sale as transplants at the Galveston County Master Gardener Fall Plant Sale 15th and the 16 of October 2021.

### FALL PLANT SALE

**Oct. 15-16, 2021** 12 - 12 p.m.

We will have a selection citrus trees, onions, lettuce, greens, broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, & Master Gardener grown items available for purchase.

## NOVEMBER

### BULB SALE

**Nov. 5-6, 2021** 12 - 12 p.m.

We will have a selection amaryllis, various lilies, daffodils, summer snowflakes & more available for purchase.

# GCMG to have 3 Online Fall Plant Sales



By Karolyn Gephart  
MG 2017

Once these dog days of summer end we will be approaching fall and fall gardens. There are three sets of dates you need to put on your calendar, September 10-11, October 15-16, and November 5-6. These are the three Fall online plant sales planned by GCMG.

The sales will run from noon on Saturday to noon on Sunday for each of the dates with a scheduled drive through pickup in the Discovery Garden at 4102 Main St. in La Marque, the address of the

Extension Office. Signs will lead cars to the garden. Each order will have an assigned time for pickup. At all three sales, the store will open at noon on the first day closing at noon the next. Plants for sale will be shown for shoppers to browse a few days before the sale. Even though shoppers cannot buy them at that time, they can start putting their list together. The sale address is <https://store.galvestonm.org>. Please note: an item is not purchased until you have checked out. Delayed shopping could have items in your basket bought by others. Browsing early and making lists can help.

The Summer Sundown Sale will be September 10-11. Fruit trees, landscape trees, perennials, fall tomatoes, squash, cucumbers and herbs will be sold.

Fall gardens are productive in Galveston County and a fresh kitchen garden of herbs is helpful in summer to fall recipes. Fall tomatoes are a welcome sight to meals. With many trees lost to the February freeze, planting new fruit trees and landscape additions are needed and the sale will supply those to shoppers.

The perennials offered will be plentiful and varied. The sale offers varieties not found in local plant markets and deciding which to have can be a difficult one. With such helpful curbside pickup and loading by Master Gardeners, it seems perfect to order as many as a shopper would want to see in their landscape, containers and patio gardens. The Fall Plant Sale will be October 15-16. The sale will offer citrus trees, onions, lettuce, greens, broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage and an assortment of Master Grown plants.

Citrus trees thrive in the county and the varieties offered at the sale are a shopper's paradise.

The fall garden can be completed with the next vegetables to be planted. Children will delight in watching the development of heads of broccoli, cauliflower and cabbage.

The true bargain sale is part of the Master Grown plant collection offered. Many MGs will share passalong plants and a variety of items they have grown. Prices are incredibly low.

The popular Bulb Sale will be November 5-6. Amaryllis, various lilies, daffodils, summer snowflakes and more will be offered.

The joy of bulbs is shared by many gardeners who love to force amaryllis for the holidays, enjoying the merriment of the reds, whites, pinks and

even greens. Lilies love the county and like bulbs in general, are so low maintenance. All bulbs ask is that you plant them. Then they take over the rest of the experience.



Galveston County Master Gardeners

## 2021 Online Plant Sales

 <b>Sept 10-11</b>	<b>Summer Sundown Sale</b> <small>Fruit trees, landscape trees, perennials, fall tomatoes, squash, cucumbers, &amp; herbs</small>
 <b>Oct 15-16</b>	<b>Fall Plant Sale</b> <small>Citrus trees, Master Gardener grown, onions, lettuce, greens, broccoli, cauliflower, &amp; cabbage</small>
 <b>Nov 5-6</b>	<b>Bulb Sale</b> <small>Amaryllis, various lilies, daffodils, summer snowflakes &amp; more</small>



## 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](mailto:gcmghours@gmail.com) for more information.



## 2021 Master Gardener Recertification Hours

Date	Name of Program	Speaker	MG CEUs
1/8/2021	Wedge Grafting - Online via Zoom	Herman Auer	1.50
1/11/2021	Growing Potatoes - MGs Only - Online via Zoom	Kevin Lancon	1.50
1/15/2021	Planting Fruit Trees - Online via Zoom	Herman Auer	1.50
1/22/2021	Growing Irish Potatoes - Online via Zoom	Kevin Lancon	1.50
1/29/2021	Growing Backyard Citrus - Online via Zoom	Robert Marshall	1.50
2/1/2021	"Texas Tuff" Plants for the Gulf Coast - Online via Zoom	Briana Etie	1.25
2/5/2021	Growing Great Tomatoes, Part 2 of 3 - Online via Zoom	Ira Gervais	1.75
2/9/2021	MGA Feb. Meeting - Wildscaping at Home	Lauren Simpson	1.00
2/12/2021	Chile Peppers from A to Z - Online via Zoom	Gene Speller	1.75
2/26/2021	Growing Peaches in Galveston County - Online via Zoom	Herman Auer	2.00
3/5/2021	Herbs for the Gulf Coast Garden - Online via Zoom	Nancy Noh & Briana Etie	1.75
3/8/2021	Successful Spring Vegetable Gardening - Online via Zoom	Herman Auer	1.75
3/9/2021	MGA March Meeting - Building Healthy Soils	Greg Cooper	1.50
3/26/2021	Tomato Stress Management - Online via Zoom	Ira Gervais	1.75
4/13/2021	MGA April Meeting - The Grape State of Texas	Justin Scheiner	1.00
4/16/2021	Growing Cucurbits - Online via Zoom	Herman Auer	1.75
4/23/2021	Best Practices of Watering - Online via Zoom	Karolyn Gephart	1.50
5/11/2021	MGA May Meeting - Talking Trash	Diane Hume	1.00
5/21/2021	Composting - Online via Zoom	Jim Gilliam	1.75
5/28/2021	Rainwater Harvesting - Online via Zoom	Nat Gruesen	1.00
6/4/2021	A Passion for Plumeria - Online via Zoom	Loretta Osteen	1.25
6/8/2021	MGA June Meeting - Gardening for the Birds & the Bees	Greg Grant	1.00
6/11/2021	Louisiana Irises - Online via Zoom	Monica Martens	1.00
<b>2021 Recertification Hours for MGs</b>		<b>Total CEUs (Hours)</b>	<b>33.25</b>



# bulletin board



## Volunteer Opportunities

For the **Master Gardener Hotline** contact Ginger Benson by email at [galvcountrymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountrymgs@gmail.com) or call the office at 281-309-5065.



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/>



## Volunteer Opportunities

**Libbie's Place Senior Day Program** is a community outreach mission of Moody Methodist Church in Galveston. They serve adults age 55 and older who may be experiencing memory loss, physical impairment, or social isolation by providing help with medications, personal care, and social activities during the day while continuing to live in their own home and community. We have two volunteer opportunities at Libbie's Place. The Beautification Bunch meets monthly to maintain their handicap accessible garden. This garden has trees, perennials, annuals, a Certified Butterfly Waystation, and vegetable and herb beds. The Green Thumb Club meets weekly with Libbie's clients for planting and harvesting and horticultural related arts and crafts. Please contact Master Gardeners Barbara Canetti or Kathy Maines to volunteer and for more information.

GalvCity Master Gardener Discovery Garden - Hitchcock, TX, USA

83°F

HIGH: 83°F at 12:54 PM  
LOW: 72°F at 04:57 AM

Wind: 0 mph High gust 16 mph at 04:01 AM

Humidity: 79% Feels like 91°F

Rain: 0.46 in Seasonal Total 17.26 in

Barometer: 29.92 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 Herman Auer - 409-655-5362 or [hauersrmga@yahoo.com](mailto:hauersrmga@yahoo.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

Contact Herman Auer - 409-655-5362 or [hauersrmga@yahoo.com](mailto:hauersrmga@yahoo.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](mailto:galvcountrymgs@gmail.com) to find out the schedule and join her team.



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](https://smile.amazon.com) - Choose Galveston County Master Gardener Association as your charity.

- Save [smile.amazon.com](https://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



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](http://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.



# Dr. William M. Johnson



By Robin Collins  
MG 2016

**Dr. William M. Johnson** was many things to many people - a role model, colleague, teacher, mentor, leader, influencer, friend, son, brother, and husband - just to name a few. He possessed a unique and subtle way of affecting his environment and the people he encountered in the Galveston County community. We all have special memories of Dr. J and the legacy he leaves behind.

One testament to his impact is the recent Texas Master Gardener Association's awards results for the year 2020. The Galveston County Master Gardener Association that Dr. Johnson oversaw and directed for over 30 years placed in nine out of nine categories entered. He would have been so proud of his Master Gardeners taking First Place as the 2020 Outstanding Master Gardener Association at the state level!

## Galveston County awards this year among extra-large associations included:

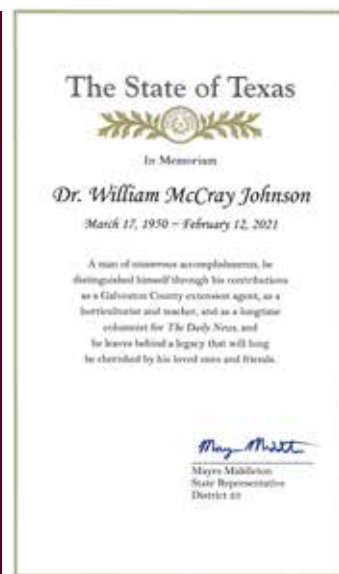
Second Place	Educational Program: Gulf Coast Gardening Seminar Series
Second Place	Written Education: 'Tree Stories' by Master Gardener Margaret Canavan
Third Place	Project: 2020 Annual Spring Plant Sale
Third Place	Research: A Corn Sugar Content Study Using a Refractometer
First Place	Youth-JMG: Heritage Gardens Junior Master Gardeners
First Place	Youth-Other: Night Creatures in the Garden
First Place	Marva E. Beck JMG Leader of the Year: Master Gardener Kaye Corey
Third Place	Outstanding Individual Master Gardener: Master Gardener Sharon Zaal
First Place	Outstanding Master Gardener Association: Galveston County Master Gardener Association

Another testament to Dr. J's impact has been set forth in proclamations awarded at the city and state levels in his memory. Proclamations were presented in his honor from the cities of Hitchcock, La Marque, Galveston, and Kemah. The Texas House of Representatives followed with a similar proclamation and the Galveston County Commissioners Court is slated to place a proclamation honoring Dr. Johnson during their June 28 meeting. And, last but not least, Dr. J was recognized with a posthumous Lifetime Achievement Award by the Galveston County Daily News in May. Click on the following link for the tribute to Dr. J. [https://www.galvnews.com/coy/video\\_aecc4112-2ee4-5eac-a8e3-f5773b04e82f.html](https://www.galvnews.com/coy/video_aecc4112-2ee4-5eac-a8e3-f5773b04e82f.html)

Dr. Johnson filled many roles for many people. I personally feel grateful to have known him and enjoyed his greatness and zest for life and relationships. I dare say not a day goes by that I do not encounter a reason to have him cross my mind. Whether it be planting a tomato vine based on direction learned from him, writing an article and proofing it 19 times or researching some horticulture question.

## How did Dr. J affect your world?

Please enjoy the images associated with this article in memory of a lovely man that taught us all that **"Knowledge not shared, is knowledge lost."**



# 2021 GCMGA Monthly Meetings



By Judy Anderson  
MG 2012

## Monthly Meetings Returning

Summer is here and it is time to look forward to the upcoming Backyard Meeting schedule. We have some exciting programs. Please mark your calendar for the second Tuesday of each month for the GCMG Programs. "An Afternoon with Greg Grant" will be the last ZOOM meeting planned for the year.

Scooter Langley, who presented a memorable Keynote Presentation during the Master Gardener Online Conference, will join us at the Extension Center for the Tuesday, July 13 meeting. Scooter's family own a farm and they sell their produce at the local Farmer's Market, but he is also the instructor for the Horticulture Technician Program at the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. He will bring two of his former students and his dad for the presentation. They have been invited to tour the Discovery Garden before the presentation. Please join this inspiring evening for a potluck dinner.

The August Backyard meeting will return as we revisit the Galveston Bay home of Nancy and Darrell Greenfield. Fried Chicken is on the menu, but please bring a pot luck dish to contribute. A beautiful sunset has been requested. Hedy Wolpa and Nancy will bring their White Sheet insect attraction to the evening. A special invitation is extended to all the recent interns. This will be your first opportunity for a Backyard Meeting; please come for a great evening with the Master Gardeners where no work is expected. Just good times!

In September, a Special Recognition is being planned for Dr. William M. Johnson. The Legacy Committee is planning the program and more details will be made available later. It will be held at the Extension Office Building Tuesday, September 14, 2021.

The October meeting will be a special Graduation and Recognition at the home of Mikey and Allen Isbell. Mikey and Allen have hosted the Graduation since 1992 when Mikey became an MG.

All Master Gardeners are encouraged to attend the GCMG Annual Meeting in November. The business of the association will be discussed and elections held.

The December Holiday Party will be held at the home of Mikey and Allen Isbell. The traditional Gardening Gift Exchange and Children's gift donation will be featured.

Monthly Meetings are an opportunity for Master Gardeners to be together in a friendly environment to put our gardening cares aside. Good food, good fun and good times. Please understand that some changes may occur in this schedule, but it is just that kind of year. God's speed Linda; welcome aboard Karolyn.

Please RSVP Judy Anderson at 281-480-2038 or email [jande10198@aol.com](mailto:jande10198@aol.com) with the MG name and dish.

## 2021 Schedule for Upcoming events

**July 13** – 6:00pm

Scooter Langley, Extension Office, Potluck social

**August 10** – 6:00pm

The Backyard meeting will return as we revisit the Galveston Bay home of Nancy and Darrell Greenfield.

**September 14** – 6:00pm

Special Recognition is being planned for Dr. William M. Johnson. The Legacy Committee is planning the program and more details will be made available later. It will be held at the Extension Office Building Tuesday, September 14, 2021.

**October 12** – 6:00pm

Mikey Isbell, Graduation and Recognition, Galveston, Backyard Meeting

**November 9** – 6:00pm

GCMG Annual Meeting, Extension Office

**December 14** – 6:00pm

Mikey Isbell, Holiday Party

\*It is 2021 – everything is subject to change



Galveston County



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