



**Officers, 2009**

President: *Alvie Vesperman*  
Vice President: *Donna Hebert*  
Treasurer: *John Milligan*  
Secretary: *Julia Cosgrove*

**Committee Chairs**

Go Texan Beds: *Jennifer Corzine & Donna Hebert*  
Ext. Office Beds: *Julia Cosgrove & John Milligan*  
Communications: *Helen Quinn*  
Children's: *Jennifer Corzine & Sandy Robillard*  
2010 Seminar: *Sandy Robillard*  
Fundraising: *Julia Cosgrove*  
Admin: *Carolyn Guillotte*  
Class: *Jennifer Corzine*  
Painting Texas w/wildflowers: *Edmond McGee*  
Co-op: *Fred Vesperman*

**Texas AgriLife Extension:**

*Rodney Finch : County Agent*  
*Barbara Szymczak: Secretary*  
\*\*\*\*\*

**Newsletter Editor:**

**Helen Quinn**  
Articles, photos and other  
Information due by 27<sup>th</sup> of each  
month. Send to:

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

Website:  
[www.grimesmastergardeners.org](http://www.grimesmastergardeners.org)

**HOE! HOE! HOE!**  
**Grimes County Master Gardeners Newsletter**  
**VOLUME 5, ISSUE 12, December 2009**

~~~~~

**Ongoing Projects:**

- \*Rose beds and landscaping at Go Texan Building, Fairgrounds.
- \*Landscaping at Texas Agri-Life Extension Office.
- \*Painting Texas with Wildflowers

**Photos from November Meeting at FountainView**



Regular meetings are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month at the Go Texan Building, Grimes Co. Fairgrounds, 9.00 am., except as noted below. Two evening meetings held at members' homes, and two Saturday field trips, enable members who work to participate.

## ON THE CALENDAR – DECEMBER/JANUARY

Dec 05 GCMG Christmas Party (see below)  
Dec 05 TMGA Directors' Meeting 11.00-3.00 TAMU  
Dec 05 City of Navasota Christmas Parade 6.00 pm  
DEC 12 Program on Orchids, Martha's Bloomers, Dr. Rainer Fink, 11am  
Jan 12 GCMG Regular meeting, Go Texan Building  
Jan 26 GCMG First Training Class – Speaker, Jayla Frye

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS

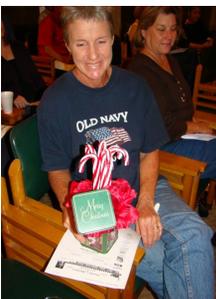
2009 Master Gardeners Christmas Party will be held Saturday, December 5, after the Christmas Parade in Navasota at the St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 414 E McAlpine Street.

Those who want to can participate in the parade along with John Milligan and his horses and buggy (details to follow).

We will all bring a covered dish and we will be donating non-perishable items again to the Navasota Manor Senior Center instead of exchanging gifts. More details to come regarding Parade and Party.

If you have questions, contact Mary Cadro at [mcadro@hotmail.com](mailto:mcadro@hotmail.com) or Vicki Gergeni at [vgergeni@hotmail.com](mailto:vgergeni@hotmail.com)

### More photos from November Meeting:





## VEGETABLE PLANTING GUIDE

12/19 start seeding broccoli, cabbage, lettuce in cold frames for spring planting

12/20 – 1/15 Brussels Sprouts

12/20 – 3/5 Carrots

12/25 start seeding onions in cold frames for spring planting

12/29 begin seeding tomatoes and peppers in sheltered place (indoors if enough light)

Sad to see the planting list dwindle down to just a few varieties. - winter must be right around the corner! As we begin to wrap up another year's planting, it would be interesting to hear how everyone coped with the drought and heat of this summer, what kind of pest and disease problems you had, and what you will do differently next year. Keeping records of this kind of information is an important step for planning, so if you haven't done it yet, buy a notepad and pencil and make a new year's resolution for 2010! January's planting list is busy, so order your seeds early, and get ready.

For something new, try *Brassica oleracea v. italica* otherwise known as Italian Green Sprouting,, or Calabrese.. This delicious vegetable bears little broccoli-like buttons on slender green stalks.



In the flower garden you can start planting your pre-chilled tulip bulbs in mid-December. If moles and other critters are a problem, try lining the planting holes with hardware cloth- the bulbs will grow through, but lunch for the wildlife will be denied! Start seeding Hollyhocks, Nasturtiums, California Poppies and Sweet Peas, and December is also a good Time to start a new compost pile with all the fallen leaves.

## Millennium Seed Bank – Wakehurst Place, West Sussex



Wakehurst Place first appeared in history in Roman times, and at one time was the family home of the famous (and controversial) herbalist Nicholas Culpeper (1616-1654). Not far from my home, it was a magical place for frequent visits. Now it is part of the Royal Botanical Gardens - Kew, and the Millennium Seed Bank Partnership, whose goal is to collect and conserve seeds from a quarter of the Earth's flowering plant species by 2020. The seed bank partnership involves more than 120 organizations in 54 countries, including that "whole other country, Texas!"

The seed bank is on target, having recently collected 10% of the world's wild plants, with seeds of a pink banana among its latest entries. The wild banana, *Musa itinerans*, is a favorite of wild Asian elephants. It was selected as the "10% species" because it is representative of what the whole project is about – it is endemic, endangered, and an economic species. *Musa itinerans* became the 24,200<sup>th</sup> species to have been stored in the seed bank. "And of course, everybody loves a banana" says Janet Terry, the seed processing manager at the bank.

In 2000 when the Wakehurst Place facility was completed, it was estimated that there were 242,000 plant species in the world, although more recently it is thought that there might be as many as 300,000. All the seeds are kept both in their country of origin and at Wakehurst Place, where they are stored in underground vaults that are kept at -20C. The plant material is dried, cleaned and sorted, ensuring only the finest specimens make it into the giant freezers. There, the cold and arid conditions keep the seeds in pristine condition for anywhere between a few years to thousands of years, depending on the species. The aim is that each seed stored in the bank can be re-grown, should the need arise.

In October 1987 there was a freak cataclysmic storm in Southeast England, during which an estimated 20,000 trees at Wakehurst Place were either uprooted or decapitated, however this disaster provided the opportunity for redesign of the 500 acres of gardens. Wakehurst Place is open to the public, and well worth a visit. You can even watch the scientists at work in the seed bank!

# THE PRAYING MANTIS

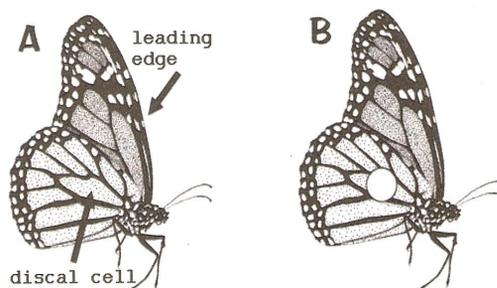


The order Mantodea contains over 1800 species which are called “mantids.” The term “mantis” applies to only a few. The praying mantis is so named because of its prayer-like posture while awaiting its prey. The mantis feeds on live insects; moths, beetles, crickets, flies and grasshoppers, among others. Sometimes it feeds on its own species. The female may eat her mate during or after mating. Their reflexes are extremely fast, and prey is captured between the barbed forelegs. The mantis has a triangular shaped head and large, compound eyes. This insect can turn its head 180 degrees while scanning its surroundings and can see movement 60 feet away. They are green or brown, making them well camouflaged while resting among plants. The species vary in size from ½ to 6 inches in length and live in the wild for about a year. The female lays her eggs forming a capsule around them which resembles a puss caterpillar. The mantises go through simple metamorphosis.

Sandra Williams

Ever wondered how to tag a butterfly? The following diagram comes from Monarch Watch :

We have adopted a tagging system in which the tag is placed over the large, mitten shaped cell (discal cell) on the underside of the hindwing of the monarch.



This method has proven to be very effective - the rate of tag recovery seems to be higher than for monarchs tagged on the wing margins (an older method). The discal cell position is closer to the center of lift and gravity for the butterfly and will not impede flight. More importantly, this tagging method appears to be less harmful to the butterflies.

GCMG SPEAKER AGENDA CLASS 2010

|          | <u>SPEAKER</u>                 | <u>SUBJECT/CHAPTER</u>                            | <u>COORDINATING<br/>MG</u> | <u>CONFIRMED</u> |
|----------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------|
| Jan. 26  | Jayla Fry                      | MG Program/Earth-Kind<br>Landscaping<br>Chapter 3 | Jennifer Corzine           | Yes              |
| Feb. 2   | Lisa Whittlesey                | Plant Growth and<br>Development<br>Chapter 1      | Alvie Vesperman            | Yes              |
| Feb. 9   | Dr.Sam Feagley                 | Soil, Water and Plant<br>Nutrients<br>Chapter 2   | Alvie Vesperman            | Yes              |
| Feb. 16  | Ann Wheeler                    | Herbs<br>Chapter 6                                | Alvie Vesperman            | Yes              |
| Feb. 23  | Dr.Carlos Bogran               | Plant Health<br>Chapter 4                         | Alvie Vesperman            | Yes              |
| March 2  | Dr.Carlos Bogran               | Entomology<br>Chapter 4                           | Alvie Vesperman            | Yes              |
| March 9  | Tom Leroy                      | Home Fruit and Nut<br>Production<br>Chapter 5     | Jennifer Corzine           | Yes              |
| March 16 | Dr.Joe Novak                   | Vegetable Gardening<br>Chapter 6                  | Sandra Williams            | Yes              |
| March 23 | Helen Quinn<br>Sharon Murry    | Propagation<br>Composting                         | Jennifer Corzine           | Yes              |
| March 30 | Elliott Head                   | Landscape Horticulture<br>Chapter 7               | Donna Hebert               | Contacted        |
| April 6  | Robert & Sandra<br>Stuckey     | Rainwater Harvesting                              | Helen Quinn                | Yes              |
| April 13 | Dr.David Chalmers              | Lawn Care<br>Chapter 8                            | Edmond McGee               | Yes              |
| April 20 | Extension Agent<br>MG Speakers | Communications<br>Open Discussion                 | Helen Quinn                |                  |

Copies of the application are available at the Extension Office, Garden Centers around town, the Chamber, the Community Center, and on the GCMG website. Pick some up And invite your friends and family members to become Master Gardeners!