



HOE! HOE! HOE!
Grimes County Master Gardeners Newsletter
*Winner of the Texas Master Gardener Association
2nd Place Newsletter Award 2006*

~~~~~**VOLUME 6, ISSUE 8, August 2010**~~~~~

**Officers, 2010**

President: Jennifer Corzine  
Vice President: Donna Hebert  
Treasurer: Fred Vesperman  
Secretary: Helen Quinn

**Committee Chairs**

Go Texan Beds: Kathy Denning &  
Linda Jolly  
Ext. Office Beds: Julia Cosgrove  
Communications: Helen Quinn  
Children's: Linda Jolly  
Scholarship: Sandra Stuckey  
Admin: Vacant/Jennifer Corzine  
Class: Jennifer Corzine  
Painting Texas w/wildflowers: Edmond  
McGee  
Co-op: Fred Vesperman

**Texas AgriLife Extension:**

Shane Jennings: MG Coordinator  
Sandra Cook: Secretary  
\*\*\*\*\*

**Newsletter Editor:**

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

**hortiq@gmail.com**

**Website:**

**www.grimesmastergardeners.org**

**Ongoing Projects:**

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

**New Project:**

Helping Ext./EYC with Beautification of Old Carver School . Watch for more new projects coming in June and ongoing.

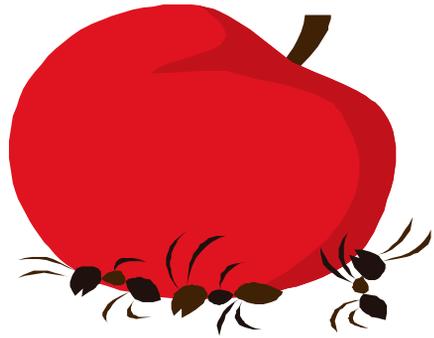
We also participate in once-a-year activities such as Farm Bureau Ag Day, Senior Day and horticulture judging at the County Fair, Boy Scout programs, Courthouse rose beds. Suggestions for new projects are always Welcome for consideration by the Board.

**WE ARE NOW ON FACEBOOK –JOIN US! We also have a dedicated email address for gardening questions from the public : \_**

**grimesmastergardeners@gmail.com**

## VEGETABLE PLANTING GUIDE July/August

|                 |           |
|-----------------|-----------|
| Cucumber        | 7/20-8/15 |
| Peas: Southern  | 7/15-8/31 |
| Edible Pod      |           |
| Southern        |           |
| Sweet Corn      | 7/15-8/20 |
| Squash, S & W   | 7/15-8/20 |
| Romaine Lettuce | 6/1-8/31  |



Use row cover to help reduce heat and viral infection.

### Summer Gardening Tip – by Sandra Williams

I'm not a big fan of Texas Summers. Too many garden chores need doing and I don't want to deal with the heat and humidity. Following rains in June, the weeds and grasses are thriving and competing with the flowers for moisture and nutrients. This suggestion from a gardening friend has been a big help in getting me to work out there. Plant a portable beach umbrella in the bed you need to weed. It provides shade from the sweltering sun and is easy to move along as you do. Don't forget your water! (One major discount store in College Station had beach umbrellas for \$8 in mid July.)



### Another Safety Tip

- Be very aware of your surroundings while stopping at the side of the road to pick flowers, or buy flowers, fruit or vegetables at roadside stands. More and more accidents are occurring and injuries being reported with drivers not paying attention (talking on the phone or texting while driving??) and crashing into parked cars, hitting bystanders.

## ON THE CALENDAR : August/September 2010

- Aug 07 TMGA Directors' Meeting 11.00 – 3.00 Forest Sci/Hort Building, TAMU
- Aug 10 GCMG Regular meeting. 9.00 am Go Texan Building. Program on Drip Irrigation by Martin Thomas.
- Sep 16 GCMG Field Trip to Colony Cellars Winery 3.pm
- Sep 18 Fall Planting Seminar with private pesticide applicator CEU's available

**NEWS FLASH : 2011 CLASS WILL START ON JANUARY 18TH,  
AT THE GO TEXAN BUILDING. START RECRUITING NOW!!!**

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 field trips are planned annually, and two evening meetings held at members' homes enable members who work to participate.

**Expert information about fire ants and their control :  
[www.extension.org/fire+ants](http://www.extension.org/fire+ants)**



Photo of Stick Insect,  
by Sharon Murry

## Walking Stick or Stick Bug

The Walking Stick or Stick Bug is an insect that looks like a stick or twig. They are in the Phasmatodea Phasmida order of which there are approximately 3,000 different species. Some Phasmida have wings and can range from 1/2 inch to more than 21 inches long.

The common American or Northern walking stick, which we generally see in our area, is usually brown and looks like a tree stick or twig, although it has the ability to change its color to suit its surroundings. For this reason, you may see a stick bug with a slightly greenish tint. It is this coloration and structure that protects them from birds, reptiles, spiders and other predators. They also often times play dead. Some species move suddenly to startle an attacker or even spray them with an irritant. These walking sticks generally grow to around 8" in length with long spiny legs. All walking sticks are herbivores, in that they graze and eat leaves of trees, mainly oak leaves, and plants like blackberry vines and rose bushes. They are not considered pests unless there are large numbers feeding at the same time in the same place. Depending on the size of a tree, they could eat most of the leaves off the tree. They generally spend their days motionless hanging from leaves and branches waiting until dark to feed. Their claws and suction pads on their feet enable them to climb vertical walls and even hang upside down.

Most Walking Sticks are females that are born with fertilized eggs that result in females only. If mating with a male occurs, the female will scatter her eggs which can stay on the ground for up to three years. The eggs have a protective seed like appearance and hard shell. A newly hatched Walking Stick is referred to as a nymph and looks like a mini Walking Stick. As it grows, it forms a new skeleton underneath the old one. The old skin cracks open and the new insect emerges with a brand new cover. After several molts, it becomes an adult Walking Stick which can reproduce again. The average lifespan of a Walking Stick is one to two years.

They are generally not harmful to humans. Some Walking Sticks are kept or sold as pets although in some areas it is illegal.

## A THORNY PROBLEM!



***When drinking wine amongst the roses  
Or guzzling beer while throwing bricks  
Or playing games in bales of hay  
Where lurks the tricky Sporothrix,  
Beware, the price you pay for play  
When you get struck by dread mycoses.***



Author unknown

To those who are susceptible, a single prick by a rose thorn can cause serious medical problems even, in the worst case scenario, death! According to canpages.ca, the New York Times reported a case in 1911 of a woman named Susan Reichart who pricked her finger on a rose thorn while working in her garden and died three days later. Poor Susan had gone out to her garden before breakfast one fine Monday morning to gather some flowers. Unfortunately, she got finger-stabbed by one of the thorns, drawing blood. Her first instinct was to suck the blood off her finger and go on with her day. Little did she know the prick had caused blood poisoning (*Sporothrix schenckii*), eventually leading to a slow and painful death. Many of us have experienced pain, redness, swelling and bruising from rose thorn punctures, The same article in canpages also stated that thorns can cause tenosynovitis, the inflammation of the fluid-filled sheath that surrounds a tendon ("trigger finger") but there doesn't appear to be much medical evidence of this.

In nature *Sporothrix* lives as a saprophyte on wood, decaying vegetation (including rose thorns), *Sphagnum* moss, animal excreta and soil. *Sporothrix* can also cause lung infections, and is particularly abundant in areas where *Sphagnum* moss is abundant. *Sporothrix* can naturally grow on *Sphagnum* moss, but it is only rarely transmitted to humans in the field. However, when this moss is collected and used for floral arrangements, this provides the right conditions for *Sporothrix* to thrive. Workers who are exposed to large quantities of the *Sphagnum* are likely to inhale large quantities of *Sporothrix* spores (as reported in botit.botany.wisc.edu.)

This illustrates a good case for wearing gloves and long sleeves while working around roses. Also, don't forget to keep your tetanus shot up to date to avoid problems from soil-borne bacteria.

*Helen Quinn*

## Gardening questions by email - June/July

- What can I do for corn ear worms?
- How can I get rid of grasshoppers?
- How can I get rid of worms in peaches / plums?
- Can I eat blackeyed peas after they have been sprayed with 10% Sevin?
- What is causing the mottling on my squash. Can I eat it?
- What is this nasty brown mess on the end of my peaches?



These questions have been answered by our email panel and all Q & A will eventually be tabulated and on file in our office at the Extension Office.



## Cleaning the beds at the Extension Office In July

### **FUNKY FLOWER** – Button Bush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*)

contributed by Kathleen Flick with credits to Texas Parks & Wildlife Magazine, June 2010 , article by Sheryl Smith-Rogers.

The flowers of the buttonbush appear from late spring into early autumn, leaving reddish-brown fruit balls that look like buttons. Well into winter, buttonbush nutlets and seeds feed many bird species, especially ducks, who don't care a whit what they look or smell like.

The fragrance is of honey, and butterflies and bees like it too. They are drawn to the odd blooms that resemble golf balls stuck with scads of knobbed straight pins. Botanically speaking, those pins are actually slender pistils, tipped with pollen-collecting stigmas and rising from tiny, four-petaled, tubular flowers that together form the gold ball. They also produce loads of nectar. So much, according to the Roadside Flowers of Texas, that beehives in the vicinity of buttonbushes reportedly produce large amounts of honey. And in fact, one of the common names for this species is honeyballs.

Thickets of *Cephalanthus occidentalis* inhabit low, moist soils found near streams, ponds and other wetlands across the state. Usually shrub sized, a buttonbush can grow taller than 12 feet. Its lustrous, green leaves – mostly arranged in opposite pairs on branches – sicken livestock but not deer.





# SMILE GARDEN

Submitted by: Connie Arden

DID YOU KNOW???



The pistil of a flower is its only protection against insects.



Dew is formed on leaves when the sun shines down on them and makes them perspire.



Mushrooms always grow in damp places so they look like umbrellas.



New gardeners learn by *trowel and error*.

SMILING IS THE BEGINNING OF LAUGHTER.....PLANT SOME SMILE SEEDS TO GROW INTO LAUGHTER AND REAP BLOSSOMS OF POSITIVE PHYSICAL, MENTAL, AND SOCIAL BENEFITS.



*The evening Social/meeting in July at Fred & Alvie's*

