



HOE! HOE! HOE!

Grimes County Master Gardeners Newsletter

*Winner of the Texas Master Gardener Association
2nd Place Newsletter Award 2006*

VOLUME 7, ISSUE 9, September 2011

ON THE CALENDAR Sept/Oct 2011

- Sept 10 9.00am GCMG Fall Seminar at Martha's Bloomers
- Sept 13 9.00am GCMG Reg. Monthly Meeting, program TBA
1-2pm Housing Fair presentation, Navasota Center
- Sept 15-18 Hummingbird Festival in Rockport, TX
- Oct 11 6.00pm Evening Social at Marguerite Corbello's
details/map tba

Officers, 2011

President: Jennifer Corzine
Vice President: Alvie Vesperman
Treasurer: Barbara Szymczak
Secretary: Helen Quinn

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Fundraiser: Linda Jolly
Awards/Social: Connie Arden

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Tesa's program on Wildscaping



CONGRATULATIONS !!

Our two newest certified
Master Gardeners, Tesa Silva
and Kathleen Flick



VEGETABLE PLANTING GUIDE

SEPTEMBER



Bush & Pole beans	thru 9/15 & 9/10
Beet	9/01 - 10/20
Broccoli *	9/10 -11/15
Brussels Sprouts*	9/10 - 11/05
Cabbage*	9/15 - 12/31
Chinese Cabbage	9/01 - 10/15
Carrot	9/15 - 12/31
Cauliflower*	9/20 - 10/31
Kohlrabi	9/20 - 11/30
Lettuce, leaf	9/15 - 11/30
Mustard	9/01 - 11/15
Spinach	9/05 - 10/25
Turnip	9/01 - 11/20
Pea, Edible Pod &	
English	9/15 - 09/30
Pepper*	9/01 - 09/30
Radish	9/01 - 11/30
Tomato*	9/01 - 09/15

Carrot – *Daucus carota, var. sativus* by Q

The lovely carrot, much beloved by rabbits, horses, humans, and yes, my puppy, was being grown as early as 300 BCE in ancient Southern Mediterranean regions. Welcomed into the British Kitchen Garden in the 1500's, Richard Gardiner in his 1599 "Profitable instructions for the Manuring, Sowing, and Planting of Kitchen Gardens" (manuring meant "cultivating") wrote "Sowe Carrets in your Gardens, and humbly praise God for them, as for a singular and great Blessing".

Carrots are well known for their vitamins and beneficial properties of eyesight health, but unless you have the right growing conditions you will not be growing the long, straight carrots available at the market. Correct variety for your area is one important thing, but more so is the soil. A carrot is basically a taproot, with hair-like feeder roots, which needs a fertile, well drained sandy loam. During its downward growth, if the carrot

•Use plants, not seeds; be sure to provide shade and adequate water.

encounters a rock or other obstacle, no matter how small, it will grow around it, thus creating a fork. Stiff, hard soil or heavy clay will make it difficult for the taproot to penetrate, and the feeder roots won't be able to find enough oxygen for optimum growth. Make sure you have at least 10" of friable soil in which to grow carrots (the half-long and mini varieties will do well in less) and consider growing in raised beds or even in containers. How many to plant? One source recommends 30 plants per person – sow lots if you love carrots! To help prevent Carrot Rust Fly, try planting onions next to them will help confuse the insects! Fall is usually a more reliable and carefree time for planting carrots, and the crop is just as sweet and delicious as from seeds sown in spring!

My favorite Fall recipe for carrots (apart from raw, fresh from the ground) is Carrot & Ginger Soup. You can even grow your own ginger – that's another story! Incidentally, the Romans referred to carrots as both *daucus* and *carota*, which is why Linnaeus gave them both names. The Latin *sativus* means "cultivated", or "planted deliberately".



**GRIMES COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION
FALL SEMINAR**

*A GARDENER'S GUIDE TO RAINWATER HARVESTING, DRIP IRRIGATION
AND FIREWISE LANDSCAPING*

3 CEU's Awarded

**GRIMES COUNTY
MASTER GARDENERS
ASSOCIATION**

208 South Judson
Navasota, TX 77868

President: Jennifer Corzine
Vice President: Alvie Vesperman
Secretary: Helen Quinn
Treasurer: Barbara Szymczak

Serving Grimes County
Since 2002

Visit us on the Web
grimesmastergardeners.org

COST

Registration Before 9/2/2011

\$15.00

Registration at the Door

\$20.00

Make checks out to GCMGA

Mail Registration Form and Check
or Money Order to:

208 South Judson
Navasota, TX 77868

Doors Open at 8:30 a.m.

DEALING WITH DROUGHT.... NO DOUBT

SEPTEMBER 10, 2011

9:00-12:00 PM

PRESENTED BY

GRIMES COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

AT MARTHA'S BLOOMERS-ARBOR ROOM

8101 HWY. 6 BYPASS

NAVASOTA, TX 77868



- RAINWATER HARVESTING-JOHN SMITH, TEXAS A&M
- DRIP IRRIGATION SYSTEMS-MARTY THOMAS, TEXAS PROFESSIONAL LANDSCAPING, LLC
- FIRE RETARDANT LANDSCAPING-MARY KAY HICKS, TEXAS A&M



GCMGA Fall 2011 Seminar Pre-Registration
(Deadline September 2, 2011)

Name(s) _____

Mailing Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

E-mail Address _____

Amount Enclosed _____ (\$15 x number of registrants)

EMAIL QUESTIONS

Questions received by email in August – KM is wanting some advice on what type of grapes to grow in the area.

Answer – “first I would recommend a soil test - you can get the kit at the county agents office. I contacted the owner of Messina Hof - a winery in Bryan that buys from local vineyards. They will purchase two varieties - Lenoir and Blanc De Bois. Also for more information you can contact Fritz Westover, who is the south Texas grape specialist at [1-281-855-5608](tel:1-281-855-5608) (cell) or [1-713-584-3360](tel:1-713-584-3360) (office). Reason for the soil test it is vital before you invest in planting anything to judge how to amend your soil for the best production. ”

The remaining schedule of volunteers to answer questions by email through December 31st is :

Aug 26 – Sept 8	Nevill, Janeth
Sept 9 – 22	Silva, Tesa
Sept 23 – Oct 6	Szymczak, Barbara
Oct 7 – 20	Vesperman, Alvie
Oct 21 – Nov 3	Williams, Sandra
Nov 4 – 17	Arden, Connie
Nov 18 – Dec 1	Arden, Mike
Dec 2 – 15	Flick, Kathleen
Dec 16 – 31	Laughlin, Kathy



If you would like to join the team of “answerers” please let Helen know. Researching the answers is a great way to increase your own knowledge as well as earning volunteer hours.

2012 CLASS

Will start February 21, and will run every Tuesday 8.30-12.30 through May 15 at the Go Texan Building, Grimes County Fairgrounds. Some speakers are already confirmed. Tell all your family, friends and neighbors, and be watching for more information as plans develop!

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

ANOTHER CASE FOR MAKING YOUR OWN COMPOST

Why do gardeners use peat?

When plants that grow in swampy areas die, they do not decompose properly. Instead they turn into a partially rotted organic material; a material known as peat. Many multi-purpose composts contain peat as it can help retain water. It is for this reason that some gardeners will also bulk-buy peat in order to add to raised beds so they stay moist.

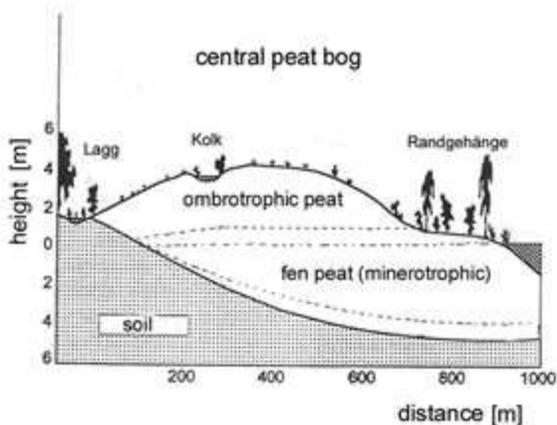
It is noteworthy that if your shop-bought compost does not say that it is peat free then there is a strong chance that it does indeed contain peat.

Why go peat free?

There are many reasons for not using peat; firstly, peat renews at approximately 1mm per year, therefore it is considered a non-renewable resource. Secondly, peat bogs store carbon, a lot of carbon. In fact the equivalent of 20 years of industrial carbon is stored in British peat bogs alone. When peat is harvested and the bog is eroded, the carbon is released into the atmosphere. What's more, exposed areas can dry out, thus releasing carbon even when not harvested.

Thirdly, peat bogs are home to a huge array of flora and fauna that thrive in such conditions. This includes birds, such as snipe and the skylark, which breed on peat bogs, as do many butterflies and dragonflies.

Although some peat is used as fuel, the vast majority of it is used by gardeners. It seems in our attempt to create our own little wilderness that we are selfishly robbing another.



What do Texas Superstars and late Navasota Native Pam Puryear have in common?

Turk's Cap - *Malvaviscus drumondii* Pam Puryear! One of the plants designated a Texas Superstar for 2011 is a pink flowered hybrid Turk's Cap named after our own Pam Puryear, who sadly passed away in 2005. Pam was one of the original three Rose Rustlers, and one of the first female graduates of Texas A&M University. She was born two days after I was, and often joked that with the time zone difference and a couple of other incidentals, we were probably twins!!

Both old and new varieties of Turk's Cap are tough and versatile plants, and both have earned Texas Superstar status. Turk's Cap is a native plant, native to South Texas, and is a magnet for butterflies and hummingbirds. It is very drought tolerant, will thrive in wet and dry soils and is not too fussy about soil pH. It does well in the shade but also takes a fair bit of sun.

Pam persuaded Greg Grant, also a former member of Texas Rose Rustlers, to experiment with hybridization of this plant to make it more cold tolerant, among other traits. The first result was a giant hybrid names "Big Mama", 5 to 6 feet tall and wide, with flowers twice as big as the native. He then crossed Big Mama back with a white flowered, cold-hardy one and one of those results was the pink flowered one that he came to name Pam Puryear.

Kathleen Flick sent in the idea for this article, much of which information she found in The Land & Livestock Post.

The photo came from: plantdelights.com

For more information on the Texas Superstar program go to texassuperstar.com.



"Flowers always make people better, happier, and more helpful; they are sunshine, food and medicine to the soul."...Luther Burbank

Other recent Texas SuperStars include *Hamelia patens* (Firebush/Mexican Firebush), *Lantana camara* (Lantana var. New Gold), *Vitex agnus-castus* (Texas Lilac), *Citrus reticulata* (Satsuma Mandarin), *Leucophyllum langmaniae* (Lowery's Legacy Cenizo/Cimarron Sage), and *Rosa* "Grandma's Yellow" Formerly thought to be "Nacogdoches" – possibly the best yellow flowering rose for Texas. There is even a Waterlily Texas SuperStar, *Nymphaea* spp: Colorado.





SMILE GARDEN

Submitted by Connie Arden

Smiling is the beginning of laughter.....plant some smile seeds to grow into laughter and reap blossoms of positive physical, mental, and social benefits.

God and Lawn Care...some ecumenical and ecological humor

GOD said : "Frank, you know all about gardens and nature. What in the world is going on down there on the planet? What happened to the dandelions, violets, milkweeds and stuff I started eons ago? I had a perfect no-maintenance garden plan. Those plants grow in any type of soil, withstand drought and multiply with abandon. The nectar from the long-lasting blossoms attracts butterflies, honey bees and flocks of songbirds. I expected to see a vast garden of colors by now. But, all I see are these green rectangles."

St. FRANCIS:

It's the tribes that settled there, Lord. The Suburbanites. They started calling your flowers 'weeds' and went to great lengths to kill them and replace them with grass.

GOD:

Grass? But, it's so boring. It's not colorful. It doesn't attract butterflies, birds and bees; only grubs and sod worms. It's sensitive to temperatures. Do these Suburbanites really want all that grass growing there?

ST. FRANCIS:

Apparently so, Lord. They go to great pains to grow it and keep it green. They begin each spring by fertilizing grass and poisoning any other plant that crops up in the lawn.

GOD:

The spring rains and warm weather probably make grass grow really fast. That must make the Suburbanites happy.

ST. FRANCIS:

Apparently not, Lord. As soon as it grows a little, they cut it-sometimes twice a week.

GOD:

They cut it? Do they then bale it like hay?

ST. FRANCIS:

Not exactly, Lord. Most of them rake it up and put it in bags.

GOD:

They bag it? Why? Is it a cash crop? Do they sell it?

ST. FRANCIS:

No, Sir, just the opposite. They pay to throw it away.

GOD:

Now, let me get this straight. They fertilize grass so it will grow. And, when it does grow, they cut it off and pay to throw it away?

ST. FRANCIS:

Yes, Sir.

GOD:

These Suburbanites must be relieved in the summer when we cut back on the rain and turn up the heat. That surely slows the growth and saves them a lot of work.

ST. FRANCIS:

You aren't going to believe this, Lord. When the grass stops growing so fast, they drag out hoses and pay more money to water it, so they can continue to mow it and pay to get rid of it.

GOD:

What nonsense. At least they kept some of the trees. That was a sheer stroke of genius, if I do say so myself. The trees grow leaves in the spring to provide beauty and shade in the summer. In the autumn, they fall to the ground and form a natural blanket to keep moisture in the soil and protect the trees and bushes. It's a natural cycle of life.

ST. FRANCIS:

You better sit down, Lord. The Suburbanites have drawn a new circle. As soon as the leaves fall, they rake them into great piles and pay to have them hauled away.

GOD:

No!?! What do they do to protect the shrub and tree roots in the winter to keep the soil moist and loose?

ST. FRANCIS:

After throwing away the leaves, they go out and buy something which they call mulch. They haul it home and spread it around in place of the leaves.

GOD:

And where do they get this mulch?

ST. FRANCIS:

They cut down trees and grind them up to make the mulch.

GOD:

Enough! I don't want to think about this anymore. St. Catherine, you're in charge of the arts. What movie have you scheduled for us tonight?

ST. CATHERINE:

'Dumb and Dumber', Lord. It's a story about....

GOD:

Never mind, I think I just heard the whole story from St. Francis



TENTATIVE SCHEDULE FOR 2012 CLASS

February 21	Jayla Fry	MG Program/EarthKind Landscaping	Confirmed
February 28	Lisa Whittlesey	Plant Growth & Development	Confirmed
March 6	Sam Feagley	Soil, Water & Plant Nutrients	Confirmed
March 13	Tom Leroy	Vegetable Gardening	Confirmed
March 20	Bart Drees	Entomology	Confirmed
March 27	Carlos Bogran	Plant Health	Confirmed
April 3	David Chalmers	Lawns & Turfgrass	Confirmed
April 10	Tom Leroy	Home Fruit & Nut Production	Confirmed
April 17	Ann Wheeler	Herbs	Pending
April 24	Martin Thomas	Landscape Horticulture	Pending
May 1	Helen Quinn	Propagation	Confirmed
May 8	Sharon Murry	Composting	Confirmed
	Stuckeys	Rainwater Harvesting	Confirmed
May 15	Shane Jennings	Communications/General	Confirmed
	MGs	Open discussion/program/lunch	Confirmed