

## Texas Master Gardeners

December 2018  
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# Grimes County Master Gardeners

## End of the Year

I don't know about you but I was taken by surprise when Grimes County got hit with three nights of freezing weather the week before Thanksgiving. After putting on fourteen Thanksgivings here I can tell you that only two have not involved outside dining because of bad weather. It's usually a great time to enjoy the fall. My ornamental flowerbeds were at their peak and I was ready to show them off to family and friends. Then the freeze came along and pretty much destroyed that idea. While I fretted to a friend that my flowers were now burnt and brown, she reminded me that other people had many other problems to worry about instead of dead flowers. How true a statement! As it happened, Thanksgiving weekend turned out glorious and while I was worrying about the flowers, the trees and shrubs decided to put on the best fall show in years! It's just a reminder that Mother Nature always has some surprise in store for us when we least expect it and that we should be truly thankful.

Now with the end of the year looming and not as much to do in our gardens, it's a good time to reflect on the past 12 months and our accomplishments in 2018. We did GCMG proud by organizing the best ever state conference registration! We welcomed our new county extension agent, Alan Homann, who has a lot on his plate but still finds the time to be engaged in the Master Gardeners. We did a wonderful job in assisting Buckingham Apartments with gardening and teaching. And, to round out the year we put on the most attended fall workshop in GCMG history.

A big **THANK YOU** goes out to every member who organized and participated in our 2018 events.

## Looking to 2019

The new year is fast approaching and it's worth mentioning a few items:

- It's not too late to submit a nomination for the 2018 Search for Excellence Awards. If you want to submit a nomination please contact Sharon Murry or Connie Arden for more details. Submission deadline is January 31, 2019. Current suggestions are:
  - Buckingham Apartment Project
  - GCMG State Conference Registration Project
  - GCMG Fall Workshop
  - Trunk or Treat
- GCMG will put on another Master Gardener Intern Program starting in February 2019. Herb Abraham is committee chairman and can be reached for more details at [herbabraham@gmail.com](mailto:herbabraham@gmail.com). Please get out the word to anyone interested.

I heard a bird sing in  
the dark of December  
A magical thing and  
sweet to remember

*Oliver Herford*



Roses



Rose Hips

## Rosacea

Rosacea encompasses the rose family of flowering plants. There are 2,500 species in more than 90 genera. Found primarily in the north temperate zone, the rose family adapts to a wide variety of habitats. Some of the species are food crops including almonds, apples, cherries, pears, raspberries and strawberries. Although, considered an ornamental plant the rose is also edible. Specifically, petals and rose hips are edible. Rose petals give salads, desserts, smoothies, syrups and teas a unique and special flavor. Recently, I enjoyed cookies and lemonade infused with rose petals. Rose hips are small berries that contain as much as 150 seeds that taste somewhat like cranberries. In addition to Vitamin C, rose hips contain vanillin as well as sugars, and are used in jams, jellies, syrups and other sweet treats.

In addition to the beauty of the rose in bouquets and flower gardens the rose has a cooling, soothing, anti-inflammatory and mild astringent property that makes it an ideal ingredient in many body care products and herbal remedies. Examples of uses for roses include rose infused oil, rose lotion bars, peppermint rose lip balm, rose bath salts, rose face and body cream, basil and rose kombucha toner, honey rose and oat face cleanser, aloe rose skin soother, rose petal vinegar and old-fashioned rose soap.

Finally, members of the rosacea family not only nourish us by providing beauty, food and other products, but the presence of these plants nourish our environment.

*Submitted by Carolyn Guillotte*

## Who's Left and Who's Arrived

The Ruby-Throated Hummingbirds hung around a bit late this year and almost got nailed by the early November freezes. Our last one left November 1st. Two weeks later brought the true sign of winter with the arrival of other migratory birds such as the **American Robin**, the **American Goldfinch** and the **Yellow Shafted Flicker**. Did you know a serious man-caused hazard to migratory birds is pet cats? According to the Audubon Society free-roaming cats take a high toll on migratory birds. Scientific studies show that each year cats may kill hundreds of millions of migratory songbirds. Cats are serious threats to fledglings, birds roosting at night and birds on nests. An indoor cat is the best kind of cat if you are a bird lover!



American Robin



American Goldfinch (winter plumage)



Yellow Shafted Flicker

## Woolly Bear Caterpillars



According to folklore, the **Woolly Bear** caterpillar is supposed to be a great predictor of cold winters. Supposedly, if the woolly caterpillar is mostly all black instead of brown then we are supposed to have a very cold winter. If the woolly

caterpillar has a thick brown stripe in its middle then it's supposed to predict a mild winter. Unfortunately, in Texas the *only* kind we ever see are the all black and there really isn't too much scientific evidence to back up the weather prediction skills of this caterpillar—similar to the predictions of the groundhog.

This time of year you will see the Woolly Bear cross-

ing roads to find a secure spot to survive winter. They have a special chemical, cryoprotectant, to protect them from freezing in harsh winter temperatures. The caterpillars are actually the **Isabella Tiger Moth**. If you see one of these it's important to know they are not poisonous but people with sensitive skin may get an irritation touching them.



*Isabella Tiger Moth*

## Pomegranates in the Garden



My vision of the perfect tree to incorporate in a garden is the pomegranate. Physicians encourage their patients to drink pomegranate juice. Pomegranate is rich in antioxidants and contributes to the control of the bad LDL cholesterol. Additionally, other health benefits of the pomegranate may be in the prevention of cancer, protection against Alzheimer's disease and heart disease.

Pomegranate can also be used not only for juice, but for making alcoholic beverages, syrup and molasses. In addition the pomegranate is valuable in making dyes. Red dye is made from the flowers, yellow dye is made from the skin and black dye is made from the roots. Pomegranate wood is very hard and closed-grained and is used for building agricultural implements.

Pomegranates may be grown from seed, cuttings or purchased bare root or in containers. There are many varieties of pomegranate. *Wonderful* is the most well known. Personally, I have *Wonderful, Sweet* and *Russian*

pomegranates. I now prefer the *Russian* pomegranate as it has proven to better survive the extremes of cold, heat and drought. The pomegranate may be allowed to grow in the bush form or pruned and trained as a tree that typically grows to 12 to 16 feet in height but can grow to 20 to 30 feet in height. There are specimens of pomegranates in Europe that are over 200 years old. Most pomegranates are self-fruitful and there is no need to plant a second pomegranate as bees pollinate the trees. Still, it is helpful to plant another pomegranate nearby to increase fruit production. The pomegranate is drought tol-erant and requires little work once established. However, their fruit may split after a rainy season. Pomegranate should be placed in the sunniest and warmest part of the yard. They will grow in acid and alkaline soils and will tolerate heavy clay as long as there is sufficient drainage. While frost is a consideration the pomegranate will tolerate temperatures down to 14 degrees Fahrenheit. Pomegranates may also be grown in containers.

*Submitted by Carol Guillotte*

**Schedule of Events**

- Dec 11: Grimes County Master Gardeners Monthly Meeting and Social, 6:00 p.m., Martha's Bloomers, Navasota, TX



# December 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

## Christmas Social

Mark your calendars! Our Christmas social this year will take place on Tuesday, **December 11th** starting at 6:00 p.m. in the Arbor Room, **Martha's Bloomers**. The board will provide the meat and tea. Please bring your favorite holiday dish or dessert to round out the meal. Spouses and significant others are invited.

As in years past we ask that everyone bring canned goods to donate to the Food Pantry. Also if you want to participate in the anonymous ornament exchange, please bring a wrapped ornament.

This year we will also conduct a “*Holiday Ugly Sweater*” contest this year with the sweaters decorated in a Christmas/Holiday theme. This is strictly volunteer. There will be a prize for the best (worst?) sweater.

Please RSVP with the number in your party attending by **December 4th** to:  
[samurry405@gmail.com](mailto:samurry405@gmail.com).

## Texas Master Gardeners

203 Veterans Memorial Drive  
Navasota, Texas 77868  
Website: [txmg.org/grimes](http://txmg.org/grimes)



## Grimes County Master Gardeners



Please send submissions and photos by the  
20th of each month to: [pwparmley@gmail.com](mailto:pwparmley@gmail.com)



Amaryllis

## 2018 Board of Directors

President ..... Michael Havens  
Vice President ..... Sharon Murry  
Secretary ..... Renee Harter  
Treasurer ..... Dia Copeland

## 2018 Committees/Chairs

Administration ..... Stephanie Cunningham  
Advertising/Publicity ..... Peggy Sloan  
Auditing ..... Stephanie Cunningham/Jena Jackson  
Communications ..... Georgia Abraham  
Co-op ..... Fred Vesperman  
Facebook ..... Jamie Bruns  
Fair Judging ..... Marti Luedtke  
Fundraising ..... Carol Garnet  
Historian ..... Sharon Murry  
Newsletter ..... Paula Parmley  
Nominating ..... Carol Garnet  
Social Awards ..... Kimberly Hertan/Connie Arden  
Timekeeping ..... Martha Brogdon  
TMGA Awards ..... Ann DeWitt/Connie Arden  
Master Gardener Class Coordination ..... Herb Abraham  
2018 Conference Registration ..... Georgia Abraham  
2018 Fall Workshop ..... Ann DeWitt  
2018 Buckingham Project ..... Michael Havens/Cathey Hardeman