



Grimes County Master Gardeners



Message From the President

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

My, my, where did 2018 go?

It seems like yesterday I was preparing seed pods for spring 2018 planting. Now it's time for 2019 seed planting.

Looking back on 2018 we certainly have a lot to be proud of. The registration for state convention, the fall seminar, the bake sales, the Halloween event and all the other county events were a great success due to all of you. Grimes County is a better place to live because of the Master Gardeners. 2019 holds opportunities, challenges, and hopefully lots of fun.

For our monthly meetings please come with ideas and excitement. Great things will happen when we join together with a common mission. Let's look to 2019 for increase in members, projects, impact, and influence.

On behalf of the 2018 and 2019 Board THANK YOU for a job well done.

Cathey Hardeman
President, Grimes County Master Gardeners

Learn, Grow, Share

We need your help in promoting our upcoming Grimes County Master Gardener Class. If you know of **anyone** who has expressed an interest in becoming a Master Gardener, please reach out to them and see if they would like to take our classes in 2019.

- Training: 10 weekly 5-hour classes
- Class Schedule: February 5—April 9, Tuesdays 9:00 a.m.—2:30 p.m.
- Location: Go Texan Building, Navasota Fairgrounds
- Applications: Contact Grimes County AgriLife Extension Office—936-873-3907 or: grimes-tx@tamu.edu.
- Cost: \$150 until January 18th, then \$175

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And now, let us believe in a long year that is given to us, new, untouched, full of things that have never been.

Rainer Maria Rilke



Celeste Fig



Warren Pear

What You Can do to Help

I adhere to the policy that gardening for people and nature is of utmost importance if we are to regain a healthy environment.

First, consider how much you care and what you are willing to do to improve the world. If you do not care then you are finished before you start. However, if you care and are willing to take steps to improve the world then there is work to do. So, if you are among the later that care, then regardless of how much property that you own it is time to make a plan and begin. With this in mind regardless of whether you have a patio attached to an apartment, a lot with your home or acreage you can, if you choose, add plants that will add beauty and enhance the environment. In addition to your personal property you may choose to assist others on an individual basis or community basis to improve the environment.

For those who choose to assist in regaining a healthy environment I encourage everyone to plant at least one food plant such as a pear, pomegranate or fig tree. Grapes and blackberries are also a good choice. Annual plants such as vegetables can also be planted. Before you choose to plant a food plant it is best to do your homework to insure that your choice(s) will do well in your area.

In addition to food plants there are many other plants that will nourish the air and soil.

Submitted by Carolyn Guillotte

Eastern Bluebird



Eastern Bluebird

The Eastern Bluebird is one of the most attractive birds in our area with a stunning plumage of bright blue backs and rusty underbellies. It is part of the thrush family with a rich diet of berries and insects. While they are migratory birds, in our part of Texas many times the bluebirds will hang around all year. As a gardener, their presence helps in the control of large insects, moths and larvae. Their numbers have been in a steady decline since the 1950's due to severe winter weather, pesticides used in controlling fire ants, and competition with other cavity nesters.

January is a good month to start working on old nest boxes or installing new ones to attract new nesting pairs. If you have a nest box that has been used before it's a good idea to look inside and see if it's empty. If so, then go ahead and clean it out as they will raise 3-4 clutches each year and will build a nest on top of old ones. Removal helps keep the nesting box cleaner, keeps the eggs lower in the box away from predators, and reduces the chance of mites and lice.

If you are going to install new boxes there are some measures to be taken to attract these finicky birds. They prefer trees on the edges of fields instead of dense thicket-like forests. The boxes should be 4-7 feet above the ground in an open area with the entrance facing away from prevailing winds. Keep open grassy areas mowed to allow the birds access to insects. Also, provide fresh water, 3-4 ft. high perches like fencing; add berry producing shrubs and be patient. Sometimes it takes a while for the bluebirds to find and use your boxes. If you don't see the boxes being used you may have to move them around to find a more suitable location. Once you attract them they are loyal visitors and usually will continue to nest for years.

Asian Lady Beetle



Oh No! I'm starting to see what I thought were ladybugs in my house and now realize they are those stinking Asian Lady Beetles. Remember last year when we suffered a huge invasion? Well, I certainly hope it's not starting again.

The Asian Lady Beetle looks very similar to the well known Ladybug but there are a few differences:

- Not as brightly colored as a ladybug and has large white cheeks with a "W" or "M".
- Congregates in large groups in the winter to get away from the cold.
- Gives off an unpleasant odor.

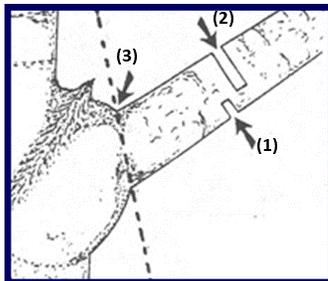
- Emits a yellow secretion that stains.
- Can bite or pinch.

You can try to get rid of them by sealing off cracks leading into your house or use a residual Pyrethroid insecticide. A HEPA filter vacuum is helpful but be sure to empty after using. If that doesn't work wait until spring when they will eventually disappear!



Asian Lady Beetle

Pruning Trees & Shrubs



In Texas most trees should be pruned during the coldest months of the year—in Grimes County that's January and February—when the tree is dormant. Pruning trees when they're dormant helps the cut wounds heal faster and reduces the risk of disease / insect infestation.

Pruning shears can be used on very small growths, while hand-held pruning saws can be used on smaller or larger

branches. For larger limbs, a chainsaw may be necessary. Smaller limb pruning and light tree shaping can be done at any time of year, and since the cuts and resulting wounds are smaller, proper timing and technique aren't as critical.

When you're pruning larger branches, however, proper pruning timing and techniques are especially important. To avoid improper healing of a pruned limb, it's best to make not just one cut through the limb, but three:

1. Make a small notched cut in the bottom of the limb to be pruned, a couple of feet out from the branch collar. This

notch should extend only about a quarter of the way through the branch; its purpose is to keep the bark from splitting when the whole limb is cut.

2. Just past that notch (moving in the direction towards the end of the branch), make a second, complete cut through the entire limb. This is referred to as a relief cut, as it removes the bulk of the limb's weight, enabling you to make your final cut without splitting any healthy wood or bark in the process.
3. Finally, make a third, complete cut through the limb, just past the

branch collar, where the collar gives way to the newly shortened branch. Often, it's best to make this cut from the bottom up, especially if your saw can't cut at the proper angle when fitted in the crotch of the branch at the top.

Be sure that when pruning any type of trees, you don't trim away more than one-quarter of the tree's branches at any one time. Overly vigorous pruning can cause stress to the tree and leave it vulnerable to pests and disease.

January 2019

Schedule of Events

- Jan 8: Grimes County Master Gardeners Monthly Meeting 9:00 a.m., **Court Annex Building**, Navasota, TX
- Jan 12: Montgomery MG, "Fruit & Nut Trees", 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m., Thomas R. Leroy Building, Conroe
- Jan 15: Brazos MG "Let's Talk Tomatoes!", 6:00 p.m., Lick Creek Nature Center, College Station
- Jan 16: Brazos MG, "Gardening with the Masters -Vegetables", Noon, Demonstration Idea Garden @ Brazos County Extension Office
- Jan 19: Brazos MG, "How to Prune & Care for Roses", 10:00 a.m., Clara B. Mounce Library, Bryan
- Jan 26: Montgomery MG, "Fruit & Nut Tree Sale", 9:00 a.m., A&M AgriLife Extension Office, Conroe
- Jan 26: The Arbor Gate, "Fruit Culture Day", 10:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.

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		

Continuing Education

Grimes County Master Gardeners active members must complete six (6) hours of continuing education each year. For opportunities in and around our area please look at the VMS calendar. If you know of any additional classes that are not listed please contact: Paula Parmley at pwparmley@gmail.com.

2018 Christmas Social

Grimes County Master Gardeners held their 2018 Christmas Social on December 11th at Marth's Bloomers. It was nicely attended by many members with an "Ugly Sweater" contest, great food and fellowship.

Also, several awards were given out this year for the exceptional work done by our hard working members.

See next pages for event photos



2018 Grimes County Master Gardener Awards

Thank You For Your Dedication and Commitment!



Michael Havens



Marty Luedtke



Peggy Sloan



Ann DeWitt



Georgia and Herb Abraham



Sharon Murry



Jamie Bruns



Paula Parmley



Allen Homann



*Winners of the Ugly Sweater Contest!
Mike & Connie Arden*

Texas Master Gardeners

203 Veterans Memorial Drive
Navasota, Texas 77868

Website: txmg.org/grimes



Grimes County Master Gardeners

Please send submissions and photos by the
20th of each month to: pwparmley@gmail.com



Foxglove

2019 Board of Directors

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FundraisingCarol Garnet
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NewsletterPaula Parmley
Nominating.....Carol Garnet
Social AwardsKimberly Herten/Connie Arden
TimekeepingMartha Brogdon
TMGA AwardsAnn DeWitt/Connie Arden