



**Inside this issue:**

*Water Gardens 101* 2

*Water Garden Construction* 3

*Events Calendar* 4

*Grimes County Master Gardeners* 5

**There are no  
gardening  
mistakes, only  
experiments!**

## *Dog Days of Summer*



The phrase “Dog Days of Summer” usually means that it is so hot and oppressive that it is not even fit for dogs. While this is still a favorite phrase today, its origins are actually from ancient times and celestial as well.

Summertime to the ancient Greeks was considered a dangerous time where water was too dangerous to drink, or it would make you “sicker than a dog.” The ancient Greeks noticed that soon after the summer solstice,

Sirius, the **dog star** in the Orion constellation would begin to rise with the sun. Thus, summer heat became associated with Sirius rising. It was the hottest time of the year in the ancient world usually beginning in July and lasting until late August, and though the earth has tilted differently since then, we continue to experience our hottest summer days during this period. So, the next time you hear it’s the dog days of summer you can thank the ancient Greeks.

## *Garden Tips for July*

It’s getting very hot and will continue for a few more months but that doesn’t mean you can stop gardening and wait it out. Now is the time for maintenance and care for all the plants you love whether they are flowers or vegetables.

- Deadhead and cut back annuals that are not blooming normally. Fertilize and water to encourage new leaf growth which helps promote new blooms.
- You should be harvesting vegetables now. You can roast, can, freeze or eat immediately your harvest. Once your vegetables are spent for the season, then start looking at replenishing your soil and prepping for a fall garden. In our area, you can start planting tomato seedlings in August.
- Select the correct mowing height on your mower so that you are removing one-third of the leaf blade. This probably means mowing every five days depending on the type of turf grass.
- If you haven’t done so yet, mulching is a must this time of year. Two to three inches of added mulch will keep weeds down and extend moisture in the soil.

## Water Gardens 101

Water gardens, like container gardens, come in all kinds of shapes and sizes. The beauty of a water garden is that even in a small container with the correct elements, you can build a very balanced system. Water gardens are one of the most efficient systems even more so than any garden on land because, in aquaculture, plants have a constant supply of nutrient loaded water which can quickly be taken up by the aquatic plants.

### Basics Plants of a Water Garden

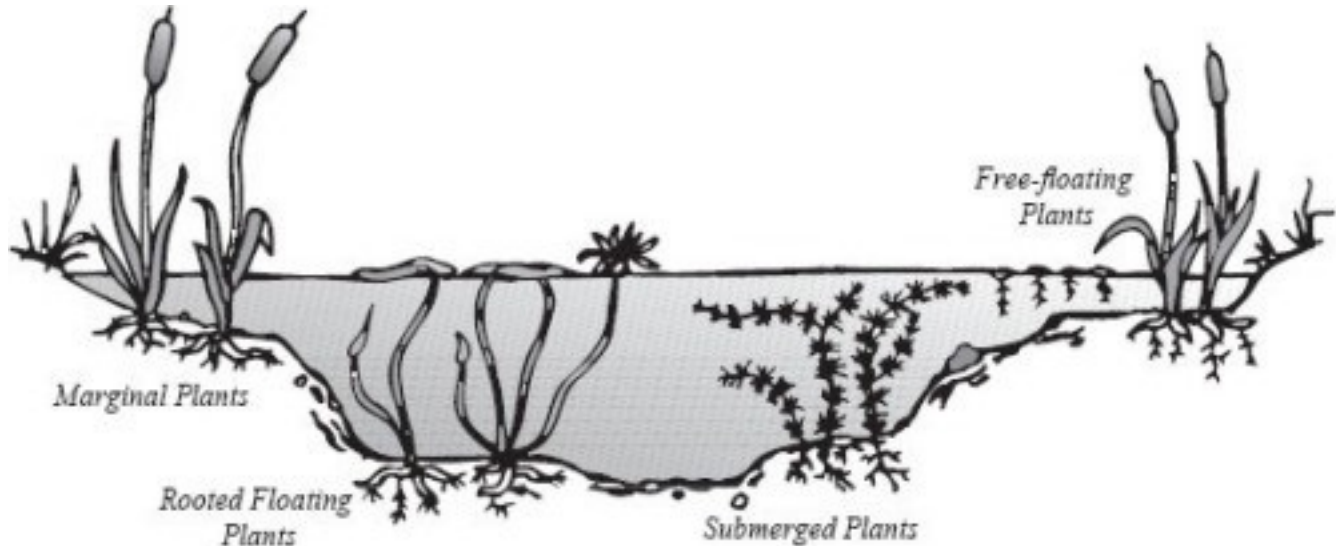


Image source: Virginia Cooperative Extension article, Urban Water-Quality Management: Purchasing Aquatic Plants.

A successful water garden contains four types of plants to keep it equalized and balanced. They are **rooted floating plants**; **marginal plants**; **submerged oxygenating plants**; and **floating plants**. Below are the function of each:



Water Lily

**Rooted Floating Plants:** These plants have their roots at the bottom of a pond or water garden with their leaves floating on the surface. Typically, these types of plants can take a lot of sunlight - as much as 10 hours a day. Their leaves provide shade to inhibit algae growth and also protection for fish and other creatures. Once the leaves of these plants die they must be removed so that they don't become food for algae. These types of plants don't like much movement so keep them away from sprays and fountains as they won't produce normal growth when disturbed. An example of a rooted floating plant is a **water lily** or a lotus plant.



Yellow Iris Flag

**Marginal Plants:** These plants grow around the shallow edges of a water garden. They provide height, color, and protection for aquatic animals like tadpoles and frogs. They also don't like much water movement so keep sprays and fountains as far away as possible. Examples of a marginal plant are horsetail fern, cattails, and **iris flags**.

## Water Gardens (cont'd)

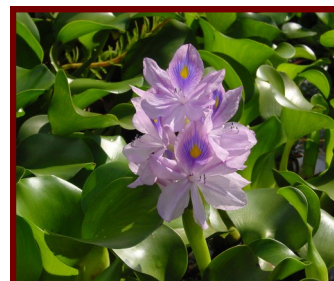


**Hornwort**

Submerged oxygenating Plants: These plants have their roots in the bottom soil of a pond or a pot with their leaves floating under the water. They are the oxygenators taking up carbon dioxide and releasing more oxygen to keep the water garden clear and support fish and other aquatic animals. Examples are **hornwort**, fanwort, and arrowhead.

Free-floating plants: Floating Plants are plants that float on the water's surface; they do not need soil but grow by extracting nutrients from the water. They control algae and act as natural filters to remove excess nutrients in the

water, which if unbalanced, could cause excess algae. Examples of these types of plants are duckweed and **water hyacinth**

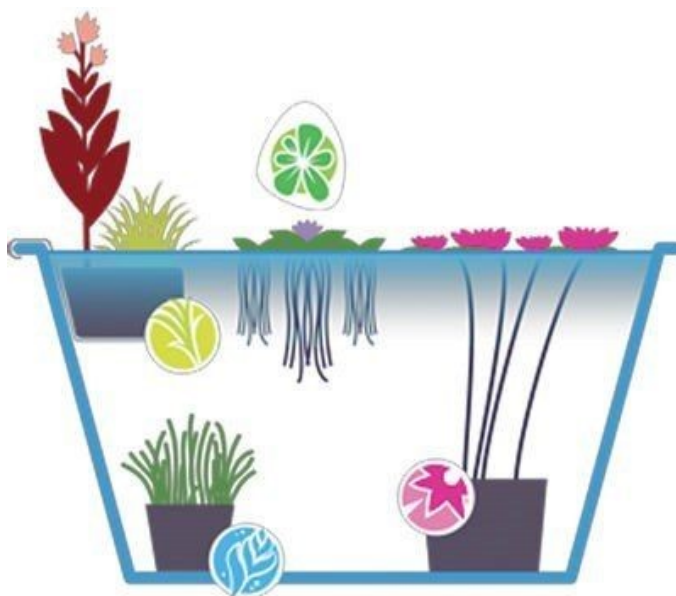


**Water Hyacinth**

## Water Gardens Construction

To build a containerized water garden, you will need:

- A container to use as the water garden. The container must be clean but **do not use** detergents or cleaning product as the residue can kill fish.
- Bricks or pavers to elevate some of the plants to the correct height.
- Plants. Remember your four basic requirements.
- Plastic pots. Black pots are recommended as they are not visible in the water.
- Garden soil. The best soil is heavy clay. Potting soil is too light and will float to the top, compost will color the water brown, and too much fertilizer will create excess nutrients which will cause over production of algae.
- Pea gravel or river rock.



Place a pot of marginal plants on bricks to elevate them up to the level of the water. Only one species of plants per pot. Next add your water lily which will sit on the bottom of the container. Add the oxygenator plant which are usually planted in a pot filled with gravel only to anchor the plant to the bottom of the water garden. Finally, add the floating plants which require no pots as they will float on the water surface with their roots hanging in the water.

If you plan on adding fish to your water garden then make sure to fill it with rainwater or dechlorinated water. Tap water will burn fish gills.

# July 2019

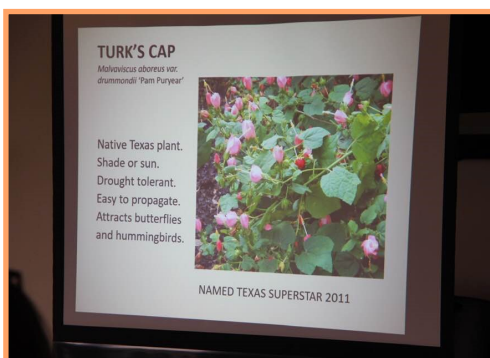
## Schedule of Events

- **July 9: Grimes County Master Gardeners:**  
*"Monthly Business Meeting";*  
*9:00 a.m.—11:00 a.m.;*  
*Court Annex Building,*  
*Navasota*

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			

## June 11th Meeting: Superstars

David McAden, Brazos County Master Gardener, provided a talk on Texas Superstars at the June 11<sup>th</sup> meeting. [Texas Superstar](#)® plants are tested and selected for their superstar performance in the Texas landscape.



## 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)



*July is Watermelon Month*

### 2019 Board of Directors

President ..... Cathey Hardeman  
Vice President ..... Sharon Murry  
Secretary ..... Paula Parmley  
Treasurer ..... Dia Copeland

### 2019 Committees/Chairs

Administration ..... Herb Abraham  
Advertising/Publicity ..... Peggy Sloan  
Auditing ..... Stephanie Cunningham/Jena Jackson  
Communications ..... Georgia Abraham  
Community Garden ..... Cathey Hardeman, Jamie Bruns, Paula Parmley  
Co-op ..... Fred Vesperman  
Facebook ..... Jamie Bruns  
Fair Judging ..... Marti Luedtke  
Fundraising ..... Carol Garnet  
Historian ..... Sharon Murry  
Master Gardener Class Coordination ..... Herb Abraham  
Newsletter ..... Paula Parmley  
Nominating ..... Carol Garnet  
Social Awards ..... Connie Arden  
Timekeeping ..... Martha Brogdon