



**Inside this issue:**

<i>Sugar Snap Peas</i>	2
<i>I've Got Grass in My...</i>	3
<i>Skeeter Eater?</i>	4
<i>The Crinum</i>	4
<i>Events Calendar</i>	5
<i>Meet the New Trainees</i>	6
<i>2019 Intern Classes</i>	7
<i>Grimes County Master Gardeners</i>	8

*Spring is Almost Here*

Spring has sprung or has it? I see green, the trees are budding out, vetch is growing on fences and the birds are singing again. It must be spring, but it sure doesn't feel like it! While we continue to be in an El Nino weather pattern with high amounts of rainfall and chilly nights, it's time to get excited about gardening again. Now is the time to start cleaning and prepping flowerbeds, garden plots, and yards. March is also one of the busiest months for purchasing great plants for our area. See **Page 5** for local plant sales.

*Daylight Saving Time is Sunday, March 10th*



Daylight saving time in the United States is the practice of setting the clock **forward by one hour** during the warmer part of the year, so that evenings have more daylight and mornings have less. Most areas of the United States observe daylight saving time, the exceptions being Arizona, Hawaii, and the overseas territories of American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and the United States Virgin Islands.

*Resources*

If you are looking for plant/tree/shrub buying options other than the big box stores then here are a few in the surrounding areas of Grimes County. Some are listed as wholesalers but they will sell to master gardeners:

- Conroe Greenhouse—111 Vickspring Road, Huntsville
- Magnolia Gardens—1980 Bowler Road, Waller
- Creekside Nursery—18729 FM 1887, Hempstead
- Antique Rose Emporium—9300 Lueckemeyer Road, Brenham
- The Arbor Gate—15635 FM 2910 Road, Tomball
- Martha's Bloomers— 8101 Highway 6, Navasota
- Producers Cooperative—1800 North Texas Avenue, Bryan

***Spring is here!  
I'm so excited I  
wet my plants.***



*Sugar Snap Pea Pod*



*Growing on a Trellis*



*Harvest Time*



*Yummy!*

## *Sugar Snaps, Delightful Delicacies*

Poor little sugar snap peas, they would so much love to make it into my kitchen; however, they may all get eaten before leaving the garden! Sugar snaps are so tasty it's difficult to not eat them right off the vine. So sweet and tender, they are easy to pop right in my mouth, who can blame me? My solution to the problem is to plant more than I think I will need. I can have enough to snack on and bring in for dinner.

Every fall, I plant Super Snap Peas, a cool-weather crop but they can also be planted in early spring. It is one of the most delightful vegetables to grow. It does not only feed me but also feeds the soil adding nitrogen, much like beans.

Sugar snaps are a member of the bean family, but unlike beans, the whole pod is eaten. Also unlike beans, peas do not open when ripe. Most varieties are climbers and need support and do best on a trellis or a fence line. After planting the seeds with a small amount of fertilizer, they usually require very little care before harvest. If moisture is present, these peas will produce an abundant amount.

Picking peas is a fun activity for my granddaughter and me to do together. Pea pods which are supported on a trellis hang down for easy picking. However, because the pods are the same color as the leaves, you will have to go over the vine a couple of times, finding these hidden jewels deep within the leaves. I gather the pods when the peas are tiny, and the pods are tender.

My preferred method for preparing the pods is steaming. I then butter, and lightly sprinkle with salt and sugar. A minimal amount of each will enhance the fantastic flavor of the peas.

Sugar Snaps are easy to preserve. Rarely if I will have any after eating fresh, but if I do I will blanch and freeze. They are also great in stir-fries, soups, or a veggie side.

With a little labor of love, sugar snaps will provide a beautiful side dish or a little snack in the garden.

Bon Appetite my friends!

*Cathey Hardeman, President, Grimes County Master Gardeners*

## *I've Got Grass in my.....*



*Bermuda Grass*

Grass and weeds are a gardener's persistent enemies; especially Bermuda Grass (*Cynodon dactylon*). Bermuda grass, which actually comes from Africa, is an introduced species that can be an excellent pasture grass but a gardener's nightmare once it gets into flowerbeds and vegetable garden plots. It is extremely difficult to kill even with multiple applications of strong herbicides but understanding how it reproduces can help in the control and eradication of it.



Bermuda grass reproduces in three ways – by seeds, by above ground shoots (stolons) and by below ground shoots (rhizomes). As any experienced gardener will tell you, just removing the top visible grass does nothing to eradicate it if you also don't remove the stolons and rhizomes. However, that can be a challenge considering the Bermuda grass rhizomes can grow 6 inches or deeper and if any is left behind then they tenaciously grow again!

There are several recommended solutions depending on where your level of effort might be:

- **Herbicides**: Use a strong herbicide repeatedly. If you don't mind using herbicides, then a repeated spraying campaign can bring Bermuda grass under control. However, you don't want to use these herbicides in your vegetable plots, and there is growing evidence that massive exposure might cause cancer.
- **Vinegar and Dish Soap**: Some people swear by this method, but others complain that the grass seems to come back even thicker and stronger after repeated spraying.
- **Mechanical Removal**: One of the more effective but labor-intensive methods is pulling out the grass by hand especially if you get all of the stolons and rhizomes. However, even breaking off some of a rhizome does not prevent the grass from continuing to grow.
- **Preventing Photosynthesis**: Preventing the grass from achieving photosynthesis by covering it with a barrier. While this method will not stop the grass from creeping back along driveways and flowerbeds, it will decrease a considerable amount in vegetable plots, and it's environmentally safe. Here are the steps:
  - Use a weed-eater to get cut the grass as low as possible or use a torch to burn off the surface grass.
  - Rake and dig up as much grass, stolons, rhizomes as possible.
  - Lay down flattened cardboard with overlapping edges and secure with sod staples.
  - Lay down a dense weed barrier cloth over the cardboard. Try to get at least 20 mils thick. This type of weed barrier will allow water to pass through but keep all sunlight out.
  - Top off the weed barrier with 4-5 inches of mulch.

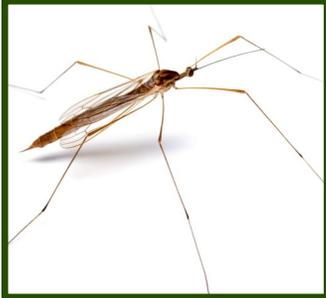


*Stolons*



*Rhizomes*

## *Skeeter Eater?*



A real sign of spring is the sudden appearance of “mosquito hawks”. They look like enlarged mosquitos with slender legs and narrow bodies and can be seen slowly bumping along house walls and doors. In reality, they don’t even have the mouth-parts to bite like a mosquito and are harmless to humans. So what are they? Well, their real name is **Crane Fly**, and the myth that they eat mosquitos is just that, a myth. They are nectar feeders and possibly help out with a little pollination in the process. There are over 4,000 different species of crane fly in the world. Their larva, which are commonly referred to as **leatherjackets**, are found in yards and gardens where they feed on plant matter after hatching. In some areas this stage of Crane fly can be destructive to gardens so steps need to be taken to eradicate them. However, once in the adult phase Crane flies cause no harm to gardens or humans.

No, the sole purpose of crane flies is not to hunt mosquitos but to provide an excellent food source for birds, lizards, fish, even spiders. Why are they here at all? Well, to mate and make future crane flies. So the next time you see a crane fly in your house, don’t think mosquitos are in the air, think love is in the air and release them outside so they can mate and lay their eggs for next year’s spring.

## *The Crinum—A Southern Heirloom*



*Crinums*

The word crinum comes from the Greek word, Krinon that means lily. The crinum is a bulbous plant that is similar to the Amaryllis. It is a genus of about 180 species of perennial plants that have large showy flowers

on leafless stems. Crinums are found in many settings including marshes, swamps, depressions and along the side of streams in tropical and subtropical areas.

The crinum like other African plants such as okra, peanuts and sweet potatoes travelled to our Southern gardens. The bulbs that can live for centuries are cherished as they are passed from one gardener to another. These long-lasting perennials thrive with low water and fertilizer needs.

Crinums can be grown in containers and even with neglect they survive in drought and extreme heat. In colder climates more care must be taken as container plants get colder in the winter than plants in the ground. Crinums thrive in shady spots. In the wild, crinums grow in moist or marshy soils and like rich, humus-filled soils. Crinums tolerate dry-wet cycles by holding and cleaning water. Some crinums grow underwater and are popular aquarium plants. The crinum can survive a year or more in

drought. Dr. William C. Welch, Professor and Texas AgriLife Extension Service Landscape Horticulturist Department of Horticulture Sciences Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas stated that “No crinum has ever died,” a statement that may be true as many crinums are found in cemeteries and around old homes. Crinums range from small and fine to large and coarse. Colors range from white, soft pink, hot pink, fuchsia and stripes.

# March 2019

## Schedule of Events

- Mar 5, 12, 19, 26: **Grimes MG**, "2019 Intern Classes", 9 a.m.—2:30 p.m., Go Texan Building, Navasota, TX
- Mar 2: **The Arbor Gate**, "Gunter's Heirloom Vegetables" 9:00 a.m.
- Mar 7: **The Arbor Gate**, "Attracting Bluebirds to the Garden", 10:00 a.m.
- Mar 7: **Brazos MG**, "Tips for Managing Pests, Diseases, and Weeds", 10 a.m., Brazos County Extension Office, Bryan
- Mar 9: **The Arbor Gate**, "The Southern Heirloom Landscape", 10 a.m.
- Mar 9: **Montgomery MG**, "Honing in on your Spring Vegetable Bounty", 8 a.m.—10 am, Conroe
- Mar 9: **Montgomery MG**, "Best Ways to Start your Vegetables Growing", 10:30 a.m.—12:00 p.m., Conroe
- Mar 10: **The Arbor Gate**, "Vegetable Gardening", 10 a.m.
- Mar 14: **GCMG Business Meeting**, 9 a.m., Grimes County Annex, Navasota
- Mar 19: **Brazos MG**, "Tough Perennials for Texas Garden", 6 p.m., Lick Creek Nature Center, College Station

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

## Plant Sales

March is a great month to load up on plants that are suited for our area. Below are several plant sales going on in our area. Bring your wagon and happy shopping!

- March 2: **Waller County Master Gardeners Spring Vegetable/Herb Sale**. 9:00—1:00 846 6th Street, Hempstead
- March 9: **Walker County Master Gardeners Spring Plant Sale**: 8:00—12:00 102 Tam Road, Huntsville
- March 15: **Festival Hill Herb/Plant Sale**: 9:00—5:00 248 Jaster Road, Round Top
- March 23: **Brazos County Master Gardeners Spring Plant Sale**: 9:00—12:00 Brazos County Extension Office, 2619 Highway 21 W., Bryan
- March 23: **Montgomery County Master Gardeners Spring Plant Sale**: 9:00—12:00, Montgomery Extension Office, 9020 Airport Road, Conroe

## Meet our New Trainees



Front Row: ME Farrell, Jennifer Thomas, Linda Jarvis, Vicki Wood, Elizabeth Meeks, Matt McEver

Back Row: Mary Farrell, Kady Hackenberg, Kelley Pritchard, Kyle Braswell, Kay Douglas

## Class of 2019



# Class of 2019



**Composting** TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION

Grimes County Master Gardeners

David Oates  
Jefferson County-Horticulture County Extension Agent  
Jefferson County  
409 835 8461  
David.oates@ag.tamu.edu

TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION



# 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)



*Azaleas*

### 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 Hardemann, 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