



Grimes County Master Gardeners



Winding Down and Gearing Up

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It's hard to believe after such a hot, dry summer that we are finally looking at cooler weather and what it means for our gardens. While the summer growing season is winding down we need to gear up for the upcoming winter months and changes that will be occurring in our area.

October is a busy month for gardeners. With cooler weather we can get back to our gardens and not be prostrate from the heat. Fall planting is the best month to get premium return on trees, shrubs and perennials. Plants established in the fall have several months to establish roots during our mild winter season. It's also an ideal time to start collecting seeds from your natives so that you can get the biggest bang for your buck on next spring's flowers.

October is an ideal time to plant new trees or relocate old ones. Their chance of survival will be greater and by spring they will have a head start.

October is also a great time to plant perennial herbs. They can be mixed in with your perennial flowers in large containers or in your vegetable garden.

If you are into roses this is the time that repeat-blooming roses are putting on their second big show.

And don't forget to plant cool weather annuals such as **pansies, violas, snapdragons, alysum, and dusty miller**, that will make dreary winter months perk up with color.

Seed Collecting and Saving

One way to acquire native plants cheaply is to collect your own seeds. Collecting seeds from roadways is usually okay but if you do collect seeds on other property than your own be sure to get permission first. Also, you do not want to destroy a native plant colony so only take about 10% of the available seeds.

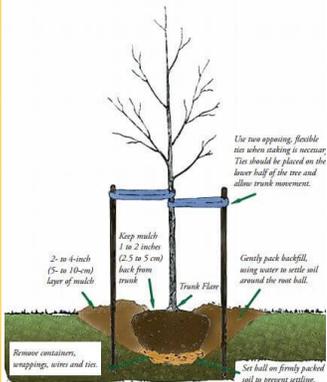
To collect, wait until the seed is ripe. In some plants the seeds will become hard, dry and dark. In some cases, you can shake off the seeds or cut the seed heads. Once collected, seeds need to be kept dry. Put them in a paper envelope (never plastic) until completely dry. Remember to label them carefully with the species, date and location where they were collected. Most seeds mature in the fall and are intended to germinate the following spring. The exact requirements for each species can be looked up but the commonest is called "cold damp stratification". This means moistening the seed and placing it in a cold environment for one or more months before planting.

Growing plants from your own seeds is a rewarding and wonderful way to expand your garden. Plants grown from seeds are usually stronger and healthier than transplants.

Fall Maintenance:

- Divide perennials and transplant wood ferns, cannas, daisies, bearded irises, and day-lilies.
- Start gathering and raking leaves for your compost.
- Make good use of fallen pine needles for mulch around trees and shrubs.

Trees and Shrubs



Tree Planting Guide



Fall is the best planting season for woody ornamental plants. It's a great time to plant roses, shrubs and trees in your landscape. By planting in the fall your plants will have over six months to establish roots before the high heat of next year.

Successful planting depends on paying attention to the proper techniques required by the individual plants.

Planting techniques are similar for trees and shrubs. Here are some planting tips:

- Planting hole should be 2 to 3 times

larger than the root ball but never deeper than the root ball.

- Water the hole first before putting in tree then water thoroughly after.
- Do not put in special soil except a little compost.
- Do not make a smooth hole—rough up the sides.
- Tree/shrub should be planted 3" above the ground.
- Keep tree flair above the ground.

Lawn Care

Fall is the last call for planting grass sod. The newly laid sod needs the next couple of months to get established before winter sets in.

Fertilizing in fall is just as important as spring fertilization. Fall fertilization prolongs fall color, increases winter hardiness, and promotes earlier spring green-up. However, fall fertilization of your lawn can be tricky. You should wait until lawns have stopped growing—if you have observed that you haven't mowed in two weeks then it's a good time to fertilize. For our area

sometime in mid-October is usually a good time to put down fertilizer. Look for fertilizers high in nitrogen and potassium but low in phosphorus. A 2-1-2 or 1-0-1 ratio is preferable.

Overseeding with winter rye is not recommended for warm weather grasses like St. Augustine but if you do want to have that green yard in winter then wait until cooler weather to sow the seeds in a lawn that has been mowed low.

Herbs

Fall means a lot less heat stress for herbs. Annuals that have been cut back will show new growth. But there are a few herbs that do not die out during fall and winter. **Rosemary, oregano** and **thyme** are all reliable growers during the cooler months. There are also several cool weather annuals that can be planted in October: **dill, cilantro, parsley, chamomile, and calendula.**

You can also try growing herbs inside during winter months but if you don't want to bother then start harvesting and preserving your summer herbs before the first frost sets in.



Herbal oils or vinegars

"If the grass looks greener on the other side, it's because they took care of it"

What the Heck is That?



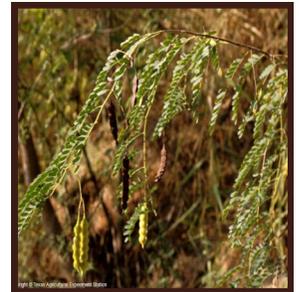
Have you recently looked at pastures in Grimes County and seen hundreds of tall looking weeds with lime green beans hanging off of them? They look like a Grinch Christmas tree! Actually they are called Rattle-bush, or Drummond

Rattlebox (*Sesbania drummondii*). It got its name because when the seed pods dry up they rattle in the wind. You can look at this plant as an invasive pest or a interesting specimen to grow in your garden. No matter what you think here are some facts about the rattle-bush:

- Grows in wet or moist soil.
- Yellow and red pea-like

blossoms provide an attractive ornamental plant in wet areas.

- Beware: rattlebox is known to be poisonous to livestock and humans.
- Can grow 15-20 feet
- Tolerates high heat
- Related to legumes



American Bumble Bee



In addition to the European honey bee or native bees as great pollinators, there is also the American bumble bee (*Bombus pensylvanicus*). While they resemble other bees as fuzzy pollinators they have some distinct differences. One of them is their size. Bumble bees with their large bodies and small wings look like they are not fit to fly properly. But this very characteristic makes them even better pollinators than many other

insects. Bumble bees perform a unique kind of pollination called **buzz pollination**. They literally vibrate flowers with their wings and large body until the pollen is released.

Another difference between bumble bees and other bees is that while they do live in colonies, the bumble bee colony only lasts for one season and is much smaller than say, a honey bee colony. In the fall, all of the bumble bees die except a fertilized queen who will hibernate during the winter usually in a hole in the ground. In the spring she will emerge and set up laying eggs immediately. The queen only takes care of the first batch of babies. Once

the first batch grows into worker bees they will take over the cleaning and guarding of the nest, finding food and taking care of the next batch of baby bees. The queen is then left to do her main job which is to lay and hatch new eggs. She will live out her life in one cycle, providing new queens and mates in the fall to generate new colonies.

There are 49 species of bumble bees in the U.S. with nine of them sited in Texas. But the bumble bees are in trouble and in decline due to many threats including habitat loss, pesticides, disease, parasites, and competition from other bees. Good gardeners can create bee friendly habitats in their

yards by doing a few things:

- Plant a large variety of native plants.
- Go organic and eliminate pesticides.
- Set up watering stations with shallow dishes.
- Provide nesting spaces in fallen logs and leaf litter.
- Submit photos to Bumble Bee Watch to help track bumble



Schedule of Events

October 2018

- Oct 6: *The Arbor Gate*, "Heirloom Bulbs", 10:00 a.m.
- Oct 9: *Grimes County Master Gardeners Monthly Meeting*, 9 a.m.—11 a.m., Grimes County Fairgrounds, Navasota
- Oct 10: *The Arbor Gate*, "Wintry Brews", 12:00 p.m.
- Oct 11, *The Arbor Gate*, "Edibles for Any Space", 10:00 a.m.
- Oct 13: *Grimes County Master Gardeners*, "Fall Bake Sale", 9:00 a.m., Walmart, Navasota
- Oct 13: *Montgomery Master Gardeners*, "Fall Plant Sale", 9:00 a.m., Conroe
- Oct 13: *Grimes County Master Gardeners*, "Fall Bake Sale", 9:00 a.m., Navasota Walmart
- Oct 16: *Brazos Master Gardeners*, "How to Grow Succulents in Containers", 6:00 p.m., Lick Creek Nature Center, College Station
- Oct 18: *The Arbor Gate*, "Attracting Blue Birds to the Garden" 10:00 a.m.
- Oct 20: *Grimes County Master Gardeners*, "Fall Workshop, 9:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m., Navasota River Halls
- Oct 27: *Grimes County Master Gardeners*, "Trunk or Treat", 5:00 p.m., Anderson
- Oct 27: *Brazos Master Gardeners*, "Wings in the Garden", 9:30 a.m.—Noon, Brazos County Demonstration Idea Garden, Bryan
- Oct 27: *Montgomery Master Gardeners*, "Fall Open Gardens Day", 9:00 a.m.—11:00 a.m., Conroe

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			

Master Gardeners Bake Sale: Oct 13th



Calling All Bakers! We need your baked goods for the upcoming fall bake sale at the Navasota Walmart on October 13th. Whole cakes and pies would be appreciated.

"Trunk or Treat": Oct 27th



Get out your broomsticks! Once again our Gardening Witches will be at the Anderson Trunk or Treat on Saturday, October 27th. If you want to have a super fun time with the kids please join us - dressed up or not!

Master Gardeners Fall Workshop—Oct 20th

If you want to take the upcoming **Fall Workshop** then please register by **October 15th**. This workshop is going to be a hands-on class for landscaping your yard using drought tolerant and native plants.

When: Saturday, October 20th, 9:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.

Where: Navasota River Halls (2692 Hwy 105 West, Navasota)

How to Register: Call: 936-873-3907 or sign up on the Grimes County Master Gardeners Facebook Page Event or email grimes-tx@tamu.edu.

Our Fall Social—September 11th



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

2018 Board of Directors

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- Vice PresidentSharon Murry
- SecretaryRenee Harter
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- FundraisingCarol Garnet
- Historian.....Sharon Murry
- Newsletter.....Paula Parmley
- Nominating.....Carol Garnet
- Social AwardsKimberly Hertan/Connie Arden
- TimekeepingMartha Brogdon
- TMGA AwardsAnn DeWitt/Connie Arden
- Master Gardener Class CoordinationHerb Abraham
- 2018 Conference Registration.....Georgia Abraham
- 2018 Fall WorkshopAnn DeWitt
- 2018 Buckingham ProjectMichael Havens/Cathey Hardeman



Fall Aster