



# Grimes County Master Gardeners



## Inside this issue:

<i>Is it Poison Ivy?</i>	2
<i>Help the Monarchs</i>	2
<i>Wildflower of the Month</i>	3
<i>Hummingbird Moth</i>	3
<i>Events Calendar</i>	4
<i>Recognitions</i>	5
<i>Grimes County Master Gardeners</i>	6

## Layaway for Spring:

- Spring bulbs are showing up in nurseries and catalog companies so purchase now for future planting: Nov-Jan.
- Texas Wildflower seeds are available. Purchase seeds now and prepare soil in September for planting in October.

## *Fall—The Other Spring*

*By Cathey Hardeman, Texas Master Gardener*

As temperatures are sizzling, we can't imagine getting out in the garden to prepare for planting cool weather crops. However, we all want to enjoy fresh vegetables for Thanksgiving, right? Well let's discuss it before you say "no way"!!! Gardening in the fall is a pleasant and productive activity. Pests are less active, plants are not as thirsty and there are fewer weeds. So let's give consideration to the most rewarding time to be in your vegetable garden.

The following plants need to be planted now for a fall harvest: **fall tomatoes, bell peppers, and cucumbers**. If you have **squash** transplants, they can still be planted at this time. These plants can be found in nurseries or the big box stores. Keep them well watered and fed. They surely would enjoy a little shade in the afternoon, if possible. It is delightful to have these veggies for your holiday meals.

It is also time to seed the cole plants. Cole plants include **cabbage, broccoli, Brussels sprouts and cauliflower**. These are some of the cool weather loving vegetables. To do this, place a couple of seeds in four-inch pots. For your medium, use compost or bagged soil. Keep your little plants well watered and place in morning sun if possible. They can be placed in the ground when they are around three or four inches tall. As always, keep well watered.

The greens so many love need to be planted later. Many plant guides suggest planting now; however, if greens are planted with the temperature as high as they are at this time they may bolt (go to seed). Many gardeners wait and watch for below eighty degrees. When it appears that the summer has finally left and the weather is cooler, plant the greens like **collards, mustard, spinach, turnips, and lettuces**. Be careful with lettuce, as it will go to seed easily. Make sure the hot temperatures are really gone.

**Carrots, sugar snaps, lettuces**, love cold weather. Plant these by seed. For sweeter, more flavorful carrots, leave carrots in the ground until after the first freeze. Sugars rush into the roots, making a great flavorful carrot. In our zone, head lettuce is not recommended. However, lovely **red, butter crunch and romaine** lettuce can be successfully grown if the weather cooperates. Harvest greens when they are young and tender.

Although many gardeners place **seed potatoes** in the ground in February, some folks plant them in late December along with onions with success.

A couple of things to remember:

- Mulch, mulch, mulch!!!
- Replenish and feed your soil. It will thank you with lovely baskets of veggies.

Hopefully this little bit of information piques your interest in fall and winter gardening. Your palate will thank you for the hard work that vegetable gardens require.

***Keep your fingernails and knees dirty!***



Virginia Creeper



Poison Ivy



Peppervine

## Is it Poison Ivy?

Before becoming a Texas Master Gardener I was convinced that all of my oak trees were infested with poison ivy vines. Each winter when the vines were dormant I would take sharp loppers and cut them at the base and pull them out of the trees.

Since then I've educated myself on those vines and guess what? They were NOT poison ivy vines but

**Virginia creeper vines** (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*). Virginia creeper is very common in Grimes County with similar looking leaves and aerial rootlets. However, the primary difference between these vines is the shape and number of leaflets on a leaf. Virginia creeper has **five leaflets per**

**leaf**, whereas poison ivy only has **three leaves, one on each side and one in the center**. Poison ivy leaves are also shiny with smooth or slightly notched edges.

While Virginia creeper does not cause a reaction in humans, many people are allergic to poison ivy usually resulting in a very irritating and itchy rash.

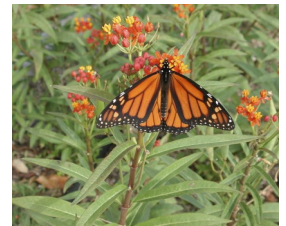
Another vine that is also prevalent in Grimes County and often mistaken for poison ivy is **Peppervine**. Peppervine (*Ampelopsis arborea*) is a close relative to grapes. The leaves are very dark green and the shape resembles a holly leaf. The big difference is that peppervine produces grape-like berries starting in late August.

These berries turn into clusters of blue-black grape-like fruit. Though delicious, if consumed most people get a weird tickle in the back of their throat after eating. This tickle is actually due to tiny needles of calcium oxalate which are a defensive measure of the peppervine. Excessive consumption of calcium oxalate will result in chemical burns in your throat. If you are interested in picking and consuming peppervine berries, please research extensively first.

So back to poison ivy. If you are in doubt remember this saying: "Leaves of three, let it be".

## Help The Monarchs

A plant that has started to show up in nurseries and gardens in the last few years is the Mexican milkweed or Tropical milkweed (*Asclepias curassavica*). While this plant attracts many pollinators, the one that you don't want to attract is the Monarch butterfly. Here's the reason why. The butterflies will hang around in the fall eating up the tender, juicy green foliage instead of starting their yearly migration. And if the plant is still around all fall the female monarch will start busily depositing her eggs on the underside of the leaves. By November, she should be safely in her wintering sites in Mexico, not stuck in Texas.



Another potential problem is that any Mexican milkweed plants that survive a mild winter can host a deadly protozoan parasite called *Ophryocystis elektroscirrha* (OE for short). As caterpillars, monarchs ingest the parasite on the leaves. When they emerge from their chrysalises, according to *Science* magazine, they are covered in OE spores. Then the spores drop onto the milkweed plants to infest the next monarch.

It's best to cut down Mexican milkweed in September or October the latest, so that the females migrating through will not stop to eat and lay their eggs. If you want to help the monarchs in your garden purchase native milkweed species so that the returning monarchs will have something healthy to forage on.

## Hooker's Palafoxia — September Wildflower of the Month



The Hooker's Palafoxia is an incredible heat and drought tolerant wildflower. It's part of the Aster family and grows in sandy pastures, prairies and along woodland edges.

### FACTS

**Description:** Stiffly upright stem with branching from the middle. The flower is about 1/2 inch long.

**Habitat:** Deep, dry sandy soil.

**Water Use:** Low

**Light Requirement:** Sun, Part Shade

**Height:** 16-40 inches

**Duration:** Annual

**Bloom Color:** Pink

**Bloom Period:** June, July, August, September, October

**Germination:** The plant is easily grown from fall-sown seeds and will continue to bloom over a long period of time if not allowed to set the seed. To be sure you get a plant each year, let the last flowers of the season mature and self-sow.

**Wildflowers don't care where they grow!**

## Hummingbird Moth



We talk a lot about our butterflies. How to create gardens for them, which species are in our area, and which plants help the larva. But we don't talk as much about the butterfly's cousin, the moth. They are not as spectacular in their colors or delicate physicality but some of them are just as interesting in their habits and what they bring to our gardens as additional pollinators.

One particular moth that is

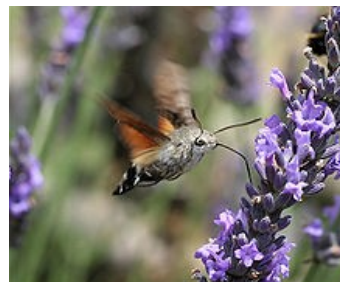
prevalent in our area is the sphynx moth also known as a hummingbird moth. The most common of these is the white-lined sphinx moth. These moths have large bodies but small wings which means they need to beat their wings very fast to fly. They are often mistaken for hummingbirds because of their similar flight pattern and hovering ability.

The White-Lined Sphinx Moth is easily identified by their markings. Their forewings are mostly brown, but each has a thick white line that extends from the base (by the head) to the tip of the wing. The tops of the hindwings each have a flash of bright pink that is only visible when the moth com-

pletely spreads its forewings open.

The adults mostly fly at dusk, during the night, and at dawn, but some have been seen during the day.

Hummingbird moths are really awesome to watch. And you can plant a moon garden in conjunction with your butterfly garden to attract these moths. They are attracted to flowers with white blooms that open or are their most fragrant in the evening.



**Here are a few excellent moon garden plants:**

- Sweet Autumn Clematis
- Coneflower 'White Swan'
- *Zinnia linearis*
- White Datura
- White Autumn Sage
- White Daffodils
- Periwinkle, *Vinca* white varieties
- Magnolias
- White Azaleas

**Schedule of Events**

# September 2018

- Sept 8: Montgomery Master Gardeners, “Native Plants for our Gardens”, 8:00 a.m., Thomas LeRoy Ed. Bldg. Montgomery, TX
- Sept 8: Martha’s Bloomers, “Herbs—What to do with them”, 11:00 a.m., Arbor Room
- Sept 8: Arborsgate, “New and Improved Vertical Gardens”, 10:00 a.m.
- Sept 11: Grimes County Master Gardeners Fall Social, 6:00 p.m., The Abraham Residence
- Sept 12: Brazos Master Gardeners, “Saving Seeds for New Year’s Garden”, 12:00 p.m., Brazos County Extension Office
- Sept 18: Brazos Master Gardeners, “Make Room for Butterflies”, 6:00 p.m., Lick Creek Nature Center
- Sept 22: Brazos Master Gardeners, “Container Gardening”, 10:00 a.m., Clara Mounce Library
- Sept 25: Brazos Master Gardeners, “Butterflies of the DIG”, 7:00 p.m., The Brazos Center
- Sept 26: Brazos Master Gardeners, “Cool Season Vegetables in B/CS”, 12:00 p.m., Brazos County Extension Office
- Sept 29: Walker Master Gardeners, “Fall Plant Sale, 8:00 a.m., 102 Tam Road

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 ★

## Don't Forget our Fall Social

Grimes County Master Gardeners Fall Social will be held at **Herb and Georgia Abraham’s** lovely home on **Tuesday, September 11th** starting at 6:00 p.m. This is a great time to visit, share wonderful food and get to know each other a little bit better.

**Address:** 9505 Bishop Bend, Iola (King Oaks Development).

**Directions:**

**Access from CR 175 using the front entrance to King Oaks** take Highway 30 toward College Station and turn right on CR 175, the last paved road just 0.5 mile before reaching the Navasota River (you went too far). From Highway 30 follow CR 175 two miles to the King Oaks entrance. At the stop sign continue straight 0.6 mile on King Oaks Dr. and turn right on Lancaster. Follow Lancaster 0.8 mile and turn right on St. John. Go 1.0 mile on St. John (it changes to Scarborough after crossing the Nature Preserve) and turn left on Bishop Bend. The driveway is 0.2 mile after you turn left.

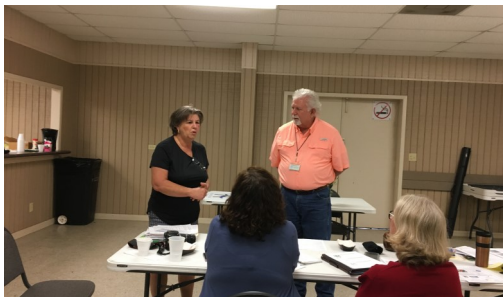
**Access from CR 175 using the back entrance (coming from Keith area—unpaved road).** Just past the Martins Prairie Church and Cemetery turn right on Winston (entrance is nearly hidden), turn left on Scarborough and an immediate right on Bishop Bend. The driveway is 0.25 mile on the right.

## Teaching Opportunity

Grimes County Master Gardeners had a teaching opportunity in July at Camp Allen. A program named **Mom's Summer Camp** provided information for 250 women from all areas across Texas.

**Michael Havens** and **Cathey Hardeman** provided classroom instruction on two subjects. Cathy presented a section on **"Growing your own Groceries"** and Michael provided information on **"Basic Landscaping"**. Afterwards they were presented with a donation to Grimes County Master Gardeners.

Thank you both!



*Cathey Hardeman  
Michael Havens*

## Other News



Congratulations!

Grimes County Master Gardener's President Michael Havens and Grimes County Extension Agent Allen Homann presented **Kathy Spaulding, Paula Parmley** and **Pat Parmley** with their Texas Master Gardener plaques at the August meeting certifying they had completed all the required courses and volunteer service.

## American Beautyberry Jelly

### Ingredients:

- 3 cups prepared juice (approximately 6 cups berries)
- 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
- 1 box Fruit Pectin
- 1/2 tsp. butter or margarine
- 4-1/2 cups sugar, measured in separate bowl

### Directions:

Prepare your canning jars and lids as specified in the USDA Canning Guide. Remove and discard stems from the beautyberries. Place in saucepan and add water to just cover the berries. Cook on medium heat until juice starts to flow, stirring occasionally. Reduce heat to low, cover and simmer 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. Place 3 layers of damp cheesecloth or jelly bag in large bowl. Pour prepared fruit into the cheesecloth, tie it closed and hang to let it drip until the dripping stops. Press gently to get remaining juice. Measure exactly 3 cups prepared juice into an 8-qt. saucepan. Stir in lemon juice first then the pectin. Add butter to reduce foaming. Bring mixture to a full rolling boil on high heat, stirring occasionally. Stir in sugar and return to full boil—boil exactly 1 minute, stirring constantly. Remove from heat, skim off foam with metal spoon. Ladle immediately into prepared jars, filling to within 1/4 inch from tops. Finish according to canning instructions with lids and rings tightly screwed on. Process for 5 minutes. Remove jars and cool completely.

# 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)

### 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 Herten/Connie Arden  
Timekeeping .....Martha Brogdon  
TMGA Awards .....Ann DeWitt/Connie Arden  
  
Master Gardener Class Coordination.....Herb Abraham  
2018 Conference Registration.....Georgia Abraham  
2018 Fall Seminar .....Ann DeWitt  
2018 Buckingham Project .....Michael Havens/Cathey Hardeman



*Pink Turk's Cap*