

Sept / Oct 2022
Volume 14, Issue V



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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.



September/October Gardening Tasks



Hello fellow gardeners! We hope you are all beating the heat and the drought, but most importantly looking ahead to the fall! Although the severe summer heat is starting to leave us, we are still a long way from cool fall temperatures. But, those milder days of fall are around the corner. Let's turn our thoughts to caring for our drought-stressed plants and trees, and next to a time of preparation for our fall gardens.

Caring for Drought-Stressed Plants and Trees

- ◆ When possible, resume a regular watering schedule. It can be tempting to over-water, but you want to ease your plants back into health and not drown them or their roots.
- ◆ Avoid pruning of trees and shrubs as this may cause added stress. We all want to prune dead limbs, but trees need their canopies to prevent scorching and burning. Of course, if the dead limbs pose a danger, then pruning is appropriate.
- ◆ Once the drought ends and watering can resume, a slow-release fertilizer will help plants recover. Choose a fertilizer with a high percentage of phosphorus to aid in repairing the root system.
- ◆ Check drought-stressed plants for pests and diseases. Catching these problems early may eliminate spreading.
- ◆ Keep those stressed roots cool by replenishing mulch once plants have been watered and fed.

Preparing for Fall Gardens

- ◆ For both existing and new garden areas, preparing the soil will be your first step toward a healthy fall garden. Consider doing a soil test prior to planting.
- ◆ Generally, fall crops do better when started from transplants than from seed.
- ◆ Check the average planting dates for fall vegetables in your growing region of Texas. Most dates range from early September to mid-November.
- ◆ Pick the best vegetable varieties for Texas and research the proper harvest times.
- ◆ Don't forget about herbs! In addition to adding flavor to your foods, many herbs have medicinal properties.

For more information regarding fall vegetable gardening guides for Texas go to:

www.agrilifeextension.tamu.edu

By Donette Bisett, Texas Master Gardener

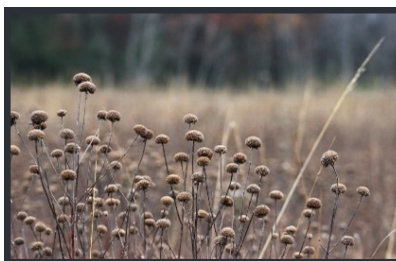
Spreading Seeds of Joy by Donette Bisett

So much life can be found in a small patch of wildflowers; brilliant colors, different types and sizes of plants, and the constant buzzing and humming of insects and butterflies dancing around blooms. Incorporating native wildflowers into your landscaping is one of the most beneficial things you can do for the local ecosystem. And, wildflowers bring joy to gardeners as they grow anywhere and everywhere! You can purchase wildflower seed packs, but let's talk about collecting seeds from the wildflowers and perennials around your home. These seeds are equipped to survive as they are conditioned to the soil and climate.

Seeds should be harvested anywhere from 4-8 weeks after blooming. A few indicators of seed ripeness include pods that have turned from green to brown, seeds that fall easily from a plant, and seed capsules that are bursting open.



Native Wildflowers



Seeds Ready for Collecting



Paper Bag over Flower Seeds



Use a Tarp to Collect



Cut and Separate Seeds



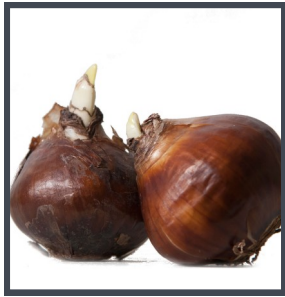
Seed Storage

Wildflower seeds should be collected on a dry day to prevent the possibility of mold growth. Here is how to collect seeds:

1. Place a paper bag over immature seeds and tie it off with a string. As the seeds mature and drop, you can catch them in your bag. At the same time, enough light and air will be supplied to the plant to allow it to grow.
2. Catching seeds in a drop cloth or tarp is another option. As seeds ripen, shake the plant gently and catch on the cloth or tarp.
3. Cutting seeds away from the plant is sometimes the easiest way to harvest seeds. Use pruners or scissors to remove the entire pod or seedhead from the plant.
4. Next, separate seeds from plant debris by rubbing the seeds with the plant debris over a screen with a gloved hand. This separation helps to reduce the chances of contamination with insect eggs or seed-disease carriers. If the seeds are moist, allow them to dry out on newspaper before storing. Once dry, seeds should be stored in paper bags or envelopes in a dry, dark, cool area.

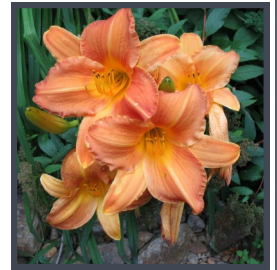
Whether you plant your seeds in the fall or spring, we know that you will be excited to see the beautiful palette of colors you have created. Happy Gardening!

Bulbs & Perennials by Paula Parmley



October through early November is a great month to plant spring-blooming bulbs in our area. These flowering bulbs will provide early color in your garden before your other perennials begin their spring blooming. It's also a good time to divide bulbs and transplant perennials. Look at your garden and see if some of them are producing at peak or are they not getting the right conditions? Remember the saying, "*right plant for the right place.*" If your perennials are not performing, then try transplanting them to a new area this month. This will give them all winter to put down roots and "spring" back into action next year. Take advantage of the fall plant sales in our area as they have extensive selections of perennials.

As for bulbs, there are several types that can be planted now, such as **Day Lilies, Gladiola, Amaryllis, Calla Lilies, Daffodils, Narcissus, Dutch Iris, Snowflakes.** These bulbs tend to naturalize which means they come back year after year. If they naturalize well then they should increase in size each year which may require thinning at some point. After blooming it is best not to remove the mature foliage until it begins to turn yellow.



Two bulbs, **Hyacinth** and **Tulips**, cannot be planted at this time as they require at least 6 - 8 weeks of refrigeration or chill time. However, **now** is the time to purchase them before supplies run out with nurseries or catalog stores. If pre-chilled now, then they will be ready to plant in early January with blooming in March. Beware, if you store these bulbs in your refrigerator do not leave them near apples which emits a gas that will cause the bulbs to be deformed. Also, tulips are annuals in this area so once they have bloomed you will want to discard and start over again next year.



Planting Requirements: Plant in well-drained soil in a sunny location. Best planted in groupings of at least 3 to 5. Plant with the pointy-end up in a mix of compost and fertilizer at the base of the bulb. Research planting depth for each bulb type. Cover and mulch 3-4". Water well after planting but not to the point of being soggy as they will rot.

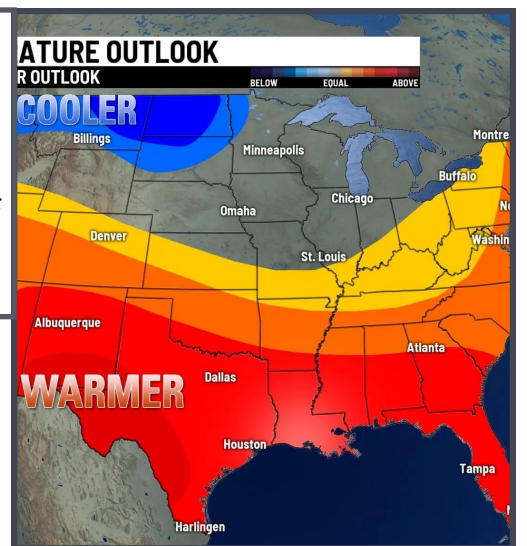
2022-2023 Winter Forecasts

The Old Farmers Almanac forecasts a cold, dry winter for Texas in 2022-2023

22-2023 WINTER FORECAST REVEALED



NOAA forecasts a continuation of the La Nina pattern with a warmer and dryer winter for 2022-2023



Fall—The Other Spring by Cathey Hardeman

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!

Love and Loss in the Garden by Patti Sexton



For those gardeners who find they receive strength, peace, and comfort while working the soil and watching gardens grow, this summer has been a particularly stressful time. The heat and drought really took its toll on the flora that normally provides a sense of comfort. As a result, some gardeners could become casualties of love and loss in the garden.

For me, I receive great comfort from being outside in nature, one with my natural surroundings. Not many activities bring me such peace. However, in the past months, I have become more and more of a recluse taking shelter. Besides the intense heat, it is emotionally painful to venture outside only to witness the carnage that once

was my green sanctuary.

As of this writing, our area is finally starting to get rainfall that is replenishing all those thirsty and struggling plants, trees and shrubs. But the damage of the past few months with its extreme high heat and drought have wrecked havoc on those plants that normally can withstand drought conditions. It has also made our garden oasis not so pleasurable.

Feeling at times helpless to make a difference, powerless to control mother nature, and hopeless for the future, the drought and heat actually take a toll on our mental health as much as physical health? Sources of joy and positive energy, seem to be indeed drying up.

The Bhekisisa, (“to scrutinize” in Zulu) Centre for Health Journalism, is a non-profit independent media organization specializing in narrative, solutions journalism focusing on health and social justice issues in Africa and globally as well (Kenyon, 2019). The Center studied suicide rates among the aboriginals in Australia and found that they have skyrocketed as a result of severe drought, brush fires and extreme heat in that country. They also studied the relationship the indigenous aboriginals have with their natural surroundings and found the culture holds the land as sacred and the promise of being community stewards of the environment.

As nature lovers, it is understandable to feel the responsibility and respect for our habitat, as we seek to protect and promote its beauty. When nature fails to provide for itself it may result in intensifying not only stress but can actually cause grief. According to Fiona Livingstone of the University of Newcastle Center for Rural and Remote Mental Health, “If the land is sick, you are sick.” Experiences of not being able to take care of the land and watching helplessly as the flora begins to die, can have the effect of exacerbating the trauma. (Livingstone, 2019).

Laboring within our gardens can bring such joy so too can watching helplessly as they die bring emotional stress. How can we cope with environmental stressors? Fortunately, there are positive aspects to gardening even within this period of uncertainty. Research has shown those who have experienced losses within their gardens in the past develop a different mindset. Junior Master Gardeners are taught that failures in the garden can mean a potential for learning, adapting, and overcoming.

Adaptive capacity is defined as the potential ability of a system, region, or community to adapt to the effects or impacts of climate change. Enhancement of adaptive capacity represents a practical means of coping with changes and uncertainties in climate, including variability and extremes. Enhancement of adaptive capacity reduces vulnerabilities.

For those coping with losses in the garden this summer, take comfort. It is very normal to have emotions of sadness and even some depression. However, although we lost the vegetation we have loved and nurtured, autumn is approaching with cooler temperatures and more rainfall. With it comes the renewal of hope and excitement. Most importantly, we can learn from our losses. Replace those withered stalks with new varieties for stronger adaptability. Till the soil for another garden. For as stewards of the land, this is what brings our peace, healing, and joy.

GRIMES COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

Speakers Bureau

Do You Need a Guest Speaker?



The Grimes County Master Gardener Association has a Speakers Bureau made up of friendly, knowledgeable Master Gardeners! We offer speakers on a variety of topics to garden clubs and other organizations upon request.

Please contact us 936-873-3907 or send an email to request a speaker at grimescountymastergardeners@gmail.com



Become a Grimes County Master Gardener



2023 Grimes County Master Gardener Class



Grimes County Master Gardeners will hold a Master Gardener Training Class starting January 2023.

Classroom courses will be held at the Navasota Center, 103 Stadium Drive, Navasota, Texas 77868.

Specific courses, dates and times of training are still to be determined.

Grimes County Master Gardeners will be offering more than 50 hours of on-line and/or classroom courses taught by Texas A&M horticulture specialist, staff and area horticulture experts to meet the 50 hour requirement to become a certified Texas Master Gardener. The class offers instruction in topics such as:

- ♦ Plant Growth and Development
- ♦ Soils, Water and Plant Nutrients
- ♦ Fruits and Vegetable Gardening
- ♦ Ornamental Trees and Shrubs
- ♦ Earth-Kind Landscaping
- ♦ Integrated Pest Management
- ♦ Lawn Care

Registration is \$220. Price includes a Master Gardener Handbook, Master Gardener T-Shirt, and Other Training Materials. Please contact Herb Abraham through the email or phone number listed below for more information on the class or to be added to the roster.

Learn, Grow, Share

Herb Abraham, Grimes County Master Gardener

Phone: 703-801-3273 (voice or text)

Email: herbabraham@gmail.com

New Grimes County Master Gardeners!

Congratulations to our newest Texas Master Gardeners!

From Left to Right: Donette Bissett, Layne Payant, Jeffie Cappadonna, and Jenny Morgan.

Not shown is Nancy Vidotto, who also completed her Texas Master Gardener Requirements.



Grimes County Master Gardeners—August 2022 Monthly Meeting with Guest Speakers: Mike and Connie Arden, Grimes County Master Gardeners. Subject: Trees in Texas



Events

Grimes County Master Gardeners will have their September Monthly Meeting on **Tuesday, September 13 starting at 9:00 a.m.** at the Navasota Center in Navasota, Texas.

September 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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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	






Continuing Education and Events

- September 1-29: Waller County Master Gardeners, **"Tree Sale"**, Online Tree Sale
Pickup: October 1, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Two locations. For more information: <https://txmg.org/wallermg>
- September 6-13-20-27: Urban Harvest, **"Basic Organic Gardening—4 Part Series"** 6:00 p.m.—7:30 p.m., Zoom
- September 10: Urban Harvest, **"How to Attract the Good Guys"**, 9:30—11:30 a.m., Zoom, \$20
- September 11: Montgomery County Master Gardeners, **"On-line Fall Plant Sale"**, 9:00 a.m.—8:00 p.m., Pickup September 17 and 18, 9020 Airport Road, Conroe, Texas.
- September 12 & 20: Harris County Master Gardeners, **"Green Thumb Series—Plant Propagation"**, go to Facebook/harriscountyp/ events
- September 17: Brazos County Master Gardeners, **"Wildlife Photography"**, 10:00 a.m.—11:00 a.m., Clara Mounce Library, Bryan, Texas
- September 18: Brazos County Master Gardeners, **"Wildlife Photography"**, 3:00 p.m.—4:00 p.m., Lick Creek Park, 13600 Rock Prairie Road, College Station, Texas
- September 21: Urban Harvest, **"All About Alliums: Growing Garlic, Onions, & Their Relatives"**, 7:00 p.m.—8:00 p.m., Zoom, Free.

Events

Grimes County Master Gardeners will have their **Fall Social** on Saturday, **October 1st**. Details to be announced at a later date.

October 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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2	3	4 	5	6	7	8 
9	10	11	12	13	14	15 
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
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30	31					

Continuing Education and Events

- October 4: Urban Harvest, "**Fall Planting Demonstration**", 6:30 p.m.—7:30 p.m. In Person at the Urban Harvest Teaching Garden.
- October 8: Walker County Master Gardeners, "**Fall Plant Sale**", 8:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m. 102 Tam Road, Huntsville, Texas.
- October 8: Urban Harvest, "**Composting with Bokashi**", 9:30 a.m.—11:30 a.m., Zoom, \$20.
- October 8: Montgomery County Master Gardeners, "**Container Gardening—Backyard to Grow Rooms**", 9:00 a.m.—11:00 a.m., 9020 Airport Road, Conroe, Texas, \$5.00.
- October 15: Montgomery County Master Gardeners, "**Fall Open Gardens Day**", 9:00 a.m.—Noon, Free
- October 15: Montgomery County Master Gardeners, "**Fall Herb, Vegetable & Succulent Sale**", 9:00 a.m.—Noon., 9020 Airport Road, Conroe, Texas.
- October 29: Grimes County Master Gardeners, "**Trunk or Treat**", 6:00 p.m. Anderson, Texas

Texas Master Gardeners

203 Veterans Memorial Drive
Navasota, Texas 77868

Website: txmg.org/grimes
Facebook: www.facebook.com/GrimesCountyMasterGardeners



Grimes County Master Gardeners

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



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