



# INSIDE DIRT

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

### President's Message

David Bickerstaff, Master Gardener

Our members have been busy in the summer heat. Our DREAM garden at the East Texas Arboretum has a new fence and we are in the process of replacing the pathway. Our new Harvest Garden located at Athens Fair grounds is taking shape with raised bed gardens, a hoop house, fruit trees, grapes and more. We have strengthened our partnership with Trinity Valley Community College and the greenhouse on the Athens campus that we use and manage is in the process of some maintenance and upgrades. We are also working with some of the local schools to assist them in establishing a children's garden. Our community outreach provides monthly speakers and gardening workshops. A new master gardener training class will also begin in early September.



We invite you to attend a day-long workshop "Tomato Town" on October 26<sup>th</sup> from 8:00am until 3:30pm at Athens Country Club. We have some wonderful expert speakers that will assist you in learning about and growing tomatoes. Read this issue of *Inside Dirt* or visit our website for more information. (*Editor's note: A flyer for the event is on page 5.*)

Please enjoy reading this issue of *Inside Dirt* and happy gardening!

David Bickerstaff, President HCMGA

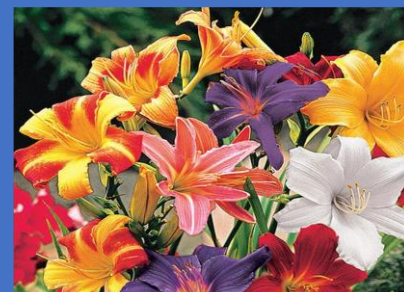
### Daylilies, the "Perfect Perennial"

David Bickerstaff, Master Gardener

One of my favorite plants in the garden are daylilies. Daylilies belong to the genus *Hemerocallis* and are in fact not true lilies. This Greek word is made up of two parts: *hemera* meaning day and *kallos* meaning beauty. The name is appropriate, since each flower lasts only one day. Unfortunately, when many people think of daylilies, they think of little



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yellow 'Stella de Oro' or the orange "ditch lily". Few people are familiar with the broad range of sizes, forms, colors and stunning patterns found in the modern daylily.

There are more than 80,000 named daylily cultivars! Some cultivars bloom just a foot above the ground, and others reach over your head, with average height about 24 to 28 inches. Typical daylily form is a round open face with six petal segments. However, one can also find long, narrow spider forms, twisting and turning unusual forms, and double forms that look like pom-poms. But it is the color patterns that really draw me into a fascination with daylilies that can begin to border on addiction! On one end of the spectrum are soft pastel creams, peach, pinks and lavenders. On the other end are dark reds and purples that are nearly black. In between are vibrant purples, reds, yellows, oranges and hot pinks. Hemerocallis is one of the very highly hybridized plant genera. Hybridizers register hundreds of new cultivars yearly.

The daylily is referred to as "the perfect perennial" by many gardeners due to its brilliant colors, ability to tolerate drought and frost and to thrive in many different climate zones, as well as its low maintenance.

### Some daylily facts:

- Daylilies are rugged, adaptable, vigorous perennials that endure in a garden for many years with little or no care
- Daylilies adapt to a wide range of soil and light conditions
- They establish quickly, grow vigorously, and survive winters with little or no injury
- Daylilies are useful in the perennial flower border, as a backdrop to other plants or as a ground cover on slopes, where they form a dense mass in just a few years.
- Daylilies may grow from 1 to 4 feet high
- Do not plant them directly under trees and shrubs as they will compete for water and nutrients
- The flowers continue blooming during the heat of the summer
- Daylilies are attractive to many pollinators, including butterflies, bees and hummingbirds.

### History of the daylily

Daylilies have a long and interesting history. Daylilies are native to eastern Asia where they were used for food, medicine and garden color. Manuscripts from 2700 B.C. are the first written records of daylilies! They were introduced to Europe in the 1500s, and subsequently to America in the 1800s. It was here in the United States, in the 1920s, that Arlow Burdette Stout, director of the New York Botanical Garden, began breeding the native daylilies to create modern hybrids. Today, new cultivars are being created by hundreds

## HCMGA Projects

- **Children's Garden:** HCMGA is available for consultation on school or teaching gardens.
- **DREAM Garden:** (Demonstrate, Research, Educate, Apply, Maintain) The HCMGA maintains a cottage-style ornamental garden at the East Texas Arboretum in Athens.
- **Fall Conference:** The largest fundraiser for HCMGA, this conference includes a guest speaker, possible raffles and/or auctions and a dinner.
- **Greenhouse:** The HCMGA maintains a greenhouse located at Trinity Valley Community College. This greenhouse allows us to propagate and grow plants that are sold at our annual spring plant sale.
- **Harvest Garden:** The HCMGA's newest project, the Harvest Garden, is a teaching garden on growing fruits and vegetables with hands-on demonstrations. It is located inside the Regional Fairpark Complex.
- **Library Series:** Educational presentations are hosted by the HCMGA on the third Tuesday of each month. These programs are open to the public at the Clint W. Murchison Memorial Library in Athens.
- **Plant Sale:** The HCMGA hosts an annual plant sale in the spring which is open to the public. Master Gardeners propagate and grow different varieties of plants and trees. This event is a major fundraiser for the organization.
- **Summer Series:** Workshops are provided in the summer months to share expertise and educate the public on various gardening topics.

of individual hybridizers, primarily in the United States. Some hybridizers operate on a grand scale with acres of daylilies. But many are created by hobbyist hybridizers working in their own back yards.

## Growing daylilies



Daylilies can be planted in the early spring or late fall and should be grown in a mostly sunny location. Some shade is fine, but dense shade will stunt growth and flower production. Typically, the daylily requires at least six hours of direct sunlight per day. Use a soil mixture that allows drainage but also retains moisture. Most any good garden soil will work for daylilies. My daylilies seem to love my East Texas soil which is sandy with some pine needles. I add some peat moss as well for a soil amendment. Plant them so the crown is just slightly above ground level and allow a 16- to 20-inch spacing. Grow from fleshy roots below ground with fans of leaves above ground, coming together at the crown of the plant. From the crown, flower stalks (scapes) will emerge in May and June, bearing typically 10 to 20 flower buds.

Though each flower is only open for one day (thus the name), the buds will take turns opening, resulting in weeks of garden color. And many cultivars send up repeat scapes into June, July and August.

Over time, new daylily fans will emerge from the crown, forming clumps. These clumps can be divided and moved to other parts of your yard or shared and traded with friends. In East Texas, a good time for dividing and planting daylilies is early spring, and again in the fall.

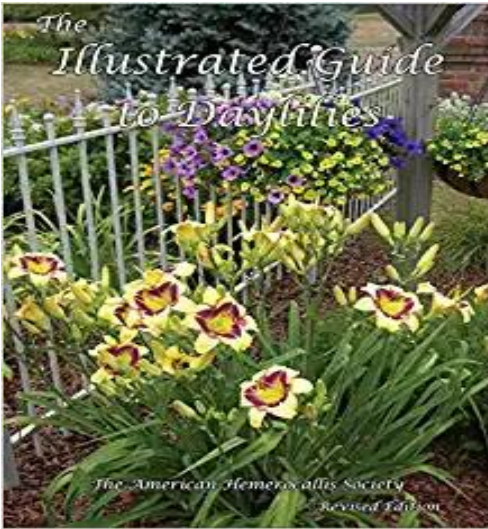
Fertilize in early spring and again about six weeks later with a high nitrogen fertilizer. Nitrogen tends to leach from the soil with watering and rain, and needs to be replenished, whereas phosphorus and potassium tends to bind to the soil particles and remain available to your plants for a longer time. Water a couple times a week, either late in the evening or early in the morning to prevent stagnant water from sitting in the fans during the heat of the day, which can cause rot. Mulching between plants is a good idea for moisture retention and weed control but keep the mulch a few inches away from the base of the plants.

As much as you might like daylilies, deer like them even more — to eat, that is. So, plant them where deer can't reach them, for instance inside a tall fence. Aphids and thrips can be a problem for any garden plant. On daylilies, they seem to be at their worst in the winter when they hunker down at the base of the leaves. Use an insecticide or organic spray early in the season, and you should be ok the rest of the year. During warm weather, spider mites affect daylilies along with most everything else in your garden. A strong blast of water to the underside of the foliage twice a week will keep spider mites under control. During periods of extended high humidity, be on the lookout for small orange spots on the foliage, which indicates a fungal disease called rust. Rust can be unsightly but will not kill the plant. Treat rust with a fungicide, or trim off the offending foliage.





While you typically can purchase daylilies from your local nursery or 'big box' store, a good place to buy daylilies is from a local daylily club. Another option is to order from a specialty daylily nursery. Plants will arrive bare root in the mail. With their fleshy roots, they can survive up to two weeks this way, if they are kept dry and cool. I have included some information at the end of this article.



## Resources

- <https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/archives/parsons/flowers/daylilies/generalcare.html>
  - [www.lilyfarm.com/](http://www.lilyfarm.com/)
  - <https://glendamaesdaylilyfarm.com/>
  - <https://easttexasgardening.tamu.edu/2014/06/26/daylilies-2/>
  - [www.oakesdaylilies.com/](http://www.oakesdaylilies.com/)
  - <https://daylilies.org/>
- ***The Illustrated Guide to Daylilies***, a publication of the American Daylily Society, available on Amazon. Plant some daylilies and enjoy the show!

## LIBRARY SERIES - Open to The Public

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**Tuesday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, at 5:30 pm:** Library Series presents Master Gardener and Specialist in Native Landscapes and Vegetables, **Addie Matney**. She will speak on the topic of **Day Lilies**.

**Tuesday, October 15<sup>th</sup>, at 5:30 pm:** Library Series presents Brenda Swagerty, a manager and grower for *Plants of Texas*, a family owned nursery located in Lindale, TX. She will speak on the topic of **Roses**.

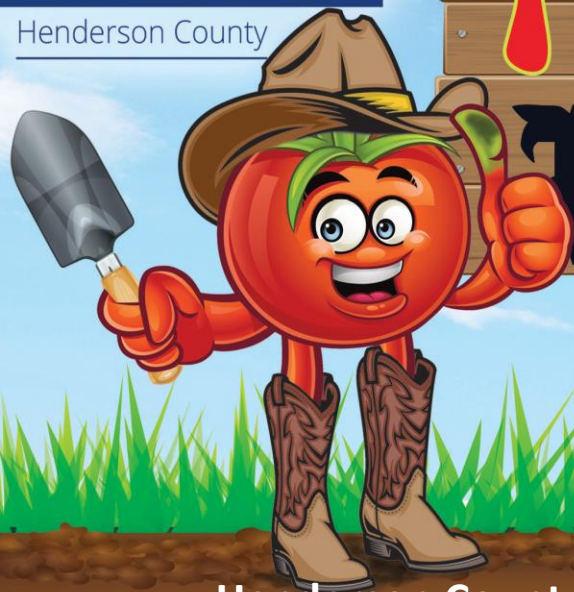
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Library Series meets the **3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday** of every month. All presentations are held at the **Clint W. Murchison Memorial Library**, 121 S. Prairieville, Athens at 5:30pm. Come early as all presentations start on time and last for an hour. For details on the above presentations, turn to page 10, or visit us at <https://txmg.org/hendersonmg/welcome/events/learn-at-the-library-series/>

*"If you end a friendship over a clem-a-tis / clematis argument, you have a gardening obsession..."*

~ Quote from Steve Aitkin, editor of **Fine Gardening**. Submitted by Master Gardener Kathi Murphy-Boley. ~

**TEXAS**  
**MASTER GARDENER**  
TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION  
Henderson County



**TOMATO**  
**TOWN**

**Henderson County Master Gardeners**

**October 26, 2019**

**Athens Country Club**

Join us for this all-day event, and learn everything about the favorite of the vegetable garden, the tomato.

**Schedule**

- 8:00 – 9:00 Registration and Breakfast
- 9:00 – 10:00 History, Hybrids, Heirlooms and More  
**Skip Richter**, County Extension Agent, Houston
- 10:30 – 11:30 When Bad Things Happen to Good Tomatoes  
**Erfan Vafaie**, Extension Program Specialist I
- 11:30 – 1:00 Lunch
- 1:00 – 2:00 Getting a Good Start – Seed Starting through Grafting  
**Tom Leroy**, County Extension Agent Emeritus
- 2:30 – 3:30 What Tomato is Best for a BLT?  
**Bill Adams**, County Extension Agent Emeritus

Tickets go on sale **July 1, 2019**, limited seating available.

Your **\$75** registration fee includes breakfast, lunch, access to handouts, swag bags, and door prizes.

Reserve your limited edition TomatoTown t-shirt.

**To purchase tickets and t-shirts visit our website:**

**<https://hendersonmg.ejoinme.org/tomatotown>**

If you have questions, please email us at [tomatotown2019@gmail.com](mailto:tomatotown2019@gmail.com)



# As If We Don't Have Enough... And Other Summer Thoughts

**Robert Erickson**  
**Henderson County Master Gardener**

Early this year, I was tending my garden and saw a fairly common sight; a Stink Bug was sitting on an unripe plant. I flicked him off but then realized this was different from others I have seen. It appeared to be a little bit larger and was brown instead of green.

Two days later, I saw a headline talking about this new invader. Here is the link to the EPA website talking about this pest. It is more than just a farm and garden pest.

<https://www.epa.gov/safepestcontrol/brown-marmorated-stink-bug>

The following is the first two paragraphs of this article.

## **Brown Marmorated Stink Bug**



The brown marmorated stink bug, *Halyomorpha halys*, is an invasive pest that is present throughout much of the United States. The species is native to Asia and was introduced into the United States in the mid-1990s, possibly stowing away in a shipping container. The presence of this stink bug is concerning for farmers because it feeds on a large number of high-value crops and ornamental plants in its immature and adult life stages.

In the United States, the highest concentrations of brown marmorated stink bugs occur in the mid-Atlantic region, and they have been identified in 38 states and the District of Columbia. They cause major economic damage to fruit, vegetable, and field crops in the mid-Atlantic region. However, while farmers in other regions of the country are concerned about the presence of the brown marmorated stink bug, they are currently

not a significant agricultural pest in most areas outside of the mid-Atlantic region.

## **Other Summer Thoughts**

In the hot, sunny days of July, August, and probably September, remember a couple of little things that make a difference in your garden.

If you regularly water in the afternoon, especially if you use a black hose, test the water coming out for a minute or two before you turn the water on your plants. The water will usually be very hot until the water sitting in the hose runs out. Hot water on your plants isn't refreshing on a hot sunny day.

Speaking of sunny days, plants labeled "full-sun" usually means 6-8 hours a day of sun. In July, August, and September, we usually have 12-14 hours of sun, depending on how your garden is shaded. In addition, the late afternoon sun is very intense. If possible, consider setting your garden where it gets afternoon shade during the summer. 7AM to 3 PM or 8 AM to 4 PM is still 8 hours of sun.

Give your plants a break with a little shade and a drink of cool water in the summer afternoons.

### **Henderson County Master Gardeners**

The master Gardener program is a volunteer development program, offered by Texas AgriLife Extension Service, that disseminates horticultural information to individuals and groups in Henderson County. The mission is to develop and cultivate community projects related to horticulture. We are a group of volunteers who share a love of gardening and are eager to learn and share our knowledge.

# Calendar

# Of Events

## September

- 9/2 Labor Day
- 9/7 Athens Farmers Market: 9:00am until 1:00pm
- 9/14 East Texas Arboretum Plants, Seeds, Bulb Sale
- 9/17 Learn At The Library
- 9/18 Members Meeting

## October

- 10/1 East Texas Arboretum Poinsettia Sale begins
- 10/5 Athens Farmers Market: 9:00am until 1:00pm
- 10/5 Kaufman MG Vintage Garden Market
- 10/12 East Texas Arboretum Annual Fall Festival
- 10/15 Learn At The Library
- 10/16 Members Meeting

## Events

## Around Town

- **September 7<sup>th</sup> – HCMG at Athens Farmers Market:** 212 Palestine, Athens TX
- **September 17<sup>th</sup> – Kaufman County Master Gardeners:** <https://www.kcmga.org/events-4/> **Mabank Garden Club: Texas Superstar Plants (2:00 pm)** Tricounty Library 132 E. Market St. Mabank. Admission FREE. *“Join Beverly Curtis & Linda Wells, Kaufman County Advanced Master Gardeners – Texas Superstar Plants, to learn about these tough plants tested by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension and proven to do well over most of Texas. They will discuss several categories of plants, show photographs and discuss how to grow the plants.”*
- **September 14<sup>th</sup> – Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center:** <https://www.wildflower.org/event/invasive-curriculum-teachers/2019-07-16> **Class: Native Plant Gardening Series: Plants I** (9:00am-12:00pm) *“Part of our popular Native Plant Gardening Series: Learn to identify native plants of Texas and choose the best for your garden.”*
- **September 14<sup>th</sup> – East Texas Arboretum:** <http://www.easttexasarboretum.org/events.html> **4<sup>th</sup> Annual Fall Plant Sale (8:00am-4:00pm)** *“Perennials, Shrubs, trees, bulbs, seeds.”*
- **September 21<sup>st</sup> – Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center:** <https://www.wildflower.org/event/invasive-curriculum-teachers/2019-07-16> **Class: Native Plant Gardening Series: Plants II** (1:00am-4:00pm) *“Part of our popular Native Plant Gardening Series: Learn to give those plants a great start and install garden features.”*
- **September 24<sup>th</sup> – Van Zandt County Master Gardeners:** <https://www.facebook.com/events/468128690665701/> **Fall Seminar (5:00 p.m-8pm)** Farm Bureau Building: 220 Burnett Trail, Canton TX. Admission \$20.00/person. *“Chris Wiesinger will speak on Hierloom Bulbs and Todd Williams will demonstrate Fall and Holiday Arrangements.”*
- **September 20-29 – Smith County Master Gardeners:** <https://txmg.org/smith/coming-events/> **East Texas State Fair** *“The Smith County Master Gardeners “Secret Garden” is part of the Discovery Texas exhibit, which takes the place of the AgriWorld exhibit during the fair. The goal is to get people excited about gardening with many activities and interactive displays.”*
- **September 29<sup>th</sup> – Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center:** <https://www.wildflower.org/event/invasive-curriculum-teachers/2019-07-16> **Class: Native Plants to Dye For** (10:00am-2:00pm) \$45.00 *“Celebrate the colors of the season with your own plant-dyed fabrics!”*
- **October 1<sup>st</sup> – East Texas Arboretum:** <http://www.easttexasarboretum.org/events.html> **Poinsettia Sale Begins**
- **October 5<sup>th</sup> – HCMG at Athens Farmers Market:** 212 Palestine, Athens TX
- **October 5<sup>th</sup> – Kaufman County Master Gardeners:** <https://www.kcmga.org/events-4/> **Vintage Garden Market (9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.)** Kaufman County Poor Farm -- St. Hwy 34 & FM 1388 -- by Fair Grounds. Admission FREE.

*“Featuring re-enactments by Shadows of Old Texas. The Kaufman County Master Gardener Association with the support of the Kaufman County Historical Commission and Kaufman County Texas AgriLife Extension are excited to host the first **Vintage Garden Market**. Our goal is to showcase Kaufman County history at one of the last remaining poor farms in the state while promoting local artists & craftspeople, local businesses, civic organizations & non-profits.”*

- **October 12<sup>th</sup> – Smith County Master Gardeners:** <https://txmg.org/smith/coming-events/> **From Bulbs to Blooms: Fall Conference and Sale (Registration: 8:30am, Conference: 9:00am)** *“Featured Speaker, Greg Grant, Smith County Extension Horticulturist. Featuring Hardy, hard to find, and Heirloom bulbs adapted to the East Texas area. Harvey Hall, 2000 W. Front St in Tyler, TX. Free and open to the public.”*
- **October 19th - Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center:** <https://www.wildflower.org/event/invasive-curriculum-teachers/2019-07-16> **Fall Native Plant Sale (9:00am-5:00pm) \$45.00** *“More than 300 species of native plants ready to make your garden look like Texas.”*

## Resources for Natives Plants

Filling your garden with native plants may seem like quite the challenge. Which plants are native? Where do you find them? How do you care for them? The HCMGA **Monthly Gardening Guide** has an article on Earth-Kind from Texas A&M AgriLife Extension. In that article are listed many native grasses, groundcovers, perennials, shrubs and trees of all sizes, as well as vines. The index lists about 325 plants, trees, shrubs, and vines, by both their common name, as well as their scientific name. The natives all have stars next to them. Here are a couple more awesome resources:

- Native Plant Society of Texas: <https://npsot.org/wp/>
- Ladybird Johnson Wild Flower Center: <https://www.wildflower.org/magazine/landscapes/natural-accents> - click on “South Central Plains”
- Texas A&M AgriLife Extension: <https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/earthkind/> and <https://agriflifeextension.tamu.edu/solutions/best-plants-trees-grow-texas-landscapes/>
- Texas A&M Agriculture Program: <https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/ornamentals/nativeshrubs/>
- Texas A&M East Texas Gardening: <https://easttexasgardening.tamu.edu/east-texas-home-gardening/plants-for-east-texas/>



*“If you go to your favorite Nursery and realize you already have every plant they sell, even the ones you really don't like, you may have a gardening obsession...”*

~ Quote from Steve Aitkin, editor of **Fine Gardening**. Submitted by Master Gardener Kathi Murphy-Boley. ~



# Henderson County Master Gardener Association

## ~~ Members Page ~~

### Texas State Conference

May 12-14, 2020 in Waco, TX



hotels are now taking reservations, so don't wait!  
<https://txmg.org/conference/2018-conference>.

You can also follow the Facebook page  
<https://www.facebook.com/tmga2020/>



Master Gardeners,  
remember to  
record your hours!



### 2019 HCMGA Meetings

**When:** Noon (luncheon), 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month

- \* September 18<sup>th</sup>
- \* October 16<sup>th</sup>
- \* November 20<sup>th</sup>
- \* December 18<sup>th</sup>

**Where:** Richard M. Hart & Johnny Morris Conservation Center

**Address:** 5601 Country Road 4812 Athens, TX 75752

*For more information on how you can become a Master Gardener:*

- Call: (903) 675-6130
- Email: [CMGA@gmail.com](mailto:CMGA@gmail.com)
- Visit: [txmg.org/hendersonmg](http://txmg.org/hendersonmg)

For more events, see the calendar on page 7



Master Gardeners  
needed to  
Mentor New Interns!

# Learn at the Library Series

Open and Free to the Public

## September 17<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm: *Day Lilies*



As part of the Henderson County Master Gardener Association’s Library Series, Master Gardener Addie Matney will give a presentation on Day Lillies.

Her presentation will be held on Tuesday, September 17, at 5:30 pm at the Clint W. Murchison Memorial Library, 121 S. Prairieville, Athens.

Ms. Matney received her Master Gardener certification in McLennan County. She also has certifications as a Vegetable Specialist and in Native Plant Landscaping. She lives in Athens with her daughter and two grandchildren.

This presentation is free and open to the public. For more information, please call 903-675-6130, send an email to [hendersoncmga@gmail.com](mailto:hendersoncmga@gmail.com), or visit our

website: [txmg.org/hendersonmg](http://txmg.org/hendersonmg).

## October 15<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm: *Roses*



As part of the Henderson County Master Gardener Association’s Library Series, **Brenda Swagerty**, manager and grower for **Plants of Texas**, a family owned nursery located in Lindale, TX, will speak on the topic of roses. To learn a bit about the company she represents, visit their website and Facebook page: <https://www.plantsoftexas.com/> and [https://www.facebook.com/pg/PlantsofTexas/photos/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/PlantsofTexas/photos/?ref=page_internal)



This presentation is free and open to the public. For more information, please call 903-675-6130, send an email to [hendersoncmga@gmail.com](mailto:hendersoncmga@gmail.com), or visit our website: [txmg.org/hendersonmg](http://txmg.org/hendersonmg).

# September & October Gardening Tips

## In General:

Relief from the heat arrives in September as fall makes its entrance. The cool weather facilitates preparation for spring as bulbs are bought, wildflowers are sown and new shrubs and trees are planted or transplanted. For most of us with major projects sitting untouched over the last few months (and who doesn't have one) we'll find ourselves back out there, while sitting on the porch and basking in the fruit of our hard work is once again pleasurable.

Share your fall project. Include photos and you'll be published in the next edition of *Inside Dirt*. Send submissions before October 19<sup>th</sup> to the editor, Susan Skomma, at [susanloves1life@gmail.com](mailto:susanloves1life@gmail.com).

## Love veggies and herbs?



Harvesting Sweet potatoes makes a fun hide-and-seek game for kids, while building an appreciation for the amazing realm of vegetable gardening.

You may not be prepared to think about planting fall vegetable as you pickle your 50 pounds of cucumbers and make sauce out of your abundant harvest of tomatoes. It is however, time to do so, for the window will soon draw to a close.

But, do not despair! For it certainly is not too late to plant that Fall garden, especially using transplants. Cool-weather loving vegetables are plentiful: beets, broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, collard, English peas, garlic, kale, lettuce, mustard, parsley, radishes, spinach, Swiss chard, and turnips. Though September 20<sup>th</sup> is the optimum last day to transplant veggies like broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage and cauliflower, many salad makings can continue to be sown thru October. Consider beets, collards, garlic, kale, lettuce, mustard, radishes, spinach and swiss chard.

Even though the weather is cooling, we still have plenty of heat in the middle of the day. Take good care of tender transplants and seedlings. You will probably need to water transplants daily and seeds may need extra help germinating. Thought the soil is warm enough, the surface dries out easily. Here is an experiment you may want to try to help seeds germinate in the Texas heat. Before seeding, watering the soil very well. Place the seeds on the wet soil and cover with dry soil to the proper depth. Cover the soil with boards or wet burlap to keep the soil from crusting over. Check it every day and remove the cover as soon as the germinated plants appear. Keep the tender shoots well-watered, and consider draping shade cloth until the plants are well developed. This tip also works for tiny or shallow-planted seeds like carrots, lettuce, and radishes, which tend to get blown away in the wind or move around while being watered.

October is a good time to separate perennial herbs. Herbs in this category are Catnip, Chives, Lavender, Lemon Verbena, Marjoram, Mint, Oregano, Rosemary, Sage, Salad Burnet, Sorrel, Texas Tarragon (Mexican Mint Marigold), Thyme, Yarrow. Remember, when harvesting herbs, don't cut more than 1/3 of the plant at a time. The best time to harvest is mid-morning and just before the plants flower. You can use any of these spices fresh. You can also dry them for storage and all year use.

## How about Flowers?

On cooler mornings, the motivation returns to dig, divide and transplant the fading oxblood and spider lily bulbs. Similarly, divide and transplant any overcrowded bearded irises, daisies, daylilies, ground covers, liriopes, peonies, and phloxes. For Henderson County Master Gardeners, don't forget to set some of these aside for the **2020 Plant Sale** on **April 25<sup>th</sup>**!



Time to pick up the bulb magazines and visit the master gardener clubs featuring bulb sales. Plant spring bulbs like daffodils, crocus, Dutch iris, hyacinth, and narcissus. Tulip and Dutch hyacinths bulbs should be selected now so they can be stored in the refrigerator for 45-60 days prior to planting in December and early January. Don't freeze the bulbs or remove them from the refrigerator until it's time to plant them. Also, don't store your bulbs next to fruit as the ethylene gas emitted from the fruit will damage the bulbs.



Round out your gardens with cool-weather and sun loving annuals like pansies and violas. Pansies are beautiful with spring bulbs. The Crystal Bowl, Imperial and Universal series, all tolerate the heat well and flower longer in the spring.

Other great cool-season flowers are English daisies, flowering cabbage, pinks, poppies, and snapdragons.

Sow wildflowers like bluebonnets, cornflower, larkspur, phlox, and poppies.

### *Do you care for your trees and shrubs - or are they just there?*

Through September, keep watering your trees and shrubs as needed. However, transplanting or planting new trees and shrubs in October gives their roots months to grow and become well established before new growth begins in the spring and summer heat and drought arrive.

### *And what about your grass?*

In case you are not sure of the frequency with which to fertilize your grass, it is a good rule of thumb to begin fertilizing in June, after you've had several good mows. From there you fertilize every six weeks. September signals that it is time for the last application of fertilizer. Try to fertilize right before a rain, or be certain to water very well afterwards. This is important so that you don't burn your lawn. Don't fertilize by hand as the results will be uneven and can damage the grass.





# Whooping it Up in the Hoop House

By Lydia Holley, Master Gardener



Whoop! Whoop! The hoop house is up!

What am I talking about? The hoop house at the Harvest Garden. In case you haven't been paying attention, Henderson County Master Gardeners have been working to create a Harvest Garden — a demonstration garden for growing fruits, vegetables, herbs, and berries, located at the Henderson County Regional Fairground Complex.

To get ready to open the Harvest Garden to the public, we have planted fruit trees, grapes, and berries; assembled and planted raised beds for vegetables and herbs; and erected a hoop house.

What's a hoop house? Well, you may know it as a high tunnel. A high tunnel is higher than a low tunnel. A low tunnel is only around 3 feet tall, while a high tunnel can be walked through. Ours is 12 feet tall in the center. Also, a high tunnel, or hoop house, is similar to a greenhouse, but is built without the use of rigid plastic or glass and is not built on a permanent foundation. Greenhouses have automated cooling and watering. A hoop house, or high tunnel, does not.

The Harvest Garden's hoop house is covered with a thick grade of plastic sheeting. Right now, that covering is rolled up on the sides to help with ventilation in the hot summer months. In the winter months, we will use the hoop house to start vegetable and herb seeds for future plantings at the Harvest Garden.



When will the Harvest Garden be ready for a Grand Opening? Although it is nearing completion, there are just a few things more to finish. We are waiting for slabs to be poured for the education area and a building. After the slabs are poured, the building will be placed. On the education area, we plan to put picnic tables and cover with shade sails. So, stay tuned! The Harvest Garden will soon be open and educating the public on growing edibles! Whoop! Whoop!

# Word Search

Created by Susan Skomma, Master Gardener

1. Daylilies belong to the genus \_\_\_\_\_. (page 1)
2. Daylilies are native to \_\_\_\_\_. (Page 2)
3. The topic for the September Learn at the Library Series is on \_\_\_\_\_. (Page 4)
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8. On the Member's Page, Master Gardeners need to remember to log their \_\_\_\_\_. (Page 9)
9. It is not too late to plant a \_\_\_\_\_. (Page 11)
10. Good veggies to plant in a fall garden are: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. (Page 11)
11. Good spring bulbs to plant this fall are: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. (Page 12)
12. \_\_\_\_\_ your lawn every six weeks. (Page 12)
13. The \_\_\_\_\_ is up in the \_\_\_\_\_ garden. (Page 13)
14. \_\_\_\_\_ is the green house manager. (Page 16)
15. Addie lost the fight with the \_\_\_\_\_ and landed on her bottom. (Page 16)
16. To divide all the ferns to transplant, \_\_\_\_\_ had to use a small \_\_\_\_\_. (Page 17)
17. \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ have an excellent memory in common (Page 17)
18. The two deeply connected systems on Susan's land are \_\_\_\_\_ and gardens. (Page 18)
19. One of Susan's hens went \_\_\_\_\_. (Page 18)
20. HCMG website is \_\_\_\_\_. (Page 20)

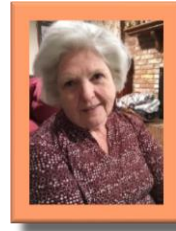


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# Anecdotes from a Gardener:

## Fern Gully

Addie Matney, Master Gardener



As a Texas Master Gardener, we have the requirement to volunteer for a certain number of hours each year to retain our certification. So, myself and several other ladies of the Henderson County Master Gardeners Association (HCMGA) spend our Friday mornings at the greenhouse doing various jobs. Now this job comes with benefits like camaraderie, laughter, an occasional lunch afterwards, and sometimes, free plants. On this particular hot July Friday, Cynthia, the greenhouse manager, decided she would bestow upon us worthy workers a bounty of Sword Ferns. While most of the ladies walked away with one or two ferns, I was convinced to take the remaining five beauties. This bounty consisted of three small one-gallon ferns and two large two-gallon ferns.



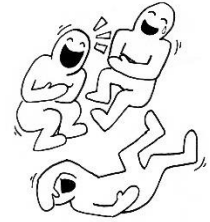
Taking my prizes home, I placed them on my patio table making a wonderful little fern forest. There they sat for a week while I pondered what I was going to do with them. While staring out my kitchen window looking at a crepe myrtle tree in the corner of my yard, I had an idea. I can make a fern garden around the base of the crepe myrtle tree. So, out the back I went, grabbed my rake, and tackled the leaves around the tree. Once I hit dirt, I realized I had a problem. Because of our wonderful Texas sun, my clay soil was so hard that only a jackhammer or a stick of dynamite would put a scratch in it. I gave each about a three second consideration before concluding my neighbors or the city of Athens would not approve of either. Coming to this conclusion, my mind jumped to the next best thing, garden soil. Off to Lowe's I

went. Ten border bricks, four large bags of garden soil, and one turtle later, I was ready to begin my garden.

The men at Lowes loaded my purchases, but at home, I had to recruit the help of my oldest grandson who unloaded everything next to the back gate which is roughly ten feet from where I needed them. Since I went into the house and left him to unload, I didn't find this out until the next morning when I went out to start my garden. Because of the hot weather, I only worked in the morning. On the first morning, I had the bed ready to plant without many mishaps other than the dogs wanting to dig in the soft soil. Second day, different story. I went out and took one of the small ferns to unpot and divide to transplant into the new garden. I turned the pot upside down, pounded on the bottom---nothing. I turned it right side up and pulled the fern---nothing.

Being the experienced gardener that I am, I beat the pot on all sides and the bottom, sat it on the ground, held it with my feet and pulled on the fern. Instead of the fern popping out, my hands slipped, and I lost my balance unceremoniously landing on my bottom. Even though I was in my backyard, I still looked around to see if anyone saw me. Sitting there letting my embarrassment fade and my dogs console me, I thought maybe water would be a better way. Water didn't get the fern out, but it did soften the dirt so I could pull it out of the pot. The larger ferns I had to cut

out the pots; they were growing out of the bottom. As I pulled one of the root balls of a larger fern out of the pot, it exploded. Dirt went everywhere, up my nose and in my hair. I swear, I had dirt in places I didn't even know I had. I'm thankful I only had two of those ferns.



To divide all the ferns to transplant, I had to use a small hand saw. The root balls were packed, dry, and had a lot of tubers. A few good whacks on the patio loosened the soil, not to mention made my plants psychotic from the trauma. I found that grasping firmly on each side of the root ball and pulling quickly was a very good exercise for your chest and arms muscles but bending over planting for two hours was not good for the back or knees. By the end of the second day, my garden was finished.

For color, I added daylilies and some fairies' houses. In the spring, I plan to add some blooming annuals for more color. Since ferns and daylilies are perennials, I hope to enjoy my new fern gully for seasons to come.

*Editor's note: We'll get a picture of Fern Gully for the next edition of Inside Dirt*

## Remember When?

by Lydia Holley, Master Gardener



What do butterflies and elephants have in common? According to scientists, it may be their memory. In one case highlighting the amazing ability of an elephant's memory, elephants Jenny and Shirley remembered each other after 23 years, even though they had only known each other for a few months all those years ago.

How long do butterflies' memories go back? Of course, butterflies don't live as long as elephants, but you may be surprised to learn that scientists now believe a butterfly can remember things that happened to them when they were a caterpillar. Scientists determined this by doing certain tests on caterpillars, and then repeating the tests after the butterfly emerged from its chrysalis. In over seventy-five percent of the cases, the butterfly acted as if they remembered the treatment given to them when they were a caterpillar.

How does a caterpillar turn into a butterfly? Inside the pupa, the caterpillar releases enzymes which break down muscle. Surprisingly, most of its organs stay intact. There are also certain clusters of cells called imaginal discs that stay connected — these discs contain parts that are necessary for the butterfly's survival, such as the eyes, legs, and wings. If you remember watching a time-lapse film observing a chrysalis, you may recall a bit of squirming. That squirming helps these discs get in the right place. Other changes take place, too. Tracheal tubes grow larger. The digestive system gets smaller, and the nervous system stays intact.

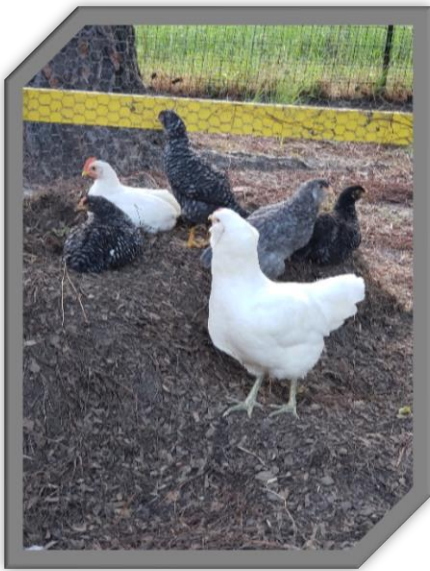
Through all those changes from a long, squirmy, eating machine to a beautiful, flying, delicate creature, it retains its memory. Move over, elephants. You have competition.



# The Cycles of Life

Susan Skommesa, Master Gardener

Gardening is done in cycles. There is a time to prepare, a time to plant, a time to harvest, a time to rest. then we repeat. The cycles correspond to the seasons and happen like clockwork every year. Take a minute to sit back and think of all the systems and all the living that happens in cycles, not exclusive to the garden. A few come to mind immediately. Holidays follow the calendar in cycles, companies run their fiscal year in cycles, the school year opens and closes in cycles, our country runs its political terms in cycles, and life creates and recreates in cycles. Many cycles overlap and impact each other, and as gardeners we tend to be very aware of them. Two deeply connected cyclical systems on my land are my chickens and my gardens.



*On top of the compost pile, mama hen in the foreground with the 5 two-month old chicks behind her.*

One of my hens went broody. Two months ago, she successfully hatched and has been raising 5 chicks. She has taught them foraging, perching, our feeding routine and what to do with it, how to manage where they are in the pecking order, and what to do when the cat is lurking around. In about 4 months, the chicks will be old enough to lay eggs.

In the last year I've lost 3 hens and my rooster had an accident and has gone lame. He will probably have to be put down as he does not seem to be recovering. Of the 5 chicks, one is a rooster. This brood replenishes my flock of hens and gives me a new rooster. The cycle of life.

I make compost in my hen yard. I use that compost to make soil, to add nutrition to my vegetable and flower beds, and as mulch. I toss kitchen scraps, gardening waste, and overly ripe vegetables from the garden into the compost pile. I also clean the hen house into the compost pile, adding wood chips and fabulous chicken fertilizer to the mix. The chickens root around in the compost pile looking for goodies. As they do so, they break the compost down, and do so much faster than time alone can accomplish. After they scatter the pile, I build it back up,

wetting it layer by layer. They then break the pile down again and we repeat the process. In a couple short months, rather than nine-ish months, I have soil ready to use.

The garden feeds my household and my chickens. My chickens feed my household and my gardens. I feed my chickens and my gardens. We all work together. My reward is fresh organic vegetables and eggs, as well as amazing contentment and joy with which my chickens and gardening fill my life.



*My veggie gardens this past spring and summer.*

# Answers to Word Search

(found on pages 14 and 15)

1. Daylilies belong to the genus Hemerocallis. (page 1)
2. Daylilies are native to eastern Asia. (Page 2)
3. The topic for the September Learn at the Library Series is on Day Lilies. (Page 4)
4. The topic for the September Learn at the Library Series is on Roses. (Page 10)
5. Tomato Town Fall Event is being held at the Athens Country Club. (Page 10)
6. Brown marmorated stink bug is an invasive pest. (Page 6)
7. In the quote from Steve Aitkin, you may have a Gardening Obsession if you have every plant your favorite nursery offers. (Page 8)
8. On the Member's Page, Master Gardeners need to remember to log their hours. (Page 9)
9. It is not too late to plant a fall garden. (Page 11)
10. Good veggies to plant in a fall garden are: beets, collards, garlic, kale, lettuce, mustard, radishes, spinach and swiss chard. (Page 11)
11. Good spring bulbs to plant this fall are: daffodils, crocus, hyacinths, iris, narcissus and tulip. (Page 12)
12. Fertilize your lawn every six weeks. (Page 12)
13. The hoop house is up in the harvest garden. (Page 13)
14. Cynthia is the green house manager. (Page 16)
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20. HCMG website is txmg.org/hendersonmg. (Page 20)

# Winners of the Summer Series

As part of the Henderson County Master Gardeners' Summer Series, Chris Wiesinger, presented "The Bulb Hunter". The event was held on Thursday, August 8<sup>th</sup>, at 6:00 pm at the Senior Citizens Center, 3344 TX Hwy 31, Athens.

This is a picture of those who won the drawings at that event.

From left to right, Dessie Cross of Athens TX, Quessie Morton of Athens TX, David Bickerstaff, HCMGA President, Ed Waldrup of Plano TX, Sally Blaze of Gun Barrel City TX, and Ann McKelroy of Winnsboro TX.

Congratulations to the winners!



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Texas master gardeners



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The members of Texas A&M AgriLife will provide equal opportunities in programs and activities, education, and employment to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identity, and will strive to achieve full and equal employment opportunity throughout Texas A&M AgriLife.