



# INSIDE DIRT



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## President’s Message

**Yvonne Sparks**, Master Gardener

The last two months have certainly been a surprise for all gardeners. In March the HCMGA heard a presentation from former president, Lydia Holley about what to expect in our gardens over the next few months. She was very informative. Lydia listed over 100+ plants and shared her best guess outcome for these plants in a garden. At the meeting I was saddened to hear from Lydia my Loropetalum (*Loropetalum chinense var. rubrum*) would probably not make it. Imagine my surprise when I found little purple leaves sprouting out at the base of the trunk. YEA! So instead of removing the deadly remains, I have pruned it down to about 12” from the ground. More leaves are starting to appear. The pale pink blooms on a Loropetalum are very refreshing and very pretty. I am confident we all will be finding little surprises in the garden during the next months.



If you lost any plants, I am sure you logged into our first annual online plant sale. The pick-up was on April 24<sup>th</sup> at the TVCC college Recreational Court. We had almost 200 plant orders and sold almost 2,000 plants. Thank you for your support of our sale.



To all the volunteers who spent hours inputting data to the plant sale program, up-potting plant plugs and seedlings, nurturing the 2,300+ plants in the sometimes-blazing hot greenhouse, and fought the good fight against bugs and disease...I thank you from my heart. **YOU ARE THE VERY BEST!**



## 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.



Greenhouse filled with healthy beautiful plants for sale.

As she told her story, it brought some much-needed laughter to our day at the greenhouse.”

Please note I have left out the names to protect the innocent!

Enjoy the pleasant Spring temperatures as you evaluate and reinvent your personal gardens. My husband and I are headed to Big Bend the day after the sale ends for some much-needed R&R. On the return trip to Athens, we are stopping in Austin to see our youngest son for the first time since January 2020.

Take care of yourself and family,  
**Yvonne Sparks, President**

*“Gardening adds years to your life and life to your years.”*

~ Unknown



This method of selling our plants will be evaluated soon to determine what changes should be made. A lot of hours was logged in by Master Gardeners and Interns. All-in-all it was a lot of fun.

**Here is a funny story about one of our MG:**

“A MG called me to say her husband was trying to find the TVCC greenhouse so he could pick up the plants she had ordered. He kept telling her he could not find a **GREEN** house on the campus. He returned home and she later drove over to pick up the plants.



Several people brought trailers and pickup trucks to move plants from the TVCC greenhouse to the TVCC Recreational Court. Took about 5 trips for these vehicles to move over 2000 plants in preparation for customer pick up.

# Plant Sale Pictures



Plants laid out in groups by customer.

These next two pages are pictures from the day the purchased plants were picked up. You can see the level of involvement from members of the HCMGA and the good time had by all.



After customers pulled up, their order was brought out to them.





What a beautiful day to pick up new plants to bring home!



# Growing a Rosy Success

Lydia Holley, Master Gardener



Lydia at the plant sale on the day plants were being picked up.

Gardeners took notice when Knock Out roses were introduced because of the plant's exceptional resistance to blackspot. Looking for a low maintenance rose, homeowners started buying them in abundance. These roses also became popular in commercial plantings.

What does it take to grow a rose such as this? Time. Patience. And a little finagling. First, you must determine which roses have the qualities you wish to have passed down. Then pollinate those roses and wait for hips to form. Inside will be seeds. Grow those, making certain you label the seedlings properly.

Evaluate your new roses. Do they bloom well? Is their growth strong? Can they withstand winter? Be ruthless in discarding those that do not perform well. The more seedlings you start with, the more you will have to destroy, but the greater your chances of success. Bill Radler, the breeder of Knock Out roses, was raising around 600 seedlings each year when that one certain rose seeding came to his attention.

Radler introduced diseased rose leaves to his seedlings, then once again, discarded those that showed little to no resistance. He noticed one particular rose seemed to be outstanding in disease resistance and had good repeat bloom.



Three years later, he showed this rose to a horticultural

company. His rose was selected to be propagated and trialed. Eight years later, in 2000, when the Knock Out rose was introduced, it won the All-America Rose award. That year, over 250,000 Knock Out roses were sold. It only took eleven years of preparation for this rose to become an overnight success.

Of course, other rose breeders look for different qualities in their roses. For example, David Austin chooses roses with numerous petals and a rich aroma. Those differences begin from the first step, when determining the parent roses. Otherwise, the process is much the same.

Could you grow a unique and treasured rose? Yes. Even if you never succeed at producing a rose that is grown commercially, breeding roses can be a fun and rewarding passion. Imagine the pride in your heart when you point to a rose and say, "I bred that one myself."

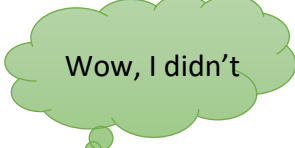
For more information, call 903-675-6130, email [hendersonCMGA@gmail.com](mailto:hendersonCMGA@gmail.com), or visit [txmq.org/hendersonmq](http://txmq.org/hendersonmq).

**Editor's Note:** For more articles like this one, go to our website <https://txmq.org/hendersonmq/welcome/publicity/>



# Library Series

Will resume as soon as possible – be watching for it!



## Did you know?



The HCMGA Library Series is always open to the public – for FREE! To find the most up to date information on the Library Series, go to <https://txmg.org/hendersonmg/welcome/events/learn-at-the-library-series/>

The **Library Series** is a partnership effort between **HCMGA** and the **Clint W. Murchison Memorial Library**, in Athens, TX. Each month, HCMGA Master Gardeners present from their expertise to the public for free. There is always a wealth of information to take home to your garden.

*We look forward to seeing you soon!*



## Did you know?

The HCMGA Website has a lot of good information. We have articles on a variety of gardening topics and events our organization hosts. This newsletter (*Inside Dirt*) is but an appetizer for the depth and breadth of topics, pictures, and great practical information you will find in that treasure trove, which gets added to every week by member writers.

<https://txmg.org/hendersonmg/welcome/our-impact/publicity/>

Have you seen our videos on Facebook? Go check them out at <https://www.facebook.com/HCmastergardener>

### 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.

# CHILL HOURS

## What Can We Expect from Our Fruit and Nut Trees This Year?

By Susan Skommesa, Master Gardener



*Picture taken in Editor's yard during the worst of the storm.*

As I write, we have just emerged from the coldest week in 110 years of East Texas history, as best I can tell. For several days, night time temperatures dropped down to the lowest single digits. I marvel that my chickens lived through it. Probably due to the extra care and food they got, as well as the fact that they have a very good henhouse.

This, however, is East Texas. Again, as I write this, I'm sitting at my desk with all the doors to the house open. The temperature is in the high 60s and absolutely beautiful. Periodically I go outside and lift my face to the sun in gratitude that we are East Texas.

For the last few years, I write an article in the May/June edition of the Inside Dirt, to see if we got enough chill hours to satisfy the needs of our fruit and nut trees. This year the article is hardly needed, however I thought it would be cool to see how many chill hours we actually got, and how that compares with years past.

Most people who grow fruit, nut, and berries, know that those plants and trees require a certain amount of cold weather to produce plenty of healthy, well-formed, sweet fruit and tasty nuts.

Fruit and nuts bud in the late summer to fall. As winter approaches and temperatures drop, the buds go into a state of dormancy. This state protects the bud from freezing temperatures as well as from prematurely responding to a warm spell. Buds will not come out of dormancy until they have experienced a certain number of chill hours. This number varies by species. So, in addition to overall chill hours, we need to consider how many chill hours the buds have slept through prior to a severe frost. It is vital that the blossoms not come out of dormancy before a severe frost. If the trees finish setting out their blossoms, and frost kills those blossoms, there will be no fruit that season. Fortunately, the ice age week from Antarctica descended upon us early in the season before blossoms emerged.

Texas A&M, [Overton Station](#), keeps track of chill hours for us here in East Texas. They have been doing so for 25 years. Their findings can be found on their website. Overton Station logs hours based on 2 different calculation methods. One method is to count the number of hours at or below 45<sup>o</sup> F, from October 1<sup>st</sup> through February 28/29<sup>th</sup>. The other method is to count the number of hours between the temperatures of 32<sup>o</sup> F and 45<sup>o</sup> F during the same period. The difference between these two methods can sometimes amount to a couple hundred hours. That may be an unnerving fact if your fruit and nut trees needed those couple hundred hours. It's also important to remember that



there are numerous microclimates all over East Texas. The number of chill hours recorded in Overton may vary from your location.

<b>Chilling Hours for the 2020-2021 Season October 1, 2020 thru February 28, 2021</b>		
	<b>Method 1</b> No of Hrs >=32 &< =45 F	<b>Method 2</b> No of Hrs <=45 F
<b>Oct</b>	41	41
<b>Nov</b>	80	80
<b>Dec</b>	278	305
<b>Jan</b>	264	319
<b>Feb</b>	166	377
<b>TOTAL</b>	829	1122

The adjacent chart, published by Texas A&M at <https://etweather.tamu.edu/chill/>, shows the number of chill hours during the fall and winter months. At the bottom is the season's grand total.

So, what about the 2020-2021 winter season. How did we do? From October through February 29<sup>th</sup> by either means of calculation, we have amassed the necessary chill hours to satisfy most A&M recommended varieties of fruit. Note that different varieties require a different number of chill hours.

According to the first method described, we accumulated 829 chill hours. According to the second method, there are 1122 chill hours. Since 800 chill hours is a minimum, it's actually a good thing that we had several weeks of 24/7 freezing weather. Otherwise, we may not have hit the mark.

For the sake of comparison, the following chart shows the historical number of chill hours for the last 25 years.

<i>Calculating Chilling Hours</i>					
Method 1: Chilling hours were calculated by counting the number of hours between 32 and 45 degrees F, from October 1st through February 28th/29th.			Method 2: Chilling hours were calculated by counting the number of hours at or below 45 degrees F, from October 1st through February 28th/29th.		
<i>Historical Date of First and Last Frost and Chilling Hour Data</i>					
Season	Date of First Frost	Date of Last Frost	First Frost Temperature (F)	Chilling Hours Method 1	Chilling Hours Method 2
2020-2021	Dec 1, 2020		29.4		
2019-2020	Oct 31, 2019	Feb 27, 2020	31.8	929	1081
2018-2019	Nov 13, 2018	Apr 1, 2019	31.3	1,040	1,238
2017-2018	Oct 28, 2017	Feb 12, 2018	30.9	811	1,115
2016-2017	Nov 20, 2016	Mar 14, 2017	31.8	394	509
2015-2016	Nov 22, 2015	Mar 21, 2016	31.7	710	798
2014-2015	Nov 13, 2014	Mar 7, 2015	31.9	1120	1346
2013-2014	Nov 13, 2013	Apr 15, 2014	30.9	1018	1404
2012-2013	Nov 13, 2012	Mar 27, 2013	31.8	801	1003
2011-2012	Nov 28, 2011	Feb 25, 2012	30.4	867	980



2010-2011	Nov 6, 2010	Mar 6, 2011	31.9	819	832
2009-2010	Dec 4, 2009	Mar 21, 2010	25.6	1067	1440
2008-2009	Oct 28, 2008	Mar 2, 2009	30.9	789	992
2007-2008	Nov 23, 2007	Mar 9, 2008	31.6	974	1156
2006-2007	Nov 3, 2006	Mar 5, 2007	30.6	907	1218
2005-2006	Nov 17, 2005	Mar 24, 2006	27.0	818	993
2004-2005	Nov 30, 2004	Mar 17, 2005	31.1	726	909
2003-2004	Nov 24, 2003	Feb 16, 2004	31.4	845	1046
2002-2003	Nov 28, 2002	Mar 10, 2003	28.5	1060	1227
2001-2002	Nov 21, 2001	Mar 10, 2002	30.1	855	1045
2000-2001	Nov 10, 2000	Feb 10, 2001	30.4	1178	1491
1999-2000	Nov 5, 1999		31.8	563	728
1998-1999	Nov 2, 1998		29.7	574	687
1997-1998	Nov 15, 1997		26.6	-	-
1996-1997	Nov 27, 1996		30.2	849	



If you look at the number of chill hours on record, over the past 25 years, the least number of chill hours occurred in 2016-2017, with 509 chill hours (1<sup>st</sup> method) or 394 chill hours (2<sup>nd</sup> method). The greatest number of chill hours happened in 2013-2014 as well as 2018-2019, depending upon which method you use to calculate.

How many chill hours do fruit and nut trees need? Great question with a simple answer: Totally depends on the variety! Ok, maybe not so simple. There is however a simple way to manage the issue: follow the recommendations of Texas A&M. Texas A&M AgriLife Extension recommends varieties for East Texas that require no more than 800-900 chill hours. Since the chill hour requirement can vary greatly between varieties, the following varieties are recommended for East Texas:

- \* **APPLES:** Fuji, Gala, Granny Smith, Holland, Imperial, Gala, Jersey mac, Mollies Delicious, Mutsu/Crispin, Pink Lady, Red Delicious, Royal Gala, Smoothee, Super Gala.
- \* **APRICOT:** Blenheim, Bryan, Chinese/Morman, Moorpark.
- \* **ASIAN PEARS:** Shinko, ShinLi, Ya Li.
- \* **BLACKBERRIES:** **Thorny** - Brazos, Brison, Cheyenne, Chickasaw, Kiowa, Rosborough, Womack. **Thornless** - Arapaho, Natchez, Navaho, Ouachita.
- \* **BLUEBERRIES:** Rabbiteye (need more than one variety of Rabbiteye for pollination) Alapaha, Austin, Brightwell, Climax, Ochlockonee, Powderblue, Premier, Prince, Tifblue, Vernon, Woodard. See [https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/fruit-nut/files/2015/04/blueberries\\_2015.pdf](https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/fruit-nut/files/2015/04/blueberries_2015.pdf) for best variety pairing.



- \* **FIGS:** Alma, Blue Giant, Bournabat, Celeste, Lemon, LSU Purple, Texas Everbearing (Brown Turkey).
- \* **GRAPES:** Black Spanish, Blanc du Bois, Champanel, Conquestador, Cynthiana (Norton), Daytona, Emerald, Herbeumont, Miss Blanc, Miss Blue, Orlando Seedless, Roucaneuf, Stover, Victoria Red.
- \* **JUJUBES:** Lang, Li.



- \* **MUSCADINE GRAPES:**
  - ✓ **Female:** Black Fry, Darleen, Fry, Higgins, Hunt, Scarlett, Sugargate, Summit, Supreme, Sweet Jenny, Scuppernong.
  - ✓ **Self-Fertile:** Carlos, Cowart, Dixie, Doreen, Granny Val, Ison, Magnolia, Nesbit, Noble, Regale, Southland, Tara, Triumph, Welder.
  - ✓ Plant 1 self-fertile plant (within 30 feet) for every 3 female plants. In a vineyard formation, that would be a self-pollinator every 3<sup>rd</sup> vine of every 3<sup>rd</sup> row.
- \* **NECTARINES:** ArmKing, Crimson Gold, Karla Rose, Redgold, Rose Princess.

- \* **PEACHES:** Bounty, Cary Mac, Cresthaven, Denman, Derby, Dixieland, Fairtime, Fireprince, Flameprince, Flavorich, Frank, GaLa, Harvester, Loring, Majestic, Ouachita Gold, Parade, Redglobe, Redskin, Regal, Ruston Red, Sentinel, Springold, Topaz.
- \* **PEARS:** Kieffer, Magness, Moonglow, Orient, Warren.
- \* **PECANS:** (Need a type I and Type II for cross Pollination): **Type I** - Caddo, Cape Fear, Cheyenne, Desirable, Houma, Oconee, Pawnee, Prilop. **Type II** - Candy, Choctaw, Elliott, Forkert, Kanza, Melrose, Sumner, Jackson, Moreland, Osage.
- \* **PLUMS:** Allred, Methley, Morris, Ozark Premier, Santa Rosa.
- \* **POMEGRANATE:** Al-Sirin-Nar, Flavorful, Russian 18, Salavatski, Spanish Sweet-Uvalde, Sumbar, Surh Anor, Wonderful.
- \* **RASPBERRIES:** Dormanred.
- \* **STRAWBERRIES:** Chandler, Douglas, Festival, Oso Grande, Seascape, Sequoia.

We've all done it: There is something we really wanted to grow, and probably at a time of the year we really shouldn't, but we try anyways. So, what's the big deal if you go with that variety the big box store carries? Yes, the one that's more suitable for Washington State than Northeast Texas. Well, here are the symptoms of insufficient chill hours:

- \* **Delayed Foliation:** Branches develop small tufts of leaves at the very tip, but foliage along the branch is significantly delayed.
- \* **Reduced Fruit Set and Buttoning:** Fruit set is describing whether flowers become fruit. Poor fruit set means very little fruit on the tree. Buttoning is when fruit is misshapen or exhibits stunted growth.
- \* **Reduced Fruit Quality:** Such as lack of fruit firmness and poor coloring when ripe. These are more than cosmetic issues that impact flavor and texture.



Enjoy your harvest!

# Calendar of Events



## Events Around Town



Here are some websites I usually comb through to find events for this section on **Events Around Town**. As Social gathering restrictions are relaxed, visit these websites to see if there is something going on. I've included a few that I found.

- ✓ Henderson County Master Gardener Association: <https://txmg.org/hendersonmg/>
- ✓ East Texas Arboretum and Botanical Society: <http://www.easttexasarboretum.org/>
  - "Join the East Texas Arboretum in celebrating City of Athens heritage and visit the **"Fiddlin' Around the Arboretum"** exhibition, May 2021. Local artists and members of the community have personalized more than 60 wooden fiddles, which will be displayed throughout the gardens."
- ✓ Texas A&M AgriLife's Dallas Center: <https://dallas.tamu.edu/events/>
- ✓ Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Gardens: <https://www.dallasarboretum.org/>
- ✓ Texas Parks and Wildlife: <https://tpwd.texas.gov/>
- ✓ Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center: <https://www.wildflower.org/>
  - **Spring Native Plant Sale:** May 16 @ 9am-1pm. "Shop a wide variety native Texas plants at our spacious, outdoor sale".
- ✓ Smith County Master Gardeners: <https://txmg.org/smith/coming-events/>
  - See the flyer on the next page for "The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly" Seminar at the Tyler Rose Garden on May 28<sup>th</sup>.
- ✓ Kaufman County Master Gardener Association: <https://www.kcmga.org/events-4/>
- ✓ Free State Master Gardeners Association of Van Zandt County: <https://txmg.org/freestatemastergardeners/>



TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION  
SMITH COUNTY PRESENTS

# "THE GOOD, THE BAD & THE UGLY" GARDEN SEMINAR



**Did the big freeze kill some of your plants?  
Wondering how to care for them  
or what to replace them with?**

Then join us at the Tyler Rose Garden Center on  
Friday, May 28, 2021 from 9-12 to hear from expert  
horticulturists to learn about dealing with  
damaged plants and replacements. Join us  
afterwards for the formal dedication of the Tyler  
Botanical Garden!

**\$20**  
payable at the  
door  
CASH OR CHECK

- Allen Owings, Retired Professor Emeritus of Horticulture-LSU Ag Center; *"Super Trees, Super Shrubs and Super Flowers"*- Featuring a wide range of terrific performers for East Texas Landscape
- Greg Grant, Smith County Horticulturist; *"Rising from the Ashes- What to Do With Landscape Plants After the Big Freeze"*

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, gender identity, or any other classification protected by federal, state, or local law and will strive to achieve full and equal employment opportunity throughout Texas A&M Agrilife.

# Henderson County Master Gardener Association

~ Members Page ~

## 2021 HCMGA Meetings

3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month

### New Time & Location

10:00am @ St. Edwards Catholic Church  
1310 S. Palestine St. Athens TX

May 19 <sup>th</sup>	September 15 <sup>th</sup>
June 23 <sup>rd</sup>	October 20 <sup>th</sup>
July 21 <sup>st</sup>	November 17 <sup>th</sup>
August 18 <sup>th</sup>	December 15 <sup>th</sup>



*Master Gardeners,  
remember to  
record your hours!*



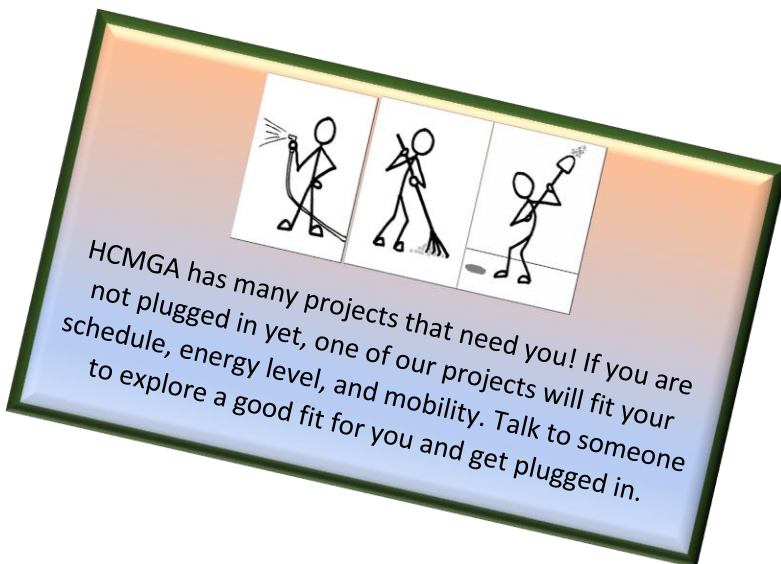
**Member and Intern Requirements:** Members need 12 hours of **volunteer service**, 6 hours of **continuing education**, and attendance at 5 **meetings**. Interns need 50 hours of **volunteer service**.

**Greenhouse:** Members volunteers are welcome on Friday's from 8:30 -11:30.

**DREAM Garden:** Member volunteers are welcome on Monday mornings.

**Harvest Garden:** Member volunteers are welcome on Tuesday mornings.

**Inside Dirt:** Member volunteers are welcome to contribute and send in articles, pictures, cartoons, gardening games, kid resources and upcoming events, to Susan Skomma at [susanloves1life@gmail.com](mailto:susanloves1life@gmail.com).



# May & June Gardening Tips

By Susan Skommesa, Master Gardener

## In General:

Regular activities include weeding, fertilizing, and mowing. Seems like we are getting plenty of rain this spring. However, be watchful as several sunny days will dry your soil out fast if not mulched. (Good reason to mulch). Come June however, consistent watering begins. TAMU offers a great resource packed with articles offering more information on how to care for your garden and lawn. Visit them at <https://agrifetoday.tamu.edu/category/lawn-garden/>.

## Veggie & herb Care:

Harvesting the greens will come to an end as the temperature climbs. Oh, so sad, because my winter/spring garden was beautiful. The cool temperatures and abundance of rain brought forth an amazing harvest. Compost your cool-season crops that have nothing left to offer.

However, one cannot be sad for long, because other veggies will be reaching maturity. As Tomatoes and Peppers set first fruit, a light application of side dressing will keep plants robust while producing the maximum amount of fruit. Continue to harvest and weed as needed.

Keep an eye out for pests, especially aphids which are happiest on new plant growth. Look under the leaves, and watch for holes or yellowing of leaves to signal that you have visitors. Some beneficial insects that are natural enemies of aphids include ladybugs, lacewings, and parasitic wasps. You can order these online or inquire at your local garden center. Remember however, not all crawly things are pests. They are your friend if they eat what wants to eat your harvest. If you are not sure, contact the local AgriLife Extension Office for identification. Keep the good guys around.



Squash bug and eggs

The single, most important factor in a successful vegetable garden is water. Too much or not enough is never a good thing. Keep soil evenly moist. Add mulch to control evaporation and keep the ground cool. Make sure your water is getting past the mulch and into the depths of the soil. Do not mulch around Squash plants as mulch provides a hiding place for squash bugs.

If Tomatoes show signs of *Blossom End Rot* (BER), (sunken, brown, leathery bottoms where the blossom was), add calcium to the soil before the next crop is planted. BER results from cold ground, inconsistent water and wet weather turning dry so that the plant cannot take up and distribute calcium throughout the fruit properly.

BER usually affects the first set of tomatoes. Add calcium to the soil if you see signs of BER.

## Flower Care:



Continue to plant, water and deadhead flowers as needed. For fuller plants, pinch back Asters and Chrysanthemums. Establish new baskets for summer accents.

There are many flowers that can be seeded now through August, such as Cosmos, Marigolds, Ornamental Sweet Potato, Periwinkle, Portulaca, and Zinnias. Keep the old spent flowers pinched back to encourage reblooming.

There is still time to plant Mums for fall if you can obtain strong healthy container grown plants. Continue to pinch terminal growth on existing established plants to induce more branching.

Spider mites love hot, dry weather. Look for stippled leaves which may indicate the presence of spider mites. A strong stream of water or insecticidal soap should do the trick.

## Trees and shrub Care:

Your shrubs should be starting to rebound. Have patients and give it time to really recover before cutting the dead branches back. My favorite shrub is growing green off the “dead” branches. Keep in mind to cut back no more than 1/3 of the shrub if you’ll be pruning it back to health. Adequate organic mulch around trees and shrubs Helps conserve moisture and keep the soil cooler through the hot summer months. However, make sure the mulch does not touch the trunk so as to not produce rotting. Also, keep in mind that when watering, water as far out as the branches reach out.

Remove flowers regularly on Rose bushes as they fade to encourage new blooms.

Thin emerging fruit from trees in order to promote a healthy harvest. Remove fallen fruit and debris from beneath trees to eliminate sources of insects and fungus.

## Grass Care:

If your lawn has some low places in it, May is a good month for repair work. To repair your lawn, choose a soil which matches your native soil for the fill. Mow and fertilize the lawn prior to applying your selected soil. If needed, plant new sod or plugs. May is the last month to apply broadleaf weed killers before the weather becomes hot.

Once you have mowed your grass several times, and all the grass is in, you can start fertilizing. Continue to fertilize every six weeks in summer until September. Try to fertilize right before a rain or be sure to water well after fertilizing so you will not burn your lawn. Applying lawn fertilizer by hand is not recommended, as the results will be uneven and can damage the grass.



The **Henderson County Master Gardener Association's Monthly Gardening Guide**, features monthly gardening tasks, tips, and amazing resource lists. Each month features some special article important to successful gardening, or planning for the migration of butterflies, or tips for pruning plants like roses or hydrangeas. All guidance is specific to East Texas, and every month has a page for making notes.

As an example, the month of **May** features a great article on effective watering, while **June** gives you details on HCMGA projects. Both months are filled with a ton of helpful information in the **Tips and Tricks** section.

If you would like this guide, call 903-675-6130, email [hendersonCMGA@gmail.com](mailto:hendersonCMGA@gmail.com), or visit [txmg.org/hendersonmg](http://txmg.org/hendersonmg)





# Please Share with Us!



There is so much creativity amongst our readers, that I'd like to invite you to share your projects, ideas, clever quotes, humor, pictures or the interesting and beautiful things happening in your gardens or landscaping. You can send a blurb, a quote, an article or contact me to interview you. Photos are always worth a thousand words. Send submissions to the editor, Susan Skommesa, at [susanloves1life@gmail.com](mailto:susanloves1life@gmail.com).



## Connect with Us:



HCmastergardener



[hendersoncmga@gmail.com](mailto:hendersoncmga@gmail.com)



Texas master gardeners



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



### Henderson County Extension Office

Office: (903) 675-6130

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### 2021 Officers

**President**, Yvonne Sparks

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