



# INSIDE DIRT



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

### President's Musings

**Delbert W. Hirst, Master Gardener**

This is a quick note to introduce myself to you, because I am way past the submission deadline for the Inside Dirt newsletter. As many of you know, because of Sara's resignation, the by-laws say that the First Vice President shall assume the position of the President...so here I am.



My name is Delbert W. Hirst, P.L.A., ASLA, and I am a Landscape Architect. I bring all my experience to this position, and have outlined below what much of that looks like so you can get to know me. Basically though, I am very excited about taking on these new duties and I cannot wait to see what happens and how things go. I am positive that this year is going to be awesome, knowing that I will have so many to lean on for help.

To begin with, I was born and raised in Snyder, Texas. As for the rest of the story, we'll need a book and several days. Instead, how about I bullet point the highlights.

**Education:**

- B.S., Landscape Architecture, Texas A&M University, 1975
- American Rainwater Catchment System Association, Accredited, 2016
- Permaculture Design Certificate, Geoff Lawton, 2018

**Registration:** Professional Landscape Architect, Licensed by the State of Texas, 1976, P.L.A. No. 630

**Years of Experience:**

- Schrickel, Rollins and Associates: 41 years starting in November 1977
- Other: 5

**Professional Affiliations:** American Society of Landscape Architects



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This is a plant sale card. These can be found throughout this edition of Inside Dirt. They are but a sample of what will be available during the plant sale. For more details on the sale see pages 3 & 9.

## Awards and Honors:

- Board of Directors for Schrickel, Rollins and Associates, Inc.
- Past Member of the North Arlington Business Council, Arlington Chamber of Commerce
- Past President and Board of Directors for Arlington Sculpture Garden Foundation
- Past President and Board of Directors for Arlington Sunrise Rotary Club
- Rotarian of the Year, Arlington Sunrise Rotary Club
- State of Texas Orienteering Champion, 1992
- Judge, International Pool, Spa and Hot Tubs Design Awards, 1989
- Qualifier for the National Sailboarding Championship, 1986
- Texas and Oklahoma Sailboarding Champion, 1984-1985
- Texas Water Safari participant, 1984
- Past President of Fort Worth Bicycling Association
- Past President of the Arlington Bicycle Club
- Past Vice President of Arlington Running Club
- Ironman Finisher, Hawaii, February 1982
- ASLA Award of Excellence in the Study of Landscape Architecture, 1975

**Lectures/Presentations:** "Design Considerations for Municipal Swimming Pools", Texas Recreation and Parks Society (TRAPS) Annual Institute and Trade Show, March 1996

**Projects:** With over 40 years' experience in the design of outdoor spaces, Dub is accomplished in providing innovative and cost-effective solutions for his clients and has accumulated extensive knowledge in master planning including site development and designs of school campuses, municipal parks, athletic facilities, aquatic facilities, and landscape designs, etc. Dub combines his passion for the outdoors with his commitment providing quality design, creating solutions that are environmentally sensitive to the surrounding land and responsive to the safety and enjoyment of the users. He has a strong track record of delivering projects on time and within budget, while never compromising the health, safety, and welfare of those who will be using their facilities.

Next month I will actually start talking about Master Gardening stuff.

TAKE CARE! **Dub**

### Red Spider Lily *Lycoris radiata*

- Type: Perennial
- Zone: 6 to 10
- Height: 1' to 2' Spread: 1' to 1.5'
- Blooms: August to September
- Bloom: Red
- Sun: Full sun to part shade
- Suggested Use: Naturalize
- Water: Medium
- Maintenance: Medium



Plant Sale Card

## HCMGA Projects

- **Children's Programing:** HCMGA is available for consultation on school or teaching gardens.
- **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.
- **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.



# Plant Sale

Elizabeth Crowe and Judy Haldeman, Master Gardener Co-Chairs 2022 Plant Sale

One of the favorite events for Henderson County Master Gardeners is our annual April Plant Sale. Our 2022 Plant Sale will be an online event similar to last year. In late March, we'll send an email listing all plants available for sale. That list will provide the common name, scientific name, a photo, and some information about the plant and list of growing conditions. See examples of some plants throughout this newsletter.

If you receive our emailed newsletter, you'll receive the plant list. If you have friends who are not currently on our email list, please let them know they can request to be added by emailing us at [hendersoncmga@gmail.com](mailto:hendersoncmga@gmail.com). A subsequent email will follow with any updates.

**Plant Sale Card**

Coneflower 'Purple'  
*Echinacea purpurea*

- Type: Perennial
- Zone: 3 to 8
- Height: 2.00 to 5.00 feet
- Spread: 1.50 to 2.00 feet
- Bloom Time: June to August
- Bloom Description: Purplish pink
- Sun: Full sun to part shade
- Water: Dry to medium
- Maintenance: Low



The online sale will open **Friday, April 8** and close **Friday, April 15**. A **one-day pick-up** at the Athens TVCC Pavilion, located behind the gymnasium, will be held **Saturday, April 23**. All customers will remain in cars while plants are loaded into vehicles.

*Creative  
On-Line Event*

We will have a wide variety of plants for sale, including Perennials, Shrubs, Annuals, Bulbs, Fruits, Herbs, Indoor Plants, Texas Native plants (including some plants native to Henderson County, and Texas Superstar® Plants. A Texas Superstar® Plant undergoes several years of extensive field trials during which they must show superior performance under Texas' tough growing conditions. Trial plants receive minimal soil preparation, reasonable levels of water, and no pesticides.

While many of the plants in the sale attract pollinators, we also have a group of plants that are host plants for various butterflies.

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS** for the opening of the online sale on April 8! We'll send a link for the online shop and will have more information on our Website and Facebook page.

*Opens: Friday April 8<sup>th</sup>  
Closes: Friday April 15<sup>th</sup>  
Pickup: Saturday April 23<sup>rd</sup>*





# 2022 INTERNS

**CORRECTION: Editor's Note** – This article was published in the last edition of the Inside Dirt - January/February 2022. There was a tremendous mix-up between the pictures and the Intern's name and statement. Please see the corrected article below. ***This is an important correction as our Interns are highly valued and we need to get to know them so they know they belong.*** The tangling up of information was quite extensive, so if further correction is needed, please forward the info to [susanloves1life@gmail.com](mailto:susanloves1life@gmail.com). ***To the Interns, I extend my most heartfelt apology.***

~ Susan Skomma, Editor & Master Gardener



**Lisa Alexander:** "I have traveled and lived all over the world and decided to retire with my husband on Cedar Creek Lake because it is the most beautiful place in the world and it is also near to my son, daughter and grandson. I LOVE tomatoes, but not the ones in the grocery store, so I planted a garden with some success. I have admired friends that are master gardeners and decided that if I were to have an amazing garden with amazing tomatoes, I would need to become a master gardener."



**Nancy Bruce:** "I have been wanting to start vegetable gardening for quite some time, but have not had the space until moving to Henderson County a year ago. The MG program is providing me with much needed information and is giving me the opportunity to meet other like-minded new friends. I am excited for more hands-on learning at the various garden projects around Athens and I look



**Vicky Domingue:** "For me there never was a time before gardening. Some of my earliest and fondest memories include the magic of soil, seeds, water and sunshine... And my amazement at what happens when you blend those ingredients, a little TLC and a little touch from GOD has never wavered or diminished. When you love something as much as I love gardening you want to know everything there is to know about it. And there is SO much that I don't know about gardening that for me the question "why do I want to become a master gardener" might be replaced with "what took you so long? Haha"



**Felisha Gillam:** I enjoy getting my hands in the soil and working in the garden. It is very comfortable and relaxing to me. My grandmother and my great grandma were both old-school gardeners, which inspired me to do the same.



**Ron Jackson:** “After retiring and moving to Athens from the Houston area, I chose to change my home landscape maintenance to a more environmentally friendly program. A good friend who is already a Master Gardener encouraged me to consider the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service training and education program. After enrolling in the Henderson County Master Gardener program, I am convinced I made a good decision. Upon completion and by following the Earth-Kind landscaping program, I will be much better prepared to produce a low maintenance and environmentally sustainable landscape. I will also have the opportunity to provide educational resources to others and work with those who share my interest.”



**Sue Krider:** “I have always loved to plant and grow things. When we moved to Athens 4 years ago and built a new house, I wanted to really know what I was doing with all new landscaping, lawn, etc. Pollinator issues are also important to me as we are keeping bees on our land. I’m also an eternal student...I love learning new things. I also looked forward to opportunity to make new friends in a new town.”



**Clematis**





**Kelly McDowell:** “Over a year ago I began my gardening journey. I had always loved flowers, but had never tried to grow them myself. I started experimenting in my parent’s garden in the summer of 2020, and by fall of 2020 I chose to leave my job as a probation officer. During this time, I started dreaming about a career in gardening. Since March 2021, I have worked at a garden center, a greenhouse, and on a pepper farm. My goal was to learn as much as possible, but I wanted more. So I signed up for several online courses through the Gardener’s Workshop with Lisa Mason Ziegler, as well as, enrolled in the Henderson County Master Gardener program. I have learned so much and met so many that

have the same passion about gardening! My goal is to grow flowers and vegetables for my immediate community in Poynor.”



**Cathy Reagan:** “As a child, I always enjoyed helping my grandmothers with gardening, preserving food, and working in their flower beds. I felt that Master Garden would be a great opportunity to learn about the things I love to do and make new friends in the community.”



**Nancy Hubbard:** I have been an avid gardener for years on the West Coast, and when I moved to East Texas 3 years ago I quickly realized that most of my knowledge was not applicable here. Soil, climate, even the insects are drastically different. I decided to become a Master Gardener to learn to be an effective gardener in this climate, and also for the opportunity to get involved in my new community.

**Kat Stevens:** (No Photo) Moved here from the Dallas area to help my dad, who is ill with Lewy body’s Disease, with his blueberry farm. Since he is a MG, I wanted to study to become one so I could better understand how to help keep his farm going. I would go to his house every Thursday so we could watch class together and I would ask him for clarification on anything I didn’t understand. It was such a joy and special bonding time for us.”





**Melissa Henson:** "I've always enjoyed gardening, growing mostly ornamentals and a few vegetables. My husband and I moved to Cedar Creek Lake from Plano 2 years ago. I have a good friend that is a Master Gardener in Collin County and always wanted to pursue the program, but it never seemed like the right time. Seems like the perfect time now. I signed up for the program to meet some like-minded friends, get involved in my new area and of course learn more about gardening."



From Pat Calderon, Master Gardener



**Justica (Jacobinia)**

Picture by **Barbara Thompson**, Master Gardener



**Crocus Vernus (Twilight)**

Picture by **Susan Skommesa**, Master Gardener

**Plant Sale Card**

**'PEGGY MARTIN' ROSE**  
*Rosa 'Peggy Martin'*

- Type: Perennial
- Zone: 4-9
- Height: 6-15 Ft. Width: 12-15 Ft.
- Spacing: 3-5 Ft.
- Flower: Pink
- Bloom Time: Spring to Mid Fall
- Foliage: Dark Green
- Sun: Full Sun Water: Average
- Flower: Pink








By **Lydia Holley**, Master Gardener

# Roses for Every Day: Part 1

Whether or not you received roses for Valentine's Day, you can plant bare root roses now. But roses are a vastly varied group of plants, and each class has their own qualities. Choosing the right rose involves a bit of research, but when you are through, you will have the perfect rose for the spot you wish to fill.

Antique roses are roses from any class introduced before 1867. Why the specific date? Because that's when they crossed a tea rose with a hybrid perpetual rose and ended up with the hybrid tea 'La France.' Of course, they had been hybridizing roses for some time, but this was the first hybrid tea. It was different from other roses. So different, it eventually divided roses into modern or antique categories. Hybrid teas had bigger blooms, longer stems, upright forms. And they liked to be pruned, putting all their energy into large blooms instead of bushy branches and multiple flowers. Suddenly, rose breeders had something new to play with.



Hybrid tea roses became very popular and are the long-stemmed, large-flowered roses most people think of when they imagine a rose bloom. The problem? They were not bred for disease resistance or for scent. Still, they became the most popular class of rose to plant during the mid-century. Why? Because people gravitated to the bright colors offered and they had anti-fungals to spray. Unfortunately, roses got a reputation for being difficult to grow.

Of course, now, few people want to spray their roses every week. And the rose industry has changed to meet consumer's demands. Since the 1980s, hybrid teas have been bred not only for their form and color but also for disease resistance.

If you want to grow hybrid teas, you may not want the same rose your mother or grandmother grew in their garden that needs to be babied. But you can certainly grow hybrid teas without spraying or much more care and effort you give other plants. Look for roses resistant to blackspot and mildew. Resistance to rust is also a plus, but not something we experience regularly in East Texas. Learn to prune and you will be able to enjoy the large blooms of a hybrid tea without any extra work.

And what if you want fragrance? That, too, is making a comeback in the breeding programs. So when you dip your nose into the center of the flower's petals, you will come away with a smile.

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:** *Master Gardener Lydia Holly writes weekly articles that are published in local papers. To read any of her articles visit our website. To read part 2 of this article, follow this link to [Roses for Every Day, Part 2 – February 21, 2022](#).*





# CALADIUMS

Claudia Durham, Master Gardener



No doubt you have seen brightly colored caladiums scattered in landscapes. They are tropical plants but do well in our zone. There are many different varieties with colors of red, pink, green, white.

Caladiums require a warm soil of 70 plus degrees to start their growth, which in our area is in late May or early June. Several varieties can be planted in the sun and some grow well in the shade or part shade. Do some research on which are sun tolerant before you plant.

Caladiums usually grow from 10 to 16 inches high. They grow well in containers or in the

ground. They accept any soil types except soggy. Depending on the size of the tubers, plant 6 to 8 inches apart, or in containers, 2 to 3 tubers will fill it up beautifully. Cover with 1½ inches of soil. Keep moist until they sprout and then water well when needed. Some plants that go well with shade caladiums are hostas, impatiens, and ferns.

Blooms will last until early fall. They will start to wilt and turn brown. At that point, you can dig them up and store for winter in a dry environment for replanting the next year. Caladiums are easy plants that require little care but they give a lot of joy. Hope you will try some. They will be available in our plant sale. Varieties include Postman Joyner, White Christmas, Carolyn Wharton.



## Save The Date

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

### Online Plant Sale

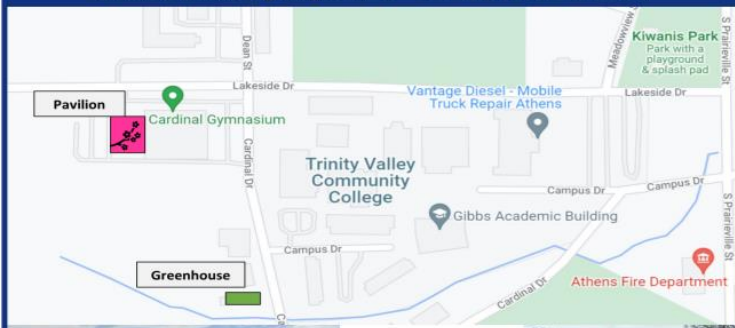
April 8 - 15, 2022



Check our website for or call us for updates:  
<https://txmg.org/hendersonmg/> (903) 675-6130

Scan Me!

### Plant Pick-up April 23<sup>rd</sup> at TVCC Pavilion



TVCC Pavilion

TVCC Greenhouse

# Calendar of Events



## Events Around Town



Below are some websites you may comb through to find events to attend.

- ✓ Henderson County Master Gardener Association: <https://txmg.org/hendersonmg/>
- ✓ East Texas Arboretum and Botanical Society: <http://www.easttexasarboretum.org/>
- ✓ 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/>
- ✓ Smith County Master Gardeners: <https://txmg.org/smith/coming-events/>
- ✓ Kaufman County Master Gardener Association: <https://www.kcmga.org/events-4/>
- ✓ Free State Master Gardeners Association of Van Zandt County: <https://txmg.org/freestatemastergardeners/>



## BLUEBONNET SIGHTINGS



Websites to help plan your bluebonnet adventure for Spring of 2022 - late March thru late April:

- <https://www.wildflower.org/bluebonnet-faq>
- <https://texashillcountry.com/5-great-places-see-bluebonnets-texas/>
- <https://www.highlandlakes.com/wildflowers/>
- <https://www.visitennis.org/bluebonnet.htm>





# March & April Gardening Tips

By Susan Skommesa, Master Gardener

## In General:

As of this writing we are in the midst of a short freeze. We've had a couple short freezes this "winter", and plenty of beautiful "get-the-gardens-ready" weather. I find myself holding my breath for the fruit trees. Like a siren calling to sailors, February saw a couple enticing warm spells tease grass, flowers, and fruit trees alike to blossom. So, the question is two-fold: Did the fruit tree blossoms take the bait and open, only to fall off in the next freeze, and, will there be enough chill hours for the fruit trees this year?

The status of blossoms we cannot answer at this point, but chill hour data for our region is available at <https://etweather.tamu.edu/chill/>.

There are two ways to calculate chill hours. Basically, the first method counts the number of hours between 32°F and 45°F, whereas the second method counts anything below 45°F. As of February 22<sup>nd</sup>, the first method calculates 653 chill hours for this winter and the second method calculates 909 chill hours. Via either method, there are only 6 more days to accumulate sufficient chill hours, as they are calculated from October 1- February 28. Texas A&M AgriLife recommends varieties for east Texas that require no more than 800-900 chill hours. A list of the recommended varieties can be found on pages 63-64 of the **Henderson County Master Gardener Association Monthly Gardening Guide**. Fact sheets on how to care for fruit trees can be found on line at the TAMU website <https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/fruit-nut/>

We have crossed the threshold of needed chill hours according to the second method. Let us hope the blossoms were not fooled into opening prematurely.

If you do not have a **Henderson County Master Gardener Association Monthly Gardening Guide** in which to look up Texas A&M AgriLife recommended varieties for our area, contact the Henderson County Extension Office, 3rd floor, Courthouse, Athens. *For more information, you may also call the extension office 903-675-6130 or email us at [hendersonCMGA@gmail.com](mailto:hendersonCMGA@gmail.com).*

## Veggie and herb Care:



**Herbs:** You can start herbs either through seed, division or propagation. When starting annual and biennial herbs, if not starting seeds indoors, start outside after the last frost. In general, you can propagate herbs via cuttings, by taking 4"- 6" cuttings in the spring for rooting. You can propagate perennial herbs via division. Simply separate the plants, in the early spring, into 3 to 4 clumps. If you grow more than you can use, you can always dry your fresh herbs. Doing so will mean herbs for the rest of the year.

**Veggies:** Cool-season crops should be in the ground by March 1. Sow seeds for summer vegetables and put in transplants after the average last frost date (March 15 for Henderson County). Again, be ready to cover them in case of a late frost.

Here are some general dates for planting veggies: Starting in **early March**, plant Bush Beans, Cucumber, Summer Squash, and Winter Squash. Starting in **mid-March**, start planting Lima Beans (bush and



pole), Pole Beans, Cantaloupe, Eggplant, Pepper transplants, Summer Muskmelons, and Watermelon. In **early April**, plant Pumpkin and Sweet Potato slips. In **mid-April**, plant Southern Peas and Okra. How is that for variety?

### Flower Care:

This might sound silly, but though I love flowers, I didn't think they were worth planting - because you can't eat them! Oh, how wrong I was. Not only are they beautiful and mesmerizing when looking deeply at their details, but they bring pollinators. If you are a veggie gardener, you need your pollinator magnets planted all around your veggie garden. These visitors, that may be highly drawn to a vining South Carolina Jasmine, will stop by to enjoy your cucumber flowers. In so doing, you increase your cucumber harvest!

So let's talk flowers. How about planting Dahlia and Caladium tubers? Or Gladiolus? I bet your porch would love hanging baskets of Begonias, Impatiens, Petunias, and other annuals. Just be prepared to bring them indoors as weather dictates.



Bulbs like Crocus and Daffodils are awake! A tip on Daffodils: when they start to wear out, don't remove the Daffodil bulb foliage, as the foliage feeds the bulb; therefore, it should brown or "ripen" on the plant before removal. If Daffodil foliage interferes with neighboring plants or become unsightly, braiding the foliage is an old English tradition!

The Caladium is a warm weather plant and does best when planted after the soil warms up to an average of 70 degrees or more. which could be within the next few weeks, or as late as May. To be safe you may want to wait until Mother's Day. Even though Caladiums like warm temperatures, they prefer cool, moist, well-drained soils in the landscape. The tubers should be planted approximately one and one-half to two inches deep and from 12 to 18 inches apart in loose, organic soil. See the article on **Caladium** on page 9 of this edition.

Be sure to plant spring and summer annuals after danger of frost and freeze.

Great ground cover plants include Confederate Jasmine, Dwarf Junipers, English Ivy, Liriope, and Vinca.

Come April, it should be safe to plant most ornamentals. Select and plant Mums for fall blooms. If planted now, Mums have time to develop deep roots before winter. However, the plant's tips should be lightly trimmed back through spring and summer to delay blooming until fall.



### Trees and shrubs:

Once your trees and shrubs start to respond with new growth, finish pruning summer-flowering trees and shrubs. Prune evergreen shrubs and spring-flowering shrubs and trees after they have bloomed. Fertilize Azaleas and Camellias after they have finished blooming. Add more organic mulch underneath Azaleas and Camellias and other shrubs as needed. Begin fertilizing Roses every 4-6 weeks until September.

When fertilizing trees be sure to apply in the area beneath the ends of the tree branches and not against the trunk.

It is recommended not to use an all-in-one weed and feed product as they rarely coincide as to when it's time to weed and when it's time to feed.

## Grass Care:

In March, while there is still the possibility of the temperatures dipping below freezing, hold off planting warm-season grasses. It may be a good idea to send in a lawn soil sample for testing, if it has been more than 2 years since you last did so.

Once your clover is big and plentiful, and you are without the advantages of cattle, it is time to mow...as soon as it is dry enough to do so. But really, mowing doesn't become a regular job until April. Did you know that there are recommended heights for your mower given the type of grass you have? Here they are:

- ✓ **Common Bermuda** 1 to 1 1/2 inches
- ✓ **Hybrid Bermuda** 1/2 to 1 inch
- ✓ **Centipede** 1 to 2 inches
- ✓ **St. Augustine** 2 to 3 inches
- ✓ **Zoysia** 1/2 to 1 1/2 inches

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** The **Henderson County Master Gardener Association's Monthly Gardening Guide**, features two amazing resource lists in the months of March and April.

**March** features a list of resources such as gardens, events and festivals for you to explore. The guide provides their website link so you can get the most up to date information. The resource list also offers a list of Master

Gardener associations in counties around us, also with their website links, so you can see what events they are sponsoring. In addition, there is a plethora of other related resources such as the Monarch Watch. **That's March!**

In **April**, the guide offers a list of plants, shrubs and trees that attract bees and butterflies. This resource offers great host plants you can provide for caterpillars to feed off of, so they'll hopefully leave your favorite flowers and vegetable plants alone. Additionally, the resource provides a list of Texas native plants that provide nectar for butterflies.

**NOTE** that there will be plants at the **April plant sale** that will cater to **nectar loving critters**, as well as **Texas native plants**.

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)

For more info on the **2022 Annual Plant Sale**, see pages 3 and 9 of this edition of the Inside Dirt, or visit our website at <https://txmg.org/hendersonmg/welcome/plant-sale/>.




**Columbine**

**Plant Sale Card**

**Mexican Heather - Purple**  
*Cuphea hyssopifolia*



- Type: Annual
- Zone: 9 to 11
- Height: 1.00 to 2.00 feet
- Spread: 0.75 to 2.50 feet
- Bloom Time: Flowers freely
- Bloom: Lavender (Showy)
- Sun: Full sun
- Water: Medium
- Maintenance: Low



**Plant Sale Card**

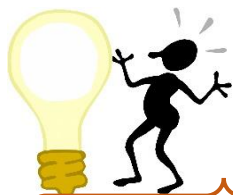
**BOUGAINVILLEA**  
*Bougainvillea*

- Type: Vine (Annual)
- Zone: 9 to 11
- Height, Spread: 5-40'
- Blooms: Seasonal bloomer
- Blooms: Purple, red, pink and yellow
- Sun: Full sun Water: Medium
- Maintenance: Medium
- Flower: Showy Other: Thorns
- Tolerate: Drought



# Henderson County Master Gardener Association

~~ Members Page ~~



*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:** Member volunteers are welcome on Monday 9am – 11am.

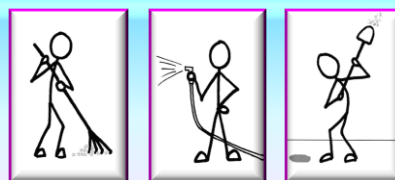
**Harvest Garden:** Member volunteers are welcome on Tuesdays 9am – 11am.

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

## 2022 HCMGA Meetings

- ✓ 10:00 am 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month
- ✓ **Location:** St. Edwards Catholic Church 1310 S. Palestine Athens TX

March 16 <sup>th</sup>	August 17 <sup>th</sup>
April 20 <sup>th</sup>	September 21 <sup>st</sup>
May 18 <sup>th</sup>	October 19 <sup>th</sup>
June 15 <sup>th</sup>	November 16 <sup>th</sup>
July 20 <sup>th</sup>	December 21 <sup>st</sup>



HCMGA has projects that need **you!** If you are not plugged in yet, one of our projects will fit your schedule, energy level, and mobility. Talk to someone to explore a good fit for you and get plugged in.



# Garden Adventure

Janelle Cole, Master Gardener



Garden fever has arrived! Any time we have a few sunny days in the late winter, Texas gardeners are chomping at the bit!

I have been planting a garden on our 7 acres for over 11 years, each year things are a little different and this year is no exception. In years past we have done a mulch, no-till method. Other years we tilled and had rows only to have an infestation of nematodes. A couple years we tried a raised bed that was built with cedar boards and was about 8 inches deep. I could give you a long list of everything that went wrong with each of our previous options but the number one problem has always been BERMUDA.

This year I am investing a lot more prep time, we started in December burning paths and other areas in our front yard. Since we are avid beekeepers, in 2014 we converted our front yard into a beescape garden, so we have mostly flower beds with granite paths through it. This year we cleaned up the beds and paths a little, then we carved out an area that gets full sun, where we were going to install our new vegetable beds.

We ordered 2 beds from Metal Garden Beds - each bed is 17 inches tall, a little over 3ft wide and 10 ft long. Before putting the beds together, we pulled what was left in the area that we burned, then we put down hardware cloth (to prevent gophers) and on top of that laid landscape fabric. I wanted the landscape cloth to extend further than the beds so that I had a buffer between the beds and would not have to fight weeds (I hope).



Once we were all ready for the beds, I enlisted my boys to help me, but honestly, I could have done it myself. It was really easy to assemble the beds. Next was the filling of the beds. I took my pick-up truck to Tyler and got 2.5 yards over two trips, of raised bed mix from Texas Organics. It is a very nice rich mix that should yield really great results!

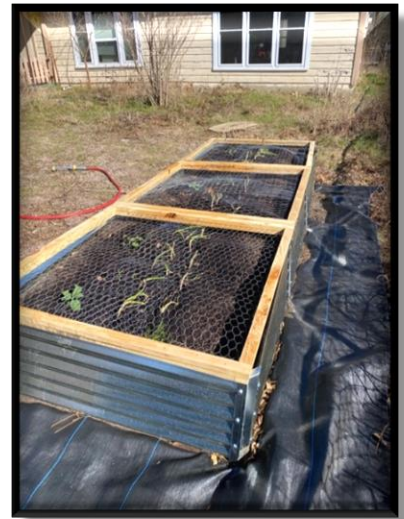


Before putting any plants in the beds, I requested that my woodworker son make some screens for me with chicken wire. I did not want my cats to decide that my vegetable beds would make a nice potty for them. These screens will only stay on while the plants are young. As soon as the plants start to grow large enough, I will take these off. So far, they are working wonderfully well. I made a screen for each section, so that I can cover as I plant, in one section at a time.

Finally, I added a few plants. First onions, then a few cabbage starts, and several sage plants. I am going for a “square foot garden” approach and plan to use a lot of companion planting for pest management. There will not be many more plants going into the beds until late March, I think. In the meantime, I will be fertilizing each week with rabbit poo tea, or a Garrett Juice/orange oil/seaweed mixture.

Stay tuned, as in the next newsletter I will talk about adding drip irrigation to the beds, which will help with water efficiency. I will set it up on a timer so I will not have to worry about watering these beds. Meanwhile take a photo of your garden beds and share with us on our Facebook page! We’d love to see what you are working on!! (<https://www.facebook.com/HCmastergardener>)

**Editor’s Note:** Garret juice can be bought or you can make your own. See this website for either option: [www.dirtdoctor.com/garden/Garrett-Juice\\_vq1927.htm](http://www.dirtdoctor.com/garden/Garrett-Juice_vq1927.htm)



## Terrific Turnout for Texas A&M Tree Giveaway

Deb Pascoe, Master Gardener



January 14 was a beautiful East Texas day – cool in the morning then warming up just enough to take those jackets off. Even though District Forester Jason Ellis arrived at Henderson County Fair Park early, a line of cars had already formed at the still-locked gate.

Forester Ellis was there to give away over 1100 hardwood saplings and over 1000 pine seedlings supplied by Texas A&M. He was aided by a crew of five Henderson County Master Gardeners - Ann Reese, Michelle Crocker, John Maloch, Sherry Sorrell, and Elizabeth Crowe - along with Henderson County Agrilife Extension Agent Spencer Perkins.

When the gates opened at 8:30, the team had its game plan and was ready. People were able to select two hardwoods. Options were American Sycamore, Live Oak, Willow Oak, Magnolia, Eastern Redcedar, Mexican Plum and Pecan. Each tree came with an instruction sheet that provided information about the tree, how to plant it and how to care for it. By the time 3PM rolled around, over 500 people had passed through the gates and received saplings and seedlings.

I asked Ann what was most memorable about the day. She commented about the general feeling of optimism and the number of children that were there. With Athens’ four-day school week, Friday was a great day for the event. It allowed them to come with parents and grandparents and help pick out a tree.

Ann commented that “You don’t plant a tree for yourself. You plant it for the future.” She went on to observe that this would be a memory that these children would cherish for years to come, each time they look at that tree growing and getting stronger and more beautiful. Many of us have had that same experience and know how special that shared memory is.

According to Forester Ellis, the Henderson County Master Gardeners were “awesome. It was one of the better tree giveaways I’ve ever done. They took it (the giveaway) to heart. They were not afraid to share their knowledge, and that made my job so much easier.”



# Navarro County Hosts Henderson County Master Gardeners

Deb Pascoe, Master Gardener



Thursday February 17 dawned cool and wet, and turned cold and windy during the day. However, that wintery weather did not affect the warm welcome Henderson County Master Gardeners received from Andrew Lewis, Navarro County's Ag Agent, and his guests. Navarro County does not currently have a Master Gardener program, so Lewis invited Henderson County's group to come and share their knowledge. Speakers Susan Skommesa and Dub Hirst delivered an information-packed afternoon, and other Henderson County Master Gardeners were on hand to answer questions on a range of topics

Susan is one of our resident experts on vegetable gardening and all its many formats. Her talk included information about in-ground, raised bed, vertical and keyhole gardening, and identified those types that are accessible to people with disabilities. Susan remarked that since her knee replacement surgery a few months ago, accessible

gardening has become top of mind for her. Susan has been growing vegetables for many years in many locations, climates, and soil conditions. One of her most fascinating topics is square foot gardening. The variety of vegetables that can be grown in one single square foot was eye-opening. Her knowledge and valuable experience made for an interesting and informative session. Attendees went away with a renewed confidence about growing vegetables.

Dub Hirst has a long career as a landscape architect. He covered two tree-related topics.

First, he talked about tree health, and how difficult it is to diagnose a sick tree. Rarely is a tree sick for only one reason – oak tree wilt is a good example. Rather, most of the time trees become unhealthy due to a combination of factors. Injuries to a tree can take years to show visible signs. Dub noted that the Texas A&M Plant Disease Diagnostic Lab (<https://plantclinic.tamu.edu>) can perform tests to help diagnose and determine what actions might be taken. Contacting a local arborist is always a good place to start.

Secondly, he talked about what to consider when adding a tree to your landscape including factors like size, location around your home, proximity to your home, flowering versus non-flowering, evergreen versus deciduous. He also covered the correct way to plant the tree and the proper care and maintenance of trees. A tree is a long-term investment and something that can bring you joy for many years, and proper care is key.

Dub shared two helpful website resources with the audience. First is the Texas A&M Texas Tree Planting Guide – <https://texastreeplanting.tamu.edu> This excellent site enables people to identify the best tree choices for their county and for their location and conditions. The second is plantant.com – <https://plantant.com>. This site has an inventory of plants available at wholesale nurseries. It is a way to locate specific plants for your landscape project.

Andrew praised the quality and professionalism of the group and the program. His goal is to develop his own Master Gardener Association for Navarro County.



**Editor's Note:** *Would you like a presentation for a group you belong to? Feel free to contact us by calling (903)675-6130 or emailing us at [hendersonCMGA@gmail.com](mailto:hendersonCMGA@gmail.com). To learn more about us, see our website: [txmg.org/hendersonmg](http://txmg.org/hendersonmg)*



## Now and Later Part 2: Evergreens and Bluebirds

Lydia Holley, Master Gardener



Are you tired of all the brown tones in your landscape? Fill it with evergreens. If you think a garden of evergreens might be just as boring as an all-beige landscape, think again. Several evergreens have variegated or colorful foliage. Plus, they come in a variety of forms for interest throughout the year.

For instance, sweet flag has a yellow variegation. It can grow in sun or shade, although the more sun, the more water it requires. Still, that can be a good thing if you have a low spot in your garden. Cast iron plants are easy to grow and are usually found planted under trees. Their sword-shaped foliage stands at attention, drawing your eye upward.

Evergreen shrubs can provide a second season of joy if you chose some that bloom later in the year, such as gardenia and azaleas. Carolina jessamine and cross vine are two evergreen vines which also flower. Other evergreens add additional interest. For example, rosemary delights with its spicy fragrance.

Bugleweed spreads along the ground. You can find bugleweed in plain green, almost black, or variegated varieties. Gold dust plant sparkles in the shade garden. Golden euonymus shines in full sun all years long, while cotoneasters are striking with their grayish foliage and red berries. Yaupon hollies also have red berries. So, too, does pyracantha. The berries attract birds migrating through. Some continue their path northward, while some, like the bluebirds, may stay in East Texas.

Recently, a bluebird has been checking out the nest boxes placed in my garden. According to Audubon International, bluebirds traditionally nested in the cavities of old trees. Because of increased housing and since most people cut down decaying trees, the number of bluebirds has decreased. You can attract bluebirds by installing nest boxes.

The male travels ahead of the female and locates several choices for a nest. The female then determines which house she prefers and builds the nest. They can have two or three broods each year.

A male bluebird's coloring is brilliant, but not only are bluebirds beautiful, they are useful. They eat numerous insects, including grasshoppers. Why not add some nest boxes to your landscape now and determine where additional evergreen plants can be placed later? You will enjoy both for months and years to come.

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

**Editor's Note:** *Master Gardener Lydia Holly writes weekly articles that are published in local papers. To read any of her articles visit our website. **To read part 1 of this article**, follow this link to [Now and Later, Part 1 – January 17, 2022](#). While there, you will find a third part as well.*

# Members & Friends, want to help us raise money as you shop?

Your impact can make a difference in a big way. Please consider using Amazon Smile when you order from Amazon, and designate Henderson County Master Gardener Association as the charity of choice.

Set up is easy peasy. Sign into Amazon Smile instead of Amazon. Your account information can be seen just as if you signed into Amazon. In the far left upper corner, on Amazon Smile, click on "Your Charity" and then **search for Texas Master Gardener Association Inc.** A list of Texas Master Gardener associations will come up by chapter. Scroll down till you find Athens TX. Click on it and *voilà!* When you make a purchase, log in through Amazon Smile, and you are helping HCMGA raise money as you shop!



## 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/>



**Plant Sale Card**

'BLACK & BLUE' SALVIA  
*Salvia guaranitica* 'Black and Blue'

- Type: Perennial
- Zone: 7 to 10
- Height: 2-5' Spread: 2\*5'
- Blooms: July to frost
- Sun: Full sun to part shade
- Water: Medium Maintenance: Low
- Flower: Showy Leaf: Fragrant
- Tolerate: Deer
- Bloom Description: Deep blue with black calyces



# 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.



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Texas master gardeners



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