



Master Gardener Gazette

Nueces County, Tx



The mission of the association shall be to organize and promote volunteer efforts that support AgriLife Extension programs advancing sound horticultural practices in Nueces County (<http://NUECES.AGRILIFE.ORG>)

Propagation Refresher Class

In preparation for the upcoming plant sale, a propagation refresher class was conducted for the Nueces Master Gardeners on Wednesday, May 16 at the Botanical Gardens Education Center. The most informative and educational class was led by NMG Sandra Williams. Attendance was great.



Plant Propagation for the Sale



Top left: Intern Kelly Munguia showed that she is starting some cuttings of *lerodendrum thomsoniae* 'Delectum'. Bottom left: NMG John Slusarz with a few newly separated ferns. Bottom center: NMG Michelle Garrett potted up a whole bunch of air plants. Bottom right: NMG Liz Yzaguirre posted a picture that shows cuttings she is propagating for the plant sale using techniques that she learned from the propagation class.



New Master Gardeners

Congratulations to two of our newest Certified Master Gardeners from Class 28.



Gina Sanchez (shown on the left with CEA Kevin Gibbs and NMG President John Slusarz) and Liz Yzaguirre (right with CEA Kevin Gibbs).



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LEADERSHIP

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[LEADERSHIP CONTACTS](#)
[CLICK THIS](#)

MASTER GARDENERS MEETING Tuesday, June 19

- 10:30am Board of Directors Meeting
- 11:30am Meet & Greet Lunch
- 12:00pm Presentation
- 12:30pm General Meeting

There are no volunteers for this month. If you could volunteer to help this month or with future lunches, you can contact Rita Phillips 991-0750 or email her at rnphillipscttx@grandecom.net

Nature Rocks Coastal Bend

Nature Rocks Coastal Bend is a collaborative of local organizations, agencies, and citizens who feel it is important to encourage families to spend time outside in nature. Texas Children in Nature and Nature Rocks Coastal Bend have partnered with Texas A&M AgriLife, Texas Master Naturalists and numerous local and regional organizations. Their focus is on creating more access to nature, and help raise awareness that children and families who play and learn in nature are Healthier, Happier and Smarter.

Our collaborative is a part of the larger Texas Children in Nature (TCiN) and national Children in Nature Network (CiN).

- To learn more about the CBCiN organization, our partners, resources, green spaces, and events visit our website, naturerockscoastalbend.org
- For more information about TCiN, and its statewide resources, visit the website at texaschildreninnature.org
- Follow us Facebook@NatureRocksCoastalBend

If families spending time outside and Nature Rocks Coastal Bend appears like something that you would like to get involved with, contact Kevin Gibbs at Kevin.gibbs@ag.tamu.edu

THANK YOU
Volunteers!
We couldn't do it without you



OTHER ACTIVITIES THIS MONTH

Wed, Jun 6 - Coastal Bend Cacti & Succulent Society meeting, 7pm, GC, 687-6474

Thur, Jun 7 - Orchidology: 1st Thursday of the month, 7pm BG

Thur, Jun 28 - Bonsai Society meeting, 7pm, GC, 992-0009

Thur. Jun 28 - Bromeliad Society meeting, 658-8650 GC 7pm

[5325 Greely Dr, CC, TX CLICK FOR MAP](#)

Botanical Gardens & Gills Events - page

ONGOING PROJECTS

[CLICK THIS - COMMITTEE/PROJECT CONTACTS PDF](#)

BOTANICAL GARDENS, Wednesday, 7:30 am
GREELY SENIOR CENTER COURTYARD, 1st Monday, 8am Jessica Latimer 563-6008 or 429paloma@att.net

FOOD BANK PROJECT Tuesdays 7:30am (Except MG meeting day then Wednesday) Contact: Mary Lambert 813-7596 or cwlmel@yahoo.com

NATURE CONSERVANCY Mondays, 4:00pm & Blucher Park 5:00pm (Behind the Main Library). Contact: Karen Smith 877-9723

Happy birthday!

Nueces Master Gardeners with a birthday this month include the following. When you see one of them, be sure that you take time to tell and wish them a **HAPPY BIRTHDAY!**

Jun 01	Huxley Smith	Class 16
Jun 02	Barbara Moses	Class 28
Jun 07	Romeo Gonzales	Class 22
Jun 19	Rita Phillips	Class 16
Jun 20	Leland Johnson	Class 1
Jun 20	Deborah Holliday	Class 23
Jun 25	Elizabeth Schmidt	Class 26



Agents Notes

TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION

Kevin O. Gibbs, CEA - Horticulture
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

Politicians and Poke Salad

When I was 2 or 3 years old, my dad got a job working for former governor Faubus, the 36th Governor of Arkansas. Governor Faubus owned a printing company and since my dad was a pressman, he ended up working on one of the newspapers that Faubus' company published. Faubus is best known for his stance against the desegregation of Little Rock public schools in 1957, using National Guardsmen to block blacks from entering Little Rock public schools, defying a federal desegregation order.

The turmoil of that era had subsided by the time we headed to Huntsville, Arkansas in 1969. We took up residence on top of one of the Ozark mountains in a beautiful little house that sat near the summit. Although it appeared to be idyllic in location, it was not without its faults. Trying to move furniture up the mountain proved difficult (everyone moved their own stuff back then). The refrigerator decided to take a tumble out of the truck and proceeded to roll down the side of the mountain. My dad and uncle retrieved it, but alas, when they plugged it in, it didn't work. We did without a refrigerator for quite some time, because we were poor. The house had a water well and we were able to keep some things cold using well water. On one occasion, my mother sent my sister out to get water from the well and she accidentally dropped the pan in the well. My brothers came running in to tattle on my sister, but in their haste to tattle, they instead made my mother think that my sister had fallen into the well. She rushed from the kitchen frantically to discover my sister crying, having lost the pan. You can imagine my mother's relief to find her safe. Finally, my dad got a paycheck and it turns out that the only thing wrong with the refrigerator was a two-dollar part; they replaced it and the refrigerator ran like a charm.

Winters in the Ozarks can be quite brutal also. We had lots of snow and freezing cold temperatures. My mother would make us pallets in the living room in front of the fireplace. The breaking point and pinnacle came with one storm; it got so cold that the inside walls of the house iced over. When you live in a cold area, you also leave the faucets dripping so the water is moving and less likely to freeze. This cold spell froze the water and then pushed the sink and faucet out of the wall. When spring arrived, we gathered our stuff and moved down the mountain closer to town and into a better insulated house.

Our new house sat in a neighborhood with other houses, but still rural. There was a creek close by and lots to explore. In the springtime, my mother would send my brothers and sister to gather berries and occasionally poke salad. Poke salad *Phytolacca americana* is one of those things that you can only eat at certain times of the year. We were told that you could only eat the young greens. The rest of the time it is considered poisonous containing phytolacca-toxins and phytolaccigenins, especially after berries are produced. I do not remember what my mother did to prepare the poke salad, but I'm pretty sure it involved bacon grease. It's thought that poor people started eating Poke salad during hard times in the South when there was little to eat. All we knew, was that it tasted good. There's no telling what all we ate in those days. My brothers even caught Crawdads (Crayfish) from the creek and boiled them up.



Continued on next page

Agent Notes - Politicians and Poke Salad

Continued from previous page

We didn't stay in Arkansas too long, my Dad got a job for the Tyler Morning News and we headed off to Tyler, Texas in 1970. Although I can appreciate all the comforts of modern technology, there's something to be said for the simpler times that we knew then. Playing games with your family, visiting friends for Sunday dinner, exploring all the bounty and surprises that nature had to offer, or even reading the Sunday morning paper. We might have been poor, but we were loved. Money isn't important when there's plenty of love to take its place. I'm grateful every day for the life experiences that I've had and the loving people who afforded me those opportunities.

If you're brave enough, track down some Poke salad and give it a try! Don't forget the bacon though!

A Vegetable Garden

Submitted by NMG Barbara Moses



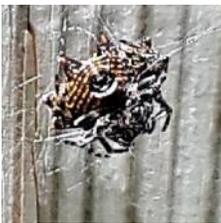
Thanks to CEA Kevin Gibbs and ALL of the Master Gardeners who have inspired me to grow a vegetable garden!!! I've learned so much from ALL of you! This year I dug up hibiscus plants in a flower bed along a walkway outside my kitchen door which gets a lot of sun. The hibiscus were pretty, but actually too big for where I had planted them. I was having to prune them pretty regularly. So, I decided this year I'm going to dig them up and try a vegetable garden instead. My son and daughter have commented to me more than once that they didn't know why I didn't have a vegetable garden all these years. So, now I do!



I planted Ruby Crush Grape Tomatoes, Tycoon Tomatoes, Sweet Slice Cucumbers, Cilantro, Mexibelle Spicy Bell Pepper, Jalapeno Pepper, marigolds, garlic and cosmos. And the best part is walking outside daily to harvest the fresh delicious vegetables that they are producing and eating them too!



The little spider was in my vegetable garden and I didn't know what it was. My daughter told me it was a Spiny Orb Weaver and after Googling it, that's what it is. Really interesting to look at and watch and is beneficial to my garden. It made webs from the fence to the tomato plants and cucumbers which are doing really well. Here's a link for more info on the beneficial and interesting Spiny Orb Weaver: https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/beneficials/beneficial-23_spiny_orb_weaver_spider.htm



To see her garden pictures full size - [CLICK THIS](#).

Barbara followed up on the above with this, "Check out my tomato and cucumber garden harvest from one day!! I have eaten so many, given bunches away, and have four paper bags full of not completely ripened tomatoes that I picked before the bugs eat them, and still have them on the vine. Next year I'm thinking I may stagger plant times or maybe not plant so many." For the all the pics - [CLICK THIS](#)



Greely Lease Agreement

The committee on this project, after having numerous meetings with Parks and Recreation Department and having spent many hours working and making presentations on this matter, has determined that at this time the Nueces Master Gardeners should confirm their willingness to continue with this project or not. This matter will be included on the agenda for the June monthly meeting and it will be determined if the Master Gardeners desire to continue working with the Parks and Recreation Department to acquire a lease for this property.

To give the Master Gardeners a better understanding of this project the following is what was presented by CEA Kevin Gibbs at the May monthly meeting as the current status of this project.

Status of the Agreement

The Corpus Christi Parks and Recreation Department is exploring the possibility of leasing park property adjacent to the Senior Garden Center to the Nueces Master Gardeners. As the negotiations process is still ongoing and until the lease agreement is created there are not many hard facts that can be given.

The lease agreement is still in preliminary development and very few details have been finalized. It is expected that the lease cost will be minimal. It is probable that the initial lease will be for a short term, estimated to be 5 years, with a lease extension incorporated. Complete project approval and faculties to be provided by the city are anticipated to be finished and installed by the end of 2018.

The current preliminary agreements as part of the lease are that the Corpus Christi Parks and Recreation Department will initially provide the following:

- Perimeter fencing and gates, anticipated to be chain link
- Utilities – install and provide water and electric at no cost
- As needed soil, grading and filling
- Support the delivery of soil, mulch and material from city facilities and properties

Initial aspects of the lease agreement incorporates that the Nueces Master Gardeners will, over the duration of the agreement, provide the following:

- Provide the community with continuing horticultural educational programs and activities.
- Establish and have available to the community practical examples of Earth-Kind, water wise, native plantings and locally adaptable plants.
- Create and exhibit demonstrational plantings, garden areas and trial gardens.
- Provide the Parks and Recreation Department with tree and bush plantings

The following are some issues and concerns if the lease is approved, that were discussed at the May monthly meeting during the presentation:

- Initial architectural plan will be done in house for presentation to neighborhood and city council.
- There will be initial financial commitments required; lot survey, tools, equipment, material and small facilities
- There will be ongoing financial requirements as the gardens develop.
- Grants, sponsors and donations will be sought.
- Local gardening and other organizations will be solicited to participate.
- Will the Master Gardeners be able to do this?

If you have questions or concerns do not hesitate to contact CEA Kevin Gibbs (Kevin.Gibbs@ag.tamu.edu 361-767-5217) or NMG John Slusarz (jmslusarz2@gmail.com 361-939-0505).

Desert Rose Blooms



NMG Kathie Fernandez posted some pictures to the NMG Facebook Bulletin Board on May 12, "These are my desert roses that are blooming today. The first one started out as a double purple but now only one branch blooms like the original flower."



Garden Flowers



NMG Barbara Moses proudly sent in pictures of some of the flowers that are growing in her garden. They are Yellow Dwarf Cosmos, White Duranta (pruned as a small tree), Poodle Hibiscus, a hibiscus and Purple Duranta. She also posted them up on her Google OneDrive, if you would like to see all the pictures in full size view - [CLICK THIS](#)



Towering Pots and Canning

NMG Huxley Smith sent in these pictures.



From Betty Rogers TIPS ON REPORTING YOUR HOURS



If you do not re-certify for two consecutive years you will be automatically dropped from the Master Gardener Program.

That does not mean, however, that we don't want you. You are welcome to come back to us at any time. Just contact us and let us know you are ready to return.

You will need to complete 40 volunteer hours and 12 CE hours your first year back to be in good standing again.

CE time received at our monthly meetings should be reported under "CE MG Meeting Programs."

Got webbing on your trees?

It is not webworms! Webbing on the bark of trunks and branches is a good thing. Don't spray!! Bark lice is nature's clean-up crew. These tiny creatures are scouring the bark for plant, animal, or fungus



life which they eat, and while they perform this housekeeping chore, they spin this web for protection. Usually the web will disintegrate in two or three days and will

disappear almost as suddenly as it appeared. Leave them alone and let them do their job of cleaning up your trees or shrubs. Thank goodness for good bugs!



Garden Talks!

Saturday, June 2nd, 10:00am-11:00am Expand Your Outdoor Space!

Speaker Phillip Elbert, Landscape Designer, Gill Landscape Nursery. Dreaming of an outdoor room for entertaining, cooking, and just relaxing? Turn your ordinary outside to a beautiful and useful living space. Join Phillip as he walks you through designing your outdoors by adding stone, water, seating, cooking area, lighting and more. Phillip's eye for design and passion for the outdoors is inspiring and contagious!

Saturday, June 9th, 10:00am-11:00am Creating Curb Appeal!

Speaker Kathy Hubner Landscape Designer, Gill Landscape Nursery. A pretty front entrance adds beauty and value to your home. Wouldn't you enjoy coming home to a great looking front yard? Come learn the basic principles of designing curb appeal in your landscape. Kathy will talk about plant selection, grouping, textures, and placement to help your home look fantastic!



FATHER'S DAY FREE WEEKEND—DADS GET IN FREE!

Saturday, Sunday, June 16, 17.

Just say "It's Fathers' Day" and **Dad gets in free**, Saturday & Sunday of Father's' Day weekend. Take a walk with the important dad in your life-- admire the gardens, Resident Reptiles, Gator Lake, trails, boardwalk, Parrot Talk at 1:30pm both days, and other fun guy stuff! Dad's dog is welcome, too, on a leash. Sorry only dads are free—other non-members pay general admission! But, what a Fathers' Day gift--buy the special dad in your life a membership this weekend, at 20% off, for a year's worth of free admission, Turner's Gardenland, Nature's Boutique and other discounts, **FREE Saturday classes, plus 300 Reciprocal Gardens!**

NATURE SHUTTERBUGS, Monday-Friday, 9am-noon, \$125 members, \$135 others.

Ages 5-7: June 18-22. **Ages 8-12:** July 30-August 3. Using Gardens' digital cameras and microscopes, campers merge science and nature with hands-on camera experience, to see biology of potential photography subjects-- animal habitats, nature crime scenes, reptiles and birds, photographing plants, animals, and animal homes. Campers will learn to recognize and create photo opportunities, which will be printed for framed pictures, journals and camp t-shirt. Students also may bring their own cameras or good-quality cell phones. Instructors are Botanical Gardens Education Coordinator Brenda Ermis, and *Wildlife in Focus* educator Susan Chilcoat.



Don't let fire ants ruin your summer, take steps this spring

*By Adam Russell Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service
Submitted by Nueces Master Gardener Carlos Valdez*

Dealing with fire ants is no picnic, but getting rid of them can be as easy as Step 1, Step 2, according to Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service experts.

Dr. Allen Knutson, AgriLife Extension entomologist, Dallas, said spring is a good time to control fire ants as this is when they search for food and build mounds, which makes them easier to locate. Broadcast baits are the core of AgriLife Extension's recommended treatment. The method becomes effective as temperatures begin to rise and ants begin to gather forage to feed their new brood, he said. But once hot, dry summer conditions set in, fire ants become less active and mounds become less visible as ants go deeper in search of moisture.

"It's time now in central and southern Texas to put out baits. But we encourage homeowners in north central Texas to wait a few weeks to begin applying baits because of our cooler soil temperatures," Knutson said. "It's a good time to apply baits in spring as they are generally slow acting. It typically takes two to four weeks to see results from using baits containing indoxacarb, spinosad or hydramethylnon. Starting as early as possible provides more time to enjoy summer without fire ants." Knutson said baits with other active ingredients may require two to six months to achieve results, but often require fewer retreatments. So again, starting early has benefits.

Dr. Mike Merchant, AgriLife Extension urban entomologist, Dallas, noted fire ant activity, especially mound construction, is ramping up following the cool spring weather. "By all evidence, this should be a typical fire ant year, with fire ants becoming more active over the next month or so," he said. "Baits are still our best weapon against fire ants, and baiting season in North Texas runs from May to September. This is the time when fire ants will actively pick up baits and bring them to the nest." Fire ant mounds are often most visible at this time of year, Merchant said, so now is a good time to treat the biggest and worst mounds with an individual mound treatment, such as a liquid drench, or some form of granular, non-bait, insecticide or dust.

There will inevitably be small colonies that get overlooked by individual mound treatments, so AgriLife Extension still recommends broadcasting baits for fire ant control over the entire yards once the soil temperatures are warm enough for active fire ant foraging, usually around 70 degrees at 1-inch depth, Merchant said.

AgriLife Extension developed the Two Step methods of fire ant control to help consumers make sense of all the products on the market, Merchant said. The Two-Step Program is described in the attached bulletin and can be accessed via Merchants "Insects in the City" website: <http://agrilife.org/citybugstest/files/2015/02/L-5070-1.pdf>. "The bulletin targets fire ant control in lawns and the home landscape," Knutson said. "Where a product can be used, whether a lawn, garden, agricultural production pasture or orchard, is determined by the insecticide label. Users should read the pesticide label to be sure the site they are treating is listed on the product label." Products labeled for fire ant control are commonly sold as baits or individual mound treatments, Knutson said. A third category includes a few products that are broadcast over the lawn and kill ants by contact.

The first step in the Two-Step Method is application of a fire ant bait to the treatment area, Knutson said. Baits have the advantage in that users don't have to find each fire ant colony and treat them directly. They are also less costly in terms of time and amount of product needed when treating a large area. "Fire ant colonies can be difficult to find, especially over a large area," Knutson said. "With baits, ants pick up the bait and return it to the nest."

Don't let fire ants ruin your summer

Continued from previous page

However, baits are slow to work, Knutson said. For those fire ant colonies in high traffic areas, such as around a mailbox, that must be controlled quickly, follow Step 2 and treat these mounds individually with a contact insecticide. "Most products applied directly to the mound kill the colony in 1-2 days," Knutson said. "If the area has just a few mounds, then it may not be necessary to apply bait. Just go to Step 2."



Baits do have a limited shelf life, Merchant said. He advises users to discard bait products opened for more than a few months. Users should also make sure products they purchase from stores are not more than two years beyond their production date. If users are not sure of the age of the bait, apply the product around an active fire ant mound. If ants gather the bait and take it underground within a few minutes, it should be fresh and ready to use, he said.

"Many native ant species are beneficial in that they compete for food with fire ants, and some also attack new fire ant queens as they attempt to start a new colony," Knutson said. "Insecticides for fire ants also kill native ants, thus only use these insecticides if fire ants are present."

Scholarship Awards

The 2018 Nueces Master Gardener Scholarship Awards were presented to Ray High School students Aizlyn Lee and Jesse Munoz by NMG Carlos Valdez, not shown are Deb Holliday, Gloria Van Zante and Rosemary Plank.



YEEHA

NMGs Deb Holliday, Beth Spirko and Michael Bishop (took the picture) of the YEEHA crew did their usual outstanding educational presentation for the students at the Early Scholars Academy.



Crustaceans, Nymphs and Eggs

Submitted by Intern Kelly Munguia

On the left, I was weeding beds at the BG today and had a very unexpected visitor, a freshwater crab, and had some Leaf footed bug nymphs on a Madagascar periwinkle, *Catharanthus roseus*.



On the right, from MG Facebook Bulletin Board, "I read that placing a whole raw egg under a plumeria cutting would help it develop roots so I gave it a shot. My plumeria has been doing great and is up to 13 leaves."



Junior Master Gardener Adult Leader Training



CLASS 12 Dates: July 25-27, 2018

Location: Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

3355 Cherry Ridge, Suite 208, San Antonio, TX 78230

Times: July 25th: 12pm-5pm, July 26th: 9am-5pm, July 27th: 9am-12pm

Come join us for the 2018 Junior Master Gardener (JMG) Adult Leader Training designed for teachers, educators, and volunteers in support of Youth Gardening. Educators will learn about "hands-on" group and individual learning experiences that will provide an appreciation for the environment and cultivate the minds of children. For full information in a PDF download - [CLICK THIS](#)

Some Stuff From The Web

As the Gazette staff is searching the web, diligently perusing the many elements needed to complete this publication, they often stumble across articles that are a little off the beaten path that still might be of interest to some of the Master Gardeners. However, there is limited publishable space and often these articles are lengthy. Below are the links to a few that might stir your curiosity.

Robots fight weeds in challenge to agrochemical giants

Reuters - In a field of sugar beets in Switzerland, a solar-powered robot that looks like a table on wheels scans the rows of crops with its camera, identifies weeds and zaps them with jets of blue liquid from its mechanical tentacles. Interested? [CLICK THIS](#)

Consider the Cactus: How Succulents Took Over Instagram - and Then the World

theringer.com - Thirty years ago, the (mostly) unkillable plants were relegated to remote deserts and dusty garden-store shelves. Then came a drought, social media, and a generation of itinerant aspiring gardeners—and suddenly, the succulent became the trendiest members of the plant kingdom. Want to read more? [CLICK THIS](#)

Giant Hammerhead Worms Have Been Invading France for Decades

LiveScience - For nearly two decades, sizable, squishy invaders have been stealthily infiltrating French ecosystems and preying on small, soil-dwelling creatures. Curious? [CLICK THIS](#)

These are the 15 easiest indoor houseplants (that won't die on you)

today.com - Indoor plants not only help clean the environment around them, they act as a quick decorating tool. We found the best 15 indoor houseplants that anyone can keep alive and thriving. If you've got kids or pets, do note before you buy: Some may be toxic. Want to read more and check it out? [CLICK THIS](#)

CEA-Horticulture; Kevin O. Gibbs - Editor: John M. Slusarz - Associate Editor: Barbara Moses

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Individuals with disabilities who require auxiliary aid, service, or accommodation in order to participate in any extension event are encouraged to contact their County Extension Office at 361-767-5217 at least one week in advance of the program in order for proper arrangements to be made.

For general information please contact Extension office at:
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