

MG Grapevine

Smith County

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SCMG Association Luncheon
11:30 AM December 5th at the
Rose Garden Center

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Happy Holidays!! It's beginning to look and feel a lot like Christmas. It will be here before we know it. Everyone will be hustling and bustling around trying to finish up last minute shopping and cooking before the big day.

With that being said, it reminds me of myself each month as I'm trying to enter all my volunteer and continuing education hours in VMS. It seems like there is always something more important than sitting down entering my hours. Just remember with the busy season coming up, posting hours on VMS or obtaining those last minute hours are the last thing on our minds.

Although you may have enough reported hours for the year to remain in good standing as a certified master gardener, the association also needs the hours for Greg's year end report and an individuals hours reported on projects for submitting entries to the Texas Master Gardener Association Awards Program.

Thanks to all of you that have your hours posted and thanks in advance to those members that will have their hours in before the end of the year to remain in good standing with the association.



Our annual Christmas luncheon will be on the 5th of December. Make plans to attend and be sure to let Ann Smith know you are coming or as she always says, you may not have a chair to sit in or a fork to eat with. Check Debby's column for all the details. She has a wonderful luncheon planned with an additional touch this

year. Plans are well underway for the Garden Tour and Conference next Spring. Now it is official, the Heritage, IDEA, Shade, and Sunshine Gardens will be under the name, "Tyler Botanical Garden".

The individual gardens names will not change, but as a whole will be referred to as "Tyler Botanical Garden". Steve Farrell is doing a great job with the assistance of his committee members. They are all excited and I think our members will be too.

It is also that time of year for taking applications, orientation, and making plans for the Class of 2020. Orientation for the new class was November 22nd and we are looking forward to those attending, joining the new class that begins on January 2nd.

Look forward to seeing all of you at the December luncheon!

- Janie Fowler President

December 2019 Association Christmas Luncheon

The Christmas luncheon takes the place of the December monthly meeting. Join us on Thursday, December 5, 2019, at the Rose Garden Center at 11:30 AM. Roast turkey breast and drinks will be furnished. This is always a delicious occasion as everyone brings a favorite side dish or dessert to share. If you have not done so yet, please send a note to Ann Smith at smithvae@aol.com and let her know what you are bringing and how many are in your party. It is critical that we know how much seating to arrange for as we don't want our distinguished guests to see you sitting on the floor (they get first dibs on chairs)!

Due to the recent approval of our demonstration gardens being named the "Tyler Botanical Garden" we are expecting guests from both the city and county. There will be a local musician providing music for us as we mingle and fellowship with each other as we arrive. After we indulge in our delicious food, he will entertain us as we have fun with his songs. Hope to see you there!

Debby Watkins

Q&A

Between my friends, family, and the public, I get lots of gardening questions. There's not any moment of any day that I don't have questions waiting to be answered on my desk, phone, or computer. Two e-mails, two phones, and two Facebook pages just compound the problem. You can help me out by answering as many as you can and volunteering at the Smith County Master Gardener help desk. Here are some of the latest:

Q: *What are the yellow haloed, brown circles in my St. Augustine?*

A: Brown patch (large patch) a common fungus caused by cool temperatures, frequent watering, and regular fertilization. Wet periods when it rains several days in a row can also create the right conditions. Unfortunately like all fungal diseases, it's easier to prevent than cure. The first thing to do is turn off the irrigation and make sure not to run it more than one time a week (one inch per application) during June, July, and August only. Also don't fertilize centipede grass more than once per year or St. Augustine or Zoysia lawns more than twice per year. A fungicide labeled for brown patch (large patch) can be applied to protect healthy grass but won't make the brown patches go away any sooner. The Aggie Turf (aggieturf.tamu.edu) website has a nice publication with more information and color pictures. The take all-root rot publication has pictures and tells how to distinguish between brown patch, chinch bugs, and take all-root rot.

Q: *When is the best time to plant shade trees and what do you recommend? I want something fast growing.*

A: The best time to plant all cold hardy woody landscape plants is fall, followed by winter, then spring, with summer being the worst. We have a recommended landscape plant list in the office, as well as TNLA Best of Texas Landscape Guides for sale with lots of different sizes and options. It's hard to beat a Shumard red oak however. It was our state sesquicentennial tree. Naturally fast growing trees like cottonwood, Chinaberry, pawlonia, weeping willow, etc. are never recommended as they are shorter lived, weak wooded, and prone to breakage. To make slower growing trees grow faster, no grass should be allowed to grow over the root zone and they should be mulched with an organic mulch, watered every two weeks during June, July, and August, and fertilized with a sprinkling of lawn fertilizer in spring and fall.

Q: *What type of lawn fertilizer do you recommend? Should I use "weed and feed?" Is it too late for fall fertilization?*

A: The recommended lawn fertilizer is something with a 3:1:2 ration like 15-5-10, 21-7-14, 18-6-12, etc. A premium professional lawn fertilizer with part quick release nitrogen and part slow release nitrogen is best. I get the



stuff professionals use (18-6-12 and 28-3-12) from Rozell Sprayers. Extension has never recommended Weed and Feed fertilizer combinations because the herbicide isn't that effective, it's often not the right time to apply both, the herbicide can damage landscape plants, and they are too expensive. Unless you have overseeded your lawn with ryegrass, it's too late for fall fertilization. Spring lawn fertilizer should be applied around mid-April when the nights are warm and the grass has been mowed a few times. I use lawn fertilizer for annuals, perennial, shrubs (except azaleas and blueberries), trees, and vegetables.

Q: *Can I use soap to control crapemyrtle bark scale?*

A: You can use it but it won't control it. Although soap and oil sprays didn't prove effective for crapemyrtle bark scale in trials, I personally would use dormant oil on them each winter (on a mild day) just to make myself feel better. The best control is achieved with systemic imidicloprid insecticide applied just when the new leaves are budding out in the spring. Texas A&M AgriLife has a publication telling all about crapemyrtle bark scale on the Aggie Horticulture website. Just Google "crapemyrtle bark scale Texas A&M."

Q: *When will the frozen foliage fall off my ugly trees?*

A: Unfortunately the early freeze zapped many shade trees while they were still growing and before they had a chance to show fall color. The leaves will most likely gradually shed with each wind and rain by winter. Exceptions are those with "stick tight" marcescent foliage like beeches, sugar maples, and some red oak whose old leaves are pushed off by the new ones each spring.

Q: *Should Dutch amaryllis be grown inside or out?*

A: They should be potted and bloomed indoors the first year, then planted in the landscape as perennials after all danger of frost in the spring. Our local climate has warmed since I started in Extension 30 years ago when Dutch amaryllis weren't reliably cold hardy as outdoor plants above I-10. Now we grow them as cold hardy perennial up to I-20 as we have warmed one-half a hardiness zone.

Q: *Do tree roots rise up out of the ground as the tree grows older or do they just get larger and appear to do so? What can I do about them? They are unsightly and in the way.*

A: Tree roots do not come to the surface with age. They just get larger (like trunks) and bulge out of the ground. Unfortunately you can't cut them off or cover them with topsoil or you'll injure or even kill the tree. Your best bet is to disguise them with mulch or groundcover. Remember old people are unsightly and in the way too, but they are valuable and have earned their keep so we tolerate them and work around them!

-Greg

Tyler Botanical Garden

At the Tyler City Council meeting on November 13 our IDEA, Heritage, Shade, and Sunshine Gardens were officially renamed the Tyler Botanical Garden. Deanna Olson and I held brief meetings with Mayor Martin Heines, Councilman Don Warren, and Councilman Broderick McGee. We thanked them for their support and informed them of the plan for Smith County Master Gardeners to host an official naming and dedication event at the gardens on June 6th next year. They were delighted with our plan and suggested that we coordinate with city organizations to aggressively promote the event. *Steve Farrell*

Shade Garden News

Kluber Lubrication has approved our proposal to donate 53 maple trees for planting in the Shade Garden. They have already purchased trees from SFA Gardens and Metro Maples. We will be planting them in December and January and will be reaching out for more volunteers to be a part of this significant planting event.

Work times in the Shade Garden will continue to be 9am to 11am on Wednesdays and 8:30am to 11:00am on Saturday December 7th and 21st. There will be no workdays on December 25th or January 1st. If the temperatures are below 35 degrees during our normal work time, we will not work.

Thanks for the great support from all Master Gardener volunteers. The Shade Garden is looking great and should be quite a showcase as the Japanese Maples and Camellias begin to show their autumn and winter beauty. *Steve Farrell*

2020 Calendar/Gardening Guide

The 2020 calendar has a lot of information about shade plants. There are also 12 articles about trees that grow well in East Texas. You can buy them at many businesses and I will be selling them at the December monthly meeting. They are \$7.00 again this year and would make a great Christmas gift for the gardeners you know.

For a list of the locations where the calendar is available go to <https://txmg.org/smith/mg-projects/gardening-guide-calendar/> *Sherri Matthews*



The following are highlights from the November Board of Directors' meeting.

- Tyler City Council approved our demonstration gardens collectively being called "Tyler Botanical Gardens." We will host a Conference and Garden Tour on June 6 to promote this.
- A new policy for SCMGA Document Archival was approved.
- The Travel policy was updated and approved
- A budget amendment was approved for monies to be taken from the Heritage Fund to be used in the Heritage Rose Garden in support of projects being done by the Gertrude Windsor Garden Club.
- A report from VMS was presented that listed members in trouble of not having enough volunteer or continuing education hours for 2019. The Board developed a plan to notify members of such.
- Greg advised that about 50 applications for the new Master Gardener class had been mailed out. Orientation is on Friday, November 22. *Debby Watkins*

TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST

Give yourself the best gift of all—knowledge! Come learn about our rich E. TX ecosystem and volunteer with Naturalist friends. Whether you are into bugs, birds, bats or botany, you will love these classes! This group finds fun ways to enjoy the outdoors together while helping to preserve the Earth's treasures for our children. **Join us! 2020 CLASSES BEGIN JAN. 21, 6-9 PM** Discovery Science Place Annex, 308 N. Broadway, Tyler, TX 75702

More than 40 hours of classroom study & field trips. Classes in archaeology, entomology, mammals, birds, botany, forest and wetland ecology, weather & more. \$150 tuition covers materials, instruction plus. Class size limited—first come, first served.

FOR MORE INFO AND **APPLICATION** CONTACT: BEVERLY = finwren@sbcglobal.net

Website URL = <http://txmn.org/etwd/> **Non-profit** Sponsored by: TPWD and AgriLife Extension

2020 Will Be Here Before You Know It!

Countdown to the 2020 TMGA State Conference continues for McLennan County. Good things are happening and the conference website is taking shape and should go live very shortly.

During the conference, there will be four exciting Keynote Speakers plus workshops, breakout sessions, and many tour choices around the Waco area. For more information go to <https://txmg.org/conference/2020-conference>



May 12-14, 2020 at the Waco Convention Center
Keep up to date on our conference [Facebook](#) page.

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