



**SOMERVELL  
COUNTY  
MASTER  
GARDENERS  
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*SCMGA Newsletter*

# *THE GREEN PIECE*



Volume 3, Issue 2

February 2010

*Vegetable Gardening*  
**SCMGA Community Horticulture Education Program**  
*Monday, February 8, 2010, 6:30 PM*  
*Somervell County Citizen Center, 209 SW Barnard*

The Somervell County Master Gardeners will be presenting a program on vegetable gardening at their monthly education program on February 8 at 6:30 pm at the Citizens Center located at 209 SW Barnard in downtown Glen Rose. Speakers will be our own Wade

Moore and Dove Johnson. NOW is the time to start getting ready for spring planting! We hope to see you there. For additional information, call 897-2809 or visit our website at [www.somervellmastergardeners.org](http://www.somervellmastergardeners.org)



Winnie the Pooh knows how to garden. Do you? Come learn how at our Veggie Program on Feb. 8th!

*Rose Program at Citizens Center*  
*Submitted by Shirley Smith*

If you were not at the Citizens Center on Monday night, January 11, you really missed a great program. Our own Master Gardeners, Bonnah Boyd and Bob Lancaster spoke to us about roses. Bonnah presented the first part of the program by reciting a poem about roses and then serenaded the group with a song. She told us how roses originated in China, were first cultivated there and then eventually brought to Europe. After Bonnah's general talk about roses, Bob Lancaster got down to the more practical side of caring for roses. He explained how to properly prune them and then actually showed the pruning on rose plants he brought to the meeting. Bob spoke about the wonderful aspects of Earth-Kind® Roses and how easy they are to grow. Earth-Kind® Rose trial gardens are now in many states and several foreign countries. Our next program will be held February 8 at 6:30 at the Citizens Center and will be about growing vegetables.



Somervell County Master Gardener Bob Lancaster shows how to properly prune roses.

## GARDENING TIPS FOR FEBRUARY

*By Nancy Hillin, Somervell County Master Gardener*



There are many adjectives to describe the anxiety gardeners experience while awaiting the arrival of favorable weather conditions that allow them to pursue their gardening passions. Some gardeners experience “itchy green thumb”, while others are subjected to “cabin fever”. But, of course, there are those die-hard gardeners that find a way to beat any conditions to satisfy their gardening desires. February is the month to finish pruning, so here are some reminders about pruning and other preparations for spring.

Mid-February is the best time to prune roses or after the last hard freeze and before new growth appears. This also holds true for pruning fruit trees, if you did not have the opportunity to finish pruning in January. If you plan on planting new roses or fruit trees, get them in the ground this month. For more information on planting fruit trees, read Josh Blane’s, Somervell County Extension Agent/AG/ NR, Texas AgriLife Extension, article in the January Somervell County Master Gardeners newsletter (<http://newsleter.somervellmastergardeners.org>).



Remember to train climbing roses to a fence or trellis and secure with jute twine to prevent wind damage. Climbing roses do not need pruning, but should have any of last year’s tangled growth trimmed. This is a good time to transplant existing mature or established shrubs while they are still dormant. Delay using any fertilizer until they start growing. Use the contents of your compost pile to spread around established plants and the soil surface beneath and around the drip lines of shrubs and trees. As the compost further decomposes, nutrients will be released to the plants. Keep a watchful eye on junipers and other evergreens for bagworm pouches. Hand removal and burning the pouches seems to be the best remedy for bag worms.

The accepted method for cutting back perennials is to prune to the ground line before any new spring growth appears. There has been a new thought that because many beneficial insects lay their eggs on the top growth of perennials it would behoove us to be selective in those plants we cut to the ground. When choosing new annuals and perennials for a spring garden, think about trying a butterfly seed mix. Plant the seeds close to lure the butterflies and other beneficial insects to the nectar

source. Flowering herbs are great attractors for all pollinating insects. Another bonus to using herbs is that most of them are deer resistant. This gardener has found the flowers of basil to be a great draw for honeybees and dill for butterflies. If you have ever let radishes or carrots go to flower, you know that they are a strong attraction to many beneficial insects.

If you have not already done so, now is the time to prepare beds and garden



areas for a spring garden. If you have truly been bitten by the “gardening bug” this is the latest you may start seeds of warm season flowers and vegetables indoors in flats or containers in time for spring planting. Make sure the yearly maintenance is done on your lawnmowers and trimmers. Keep birdbaths and puddlers clean and full. Clean bird feeders and keep them supplied with your yard bird’s favorite seeds and treats. Be of good cheer, spring will be here before you know it!

Sources: Texas AgriLife Extension Service; Garden Stops.com  
Texas Gardener Magazine

## *Favorite Plants of Master Gardeners - Mexican Oregano*

*By Sandi Stringer Somervell County Master Gardener*

**Common Name/Scientific Name:** Mexican Oregano/*Poliomintha longiflora*

**Native/Adapted:** Native to Hill Country of Texas

**Height:** 3' **Spread:** 4'

**Light:** Sun/Dappled Shade

**Evergreen/Deciduous:** Evergreen but gets bedraggled looking in the winter

**Seasonal Interest:** Blooms early summer and well into fall

**Color/ Features:** Lavender Pink Tubular Flowers

**Water:** Low to average

**Maintenance:** Prune top ½ after blooming has ended. Trim to a 3" ht. after first frost browns the leaves

**Wildlife:** Hummingbirds, butterflies, and bees

**Deer Resistant:** yes

**Comments/Experience:** This is not your common kitchen herb; however, foliage can be crumbled and used to season foods and the flowers can actually be added to salads for color or used to make tea. This is one of the first plants that I put in one of my gardens 5 years ago and it has never been bothered by insects or disease nor is it very fussy about soil conditions. Because the branches become woody with age, cutting it back in the winter will insure that you have a nicely shaped bush by late spring/early summer when it begins to bloom. The hummingbirds and butterflies can often be found feeding on the bush but never the deer or rabbits...a real plus!

Source: 1) What Can I Do With My Herbs 2) Native and Adapted Landscape Plants

To view a color photo of this plant, visit our website at [www.somervellmastergardeners.org](http://www.somervellmastergardeners.org)



## *"WALLY WORM WORD" - "COLLEMBOLA "*

*by Wade Moore, Somervell County Master Gardener*

"Hey! WallyWorm, what are you looking for?"

"Well Wade, I am waiting on Collem. You know, Collem Bola, the spring-tail from across the garden. Here he comes now. Howdy Collem."

"Hi WallyWorm. Can't stay long; I'm on my way to the Olympics; I'm entered in the broad jump."

"Well stay long enough to tell Wade here who you are and what you do for his garden."

"Okay WallyWorm. I am a hexapod, which means even though I have six legs, I am not an insect. I crawl around eating decaying plant material, fungi, and bacteria. I help spread the mycorrhizal fungus you like so well. I discharge a sticky substance through my colophore which helps me 'stick' around. I also take in water through this ventral tube as well as through my thin body covering. Since I also emit a lot of my body moisture through my 'skin', I like to be in moist areas.

I may be small; most of my kinds are about 1/8 of an inch long, but I can jump 3 inches in a single bound. I accomplish this by putting the 'spring' on my tail, called my furcula, into action. My furcula is held under tension by my tenaculum and when released catapults me out of danger. Oh! By the way, I do no harm to your plants".

"Well, thanks Collem, for the information, and good luck at the Olympics" says WallyWorm.

"WallyWorm, thank you for introducing me to your friend, and mine; "COLLEMBOLA" the springtail" replied Wade.

Information gathered from Wikipedia, University of Nebraska Extension, and University of Missouri Extension.





## Help with the “Winter Blues”

By Becky Altobelli Somervell County Master Gardener



It is the middle of winter, the temperature is 35 degrees, the skies are overcast with showers predicted all day, once again. Outside your garden and/or pasture is brown and dormant, and some plants are showing signs of freeze-damage from December's and January's snow and ice.

You are home, waiting for Spring, and wondering what plants to trim, what to replace or add to your springtime landscape. Take a short drive to the Texas Agrilife Extension Service, located at 1405 Texas Drive in Glen Rose, and browse through the Somervell County Master Gardener Association library that is located inside. Open 8:00 to 5:00, Monday through Friday, the library shelves hold answers to your questions and inspiration for your home garden, landscape

and pasture health and productivity this 2010.

There is a variety of books and pamphlets available in the library on growing and caring for annuals and perennials along with problem-solving reference books for identifying and treating plant diseases and pests. Also, books with how-to's on composting, organic gardening and propagation are in the collection. Books and materials specific to growing vegetables, fruit trees, herbs and grasses (both ornamental and native forage for wildlife and live stock ) along with information about Earth-Kind® Roses are also on the library shelves. We do have some past issues of “Neil Sperry's Gardens” and “Texas Gardener” magazines. These are great resources for the Texas garden.

You are welcome to come and sit and browse through the reading material, take notes and make copies of any pages or articles found of interest. A free take-home publication of “Nonnative Plants of Southern Forests” from the USDA is available along with the “Native and Adaptive Landscape Plants” of Central Texas that can be purchased for a donation of \$2.00. Josh Blaneck, the Somervell County Agrilife Extension Agent and staff, along with any Master Gardener are also on site and available for any additional help.

Spring is coming and now you know where to come and pass some of that waiting time productively planning for its arrival. Hope to see you at the Somervell County Master Gardener library!

## New Master Gardeners Certify



After completing 50 hours of Training and 50 hours of volunteer service, 5 new Master Gardeners received their certifications at the AgriLife Leadership Awards Dinner on Thursday, January 21. Receiving their certifications from SCMGPA President Donna Hagar are: (l-r) Nancy Hillin, Greg Marsh for wife Glenda, Virginia Reynolds, Shirley Smith and Nelda Tandy. These 5 energetic and enthusiastic Gardeners are already hard at work in your community. Congratulations to them all!



## *Project 2010 Rose Bush*

### *Put the Rose Back in Glen Rose*

*By Donna Hagar, Somervell County Master Gardener*

Project 2010 Rose Bush has received overwhelming support and an explosive start! The second order of Earth-Kind® Roses was placed on Wednesday, February 3. This order will be delivered on Friday, February 12th, just in time for Valentines Day. With the addition of this order of 237 roses, added to the 172 ordered in November and the 30 that the Master Gardeners planted at Heritage Park, we have 439 already behind us. This amounts to 22% of our goal of 2,010 roses planted this year. And we are just getting started!!

This latest order had a big boost from the City of Glen Rose. The City purchased 160

roses to be planted along the River Walk downtown. These roses will be planted in time for the Grand Open-

ing of the River Walk on March 13th. While they may not be thriving by that time, they will definitely make a statement of what is yet to come. The City is also considering utilizing some roses in their newly acquired Oakdale Park renovations. We are certainly excited and appreciative of the City's participation in this project.

In addition to the City, several local businesses have ordered roses as well. Thank you to all

businesses and individuals who have already participated and we know more will get involved as time goes on.

And if this excitement isn't enough, we just learned that Garey Wylie, Johnson County Master Gardener who is helping us obtain and delivering the rose orders, has recently taken the title of National Coordinator for Earth-Kind® Roses in City Parks. This is exciting as Garey will be following our endeavor and will be writing articles for the State Master Gardener Newsletter as well as reporting the progress, particularly on the River Walk and Oakdale Park projects, to folks involved in the Earth-Kind®



River Walk "before"  
Watch for the after!

movement all over the country.

We have also been made aware that this is not

the first time in Glen Rose History that roses were promoted as a beautification project. At some time in the late 1960's, Bill Cowen, Ag teacher in the Glen Rose ISD, made a similar effort to blanket the city with roses. There is some speculation that the 3 or 4 remaining roses in the triangular parcel of land next to the Red Barn may, in fact, be a legacy to Bill Cowen's efforts. We will be looking into this further, but if anyone has any knowledge of

this project we would love to know about it. It would be interesting to learn if those or any roses that may be left from a potentially 50 year old project are still in existence today. If you have any information or recollection of Bill Cowan project, please contact the Somervell County Master Gardeners at [somervellmq@gmail.com](mailto:somervellmq@gmail.com) or call 254-897-2809 and let us know.

Project 2010 Rose Bush will be ongoing throughout the year. Roses can be ordered at any time. When we have accumulated orders for approximately 100 roses, we will call for delivery, which usually happens within 10 days. Roses can be ordered from the Glen Rose Chamber of Commerce. Order forms can be obtained on the Chamber website at [www.glenrosechamber.com](http://www.glenrosechamber.com).

The Somervell County Master Gardeners have also put together an information sheet with order form attached. Find it on our website at: <http://www.somervellmastergardener.org>. More information can also be obtained on a recently updated Earth-Kind® website at: <http://earthkindroses.tamu.edu>

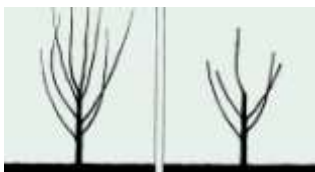




## *Winter Care Of Fruit & Nut Trees*

*Submitted by Josh Blanek, CEA-AG/NR Somervell County*

Last month we talked about planting fruit and nut trees in our area. Let's continue with that topic this month and examine how the next 45-60 days is an important time in maintenance of established fruit and nut trees. February or March is the best time to do winter pruning of fruit and nut trees. However, be cautious when pruning in January or early February, as with drought, pruning stresses the tree, any form of stress makes plants and trees more vulnerable to



freeze injury, if a severe freeze should follow. Remember to always spray any wounds (cuts where you have pruned the tree) with tree pruning spray. Doing this immediately after you have pruned will help seal the cut keeping insects & disease from entering the tree.

Another chore that needs to be taken care of is the dormant spray. Apply a dormant oil spray to fruit trees, pears and various landscape trees as well. Scale insects are a primary target of the oil spray. Scale is a tiny, scaling insect that can seriously injure or kill branches, or the entire tree. They attach themselves to

twigs, limbs and major branches with smooth bark, and each insect seals itself under a protective covering. The covering are visible as scaly crust ranging from a dull grayish – white with San Jose scale (the most common scale on fruit trees) to snow white to a dull brown for other types of scale.

Scale insects tend to be especially serious problems on peaches, plums and stone fruits, as well as apples and pears. Numerous ornamental trees and shrubs are also affected.

Dormant oil sprays are also applied to kill over-wintering eggs or various insects and mites. Phylloxera eggs are a primary target on pecan trees.

The dormant oil spray can be applied anytime the tree is fully dormant and before it has leafed out or began to bloom. Late winter is a better time than early winter because the scale insects weaken and become more vulnerable as winter progresses.

Good spray coverage is important since the primary mechanics of kill is suffocation by an oil film. Air sprays and other low volume sprays are not as good as handgun application.

Do not over apply dormant oil or tree injury may result. Heavy



scale infiltration may require more than one dormant oil application for eradication. If a second oil spray is applied, wait at least three weeks after the first spray or until heavy rainfall has occurred.

Oil related injuries sometimes occur because of poor mixing in the spray tank so be sure that your spray tank has good agitation immediately before and during spraying.

For more information about properly pruning fruit & nut trees or applying dormant oil contact the Somervell County Extension Office at 254-897-2809 or email at [j\\_blanek@tamu.edu](mailto:j_blanek@tamu.edu) or stop by 1405 Texas Drive.







**SOMERVELL  
COUNTY MASTER  
GARDENERS  
ASSOCIATION**

Josh Blaneck, CEA AG/NR  
Texas AgriLife Extension  
Service  
Somervell County  
P. O. Box 895  
Glen Rose, TX 76043  
<http://somervell-co.tamu.edu>

Phone: 254-897-2809  
Fax: 254-897-9323  
E-mail:  
[somervellmg@gmail.com](mailto:somervellmg@gmail.com)

## *Somervell County Master Gardeners*

### *Set 2010 Community Horticulture Education Programs*

The Somervell County Master Gardeners have some exciting and informative programs set for 2010. All monthly programs will be held on the second Monday each month at 6:30 pm at the Somervell County Citizens Center, 209 SW Barnard. Please check our website [somervellmastergardeners.org](http://somervellmastergardeners.org) for updates.

January—Roses  
February—Vegetables  
March—Gourds/Bird House  
April—Rainwater Harvesting  
May—Bees  
June—Worm Composting

July—no program  
August—Compost Tea  
September—Herbs  
October—Greenhouse  
November—Blue Bird Houses  
December—no program

We're on the web!

<http://www.somervellmastergardeners.org>

The Somervell County Master Gardeners are volunteers who work with the AgriLIFE Extension to improve gardening skills throughout the community. Program objectives are implemented through the training of local volunteers known as Master Gardeners. We collaborate with Extension to conduct youth and community education; establish and maintain demonstration gardens; and provide a speakers bureau. We work with special audiences in the community for youth and community outreach of a horticultural nature. We recruit and educate new Master Gardener candidates for effective volunteering.

The training for Somervell County is held in combination with Hood and Johnson Counties and is currently held only every other odd year. The next training for our area will be held in the spring of 2011. If you are interested in the SCMGA, we would like to invite and encourage you to visit one of our monthly meetings, so that you might learn more about our various projects and activities. Our regular monthly business meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 10:00 a.m. in the Somervell County Extension Office. For more information, please contact Josh Blaneck, Somervell County Extension agent at 254-897-2809 or [j-blaneck@tamu.edu](mailto:j-blaneck@tamu.edu) or you may email the SCMGA at [somervellmg@gmail.com](mailto:somervellmg@gmail.com).



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