



FUN FOR KIDS: Children will gain green thumb knowledge during summer camp

Gardeners' Dirt by Helen R. Parks May 5, 2023

Victoria County Master Gardeners are busy planning the five-day Summer Kids Camp. Master Gardeners volunteer their time, talents, love of gardening and “green thumbs” to provide an educational camp for school-age children to learn about all aspects of gardening in a safe environment.



Earth, Rain, Wind & Fire, is the theme of this year’s camp. Activities will highlight gardening practices in fun ways that encourage kids to garden and to develop healthy eating habits.

The camp will be held at the Victoria Educational Gardens Pavilion, 283 Bachelor Drive, near the Victoria Airport, from 8:30 to noon June 5 — 9. Registration for children ages 6-12 is May 6-28, until a limit of 60 kids is reached.

A registration fee of \$65 per camper must accompany the form found on the txmg.org/victoria website. It is important to register early to make sure your child has a reserved place. Send the fee and form to: VCMGA Kids Camp 528 Waco Circle, Victoria, TX or it can be dropped off at the Victoria County AgriLife Extension Office. Questions? Call 361-935-1556.

Earth: Each day, community speakers will educate kids on how to be good stewards of the land. The campers will learn how important composting is for a clean environment. How do worms add healthy nutrients to the soil? Can worms make our plants grow better? Do we have good or bad worms in our soil? Kids will tour the master gardener composting stations. They get to make terrariums and newspaper planting pots. How can we grow our own plants in backyard gardens with minimal land? What do plants need to grow? What plants are easy to grow?

Rain: How does our water supply make a difference to growing healthy plants? How can we harvest rain-water in our own backyard? How can we make sure our water supply is clean? Can the PH of water make a difference when growing plants? Kids will learn about freshwater and saltwater gardening. They will make rain gauges and rain sticks.

Wind: How important is the weather to plant growth? Can our local weather conditions show us when to plant our gardens? Does the wind play a role in pollinating plants and trees?

A surprise guest from the Victoria TV station will give us insights into weather events as we look forward to a bountiful harvest. What is the big deal about air pollution? They get to make wind socks.

Fire: Children get to talk about fire safety with our local fire department. How does fire affect our vegetation? What should we do in an emergency? The Victoria Fire Department will give campers a 'hands on' tour of a firetruck and fire suit.



Are bees and insects good or bad in the garden? What is pollination? Are bees the only way pollination occurs in nature? Campers will walk through the gardens and

Butterfly Haven and watch insects at work.



How do fresh foods stack up against preservatives and processed foods for our bodies to grow strong? Kids will learn about seeds and where fruits and vegetables grow. Can we eat seeds? What parts of plants can we eat? Campers get to note how different vegetables and herbs grow and taste.

Master gardeners will answer many questions during our summer camp. We invite children to enjoy many 'hands-on' activities, as well as singing, arts and crafts, while making new friends. Also campers get to take home their special creations each day.

Don't miss this opportunity for your children to learn about gardening as it relates to Earth, Rain, Wind and Fire. Who knows maybe your campers will grow "green thumbs."

The Gardener's Dirt is written by members of the Victoria County Master Gardener Association, an educational outreach of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Victoria County. Mail your questions in care of the Advocate, P.O. Box 1518, Victoria, TX 77901; or vcmg@vicad.com, or comment on this column at [Victoria Advocate.com](http://VictoriaAdvocate.com).

Photos contributed by Brynn Lee

Summer Camp