

Wood Works

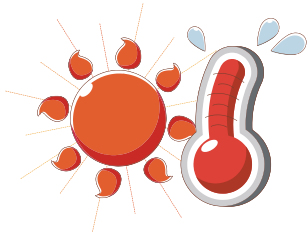


Master Gardeners Association Newsletter Wood County, Texas

Volume 2014, Issue 5

Edited by: Sylvia Johnson

The President's Musings...



Article and Photos by:
**Ellen Atkins &
ClipArt**

"I will never live in or visit Texas in August!" Yes, I said it and I also committed that cardinal sin of saying 'never'. I guess August in Texas is as bad as January in Michigan (blizzards and -20°). Obviously all of our United States have something about each one that leaves a lot to be desired as well as all their good points. But now that we have survived another

August and are into the fall season, it's time to get outside again. There's a lot to be done in September and October in our gardens, as well as many opportunities for volunteer service as a Master Gardener. Whether you choose one of the many local projects or a festival, your volunteer service is very much appreciated.

Most Master Gardeners volunteer far more hours than the required twelve to maintain certification. You are a generous group willing to do many tasks from the menial to the very challenging. Witness the vast changes at the Arboretum and the Nature Preserve. The local libraries have enjoyed new "looks" because of the planning and

execution of many Master Gardeners. Your desire to beautify your surroundings is truly amazing and this is a wonderful thing.

But let's not lose sight of the main goal of all TX Master Gardeners and in particular Wood County Master Gardeners. "Texas Master Gardeners is a volunteer program designed to grow horticultural information throughout the state, town by town." This statement is found on the Texas Master Gardener website (www.txmga.org). So how do we "grow horticultural information"? It's done through education. The WCMG members have found several ways to achieve this goal.

[\(click for full article\)](#)

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Scheduled Meeting Subjects and Events

Sept 1— update volunteer hours

<http://texas.volunteersystem.org>

18—WCMG - M. Chamblee—
Roses— 1 CEU

27—Festival—Alba

Oct 1— update hours

4—Festival-Winnsboro Business Expo

11-Festival-Hawkins Oil Festival

16—WCMG - Nomination of 2015 WCMG Officers.

18-Festival-Alba-Golden-Sweet Potato Fest

Come join us and learn, talk with friends and see who will win the next door prize!

- [From the Editor](#) 15
- [On-Line with WCMG](#)
- [On-Line CEU](#)





News from the QAB&G and the Stinson House

Photo by Sylvia



Mineola Nature Preserve on the Sabine River

Photo by: Sylvia



Article and photos by: Sylvia

Photos in display Booth by: Jim Willis

Inside and Outside the Picket Fence

By: Jan Whitlock

The gardens at the Quitman Arboretum have enjoyed the cooler temperatures and rainfall that blessed Wood County in July.

A variety of plants are in full bloom, looking their best after Joe Mele's mowing and edging each week. Thank you Joe for making our gardening efforts stand out.

The planting of boxwood has added a formal note to the Gazebo at the north end of the gardens. The caladiums there are now emerging with full force, giving that shady corner a burst of color.

Walk across the George Bridge and visit the Sensory Garden. John Fox has installed a drip irrigation system to keep these plants healthy and our ceramic

fountain continues to bubble along. Newly planted Lady Banks Rose bushes will be receiving some growth support in the near future to showcase the spring flush of blooms this variety provides.

Have you noticed the Black Diamond Crepe Myrtles that have been planted along the chain link fence separating the Water-Wise [\(click for full article\)](#)

WILDSCAPE GARDEN

Article and Photos by: Karen Anderson

Things have slowed down at the Wildscape Gardens with the hot humid weather and vacation time for many of our members. The Wildflower garden has seen it's glory for this year and is busy sprouting seeds for next year. But we have been lucky with the big rain we received on July 31 along

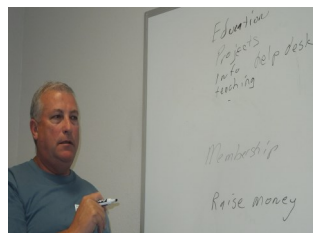
with some cooler weather.

We had a very busy day on June 17. A group of teenagers from a local church camp came to the Wildscape to help clean flower beds, move and spread mulch and clean up the compost bin area. It was a very hot day as they came from 1:30-

4:30 and would you believe we had thunderstorms all around us. We accomplished a lot with those young bodies going gun-ho until about 4:00 when the lightning and thunder moved in and we called it quits. We really appreciated their time and effort. [\(click for full article\)](#)

What U missed at our meetings! Festival Volunteers Needed.

Get your [Volunteer Hours](#) while enjoying a fun festive atmosphere, not to mention the Food!



Roy Culbertson gave a talk on Outreach Training pro-

jects. He explained the major items to consider when manning our Festival Booths. He explained that if the Festival has a theme, we should have our booth and handouts coincide with that theme. To educate the public, which is our main goal, we need to ensure we have brochures,

pictures, and information that is pertinent to the public at that event.

WCMG have purchased a new booth and rolling carrier to help facilitate ease of erecting our booth, save time, effort and maintain our humor. Enjoy your Festival.

Festival Chairperson: Lynette Irizaty @ platinumfish@msn.com



AgriLife Agent Article: Controlling Pharaoh Ants

Picture: <http://urbanentomology.tamu.edu/ants/pharaoh.html>



Pharaoh or sugar ants are perhaps the most difficult household pest to control. They are quite small (less than 1/16 inch long) and are light tawny brown. Careless application or improperly directed insecticides often make the situation worse. Even an intensive, properly conducted control program may require 2 to 3 months to eliminate Pharaoh ants.

Follow these steps, in order to control ants.

1. Survey. Make a diagram on floor plan of your home and mark the areas where Pharaoh ants are seen. Another technique is to put out numerous, small bait stations containing corn syrup. Keep the bait moist by periodically adding a few drops of water. Check the bait stations daily; record where the ants are and where they travel after they feed on bait. Shift the bait stations around, but concentrate in areas where both heat (over 80° F) and moisture

(humidity over 80%) are present. Examples of such areas are around the sinks or dishwasher, under the refrigerator, over the stove, around heating ducts, near hot water heaters and around air conditioning units. Pharaoh ants prefer moisture, but sometimes can be found nesting in attics, crawl spaces, linear closets or other widely scattered areas. They generally prefer to feed on grease or sweets,

[\(click for full article\)](#)

By: Clint Perkins

- Ag and Natural Resources County Extension Agent
- (903) 763-2924
- CTPerkins@ag.tamu.edu
- <http://txmq/woodcounty>

Dealing in Dirt — Don't pay someone to haul off your waste! Compost!

By: Sandra McFall

We all like the idea of getting something free and this can be possible if we compost. As Master Gardeners, most of us have all the components for making compost. It's in our yards, gardens, kitchens, barnyards and maybe our friends and neighbors have some that they don't want and will be

glad to give to you. That's right, it's called waste. But don't waste it. Use it to make that free stuff that will improve your soil, save you time and money, and label you as a recycler. You say how does it do all that?

By composting you turn the free organic matter into a

useable soil amendment which loosens tight clay soil and improves the water-holding capabilities of sandy soils. Binding soil particles also helps improve aeration, root penetration, and water infiltration while reducing the crusting of the soil surface

[\(click for full article\)](#)

Volunteer to be a WCMG Officer

A great way to earn all your 2015 volunteer hours without "working" outside. Open positions:

President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer

Get with a friend and Co-volunteer and share the fun.

Contact Ellen at:

ellen.atkins@hotmail.com

Featured Plant: "Princess Caroline" Napier grass Article and Photos by: Karen Anderson

"Princess Caroline" Napier grass was awarded the Texas Super Star status in 2013 beating out 16 other Napier grasses that were tested. It is an attractive grass that is a reliable perennial in Texas except in the Panhandle and

South and Rolling plains where it is considered an annual. The roots will survive in most of the state-even after freezes kill the plant to the ground-and will grow back in the spring without replanting.

The plant is a fast grower reaching 4-6 feet in a season depending on the amount of water it's given and the length of the growing season. The plants

[\(click for full article\)](#)



"Princess Caroline" Napier Grass

Planted in May at the Wildscape

President Article continued:

First, you educate yourselves by achieving continuing education units (CEU). Next you plan instructional activities for the public including adults and children. Finally, many of you teach to groups outside the norm of horticultural groups. Even that short conversation with the store's cashier about using cardboard as mulch is educational. Informing your son that his compost pile needs four parts carbon to one part nitrogen is teaching.

As we look forward to cooler weather, let's all enthusiastically look for those not-so-hidden ways to spread horticultural information. Those county festivals and our coming spring conference are great opportunities to educate. Remember, you have a wealth of knowledge and experience to share! [\(return to story beginning\)](#)



Wildscape continued:

The grasses we received from SFA are starting to take root and grow. Some have pretty blue shaded leaves, some are very frilly and delicate. Our show stopper on the grass hill is the "Princess Caroline" Napier grass which was designated as a Texas Super Star in 2013. We were able to acquire one group of five plants and another of three. The three were planted behind the rock on the hill and the other five were planted low on the hill. They are now about 2 ½-3 feet tall with deep purple coloring on the leaves and are mounding beautifully. (Article about the plant is later in the newsletter). Everyone who sees the "Princess Caroline" grass plants fall in love with their spectacular beauty. The grass hill is looking great as is the bed at the end of the grass hill.

We had a little accident with that bed a few weeks ago when a storm blew thru Mineola. It knocked down the trellis with the beautiful Cross Vine and we had to cut the vine back in order to re-set the trellis. The vine looks a little skimpy right now but is starting to recover.

We are preparing for "Naturefest" on Oct. 18, 2014. Dawnvolyn from Big Chicken Daylily Farm will be our main speaker and will do 2 presentations, one at 10:30am and another at 1:00pm. She will have bare root daylilies for sale and maybe some Irises. We are hoping to schedule 2 Master Gardeners as additional speakers during the day. This is an all day celebration and there are activities for all ages along with educational sessions like "The Birds of Prey". So watch for the schedule and posters in local stores and come have a fun day with your family.

The work day schedule for the Nature Preserve is every Tues. morning from 8:00-11:00 depending on the weather. So if you need some hours and want to work with a great group of people please come anytime you can.



Every Bunny loves our Grass Bed

photo by Karen

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QAB&G continued:

Wise garden from the parking lot at the Carrol Green Center? October 12th, the date for the annual Fall Plant Sale, is the time for you to purchase your own Black Diamonds.

The Stinson House will be the staging area for our second annual Yard Sale. This event is scheduled for September 19th and will begin at 8:00 a.m. Any and all donations (no clothing please) to this yard sale will be accepted any Wednesday morning or special arrangements can be made by calling Jan Whitlock @ (903-878-2795) or Pam Riley @ (903-466-4327).

October will be a busy month. In addition to the plant sale on the 12th, plans are underway to accommodate a wedding party of 200 and don't forget the Haunting of Hogg Park, a local Halloween tradition for young and old alike.

Work continues on the storage addition to the Stinson House and our "Master Builders" are also busy adding flooring to the Shade Garden Pergola, located on the west side of the property.

Despite joint problems and the occasional bouts with lower backs and aching knees . . .The Friends of the Arboretum and WCMG Master Gardeners soldier on and enjoy every minute spent beautifying the Arboretum, Botanical Gardens and Stinson House. We would love to have you join in the fun. We meet on Wednesdays beginning about 8:30-9:00. Just remember, bring your sense of humor and a pair of gardening gloves.



The second annual **YARD SALE** to benefit the Quitman Arboretum and Stinson House will be held

Friday, September 19th, 8:00 am until all item are gone.

WE NEED YOUR STUFF to include in the sale---furniture, household items, kitchenware, yard and outdoor items, tools, gadgets, etc. (But no clothes, please).

You can drop off donations at the Stinson House any Wednesday morning beginning August 20th until the sale. If you need to make other arrangements or have questions,

send an e-mail to us at friendsarboretum@yahoo.com

or call Deanna Caldwell at 903-569-8289.

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The Dreaded Garden Bed

By: Ellen Atkins

After two seasons of poor harvest of two of my favorite vegetables, I have decided to take action. Doing battle with hidden soil demons requires creativity, perseverance, and great resolve. The raised bed in 2013 was home to green beans. The first planting's germination rate was below average (old seed?) but I brushed off the poor showing by telling myself I could extend the harvest by planting in succession. Then legions of cutworms did their damage. The second planting was a sad mess. One more chance to plant green bean seeds and harvest before the frost date ended in plants dusted with mildew and rust giving me a few green beans dwarfed in size. Certainly, a disappointing season for a favored crop.

During the winter, wooden frames were placed around the raised beds improving the function and look of the garden. Since the dreaded bed was "under construction", I did not plant anything in this bed (now called box 5 because of framing). I thought allowing box 5 to remain fallow would end my planting woes.

The spring of 2014, I planted tomatoes in box 5. Surely all the demons had been exorcized during the cold winter. I planted four varieties of tomatoes and used the suggestion read about in Texas Gardener magazine for supporting them. I also planted marigolds around the perimeter of box 5 since I had read somewhere that marigolds would deter pests. I noticed when attending the field trials in Overton that the tomatoes planted in the trials also had some marigolds planted with the trial plants as well as basil. I asked Dr. Masabni, Texas A & M vegetable guru, about the combination and he was not impressed with the addition of marigolds and basil. His concern was that the side plants would take water and nutrients from the tomatoes in the trial. I made a mental note about his concerns and determined that the tomatoes that lived in box 5 would get regular two week feedings and water three times each week. I checked the tomatoes daily. Then it happened. Early blight! I sprayed and fed and watched and sprayed and watered and cajoled and became resigned to the fate of three of the varieties in box 5. Early blight lives in the soil and my plan of leaving box 5 fallow obviously had not worked to kill the fungus.

Now after pulling out all the tomato plants, box 5 is clad in plastic, sealed around the edges to not allow a breath of air to enter. I'm trying solarization to heal the soil, kill any eggs or worms of pest that may still dwell there (although the marigolds must have worked because I had few if any pests on my tomatoes) and allow time for added amendments to break down. The quarantine will last six to eight weeks. Then I plan to plant vetch through the winter. Next spring will bring another crop for box 5. We'll see how that goes.



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Featured Plant continued :

The plant is a fast grower reaching 4-6 feet in a season depending on the amount of water it's given and the length of the growing season. The plants at the Nature Preserve were planted in May and have already reached 3 feet and are full and thick. The plants were well mulched and have been watered regularly by Mother Nature and a few times by Master Gardeners.

The foliage is a nice dark green with purple running thru the leaves. With this dark color as a background it looks good with yellow or orange flowers in front for contrast. The dark purple in the leaves really catch your eye when planted as a cluster of several plants. When planted in a cluster, they need to be at least 3 feet apart as they not only grow tall but mound beautifully.

The one caution for good growth is not to over fertilize as this will cause excessive growth and loss of purple coloring. The plants at the Preserve have done well with good composted soil and mulch, no fertilizer.

We have had more comments on this plant than any we have planted to date. So find a "Princess Caroline" and enjoy the beauty of the plant in your own garden.

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"Princess Caroline"
Wildscape Garden



Spring 2015 Conference: by Lori Clark, Chairperson

Plans have begun for the 2015 Master Gardener Spring Conference. It will be held at the Quitman High School on Saturday March 21 2015. Mark your calendars. Next meeting will be June 24th, 1pm Wood Co. Ag Extension office. Committee members please plan to attend.

To volunteer or for more information: lorikclark05@peoplescom.net or gloriajeanrosewall@gmail.com

" Time to Plant Smarter"

will be the theme for the conference. I know we will all be excited to find out all the details and plans as they are established by Lori and her committee. Remember it is never too early to volunteer to help!

Sylvia

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Photo by: Clipart

Dealing with Dirt continued #1:

It also adds nutrients with the fertilizer. You may still need to, however, add additional fertilizer to obtain the best growth and yield of the plants. Composting is the best mulching material. It holds moisture, prevents weed growth, prevents splashing, and cools the soil during the summer. At the end of the growing season, till it into the soil for added organic material. It can be used for potting mix for seedlings and as part of a growing medium for houseplants. So you have made good organic soil from waste, saved money by mulching and by not having to pay to have the waste hauled off, and saved time from weeding and watering. Not a bad deal for a little effort. Oh, did I forget to mention that this entire compost making is great exercise. And don't forget, you now have a label. You are a recycler.

Compost is a mixture of partially decomposed organic matters, called greens and browns. By mixing them together, keeping them damp, and turning the pile at regular intervals for aeration, you will have black gold. Officially it's called humus and it should be dark, easily crumbled, and have an earthy aroma. This occurs after microorganisms decompose the organic materials; their body heat causes the temperature in the pile to rise to 110-140 degrees in 4-5 days. The pile will settle and sometimes you will actually see the pile give off smoke. If the pile heats up as it should this will kill most weed seeds and disease organisms. But to be on the safe side (as I found out the hard way) don't put diseased plants in the pile or weeds with seeds. Adding nitrogen is beneficial to the breakdown of the organic material by the organisms which is necessary for rapid decomposition. This nitrogen will be released for your plants use after decomposition is complete. So now you have compost.

What Can I Compost?

The best compost "recipe" is a combination of carbon-rich brown materials; dry leaves, plant stalks, pine needles, small twigs, wood shavings, shredded paper, hay, dryer lint, nutshells, straw, and many more to choose from. Nitrogen rich green materials include coffee grounds with filters, tea bags, eggshells, fish waste, fruits, grains, grass clippings, hair, manure, vegetable scraps, weeds, and fertilizer. Try to add about three times as many brown materials as green materials. Do not compost meat, bones, animal waste (dog, cat, or bird), dairy products, diseased plants, seeded weeds, plants treated with herbicides or pesticides or any inorganic material.

There is something called the Carbon to Nitrogen ratio that is the ideal ratio for carbon and nitrogen in a compost pile. Don't get caught up in the numbers. Remember, what is important to understand is how greens and browns affect the compost process. Carbon is the spark that starts the composting process and nitrogen fuels the microorganisms that decompose materials. It is usually based on the percent dry weight of carbon and nitrogen in the material. A ratio of about 30:1 is ideal for the activity of the microbes in the compost. You will need a chart to refer to which may be obtained at the county extension office (referred to as the carbon to nitrogen chart). For example, if you have two bags of grass clippings (C:N=20:1) and one bag of leaves (C:N=60:1), then combined you have a C:N ratio $(20:1 + 20:1 + 60:1) \div 3 = (100:1) \div 3 = 33.1$, which is close to the ideal (C:N=30:1). Math class is over. Like I already said, don't stress over the numbers. Remember more brown than green.

How to build the pile and care for it

Put the pile in a convenient area where water doesn't stand, that has good air circulation, is shaded, and is easy to work in and around. The pile may be started on the ground. Begin with organic materials 6-8 inches deep. If possible, shred your materials for they will decompose faster. If you have damp grass clippings, lay them in layers 2-3 inch thick or mix with some dried material. Between these layers, wet the material, but do not soak it. Next add a layer of manure 1-2 inches deep, or sprinkle a high-nitrogen garden fertilizer. Add a layer of soil or sod about 1 inch deep. This contains microorganisms that help to start the process.

Dealing with Dirt continued #2:

Continue to build to about 4 feet or whatever is easy for you to turn frequently. Keep it moist during hot dry weather. If you keep it turned and moist with correct brown to green ratio you will have compost in 3-9 months. You will know it is ready as it will shrink and when you dig into the middle you will find soft dark crumbly soil. Happy gardening.

You should add compost to you garden annually if you are using it to improve the soil. The best time to add it to the vegetables or flowers is during fall or spring tilling.

Composting problems:

If you smell a bad odor from the pile it may to too wet, too tight, or both. Turn it for air circulation and to loosen the soil. If dry materials are available, add these.

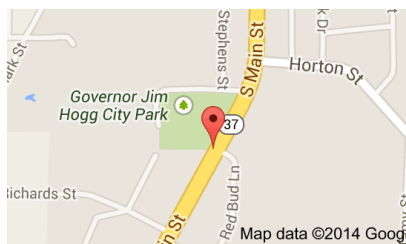
If the pile seems to be just sitting there with nothing happening it may be too dry. Water it and turn it.

The pile is wet enough and the center is warm but not hot - the pile is too small. Add matter to it, turn it, and mix it together. If the pile was not too small and not decomposing add some nitrogen.

There are many helpful websites where you can get more information and there is an article available at the Texas A&M AgraLife Extension Office.

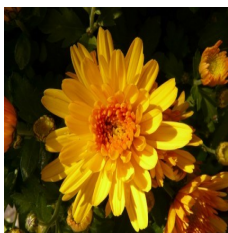
Hope this helps you grow big beautiful vegetable and flowers. [\(return to story beginning\)](#)

TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION



Birth Month Flowers: pictures from pintrest

September



Astor



October

Cosmos

AgriLife Agent Article continued:

so watch for them in the kitchen or pantry. Pharaoh ant colonies can move around within the home and can split or "bud" into two or more separate colonies. Budding can occur in response to improper insecticide applications or various other adverse environmental factors and can make control even more difficult. The effort to locate the nest(s) pays off in effective control.



2. Treating with insecticides sprays and dusts. Treat the infested areas with boric acid dust. All ant entrances must be treated. Usually this means injecting the dust into cracks around baseboards, door frames, electrical switches and plugs, cabinets, etc. Apply dusts in thin even layers and not in clumps or piles. Small hand dusters can be obtained at most hardware stores.

After dusting, apply a band of insecticide spray using Sevin®, or Baygon® along baseboards and other areas where ants have been seen. Spray around suspected nest areas. It is not necessary to spray vast open areas, but do concentrate on the areas where you noted ant activity.

3. A third insecticide application technique is also necessary. Prepare boric acid bait (mix 2 teaspoons boric acid with 4 oz. of boiling water. Add the dissolved boric acid solution to 10 oz. of corn syrup) to be placed in infected areas. Place on aluminum foil or pie pans. Keep the bait moist by periodically adding a few drops of water. This should kill ant infestations in 4 to 5 weeks. Keep baits away from children or pets. [\(return to story beginning\)](#)



Recipe featured in **"From Garden to Table"** tip and recipe book published by WCMG:

Hot Garlic Pecans submitted by: Linda Timmons

4 cups pecan halves

1/4 cup butter, melted

2 teaspoons Tabasco sauce

1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce

1 teaspoon garlic powder

Creole seasoning salt (to taste)

Preheat oven to 300°. Mix all ingredients and spread on jelly roll pan. Bake 30 minutes, stirring several times. Remove from oven and lightly sprinkle with Creole seasoning. Store cooled pecans in an airtight container.



we105921 www.fotosearch.com

Happy Pecan Season, Sylvia

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Yes, We've Had Rain But Don't Roll Up the Hose

By Lucy Germany

Well, nice surprise, we have had rain—the kind that brings applause from every type of plant and that we can hardly trust as it begins to work its magic on the garden's blooming plants. But these very plants in their revived state remind us of the importance of water and the difficulty of being hopeful when we remember the droughts of prior years. We are faced with the tasks of dragging lengths of hose from one part of the yard to another, of unkinking the treacherous little knots that cause the flow of water to stop suddenly and you can almost hear the cry for help from the bee balm and the evening primrose. Of course if you have an underground sprinkler system you experience none of this but then you are working with an anxiety that involves fear of its suddenly shutting down due to one of those mysterious events that take place right when you're off to an event that requires you to be away from home and, upon return, without a clue as to how to start it up again.

Water is the foundational gift to all plants—including weeds. It is the secret to the deep orange beauty of our Indian Blankets (Gallardia), the crazy quilt mix of colors that take up residence in the immense masses of Texas Lantana with its complex mix of yellow and orange flowers. It polishes the clear yellow of Missouri primrose, still blooming even though it's the first part of August and it enriches the regal purple of the passion flower that threatens in its exuberance to hide big chunks of your front porch and half of all the plants you've been nurturing with great zeal, turning them into exotic purple filaments. When you are generous with your watering, you have to be stern with your insistence on playing favorites, concentrating on the most visible and riotous bloomers, marking them for first plants to be watered. I therefore often find myself weeding out the “newborns” of some of my most persistent bloomers, knowing it is far better to welcome the ones that are at the top of their form than to try to play “catch up” with the ones that are barely visible. That may be short-sighted favoritism but it makes it easier to achieve the apogee of garden beauty and you can always catch the seeds from the mature specimens and start over with a new round of seeding this coming fall or in early spring.

Whether you favor “culling” or “laissez-fair” the main key to a beautiful supply of garden color for the rest of this year is to be sure your “waterworks” are in good shape from now until fall's so-called “rainy season”. Until that time you'll also need a couple of comfortable outdoor chairs so you can sit in the midst of your rainbow and rejoice.



Sunflowers

By: Lynn AronSpeer

It began because I thought sunflowers would be cheerful and easy to grow. They were both. Our soil is not amended by any means so we were amazed when each stalk grew to over fifteen feet tall with a face about eighteen inches across. What to do with them? Why dry, roast and eat them of course. My honey was additionally enthusiastic to dry and save the seeds inasmuch as he has a tiny 'Prepper' streak and, wanting to raise chickens, he had always been faced with the challenge of feeding them should times get tough and feed become very expensive or even unavailable. Chickens could certainly thrive on sunflower seeds. Each sunflower face contained easily over a thousand seeds. We had only put in thirteen plants; with one flower on each, this equaled approximately 13,000+ seeds. Imagine a whole field of sunflowers, harvested and dried for feed over the winter when grasshoppers and bugs would be largely absent.

There are three parts to the harvest process.



Unknown Woman with Sunflower by
Terrell AronSpeer

Part 1 Drying on the Stem

- 1- Wait for the flower to wilt, droop and the back of the head to become yellow-brown (Seeds will not let go of the head if they are even moist). As the wilting process progresses, the seeds will begin to plump up and acquire their black-and-white striped shell.
- 2- Tie a paper bag or cheesecloth over the head. No plastic which restricts air flow and causes moisture to build up so rot the seeds. The bag or cloth keeps the seeds for you and not all the critters in your neighborhood who are perfectly willing to harvest early for you. You can attach a makeshift bag handle by stapling a length of twine to each side of the bag after pushing the bag up over the wilting flower and placing the 'handle' over the wilting stem. Now, should the flower begin dropping seeds, you'll catch them in the bag.
- 3- Change the bags as needed. Usually this would only be after a strong rain storm and the bag becomes wet. If there are any seeds in the bag, examine them for damage and store the good ones in airtight containers until the harvest is completed.
- 4- Finally, once the back of the flower head is totally brown, cut them off, leaving approximately one foot of stem attached to the flower head. Make sure to keep the bag covering the flower or you may lose a significant amount of seeds in the process.

Part 2

Drying off the Stem

2- Dry the sunflowers in a warm dry location indoors or, here in TX, perhaps in a garage. Hang them high to prevent rodents from becoming interested.

3 – Check the heads periodically. When the flower back is totally brown and very dry, the seeds are ready for harvest. The drying process takes an average of one to four days, but may be longer depending of the weather or the conditions where the stem is hung.

Part 3 Harvesting and Storing the Seeds

1 – Place sunflower on a flat, clean surface and remove the paper bag

2 – To remove seeds, simply brush them with your hands or a vegetable brush. (If harvesting more than one sunflower, you can gently brush the flower faces together to remove the seeds.) Continue until all seeds are dislodged.

3 – Rinse the seeds in a colander thoroughly in cold, running water and then allow the seeds to drain completely before removing from the colander. (This removes dirt and bacteria from being outdoors.)

4- Dry the seeds out by spreading on a thick towel in a single layer for several hours or longer depending on the humidity. Inspect for any damaged seeds or debris before continuing on to the next step.

5 – If you plan to consume the seeds soon, you can salt and roast them immediately by soaking them first overnight in a solution made from two quarts of water and $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ cup salt. If you prefer, you may boil the seeds in this salt water solution for two hours instead of soaking overnight. Next, dry the seeds on absorbent paper towel. Finally spread the seeds out in a single layer on a shallow baking sheet and roast for 30 to 40 minutes or until golden brown, at an oven temperature of 300 degrees. Stir the seeds occasionally as they roast. Allow to cool completely.

6 – Store in refrigerator for several weeks or unroasted seeds can be kept for several months inside the refrigerator or freezer and last longest inside the freezer.

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Chamberbitter Weed

Submitted by: Peggy Rogers

Are you familiar with the Chamberbitter Weed (aka gripeweed, leafflower or little mimosa)? A friend saw it in one (just one, thank goodness!) of my flower beds and asked if I knew what it was. Since then, two other people have asked me about the same weed in their beds. I thought it was maybe from a locust tree, since the seedlings look just alike. or maybe a mimosa. So glad that she identified it as Chamberbitter Weed. She said that hers get small yellow flowers. From the sound of this article, they should be pulled up and destroyed ASAP!

http://www.al.com/living/index.ssf/2013/10/chamberbitter_is_a_tough_weed.html

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Free Food: Allegheny Chinquapin

By: Sylvia Johnson

Plant Characteristics: Tree/shrub

Habit: Understory/Shade

Nut: Edible

Rest of plant: NON-edible



Nutritional Value: They are the only nut that contain vitamin C . Also contains B3 & B6 plus other trace minerals.

Castanea pumila

The most ignored and undervalued native North American nut tree!* This tree/shrub can be found in our East Texas forest and along our streams and river banks. This would be fun forage expedition this fall. You can use these nuts as you would chestnuts. If you don't eat them as soon as you pick them that is. Take your gloves and handle the burrs with care and the sweet nut will be a delightful treat.

The Allegheny chinquapin is found in sandy woods and natural thickets from southern New Jersey and Pennsylvania, west to Indiana and Missouri, and south to Florida and Texas. The fruit of the chinquapin is a small nut encased within a bur. Even though small, the nut is sweet and edible. The bur surrounding it has sharp spines approximately .75 inch to 1.5 inches in diameter. Each bur contains one brown chestnut-like nut. The nut matures in the fall, at which time the bur splits open into two halves (similar to a clam shell) allowing the nut to be plucked out.

It prefers dry, sandy, well-drained soil. Its natural habitat is sandy, rocky uplands and ridges, mixed among stands of oak and hickory.**

Edible by humans, the nuts also provide a vital food source for wildlife, including birds and small mammals, such as rabbits, squirrels, and chipmunks. Deer also forage on the fruit. The wood has been used for making fencing and railroad ties, as well as a source for fuel. Native Americans used the roots as an astringent and tonic, and to treat fevers and headaches.***



©



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* www.forestry.about.com

**<https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu>

*** www.willisorchards.com © Pictures

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On-line with Wood County Master Gardeners;

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—Visit our **Website** at <http://txmg.org/woodcounty> for up-to-the-minute news and scheduled events, back issues of the newsletter and seasonal videos. Any new content for the web-site can be sent to jrwillisjr@yahoo.com.

—Go on **Facebook**, search for Wood County Master Gardeners, Inc. You should find 3 pages to choose from,

Page 1 is a blank site that has been removed,

Page 2 is Wood County Master Gardeners from Kentucky ,

Page 3 Wood County Master Gardeners, Quitman.

Then "like" us!

—CEU Credit ON LINE

Directions: <http://txmg.org> Drop down a little ways, look to side of page, click on Training, click on Training Opportunities, down a little ways on page click Earth-Kind Training for Master Gardeners, almost to bottom of page you will find Directions. There are 12 subjects,

click on arrow in front of subject for video then click on survey or test and answer questions.....You are not graded on the test so you can't fail it. So now you have the directions so let's get those CEU's done!

—**Sunshine**, If you know of a member who needs cheering up or sympathy please contact our chairperson at: joycemhollaway@hotmail.com

—Volunteer Hours

<http://texas.volunteersystem.org>

Just click on the link and you will be where to enter your password. Before logging in, right click on the page and save to favorites or bookmark or Create Shortcut to you desktop.

Thanks for entering your hours. If you need help contact Peggy at: peggyrog-ersc21@gmail.com



From the Newsletter Editor:

How to earn more Volunteer Hours — By: Sylvia Johnson

Submitting articles and pictures is another way you may earn your volunteer hours. You may count the article writing time as volunteer time. All articles are required to meet the following conditions:

- Written by yourself, we love true first person accounts and Biographies
- Written by another or compiled from different resources, but full credit annotated to original source
- Pictures must be credited to photographer — annotate whether you took them or where you got them (must have permission when copying from the web)
- Be related to Master Gardeners and gardening, any subject covered in MG training class, work day, or project
- We have ongoing needs for articles about: native plants, heirloom plants, vegetable plants, people interacting with plants, eating plants, insects and plants, etc...you get the idea. Just follow the examples in our past issues
- **You must allow editing by yours truly.** Submission is considered permission.

Articles will be accepted in Microsoft Word & Work, sent from iPad, sent from phone, or hard copy. I can use most pictures sent by e-mail and compatible with Windows. Pictures must be accredited to photographer.

The leading delivery of malware comes in E-Mails,

I DELETE E-MAILS WITH NO SUBJECT LINE (even if you are stuck in Arizona by a flash flood)!

Please fill free to contact me with any questions. mgnewsletter@hotmail.com

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