



MG WOOD WORKS



February 2020

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For More Information

About Wood County Master Gardener projects and learning opportunities, visit our [website](https://txmg.org/woodcounty):

<https://txmg.org/woodcounty>



Peggy Rogers

What does the new year mean for Texas Master Gardeners, Wood County aka WCMGA?

The Master Gardener Program is a volunteer development program offered by Texas AgriLife Extension Service and is designed to increase the availability of horticultural information and improve the quality of life through horticultural projects. These objectives are implemented through training volunteers to become Texas Master Gardeners. We aid Extension by conducting garden projects; answering requests for horticultural information; establishing and maintaining demonstration gardens; and designing and implementing community improvement projects, as well as coordinating Master Gardener projects. We have three demonstration garden projects and two of them need more help in maintaining them.

This year I challenge each of you to “ask not what the Texas Master Gardener Program can do for me” but “what can I do for the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Program Texas Master Gardeners (WCMGA)”. A call to action to each of us.

My wish and plan for this year is for us to have more educational programs for the community, not just one fall conference, so I’m open to any constructive suggestions. So put your thinking caps on and let me hear from you!

Also, we will be looking at infrastructure training within the members. Several have expressed interest in how the operations of WCMGA works, and we are excited about providing more information and education.

Look forward to working with each of you. Let’s have a great year!

Peggy Rogers

2020 President

Melody Eishen

All our master gardeners have worked hard acquiring a multitude of volunteer hours by working at our project locations in Quitman, Mineola, and Hawkins, writing articles for the newsletter, speaking at various events, and/or participating in *Nature Watch*, our new phenology study. Thank you for putting in all the volunteer hours you have and keeping up with your hours in a timely manner.

At this time of year, it’s not uncommon to express gratitude. I would like to express my gratitude to all of you for the opportunity you’ve given me as your president. It has been a very meaningful experience for me and I’m so grateful that I’ve gotten to know a little better some outstanding people, who just happen to be master gardeners. The other officers, Joyce, Phil and Wanda have been instrumental in accomplishing our goals this year. Each of these individuals have shown excellence in accomplishing their duties and shown great dedication in carrying them out. I will truly miss working closely with them, but it’s good to know I’ll still see them often at our monthly meeting. Again, “Thank you” to this year’s officers, and I wish them a restful and blessed 2020 year, they have worked very hard during the 2019 year.

Now for my word for the year, “Sustainable”. I feel very confident turning over responsibilities to our new slate of officers for 2020. The people you’ve chosen to lead you next year are up to any challenge they might face. I have come to know these master gardeners as very educated, dedicated and experienced, so you are in good hands. Therefore, the word Sustainable comes into play, because I know transitioning forward into next year will be smooth.

My wish for all Master Gardeners is a very blessed 2020. We each have our list of what those blessings look like whether it’s health, expanding family, traveling, home projects, being involved in community, etc. My hope is we can all continue to support, encourage and be there for each other as dedicated Wood County Master Gardeners.

Again, thank you for all your support this year and have a blessed 2020.



2020 Wood County MGs

2020 Officers – Directors

Peggy Rogers, President	214.794.2853peggyrogersc21@gmail.com
Ann Fair-Irby Vice-President	903.571.5802ladyfaira@aol.com
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Project Chairs

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Hawkins City Park	Ann Reynolds.....903 769-2398ann@etex.net
Extension Office Landscaping	Debbie Latham817.925.3055latham55@msn.com

2020 Responsibilities

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Intern Class	Linda Bradley817 909-6919lk_bradley58@yahoo.com
Newsletter	Bobbie McGee.....402 926-8215MGNewsletter@hotmail.com
Sunshine	Elaine Porter.....361 319-7300porterpettus@gmail.com
Volunteer Management System	Peggy Rogers214 794-2853peggyrogers21@gmail.com
Website	Keith Zimmerman.....979 299-804 7keithzim@yahoo.com

2020 Officers & Annual Awards

At the December 19, 2019 meeting, Melodee inducted the new Association officers for 2020 and gratefully thanked the 2019 officers for their service, contributions, and dedication over the past year.

2020 Wood County Master Gardeners Association Officers



Peggy Rogers
President



Ann Fair-Irby
Vice President



Jean Croucher
Treasurer



Jan Whitlock
Secretary

Shanique Davis presented the awards for our outstanding Wood County Master Gardeners.

2019 WCMGA Awards. Award Winners



Joyce Tullis
Innovator of the Year



Debbie Latham
Rookie of the Year



Melodee Eishen
Master Gardener
of the Year



Linda Bradley
Project Leader
of the Year



Ann Reynolds
Community Outreach
of the Year

2020 Master Gardener Class

The 2020 Wood County Master Gardener class is in full swing. We have 20 interns representing 9 communities!

All Master Gardeners are welcome, and encouraged, to attend any of the classes; classes may provide additional CEUs. A tentative schedule of the classes follows.

Date	Subject	Speaker
1/14/20	Botany	Clint Perkins
1/21/20	Trees	Daniel Duncum
1/28/20	Soil 1 and 2	Clint Perkins
2/4/20	IPM	Linda Timmons
2/11/20	Bee Keeping	Bill Zimmer
2/18/20	Fruits and Nuts	Tommy Phillips
2/25/20	Vegetables	Gayle Mullinex Deena Taylor Keith Zimmerman Barbara Williams
3/3/20	Propagation 1	Melodee Eishen
3/10/20	Propagation 2	Melodee Eishen
3/17/20	Composting TX Super Stars and Greenhouse	Katie Carter Ellen Atkins
3/24/20	Square Foot and Keyhole Gardening	Deena Taylor
	Natives	Ann Reynolds
3/31/20	Bulbs	Lin Grado
	Herbs	Kathi Ladewig
4/7/2020	Fieldtrip: Blue Moon Gardens	
4/14/20	Turf/Irrigation	Chrissie Segars
4/21/20	Field Trip/ Alford Family Farm Ellen Atkins Gardens	Interns Only
4/28/20	Graduation	



*Editor's Note: All Master Gardeners are angels, of course. Nonetheless, apologies for the haloes in the photo.

2020 Master Gardener Interns



Penny Boice
Winnsboro



Sydney Harwell-Mason
Hawkins



Michele Musser
Hawkins



Jewel Thompson
Holly Lake Ranch



Misty Frazier
Winnsboro



M. J. Lamborn
Como



Mitzi Pearch
Mineola

Ron Thompson
Holly Lake Ranch



Greg Geisler
Yantis



Susan Lewis
Quitman



Dan Rose
Hawkins



Gwynn Tucker
Winnsboro



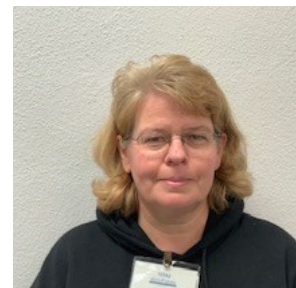
Scott Gilbeath
Carrollton



Linda Mahony
Quitman



David Tevebaugh
Gilmer



Heather Vessey
Winnsboro



Kathryn Goodman
Holly Lake Ranch



Nancy McDonald
Mineola



Nancy Tevebaugh
Gilmer



Carolyn West
Emory

Lin Grado: Replace Invasive Plants in East Texas Gardens

Winter can be the best time to rid your garden of exotic invasive plants. Two of the more common offenders in Wood County are Nandina (also called heavenly bamboo) and Chinese privet.

Nandina is a shrub that, on the surface, seems like a great garden plant, growing in sun or shade. Its evergreen foliage contrasts with big clusters of orange-red berries that persist into the winter. It was introduced from Asia in the early 1800s, and is still available in the nursery trade today. So what makes it so bad? It's an aggressive grower, out-competing native plants and disrupting the ecosystem. Additionally, those pretty berries are toxic to many animals including birds, according to the Audubon society. I confess to having some Nandina in a garden at the Arboretum that was built by a friend who has passed away, so it's been difficult for me to remove, both emotionally and physically. Unfortunately it has also spread through the woods at the Arboretum, and its removal will be labor-intensive and may require the use of chemicals, since even a small portion of roots left behind will re-grow.



Nandina berries are beautiful but toxic to wildlife.

What should you plant instead of Nandina? There are several alternatives that provide red berries in east Texas winters, especially hollies. The native yaupon holly is an evergreen species with scarlet berries, while the native Possumhaw* Holly (*Ilex decidua*). Possumhaw bears its red or yellow fruit on bare stems; be sure to buy female clones to ensure berry production. One of my favorite varieties is a Weeping Yaupon; this holly can be used as a focal point in your garden. Unfortunately, these hollies are larger than Nandina. There are other hollies of a more moderate



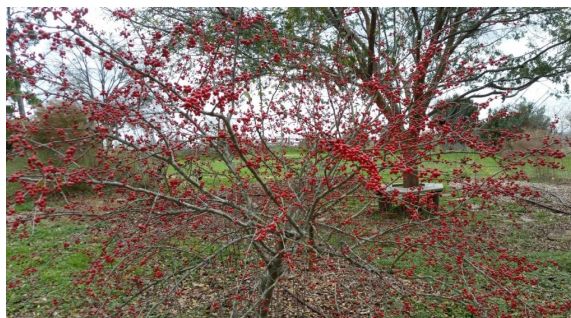
Weeping Yaupon can be the focal point of your garden

size, such as several varieties of Chinese Holly - 'Berries Jubilee', 'Dazzler', or 'Dwarf Burford', for example - that can fill that niche. As a bonus, many of these are self-fruitful. There's a beautiful holly outside the Mineola office of the Wood County Monitor that is just a show-stopper in the winter.

If you have the room for it, American Holly is a knock-out that grows easily to 20'. The ones in my garden typically form a cluster of trunks with beautiful, mottled bark that is smooth to the touch, with berries that are a bright red. I particularly enjoy watching the birds eating the fruit from these plants each January - typically robins will eat the fruit on the lower limbs, while cedar waxwings swoop in to clear the top third of the tree. In the spring, the tree seems to vibrate with the bees that visit the blooms - I can hear them across the yard. This is one holly for the wildlife garden!

The other invasive shrub that I want to eradicate from the woods at the Arboretum (and our yards) is the Chinese privet. This is another evergreen shrub, introduced here in 1852, that escaped cultivation by the 1930s. Its berries are blue and are eaten by many birds and other animals, enabling its spread by seed. The spring blooms are highly fragrant and serve as nectar sources for honeybees. Ironically, this plant disrupts the native bee population, as it has a negative impact on other bee-supporting plants. Like Nandina, removal is difficult, but research by the US Forest Service in Georgia has shown that the ecosystem recovers tremendously within a few years of removal.

There are much better replacements for this invasive - my favorite is



Possum Haw berries really sparkle on bare stems

probably the native wax myrtle. It can grow a bit larger than Chinese privet, but the leaves are fragrant, the bark attractive, and the female plant sports pale blue berries in winter. Another possible substitute is Carolina Laurel Cherry - while this evergreen can grow to a tree, it can be trimmed to a shrub six feet high or so. Farkleberry is another larger shrub that can grow in the same spots as Chinese privet. This blueberry relative has the same bell-shaped blossoms in the spring and similar fall color; its bark is also a feature in the winter garden.

Gardening, like life, is about choices. We should choose our landscape plants wisely, and eradicate these invasive species from our east Texas gardens.

*Commonly referred to as *Possumhaw*, *Possum-Haw*, *Possum Haw*, and *Swamp Holly*

Jacque Hilburn-Simmons Design Your Own Wildscape

Winter may be the quieter, less busy time of the year garden wise but its a great time to spend planning our gardens. While you're thinking about color, texture and function in your garden, spend some time thinking about the wildlife, too.

One of the first suggestions for having a more wildlife friendly yard is to reduce the turf area. Using native plants instead of lawn will help reduce water, fertilizer and pesticide use. Turf grass may be better at converting carbon dioxide to oxygen but unless you are using an old-fashioned reel mower mowing does create air pollutants. One way to gradually decrease your lawn area is to edge your beds out a few inches bigger every year.

Another suggestion for an effective Wildscape is to include evergreens and plants that bloom and fruit at different times of the year. Our native red cedars (*Juniperus virginiana*) may look a little messy but they provide winter habitat and food for your winter birds. Red cedar is also the host plant of the Olive hairstreak butterfly. For winter color in your garden consider adding a possumhaw holly (*Ilex decidua*). The cedar waxwings and mockingbirds will fight over the berries.

A final wildscape design tip is to add a water feature. Water is a year around attraction for wildlife. Standing water is adequate but moving water is better and flowing water is best. A simple bird bath is an inexpensive way to add a water feature to your landscape. Try using the largest pot saucer you have as a bird bath. Birds only need 1"-3" of water to drink or preen. Set it up on an upside-down pot near one of your bird feeders and watch. Clean water will attract even non seed eating birds to your yard.

For more Wildscape design tips check out the Texas Parks and Wildlife [web site:](https://tpwd.texas.gov/huntwild/wild/wildlife_diversity/wildscapes/design_tips.phtml)
(https://tpwd.texas.gov/huntwild/wild/wildlife_diversity/wildscapes/design_tips.phtml)



Possumhaw Holly

Of Special Interest

New PD-Resistant Wine Grape Varieties Named and Released

As many of you know Dr. Andy Walker of UC-Davis has been working on naturally breeding Pierce's Disease tolerance into *Vitis vinifera* wine grape parentage. He has 5 successful crosses, some of which have been trialed by Jim Kamas in Fredericksburg. The wine quality is superb and now growers in moderate to high Pierce's Disease pressure have more options. Vines can be purchased from Sunridge nurseries in California and now these five numbered selections now have names. This is very exciting news.

(https://www.winebusiness.com/news/?go=getArticle&dataId=223142&fbclid=IwAR0tWA_T_RxFpsjf7b6a7W1mDXhuxUhbPkDlfuZLsOiEskeyAFkTo9bYMNg)

Submitted by: Michael Cook
Viticulture Program Specialist - North Texas
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

**2020 Annual East Texas Turfgrass Conference
For Homeowners, Master Gardeners and Lawn Care Professionals**
Tuesday, February 4, 2020
Texas A&M AgriLife Research & Extension Center 1710 FM 3053
Overton, Texas Registration starts at 8:00 am
5 CEU's (pending TDA approval)

LANDSCAPE DESIGN SCHOOL SERIES XXVI, COURSE IV

February 24-25, 2020

George H. W. Bush Presidential Library
theater in the Rotunda (free parking)
College Station, TX
For More Information:

Michele Wehrheim (313) 649-1067
texaslandscapedesignschool@gmail.com
On-Line Info at <https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/southerngarden/>

Upcoming Events

WCMG Meeting:

Third Thursday of Each Month 9:00 AM—12:00 Noon
618 S. Main Street *Quitman, TX* 75783-0968
Tel: 903.763.2924.

February 20	May 21	August 20	November 19
March 19	June 18	September 17	December 17
April 16	July 16	October 15	

Advance Training: Visit the **Texas Master Gardener** website (<https://mastergardener.tamu.edu/>) for information about advanced training topics and opportunities. The *Master Gardener On-Line Training* programs offers modules on: Landscape Water Conservation, Low-Volume Irrigation, Irrigation System Auditing,, Safe Use and Handling of Pesticides, Safe Use and Handling of Fertilizers, Reducing Landscape Waste-Composting, Designing an Earth-Kind Landscape, Landscaping for Energy Conservation, Creating Native Habitat, Earth-Kind Roses, Integrated Pest Management, Pet Management for Crape Myrtles, and Rainwater Harvesting.

As you read our WCMG newsletter and learn of all the educational seminars and classes we hold, garden projects we plan and execute, advanced training speakers we share with the public in educational forums, the class room instruction we provide to County ISDs, the newspaper educational articles written by our Associates and the community outreach events we hold, as well as our web-site and Facebook pages, we hope you get an understanding of how great an asset you have available to you especially here in Wood County, Texas.

Online with WCMGA

MG Wood Works Newsletter:

- ◆ You are invited to submit thoughts, lessons, suggestions, or perceptions; if you are planning or know of an upcoming event of interest to MGs, please be sure to send that information to me. You are permitted to count time writing articles as volunteer hours. Articles may be edited .
- ◆ Unless otherwise annotated, all photos in this publication were taken by the author of the article in which they appear.
- ◆ Submit articles, ask questions, make comments, or report corrections to B.J. McGee:
mgnewsletter@hotmail.com or bmcgee@froco.com

Website at <http://txmg.org/woodcounty> 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 **Keith Zimmerman**: keithzim@yahoo.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Wood-County-Master-Gardeners-Inc-205733709448425/?fref=ts>

Facebook Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1534107646899295/>

MG Advanced Training through Texas A & M AgriLife Extension

Sunshine: Know of a member who needs a get well, warm thought, or sympathy card? Contact Elaine Porter (361 319-7300; porterpettus@gmail.com). She will ensure one is sent from the Association.

Volunteer Hours: <http://texas.volunteersystem.org> Just click on the link and you will see 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 Rogers.

Associate Roster: You can find all e-mail addresses and contact information for other Master Gardeners Available after logging into the Volunteer System.

Update your profile in the Roster! Is your phone number up to date? Have you changed your email address? Did you move? Have you uploaded a photo? Please check your listing to be sure your contact information is up to date

Become a MG!

Contact the Wood County Extension Office: **Phone: 903-763-2924**

