

March
 2020

Peggy Rogers

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Greetings!

I would love to see all your cheerful faces. The Zoom meeting class was so uplifting, just to be able to see all of you that participated. I wasn't even interested in Turf Grass but 'Wow, just Wow', Christie Segars was fantastic and I wasn't ready for her to stop. She is going to send the presentation to Shaniqua but the file is very large.

Many of us have been watching Aggie Horticulture Live on Facebook. They have new subjects each week at 1:00pm on Wednesday and Friday. Great subjects and each one is 1 CEU. Go to Aggie Horticulture on Facebook and view as, they are keeping some on-line for later viewing. AgriLife has stepped up trying to keep us interested and educated.


Trainees/Interns, I so appreciate your continued participation and interest. Your class will be one to be remembered! Change in interpretation of AgriLife rules, meetings cancelled, class hours being done on line, (some of you are very close to your 50 class hours!), Zoom meeting, and studying Chapter 1 by email. Covid 19, can't stop us, yes limit us but not stop us.

I planted my garden and flower seeds twice and with so much rain the seeds washed away. I have several annual seeds that I like to sow in the ground so neighbors down the hill should have a beautiful show of summer flowers!

There are still no definite news of when we can return to meetings or work on demonstration projects. So.....the weeds grow!

In a couple of weeks, it WOULD have been time to go to Waco to our 2020 State Convention, however, that was not to be! We are all so bummed at it having been cancelled!

Stay on course, and hopefully this will be over soon!



Aggie Horticulture Facebook Live Events

Series of educational videos <https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/fblive/>
 Earn 1 CEU for each video.

2020 Wood County Master Gardener Association

2020 Officers – Directors



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Wood County Extension Agent

Position pending. Shaniqua has moved to the Gregg County office and is still available if we have questions.

Project Chairs

Mineola Nature Preserve
 Hawkins City Park
 Extension Office Landscaping

Linda Timmons903 569-3443lindtmms@aol.com
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2020 Responsibilities

Emails
 Facebook
 Intern Class
 Newsletter
 Sunshine
 Volunteer Management System
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Melodee Eishen

Nature Watch

It seems like things have quickly evolved around this latest virus scare. We're staying home, no more meeting together as interns, working on master gardener projects, or monthly meetings. For me this has been a positive, from the perspective that I've had more time to garden. Yeah! Here, on my place, I think I've doubled the size of my garden. I know it's more to keep up with, but I also look at the potential to get more canned for later use. Remember my articles last year on sustainability? I guess I really do what I preach.

So what does all of this have to do with Nature Watch, the Master Gardener Phenology Study? Well, I guess I'm trying to say that it's been on the back burner, instead of the front. My plan is to have my first class finished by the end of April.

That class is a requirement to use and understand the National Phenology Network (NPN) structure and workings of the website. Keith Mullinax and I are trying to go through this protocol to determine if this is truly the direction we are going to take on this project. I think it is.

I originally thought that we needed to reinvent the wheel for this one, but our hope is that we can work with NPN and join ranks with them for this project. We can give them data from East Texas and we can gain information from current and previous data collected from this organization. All of this is to say, it's still a work in progress.

For you who are curious about phenology or what we as Master Gardeners in Wood County are trying to accomplish, head on over to www.usanpn.org and check it out for more information. In the meantime, Wikipedia defines phenology as the study of periodic plant and animal life cycle events and how these are influenced by seasonal and inter annual variations in climate as well as habitat factors (such as elevation). Examples include the date of emergence of leaves and flowers, the first appearance of migratory birds, the first flight of butterflies, leaf coloring in the fall on deciduous trees, dates of egg laying birds and amphibians, and the developmental cycles of temperate-zone honey bee colonies.

For us master gardeners of Wood County, we are also looking for garden production, garden insects and pest infestation, native plants, rain, drought, temperature ranges, soil temperatures, etc. We hope to analyze what's working or not, and why.

So for now, the Texas Master Gardeners of Wood County that are part of this project are keeping track of their five plants and one bird. Hopefully soon, we can start entering data on the www.usanpn.org website and Keith can track us.

Here is what I'm currently tracking:

1. Hummingbirds (so far we have two; they have been here for almost three weeks).
2. Comfrey (it's growing fast, multiplying and blooming)
3. Moringa (usually we plant this as an annual in May, but with our mild winter, we are having moringa coming back from trunks left in the ground. We will also plant more trees this week. I'm so excited. It's a wonderful food source to grow, go do some research, I think you will be amazed.)
4. Thai Hibiscus (it's still too cold to plant yet, but I will be prepping seeds this week to plant next week.)
5. Basil (it's in the ground, about 1-2 inches high). I've had a lot from volunteer seeds, plus some I've planted in a new plot.
6. Sunchokes (This was new for me last year; and on a lark I bought a few sun chokes at a grocery store and planted them. I thought the blooms were lovely and they grew quite large in our container. I chopped them down after frost and forgot about them. About a month ago I remembered them and started digging them up. Wow, what an abundant harvest. I've proceeded to plant quite a few in a new garden space and they have come up nicely, some are about six inches high. This will be a perpetual garden producer with little work.)

If you have an interest in joining the Nature Watch phenology study, please let me know. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have. Have a wonderful spring.

Update Your Profile!

All Master Gardeners and interns are included in the Roster on the Texas Master Gardener Volunteer Management System... the same system you use to enter your volunteer and CEU hours. Please review and update your profile, including **adding your photo**.

Here's what to do:

- ◆ Go to <https://texas.volunteersystem.org/users/index.cfm> and select *Member Roster* (Under *General Information* on the left)
- ◆ Select Your Name
- ◆ Select *Edit Profile*
- ◆ Select *Upload Photo/Choose File* (You may be able to use your phone to take a photo and then click *Upload*)

Moira "MJ" Lamborn Surprises In My Learning

A few weeks ago in our Master Gardener intern class we were taught various methods of propagation and actually propagated some plants..

We did cuttings on roses, various leaf cuttings on begonias and African violets, root cuttings, layered propagation on mint, and tested old seed between damp paper towels to see if they would sprout to life.

I brought all my newly propagated plants home and fully expected them all to live, especially the Moringa plant which I had carefully transplanted to a bigger pot and made a mini greenhouse effect with a Ziploc bag. I had a few tomato seedlings, zucchini and an onion plant. How proud I was of these babies.

That week we were blessed with some sunshine, but what followed was about 10 days of damp/wet weather and little sunshine. I tried moving the plants nearer windows, but one by one my plants began to die. A fuzzy white mold grew on the little rose cuttings, and the top of the Moringa bowed its head and slowly leaves turned yellow and shriveled up.

The seeds grew in the tissue with long weak stems, and I tried to save them by potting in soil - the jury is still out on those. My tomatoes plants are struggling, and in their quiet way are asking for some sunshine.

The begonia cuttings are looking sick, and I'm tempted to pull the leaf cuttings up out of the perlite to see if any roots have formed. The African violet leaf cuttings look ok, so I'm leaving them alone. At this point I feel like a failure and any hope they have of living is for me to keep well away.

I will tell you the mint is doing ok, but then they already had roots, and I'm told anyone can grow mint.

So what has most surprised me about my Master Gardener learning experience? It's not that I'm a failure, or that the plant cuttings failed me, or that the class instructions failed me.

My biggest surprise about my learning experience is that plants are living things, and to live is a challenge for all of us - plants, animals, human beings. We need air, water, sunshine and TLC. Through this propagation experience I've learned to not give up, appreciate the value of education, and to continue being educated.

A failure is just another chance to learn!

MJ is a 2020 Master Gardener Intern

Ann Reynolds Hawkins City Park and Library

I'm sure you have heard the old adage, "If I didn't have bad luck, I would have no luck at all." Such is the lament of those of us who work in the Hawkins City Park.

Let me refresh your memory. The year was 2018 when the project was approved. The Wood County Master Gardeners had hoped to have a project supported by members and interns in each of the County's four precincts. A "spread the wealth" if you please. . . . Master Gardeners' handiwork and beauty extended throughout the county. We started the middle of 2018 with a scant budget of \$50 but that did not deter us. We are gardeners! Many of us brought seeds and starts from our home gardens and by the time of the Hawkins Oil Festival the garden was looking pretty good. It helped to have Ann Irby's artistic touch with pumpkins and mums. We ended the year with Christmas in the Park and dreams of bigger and better gardens the next year.

We began 2019 with designing and planting a children's sensory garden near the playground equipment, picnic tables and splash pad. With the addition of a load of compost (thanks Bobbie McGee,) the plants took off like our dreams. Mike Whisenant added a windchime for sound and Ann Irby contributed colorful signage. We continued to plant purchased and home grown plants in the pavilion flowerbed during the spring. We expended our new budget pretty quickly. We also took on the Allen Library small flower garden where the director wanted to showcase Texas native plants. We had this!! By late spring and mid-summer, we began to notice drought tolerant flowers beginning to wilt and die. After much sleuthing (thanks Phil Young) it was discovered that the sprinkler system was broken and the water system had been turned off. I continued to hand water three times a week and make pleas with the Hawkins Development Corporation and City Council. Finally, the system was repaired. It was now fall so we began adding bulbs and winter color.

2020 would be the year of the Hawkins City Park project! With a nice budget, a new class of interns wanting to learn about what, when and how to plant, a repaired sprinkler system and seeded plants growing in our greenhouses, what could go wrong? We spent the early months weeding and trimming trees (thanks Dan Rose, David and Nancy Tevebaugh). We edged closer to spring and began listing plants needed for the beds. I transplanted Oxalis between

[\(continued page 5](#)

Michele Musser Hawkins Neighborhood Garden



All the Boxes
Overgrown with Weeds

There are three raised-beds in a yard across the street from me. These gardens are all overgrown with weeds because my neighbor is only here every few months.

After visiting with some of my neighbors, we asked the owner if we could use these boxes for a neighborhood garden. On March 24th, five neighbors met me at the location to start the project.

We pulled all the weeds and then put down wet cardboard. I showed the ladies how to make a Mills mix, and we filled all the beds up with the new soil. We then purchased and planted lots of vegetables for everyone to share. We installed a dripper system with a timer for watering. Everyone had a blast and after seven hours on this project, we went home sunburned!



Stirring up the Mills Mix



Cardboard Over the Cleared Beds



Installing Drip Irrigation System



Laying out the First Garden

Ann Reynolds: Hawkins City Park and Library, continued

the Liriope, planted Lycoris and added Gulf Coast Penstemon to the Pollinator Garden (pavilion flowerbed). The Zinnias were popping up amid the Daffodils and Tulips (thank you whoever planted these). We could see the Lantana and Blue Mist Flower just waiting to burst forth. And then IT happened. The Invisible Enemy. The dreaded COVID19. We could no longer work as a Texas Master Gardener on our projects and rightly so. We truly can't be gardeners if we do not respect our health.

So I have wistfully visited the Allen Memorial Flowerbed on Sunday mornings when no patrons are around and pulled a

weed or two and applied fertilizer right before our recent rains. I continue to monitor the Sensory and Pollinator gardens when visitors are not at the park. I hear plants calling my name, from garden centers around east Texas, that want to be stars in Hawkins but alas I have chosen to shelter in place, which means tend to my own plot of posies.

Sad? A little. But, as a gardener I know that plants grow; plants die. Seasons change. There is a time to reap; a time to sow. This too shall pass. And, finally, a garden is never as good as it will be next year.

Garden on!

Upcoming Events

WCMG Regularly Scheduled Meetings: Please watch for messages for information on resuming our meetings.

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

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|---------|--------------|-------------|
| May 21 | August 20 | November 19 |
| June 18 | September 17 | December 17 |
| July 16 | October 15 | |

Advanced Training: Visit the [Texas Master Gardener](https://mastergardener.tamu.edu/) 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

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, and 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 your 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**



Educational Opportunities

Aggie Horticulture Facebook Live Events

Join us on Wednesdays & Fridays at 1pm Central time on the [Aggie Horticulture Facebook Page](#) to watch our Facebook Live events!

- 5/1/2020 – Friday 1:00 pm – Drip Irrigation Essentials
- 5/6/2020 – Wednesday 1:00 pm – Grapevine Planting & Training Demo

Previous videos available for view at any time; 1 CEU per video.

- [*Raised Garden Beds, Location, Soil Mixtures and more!*](#)
- [*Starting vegetable seeds at home*](#)
- [*Planting vegetable transplants or direct seed into your garden!*](#)
- [*Home Fruit Production – Tips for Success!*](#)
- [*Small fruits for the backyard*](#)
- [*Floral Designs from your backyard – Growing, Cutting, Using your flowers and shrubs!*](#)
- [*Growing Herbs: Basil Bounty*](#)
- [*Backyard Grapes/Vineyards*](#)
- [*Pecan Grafting*](#)
- [*How to Prune Your Trees*](#)
- [*How to Prune Your Shrubs*](#)
- [*Fertilization & Care of Your Home Lawn*](#)
- [*Drip Irrigation Essentials*](#)
- [*Grapevine Planting & Training Demo*](#)

The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating. The members of Texas A&M AgriLife will provide equal opportunities in programs and activities, education, and employment to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identity and will strive to achieve full and equal employment opportunity throughout Texas A&M AgriLife.

Texas Master Gardeners Wood County Free Garden Educational Series

Please watch your email/announcements to see if these classes will be held

- “Weeds vs Flowers”: July 30, 2020 at the Quitman Library
Victoria Settle and Debbie Latham, Presenters
- “Propagation” : October 29, 2020 at the Ag Office Quitman
Katie Carter, Presenter