

MG WOOD WORKS

Barb Williams: President's Letter

July/August 2022

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Howdy all y'all and welcome to the second half of 2022!

Holy moly I can't believe this year is half over, although having August weather in June has my senses off kilter a little too! Praying for rain!!!



Gathering pine straw.

I created a pop-up pumpkin patch in the beginning of June. I put it in the same location as my garden of 2018, the only safe spot while our house was being built. I used most of the same techniques too, only this time I used a pitchfork



Top soil with potting soil mounds.

and loaded the pine straw directly into the bed of the gator in lieu of raking it up and shoving it in bags for transport. (Thank you Holly Ross for the idea!) Basically, I laid down hardware cloth (the gophers LOVE this area), then a layer of wet cardboard (to keep weeds at bay), then a thick layer of pine straw (including the matted part beneath it), a bag of topsoil, mounds of garden soil (really need to get my compost pile going!) and then the Jack O' Lantern and Casper seeds.

I'm hoping they do well!

I also planted some small pie pumpkins in my raised bed veggie garden. I am trying to train them up the gate and makeshift teepee.

I feel like my veggies are a month behind and I'm crossing my fingers that I'll be able to harvest tomatoes soonish! The cucumbers are doing well and my herbs are amazing!

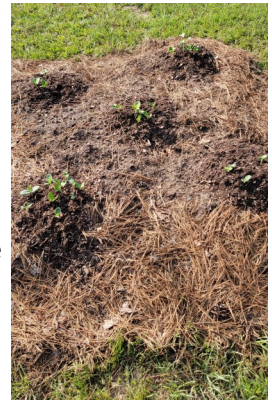
Lesson learned. Next year I start my tomato and pepper plants at the end of January and not put it off a month because, "Easter is so late this year, it won't matter."

I'm blessed to have my Auntie Corki, who loves to pull weeds, living next door! My assorted beds are looking great, even if it is too hot to show them off.

We had a project leader pool party this past month and brainstormed ways to help each other make all of the WCMGA projects more effective in hitting the AgriLife education goal. We had a blast and are looking forward to the next one! The executive board's goal this year is to make every aspect of WCMGA transparent and user friendly, please let me know if there's an area you'd like us to look at. This is, after all, your organization!

Please feel free to reach out to me whenever you'd like. I respond quickest to text messages at (505) 321-2817.

Peace, Love and Joy!



Pumpkin patch at 12 days.

Upcoming WCMGA Meetings

| | |
|--------|--|
| July | Reggie Askins—Micro Gardening |
| August | Elizabeth Waldrop from Smith County Master Gardeners—Night Gardens |

2022 Officers and Directors



Barb Williams
President



Susan Jarrell
Vice President



Gloria Jeane Rosewall
Secretary



May Sandison
Treasurer

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Emily (Husmann) Castillo

*To learn how to become a Master
Gardener, contact the AgriLife
Extension Office for Wood County
903.763.2924*

Project Chairs

| | | | |
|---|------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Emory City Park and Sandy Creek Park | Lannette Beaver | 903.474.3661 | lanetteb@peoplescom.net |
| Intern Class | Emily Castillo | 903.763.2924 | emily.husmann@ag.tamu.edu |
| Hawkins City Park and Library | Ann Reynolds | 903.769.2398 | ann@etex.net |
| Mineola Nature Preserve | Linda Timmons | 903.569.3443 | lindtmms@aol.com |
| Phenology-Nature Watch | Jessie Mellon | 214.632.2647 | jmello77991@gmail.com |
| Quitman Public Library | Jan Whitlock | 972.978.9054 | j_whitlock@hotmail.com |
| Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Office | Carolyn West | 903.752.2014 | cwest212@hotmail.com |
| Winnsboro Library | Bob Bauerschmidt | 817.999.4453 | bauerschmidt@gmail.com |
| Wood County Arboretum & Botanical Gardens | Lin Grado | 817.455.6125 | lingrado@gmail.com |

Responsibilities

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| Emails | Keith Mullinax | 806.341.0716 | k_mullinax@att.net |
| WCMGA Facebook (Private Group) | Linda Timmons | 903.569.3443 | lindtmms@aol.com |
| Newsletter | Kathy Goodman | 214.263.6181 | kmgoodman0807@gmail.com |
| Sunshine | Elaine Porter | 361.319.7300 | porterpettus@gmail.com |
| Volunteer Management System | Linda Timmons | 903.569.3443 | lindtmms@aol.com |
| Website | Keith Zimmerman | 979.299.8047 | keithzim@yahoo.com |

Emily Husmann Castillo: 2022 Class Graduation

On Tuesday, May 17, the Wood County Master Gardener Association celebrated the 2022 Master Gardener trainee class at a "Hop on Board" themed graduation ceremony and luncheon.

2022 Master Gardener Class

The following individuals completed 50 educational hours and passed their final exam, thus earning the title of Master Gardener intern:

- Patricia "Patt" Bauerschmidt
- Nancy Kinder
- Charla Malek
- Martha Maurits
- Michelle Mickle
- Cynthia "Cindi" Miller
- Suman Musunuru
- Lorraine Pedretti
- Deneice Scott
- Diane Sommers
- Lynette Wallace
- Patricia "Patti" Yost

As the newly graduated Master Gardener interns complete their required 50 volunteer hours, they will be recognized at the monthly WCMGA meetings when they earn the title of certified Master Gardener.

Congratulations to Our New Certified Master Gardeners

At the time of graduation, Patricia Bauerschmidt, Michelle Mickle, and Cindi Miller completed their 50 volunteer hours, so they were also recognized as certified Master Gardeners! Emily Husmann Castillo and Barb Williams presented their certificates.



Patt Bauerschmidt



Michelle Mickle



Cindi Miller

Congratulations to Our New Interns

Emily Husmann Castillo and Barb Williams presented certificates to the following class members who completed their intern requirements.



Nancy Kinder



Charla Malek



Martha Maurits



Suman Musunuru



Lorraine Pedretti



Deneice Scott



Diane Sommers

2022 Class Graduation Continued from page 3

Thank You to Those Who Helped with the Class of 2022

Special thanks to Melissa Deakins, who worked diligently to put together a wonderful luncheon for the new certified Master Gardeners and interns and to all Master Gardeners who contributed to the graduation decorations and food for the luncheon.

Also, thank you again to Linda Long who was a great help with this year's training class!

Welcome aboard class of 2022!



Linda Long on the left and Emily Husmann Castillo on the right pose with the 2022 Master Gardener class at their graduation.

Linda Timmons: TX MG Association State Awards for 2022

The Texas Master Gardener Association (TXMGA) sponsors an annual award program titled appropriately "Search for Excellence." In May our tip book, *A Year in the Garden*, won third place in the Medium-Large division for written education and our 2021 Education Series won second place.

Our Wood County MGA has been nominating individuals, projects, educational programs, written education pieces, and our association for awards since 2007.

The wall outside Emily Castillo's office in the Wood County Extension office displays some of the awards earned over the last 14 years.

We compete against other associations with a comparable size of membership, not based on the geographical size of the counties. For at least the past ten years we have been classed as a medium-large sized association (50-99 members).

TXMGA uses the award system to encourage Master Gardener associations to focus on education in support of AgriLife Extension. Recent discussions about the awards program have created questions about how award entries are rated.

Award Scoring Criteria

All entries are rated using a 100-point scale. The entries are evaluated by judges selected by the Texas Master Gardener Coordinator. The scoring criteria for the Youth-JMG, Youth-Other, Project, Educational Program, Written Education, and Research award categories are:

- **Simple to Replicate** (15 points) The goal of the entry is to share ideas and programs that can be replicated by other Master Gardener groups.



Awards line the wall in the Wood County Extension office.

- **Practicality** (15 points) Entries must support the needs of the target group.
- **Innovative and Creative** (10 points) The award entry must reflect the creativity and/or individuality of the Master Gardeners who are working with it.
- **Compatibility** (15 points) The entry must be compatible with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and Texas Master Gardener missions. The entry must include an educational component.
- **Availability** (5 points) The award entry must be available to all persons without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, veteran status, political beliefs, sexual orientation, national origin, marital, or family status.
- **AgriLife Extension** (5 points) The entry must extend the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service resources to assist participants to solve problems at home or within the community.
- **Educational Impact** (20 points) The award entry must have a significant educational impact. The submission should include how the subject of the award entry was planned, how it was executed, including any obstacles that had to be overcome, how the subject of the award entry contributed to an increase in gardening knowledge, and how the increase in gardening knowledge was determined.
- **Worthwhile Results** (10 points) Significant learning and change in attitude and practices are outcomes that Texas A&M AgriLife Extension uses to evaluate services and programs. Search for Excellence Master Gardener projects, people, and written materials improve people's lives, and this impact must be identified. Quantitative, objective measurements to demonstrate impact, such as user surveys or interviews will be preferred over anecdotal or qualitative reports of outcome.
- **Clarity** (5 points) How clear and complete was the entry?

Reggie Askins: Teach a Child to Love Nature



Teach a child to love nature and we have a gardener for life. Our May 2022 Science Days were a huge success. This success is entirely due to our talented and creative staff and their fun lessons:

- Reggie Askins – Sensory Nature
- Katie Carter – Worms
- Melodee Eishen – Propagation
- Linda Timmons – Solitary Bees
- Emily Castillo – 4-H



Also, the Wood County Arboretum and Botanical Gardens, with our camp host Lin Grado, was the perfect setting for all our activities.

Thanks also to Barb Williams, timekeeper and Kathy Goodman, photographer.

The students and their teachers were engaged, enthusiastic learners who made teaching fun! Thank you to Winnsboro ISD and Quitman ISD. Unfortunately, due to weather concerns, the decision was made to cancel the day for Mineola ISD.



Kathy Goodman: Bees, Education, and Opportunities

The students of the award-winning Hawkins ISD Agricultural Department's beekeeping program spoke at the May WCMGA meeting. The meeting was held in the Hawkins Park pavilion. The student's program certainly kept the interest of the Master Gardeners. At the end of the program they got a lot of questions from the audience.



Susan Jarrell introduced the Hawkins beekeeping presentation at the May WCMGA meeting.

The Hawkins beekeeping program began when the nearby Ozarka company encountered a bee problem. Honey bees were attacking the truck drivers and workers at the plant. The company contacted the Agriculture Department at Hawkins ISD to see if they could help capture the bees. That was the beginning of a great opportunity.

Four female Ag students used swarm catchers and relocated the bee colony to a field outside of Ozarka. The beekeeping program was named "4G Honey" for the four girls who started the program.



Attendees at the May WCMGA meeting enjoyed a nice breeze in the shade of the Hawkins Park pavilion. Photo by Gayle Mullinax.

The program has grown quickly because of the enthusiasm of the beekeeping team members. They work outside of class and on weekends to maintain the bee hives. They now have hives at the Hawkins campus, Lake Hawkins, and Quitman.

Because honey bees pollinate one third of all crops, they can increase a farmer's crop yield. In addition, landowners with a minimum of five acres and three hives can get an agricultural exemption for their land.

In another offshoot of the program, the team is building their own hives out of eastern cedar. They determined that the natural oil in the wood prevents bad insects from entering the hives. They sell the boxes and stands.

The Hawkins community passed a bond last May that will fund a new Agricultural Science Center. It will have a honey processing facility with automatic honey extraction. When the students extract the honey from the frames, they will separate the wax and honey and return the frames to the owner. The center also will have a queen room, an observation hive, and new shop. In addition to extracting honey and selling hive boxes, they will be selling queens.

Because of the success of the beekeeping program, the Hawkins ISD Superintendents Susan Morton and Stephanie McConnel submitted curriculum for a beekeeping course to the state for approval. At the curriculum's passage, schools all across Texas will be able to add it to their curriculum and receive funding for it.

The beekeeping team has competed in FFA at the state and national level. There was not a category for beekeeping, but at the Houston Livestock show, they won the "Showmanship" competition. They were also featured on the Today Show in 2019.

Matt Byrd, the Hawkins Agricultural Science teacher, said that the beekeeping program has given the students confidence in



During the break, Meleena Byram and Suzanne Whitsell admiring the pollinator flowerbed at the Hawkins Park pavilion.

their public speaking skills. It has also given the students something to be proud to participate in and even may lead to future educational opportunities.

They harvest the honey in June. Then, the students sell their honey at the Hawkins farmers market, feed

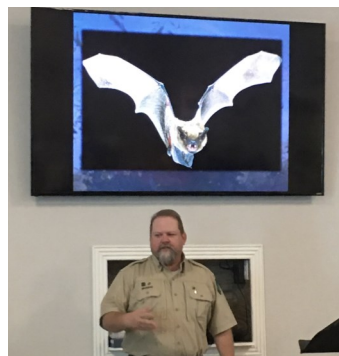
stores, Ace Hardware, and on an Etsy account. All the money is put back into the program and some money is given as a scholarship for graduating team members.

For more information about the program, contact Matt Byrd, Agriculture Science teacher at 903-738-4481 or matt.byrd@hawkinsisd.org.

Kathy Goodman: Bats Benefit Agriculture

At the June WCMGA meeting, Boyd Sanders, a master interpreter at Tyler State Park, presented interesting information about local bats of East Texas. Boyd has been at Tyler State Park for 14 years.

He said that bats can be seen drinking from the park's lake and eating insects at night.



Boyd Sanders, Tyler State Park

Bats provide vital services to the global ecosystem.

Globally, bats provide vital ecosystem services in the form of insect pest consumption, plant pollination, and seed

dispersal, making them essential to the health of global ecosystems.

Bats Save Billions for US Farmer Each Year

According to the Bat Conservation International website, scientists estimate that insect-eating (insectivorous) bats may save U.S. farmers roughly \$23 billion each year by reducing crop damage and limiting the need for pesticides. Most, on average, can eat up to half their body weight in insects, while pregnant or mothers will consume up to 100 percent of their body weight each night.

Bats are the only mammal capable of true flight.

The millions of Mexican Free-tailed Bats at the Bracken Cave in Central Texas help target an especially damaging pest called the Corn Earworm moth (aka cotton bollworm, or tomato fruitworm) that attacks a host of commercial plants from artichokes to watermelons.

Boyd said that all of the Mexican free-tailed bats eat insects equal to the contents of 11 medium-sized dump truck loads per night. They also eat 33 million root worms per summer. So, bats save Texas agriculture a billion dollars a year.

People Fear Bats Because of Rabies

Bats have great eyesight and also use echo location to navigate. Bats ears act like a satellite dish. Their ears face forward and the shape of their face directs sound toward their ears.

Boyd said that because of their great vision and hearing, if a bat runs into you, get the rabies shot. Rabies shots are now given with a small needle in your arm, so it's not as painful as in the past. The reason you need to get a shot is that bats have tiny, extremely sharp teeth and you might not realize that you have

been bitten.

Most bats can't take off from the ground. So, if you see a bat on the ground, call the local animal control. **Do not pick it up.**

Bats Have Commonalities with Humans

We have a lot in common with bats. Their wings are like our hands. They have the same bones that we have.

Bats are among the slowest reproducing mammals on earth for their size. On average, most species give birth to one pup per year.



Bat skeleton encased in plastic.

Bats are in Danger

Bat populations are in decline. One cause is disease, such as White-nose Syndrome. It is caused by a fungus that is spreading to bats. The fungus was inadvertently spread by spelunkers carrying the fungus from one cave to another.

Habitat destruction is another threat to the bat population. Bats are killed by people who believe all bats are vampire bats. Wind turbines also kill hundreds of thousands of bats each year.

Bats of East Texas

Boyd said the bats seen in East Texas are:

- Eastern pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus subflavus*)
- Silver-haired (*Lasionycteris noctivagans*)
- Big brown (*Eptesicus fuscus*)
- Eastern Red (*Lasiurus borealis*)
- Seminole (*Lasiurus seminolus*)
- Hoary (*Lasiurus cinereus*)
- Evening (*Nycticeius humeralis*)
- Mexican free-tailed (*Tadarida brasiliensis*)



Boyd talked about the various types of bats in East Texas.

Where Bats Roost

Bats roost in hollows in trees, woodpecker holes, clumps of leaves, and under bark.

Bracken Cave is the summer home to the largest colony of bats in the world. The cave is located in southern Comal County, Texas, outside of San Antonio. An estimated 20 million Mexican free-tailed bats roost in the cave from March to October making it the largest known concentration of bats.

Reference: For more information about bats, see:

- Texas Parks and Wildlife website <https://tpwd.texas.gov/huntwild/wild/species/>

Terri Baker: 2022 Education Series

The first of three Education Series events was held on June 4 at the Hawkins Park Pavilion. Per the sign in sheet, there were 28 in attendance.



Ann Reynolds speaking at the Hawkins Park Pavilion.
Photo by Kathy Goodman

Next Ed Series Committee Meeting

The next Ed Series Committee meeting is Friday, August 12, from 2 pm to 4 pm at the AgriLife Extension Office. Everyone is invited to attend, volunteer, or just to learn more about the 2022 Education Series.

Education Series Dates and Locations

Our tip book, *A Year in the Garden*, will be sold at each event. We may sell pumpkins and ferns, and there will be door prizes at each series! The following dates and speakers have been confirmed.



Extension Office flowerbed. Photo by Kathy Goodman

September 17, AgriLife Extension Office, 9 am to Noon;
15 minutes for each topic with 10 minutes for Q&A

The planned topics are:

- **Composting** by Carolyn West and Bob Bauerschmidt
- **Irrigation Project** by Carolyn West
- **Plants for Shade and Sun** by Kathy Goodman
- **Phenology – How to Become a “Citizen Scientist”** by Jessie Mellon

October 22, Mineola Nature Preserve, 9 am to Noon, 30 minutes for each topic with 15 minutes Q&A



Mineola Nature Preserve Photo by Linda Timmons

The planned topics are:

- **All About Bees** by Linda Timmons
- **Using Natives in Your Landscape** by Linda Timmons
- **Cultivars Using Native Plants** by Melissa Deakins
- **Walk about**

We Appreciate Event Volunteers

In addition to speakers, we need volunteers for set up, take down, and docents to act as guides. Please contact Terri Baker if you would like to volunteer.

For any questions or comments, please contact Terri Baker at terrihbaker@yahoo.com or 214-868-7529.

Publicizing the Events

Katie Carter will make flyers. Kim Mason will be posting on Facebook and Barbara Williams will be posting on Next Door. Terri Baker will facilitate getting the information in all the local newspapers! Tag WCMGA when you see an article!

The mission of the Texas Master Gardeners, Wood County, is to educate the public. So, please share this information with everyone you know.

Texas AgriLife Extension Service Mission Statement

Working hand-in-hand with its Texas A&M System partners, the state legislature, and the communities it serves, the Texas AgriLife Extension Service mission to serve Texans through community-based education has remained unchanged for almost a century. With a vast network of 250 county Extension offices, 616 Extension agents, and 343 subject-matter specialists, the expertise provided by AgriLife Extension is available to every resident in every Texas county.

Reference: <https://txmg.org/contacts/agrilife-extension>

Linda Timmons: Greenbriar - The Native Plant Gardeners Hate

The native perennial vine most gardeners call greenbriar (*Smilax sp.*) is a much-maligned plant. It starts out as a glossy green vine with heart-shaped leaves. With time it can turn into an impenetrable thicket. Greenbriar is easily recognized as it is the only vine with both thorns and tendrils.

It has a multitude of names: catbrier, bullbrier, chinabrier, saw greenbrier, tramp's trouble, hogbrier, bullbrier, prickly-ivy, deer thorn, and *Smilax*. There are at least ten common *Smilax* species all of which are capable of growing in low-light conditions allowing them to grow through underbrush or ornamental shrubs.

The root systems of greenbriars are knobby rhizomes. Each rhizome can sprout additional vines from several inches to several feet from the original vine. The rhizomes quickly regenerate new vines after being cut, or treated with most weed killers.



Greenbriar vines grow aggressively and reach for something to cling to.

Greenbriar is a single-cotyledon monocot and is related to corn and grasses. Greenbriar's closest relatives are asparagus, trilliums, yucca, and onions. Greenbriar vines blossom in late spring to early summer, producing dangling umbels of greenish flowers.

The vines are dioecious meaning they have male and female flowers on separate plants. The female flowers produce small blue-black berries that ripen in fall. They are eaten by many



Greenbriar vine is hard to eliminate.

mammals and birds. The seeds in the berries pass through undigested and are deposited with a little natural fertilizer to assist in germination the following spring.

However, greenbriars aren't all bad. According to Mark "Merriwether" Vorderbruggen on his website "Foraging Texas" the tender vines (the portion easily snapped off by hand), tendrils, tubers, leaves, and berries are all edible.

Reference: <https://www.foragingtexas.com/>

The vines and tendrils can be eaten raw, steamed or baked; leaves can be cooked like spinach; berries can be eaten raw or made into jams or jelly.

At the Wildscape Garden we have been challenged with a massive growth of greenbriars in an area that used to be covered with a huge mature Southern Wax Myrtle. The native wax myrtle is a large shrub or small tree if its limbed up. The one at the Wildscape had been allowed to grow naturally and was at least 20 feet wide. It died to the ground in the winter storm of February 2021.

This year our volunteers cleared the area and prepared it for replanting. In early May the greenbriars started popping up. It seemed like they grew a foot a week. Some hardy souls dug them out. Or tried to. Because of the major roots left in the ground from the wax myrtle many greenbriar rhizomes were left in the ground. They're back....

There are a lot of ways gardeners try to get rid of greenbriar and I can tell you from experience, most don't work. Texas AgriLife Extension in their article "Brush Busters: How to Take the Green Out of Greenbriar" recommends the herbicide Remedy® to control greenbriar.

During the winter cut the vines at least a foot above the ground. Spray Remedy® lightly but evenly on the basal stem from the ground level up to about 12 inches high. Spray to coat each stem all the way around, but not to the point that the mixture runs off.

AgriLife says controlling greenbriar is not a one-time job. The plant produces many seeds that, along with the hard-to-kill tubers, will eventually produce new plants which will also need to be treated. This method should kill at least seven of ten plants treated.

I think we'll be fighting greenbriars for a while.

Reference:

<https://agrilifeextension.tamu.edu/library/ranching/brush-busters-how-to-take-the-green-out-of-greenbriar/>

Angela Thompson: Local Gardens Spotlighted in Fannie Marchman Garden Tour

Five local gardens in Mineola were spotlighted during the second Annual Garden Tour of the Fannie Marchman Garden Club on June 11, 2022. The garden club promotes the beautification of Mineola and encourages other community members to share and enjoy that beauty. That is exactly what happened! Each garden was so unique and brought in tourists locally and from all over East Texas, Euless, Dallas, Denison, Texarkana, Murchison, Rockwall, and many towns in between.

The tour is one of the fundraisers for the club. Monies raised are used to support the beautification of Mineola, other service club projects, and a scholarship for a graduating senior. The Fannie Marchman Garden Club was established in 1936 and it is still going strong with 20 active members.

If you missed the tour there is always next year because plans have already begun.

Callaway-Wisdom Home



The Callaway-Wisdom Home at 512 Sycamore was built in 1892 and is the oldest standing home in Mineola. The yard features an array of plants including sentimental flowers such as Nanny's tulip tree, Gibb's philodendron, Grace's asparagus fern, and Susie's courtship ponytail plant.

A welcoming entrance porch, the sunflower porch, the celebrate America porch, and the quiet place

back porch, all beckon you to sit and relax in the rockers used for coffee in the morning and wine in the evenings.

The backyard features a pool area, fire pit, and several sitting areas for family and friends to gather and has served as an elegant backdrop for weddings, receptions, and birthdays.

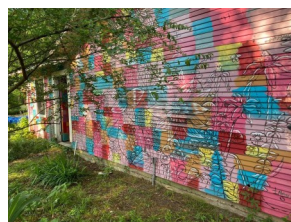
Morgan Home and Gardens

Tabitha and Todd Morgan are an artsy family working their best with all they have been blessed. They completed an extensive renovation of their craftsman bungalow home at 316 W Blair while maintaining the original charm.



With the inside and outside restorations complete, they are using that same attention to detail on the transformation of the gardens with bulbs and blooms from generations back to 1907.

Curb appeal draws you to sit on the wide wrap around porch with vintage chairs and glider overlooking a victory garden. The backyard hosts a fire pit from stones found around the home, chicken coop, koi fish pond made from an old john boat and



creative patchwork flower mural on the side of the garage to keep flowers in every season. They jokingly describe it as The Hot Mess Garden Express!

Dotty Murray's Home and Gardens

Dottie Murray's home and gardens at 383 CR 2610 will surely catch your eye in the Woodland East subdivision. She invites everyone into her backyard to sit on her porch decorated with all her upcycled thrifty finds in fun colors of yellow, turquoise and black and white buffalo plaid. It just makes you happy!

Her backyard features a greenhouse and several decorated sitting areas beside her large back porch decorated in the farmhouse style.

Jeanne Rowland Home and Gardens



Jeanne Rowland's home is like taking a step back in time with her stately southern style home displaying a veranda across the front of the home and the dormers overlooking the wide landscaped flower beds.

The long winding driveway, flanked by beautifully planted beds, draws you to meander into the backyard where you can hear the cicadas while taking in the genteel view of crepe myrtles and gardens. Her home at 370 CR 2311 is amongst many beautiful homes in the Hickory Creek Estates.

Bob Wells Nursery at Sorelle Farms



Bob Wells Nursery at Sorelle Farms is more than a nursery and is quickly becoming a gardener's premier destination for classes, workshops, gardening supplies, and the area's leading supplier

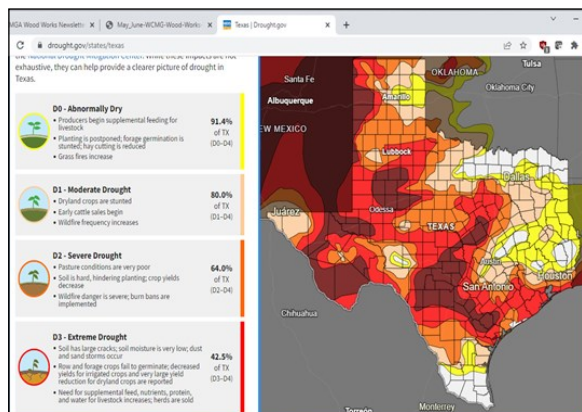
of high-quality, decorative, and edible producing trees.

Sorelle Farms was established in Mineola in 2014 at 975 CR 2220 and acquired Bob Wells Nursery in 2018. The farmhouse style retail store is so welcoming with its drink/coffee bar, seed exchange library and inviting porch overlooking the raised bed vegetable gardens. A model homestead onsite features the cutest little chicken coop surrounded by a demonstration orchard.

Rachel and Ed Donnelly graciously provided a \$50 gift card to the nursery for a drawing for tour guests.

Jessie Mellon: Phenology Report – Summer Weather is Here

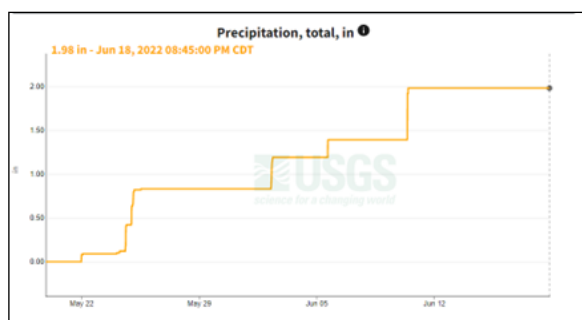
Summer weather is here! Daytime temperatures are in the 90s as of June 19 with a forecast of temperatures exceeding 100° by June 24. We can expect the same pattern for July. Although the Texas drought map has changed a bit from last month, half of Wood County is classified as “exceptionally dry.” The western half of the county is classified as experiencing “moderate drought.”



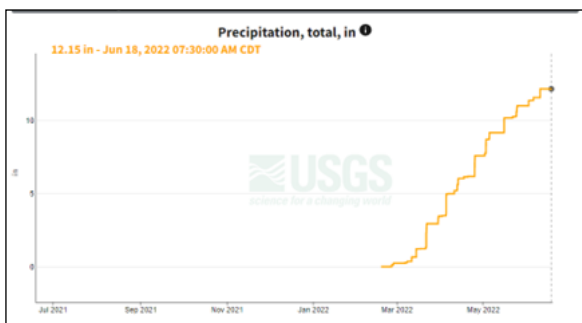
Texas drought map shows the 2022 drought conditions in eastern and western Wood County.

Our garden is in the eastern part of the county, and I believe “exceptionally dry” may be an understatement. My garden requires water every other day. The soaker hoses run for at least 4 hours.

According to the USGS weather station in Winnsboro, Wood County received 1.98 inches of precipitation between May 15 and June 15.



Wood County total precipitation was 1.98 inches from May 15 - June 15, 2022.



Wood County total precipitation for 2022 till June 18.

An extended timeline from February 15 to June 15 reveals a total precipitation of only 12.15 inches for the county. Last year's precipitation for the same time range was approximately 26 inches. We have received less rainfall this spring than spring of last year.

My Phenology Observations

I document changes in several species. It's fun to see how things change in the environment, especially in drought conditions.

The American pokeweed (*Phytolacca americana*) is 7 feet tall and is blooming and setting seed. I do not water it and it is unphased by the hot, dry conditions. Pokeweed has a large taproot and when other plants look sad in the midday “wilt”, pokeweed looks great.

This year the purple passion vine is growing vigorously, blooming and setting fruit. Last year this time it was stripped bare by Gulf fritillary (*Dione vanillae*) caterpillars. This year, I have not seen any Gulf fritillary caterpillars or adults in our pollinator garden.

Cedar waxwing birds never visited our holly tree this winter and we don't expect to get a glimpse of any until winter temperatures return.

Another plant that scoffs at drought conditions is our native Yaupon holly (*Ilex vomitoria*). They show no evidence of lack of moisture, have bloomed, and are setting thousands of green berries.

Fewer Pollinators

This year there are fewer species of butterflies in the pollinator garden. Skippers (*family Hesperidae*) abound. I see Eastern black swallowtail (*Papilio polyxenes*) butterflies, but few other butterfly species.

There are very few honey bees (*family Apidae*), but bumblebees (*family Apidae*) are filling in as the main pollinator.

Garden Pests

This summer I have noticed more leaf-footed bugs (*family Coreidae*) than last year. These are obnoxious insects that cause damage to any plant they attack.

There is also an onslaught of flea beetles (*Order Coleoptera*) on green leafy vegetables. Of course the squash vine borer (*Melittia calabaza*) has worked its black magic and my squash is no more.

This time of year, we pray for rain and hope to nurse our gardens through the heat. I am looking forward to cooler temperatures in the fall.

Reference:

- <https://www.drought.gov/states/texas/county/Wood>
- <https://waterdata.usgs.gov/monitoring-location/325736095164800/#parameterCode=00045&period=P365D>

Jessie Mellon: Meet *Chenopodium Berlandieri*

Recently, my garden mentor and I were touring my newly established vegetable garden. I waxed on about the beds, what I planted, and my plans for the future. She listened politely and when I finally shut up, she said, "I see you have Lamb's quarters." The novice that I am replied, "What's that?" That was my introduction to this nutritious vegetable which I had maligned as a weed. I had to know more about lamb's quarters (*Chenopodium berlandieri*).

Chenopodium sp. Is a summer annual plant found across North America. It does not require cultivation and is found growing in fields, gardens, waste areas, and forest edges.

Stems become woody with maturity and may reach a height of 6 feet. The stems are often branched, have five distinct sides, and are a light green with unbroken red stripes. The whitish powdery coating on the stem tips is water repellent and is a good indicator of well mineralized soil. Full sun to partial shade in fertile cultivated soil is optimum; however, this plant will grow in various soil types with a pH range from mildly acidic to mildly alkaline. In my yard, the plant's height depends on the availability of moisture.

Prolific tiny hermaphroditic flowers bloom in July. The female parts develop before their male counterparts. This strategy helps promote crosspollination and genetic diversity. Pollen is spread by the wind and the seed sprouts easily if there is adequate moisture and soil temperature. One plant can produce between 75 to 106 thousand seeds which may be gathered in August and ground into flour or stored.

The leaves and seeds are an ancient source of nutrition in the Americas for native peoples. Seeds from Blackfoot camps have been dated to the 16th century. The Mixtec tribe used tea



Lamb's quarters (*Chenopodium berlandieri*)

brewed from the seeds to soothe stomach ailments. Domesticated *Chenopodium* seeds have been archaeologically documented from two rock shelters in Kentucky and carbon dated to 3800 years ago. Archaeological sites in Iowa have documented lamb's quarter seeds in ceramic cooking pots. Ancient peoples cooked lamb's quarters seeds to make them more palatable and ground them into flour to make a bread and thickener for soup or stew. Parched and roasted seeds provide high amounts of carbohydrates and lesser amounts of fats and proteins.

Tender greens may be harvested from early spring into early summer. The greens are a rich source of vitamin A, thiamine, riboflavin, carbohydrates, fiber, protein, vitamin D, calcium, and iron potassium.

The raw greens have a slightly salty taste due to their mineral content in the silvery, water repellent coating on the leaves. Use caution when consuming raw foliage as it contains oxalic acid which can bind minerals making them unavailable for absorption. Oxalic acid may also aggravate arthritis, rheumatism, or kidney issues. Cooking breaks down the oxalic acid and makes the greens more palatable (like spinach). I have harvested tender greens, and sauteed them with a little olive oil, garlic, ginger, and sesame oil for a tasty lunch. Blanched greens are in my freezer for later use in soups and stews.

I have found several recipes which include lamb's quarters in salads, breads, and energy bars. These can be found in *The Wild Wisdom of Weeds* book by Katrina Blair.

The lamb's quarters plant is a welcome addition to the number of nutritional, open-pollinated plants in my "food forest." It literally grows like a "weed" that provides a nutritional meal for me, for songbirds, deer, and my chickens.

Kathy Goodman: Mel's Mix Recipe

In early 2020, Deena Taylor did an excellent training session about making Mel's Mix for the Master Gardener class of 2020. Deena showed the attendees how to use the mix and the lasagna method to fill the troughs at the Wildscape Garden of the Mineola Nature Preserve.

Recently, Bev Ray was talking about this recipe as the master gardeners visited the Alford Farm. So, I thought it would be a good time to include the recipe in the newsletter. Bev supplied the recipe, but you can find much more information on the internet.

Mel's Mix is a formula, created by Mel Bartholomew, for blending compost, peat moss, and vermiculite to achieve a loose, friable soil that drains beautifully, holds nutrients well, and keeps weeds from taking over. This mixture is recommended by the folks who promote the Square Foot Garden method.

Reference: To learn more about Mel's Mix and the Square Foot Garden method, see <https://squarefootgardening.org/category/mels-mix/>

Mel's Mix Recipe

1/3 Coarse Grade Horticultural Vermiculite

1/3 Sphagnum peat moss

1/3 Blended organic compost (Use at least 5 different mediums such as poultry, cow, rabbit, mushroom, cotton burr, worm castings, or bat guano. The 5 blended composts supply the nutrients. If you use compost from Vital Earth or your own, let that be one of the 5 different components.)

These three components are mixed by volume not weight.

The peat moss and vermiculite do not break down and are for water retention and keeping the soil friable.

Carolyn West: It's Not Easy Being Green

I think when Kermit the Frog said, "It's not easy being green." he spoke a bit of wisdom that could be applied to trying to grow flowers and tend a compost pile in a Texas summer! What a challenge it has been.

Admittedly, the AgriLife gardens are just not as pretty and healthy as they were last year. The drought and heat are sapping the energy out of the plants and those of us trying to keep them alive. Using one water faucet as our only source of outdoor water, we have struggled to keep both our new plants and our established plants alive.

Water Sprinkling System is Coming

And that is a good transition to telling our members some very good news. Russell Aker, County Commissioner, has agreed to a plan for installation of the long talked-about water sprinkling system. Russell will have a plumber provide a water supply and faucet to the back of the building and then a sprinkler system can be installed. My husband, Ken, has experience with installing systems and has volunteered his crew to lay the PVC and sprinkler heads.

Agreement was reached with Mr. Aker that the system will be disconnected before the first frost so that exposed pipes across the concrete in the back of the building would not be subject to freeze. I totally understand his concern about the risk of broken water pipes and flooding. Our team is excited to get this legacy project completed as we begin to transition the project to the Class of 2022.

Transitioning to Class of 2022

Speaking of the Class of 2022, Diane Sommers and Martha Maurits volunteered last Thursday. We had a walk-around introduction to the AgriLife gardens.

We will continue to meet on Thursdays as more members volunteer. WCMGA president Barbara Williams has added the 2022 graduates' names to the VMS system and with the existing volunteers, we should have a productive weekly work session.



Nancy McDonald watering the SIP that she and her husband built for the Extension Office entry.

Coming Education Series at the Extension Office

The AgriLife Center will be the focus of the September Education Series Classes. We look forward to presenting the gardens, a mini class on composting, and a phenology class.

With any luck, the sprinkler system will be installed, the plants will look healthier, and the compost will be perfect for demonstrating.

Compliment From Local Resident

Our Ag Agent, Emily Castillo and I were talking last week, and she mentioned a new county resident had stopped in for a visit. The conversation turned to the sub-irrigation planters (SIP) out front and the flowers that were growing in the beds. Emily received nice words from the visitor who complimented our efforts.

In my mind, those comments make our Master Gardener efforts well worth the effort. Thanks, Emily, for sharing the conversation with me. We hope we make you proud of your work surroundings.



Sub-irrigation planters add interest to the Extension Office entryway.

Barb Williams: WCMGA Projects Map

This map shows the location of each of the WCMGA projects.

See the list below for names relating to the numbers, project chairs, and work days.



Current Projects

1. Emory Park (Emory)
Project Chair: Lannette Beaver
Work day: Varies
2. Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Office (EOG)
Project Chair: Carolyn West
Work day: Thursday @ 9 am
3. Mineola Nature Preserve (MNP)
Project Chair: Linda Timmons
Work day: Tuesday @ 9 am
4. Hawkins City Park and Library (HCP)
Project Chair: Ann Reynolds
Work day: Friday @ 9 am

Soft Launch Projects (1-Year Trial)

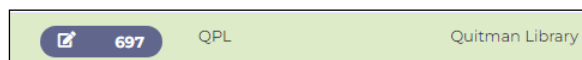
5. Quitman Public Library (QPL)
Project Chair: Jan Whitlock
Work day: Monday @ 9 am
6. Winnsboro Library (WINNS)
Project Chair: Bob Bauerschmidt
Work day: Monday @ 10 am

7. Wood County Arboretum & Botanical Gardens (WCABG)
Project Chair: Lin Grado
Work day: Wednesday @ 9 am

Please sign up on the Texas Master Gardener Volunteer Management System (VMS) for each of the projects you would like an email from so you can receive up-to-date information about a particular project.

To Sign Up for a Project

1. Sign in to Texas Master Gardener VMS at https://vms.texasmg.org/sec_Login/
2. Select **GENERAL INFORMATION > PROJECTS**.
3. Click an **ID** for a project. For example:



The **PROJECTS** tab opens.

4. Scroll to the bottom. Add **Notes** to indicate that you want to offer a particular skill, and then click **Volunteer for this Project**. You will receive an email verifying your sign up.

Ann McKelroy: Food Pantries for Vegetable Donations

Thank you for helping feed the hungry! Please track the number of pounds that you donate for the year.

All the pantries that we contacted are pleased to accept donations of fresh vegetables. There may be other programs that are not widely published. So, if you discover a program that is not on this list, please let me know so that I can update the list. damckelroy@gmail.com.

Note from Kathy Goodman: Please also copy me on updates to this list of donation sites. For convenience, I plan to post this list as a regular part of the newsletter. My email is kmgoodman0807@gmail.com

Tracking Vegetable Donations

Please include the following information when you donate vegetables to a program:

Your name

Texas Master Gardener-Wood County

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension System

Also, please create a vegetable donation record by tracking how many pounds of fruits and vegetables you are producing per square foot or acre of your garden and track every time you harvest or donate. For Wood County Extension Agent Emily (Husmann) Castillo's reports for the year, she needs the total pounds of produce grown by Wood County Master Gardeners as well as the total pounds of produce donated.

So, each time you donate, please record:

- Estimated pounds harvested during that donation period
- Estimated pounds donated

Then, at the end of the season, please total each amount and give that information to Wood County Extension Agent Emily (Husmann) Castillo.

emily.husmann@ag.tamu.edu

Extension Office: 903.763.2924, FAX: 903.763.2092

WCMGA Meetings

Third Thursday of Each Month

8:30 - 9 am Visiting and Sign-in
9 am Meeting

First Assembly of God Church
909 E Goode St., Quitman, Texas

Area Food Pantries

The following food pantries accept donations of fresh vegetables.

Alba

Alba-Golden Food Pantry

245 E. Holley Street, Alba (903) 765-2471

Friday 9 AM - 11 AM

Service Area: Alba-Golden School District

Lake Fork Baptist Church Feed My Sheep (Pantry)

9483 W FM 515, Alba (903) 473-9523

Second Tuesday 1 PM - 3 PM

Service Area: All counties

Hawkins

Hawkins Helping Hands (Pantry)

320 W. Front St., Hawkins (903) 769-4357

Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday 9 AM - 12 PM

Service Area: Hawkins ISD

Mineola

Bread of Life Ministries (Pantry)

1001 E. McDonald, Mineola (903) 405-0064

First and third Tuesday 8:30 AM - 4 PM

Service Area: Wood County

Kindness Kottage (Pantry)

316 E. Broad St, Mineola (903) 569-9197

Monday - Friday 9 AM - 3 PM

Service Area: Mineola ISD

Rose Hill Food Pantry

1420 CR 2460, Mineola (903) 312-3256

Second and fourth Wednesday 10 AM - 12 PM

Service Area: Wood County

Quitman

First United Methodist Church (Senior Box)

406 E Lane St, Quitman (903) 597-3663

Second Friday Participating Clients: 9 AM - 10 AM

Waiting Clients: 10 AM - 11 AM

Service Area: All counties

Note: Enter on N. Goldman St.

Mercy Mall (Pantry)

104 Bermuda, Quitman (903) 497-0684

Every Saturday 10 AM - 12 PM

Service Area: All

Winnsboro

Winnsboro CRC (Pantry)

115 W. Broadway, Winnsboro (903) 342-3287

Tuesday & Thursday 10 AM - 2 PM



As you read the WCMGA newsletter, you can learn about:

- Educational seminars and classes
- Garden projects
- Advanced training speakers at educational forums
- Classroom instruction for county ISDs
- Educational articles written by Master Gardeners
- Community outreach events

Please send newsletter articles, suggestions, and interesting information to newsletter editor Kathy Goodman at kmgoodman0807@gmail.com.

Note: For writing articles, you can count up to 3 hours as Project: NL volunteer hours in VMS. Put the number of hours for research under Project: Research in VMS. Please understand that all articles will be edited to fit the newsletter style or for spacing needs.

WCMGA Information and Educational Opportunities

MG Wood Works Newsletter Photos

Unless otherwise noted, all photos in this publication were taken by the author of the article in which they appear.

Texas Master Gardener, Wood County Website

<http://txmg.org/woodcounty> This website contains up-to-the-minute news and scheduled events, back issues of the newsletter, and seasonal videos. Send new content for the website to **Keith Zimmerman**: keithzim@yahoo.com

WCMGA Private Facebook Group

This private Facebook group is for the Wood County Master Gardeners Association members. To join, contact Linda Timmons at 903.569.3443 or lindtmms@aol.com.

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

Volunteer Management System

VMS is most user-friendly when using a computer, iPad, or tablet. The system has some nice features, such as copying a previous entry and changing the date and hours. Please add your photo, volunteer hours, mileage, and CEUs.

Associate Roster: You can find email addresses and contact information for other Master Gardeners in VMS. Please update your profile and add your photo in the Roster. Check your listing to be sure your contact information is up-to-date.

If you have problems entering your hours or updating your information, please contact Linda Timmons at 903.569.3443 or lindtmms@aol.com.

<https://vms.texasmg.org/>

Advanced Training

Visit the **Texas Master Gardener Advanced Training** website for information about advanced training topics and opportunities.

<https://mastergardener.tamu.edu/master-gardener-specialist/>

Sunshine

Know of a member who needs a get well, warm thought, or sympathy card? Contact Elaine Porter at 361.319.7300 or porterpettus@gmail.com.

Become a Master Gardener

To learn about how to become a Master Gardener contact the Wood County Extension Office at 903.763.2924.

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.