



ECHO

Extension's Community Horticultural Outreach

November-December 2005

Hello Friends,

I hope this letter finds you well and enjoying Fall. I love this time of year. This hot, dry summer has me hoping for a soaking rain. It has brought home many of the points made by Extension Agent Billy Kniffen at the August CCMGA General Meeting as he spoke about the importance of rainwater collection in the home garden. If you enjoyed that talk as much as I did, some good follow-up reading can be found at the Texas Cooperative Extension online bookstore located at: <http://tcebookstore.org/>. Look at publication B-6153, which is available for printing from your home computer. Also, Amanda Crawford wrote an article about rainwater harvesting which is posted on this month's "Horticulture Update" online newsletter found on the Aggie Horticulture website by clicking on the "Newsletters" link on the homepage.

We've had some super opportunities to learn from fellow Master Gardeners within the past month. Mary Means did a great job of describing the benefits and "how-to's" of attracting wildlife to the landscape. Candace Fountoulakis and Ramiro Ortiz treated about thirty of us to a wonderful program about Oak Wilt in Collin County given at the Heard Museum. Candace and Ramiro are our County's Master Gardener Oak Wilt Specialists, and they are helping us know how to identify and prevent the spread of Oak Wilt. If you would like to know more about these important topics, be sure to contact these Master Gardeners.

As always, I am proud of all of you and your hard work. You all are making a difference in North Texas! Keep up the great progress.

Landry Lockett, CEA-Horticulture,
Texas Cooperative Extension



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Franklinia Alatomaha

Franklinia alatomaha was first seen by John Bartram and his son, William in 1765 in Georgia along the Altamaha River. In 1774, William set off on a botanical journey and he came across the same grove of trees he had seen with his father. He later decided to name the tree after his father's good friend Benjamin Franklin.

For the Love of Plants

By Nancy Furth

If you read my article in May, you will recall that I gave a very brief description of the Tradescants, John the Elder and his son, and the important roles they played in introducing new plants from Europe, North Africa, Russia and North America to English gardens during the 17th century. After visiting the gardens at Lambeth and writing the article, I decided to embark on a mission to find out more about their American counterparts, John and William Bartram, who helped 'botanize' America during the eighteenth century. Some five months and many more than five books later, I have found their personal accounts and stories captivating, and have branched out to learn the stories of other plant hunters and botanists. My appreciation continues to grow as I read of the magnitude of their contributions and the enormous sacrifice and hardship these men endured during what is referred to as "the Golden Age of Botany".

As I gathered the books available on the Bartrams, it didn't take me long to realize that I needed to reacquaint myself with the events of the time period in order to place John Bartram and his son, William, in the larger picture with regard to events happening in the world around them at that time. I have gone about this search as a treasure hunt, certainly not the drudgery it once was years ago in school. Perhaps if my first World History teacher, Mr. DeAngelo, had let me plant a history garden instead of requiring me to listen to opera on Saturday mornings for extra credit I would have done better. (There's an idea for Junior Master Gardeners!)

Plant hunting in Europe during the 17th Century by the John Tradescants resulted in discoveries that changed and enriched the landscape of Britain. John the elder was employed on a number of diplomatic or military missions. "In 1618 he traveled to Russia, and two years later he joined an expedition to Algiers against the Barbary pirates. In the service of the Duke of Buckingham, he acted as baggage-master when the Duke went to Paris to escort King Charles I's bride, Henrietta Maria, to England, and served as an engineer on the ill-fated Isle of Rhé campaign in 1627."(1) On each of these trips new plants were collected and acquired for British gardens. By 1634 through importation from Virginia alone, forty North American plants were present in the Tradescant garden. The elder Tradescant is said to have been the first to grow Virginia Creeper and credited with bringing back to England the first lilac, gladioli, lupins, pomegranate, the hypericum and many crocuses. After his death in 1637, his son made trips to Virginia in 1637, 1642 and 1654. He brought back seeds of great American trees like Magnolias, Bald Cypress and the Tulip Tree, and garden plants such phlox and asters. John Tradescant the Elder became known as "the father of modern plant hunting".

The British population grew and its economy prospered through the 17th and 18th centuries. Colonization and trade grew around the world. The science of botany had begun to evolve as interest in plants transitioned from those used strictly as medicine or as food sources to plants used for ornamentation.

Just as the Tradescants had left their mark during the botanical renaissance of 17th century in England, John and William Bartram created the same legacy here in America during the 18th century.

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(For the Love of Plants, continued from page 2)

They lived during a time when colonial America was ripe for exploration and discovery. John Bartram was born in 1699 to an English Quaker family who reached the Colonies in 1682 aboard the *"Welcome."* His family was one of the first to arrive, accompanying William Penn to "Penns Woods" later to be called Pennsylvania. John's father, like the average colonist, was a farmer. John followed in his father's footsteps and is said to have possessed a talent for "imaginative farming" by employing techniques way ahead of his time. His technique of using liquid manure and rotted compost spread over lean soil during the winter months and cover crops of red clover increased hay production remarkably. He is said to have experimented with crop rotation and soil testing to see where plants would grow best. It is mentioned that he was probably one of the first hybridizers of plants. John was also one of the first conservationists, believing that trees cut down should be replaced elsewhere.

"The most striking quality of the 18th century was its optimism. It was a time that celebrated the excellence of the human mind. All creation was believed open to scrutiny." It was a time known as "The Age of Reason." (2) John had a tremendous interest in all of nature. It is said that his interest in plants was borne of a revelation he had while plowing a field. He saw a daisy and out of curiosity pulled it to pieces, thinking to himself:

"What a shame that thee should have been employed so many years tilling the earth and destroying so many flowers and plants, without being acquainted with their structure and uses." (3)

He later claimed that his interest had begun as a child, and as the years passed, it expanded beyond his control and became an obsession. His early explorations in the mid 1730's began in the immediate area surrounding the family home he built at Kingsessing on the Schuylkill River now a part of Philadelphia. Gradually his journeys alone lengthened to include trips to Delaware, Maryland and Virginia, exploring the Chesapeake Bay and the Blue Ridge Mountains. In 1743 he set off on his first long exploration and collection trip accompanying the famous Conrad Weiser who was the chief peace treaty negotiator between the Pennsylvania Colony and the Iroquois or 'Six Nations' Indians. At that time, it took approximately eighteen days to travel from the Philadelphia area to western New York and Onondaga, close to the Lake Ontario border. Their trip to meet with all of the tribes of the Iroquois Nation took a total of six weeks. A mapmaker was the third member of the party, since none of this territory had been documented before. Because of Weiser's knowledge of the Iroquois and abilities as a peace-maker, Bartram did not fear going into unknown country. "He spent every spare minute collecting plants and exploring an area that few had seen before." (4) Many trips took place before his last at the age of 66 in 1765.

Although a shy man with only a basic education, John Bartram had many friends who admired and respected him for his talents and love of nature. Among them were Benjamin Franklin, Dr. John Fothergill, Mark Catesby, Peter Kalm and Carl Linnaeus. His best friend (although they had never met face to face) and correspondent for over thirty years was Peter Collinson. "From the early 1730's until Collinson's death in 1768, they shared a hobby, friendship and business partnership that was exciting and profitable to both." (5) Collinson was a wealthy woolen dealer who lived in England and also collected plants. Though they never met, hundreds of letters, plants, seeds and roots were sent across the ocean to Collinson and many subsequent friendships evolved from theirs. Collinson told his friends about Bartram and they also ordered plants. Much of this trade made Bartram's hobby of Botany pay well. With Collinson's support and the sponsorship of some of his closest friends, John Bartram was appointed the King's Royal Botanist for the American Colonies in 1765. At the age of sixty-six, Bartram set out on his last extensive plant hunt through Georgia and Florida. "A notice in the *South-Carolina Gazette* read:

"Mr. Bartram, his Majesty's botanist for North America, who Arrived here some time ago from Philadelphia. . . on Thursday last he set out, accompanied by his son (who is an excellent draughtsman) for Georgia, and East and West Florida, intending to go as far back of those countries as the Indian nations may permit him." (6)

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(For the Love of Plants, continued from page 3)

Although this is hardly the end of John Bartram's story, it signals the beginning for his son William as the foremost American naturalist of his time. William was the fifth son and had shown an early interest in nature and an early talent in drawing. Although his father had seen to it that William got the type of education that would ready him for a more practical livelihood, William's desire was to put his artistic skills to use sketching birds, plants, and animals and to keep detailed records of his expeditions. "From 1773 to 1777, William Bartram named 215 North American birds as part of his remarkable description of a 2,400-mile, four-year journey through what soon would be the southeastern United States. He earned the honor of being the "Father of Pennsylvania Ornithology." His work, titled [Travels Through North & South Carolina, Georgia, East & West Florida](#), was published in 1791." (7) His book was hailed as a work of literature and an accurate account of natural and cultural history. Bartram's published account of his journey was widely read and appealed to the English romantic writers Coleridge and Wordsworth. This has been just a summary of the fascinating lives and times of the Bartrams. Reading about such devoted botanists and naturalists has been such an enjoyable adventure that I would like to recommend the following books which have kept me well-occupied this summer and will continue to do so for a few weeks to come.

[The Plant Hunters](#) by Tyler Whittle, Published by The Lyon's Press

[Exploring with the Bartrams](#) by Ann and Myron Sutton, Published by E.M. Hale and Co.

[John and William Bartram's America](#) Selections from the writings of the Philadelphia Naturalists, edited by Helen Gere Cruickshank, published by the Devin-Adair Company

[The Natures of John and William Bartram](#) by Thomas P. Slaughter, published by Alfred A. Knopf

[Plants in Garden History](#) by Penelope Hobhouse, published by Pavilion Books LTD

[In Pursuit of Plants](#) by Philip Short, published by Timber Press

[The Botany of Desire](#) by Michael Pollan, published by Random House

(1)English literature." [Britannica Student Encyclopedia](#). 2005. Encyclopedia Britannica Premium Service.

4 Oct. 2005 <<http://www.britannica.com/ebi/article-200341>>.

(2)<http://www.musaeum.org/tradescants/tradescant.html>

(3) [The Plant Hunters](#) by Tyler Whittle, The Lyons Press, pg. 53

(4) [John and William Bartram](#) by Sandra Wallus Sammons, Ocean Pub., pg. 24

(5) [John and William Bartram](#) by Sandra Wallus Sammons, Ocean Pub., pg. 11

(6) [Exploring with the Bartrams](#) by Ann and Myron Sutton, E.M.Hale and Co., pg. 57

(7) http://www.dep.state.pa.us/dep/PA_Env-Her/william_bartram.htm

Congratulations to the newly elected 2006 Executive Officers

Rene Mahoney, President
 Carol Dean, 1st Vice President
 Diane Sharp, 2nd Vice-President
 Candace Fountoulakis, Treasurer
 Mary Means, Secretary
 Renee Ferguson, Volunteer Coordinator

It was 'Fun with Oak Wilt'!

By Candace Fountoulakis

The weather was autumnal, the lunch was on time and tasty and the topic was *disease*. Well, we tried to make it palatable and for the most part succeeded during a day of continuing education at the Heard Natural Science Museum on October 6. Ramiro Ortiz narrated his power point presentation on How to Identify and Manage Oak Wilt in Texas after participants watched a video filmed in Fort Worth by the Texas Forest Service outlining treatments for residential cases of this fast-spreading fungal pathogen. After enjoying a boxed lunch delivered by Jason's Deli in McKinney, we adjourned to the Hoot Owl Trail for a walk and talk about tree identification, tales from the field and other tree diseases whose symptoms are similar to those of oak wilt. Steve Houser of Arborological Services wowed us with his expertise and extensive experience treating and caring for trees. We all came away with a new awareness of the glory of our natural heritage and an appreciation of the complexity of diagnosing tree problems.



The accompanying photo illustrates just how large bur oaks can get when left to mature in a bottomland forest. Steve is shown discussing the giant to his right while master gardeners listen intently. We hope to involve Steve in future cooperative efforts with the Collin County Master Gardeners as a valuable educational resource.

PLANTHUNTER OF THE 21ST CENTURY

An Invitation to Hear David Creech, Ph.D.

By Nancy Furth

The keynote speaker at our Graduation Celebration on Thursday, December 1st will be none other than Texas' own David Creech, Ph.D. Recognized as an authority on plant materials from around the world, he has enjoyed 16 international consultancies since 1981 to Pakistan, Guatemala, Mexico and Nepal. He is currently collaborating with several joint ventures in China related to the nursery industry. Dr. Creech will tell us about some of his work in Southeast China working with plant breeders, joint ventures and the nursery industry.

David Creech is the director of Stephen F. Austin State University Mast Arboretum, Nacogdoches,

Texas, an on-campus living garden laboratory for students in forestry, biology and horticulture, as well as the public. The Arboretum is a treasure trove of new, rare, and unusual woody trees, shrubs, and vines, herbaceous perennials, ground covers, ornamental grasses and annuals. Its primary focus is evaluating a wide range of plant materials for landscape use in the south. Creech is also co-director of the 40-acre on-campus Pineywoods Native Plant Center. This resource dedicated in 2000 by Lady Bird Johnson, promotes the conservation, education and use of the native plants of the southern forest.

Don't miss the opportunity to learn about current developments in horticulture on the world stage and in the nursery industry from Dr. Creech's unique perspective.

HOLIDAY COLORS

By Derald Freeman, Tarrant County Master Gardener



Winter is a time for festivities. It is a time to forget about plants, plant colors, and a time to put flower thoughts to rest. Hmm, or is it?

The colors that are most closely associated with the Christmas holiday season are red, white and green. Some say that this is because of the red and green plants of wintertime contrasting with white snow.

Early influence is thought to have evolved from our ancient nature-worshipping ancestors who decorated with holly and Old Norse practice of burning evergreens to encourage the sun's return.

Red means love and reflects our warmth and love for each other. It is also the color that is considered the greatest excitement. As a religious symbol it stands for fire, blood, and charity. The holly berries and poinsettias are two winter plants traditionally used as Christmas decorations.

Green means hope and the eternal longing for spring and all the promises of the future. Green is the symbol for nature, youth, and life. Holly, pine trees, ivy, mistletoe are all plants closely associated with this time of the year.

White means purity and is represented by the crystalline form of water and the snowflake. White is a symbol that stands for light, purity, and joy. White is seen in the winter snow and snowflakes.

Poinsettias

The Poinsettias and spruce and fir trees are the most used plants at this time of the year. These are tropical plants, originating in southern Mexico and Central America and have become the traditional Christmas plant. Poinsettias are available in red, pink, gold, white and variegated colors.

Joel Robert Poinsett, amateur botanist and first ambassador to Mexico, first introduced poinsettias to the United States in 1825. He brought the plant in the form of cuttings to the United States to his plantation in Greenville, Greenwood County, South Carolina. He grew the plants in his plantation and gave them out as gifts to friends.



There are many interesting facts, folklores, and entertaining trivia about Poinsettias.

- The Aztecs called poinsettias "Cuetlaxochitl." During the 14th - 16th century the sap was used to control fevers and the bracts (modified leaves) were used to make a reddish dye.
 - Poinsettias are native to Mexico.
 - Poinsettia Day is December 12th. It was declared in honor of the death of Joel Robert Poinsett on December 12, 1851.
 - Poinsettias were introduced into the United States in 1825 by Joel Poinsett.
 - Poinsettias represent over 85 percent of the potted plant sales during the holiday season.
 - Women purchase Eighty percent of poinsettias.
 - Eighty percent of people who purchase poinsettias are 40 or older.
 - Ninety percent of all poinsettias are exported from the United States.
 - Seventy-four percent of Americans still prefer red poinsettias; 8 percent prefer white and 6 percent pink.
 - Poinsettias are the best selling potted plant in the United States.
 - Poinsettias are the most popular Christmas.
 - Poinsettias are commercially grown in all 50 states.
 - California is the top poinsettia producing state.
 - \$220 million worth of poinsettias are sold during the holiday season.
 - Poinsettias are one of the longest-lasting blooming plants available to consumers.
 - There are about 75 million poinsettias produced every year in the United States, and they're all sold within about a six-week period.
 - The number of blooms determines the cost of a poinsettia
- To keep the poinsettia blooming during the special season use the following tips.
- When surface soil is dry to the touch, water thoroughly. Discard excess water in the saucer.

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- To prolong color, keep a temperature range of 60 degrees for night and 72 degrees for day. High humidity is preferable.
- Place plant away from hot or cold drafts, and protect from cold winds.

Place your poinsettia in a well-lit location, out of direct sunlight and drafts. If the plant comes in a decorative foil wrapping, make a hole in the bottom to allow for good drainage. Water often enough to keep the soil evenly moist but not soggy.



Contrary to popular belief, recent research had proven the poinsettia to be non-poisonous. It is not edible, though, and some people are allergic to its milky sap and may develop a rash if they come into contact with it. To be safe, keep your plant out of the reach of children and pets. The Ohio State University (OSU) exhaustively tested all parts of the poinsettia. Research conducted at The Ohio State University and other institutions has proved the old wives' tale that poinsettias are poisonous to be false.

(<http://ohioline.osu.edu/hyg-fact/1000/1248.html>).

The American Medical Association's *Handbook of Poisonous and Injurious Plants*, echoes the findings of OSU.

Other plants for the Holidays that you can use.

Amaryllis has large, 8 to 10 inch blooms in shades of red, pink, orange, coral, white and bicolor.

African Violet is a rosette-forming perennial bearing ovate, mid-green leaves, up to 2 inches long.

Azalea (Rhododendron) available in red and white varieties makes a stunning display. Bloom usually lasts two to three weeks.

Bromeliad has open rosettes of 12 to 20 strap-shaped, toothed, mid-green or variegated.

Caladium has brightly colored foliage that easily rival poinsettias for crisp Christmas color that last at least three to four weeks.

Camellia is popular for their bold foliage and abundance of showy, white, pink, and red flowers.

Christmas Cactus is thornless and is available in pink, white, red and violet blooms.

Chrysanthemums with large flowers last for two to four weeks.

Gardenia flowers may be solitary or paired, white or yellow, and are usually large and fragrant. This is a difficult house plant to grow successfully.

Rosemary is grown for evergreen foliage, a soft gray-green, and for its pleasing scent.

Narcissus has tall stalks of fragrant white flowers lasting one to two weeks.

If you are potting any of these for use in the house remember the following guidelines. Use sterile potting soil, adding about an inch to the bottom of the pot. Place the bulb or plant in the pot making sure to spread the roots carefully. Add more soil, leaving about 2/3 of the bulb above the soil-level. Water thoroughly. Move to a sunny window. Water whenever the soil feels dry to the touch. Fertilize monthly.

Decorating tips

1. Make simple bows from Christmas print ribbon and pin them to your plant pots.
2. Dress up your house plants - hang small Christmas ornaments on them.
3. Pile a collection of Christmas books on a side table.
4. Hang mistletoe everywhere.
5. Twist garland around railings or banisters or drape them from the top of entertainment centers and secure here and there with tape.
6. Hang a large December wall calendar on your wall. Count down the days to Christmas by gluing a brightly colored bow on each passing day.
7. Display colored glass ball ornaments or beads in bowls.
8. Tie bows around doorknobs.
9. Display red and green glycerin soaps, bath gels and oils in your bathroom.
10. Replace the candles in your candlesticks with Christmas colored candles
11. Change the answering machine message to a holiday message of your choice.
12. Hang a wreath on your front door.

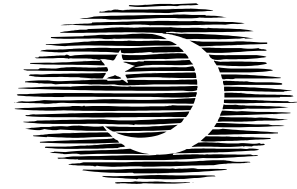
If you have a Possumhaw Holly then you are already decorated.

Oh, and above all, have fun! It's the time of the year to let red, green, and white rule. A little extra effort and lots of fun can turn your home into a very special event for your family, relatives and friends.



Clear Moon, Frost Soon

By Mary Nell Jackson



Fall is an interesting time of year for the gardener. Much like our pets in a storm, our instincts tell us of the seasons change as the days grow shorter. Some call fall the second season. Not everyone takes advantage of the cooler dawns or the chilly evenings but our plants take note. The wilted look from the summer's heat improves on most plants and they seem to stand taller as if to say, "I survived those triple digit July & August days". To prove it they reward us with a flush of roses along with the beauty of purple blossoms of Mexican bush sage and our mint marigold, surprising the landscape with its yellow flowers. For those of us who await the second season, now is the time to plant our perennials and seed our cool weather vegetables. Fall finds the butterflies migrating South and the lady beetles retiring to hibernating places, the garden becomes silent. For some the season of toil is enough, no second season planting. Time to rest, like the ladybug.

Our ancestors certainly lived by the seasons and took advantage of each one. There was no nursery to replenish plants and few seeds available. Rest was something that could be enjoyed when the garden chores were complete which usually didn't happen until the deep snow arrived.

Most seeds around the 1800's came from Holland and England. According to George Seddon author of *Your Kitchen Garden*, the first nationally known seedsmen were the eighteenth century Shakers. They distributed seeds imported from Europe but also grew their own strains on American soil. Gradually purely American seed houses developed. Some of the nineteenth century firms are still doing business today. In 1883 the W. Altee Burpee Company

sent free packets of lettuce seed to a few hundred customers to try. This was a costly, large, marketing effort. Think about the 1800's when you begin to receive the multitude of gardening catalogues this winter.

In 1916 Harry Higgott Thomas wrote, "Perhaps the best relaxation for December is to turn to the gardening books and catalogues, which provide much food for reflection and tell many fairy tales. It is fairly safe when you read of a scarlet flower to expect only a red one; to translate orange as yellow, yellow as primrose, mauve as lavender, crimson as dark red, and so on, and to regard with suspicion the flowers of purplish-rose." Reality must be something the gardener has to discover with his own mistakes as the photos of seeds and flowers leads us 'down an unrealistic garden path'.

Gardening advice was more of the grapevine ilk for the early day gardeners. They, however, were devoted to an informative little book called an 'almanac'. It is believed that the earliest almanacs contained predictions made by the ancient Persian astrologers. The oldest still existing copies of almanacs were written in 1300-1400's. Almanacs appeared in Colonial America in the 1600's. The *Old Farmer's Almanac* began in 1792 and continues to predict the weather and time to plant. Gardeners must believe that the information these almanacs offer contain correct information as longevity rules in this case.

The ancients believed that the moon guided our planting. Louis Riotte writes in her book, *Sleeping With A Sunflower*, "Practical-minded early gardeners did not consider lunar gardening a

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(Clear Moon, Frost Soon, continued from page 8)

miracle cure for all problems. They knew that even moon-planted crops could not completely withstand drought or get along without a program of weeding, watering, mulching, composting and fertilizing. However, they felt that growth advanced at a more rapid and satisfactory rate if gardening tasks were performed when the signs were right."

Riotte described the Native Americans as very poetic people, intelligent and creative gardeners and states that they gave the moon many names. In January the moon was called the Wolf Moon, describing the hungry wolf packs that roamed about in the dead of winter. February brought the Snow Moon, because of the blizzards that often struck during this month. March's moon was given a strange name - the Worm Moon -, because with the spring thaw the earthworms would come to the soil surface.

We know the full, clear moon signals that frost cannot be far away. As we settle in for a rest from our gardening chores to await the Worm Moon next spring, take moonlight strolls in the garden to enjoy the frosty evenings. Once inside in the warmth of your home look for the moon and give it a wink as the winter moon was aptly named, the Cold Moon.

Out and About ...
Activities and Events of Interest
 (The activities and events listed below are not eligible for continuing education or CCMGA Volunteer hours.)
Arbor Day Celebration: An Arbor Day celebration will be held at Pecan Hollow Club House in Plano on Saturday, November 5, at 10 am. The event will include kids activities, free tree seedling and the opportunity to help plant trees on the golf course. Pecan Hollow Club House is located at 4501 E. 14th Street, Plano.
Be Holiday Smart: Thursday, November 10 from 9:15-noon at TAMU-Coit in the Whitehurst Education Building. \$5.00 registration fee includes refreshments and handouts.
Dallas Arboretum: There are many new classes scheduled for fall, so check out their education opportunities page: www.dallasarboretum.org
Texas Discovery Gardens at Fair Park: Visit the web site: www.texasdiscoverygardens.org for a listing of all of the special events and activities.

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|| The Intern Class of 2005
 || took a field trip, October
 || 18th, to the Fort Worth
 || Botanic Gardens.

|| Thanks to John Brooks
 || for submitting the photo.

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Garden Checklist for November/December

Dr. William C. Welch

Professor & Landscape Horticulturist
Texas A&M University, College Station, TX

(The following information was compiled from the 2004 information available at <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/>)

- Place orders for seeds now so you will have them available when you are ready to plant. By ordering early, you will be more certain of getting the varieties you want.
- Don't get in a hurry to prune woody plants. Late December through February is usually the best time to prune them.
- Reduce the fertilization of indoor plants from late October to mid-March. An exception would be plants in an atrium or a well lighted window.
- Drain gasoline from power tools and run the engine until fuel in the carburetor is used up.
- Drain and store garden hoses and watering equipment in a readily accessible location. The lawn and plants may need water during a prolonged dry spell.
- November through February is a good time to plant trees and shrubs. In the Panhandle, planting is often delayed until February or early March.
- In all but North Texas and the Panhandle, continue to set out cool-season bedding plants, such as pansies, violas, stock, snapdragons, and dianthus.
- Prepare beds and individual holes for rose planting in January and February. Use composted manure, pine bark, and similar materials mixed with existing soil.
- Use good pruning practices when selecting Christmas greenery from landscape plants. Don't destroy the natural form and beauty of the plant.
- Protect your lawn from excessive winter damage by providing irrigation during dry periods.
- Plant spring-flowering bulbs if you haven't already done so.
- Prolong the life of holiday-season gift plants by providing proper care. Check to see if the pot wrap has plugged up the bottom drainage. Don't over water. Keep out of drafts from heating vents and opening doorways. Fertilizer is seldom needed the first few months.
- Take advantage of good weather to prepare garden beds for spring planting. Work in any needed organic matter, and have beds ready to plant.
- Don't forget tulip and hyacinth bulbs in the refrigerator. They can be planted any time in December if they have received 60 or more days of chilling.
- Want to start cuttings of your favorite Christmas cactus? As soon as it has finished blooming, select a cutting with 4 or 5 joints, break or cut it off, and insert the basal end into a pot of moderately moist soil. Place it on a windowsill or other brightly lit area. The cuttings should be rooted within 3 to 4 weeks.
- Don't spare the pruning shears when transplanting bare-rooted woody plants. Cut the tops back at least one-third to one-half, to compensate for the roots lost when digging the plant.
- Take advantage of bad weather and holiday time to study seed and nursery catalogues as well as good gardening books.
- Berrying plants, such as holly and yaupon, may be pruned now while they can be enjoyed as cut material inside the house.

Volunteer Opportunities:

Help Line: The shifts are from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. Contact Rene Mahoney at (972)838-4210 on the weekend, or Sheila Nelson at (972)548-4232, Monday through Friday.

Graduation Celebration: Volunteers are needed for the Graduation Celebration that will be held December 1. Contact Jan at jmadden@airmail.net or 972 596-1619 for more detailed information.

CEMAP Gardening: Join us in the CEMAP Garden (at TAMU-Coit) on November 9th at 9:00 am to plant pansies into flower beds. For further information, contact Mary Means mvmeans@kbwireless.com or 972-752-4119.

Samaritan Inn Project: We will be preparing the beds and planting the plants at The Samaritan in on Saturday, November 19th. Volunteers are needed all day or for half the day. We probably will start at 9am and finish around 5pm. Contact Deborah Finley at deborahjfinley@comcast.net or 972-529-1470 for more information.

Ready for Cool-Season Annuals?

Submitted by Katherine Ponder

The Dallas Arboretum Plant Trials showed these varieties of pansies were most successful historically:

Springtime (by Floranova)

Nature (by Takii)

Pansy Matrix series (by PanAmerican)

Baby Bingo (by Ball Seed)

XXL (by PanAmerican)

Iona (by Takii)

Panola (by PanAmerican)

Ultima (by Sakata)

Skyline (by Syngenta)

Jimmy Turner, director of Horticulture Research at the Dallas Arboretum, also recommends:

Nature Pansy series (by Takii)

Viola Purple Rain (by Pan American)

Viola "Gemini" series (by Sakata)

Dianthus "First Love" (by Takii)

Dianthus "Sweet" series (by PanAmerican)



GREAT IDEA!

The Sharing Our Best Cookbook makes a wonderful Holiday Gift!

It is available for sale at the monthly meetings or at the extension office.

Only \$13.00.

November 2005

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

		1	2	3 Turf- Allen Garden Club 7:30pm	4	5
6	7 Native Plants/ Earthkind Roses/Texas Superstars 2005 Intern Class 9am	8	9 CEMAP Gar- dening— TAMU -Coit 9am	10 Wildflowers, Legends and More—Celina	11	12
13	14 Gifts from the Garden McKinney Sr. Center 11:30am Review 2005 Intern Class 9am	15	16 Forcing Bulbs for Indoor Dis- play and Holiday Plant Mainte- nance- Plano Adult Education 7:00 pm	17 Potluck, seed and Plant Ex- change Meeting. 11:30am, Heard, SRC bldg Bulbs for North TX Landscapes— Forest Creek Club 7:30pm	18	19 Samaritan Inn planting— 9 am
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30 Hours Due			

December 2005

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

				1 Graduation Celebration	2	3
4	5	6	7	8 Cookie Ex- change 10:30 am—noon— TAMU- Coit	9	10
11	12 Wreath Mak- ing with Herbs McKinney Sr. Center 10:30am	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31 Hours Due

This and That

CCMGA Dues: All Collin County Master Gardeners, 2004 Interns and 2005 Interns must remit dues of \$15.00 by January 1, 2006. Why wait? Pay now! \$2.00 of the due pays your state membership. Please mail your check to: **CCMGA** to the treasurer at 771 Timberwood Lane, Fairview, TX 75069.

November 17 will be the Annual Potluck, Seed and Plant Exchange. It will be held at the Heard Museum in the SRC Building. Don't miss out on the fun! The September/October 2004 Echo Newsletter contains an excellent article by Diane Poston that provides details on seed collecting. The article can be accessed at <http://www.ccmgatx.org/Association/Newsletter.htm>

December 1 is the Graduation celebration which will be held at Texas A&M—Coit. The keynote speaker will be Dr. David Creech, professor of Horticulture at Stephen F. Austin State University. Dr Creech will be presenting "How Texas has benefited from China."

Other events of interest can be found on the Texas Master Gardeners website. The web site is www.texasmastergardeners.com/events/events.html

Thanks to ECHO Newsletter contributors:

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The submission deadline for the January/February issue of the Echo Newsletter is Friday, December 2, 2005. Send submissions to janicemiller@sbcglobal.net

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