



ECHO

Extension's Community Horticultural Outreach

September-October 2005

Howdy Master Gardeners,

These are exciting times in our neck of the woods. We've had a good start to this year's Collin County Master Gardener Training. The Interns are a motivated bunch of wonderful individuals. They will be great additions to our group. Thanks to all of you who have helped in making this year's training a success. Nancy and Bill King have put a lot of effort into completing a Master Gardener Handbook Glossary. They have done a terrific job, and this addition will help our MG Trainings be more educational. If any of you would like an electronic version of the new glossary, send me an email.

I am pleased to announce that Extension has utilized some funds to purchase needed horticulture reference books and materials. These resources will be added to our bookshelves, and will help us to better serve Collin County. The books include: Landscape Plants for Texas and Environs by Michael Arnold, The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Trees, Second Edition by More and White, a book to help with identification of common turfgrass weeds, a book about residential landscape architecture concepts that was recommended by the TAMU Landscape Architecture department and a set of educational flash-cards that show Poison Ivy in various life stages and seasons. Come spend some time on the Telephone Answerline and check out these great new resources.

Candace Fountoulakis and Ramiro Ortiz have recently completed Master Gardener Oak Wilt Specialist Training in Salado, Texas. They are busy making preparations for a Collin County training day on Thursday, October 6th at the Heard Museum. Read more about this important subject in Candace's article in this newsletter. I hope to see you all at the Oak Wilt training.

Beth DiGioia and Emma Bookout will be sharing their talents as Master Gardener Plant Propagation Specialists with the new Interns and anyone else that would like to attend a plant propagation short course that will be held on the morning of Monday, October 24, 2005 at TAMU-Dallas' Pavilion Building. If you are not an Intern in training and would like to attend this session, please let Beth know so that she can prepare enough supplies. Later that same day, Rene Mahoney and her crew will lead us through a Speaker's Bureau Training, so set aside this day for lots of fun and learning.

Take care, and I'll see you out in the garden.

Landry Lockett, CEA-Horticulture,
Texas Cooperative Extension



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In this issue:

<i>Message from Landry Lockett, CEA-Horticulture</i>	Page 1
<i>Look with Your Eyes</i>	Page 2
<i>2nd Annual Fundraiser: Bulbs for North Texas</i>	Page 3
<i>Perennial Fall Color</i>	Page 4
<i>Volunteer Opportunities</i>	Page 4
<i>Plant Spotlight: Texas Oaks, Our Natural Heritage</i>	Page 5
<i>Dressed to Kill (Weeds, That is)</i>	Page 6
<i>2006 Texas Master Gardener Conference Announcement</i>	Page 7
<i>A Gardeners Vacation for \$100</i>	Page 8
<i>CEMAP Gardening</i>	Page 9
<i>Welcome 2005 Interns</i>	Page 9
<i>Garden Checklist for September/October</i>	Page 10
<i>Nursery/Greenhouse startup a Risky, possible profitable business</i>	Page 11
<i>Out and About</i>	Page 12
<i>Hummingbird Sighting</i>	Page 13
<i>Reminder: Seed Exchange</i>	Page 13
<i>September Calendar</i>	Page 14
<i>October Calendar</i>	Page 15
<i>This and That</i>	Page 16



Chicago Botanic Garden



Longwood Gardens



The Desert Botanical Garden

“LOOK With Your Eyes . . .” By Nancy Furth

How well I remember that Motherly advice! “Look with your eyes, not your hands” can also be good advice for new gardeners as well as seasoned gardeners like me. I remember my own exuberant enthusiasm as I began my master gardening training, and I still find it difficult to control the urge to plant, plant, and plant some more. However, this has been my summer for just ‘looking’, and I have high expectations that next year my garden will reap the rewards.

For the last ten years I have been at the mercy of almost every nursery I’ve walked into. Although I have tried to adhere to the teachings of Extension specialists and the sound advice of local experts, time and nature have gradually ‘matured’ my little rectangle in Plano to a point beyond what was originally envisioned. Oh yes, I have followed *the plan* every year by buying, placing, and planting only what would enhance my landscape’s original design, but what I see now definitely needs a face-lift and some fine tuning due to increased shade and aging plants.

As an avid gardener, I know my eyes are much more critical about such things. I recently was reminded by a local horticulture expert that true gardeners “see the unfinished tasks and seldom have time to enjoy their gardens”. Well, in my case, those unfinished tasks have remained unfinished this year. I’ve enjoyed my garden’s ‘mature’ look and only maintained, watered and done the absolutely necessary tasks. In the meantime, while keeping my hands out of the garden to refresh and reflect, I have taken a much needed break from the annual schedule of gardening projects and visited public gardens to ‘look’ with my eyes and learn. I hope to put to use all that I have gleaned from the garden artistry I have seen.

This has been an unexpected year of travel for me. Like most of us I presume, my public garden visits outside the Dallas area have had to coincide with family visits and obligations because of financial reasons. You’ve already read about my family emergency trip to London in the spring. Just after that I spent a weekend visiting my husband who was on a contract job in Phoenix, Arizona, and I had the pleasure of visiting The Desert Botanical Garden and the Thompson Arboretum, both in the Phoenix area. In July, I took a quick trip to visit my sister in Binghamton, NY, and we accompanied the Master Gardeners in my hometown on a day trip to Longwood Gardens outside of Philadelphia. My daughter’s scholarship acceptance to graduate school in Chicago provided me recently with an opportunity to visit the Chicago Botanic Garden while helping her settle into a small apartment in Evanston, IL.

In addition to the garden visits during my travels, it has become my habit to visit the Dallas Arboretum at least once every season. This summer I did so on August 5th and was thrilled to see tremendously colorful garden tapestries of annuals throughout the gardens, as well as wonderful examples of perennial summer foliage and

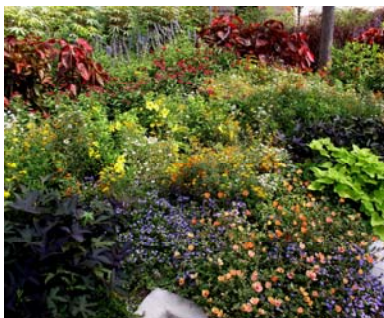
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(Look with your eyes, continued from page 2)

blooming plants. The Arboretum is a wonderful place for master gardeners, both new and old, to gather ideas and learn about well-adapted plant choices and successful plant combinations.

Each of these trips and visits to gardens are gifts that I will long remember. Whether called an arboretum or botanical garden, each had its own personality, focus and special beauty. My experience as a master gardener helped me to 'look' and assimilate information about the design principles and elements used, and evaluate the many plant compositions. I look forward to organizing all the pictures I took and sorting them with regard to program and reference suitability. For example, at the Chicago Botanical Gardens I visited the Buehler Enabling Garden and had the unexpected pleasure of meeting Gene Rothert author of the book entitled The Enabling Garden which we have in our office library. I took pictures of therapy garden examples and intend to put them on file in the office for use by anyone interested in horticulture therapy programs.

Most of all, my time out from hands-on gardening has given me a new perspective and a renewed appreciation of the evolution of my own little garden. As has been said before, 'A garden is never quite finished', and I'm so glad!



The Dallas Arboretum

2nd Annual Fall Fundraiser: Bulbs for North Texas Landscapes

By Beth Digioia

Wow, a year goes by quickly! Last year we tried out a new fundraising idea; the Bulb Sale was such a success, we're doing it again.

Our goal is not just to raise funds, though. In keeping with our organizational philosophy, we are educating gardeners about bulbs that will thrive (and often multiply) in the difficult soil and climate extremes here in North Texas. We'll help gardeners save time by encouraging them to plant varieties that don't require special handling (these bulbs only have to be planted once) and will produce the desired spring display. Gardeners will also save resources (money and plant material) by planting varieties that return year after year. Plus, many of these varieties are just not available for purchase at local nurseries.

This year we are offering a mix of the bulbs that were successful last year and a few that we just wanted to try ourselves. These bulbs that will reward gardeners with a beautiful spring showing with a minimum of time, en-

ergy, and expense. There is also a lovely forcing Amaryllis suitable for gift giving (the holidays will be here before you know it).

The fall fundraiser is open to everyone – you don't have to be a Master Gardener to participate. Be sure to invite your friends and family.

The important details: Orders must be accompanied by check payable to CCMGA and must be received by September 27th. Orders will be available for pick up October 28th at the Extension Office between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. A member of the Bulb Committee will also see that orders are available for pick up at intern training on October 24th and at the monthly meeting on October 27th.

For more information and a downloadable order form, visit the CCMGA website at: ccmgatx.org. Or check with a member of the Bulb Committee: Emma Bookout, Pam Burnett, Beth DiGioia, Renee Mahoney, or Sara Shaffer.

Perennial Fall Color

By Beth DiGioia

At the 2005 Master Gardener Conference, Julie Ryan's presentation was entitled, Perennial Fall Color. Before Julie shared her lists of fall favorites with us, she emphasized that our gardens must have good bones: functional hardscape features (paths, sitting spots, shady nooks), trees and shrubs before filling in with perennials.

She also encouraged us to remember that foliage is important because it creates texture and color change within the garden. But it is blooms which lift our spirits! Often, we are worn out by the time fall arrives and it is good to have a few reliable fall blooming perennials planted to carry us through until frost.

If you have shade, Julie recommends:

Achillea millefolium x 'Moonshine'
 Allium tuberosum
 Helianthus angustifolia
 Pavonia
 Plumbago capensis
 Ruellia Brittoniana
 Salvia guarantica 'Purple Majesty'
 Salvia coccinea
 Verbena tenuisecta
 Zephyranthes candida

If you have sun, Julie recommends:

Anisacanthus Wrightii
 Aster longifolius
 Cupheas micropetala
 Lantana horrida/camara 'New Gold'/camara 'Silver Mound', 'Trailing Lavendar'
 Perovskia
 Poliomintha longiflora
 Salvia Greggii/farinacia/farinacia 'Victoria'/leucantha
 Tagetes lucida/lemmoni
 Verbena bipinnatifida/'Homestead'
 Zinnia angustifolia/linearis

Take the time to familiarize yourself with these favorites. Sit down with your favorite garden resource and a cold drink on a hot afternoon and choose the ones you like. It's not too late to plant them now for fall enjoyment if you follow a few simple guidelines: plant just before the sun goes down, water the root ball well with root stimulator before firming the earth, protect from drying winds, and follow a watering schedule until the plant is established (water once a day for three days, water every other day for three times, water every third day for three times).

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.

Help needed with Kids in the Garden Fallfest: The Environmental Discovery Garden is hosting Kids in the Garden Fallfest on September 24 from 9 a.m. - 12 noon. Volunteers are needed to help guide the children in making coffee filter butterflies and planting seedlings. Contact Jennifer St. Germain at jrabstg@yahoo.com or 972 542-2322.

Heard Museum Fall Plant Sale: The Heard Museum Fall Plant Sale is scheduled for October 14th and 15th at Elliot's Hardware in Plano and they are looking for Master Gardener volunteers to help with the event. The event hours are from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Friday, and from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Saturday. **Collin County Master Gardeners can earn up to 8 hours of volunteer time per year by volunteering at the Heard.**

Interested Master Gardeners should contact Chelsi Curry, Events and Planning Director at the Heard. Her phone number is 972-562-5566 ext. 269. Her email address is ccurry@heardmuseum.org

PLANT IN THE SPOTLIGHT:
Texas Oaks, Our Natural Heritage
By Candace Fountoulakis

What would we do without our favorite oaks? The Bicentennial Bur oak, sixty inches in diameter, stands in quiet glory in south Bob Woodruff Park in Plano, over 240 years old. Its cousins, mere inches slimmer around but even taller than its 74 feet, inhabit the surrounding rich bottomland along Rowlett Creek. The Heard in McKinney celebrates its huge bur oaks with plaques and guided walks along the Hoot owl trail. A favorite with wildlife, these giants remind us of how many natural glories abound in our state. Red oaks, the elegant sharp-leafed *shumardii* in our area, adjust to our small yards and limited spaces to bring welcome color most autumns. And what can we add to the lore of the live oak, perhaps the most painted tree in landscapes depicting Central Texas?



These trees not only provide shade, beauty, property value and environmental benefits, but they also frame our emotional ties to home; they establish a sense of place found nowhere else but Texas. This sentiment may be difficult to verbalize, but we know it when we feel it. Just try to resist gazing at a field of bluebonnets among live oaks in the Hill Country, a genuine blessing for the soul.

So how should we feel about a very real threat to these trees in their tranquil setting, amid typically thin rocky soils and prickly pear cactus? This threat is commonly known as oak wilt and it has devastated thousands of oaks in Texas for several decades. Red oaks and live oaks have suffered the most fatalities from this fungal disease but other species demonstrate a greater natural resistance. White oaks, including bur and chinquapin oaks, most often do not become casualties or suffer only minor cosmetic damage. Lacey oaks also demonstrate a strong ability to survive and thrive even after infection.

Collin County Master Gardeners are in a position to help stop the spread of this disease in Texas by learning about the best methods of prevention from the Texas Oak Wilt Suppression Project, a team of foresters specializing in identifying and treating outbreaks in Texas. Visit www.texasoakwilt.org for the latest research on the disease, which includes prevention, detection, treatments, interactive maps and approved vendor lists.

To further enhance your understanding about oak wilt and how we can be a large part of the solution to this problem, mark your calendar for October 6, 2005 when the Heard Museum will host interested master gardeners for training on oak wilt. The part-day educational opportunity will include indoor and outdoor sessions sandwiched between a fun lunch that will give us a chance to just talk and visit. Details about this training day will be forthcoming as planning progresses, but afterward we will be able to better serve the residents of Collin County in making informed decisions about their trees, based on years of laboratory and field trials by the caretakers of our Texas treasures, our oaks.

DRESSED TO KILL (WEEDS, THAT IS)

BY MARY NELL JACKSON

You can tell a true gardener by the clothes he or she wears. I am often reminded of my garden attire when my husband arrives home from work and gives me a sly smile as he gazes upon the smudges of dirt and plant stains here and there on my tattered "favorites". He knows dinner will be late by my excited chatter of show and tell as we walk the garden path; he to the back door, me back to the weeding.

Gardening clothes seem to improve with repeated washing and the rose thorn holes become familiar reminders of past work days in the garden. Don't mess with my favorites, which are a few select stained long sleeved T-shirts, dark colored knit pants to hide most stains and one of my husband's old dress shirts to wear on cooler days. Gardeners who work in shorts and tank tops must never walk into rose bushes, bees probably avoid them and mosquitoes are never hungry when they pass by. For me, I cover the old body for the eventual mishaps that the garden inevitably presents.

I can't recall going shopping for gardening clothes--sturdy clogs, yes, but gardening clothes seem to find me instead. Gardeners love comfort and protection. I do muse to myself that an article of new clothing might just one day make the perfect thing to reserve for gardening; of course, if has to be old enough to quality as a cast off.

Many years ago, as a new gardener, I purchased the recommended gloves, the sturdy one that the manufacturers vowed would never wear out. They were pricey. I quickly realized I couldn't move my fingers; I couldn't prune, dig or grasp most tools. These gloves were discarded for the cool, cotton ones that serve to protect but not limit my hands. Sure, the same two fingers wear through each time but most digits are protected until the gloves fall apart or become so soiled I am afraid to insert my hands. I know, I know, I should wash them, but who has time when the salvias need pruning? I



have some rose gloves but for the most part, give me the simple, inexpensive choices and watch me work. Gloves are surely a must but often forgotten as one inspects the insect invasion of a leaf and kneels for a closer look, discovering 30 minutes later, with pride, that all the weeding has been completed under the shrub--sans gloves. So much for the nails.

Gardening hats are becoming a bit fancy for my taste. As gardening is quite the rage among the younger set (hurrah!) the hat designers are proving to us that they don't know anything about gardening. Most of the hats are too stiff or flimsy, the brims aren't broad enough to shade your face against the sun, and few fit as they are made to

sell, not garden in. Clever and cutesy gets in the way of practical design. My favorite garden hat is old, somewhat tattered, and dependable; it was not made to flatter me. When I garden, it sits firmly down on my head disregarding my hair just rimming my sunglasses, feeling like an anchor. When I put it on I'm ready to work.

But alas, I have a true confession to make about my favorite garden attire. My pajamas! Yes, you read it correctly. I don't intend to garden in sleeping attire. It is always unexpected, but I often do it. As soon as the day dawns in the spring and summer, I'm out to check on the garden's progress as all things green are finding the light. With a cup of my favorite herbal tea in hand, my intentions are to stroll through the garden and note chores that need to be done. The trance takes over and before I know it, I find myself surrounded by mid-morning sun, garden chores almost done, beds unmade, errands forgotten and true sense of connecting to the earth. It is later that I realize my pajamas may never recover in the wash from the soil smudges, but I am renewed and feel alive once again. Maybe it is time to make a career change and design sleepwear/garden wear suitable for both.

As long as I am confessing my gardening habits, I must say that I love gardening in the dark. Often, the sun sets and the moon surprises me when I am

(Continued on page 7)

(Dressed to Kill, continued from page 6)

so busy with pruning; just one more trim and then inside. Sound familiar? The moon has a way of enticing me outside not only with its beauty, but with the light it casts on the landscape. The herb garden is especially beautiful in moonlight with the grey foliage all aglow. Somehow, the scents and sounds of the night increase, making the close of day into an exclamation!

Whatever you choose to wear as you tend your garden~ day or night~ I hope you are comfortable and protected. The plants, insects and critters don't care how we look --it's the neighbors that stare. Here's wishing you plenty of sunshine, a gentle rain shower now and then, cool breezes on warm days and a harvest of our favorite herbs. Spring has sprung, so conquer those pesky weeds; they will ignore you even if you are in your birthday suit. However, should that be the case, do not prune the roses!

2006 Texas Master Gardener Conference

"Sharing Our Garden Heritage"

May 4, 5 & 6, 2006

Texas A&M University, College Station

Hosted by the Brazos County Master Gardeners

Highlights:

- Keynote address: "Thomas Jefferson - Statesman and Supreme Gardener," presented by Peggy Cornett, Director, Thomas Jefferson Center for Historic Plants, Monticello
- Thursday evening reception at the George Bush Presidential Library and Museum
- Friday over 10 tours and field trips to local horticultural enterprises and Texas A&M facilities; plus workshops featuring County Master Gardener programs and the Junior Master Gardener program
- Friday evening banquet with inspiration and entertainment by Ben Welch, Director, Center for Executive Development and Senior Lecturer, Dept. of Management in Mays Business School, Texas A&M
- Saturday over 13 presentations by nationally-recognized speakers
- Saturday awards luncheon for the Texas MG Awards, JMG Awards and MG Specialists recognition
- Saturday afternoon Showcase of Sharing with presentations about County MG Projects and Educational programs from across the state
- And of course a Master Gardener Market to shop till you drop!

Hotel information is forthcoming

Put this date on your calendar. You won't want to miss fabulous conference.

Douglas F. Welsh, Ph.D.

Professor and Extension Horticulturist

Texas Cooperative Extension

The Texas A&M University System

979-845-8568

979-845-8906 fax

A Gardeners Vacation for \$100

By Nancy Joslin

A few weeks ago when I was overwhelmed with everything and needed a break from my life, I decided to take a few days doing only what would please ME. With limited funds (two kids in college), I chose to venture to some garden sites in the Texas Hill Country. I set out on a Thursday morning, down Hwy 281 to Fredericksburg.

After checking in at a small local hotel (\$50 per night) I went to the Fredericksburg Herb Farm and Spa. In addition to being an education site, the property has a small Bed & Breakfast and a lovely restaurant. The small gift shop with homemade essential oils impressed me. And although it was 110 degrees that day, the shade offered by the old oaks made it feel only 90. The staff welcomed my quick trips into the gift and candle shop for a cooling off before continuing my self-guided tour. I saw acres of herbs growing in a traditional pattern plus many other areas of specialty gardens. Surprisingly, there were other people out there on such a day! I spent the rest of the day on the farm before returning to my room for a long dip in the pool.

The following morning I left Fredericksburg for the Wild Seed Farm near Johnson City. This is a *must see* for any gardener. I have never been particularly interested in wild flowers, but the area is impressive with the many acres of color surrounding a nursery where native plants at very low prices are available for sale. (You may want to take a Texas native plant book with you to check plants' climate adaptation for Collin County.) You could spend an entire day in the large gift shop and even larger seed shop. Wild seeds of all kinds are sold in pound bags as well as individual packages. Shopping the canning room and wine tasting bar can also take quite a while. If you go to the Wild Seed Farm, be sure to bring your own water; it is in an open field with no shade. Besides, you will want to save your money to buy plants, seeds, gifts, and wine!

I continued my trek to Wimberley to visit Bella Vista Ranch for a day in the Mediterranean. Some of you may have heard the owner, Jack Dougherty, speak at our conference in Denton. If you missed him, you will surely want to visit his ranch. He is a California transplant who was raised on an orchard near San Francisco and spent his career in the telecom industry in Silicon Valley. Realizing that he had root interests, he searched and found the perfect spot to raise olive trees and bottle oil.

I met Jack, his daughter, and grandchildren in the driveway leading to his 1902-built stone house. Jack has stories of every accomplishment on the ranch - from clear-

ing the land for planting, to disassembling an old out-building stone by stone to move it closer to the house to make into a garage. He has an impressive tasting room for his wine and oil and will gladly show you his operation out back. He was welcoming with his demonstration of the differences in oils and vinegars, but I would suggest you question him as needed as his knowledge is extensive and he assumes we know more than we do about the olive business.

A tour of the property is a must! He grows all the plants you would expect to see in the Mediterranean - artichokes on the vine, plums and grapes I had only seen in pictures, and a crop of asparagus that is unlike anything we grow in Collin County. His olive trees are so heavy with fruit I wondered how they could hold out until the September harvest. If you go, don't touch the olives growing on the branches; the oils from our hands can change the flavor of an entire batch of oil olive.

Jack has a wealth of information for those interested in novelty gardening. I urge all of you to take a trip to see his grove and talk with him about the tree heritage and how he has adapted it to the Texas Hill Country.

After the day of 112 degrees in the grove, I proceeded to my hotel in San Marcos. Hotels in Wimberley are strictly Bed & Breakfast. San Marcos offers the budget sites that coincide with my needs. I took another dip in the pool and returned to my room to drink a bottle of Jack's blackberry wine. I called my office and they gave me grief for not being in Plano.

The following morning I loaded my goodies and started up 35 to Salado. My family has enjoyed Salado many times and it always makes me feel good to drive through to see the ice cream shop my girls loved as kids and the Mansion Restaurant on the hill with its slanted floors and the best margaritas you can find anywhere. Shopping is plentiful in Salado, so if you can manage your schedule, stay at the Stagecoach Inn and enjoy a leisurely day with your loved ones. I have friends who have annual daughters weekends in Salado.

I think an annual trip to the Hill Country may just be what I need to stay sane in this fast world. I recommend it to all of you!

Web sites of interest:

<http://www.bvranch.com/>

<http://www.wildseedfarms.com/>

<http://www.fredericksburgherbfarm.com/herbfest/schedule.html>

<http://www.salado.com/index.html>

CEMAP Gardening

By Mary Means

Texas A&M CEMAP Gardens

September 7. Wednesday morning. CEMAP Gardening. Main activities: weed and tidy gardens. Bring items for weeding and light pruning. Wear garden shoes and clothing. Arrive no earlier than 8:00 a.m.; done before noon. No need to sign up, just come.

September 14. Texas Turf and Ornamental Field Day and Outdoor Equipment Rodeo. 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.. Thank you to the Master Gardeners and 2004 interns who have volunteered to help with the A&M Field Day. By now, you should have your task assignments. If not, contact Mary Means. A count of volunteers must be turned in to Field Day organizers near the beginning of September so that they can plan the luncheon plus other things. Therefore, be sure that Mary knows you're coming right away if you haven't already signed up to help. Parking assistants should arrive about 7:00 a.m.. When parking duties are finished, plan to move on to other assignments. Registration begins at 7:30 a.m.. The Official Welcome is at 9:00 a.m. in the Pavilion. Concurrent Educational Programs begin at 9:15 a.m. and finish at 11:30 a.m.. Lunch is from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.. Ideally, there will be two or three Master Gardeners / interns on each position. That way, we can support and encourage one another, and spread our good will to the Field Day attendees.

Other CEMAP Gardening. Near the end of September or the beginning of October, we will have planting session(s) in the CEMAP gardens. Watch your E-Minders for the exact day(s). Contact Mary Means for further information. Thanks everybody. Mary Means mvmeans@kbwireless.com



Top row: Kimberly Gafford, Marjorie Webb, DeAnn Almond, Doreen McDonnell, Kenneth Phillips, Cindy Graham, John Krause, Kathy Ward, Michael Farkas. **Middle row:** Lecia Smith, Carol Moss, Susan Norton, Nancy Harmon, Michael Gillock, Kathleen Roberson. **Bottom row:** Tamara Galbraith, Marian Fraser, Sandra Wisdorf, Kathleen Brooks, Linda Bolton, Deborah Jolly, Janet Bura, Shannan Huth, Tony Dennis

Garden Checklist for September/October

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/>)

- Rejuvenate heat-stressed geraniums and begonias for the fall season by lightly pruning, fertilizing, and watering.
- Caladiums require plenty of water at this time of year if they are to remain lush and attractive until fall. Fertilize with ammonium sulfate at the rate of 1/2 to 2 pounds per 100 square feet of bed area, and water thoroughly.
- Don't allow plants with green fruit or berries to suffer from lack of moisture. Hollies will frequently drop their fruit under drought conditions.
- Prune out dead or diseased wood from trees and shrubs. Hold off on major pruning until midwinter. Pruning now may stimulate tender growth prior to frost.
- Divide spring-flowering perennials such as irises, Shasta daisies, gaillardias, cannas, day lilies, violets, liriopse, and ajuga. Reset divisions into well prepared soil with generous amounts of organic material worked into the top 8 to 10 inches.
- Prepare the beds for spring-flowering bulbs as soon as possible. It is important to cultivate the soil and add generous amounts of organic matter to improve the water drainage. Bulbs will rot without proper drainage.
- Plantings at this time can provide landscape color for three seasons in central, east, and south Texas. Annuals set out early enough will bloom as soon as Thanksgiving, and frequently last until Memorial Day. Annuals that should soon be available in nurseries and garden shops include petunias, calendulas, pansies, snapdragons, stock, sweet peas, and violas (from seed).
- Continue a disease-spray schedule on roses, as blackspot and mildew can be extremely damaging in September and October. Funginex, used every 7 to 14 days, will usually give excellent control.
- Christmas cactus can be made to flower by supplying 12 hours of uninterrupted darkness and cool nights (55 degrees F.) for a month, starting in mid-October. Keep plants on the dry side for a month prior to treatment.
- Replenish mulches around trees and shrubs, and water every 3 to 5 days.
- Start cool-season vegetables, such as mustard, lettuce, arugula, broccoli, carrots, and turnips, from seed in well prepared beds.
- Harvest okra, peppers, squash, and other vegetables often to encourage production.

October:

- October through November is an excellent time to purchase bulbs while you still have a good selection in the garden center. They may be planted at any time with the exception of tulips and hyacinths.
- Chill tulip and hyacinth bulbs in the refrigerator until mid or late December before planting. The lower part of the refrigerator is best. Do not leave bulbs in airtight bags during refrigerated storage.
- Plant bulbs in well prepared beds so the base of the bulb is at a depth that is three times the diameter of the bulb. In sandy soil, set slightly deeper and in clay soils less deeply.
- Start collecting leaves for the compost pile. Be sure to have extra soil available so that each 6 inch layer of leaves may be covered with several inches of soil. Always wet the layer of leaves thoroughly before adding the soil. Add about one pound of a complete lawn or garden fertilizer to each layer of leaves to provide the necessary nitrogen for decomposition.
- If you have saved seeds of your favorite plants, allow them to become air dry, then place them in an airtight container and store in the refrigerator. Be sure to label each packet carefully. Remember, seed from hybrid plants will seldom resemble the parent plant.
- Prepare beds for planting pansies when the soil has cooled. They need a well-drained soil and exposure to at least a half-day of sun. It is best to use started plants, as seeds are difficult to handle.
- If you are planning to save caladium tubers for another year, dig them in late October, and allow to dry in a well ventilated by shady area. After 7 to 20 days, remove leaves and dirt, then pack in dry peat moss, vermiculite, or similar material for storage. Pack tubers so they do not touch each other. Dust with all-purpose fungicide as you pack. Place container in an area where temperature won't drop below 50 degrees F.
- If twig girdlers have worked over your trees so that many twigs and branches are dropping, make sure these are collected and destroyed, as the eggs are deposited in that portion of the branch that drops to the ground.
- October is a good time to reduce the insect and disease potential in next year's garden. Clean up the garden, removing all annuals that have completed their life cycle. Remove the tops of all herbaceous perennials that have finished flowering or as soon as frost has killed the leaves.
- Holly plants with a heavy set of fruit often suffer a fertilizer deficiency. An application of complete fertilizer late this month can be helpful and provide a head start next spring.

July 22, 2005

Nursery/greenhouse Startup a Risky, Possible Profitable Business

Writer: Robert Burns, (903) 834-6191, rd-burns@tamu.edu

Contact: Dr. Scott Ludwig, (903) 834-6191, swludwig@ag.tamu.edu

VERTON – So you say you want to get started in the greenhouse and nursery business? "Maybe not," said Dr. Scott Ludwig, a Texas Cooperative Extension specialist who works closely with the East Texas nursery and bedding plant industry. To help prospective nursery operators decide if the business is for them, Ludwig has planned, "So you want to start a greenhouse or nursery," a four-day workshop designed to give a prospective growers an overview of the industry. "We'll cram as much information into four days as we can," he said.

Two workshops will be held. The first one will be at the Texas A&M University System Agricultural Research and Extension Center in Overton on Aug. 30 - Sept. 2. The second workshop, with nearly an identical program, will be held Oct. 4 -7 in Fort Worth at the Resource Connection Conference and Recreation Center, 2300 Circle Drive.

Many people seem to think that operating a greenhouse or tree nursery is a business where they can make a lot of money with little effort, Ludwig said. "But that's just not the case. It's a lot of work, a 365-days-a-year business," said Ludwig, whose Extension specialty is integrated pest management. And it's also a knowledge-intensive business, requiring the owner/operators to keep up on the latest changes in the market and technology. Actually, it is possible to do very well in the nursery bedding plant industry. Bedding plants are a significant part of the billion-dollar ornamental industry spanning both rural and urban Texas. Most bedding plant and tree nurseries are in rural counties, but the majority of retail sales are in urban areas. In the last few years, wholesale gate receipts have averaged more than \$250 million for the four East Texas counties of Cherokee, Van Zandt, Smith and Henderson alone. Statewide, the nursery industry accounted for nearly 9 percent of all agricultural production, with total wholesale receipts of \$1.2 billion. "And all the counties with large ornamental producers have seen growth in sales in last couple of years," Ludwig said. Still, it's a good idea to look before you leap, as start-up and capital investments can be large. "Also, without training and a willingness to work very hard, new growers may not produce a quality product," Ludwig said. "And that could reflect badly on the region's industry overall."

Each workshop will consist of three days of lectures and one day of tours of local working nurseries and greenhouses. The lectures will cover such topics as an history of the business in Texas; how to make a business plan; calculating the cost of producing various types of ornamental plants; production technology; integrated pest management; weed control; insect management; soil fertility; production of trees and shrubs in containers and in the field; and marketing. Registration for either workshop is \$300, which includes lunch each day, refreshments at breaks and educational materials.

To register by check, call Ludwig at (903) 834-6191.

It's also possible to register via the Internet with a credit card. Extension maintains a secure Web site at <http://www.peopleware.net/1542b>.

Maps and driving directions to the Overton center can be found online at <http://overton.tamu.edu/maps.htm>.

Driving directions to the Fort Worth conference center can be online at http://www.tarrantcounty.com/tc_resource/. The conference center is located on a 262-acre campus in southeastern Fort Worth, with regular bus service from the Fort Worth Transportation Authority.

Help Wanted: Executive Officers for 2006!

The nominating committee is accepting nominations for Executive Officer candidates for 2006. The executive officer positions are: President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Volunteer Support Coordinator. Officers will be elected at the October meeting, installed at the November meeting and assume their duties upon installation. If you are interested in serving or would like to nominate someone, please contact a member of the committee:

Glenn Mieritz (972) 542-8863 gmieritz@comcast.net

Jan Madden (972) 596-1619 jmadden@airmail.net

Emma Bookout (972) 727-3335 ehb@att.net

Out and About ...

Activities and Events of Interest

(The activities and events listed below are not eligible for continuing education or CCMGA Volunteer hours.)

Dallas Arboretum: Dallas Blooms Autumn, A PALETTE IN BLOOM featuring Artscape September 24 - October 30, 2005, 9am to 5pm daily. Dallas Blooms Autumn is a celebration of fall at the Dallas Arboretum, which is arguably one of top five floral display gardens in North America. This year's festival features more than 100,000 beautiful fall flowers and is action-packed with activities for the family including ArtScape, the Arboretum's first-ever fine art show and sale in the Garden. There are many new classes scheduled for fall, so if check out their education opportunities page, www.dallasarboretum.org

Texas Discovery Gardens at Fair Park:

State Fair of Texas - Friday, Sept. 30 - Sunday, Oct. 23

Visit Texas Discovery Gardens to see live Monarch Butterfly Tagging Demonstrations, the Texas Garden Railway, CBS 11 live newscasts, celebrity cooking demonstrations and much more! Visit the web site: www.texasdiscoverygardens.org for a listing of all of the special events and activities.

Plants, Birds & Elephants—September 24, 2005 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Lewisville Independent School District's Outdoor Learning area. Featuring Susan Randolph, owner of Lantana Gardens, who will be presenting a lecture/demonstration on Container Gardening at 11:30 a.m.

9:30 a.m. Lecture on "Companion Planting with Roses"

10:30 a.m. Lecture on "Fire Wise"

11:30 a.m. Lecture on "Container Gardening"

12:30 p.m. Lecture on "Fall Colors in the Landscape"

1:30 p.m. Lecture on "Herb Gardening"

Other activities include guided trail hikes & bird watching, multiple craft vendors, White Elephant tables, Junior Master Gardener exhibits, Denton County Master Gardener exhibits, sale of gardening related merchandise, plants for sale, guided trail hikes & animal tracks, guided tours of the gardens, Texas Cooperative Extension Office publications on landscaping/gardening, and lots, lots more!

Fort Worth Botanic Garden Events:

September 24 -Fort Worth Iris Society Sale, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

September 24 - North Texas Daylily Sale, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

October 08 - Fall Plant Sale, 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

October 22 -Fall Festival in Japanese Garden, 11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

October 23 - Fall Festival in Japanese Garden, 12:00 - 5:00 p.m.

View more information at www.fwbg.org

Plant Sale: Semi-annual sale at the Molly Hollar Wildscape Demonstration Garden October 1st, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., Veterans Park, Arlington. All Texas native plants are locally and organically grown. Plants propagated by Wildscape volunteers and proceeds benefit the four-acre demonstration garden.

Fall Native Plant Sale at Elliott's Hardware—Friday, October 14, 2005, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday, October 15, 2005, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Fall is the best time to plant and The Heard is making sure you have a great selection of natives to choose from for your landscape. We are happy to announce our first annual fall plant sale! The Heard is partnering with Elliott's Hardware to make available a good selection of native trees, shrubs, perennials and perennial vines. Come shop for hard to find natives and help support the Heard. The plant sale will take place at Elliott's Hardware in Plano, which is located at: 2049 Coit Road, Suite 300 Plano, Texas 75075

Hummingbird Sighting

By BETSY BLANEY

Jul 26, 8:35 P.M. (ET)

LUBBOCK, Texas (AP) - The recent sighting of a rare hummingbird has bird biologists in Texas almost giddy. A white-eared hummingbird spotted in Lubbock earlier this month was the first to be seen in the South Plains and Panhandle regions, according to the Llano Estacado Audubon Society. Eight others have been seen in West Texas this year. Between 1972 and the end of last year, only 14 had been sighted in Texas.



"This is a real explosive jump in our numbers," said Mark Klym, who coordinates the Texas Hummingbird Roundup for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. "Our bird biologists want to know what's going on." It could be a sign that the birds, which are known to nest in New Mexico, Mexico and southeast Arizona, are expanding their range, Klym said. "All animals tend to expand their range whenever they can," he said.

Wildlife department officials want the public's help in reporting additional sightings of the bird, which has a short red bill with a black tip and a distinctive white patch of feathers on its dark head. The hummingbird, which often lives in pine-oak woods and mountain pine forests and borders, "is one that few Texans have enjoyed in their own state, and for it to be seen in such atypical habitat is fascinating," Klym said. "Any information we get about the white-eared hummingbird is a contribution to our knowledge on the bird."

The annual hummingbird roundup lets Texans assist wildlife department biologists who study the bird's feeding patterns, behavior, range and their distribution. Texas has 18 species of hummingbirds, and there are about 300 species overall. Texas and Arizona, which also has 18 species, have the most of any state.

About three years ago, a white-eared hummingbird was confirmed in Johnson City in central Texas, the eastern-most sighting ever in the state, Klym said. The bird, a juvenile, was seen for several days in mid-June in a residential yard in Lubbock. The homeowner saw it while out gardening, Klym said. "He knew enough that it was something different and got some birders to come look at it," Klym said. Anthony Hewetson, president of the Audubon society, said he saw the bird a few days after its arrival. "It was pretty awesome," he said. "A lot of people were really excited by it."

Despite a lack of documentation that a white-eared hummingbird has hatched in Texas, Klym said it's his opinion that this juvenile hatched in far West Texas and flew to Lubbock. Hewetson hopes the bird's departure from Lubbock means he's winging his way home. It was in Lubbock for about five days, Klym said. "I kind of hope he made his way back to Mexico," he said.

(Thanks to Katherine Ponder for article submission.)

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: **Reminder:** The annual seed and plant exchange will be :
: November 17. This fun event is a potluck luncheon followed :
: by a seed and plant exchange. Start planning now by saving :
: seed from your favorite plants to pass along to fellow gar- :
: dening friends! 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.ccmqatx.org/Association/Newsletter.htm> :
:
:

September 2005

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

				1	2	3 Herbs for the Fall Garden Parker Garden Club 9 a.m.
4	5 Holiday—no class	6	7 Fall Garden Parker Garden Club 1 p.m. CEMAP Gar- den Workday	8 Fall Garden Plano Sr. Cen- ter 10 a.m.	9	10
11 Dallas Home and Garden Show	12 2005 CCMGA class - Turf Maintenance	13 Container Gar- dening McKinney Garden Club 12pm Bulbs for Spring Heritage Ranch Garden Club 2 p.m.	14 Wildflowers, Legends and More Plano Adult Edu- cation 7pm TAMU Field Day 8:30-3—TX A&M Coit	15 Fall Clean-up First Baptist Church of McKinney 10:30 a.m.	16	17
18	19 2005 CCMGA class - Or- ganic Garden- ing	20	21	22 CCMGA Meeting 11:30 a.m. Attracting wildlife to the fall and winter garden	23	24 Kids Fall Fest 9 a.m. –12 p.m.
25 Fall Bulbs Grapevine Garden Club -	26 2005 CCMGA class - Woody Plants/ Oak Wilt	27 Fall Bulb Sale Orders Due	28	29	30 September hours due	

October 2005

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

						1
2	3 2005 CCMGA class - Fruits and Nuts / Vegetable Gardening	4	5	6 Beneficial Bugs into your Garden City of Plano Compost Education 7 p.m. Oak Wilt (Heard) 10 a.m. -2 p.m.	7	8
9	10 2005 CCMGA class - Annuals/Perennials/Herbs	11 Green Landscape Design City of Plano Compost Education 7 p.m.	12 Fall Landscape Color w/ Ornamental Grasses Plano Adult Education 7 p.m.	13	14 Heard Museum Plant Sale at Elliott's 8 a.m.- 6 p.m.	15 Heard Museum Plant at Elliott's Sale 9 a.m.-5.p.m.
16	17 2005 CCMGA class - Entomology/1 p.m.	18 Friendly Plants, Shrubs and Trees City of Plano Compost Education 7 p.m.	19	20	21	22
23	24 2005 CCMGA class - Plant Propagation/ Review/ Speakers Bureau	25	26	27 CCMGA Meeting 11:30 a.m. Greenhouse Gardening	28 Fall Bulb Sale Orders—Pick up 9 a.m. —5 p.m.	29
30	31 2005 CCMGA class - Plant Pathology October hours due					

This and That

Sept 19-20, 2005 - Landscape Design Study Course I Landscape Design Study Course I, to be offered in College Station, Texas, September 19-20, 2005. The courses are co-sponsored by Texas Garden Clubs, Inc. and the Texas Cooperative Extension, Texas A&M University, and have been attended by many Master Gardeners in the past. It is an opportunity for more in-depth training in landscape design than we normally include in the Master Gardener curriculum. We have had excellent representation from Master Gardeners in previous courses. Each course has been approved to qualify for 12 hours of continuing education toward maintaining certification for Master Gardeners.

Attracting Wildlife to the Fall and Winter Garden, by Mary Means The September 22, meeting will be held at the Heard Museum in the Laughlin room. Attendance will qualify for 1 hour of continuing education.

Greenhouse Gardening, by Wayne McKay will be presented during the October 27 meeting which will be held at Texas A&M—Coit.

October 6—Oak Wilt Training: Join or newly trained Oak Wilt Specialists for training at the Heard Nature Museum from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Additional information will be sent in future e-minders.

Thanks to ECHO Newsletter contributors:

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