



The "DIG IT" News

Keeping
on the
Sunny
side



HIGHLAND LAKES MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

President's Corner

The thermometer is ready to pop its top, so slow down and stay cool!

Greetings Master Gardeners...
Wow, the dog days of summer are really here, aren't they? This has already been a hot and dry summer, but it seems that July has started with a vengeance. As I write this on a Sunday morning, it is already over 100 degrees on my back porch!! Maybe it is time for us to be a bit "lazy" and enjoy the air conditioning for a while.

vegetables at both of our community gardens.

But looking at the second half of the year, we still have much to do! The Farmers and Crafts Market is still going every Saturday morning and volunteers are always welcome. The PET committee will meet soon for project evaluations, the nominating committee will start thinking of recommendations for the 2023 officers, and our

Deep summer is when laziness finds respectability.

Sam Keen

fall poinsettia fundraiser will get underway in October. And, of course,

the fall gardens are being planned and looked forward to. So take a mini break on these really hot days to recharge your batteries and enjoy the wonderful air conditioning.

Just a reminder that we will not have a monthly meeting in July but will resume our monthly meeting on August 2. Until then, stay cool and have a wonderful July!

Carolyn Stephens

stephens4005@sbcglobal.net
817-874-2138



6



10



30



16



22



28

In This Issue

SPECIAL FEATURES

- 6 From Our Backyard: Baby boom!
- 10 The Garden update
- 11 Green Thumb Program
- 12 Keeping on the sunny side
- 16 CoCoRaHS: How much rain did y'all get?
- 19 CoCoRaHS: Let me tell y'all how much rain we got!

- 21 Burnet County Fair thank-you
- 22 The King's Garden update
- 28 Garden-fresh Recipes


Lanetta Sprott..... 15
Roxanne Dunegan..... 18

REGULAR COLUMNS

- 2 President's Corner
- 3 Upcoming meeting notice
- 4 AT Opportunities
- 21 Creature Feature
- 26 Luedecke Lessons
- 30 Garden Hacks
- 30 Call for Content

Find the latest HLMGA news online!

burnetcountyhighlandlakesmastergardener.org

 facebook.com/HighlandLakesMasterGardeners



The "Dig It" News is a publication of the Highland Lakes Master Gardener Association – written by gardeners, for gardeners! Please send all content for publication to editor Gail Braymen at gebfoto@gmail.com. Deadline is the 28th of the month for the following month's issue. The "Dig It" News is published every month except February and August.



Tuesday, August 2, 2022 • 2 p.m.

Burnet County AgriLife Extension Office

607 N. Vanderveer, Burnet, Texas

*ATTENDANCE IN PERSON AND VIA ZOOM**

PROGRAM:

Bees

Presented by Jody McCumber from Jackass Honey Farm

**Watch your email for Zoom details.*

JULY/AUGUST 2022

From the MG Membership Committee

JULY

JULY 16 — “Water Conservation for Gardeners” with Tim Miller, Millberg Farms, 10 a.m. (1 hr credit), at The Natural Gardener, 8648 Old Bee Caves Rd., Austin. Fee: free. Pre-registration required at tngaustin.com/july-free-classes.

JULY 16 — “Nature-Based Gardening” with Lee Marlowe, Sustainable Landscape Ecologist, 2-3:30 p.m. (1.5 hrs. credit), at the San Antonio Botanical Garden, 555 Funston Place, San Antonio. Fee: \$15. Pre-registration required at sabot.org/learn/adult-classes.

JULY 16 — “DIY: Root-infused Whiskey” (history of whiskey, roots that impart, craft your own) with Christa Sauers, Culinary and Wellness Program Specialist, and Maeve Bassett, Conservation and Voluntary Programs Specialist, at the San Antonio Botanical Garden, 11 a.m.-12 p.m. and again at 12:30-1:30 p.m., (1 hr credit for one class), at the San Antonio Botanical Garden, 555 Funston Place, San Antonio. Fee: \$35. Pre-registration required at sabot.org/learn/adult-classes.

JULY 16 — “Solutions to Irrigation Irritations!” with Stephen Lucke, Founder and CEO of Gardopia Gardens, and Dominic Dominguez, LEED Professional, 10-11:00 a.m. (1 hr credit), at The San Antonio Botanical Garden, 555 Funston Place, San Antonio. Fee: \$15. Pre-registration required at sabot.org/learn/adult-classes.

Gardening for Wildlife Series

ONLINE

**JULY 17 • JULY 24
JULY 31 • AUGUST 7**

Four online classes with Ryan Fleming, Ecological Landscape Designer, 2-4 p.m. (total of 8 hrs credit). Fee: \$80 for entire series. Pre-registration required at wildflower.org/learn/adults.

JULY 19 — “Plant Propagation” with Robb, Horticulturalist at The Natural Gardener, 10 a.m. (1 hr credit), at The Natural Gardener, 8648 Old Bee Caves Rd., Austin. Fee: free. Pre-registration required at tngaustin.com/july-free-classes.

JULY 23 — “Succulent Containers” with Chrissie, Horticulturalist at The Natural Gardener, 10 a.m., (1 hr credit), at The Natural Gardener, 8648 Old Bee Caves Rd., Austin. Fee: free. Pre-registration required at tngaustin.com/july-free-classes.

JULY 26 — “Pruning” with Heather, Horticulturalist at The Natural Gardener, 10 a.m. (1 hr credit), at The Natural Gardener, 8648 Old Bee Caves Rd., Austin. Fee: free. Pre-registration required at tngaustin.com/july-free-classes.

JULY 28 — “Water Conservation” with Kelly Simon, a representative of LCRA, 1 p.m. (1 hr credit), at the Marble Falls library, 101 Main St., Marble Falls. Fee: free. Sponsored by the Highland Lakes Master Gardener Association Green Thumb Program.

JULY 30 — “Drought-Tolerant Trees” with Rebecca Johnson, from Arborholic, 10 a.m. (1 hr credit), at The Natural Gardener, 8648 Old Bee Caves Rd., Austin. Fee: free. Pre-registration required at tngaustin.com/july-free-classes.

Free Introduction to Organic Food Gardening Series

Three in-person classes for our neighbours in the Highland Lakes region, 9-11:00 a.m. (2 hrs credit for each), at The Garden, located at the Trinity Episcopal Church, 909 Ave D, Marble Falls. Fee: free. Gardening supplies included. Pre-registration required at tinyurl.com/bdevnr2v. Sponsored by the Central Texas Food Bank and the Highland Lakes Master Gardener Association.

JULY 30 — “Container Gardening”

AUGUST 6 — “Garden Planning and Installation”

AUGUST 13 — “Garden Maintenance”

AUGUST

AUGUST 2 — “Organic Veggie Gardening 101” with Robb, Horticulturalist at The Natural Gardener, (repeat), 10 a.m. (1 hr credit), at The Natural Gardener, 8648 Old Bee Caves Rd., Austin. Fee: free. Pre-registration required at tngaustin.com.

AUGUST 4 — “Safety in the Home Garden (ONLINE)” with Shannon Dietz, Harris County Extension Agent, 10 a.m. (1 hr credit). Fee: free. Pre-registration required at homegrown2022.eventbrite.com. Sponsored by the Harris County AgriLife Extension Home Grown Lecture Series 2022.

AUGUST 6 — “Homebrew Kombucha” with Buddha’s Brew, 10 a.m., at The Natural Gardener, 8648 Old Bee Caves Rd., Austin. Fee: free. Pre-registration required at tngaustin.com.

AUGUST 9 — “Composts, Soils and Products”

Highlight on Online AT

AUGUST 11 — A “Cover Crops and Gardens” presentation will be hosted by the University of Illinois Extension at 1 p.m. While cover crops are often used in commercial agriculture, Duane Friend will discuss their use in home gardens.

Duane is the State Master Naturalist and Climate Change Specialist for the University of Illinois Extension. Since 1993, he has served in various capacities with Illinois Extension, including Environmental and Energy Stewardship Educator, Natural Resources Management Extension Educator, County Executive Director for the Farm Services Agency, and Resource Conservationist for one of Illinois’ Soil and Water Conservation Districts. Some of Duane’s professional awards include the Honor Award from the Soil and Water Conservation Society, gold and bronze awards from the Association of Natural Resource Extension Professionals and an Excellence in Extension Award for educational programming.

To register for the free webinar and get one hour credit for Master Gardener advanced training, go to web.extension.illinois.edu/registration/?RegistrationID=26006, fill out the form and click the “Continue to Step 2” button. On the next page, double check your information and click on the “Continue to Step 3” button, then click the “Complete Registration” button. You’ll receive a confirmation email. On the day of the webinar, you’ll get an email with a link to the presentation.

To learn more about the University of Illinois Extension, go to web.extension.illinois.edu. You can view a list of their upcoming webinars at extension.illinois.edu/global/upcoming-webinars.

For other online AT opportunities, go to bur-netcountyhighlandlakesmastergardener.org/library-of-at-resources, enter the member password, and select the latest list of webinars.

with Felecia, Horticulturalist at The Natural Gardener, 10 a.m., at The Natural Gardener, 8648 Old Bee Caves Rd., Austin. Fee: free. Pre-registration required at tngaustin.com.

AUGUST 10 — “Texas Native Annuals and Perennials for Your Landscape” with Bexar County Master Gardeners, at the San Antonio Botanical Garden, 555 Funston Place, San Antonio. Fee: free. Pre-registration required at sabot.org/learn/adult-classes.

AUGUST 13 — “Poolside Plantings and Arrangements” with Chrissie, Horticulturalist at The Natural Gardener, 10 a.m., at The Natural Gardener, 8648 Old Bee Caves Rd., Austin. Fee: free. Pre-registration required at tngaustin.com.

AUGUST 13 — “Bizarre Botany Cocktail Tour:

Plant Nightlife” with Maeve Bassett, Conservation and Volunteer Programs Specialist, at the San Antonio Botanical Garden, 6-7:30 p.m. (1.5 hrs credit), at the San Antonio Botanical Garden, 555 Funston Place, San Antonio. Fee: \$20 per person. Pre-registration required at sabot.org/learn/adult-classes.

AUGUST 16 — “Invasive Species of Texas” with Kelly Simon, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, 1 p.m. (1 hr credit), at the Marble Falls Library, 101 Main St., Marble Falls. Fee: free. Sponsored by the Highland Lakes Master Gardener Association Green Thumb Program.

AUGUST 18 — “Bizarre Botany Cocktail Tour: Plant Nightlife” with Maeve Bassett, Conservation and Volunteer Programs Specialist, at the San Antonio Botanical Garden, 6:30-8 p.m. (1.5 hrs credit), at the San Antonio Botanical Garden, 555 Funston Place, San Antonio. Fee: \$20 per person. Pre-registration required at sabot.org/learn/adult-classes.

AUGUST 20 — “Tasting Texas” (edible native plants) with Maeve Bassett, Conservation and Volunteer Programs Specialist at the San Antonio Botanical Garden, 6-8 p.m. (2 hrs credit), at the San Antonio Botanical Garden, 555 Funston Place, San Antonio. Fee: \$20. Pre-registration required at sabot.org/learn/adult-classes.

AUGUST 20 — “Irrigation in the Vegetable Garden” with a speaker from New Garden Road, 10 a.m. (1 hr credit), at The Natural Gardener, 8648 Old Bee Caves Rd., Austin. Fee: free. Pre-registration required at tngaustin.com.

AUGUST 23 — “How to Stage Your Outdoor Space” (transform garden into inviting space) with Chrissie, Horticulturalist at The Natural Gardener, 10 a.m. (1 hr credit), at The Natural Gardener, 8648 Old Bee Caves Rd., Austin. Fee: free. Pre-registration required at tngaustin.com.

AUGUST 27 — “Fox Farm Product Class” (product demonstration), 10 a.m. (1 hr credit), at The Natural Gardener, 8648 Old Bee Caves Rd., Austin. Fee: free. Pre-registration required at tngaustin.com.

AUGUST 30 — “Organic Veggie Gardening 201” with Robb, Horticulturalist at The Natural Garden, (repeat), at The Natural Garden, 8648 Old Bee Caves Rd., Austin. Fee: free. Pre-registration required at tngaustin.com.

Master Volunteer Entomology Advanced Training Series

ONLINE

AUGUST 30-OCTOBER 27 — Thirty classes with Wizzie Brown, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension (30 total hrs credit). Fee: \$120. Pre-registration and details about speakers, dates and times at cdn-de.agrilife.org/extension/departments/events/ento-ev-011/2022-mveat-schedule.pdf.



Not conjoined twin fawns.

Baby boom!

Little critters abound on land and in the air

HUGE NEWS! After four years of trying, with one pair almost making it, we finally had a successful fledge of two purple martins in our yard.

By the end of March, I was tired of cleaning out sparrow nests from the martin houses and had almost given up. I offered my houses to a couple folks that I thought might be interested. It's a good thing that they said "no," because shortly after the second declination, we started to have daily visits of apartment-seeking martins.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8



A purple martin feeds nestlings.

Story by Hank Rominski
Photos by Colleen "Sissy" Rominski



Painted bunting



Male house finch



"This fence can't keep me out!"

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

Eventually, a nice trio of two females and one male took a short-term lease on gourd #4. It is one of our best gourds, with a south-facing balcony that has a view of the Llano River. While the martins were nesting, I still had to be a good landlord, evicting those unwanted sparrows and checking to see how many eggs (two) were in gourd #4. We worried about the nestlings when they finally hatched, as it was already hot, with an extended forecast for hotter than hell. Every time we passed through that area of the backyard, Sissy and I would look up, hoping to get a glimpse of a little one poking out its head.

As the nestlings grew, we saw them more and more and would watch as they would take food from their parents. About two weeks before they finally fledged, our yard was visited a couple times a day by other martins. There would be anywhere from six to more than 20 doing their noisy aerial acrobatics over us. Sissy's eyes are much better than mine, and she saw that they were catching dragonflies. This may be old hat to some of you, but to these non-native Texans, the show that these birds put on was still a bargain at twice the price.

During the third week of June, I saw that the martins' gourd was empty and surmised that there was a successful fledge.

We continued to have morning and nightly visits of the colony for a little over a week. Now the gourds sit empty and we are landlords no more.

We also had some firsthand experience with some very small twin fawns. These days-old babies were so tiny that they would climb through our fence that has 6x6-inch openings. One of the fawns took to taking a break in our greenhouse. It lay there looking out through the open door like a king surveying his domain. The fawns are so cute when they



Lesser finches

are all tiny and spotted, and they will remain so as long as they stay outside of the fence.

Sissy's extravagant purchase of many 50-pound sacks of white millet seed paid off this year with continued visits by the very colorful painted buntings. They have been coming here for the free food since early April. Unfortunately, the white millet also brings in more house sparrows than we would like to have. Oh well, if you want a prince, you have

to kiss a bunch of frogs.

This heat seems to have accelerated the growth cycle of some of our sunflowers, and they have gone to seed already. This is a good thing, because the house and lesser finches like them directly from plant to beak. Sissy captured a few photos of them which we're sharing with you.

We found that we had way more cucumbers than we could eat, pickle, donate and give away. Sissy was picking about 15 pounds every two days, so she decided to sell them on Next Door. We sold about 80 pounds to three people who were going to pickle them, and about another 40 pounds to people buying two to three pounds each. It was nice to be able to offload the extra cukes, but we are undecided if it is worth it to plant extra with the idea of selling them.

There is more, but I don't want to bore, so I'll close the door and write no more.

Stay safe, stay cool and enjoy Sissy's photos. 🐝



Bee on sunflower



On the other hand, the okra loves the heat and is producing like mad. That, of course, means we are in the plants with full cover, which is, you guessed it, hot.

We are grateful to Trinity Episcopal for their donation of water, as the rainwater tank has been dry for some time. Also appreciated are the few brave souls who, despite the heat, have come out to lend a hand.

Not much else to report. We are out there every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, so, if you feel like enjoying a warm morning, we would love to see you. 🌱

UPDATE The Garden

HOT, HOT, HOT...

The Garden is having a rough time with these 100-degree days! The tomatoes have taken the greatest hit. Between the heat and the birds, our yield is way down compared to where we were last year.

Story and photos by David Waldo



The Green Thumb Program for the month of July will be Thursday, July 28, 1–2 p.m., at the Marble Falls Library at 101 Main St.

The guest speaker will be Brett Briant from the Lower Colorado River Authority. Brett will discuss water and soil conservation.

Brett has been with the LCRA for 15 years and has a degree in turfgrass management and water resource

protection. He currently is a Texas Licensed Irrigator and has licenses in water treatment and distribution, along with waste water collection and treatment. His role with LCRA is to provide information to help LCRA customers become better water managers. This should be very helpful information during our current drought situation.

AUGUST

The Green Thumb Program for the month of August will be Tuesday, August 16, at the Marble Falls Library at 101 Main St.

The guest speaker will be Kelly Conrad Simon, who is the Urban Wildlife Biologist for Central Texas at Texas Parks and Wildlife. Kelly

will provide information on Invasive Species.

Kelly engages in projects with cities, corporations, private landowners and community groups to ensure the health and vitality of wild spaces. She is co-author of the award-winning book *Texas Wildscapes: Gardening for Wildlife* and is the founding chair of The Capital Area Texas Master Naturalists. She has her MS in Zoology from Emporia State University and a BA in Animal Behavior and Biology from Southwestern.



Both Green Thumb presentations are free and open to the public. Hope to see you there! 🌱

Keeping on the sunny side

This gardener's 2022 personal plant challenge is a bright and colorful success story

There's an old but classic song (some of you may remember) titled "Keep on the Sunny Side" that was recorded by the Carter Family. So, with that introduction, I would like to share with you some photos of my flowers blooming "on the sunny side" of my garden.

If you hadn't already figured out the connection, I'm referring to sunflowers, of course.

Every year, I try to pick out a plant I haven't grown before and throw my heart and soul at it. Last year, my new plant challenge was birdhouse gourds. The gourds did great, and I learned a lot from that experience.

A bushel of gourds later, and not sure what to do with them, I finally donated them to the Lakeshore Library for a crafting project. Thank

God. You only need so many birdhouses.

This year, my plant challenge was sunflowers. As I previously mentioned, I throw my heart and soul into every challenge. I did not stop with one variety, oh no, but planted five. As you can see for yourself, the varieties are quite different and quite colorful. They have proven to be a magnet for butterflies, bees, moths and, believe it or not, hummingbirds. Not so for the gourds. I can't wait to see if, when the sunflower seeds mature, I can include songbirds in the list.

I will confess to you, right here and now, red is my favorite color. Did you ever imagine you could grow a vivid red-colored sunflower? Well, yes, you can. In fact, that is exactly what

CONTINUED ON PAGE 15



Story and photos by Willard Horn

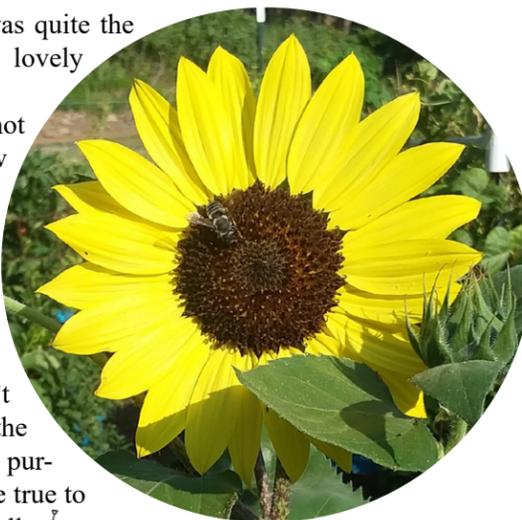


CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

the photos prove. I'm not smart enough to know how to doctor a picture on my cell phone, so rest assured it is authentic. Unfortunately, I threw away, or lost, the seed packet, so I'm unable to name the variety for you.



From the same packet of seeds, some plants sported a brilliant purple stem. It was quite the contrast to their lovely blooms.



While I'm not likely to grow birdhouse gourds any time soon, I can't wait to collect my sunflower seeds and do even better next year. I also can't wait to see if the plants with dark purple stems produce true to form. Time will tell. 🌻

This guy was out in full sun, mid-afternoon, working his little butt off! I wanted to follow along, to see where he would end up, but it was too hot!

Rather than two dung beetles working together, this one was alone. He would stop, check out the next blade of grass to tackle, then get going again. His determination to get someplace was very fascinating to watch. That's all the "rollers" do all day, every day, of their short lives: roll poop around from this place to that — kind of like my gardening!

I guess this guy didn't get the memo that it's dry conditions, but maybe he has no place else to call home. Or, maybe he's so in tune with nature he knows it will rain — eventually.

~ Lanetta Sprott



What's growing, blooming and producing in YOUR garden? Show it off in What's Growing On! Send pictures of your plants and projects, plus a little information, to Gail Braymen at gebfoto@gmail.com.

Citizen-scientist members of the Community Collaborative Rain, Hail and Snow Network have the exact answer to the ageless question:

“How much rain did y’all get?”

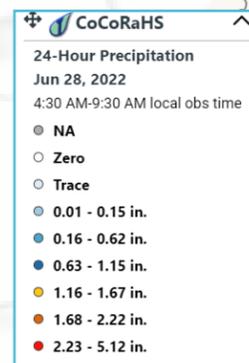


CoCoRaHS (Community Collaborative Rain, Hail and Snow Network) is a grassroots volunteer network of backyard weather observers working together to measure and map precipitation in their local communities, according to the CoCoRaHS website at cocorahs.org.

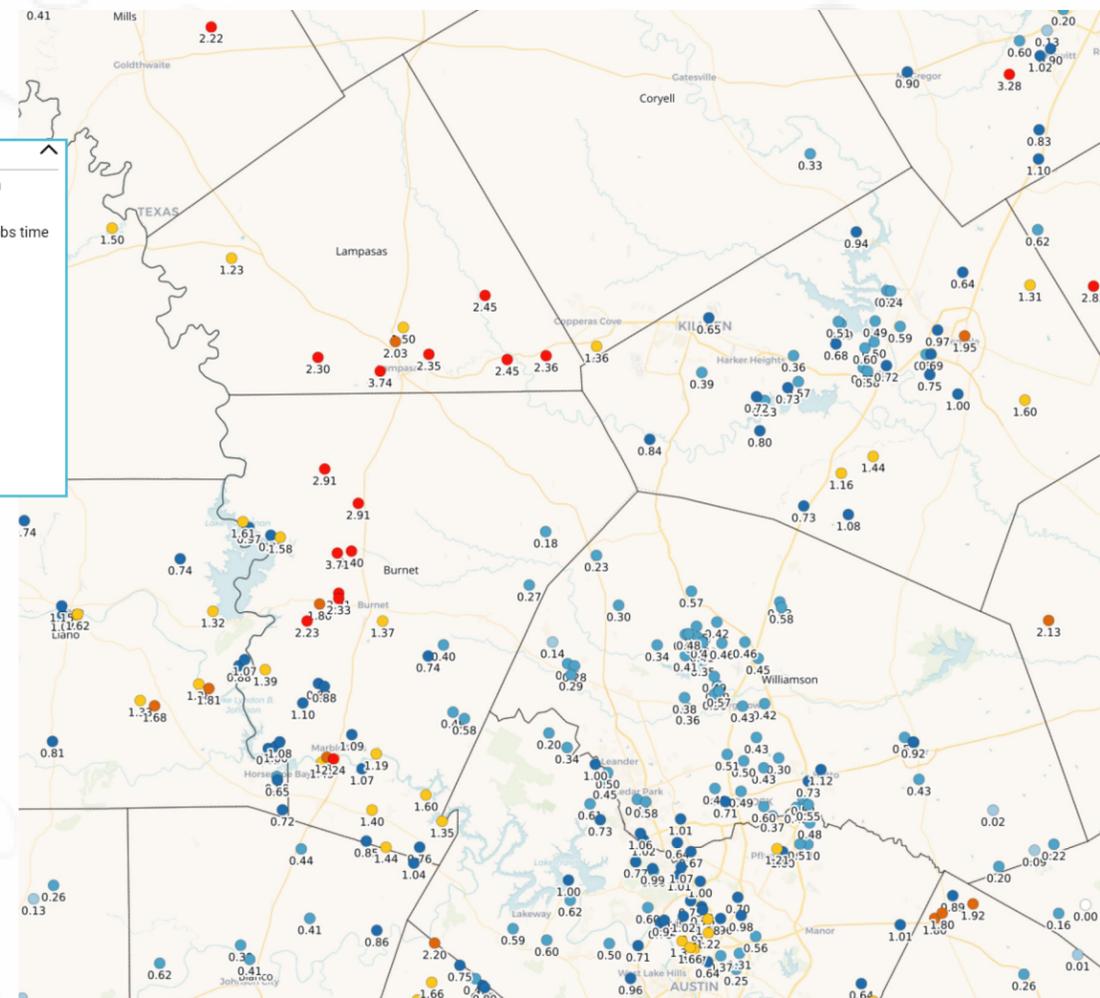
For HLMGA, CoCoRaHS is an important project with members earning volunteer service hours by recording precipitation data since 2002. But it is a quiet project: no chair person, no group announcements, no committee meetings or travel time. So I surveyed members who have recorded volunteer service hours for CoCoRaHS this year to teach us more about it.

LEFT: CoCoRaHS volunteers use professional rain gauges that accurately measure rainfall to the hundredth of an inch and can hold up to 11 inches of water in a downpour. Lyn Mefford keeps her gauge, shown here, secured to the corner of her garden fence.

Photo by Lyn Mefford



RIGHT: This 24-hour precipitation map shows rainfall recorded by CoCoRaHS volunteers June 28, 2022. It was a happy day in Lampasas and Burnet Counties! Graphic courtesy CoCoRaHS



💧 Why did you begin collecting rainfall data? Why do you continue?

Nancy Knickerbocker-Pennick: I took a storm reporting class around 20 years ago, and the rainfall reporting was part of the class. I ordered the gauge and have been reporting ever since. I had to shut down my Williamson County station when I moved here, and I set up a new gauge to report from Burnet County. I continue because weather impacts everything.

Lyn Mefford: I started collecting rain data during my Master Gardener classes. I’m a bit of a science nerd, and I loved the idea that people were volunteering to do this collecting and reporting all over the country. I’d noticed after we moved here that there was quite a bit of disparity in the reports of rain in the Austin area. And, since we live on the east side of Lake Buchanan, I was interested in knowing if the “myth” was right — is the east side

of the lake really the drier side?

Kathy Forisha: I started collecting rain data to make a contribution and to obtain volunteer hours. I continue in order to provide accurate rainfall information at our location.

Donna Cagle: I began collecting data when presented with the opportunity at Master Gardener training in 2021. The more areas that are represented help scientists better understand climate and weather patterns. I also like seeing the exact amount of rain that I get down to a tenth of an inch, and that helps me better determine if I need to water the garden and how much, when there is rainfall.

Bobby Whitmire: I began collecting rainfall data because I am interested in the weather in general, and particularly where we stand with regard to rainfall. I continue to do so because I continue to have this interest and can now share my data through CoCoRaHS.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 18

By Carolyn Crouchet

How often do you record data?

Responses ranged from daily to when it rains, hails or snows.

What tips do you have for those who are interested?

Bobby Whitmire: I would advise anyone else who is interested in participating to get a quality rain gauge and properly locate it. They could join the community if they would like to share their data and see what people in other areas are recording.

Donna Cagle: The tip I have would be to read the information that they have on their website, so you know how to handle things like snow, ice and hail and whenever rain accumulation is more than an inch. You can also submit entries for multiple days, so if you travel you can still give input upon your return. It's really easy to get into the routine of checking each morning.

Nancy Knickerbocker-Pennick: I use the phone app for reporting. If inter-

ested in gardening, being interested in weather is a must.

Lyn Mefford: I'd encourage anyone who has an interest in weather to get a rain gauge and register it to report. My favorite thing is to make a report and then look at the map of the county and the reports others make. It is comforting to know that others are using the same tool, the same processes, and have the same interest. After all, the weather is often a gardener's best friend!

Kathy Forisha: It's quick and it allows you to contribute, view areas and see how precipitation varies. Cool!

Cool indeed! Thank you each and all for your important work.

NOTE: I am collecting information on other citizen-scientist activities of potential interest to our members and will share the information in the next Dig It. If you are involved in an activity and have insights to share, I'd like to hear from you via carolyncrouchet@yahoo.com.



ABOVE: Donna Cagle's CoCoRaHS rain gauge is perfectly situated in an area of her yard that is not blocked by structures or overhanging trees.

Photo by Donna Cagle

“Let me tell y'all how much rain we got!”

A CoCoRaHS volunteer and self-confessed weather nerd shares her love of rainfall data

I grew up on a family farm in Iowa, and I remember being a kid and standing out on the gravel road with my Pop on a sticky summer afternoon, looking up at the sky and watching swirling, sickly green clouds.

“See how they're forming a circle?” he asked, pointing straight above our heads. “That's how a tornado gets started.”

Instead of running for the basement — as a lot of sensible people would — we stayed there and watched those clouds, hoping to get only rain out of them, and not a funnel cloud or, possibly even worse, hail that could flatten the crops.

That's how I became a weather nerd. From the time I was old enough to understand the topic, I thought (and still think) it's awfully strange that some people don't know how much rain they just got. Doesn't everybody have a rain gauge?

And don't get me started on city slickers who are always hoping for sunny skies, even when fields and pastures are bone dry.

So when I was in the 2019 HLMGA certification class and a guest speaker told us about this super-cool organization called CoCoRaHS, I knew instantly that I wanted to join up. Our piece of land in western Lampasas County is now CoCoRaHS station TX-LP-10, and recently I re-

ceived an email congratulating me for submitting more than 500 daily reports.

But CoCoRaHS is only part of my weather nerdiness. As my Pop did, I keep a record of our rainfall (he also kept track of snowfall, but that's not something I've had to deal with much here in the Hill Country). Pop used a paper calendar, but with my Excel spreadsheet, I can tell you to the hundredth of an inch how much rain we had every day of every year since we moved here in the spring of 2018. I can tell you how this month's rainfall compares to our location's average rainfall for the month.

A couple of years into using my spreadsheet, I wanted to track our rainfall not just by the calendar year, but by the last 12 months and the last six months, so I added “rolling” totals and averages. I also found out about a “rain year” or “water year” which, for CoCoRaHS, is the total amount of moisture measured from Oct. 1 of one year through Sept. 30 of the following year. So I put that in my spreadsheet, too.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 20



I entered my Sweet 100s in the fair. My tomatoes didn't win, but this picture OF MY TOMATOES got first place — go figure!

~ Roxanne Dunegan



What's growing, blooming and producing in YOUR garden? Show it off in What's Growing On! Send pictures of your plants and projects, plus a little information, to Gail Braymen at gebfo@gmail.com.

By Gail Braymen

RIGHT: The 2022 page of Gail's rainfall spreadsheet is looking mostly blank and very bleak.

2022												
	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
1												
2						0.02						
3		0.55				0.31						
4												
5					0.08							
6												
7												
8	0.03		0.01									
9												
10												
11	0.2											
12				0.1								
13							0.02					
14												
15												
16												
17		0.05		0.04								
18												
19												
20												
21			0.1									
22		0.01										
23					0.84							
24	0.41				1.21							
25				0.05								
26		0.06										
27						1.23						
28												
29												
30			0.36									
31	0.24											
Actual by Month	0.88	0.67	0.47	0.19	2.13	1.56	0.02	0	0	0	0	0
Average by Month	1.5	2.2	2.7	2.06	4.09	4.28	2.24	1.97	2.73	3.27	2.35	1.95
Actual to Date	0.88	1.55	2.02	2.21	4.34	5.9	5.92	5.92	5.92	5.92	5.92	5.92
Average to Date	1.5	3.7	6.4	8.46	12.55	16.83	19.07	21.04	23.77	27.04	29.39	31.34
2021 Actual by month	1.18	0.65	2.89	2.37	8.41	1.03	2.98	0.35	1.06	2.21	1.06	0.08
2021 Actual to Date	1.18	1.83	4.72	7.09	15.5	16.53	19.51	19.86	20.92	23.13	24.19	24.27
12-mo rolling actual	23.97	23.99	21.57	19.39	13.11	13.64	10.68	10.33	9.27	7.06	6	5.92
Rain Year to date actual	4.23	4.9	5.37	5.56	7.69	9.25	9.27	9.27	9.27	0	0	0
Rain Year to date average	9.07	11.27	13.97	16.03	20.12	24.4	26.64	28.61	31.34	3.27	5.62	7.57
6-mo rolling actual	5.64	5.96	7.39	3.35	4.42	5.9	5.04	4.37	3.9	3.71	1.58	0.02
6-mo rolling average	13.77	14	13.97	12.76	14.5	16.83	17.57	17.34	17.37	18.58	16.84	14.51
LAST FREEZE	24-Mar			FIRST FREEZE								

Unfortunately, this year I can tell you we're currently 17.68 inches below our average annual rainfall of 31.34 inches. We're also 17.37 inches below the rain year average, 17.57 inches below the six-month rolling average, and 20.66 inches below the 12-month rolling average.

Sometimes I wish I did *not* know just how bad this drought really is.

My rainfall spreadsheet can make me smile, too, though. On the 2018 page, in the October column, wow! The total for the month was 16.5 inches, and 12 of those fell in just two days. The memories rush back, just as the water did in Salt Creek that runs through our place.

We hadn't lived here for a year yet, and we'd only ever seen a gentle trickle of a creek, if it was running at all. Suddenly, though, quiet Salt Creek was a raging river, roaring over our crossing and trapping us on the property! Good thing we had gone to the grocery store the night before.

October 2018 was definitely our initiation into the wild ups and downs of Central Texas weather. Fortunately, our creek crossing didn't wash away, and the spring wildflower season of 2019 — thanks to all that moisture in the fall — was amazing.

When I look at the spreadsheet column for September 2020 (12.29 inches compared to our average September rainfall of 2.73 inches), I remember the big RV trip I had planned with my sister. I was supposed to head to her home in North Carolina on the 3rd. But look at the rainfall we had that day: 6.59 inches. Guess what Salt Creek was doing. There was no driving an RV through that flood! It kept raining on the 4th, another 1.46 inches, and I had to postpone the trip a second day.

By the morning of the 5th, the creek level had gone down, and my husband, Don, took the tractor to the crossing to push back the gravel that the flood water had washed out of place. Let me tell you, that crossing was mushy as tapioca pudding, but the RV made it, and moments later I was out on the blacktop road and headed to North Carolina. Moments after that, the rain started pouring down again, and minutes after that, the crossing was flooded again! I had just squeaked through a tiny weather window.

Last year is still pretty fresh in my mind, so I don't really need the spreadsheet to remind me that we had a wet spring. It stayed unusually wet in our general area through the summer, *except* on our property, which often seems to us to have a force field that repels rainclouds. The current drought really began for us last summer, and we're a full year into the misery now.

2018 October	
1	
2	0.15
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	0.25
9	1.8
10	
11	
12	
13	
14	
15	6.5
16	5.5
17	0.4
18	0.3
19	0.55
20	
21	
22	
23	
24	1.05
25	
26	
27	
28	
29	
30	
31	
Actual by Month	16.5
Average by Month	3.33
Actual to Date	39.68
Average to Date	26.53

What gives me hope — and keeps me a watchful weather nerd — is always the pleasant possibility and prospect of having rain to empty out of the gauge in the morning, submitting my daily CoCoRaHS report that isn't a big ZERO, and adding an entry in my rainfall spreadsheet.

I think Pop would be proud. 🙌

NOTE: I am very pleased to tell y'all that the morning of July 15 — the Dig It publication day — CoCoRaHS station TX-LP-10 (that's me!) reported rainfall of 0.77 inch received during the previous afternoon's storm.

2020 September	
1	
2	0.5
3	6.59
4	1.46
5	0.44
6	
7	
8	0.55
9	1.76
10	
11	
12	
13	
14	
15	
16	0.95
17	
18	
19	
20	
21	0.04
22	
23	
24	
25	
26	
27	
28	
29	
30	
31	
Actual by Month	12.29
Average by Month	2.73
Actual to Date	37.21
Average to Date	23.77

2019 Actual by month	0.67
2019 Actual to Date	16.09
12-mo rolling actual	40.61
Rain year to date actual	40.61
Rain year to date average	31.34
6-mo rolling actual	25.32
6-mo rolling average	17.37

CREATURE FEATURE

By Wizzie Brown, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist

Cicada Killer Wasps

Cicada killer wasps, common this time of year, are native to Texas. They are some of the largest wasps that you can find in Texas, reaching up to 1 1/2 inches long, and can be somewhat frightening if you see them flying about your lawn. Cicada killers have a reddish-brown head and thorax, a black and yellow abdomen, and wings with a rusty tinge. Only females are capable of stinging because the stinger is a modified egg laying structure. Fortunately, female cicada killer wasps are rarely aggressive. Males look similar to females and are territorial. They will buzz near you if you enter their territory, but once you leave the male's territory it ignores you.

Cicada killers are considered beneficial insects because they help to control cicada populations. Cicadas, the noisy insects of summer, are stung and paralyzed by female cicada killer wasps. The paralyzed cicadas are carried back to a burrow that the wasp digs in the ground. The female wasp pulls the cicada into the burrow and tucks into a side tunnel. Once there are three or four cicadas in the side tunnel, the female deposits an egg with the cicadas and seals the tunnel. When the egg hatches, the cicada killer larva eats the cicadas provided. The cicada killer wasp that is developing emerges the following year.

Cicada killers usually do not warrant any control methods. If someone is allergic to wasps, then insecticidal dust



Don't be alarmed by the size of a cicada killer wasp, which can be up to 1 1/2 inches long. Only female wasps can sting, and they are rarely aggressive and more interested in hunting than hurting humans.

Photo courtesy Texas A&M University

can be sprinkled around the opening of the burrow. Tamp the dust around the opening with your shoe and, as the wasps work on cleaning out the entrance to the burrow, they will pick up the dust on their bodies and eventually die.

Please note that cicada killer wasps are often mistaken for Asian giant hornets (AGH), also referred to as "murder hornets." AGH have not been found in Texas and have only been located in Washington state within the United States. 🐝

For more information or help with identification, contact Wizzie Brown, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist, at 512-854-9600. Check out Wizzie's blog at urban-ipm.blogspot.com.

BURNET COUNTY AREA FAIR

On behalf of the Burnet County Area Fair board, I would like to thank all the Master Gardeners who participated in the fair, both volunteering and entering. We look forward to everyone being part of it next year. Put it on your calendar: June 9 and 10, 2023.

Roxanne Dunegan



Cosmos



This Celebrity tomato has heat-stressed leaves.

spines are very sharp and contain substances that may produce allergic skin reactions when they penetrate the skin.

not once during this heat spell have I heard that very old cliché often humorously asked during very hot weather.

Can you think of the phrase? It's a question. Have you ever used it? Have you ever heard it in person, or is it one of those things not based on fact and found only in movies or literature? Maybe it's like that story about the young couple making out in a car, and the psycho with the hook attacks them: it never happened.

So, I'll ask y'all, so that we can check that box and move on to the rest of the article.

"(Is it) hot enough for you?"

Summer survivors

Two crops are thriving in this weather: the sweet potato vines and the okra. We planted three beds of sweet potatoes and decided not to trellis them this year. It's pretty amazing to see a 15x40-foot patch of luscious, deep green leaves on vines voraciously vying for sunlight. The vines have completely covered the beds and the aisles between them.

Feel free to stop by and pick a few slips for your garden.

The okra is doing what okra does: growing taller and taller, while putting on pretty flowers that change to pods of palatable pleasure. There is a major downside when you are harvesting while wearing a short-sleeved shirt. Whenever I pick okra, I have an allergic reaction to those prominent hairs or spines on the stems and leaves of the okra plant. These

Yes, I am allergic and, yes, I itch and swell. The irony of it is I don't eat okra.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24



Jana picks cukes.

THE KING'S GARDEN

UPDATE

In my last article, written May 28, I referred to the heat wave that was affecting us and our gardens. Almost six weeks later, we have yet to have a break from it.

Today I was just standing, holding a garden hose and watering plants, and the sweat was literally flowing off my forehead, covering my glasses and distorting my vision. Surprisingly enough though,



STORY BY HANK ROMINSKI | PHOTOS BY COLLEEN "SISSY" ROMINSKI



The last of the peaches.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 23

The tomatoes and cucumbers are still hanging in there and producing. Peppers still haven't reached their full potential for the season. Sadly, the squashes are on their last legs due to the heat and the borers. But fear not! We have planted squash starts, and the cycle continues.



Datura/Moonflower/Thornapple/Angel's Trumpet/Jimsonweed, etc.

Just peachy

In mid-July, we picked the last of the peaches. They had all turned that tasty red and gold color that screams, "We need picking — NOW!" Another reason for picking is that one of the peaches was half-eaten on the tree. My guess was that it was attacked by a member of the Microchiroptera family. I believe that it was a bat and not a Sciuridae (squirrel) because it was still left on the tree, and because of the tooth pattern left in the peach.

We're pretty proud of our 75 pounds of peaches picked this year. Last year, we only had one peach. We owe it all to Mickey York, who brought our fruit trees back from the dead.

And the answer is...

We did manage to have a couple downpours since our last article. After the first one, it was evident that the main diversion ditch in the front of the pollinator garden wasn't big or deep enough. It's always an oxymoron digging a drainage ditch in sunny, 100-plus degree weather. However, it needed to be done.

During the couple-hour task of digging, shoveling and dumping the soil at different places, not one person came up to my sweat-drenched body and asked "Hot enough for you?" 🙄



Hank v. the drainage ditch.



Hummingbird

Volunteers show up to The King's Garden every Monday, Wednesday and Friday starting about 8 a.m. and leave when they need. The last volunteer is there until 11–11:30 or sometimes later. Contact Keith Atwood (713-203-8846) or Hank Rominski (860-575-8098) for more information or if you want to visit or volunteer at The King's Garden. Put "3333 Route 1431 Kingsland TX" in your GPS and it should direct you to the right place.

Burnet Farmers and Crafts Market

Every Saturday on the Courthouse Square
Through Nov. 19, 2022
 9 a.m.–1 p.m.

For volunteer opportunities, contact Linda Stoneking at flyingmom4@yahoo.com or 817-939-7080





Luedecke Lessons

By Bill and Martelle Luedecke

Keep your souls and soles in your garden! Remember the True Master Gardener: Jesus said, "I am the vine; my Father is the Gardener." John 15:1

Helpful hints for a hot, dry summer

Composting

* Have you started composting? With the heat, compost materials will break down to a wonderful fertilizer. You can compost kitchen scraps such as coffee grounds and filters, the tops of celery, apple cores, orange peels and crushed eggshells, for starters, and other kitchen scraps such as these. Crushed eggshells will cut up the grub worms. Don't use animal products such as grease or trimmings. Animal products break down SLOWLY and attract all kinds of unwanted varmints. You can also add dry leaves, grass clippings, sawdust, hay and hedge clippings. If you are doing a pile, make sure to turn the pile at least once a week. If you are using a tub, rotate often. Remember to keep your compost moist!



middle of the day in Texas, the water will get hot and act as a magnifying glass. You might fry or steam your fruit and nut trees. Gentle reminder: your mulch should not touch the trunk of your tree. Leave approximately 6 inches of space between trunk and mulch.

Potted plants

* When watering potted plants, make sure that the water is getting to the roots. A good rule of thumb is 3 inches down. You can measure by sticking a wooden ruler or wooden dowel or popsicle stick into the soil. Water deeply, then allow the soil to completely dry to avoid root rot. Then repeat.

Mulch

* While you have your ruler out, double-check the depths of your mulch. Is it 3-4 inches deep? If not, time to add some on the top.

Herbs

* Prune herbs to encourage growth. For instance, you want to prune your basil before the flowers emerge. Pruning your mints makes for some wonderful sun tea. Isn't it fun to cut sprigs, place them in water on the kitchen windowsill and watch them grow? Sure makes the kitchen smell yummy, too.

Cucumbers

* Yellow cucumbers will have an intense flavor, so harvest your cucumbers while they are green and just the right size for your use. Add dill and vinegar for pickles. Or slice and freeze for your water bottle.

Dog days

* Sidenote: did y'all know there are "swamp cooler" vests for dogs? They work wonderfully.

Deter garden pests

* In our gardens we can have two types of insect pests: the ones that chomp away and the ones that suck juices from our plants. To deter these pests, mow around your garden. Keep your plants healthy with fertilizer and watering. After you have harvested all the fruit and vegetables from the plant, remove the expired plant, throw it in your compost or till it into the soil. Leaving the old plant continues to attract the chompers and suckers.

Happy hummers

* Keep an eye on your hummingbird feeders. The hot sun may be making rock candy at the bottom.

Fruit and nut trees

* Water fruit and nut trees often and deeply to avoid fruit drop-off. Water in the early morning, long and deep. Never water in the middle of the day. If you water in the

Reduce Wildfire Risk

We've had some rain. Grass and shrubs grew. Now the grass is high and dry.

We stopped by to speak with Kelly Tarla, Burnet County Extension Agent, at Burnet County AgriLife to discuss the situation and gather resources. We asked, "What should we do?"

"The main objective is to get rid of the fuel load!" Kelly said. Fuel load could determine if a fire is going to start, and it definitely will determine intensity of the fire.

Remove dead grass

* Remove fuel load by mowing and removing thatch from the grass. A mower with a collection bag attached will do the job.

Remove deadwood

Look at your landscape. Do you have deadwood? For example, branches that didn't recover from the freeze and shrubs that need pruning.

Do you have "laddering landscape"? Plant material that can carry a fire burning in low-growing vegetation to taller vegetation is called "ladder fuel," according to surviving-wildfire.extension.org.

* Some local plants that could be ladder fuel, due to the extreme weather conditions that we have experienced in the last two years, are Salvia greggii (Autumn Sage), Texas sage and ash trees. Salvia and older Texas sage tend to get leggy if they're not trimmed. So, you might have some random dead wood.

* Ash trees did not do well during the freeze of 2021 and may be dead and dry in your landscape. Although the base of your ash tree may be recuperating you might have dead limbs up high. Even though the ton of deadwood is high up, embers can still get

up there, especially with the wind that we have had!

* Anything that is dead is going to be a fuel for fire! Therefore, remove as much thatch and deadwood as you can from around your home and on your property. Try to take it to a city or county dump.

Incorporate firewise landscaping

If you're out in a rural area with no irrigation, Kelly further suggests firewise landscaping.

* Try low-growing, moist plants such as Columbine, Violet, Primrose and Phlox within 10 feet of your home. Taller plants, such as Bluebells, Bluebonnets, Aster and Gay Feather could be used 10-30 feet out from your home. Beyond 30 feet, good choices are shrubs such as Turks cap or butterfly bush.

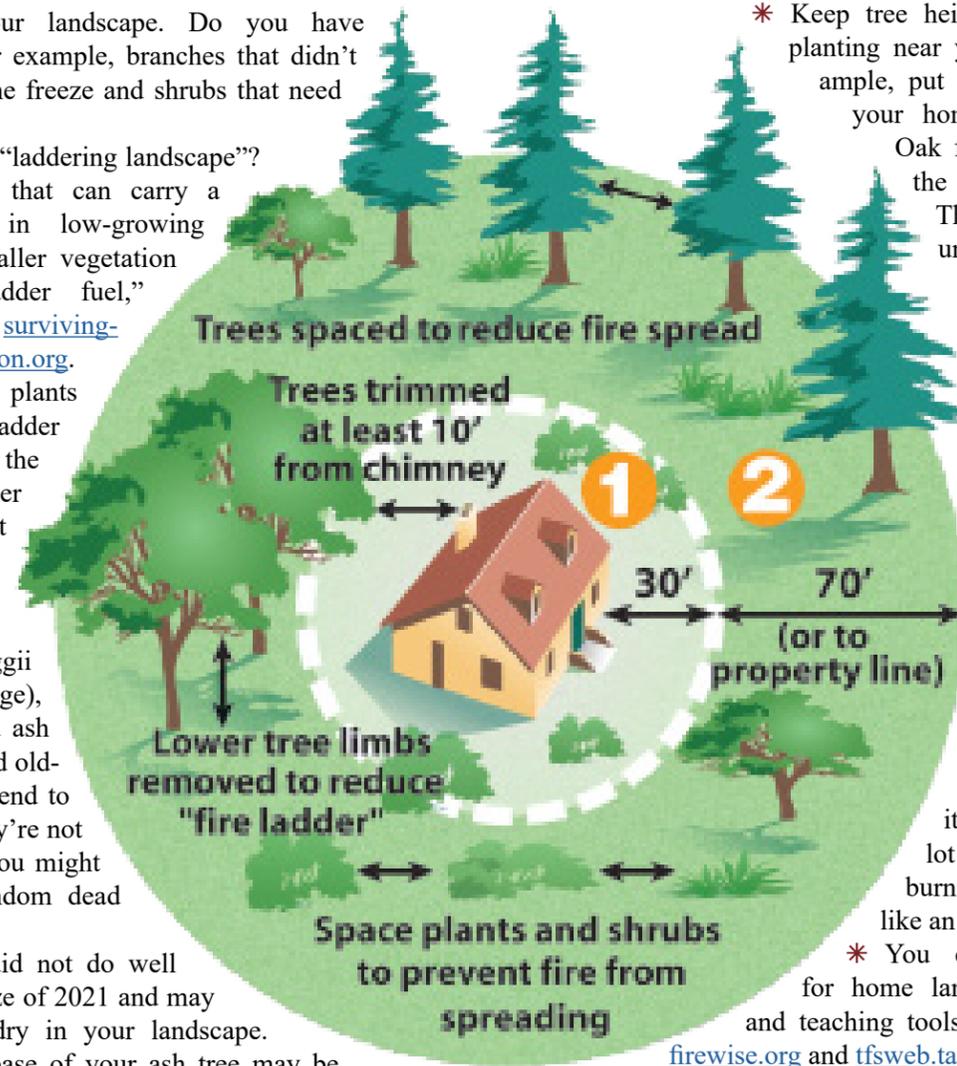
* Keep tree heights in mind when planting near your house. For example, put Lacy Oak closer to your home and Monterey Oak farther away, due to the height of the trees. The idea is to have NO underbrush by your house!

* Double-check your mulch around the house. Even if it is flame-retardant, how old or dry is it now? Around your house, keep a green belt and keep wood moist, if possible.

* Try to thin your cedar trees. If they are dead, they've got to go. Cedar has an oil in it, so it burns hotter than a lot of other stuff, and it burns quickly. It's almost like an explosive.

* You can find resources for home landscaping checklists and teaching tools and instructions at firewise.org and tfsweb.tamu.edu.

* The National Fire Prevention Association has free online training for Reducing Wildfire Risk for People and Property at nfpa.org.



Have questions or comments?

Contact Bill Luedecke at bill@texasland.net or Martelle Luedecke at Luedeckephoto@gmail.com.

GARDEN-FRESH RECIPES

EGGPLANT IN THE GARDEN

Story and photos by Donna Cagle



This was my first year growing eggplant. I saw how well it did at The Garden in Marble Falls last year and wanted to try my hand at it.

I started four plants from seed and put the babies in the ground March 24. I also directly sowed some seeds to see how they would do. Two months later, on May 24, the garden took a hit from a severe hail storm and damaging winds, which shredded leaves and toppled plants over. However, the eggplants were a hardy crew and survived! They also appear to love the heat and, with regular irrigation and fish emulsion application, are producing quite a bit of fruit.

Now, what do I do with them? I've given some away, but not everybody is an eggplant fan, I guess. A neighbor said "Yes" to zucchini and onions, but

"No thanks" to the eggplant. I think a lot of people don't know what to do with them. So...

I want to share two of my favorite recipes: Baba Ganoush (Eggplant Dip) and Greek Moussaka. My husband loves Baba Ganoush, which we first tried in a restaurant a number of years ago, and the Moussaka is a rediscovered favorite.



BABA GANOUSH (EGGPLANT DIP)

- 1 or 2 eggplant, totaling 2 pounds
 - 3 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil
 - 2 to 3 Tbsp roasted tahini
 - 1-2 garlic cloves, finely chopped (more or less depending on your taste)
 - 1/2 tsp ground cumin
 - Juice of 1 lemon (about 2 1/2 Tbsp)
 - Salt and cayenne pepper to taste
 - 1 Tbsp chopped parsley
- Preheat oven to 400 degrees F.

Poke the whole eggplants in several places with the tines of a fork. Cut the eggplants in half lengthwise and brush the cut sides lightly with olive oil (about 1 Tbsp). Place slices, cut side down, on a baking sheet that has been lined with parchment or aluminum foil for easy clean-up. Roast until very tender, about 40 minutes. Remove from the oven and allow to cool for 15 minutes.

Scoop the cooled eggplant flesh into a large bowl and mash well with a fork. Add garlic, olive oil,

tahini, cumin, lemon juice, salt, cayenne (just a pinch unless you want more heat) and mash well. You want it to be somewhat smooth, but still retain some texture.

Cool mixture to room temperature and season to taste with additional lemon juice, salt and cayenne. If you want, swirl a little olive oil on the top. Sprinkle with the fresh chopped parsley.

Serve with pita chips (my favorite), crackers, sliced baguette, celery or cucumber slices.

Recipe from simplyrecipes.com.

EASY GREEK MOUSSAKA

This recipe comes from Greece, but is simplified and cheaper than other versions, which is one reason I like it. Plus, it's very tasty! Serves 6

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 large eggplant, unpared | Cloves to taste |
| Olive oil | 2 cups tomato sauce |
| Salt and pepper to taste | 2 Tbsp tomato paste |
| 1 lb. ground beef | 1/4 cup red wine (optional) |
| 1 onion, chopped | 1/2 tsp oregano |
| 1 clove garlic, minced | 1 Tbsp chopped parsley |
| Dash nutmeg | 1 cup mozzarella cheese, shredded |
| Cinnamon to taste | Parmesan cheese, shredded |

Preheat oven to broil.

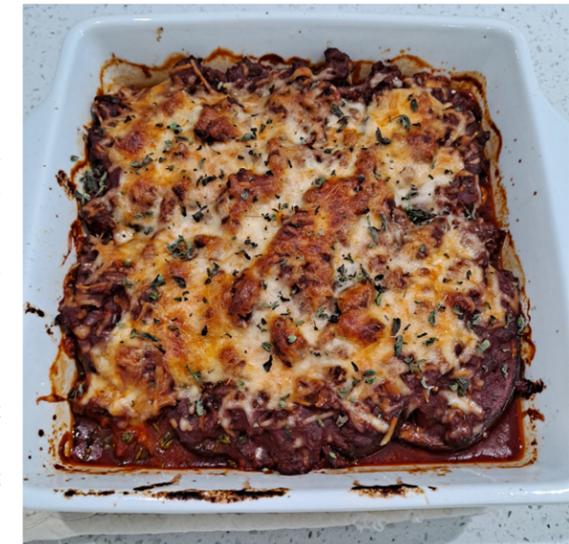
Cut eggplant into 1/2 inch slices. Place slices on cookie sheet, brush with olive oil, sprinkle with salt and pepper, and broil 5 minutes or until golden. Turn slices, brush and season again and broil until golden. Set oven to 350 degrees when broiling is completed.

Meanwhile, fry together the ground beef, onion and garlic. Season with salt and pepper, nutmeg, cinnamon and cloves. Add tomato sauce, tomato paste, red wine, oregano and parsley.

In a 9x9 baking dish, place half of the eggplant slices and top with half of meat mixture. Sprinkle with half of the mozzarella cheese and a light sprinkling of Parmesan cheese. Repeat layers, ending with Parmesan cheese.

Bake 40 minutes.

Recipe adapted from *More-with-Less Cookbook* by Doris Janzen Longacre



SMOKY SALSA

From Lisa Smith

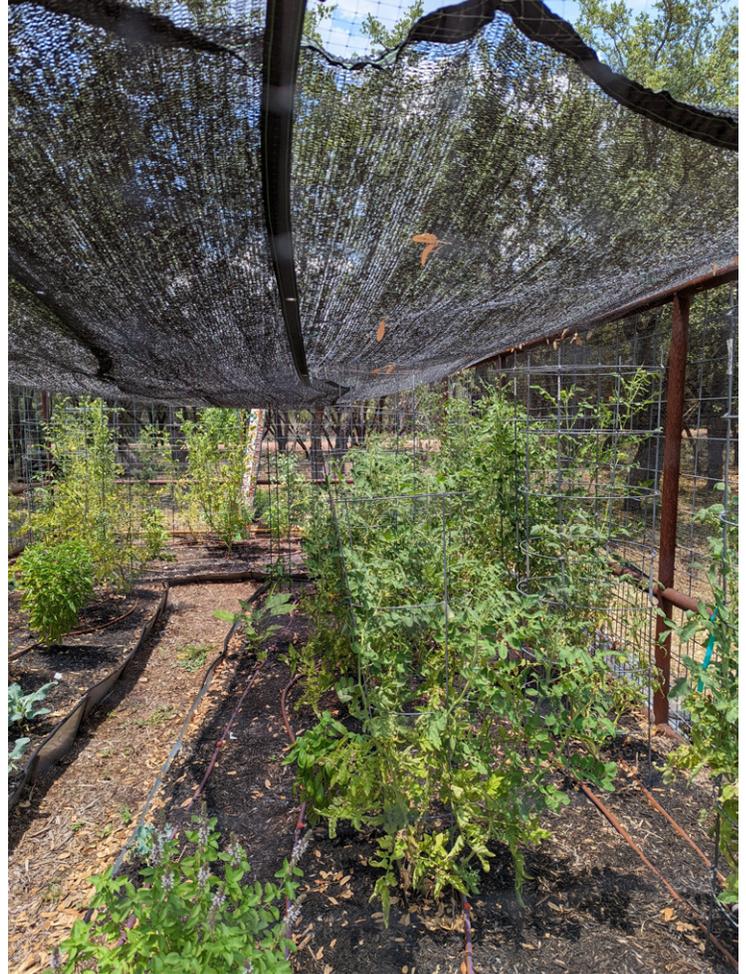
- 4 tomatoes, halved
- 1 red onion, sliced thick
- 1/3 bunch cilantro
- 1 garlic clove (small)
- 1 tsp canned chipotle chilies in adobo sauce
- 1 tsp apple cider vinegar
- 1 tsp salt

Grill veggies and slightly grill cilantro. Put all ingredients in blender and blend until slightly chunky.



Garden Hacks

Been gardening more than a day? Then chances are you have lots of tips and tricks to grow healthier plants, fight pests and generally make gardening easier and more productive. Send your Garden Hacks to Gail Braymen at gebfoto@gmail.com.



I would like to give a shout-out to the Master Gardener at the last meeting (June) who suggested shade cloth as a garden-saving application. I went home and ordered some from Amazon and installed it the next day. It has made a world of difference in the garden — I have blossoms and tomatoes and green plants!

I promise you, it is about 10 degrees cooler inside than out.

~ Lyn Mefford

Call for Content!

The Dig It News is written for gardeners, by gardeners... and that means we need to hear from YOU! You may send material at any time to Gail Braymen at gebfoto@gmail.com, but the deadline for the next issue (September) is August 28. You can send content as the text of an email or in a document – whatever works best for you. Cell phone pictures are fine, and photos are welcomed with all types of submissions.

Here's a list of submission categories, but please don't feel limited – if a topic interests you, chances are it will interest other HLMGA members!

• **Articles** - Stories about people, projects, plants, places or anything else you think would interest readers. Those of you with specialized training or knowledge are especially invited to share your expertise with the rest of us! Photos are a plus. (BONUS: time spent writing

articles counts as volunteer time!)

- **Photos / What's Growing On** - Share pictures of plants, projects, people, you name it. Please include a brief description of what is in the photo and identify any people.
- **Gardener's X-change** - Please include your email address and/or phone number so folks know how to contact you.
- **Q&A with the HLMGA** - Send gardening questions you have, or answer questions published in a previous issue.
- **Garden Hacks** - Share your best tips and tricks.
- **Recommended Reading** - Send the titles of your favorite gardening books.
- **Links & Apps** - Share your favorite online gardening links and applications.
- **Recipes** - Because who doesn't like to enjoy the fruits – and veggies – of their labor?