

# The "DIG IT!" News



## Courtyard Care

*Refreshing a long-term project*

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# HIGHLAND LAKES MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

## President's Corner

Feeling thankful for memories, meals and Master Gardeners!

Greetings Master Gardeners... On the fourth Thursday of every November in the United States, we gather with friends and family to share a meal and be grateful for all the good that has been given us throughout the year. This timeless tradition of giving thanks is a cherished ritual that many Americans hold near and dear to their hearts — not to mention, the food is amazing!

The holiday originated as a harvest festival celebrated by the Pilgrims in 1621 after a successful growing season. It has been celebrated nationally on and off since 1789. In 1863, it became a federal holiday after President Abraham Lincoln made Thanksgiving an official holiday to be celebrated on the fourth Thursday of November every year.

Thanksgiving has always been one of my favorite holidays, with some of my best memories of family dinners. When I was growing up, my Mother always loved the day, and helping her fix our favorite dishes was so special. Now I still prepare those same dishes using her recipes...

mainly from scratch, but with a few short cuts! Great traditions and great memories are made on Thanksgiving Day. As I count my blessings this year, HLMGA is certainly one of them and I wish each of you a very happy Thanksgiving.

We have started taking orders for our poinsettia plant sale. This has been a great fundraiser for the past two years. The plants have been so pretty and I am confident that they will be the same quality this year. We will have red, pink and white poinsettias and Christmas cactus

available to order. The order form is available on our website and can be mailed to me or turned in at the November meeting on Thursday the 10th, which is the last day to turn in your order. The poinsettia plants are \$16 and the Christmas cactus \$20. They will be available for pickup at the AgriLife parking lot on Saturday, Nov.19.

*Carolyn Stephens*  
stephens4005@sbcglobal.net  
817-874-2138

As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.  
*John F. Kennedy*

### Find the latest HLMGA news online!

[burnetcountyhighlandlakesmastergardener.org](http://burnetcountyhighlandlakesmastergardener.org)

[facebook.com/HighlandLakesMasterGardeners](https://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](mailto: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.

*Awarded First Place in the Texas Master Gardeners Search for Excellence Awards Program*



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November HLMGA Meeting

**Thursday, November 10, 2022 • 2 p.m.**

**Burnet County AgriLife Extension Office**

607 N. Vanderveer, Burnet, Texas

*ATTENDANCE IN PERSON AND VIA ZOOM\**

### PROGRAM:

**Attracting & Photographing Wildlife in Our Backyard**

Presented by Hank Rominski, Master Gardener

*\*Watch your email for Zoom details.*

# NOVEMBER 2022

From the MG Membership Committee

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

**NOVEMBER 3 — “Bizarre Botany Cocktail Tour: Fungus Among Us”** with Maeve Bassett, Conservation Programs Specialist at the LBJ Wildflower Center, 6–7:30 p.m. (1.5 hr credit), at the LBJ Wildflower Center, 4801 La Crosse Ave, Austin. Fee: \$25. Pre-registration required at [wildflower.org/learn/adults](https://wildflower.org/learn/adults).

**NOVEMBER 5 — “Morphology of Texas Oaks and Trees”** with Maeve Bassett, Conservation Programs Specialist at the LBJ Wildflower Center, 1–3 p.m. (2 hrs credit), at the LBJ Wildflower Center, 4801 La Crosse Ave, Austin. Fee: \$25. Pre-registration required at [wildflower.org/learn/adults](https://wildflower.org/learn/adults).

**NOVEMBER 5 — “Foraging for Native Edibles”** with Eric Knight, owner of Local Leaf, 9–11 a.m. (2 hrs credit – repeat), at the LBJ Wildflower Center, 4801 La Crosse Ave, Austin. Fee: \$25. Pre-registration required at [wildflower.org/learn/adults](https://wildflower.org/learn/adults).

**NOVEMBER 5 — “Winter Tree Pruning”** with Colleen Dieter, founder of Red Wheelbarrow, 9:30-11:30 a.m. (2 hrs credit), at the LBJ Wildflower Center 4801 La Cross Ave, Austin. Fee: \$30. Pre-registration required at [wildflower.org/learn/adults](https://wildflower.org/learn/adults).

**NOVEMBER 5 — “Botany of Thanksgiving”** with Michael Eason, director of Plant Conservation and Research, San Antonio Botanical Garden, 10 a.m.–12 p.m. (2 hrs credit), at the San Antonio Botanical Garden, 555 Funston Place, San Antonio. Fee: \$15. Pre-registration required at [sabot.org/learn/adult-classes](https://sabot.org/learn/adult-classes).

**NOVEMBER 5 — “Winter Gardening Tips for Victorious Veggies”** with Scott, 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/free-class-november-5](https://tngaustin.com/free-class-november-5).

**NOVEMBER 8 — “Bringing in Houseplants for the Winter”** 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/free-class-november-8](https://tngaustin.com/free-class-november-8).

**NOVEMBER 9 — “Basic Tree Care”** with Marybeth Parsons, Bexar County Master Gardener, 10 a.m.–12p.m. (2 hrs credit), at the San Antonio Botanical Garden, 555 Funston Place, San Antonio. Fee: free. Pre-registration required at [sabot.org/learn/adult-classes](https://sabot.org/learn/adult-classes).

**NOVEMBER 12 — “Ethnobotany of the Mesquite”** with Maeve Bassett, Conservation Programs Specialist, San Antonio Botanical Garden, 11:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m. (1.5 hrs credit), at the San Antonio Botanical Garden, 555 Funston Place, San Antonio. Fee: \$20. Pre-registration required at [sabot.org/learn/adult-classes](https://sabot.org/learn/adult-classes).

**NOVEMBER 12 — “DIY: Botanical Gin”** with Maeve Bassett, Conservation Programs Specialist, San Antonio Botanical Garden, 1–2 p.m. (1 hr credit), at the San Antonio Botanical Garden, 555 Funston Place, San Antonio. Fee: \$25. Pre-registration required at [sabot.org/learn/adult-classes](https://sabot.org/learn/adult-classes).

**NOVEMBER 12 — “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/free-class-november-12](https://tngaustin.com/free-class-november-12).

**NOVEMBER 12 — “Bizarre Botany Cocktail Tour: Fungus Among Us”** with Maeve Bassett, Conservation Programs Specialist at the LBJ Wildflower Center, 2:30–4 p.m. (1.5 hr credit), at the LBJ Wildflower Center, 4801 La Crosse Ave, Austin. Fee: \$25. Pre-registration required at [wildflower.org/learn/adults](https://wildflower.org/learn/adults).

**NOVEMBER 15 — “Pruning”** 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/free-class-november-15](https://tngaustin.com/free-class-november-15).

**NOVEMBER 19 — “The Importance of Soil”** with Matthew Gaston, Zilker Botanical Garden, 10 a.m. (1 hr credit), at The Natural Gardener, 8648 Old Bee Caves Rd, Austin. Fee: free. Pre-registration required at [tngaustin.com/free-class-november-19](https://tngaustin.com/free-class-november-19).

**NOVEMBER 19 — “How we can ensure the Hill Country continues to be sustainable and resilient for future generations”** with Rachael Lindsey, Director of Science and Stewardship at Hill Country Conservancy, 1 p.m. (1 hr credit), hosted by the Highland Lakes Chapter of the Native Plant Society of Texas at the Marble Falls Public Library, 101 Main St., Marble Falls. The educational presentation will follow a 30-minute chapter business meeting. Both in-person and Zoom meeting formats are offered. To join via Zoom, use this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88230443637?pwd=OFExekFvdjBGa3lKeVF-meS9mMFZDZz09>

Rachael will cover:  
• A brief on the Hill Country Conservancy and Hill Country Conservation Network, how dozens of conservation

organizations work together to protect the water and wildlife in the hill country.

• State of the Hill Country Report – a report on how population growth threatens our water supply and natural resources; what can be done?

• Dispelling the Cedar and Mesquite myths, how both trees benefit us

• How native plants and trees play a key role in our efforts to conserve water

• Biotic Pump theory - how tree canopies are indispensable for rain fall

**NOVEMBER 29 — “Planting and Transplanting”** 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/free-class-november-29](https://tngaustin.com/free-class-november-29).

## Burnet Farmers and Crafts Market



Every Saturday on the Courthouse Square

May 7 – Nov. 19, 2022  
9 a.m.–1 p.m.

For volunteer opportunities, contact Linda Stoneking at [flyingmom4@yahoo.com](mailto:flyingmom4@yahoo.com) or 817-939-7080

### HIGHLIGHT ON ONLINE AT

**NOVEMBER 9** — The Chino Basin Water Conservation District will host a “**Landscape Transformation Basics**” presentation at 8 p.m. The webinar will cover how to convert your lawn to a space that conserves water. They will cover:

- basics of creating a plan and resources to help
- basics of turf removal and project preparation
- basics of understanding what changes may be needed to your irrigation system
- advice on project planning and the best times of year to remove lawn and install plants
- advice on choosing and hiring a contractor
- other sources of information to help you on your next steps

To register for the free webinar and get 1.5 hours credit for Master Gardener advanced training, go to [eventbrite.com/e/landscape-transformation-basics-online-workshop-registration-410785900687](https://eventbrite.com/e/landscape-transformation-basics-online-workshop-registration-410785900687), click the red “Reserve a spot” button, select the number of people you’ll have attending, and click the red “Register” button. Fill out the contact information form; you may want to uncheck two checkboxes if you don’t want to get email from the Chino Basin folks. Again, click the red “Register” button. You’re now registered. In a couple of minutes, you’ll have a confirmation email in your inbox from Eventbrite. On Nov. 9, open the email and click on the “View the event” button to join the presentation.

The Chino Basin Water Conservation District was formed to help protect and preserve the Chino Groundwater Basin for the San Bernardino County communities in California that rely on it as a water source. Among other things, they focus on reducing water demand through community and conservation programs, providing free resources, workshops and programs to inspire and empower community members of all ages to be water stewards. For more information on this organization, go to [cbwcd.org](https://cbwcd.org); a list of their upcoming webinars and other courses can be found at [cbwcd.org/354/Free-Workshops](https://cbwcd.org/354/Free-Workshops).

For other online AT opportunities, go to [burnetcountyhighlandlakesmastergardener.org/library-of-at-resources](https://burnetcountyhighlandlakesmastergardener.org/library-of-at-resources), enter the member password, and select the latest list of webinars.

# Helping kids become gardeners

at the Burnet Middle School greenhouse



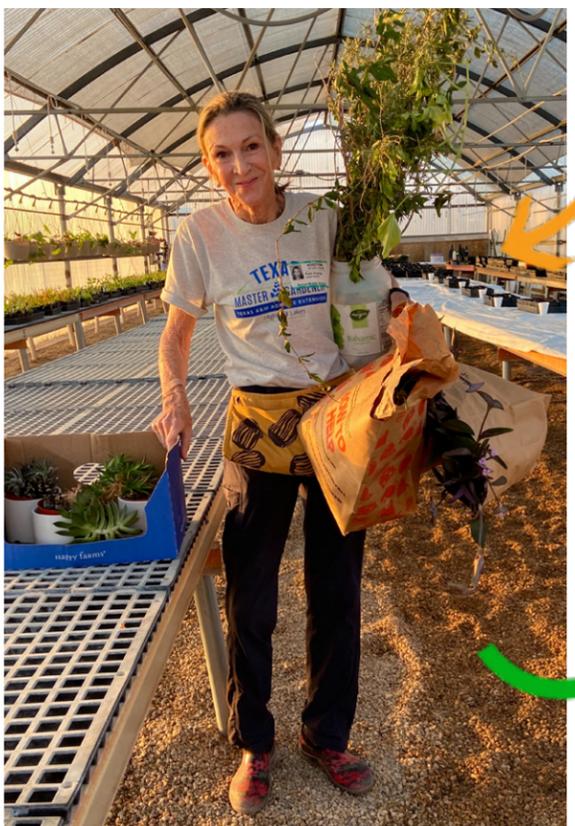
Tables await pots.



Pots await plants.

What happens on propagation work days at the BMS greenhouse?

at the Burnet Middle School greenhouse



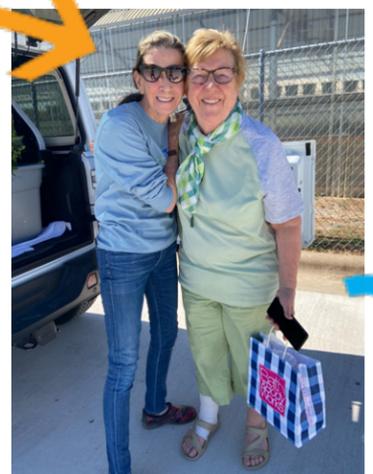
Patti Young totes plants donated by HLMGA members.



Willard Horn brings in more.

Photo essay by Carolyn Crouchet

Lavona Fry brings an entire carload of plants from her house...



...and gets a thank-you from Patti Young.

Here's a huge congratulations to the team: Carolyn Crouchet, Lavona Fry, Rebecca Hewitt, Ingrid Hoffmeister, Willard Horn, Ann McClanahan, Lyn Mefford, Linda Poerner, Karen Roberts, Mena Rueffer, Marsha Whatley, Lori Whitmire, Patti Young, Susan Young

We will start planting seeds for veggies in January. Come join in the fun!



Teacher Shelly Townsend, Linda Poerner, Lyn Mefford, Susan Young and Mena Rueffer consider those age-old questions for gardeners: What plants do we want? Where can we get them?



Heads down and working with skill: Karen Roberts, Ingrid Hoffmeister, Marsha Whatley, Lori Whitmire and Patti Young prep cuttings as fast as they can.



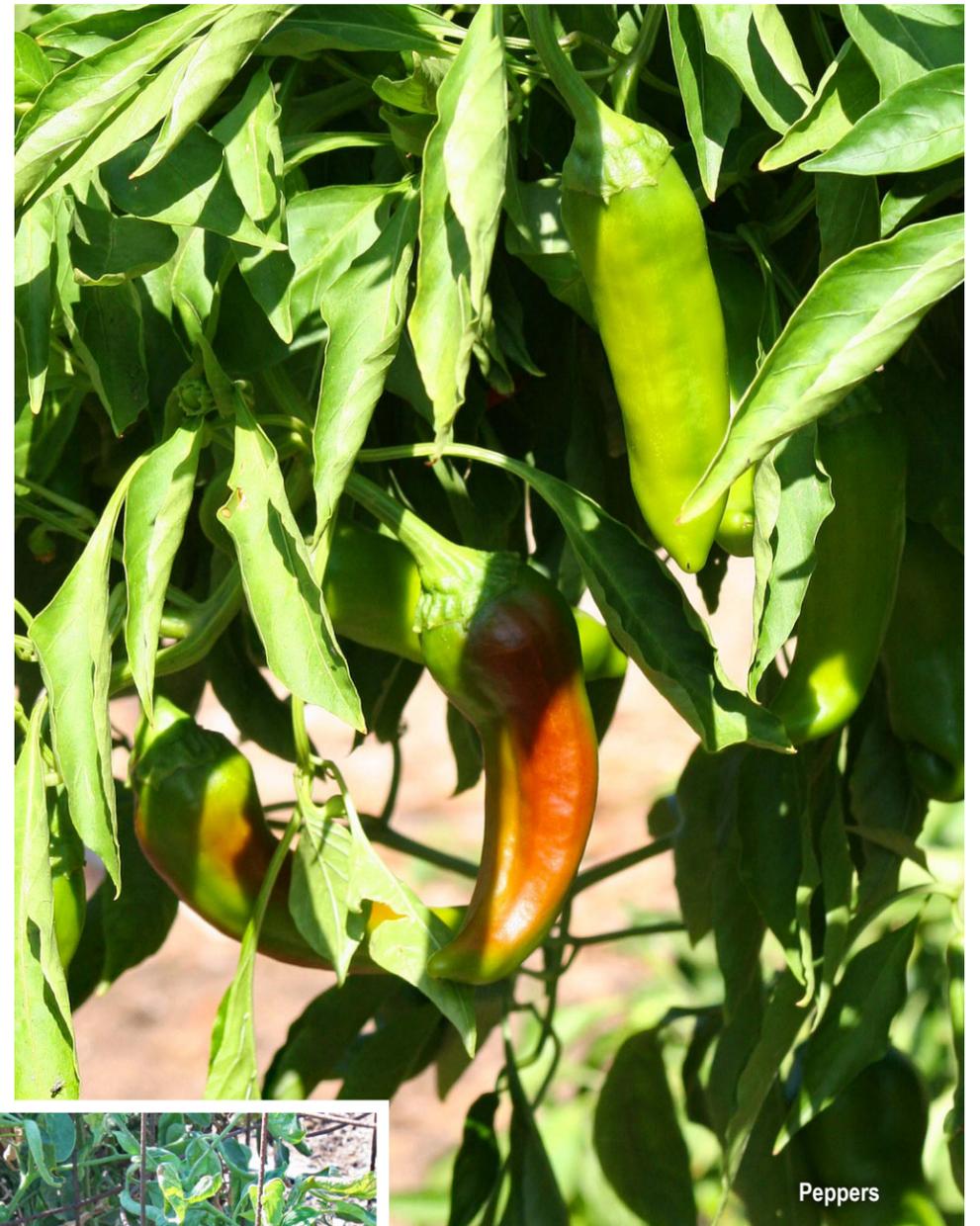
Six classes of kids plant the cuttings faster than we can prep them.



And the greenhouse fills up with plants.



Our international guests



Peppers

Our first digging of sweet potatoes weighed in at 147 pounds. We'll continue to harvest them for the next two to three weeks and hope that we will have about 400 more pounds.

The big surprise has been peppers. Our plant guy, Keith, is a big fan of different varieties of both sweet and hot peppers, and we planted a lot of them (pun intended). Since last month, the peppers have made it to the "number one" position in poundage picked. For a while, we had more peppers to pick than volunteers to harvest them. We certainly could have used a Peter Piper to pick a couple pecks, for sure. So, each week, we fell behind and left more and more peppers to continue to grow and ripen.

Which leads us to the following: On Oct. 25, God smiled once again on The King's Garden in the form of a donation by Debbie Kane. Ms. Kane is a volunteer at the Share the Harvest Pantry, and she hired a young couple from

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Tomatoes

Volunteers show up at the internationally famous 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 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.

# THE KING'S GARDEN

## UPDATE

Can you believe it? The next time you blink, 2022 will be in our rear-view mirror.

October finally brought cooler days and nights to our piece of Texas in the Highland Lakes. It also is a time when the eggplants and peppers begin to proliferate and provide many pounds of produce. It is certainly great to see the green tomatoes grow and start to change colors. They suffered so much this summer.

The bean seeds that were planted are growing according to schedule, along with the cucumber

and squash plants. We have added kale, lettuce and cabbage to the mix, and all these plants are enjoying the milder temperatures and growing more green leaves each day.

We even picked a couple of yellow squash. There are a number of yellow flowers on the squash plants, so, by next month, the squash will be a much larger part of our weekly harvest.



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



Sunflower row



Hank works in a sea of sweet potato vines.

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Nicaragua to work with us that Wednesday morning. This was also a day when we had nine volunteers volunteering. (One of the 12 days of Christmas?)

On Wednesday, Oct. 25, the volunteers at The King's Garden harvested a total of 310 pounds — a truly blessed amount.

Even though the new Pantry

employees didn't speak any English, our early arriver, Cris Northup, was able to have them start working right away clearing the vines from the sweet potato plants. Once Hank arrived, we were able to communicate better and give more detailed tasks for the morning. With the many other volunteers, we were finally able to pick those pesky peppers, many of which had peaked. By the end of the day, the volunteers had harvested almost 150 pounds (149, to be exact) of prime peppers. They sure were pretty, bright, shiny and colorful as they sat in the bins.

We had more peppers than we could handle, so we donated 77 pounds to the Helping Center in Marble Falls.

With our two guests and large number of helpers, we were also able to clear off the next batch of sweet potato vines, clear the watermelon patch, tie up some of those tomato cages that kept falling over, water the pollinator garden and remove a few pesky weeds.

With two more volunteers, we could have found a cure for COVID.

Therefore, a BIG SHOUT out to those who helped us complete a ton of tasks. You know who you are, Cris, Jana, Sissy, Sherie, Mary, Lester, Debbie, Hank, Kay (Master Naturalist). And to our Nicaraguan guests, Lenin and Jennifer, a hearty "Muchas Thank You."

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Fall also brings us a bountiful bucket of butterflies. Our flower beds are alive with the movement of fluttering wings. It is such a pretty time seeing the colorful movement of these delicate insects.

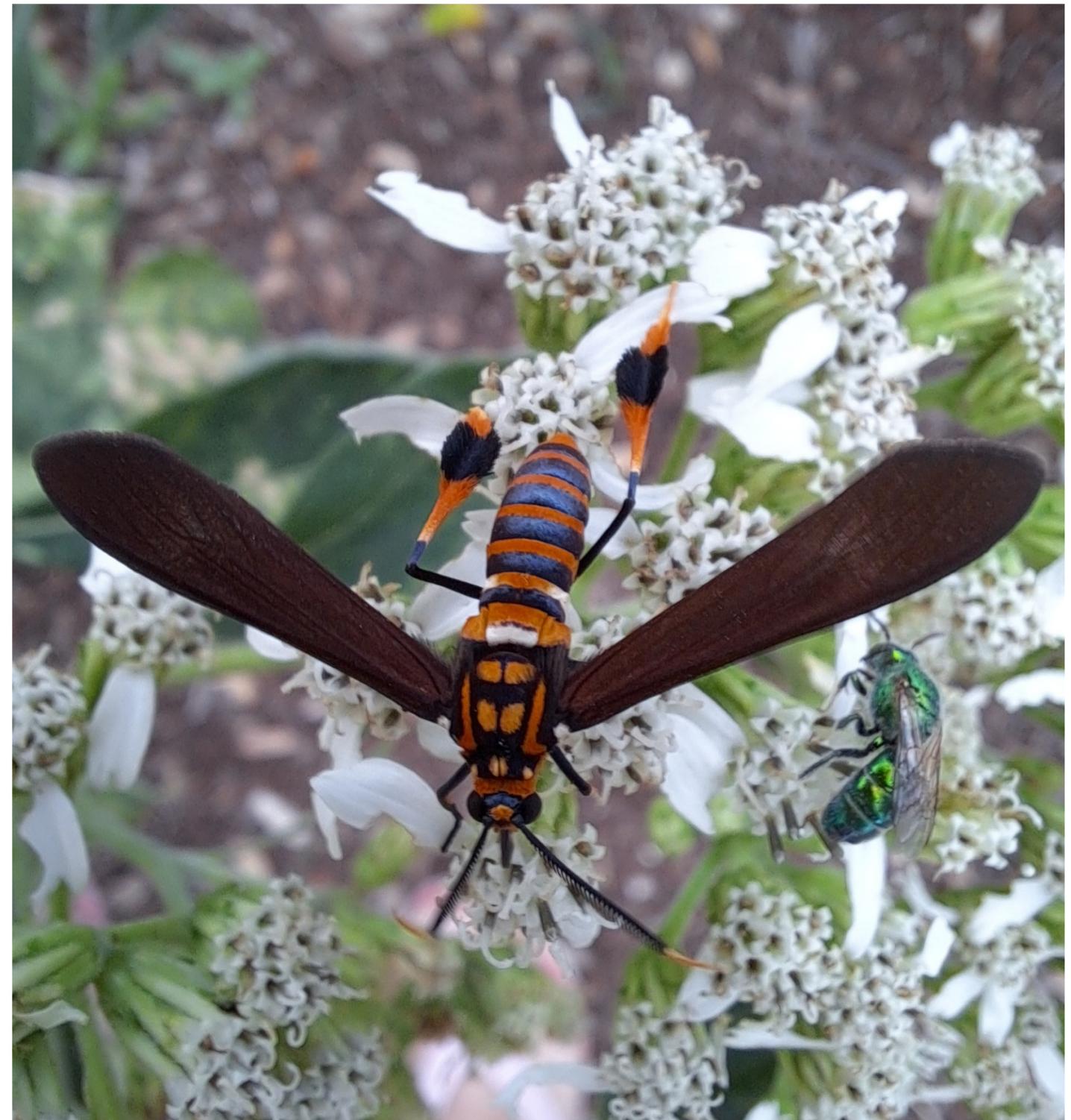
Did you know that butterflies (including moths) belong to the order of Lepidoptera? Did you know that Lepidoptera is a combination of the Latin words "lepido" (scale) and "ptera" (wing)? Sissy has a close-up of a butterfly's wing in our presentation that shows the scales. You can see this photo at the November HLMGA meeting. 🦋



American lady butterfly



Giant swallowtail butterflies



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](mailto:gebfoto@gmail.com).



A Texas wasp moth enjoys nectar from Frostweed.

~ Donna Cagle



# GARDEN-FRESH RECIPE

## SLICED GREEN TOMATO PIE

From Gail Braymen, who says, “My Pop loved pies of all kinds, and I used to always bake him a pie whenever I’d visit him and Mom. One year I was at their Iowa farm in October when the first freeze warning was announced, so it was all hands on deck picking the bushels of green tomatoes in the garden and safely stowing them away to ripen over the next weeks and months. Later, while leafing through Mom’s 1965 copy of *Farm Journal’s*

*Complete Pie Cookbook* and looking for something to make for Pop, I came across a recipe for green tomato pie. With permission to use some of the big, green, juicy jewels rescued from the freeze, I gave the pie a try. Pop’s satisfied smile and clean plate let me know it was a winner. I just came back from a visit to Iowa, and this time I made the pie for my husband, again with tomatoes rescued from the first freeze at Lone Rock Farm.

*From Farm Journal’s Complete Pie Cookbook*

Pastry for 2-Crust Pie (see below)	4 cups thinly sliced green tomatoes
1 1/4 cup sugar	1/2 tsp. cinnamon
1/2 tsp. nutmeg	1/4 tsp. salt
4 to 5 Tbsp. flour	2 Tbsp. lemon juice

Blend together sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg, salt and flour in bowl. Toss with tomatoes. Add lemon juice and mix in.

Place in pastry-lined pie pan. Adjust top crust and flute edges; cut vents. If desired, lightly brush top crust with water or milk and sprinkle with sugar.

Bake in 425° oven until tomatoes are soft and crust is lightly browned, about 50 to 60 minutes.

*NOTE: I used a deep dish 9-inch pie pan and doubled all the filling ingredients.*



## PASTRY FOR 2-CRUST PIE

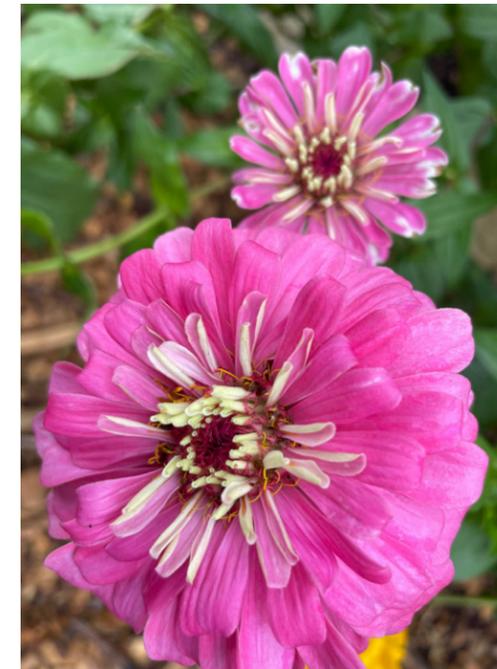
*Makes enough dough for a 10-inch pie or a deep dish 9-inch pie*

3 cups flour
1 1/2 tsp. salt
1 cup plus 2 Tbsp. vegetable shortening OR
1 cup lard
6 Tbsp. water

Combine flour and salt in mixing bowl. Cut in shortening with pastry blender.

Sprinkle on cold water, 1 Tbsp. at a time, tossing mixture lightly and stirring with fork. Add water each time to the driest part of mixture. The dough should be just moist enough to hold together when pressed gently with a fork. It should not be sticky.

Divide dough into two pieces, one slightly bigger for the bottom crust. Shape dough into smooth ball with hands, and roll.



These are zinnias we have been growing in a small side garden.

# UPDATE The Garden

Cooler temps and rain, yes please! We seem to finally be getting into fall, and it could not have come sooner.

The fall veggies are loving it, with things like radishes, beets and spinach coming along nicely. We had a great run with our okra this year, but that has now come to an end.

We are clearing out

most of our in-ground area and planting ryegrass. The ryegrass will prevent erosion in case of strong rains, help as a weed barrier, and add nitrogen to the soil, which is obviously a good thing.

We think, due to their young age, our fruit trees didn’t produce much this year. The exception to this was the fig trees, which

still have a great deal of fruit in the process of ripening.

Not a great deal more to report from The Garden. We will continue to work Monday, Wednesday and Friday starting at 8 a.m. throughout the year, as there is always something. Please feel free to come join us as we head into shorter, cooler days. 🍷

Story and photo by David Waldo

# Fall frenzy

Autumn days are busy with cultivating cool-weather crops, putting up produce, enjoying eggplant and watching wildlife

**H**ey y'all, it's finally fall! The days and nights have finally been sweat-free for a couple of weeks. One night, it was cool enough that we had to bring the plumeria inside. When the temperature drops to the low 40s, the plant will survive, but the leaves will droop and begin to fall.

We are doing the normal fall stuff in our backyard, planting the fall and winter crops, preparing the soil for onions, and picking a bunch of eggplants and peppers. By the way, we still have about 10 pounds of onions from our harvest this spring.

This year, Sissy and I discovered that we really like roasted eggplant. We cut them into 1-inch cubes, put them on parchment paper, top with olive oil and spices, then roast at 450° for about a half-hour. After roasting, voila!

We have something that we both really like. It makes a nice topping on a number of dishes, or we'll eat it as a side dish.

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Story by Hank Rominski

Photos by Colleen "Sissy" Rominski



Green anole



Pipevine Swallowtails on Pride of Barbados



Fig tree

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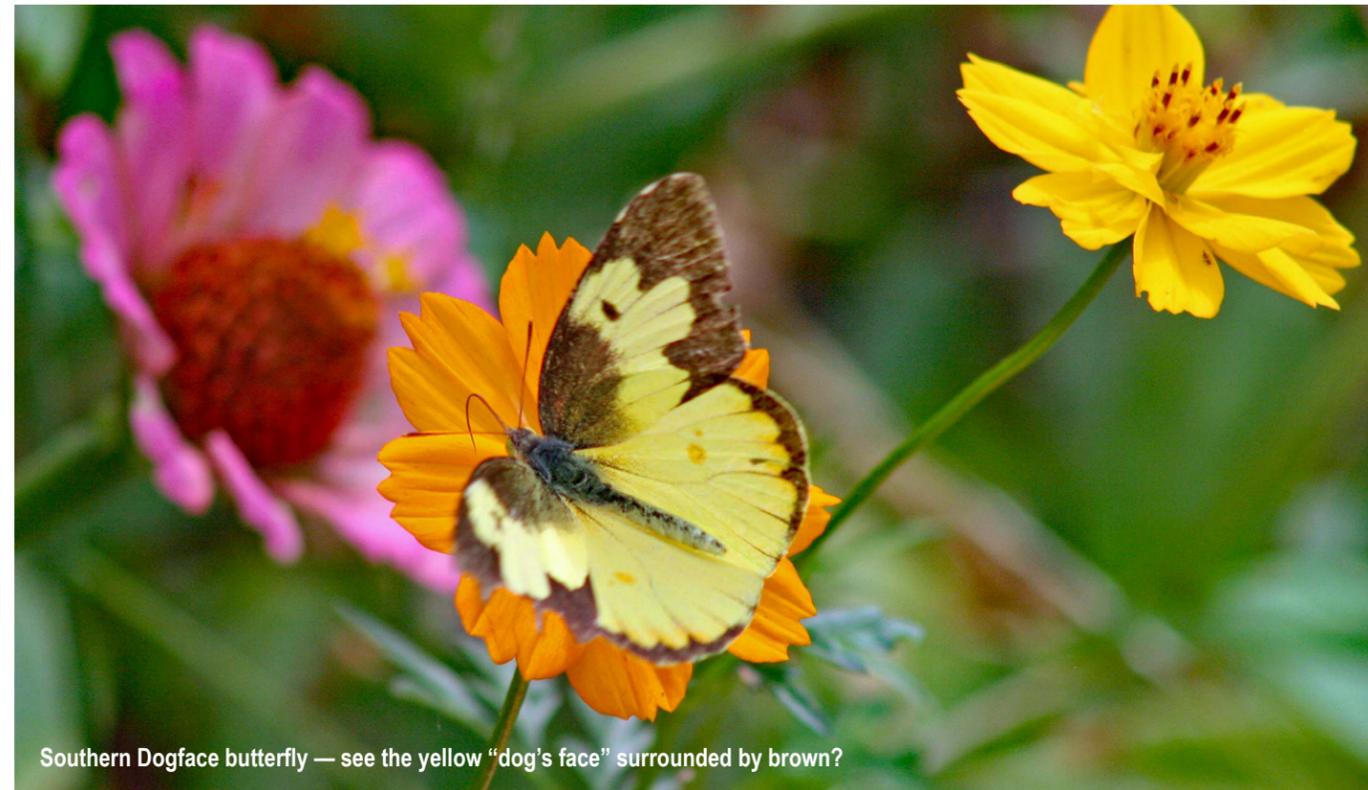
The peppers that we don't eat or give away will be sliced, bagged, vacuum-packed, then frozen. There is no blanching or other prepping required. When the fresh peppers are done, we have all we need for cooking until next year's harvest.

We have three varieties of figs that are finally all producing fruit. They were cuttings given to us by other gardeners, and I am unable to give the specific variety name. Two of the trees have larger than normal-sized figs; those on the third are smaller. But they all taste really sweet.

The fig trees are big enough this year to start propagating new plants from them. I tried air layering using 2-liter plastic bottles, wet peat moss and Gorilla tape. You can see the roots growing in one of the photos. Shortly after the photo was taken, we cut it from the plant and put it in a pot. So far, it is doing well. If all six grow, we will plant one and either sell or barter the others next year.



Air layering a fig tree



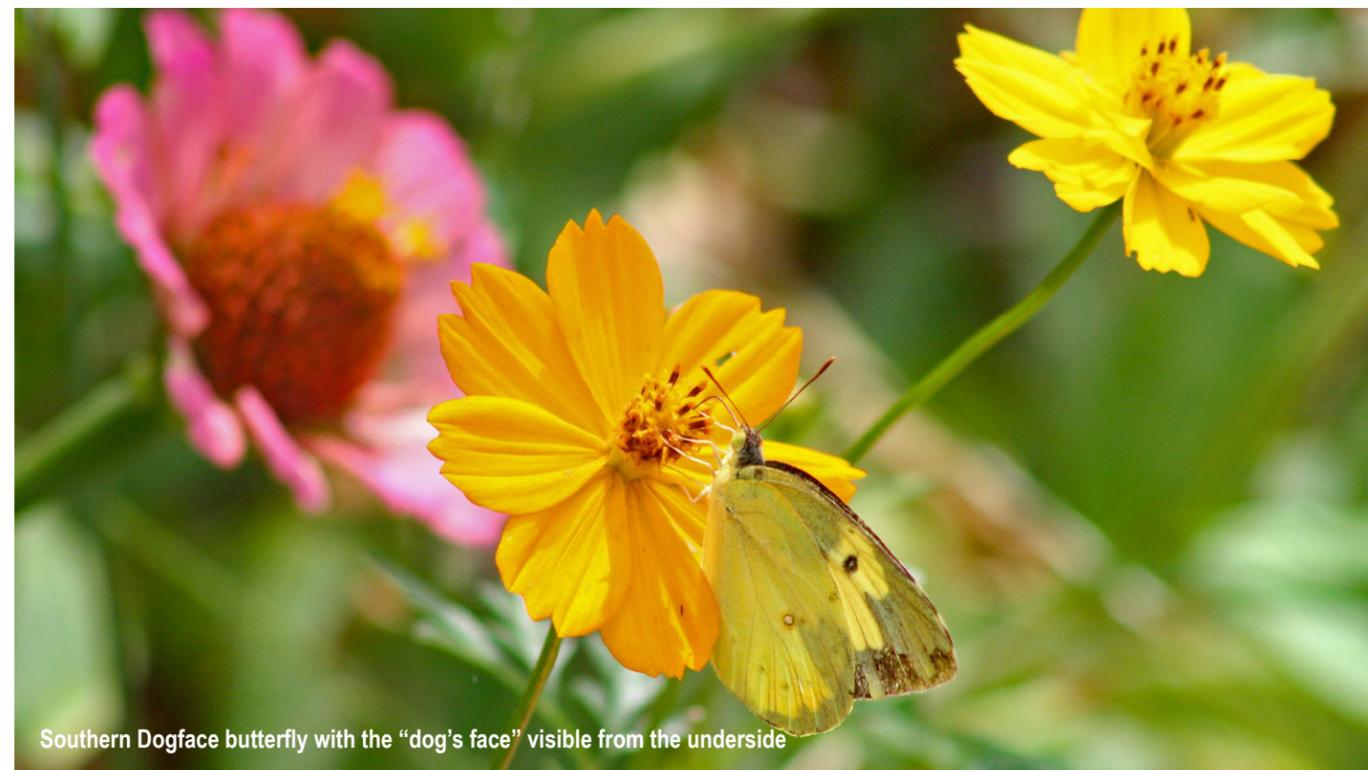
Southern Dogface butterfly — see the yellow “dog’s face” surrounded by brown?

I need to move the 12x20 foot hoop house to the other side of the garden, and I plan to move it in one piece. It creates too much winter shade for the plants next to it. More on that, with photos, after the move.

In her wanderings this month, Sis-sy was able to photograph a Southern Dogface butterfly with its wings open! It is rare to see them in that pose, as normally they close their wings when they light on flowers. Their unique

identification can be seen on the upper-side forewings: a yellow “dog’s face” surrounded by brown. When the wings are closed, the face is only visible when the light shines on them from the correct angle. It’s a shy dog.

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Southern Dogface butterfly with the “dog’s face” visible from the underside

Hank found his way out of the asparagus patch.



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Last year, I wrote about how we successfully grew asparagus from seed. The first bed was 20 feet long and has been a prolific producer. This year, we added a 15-foot row next to it. Regular harvesting ended the middle of August. After that, we only picked a handful every now and then when we wanted some fresh asparagus. The remaining stalks continued to thrive and grow to be very tall, very thick and very feathery. They are so thick and bushy that when we

hunt stalks for the next meal, we need a compass to find our way out.

The berries on the yaupon holly in the front yard are ripening and turning red, and the red berries and green leaves present a pleasing picture. We hope that they will draw an "ear full" or "museum" of cedar waxwings this winter. Watching the antics and social interaction of these birds is so much fun.

You've read the article, now it's time to view Sissy's pics. Enjoy! 🍷

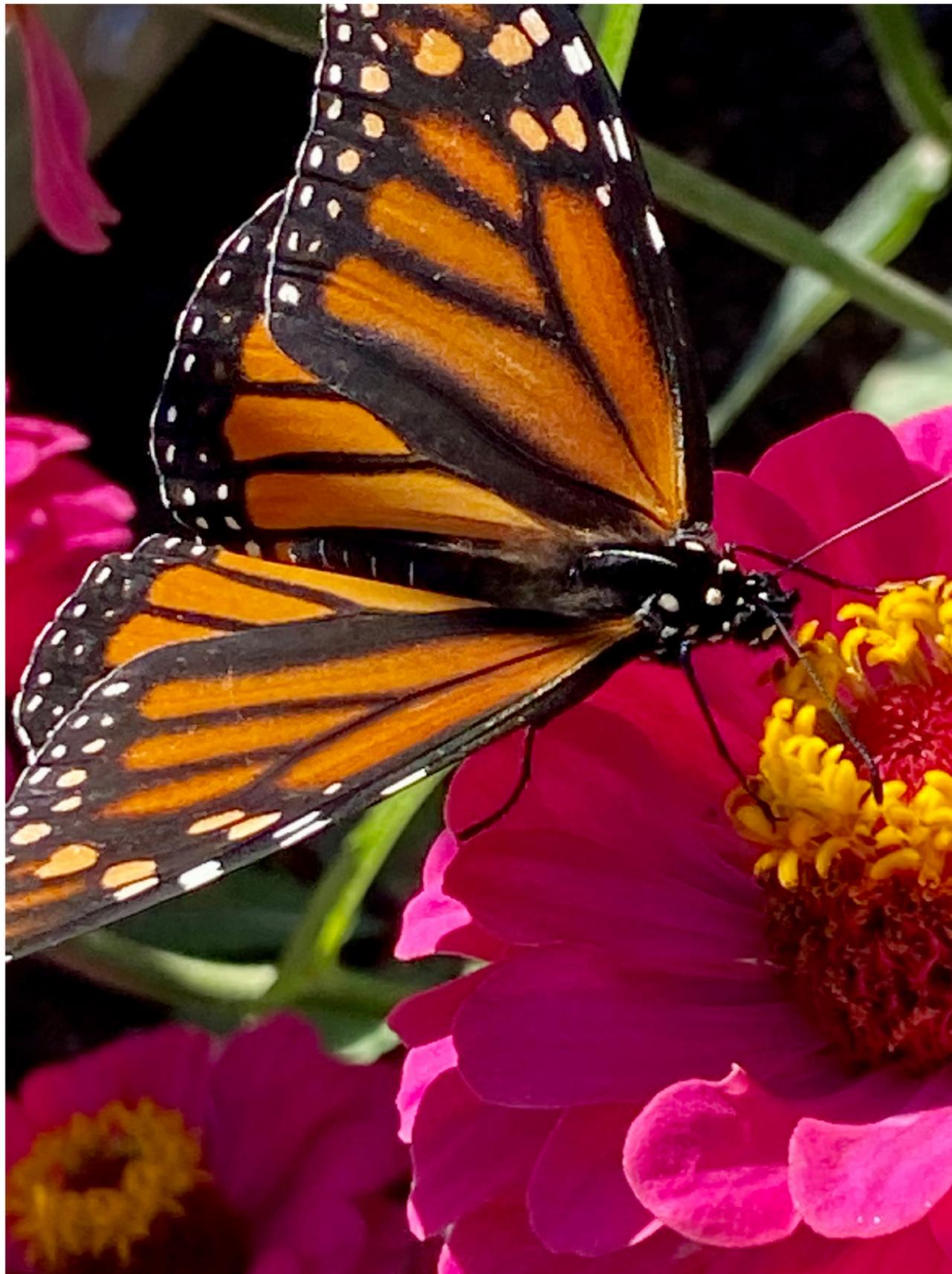


Gulf fritillaries on Passion Flower



A golden-fronted woodpecker eats homemade peanut butter suet.





Monarch on zinnia shared by Carolyn Crouchet



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](mailto:gebfoto@gmail.com).



# 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*

## Garden Duties

- \* Place your tulip and hyacinth bulbs in the refrigerator for 60 days. These have to chill for that period of time before planting. The other bulb plants — Bluebell, Christmas rose, Crocus, Daffodil, Fritillary, Glory of Snow, Iris (Bearded and Siberian), Snowdrop, Snowflake and Star of Bethlehem — can be planted now. Plant your bulbs (not tulip or hyacinth) so that the base of the bulb is at a depth that is three times the diameter of the bulb.
- \* Plant trees this month and next month.
- \* Start planning for next spring and cleaning up the gardens for winter. Remove all the annuals as they dwindle in their blooms. Cut the tops off all the herbaceous perennials that have completed their flowering cycle or when the first freeze has killed their leaves.
- \* If you have been saving seeds of those favorite plants, allow them to air dry. Then place them in an air-dry container. Be sure to mark what they are before putting them away.
- \* If you haven't already, dig your Caladium bulbs to save them for next year. After seven to 10 days, remove the leaves and dirt, then pack them, without them touching each other, in peat moss, vermiculite or similar material for storage. Dust with an organic fungicide and place in an area where the temperature will not drop below 50 degrees Fahrenheit.
- \* It is time to feed the azaleas, camellias and rhododendrons with bone meal to encourage bud formation.
- \* When you are composting, be sure to add coffee grounds to assist in bringing the pH down.



Photo courtesy: Texas A&M University

## Pillbugs

Carolyn asks, "What is an organic method of controlling pillbugs?"

Carolyn, pillbugs (*Armadillidium vulgare*) are crustaceans, meaning they have exoskeletons similar to shrimp. Although they are fun to play with, these isopods are decomposers that feast on transplants and seedlings.

You have a couple of options: first, diatomaceous earth. DE is not poisonous; it is pet- and child- friendly. Because DE is made from the fossilized remains of tiny, aquatic organisms called diatoms, their skeletons are made of a natural substance called silica which causes insects to dry out and die by absorbing the oils and fats from the cuticle of the insect's exoskeleton. Its sharp edges are abrasive, speeding up the process. To eradicate the pill bugs spread DE around your garden, a top layer.

A second option is bait. Set a corn cob or slice of melon in your garden. The pillbugs will congregate for the buffet. Then put the melon rind in a small trash bag before placing it into the trash can. Fair warning: the bait may attract more than just the roly polies; consider wearing gloves before you pick up your bait. Also remember: pillbugs are really good clean-up bugs, equal to the vultures cleaning up roadkill.

*Have questions or comments?*

Contact Bill Luedecke at [bill@texasland.net](mailto:bill@texasland.net) or Martelle Luedecke at [Luedeckephoto@gmail.com](mailto:Luedeckephoto@gmail.com).

A long-term HLMGA project is being refreshed and expanded with new, pollinator-friendly plants



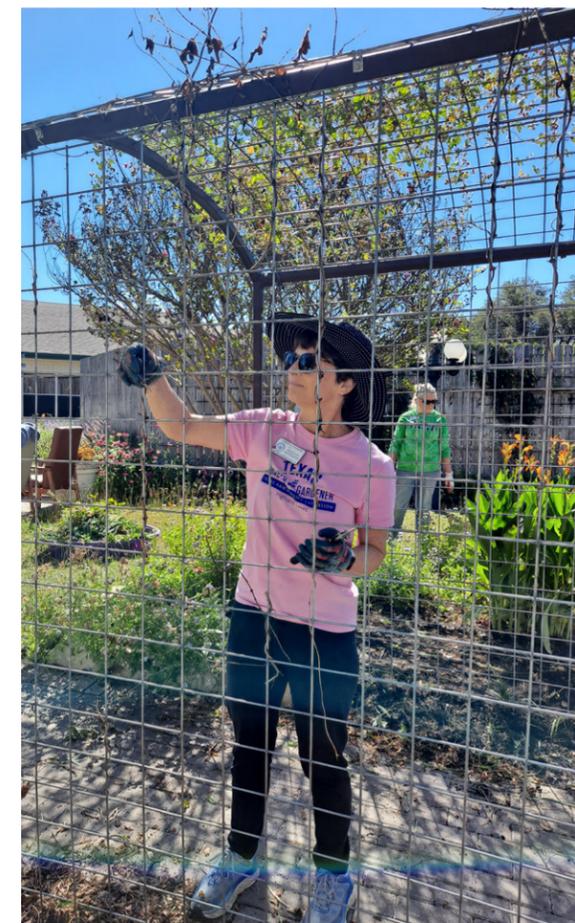
# Courtyard Care

## From what I've been told,

the courtyard at the Oaks Nursing Center in Burnet has been a project with the Master Gardeners for 20 years. However, this summer's drought, the freeze of 2021, and the pandemic have taken their toll on the courtyard, and it needs a little help from us to re-establish its beauty.

Having recently volunteered to be the project chair, I am eager to enlist volunteers to come weekly for watering and general upkeep of the beds. However, I am most excited to create a lovely butterfly/pollinator garden that the residents can enjoy while sitting outside or just looking out the windows of the dining area. We have already gotten started!

CONTINUED ON PAGE 26



Christina Nabors

Story and photos by  
Donna Cagle



Dana Tiller



Sheralyn Nobles and Dana Tiller



Ann McClanahan



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25

Dana Tiller and I are utilizing the information we have learned through an entomology class on butterflies to formulate plans and, two weeks ago, five volunteers came together on a Wednesday morning to thin out, dig up, prune and cut back existing plants, as well as put in new ones such as Golden Leadball tree, Flame Acanthus, Globe Amaranth and Lantana.

In the near future (at least well before spring), volunteers will be needed to redo several of the raised beds and start native plants from seed.

If you are interested in volunteering in any capacity, you can contact me at [dgtcagle@gmail.com](mailto:dgtcagle@gmail.com).

## 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](mailto:gebfoto@gmail.com), but the deadline for the next issue (December) is November 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?

# CREATURE FEATURE

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

## Gossamer Winged Butterflies

Gossamer winged butterflies, family Lycaenidae, are the second largest family of butterflies after Nymphalidae. There are more than 6,000 species in the world, with more than 100 species in North America.

Adults are small, usually under 5 cm, brightly colored and often metallic. Many species have tails on the hindwing. Larvae are flattened and slug-like and have a gland that releases a sugary substance similar to honeydew that is used to “bribe” ants for protection. Lycaenidae is split into seven subfamilies, three of which are not found within the United States: Aphnaeinae, Portiinae and Curetinae.

Family Lycaeinae, the coppers, are found in the northern and western United States and are small in size with a brilliant coppery orange on the upper surface of their wings. These butterflies aren't seen too much within Texas, but can be found in more northern regions.

The hairstreaks, family Theclinae, are common throughout the state. They get their name from the “hairlike” lines crossing on the under surface of the wings. Most hairstreaks



have slender tails on their hindwings. The tails on the hindwing are paired with eyespots to make it look like a false head, which can allow the butterfly to evade predators. Tropical species tend to be brightly colored, while ours tend to be mostly gray or brown. The patterns of lines and spots on the underside of the wings are used for identification. Hairstreaks are fast flying and tend to dart around erratically. Males will defend territory around their perch areas.

Family Miletinae, the harvesters, has one species, *Feniseca tarquinius*, found in North America, including Texas. The butterfly is orange with brownish-black borders and spots on the upperside of the wings. The underside of the wings are pale orangish-brown with dark brown spots with whitish rings. This butterfly's caterpillar is carnivorous, feeding on woolly aphids. Adults eat honeydew from aphids, as well as fluids from tree sap, carrion and dung.

The blues, family Polyommatae, get their name from the blue upperwings of many of the males. Females are more brownish with wide, dark borders and blue toward the body. Species identification is confirmed by the pattern of spots on the underwings. Blues flight is more fluttery, but they are able to dart away when needed. Males often gather at mud puddles and wet sand to get moisture, salts and amino acids.



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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](http://urban-ipm.blogspot.com).