

The "DIG IT" News



**Ain't nothin' like
homegrown tomatoes!**

*Keep your summer vines
producing all fall*

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HIGHLAND LAKES MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

President's Corner

Autumn is coming, whether or not Texas weather cooperates!

Greetings, Master Gardeners...

Last month I said autumn is my second favorite time of the year, and today I am thinking that I might have been wrong about that. I do love crisp, cool fall mornings and warm afternoons. I have to agree with Nathaniel Hawthorne: I think it is a waste to be inside on these beautiful days!

Years ago my husband and I traveled to the Northeast in October. I had never seen such beautiful fall color before. I know we are blessed to live here in central Texas, but you have to admit that we may or may not have autumn with colorful leaves; many times they just turn brown and then fall. But now I have had wonderful rain, with the possibility of more to come this week... I wouldn't trade my home in God's country for anywhere else.

Your Executive Board will meet Thursday, Oct. 7, with a number of things on the agenda. As always, members are welcome to join us. One of the items on the agenda is a report from the PET committee. If you are a project chair and have not returned your forms, please contact Suzy Buchanan as soon as possible. The PET committee will meet Monday, Oct. 4.

Also on the Executive Board agenda is a membership report. To be recognized at our Christmas and Awards Banquet, your time needs to be entered in the VMS system by Oct. 31. To remain in good standing as a Master Gardener next year, you must have at least 25 hours of

VT and six hours of AT entered by Dec. 31. Please update your hours as soon as you can. I know entering time in the VMS system is not our favorite thing to do! I am as guilty as anyone and will be working later this week to update my hours.

Christmas will be here before we know it! Please keep in mind our upcoming Poinsettia fundraiser. Last year the plants we received were so beautiful. I anticipate the same quality again this year, as we will be working with

the same vendor. The price will be the same as last year: \$15 for a 6-inch plant. It looks like we will have another color choice this year, as well as the option to purchase Christmas cactus.

These plants would be great for decorating our homes, as well as great gifts. I will be sending out order forms and more information soon.

I am really looking forward to our Oct. 12 meeting at Reveille Peak Ranch. Bill Carr, a botanist, will be our speaker. There is a covered pavilion, so weather will not be a factor, but we will not be able to have a Zoom option for this meeting. We will send more details with driving instructions and carpool information later. It will be a real treat to meet outside and in person... I hope to see you there.

Carolyn Stephens

stephens4005@sbcglobal.net
817-874-2138

I cannot endure to waste anything so precious as autumnal sunshine by staying in the house. So I have spent almost all the daylight hours in the open air.

Nathaniel Hawthorne

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.



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October HLMGA Meeting: A Fall Outing!

Save the Date!

December 7, 2021
Awards Program & Christmas Banquet

It was previously announced that this event would be Dec. 9, but we were able to change it back to our original date.

Tuesday, October 12, 2021 • 2 p.m.

Reveille Peak Ranch
105 County Road 114 • Burnet, Texas
Please bring a chair!

IN-PERSON ONLY!

The outdoor environment is not conducive to effective sound for Zoom.

PROGRAM: A Plant Walk and Talk
Presented by Bill Carr, Botanist from The University of Texas
Watch your email for a map and details!

OCTOBER 2021

From the MG Membership Committee

SPECIAL NOTE: Some of these MG Advanced Training Opportunities are offered as a series of three or four class sessions, some of which in the series are IN-PERSON and some of which are VIRTUAL. So, the IN-PERSON and the VIRTUAL classes are NOT listed separately, but boxed together under the MIXED FORMAT SERIES heading.

MIXED FORMAT SERIES

Native Bees of Texas

Laurel Trevino, UT Austin, is the instructor. Sponsored by the LBJ Wildflower Center. Fee for series: \$45. Pre-registration required at wildflower.org/learn/adults. Scroll to find series, click on "Find out more," click on register and follow instructions.

OCTOBER 11 — "Biology and I.D. Keys - ONLINE LECTURE", 3–5:30 p.m., (2.5 hrs Credit).

OCTOBER 13 — "Specimens of Different Native Bees - ONLINE LAB", 1–3:30 p.m., (2.5 hrs credit),

OCTOBER 16 — "Finding and Identifying Bees - IN-PERSON TOUR", 1-2:30 p.m. (1.5 hrs credit), at LBJ Wildflower Center, 4801 La Crosse, Austin.

What's Happening in the Gardens

Instructed by Leslie Uppinghouse and LBJ Wildflower Center Horticulture Team. Sponsored by the San Antonio Water System. Fee: \$15 each session. Pre-registration required at wildflower.org/learn/adults. Scroll to find class, click on "Find out more" and click on the class or classes you want to attend in person or online or both,

OCTOBER 12 — "Prepping Beds - ONLINE" 12–1:30 p.m. (1.5 hrs Credit).

OCTOBER 26 — "Plant and Prune - IN-PERSON" 12-1:30 p.m. (1.5 hrs credit), at the LBJ Wildflower Center, 4801 La Crosse, Austin.

NOVEMBER 9 — "Final Cut Back - ONLINE" 12–1:30 p.m. (1.5 hrs credit)

IN-PERSON EVENTS

OCTOBER 2 — "Integrated Pest Management" with Staff, 1-4 p.m. (3 hrs credit), at the LBJ Wildflower Center, 4801 La Crosse, Austin. Fee: \$45. Pre-registration required at wildflower.org/learn/adults.

Scroll to class, click on "Find out more" and follow registration instructions.

OCTOBER 5 — "Gardening for Butterflies" with Sondra Fox, Master Naturalist, 1 p.m. (1 hr credit), at the Kingsland Library. Sponsored by the Master Gardener Green Thumb Program. Free. No pre-registration required.

OCTOBER 5 — "Care of Houseplants" with Heather, 10 a.m. (1 hr Credit), at The Natural Gardener, 8648 Old Bee Caves Road, Austin. Free. Pre-registration required at tngaustin.com/sign%20up. See instructions for registration and sign-up date; click on the class when registration date comes up.

OCTOBER 6 — "Plant a Butterfly Garden" with Noted Landscaper, 6–7:30 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. Click to Week 2, scroll to class and click, click on register and follow instructions. Sponsored by the San Antonio Water System.

OCTOBER 7 — "Creating a Combination Planter" with Paul Winski, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Agent for Harris County, 10 a.m. (1 hr Credit). Sponsored by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Home Grown Lecture Series. Free. Pre-registration required at Homegrown2021Q4.eventbrite.com. Click on the date for the class at "Select A Date" and click on register and follow instructions.

OCTOBER 9 — "Gardening for Newcomers" with Native Plant Expert, 10 a.m.–1:30 p.m. (3.5 hrs credit), at the LBJ Wildflower Center, 4801 La Crosse, Austin. Fee: \$45. Pre-registration required at wildflower.org/learn/adults. Scroll to class, click on "Find out more," click on register and follow instructions.

OCTOBER 10 — "Intro to Pocket Prairies" with John Hart Asher, Environmental Designer, 10 a.m.– 12 p.m. (2 hrs credit), at the LBJ Wildflower Center, 4801 La Crosse, Austin. Fee: \$35. Pre-registration required at wildflower.org/learn/adults. Scroll to class, click on "Find out more" and click on register and follow instructions.

OCTOBER 11 & 12 — 2021 Texas Fruit Conference on Fruit and Nut Resources, at the New Braunfels Civic Convention Center, 375 S. Castell Ave., New Braunfels. Fee for package of Monday morning Fruit Workshop plus Main Conference Monday afternoon and all day Tuesday: \$125. Fee for Conference only: \$90. Fee for Fruit Workshop only: \$55. Pre-registration required at agriliferegister.tamu.edu/fruit/. NOTE: NOT ALL PRESENTATIONS COUNT FOR MG

2022 Certification Class Forming Now

Highland Lakes Master Gardener certification classes will begin Feb. 2, 2022, for 10 weeks on Wednesdays from 10 a.m. until about 2:30 p.m. in the Burnet County AgriLife auditorium.

Depending on future COVID

restrictions, class size may be strictly limited to 20 students. If you have friends who are interested, or neighbors new to the Hill Country wondering what to do with their landscape or garden, please invite them to join us. Have them watch our website for the 2022 application, coming soon.

In the meantime, please consider

becoming a mentor or a speaker for the class — such a fun way to get your volunteer hours and maybe even some advanced training, if it is a topic you have not had for a while. Your comments and suggestions are always welcome. For additional information, please email Gail Eltgroth at geltgroth@gmail.com.

ADVANCED TRAINING: (1) All presentations in Monday's Fruit Growing Workshop IN COMBINATION count 3 hours; (2) Presentations in Conference Sessions 1 and 2 on Monday afternoon DO NOT COUNT; (3) All the presentations in Conference Session 3 on Tuesday morning IN COMBINATION count for 3 hours; (4) All the presentations in Conference Session 4 on Tuesday afternoon IN COMBINATION count for 1.5 hours; (5) Presentations in Conference Session 5 on Tuesday afternoon DO NOT COUNT.

OCTOBER 12 — "Organic Veggie Gardening 101" with Robb, 10 a.m. (1 hr Credit), at The Natural Gardener, 8648 Old Bee Caves Rd, Austin. Free. Pre-registration required at tngaustin.com/sign%20up. Read registration instructions, scroll to class and note when registration period begins.

OCTOBER 13 — "Fall Gardening Tasks" with Anna Vogler and Lynn Cox, Bexar County Master Gardeners, 10 a.m.–12 p.m. (2 hrs Credit), at the San Antonio Botanical Gardens, 555 Funston Place, San Antonio. Fee: \$10. Pre-registration required at sabot.org/learn/adult-classes. Scroll to class, click to find registration and follow instructions.

OCTOBER 14 — "How to Create a Bonsai Tree" with Brandon Baldauf, Hawk Eye Bonsai in Austin, 1 p.m. (1 hr Credit), at the Marble Falls Library. Sponsored by the Marble Falls Garden Club. Free. Bring a tree, boxwood or yaupon holly, and scissors.

OCTOBER 14 — "Landscaping with Mexican Plants" with Michael Eason, Horticulturalist at the 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. Scroll to class, click on and register and follow instructions.

OCTOBER 16 — "An Introduction to Asteraceae" with Amy Galloway, Horticulturalist at the LBJ Wildflower Center, 10–11:30 a.m. (1.5 hrs Credit), at the LBJ Wildflower Center, 4801 La Crosse, Austin. Fee: \$25. Pre-registration required at wildflower.org/learn/adults. Scroll to class, click on "Find out more," click on register and follow instructions.

OCTOBER 16 — "Bluebonnet Blooms for Spring – Adult Class" with Staff, 10-11:30 a.m. (1 .5 hrs Credit), at the LBJ Wildflower Center, 4801 La Crosse,

Austin. Fee: \$40. Pre-registration required at wildflower.org/learn/adults. Scroll to class, click on "Find out more," click on registration and follow instructions.

OCTOBER 19 — "Organic Veggie Gardening 201" with Robb, 10 a.m. (1 hr Credit), at The Natural Gardener, 8648 Old Bee Caves Rd, Austin. Free. Pre-registration required at tngaustin.com/sign%20up. Read registration instructions, scroll to class, note when registration begins.

OCTOBER 21 — "Migratory Birds in the Landscape" with Staff, 8–10 a.m. (2 hrs Credit), at the LBJ Wildflower Center, 4801 La Crosse, Austin. Fee: \$15. Pre-registration required at wildflower.org/learn/adults. Scroll to class, click on "Find out more," click on register and follow instructions. (Same class offered again Nov. 18.)

OCTOBER 26 — "Native Wildflowers" with George Cates, Native American Seed, 10 a.m. (1 hr Credit), at The Natural Gardener, 8648 Old Bee Caves Rd, Austin. Free. Pre-registration required at tngaustin.com/sign%20up. Read instructions about registration, scroll to class, note when registration begins.

OCTOBER 26 — "Hand Tied Bouquets with Marigolds" with Chelsea Crisler, Gardener, 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: \$35. Pre-registration required at wildflower.org/learn/adults. Scroll to class, click on "Find out more," click on registration and follow instructions. Bring vase for safe transport of your bouquet.

OCTOBER 28 — "Ethnobotany of Native Plants Guided Tour" with Staff, 10 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. Scroll to class, click on class to register and follow instructions.

VIRTUAL EVENTS

OCTOBER 19 — "Texas Geophytes" with Dr. Alace Le Duc, 6–8 p.m. (2 hrs Credit), from the LBJ Wildflower Center. Fee: \$25. Pre-registration required at wildflower.org/learn/adults. Scroll to class, click on "Find out more," click on registration and follow instructions.

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VIRTUAL EVENTS

Native Plant Society of Texas 2021 Annual Fall Symposium

The Symposium features 16 1-hour Master Gardener-approved Advanced Training classes — all VIRTUALLY! It is worth the \$40 registration fee (for non-members) to have access to these classes, and you can attend as many as you want. (They will send Zoom invitations for each day.) Go to npsot.org/wp/symposium2021 and click on Registration.

OCTOBER 6 — “How Native Plants and NPSOT are Relevant in Our Daily Lives” with Ricky Linex.

OCTOBER 7 — “Challenges Presented by Ex-Urban Population Growth” with Elizabeth Bowerman and Helen Ballew, “Connecting Children to Nature” with Sara Coles, “Field Trip Video – Attract Pollinators in Your Garden” with Gracie Waggener’s landscape, “Field Trip Video – Land Management Practices on Rural Fredericksburg Property” with Jill Nokes’ land, “Recovering America’s Wildlife Act (video)” with Rachel Rommel-Crump and Richard Heilbrun, “Feeding Your Friendly Backyard Herbivore: Co-evolution of Native Plants, Native Insects and Microbes” with Dr. Alison Revenscraft, “I’m Being Invaded! What Can I Do?” with Deedy Wright.

OCTOBER 8 — “How Native Plants Have Made My Life Way More Exciting!” with Sheryl Smith-Rogers, “Establishing a New Model for Hands-on Riparian Stewardship Instruction” with David Oppenheimer and Ryan McGillicuddy, “Field Trip Video — Take a Tour of Kathy Saucier’s Landscape;” “Field Trip Video — Take a Tour of Maggie Living’s Landscape;” “Ashe Juniper: the Hill Country’s Keystone Species” with Rachel Lindsay.

OCTOBER 9 — “Magnificent Moths – Manage Your Habitat to Encourage Moth Diversity” with Sam Kieschnick, “Native Plants — Native Birds” with Rufus Stephens, “Field Trip Video — Habitats and Microclimates at the Fredericksburg Nature Center” in memory of Bill Lindemann.



I thought folks would enjoy seeing this photo of Melonworm moths. Pretty interesting, although I’m not happy to find them in my pumpkin patch.

~ Donna Cagle



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.

Hill Country LAWN AND GARDEN SHOW

Save the Dates to Volunteer

A day filled with garden-themed vendors and activities.

WHAT: Plants – Flowers - Vegetables – Native Plants – Succulents
Yard Art – Handicrafts – Artisans – Silent Auction – Donation Quilt
Children’s Booth – Gardening Presentations – Delicious Food

WHERE: AgriLife auditorium and adjacent covered pavilion in Burnet, Texas

WHEN: Friday, March 25, 2022
2-7 p.m. Master Gardeners Set Up • 4-7 p.m. Vendors Set Up

Saturday, March 26, 2022
7 a.m. More Vendors Arrive • 10 a.m.–4 p.m. Open to Public

WHO: Master Gardener Volunteers Needed For:
Set Up and Tear Down • Vendor Assistance
Items for the Silent Auction • Silent Auction Coordinator
Master Gardener Booth Coordinator

Volunteer sign-up sheets will be available after the holidays.
Questions? Contact Roxanne Dunegan, Show Chair, at roxdunegan@gmail.com



Sponsored by Highland Lakes Master Gardener Association



Our okra is still producing, though you must climb a ladder to get to a lot of the crop. Watermelon has been a welcome crop this year, as it is very much appreciated at the Helping Center. Black-eyed peas have also done well, and they have attracted several banana spiders which have helped take care of several grasshoppers.

We are currently planting our fall veggies. Tomatoes have been in for some time, and they are looking good. We just hope to get good production before the first freeze.

We have been fortunate to get a few members of this year's MG class to join us, but there is always room for more hands. We are in The Garden Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays starting at 8 a.m. Please feel free to join in the fun any one of those days! 🌱



In late August, a group of 16 women from the Monday Mahjong group donated a bench which they dedicated in memory of Kay Peterson, one of their longtime friends who recently passed away.

This beautiful piece of furniture was designed and built by Finnis Corely. Finnis' sister Yvonne is a Master Gardener and one of our most loyal volunteers in The Garden.



UPDATE The Garden

Things are still going well at The Garden, though production is slowing down a bit. We had one very nice addition to our décor, which is a bench dedicated to a friend of the Monday Mahjong group, Kay Herring. The Mahjong group gathered under our pavilion to commemorate their departed member, who was a real contribution to the greater community.

Story and photos by David Waldo



Gulf Fritillary butterfly on zinnia

Beauty OR BEAST

Passionflower vines attract both

“Beauty is bought by judgement of the eye,” Shakespeare taught us, and the handsome red and black beetle on my passionflower vine certainly caught my eye one morning. This passionflower flea beetle chews holes in the leaves and is kin to flea beetles who damage garden vegetables when their numbers soar. But did this flea beetle really hurt my passionflower vine?

How would I know? There has been so much leaf damage from Gulf Fritillary larvae this year, and yet I welcome every one of the gnarly looking caterpillars I spot. Their don’t-touch-me exoskeletons and poisonous flesh keep birds from dining on them, according to most reports. A Jasper Master Naturalist/passionfruit-vine researcher reports vividly about leaf damage and speculates that mockingbirds may eat the larvae: txmn.org/llr/2020/07/15/my-experience-tending-to-passion-fruit-vine-inadvertently-raising-gulf-fritillary-caterpillars/.

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Story and photos by
Carolyn Crouchet



Passionflower flea beetle



Passionflower blossom



Gulf Fritillary caterpillar

And reproduce. I am elated. The hummingbirds who visit agree. But, the passionflower vines are often sold in nurseries with a warning label that they can become invasive. One of my friends in town has a passionflower vine that has reproduced quite a bit of her backyard and now making unwelcome advances into the neighbor's yard, also.

Beauties or beasts? Yes, no, for some folks both. Personally, access to passionflower vines has given me the charming company of Gulf Fritillary butterflies all summer, sipping nectar from many flower sources, especially the zinnias. As summer has lumbered on through much of September, the cheerful

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Passionflower leaves and flowers are the only food the larvae will eat, and I planted my vine hoping to attract Gulf Fritillary butterflies with a larval host

plant. Of course, I was also hoping for the glorious blooms.

And bloom they do. And spread. And reproduce. And survive arctic cold events. And bloom. And spread.

orange butterflies have kept me motivated to water and deadhead the increasingly raggedy plants. Those scruffy zinnias are beauties to behold for the butterflies. And they taste good, too! 🐛

Call for Content!

The Dig It News is written for gardeners, by gardeners... and that means we need to hear from YOU! You can send material at any time to Gail Braymen at gebfoto@gmail.com, but the deadline for the next issue (October) is Sept. 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?



Photo by Willard Horn



GREEN THUMB PROGRAM

The Green Thumb program will have its final presentation of 2021 on Oct. 5, 1-2 p.m., at the Kingsland Library at 125 W. Polk Street in Kingsland. Sondra Fox will present a program called "Gardening For Butterflies."

Sondra is a retired teacher who moved to the Hill Country in 2007. She is a 14-year member of The Highland Lakes Birding and Wildlife Society and has been a Master Naturalist for 13 years.

September attendees learned how plants send "smoke signals"

By Willard Horn

Thanks to David Waldo, our September Green Thumb presentation, featuring father/daughter duo Bill and Martelle Luedecke, was held in the spacious and beautiful confines of the Trinity Episcopal Church's community room. And a good thing it was, as we had a record turnout for this event that generated interest from far and wide. I noticed a good number of people with name badges from the Llano area; however, Bill and Martelle cowrite a gardening column for a five-county area. It would not surprise me if there were guests from all counties, as Bill and Martelle's reputation is quite well known.



Bill and Martelle's presentation — "Plants Send Smoke Signals" — was both new and exciting. All the guests listened and learned from Martelle's beautiful PowerPoint and informative description of the various methods plants use to communicate with one another, as well as predatory insects, to rid them of voracious eaters.

We were so fortunate that Martelle chose to unveil this special program first and foremost with Green Thumb.

Martelle's lively and enthusiastic demeanor made for such a memorable experience, and only enhanced her ability to communicate with the crowd.

That only leaves me to say, her presentation and personality were both crowd favorites.

Photo by Lavona Fry



Under the ancient oaks at The King's Garden in Kingsland, Willard Horn spoke about olla gardening, a slow water irrigation system which he has used for the last year. Willard explained what olla gardening is, how to incorporate its use into gardens, and how to cheaply build a system.

August attendees learned about olla gardening

Keep those homegrown tomatoes coming!



How to harvest fall tomatoes from original summer producers



Tomatoes from the summer harvest, sitting on the porch for neighbors to come grab.



About three weeks after pruning

I had a fantastic yield from the three varieties of indeterminate tomatoes that I planted in the spring. The varieties that I had started from seed were Early Doll, Cherokee and Black Krim. When the harvest was over toward the end of July, I assumed that was all until next year.

However, I was mistaken. Checking out [The Natural Gardener](#) website, I clicked on “This Month in the Garden” and discovered that I could bring new life and more tomatoes out of these same plants. This is what they recommend:

Cut back spring-planted, indeterminate tomatoes, leaving about one-third of the plant, and feed with a high-phosphorus fertilizer to rejuvenate them for the fall season. Sometimes there are still flowers and green tomatoes on the plants, but it is better for the fall harvest to cut them back around mid-July. You can use any unripe fruits to make fried green tomatoes! Pull any unhealthy-looking plants and replace them, then set up 40 percent shade cloth to protect your plants from the hot afternoon sun. Once temperatures cool off, the flowers will begin to set fruit. If you’re successful in keeping your plants consistently watered and happy, you’ll enjoy a good fall harvest.

I followed the instructions and cut each plant back by two-thirds. Every plant was “bald” except for the green sticks coming out of the ground. In fact, I wondered if I had cut them back too much. Instead of applying the high-phosphorus fertilizer initially, I started with fish emulsion. However, as leaves started to appear, I became hopeful, and as



About eight weeks after pruning

the plants grew taller and produced more leaves, even more so. And now, two months later, they look just as they did when they were happy and producing. Lots of tomatoes are appearing on the plants. I think the key to this success was the 40 percent shade cloth and cutting the plants back even while there were a few tomatoes still hanging on in July. I am looking forward to the fall harvest! 🍅

Story and photos by Donna Cagle



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

Plant wildflowers now for spring!

Have you gone to the nursery and picked up your preferred wildflower seeds? Do you have some you saved from earlier this year? Did your neighbor give you some after you complimented their blooms?

First, we need to have a site selected. Please make sure that the site you decide upon will support vegetation; it should be a site that drains well. In other words, don't try to plant seeds in the middle of solid rock and expect a miracle. Once you have the site selected, the next thing to do is remove the vegetation on the location. This is done by mowing the site, being careful to remove the clippings. Next, either lightly till or rake the area, but only about an inch deep. Seeds planted at a depth of 1/16 inch will give you much better plants and blooms.

Second, prepare the seeds. Mix them with some inert material such as masonry sand, perlite, potting soil, etc. Wild Seed Farms recommend a minimum of four parts inert material to one part seeds.

Third, plant the seeds. Broadcast half of the seed mixture as evenly as you can, then broadcast the other half perpendicular to the first. Press the seeds into the prepared soil by walking or rolling over the newly planted area. Again, don't plant the seeds deeper than 1/16 inch. Some of the seeds are going to remain visible.



Another option, which is not quite exact, is to throw your seeds out after a rainfall or watering. If you are not particular about where exactly your wildflowers grow, this is a simple alternative.

Do NOT fertilize where you are going to be planting or scattering bluebonnet seeds. Please learn from our mistakes. Dad thought he would be kind to the soil and fertilized his 2-acre bluebonnet field. The following spring, perhaps 10 — as opposed to the usual 1000 — bluebonnets sprouted. Daughter learned from Dad's mistake.

Rainbows

What is a rainbow? We see an arc of color. From our ground-level perspective, a rainbow appears to be a semicircle. But if you were in an aircraft looking down, you would see a full circle, with the center point opposite the sun. When we see a rainbow, we are seeing sunlight which is reflected at 42 degrees back into our eyes. The reflection is what causes the shape of the rainbow.

The colors of the rainbow are refractions. A refraction is when white light is bent upon entering a drop of water in the air after a rainfall or a garden hose being sprayed. From the outside in, we see red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet. Different cultures see rainbows (the 42-degree refraction reflection) as signs of hope, promise, good luck and new beginnings.



Plant trees & shrubs

Fall is the ideal time to plant a new tree or shrub. A friend of ours told us how her grandmother would plant a new tree each time a grandchild was born. What a wonderful family tradition.

Before planting, remember to look up and down. Keep in mind the plant's mature height compared to your surroundings: power lines, overhangs of buildings, sidewalks and driveways, septic systems, water lines, etc. A Lacy Oak may grow 30 to 35 feet tall, while a Sugarberry tree can grow up to 80 feet tall and 3 feet in diameter. Before you leave the nursery with your new plant, double check with the staff which species you have in hand. For instance, which type of Crepe Myrtle? Dwarf Crepe Myrtles grow less than 3 feet tall, while others may reach 30 feet tall.

Use a tree that will grow well under local environmental conditions and provide it with plenty of space to grow and mature. This includes both vertical and horizontal space for the canopy and plenty of room for root growth.

Now let's plant.

Select an appropriate location for the tree.

Dig the hole at least twice as wide as the root ball (wider is better). Wide areas give roots a place to spread and grow. Dig the hole no deeper than the root ball to keep the tree from settling too deep and dig square holes to allow for root penetration out of the hole and into the surrounding soil.

Fill the hole with water and check the drainage.

If it takes longer than 24 hours to drain, select another site or another tree. A tree will die if its roots are under water for long periods of time. Tree roots need air.

Prune the tree sparingly only if necessary.

Remove dead, broken and diseased branches and crushed and girdling roots only. Removing even a small portion of

the healthy canopy slows root growth and delays establishment. A thoughtfully selected tree requires no pruning.

Remove all foreign materials from the tree, including wires, twine, cords, containers, tags and, especially, non-biodegradable bags. If planting a balled and burlapped tree, remove as much of the burlap as possible to allow for water infiltration into the bag and root penetration out of the bag.

Set the tree in the hole with the root collar flush or slightly above natural grade. Planting too deep is a leading cause of mortality of newly planted trees.

Do not pick the tree up by the trunk. Always handle by the container or root ball.

Gently backfill with the same soil that came out of the hole.

Create a natural environment, not an artificial one. Do not add soil amendments or fertilizer. Too much nitrogen will burn tender young roots, slowing

growth and delaying establishment. Settle the soil with water. Tamping the soil causes compaction and damages roots.

Stake the tree only if necessary. Consult a professional if staking is required. Stakes should not be left in place longer than one year.

Mulch the trees out to the drip line, 2-3 inches deep, and up to, but not touching the trunk.

Wood chips, pine bark, leaf litter, hay, etc., are great mulches. Mulch keeps soil temperature fluctuations to a minimum and increases soil moisture retention. Mulch also suppresses weed growth, and organic mulch adds nutrients to the soil.

Water the tree for at least one year, preferably two.

A newly planted tree requires 6-8 gallons of water per diameter inch of trunk per week. A thorough soaking is much better than light, frequent waterings.



Photos courtesy Texas A&M University

Have questions or comments?

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



LEFT: The Certification Class of 2021 poses for a picture outside the Burnet County AgriLife Extension building. *Photo by Gail Eltgroth*

BELOW: Class members tour The Garden in Marble Falls.



A fond tribute to the Class of 2021

All good things must come to an end, but other doors open, and boy, oh boy, is it ever exciting. The MG class of 2021 graduated in August and everyone made it. Yay! We had so much fun. We have also had some people grind out their volunteer and AT hours and have officially become Texas Master Gardeners! Congratulations, y'all!

We had great speakers and I, for one, learned a ton. Our class project was to design a sustainable landscape and everyone did a fantastic job! I had a blast designing mine because I am moving and created a landscape for my new house! With years of preparation and planting, I look forward to carrying out my project in real life and implementing everything I have learned thus far. Thank you, Gail Eltgroth, for your countless time in coordinating everything for us, and to

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LEFT: For their class projects, associates were required to design a sustainable landscape.

ABOVE: Gail Eltgroth had this cake made for the graduating class.

Story and photos by Jami Whitehead

Butterflies feed on blossoms in The Garden's pollinator garden during a class tour.



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the mentors and speakers we had. Without y'all I don't think it would have been smooth sailing, at least for me. Everyone who put forth effort into helping us along the way deserves a huge thanks!

I can't wait for the class of 2022 to start in February. The new class really has a lot to look forward to! I can't wait to see what's behind this new door of opportunity. The Highland Lakes Master Gardeners are truly phenomenal. 🌱



Cukes, tomatoes and sweet potatoes

THE KING'S GARDEN

UPDATE

Greetings from the H-Bar-G Ranch overlooking Estes Park Colorado. I am writing this month inside Shep's Place, a cabin built in 1897. Over the years, this cabin has hosted many people, experienced many changes and has been my favorite place to stay for more than 25 years.

The new plants at The King's Garden now are at that stage showing almost explosive growth. Like oil wells in West Texas, tomato cages once again are visible over the landscape, providing support for the tomato plants setting fruit. Peppers and eggplants are enjoying the heat and continue to

produce. Fall cukes are starting to set, squash plants are starting to bloom. Broccoli, cauliflower and Brussels sprouts are in the ground. Cabbage will be planted by the time you read this, and the rye grass, spinach, lettuce and kale have sprouted. The brown beds of last month are greening once again.

This summer, we acquired two rolls of concrete wire and are using pieces of it for the cucumbers



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



Future salad

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and sweet potatoes to climb. We have to weave the new growth of the sweet potato vines through the fence a couple times a week to keep them from spreading to the adjoining tomato and cosmos beds. It's amazing how the vines have filled in the openings and created a 5-foot wall of deep green leaves and vivacious violet flowers that completely block your view.

While the plants are in the early stages of production, the pollinator and flower gardens keep attracting the insects necessary



Sweet potato flower

**5,400 POUNDS
PICKED
SO FAR THIS YEAR**



The King's Garden in mid-September

Volunteers show up to The King's Garden every Monday, Wednesday and Friday starting about 8 a.m. and leave when they need, and the last volunteer is there until 11-11:30. Contact Keith Atwood (713-203-8846) or Hank Rominski (860-575-8098) for more information if you want to visit or volunteer at The King's Garden.

to complete the cycle once again. Sissy continues to use her camera to capture some of the visitors. Last month we had a special visitor, a Viceroy butterfly that came by to feast on our flowers. We see the Monarch regularly, but hadn't noticed the Viceroy before.

Here's a little tidbit about the Viceroy butterfly: I grew up thinking that the Viceroy and Monarch exhibited Batesian mimicry in which a harmless species (Viceroy) mimics a toxic species (Monarch). However, studies conducted in the early 1990s suggest that the Viceroy and the Monarch are actually examples of Mullerian mimicry, in which two equally toxic species mimic each other to the benefit of each. Just goes to show you there's always something new to discover in the natural world!

As the year is coming to a close, some of you may find that you need a few more volunteer hours. If that's the case, give The King's Garden a try. You might find it a place that you want to visit over and over again. 🦋



Monarch butterfly



Viceroy butterfly

Join the fun!

Burnet Farmers and Crafts Market

**Every Saturday through Nov. 20
on the Courthouse Square in Burnet**

Market Hours 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

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

