



# The Guadalupe Gardener



March 2012

A monthly publication of the Guadalupe County Master Gardeners in cooperation with the Texas AgriLIFE Extension, Guadalupe County



## The Garden Favorite

With spring planting around the corner, it's time to get out the gardening tools and start our garden soil preparation. Traditionally, tomato plants are the most popular vegetable (fruit) for home gardeners.

For the botanical history buffs, let's take a look at how the tomato evolved as a food source.

The tomato is native to western South America and Central America. In 1519, the Spanish explorer, Cortez, discovered tomatoes growing in Montezuma's gardens and returned to Europe with tomato seeds that were planted as ornamentals. Native versions resembled cherry tomatoes and were yellow in color. Italy was the first to accept and cultivate the tomato outside South America. As a member of the deadly nightshade family, Europeans thought the tomato to be poisonous (the leaves are poisonous). The English word tomato comes from the Spanish word, tomate. The French referred to the tomato as pommes d'amour, or love apples and I'll let your imagination figure out the rest. In 1897, soup king Joseph Campbell introduced condensed tomato soup and helped foster the use and understanding of the tomato to the general public.

Select members will have a tomato history oral quiz at the March monthly meeting.

There are approximately 7500 tomato varieties grown for various purposes and botanically they are a fruit rich in lycopene which may have beneficial health effects.

The newcomer to the tomato family this year is the  
(continued on page 3)

## MARCH MEETING

March 15th, 2012

**Mar 15 - Square Foot Gardening** - Andy Chidster who works for The Natural Gardener Inc., manufacturer of Lady Bug Products, will present Mel Bartholomew's method for growing more in less space.

Don't forget to bring your plants for the plant exchange table.

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## FEBRUARY MEETING PROGRAM

### You Make Me Sick

Paul Cox spoke on Toxic Plants at the monthly members' meeting on February 16. During more than thirty years at the San Antonio Botanical Gardens, retiring as director, Paul was frequently consulted as the expert on toxic plants in and around San Antonio. A sought after speaker, Paul is the coauthor of Texas Trees—A Friendly Guide, a must for any gardener's library.

Plants, being rooted in the ground, and unable to flee from predators, have developed three basic strategies for self-defense. Some develop elaborate camouflages, trying to blend in with their surroundings such as cactus that look like rocks. Some develop spines like roses that discourage browsers and trampers with a sharp prick. And some have developed toxins which can teach a harsh lesson anywhere from discomfort to death. A toxin is defined here as anything that interferes with normal metabolism and it covers a wide range of substances.

So many plants are toxic that it is almost easier to define those that are not rather than those that are. Susceptibility to toxins varies greatly from person to person. In fact, a given person's reaction to a given toxin can also vary from exposure event to exposure event. Rule No. 1 is never eat anything if you are not absolutely sure what it is. Rule No. 2 is that in the event that you were wrong in applying Rule No. 1, don't try to deal with the problem yourself. Dial 911. Your life may depend on it.

Many common plants are highly toxic, although they may not be lethal at low doses. The problem arises in that the margin between lethal and nonlethal is too slim to gamble on. Mountain laurel is an excellent example. A lovely native tree routinely grown as a landscape plant in this area, this plant was highly regarded by Native Americans. But the lovely red beans, which look remarkably like coffee beans, are highly hallucinogenic in very low doses and absolutely lethal half a bean or so later. It is one of the most toxic plants regularly grown in urban yards and it is also responsible for a number of recorded deaths. Oleanders have a well-deserved reputation for being toxic. Historically grown in public parks, these lovely, hardy, upright plants are now no longer recommended for areas close to bar-b-que grills because they make invitingly long, straight skewers for hotdogs and marshmallows. Unfortunately, they also transfer their toxic juices to the food when used in this manner.

Teach children never to eat anything growing outdoors without adult supervision. The playful nature of children makes them particularly vulnerable to plant toxins as they create the wonderful world of their imaginations.

Some toxins are virulently caustic. Poison ivy causes a serious skin rash, but if the smoke from burning poison ivy is inhaled, it can burn lungs so badly as to be lethal. Spanish dagger carries a wax like scale on the tips of its leaves that leave an irritating residue of scales behind when pulled out. The resulting irritation causes a skin infection. Agave also has a highly caustic sap.

Gardeners should be cautious when working with plants they are not familiar with because even ones they know and love can have nasty surprises. Larkspurs are a lovely longtime favorite and yet are toxic if eaten. They are reputed to taste like blueberries, although you gotta' wonder about the person who sampled them to report that.

Reported by Gail Johnson

# Association News



## NEWLY CERTIFIED MASTER GARDENER

**Joyce Friesenhahn**  
President Bob Davis  
presenting certificate  
and pin.

Photo by  
Dave Elder



**KUDOS**  
to  
Hughlene Micheli  
For her solo  
weeding of the  
Ag Building  
garden

## MEETING REFRESHMENTS

I want to thank all the people that provided the wonderful refreshments for the February meeting. They were Kathy Pape, Jeri Preston, Deedy Wright, Beth Zeiss, Mary Jean Lucky, and Betty Hughes. We need those recipes !!

The Volunteers signed up for the March 15 meeting are: Debbie Lowe, Susan Hadley, Cyndy Winkelman, Martha Edwards, and Betty Hughes. If you would like to share your recipes, bring them to the meeting and I'll get them out to those members who want them.

We need Coordinators for the Summer Social. I am already looking for a location. I appreciate all the help that everyone is giving.

Sincerely, Treva Hicks, Refreshment Volunteer Coordinator (830-303-4712).

(FAVORITE—Continued from page 1)

BHN 602/F1 hybrid variety. Produces high yields of 12 oz red globe shaped fruit with outstanding flavor in 77 days and this variety is resistant to tomato spotted wilt virus.

Last but not least, I highly recommend the recently published book by William (Bill) D. Adams, The Texas Tomato Lover's Handbook, and he also has an article on tomato tips and varieties in the January/February 2012 magazine, Texas Gardener.

Don't forget Sunday, March 14, 2012, we start Daylight Savings Time – spring forward – fall back.

### THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

If we are afraid to be different, how can we make a difference in this world. Author unknown

Bob Davis, President

## BIG RED BARN

Not much happening at the Red Barn - who knew we'd be rained out for 6 consecutive weeks! We have had mud, fire ants and weeds everywhere and tomorrow will be our first day to tackle them and talk about our spring plans. We are looking for a volunteer who would take over the planting and maintaining of tomatoes – just 3 - 4 plants – a favorite variety.



We do have two new signs - one being guarded by a determined friend.

The island bed that separates the garden areas from the parking lots has been a challenge to maintain. With so many events hosted at the Red Barn, there are often tire tracks in the bed and the rocks have been pushed to a new location. In early December we trimmed the pine and the plum and planted a winter-hardy selection.

Photos and report provided by Gretchen Ricker



### **TEXAS GARDENER** **FUNDRAISER**

Our Treasury keeps 25% of your subscription when it is sent through GCMG. Email [jbruno@gvec.net](mailto:jbruno@gvec.net) for further information.

**The Guadalupe County  
Master Gardener Association  
Is a  
VOLUNTEER ASSOCIATION**

## Guadalupe County Master Gardeners Class 24

### DRAFT\* Class Topics DRAFT\* - August - December

Mostly Wednesdays 10:00 - 2:30 p.m...in Seguin

Cost is \$190 with no discount

How To Achieve Proper Balance Of **Soil, Water & Plant Nutrients**

**Earthkind:** How To Minimize Your Impact On The Planet.

How To **Grow Vegetables** You Like To Eat

How To Have A Better **Lawn**

How To **Propagate Plants**

How To **Harvest, Store And Re-Use Rain**

How To Save Water By Making Your **Own Drip Irrigation** System

How To **Evaluate Plant Health & Diagnose Problems**

How To **Make Compost** In Your Own Backyard

**How To Tell Good Bugs From Bad** And How To Get Rid Of The Bad W/O Hurting The Good.

How To Use **Native Plants** To Bring Nature Back To Your Landscape

How To **Select, Plant And Nurture Trees** In South Central Texas

How To Be **Firewise** In Your Landscape Design

How To Improve Your **Landscape Design**

How To **Propagate Plants 2**

How To Grace Your Landscape/Garden With **Herbs And Heirlooms**

How To Produce Your Own **Fruit And Nuts** At Home

How To Develop And Maintain **Native Ecosystems**

How To **Achieve Your Personal Gardening Goals**

Schedule of Class Topics is tentative pending speaker availability

See [guadalupecountymastergardeners.org](http://guadalupecountymastergardeners.org) for final schedule

## KWED Lawn & Garden Show

The KWED Lawn & Garden Show will do "remote" broadcasts on March 3 from show sponsors Schulz Nursery in Marion and on March 24 from Maldonado Nursery in Seguin. And, on "every" Saturday for the next "little while" we'll have several give-aways (started two weeks ago) by both Schulz and Maldonado Nursery to be awarded to our listeners each Saturday morning.

To volunteer or If you have a topic contact Bob (830-743-3399) or Janet (830-305-1446) Grafe. On-March 17th: Linda Bruno, Gene Griffin, and George Ammermann, all MGs, will join the program and the topic will be Raised Bed Gardening.

Are you getting emails from the GCMG? Notices about meetings, events and other happenings? If not, email Dale Odvody at [odvodyd@swbell.net](mailto:odvodyd@swbell.net) and let him know. And please check your email at least once a week. We are really getting busy and would hate for you to miss out on a great education or volunteer opportunity.

## GUADALUPE COUNTY COMMUNITY GARDEN

### WORKDAY - MARCH 10th

All hands on deck! We can really use help with construction of new beds, cleanup and planting in the Garden. And the landscape around the County Annex Building is desperately in need of pruning, cleanup and re-mulching. Can you give us at least four hours of your time on March 10th? Starting at 8:00 a.m., weather permitting. This is a Community Workday and will include other groups so wear your green shirts and name tags. And bring a friend. Email [jlbruno@gvec.net](mailto:jlbruno@gvec.net) for more details.



### RAISED BED WORKSHOP

Includes Lunch & Raised Bed Kit

Deedy Wright, Guadalupe County Master Gardener & Certified Vegetable Specialist  
Linda Bruno, Dale Odvody & Joe Bruno,  
Guadalupe County Master Gardeners  
& GCMG Volunteers

**WHEN:** Saturday, March 24, 2012 - 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., rain or shine

**WHERE:** Guadalupe County Community Garden, 1101 Elbel Road, Schertz

**COST:** \$65 for Workshop & 4 x 4 kit, extra kits \$50 each

\$80 for Workshop & 4 x 8 kit, extra kits \$60 each

**SCHEDULE:** 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. Spring vegetables, what to plant & how

11:30 - 12:15 p.m. Lunch & tour of Garden

12:15 – 1:30 p.m. Why raised beds, materials, construction & more

1:40 – finish Construction demonstration & hands on training

**4 x 4 kit includes:** 4 ea. 2 x 10 x 4 ft. treated lumber, 4 ea. 4 x 4 blocks, 10 inches long for corner support, 26 ea. 3-1/2 inch deck screws, 1 ea. screwdriver tip for screws. All wood is predrilled.

**4 x 8 kit includes:** 2 ea. 2 x 10 x 8 ft. treated lumber, 2 ea. 2 x 10 x 4 ft. treated lumber, 4 ea. 4 x 4 blocks, 10 inches long for corner support, 26 each 3-1/2 inch deck screws, 1 ea. screwdriver tip for screws. All wood is predrilled.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO RESERVE YOUR PLACE

Call 210-363-8380 or email [jlbruno@gvec.net](mailto:jlbruno@gvec.net)

GUADALUPE COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS & TEXAS AGRILIFE EXTENSION SERVICE

## Updates from Ann Odvody



IN LATE DECEMBER THE GUADALUPE COUNTY COMMUNITY GARDEN IN SCHERTZ REACHED ONE TON OF FOOD HARVESTED AND DONATED TO RA-CAP FOR THE YEAR 2011. THAT'S RIGHT, WE HARVESTED A TON OF FOOD!!!!!! MARY PICKED THE CABBAGES THAT PUT US OVER THE TOP, DALE CUT AND WASHED THEM AND ANN DID THE WEIGHING IN. WHAT A DAY FOR ALL THOSE WHO HELPED PLANT, WEED, PICK, COMPOST, ETC TO MAKE THIS POSSIBLE. WHOOPPEEEEEEEEE!!!!!! (Photo by Mary Bowe)

2/2 - Very quiet out today, so I amused myself, while harvesting, with a political discussion with the rabbit. Bottom line.-it is "for" free meals. This week we harvested 10 pounds 2 ounces of produce with most of the weight coming from our radishes. So far this year 39 pounds 5 ounces.

2/5 - Folks, due to all the rain we have had the last few days and the rain being forecast for Wed through Fri, there will be **no** work days Mon (6 Feb) or Thurs (9 Feb). We are grateful for the rain, but it makes it just too wet and too cold to be working. Enjoy the time off!

2/8 - Went to check the garden this morning and harvested what could not wait until Monday. It is still very wet. Brought in 4 pounds 8 ounces of collard greens, salad greens and radishes. So far this year 43 pounds 13 ounces.

2/12 - Folks, having just watched the weather (39 in the am with 50% chance of rain), I think we all need to take another day off. I harvested last Wed. ,so we should be able to make it until Thurs. morning at 9 am. Should be much warmer too! Bring your diggers!

2/16 - Dale, Mary and I sure missed our buddies in the garden this morning. The rabbit ate 6 heads of broccoli!! Left us just one. We had a good harvest of greens and radishes. Also, harvested our first kohlrabi. Today's harvest was 10 pounds, bringing us to 53 pounds 13 ounces this year.

2/20 - Too wet to plant in the garden today, so potatoes and radishes will have to wait until Thursday. The rain gauge showed the garden got 4.5 inches of rain this last week. One of the peach trees is blooming and so are the snow peas! We harvested 6 pounds 9 ounces of produce, giving us a total of 60 pounds 6 ounces so far this year.

2/23 - It was busy in the garden today..one group fitting out rain barrels and another gardening. We planted potatoes, radishes, carrots, and kohlrabi and got some weeding done. New shelves are up in the shed. Martins have arrived at the birdhouse. We harvested 4 pounds 6 ounces of produce, bringing us up to 64 pounds 12 ounces this year.

2/27 - The rabbit and I harvested (actually I followed what he had already done) this morning. It was a little damp. We harvested 6 pounds 10 ounces of produce. So far this year, 71 pounds 6 ounces.

## Computer Training

A very big THANK YOU to Dr. Sam Hijazi and Texas Lutheran University for helping out a group of Guadalupe County Master Gardeners. Dr. Sam has agreed to give us tutoring in the use of Power Point and TLU is letting us use their computer lab for the lessons. Having completed two sessions now, we are learning a lot more than Power Point. To be continued . . .

Photo by Linda Bruno



## Expressions of Gratitude

My GCMG mentor is the most beautiful, caring, thoughtful person. She has served some volunteer work with the American Red Cross overseas in Taiwan and with the Armed Forces Vietnam network. In addition she has dedicated her past 40 years to working in the local school district as a certified teacher in Early Childhood Education, along with being my GCMG mentor, Class 23.

When my mentor first called to inform me that she was my GCMG mentor, I was very excited to receive her call, because at this point, I was wondering if the Master Gardener program was going to be too challenging for me handle. After all - it had been a long time since I had been in a classroom situation with professors giving lectures. (Did I mention, these were professors from Texas A&M?) However, her phone call to me was so positive and motivating, I felt like "I might" be able to do this.

Later she came over and visited and had a special surprise waiting for me. This surprise included, a decorated pot, filled with items such as; a calendar, a package of planting seeds, water bottle and a spray bottle (I later needed for the propagation class), a fold-up garden hat, a small fold -up fan, knee pads and a pair of beautiful turquoise and tan leather garden gloves! Wow! There was no turning back for me now. "I might " be able to complete this class turned into " I WILL" complete this class. After all, I was almost already a gardener now with my new accessories, GLOVES included!

I always kept the garden gloves nearby hanging in my kitchen to remind me of my commitment to my GCMG class, to my volunteer hours I was prepared to work, and to my mentor who believed in me. My mentor would always call me before my class and after my class and often in between. Even when she went on vacation for a month she managed to call and send me postcards from two of the many places where she visited (which was way out on the East Coast in Rangeley, Maine, and Myrtle Beach, South Carolina). She was so inspiring to me with her genuine thoughtfulness towards me and my new journey with the Master Gardener class, I just knew I had to graduate as a certified Master Gardener in December of 2011.

In order to help me acquire all my needed volunteer hours she invited me to work in the Schertz Community Garden with her, so I did, and I learned so much. We had a wonderful time during the fall harvest in spite of the very cold temperatures. One day when we completed our afternoon in the Schertz Garden, she took me on a field trip to the Antique Rose Emporium. It is so beautiful out there! The many different variety of roses can be well appreciated. In addition, I had never seen such a creative way to plant a vegetable garden before.

At last my Graduation Day has arrived. My mentor, Mary Bowe, presented me with the most lovely corsage I have ever seen! She designed it, and had it made just for me. It was an elegant fresh white rose with an earth brown ribbon tied in a perfect bow. A chili pepper was on it, along with broccoli flowerets, cherry tomatoes and grapes. It was laced with some fresh green cilantro.

A beautiful edible corsage in honor of me graduating as a Guadalupe County Master Gardner. She is truly an amazing educator and an inspiring, caring person.

Not only was I fortunate enough to have Mary Bowe as my mentor, I now get the great pleasure of thanking her. "Thank you Mary Bowe, I couldn't have done it without you."

Love and Gratitude, Sharon Delcambre, Class 23



## Speakers Bureau

February 1, Susan Casto spoke to the Kiwanis Club and on February 13 to the Lazy Daisy Garden Club on the Red Barn Garden. February 2, Betty Hughes told the St. Paul Women's Fellowship about Dry-Flower Arranging. February 8, Bob Tewles presented Propagation by Stem Cuttings to Leon Valley Garden Club. February 9, Bob and Janet Grafe spoke to the LDS Church group about Vegetable Gardening.

Speakers, please let me know how many listeners are in each group, your subject, and when and where the talk is given. Membership: if you belong to a club that needs speakers, please contact me, Clara Mae Marcotte, at [rcm.marcotte@gmail.com](mailto:rcm.marcotte@gmail.com). We have speakers on FireWise, Plant Propagation, Oak Wilt, Rainwater Harvesting, Greenhouse Management, Composting, Citrus Greening, Entomology, Vegetables, Wildflowers, and Floral Arranging.

## Joy - Joy - Joy !!!

**Linda Waite** has joined the Publications team by agreeing to pick up and mail the hard copies of the Newsletter each month. What a load that will take off the Newsletter Editor's shoulders.

Thank you Linda.

## REMINDER

If anyone needs a card from the organization for an illness or loss of a family member, contact Gail Johnson, Secretary, 830-491-1996 or e-mail [gailjohnson@earthlink.net](mailto:gailjohnson@earthlink.net).

## Members in Service

### Texas Master Gardener Board of Directors

Two Year Term - George Ammermann; Linda Bruno, Alternate  
One Year Term - Gail Johnson; Jim Johnson, Alternate

### Project Evaluation Committee

Gillian Siemens, Barbara Gettig, Janice Knobles

Membership Outreach Committee - Open

Speakers Bureau - Clara Mae Marcotte

### Guadalupe County Community Garden Operating Committee

Linda Bruno, Holly Christian

JMG Program Coordinator - Lo-Ra Dick

Master Gardener Office/Library - Betty Hughes

AgriLife Building Workdays - Liz Romero

New Member Support - Bob Teweles

Hours Reporting - Dale & Ann Odvody

Notification - Dale Odvody & Beth Zies

Refreshment Coordinator - Treva Hicks

WebSite Photo Album - Jerilyn Preston

Class 23 & 24 Coordinator - Jose Antonio Contreras

Newsletter Editor - Elaine McIntyre

Web Master - Randee Malmsten

## February Meeting

The drawing of \$19.50 was won by George Ammermann. Don Hilbert won the door prize.

## FUTURE PROGRAMS

Apr 19 - Olive Tree Growing in Se-  
guin - Joe Wait, local grower of olive trees, will present a program about growing olive trees.

May 17 - Using Herbs in Your Diet - Mary Dunford, owner of Nature's Herb Farm, will talk about how herbs can best be used in our diet.

Aug 16 - Ten Bugs Every Gardener  
Should Know, Molly Keck, Integrated Pest Management Program Specialist with Texas AgriLife Extension of Bexar County. MS in Entomology

## *Trowel and Error* by Sharon Lovejoy

Did you know that you can use thin copper wire to deter snails and slugs? When they touch the wire, they get a shock.

Did you know that a raw potato can help you root a difficult to propagate cutting?

Did you know that bleach diluted in equal parts with water is an effective treatment for fire ant stings?

This and much more homespun wisdom can be found in a fascinating little book titled *Trowel and Error* by Sharon Lovejoy. The author is a lifelong gardener and has compiled a fascinating little book about gardening "shortcuts, tips, and remedies." She obviously loves to play in her garden and also loves to play with words - as shown in the title. She is just full of very helpful advice and ideas for any gardener. Even though much of her gardening experience comes from Maine, most everything in the book is useful in Texas. Well, almost everything - I don't think I'll need the advice for protecting roses from frost heaving!

When this little book arrived in the mail, I sat down at lunch to flip through it quickly. Two hours later I realized I had read almost the entire book. Not everything was new, but I was intrigued with what I discovered. I would heartily recommend *Trowel and Error* to any gardener, regardless of experience. The book would certainly make a very welcome gift for a gardener!

Book Review by Deedy Wright

# VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

## Wilson County Gardening Days

Saturday, March 3rd 9 am to 4 pm

Huge Plant Sale in Floresville located at the Floresville Alternative School 335 Alternative Lane. The event will benefit the South Texas Alternative School Gardening Program and will be held on their school campus off Sutherland Spring Road. Sponsored by Wilson County News, SAWS, & KLUP Radio. **Guadalupe County Master Gardeners** will have a booth. Volunteers are needed to help with set up (7:30am), manning the booth and tear down. If you would like to join in for the fun, please call Peggy Jones at 210-649-4002 or email [pljones@swbell.net](mailto:pljones@swbell.net)

## GUTIERREZ XERISCAPE PARK, Schertz

Spring is in the air. Come out to Gutierrez Park in Schertz for Spring clean up Saturday, March 3rd from 9:00 to 11:00 am. Lots of things to get done: Planting, weeding, mulching - all the things we love doing. Bring your gloves and favorite tools. For questions contact Tammee Trawick; [ttrawick@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ttrawick@sbcglobal.net) or home 210 945-8635.

Green Team



## Green Team - City Hall and in Central Park 1st & 3rd Mondays

We need some people to work with the Green Team. Meet at the City Hall Annex at 9 AM. Bring your own tools. Contact Hughlene Micheli, 830-379-5673, or e-mail [clifmic@axs4u.net](mailto:clifmic@axs4u.net)

## Join Us for Earth Day Craft Session March 5, Volunteer for 2-Hour Shift at Booth April 28

Please join us for a 2-hour craft session **Monday, March 5, from either 9-11 am, or 1-3 pm**, to help make recycled plant pots for the youth activity at our community Earth Day Master Gardener booth. We'll meet at the AgriLife Building, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, 210 E. Live Oak St., Seguin. If you can attend one session, or have questions, please email Ellen Laubhan, committee co-chair, at [ellen.laubhan@gmail.com](mailto:ellen.laubhan@gmail.com). Please save and bring newspaper, which will be used to make the pots.

**Join in the fun volunteering in the Earth Day Master Gardener booth Saturday, April 28, on the Square in Seguin, for one of the following 2-hour shifts:**

- > 8:30-10:30 am
- > 10:30-12:30 am
- > 12:30-2:30 pm

Your help is truly appreciated, as we need 8 volunteers for each shift. **This is a great opportunity to reach hundreds of children and adults with spring gardening information!** We'll have a youth planting activity, rain barrel and drip irrigation/water conservation demo, and a gardening information table. *Ideas welcome!*

Email your volunteer shift preference to: [ellen.laubhan@gmail.com](mailto:ellen.laubhan@gmail.com)

## GUADALUPE COUNTY FINANCE BUILDING FLOWER BEDS

307 West Court Street, Seguin

The top and bottom flower beds in front of the Finance building as well as sides and back will be cleared of old stumps and rotten timbers soon, we will need a great work crew to remove plants before replanting in the side beds.

The top and bottom front beds will get new plants, roses as well as mulch. Our group of volunteers will be scheduled to work the week of March 26<sup>th</sup>. If you would like to be on this great team sign up to join the workers that signed up at our last Master Gardener meeting to be contacted when the exact date is chosen or contact Carol Mycue 830-557-6387.

## Wearin' o' the Green

Please join us in the **AgriLife Extension Office gardens** on Saturday, **March 17<sup>th</sup> at 9:00AM** for our monthly work day. Bring gloves, weeding tools, kneeling pads, clippers or loppers and a garbage bag. Green tea and green cookies will be served, in keeping with the occasion.

All attendees will be required to "Wear the Green" - on your knees, elbows or gloves!!!

If you have any questions, please call Elizabeth O'Romero, 830-372-3106  
or Elizabeth O'Hughes, 830-401-4066



# EDUCATION - CLASSES - SEMINARS

The **San Antonio Garden Center** will host their monthly meeting **March 7, 2012** starting with a social at 9:30 am. Dr. Kip Kiphart will talk about "**Monarch Butterfly Migration & Attracting Butterflies to your Garden.**" Dr. Kiphart is a Texas Master Naturalist and volunteer for the Monarch Larvae Monitoring project at Cibolo Nature Center.

Guests and new members are welcome to all SAGC meetings on the 1st Wednesday of each month at the Garden Center located at 3310 N. New Braunfels and Funston by the Botanical Garden. Please join us if you are interested in butterflies or want to be involved with a group that loves flowers and plants.

Don't forget the **24th Annual SAGC Plant Sale** on Friday & Saturday, **March 30th & 31st** for quality plants and unique plants from the gardens of members. Check out our website at [www.sanantoniogardencentre.org](http://www.sanantoniogardencentre.org).

## New Braunfels Library Gardening Series

700 E. Common St, New Braunfels

Presented by Comal County Master Gardeners

Time: 3:00 pm – 4:30 pm

**March 28, 2012** – **Bryan Davis**, Bexar County AgriLife Extension agent, "Rainwater Harvesting". Demonstration of Bryan's simple backyard system.

**April 25, 2012** – **Don Tuff**, Comal Master Gardener, entomologist, and TSU professor (retired), "Insects Pests and Earth-Friendly Control". How to manage pesky garden pests.

**May 23, 2012** – **Minette Marr**, plant conservationist at the Wildflower Center in Austin, "Seed Collecting and Preserving", Seed swap too.

Telephone: (830) 964-4494

## COMING IN MAY – LET'S TALK NATIVES!

Guadalupe County Master Gardeners and the Guadalupe County Chapter of the Native Plant Society of Texas (GCNPSOT) are hosting a day of lectures, vendors and other activities in Seguin. Why are we telling you now without all the details? Because it is going to be a great program and we know you will want to be there. Speaker confirmation is pending for the exact Saturday; keep your calendar open for May 5th or May 19th.

## Native Plant Society of Texas

### Guadalupe County (Schertz-Seguin) Chapter

On Tuesday, March 13, 2012, Judit Green of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department will present "Texas Wildscapes, Gardening for Wildlife." This Program will center on landscaping with native plants which support wildlife such as bees, birds, and butterflies.

The Guadalupe County Chapter meets the second Tuesday of the Month at the Marion Library Meeting Room, 500 Bulldog Lane, Marion, TX.

There will be a plant/seed exchange and welcome at 6:30pm followed by the Program by Judit Green at 7:00 pm. It is open to the public and visitors are welcome.

For more information, directions to The Marion Library or membership applications contact our website at: [www.npost.org.guadalupecounty](http://www.npost.org.guadalupecounty).



## **Top 20 Plants for Birds with Judit Green**

Saturday, 4/14/12: 9 am to noon - Mitchell Lake Audubon Center

Join us for this top 20 countdown to the most valuable native plants that will draw in birds to your backyard. Many of the plants highlighted are shrubs and trees that serve as valuable food sources, shelter and nesting opportunities. We will also offer up some basic ID tips to help you identify the birds you might see on your property. Birds are one of the easiest wildlife species to attract, so why not get started with a new and fun gardening project! Judit is a 23 year employee of Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept. and has been an Urban Wildlife Biologist in San Antonio for the past 17 years. She, along with many others, initiated the first chapter of Master Naturalists in Texas in 1996 and she still serves as advisor to the founding Alamo Area Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalist™ Volunteer Program.

Program fee: \$10 for MLAC members; \$15 for non-members - Space is limited, RSVP is required  
For info or to RSVP: [mlac@audubon.org](mailto:mlac@audubon.org) or call (210) 628-1639

## **Antique Rose Emporium Seminars**

Saturday, **March 2, 10am - Veggies in Your Backyard**. Do you ever wish your veggies looked and tasted as good as the neighbor's? From soil prep to harvest, Keith Amelung will share his gardening expertise and recipes on growing the best veggies ever. FREE

Saturday, **March 10, 10am - Herbs 101: A Guide for Herbal Success**. Join us for a morning of growing and using herbs. Cindy Meredith is our herbal gal pal for all the best information on raising herbs. Don't be afraid to grow herbs; be inspired! FREE

Saturday, **March 31, 10am to 2pm** - The **San Antonio Rose Society** is going to be in the garden to answer your rose-y questions.

## **Master Gardener Specialist Composter Training**

**June 13 - 14** (8 am - 5 pm) - **June 15** (9 am - 12 noon)

San Antonio Botanical Garden, 555 Funston, San Antonio

This Master Gardener Specialist Composter Training was created as an intensive multi-day training that would empower Master Gardeners with knowledge and skills required to effectively support and multiply Texas AgriLife Extension Service efforts in Earth-Kind environmental educational programs in their counties.

Registration Fee: \$225 payable to Bexar County Master Gardeners, Attn: Angel Torres, 3355 Cherry Ridge, Suite 212, San Antonio, Tx 78230-4818. This includes 2 lunches, 1 dinner, snacks and other goodies. Payment and application must be in our office by Friday, May 18th. Cancellation must be made by Friday, May 25, as there will be a \$100 surcharge.

## ROSES

On March 17th, our own Peggy Jones, will present a program on Roses at Maldonado Nursery, Hwy 90 & FM 725 in Seguin. The program starts at 10 AM. Find out what your roses need from you so they can bring you beauty and fragrance.

### **Master Gardener Specialist Training-Citriculture**

**April 12-13** (Thursday-Friday), 2012, Montgomery Co. Extension Office, Conroe, TX. The future of successful citrus production in Texas, at the home or commercial level, hinges upon preventing the spread of Citrus Greening (CG), an exotic plant disease **detected for the first time in January 2012 in the Rio Grande Valley**. Citrus trees infected with CG produce undesirable fruit and have a shortened lifespan. The disease is spread by psyllid insects that are established in Texas and capable of spreading this disease.

The Texas AgriLife Extension Service is offering a Master Gardener Specialist training in citriculture during 2012 to enlist Master Gardeners' assistance for detection and prevention of CG. The MG Specialist-Citriculture training is a comprehensive educational program aimed at preparing master gardeners to grow citrus in the home orchard successfully and manage the challenging complex of associated insects and diseases, including CG. The two-day course will cover varieties, nutrition, freeze protection, propagation, as well as identification and management of insects and diseases of citrus.

Participants for each session must be preregistered by their County MG Coordinator/Agent and approved by the MG Specialist Training Coordinator (Monte Nesbitt, Extension Program Specialist). Fee for the course is being specially priced at \$100/person.

Please contact the County MG Coordinator, Travis Franke, for a preregistration form.

### **Master Gardener Specialist – Irrigation Efficiency Training**

San Antonio Botanical Garden—**March 26, 27, 28, 2012**

Tarrant County Extension is offering a Master Gardener Specialist Training for Irrigation Efficiency. This training will cover: Understanding state and regional water supply problems and the relationship and importance of landscape irrigation conservation; Learn how to identify the most common problems and landscape irrigation systems from a water conservation perspective; Learn how to measure the precipitation rate of sprinklers to use along with ET to produce an irrigation schedule, including run times and number of irrigation runs per week; Learn what types of controllers are available and how to use/program them; Learn how soil preparation, plant selection and mulch will make a difference for irrigation efficiency; Learn how drip irrigation is more efficient and easy to install at a faucet and how to convert a regular irrigation system to drip.

Master Gardener Specialists - Irrigation Efficiency will volunteer 12 hours above their current volunteer obligation, train Master Gardeners in their county, present the information to at least 2 other groups, work with their city water conservation educator, and do a catch can demonstration for Master Gardeners, a garden club, neighborhood association or civic organization.

Registration cost is \$200.00 per person and includes 3 lunches, power points, manual, snacks and other materials to help teach others about irrigation efficiency.

Registration is online at <http://dallas.tamu.edu>. The training is limited to 15 participants. Registration is on a first come/first serve basis. Payment and forms must be in our office by March 21, 2012. Contact Dotty Woodson, [d-woodson@tamu.edu](mailto:d-woodson@tamu.edu), to answer any questions or provide further information.

## Never Let 'em Set Seed

*By Robert Norris, Ph.D., Fellow of the Weed Science Society of America*

Have you ever wished you could grow vegetables without hours of weeding? If you are like most gardeners, I bet you have. The good news is that with a bit of dedicated effort, you can reduce the weeding you do year by year until your vegetable garden is virtually weed-free. The key is to know a bit about something called the “weed seed bank” and how to manage it.

Most people don't realize that a weed can produce literally thousands – or even millions – of seeds per plant. Early in my career as a university professor, I conducted research to document the number of seeds coming from even a single weed plant...the results were pretty stunning. And all those seeds fall to the ground and become part of a “seed bank” that fuels new weed growth. The weed seed bank is central to the “never let 'em set seed” rationale. Seeds “in the bank” can remain viable for quite a long time and sprout when conditions are right. That means it will take several years for you to reach your weed-free goal.

How many years? The answer depends on the weed species growing in your garden. Seeds of most annual weedy grasses die after two or three years, but some broadleaf weed seeds can last for decades. On average, though, the bulk of your weed seed bank will be depleted in about five years if no additional seeds are added. That means diligence is the key. Never let one weed go to seed or you will be back to square one!

What about seeds blown onto your garden or dropped there by birds? They shouldn't be a big problem. The seeds for most weed species drop directly to the ground, close to the mother plant. There are only a few bad actors with windborne seed, such as dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*), sowthistle (*Sonchus oleraceus*) and groundsel (*Senecio vulgaris*). And it is rare for annual weed seeds to be spread by birds. It's a bit of gardening lore that isn't substantiated by fact.

To hasten the path to a weed-free garden, I recommend a two-pronged strategy: drive down the number of viable seeds in the soil and quickly intervene when those that remain sprout. I grow between 70% and 80% of the vegetables my wife and I eat, and I now spend almost no time weeding them. I have managed to drive down the seed bank using solarization, mulching, hoeing and hand pulling. In case you haven't heard of solarization, it involves covering the soil with a clear plastic tarp for several weeks in the summer to heat the soil and kill weed seeds. It may sound farfetched, but it works.

While there is never a 100% guarantee in the natural world, if you follow a “never let 'em set seed” strategy, I can virtually guarantee that you will soon be doing a lot less weeding in future years.

**A Note about Perennial Weeds.** Most of the perennial weeds that plague perennial flower gardens and lawns need more than the “never let 'em set seed” rule for effective control. Many perennial weeds grow from underground roots or tubers – making the path to weed-free perennial gardening much tougher. Not only should you prevent seed production, but you need to control the roots and tubers, too. Frequent removal of the shoots of perennial weeds will eventually starve and kill the underground tissues. You'll need to be especially persistent and use a variety of control methods to reach your goal. If necessary, this can also be achieved with the careful use of appropriate herbicides.

This column is provided as a courtesy by the Weed Science Society of America (WSSA). The author Robert Norris is an avid gardener and a professor emeritus in the Plant Sciences at the University of California at Davis

# GARDENING EVENTS

## 2012 TMGA Conference

Registration is now open for the 2012 TMGA Conference. The Bexar County Master Gardeners are looking forward to seeing you at the state conference this year in San Antonio. We have an outstanding group of speakers, hands-on sessions and tours lined up for you. The conference will be held at the Norris Conference Center which is conveniently located at Wonderland of the Americas Mall, Interstate 10 and Loop 410. There are many hotels and motels within a 5 mile radius.

You can get more information and register at:

[www.2012TMGAconference.org](http://www.2012TMGAconference.org) or  
[www.bexarcountymastergardeners.org](http://www.bexarcountymastergardeners.org).



TEXAS MASTER GARDENER CONFERENCE  
2012 BEXAR COUNTY

## 41st Annual Orchid Show & Sale

Zilker Botanical Garden/Austin Area Garden Center

**April 28-29, 2012**

Presented by Heart O'Texas Orchid Society ([www.hotos.org](http://www.hotos.org))

For a complete schedule of events or for more information contact: Geoffrey Frost at 512-413-3199 or e-mail [geoffreyfrost@yahoo.com](mailto:geoffreyfrost@yahoo.com).

## San Antonio Garden Center 24th Annual Spring Plant Sale

March 30th & 31st - 9 am - 4 pm

3310 N. New Braunfels @ Funston by the Botanical Gardens

The Plant Sale is a major fundraising project of the San Antonio Garden Center. We strive to provide our customers with a variety of popular shrubs, landscape plants, bedding plants, succulents, cacti and herbs, as well as a number of unique plants.

A popular part of the sale is the Donation Station where members donate plants, bulbs, seeds, etc. from their gardens.

Please contact the Garden Center if you have any questions at 824-9981. Shop early for the best selection!

## The Southern Region MG Conference

**May 1-4, 2012**


**Natchez, MS**

More information at <http://msucare.com/srmg>



# march 2012



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 GCCG Workday	2	3 KWED Radio 1580 AM Lawn & Garden Show 9:15 a.m. Wilson Co Gardening Days Gutierrez Park
4	5 Master Gardener Office/Library Open 8:30-NOON  GREEN TEAM 9 am  Earth Day Crafts	6 GCCG Workday 9 am	7	8 GCMG Board Meeting  GCCG Workday  O FULL MOON	9	10 KWED Radio Lawn & Garden Show 9:15 a.m.  GCCG Workday 9 AM
11	12 Master Gardener Office/Library	13 GCCG Workday	14	15 GCMG Meeting 7 PM  GCCG Workday	16 	17 KWED Radio Lawn & Garden Show 9:15 a.m.  Extension Bldg Workday <b>St Pat's Day</b>
18	19 Master Gardener Office/Library  GREEN TEAM 9 am	20 GCCG Workday	21	22  GCCG Workday  ● New Moon	23	24 KWED Radio Lawn & Garden Show 9:15 a.m.  Raised Bed Workshop GCCG
25	26 Master Gardener Office/Library  Finance Bldg Beds  <b>Newsletter Deadline</b>	27 GCCG Workday	28	29  GCCG Workday	30	31 KWED Radio Lawn & Garden Show 9:15 a.m.



**Guadalupe County Master Gardeners, Inc.  
210 East Live Oak St.  
Seguin, TX 78155**

Guadalupe County Master Gardeners <http://www.guadalupecountymastergardeners.org> 830-379-1972 Ext 210  
Guadalupe County AgriLIFE Extension <http://www.guadalupe-tx.tamu.edu/> 830-379-1972  
Texas Master Gardeners <http://www.txmg.org>

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Dave Elder	Publication Chairman
Carol Calentine	Volunteer Chairman
Jose Antonio Contreras	MG Training Chairman
Travis Franke	AgriLIFE Agent
	Master Gardener Coordinator

### **March Meeting**

**Thurs, March 15, 2012, 7 P.M.**

*AgriLIFE Extension Building  
210 E. Live Oak, Seguin, Tx*

Reference to commercial products or trade names is made with the understanding that no discrimination by the Master Gardeners is implied, and no endorsement by the Master Gardeners is implied. Educational programs conducted by the Guadalupe County Master Gardeners serve people of all ages, regardless of socioeconomic level, color, sex, religion, handicap, or national origin.

**Elaine McIntyre, Editor**

([elaine@tindomorgans.com](mailto:elaine@tindomorgans.com))

Linda Waite - Newsletter Assistant

Marilyn Moltz, The Wandering Gardener