



As the Garden Grows



A Publication of the Gonzales Master Gardeners

Gonzales, Texas August 2015 Volume 5, Issue 8

Master Gardener Class #6 NOW Accepting Applications

The Gonzales Master Gardeners are people who love gardening and want to learn more about horticulture. Master Gardeners enjoy sharing their plant knowledge with others and promoting the love of gardening. What really sets Master Gardeners apart from other home gardeners is their special training in horticulture. In exchange for their training, persons who become Master Gardeners contribute time as volunteers, working through the Texas AgriLife Extension office to provide horticulture-related information to the community.

Our next class begins on September 15, 2015 and runs through May 17, 2016. We usually meet every other Tuesday from 8:30 am until 12:30 pm. The instructors are very knowledgeable in their area of expertise. Subjects included are:

- Botany & Plant Growth
- Propagation of Plants
- Soil and Plant Nutrition
- Greenhouses
- Irrigation and Water Conservation
- Lawn Care Maintenance & Disease
- Insects
- Diagnosing and Managing Plant Problems
- Herbs & Vegetables
- Tree Care & Pruning Principles
- Composting/Organic Horticulture
- Home Fruit & Nut Production



Go to www.gonzalesmastergardeners.com to download an application or visit the Texas AgriLife Extension office at 1709 E. Sarah DeWitt Drive, Gonzales, TX 78629-2613, 830-672-8531.

Living with Chemical Warfare in Plants

(submitted by Gail Johnson)

In the last two months, I have reviewed the research available to determine if there is any truth to the idea of companion planting in gardens and to discuss the idea of allelopathy, or plant warfare. As I told you, there didn't seem to be much evidence to support the idea of traditional companion planting but there is some evidence that plants can physically help each other through such things as shading and that plants can chemically benefit from each other from such things as nitrogen fixing. Then we looked at the fact that plants can actually inhibit each other chemically by producing substances that inhibit the growth and productivity of other plants. So, two things today, (1) does any of this affect humans and animals, and (2) in general how do we deal with this?

Toxicity is the degree that a substance can affect humans and animals. So allelopathy is an effect on plants and toxicity is an effect on animals. And yes, some chemicals grown by plants for the purpose of inhibiting other plants can be toxic, at least to some extent, to animals. (Not everything that is toxic is deadly. Sometimes the inconvenience is greater than other times.) One such substance, juglone, is found in all members of the juglans species of trees. The juglans species includes quite a number of nut bearing trees including pecans, hickories, butternuts and walnuts. Each of these species of trees carries juglone in varying amounts.

Pecans, hickories and black walnuts are native to this area, so it seemed appropriate to pursue this a little further but, as often happens to me in these research projects, the research gets contradictory. Experts are not sure what part of the plant carries the juglone. They suspect the nuts, the leaves and the roots of these trees in varying degrees. The most common animal reported to be affected is the horse in which juglone is suspected to be a cause of laminitis (founder). There seemed to be general agreement that horses should not be bedded on fresh material from juglans species trees. Since the Master Gardeners are promoting the planting of nut trees, I asked several local experts about this problem in this area. No one was aware that this has been a problem in Gonzales County but out of an abundance of caution, it seems prudent to suggest that horses not be bedded on fresh shavings from nut trees. Research indicates that aged material is not a problem, but why take the risk? And should any animal owner suspect that their pet or working animal is suffering from any toxicity, they would be well advised to seek veterinary care promptly.

Are allelopathy and toxicity, then, such that we need to completely avoid certain plants? Well, common sense would tell you that we should not be planting hemlock in our gardens but for the gardener who hopes to create a pleasing landscape with juglans species trees, I will be posting a list of plants on the Gonzales Master Gardener website that are resistant to juglone allelopathy. It's a long list. But in general, it seems that allelopathy is one of many influences on plants in our gardens that we as gardeners need to be aware of. Like so many things, the subject is so broad that we must take it on a case by case basis. Research is certainly on-going in this field and if I spot anything exciting, I'll be sure to let you know!



Little Ruby alternanthera named newest Texas Superstar plant

Written by Robert Burns, Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Service
(Reprinted from July 31, 2015 edition of AgriLife Today)



Selection is smaller, thicker and fuller version of Joseph's coat
(photo by Dr. Mike Arnold)

COLLEGE STATION – The ground cover plant, Little Ruby alternanthera has been named the newest Texas Superstar plant. “A lot of old-timers will probably recognize this group of plants as ‘Joseph’s Coat,’” said David Rodriguez, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service agent for horticulture in Bexar County and member of the Texas Superstar selection board. “But this selection is about a third the normal size of the older selections of Joseph’s Coat, so it’s a much smaller, compact, thicker, fuller type of a seasonal ground cover.”

Little Ruby is typically planted in late winter or spring, but it can also be planted throughout the summer and fall and be expected to give good results, Rodriguez

said. This long planting season, among other traits, is one reason it was selected as a Texas Superstar.

All Texas Superstar plants undergo extensive tests throughout the state by AgriLife Research and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service horticulturists, said Dr. Brent Pemberton, Texas A&M AgriLife Research ornamental horticulturist and head of the Texas Superstar board, Overton. To be designated a Texas Superstar, a plant must not just be beautiful but also perform well for consumers and growers throughout Texas. Superstars must also be easy to propagate, which should ensure the plants are not only widely available throughout Texas but reasonably priced as well, Pemberton said.

Rodriguez said Little Ruby does perform very well in landscapes, in containers, alone or to contrast with other plants. Its color varies from green to red to a deep burgundy, depending upon how much sunlight it receives during the day. “In an area that gets bright sunlight for much of the day, it will produce real attractive burgundy or ‘maroon-ish’ foliage,” Rodriguez said. “The more sun it receives, the darker, more intense the color.” In a shady location, the color will be more greenish, which is attractive as well, he said.

Little Ruby is also easy to grow and tolerates a variety of soils. “The main thing is to provide a soil rich with organic material, good drainage, and maybe add some slow-release fertilizer at the initial planting,” Rodriguez said. “And maybe every second week or so supplement with a water-soluble fertilizer.”



Texas A&M AgriLife Research,
Photo by Dr. Brent Pemberton

In most situations, Little Ruby is considered an annual, but it depends, he said. "In Central or South Texas, it can be a short-lived perennial, but you do have to give it some cold weather protection. If you grow it as a container plant, it can be moved inside on the colder winter days." In flowerbeds, it may freeze down and have to be replanted every year, Rodriguez said. During a mild winter, it may be nipped back a little by the cold, in which case the gardener need only prune back the killed off plant tops, apply a water soluble fertilizer and it will come back and establish a full ground cover.

New plants should be planted about 12 inches apart, he said. If you plant them early in the spring, they should establish a good cover in four to six weeks.



Texas Superstar is a registered trademark owned by Texas A&M AgriLife Research, a state agency that is part of the Texas A&M University System. More information about the Texas Superstar program can be found at <http://texassuperstar.com/>.

"We have seen them have little white flowers, but that's not the main feature of the plant," Rodriguez said. "If they do bloom, it's usually in late fall, and they make a really good contrast with the foliage. I think this is a 'must' plant for people to try."

More information about the Texas Superstar program, including retail outlets where Superstar varieties may be purchased, can be found at <http://www.texassuperstar.com/>.

Annual Tree Sale Meeting

(Submitted by Fran Saliger)

The 2015-16 Fall Tree Sale committee met on August 4, 2015 to continue making plans for the event. A final list of varieties of fruit and nut trees was finalized. The next thing to complete is how we will do the education for the public and our marketing strategy. The deadline to order will be October 31 with delivery in early December.



The following varieties will be offered:

- Figs- *Texas Everbearing* (aka Brown Turkey) and *Celeste*
- Peaches- *LaFeliciano* and *Tex Prince*
- Grapes- *Black Spanish* and *Victoria Red*
- Pears- *Orient* and *Moonglow*
- Pomegranate- *New Russian 18* and *Wonderful*
- Plums- *Methley* and *Santa Rosa*
- Pecans- *Desirable* and *Choctaw*

Varieties were chosen based on how they do in Gonzales County. Many of these trees need specific growing conditions that are suitable for our area. Timing of when to plant is also important. This will give the customer a better chance at having a successful planting and harvest.

Our next meeting will be held at the PACE building on Tuesday, **September 8, 2015 at 1:30 pm**. If you have any questions, contact Gail Johnson or Fran Saliger.



.gonzalesmastergardeners.



We've come a long way from the beginning of a great Website first created by Betsy DeMent. As time marched on, the GMG organization felt it was time to better serve the public with all the added programs that have come about over the years. With the guidance of Marcella Perales, administrative assistant at the extension office, Jo Swiger and Gail Johnson the website has a new look. They have done a wonderful job of bringing the website up to date. It is a very user-friendly site that tells our story and will keep all GMG's up to date about what's happening with our organization. Each project leader will have the capability to inform everyone about what is going on with his or her project. It will be a great tool for each of to use so we know what is happening on a regular basis. The calendar should keep everyone abreast of when the next meeting or event is going to happen. We all too often forget about a planned meeting. By checking your GMG calendar, you will always know when to be somewhere.

So....check out the new look on the Gonzales Master Gardener website. We are about 80% of the way done with this project and hope everyone will be happy with the results! Know what's happening with Gonzales Master Gardeners.

www.gonzalesmastergardeners.org

Noon Master Gardener Meeting-September 3, 2015

Come join us for a fun time talking about our gardens, sharing plants and information.
Lunch provided. Meeting begins at noon. Come early to visit.

Volunteer Hours Report for July 2015

Twelve Master Gardeners turned in 157.5 volunteer hours and five CEU hours

During the month, maintenance work was performed at the Children's Garden. The Fall Tree Sale committee continued preparations for a Fall Fruit and Nut Tree sale to include educational programs. The GMG Class #6 is preparing for training classes to begin in September.

Eating What We Grow

(Submitted by Fran Saliger)

Oven Roasted Okra

Ingredients:

½ pound of sliced okra
 2 Tablespoons olive oil or corn oil
 ½ teaspoon garlic salt
 Salt and Pepper to taste
 ½ cup Panko Bread Crumbs



Directions:

Preheat an oven to 425 degrees F (220 degrees C).

Place the okra in a one-gallon Ziploc bag. Pour in the olive oil and sprinkle with garlic, salt, and pepper. Shake bag until the vegetables are coated with oil. Add the panko bread crumbs and shake. Spread the vegetables on to a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Bake for 13 to 15 minutes until the okra is lightly browned.

Note: This recipe will work with just about any sliced vegetable. I love sliced potatoes cooked this way. May have to adjust cooking times.



Plant of the Month

(Submitted by Brenda Thompson)

Gulf Coast Penstemon or *Penstemon tenuis*

Deciduous perennial with purple blooms on upright flower spikes, approximately 1-1/2 to 2-1/2 feet tall, which readily reseeds. It will grow in full sun or partial shade in clay, sandy or loamy soil, and requires low to medium watering. It is a native Texas plant which provides nectar for hummingbirds and butterflies. Blooms March, April, May and June; towards the end of July and in August, seeds can be collected.





Area Events

(Submitted by Brenda Thompson)

Houston: "Watering Systems" will be the topic of the Houston Rose Society meeting on Thursday, **August 13**, at 7:30 p.m. Baxter Williams, past president of the Houston Rose Society, author of numerous articles on rose culture, and an expert on growing roses on the Gulf coast of Texas, will speak on inexpensive, easy-to-build watering systems. The meeting will be held at the Parish Hall of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 1819 Heights Blvd., Houston. Entrance to the parking lot is on W. 19th Street near Yale St.

Nacogdoches: Stephen F. Austin State University's SFA Gardens will host the monthly Theresa and Les Reeves Lecture Series at **7 p.m. Thursday, August 13**, in the Ina Brundrett Conservation Education Building at the Pineywoods Native Plant Center, 2900 Raguet St., Nacogdoches. Scott McMahan, owner of McMahan Nursery in Atlanta, will present "Climbing Asian Mountains, Forging Rivers and Fighting the Elements: Moments from a Plant Hunter's Diary." A resident of Decatur, Georgia, McMahan is an extreme plant enthusiast. In fall 2009, McMahan opened Garden*Hood, a full-scale retail nursery and in-town plant boutique located near Zoo Atlanta. The nursery was named Best Place to Buy Plants in the "Atlanta Magazine" 2009 issue and also won both the editor's and people's choice award in the Atlanta Journal-Constitution's Best of the Big A poll for 2010. More recently, Garden*Hood won Best Garden Shop in Creative Loafing's 2011, 2012 and 2014 Best of Atlanta issues. The Theresa and Les Reeves Lecture Series is held the second Thursday of each month at SFA's Pineywoods Native Plant Center. A rare plant raffle will be held after the program. The lecture is free and open to the public, but donations to the Theresa and Les Reeves lecture series fund are always appreciated. Parking is available at the nearby Raguet Elementary School, 2428 Raguet St., with continual shuttle service to the Ina Brundrett Conservation Education Building. For more information, call 936- 468-1832 or email grantdamon@sfasu.edu.

San Antonio: The San Antonio Herb Society August meeting will feature Don Crites, a long time Master Gardener, presenting Good Bugs, Bad Bugs in your Garden. Herbs have some pesky bugs, so if you have questions or even examples, bring them. The San Antonio Herb Society meeting is Thursday, **August 13, from 6:30-8:30 p.m.** at the San Antonio Garden Center, 3310 N. New Braunfels, San Antonio. Free and open to the public. For more information, call 210-826-6860 or email mbelisle@satx.rr.com.

Bastrop: This workshop is free and will take place at the Bastrop Refectory in Bastrop State Park at 3005 TX-21, Bastrop, on **Saturday, August 15 from 9 a.m.-1 p.m.** Lunch is not included, but coffee and snacks are provided. Registration is open now until Aug. 12. The wildfires of 2011 caused significant destruction throughout Bastrop County. Residents may now wonder what can be done to reclaim the beauty of the landscape. This question can be answered during Texas A&M Forest Service's landowner workshop. Attendees will learn how to manage oak and yaupon sprouts, and help pine trees to once again re-establish as a central feature of Bastrop County. This workshop will help landowners take a more proactive role in managing their properties post burn. Landowners will learn what options are available for land management assistance and provide techniques they can use to manage the species composition within their landscapes so that pine trees are not totally displaced by oak and yaupon sprouts. Experts from across the state and multiple agencies will address tree planting service availability, fuel reduction, woody vegetation control with demonstrations, standing dead tree removal and Firewise landscaping. For more information or to

register for this workshop visit <http://tfsweb.tamu.edu/content/landing.aspx?id=21194> or contact Daniel Lewis at 979-968-5555 or dlewis@tfs.tamu.edu.

San Antonio: "30 Bugs Every Gardener Should Know" will be presented **Wednesday, August 19, 1-3 p.m.** at the Bexar County Ext Office, 3355 Cherry Ridge St, Suite #208, San Antonio. Cost: \$10. If you spend any time outdoors, you know there are bugs and this wet spring and summer have helped insect populations explode! Learn which bugs are hurting or helping your plants, invading your home, or just causing a nuisance. See real insects as well as pictures and be sure to bring your insects or plant damage that you need identified. To RSVP, email Molly Keck at mekeck@ag.tamu.edu or call 210-467-6575.

Seabrook: Tony Collins, past president of the San Jacinto Branch of the American Begonia Society, will present "Begonias" at 10 a.m., **August 19**, in the Meeting Room at Clear Lake Park, 5001 NASA Parkway, Seabrook. For additional information, visit <https://hcmga.tamu.edu>.

Woodway: Master Gardener Mark Barnett will discuss "Soils, Trees, and Oak Wilt" at the Carleen Bright Arboretum, The Pavilion, Woodway, **August 19, from noon until to 2 p.m.** Learn about crafty ways to create art for your garden. Get ideas on fairy gardens, cement as art, beautifying areas of your landscape, decorative signs, plant markers, fence panels, and many other fun and creative ideas. Bring lunch! For more information, call 254-399-9204.

San Antonio: Edwards Aquifer--BCMG Seminar & Meeting will be held **Thursday, August 20, 1-3 p.m.** at Texas AgriLife Ext Service, 3355 Cherry Ridge, Suite 208, San Antonio. Gregg Eckhardt, an environmental scientist who has been studying the Edwards Aquifer and related issues since 1972, will discuss the Edwards Aquifer. In 1994, he created Edwards' website as an educational tool for the public. He is a registered Environmental Manager and has served on many local committees and boards and has received several State appointments to scientific and educational panels. His talk will include some water history, hydrology basics, and some of the regulatory complications. Free. Plant exchange prior to meeting. For more information email Barbara Lutz at bblutz@stic.net or call: 210-699-0663.

La Marque: "The Patio Garden" with former Montgomery County agent Tom LeRoy. Saturday 9-11 a.m., **August 22**, at Galveston County AgriLife Extension in Carbide Park, 4102 Main, La Marque; Ph 281-534-3413; email reservations to galv3@wt.net, further details www.aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston. Free.

San Antonio: Alamo Area Conservation Workshop will be held Friday, **August 28, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.** at Phil Hardberger Park, 8400 NW Military Hwy. San Antonio. Speakers will represent Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, Texas Forest Service, Bexar County Master Gardeners and Alamo Area Master Naturalists. Cost: \$20 per person by Aug 21 (\$25 at door); lunch included. Learn about Fire in the Urban Wildland Interface, Oak Wilt, Feral Hogs, Insects, Water Quality and the Natural History of the South Texas Plains. For details or to register, email Angel Torres at matorres@ag.tamu.edu or call 210-467-6575.

La Marque: "Successful Fall Vegetable Gardening" with GC Master Gardener Luke Stripling. Saturday 9-11:30 a.m., **August 29**, at Galveston County AgriLife Extension in Carbide Park, 4102 Main, La Marque; Ph 281-534-3413; email reservations to galv3@wt.net, further details www.aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston. Free.

Austin: Wizzie Brown will discuss "Natural Pest Control," **September 10, 10 a.m. to noon** at Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service-Travis County, 1600-B Smith Road, Austin. Learn how to tell pests from other insects found in your backyard, learn integrated pest management (IPM) to avoid many problem pests you may experience, and learn a combination of practices to prevent or avoid pest problems rather than treating them once they occur. Stabilize your landscape so that conditions are more favorable for plants than for pests. Wizzie Brown serves as Program Specialist - IPM in the Austin metroplex encompassing Travis County and surrounding counties. Cost: \$10 thru 8/31, \$15 starting 09/01 and onsite, No cash accepted - checks and credit cards only. Register on line at <https://agriliferegister.tamu.edu/TravisCounty> or by phone at 979-845-2604. For additional information, contact Sue Carrasco at 512-854-9610 or sacarrasco@ag.tamu.edu.

La Grange: Dr. Mark McFarland will discuss "Soils Testing & Fertility Management, 12:05 p.m.-12:50 p.m., **September 10**, at the Fayette County Agricultural Building, 255 Svboda Lane, La Grange. Registration 11:50 a.m.-12:05 p.m., For additional information, visit <http://fayette.agrilife.org>.

San Antonio: Rain Barrel Workshop will be presented **Saturday, September 12, 9 a.m.-noon**, at Stone Oak Property Owners Offices, 19210 Huebner Road, San Antonio. A rain barrel is a container that collects and stores water when you need it most. You conserve water and benefit your plants and garden!! Make-and-take your own rain barrel in just a few hours by attending this workshop. Fun and educational for the whole family! Bring the kids to help assemble your rain barrel - and enjoy free food and drinks for all! Also visit with SAWS and Trinity District water conservation specialists. Limit 30 - \$25 per person. RSVP with payment to Angel Torres by Sept 3, 2015: 210-467-6575 or matorres@ag.tamu.edu. Make check payable to: Texas A&M AgriLife, 3355 Cherry Ridge, Suite 212, San Antonio.

Sugar Land: The Great Grow, Children's Organic School Garden program presents Fall Kids Fest at the Museum. 13016 University Blvd, Sugar Land 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., **Saturday, September 26**. Enjoy this fun filled fall festival. Explore the museum butterfly garden. See a live bee hive. Pumpkin patch sponsored by HEB. Habitat plant sale. Vendor and sponsorship opportunities. Info at www.TheGreatGrow.com or call Diana Miller 713-724-3113

San Antonio: San Antonio Botanical Gardens, **September 9, 2015 - February 14, 2016**, on exhibit: Eight bronze sculptures by internationally renowned Mexican Artist Jorge Marín. For the past 24 years, these contemporary sculptures have traveled throughout the world, as cultural outreach from Mexico. Public reception/opening: September 9, 5:30-7:30pm, at the Botanical Garden, Rainforest exhibit thru September. Maze leads guests on an educational experience. The Garden is open year-round, 9am to 5 pm. For info call 210-207-3250 or visit www.sabot.org

Learn Floral Design at Garden Center's Fall 2015 classes. Three classes:

Tuesday, September 8

Tuesday, September 15

Tuesday, September 22

All classes are 12n-3pm at San Antonio Garden Center, 3310 N. New Braunfels.

For more information, call Garden Center at 210.824.9981 or info@sanantoniogardencenter.org.

Austin: Backyard Basics Fall Series. 10 a.m. to noon. AgriLife Extension office, 1600-B Smith Road, Austin. Backyard Basics, offered by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Travis County, will provide consumers, backyard gardeners, homemakers, educators and farmers a "do-it-yourself"

learning opportunity on raising chickens for home egg production, implementing integrated pest management principles, starting new plants from cuttings, and growing edible plants with ornamental potential.

September 10 – Natural Pest Control

October 8 – Plant Propagation

November 12 – Bold and Beautiful Edibles

Cost: \$10 for early registration, \$15 late and onsite, No cash accepted-checks & credit cards only.

Register: <https://agriliferegister.tamu.edu/TravisCounty>

Register by Phone: 979-845-2604

Contact: Sue Carrasco, 512-854-9610 or sacarrasco@ag.tamu.edu. Details on the

blog: <http://centraltexashorticulture.blogspot.com/2015/06/backyard-basics-fall-series.html>

San Antonio: SAVE THE DATE: OCTOBER 17, 2015

24th Annual San Antonio Herb Market again this year at the Historic Pearl Brewery!

9:00am - 3:00pm Let's Celebrate the Herb of The Year - - Savory!

Austin Area Events-for more events in the Austin Area, go to

<http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/travis/>

San Antonio, Texas- for events in the San Antonio area got to

<http://www.bexarcounnymastergardeners.org>

GMG Training Program Starts September 15, 2015



GISD School Starts August 24, 2015

DATES TO REMEMBER: (Check elsewhere in newsletter for details)

Unless otherwise noted, all meetings/classes are at

623 N. Fair Street (Plantatarium: A Center for Exploration)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
August 9	10	11	12	13	14 WIC Garden 11 AM	15
16	17	18	19	20	21 WIC Garden 11 AM	22
23	24 Back to School for GISD	25	26	27 Board Mtg. 9:30 am	28 WIC Garden 11 AM	29
30	31 Volunteer Hours Due	SEPTEMBER 1 Deadline for MG class #6	2	3 GMG Lunch/Noon mtg.	4 WIC Garden 11 AM	5
6	7	8 Tree Sale Mtg. 1:30 pm Newsletter Articles Due	9	10	11 WIC Garden 11 AM	12
13	14	15 GMG Class #6 Orientation 8:30-12:30 pm	16	17	18 WIC Garden 11 AM	19

PACE: 623 N. Fair Street-next to Gonzales Elementary School

Children's Garden: Corner of Moore and St. Louis St.-next to Eggleston House

WIC Garden: 628 St. George Street

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<http://gonzales.agrilife.org>



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