



As the Garden Grows



A Publication of the Gonzales Master Gardeners

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GMG Training Class to Begin September 13

Join us for the next great Master Gardener Training program beginning September 13, 2016. Classes are generally held on the second and fourth Tuesdays from 8:30 am-12:30 pm through May 2017 at the Plantarium: A Center for Exploration (PACE), 623 Fair Street, Gonzales, Texas. Application deadline is 5:00 p.m., Tuesday, August 30, 2016. Payment of \$165.00 will be due with the application. Go online (www.gonzalesmastergardeners.org) to download the application and class schedule. While you're at our website, see how GMG's are involved in our community.

The Master Gardener Training Program is an education/volunteer program conducted by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension designed to increase the availability of horticultural information and extend horticultural projects through the community. We are looking for individuals with the time and inclination to fulfill our community goals.

For more information, contact Robbie Cole at 281-734-1391.



What's In Your Soil?

(Submitted by Fran Saliger)

The soil used for growing healthy plants is the primary source of water and nutrients for the plants. The soil also anchors the plants in the ground. So if you start with healthy soil when starting a vegetable or flower garden, the rewards will be well worth the effort of creating a good environment for your plants.

Start preparing your soil by knowing the current physical and chemical characteristics of the soil you are working with. Plants need a good balance of air and water. In Texas, there are many different soil types ranging from very fine sand to heavy clays. The most desirable soil is one that contains

25% water, 25% air, and 45 % solids. Organic matter makes up the remaining 5% of the soil. Organic matter is both plant and animal remains in various stages of decomposition. Too much water in the soil and the plant's roots will suffer. A lack of oxygen in the soil can result in root diseases, nutrient deficiencies, deterioration of root systems and ultimately plant death. Soils that do not hold water require frequent irrigation leading to drought stress for the plants and a buildup of salts from the water.

To achieve a good balance of air and water, perform a "Hole-Test". Dig a hole 6-8 inches in diameter and 2 foot deep. Fill the hole ½ full of water and note the time. Determine how long it takes the water to drain from the hole. Use the following guidelines to interpret the results:

- Less than 15 minutes means excessive drainage. Consider adding organic matter to increase the soils ability to hold water.
- 15-30 minutes means adequate drainage and water holding properties. No additional material is required for planting trees but adding organic matter for flowers and shrubs is beneficial.
- 30 minutes means poor drainage and adding coarse texture soil amendments like compost, bark mulch, or expanded shale will increase the aeration and drainage.

Also living in the soil are microorganisms and macroorganisms. Earthworms are macroorganisms that till and enrich the soil. Some of the microorganisms in the soil that help break down the dead plants and animals are bacteria, actinomycetes, fungi, protozoa, algae, and nematodes.

Consider having a soil test performed that supplies information to enable the homeowner to wisely choose and apply soil amendments and sources of nutrients. Plants need 16 essential elements or nutrients for normal growth. Carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, and nitrogen make up 95% of plant solids. The other 12 elements for all plants are boron, calcium, chlorine, copper, iron, magnesium, molybdenum, phosphorus, potassium, sulfur, and zinc. Most of these elements are in the soil in adequate amounts. Nitrogen, calcium, magnesium, phosphorus, and potassium may be depleted from time to time. The soil test will tell if these elements are needed or not. Plants need these essential nutrients to promote healthy growing plants. Contact your local County Extension office about having a soil test performed.

There are many commercially available fertilizers on the market. Organic fertilizers are fertilizers that are derived solely from the remains of once-living organism. Generally, organic materials release nutrients over a fairly long period of time. The drawback to using organic nutrients is that the plant may not get enough of the principal nutrient when it needs it most to promote optimal growth. Examples of organic sources of nutrients are cottonseed meal, blood meal, bone meal, fish emulsion, and all manures and composts.

The soil pH is also important. The measurement expresses the degree of acidity or alkalinity of the soil. For most plants, the ideal soil pH is near neutral or slightly acid. Some plants like blueberries require a lower ph. The pH of the soil will also determine whether or not the Hydrangea will bloom pink or blue!

If you take the time to know what kind of soil you have when designing a landscape, planting flowers or growing vegetables you will have a successful garden and reap the benefits of beautiful trees, shrubs, flowers and vegetables.

Resources:

<http://EarthKind.tamu.edu>

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

Texas Master Gardener Handbook

Getting Ready for the Start of School at GISD

As the school year for GISD begins on August 22, 2016, the Gonzales Master Gardeners are looking forward to working with the students in the coming months. Arline Schacherl, leader of the first grade program, and Dee Sengelmann, second grade leader, met with Dr. Womack, principal at East Avenue Primary school, and Janice Schacherl, assistant principal, to schedule their programs for the upcoming year. As you may know by now, the second grade classes are being moved to East Avenue Primary. Dr. Womack and Ms. Schacherl are very supportive of the second graders walking to the PACE building for their class sessions.

Dates for the Second Grade Program are as follows:

Session #1--Thursday, October 13 (alternate date--Thursday, October 20)

Session #2--Tuesday, December 6 (alternate date--Thursday, December 8)

Session #3--Thursday, February 9 (alternate date--Thursday, February 16)

Session #4--Tuesday, April 11 (alternate date--Tuesday, April 25)

Contact Dee Sengelmann if you plan to help with these classes

The first grade sessions are scheduled as follows beginning in January 2017:

Session #1 [classroom]--Thursday, January 12 (alternate date--Thursday, January 19)

Session #2 [classroom]--Thursday, January 26 (alternate date--Thursday, February 2)

Session #3 [planting at garden]--Thursday, February 23 (alternate date--Thursday, March 2)

Session #4 [visiting the garden]--Thursday, March 23 (alternate date--Thursday, March 30)

Session #5 [harvesting the garden]--Thursday, April 20 (alternate date--Thursday, April 27)

Contact Arline Schacherl if you plan to help with these classes.

There will be eleven classes in each grade level for first and second grade. Stay tuned for any schedule changes and time of each session.

Arline will be emailing everyone about the dates for the cleanup of the children's garden in the coming weeks.

Third and fourth grade will remain at Gonzales Elementary. Gail Johnson will be working on the 3rd and 4th grade Black Walnut Restoration Program.

New this year will be a small team of Master Gardeners working with Donna Horsley, teacher for the Life Skills Class at Gonzales High School. Thanks to Sandy Llewellyn and Melissa Watson for taking the leadership of this project. Mrs. Horsley wants to create a garden for these students to enable them to learn about where their food comes from and how to grow vegetables and herbs. They will

use this knowledge in the classroom as they study biology and how to cook their homegrown vegetables. GMG will be giving them the guidance they need to learn about gardening and horticulture. GMG will not be building the beds or furnishing continued maintenance on the project.

It promises to be another great year and are looking forward to seeing all Master Gardeners involved with these programs.

Member's Monthly Meeting

Our next monthly lunch meeting will be on **September 1**. Arline Schacherl and Mike Ohlhavsen have volunteered to bring lunch. Come on out and enjoy a wonderful lunch and visit with your fellow MG's. Bring something to share in the door prize give away.

Need to schedule a meeting at PACE?

As most of you may know, the PACE building is used not only by GMG but also by the Extension Office. GMG generally use the building on Tuesdays and Thursdays for our classes and meetings. Team leaders need to schedule their meetings on these days if possible. If you require using it other than Tuesdays or Thursday, please call Marcela Perales at the Extension Office (830-672-8531) to schedule a meeting. Consider turning on the AC/Heat the day before depending on weather conditions.

Cooking What We Grow

(submitted by Carolyn Wilkerson)

This is a great way to use those really big zucchini that you missed while harvesting!!

Zucchini Bread

3 cups flour
2 cups sugar
2 cups shredded zucchini
1 cup oil
½ tsp. baking powder
2 ½ tsp. cinnamon
1 cup pecans, chopped
3 eggs
1 T. vanilla
1 tsp. baking soda
1 tsp. salt
1 tsp. nutmeg

Grease pans and preheat oven to 350 degrees. Beat eggs til fluffy; add sugar, zucchini, oil and vanilla. Mix well. Add dry ingredients. Bake for 1 hour. Makes 2 loaves in 9 X 13 pans.

Note: Try adding ¼ cup cocoa. Yummy!

Plant of the Month

(Submitted by Brenda Thompson)



Common Name: Ice plant

Family: Aizoaceae

Genus: *Delosperma and Lampranthus*

Bright green, shiny, succulent leaves with 3/4-inch daisy-like flowers in a variety of colors (yellow, orange, pink, magenta) depending on species. There is also a species with variegated leaves. Drought-tolerant, fast-growing perennial that does well as a pot plant, hanging basket or ground cover. Note: this plant is like candy to snails. Does well in full or partial sun.

Propagation: Apparently, this can be started by seed but I've only started new plants by cuttings. Usually, I just lay the cuttings on top of soil and water lightly. If there is a woody stem, I stick the end in the soil.

Bloom Period: Summer

Water Requirements: low but with more water, the leaves are larger and plant grows quicker; needs good drainage

Area Events

(Submitted by Brenda Thompson)

Houston: "Roses of Russia" will be the topic of the Houston Rose Society meeting, Thursday, **August 11** at 7:30 p.m. at the Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion, 1500 Hermann Drive, Houston. The parking lot is Lot C, located at Hermann Drive and Crawford Street. Houston Rose Society and American Rose Society member, Penny Pressler, will present this program. Penny and her husband are world travelers. The program will focus on the roses and rose gardens of Russia. Free admission. For more information, visit www.houstonrose.org.

San Antonio: The San Antonio Herb Society will present a program by Grace Emery on **August 11**. In addition to being the current president of the Herb Society, Grace is also a Master Gardener, and Red Cross volunteer. She will be speaking on Garden First Aid and Citizen CPR. Basic first aid topics covered will include bleeding, heat stress, poisoning, bug, spider, and snakebites, back strain, and sunburn. Some herbal remedies will also be covered as well as traditional Red Cross first aid. The meeting will be held at the San Antonio Garden Center, 3310 N. New Braunfels at Parland from

6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Admission is free and the public is welcome. For more information, visit www.sanantonioherbs.org.

Houston: Open Garden Day, with Harris County Master Gardeners at Precinct 2. 8:30-11:00 a.m., Monday, **August 15**, at the Genoa Friendship Garden, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Rd., Houston. Master Gardeners will be available to answer gardening questions. Free. Plants for sale every Monday in the Greenhouse. For more information, visit <https://hcmga.tamu.edu>.

Lufkin: Dr. Bill Welch will present "Redesigning the Landscape" at 6:30 p.m. Monday, **August 15**, at Angelina Extension, 2201 S. Medford Drive, Lufkin. Cost is \$10 at the door. Dr. Welch's books will be available for sale and signing at 6:00 p.m. Call 634-6414 for more information.

La Marque: "Gardening by the Square Foot" with GC Master Gardener Jon Johns presenting, 6:30-8:30 p.m., **August 16**, at the Galveston County AgriLife Extension Building in Carbide Park, 4102-B Main St., La Marque. Fee/Free. Participants must pre-register: 281-534-3413. Galveston County Master Gardener event. For additional information, visit <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/>.

Odessa: Permian Basin Master Gardeners (Ector/Midland Counties) will continue its Backyard Basics series with classes on Home Egg Production. Classes will be held on Tuesday, **August 16**, from 6 to 9 p.m. with an identical class on Wednesday August 17 from 9 a.m. to noon. Choose either class to fit your schedule. Both classes will be held at the West Texas Food Bank, 411 South Pagewood, Odessa, TX. Attendance is free, but registration is requested at 432-498-4071. Topics will include buying and raising chicks, feeding, housing, care and costs, egg production and end of production.

Smithson Valley: The Lindheimer Chapter (Comal County) of the Native Plant Society of Texas will hold their monthly meeting **August 16** at the GVTC Auditorium, 36101 FM 3159, Smithson Valley. The doors open at 6:30 p.m. and the meeting starts at 7:00 p.m. The speaker will be Jim McCollough, Geologist & Master Naturalist. Jim will discuss "Hill Country Geology." The meeting is free and the public is welcome. For more information, call Martha Guethle, 830-438-5996.

Woodway: Mark Barnett, Master Gardener and Horticulturist/Landscape Designer, will present a program on Native Texas Plants, noon to 2:00 p.m., **August 17**, Pavilion at the Woodway Arboretum, 9001 Bosque Blvd, Woodway. From flowers to bushes to trees, learn about many plants that do very well in Central Texas landscapes. Free. For more information, call 254-399-9204.

La Marque: "Flower Arranging" with GC Master Gardener Jackie Auer presenting, 9:00-11:00 a.m., **August 27**, at the Galveston County AgriLife Extension Building in Carbide Park, 4102-B Main St., La Marque. Fee/Free. Participants must pre-register: 281-534-3413. Galveston County Master Gardener event. For additional information, visit <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/>.

La Marque: "Growing Strawberries" with MG Master Gardener Robert Marshall presenting, 1:00-2:00 p.m., **August 27**, at the Galveston County AgriLife Extension Building in Carbide Park, 4102-B Main St., La Marque. Fee/Free. Participants must pre-register 281-534-3413. Galveston County Master Gardener event. For additional information, visit <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/>.

Victoria: **Saturday, September 17, 2016**, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. Victoria MG Fall Symposium. Topics include: Yes, You can Grow Roses and More!, Growing Grapes in Goliad County, Native Dave/Rebellious by nature, Sustainable Landscape with Native Plants, Big Tree Butterflies, Little Herds Farm/Austin, TX. Fee-\$30 before Sept. 1 or \$35 at the door. Lunch provided and tour of VEG garden. CEU's offered. Contact: www.vcmga.org.

Lufkin: 4th Annual Native Plant Sale will be held at the Farmer's Market, 2107 S Medford Dr., Lufkin, on Saturday, **September 24**, beginning at 8:00 a.m. until sold out. Featuring native and well adapted ferns, grasses, perennials, shrubs and trees. Angelina Master Gardeners. Call 634-6414 for more information.

New Braunfels: 6th Annual Spring Seminar 2017. **Friday, February 17, 2017**, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. Texas Heirlooms and Superstars. Speakers include Greg Grant, Florence Oxley, David Rodriguez, and Cameron Campbell. Contact for more information and registration form: <http://txmg.org/comal/events/seminar>

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 go to <http://www.bexarcountymastergardeners.org>

GISD School Begins August 22



Gonzales Master Gardening Classes Begin September 13

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-(aka PACE)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
August 7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25 Board Mtg. 9:30	26	27
28	29	30 Deadline for applying for GMG Class #7	31	September 1 Noon MG mtg.	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13 GMG Class #7 Orientation 8:30 am-12:30 pm	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27 GMG Class #7 Botany 8:30 am-12:30 pm	28	29 Board Mtg. 9:30	30	

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

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



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