

Denton County Master Gardener Association



THE ROOT

Grow With Us



Buds From The Board

BY PAT MOYER, PRESIDENT

Greetings MGers and Interns.

The holiday season has made its appearance with an early frost. So, of course, I was hectically moving plants out of harm's way and trying to find frost cloths that haven't seen the light of day since March. I was relatively successful and hope you were, too.

This past month also saw the election/re-election of the Board of Directors for 2019. This was a sad time for me personally. Patty Cooke made the decision to not seek re-election, but will take over co-Project Manager duties for the Denton County (Sandy Jacobs) Fruit and Nut Grove. She has been a great asset to the Board (particularly keeping me focused), and we'll miss her. However, we have a great replacement with Kathryn Wells. She is moving from her Director of Communications position.

Kathryn will also be hard to replace. But, she will be replaced by Liz Moyer, who has extensive background in DCMGA project management. The remainder of the board remains intact and ready for the challenges of 2019.

WHAT'S GROWING ON

-
- 04 Project Spotlight:
Double Tree Ranch
Park
 - 06 Meet a Member:
Phyllis Minton
 - 10 Plant of the Month:
Possumhaw Holly
 - 12 Feature Article:
Fruits & Nuts
 - 15 Help Desk Q & A:
Pecan Trees

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<https://dcmga.com>

Buds from the Board (Cont.)

We also had a very enjoyable Field Trip in November to BRIT (Botanical Research Institute of Texas) and the Fort Worth Botanical Gardens Japanese Garden. It's my third trip to BRIT and was, by far, the best. The maples in the Japanese Gardens were amazing and definitely worth the trip. Special thanks to Barbara Prins for planning and coordinating this great excursion.

I hope everyone will be able to attend our annual Christmas party. Look for your evite in your email. Dee Payne and a team of MGers put this on for us every year. DCMGA provides the ham, and all members are encouraged to bring a dish and enjoy. We also select a local charity and allow everyone to make a donation during the party. This is then taken directly to the selected group as a way to share our celebration. This year's charity is Rainbow Room. You can find information about Rainbow Room on page 3.

Have a great Christmas holiday season, and get ready for an exciting 2019—DCMGA's 30th Anniversary.

Please, please, please, get those service and AT hours in, and renew your membership for 2019.

Pat Moyer



TOP GARDENING TIPS

December

Forage for fresh holiday decorations; leave seeds and berries for wildlife.

Clean, sharpen, repair, and store garden and lawn tools.

Leave the leaves! Mow in place, compost, or use as mulch.

Check trees for damaged limbs that may be compromised by ice.

Relocate established trees & shrubs during winter dormancy.

#DCMGA #GROWWITHUS

DENTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

Rainbow Room Makes DCMGA's Nice List

At DCMGA's November monthly meeting, the membership voted to support The Rainbow Room as our charity of choice at this year's annual Christmas party. Monetary contributions will be collected at the party. Here's some information about the program.

Community Partners of Denton County

Community Partners of Denton County (CPDC), dba The Rainbow Rooms, is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, charitable organization dedicated to providing help and hope to abused, neglected, and abandoned Denton County children and the caseworkers who serve them.

CPDC helps meet the special needs of children being placed in foster care and strengthens families by providing emergency basic needs. CPDC also helps prevent child abuse and neglect by providing educational programs to clients, staff, and the community.

Nearly 600 children are in foster care and being served in Denton County at this time, and throughout the year, CPDC assists the Child Protective Services (CPS) workers who help them. CPDC offers several branches of service including Rainbow Rooms, coat drives, Thanksgiving baskets, Christmas store items, and more.

Rainbow Rooms

Most children enter the foster care system with few material goods. Rainbow Rooms are emergency resource centers for the CPS caseworkers assigned to help them. Open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, Rainbow Rooms provide necessities such as clothing, diapers, and school supplies for children who have experienced abuse, neglect, or abandonment.

There are close to 300 Rainbow Rooms in Texas, and three of them are in Denton County: Denton, Carrollton, and Lewisville.

All items in Rainbow Rooms are new; no used or hand-me-down items are accepted or offered. The shelves are stocked with clothing, shoes, socks, underwear, pajamas, diapers, baby items, school supplies, personal care items, snacks, and many other essentials. The customers are CPS caseworkers, who select items for the children assigned to them.

Children entering the foster care system are at risk and in crisis, and Rainbow Rooms accept only new items because "abused and neglected children don't need abused and neglected things."

As you give, know that 100% of your contribution directly benefits our Denton County Rainbow Rooms.

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services website offers additional information, including the Top 10 Items Wish List Items :

https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Protection/Rainbow_Rooms/default.asp

Double Tree Ranch Park

BY KATHY RAINEY

Master Gardener Mary Morris was inspired to initiate a gardening project while walking her dog in Doubletree Ranch Park located in her community of Highland Village. She is a frequent visitor to the park and noticed that deadheading and weeding was not being done. She had gotten to know the Highland Village park staff and after chatting with them one day, she learned they simply did not have time to do all the work necessary to maintain the Park Pavilion Gardens. Master Gardeners naturally came to her mind.

With her initiative and the help of Cheryl Terry, a new DCMGA Project was proposed and approved. Mary found the City was eager to have the help, and, because she had established a relationship with the Park staff and the Parks & Trails Superintendent, the project development went smoothly. Mary knows it helped that the Parks & Trails Superintendent had completed Master Gardener training in another county. She also took advantage of the City's Adopt-a-Park program. In 2018, with the help of other Master Gardeners, they maintained the beds, recommended plants to staff, provided advice when asked, and offered community education on pollinators and the existing trees. She is also proud of the education other Master Gardeners received about the Park while helping with this project.



Photo Courtesy of Mary Morris

Double Tree Pavilion



Photo Courtesy of Mary Morris

Double Tree Work Day

Intern Beverly Duncan and DCMGA President Pat Moyer help plant new perennials.

There will be one last workday in 2018 during early December. Mary calls it a "Planting Frenzy" where DCMGA volunteers and Park staff will replant some of the perennial beds. Lunch will be provided. Check Plan-Your-Week for the date and time.

In 2019 Mary plans the same types of activities and goals, plus the team intends to install a Monarch Waystation. As with most projects, after observing and maintaining some of the plants installed, they may rethink some of the plant choices for potential removal and replacement next spring. A Pollinator Walk and Tree Walk are also in the works, as the ones in 2018 were unfortunately canceled due to weather conditions.

Double Tree Ranch Park (Cont.)

BY KATHY RAINEY



Photo Courtesy of Mary Morris

Double Tree Ranch Park

Mary describes this project as small – one that did not utilize many volunteers – but it is a very good example of collaborating with city staff for a mutually beneficial improvement project. For a Master Gardener who may want to try project management, it is the perfect size for learning the ropes of initiating and leading a project. If you have questions about the Doubletree Ranch Park and Pavilion Garden, contact Mary Morris at mmorris143.mm@gmail.com.



New Membership Renewal Process

It's time to renew your annual DCMGA membership, and, as you do, please note the following changes to the policy and procedure:

- Annual dues paid by January 31, 2019 are \$15.
- Annual dues paid after January 31, 2019 will be \$25
- All service hours and AT hours must be entered in VMS no later than January 31, 2019.
- Any member not in good standing as of March 31, 2019 will be inactivated, unless granted an exception by the CEA-Hort.

As always, to remain a member in good standing, the following conditions must be met:

- Required annual service hours and AT hours have been earned and entered into VMS.
- The annual renewal form AND annual volunteer service agreement have been completed.
- Annual dues have been paid.

For a review of the annual membership renewal requirements, please visit the Member's Info section of our website or this direct link:

<https://dcmga.com/members-info/annual-dcmga-membership-renewal/>

Please contact President Pat Moyer or Member-at-Large Gay Campbell with any questions or concerns.

Meet Phyllis Minton

BY GAY CAMPBELL

Born into a traditional Catholic family in Dubuque, Iowa, Phyllis recalls an idyllic childhood. She and her sister walked to grade school and rode the bus to high school. With two colleges in their hometown, there was always a local play or musical performance to attend. "The only traveling we ever did was to visit Aunt Marie in Chicago," says Phyllis. She vividly remembers attending her very first Broadway show in Chicago. After seeing Camelot, Phyllis fell irreparably in love with the theatre, which she says has been a part of her everyday life ever since. "It's stunning to me that theatre is not a part of everyone's life," she remarks. In addition to introducing her to Broadway and encouraging her love of the arts, Phyllis also credits Aunt Marie for her fondness for hats.

Unsure of which direction to take after graduating from high school, Phyllis was inspired by a flight attendant friend and decided to pursue a job with the airlines. After completing two ads in Seventeen Magazine, she was granted a couple of interviews. In spite of never having flown in an airplane, she was hired by American Airlines and sent to Dallas for flight attendant school. Phyllis was a young woman when she first visited Dallas, but she still recalls being surprised by our red Texas soil and extremely variable Texas weather.

During her 40 years of flying, Phyllis was based in Chicago, New York City, San Francisco, Washington DC, and Dallas. The most memorable change during those years was the introduction of the Boeing 747. The airlines went from a 120-to 150-passenger plane with 4-5 flight attendants to a 400-passenger plane with 14 flight attendants literally overnight. The flight crew had to scramble to learn how to serve 400 guests at once. First class passengers were served 5-6 course meals. The huge plane lent itself to a party atmosphere. There was an upper deck bar for first class and a piano bar in the back of



Photo courtesy of Phyllis Minton

Phyllis Minton

enjoying the Dallas Arboretum.

the plane. At first, smoking was allowed throughout the plane, then eventually only in the back section where the flight attendants often worked. Each first class seat came with a 4-pack of cigarettes. After working a 3-day trip, Phyllis said she smelled like a chimney when she returned home. American Airlines eventually decided to do away with both the upper and lower bars in favor of an additional 70 seats. After 5 years, the party was over.

In 1969, Phyllis worked in New York City where she relished going to the theatre and getting a slice of pizza on the street for a quarter. What she did not love was just how dangerous New York City was in those days. From New York, she transferred to San Francisco. She was only earning \$420 a month, but in those days San Francisco was still affordable and her salary was enough to enable her to live in the city. She remembers San Francisco as a beautiful place with a diverse culture that was especially exciting to a Midwestern girl. She was based there for

Phyllis Minton (Cont.)

10 years and it was in San Francisco that she taught herself to cook. She also recalls how much fun it was to be a hippie in San Francisco in 1969 on the days she was off work and not flying.

Through a mutual friend, Phyllis was introduced to David Minton, a staffer in the House of Representatives. After marrying, they moved to Northern Virginia where Phyllis joined the Junior League and became involved in philanthropy. She was especially fond of the National Arboretum in Washington DC. During those years, Phyllis and David traveled to the Philadelphia Flower Show and the Chelsea Flower Show in London. They often visited the UK to tour internationally acclaimed English gardens such as Chatsworth House. Phyllis proclaims to be a devoted fan of the grand landscapes designed by Capability Brown. After learning that he is widely acclaimed as "England's greatest gardener," I understand his appeal. I also have a destination in mind for our next DCMGA field trip!



Photo courtesy of Phyllis Minton

Angel Wing Begonia
and Coleus make a lovely grouping.

While on one English garden tour, Phyllis recalls overhearing a British gentleman say, "The mature English gardener wants something to look at all year long." Taking that to heart, Phyllis says she continually strives to incorporate seasonal interest as well as a selection of evergreen plants into her landscape. In addition to England, Phyllis and David visited Africa and Sierra Leone.

After retiring, David, wanted to return to his hometown of Denton, Texas. In 2008 Phyllis took an early retirement buy-out from American Airlines in order to care for David, who had been diagnosed with Alzheimer's. Phyllis had always wanted to become a Master Gardener, so in 2010 she took the advice of a trusted friend and healthcare professional and hired college students to care for David on Tuesdays during her DCMGA intern classes. It was a gift she gave both herself and David. Not only was she given a bit of respite, David thoroughly enjoyed himself. "At 75, he thought he was a college student," Phyllis recalls. The



Photo courtesy of Phyllis Minton

Coneflower in Phyllis's Garden

Phyllis cuts her *Echinacea purpurea* back to the ground at the end of July. Doing so results in beautiful growth in September/October, which the pollinators love.

Phyllis Minton (Cont.)



Photo courtesy of Phyllis Minton

Hostas in Chartreuse Colors

Phyllis finds the chartreuse varieties tolerate the Texas heat and sun well. She lets the fall leaves remain on the ground around her hostas to provide mulch.

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students took him out to lunch and he thought of them as friends rather than sitters. "The life you lead taking care of someone with dementia is not normal," Phyllis says. "My husband was a flight risk and my adrenalin was always pumping. He would be out the door during the time it would take me to go to the bathroom. People would often have to help me get him home," says Phyllis. Becoming a Master Gardener during this time in her life helped her to "keep one foot in normal."

Phyllis found her current home in Denton a year before David passed away. When you have a spouse with Alzheimer's, "a lot of people back off because they don't know how to deal with you," says Phyllis. "Several friends hung in there with us. They would

bring pastries every Friday and even though he wasn't a real participant in the conversation, David loved being in that room with us." Phyllis is grateful for the friends that held her hand through it all.

She also joined an Alzheimer's support group. Currently, TWU has a Stepping Stones program that involves Occupational Therapy students who care for the memory-impaired individual while another family member attends a support group. Other than Stepping Stones, Phyllis says there is not much support for caregivers in the community. Phyllis believes that "overconsumption of sugar is leading to bad things in brains. We need more research on prevention, but we still have several generations before that happens. Alzheimer's is a weird path to walk down," she says.

"I like knowing what's going on in my town, so I take the local paper and read it every day," states Phyllis. "I care about school board elections, zoning issues, fracking issues. After getting involved, you can never be quiet again. I'm the president of the women's club in Denton, so I'm trying to keep a 90-year-old building in good repair. I love going to the theatre. Probably three out of four Sunday's, I've got tickets to something – the Denton Community Theatre, the UNT Opera, the Dallas Opera, or the Dallas Symphony. I love Klyde Warren Park, the Ft. Worth museums, taking the train, and all the TWU and UNT performances," says Phyllis. In addition to her role as a community leader and activist, Phyllis is also an Elm Fork Master Naturalist.

"Becoming a Master Gardener has been such a blessing because I've met people who like to talk about dirt, and I've learned so much," remarks Phyllis. "A favorite thing that I've done is to be on the garden tour. Several years ago, Jill Peak was trying to recruit members to be on the tour. Jill said that all of our gardens have something to teach us. She said that our gardens don't have to look like they belong in a House and Garden magazine. Each

Phyllis Minton (Cont.)

garden has lessons to be learned. That always stuck with me. I learned that I don't have to dig down; I can build up. I also loved being a captain on Ana Hunt's garden and being around all those young people."

Eventually David's health deteriorated to the point that Phyllis had no choice but to put him in a small care-facility in Ponder. By that point, David was okay with the decision, and Phyllis had more time and energy to concentrate on her landscaping. Although her house was well-kept by previous owners, the yard was basically untouched. Phyllis was grateful to be given a blank slate. "I'm sure all those people kept wondering who that crazy woman was that kept picking up their leaf bags on the street and what was she doing putting down all of that cardboard?" Phyllis laughs. "Every other house on the street is just basically St. Augustine grass. One of my duties is to judge individual yards for *Keep Denton Beautiful*," she says. "One of the households that I gave a lot of plants to was picked as *Yard of the Month*. I feel like I birthed a new yard.



Photo courtesy of Phyllis Minton

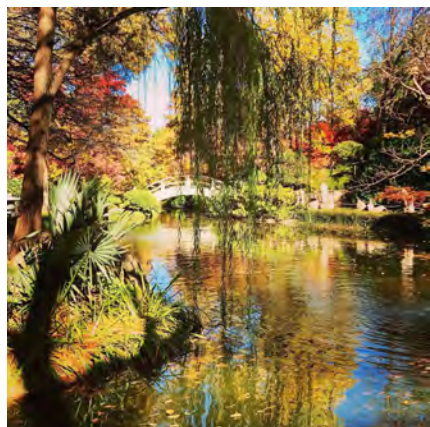
'Dark Knight'

The bees adore this *Caryopteris x clandonensis*. Phyllis cut the plant back in March and again in July for spectacular blooms in September.

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"One of the most fun times in my garden is the day when a science-teacher friend at Woodrow Wilson walked her 5th grade class over to my yard to see my garden. On that day, every pollinator imaginable showed up and the kids had a ball. They all wanted some lamb's ear because it felt so good. It's an ongoing tutorial out there. When I'm picking up or dead-heading or whatever, it's a great conversation opener to anyone that walks by. My favorite plants are the fall blooming asters, sedums, mums, and any other plants that get a second breath in autumn. The show is absolutely worth it."

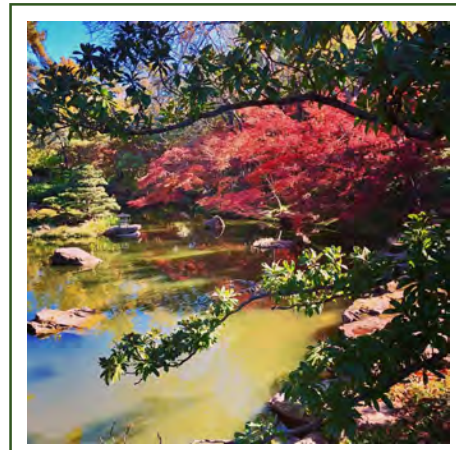
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Photos courtesy of Kathryn Wells

Fall Foliage

was at its peak during the recent DCMGA field trip to the Botanical Research Institute of Texas (BRIT) and the Ft. Worth Japanese Garden. Completed in 1973, the Japanese Garden features 7.5 acres of lovely plantings including cherry trees and Japanese maples.



Plant of the Month - Possumhaw Holly

BY LEE ANN YATES

Ah, December! Our gardens are going to sleep as the year turns darker and colder, yet it is also the Giving Time of year - and the perfect time to plant trees and shrubs on those somewhat warmer days! Yes! It's not too late to think about giving to our feathered and furry friends by planting a native Possumhaw Holly (*Ilex decidua*) in your own landscape. You may know it as Deciduous Yaupon Holly or winterberry.

Possumhaw holly is a wonderful native deciduous shrub or tree that is pretty nondescript in summer, yet really shines in the fall when the leaves turn bright yellow. In winter, red, orange, or yellow berries line the slender, gray twigs of female trees, bringing bright spots into a sleeping landscape. The berries feed song- and gamebirds, opossums, raccoons, and other mammals. In the spring and summer, white flowers share their nectar with multiple insects and glossy, dark green, oval, toothed leaves provide prime nesting places for birds.

Growing Possumhaw Holly

This beauty is close to perfect for North Central Texas. Adapted to many soil types from sandy loam to clay to caliche, Possumhaw is the widest ranging of all the Texas hollies. It can stand up well to both our summer heat and the icy blasts of those "blue northers" howling down from the Great Plains. It can take wet feet for short periods of time, dealing well with the monsoons of spring. While Possumhaw hollies can be planted in shade, placing them in full sun to partial shade will get you the highest berry production. These are "couple" trees - the females need a male pollinator nearby for good berry set. If you have native Possumhaws near your property, there is no need to plant a male to pollinate your female. However, if you have not seen them in the natural surroundings nearby and you want berries, play it safe by planting both a male and a female.



Photo by Steven Schwartzman,
Wildflower Center Digital Library

Possumhaw Holly Berries

Collecting From Native Habitat

If you decide to collect specimens from their native habitat, three things should be kept in mind. First, gain the permission of the landowner if you will be digging on private land, and do not harvest seedlings from a protected area. Next, select a plant with at least a few berries. Lastly, unless you are very good at digging or can access heavy-duty digging equipment, choose a small plant. Possumhaws grow quickly once established, but keep in mind that large collected plants might suffer from transplant shock and be slow to recover.

Propagating Possumhaw hollies from seed is not a simple process. Seeds germinate best if planted immediately after collection. They may be pretreated with double-stratification, but according to the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, "the essential element seems to be time." As with most plants, when the seed's internal conditions are perfect, the seed will germinate. With Possumhaws this

Possumhaw Holly (Cont.)



Photo by David K. Northington,
Wildflower Center Slide Library

Possumhaw Holly Tree

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unsightly spaces, or as a focal point in your landscape. They need little regular care or maintenance – light pruning to keep its shape and dealing with unwanted suckers from the roots are about it. Possumhaws have a twiggy growth habit that some might not find attractive, but if you have a more natural corner or section in your landscape, this could provide some height, color, and sanctuary.

Bring some Possumhaw berry-filled branches inside for your holiday decorations! They are useful in many ways – table greens, a wreath, decorating a Yule log, or arranged sculpturally in a vase. Enjoy!

As we reflect and plan changes and additions to our gardens in this quiet time of nature's year, may that quiet find a home in your heart and soul. Happiest Holidays!

Resources

Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center Plant Database

https://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id_plant=ilde

Texas Native Plants Database

<https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/ornamentals/natives/ILEXDECIDUA.HTM>

Denton County Master Gardener Association – <https://dcmga.com/north-texas-gardening/perennials/master-gardener-favorites/possumhaw-deciduous-holly/>

Native Plant Network – <https://npn.rngr.net/renderNPNProtocolDetails?selectedProtocolIds=aquifoliaceae-ilex-1222&referer=wildflower>

TexasSmartScape – <http://www.txsmartscape.com/plant-search/plant-details.php?id=297>

can take years. More detailed information can be found at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center website (see *Resources*).

Texas Superstar®

These natives need very little irrigation once they get going – natural rainfall is sufficient except in the driest times. They are considered moderately resistant to deer and are generally disease resistant. Possumhaws have been designated as a Texas Superstar® – we discussed those hardy, wonderful plants in the July 2018 newsletter.

Possumhaw hollies can reach 12' to 20' tall and 6' to 15' wide with shrubby growth, but can be trained into multi-trunked small trees. They make excellent understory trees and can be used in border plantings, as a barrier to screen

Fruit & Nut Trees

BY KATHRYN WELLS

'Tis the season to plant fruit and nut trees in North Central Texas. January through March is an optimal time to plant new trees and to transplant established ones. Since the trees are in their winter dormancy, the process is less stressful for them, and they can adapt more readily to their new home.

Tree Selection

While many varieties of fruit and nut trees can be grown in our eco-region, some of the more successful large-fruit crops include figs, peaches, plums, and pomegranates. Blackberries and grapes are some of the easiest small-fruit crops to grow here. For nut crops, you can't go wrong with a pecan—our Texas state tree. Mature pecans are quite large; the height can range from 60 to 100 feet or more, so plan their new home accordingly.

A plentiful selection of fruit and nut trees should be currently available at area nurseries. You will find them in one of three forms: bare-rooted (no soil, usually packed in moist peat moss), balled-and-burlapped (ball of soil around roots), or container-grown (soil and roots in a nursery pot). When purchasing a container-grown tree, check to ensure the roots are not girdled (tightly circling the trunk or other main roots) in the pot.

Planting Your Tree

Fruit and nut trees need at least six hours of sun for quality production, so choose a sunny spot with good drainage. The best practice is to select varieties that thrive in native soil. A common planting mistake is to dig the hole too deep; a good rule of thumb is to dig the hole twice as wide as the root ball but at an equal depth, so the root flare (where the main roots meet the trunk) is not smothered and the root system has space to stretch and grow. If you're planting a container-grown tree, gently separate the roots and remove any excess soil covering the top of the root ball. Backfill the hole's interior circumference with native soil, and water well. Continue to water regularly as the new planting establishes itself in the new location. A handy tree-planting guide is available on the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension website (see *Resources*).

If you're adding several new plantings, north-to-south rows allow for the best air movement and light exposure. Place larger trees in the northern-most position to prevent shading of the smaller crops. Weed (and grass) removal is key, especially for newly planted and transplanted trees, to help eliminate competition for water and nutrients. Keep the soil surface free of weeds and grass in a circumference area at least as wide as the tree canopy (width of limb spread). Mulching helps retain moisture and repress weeds, but take care to leave the trunk and its root flare exposed.



Photo Courtesy of Kathryn Wells

Pomegranates

are not native to the United States, but reports indicate that Spanish missionaries introduced them to America in the 1500s. Although not indigenous to our area, pomegranates grow quite well here.

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Fruit & Nut Trees (Cont.)

Pruning Established Plants

It's also a good time to prune established fruit and nut crops in your landscape. Remove select vertical shoots from peach and plum trees to encourage horizontal branching, but always maintain the central leader as the highest point. Just above bud growth, make a slightly angled cut (45 degrees) with a sharp, clean implement. Always leave a branch facing southward to help train against the prevailing south/southwest winds. After grapevines reach their second year of growth, cut back canes by approximately 75% to remove dead wood, encourage new fruit-producing growth, and train sturdy scaffolding.

Some fruit and nut cultivars are self-fruited; others require cross-pollination. Chilling hours (the amount of time needed before dormant buds set new fruit) also vary. Everything you need to know about the best varieties for our area can be found on the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service website (see *Resources*).

Resources

If you have questions about fruit and nut plantings or any other horticulture-related question, please contact the Denton County Master Gardener Help Desk at master.gardener@dentoncounty.com or 940.349.2892; it's free of charge, and it's our pleasure to assist you.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Tree-Planting Guide

<https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/earthkind/landscape/planting-a-tree/>

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Fruit & Nut Resources

<https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/fruit-nut/>



Photo Courtesy of Kathryn Wells

Blackberries

are one of the easiest small fruit crops to grown in North Texas. These Apache blackberries entered by Thiago Arenas of Corinth, TX, won "Best in Show" in DCMGA's 2017 Fruit, Vegetable, Herb, & Flower Show.

This holiday, make a difference while you shop

Shop for holiday gifts and supplies at smile.amazon.com and Amazon donates

You shop. Amazon donates.
amazonsmile



Share as You Shop

this holiday season. If you purchase gifts on Amazon, please choose to order through Amazon's Smile program and choose Denton County Master Gardener Association as your charity of choice. A percentage of each eligible purchase will be donated to DCMGA, and that's a gift that keeps on giving!

Pass-Along Marking

BY LIZ MOYER

Avoid Plant Sale Prep Horror!

We've all been there. It's time to pot up pass-alongs for the Plant Sale, but:

1. We can't remember which plants were outgrowing their locations and need to be thinned and/or dug around the margins (edges)
2. The ones we think probably were candidates are still too small to be sure
3. We can't remember the names of the plants, and they are too small for ID



Photo courtesy of Liz Moyer

Knife Marker



Photo courtesy of Liz Moyer

Flag Marker

Oh, the horror!

Act now! Grab a permanent felt tip pen and a bunch of plastic knives or utility marking flags and get out there. Mark your plants now for digging in early March. It's a good idea to make yourself a diagram or some notes when you mark them. Check your markers periodically throughout the winter to be sure they are still legible and to remind yourself where they are ...

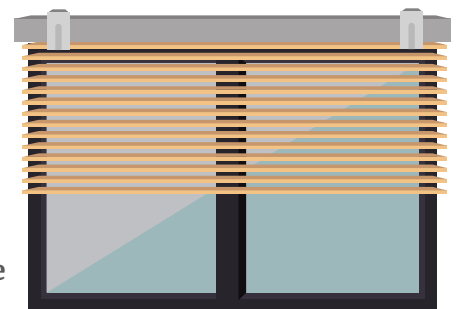
Another advantage: utility flags and plastic knives come in a variety of colors and can really add a pop to your winter landscape!



Mini-Blinds Wanted

Do you have some used mini-blinds that are destined for the trash? Did your neighbor set out mini-blinds for trash pick-up when they moved out?

The Plant Sale Committee can use any and all mini-blinds for Plant Sale ID stakes. If you have some to donate, contact Michele Rawleigh at flower.freak@verizon.net.





BY JANIE FARLER

Q. I planted two pecan seeds about 15 years ago. They have yet to produce a pecan. What am I doing wrong?

A. There are several reasons pecans don't produce.

- Trees grown from seeds are slower to bear nuts. It may take 15 years.
- It could be a poor variety for pecan production.
- If you have clay soil, the tree will struggle. They prefer sandy loam.
- Your tree probably needs fertilizer. Inadequate zinc, nitrogen, and lime can limit production. Get a soil test so that you will know for certain what your soil needs (soiltesting.tamu.edu).
- Poor pollination is a common reason for lack of nut production. Pecans produce both

male catkins and female flowers on the same tree. However, frequently the catkin's pollen is shed either too early or too late to pollinate the flower. Having more than one tree can help with this.

- Too much or too little water affects production.
- Disease and insect pests can seriously limit production. Look for a variety with good disease resistance. You can find a list here: https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/extension/homefruit/pecan/pecan.html?fbclid=IwAR0PY_SHW5QSc_838q0fibBjrm7oXuFqyMpMahLRhjiponZIC90Qu5vLWQ

To read more, click on this link:

<http://www.aces.edu/dept/extcomm/specialty/pecans2.html>



Photo courtesy of Kathryn Wells

If you have questions about nut trees or any other horticulture-related subjects, please contact our Master Gardener Help Desk at 940.349.2892 or master.gardener@dentoncounty.com.

It's free of charge, and it's our pleasure to assist you.



DENTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

GREATER GARDENING

2019 GREATER AUBREY AREA GARDENING SERIES



JANUARY 17

Butterfly Gardens

**Carol Rowley
& Mary Branstetter**



FEBRUARY 21

Plant Propagation

Suzie Cook



MARCH 21

*Basic Landscaping Design
Principles*

Shirlee & Claud Singer

6:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Third Thursday: Jan, Feb, & March

AUBREY AREA LIBRARY

226 Countryside Drive

Aubrey, TX 76227

Jump start your 2019 gardening
with this free educational series.

Register via email to
kab@KeepAubreyBeautiful.org
or via phone at 940-343-1313.

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TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION

Mission Statement

Denton County Master Gardener Association educates and engages county residents in the implementation of research-based horticultural and environmental practices that create sustainable gardens, landscapes, and communities.

Extension EO/EEO Statement

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension provides equal opportunities in its programs and employment to all persons, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.

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Social Media

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<https://www.facebook.com/DentonCountyMGA>

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<https://www.instagram.com/DentonCountyMGA>

Twitter:

<https://twitter.com/@DentonCountyMGA>

Pinterest:

<https://www.pinterest.com/DentonCountyMGA>

Save the Date

December 05:	DCMGA Board Meeting
December 11:	Denton County Commissioners Court Appreciation Breakfast
December 12:	DCMGA Christmas Party
January 16:	Graduation & Awards Banquet

Contact Information

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension
Joseph A. Carroll Building
401 W. Hickory Street
Suite 112
Denton TX 76201-9026

Office: 940.349.2883

Help Desk:

940.349.2892

master.gardener@dentoncounty.com

Webmaster:

dcmga.webmaster@gmail.com

Communications:

dcmga.communications@gmail.com

Website:

<https://dcmga.com>

Content

Submission deadline for the January edition of *The Root* is Saturday, December 15. Submissions may be revised at the discretion of the editor.

Ideas, photos, and articles are welcome and may be submitted to Editor Karen Gibson at karenhoot19@gmail.com or Communications Director Kathryn Wells at kathrynwells333@gmail.com.