

Denton County Master Gardener Association

THE ROOT

Grow With Us



Buds From The Board

BY KATHRYN WELLS, PRESIDENT

Happy July, friends. Summer's triple-digit temperatures are in full swing, requiring sturdy constitutions from Texas gardens—and Texas gardeners!

Our annual Fruit, Vegetable, Herb, and Flower Show, held on June 18th at the Denton County Historical Park and Community Market, elicited more than 150 backyard bounty entries. So many beautiful and unique items were entered by Denton County residents (adults and children), and category winners received cash prizes, ribbons, and bragging rights! Our August issue of *The Root* will feature event photos of the winning entries and their respective gardeners. Thanks to all for growing and showing your backyard bounty, and thanks to Project Manager Debby Ishee and her team for a successful show.

For our July 13th General Meeting and Program, Programs Chair Tracy Durmick invited Wildscapers Landscaping to teach us about "Ecological Landscaping" at 10 am. This hybrid meeting offers the opportunity to attend in person or in cyberspace via Zoom. Additional

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<https://dcmga.com>

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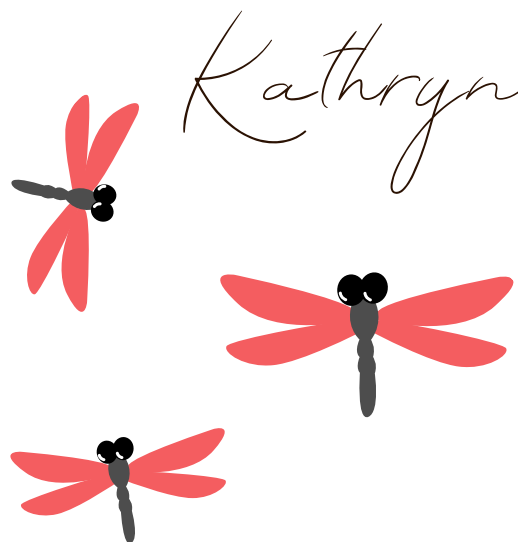
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Buds From The Board (Cont.)

information, including our in-person location, is available on the Upcoming Events section of our website. As always, our General Meetings and Programs are free and open to the public. Advance registration is required for virtual participants.

Denton County Master Gardeners and Denton County residents—despite the heat, you remain the coolest gardeners we know. Thank you for growing with us!



SWAt – Science With Attitude *Wellington Science Night*

BY BETH SHARUM

Outreach for the Science With Attitude (SWAt) project was in full force again this spring! After two quiet springs, SWAt volunteers were excited to get back to doing what they love best—teaching and sharing their love for plants, gardening, environmental science, and Denton County wildlife. 2022 saw the return of in-person school field trips at Denton ISD School Days at Clear Creek, in-person lessons and activities at schools and libraries, and large school events, like science nights.

Returning this spring after an 18 month hiatus, Wellington Elementary School in Flower Mound hosted their annual Science Night on the evening of April 19, 2022. This two hour event featured many science enrichment activities for the students and parents to explore, including the SWAt room. In addition to SWAt, Flower Mound High School STEM clubs brought hands-on activities for the attendees, scientists from UT Southwestern brought a human brain for kids to examine, and museums and other STEM driven organizations were also in attendance. SWAt volunteers have participated in this event since 2016.



Photo Courtesy Gina Alday

Denton County 4-H Coordinator Colleen Carpenter, Master Gardeners Amanda Price

Building Plant People

(2022), Cindy Helm (2018), Deb Williams (2019), Cece Kenney (2017), Beth Sharum (2016), and Shadow Ridge eighth grade NJHS student Zach Sharum manned the SWAt room for the evening. In two hours, 789 students and adults visited the SWAt classroom during the event. This was the biggest reach SWAt has seen for a one day event this year.

"Wellington Elementary School's Science Night is something to behold," said Denton County 4-H Coordinator and recent AgriLife Extension State Award winner Colleen Carpenter. "Seven Extension volunteers facilitated three activities for two hours for nearly 800 kids and adults. After a one year hiatus, it was good to get back out into the community for this massive educational opportunity."

Cece Kenney added, "(The event was) very warm and crowded as the kids and parents were excited to be out attending this event again."

SWAt - Wellington Science Night (Cont.)

Amanda Price agreed. "The turnout was more than I and everyone expected," said Price. "It was wonderful to see such a big crowd! I was glad to see things getting back to normal – nice to have everyone gathering together and socializing again to learn something new while having a lot of fun!"

During the event, our volunteers prepped hundreds of Plant People while talking to the kids about what plants need and informed visitors about how they can prevent water pollution with the help of our friend Freddie the Fish. They also shared with parents how they could make a simple passive hydroponics set up at home using recycled materials. Most importantly, the volunteers had a blast.

Kenney, Price, and Cindy Helm agree on their favorite part of the event – the kids. "The kids were so excited to get to do this event again after not getting to due to Covid," said Helm.

"It was so nice to see the children of various ages getting excited to make Plant People," said Price. "Many were working on making them with their parents and having such a great time. It was cool seeing their imaginations at work!"

Even though this large and busy event can be overwhelming at times, it won't keep volunteers from going back in 2023. When asked why working these big school events is so important for Denton County Master Gardener Association(DCMGA), Helm said, "it spreads the mission of education to our youth and that is important for sure."

Price added, "One of our primary objectives as Master Gardeners is to educate the public at large, specific groups & organizations. These types of events and activities are a great way to 'plant the seed' for an interest in gardening for a lifetime. It was my grandmother who "planted the seed" for my love of gardening and birding. I'd like to think through SWAt and DCMGA I'll do the same for someone or make them want to learn more!"

Interested in trying out volunteering at a school event in the fall? SWAt meets on the fourth Thursday of the month at 9:30 a.m. at the Extension office. We look forward to seeing you!



Freddie the Fish demonstrates how individuals can prevent water pollution.



Plant of the Month - Texas Star Hibiscus

BY RICKY WILKINS

There is nothing like the explosion of color that the Texas Star Hibiscus (*Hibiscus coccineus*) brings to a garden. Whether it's several planted along a fence line or a single plant in a prominent place in your garden, you can't go wrong with this Texas Smartscape® plant. Not only is the Texas Star Hibiscus a beauty, but it also has the added benefit of attracting butterflies and hummingbirds. Texas Star Hibiscus is one of my favorite full sun plants.

The Texas Star Hibiscus is a tall, slender perennial that can grow 4-7 feet tall and 2-3 feet wide. It is native to bogs and streams, so it prefers wet areas, but can be grown successfully in other areas, provided it is watered frequently. It will bloom from June to October, with red or white star-shaped blooms, 3-4 inches wide. The plant will die down to the ground in winter, returning in the spring. To protect against a severe freeze, it is best to lightly mulch the roots after it has died back. Propagate Texas Star Hibiscus from seeds in early spring. Plant them 1/4" deep and keep them moist; they should produce a plant that will bloom the first year. You can also propagate them by dividing the clump in late winter and planting them 2 to 3 feet apart with the crown 3 to 4 inches beneath the soil.



Photo Courtesy DCMGA Member Karen Gibson

Texas Star Hibiscus

I have a funny story to share about one of the well-known characteristics of the Texas Star. Before moving to Highland Village, we lived in Frisco, in Collin County. In re-doing our back yard, we discovered the Texas Star Hibiscus at a local nursery and planted four of them along our back fence. They were doing well in late spring before they had started blooming. One weekend, our daughter brought her family over for a hamburger cookout. As we were relaxing on the back porch, her gaze drifted to the Texas Star Hibiscus, and her eyes got wide as saucers. She whispered to her mother, "Mom, what are you growing back there?" For any of you who have grown this variety of hardy hibiscus, you know that their leaves bear a striking resemblance to marijuana. We had to assure our daughter that we were not branching out into growing illegal substances. So, if you introduce the Texas Star Hibiscus into your landscape, you may get some funny looks from the local policeman patrolling your neighborhood.

Texas Star Hibiscus

The Texas Star Hibiscus does best in full sun, with frequent watering. It will survive in less sunny areas; it may not bloom as frequently. Frisco is where we fell in love with the Texas Star, but our gardens are "sun challenged" since moving to Highland Village. Because we love this plant so much, we are attempting to introduce it into our gardens. We hope you love it as much as we do.



A white Texas Star Hibiscus blossom.



The leaves bear a striking resemblance to marijuana.

Resources

Denton County Master Gardener Association (DCMGA)

"Hardy Hibiscus 'Texas Star'"

https://dcmga.com/north-texas-gardening/perennials/master-gardener-favorites_trashed/texas-star-hibiscus/

Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center

"Hibiscus coccineus"

https://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id_plant=HICO2

Texas A&M University, Aggie Horticulture

"Hardy Hibiscus" - Dr. William C. Welch

<https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/southerngarden/hibiscus.html>



Preserving Your Harvest

BY JUDY ALLEN

Look at all this PRODUCE! Now What? Let's Preserve It!

Our ancestors raised their gardens and preserved the harvest for future use. They didn't have the luxury of running out to the grocery store when they needed to prepare a meal. Times have changed, and we can eat out or microwave a quick dinner. However, we can tell the difference between a home-grown tomato and one shipped across the country to the supermarket shelves. The nutrition is far superior, as is the taste. And did I mention supply chain issues? Who knows if we can find our favorite foods every time we shop? The solution is food preservation.

Raising a garden and preserving all those vegetables is time-consuming but knowing that we are serving the best foods possible to our friends and family is fulfilling. Even if you are not raising all your vegetables, the farmers' markets are a great place to buy quality products you can preserve for future use—what a great way to support your local farmer. Farmers' market vendors pick and pack most fruits and vegetables the same morning they come to the market. Now, that's fresh!



Quality Produce Makes Quality Preserves

There are many ways to preserve the harvest, and we will discuss just a few. Certainly, the most popular preservation methods include canning, pickling, dehydrating, freezing, and fermenting.

Pickling?

From asparagus to zucchini, many vegetables can be home preserved by pickling. The key is to select a recipe from an approved source that is specifically designed for the vegetable you are pickling. The correct combination of acid/vinegar, spices, and sugar with cucumbers creates an acidic food most of us love: pickles.

Pickling is a relatively straightforward process and is suitable for steam canning. To produce a safe and crisp product, follow a recipe specifically designed for the vegetable you're pickling.

Preserving Your Harvest (Cont.)

Dehydrating

If you are growing herbs, a dehydrator will give you up to one year of herbs at your disposal. The benefit of a dehydrator is its ability to maintain a low temperature (90 degrees-145 degrees) for long periods. Dehydration allows your herbs to dry completely without cooking them. Certain vegetables and fruits are also perfect for dehydrating. Air drying has also been used for years. Items are laid out on a screen or hung in bunches and left to dry naturally. Air drying is more challenging in our humid Texas climate. Dehydrating also retains many of the nutritional benefits of freshly picked produce. Store-bought herbs cannot be compared to your own freshly preserved harvest.

Fermenting

The process of fermentation is one of the oldest forms of preservation. According to the National Center for Home Food Preservation (NCHFP), microorganisms responsible for fermentation can produce vitamins as they ferment. Fermentation produces a more nutritious end-product.

Fermenting has multiple nutritional benefits. You can ferment certain vegetables, and an all-time favorite is sauerkraut. Always use a tested recipe with the proper salt-to-produce ratio. The appropriate container, salt, and your produce are all you need to achieve a tasty product.

Canning

Canning is my favorite form of food preservation. I love seeing the preserved foods. It satisfies me knowing I have plenty of healthy food ready to go when I need it. My peach pie filling doesn't fall into the "healthy" category, but it's still delicious.

Additional supplies need to be purchased when deciding to use a canner. A Pressure canner is a significant investment, but it also gives the most options for foods to preserve. A water bath or steam canner is not expensive, but you can only preserve high acid foods with these canners. Then there are the jars, lids, rings, and accessories. However, your future costs are low once the initial supplies are purchased. Jars and rings are reusable, but new lids are always required.



Hot Water Bath Method

Preserving Your Harvest (Cont.)

The three most popular canning methods are pressure canning, water bath canning, and steam canning. Here are the differences:

Water Bath Canning

High acid foods such as pickles, jams, jellies, and some acidified tomato products can be preserved using the water bath method. A large pot with a rack in the bottom is filled with enough water to cover the jars with at least 1 inch of water for the entire processing time. This canner takes a lot of water, and it takes a long time to heat all that water. The canner is very heavy when full of water.

Atmospheric Steam Canner

Steam canning is relatively new to the marketplace. It has been tested and is recommended as a replacement for the water bath canner. This canner has a rack at the bottom and a small base, which takes only 2 inches of water. It uses less energy because it heats the smaller amount of water much faster. It can be used interchangeably with a water bath canner if the recipe calls for processing times no longer than 45 minutes. This maximum processing time means the canner will not run out of water and lose its steaming ability. Most high acid foods like jams, jellies, and acidified tomato products have processing times under the 45-minute maximum. The steaming process acts as the preserver. A steam canner is lighter and easier to handle. Less water and less energy = Game changer!

Pressure Canner

A pressure cooker or instant pot is not a pressure canner. These appliances are not tested or approved for canning. If it's not tested, we don't use it.



Blanching Green Beans



Pressure Canner

Preserving Your Harvest (Cont.)

These canners have multiple safety features and allow you to preserve countless foods. If you follow directions, your kitchen will not explode! Think about how you'll feel when opening a jar of chicken soup or beef stew. Be sure to use your bragging rights because you made it yourself.

Here is a video we did on pressure canning carrots. We followed all the NCHFP recommendations. However, it has not been tested or approved.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qlssd19Ixx8>

Resources

It's all about safety! Here is an excellent list of resources that are approved and scientifically tested. You can depend on these sites for all your food preserving needs.

Pressure Canning

<https://extension.unh.edu/resource/canning-vegetables-pressure-canner>

Food Safety (Food Preservation)

<https://extension.umn.edu/food-safety/preserving-and-preparing>

Steam Canning

https://nchfp.uga.edu/publications/nchfp/factsheets/steam_canners.html

Fermenting and Pickling

<https://extension.psu.edu/lets-preserve-fermentation-sauerkraut-and-pickles>

<https://extension.umn.edu/preserving-and-preparing/how-make-your-own-sauerkraut>

<https://extension.umn.edu/preserving-and-preparing/pickling-basics>

Dehydrating

<https://extension.psu.edu/lets-preserve-drying-herbs>

Freezing

<https://extension.psu.edu/lets-preserve-freezing-vegetables>

All Food Safety Info

<https://nchfp.uga.edu/>

USDA Publications

https://nchfp.uga.edu/publications/publications_usda.html



Join Denton County MGA for our
hybrid (in person and virtual)
July General Meeting & Program.

We're pleased to welcome
Wildscapers Landscape, who will
teach us all about
"Ecological Landscaping."

Advance registration is required
only for virtual participants live-
streaming via Zoom.

In-person participants will meet in
the Solomon's Porch building at
Global Spheres Center (7801 S
Interstate 35, Corinth, TX).

As always, our General Meeting programs are
open to the public and free of charge.



Wildscaping in a Suburban Food Forest: Feeding Nature and Yourself

BY JANET GERSHENFELD AND JOAN STANLEY

Walk down any path in either of our gardens and see a world alive: mammals, lizards, birds, bugs, and pollinators. Bees cling to the blossoms of the native penstemon, then move on to the fruit trees and vegetable patch. Birds stop to sip and splash in the water feature. The hummingbirds flit from the salvias to the bee balm as the anole suns himself on the rock wall. A garden shared is a garden enlarged and enhanced. We must learn and adopt the practice of creating a world for ourselves and those creatures who were here first and have nowhere else to go. We should always see ourselves as stewards of this small plot of land we call home. Wildscaping and permaculture share certain principles. Work with nature to fill your garden with all the levels and layers that create a space that will sustain itself, feed us... body, mind, and soul, and provide for the wildlife.



Salvia provides food for hummingbirds

First, in a series of articles on how to design beauty and biodiversity into our gardens, let us start with what the typical suburban yard looks like: A monoculture of grass, an imported tree species, and a couple of non-native shrubs sheared into balls. We can do better. We need to reintroduce layers to residential housing areas to restore habitat. The restoration doesn't have to be overwhelming. It didn't get this way overnight and won't be restored instantly either.

We started with an assessment of what we had tree and shrub-wise. I started with several mature oaks, which is why I bought my house. Also included were a bunch of holly hedges, azalea bushes, 20 crepe myrtle trees, and lots of St. Augustine lawn. Joan started with an extensive area of rocks surrounded by a vast Japanese boxwood hedge overgrown with weeds. From whatever your starting point, your first step should be adding your trees. Whether you want large trees like oak or pecan, or smaller fruiting varieties, choose natives trees if you can. Doug Tallamy's book *The Living Landscape* echoes our sentiments about oak trees. It is the most useful and diverse addition for wildscaping, recreating habitat in our gardens, and sequestering carbon in atmospheric restoration. There are several varieties of

Wildscaping a Suburban Food Forest (Cont.)

oak, but choose the varieties that fit your space. Try nut trees like pecan, hickory, or black walnut that grow in our area. Add native plum trees or add in dwarf fruit tree varieties with lower chilling hour requirements for our county (typically around 800 hours yearly). We grow peaches, persimmons, pears, mulberries, pawpaws, cherries, jujubes, soapberries, mayhaw, nectarines, prickly ash, vitex with its edible corns, apples, figs, and redbuds (a member of the pea family) which is great for infusing nitrogen into the understory.

We always plant the trees first as they are the basic structure and take the longest to reach maturity. Then the famous longtime battle cry of "Death to sod" takes over the planning process.

Permaculture has become a popular trend. We are all for it; we have been practicing it for decades without knowing the hip word describing it. There are lots of books and classes to be had! The most basic forms of the seven permaculture layers are tree canopy, understory trees, shrubs, vines, perennials herbaceous plants, ground layer, and underground layer. These are also the basic layers for creating wildscapes. So you get the total habitat when you add the stewardship of wildscaping by including native plantings and water sources. Native plants have evolved in our ecosystem and have unique symbiotic relationships between the soil's microorganisms and the region's insects, birds, and animals.



Photos Courtesy DCMGA member Lea Watson

Trees are the Basic Structure



Photo Courtesy DCMGA member Kim Shaneyfelt

Janet's gardens are a haven for wildlife!

Wildscaping a Suburban Food Forest (Cont.)

Inviting the wildlife back into your yard is sometimes messy and inconvenient, usually when the paper wasp finds a new place for her nest. I gently encourage that to not be on my patio with a stream of water from the hose, not a pesticide storm or a pyrethrum misting system that erupts every 15 minutes. You have to train yourself as you grow more aware and be willing to accept a little nature in your space.

Here is the magic ticket to becoming the plantaholic, um, I mean collector that we have become. Diversity is essential. You need to fill your gardens with a wide selection of native and adaptive plants that are useful to you and wildlife. It is a fascinating doorway into learning what a plant does, how nature uses it, and how we use it. Theoretically, every plant included should have at least three uses. Examples include food for us or a caterpillar, shade or shelter, nesting site or material to construct it, medicinal uses, fertilizer or mulch, structure, nectar, beauty, pollen producer, windbreak, visual or physical boundary. You get the idea. It takes some thought and planning. It is best to draw the basic idea out on paper. We never got too specific down to a complete and exact planting list, as that fun comes with the thrill of the hunt and placing a plant where it will thrive the best – one hopes!

Front Yard Progression . . .



Lawn to . . .



Hedges to . . .



Photos Courtesy DCMGA member Janet Gershenfeld

Wildscape!

Wildscaping a Suburban Food Forest (Cont.)

A garden is ever-changing; the tree grows, and now there is shade. The tree limb falls, and now there is the blazing sun where there was once deep shade.

As you design or when changes happen, choose plants that improve the soil, attract beneficial insects and wildlife, or provide synergistic benefits to other crops you are growing. Best of all, try and fit in some permaculture plants that produce the food you enjoy eating.

You don't have to create your whole garden at once. Add a few new plants to your yard and go from there. Include a simple water feature such as a saucer of water with a rock in the center for birds and insects. In a few years, you will have established a fantastic garden using wildscaping and permaculture.

Next time we will talk about vines and shrubs. Happy gardening.



Photo Courtesy DCMGA member Janet Gershenfeld

Trees grow and now there is shade!



Photo Courtesy DCMGA member Kim Shaneyfelt

In a few years, you will have established a fantastic garden using wildscaping and permaculture.

Wildscaping a Suburban Food Forest (Cont.)

Resources

Aggie Horticulture®, <https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/>

Tallamy, Douglas W., and Rick Darke. *The Living Landscape: Designing for Beauty and Biodiversity in the Home Garden*. Timber Press, 2014.

Judd, Michael. *Edible Landscaping with a Permaculture Twist: How to Have Your Yard and Eat it Too*. Chelsea Green Publishing, 2013.

Creasy, Rosalind. *Edible Landscaping*. Catapult, 2010.

Hafferty, Stephanie, and Charles Dowding. *No Dig Organic Home & Garden: Grow, Cook, Use & Store Your Harvest*. Permanent Publications, 2017.

Bloom, Jessi, and Dave Boehnlein. *Practical Permaculture: For Home Landscapes, Your Community, and the Whole Earth*. Timber Press, 2015.

Bender, Kelly Conrad, and Noreen Damude. *Texas Wildscapes: Gardening for Wildlife*. Edited by Kelly Conrad Bender, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Wildlife Diversity Program, 1999.



Photo Courtesy DCMGA member Lea Watson



Photo Courtesy DCMGA member Suzanne Barnard

You get the total habitat when you add the stewardship of wildscaping by including native plantings and water sources.



2022 Garden Tour Recap

BY BEVERLY DUNCAN

Where do we begin describing and detailing the successes of Garden Tour 2022?

Maybe we should begin with our DCMGA Mission that reads in part "to engage and educate county residents in the implementation of research-based horticultural practices that create sustainable gardens, landscapes, and communities."

Then we would go onto share:

- Wonderful Weather - cool in the morning with a gentle breeze turning reasonably warm as the day progressed.
- Gorgeous Gardens - four in all displaying amazing blossoms of perennials, annuals, and natives. Stately trees and thriving vegetables all providing inspiring ideas for garden visitors.
- Amazing Attendance - Approximately 1500 guests toured, learned, and breathed deeply in the fresh country air. Grandmothers with daughters and granddaughters proudly continued the day before Mother's Day tour.
- Entire families enjoyed touring and learning more about gardening in North Texas.
- Educational Opportunities - Guests enjoyed listening to experts speak on pollinator gardening, water harvesting, native bees, roses, and creating ergonomic gardens. The DCMGA Help Desk enjoyed a steady flow of visitors questioning our staff of MG experts. Soil testing bags were available for residents to take home, gather soil, and send to AgriLife to learn more about their own property.
- Volumes of Volunteers - Over 130 on tour day alone contributed to the success of Tour 2022 including interns from the current class of 2022 and veterans from classes reaching back to our DCMGA beginnings in 1989!

Thank you to everyone that contributed to the phenomenal success of Garden Tour 2022! We report Mission Accomplished and see you next year for Garden Tour, May 13, 2023!



2022 Garden Tour Recap (Cont.)



2022 Garden Tour Recap (Cont.)



A Few of Our Favorite Reads

Bird-by-Bird Gardening: The Ultimate Guide to Bringing in Your Favorite Birds--Year after Year by Sally Roth. Rodale Books; Reprint edition (February 3, 2009).

Empress of the Garden by G. Michael Shoup. Texas A&M University Press (February 14, 2013).

Atlas of the Vascular Plants of Texas by B.L. Turner; Holly Nichols; Geoffrey Den (Author), Barney Lipscomb (Editor). Botanical Research Institute of Texas; 1st edition (April 25, 2003).

The information given herein is for educational purposes only. Reference to commercial products or trade names is made with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service is implied.

Cumulative Service Awards

At our June general meeting, President Kathryn Wells and Member-at-Large Kim Shaneyfelt recognized members who have achieved cumulative service hour milestones over the course of their membership (as of the end of 2021). Each milestone earns a special service pin.

Congratulations everyone, and thanks for your commitment to DCMGA...and to the community we serve.



BUTTERFLY

100+ Intern Hours

Ann Athey	Susan Marchus
Russ Allen	Anne McMahon
Suzanne Barnard	Susan Murphy
Vicki Campbell	Susan Schattle
Rhonda Curtright	Ruth Tweto
Beverly Ivey	Sherri Ursini
	Melissa Weaver



WATERING CAN

2000 - 2499 Hours

Lynda Harvey	Beth Sharum
Jolayne LaCour	Debbie Smith
Dolores Payne	Kim Wootton



FORK

500- 999 Hours

Daniel Arenas-	Cheryl Huckabee
Richieri	Sandy LaQuey
Lori Barr	Kathy Rainey
Janie Cindric	Sharon Stratman
Linda Hay	Melinda Wooley

DAISY

3000 - 3499 Hours



Barbara Brown	Dale Powell
Shirley Manfredi	Kathryn Wells

SUNFLOWER

3500 - 3999 Hours



Tammie Gurley	Shirlee Singer
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SHOVEL

1000 - 1499 Hours

Beverly Duncan	Susan Novak
Ann Hillman	Joanne Spurgin
Lela Khan	Steve Spurgin

BEE

4500 -4999 Hours



Susan Cosio



BOUQUET

1500 - 1999 Hours

Gay Campbell	Pat Edwards
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DRAGONFLY

5000 - 5499 Hours



Susan Hudiburgh

Cumulative Service Awards (Cont.)



Present to receive their Cumulative Service awards were:
(Front row) Beverly Duncan, Kathryn Wells, and Joanne Spurgin;
(Middle row) Lynda Harvey, Lori Barr, Ann Hillman, and Kathy Rainey;
(Back row) Ruth Tweto, Sherri Ursini , Russ Allen, Daniel Arenas, Susan Marchus, Cheryl Huckabee, AnnMcMahon, and Steve Spurgin.



*Denton County Master Gardener
YouTube Channel*

Click on "Videos" and check out our new presentations!
And don't forget to subscribe!

<http://www.youtube.com/c/DentonCountyMasterGardener>



Denton County Master Gardener Association YouTube Playlists

Flower Arranging
Herbs & Vegetables
Organic Gardening
Other Gardening Topics
Permaculture
Seasonal Tasks & Tips
Waterwise Gardening
Wildlife Habitat Gardening

Houseplants
Landscaping
Pollinators
Roses
Shade Plants
Tree Care
Turf Care

<https://www.youtube.com/c/DentonCountyMasterGardener>

New! DCMGA General Meeting Presentation

July 13, 2022. 10:00 am to Noon

Open To The Public

"Ecological Landscaping" presented by
Wildscapers Landscape Co.

Location: Global Spheres Center, 7801 S
Interstate 35, Corinth, TX

You may also join virtually via Zoom. Advance
registration required for virtual attendance.

To Register:

https://uso2web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUrd-2rqTsrGtoGO_bj5o4xJBMY4RZ2hs6Q

Resources & Education Opportunities For Master Gardeners and the Community We Serve

Science-based knowledge on a variety of topics.

New!

Home Grown Lecture Series

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension. Virtual.

July 7, 2022 – Identifying Pest & Disease Issues in
the Garden – Paul Winski, County Extension Agent–
Commercial Horticulture

August 4, 2022 – Safety in the Home Garden –
Shannon Dietz, County Extension Agent–Ag &
Natural Resources

Registration Required:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/home-grown-lecture-series-2022-tickets-221010808277>

New!

Fall Into Gardening

Learn to Grow and Manage the Flow.

Save the Date! Saturday, September 17, 2022
8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Free Classes by Master Gardeners

8:00–10am	Rainwater + Watershed
10:30am–12pm	Soil + Soil Nutrition
1–2:30pm	Texas Native Plants
3–4:30pm	Vegetable Gardening

Hands-on Learning Activities
Garden Tours

Location: Global Spheres Center, 7801 S Interstate
35, Corinth, TX

DCMGA Members

Plan Your Week emailed each Friday has the most current
Online CE Opportunities.



BY HELP DESK TEAM

Q: I'm new to vegetable gardening and growing tomatoes. What's this mushy black spot on the bottom of my tomato?

A: Gardeners have a love-hate relationship with tomatoes. There's nothing better tasting than a homegrown tomato. At the same time, growing them can test even the best gardener's patience.

Your tomato has blossom end rot, a disorder of tomato and pepper fruits caused by a deficiency of calcium, characterized by decay at the blossom end of the fruit.

Symptoms

Water-soaked spots appear on the blossom end (bottom) of the fruit. The tissue breaks down quickly and becomes dark brown to black. The area can be mushy or have a leathery texture.

Causes

Insufficient calcium in the tissues of the tomato causes blossom end rot. Calcium is pulled from the soil through the plant's roots. Actively growing parts of the tomato plant need a continuous supply of calcium to prevent blossom end rot.

Inconsistent soil moisture is linked as a

cause of blossom end rot. Consistently moist soil allows the tomato plant to pull the calcium from the soil through its roots into the tissues and fruit.

Prevention

Tomato plants do best in well-drained soil high in organic matter. Have your soil tested and apply fertilizer and lime as recommended in the analysis results

(<http://soiltesting.tamu.edu/files/urbansoil.pdf>).

Water your plants at least 1 inch per week absent rainfall. Watering with a soaker hose or drip irrigation is best to keep soil from splashing on the leaves, which can lead to fungal diseases, and is undoubtedly more efficient.

Mulch the soil around the base of your plants 2 - 4 inches. The mulch will help hold moisture in the soil and keep weeds at bay.

Remove the infected fruit. Blossom end rot on the fruit cannot be stopped once it begins.

Repeated applications of a calcium chloride spray on the foliage and fruit can be helpful—example products: Bonide® Rot-Stop®, Southern Ag® Stop Blossom-End Rot of Tomatoes.



Photo: DCMGA member Cheryl Huckabee

Aggie Horticulture has a terrific site devoted to identifying and solving problems with growing tomatoes you may find helpful: <https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/vegetable/problem-solvers/tomato-problem-solver/>

Sources & Resources

"Blossom-end rot of tomato tip sheet," Michigan State University Extension
https://www.canr.msu.edu/resources/blossom_end_rot_tip_sheet

"Tomato Problem Solver," Aggie Horticulture
<https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/vegetable/problem-solvers/tomato-problem-solver/>

"Tomato." Texas Plant Disease Handbook, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension
<https://plantdiseasehandbook.tamu.edu/food-crops/vegetable-crops/tomato/>



If you have questions about any horticulture-related subjects, please contact our

Master Gardener Help Desk

at 940.349.2892

or master.gardener@dentoncounty.gov.

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

Spotted in Members' Gardens



Photo: DCMGA member Russ Allen

Sunflower
Helianthus



Photo: DCMGA member Lea Sage Watson

Black Ambrosia Daylily
Hemerocallis 'Black Ambrosia'



Photo: DCMGA member Sherri Ursini

Ms. Grace Dahlia
Dahlia 'Ms. Grace'



Photo: DCMGA member Angela Rosencrans

Lady Lucille Daylily
Hemerocallis 'Lady Lucille'

Save the Date

DENTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION,
UPPER TRINITY REGIONAL WATER DISTRICT &
BEULAH ACRES PRESENT

FALL INTO GARDENING

LEARN TO GROW
&
MANAGE THE FLOW

Saturday, September 17th, 2022
8 am-4:30 pm
Global Spheres Center
7801 S I35, Corinth

FREE CLASSES BY MASTER GARDENERS

8:00-10a Rainwater+Watershed
10:30a-12p Soil+Soil Nutrition
1-2:30p Texas Native Plants
3-4:30p Vegetable Gardening

HANDS-ON LEARNING ACTIVITIES
GARDEN TOURS

Box lunch available to order.





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





What's Growing On

Denton County Master Gardener Association Upcoming Events

July
1

Succulents

10 -11 am . Pilot Point Community Library, Pilot Point, TX

July
8

Container Gardening

10 - 11 am. Pilot Point Community Library, Pilot Point, TX

July
13

General Meeting & Program

10 am-noon. Business meeting & program "Ecological Landscaping" presented by Wildscapers Landscape Co., Global Spheres Center

August
4

KLB Garden Secrets Series: Fall Vegetable Gardening

6-7 pm . Presented in partnership with Keep Lewisville Beautiful. Lewisville Grand Theater, Lewisville, TX.

August
10

Fall Vegetable Gardening

6:30 - 7:30 pm .Lewisville Public Library, Lewisville, TX

August
10

General Meeting & Program

10 am-noon. Business meeting & program "Inviting the Prairie into Your Home Garden" presented by Suzanne Tuttle, Global Spheres Center

August
12

Vegetable Gardening

9- 10 am. Denton Senior Center, Denton, TX

August
13

Permaculture Design Intro Class

9 am-noon. Presented in partnership with Beulah Acres Agroforest, Global Spheres Center

August
13

Veggie Garden Class

1-4 pm. Presented in partnership with Beulah Acres Agroforest, Global Spheres Center

August
25

KLB Garden Secrets Series: Herb Gardening

6-7 pm . Presented in partnership with Keep Lewisville Beautiful. Lewisville Grand Theater, Lewisville, TX.

August
27

Compost Class

1-4 pm. Presented in partnership with Beulah Acres Agroforest, Global Spheres Center

For detailed information: dcmga.com/upcoming-events

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension is an equal opportunity employer and program provider. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.





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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Save the Date

- July 13 DCMGA General Meeting, Global Spheres Center (& Virtual) - "Ecological Landscaping" presented by Wildscapers Landscape Co.
- August 10 DCMGA General Meeting, Global Spheres Center (& Virtual)

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Content

Submission deadline for the August edition of *The Root is Friday*, July 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 or Communications Director Cheryl Huckabee at dcmga.communications@gmail.com.

All photos are courtesy of DCMGA's Creative Visual Arts (CVA) Team unless otherwise attributed.