

Denton County Master Gardener Association

# THE ROOT

Grow With Us



## Buds From The Board

BY KATHRYN WELLS, PRESIDENT

Happy August, friends; what a blazing summer it has been! Triple-digit temperatures and countless days without rain require tough Texas gardens ... and tough Texas gardeners. Last summer was relatively mild; what a difference a year makes!

As we navigate through this steamy season, slinking from shady spot to shady spot, one welcome climate-controlled activity is planning your autumn garden. To help you prepare, we have several upcoming programs featuring fall vegetable and herb gardening tips. And, as you look ahead to what is arguably the best season of the year, please save the date for our September 17th educational event: "Fall into Gardening: Learn to Grow & Manage the Flow." Held in partnership with Upper Trinity Regional Water District and Beulah Acres, the all-day event features four important programs: Rainwater & Watershed, Soil & Soil Nutrition, Texas Native Plants, and Vegetable Gardening. Hands-on learning activities, interactive demonstrations, and garden tours will also be offered, and if you'd like to spend the entire day with us (we hope you will!), box lunches will be available to order. Other than lunch, the entire

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## Buds From The Board (Cont.)

educational event is free and open to the public. More information may be found on the flyer in this issue of *The Root*, and additional details will soon be available on our [DCMGA website](#).

In the meantime, please plan to join us in cyberspace for our August 10th General Meeting and Program where plant ecologist expert Suzanne Tuttle will present, "Inviting the Prairie into Your Home Garden." As always, our monthly general meetings are free and open to the public. For these virtual meetings via Zoom videoconference, advance registration is required for both members and guests, and replays of all our recent virtual meetings and programs are available on our [DCMGA YouTube channel](#).

Denton County Master Gardeners and Denton County residents—you are blessings! I can't imagine North Texas without you. Despite the baking temperatures, you remain the coolest people I know. 😊

*Kathryn*

### TOP GARDENING TIPS

## August

Collect seeds from summer-blooming plants.  
Research native wildflower mixes for fall planting.  
Plan & prepare beds for fall planting.  
Replenish mulch to suppress weeds & retain moisture.  
Plant fall garden vegetable seeds & transplants.

#DCMGA #GROWWITHUS

DENTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

# SWAt - Science With Attitude Summer Camp

BY BETH SHARUM

We're back and better than ever! After a two year break, Science With Attitude's (SWAt) summer camp programs were back in action in June. Outdoor Science with Attitude(O'SWAt) summer camp was held June 20 thru June 24 in the mornings at Clear Creek Natural Heritage Center. This is SWAt's fifth year to partner with Denton Parks and Rec for summer programs and the first year holding camp at Clear Creek.

The O'SWAt camp team's goal was simple. For the 20 campers (and our volunteers) to have a great time the week of camp. And for the campers learn a few things about plants, environmental science, and Denton County wildlife along the way. It was a bonus that the volunteers learned a ton, too!

This summer, the camp celebrated SWAt's unique collaboration between Denton County Master Gardeners, Elm Fork Master Naturalists, and Denton County 4-H. The new format was the result of merging the best ideas from the previous week-long Junior Master Gardener and Junior Master Naturalist camps —and adding in 4-H STEM and Food and Nutrition lessons and activities.

The heat advisories did not slow the volunteers or the campers down. Camp days were filled with lessons and hand-ons activities. Some highlights of the week included daily insect hunts, how animals are beneficial in our urban habitat and our gardens, DIY hydroponics, learning how to prevent water pollution, and working in the vegetable gardens at Clear Creek. We stayed cool on Friday, the hottest day of the week, with popsicles after our MyPlate relays and campers learned how to create simple, healthy (and delicious!) yogurt parfaits.

In addition, our week was filled with amazing speakers from around the metroplex. They not only taught us something new, they brought visitors for us to meet! All the amazing animals that were featured throughout camp are so beneficial to our habitats and gardens. The campers left each day with a better understanding of how we are all connected. We learned about and were able to meet box turtles, a king snake, composting worms, and beautiful raptors.

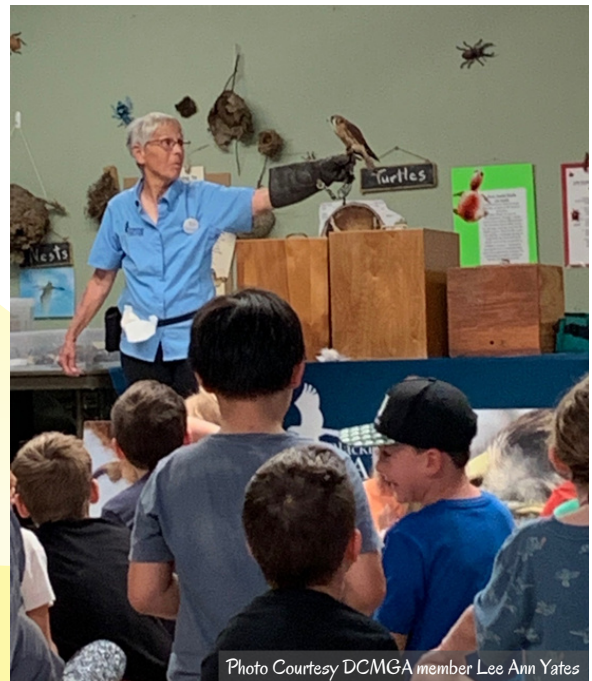


Photo Courtesy DCMGA member Lee Ann Yates

## Blackland Prairie Raptor Center presentation



## SWAt - Summer Camp (Cont.)



**Master Naturalist Lori Carroll pointing out the parts of a plant to an O'SWAt camper.**



**Master Gardener Deb Williams teaches campers about growing microgreens.**

When asked about their favorite things about this camp, the camper's most common answer was "Everything!"

This camp is not possible without the group of dedicated, talented, and wonderfully fun Master Gardener, Master Naturalist and AgriLife volunteers. It takes a village of volunteers to make this program such a success. We thank you for your hard work and dedication to the program. Mark your calendars! We hope to see you again in 2023!



**Master Gardener Amanda Price holding a baby box turtle.**





## Meet A Couple of Our Couples

BY CHERYL HUCKABEE

*Much of DCMGA's success is due to our commitment to teamwork. We have a dozen member couples who significantly contribute to the team effort. We'd like to introduce you to two of our newest dynamic duos, 2022 Master Gardener Interns Jerry and Susan Hamby and Ricky and Reesa Wilkins.*

Jerry and Susan Hamby are recent additions to Denton County. After retiring from teaching careers in Houston, they moved into a home with a typical suburban lawn and hedges.

Susan has deep roots in gardening. Growing up on a cattle ranch in southwest Missouri, her mother planted a large vegetable garden every spring and grew flowers. She misses those homegrown veggies and dreams of having her own garden.

Although Jerry didn't have much gardening experience growing up in Amarillo, he has enjoyed nature since early childhood. His interest in gardening, however, is more recent, and Jerry says that his wife Susan is his biggest gardening influence. Jerry impressed Susan with his composter when they met!

In 2014 Jerry earned his Texas Master Naturalist certification. Together, they have completed Levels 1-3 of the Native Plant Society of Texas' Native Landscape Certification Program. And Susan is enrolled to earn her Texas Master Naturalist certification this fall.

During their internship year, Jerry and Susan's volunteer service included the Garden Tour and Shiloh Field. And, I must add, they have graciously shared the excellent photographs they've taken during DCMGA activities.



Photo Courtesy Georgann Ward

**Susan & Jerry Hamby  
Class of 2022**



Photos Courtesy of DCMGA Member Jerry Hamby



**Susan & Jerry's Native Landscape in Houston**

## Meet A Couple of Our Couples (Cont.)

Their new Denton home has a sunny spot just right for planting a vegetable garden. Susan expects to put what she's learned from Charles Dowding's "No Dig" videos on YouTube and Niki Jabbour's books on intensive succession planting to good use in her new garden. They also plan to add native plants to attract pollinators and wildlife to their landscape. I'm sure entomologist, ecologist, conservationist, and one of Jerry's favorite authors Doug Tallamy will have some influence on their plans.



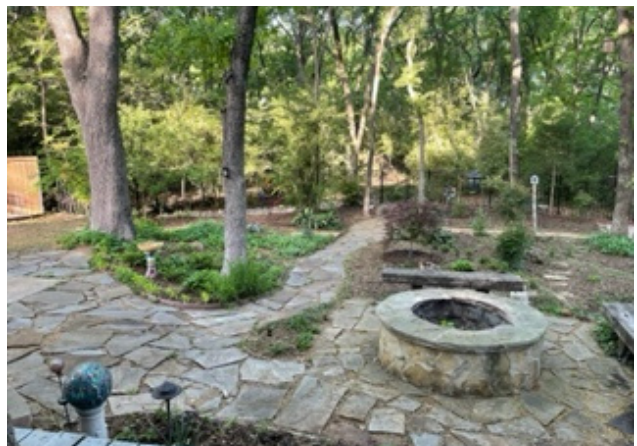
**Reesa & Ricky Wilkins**  
**Class of 2022**

Native Texans *Ricky and Reesa Wilkins* grew up in Abilene. Vegetable gardens were part of their childhood; Ricky's grandfather had a large vegetable garden next to his beauty school, and Reesa's parents had a large vegetable garden. Ricky's mom loved flowers and had beautiful beds. Reesa's parents were cotton farmers in Hermleigh (Scurry County).

Their home sits on 1/2 acre near the southwestern branch of Lewisville Lake in dappled to dense shade. "We love our back yard and have a screened-in patio that is one of our favorite places in the world," Reesa says. One of Reesa's favorite plants is the Weeping Dwarf Japanese Maple (*Acer palmatum dissectum*), a

small tree (3-8 feet) with a weeping habit known for its beautiful foliage color. Ricky claims the Texas Star Hibiscus (*Hibiscus coccineus*) as his favorite plant, a hardy hibiscus with 3-4 inch red flowers. Look for Ricky's article about the Texas Star Hibiscus in the July 2022 issue of *The Root*.

Ricky and Reesa made the 2022 Garden Tour the focus of their volunteer service during their internship year. They served as intern captains for BarB Legacy Farms and Garden and workdays



**The Wilkins' much loved screened patio and backyard**



## Meet A Couple of Our Couples (Cont.)

at two other 2022 tour gardens. They also volunteered at the Annual Plant Sale and Lewisville Lake Environmental Learning Area (LLELA).

Ricky is interested in Advanced Master Gardener training in trees. Reesa wants to learn more about growing herbs. After such a successful internship year, I'm confident they'll achieve their goals.



### Spotted in Members' Gardens



Photo: DCMGA member Melissa Weaver

#### Agave

*Agave*

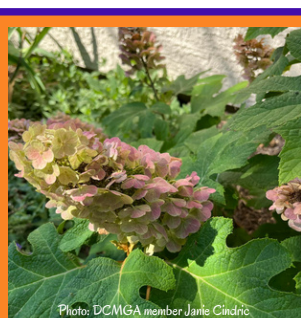


Photo: DCMGA member Jamie Cindric

#### Ruby Slippers Hydrangea

*Hydrangea quercifolia 'Ruby Slippers'*



Photo: DCMGA member Melissa Weaver

#### Passion Flower

*Passiflora*

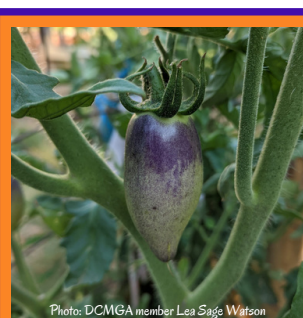


Photo: DCMGA member Lea Sage Watson

#### Midnight Roma Tomato

*Solanum lycopersicum 'Roma, Midnight'*



Volunteer Opportunity  
CHILDREN'S GARDEN  
AT FAIROAKS  
CONTACT VP-PROJECTS TOM O'BRIEN  
tobrien083@verizon.net

# HELP DESK

Volunteer Opportunity  
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Volunteer Opportunity  
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Volunteer Opportunity  
**TECHNOLOGY TEAM**

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## Plant of the Month - Moss Rose A Rose By Any Other Name...

BY CHERYL HUCKABEE

Moss Rose brings back happy childhood memories. It was one of my mother's favorite plants. She grew it in hanging baskets and lovingly gave it small drinks of water during the hot summer months. And the blooms were a sight to behold; a profusion of cheery, warm colors.

Moss Rose (*Portulaca grandiflora*) is an old-fashioned garden annual dating back to the early 19th century. It hails from southern Brazil, Uruguay, and Argentina, where Dr. John Gillies collected the first seeds in the 1820s. Dr. Gillies also gave us the garden salvia, petunia, and verbenas.

I love Moss Rose for its heat and drought tolerance. Also known as Portulaca, Moss Rose is semi-succulent and stores water in its fleshy leaves. It forms a low-growing mat, 1 foot wide and 3-8 inches high.



Photo Courtesy DCMGA Member Cheryl Huckabee

**Moss Rose  
comes in nearly every color except blue.**

The star of the show is its beautiful rose-like flowers in nearly every color except blue. Older varieties open in bright sunlight closing at night or on cloudy days. Newer hybrids will stay open until evening. The flowers range in size from 1-3 inches; some hybrid varieties have spotted, striped, or double blossoms.

Moss Rose requires full sun and well-drained soil. It works well in hot, dry areas such as rock gardens. Its trailing habit is stunning in hanging baskets or containers, and it can be grown as an annual groundcover, although it won't tolerate foot traffic. Give supplemental water and pinch off spent blooms to encourage continuous flowering from summer to fall. In mid-summer, prune or shear back the plant by one-third for fuller growth.

Start Moss Rose from seed 4-8 weeks before the last frost, barely covering the tiny seeds with soil. Wait until the soil warms to transplant outdoors. Take cuttings from established plants to propagate them as well.

This tough, low-maintenance, flowering annual is perfect for the hot North Texas summers!



## Plant of the Month - Moss Rose (Cont.)



**Give supplemental water and pinch off spent blooms to encourage continuous flowering from summer to fall.**

### *Resources*

*UAEX, University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture*

Klingaman, Gerald. "Rose, Moss." 7 July 2000

<https://www.uaex.uada.edu/yard-garden/resource-library/plant-week/moss-rose.aspx>.

*Wisconsin Horticulture, University of Wisconsin-Madison*

Mahr, Susan. "Moss Rose, Portulaca grandiflora – Wisconsin Horticulture."

<https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/articles/moss-rose-portulaca-grandiflora/>

*Earth-Kind Landscaping, Texas A&M AgriLife*

"Rose Moss or Moss Rose." Earth-Kind® Plant Selector

<http://ekps.tamu.edu/details?id=303>



**Denton County Master Gardener  
YouTube Channel**

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**And don't forget to subscribe!**

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

## Let's Talk Birdie *Creating a Feather-Friendly Fly Zone*

BY KATHRYN WELLS

Cardinals, chickadees, and kinglets ... oh, my! Home to approximately 500 regularly-occurring birds, Texas has its fair share of feathered friends; over 600 avian species have been identified in our state! Common permanent residents, which you've probably seen in your own backyard, include (but certainly are not limited to) Blue Jays, Carolina Chickadees, Eastern Bluebirds, Tufted Titmice, Woodpeckers (Downy and Red-Bellied), Wrens (Bewick's and Carolina), Northern Cardinals, and Northern Mockingbirds (our Texas state bird).

In addition to our regular residents, North Central Texas rolls out the proverbial welcome mat for seasonal visitors and transitory migrants, too. Smack in the middle of the Central Flyway—the seasonal migration route for birds traveling north and south in spring and autumn—the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex offers a summer (or winter!) home for many species and serves as a temporary respite for species just passing through. In fact, according to the American Ornithological Society, 98.5% of all long-distance North American migrant species have been recorded in Texas—333 of 338 species! Summer residents include Buntings (Indigo and Painted), Hummingbirds (Black-Chinned and Ruby-Throated), Summer Tanagers, and Scissor-Tailed Flycatchers. Winter dwellers include American Goldfinches, Cedar Waxwings, Dark-Eyed Juncos, Ruby-Crowned Kinglets, Sparrows (Chipping, White-Crowned, and White-Throated), and Warblers (Orange-Crowned and Yellow-Rumped).



Photos Courtesy DCMGA member Kathryn Wells

**Eastern Bluebirds (*Sialia sialis*)** sometimes lay up to three clutches each spring. The adult insectivores supplement their diet with fruits and berries throughout the winter. Here, Mom and Dad are diligently watching over their fledglings, who've just left the nest.



**Male Eastern Bluebirds** help feed the nestlings; here, Dad is returning to the nest with a tasty snack.



## Let's Talk Birdie (Cont.)

Interesting information aside, why should we care about birds at all? Well, our feathered friends serve many important purposes in our ecosystem; they're pollinators (hummingbirds are one excellent example), seed dispersers (a single jay can cache 3000-5000 nuts, and they typically use only 30% of what they store), decomposers (woodpeckers help break down decaying trees), biological controllers (birds serve as organic pest management), and environmental health reflectors (their presence reflects a healthy, well-balanced ecosystem). They're also entertainers—providing many hours of enjoyment for backyard birders and back-porch coffee drinkers.

Sadly, about one-third of North American birds are in decline due to issues such as habitat fragmentation (construction and encroaching development), homogenization (monocultures like lawn grass and non-native invasive plants), and sterilization (loss of natural food sources—insects, native plants, and smaller creatures—due to herbicides, pesticides, rodenticides, and other "ides").

Migration challenges also abound for our seasonal visitors; high-quality stopover habitat is critical for their success, but, unfortunately, the seasonal journey is fraught with obstacles:

- Changing weather patterns (which impact the availability of resources, especially food)
- Lack of food and water (due to habitat loss and fragmentation, drought, invasive species, and pesticide use)
- Light pollution (which inhibits nocturnal migration—most songbirds migrate at night via magnetic compass and stop during the day to rest and eat)
- Collisions (due to communication towers, wind turbines, high-rise buildings, and windows)
- Predators (especially domestic cats—the primary human-related cause of bird death in the United States, annually killing between 1.3 and 4 billion birds)



**Testing their independence under the watchful eyes of Mom and Dad, recently fledged Eastern Bluebirds enjoy a bird bath and a new perching perspective of their expanded world.**

## Let's Talk Birdie (Cont.)



**Red-Winged Blackbirds**  
Found year-round throughout the state of Texas, they particularly appreciate nesting spots adjacent to freshwater marshes and fields. This first-year juvenile male will have his adult coloring—glossy back feathers with yellow-tipped red shoulder patches—next breeding season.



**Greater Roadrunners**  
may be the ultimate Texas bird! Intelligent and inquisitive, these interesting birds are omnivores but especially appreciate reptile repasts. This was a good day for the roadrunner but a bad day for the Texas Spiny Lizard.

### *The Bare Necessities: Food, Water, and Shelter*

Considering the perilous conditions birds must navigate, how can we help our familiar (and long-distance-flying) feathered friends not only survive but also thrive? Basic bird requirements are the same as we humans need: food, water, shelter, and a safe place to raise the next generation.

#### Food

Native plants are the best food source, and natives that produce berries, fruit, seeds, nuts, nectar, and sap are the very best. Consider each plant's annual evolution and incorporate natives that yield the highest benefits. For example, Turk's Cap (*Malvaviscus arboreus*) first functions as a flowering nectar source in spring and summer; later in the year, the turban-shaped blooms morph into nice-sized fruits for birds and small mammals. (They're fit for human consumption, too—either raw or cooked—and taste somewhat like a mild apple.)

Additionally and importantly, native plants host native insects, and all birds need insects! Even seed-eaters like Northern Cardinals and fruit-eaters like Northern Mockingbirds need insects



## Let's Talk Birdie (Cont.)

insects to supplement their diets and, especially, to feed their young. Just as human newborns can't digest a meal of steak and potatoes, nestlings can't digest seeds, nuts, or fruit. And, while milk sustains human babies, invertebrates (especially caterpillars) provide necessary nutrition for avian species in those early days and weeks of life. An average size clutch of Carolina Chickadees, for example, needs between 6000 and 9000 insects to sustain helpless hatchlings as they grow into healthy fledglings—that's a lot of meals and snacks! And, because Mom and Dad forage in an approximate 50-yard radius, it's important to keep their natural pantry well-stocked with high-quality food.

### Water

A supplemental water source for your feathered friends is simple: keep it clean, keep it filled, and keep it shallow. Textured, sloped sides allow birds of all sizes easy access without losing their footing. Stones in the center provide places to perch and devices like water wigglers or misters provide gentle water movement, attracting birds and discouraging mosquitoes. Algae growth may appear in summer's heat; it's easy to scrub away with a mild solution of nine parts water to one part chlorine bleach (or vinegar). Rinse well before refilling. Birds are vulnerable when they're drinking and especially when they're bathing, so place your bird bath/watering station in an open area where birds can clearly see what's around them; proximity to shelter (five to ten feet away) provides cover and inspires confidence should the birds need to quickly exit. In the winter, heaters or deicers will help keep the water drinkable. Homemade solutions such as a water-holding saucer offset over a lit candle in a terra cotta pot work well in a pinch!

### Shelter

Shelter is the biggest void in most suburban landscapes. Since it's necessary for birds' cover, protection, and nesting, we can help by thoughtfully stewarding habitat to include a range of plants with revolving maturities. Think vertically, and densely fill your landscape from the ground up—vines, grasses and flowers, shrubs, under-canopy trees, and canopy trees. Different species nest in different ways; for example,



### Dark-Eyed Juncos

flock to Texas for the winter; where you see one, there are usually many more! They're a little camouflaged by the winter foliage, but, if it snows, these ground-foraging friends are easy to spot.

## Let's Talk Birdie (Cont.)

bluebirds and chickadees are cavity nesters. Wrens, also cavity nesters, tend to nest anywhere; check your potted plants, hanging baskets, and garden boots! Cardinals tend to nest in shrubby layers of the landscape (3 to 10 feet from the ground while meadowlarks prefer to nest in native bunch grasses. To ensure a full, lush landscape, consider which plants and trees are evergreen and which are deciduous, which are annuals and which are perennials, and incorporate them accordingly. Immaculate maintenance strips habitat of important cover and nesting sites, so, as is safe for your particular site, consider leaving brush piles and tree snags.

### ***Easy as 1, 2, 3***

By thoughtfully incorporating just three elements: high-quality food supplies, water sources, and safe shelters, you'll be well on your way to creating a feather-friendly fly zone.

### **Native Plant Suggestions**

- **Berry/Fruit-Producing** (ordered alphabetically by common name)
  - American Beautyberry (*Callicarpa americana*)
  - Coralberry (*Symphoricarpos orbiculatus*)
  - Elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* ssp. *canadensis*)
  - Mexican Plum (*Prunus mexicana*)
  - Pigeonberry (*Rivina humilis*)
  - Pokeberry (*Phytolacca americana*)
  - Possumhaw Holly (*Ilex decidua*)
  - Rough-Leaf Dogwood (*Cornus drummondii*)
  - Turk's Cap (*Malvaviscus arboreus*)
  - Yaupon Holly (*Ilex vomitoria*)



### **Painted Buntings**

are a seasonal favorite here in Texas. While the males are unmistakable with their blue, red, and yellow-green coloring, adult females, like this one, are beautiful, too. In the Cardinalidae family (like our resident Northern Cardinals), their bills are made for eating seeds.



## Let's Talk Birdie (Cont.)

- **Nectar-Producing** (ordered alphabetically by common name)
  - Autumn Sage (*Salvia greggii*)
  - Coral Honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*)
  - Crossvine (*Bignonia capreolata*)
  - Desert Willow (*Chilopsis linearis*)
  - Flame Acanthus (*Anisacanthus quadrifidus*)
  - Penstemons (*Penstemon sp.*)
  - Red Yucca (*Hesperaloe parviflora*)
- **Seed/Nut-Producing** (ordered alphabetically by common name)
  - Bee Balms (*Monarda sp.*)
  - Bluestems (*Andropogon sp.*)
  - Buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*)
  - Coneflowers (Various including *Dracopsis*, *Echinacea*, *Ratibida*, and *Rudbeckia sp.*)
  - Oaks (*Quercus sp.*)
  - Pecan (*Carya illinoensis*, Texas state tree)
  - Side Oats Grama (*Bouteloua curtipendula*, Texas state grass)
  - Sunflowers (*Helianthus sp.*)
  - Wildflowers (Pick your favorites!)
  - Woodland (Inland Sea) Oats (*Chasmanthium latifolium*)
- **Insect-Sustaining** (ordered by number of species supported)
  - Oaks (*Quercus sp.*, hosts more than 400 caterpillar species)
  - Willows (hosts more than 400 caterpillar species; Texas native *Salix nigra* supports at least 90 species)
  - Cherry Laurels (*Prunus sp.*, hosts more than 300 caterpillar species)
  - Cottonwoods (*Populus sp.*, hosts more than 250 caterpillar species)
  - Every native plant!



**Summer Tanager**  
a first spring juvenile male



**Northern Cardinal**  
the redder the better to attract a female

## Let's Talk Birdie (Cont.)



### Hummingbird

Who doesn't love a hummingbird? While our north central Texas summer residents (Black-Chinned and Ruby-Throated, like the male adult pictured here) favor plants with tubular blooms, they also appreciate nectar in the form of sugar water (one part white table sugar to four parts boiling water; mix and let cool before serving). If you make your own sugar water, don't use organic, raw, or brown sugar—only plain white granulated table sugar, as high levels

of iron in the unprocessed sugars can be fatal to hummers. And, don't use honey, as it can produce detrimental fungal growth in the birds' esophagus. No red coloring is necessary; the plain mixture of white table sugar and water is most like the chemical composition of natural nectar. Change your solution every two to three days—before it becomes cloudy—as sugar water rapidly ferments in hot temperatures, producing toxic alcohol. Extra solution can be stored in the refrigerator. Better yet, just plant more natives with tubular-shaped blooms—Coral Honeysuckle, Flame Acanthus, and Red Yucca are just three of many choices. And, although it's said that with their ultraviolet vision spectrum, hummers prefer red and orange, I've seen them enthusiastically feeding on white (Autumn Sage), pink (Desert Willow), and purple (Penstemon sp.) blooms, too.

### Recommended Reading:

*Bird by Bird Gardening* (Sally Roth)  
*Bringing Nature Home* (Doug Tallamy)  
*Texas Wildscapes: Gardening for Wildlife*  
 (Damude & Bender)

### Recommended Resources:

[Audubon Native Plants Database](#)  
[Cornell Lab of Ornithology](#)  
[Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center](#)  
[Native Plant Society of Texas, Trinity Forks Chapter](#)  
[Texas Parks & Wildlife, Bird Migration FAQ](#)

### Important Information:

Migratory Bird Treaty Act: it's illegal to take, possess, import, export, transport, sell, purchase, or barter any migratory bird or bird parts (feathers), nests, or eggs without a valid Federal permit. Non-native species (House Sparrows and European Starlings) are excluded; limited protection applies in season for game birds (ducks, geese, doves, some shorebirds).





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

We're pleased to welcome  
Suzanne Tuttle, who will present  
"Inviting the Prairie  
into Your Home Garden."

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.



## A Few of Our Favorite Reads

*The Garden in Autumn* by Allen Lacy. Atlantic Monthly Press; 1st edition (October 1, 1990).

*Gardening With Nature In Texas* by Karen M. Breneman. Taylor Trade Publishing; Illustrated edition (February 22, 2002).

*All New Square Foot Gardening, 3rd Edition* by Mel Bartholomew (Author), Square Foot Gardening Foundation (Author). Cool Springs Press; 3rd edition (November 13, 2018).

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# Growing Wildflowers from Seed

NORTH TEXAS GARDENING, DCMGA

Growing native wildflowers brings a bit of the prairie to your backyard. Sowing wildflower seed mixes is an inexpensive way to fill an area with a variety of colorful springtime blooms. Native bees and other pollinators that are important to our food chain appreciate the nectar that wildflowers provide early in the season.

To have the best chance of success with your wildflower garden, here are a few things to consider:



**Sowing wildflower seed mixes fills an area with a variety of springtime blooms.**

## *Seed Selection*

Select seeds of species that are native to your area. These will be the most attractive and beneficial to native pollinators, along with being adapted to your weather conditions. Some seed suppliers prepare blends that are labeled for specific geographic regions. You can also compare the seeds listed on the packet with the native plant database on the Ladybird Johnson Wildflower Center website ([www.wildflower.org](http://www.wildflower.org)), which also includes the 20 most common Texas wildflowers. Texas A&M's Wildflowers in Bloom website (<https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/wildseed/>) also provides detailed growing information and photographs for dozens of wildflowers.

## *Site Selection*

Locate your wildflower garden in full sun. Most wildflowers bloom best with full sun, meaning at least 5 to 8 hours of direct sun. Although tolerant of our slightly alkaline soil in North Texas, it is essential that the soil drains well. Sites with standing water or heavy clays will not yield good results.

## *When to Plant*

In North Central Texas, sow wildflower seeds in fall for spring bloom. North Texas typically experiences enough rain in the fall to help the seeds germinate and then has a sufficiently cold winter for those species that prefer some chilling hours.



## Growing Wildflowers from Seed (Cont.)

### *Site Preparation*

Start with a clean slate. Remove weeds and turf grasses that will crowd out wildflower seedlings. Lightly rake the surface no more than 1" deep to loosen the soil, but not so deep that you expose more weed seeds. Integrating organic material or compost improves the soil by adding plant nutrients and helping to break up clay soil.

### *Sowing Seeds*

Scatter seeds by hand or with a handheld spreader onto bare earth. You may wish to add sand or perlite to your mix in a ratio of 4 parts inert material to 1-part seed mix to help tiny seeds disperse evenly. Do not cover the seeds with soil, but do press down on the area by walking or using a roller. It is important that the seeds are in contact with the soil but not covered with more than 1/16" - 1/8" of soil.



### *Ongoing Care of your Wildflower Garden*

Gently hand water at first sowing and keep the area evenly moist (but not saturated) for the next 4 to 6 weeks, supplementing with irrigation if necessary until the plants are a couple inches high. Once established, wildflowers need minimal supplemental water.

**Proper soil preparation is key for growing wildflowers.**

If you planted a mixture of seeds, germination will be sporadic as not all species have the same germination rates or requirements. Be aware that emerging seedlings could easily be mistaken for weeds. Texas A&M's Wildflowers in Bloom website includes photographs of common wildflower seedlings to assist in identification. The website also suggests sowing a pinch of seeds into a container of potting soil to use for comparison.

If Mother Nature cooperates, come spring your wildflower garden will be a beautiful haven for beneficial insects. Then sit back and enjoy your own little piece of the prairie.



## Fall Into Gardening Day



*Autumn is prime time for gardening for lots of reasons. After suffering through this summer's extraordinary heat and drought, you and your landscape can take advantage of the cooler temperatures and wetter weather. Planting, planning, and preparation are all the better in the fall.*

*Get a jump start on spring at our Fall Into Gardening: Learn to Grow & Manage the Flow event, September 17, 2022, presented in partnership with Upper Trinity Regional Water District and Beulah Acres. Attend four free classes and participate in hands-on activities to get lots of tips and tricks for water conservation, improving your soil, vegetable gardening, Texas native plants, and much more.*

*Learn more about this incredible event and register to attend on our website:  
<https://dcmga.com/>.*

# 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**

Register on [dcmga.com](https://dcmga.com)



Rainwater +  
Watershed



Soil + Soil  
Nutrition



Texas Native  
Plants



Vegetable  
Gardening



# 2022 Fruit, Vegetable, Herb, and Flower Show Recap

BY DEBBY ISHEE

It was a beautiful, sun-shiny, very hot day for our annual Fruit, Vegetable, Herb, and Flower Show. The weather man said it was 98 degrees that day, but all that volunteered that day knew better. It was very hot. We started at 6 in the morning, setting up tables and canopies, trying to beat the heat. Around 9, the entries started rolling in. Oh, the excitement! There were all kinds of fruits, vegetables, herbs, and flowers! Finally, registration ended, and the judging began at 10. Kathi Efflandt, Susie Cook, and Phyllis Minton judged the flowers and herbs, while Karen Stubbs, Cindy Helm, and Barbara Brown judged the fruits and vegetables. Gresha Leamon and Carol Brantley stood beside them, adding remarks and scores as the judges tasted, touched, and admired the multitude of fabulous entries. After all the tallying was finished and all the results were in, the winners were:

**Best in Show:** Lynda Harvey for her Standing Yellow Cypress.

*The adult winners were:*

**Grand Champion,** Michelle Arenas for her thyme

**Reserve Grand Champion,** Jerry Gurley for his Sun Gold Tomatoes

**First Runner Up,** Tammie Gurley, (not to be confused with our MG Tammie) for her Yellow Tomatoes

*The youth winners were:*

**Grand Champion,** Bowen Prestemon for his Magenta Zinnia

**Reserve Grand Champion,** Bibi Arenas for her sweet basil

**First Runner Up,** Bibi Arenas for her onions

Thanks to everyone who brought their harvests to this year's show! Out of the 21 people who registered, 14 contestants brought a maximum of 5 entries each this year.

Even though Covid was awful, and we all suffered through the isolation, we learned new ways of doing things that have really simplified and even enhanced our lives today. Last year we implemented the QR code registration, which helped to prevent long lines at the registration table. Every year, the FVHF show team, consisting of Pam Hawkins, Kaye Gross, Joyce Yarnall-Smith, Jacqueline Perkins, Clarice Luce, and I, look to see what we can do to make the show better. They are quite the team and have taught me a lot about the value of teamwork! Our team is always open to hearing your ideas and suggestions for next year's Fruit, Vegetable, Herb, and Flower Show.

## 2022 Flower, Vegetable, Herb, and Flower Show Recap (Cont.)

Thanks to the many volunteers who endured the heat and worked so hard to allow the show to go on! A special thanks go to Steve Spurgin for making sure we had the canopies and to Ann Hillman, Pam Spooner, and Bonnie Ambrose for having an Ask a Master Gardener Booth after being asked at the last minute.



Photos Courtesy DCMGA member Louie Tonry



## Summer Heat

*The sunflowers and rudbeckia sure are drawing a crowd.  
It may be too hot to work in the garden, but the wildlife continues to enjoy it.*



Photos Courtesy DCMGA member Janice Goetz



## 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

August 10, 2022. 10:00 am to Noon

Open To The Public

"Inviting the Prairie Into Your Home Garden"  
presented by Suzanne Tuttle

**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/tZlkc-qurjsqEtyzoKhhN3-m4\\_3qsNFTjaBZ](https://uso2web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZlkc-qurjsqEtyzoKhhN3-m4_3qsNFTjaBZ)

### DCMGA Members

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

## 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.

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

September 1, 2022 – All About Mint – Brandi Keller,  
County Extension Agent-Horticulture

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

**For More Events – Visit  
[the DCMGA Upcoming Events Page](https://dcmga.com/)**



**BY HELP DESK TEAM**

*Q: Master Gardeners often recommend hiring a certified arborist when there are issues with trees. What is a certified arborist, and why are they better than a tree service?*

**A:** Thank you for asking a terrific question! Healthy trees not only add beauty to our home's landscape but also add to our property value, energy efficiency, and a home for wildlife. In short, the trees in our landscape are an investment in your home, requiring care and maintenance just like the physical structure of your home.

**What is an Arborist?**

An arborist is a specialist in the cultivation of trees. Their specialties include planting, caring for, and maintaining individual trees. ISA-certified arborists must be trained and knowledgeable in all areas of arboriculture. The credentials of a certified arborist include:

- 3 years of full-time professional experience in the tree care industry
- A degree in the field of arboriculture, horticulture, landscape architecture, or forestry from a regionally accredited educational institute
- Have passed an extensive examination

covering all aspects of tree care

- Membership in professional organizations such as the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA), the Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA), or the American Society of Consulting Arborists (ASCA). These organizations offer continuing education in tree care.

**What are the Services an Arborist Provides?**

- Prune trees to maintain their health, appearance, and safety. Proper pruning can include developing good structures in young trees, improving the tree's shape, removing diseased or insect-infested limbs, removing limbs that may be obstructing streets, sidewalks or other structures, and reducing potential damage from storms.
- Helping you decide whether a tree should be removed for a variety of reasons: the tree may be dead or dying and beyond therapeutic care, is a risk to property or people, is causing an obstruction that can't be solved with pruning, must be removed for construction, and so on. In the cases of pruning or removal, an arborist has the expertise, training, and equipment to perform the task safely.



- Emergency care of trees following a storm or other physical damage
- Arborists assist in the best tree selection for the site, climate, and purpose; some arborists will also plant trees
- Administer proactive plant health care to reduce or mitigate pest damage, fertilization, soil improvements, and structural support

#### How Do I Select the Right Arborist?

Buyer beware! Some tree services only employ workers who know how to use a chainsaw, have the physical ability to climb a tree, and are not afraid of heights! Many reputable tree services have one or more certified arborists on their staff. Here's a checklist of things to look for:

- Membership in one or more of the professional organizations ISA, TCIA, ASCA
- ISA Certification
- Proff of insurance - personal, property damage, and workers' compensation
- Necessary permits or licenses required by local or state government agencies
- References
- A written estimate with a description of the work to be done, and the work to be done is an industry-accepted practice.
- A written contract with the start and complete dates, detailed description of the work to be done, responsibility for clean-up, total price and terms of payment, and hourly rate

#### How Do I Find a Certified Arborist?

The Texas Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture's (ISAT) online tool lets you search for tree care companies in Texas that have ISA Certified Arborists on staff. The International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) offers a similar online tool.

You're well on your way to being an informed consumer!

#### Sources and Resources

"Hiring an Arborist." Texas A&M University, Travis County. <https://travis-tx.tamu.edu/about-2/horticulture/ornamental-plants/trees-and-tree-care/hiring-an-arborist/>.

"Why Hire an Arborist." International Society of Arboriculture. [www.treesaregood.org/treeowner/whyhireanarborist](http://www.treesaregood.org/treeowner/whyhireanarborist).

"Find a Texas Arborist Near You." Texas Chapter: International Society of Arboriculture. [isatexas.com/for-the-public/find-an-arborist/](http://isatexas.com/for-the-public/find-an-arborist/).

"Find an Arborist." International Society of Arboriculture. [www.treesaregood.org/findanarborist/findanarborist](http://www.treesaregood.org/findanarborist/findanarborist).



*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](mailto:master.gardener@dentoncounty.gov).*

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



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*

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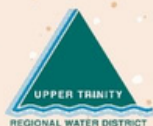
**HANDS-ON LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

**GARDEN TOURS**

*Box lunch available to order.*



SCAN THIS CODE  
OR GO TO [DCMGA.COM](https://dcmga.com)  
TO REGISTER



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





# What's Growing On

## Denton County Master Gardener Association Upcoming Events

**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**

### ***General Meeting & Program***

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

**August  
10**

### ***Fall Vegetable Gardening***

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

**August  
12**

### ***Vegetable Gardening***

6- 7 pm. Denton Senior Center, Denton, TX

**August  
13**

### ***Permaculture Design Intro Class***

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

**August  
13**

### ***Rainwater Class + Demonstration***

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

**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**

### ***Veggie Garden Class***

9-12 am. Presented in partnership with Beulah Acres Agroforest, Global Spheres Center, Registration Required

**August  
27**

### ***Compost Class***

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

For detailed information: [dcmga.com/upcomingevents](https://dcmga.com/upcomingevents)

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.

### 2022 Board of Directors

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Vice-President - Projects	Tom O'Brien
Vice-President - Outreach	Georgiana McCoig
Secretary	Kelli Bixler
Treasurer	Dale Powell
Communications Dir. - Systems	Cheryl Huckabee
Education Director	Daniel Arenas
Member-at-Large	Kim Shaneyfelt
Past President	Pat Moyer
Extension Agent - Horticulture	Janet Laminack

### Social Media

Facebook:

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

Instagram:

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

Twitter:

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

Pinterest:

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

YouTube:

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

### Save the Date

- August 10 DCMGA General Meeting, Global Spheres Center (& Virtual) - Program: "Inviting the Prairie Into Your Home Garden"
- September 17 Fall Into Gardening, Global Spheres Center Registration Required (see flyer)

### Contact Information

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Website:

<https://dcmga.com>

### 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](mailto:dcmga.communications@gmail.com).

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