

Denton County Master Gardener Association

# THE ROOT

Grow With Us



## WHAT'S GROWING ON

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# Buds From The Board

BY CHERYL HUCKABEE, PRESIDENT

*"July is hollyhocks and hammocks, fireworks and vacations, hot and steamy weather, cool and refreshing swims, beach picnics, and vegetables all out of the garden." – Jean Hersey*

Texas summers are hot, really hot. On June 15, the Climate Prediction Center's July temperature outlook was 33-40% higher than normal for North Texas. There's good news: the monthly precipitation outlook is also 33-40% higher than normal for North Texas. So, hot and steamy is what we'll have to endure.

As you sip your cool drink in the comfort of air conditioning, here are a few fun and interesting facts about July:

- The Roman Senate named July for the Roman dictator Julius Caesar because July was his birth month.
- July 1-2 marks the halfway point of the year.
- The hottest and coldest-ever recorded Earth temperatures were recorded in July. Typically, August is the hottest month in North Texas.
- Larkspur is one of July's two birth flowers. The larkspur is the symbol of positivity and dedication. It is a member of the buttercup family (*Ranunculaceae*) and is highly poisonous if ingested. The Prairie Larkspur (*Delphinium carolinianum*) is native to Texas. Native Americans used the pale blue blooms to make dyes and repel insects.
- Water-lily symbolizes purity and innocence and is also one of July's birth flowers. In Texas, the Fragrant White Water-Lily (*Nymphaea odorata*) is a native. Its leaves and flowers float on the water. The fragrant white 2 1/2" flowers open from early morning until noon. They prefer full sun and grow and bloom best in large water gardens.



Independence Day Celebrations are what July is known for. Check out Family eGuide's North DFW 4th of July Events for a nearby celebration.

## Buds From The Board (Cont.)

On July 12, Denton County Master Gardeners Carol Brantley, Beverly Duncan, and Kathy Rainey will present "Texas Superstar® Plants" during our monthly meeting at Global Spheres Center at 10 am. Texas Superstar® plants are chosen for superior performance by Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Texas A&M Extension Service after undergoing rigorous field trials over several years. [[texassuperstar.com](http://texassuperstar.com)].

We thank you if you joined us at our Fruit, Vegetable, Herb, and Flower Show on June 19 at the North Texas Fairgrounds. The contest entries were fantastic, the educational booths enlightening, and the vendors entertaining.

We hope you enjoy this issue of *The Root*.

Stay Cool & Happy Gardening!



### DCMGA Members & Interns

*Plan Your Week (PYW)* is emailed each Friday.  
It has the most current VS/CE Opportunities.



## Janet Laminack, CE-Hort *We Will Miss You*

We have lost a dear friend and sponsor of the Denton County Master Gardener program. Janet Laminack lost her battle with cancer on June 28, 2023. Her courage and enduring positive attitude during her battle inspired us all.

Janet joined Denton County AgriLife Extension in 2008 as the County Extension Agent-Horticulture. Her cheerful nature and thoughtful leadership help DCMGA grow and increase our impact on the community we serve. Janet will be missed greatly.

Our best wishes and love to Janet's family during this difficult time.



## DCMGA Website *Got Questions? Find Answers on dcmga.com!*

BY CHERYL HUCKABEE

The DCMGA website will help you answer the question, "How does that grow?" Whether you're new to North Texas, learning how to garden successfully here, or a lifelong resident wanting to try something new, you will find answers on dcmga.com. Let us take you through all the steps of an exciting gardening journey!

### Step 1: Plan & Prepare Your Landscape



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Do you have a new garden space, or is it time to revitalize an existing garden? What purpose will it serve – ornamental, edibles, wildlife, lawn, or all the above? Do you garden in a suburban or a rural setting? What's your budget for both time and money? Explore the many facets of gardening and the options you have. Our Gardening Basics fact sheets will help you plan many types of gardens – accessible, children's, edible, native, pollinator, shade, small space, waterwise, and wildlife gardens.

How do you achieve the garden of your dreams in North Texas? Gardeners have more than a few challenges with our soil, climate extremes, water resources, pests, and critters. Come along with us and explore how to start your garden to best build for success in our sometimes-tough environment. Soil, water and irrigation, sunlight, compost and mulch, garden beds, propagation, fertilizers, pest management, tools, and gifts; our Gardening Basics fact sheets cover it all!

You'll even brush up on your vocabulary and learn common gardening terms every gardener should know on our [Gardening Terms](#) page.



## DCMGA Website (Cont.)

### Step 2: Select & Grow Your Plants

What gardener hasn't planted an interesting plant only to find it entirely unsuitable later? There are five essential considerations when choosing plants for your landscape: Function, aesthetics, growing conditions, management, and environmental impact. Learn about these important factors and more before selecting your plants.



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Growing any plant to its fullest potential requires knowing about its needs. No matter what type of garden, shrub, or tree interests you, we have curated a number of resources to help you plan and care for them well. Find Plant Facts for Master Gardener's favorite plants that have proven themselves to be reliable choices in our harsh North Texas climate.

### Step 3: Maintain & Solve Garden Problems



Photo Courtesy "Homestead and Gardens"  
John & Anni Winnings/flickr/ CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

Maintaining your garden and landscape may seem like a daunting task. Completing the right tasks at the right time with the right tools can result in healthy and beautiful gardens and landscapes for you to enjoy. Learn tips for watering, pruning, mowing, mulching, fertilizing, improving the soil, weeding, and controlling pests and diseases.

Our Monthly Gardening Tips is a feature you shouldn't miss. Put a reminder on your calendar to learn what to do in the yard and garden each month with gardening tips specifically for Denton County and North Texas.

Don't let issues in your garden get you down. Learn how to deal with common garden problems quickly and efficiently with expert advice from Master Gardeners and Extension Service experts. Our Gardening Basics fact sheets will help you with animal and bird pests, environmental damage, grasses, insect pests, plant diseases, plant identification, trees and shrubs, and weeds.

## DCMGA Website (Cont.)

### Step 4: Grow Your Skills

Make your Green Thumb a little greener. Our monthly magazine *The Root* offers in-depth gardening articles and tips. View our videos and peruse our how-to guides to deepen your gardening knowledge. Check our Event Calendar for lectures and workshops to attend that will enhance your gardening skills.

### Learn about DCMGA

Our Master Gardener volunteers share research-based advice to help you learn about and implement sustainable horticultural practices. We support a wide variety of programs, including annual events, youth and children's programs, community gardens, landscape design, lectures and presentations, community partnerships, and beautification programs.

### Want to Become a Master Gardener?

Do you love gardening? Are you interested in broadening your knowledge of sustainable gardening? Do you like making friends and doing things with others who share your interests? Is serving your community important to you?

You may ask yourself these questions if you're considering becoming a Master Gardener. And, if you answer yes to any of these questions, becoming a Master Gardener is quite likely right for you. Get all the details for becoming a Master Gardener.

Some afternoons this summer, when it's too hot to get outside, peruse our new website for a few minutes. We know you'll be entertained, enlightened, and enriched by what you can learn! See you in cyberspace!



Canva Stock Photo



Photo Courtesy DCMGA Member Cindy Helm

### Shiloh Field



Photo Courtesy DCMGA Member Pat Edwards

### DCMGA Master Gardeners

## Meet Kim Wootton

BY BARBARA BROWN

Being a Master Gardener is about sharing information that helps people make good decisions when selecting their landscape plants. Kim Wootton is a role model for how to provide sustainable gardening information in a friendly and effective manner. Kim became a Master Gardener intern in 2017 and the first year after certification, she volunteered to assist in training the 2018 intern class. She became the intern class manager in 2019 and continues in that role today. When asked why she continues to take on this challenge, she explained that it was a privilege to get to know well so many talented future Master Gardeners.



**Kim Wootton**  
**DCMGA Class 2017**

Kim is a master at creative problem-solving as demonstrated by the events that directly impacted the 2020 intern class. Just after the 2020 intern classes

began, Covid hit, and the planned classroom lectures had to become virtual almost overnight and many supervised practicum experiences needed to be immediately modified. Even with the upheaval and the need to change the way intern training was accomplished, most of the 2020 interns graduated as Master Gardeners. Under her thoughtful guidance, each year the percentage of interns being certified as Master Gardeners has increased. And, fortunately for all of us, Kim will continue in 2024 as the intern class leader.

Before she retired from teaching and became a Master Gardener, Kim taught biology at all public school levels, conducted labs at UNT, and served for several years as a consultant to NASA on sustainability and life sciences. When she was actively teaching students, she kept representatives of all animal phyla, including reptiles, millipedes, snakes, and spiders, to share the natural world with her students. This worldview perhaps played a role in motivating her to seek certification for her home landscape as a wildlife habitat.

To continue the theme of sharing knowledge about sustainable landscaping, Kim agreed to have her home on the 2023 DCMGA Garden Tour. Her landscape, dubbed Wildlife Waystation for the tour, gave interns and veterans the opportunity to be immersed in a landscaped yard filled with native plants while enjoying the surrounding natural area. Kim's landscaping goal was to demonstrate the integration of plants and hardscape with nature, thereby providing a welcoming habitat for local and migrating birds, pollinating insects, and indigenous plants and animals.



## Meet Kim Wootton (Cont.)

Before we learn about Kim the mother and grandmother, there is one more significant achievement in her gardening sustainability portfolio. For many residents, working successfully with your homeowner's association when it comes to your landscape plants can be a difficult experience. Kim took on the challenge by applying her motto of winning with honey instead of with vinegar. During several meetings with the HOA, Kim—a certified Native Plant Landscape Specialist—provided information, explanations, and encouragement. Many meetings and demonstrations later, her HOA is a partner and not an adversary. And, the icing on the cake is that several of her neighbors have adopted native plants and sustainable practices, leading to having the area designated as a community-certified wildlife habitat.

Kim is the mother of two adult children, one of whom works for Upper Trinity Water District, thereby continuing her legacy. Today, Kim passes along sustainability knowledge to her newest family member, her granddaughter. When asked what plant she would always have in her landscape and which one she never wanted again, she applauded the beauty and sustainability of Turk's cap and cursed the unrelenting aggression of Asian jasmine.

Thank you, Kim, for all you have contributed to our community!



**Wildlife  
Waystation  
Garden Tour  
Photos**



**Kim's vegetable  
garden and grapevines  
in raised beds.**





**SAVE THE DATE!**

# Fall Into Gardening

PRESENTED BY:

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

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30**  
GLOBAL SPHERES CENTER, CORINTH, TX

KEYNOTE SPEAKER:  
**STEVE HUDDLESTON**  
AUTHOR "EASY GARDENS FOR NORTH CENTRAL TEXAS"

GARDENING WORKSHOPS, DEMONSTRATIONS, GARDEN TOURS,  
& KIDS ACTIVITIES

Logos: TEXAS MASTER GARDENER, TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION, Denton County, UPPER TRINITY, BEULAH ACRES




## A Few of Our Favorite Resources

*Bugs By The Yard Podcast*, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension  
Learn about insects that occur in urban backyards and gardens of Texas; whether they be pests, beneficials, or really fascinating! Presented by Molly Keck, Wizzie Brown, and Erfan Vafaie, Department of Entomology, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service & Texas A&M Department of Entomology.  
Listen on Apple Podcasts:  
<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-no-till-market-garden-podcast/id1441886206>

*The Complete Gardener: A Practical, Imaginative Guide to Every Aspect of Gardening*, DK Publishing; (May 4, 2021).

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## Plant of the Month - Clematis *Right Plant, Right Place*

BY LEE ANN YATES

I really hope you were able to visit the gardens that were on the DCMGA Garden Tour just before Mother's Day. If not, WOW did you miss some bee-u-tiful and diverse gardens! Check us out next year in May! One plant among the bounteous gorgeousness that caught my eye was Clematis – a blooming vine I remember from my Gramma's Michigan garden in my childhood. Huge flowers twined through her rose bushes in contrasting colors - I was amazed at the combinations! But I know what grows in Michigan doesn't usually grow here in Denton County so I never even attempted to grow Clematis among my roses or anywhere else. And then, there it was in at least two of the Garden Tour gardens, blooming and flourishing! I said to myself, "Self, you must look further into how to grow Clematis here! And for heaven's sake, close your mouth – 'we are not a codfish'!" (IYKYK! All others, see below\*)

Here is what I have discovered about growing Clematis in North Texas:

Clematises are part of the buttercup family (*Ranunculaceae*) and include over 300 species, some of which have been growing since the 1800s! They can be planted in containers or in the ground, along fences, or up a trellis. They need at least six hours of sun during the growing season, but remember, almost every plant appreciates a rest from Texas' late afternoon summer sun. At the same time that the foliage and flowers are loving the sunshine, the roots like cool, well-drained soil. A thick layer of mulch will help cool the soil and clematises are friendly low-growing perennials planted near their bases. Water in-ground clematises at least once a week, more often if they are in pots. Don't let them become soggy, though, because they can suffer from root rot. See why Clematises have a reputation for being finicky?

Those huge flowers in my memories have difficulty standing up to our heat in summer, so what to do? Delve carefully into large-flowered hybrids, of which there are many. This will take some homework. Avoid any clematis cultivars that require a winter dormancy period, including snow cover. We don't get snow reliably here and these are hybrids who like a frosty blanket of snow for several weeks, even months.



Photo Courtesy DCMGA Member Sharrie Ely

**'Polish Spirit,'  
a *Viticella clematis***



## Clematis (Cont.)

Knowing the parentage of the hybrid you consider can be helpful, but also may be difficult to discover. One example trademarked as 'Avalanche' (*Clematis x cartmanii* 'Blaaval') has parents who hail from a part of New Zealand that gets a lot of rain. Therefore, 'Avalanche' needs to be in a pot in North Texas, not the ground, and receive regular watering (preferably rainwater), part shade, and lots of attention. Keeping it cool enough can be challenging, but a thick mulch helps. Be careful not to overwater. This is true of many of the hybrids that thrive in the ground in the northern realms but must be in pots here. So, if you pine for Clematis vines with the biggest flowers, invest in some large pots, prepare to devote attention to them, and go to town!

Some hybrids might be worth trying in Denton County, especially when you consider the smaller the flower, the higher likelihood of success. A *Texas Gardener* magazine article reported that Richard Hawke, clematis evaluator at the Chicago Botanic Garden, created a rated list of clematis in *Fine Gardening* magazine's online version. A link to download the rating chart is given below (see *Resources*).

Our good friends at *Texas Gardener* magazine did name some of those cultivars to get us started. In the Italian *Viticella* groups of Clematis, there are many heat-tolerant cultivars, especially 'Madame Julia Correyon,' a reddish, four-inch summer bloomer, and 'Ernest Markham' which garnered the highest score in Hawke's ratings. Both adapt well to a variety of soil types. Easily available larger-flowered clematises (five-inchers!) that will survive Texas conditions include 'Rouge Cardinal,' 'Jackmanii,' and 'Harlow Carr.' If you feel like stretching the size envelope a bit, 'The President,' 'Bees' Jubilee,' and 'Nelly Moser' are all reputable six-inch candidates.



Photo Courtesy DCMGA Member Michelle Rawleigh

**'Flore Pleno,' a *Viticella* clematis**

If you are a fan of native and adapted plants, you don't have to miss the Clematis band wagon! Texas is home to a few native Clematis varieties, each with its favorite environment. Here are four that are less finicky for our gardens in Denton County:

- *Clematis texensis*, the truly Texas native known as Scarlet Clematis
- *Clematis pitcheri*, a delicate little recurved beauty
- *Clematis drummondii*, or old man's beard
- *Clematis terniflora*, sweet autumn clematis, a late summer and fall delight.

## Clematis (Cont.)

Texas Clematis or Scarlet Clematis (*Clematis texensis*) grows naturally only on the Edwards Plateau along streams, shady limestone ledges, and rich bottomlands. Texas Clematis is named for its small, bright red, urn-shaped flowers with sepals, not petals, that curve backward like a 1960s girl group hairstyle. The sepals are somewhat leathery, giving another common name – Texas Leatherflower. This Clematis, like all others, prefers a somewhat shady place for its roots, in well-drained soil, but partial sun for the foliage and flowers. It is heat tolerant and somewhat drought tolerant (Edwards Plateau, people!); however, appealing to those of us who have lost plants to cold weather recently, Scarlet Clematis is cold tolerant to Zone 5! It is uncommon even in its native areas and is rare to find being cultivated by growers, but it is often used as a parent in some hybrids, particularly 'Duchess of Albany,' 'Etoile Rose,' and 'Princess of Wales' – hybrids which are more commonly available from growers. You might find other good hybrids as well, including 'Gravetye Beauty,' 'Trevor Lawrence,' and the tulip-like 'Princess Diana.' All of these darlings will grow up to nine feet, giving you plenty of red to rose-pink blooms in the summer. Texas/Scarlet Clematis is deciduous and will need pruning – a confusing process that I will de-mystify in just a bit.

Pitcher Clematis (*Clematis pitcheri* or *C. filifera*) also displays the recurved sepals but in purple shades. It is a delicate vine that grows in moist woods, along forest margins and stream banks throughout the eastern half of Texas. The cute little urn-shaped flowers appear from June through August, followed by fruits with silky tails! These are also very cold hardy (Zone 5), but be aware that their herbaceous stems will die back in the winter with new growth appearing the next spring. The summertime blooms are usually purple but can range to dark red on vines that can reach eight to fifteen feet long. It is adaptable to many soil types, but really likes moist conditions, so adding compost to clay or sandy soils will help with moisture retention and drainage. Plant Pitcher Clematis in full morning sun to all-day partial shade. It is a low to medium water user, preferring regular watering, but similar to other natives, it can tolerate occasional dry periods. Butterflies and bees love Pitcher Clematis, so it is an interesting addition to pollinator gardens!



Photo Courtesy DCMGA Member Karen Gibson

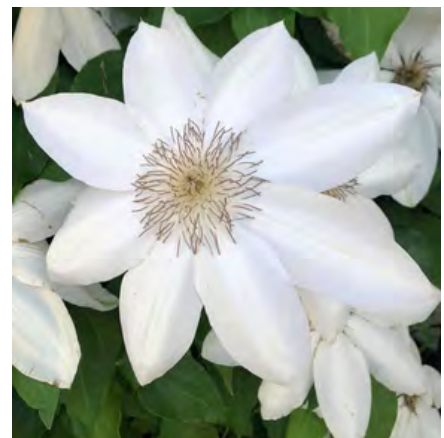


Photo Courtesy DCMGA Member Janie Cindric

## Clematis (Cont.)

*Texas Gardener* magazine calls Desert Clematis vine (*Clematis drummondii*) a 'surefire success' coming from Central and South Texas. Also known as Old Man's Beard or Love-in-a-mist, Desert Clematis has twining vines from fifteen to twenty-five feet. A monoecious plant, Desert Clematis has male flowers that look like tiny sea anemones and female flowers that produce elongated styles with silky hairs that look like wind-blown cotton candy. This perennial is drought-tolerant and freeze resistant. Place it carefully, though, as it produces copious seeds and consequently can get aggressive in the garden, spreading rapidly.

Lastly, there is a sweet-smelling clematis that blooms at the end of summer and into fall. The aptly-named Sweet Autumn Clematis (*Clematis terniflora*) is a lovely spreading vine with tiny white blooms, small green leaves, and a sweet vanilla scent that will perfume your yard. It provides nectar for butterflies and bees. It is a vigorous, fast-growing deciduous vine best placed in full morning sun to partial shade. It is also a low to medium-water user and adapts to well-draining soils. Cut Sweet Autumn Clematis back severely after bloom to keep it from taking over your garden. In very cold weather, it will die back to the ground, but reappear in the spring. 'Sweet Summer Love' is a cranberry-violet hybrid of Sweet Autumn Clematis, with a cherry-vanilla fragrance. What a delicious addition to your late summer or fall garden!

A consolation for you big-flowered-clematis-lovers deciding to grow the smaller-flowered native vines is that the small-flowered species may produce an abundance of blooms compared to the larger-flowered vines. They can also be more easily managed to climb on structures or intertwine with shrubs without threatening the viability of those supports.

Can you grow clematis in Denton County? YES! Should you? YES! If you remember the Master Gardener mantra of "Right Plant, Right Place." Choose wisely and enjoy this most elegant blooming vine in your garden!

Next month I'll cover **Pruning and Feeding your Clematis.**

\**Bedknobs and Broomsticks* fans will know to what I refer. All others, watch this movie – it's a classic! Angela Lansbury to her young visitor from the slums of London, telling him to close his mouth when he was astounded by something he saw.

### Resources

Texas A&M AgriLife, Aggie Horticulture

"Pitcher Clematis"

<https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/ornamentals/nativeshrubs/tecomastans.htm>

"Scarlet Clematis, Texas Clematis, Leatherflower, Texas Leatherflower, Pipe-vine"

<https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/ornamentals/nativeshrubs/anisacanthusquadrifid.htm>



## Clematis (Cont.)

### Resources (Cont.)

*Texas Master Gardener, Randall County Master Gardener Association, "Popular Vines"*

<https://txmg.org/randall/staying-connected/gardening-with-the-masters/gardening-tips-2/popular-vines/>

*Texas Gardener, "A Texan's Guide to Clematis"*

<https://www.texasgardener.com/a-texans-guide-to-clematis/>

*Texas SmartScape, "Sweet Autumn Clematis" and "Pitcher Clematis"*

<http://www.txsmartscape.com/plant-search/plant-details.php?id=910>

<http://www.txsmartscape.com/plant-search/plant-details.php?id=909>

*Neil Sperry's Gardens, "Will clematis grow well here in Texas? We grew it up North."*

<https://neilsperry.com/faq/will-clematis-grow-well-here-in-texas-we-grew-it-up-north-10311/>

*American Horticultural Society, "Clematis with American Roots"*

[https://ahsgardening.org/wp-content/pdfs/Clematis\\_TAG\\_JA14.pdf](https://ahsgardening.org/wp-content/pdfs/Clematis_TAG_JA14.pdf)

*Horticulture, The Art & Science of Smart Gardening Magazine, January/February 2023, Volume 120, Number 1, pp. 26-31*

*An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Clematis, by Mary Toomey and Everett Leeds, Timber Press, September 15, 2001*

To download Richard Hawke's clematis rating chart visit this site:

<https://www.finegardening.com/article/clematis-trials-at-the-chicago-botanic-garden>

For a PDF of the trial results: [https://images.taunton.com/downloads/finegardening/clematis-trial-results-from-Fine-Gardening.pdf?](https://images.taunton.com/downloads/finegardening/clematis-trial-results-from-Fine-Gardening.pdf?_gl=1*uqbaax*_gcl_au*MTUwNTY1NTMwNS4xNjgoNDQ2OTAz)

[\\_gl=1\\*uqbaax\\*\\_gcl\\_au\\*MTUwNTY1NTMwNS4xNjgoNDQ2OTAz](https://images.taunton.com/downloads/finegardening/clematis-trial-results-from-Fine-Gardening.pdf?_gl=1*uqbaax*_gcl_au*MTUwNTY1NTMwNS4xNjgoNDQ2OTAz)



**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>

*You're Invited*

July 2023, Monthly Meeting & Program  
"Texas Superstar® Plants"



Denton County Master Gardener Beverly Duncan will help you learn about the many Texas Superstar® plants tested and selected for superstar performance in Texas.

July 12, 2023, 10 am  
Global Spheres Center  
7801 S Interstate 35E, Corinth, TX 76210

## The Frustrated Gardener *Too Many Projects, Too Few Successes* BY MARTHA CANTRELL

I've heard that gardening is the new Prozac: scientists discovered that *Mycobacterium vaccae* – a type of bacteria commonly found in soil – acts like Prozac, stimulating serotonin in the brain. Known to lighten your mood, and increase life satisfaction and psychological well-being. Gardening also offers purpose and a sense of accomplishment. So why don't I feel any of those things when I come in from a long, hot day covered in dirt, bug bites, and plant debris?

The reason is simple. I have too many projects started, too many big ideas, and too many directions to go at once. I'm overwhelmed and don't know where to start. Also, I tend to over-engineer things. My husband thinks I should have two slogans tattooed on me for all to see. First – If it's worth doing, it's worth overdoing. Second – why buy something for \$5 when you can build it for \$25?

A wise Denton County Master Gardener told me to start only one project at a time. Complete that one and THEN start the next one. It sounds so easy and logical and, being a degreed engineer, it should be very doable for me. But I also have ADHD, which makes focusing ... squirrel! ... sometimes difficult for me. Another part of the problem is that, by being a Master Gardener Intern, I see amazing gardens full of wonderful ideas and successes. I want all of them in my small suburban yard.

Like 'they' always say, the best way to solve a problem is to admit you have one, so here goes. "Hello. My name is Martha, and I am an overachieving, overwhelmed, always starting and never finishing gardener."

I wrote this article for other frustrated gardeners for two reasons. First, you are not alone in your struggles. And second, and most importantly, there is a light at the end of the tunnel! My mentors and Master Gardener Veterans tell me that ALL gardeners go through this in the beginning. I look at their gardens in awe and can't imagine they began like me.

To expound on my first reason, I will embarrass myself and show you a FEW of my project ideas. Some I haven't even started, yet all the supplies lie forlorn and, in some cases, dying, waiting for me to trip over them or mow over them. Some are works in progress but lacking big pieces. The saddest, though, are the ones I finished without doing proper research, leaving disaster and death in my wake.

### *Projects Not Started*

My biggest unstarted project would have to be my raised beds. I wanted to grow many beautiful vegetables, fruits, and herbs. Instead of doing it in the logical order that I knew, starting with only a few plants, I did all the steps in the wrong order, leaving piles of debris scattered everywhere and plants literally dying to get in.



## The Frustrated Gardener (Cont.)



**Lost little seedlings**

Photos Courtesy DCMGA Member Martha Cantrell



**Lumber collected for future raised beds**



**Bertram, a thornless Blackberry, awaits his own raised bed home**

Another example of a project yearning to be started, but sadly waiting, is my rainwater capturing system. I noticed online that one of the local water districts was doing a ZOOM demo on how to build your own rainwater capturing system. I watched it and immediately HAD to have one. I searched until I amazingly found three brand new, food-grade barrels that a woman was giving away because her husband never got around to building HIS system. Ah, a kindred spirit. So, a friend of mine with a truck went and picked up these gorgeous giant blue beauties and brought them home to Mama. I was so excited I could hardly sleep that night, with all my ideas and designs and irrigation plans playing chase in my head. I had no idea how to hook them up, but I knew I could come up with a complicated system with pumps and hoses and pipes and other magical mechanical things I knew must exist. I had grand plans to have my beautiful system irrigate all of my raised beds and containers and the pollinator garden I was going to build across my back fence. The picture below shows how I am using my precious rainwater-capturing blue beauties. I wonder if they are as embarrassed for me as I am for them.



### *Started But Far from Finished Project*

I'm not even sure if there are words strong enough to describe the horror show that I must face every time I look into my backyard. It's like bumping into Jason, Mike Myers, Freddy Krueger, and my high school English teacher every time I walk out the backdoor. I keep the shutters closed on the beautiful bay window in the bedroom because it faces this junkyard mimic.

## The Frustrated Gardener (Cont.)

This grand idea first entered my crazy, overactive brain when I heard about the plight of our beautiful soon-to-be-endangered Monarch Butterfly. These gorgeous creatures used to be a common sight, to me symbolizing summertime and pretty flowers in bloom. Now their numbers are plunging towards extinction due to the use of pesticides, herbicides that kill the host plants (milkweed), and many other things we selfish humans continue to unleash on our beautiful planet cohabitants.

To save the Monarchs, I decided to tear up the back half of our suburban backyard and build a 40' wide (the full width of our lot), 6' deep pollinator garden. Nothing's too big to save such a cherished national resource, right? But it IS too big of a project to start without a detailed plan and a REALISTIC timeline attached to it, especially for a person like me, who gets distracted by a butterfly floating by on the breeze.

As a Master Gardener suggested, I spray painted in the grass the outline I had drawn up in my whirling dervish head, most likely between the hours of 2 and 4 a.m., when I come up with all my best, most complicated ideas. This spray-painted outline was there to help me decide if this was the design I wanted, allowing me to live with it for a few days.

While I was supposed to be 'living with' my new design, I began buying plants, putting Milkweed seeds in the fridge for their months' long cold stratification, and starting over a hundred and fifty seeds indoors in my newly self-designed, over-engineered, home-built seed germination center. I was so excited when the first seedlings poked their heads out in their biodegradable pots, I didn't realize I had no place to put them when they were ready.

As you might imagine, that white line in the grass, which signified the seedlings', the newly acquired potted plants', the Monarchs' and hummingbirds' future paradise, was mown over so many times that it became only a partial memory.



**The Pollinator garden started as a dream  
but soon became a horrible nightmare**



## The Frustrated Gardener (Cont.)

Pictured is the horrible state this pollinator Shangri-La is in currently, as well as some of the few seedlings and plants that have survived in their tiny little 'temporary' homes.



**The Monarch butterfly's favorite gourmet treat, Milkweed, should be in the imagined pollinator garden feeding hungry caterpillars**



**Twin rescues who have been waiting almost 2 years for their forever home for pollinators**

### *Finished Project Without Proper Research*

I'm not even sure if there are words strong enough to describe the horror show that I must face every time I look into my backyard. It's like bumping into Jason, Mike Myers, Freddy Krueger, and my high school English teacher every time I walk out the backdoor. I keep the shutters closed on the beautiful bay window in the bedroom because it faces this junkyard mimic.

When we moved into our newly constructed home, the builders had put clumps of cheap ornamental grass, 39 large plants to be exact, down the length of our very long fence line. It looked to me like a long condominium complex for snakes, rats, and other undesirables. To prove my point, one afternoon as my sweet Daisy and I were walking along, grumbling about the stinginess of this 'high-end' builder, I heard a rustling in the nesting grounds of the unknown. I peeked in and found a large snake eating a beautiful, shiny blue egg that contained an almost mature chick inside. Being the bird lover, and lover of all animals for that matter, except maybe baby bird-eating snakes, that was all the evidence I needed to justify the over-the-top labor and expense of yanking out those ugly plants.

Gaura is a gorgeous perennial with tall, sweet little airy-looking flowers that give the appearance of butterflies floating in the garden. The flowers are held at the end of long wand-like stems that sway in the breeze, giving it the common name Wand Flower. It is a Texas



## The Frustrated Gardener (Cont.)

native that tolerates our extremely hot summers, severe droughts, and blooms from early spring into fall. Sounds perfect, right? So I went to purchase 50+ Gaura plants to fill in where the ornamental grass had been expelled. I ran into the problem of finding so many of the same bloom and stem color, but I assumed (very bad idea) that even if the blooms were different colors, their characteristics would be the same. After everything I have learned in the Master Gardener Internship Program, I'm embarrassed by my bad assumptions, and hope, if those veterans who mentored me are reading this, that they aren't too disappointed in their student.

I planted the different varieties with as much symmetry as I could. The first year they were getting acclimated to their new home, so their floral show was a little lackluster. In the spring



**Beautiful shot of the Gaura (above) before it fought with the dripline and lost (below)**



of their second year, they began to put on quite a performance, with an incredible display of hundreds of dancing blooms in various wattages of bright pink. Neighbors stopped their cars and wanted to know what this stunning beauty was. I was so proud of my plan and how well it turned out.

But then, yes ... here comes the sad part of this happy tale, I started to notice that most of them, three out of every four, to put a finer point on it, started to slow their blooming show. The leaves started to look dull and then, gasp, the sweet little butterfly flowers started to turn black and fall off. I tried everything I could to save them, but nothing worked. By the time I learned it was a fungus, they were too far gone. The Ripley's Believe-It-Or-Not part was that every fourth one was doing ok. I, once again, spent many a sleepless night worrying over this odd conundrum until I slapped

myself in the forehead, realizing that the different varieties have different reactions to being watered/overwatered. I didn't know that allowing our irrigation system to water them was a death sentence for these desert-dwelling drought-loving beauties.

The result is a very sad, painful example of what can happen when you don't do your research BEFORE a project of this magnitude.

## The Frustrated Gardener (Cont.)

### *Successes*

I HAVE had successes, some small, but still worth celebrating. I planted lots of bulbs in the winter that came up with a spectacular show of early blooms and fragrances that, if you stood in the middle of my flowerbed blindfolded, you would think you were at a perfume counter. I rescued quite a few plants from the Big Box stores' shelves of death and 99% of them are happy and healthy in their new home at my house.

I built two separate growing locations in my home. The one in my kitchen is for seed starting where I successfully grew hundreds of veggie & flower seedlings. I've harvested 50+ tomatoes from 5 of these homegrown test tube babies (my first ever successfully grown full-sized tomatoes) and was able to share beautiful new plants with friends.



**Beautiful Coneflowers**



**My First-ever homegrown full-size Tomatoes**



The second location, in my garage, is an over-engineered setup for overwintering my more delicate plants and not one of them died in the many freezes and ice storms North Texas is known for. One especially important plant to me, Leonard my Meyer's Lemon (he's my favorite, but don't tell the others!), even bloomed in my grow light jungle. He is now covered in lemons, 47 to be exact, and will give me fresh lemons in November/December, being my first-ever fruit crop.

There are more successes I need to focus on when I look at all I mentioned before and feel like giving up. And there lies the purpose of this embarrassing, soul-exposing, hide-under-the-bed article. I am willing to show all my ugliness to the public to help other frustrated gardeners see the two things I mentioned at the beginning.

You've now seen in real life, or death as it may be, how overcommitting, under planning, jumping steps, skipping research, and biting off more than even a T-Rex could chew, can ruin

## The Frustrated Gardener (Cont.)

everything you dream of achieving. And you've also seen that you are not the only one who has ever created such a mess. You are not alone. There are amazing resources available, for free no less, where people would love to help you make beauty out of your stumbles. Two places, in particular, are the Denton County Master Gardener website and their Facebook page. There you will find oodles of fantastic information and help with ALL your gardening troubles and so much more. Second, and most importantly, everything is fixable! If you can take a deep breath and know that there is a bright beautiful light at the end of this scary, dark tunnel, you will be taking the first step to REALLY enjoying gardening.



**My sweet-smelling, fast-growing Leonard is covered in 47 shiny, beautiful, green baby Meyer's lemons**

The road to my garden's recovery depends on me. Here is my plan to conquer this mess:

- Create a large, long-range, overall view of everything needed to make my beautiful oasis a reality.
- Make a list of all the projects that need to be started, completed, or redone. Yes, the list will be long and disconcerting, but I MUST see what I have ahead of me.
- Prioritize each project by importance. I'm going about this by putting the projects that have money invested in or plants dying for into the first slot.
- Once I have my complete list in order, I will start to divide and conquer. I'll break down each part into smaller pieces that I can finish in 2-4 hours so my ADHA doesn't kick in. By breaking it up into smaller, achievable pieces, I will feel a small sense of accomplishment each time I finish one.
- I will make sure AHEAD of time I have ALL the tools and supplies I need to complete each small piece of this giant, overwhelming mess.

If I stick to what seems like a very simple plan and keep my focus on the 'smaller pieces' list, I might start to see a dim light at the end of this very dark tunnel. I was once tested for patience and found to be negative, so I MUST look at the very small victories to win this war. Using the adage about eating an elephant, which I've never understood – I mean who would want to eat an elephant? They look like they'd be very tough and one might break a tooth – take it one bite at a time. Once you finally have your oasis, whether it takes a week, a month, or a year, the blood, sweat, and tears will be mightily worth it.





# OFF WITH THEIR HEADS!

Deadhead blooming plants in July to get more flowers.



## DEADHEADING

Removing spent flowers from annual and perennial blooming plants in July will encourage them to rebloom. The plants spend their energy producing new flowers rather than seeds.

## PINCHING

Flowering plants with thin, soft stems can be deadheaded by pinching off the spent blooms between your fingers with your fingernails. Ex: Geraniums and Petunias



## PRUNING

Remove spent blooms on larger perennials with thicker stems using pruners. Cut the stem just above new buds on the stalk. If all blooms are spent, cut the stalk to the ground. Ex Purple Coneflower, Shasta Daisy, Black-Eye Susan



## SHEARING

Some blooming plants benefit from removing all the spent flowers and some foliage at one time. This makes them bushier and rebloom several times. Cut 1/3 to 1/2 of the entire plant. Ex: Texas Lantana, Autumn Sage, Coreopsis



## TIPS

- Leave developing buds
- Look below faded flowers for new buds; cut-off just above the bud
- Remove spent blooms from self-seeders to limit spreading. Ex: Dianthus, Calendula, Hollyhock
- Remove and discard diseased foliage



Source: Enjoy More Flowers in Your Garden by Deadheading Regularly. (n.d.). SDSU Extension. <https://extension.sdstate.edu/enjoy-more-flowers-your-garden-deadheading-regularly>

## Nature In Action

BY MELISSA MIGIS

On June 9th, I walked out to my driveway where I witnessed nature at its finest. A non-venomous speckled king snake (my new favorite garden friend!) eating a poisonous copperhead. The copperhead was lifeless and the king snake took its sweet time eating its prey.

I live in Shady Shores and have had the great pleasure of seeing many wonders of nature in my yard. I often say Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom is here in my yard. If we would all just slow down and be still in our gardens, we would all be amazed at what can be seen.



## Caterpillars: Friends or Foes?

BY MELISSA MIGIS

I have so much fun watching the different caterpillars in my garden. This year, I had beautiful Swallowtail and Gulf Fritillary caterpillars. I also had the dreaded Tobacco and Tomato hornworm or caterpillar.

I had the pleasure to share these beautiful caterpillars with a dear friend's grandkids several days each week. Her grandkids love to visit because when they are here they get to see the caterpillars and pick tomatoes. This brings me great joy and hopefully inspires a future generation of gardeners.

During our visits, we have discussions about the life cycle of the caterpillar and the important role adult butterflies and moths have in pollinating our plants. We talk about the host plants and how most caterpillars only feed on

one host plant. The butterfly and moth larvae devour the host plants, but the plants grow back quickly to continue to feed the next generation of caterpillars. Once the life cycle is complete, the adult butterflies emerge. They feed on flowering nectar plants, rotting fruit, sap, and animal waste. Each adult butterfly and moth has a plant or variety of plants they feed on. All this information has led to more questions from the inquisitive kids. They have watched additional videos to do more research about our caterpillar friends!

[Butterfly Larval Host Plant List — York County Master Gardener Program — Penn State Extension \(psu.edu\)](#)

The first caterpillars to emerge in my garden were the Swallowtail Caterpillars. I watched throughout the day as more arrived to feast on my fennel and parsley. They spent many days dining in my garden, and then disappeared! Later, I saw them fluttering about my garden yet again. Just when I think they are gone, I find seven more on my bronze leaf fennel. A happy surprise. The kids were so excited, and I was too! A fun fact I learned in researching these beautiful caterpillars is that when the caterpillar feels threatened, they have small orange horns called osmeterium that pop out of the top of their heads. The horn looks like a snake's tongue and releases a foul-smelling chemical repellent. The kids loved watching the Swallowtail's defense mechanism in action.



*Photos Courtesy DCMGA Member Melissa Migis*

### Kids looking at Swallowtail caterpillars on Fennel



## Caterpillars: Friends or Foes? (Cont.)



**Swallowtail caterpillar showing its osmeterium**



**Swallowtails at night under black light**



**Swallowtail caterpillar on parsley at night**

My garden's next visitors were the nasty Tobacco and Tomato hornworm. These are the destructive larva of the Hawk and Sphinx Moths. At first glance, a Hawk Moth can be confused for a hummingbird. These caterpillars are most often found in vegetable gardens and can grow to over 6 inches in length. They can wreak havoc on your tomato plants in a single day's time. A mature Tomato hornworm has a white "V" shaped marking on its body with a black horn on its tail, whereas the Tobacco hornworm has white lines on its body with a red horn on its tail. I have been doing a nightly patrol with a UV black light flashlight to find these pesky worms. This flashlight is a game changer; it makes the worms stand out, which makes pulling the worms off so much easier. With the flashlight, I was able to pull off seven in one night.

[Caterpillars 'Horn In' on Tomato Plants // Missouri Environment and Garden News Article // Integrated Pest Management, University of Missouri](#)



## Caterpillars: Friends or Foes? (Cont.)



**Tobacco hornworm on tomato plant with black light**



**Tobacco hornworm on tomato plant**

The final teachable opportunity was the recent emergence of the Gulf Fritillary caterpillar on my passion vines. There are many varieties of passion vine, which is the host plant for the Gulf Fritillary. Some passion vines bear fruit and others do not. The butterflies lay their eggs on both varieties. I watched the butterflies visit my passion vine, and within about a week, the baby caterpillars showed up and started consuming the leaves. The passion vine's leaves will be completely gone in no time but will grow back. I watched one start the metamorphosis process by going into a "J" position and morph into a chrysalis. This process takes 5 to 10 days.

[My Experience Tending to Passionfruit Vine: Inadvertently Raising Gulf Fritillary Caterpillars \(txmn.org\)](http://txmn.org)

**Recently hatched Gulf Fritillary caterpillar and one is starting the process**



**Gulf Fritillary caterpillar chrysalis**

## Caterpillars: Friends or Foes? (Cont.)



**Gulf Fritillary caterpillar on  
passion vine**



**Gulf Fritillary on purple  
coneflower**

I hope our lessons with caterpillars in the garden have inspired you to plant host and nectar plants. I have been fortunate to experience the joy and benefits of these friends and foes in my garden. I hope you also get the opportunity to share these beautiful teachable moments about caterpillars with your kids, grandkids, or neighbor children. You never know where this new information will take them. Have fun in the garden!

### *Other resources:*

*Texas A&M AgriLife, Aggie Horticulture, "Butterfly Garden Brochure"*

<https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/travis/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/EAGF-2015-Butterfly-Garden-Brochure.pdf>

*Texas Master Gardener, Williamson County Master Gardeners*

*"Butterfly Host Plants"*

<https://txmg.org/williamson/files/Butterfly-host-plants.pdf>

*Clemson Cooperative Extension, Home & Garden Information Center*

*"Butterflies in the Garden"*

<https://hgic.clemson.edu/factsheet/butterflies-in-the-garden/>



## 2023 Garden Tour Recap

BY BEVERLY DUNCAN

The weather prediction was for a wet and cold Saturday, but fortunately, the rain stayed away and left us with a cool May day. Most guests and volunteers were wearing jackets.

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.

The Marketplace consisted of at least 25 vendors selling all things garden related.

We had amazing attendance, with approximately 1800 adults and 100 youth touring these four spectacular gardens. Entire families enjoyed touring and learning more about gardening in North Texas. Many Grandmothers, daughters, and granddaughters celebrated this Mother's Day weekend with us.

Educational Opportunities – Guests enjoyed listening to experts speak on landscape design, Ask a Master Gardener Booths, shade gardening, SWAT, Native Plant Society, and Texas Parks and Wildlife. 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.

Over 6,000 volunteer hours were accumulated during the year in preparation for the tour. And almost 1100 Volunteer hours on tour day alone, which contributed to the success of Tour 2023, including interns from the current class of 2023 and veterans from classes reaching back to our DCMGA beginnings!

Where do we begin describing and detailing the successes of Garden Tour 2023? Maybe we should begin with our DCMGA Mission which reads in part "to engage and educate county residents in the implementation of research-based horticultural practices that create sustainable gardens, landscapes, and communities."

Thank you to everyone that contributed to the phenomenal success of Garden Tour 2023! We report Mission Accomplished and see you next year for Garden Tour 2024 on May 11.





## 2023 Garden Tour Recap (Cont.)







*Resources & Education Opportunities  
for Master Gardeners and the Community we  
serve can be found on the Calendar at  
[Upcoming Events.](#)*

*For non-DCMGA events, check out this list of  
[Continuing Education Opportunities.](#)*

## **Know Your White-Flowering Plants Avoiding Toxic Exposure**

Poisonous hemlock has been a hot topic recently on local social media. So we are reminding our readers that in our May 2022 issue, *The Root* ran the article "Know Your White-Flowering Plants: Avoiding Toxic Exposure." The opening paragraph reads:

*There are several similar white flowers blooming in our area over the spring and summer that we should avoid when in natural areas. These include poison hemlock (*Conium maculatum*), water hemlock (*Cicuta maculata*), Queen Anne's lace (*Daucus carota*), snow-on-the-prairie (*Euphorbia marginata*, *E. bicolor*) and wild parsnip (*Pastinaca sativa*). While it is unlikely you'll run across poison hemlock on a city lot, it could pop up on a vacant lot or you might find it when out for a walk or hike. It's wise to be able to identify it. Hemlock is a deadly plant – just ask Socrates – and children, pets and livestock should be protected from it.*

To read the complete article: [May 2022 The Root](#)

Included was a handy pull-out field guide that could be printed off and carried in your vehicle when traveling or backpack when hiking. We are including that pull-out here for your convenience.

Also, our Help Desk Question of the Week is a repeat from May 2022 on identifying poisonous hemlock.

***Be Informed! Keep Safe!***

### Poison Hemlock



Delaware Department of  
Agriculture

Robert Videcki  
National Park Service

### Poison Hemlock or Water Hemlock Ingestion

Poison Control Center  
1-800-222-1222

If chewed or eaten, go  
to nearest Emergency  
Room.  
Take the plant with  
you.

### Water Hemlock



C & L Loughmiller  
Wildflower.org

Suzanne Cadwell

### Queen Anne's Lace



Joshua Mayer

### Snow-on-the-Prairie



### Wild Parsnip



Joshua Mayer



## White Blooming Wild Plants of the DFW Area

	<b>Poison Hemlock</b> <i>Conium maculatum</i>	<b>Water hemlock, aka spotted cowbane</b> <i>Cicuta maculata</i>	<b>Queen Anne's lace, aka wild carrot</b> <i>Daucus carota</i>	<b>Snow-on-the-Prairie</b> <i>Euphorbia marginata, E. bicolor</i>	<b>Wild parsnip</b> <i>Pastinaca sativa</i>
<b>Stem characteristics</b>	Stems with purple splotches	May vary in color and pattern, from solid green or purple to green with purple spots or stripes	Hairy, solid, green stems and no purple mottling	Smooth, hairless, green stems	Hairless and grooved
<b>Plant height</b>	2-10 feet tall	3-6 feet tall	2-4 feet tall	1-3 feet tall	2-5 feet tall
<b>Flower</b>	White in umbrella-shaped clusters	White in umbrella-shaped clusters	White in umbrella-shaped clusters, often has a small reddish flower in center	White in umbrella-shaped clusters	Yellow in umbrella-shaped clusters
<b>Leaves</b>	May be 6" wide and 12" long, with many oval to broadly oval leaflets opposite each other.	Small leaflets with toothed edges. Side veins of the leaves lead to notches, not to tips, at the outer leaflet margins.	Feathery leaves similar to carrots	Whorl of four or five petal-like leaves, usually yellow-green surrounding the flower cluster	Oblong leaflets. Stem leaves are alternate, with 2-5 pairs of opposite, sharply toothed leaflets
<b>Toxicity to people and animals</b>	Highly toxic; ingestion of even small amounts is fatal to humans and animals; causes muscle tremors, paralysis and death	Highly toxic; ingestion may cause convulsions, delirium, nausea, seizures and vomiting - often resulting in death	May cause skin irritation in those with sensitive skin	Somewhat toxic; sap will blister the skin and cause diarrhea if eaten	May cause skin irritation, blistering rashes and skin discoloration
<b>Habitat</b>	Dense stands in roadside ditches and stream banks	Wet areas, stream banks, pond margins, marshes	Dry fields, roadside ditches, open areas	Tight clay soils and dry streambeds	Sunny, open areas, wet or dry



#### BY HELP DESK TEAM

**Q:** I'm very concerned. I have poison hemlock growing in an area of my backyard. How do I kill it?

**A:** Wild carrot (*Daucus carota*), also known as Queen Anne's Lace, is often mistakenly identified as poison hemlock (*Conium maculatum*), and it is more likely what is growing in your backyard. Both are weeds, but the control method may be different once correctly identified.

Poison hemlock is in the same family (*Apiaceae*) as carrots, celery, parsnips, and several herbs, including parsley, cilantro, chervil, fennel, anise, dill, and caraway.

#### Poison Hemlock vs. Wild Carrot

**Stems (Fig 1):** The most distinct visible difference between poison hemlock and wild carrot is the stems. The poison hemlock's stem has purple blotches, is "hairless," and hollow. Wild carrot's stem is green (young plants), burgundy-green (mature plants), and "hairy."

**Foliage (Fig 2):** Although both species have fern-like leaves, there are some differences in the leaves. The leaves of poison hemlock are sharper in detail, up to 2 feet long, and

glossy dark green without "hairs." Wild carrot leaves are lacy or feathery, shorter (2-6 inches long), and nearly hairless to bristly-haired.

**Flowers (Fig 3):** The flowers of poison hemlock and wild carrot are more similar. Both have white flowers clustered at the end of the stem that are flat, umbrella-like.



**Scent:** When crushed, the leaves and stems of poison hemlock have an unpleasant odor, whereas the leaves and stems of wild carrot smell like carrots when crushed.

**Habitat:** Poison hemlock and wild carrot are considered invasive plants found in fields, pastures, vegetable crops, orchards, roadsides, and other disturbed places.

Wild carrot is typically found in sandy or gravelly soils, and poison hemlock prefers moist soils.

*Impact:* Of course, there's a significant difference in the effect of poison hemlock vs. wild carrot. Poison hemlock is toxic to livestock and humans through ingestion. Cases of human poisoning are relatively rare. The toxin affects the nervous system and can result in fairly rapid death in livestock that feeds on poison hemlock in fresh foliage, stored silage, or contaminated hay. The sap of poison hemlock can also cause contact dermatitis.

#### Management & Control

The management of both poison hemlock and wild carrot are similar.

- Inspect areas frequently for new infestations. Young plants of both species start as rosettes of foliage.
- Mechanical removal is preferred using a spade or trowel. Wear gloves and long sleeves to avoid skin exposure to the sap of poison hemlock. Be sure to remove the entire taproot to prevent regrowth. Discard the plant in the trash, do not compost or burn it.
- Mowing frequently before flowering begins or plowing or cultivating the area will disrupt the seed germination cycle. Bag and discard the clippings to avoid inadvertently dispersing seeds.
- Use herbicides only as a spot treatment on seedlings or small rosettes. Mechanically remove mature plants. Large infestations may be treated with herbicides containing active ingredients 2,4-D, triclopyr, or glyphosate. Fully follow label instructions about

protective clothing and treat carefully to avoid overspray. You can use an empty six ounce can (from tomato paste, for example) with both ends removed to guard against overspray.

Learn more about poison hemlock and wild carrot from the links below.

#### Sources & Resources

"Poison Hemlock," University of California Agriculture & Natural Resources  
<http://ipm.ucanr.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn74.162.html>

"Wild Carrot," University of California Agriculture & Natural Resources  
[http://ipm.ucanr.edu/PMG/WEEDS/wild\\_carrot.html](http://ipm.ucanr.edu/PMG/WEEDS/wild_carrot.html)

"The 'Don't Touch Me' Plants," Purdue University Extension  
<https://ag.purdue.edu/btny/purdueweedscience/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/The-Dont-Touch-Me-Plants.pdf>



*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 Gardeners Upcoming Events

**July  
12**

## **July 2023, Monthly Meeting & Program "Texas Superstar® Plants"**

Please join us for our Monthly Meeting and Program, "Texas Superstar® Plants." Denton County Master Gardener Beverly Duncan will help you learn about the many Texas Superstar® plants tested and selected for superstar performance in Texas. The monthly business meeting will follow the program.  
10AM-12PM @ Global Spheres Center

**August  
03**

## **Fall Vegetable Gardening**

Fall is the perfect time to grow vegetables in North Texas. Learn how to start a fall vegetable garden from Denton County Master Gardener Barbara Brown. Presented in partnership with Keep Lewisville Beautiful  
6PM-7PM Lewisville Grand Theatre

**August  
12**

## **Introduction to Permaculture**

Permaculture is a forward-thinking design system based on principles found in nature where wildlife and native plants are vital. Its purpose is to create living environments that are harmonious, sustainable, and productive, generating human yields while greatly reducing work and energy required to maintain them over time. You will learn how this works, along with essential guidelines, ethics, principles, and strategies to wrap your head and heart around this amazing land stewardship lifestyle!  
9AM-12PM Global Spheres Center

**August  
12**

## **Rainwater Collection Class**

Water is one of the most valuable assets in life. Not just because people need it to survive but also for plants, lawn trees, veggies, and wildlife. Understanding how rainwater behaves on your property will allow you to use it efficiently and experience success in your landscape. You will learn the importance of watersheds and rainwater harvesting, followed by a rain barrel set-up demonstration. Presented in partnership with Beulah Acres Agroforest.  
1PM-4PM Global Spheres Center

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.

### 2023 Board of Directors

President	Cheryl Huckabee
Vice-President - Projects	Kelli Bixler
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### 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

July 12 General Meeting & Program,  
"Texas Superstar Plants" -  
Global Spheres, Corinth

August 9 General Meeting & Program,  
"Texas Mycology: Yes, You  
Can Grow Mushrooms in  
Texas" - Global Spheres,  
Corinth

### Contact Information

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### Content

**Submission deadline for the August edition of The Root is Saturday, 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 Judy Allen 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.