MAY 2025 VOL. 8, NO. 5

Denton County Master Gardener Association

# THE ROOT

Grow With Us

Charmaine Richardson, Courtesy of Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center

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# Buds from the Board

**BY RAELINE NOBLES, PRESIDENT**

Welcome to May and the latest edition of the Denton County Master Gardener Association's *The Root*. We're excited to share exciting updates at our organization and great information for your gardens. We hope you enjoy it all and find ways to make a few of the ideas become a reality in your landscapes.

Dick Culbert, CC BY 2.0

**Mexican Mint Marigold**
**Texas Superstar® Plant**

To start, there is a new addition to the Texas Superstar® Plants list of fantastic bloomers and survivors of Texas climates and soils. Mexican Mint Marigold is a rugged beauty that withstands fairly harsh conditions and produces an abundance of yellow flowers. It's sure to be a showstopper for you as a fall bloomer that draws in the pollinators. It's a relatively compact shrub when fully developed; two to three feet in height and width, just the perfect size for a full sun spot that needs a shot of color.

*AgriLife Today* recommends planting your Mexican Mint Marigold next to Greg's Mistflower, which also blooms in late summer and fall. The color contrast between the blue Mistflower and gold Mexican Mint Marigold is quite stunning, and the licorice scent of the Marigold is wonderful if you're looking to pull in pollinators or just want a nice scent in your garden. If blue isn't your first choice, try planting your Marigold shrub near a vibrant red *Salvia greggii* (Autumn Sage).

The Mexican Mint Marigold perennial will serve you best in full sun and well-draining soil. It has moderate water needs, few pests, and prolific blooms. This plant might be the perfect Mother's Day gift for mom or your favorite friend, but don't forget to get yourself one (or three)! Learn more here.

Speaking of Mother's Day, if you're in the Denton County area on Mother's Day weekend, give your Mom, friends, and family a special treat by taking them to our annual Garden Tour on Saturday, May 10. You'll find tour and ticket information in this month's edition and on our website: https://www.dcmga.com/. We're going to the 21st century, folks. All tickets are online with educational information at each tour location; you can take them home on your phone.

# Buds from the Board (Cont.)

The four homes on tour this year will be a treat you and your family will not forget; full of ideas, beautiful landscapes, yard art, and information you can apply to your garden. The cherry on top is a free tour of the largest community garden in the United States, right in the middle of Denton, Texas. Shiloh Field Community Garden is a true dream with a mission. Not only is it beautiful, but it also helps stock food banks and shelters throughout our county and beyond. We hope to see you at our Garden Tour to enjoy the beauty, learn new things, and meet new friends. Come see us! And thank you for joining us this month with *The Root.*

~ Raeline

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

## ***What to Plant in May***

- **All warm-season grasses, flowers, and tropicals**
- **Extra dill, fennel, and rue for Swallowtail caterpillars**
- **Plant early in the month to avoid the heat that is coming**
- **Start an herb garden**
- **Fertilize fruit trees over the whole root zone with a 2" layer of compost or 21-0-0**
- **Climbing roses can be pruned after their first bloom**
- **Start thinking about a fall garden**

**For more monthly tips:**
**https://www.dcmga.com/maintain-and-solve-problems/maintain/monthly-gardening-tips/**

# The 2025 Garden Tour is Almost Here!

## *Denton and Oak Point = Four Gardens + One Community Garden*

## *May 10, 2025*

***Enjoy seasonal creeks, Texas native plants, rain gardens, water conservation & management, shade gardening, raised vegetable beds, fruit trees, berries & grapes, cacti & succulents, fragrant roses, community garden, Hügelkultur, chickens, high tunnels, perennials & annuals, pollinator gardens. Our Annual Garden Tour has it all. Tickets are available now on dcmga.com.***

***New this year! Keep an eye out for Digging Deeper posters around the gardens. They share quick garden tips and have QR codes linking to detailed articles you can read on the spot or save for later. Plus, enjoy hands-on activities hosted by Denton County Master Gardeners in each garden.***

### *Garden Tapestry*

**This is a northeast Denton home garden with modest proportions. It includes natives and ornamentals, sun and shade, perennials and annuals. Highlights include the butterfly and bee pollinator garden, shade garden, and cloistered back garden. This is managed by one person with very basic tools. Plants are chosen for texture, color, and beauty.**

**The redbud tree is the traditional tree of Texas Woman's University where the homeowners have deep ties. It happily grows in the yard and even produces some volunteers. You might see a little green heart around the garden, which is a redbud baby. There are various herbs and annuals that dot the landscape and provide food and interest throughout the garden.**

**What to Learn Here: Look for our Digging Deeper signs on this property to find out more about lasagna gardening, composting, and Hügelkultur.**

Photos: Lea Sage Watson, CC BY-NC-SA 4.0, Denton County MGA

# The 2025 Garden Tour Preview (Cont.)

## *Secluded Sanctuary*

Secluded Sanctuary provides an appreciative respite to nature in a suburban neighborhood environment. From the abundance of shady areas to the extensive use of beautiful Texas native plants, the diversity of colorful, fragrant roses, and the enjoyment of growing at home vegetables, Secluded Sanctuary offers exemplary demonstrations that give encouragement to both the novice and discriminating gardener.

Part of this landscape is a beautiful native groundcover, horseherb. Once established, it spreads freely with small yellow flowers. Rabbits enjoy the tender green leaves. Showy in the spring and fall, it comes back every year.

Enjoy many flowers and wildflowers in masses, especially spiderworts and larkspur. They add a colorful start to spring and the warm seasons, also attracting pollinators and birds.

What To Learn Here: Digging Deeper signs will help you learn all about rose care, water and erosion control methods, and raised bed gardening.

## *Windblown Wildscape*

Photos: Lea Sage Watson, CC BY-NC-SA 4.0, Denton County MGA

Windblown Wildscape is a one-acre shaded garden that slopes gently down to a seasonal creek which drains to Lewisville Lake. The property features curving plant beds full of groundcover and native plants, raised vegetable beds, a rain garden, fruit trees, and sunny plantings close to the house. The development of this garden began 9 years ago. It was originally sloping eroded dirt, exposed tree roots, sparse grass, and thick with greenbrier and poison ivy.

# 2025 Garden Tour Preview (Cont.)

After a huge windstorm in 2024, downed trees and limbs changed part of this landscape from shade to sun, requiring the owners to rework their once shade-loving planting to more sun-tolerant plants. They repurposed much of the wood, building bench seating, pot stands, stair handrails, vine support, and a stump sculpture. Their favorite plants are the large agaves with their tropical boldness and blue color. The papyrus is tall and striking in the rain garden. There are more than 10 varieties of groundcover that blanket the landscape and provide year-round interest.

What to Learn Here: Rain gardens, Hügelkultur (beginning steps), water conservation with rain barrels and shade gardening are the focus of Digging Deeper education at this site.

## *Alice in Cactusland*

Alice in Cactusland is a whimsical garden that blends art with nature, featuring a unique collection of cacti and succulents. Visitors will explore creative solutions to drainage and space issues while enjoying a delightful mix of past and present, all within an enchanting artistic setting.

People in the community drive by to see the spectacular show put on by the Peggy Martin roses. Another gorgeous rose is the Zephrine Drouhin. It is at least 20 years old and has moved with the owners from several residences. It is huge and represents many special family memories. There are 4-5 varieties of fig trees in the orchard that supply an abundant crop each year.

It has been a "trial and error" effort. Just when a garden bed was ready, workers would begin to install a water line. Then, out of nowhere, Mother Nature would send a flood and the workers would have to adapt with a very different design. Nothing is as it was during their first few years, which is how a garden grows!

# 2025 Garden Tour Preview (Cont.)

What to Learn Here: Digging Deeper signs here will provide information on succulent propagation, drainage solutions, and the therapeutic benefits of gardening.

## *Shiloh Field Community Garden*

Shiloh Field is the nation's largest community garden, producing over 60,000 pounds of food annually for local food banks with a strong emphasis on sustainability.

What to Learn Here: Through Digging Deeper, Shiloh Field Community Garden will provide education on beekeeping, how to build a raised bed, the best vegetable varieties for North Texas (list will be provided), and seed propagation.

Photo: Denton County MGA

DIGGING DEEPER

## *Learning Opportunities at the Tour*

- Building a Raised Bed
- Composting
- Control Water & Erosion
- Hügelkultur Advantages
- Hügelkultur Construction
- Lasagna Gardening
- Rain Barrels
- Rain Gardens
- Raised Bed Gardening
- Roses
- Seed Propagation
- Shade Gardening
- Soil Drainage Issues
- Succulents
- Texas Tough Veggies
- Therapeutic Gardening

# What Creatures are These: Squash Pests

BY JANICE YODER-SMITH

When our squash plants spread out and set blooms, unwanted six-legged visitors may appear. We might not initially see the small, disguised, or hidden suspects, but we will see evidence that they are around.

## *Squash Bugs*

Slower-than-expected growth, tiny spots on leaves or fruit, or wilting leaves are all signs that *Anasa tristis*, commonly known as the squash bug, is present. Those winged, 5/8-inch, grayish-brown, shield-shaped adults are well-camouflaged in mulch, but their color stands out against the green leaves and various colors of cucurbits, such as squash, pumpkins, and gourds. Because they release a foul odor when crushed, squash bugs are sometimes confused with stink bugs.

Squash bugs are insects that are truly bugs because of their mouthparts and reproductive cycles. They have sucking mouthparts that resemble short straws used to penetrate the surfaces of leaves. When squash bugs move to a new location, the damaged parts of the leaves turn yellow and eventually brown. Injuries from a single squash bug would be unlikely to kill a plant. However, many squash bugs are usually present if one has been observed on a plant.

Michael Zelun Lee, CC BY-NC 4.0

**Adult Squash Bug**

The word "bug" refers to a wide range of insects, including spiders, beetles, and butterflies, as well as other creatures that are not typically associated with these groups. True bugs are insects that undergo incomplete metamorphosis, meaning they hatch from their eggs as smaller, often differently-colored wingless versions of adults. Each stage of growth and development into an adult is called an instar, and the immature bugs are referred to as nymphs. Squash bugs are true bugs that have five instar stages.

Squash bugs lay 1/16" copper to bronze-colored, oval eggs in diamond-shaped patterns, which are usually observed on the undersides of leaves. The eggs hatch into nymphs within about a week to two weeks. The tiny first-instar squash bug nymphs have green bodies with contrasting dark heads. The four subsequent instars grow larger and change colors to resemble adults more closely. Mature squash bugs arise 4-6 weeks after the first nymphs appear. In our north-central Texas area, we typically observe nymphs in late May and adults in June and July. The adults lay eggs through August. Whether the nymphs produced in August and September become adults depends on whether we get freezing weather that kills them.

# Squash Pests (Cont.)



Squash Bug Eggs



Squash Bug Nymphs

Adults survive freezes by burrowing under debris for the winter. Removing the entire squash plant, along with its associated debris, and destroying it at the end of the season reduces the number of adults that survive the winter. Moving next year's squash patch as far as possible from this year's patch reduces the number of adults that succeed in finding our new crop.

## *Squash Vine Borers*

Another insect that can attack our squash plants is the squash vine borer, *Melittia cucurbitae*, which was reclassified as *Eichlinia cucurbitae* in 2020. Squash vine borers are insects that undergo complete metamorphosis. Adults lay eggs that hatch into larvae. Larvae morph into pupae, which then change into adults. Individual insects at one stage bear little or no resemblance to the next stage.



Adult Squash Vine Borer

Adult *Eichlinia curcubitae* are moths. At a distance, they resemble a wasp more than a moth. They are about an inch long, with a slightly longer wingspan.

Their wings appear dark when folded against their orange-red, sometimes gray, bodies. When flying, the greenish-black forewings and clear hindwings are apparent. Their bodies have black spots at the top of each segment. Their legs are orange with black and white stripes. These moths are daylight flyers that don't fly in straight paths. They zig-zag as they move between plants. At dusk, they settle on squash leaves and remain there until dawn.

# Squash Pests (Cont.)

Females lay eggs individually near stem bases or near soil touching branches of squash plants. A single dark red 1mm egg is hard to spot, which increases the chances that more eggs will survive to become larvae in 7-10 days. The cream-colored, dark-headed emerging larvae have three pairs of legs and five pairs of prolegs and are less than an inch long. They immediately start boring into the plant stem feeding on vascular tissues inside the stem. The injured tissues no longer provide the rest of the plant with nutrients or water. The stem becomes soft; the plant wilts. The open stem injury allows disease-causing organisms to infect the plants. If the plant survives long enough, the larvae grow for 4-6 weeks before emerging and dropping into the soil, where they may live through the winter or pupate. The pupae are found within silk cocoons located within the top two inches of soil. The pupae open and release adults in May.

## *Pest Control*

How can gardeners save squash crops from squash bugs and squash vine borers? We can use integrated pest management (IPM). We can completely remove and destroy our spent squash vines. We cannot compost them because squash vine borer larvae and adult squash bugs may survive under our piles. We can relocate our squash beds next year.

Summerwalks, CCBY-NC-4.0

**Adult Squash Vine Borer laying eggs on a squash plant stem.**

Row covers with no gaps may prevent vine borer moths from laying eggs, but they block pollination. They do nothing to control squash bugs.

Frequent inspection of the plants is extremely helpful. We cannot assume any wilt observed is due to heat or lack of water. We look for the insects. We can remove and destroy any adult squash pests as soon as they are spotted. If we don't want to smell the stench of squashed bugs, we can drown them in soapy water instead of crushing them. The best times to pick off the vine borer moths are dawn and dusk. If we observe squash bug eggs on leaves, we can remove them or the affected leaves.

Wrapping the lower parts of squash stems in foil or cheesecloth limits the ability of the squash vine borer larva to penetrate the stem. Raising squash vine runners off the ground using trellises also reduces their risk of injuring the plants. When gardeners notice holes surrounded by something that looks like sawdust in squash stems, they can use a sharp knife to make a slit in the affected stem section. Next, remove and destroy the larvae. Help the surgical wound heal by pulling the wound closed with a wrap of cheesecloth and burying the stem in the soil to promote new growth.

# Squash Pests (Cont.)

If space allows, we can use trap plants started a few weeks earlier and located far from our desired crop. Squash bugs and squash vine borers prefer blue Hubbard squash. We can use companion plants, such as dill, parsley, oregano, marigolds, or nasturtiums, around our squash plants. These benefit us in three ways: attracting pollinators, attracting squash bug predators, or serving as trap crops themselves.

Gardeners must be cautious when using insecticides, especially on food crops. How long does the insecticide remain active on the plant or in the soil? How will it impact beneficial insects? Is it better to spray the ground and stems or the leaves? Research potential products by carefully reading the product labels and safety data sheets (SDS). If you choose to use an insecticide, follow the directions carefully. Wind speed, temperature, and predicted rainfall are important factors. The Texas A&M University AgriLife Extension Service offers a wealth of online resources on gardening and insect control.

## *Sources and Resources*


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# In The Veggie Patch: Cherry and Grape Tomatoes

BY MARTHA CANTRELL

In my limited experience of growing tomatoes in this brutal North Texas heat, I have found that my favorite, most heat and wind-tolerant, are the cherry and grape varieties. I find it isn't easy to grow the big beefsteak varieties here because they don't tolerate our searing heat and overabundance of full sun. I love the sweet, juicy, bright red or gold cherries you can grow all summer into fall.

## *Origins*

Cherry and grape tomatoes, *Solanum lycopersicum var. cerasiforme*, are the most popular plants today and originated from wild plants. Cherry tomatoes originated in the Andean region of South America and were domesticated in the Puebla-Veracruz region of Mexico. The Aztecs also cultivated them for cooking and referred to them as 'xtomatl' and 'tomatl'. Scientists developed the cherry tomatoes we grow today in the early 70s, mainly in Israel.

Pluma, CC BY-SA 3.0

**Super Sweet 100 Cherry Tomato**

## *Nutrients and Benefits*

These little beauties are rich in vitamins like:

- Vitamin C is an excellent antioxidant that supports a healthy immune system and helps with collagen production.
- Vitamin A supports your vision, cell production, and skin health.
- Vitamin E protects your cells from damage.
- Vitamin B, including niacin, folate, and thiamin, aids in metabolism, brain function, and cell production.

They also contain essential minerals such as calcium, magnesium, and potassium. These minerals offer health benefits, including anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, and cardiovascular health effects.

However, the biggest benefits I've found are that they taste incredible, can be used in a wide variety of ways in many recipes, and can be frozen whole, allowing you to enjoy the amazing taste of summer even in the cold winter months.

## *Planting, Disease, and Care*

To get a jump on the growing season, I start mine from seed indoors and transplant them after the danger of frost has passed, typically around April 1st. Of course, this year, we had a frost threat on April 6th, so I had to bring the ones in containers inside and cover the ones in the ground, praying they would survive their first trauma due to our crazy North Texas

# In The Veggie Patch: Cherry Tomatoes (Cont.)

weather. If you want to learn more about starting them from seeds, there's a great article in a past edition of The Root called 'Plant of the Month—The Seedy Truth' that you might be interested in. It's available at https://www.dcmga.com/wp-content/uploads/docs/root/root-2024-02.pdf.

When planting cherry tomatoes, determine whether they are determinate or indeterminate. The Travis County Extension Service offers a valuable article, 'Top Tips for Terrific Tomatoes,' that effectively explains these different growing habits. It is worth reading. You can find the very long link at the bottom of this article.

Ann Althouse; CC BY-NC 2.0.

Sun Gold Cherry Tomato

Like most tomatoes, cherries need at least 6 hours of full sun. Indeterminate varieties require something to climb on for support. I plant my determinate varieties in containers, including hanging baskets. I add root boost or a starter growth solution to my newly transplanted seedlings and fertilize them once the fruit is set. Adding compost to the soil also provides nutrients. Top the soil with mulch, which helps retain moisture and keeps the soil cooler. They don't like to have their 'feet wet,' meaning their roots, so don't over-love (water) them. Keep the soil moist, not saturated.

They are susceptible to the same diseases as regular tomatoes, but are much more heat-tolerant than their larger cousins. Cherry and grape tomatoes will set fruit during the summer heat, while larger varieties struggle to set fruit when the temperature consistently rises above 85-90°F (30-32°C) during the day and 70-75°F (21-24°C) at night.

## *Varieties for North Texas*

My favorite varieties are Sun Gold, Super Sweet 100, and Yellow Pear, all of which are very sweet with a low acid content. There are many more varieties to choose from. If you like a little acid in yours, choose Black Cherry, Midnight Snack, and Green Envy. You can have fun browsing through seed catalogs containing all the details you need to select the perfect cherry or grape variety for you! Due to a control issue with seed catalogs, I typically grow 8-12 varieties of tomatoes, mostly cherry or small, in my garden every spring.

Pawel Wiecek;, CC BY-SA 2.0

Black Cherry Tomato

# In The Veggie Patch: Cherry Tomaotes (Cont.)

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cygnusg21, CC BY 2.0

**Yellow Pear Cherry Tomato**


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# Plant of the Month:Growing Iris in the South

BY GLORIA AND JERRY ALEXANDER

## *Irises: A Garden Favorite that Rarely Fails*

For years, we've seen irises blooming in gardens, along roadsides, in vacant fields, and even where houses once stood. They've always been easy to grow and maintain. We never worried about them not blooming or falling victim to disease—they just flourished and caught your eye with their bright, elegant flowers.

Sue Lowndes; , CC BY-ND 2.0

Tall Bearded Iris (*Iris x germanica*)

## *Types of Irises: Bearded vs. Beardless*

According to Gary White, past president of the American Iris Society, there are two main types of irises: bearded and beardless. There are also more than 300 species, all of which are perennials.

Bearded irises are the most popular. They have large, colorful flowers with a fuzzy, beard-like tuft of hairs on their falls (the lower petals). These flowers bloom from early spring to early summer in mild climates, and from early summer to early winter in colder regions. They come in nearly every color—except green and scarlet red—with white, yellow, and purple being the most common in most landscapes.

On the other hand, beardless irises don't have fuzzy beards but instead show a blaze of color in the flower's throat. The most commonly grown type is the Siberian iris, known for its adaptability to various climates and soil types. Other popular beardless varieties include Japanese, Louisiana, and Pacific Coast irises.

Francisco Welter-Schultes; CC0 1.0 Universal.

Siberian Iris (*Iris x sibirica*)

Sally;, CC BY-NC 2.0

Pacific Coast Iris (*Iris x douglasiana*)

# Growing Iris (Cont.)

KENPEI, CC BY-SA 3.0.

Japanese Iris *(Iris ensata cv. 'kumoinokari')*

peganum, CC BY-SA 2.0

Louisiana Iris *(Iris fulva)*

## *Light and Climate Requirements*

To produce the best blooms, most irises need full sun, at least 6 to 8 hours a day. Some varieties will tolerate partial shade, but full sun is generally ideal. That said, Siberian and Japanese irises handle afternoon shade well because they don't like intense heat. In northern areas, they can tolerate full sun without issue.

## *How to Plant Irises Properly*

Irises grow from rhizomes, which look like long, skinny sweet potatoes. Both the leaves and flowers emerge from these underground stems. To get the best results:

- Choose a sunny location.
- Add compost to improve the soil.
- Space bearded irises 1-2 feet apart and beardless irises 2-3 feet apart for good air circulation.
- Avoid planting too deep-this can stop blooming.
- Bearded irises can be planted 2-3 inches below the surface.
- Water thoroughly after planting.
- Mulch with pine needles during the first year to protect the rhizomes from freeze-thaw cycles.

## *Fertilizing and Maintenance*

We never deliberately fertilized our irises, but they seemed fine even when the broadcast spreader threw some fertilizer into the bed. However, research recommends using a balanced, slow-release granular fertilizer like 10-10-10 or 6-12-12, especially during the first year.

## *When to Plant*

The ideal time to plant irises is 6–8 weeks before the ground freezes. You can plant and divide irises in warmer southern regions from July through early November. Beardless varieties don't tolerate heat well, so plant them in spring or fall to allow time for root establishment before summer arrives.

# Growing Iris (Cont.)

## *Dividing and Thinning Irises*

Divide irises when they become overcrowded. Depending on your growing conditions, this might only be necessary every few years. If you notice your irises aren't blooming or the flowers are smaller than usual, it's time to thin them out.
To avoid damage, lift the rhizomes gently with a garden fork, especially with bearded varieties. If using a spade or shovel, dig from the outer edge of the clump.

## *A Personal Note: What We've Learned*

Our research taught us that we should cut the bloom stems down to the base—something we hadn't been doing. We used just to snip off the spent blooms. You should also leave the bearded iris leaves intact as long as they're green and healthy, so they can keep producing energy. Once the leaves turn brown, cut them back to 2–4 inches above the ground. Beardless iris leaves will die back naturally.

This reminds me of a friend who advised us to trim the leaf fans into an upside-down "V" to force new blooms. It worked—we had irises blooming in April, June, and again in the fall. But with a lot of plants, it becomes a big job.

That friend once told us to plant the white irises on the opposite side of the yard to keep them white. We didn't listen and mixed them with purple and yellow ones. Later, we discovered pink and gold-colored flowers in those beds—colors we hadn't planted. The pure white ones were gone.

## *Resources*


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**Tall Bearded Iris (*Iris cristata*)**

# Give a Drip and Water Less Y'all – Your Yard and Community will Thank You

**BY BLAKE ALLDREDGE, WATER EDUCATION COORDINATOR, UPPER TRINITY REGIONAL WATER DISTRICT**

As the days grow longer, residents shift their attention toward their lawns and landscapes. The first signs of spring —budding trees, warmer weather, and wildflowers— signal the time to refresh outdoor spaces. As you dust off your gardening tools and prepare for a season of growth, the Upper Trinity Regional Water District encourages residents to "Give a Drip" by watering no more than two days a week, and not between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.

## *Pledge to Water Less*

Photo courtesy of Upper Trinity Regional Water District

**Thomas E. Taylor Water treatment Plant in Lewisville**

Upper Trinity provides drinking water to 29 communities in Denton and Collin counties.Growth and development, and frequent drought conditions have increased the amount of water people are using for their yards. High outdoor water usage strains the available water in our reservoirs, North Texas's main source of drinking water, as well as the treatment and pumping equipment that deliver drinking water to your tap. Upper Trinity's two water treatment plants, located in Lewisville and Providence Village, can treat up to 100 million gallons per day (MGD), and both are currently under construction to increase total treatment capacity to 145 MGD. Last year, Upper Trinity implemented a mandatory two-day-per-week outdoor watering schedule for residents and businesses to reduce water usage, alleviate strain on water treatment equipment, and protect lake levels.

Upper Trinity encourages residents to 'Give a Drip' by pledging to water less frequently this spring and summer. To take the pledge, visit WaterLessYall.com and fill out the pledge form. Qualified residents will be entered into monthly drawings for a free irrigation repair kit, valued at $30. In October, three grand prize winners will be randomly selectedto receive one of two smart irrigation controllers, or a free professional landscape consultation and a $500 gift card to Rooted In, a nursery and garden center in Pilot Point. WaterLessYall.com also offers landscape classes, weekly watering tips, and hands-on information about reducing outdoor watering.

Over half of the water used in North Texas during the summer is for outdoor watering, amounting to billions of gallons applied to yards each year. Fortunately, it takes less water for your yard to thrive than you might think. Grass and native plants are Texas tough. In fact, if watered efficiently, plants thrive with less frequent watering. Upper Trinity also recommends discontinuing outdoor irrigation during the winter.

# Give a Drip (Cont.)

## *"Cycle and Soak" for a Healthier Lawn*

When watering your lawns and landscapes, make the most of your efforts by watering the right way. Practice the "cycle and soak" method to help water penetrate deeper into the roots. Water for a short cycle of 5-6 minutes in each zone (for spray heads) and repeat the process in one hour. Typically, two or three cycles are all that are needed. Watch this short video from UTRWD to learn more.



Native plants are drought-tolerant.

## *Go Native*

Incorporating Texas-native and drought-tolerant plants into your landscape saves water. These plants thrive in local growing conditions, often requiring less water than exotic or water-demanding species. Adopting a two-day-per-week watering regimen complements the needs of native and drought-tolerant plants, allowing them to flourish without excessive irrigation. Upper Trinity partners with the Denton County Master Gardeners on educational activities and encourages residents to visit their website (dcmga.com) to utilize water-efficient landscape designs and other resources. You can also find a list of native plants on the Native Plant Society of Texas website at npsot.org.

You might say, "My Homeowner's Association won't allow me to plant that!" While state law restricts HOAs from preventing you from planting natives in your yard, they can require you to maintain a similar "look and feel" of other landscapes in your area. It is best to work with your HOA to determine if there are any specific requirements and to submit a landscape design for approval before starting any work.

## *Don't Be a Drip: Irrigate Efficiently*

Checking sprinkler heads at least once a month during the spring and summer ensures they are in good working condition. Many sprinkler issues, such as broken heads or clogged nozzles, can be easily repaired by homeowners. Upper Trinity has videos on its YouTube channel demonstrating how to make these easy repairs and adjustments. For residents who are not comfortable checking their sprinklers or don't know how to operate their controller, free irrigation evaluations are available. These evaluations are performed by Upper Trinity's Irrigation Specialist, who can provide expert advice on proper watering schedules and recommend necessary repairs or adjustments to deliver water more effectively. Schedule your free irrigation evaluation by visiting utrwd.com.

# Give a Drip (Cont.)

Water can be distributed more evenly by upgrading your irrigation system to multi-stream heads instead of traditional fixed-spray nozzles. The rotational movement delivers water at a slower rate, which reduces evaporation, resulting in less misting and runoff and giving the soil more time to absorb it. Drip irrigation systems or soaker hoses are ideal for flower beds, younger trees, and foundation watering and are not restricted under the two-day-per-week watering schedule until later drought stages are enacted.

Smart controllers do the thinking for you by automatically operating your irrigation system and adjusting it according to weather conditions and the time of year. The watering schedule changes to align with actual site conditions. Sign up for weekly emails from Texas A&M AgriLife's WaterMyYard.org program to know when and how long to water. When rain has occurred or is forecasted, it's best to shut off sprinklers.

Watering two days per week or less ensures plant health and vitality. It also protects our lake levels and reduces your water bills. It's possible to have a beautiful yard and conserve water, ensuring we have water today and for generations to come. So, give a drip and pledge to water less, y'all!

*ABOUT UPPER TRINITY*

*Upper Trinity Regional Water District, headquartered in Lewisville, Texas, provides drinking water to 29 cities and communities in Denton and Collin Counties. Established in 1989, Upper Trinity treats water from various sources, including Jim Chapman, Lewisville, and Ray Roberts Lakes, to meet the needs of its growing service area.*

## *Resources*


- Upper Trinity Regional Water District. (2025, February 10). Home - UTRWD. UTRWD - UTRWD. https://utrwd.com/
- Upper Trinity Regional Water District. (2025b, March 31). Water less, y'all - UTRWD. UTRWD - UTRWD. https://utrwd.com/saving-water/save-outdoors/water-less-yall/
- Native Plant Society of Texas. (2025, March 25). Home - Native Plant Society of Texas. https://www.npsot.org/
- Upper Trinity Regional Water District. (n.d.). YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/@UTRWD
- WaterMyYard. (n.d.). https://watermyyard.org/

# Rooted in North Texas:
# *A Newcomer's Guide to Gardening Success*

BY CHERYL HUCKABEE

## *Pest Patrol: Protecting Your North Texas Garden from Unwanted Guests*

***Welcome to the fourth article in our eight-part gardening series for North Texas newcomers! Dig in to learn from seasoned Master Gardeners who've mastered taming our unique climate and soil challenges.***

Are you new to North Central Texas gardening? You might be surprised by this area's unique insect challenges and opportunities. This guide will help you understand and manage them.

### *The Impact of North Central Texas Climate on Insect Populations*

If you're new to North Central Texas, you're likely getting familiar with its unique climate: hot summers, mild winters, and occasional droughts. These weather patterns significantly impact the local insect populations in your garden. Understanding this dynamic will help you better manage pests and make informed decisions on keeping your garden healthy and thriving.

In North Central Texas, warmer winters allow many insects to survive and emerge earlier in spring, increasing pest populations. These include mosquitoes, aphids, and other insects that can damage plants. Hot, dry summers also stress plants, making them more vulnerable to pests like spider mites and grasshoppers. Prolonged drought conditions allow pests such as whiteflies to thrive, while heavy rainfall provides ideal breeding grounds for mosquitoes, leading to population surges. Longer growing seasons allow insects such as caterpillars and beetles more time to reproduce, resulting in higher populations over time.

### *Understanding the Insect Ecosystem in Your Garden*

While many insects in your garden may seem like a nuisance, it's important to remember that only a small fraction are truly harmful. Approximately 97% of insects are either beneficial or harmless. Understanding the difference between pests, beneficial insects, and nuisance bugs can help you manage your garden effectively.

Pests are insects that harm plants by feeding on them or spreading disease. Common pests in North Central Texas include aphids, spider mites, and grasshoppers. Nuisance insects, such as mosquitoes or flies, may not harm plants, but they can be annoying.

### *How to Attract and Conserve Beneficial Insects*

Beneficial insects help your garden by controlling pest populations and pollinating plants. There are generally four main types of beneficial insects:

# Rooted in North Texas: Pest Patrol (Cont.)

1. Predators: These insects hunt and eat other pests. Examples include lady beetles, spiders, and praying mantises.
2. Parasitoids: These insects lay their eggs on or inside a pest, and their larvae slowly consume the host insect. Braconid wasps are a prime example.
3. Decomposers/Recyclers: Insects such as earthworms and certain nematodes break down organic matter, enriching the soil.
4. Pollinators: Insects such as bees and butterflies help pollinate plants, vital for fruit and vegetable production.


You can attract and conserve these helpful insects in your garden by creating a hospitable environment. Here are some key steps:

- Provide Host and Nectar Plants: Many beneficial insects rely on specific plants for food or shelter. Planting a mix of flowering plants that bloom at different times will attract various insects throughout the growing season.
- Create a Diverse Habitat: Your garden should have a mix of sunny areas, shaded spots, water sources, and protective spaces like tall grasses or shrubs. This diversity will cater to different insect species and create a balanced ecosystem.
- Reduce Pesticide Use: Because pesticides can harm beneficial insects, try to minimize their use. Instead, focus on spot treatments for pest problems and opt for less toxic, natural remedies such as neem oil or insecticidal soap.
- Embrace Integrated Pest Management (IPM): IPM is an eco-friendly approach to managing pests that focuses on prevention, monitoring, and natural control before using chemical treatments.

Although purchasing and releasing beneficial insects may be tempting, research has shown that this is rarely effective. The more practical approach is to attract and protect them in your garden.

# Rooted in North Texas: Pest Patrol (Cont.)

## *Integrated Pest Management (IPM): A Smarter Approach*

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a comprehensive approach to pest control, focusing on a balanced mix of methods rather than solely relying on chemicals. This ensures effective pest management while maintaining a safe environment for your plants. Here's how to apply IPM in your North Central Texas garden:

- Prevention: Select plants well-suited to your garden's environment and North Texas. Healthy plants are better able to resist pests. Additionally, mulching and proper watering help maintain healthy soil, making it less inviting to pests.
- Monitoring: Regularly inspect your plants for signs of pest activity, such as leaf damage, sticky spots, or abnormal growth. Early detection makes problems easier to address before they worsen.
- Identification: Learn to recognize the difference between pests and beneficial insects.
- Control: When pests are present, first try non-chemical methods. Removing insects by hand, introducing natural predators (like ladybugs for aphids), or using natural treatments like neem oil or soapy water can effectively manage pests without harming beneficial species.
- Chemical Control: Consider using chemicals only in severe infestations and when other methods have failed. Choose the least toxic, most targeted pesticides available, and always follow the manufacturer's guidelines to minimize the impact on beneficial insects.

## *Conclusion*

Managing insect pests doesn't have to involve harsh chemicals. By understanding your garden's natural ecosystem and adopting eco-friendly practices like Integrated Pest Management (IPM), you can protect your plants and the beneficial insects that keep your garden healthy. Embrace a natural, holistic approach to pest control for healthier plants and a thriving, biodiverse garden. Happy gardening!

## *Resources*


- Allsup, Kelly, et al. Top 10 Beneficial Insects in the Garden. extension.illinois.edu/sites/default/files/beneficial_insects_from_the_garden_updated_2018.pdf.
- Beneficial Insects - Oklahoma State University. 1 July 2022, extension.okstate.edu/fact-sheets/beneficial-insects.html.
- "Common Beneficial Arthropods Found in Field Crops." Mississippi State University Extension Service, extension.msstate.edu/publications/common-beneficial-arthropods-found-field-crops-0.
- Drees, et al. Common Sense Pest Control. www.ci.austin.tx.us/growgreen/downloads/beneficial.pdf.

# Rooted in North Texas: Pest Patrol (Cont.)


- Gray, Betty. Beneficials in the Garden. aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2010/10/beneficials.pdf.
- Jackman, John A. "Managing Insect and Mite Pests in Vegetable Gardens." AgriLife.org, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, Feb. 2008, cdn-de.agrilife.org/extension/departments/ento/ento-pu-011/publications/files/managing-insect-and-mite-pests-in-vegetable-gardens.pdf.
- Masabni, Joseph, et al. "Recognizing Insect Problems." Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, pp. 1–3. aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2013/09/EHT-072.pdf.
- Pests of Foliage and Flowering Plants - Ornamental Production Ornamental Production. aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/ornamental/a-reference-guide-to-plant-care-handling-and-merchandising/pests-of-foliage-flowering-plants.
- Pollinator Conservation Biocontrol: Beneficial Insects | IPM and Pollinator Conservation. ncipmhort.cfans.umn.edu/beneficial-insects.


***North Texas Gardening***

***Timely Articles from DCMGA and The Root***

Insect Inquiry (Garden Basics)

Pineapple Express Mangave (Plant Facts)

Hummingbird Feeder Plants (Plant of the Month, May 2019)

Four-Nerve Daisy (Plant of the Month, May 2021)

Your Homeowners Associations and What are you allowed to do in your garden? (The Root, May 2023)

# Rooted in North Texas: Pest Patrol (Cont.)

***Ornamental Plants – Common Insect Pests***

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Identification** |  **Aphids:** Small, soft-bodied insects in various colors. |  **Spider Mites:** Tiny web-spinning pests on the undersides of leaves. |  **Whiteflies:** Tiny, white flying insects that swarm when disturbed. |
| **Damage** | · Suck sap<br>· Curled leaves<br>· Produce sticky honeydew<br>· Cause small, distorted, weak growth | · Yellowing<br>· Stippling<br>· Leaf drop<br>· Curled leaves | · Suck sap<br>· Curled leaves<br>· Produce sticky honeydew<br>· Cause small, distorted, weak growth |
| **Control** | Cultural & Physical<br>· Blast with water<br>· Companion planting-marigolds, garlic, chives, basil, mint, nasturtiums<br>· Row covers<br>· Rotate crops & pruning-remove infested leaves<br>· Sticky traps<br>Natural Predators<br>· Ladybugs<br>· Big-Eyed Bugs<br>· Lacewings (Green & Brown)<br>· Parasitic Wasps (*Aphidius* species)<br>· Soldier Beetles<br>· Spiders<br>· Hoverflies (Syrphid Flies)<br>· Minute Pirate Bugs<br>· Damsel Bugs<br>Natural Insecticide<br>· Insecticidal Soap<br>· Neem Oil<br>· Horticultural Oils<br>· Pyrethrins<br>· Diatomaceous Earth (DE)<br>Chemical Insecticide⚠<br>· Systemic: Imidacloprid, Dinotefuran, Thiamethoxam<br>· Synthetic Pyrethroids | Cultural & Physical<br>· Blast with water<br>· Prune & discard infected leaves<br>· Increase humidity<br>· Companion planting-dill, cilantro, marigolds<br>· Rotate crops<br>· Maintain healthy plants<br>Natural Predators<br>· Predatory mites<br>· Big-Eyed Bugs<br>· Ladybugs<br>· Lacewings (Green & Brown)<br>· Parasitic Wasps (*Aphidius spp.*)<br>· Minute Pirate Bugs<br>· Damsel Bugs<br>Natural Insecticide<br>· Insecticidal Soap<br>· Neem Oil<br>· Horticultural Oils<br>· Diatomaceous Earth (DE)<br>Chemical Insecticide⚠<br>· Chemical Miticides: Acaricides<br>· Broad-Spectrum: Pyrethroids, Malathion<br>· Systemic: Imidacloprid | Cultural & Physical<br>· Blast with water<br>· Prune & discard infected leaves<br>· Row covers<br>· Companion planting-basil, marigolds, nasturtiums<br>· Remove weeds<br>· Maintain healthy plants<br>Natural Predators<br>· Parasitic wasps (*Encarsia Formosa, Eretmocerus spp.)*<br>· Lacewings (Green & Brown)<br>· Ladybugs<br>· Minute Pirate Bugs<br>· Big-Eyed Bugs<br>· Syrphid Flies<br>· Spiders<br>Natural Insecticide<br>· Insecticidal Soap<br>· Neem Oil<br>· Horticultural Oils<br>Chemical Insecticide⚠<br>· Pyrethroids: Dinotefuran, Avermectic (Abamectin), Buprofezin<br>· Neonicotinoids: : Imidacloprid<br>· Broad Spectrum: Malathion |

*Photo credits: Aphids, Jim Occi, BugPics, Bugwood.org | Spider Mites, Eric Coombs, Oregon Department of Agriculture, Bugwood.org. | Whiteflies, John C. French Sr., Retired, Universities: Auburn, GA, Clemson and U of MO, Bugwood.org.*

⚠Chemical use instructions: Follow Label Instructions – Always adhere to the manufacturer's dosage and safety precautions guidelines to ensure effective and safe application. Synthetic insecticides can harm beneficial insects.

# Rooted in North Texas: Pest Patrol (Cont.)

***Ornamental Plants – Common Insect Pests (Cont.)***

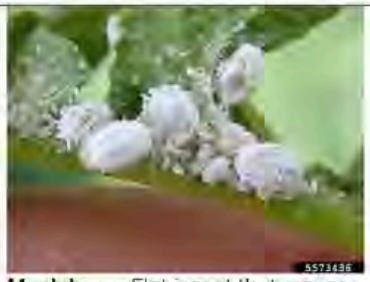
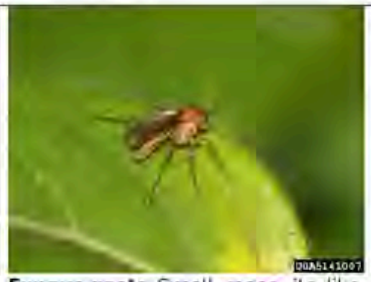
| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Identification** |  **Mealybugs:** Flat insect that moves slowly. Produces cottony white secretions along stems & under leaves. |  **Fungus gnats:** Small, mosquito-like flies that thrive in moist soil. |  **Thrips:** Tiny, slender insects with fringed wings can infest many plants indoors & outdoors. |
| **Damage** | · Suck sap<br>· Curled leaves<br>· Produce sticky honeydew<br>· Small, distorted, weak growth<br>· Severe infestations cause leaf drop<br>· Can spread plant viruses | · Adults are mostly a nuisance<br>· Damage roots & root hairs (larvae)<br>· Stunted growth<br>· Yellowing leaves<br>· Wilting<br>· Susceptibility to root rot & fungal diseases | · Puncture cells & suck out tissue<br>· Cause silvering or stippling on leaves & curling leaves<br>· Target flowers causing distortion & discoloration<br>· Scarring on fruits<br>· Carry plant viruses |
| **Control** | <u>Cultural & Physical</u><br>· Remove infested plants<br>· Blast with water<br>· Dab with a cotton swab dipped in isopropyl alcohol<br>· Increase air circulation<br>· Avoid overwatering<br>· Yellow sticky traps<br>· Quarantine new plants 10-14 days<br>· Maintain healthy plants<br><u>Natural Predators</u><br>· Ladybugs (*Cryptolaemus montrouzieri*, "Mealybug Destroyer")<br>· Lacewings (Green & Brown)<br>· Parasitic Wasps (*Anagyrus spp., Leptomastix dactylopii*)<br>· Minute Pirate Bugs<br>· Rove Beetles (*Dalotia coriaria*)<br><u>Natural Insecticide</u><br>· Neem Oil<br>· Insecticidal Soap<br>· Horticultural Oil<br>· Diatomaceous Earth (DE)<br><u>Chemical Insecticide</u><br>· Systemic: Imidacloprid, Dinotefuran<br>· Pyrethroids: Permethrin, Cypermethrin, Bifenthrin<br>· Acephate, Malathion<br>· Insect Growth Regulators: Pyriproxyfen, Buprofezin | <u>Cultural & Physical</u><br>· Let soil dry out<br>· Remove organic matter<br>· Use well-draining soil<br>· Yellow sticky traps<br>· Sand or gravel mulch to prevent adults from laying eggs<br>· Avoid overwatering<br>· Repot new plants<br><u>Natural Predators</u><br>· Beneficial Nematodes (*Steinernema feltiae*)<br>· Rove Beetles (*Dalotia coriaria*)<br>· Minute Pirate Bugs<br>· Springtails (not predators, compete for organic matter, reducing food supply)<br><u>Natural Insecticide</u><br>· Diatomaceous Earth (DE)<br>· Neem Oil<br>· Insecticidal Soap<br>· Bacillus thuringiensis (Bt)<br><u>Chemical Insecticide</u> ⚠<br>· Pyrethroids: Permethrin, Bifenthrin<br>· Neonicotinoids: Imidacloprid<br>· Larvicide Soil Treatment: Mosquito Dunks (Bt)<br>· Azadirachtin (from Neem oil) | <u>Cultural & Physical</u><br>· Plant rotation & diversity<br>· Resistant varieties<br>· Remove plant debris & weeds that harbor eggs<br>· Fine mesh screens on greenhouses<br>· Reflective mulch confuses thrips<br><u>Natural Predators</u><br>· Ladybugs<br>· Lacewing larvae<br>· Minute Pirate Bugs<br>· Spiders<br>· Thrips parasitoid wasps (e.g., *Ceranisus sp.*)<br><u>Natural Insecticide</u><br>· Neem Oil<br>· Insecticidal Soap<br>· Diatomaceous Earth (DE)<br>· Rosemary or Peppermint Oil<br>· Spinosad<br><u>Chemical Insecticide</u> ⚠<br>· Pyrethroids: Permethrin, Bifenthrin<br>· Neonicotinoids: Imidacloprid<br>· Miticides/Aracides |

*Photo credits: Mealybug, Whitney Cranshaw, Colorado State University, Bugwood.org | Fungus gnats, Johnny N. Dell, Bugwood.org |Western Flower Thrip, Mohammad Mirmezhad, Leiden University, Bugwood.org*

⚠ Chemical use instructions: Follow Label Instructions – Always adhere to the manufacturer's dosage and safety precautions guidelines to ensure effective and safe application. Synthetic insecticides can harm beneficial insects.

# Rooted in North Texas: Pest Patrol (Cont.)

***Vegetable Plants – Common Insect Pests***

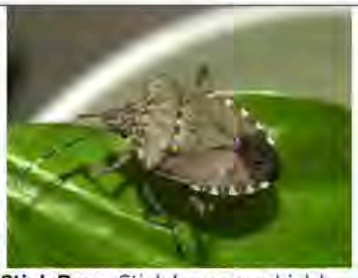
| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Identification** |  **Grasshoppers:** Adult differential grasshoppers are brown to olive green & yellow & up to 1-3/4 inches long. |  **Tomato Hornworm (larvae):** Large green caterpillars with horn-like tails. |  **Stink Bugs**: Stink bugs are shield-shaped insects with piercing-sucking mouthparts. |
| **Damage** | · Skeletonized leaves<br>· Ragged edges on leaves<br>· Missing or damaged fruits<br>· Feeding on leaves, stems & fruits<br>· Can cause complete plant destruction | · Chewing mouthparts<br>· Feed on tomato, eggplant, pepper, & potato leaves<br>· Defoliation weakening the plant<br>· Fruit damage | · Suck the juices of developing fruit (tomatoes, okra)<br>· Inject enzymes to liquefy the tissue<br>· Causing scars, discoloration, depressions |
| **Control** | Cultural & Physical<br>· Row covers & netting<br>· Grasshopper-resistant crops-basil, cilantro, arugula<br>· Encourage moist conditions<br>· Remove weeds & turn soil in fall & early spring to destroy eggs<br>· Handpick & drop in soapy water<br>· Traps at the edge of the garden<br>Natural Predators<br>· Birds & fowl-Chickens, guinea, wild birds<br>· Insects & arachnids-Robber flies, Spiders, Praying Mantis, Blister Beetles, Assassin Bugs<br>· Reptiles & Amphibians-Lizards, Frogs, & Toads<br>· Mammals-Bats, Foxes, Coyotes, Mice, Rats<br>Natural Insecticide<br>· Neem Oil (for young grasshoppers)<br>· Kaolin Clay (a protective coating on plants)<br>· Insecticidal Soap (for nymphs)<br>· Nosema locustae (Nolo Bait)-kills over time<br>Chemical Insecticide⚠<br>· Pyrethroids: Permethrin, Cypermethrin, Bifenthrin<br>· Malathion<br>· Systemic: Acephate | Cultural & Physical<br>· Handpick & drop in soapy water<br>· Rotate solanaceous crops<br>· Remove plant debris & turn soil to kill pupae<br>· Companion planting-basil, dill, marigolds<br>· Remove weeds<br>· Use plant collars<br>Natural Predators<br>· Beneficial Nematodes<br>· Ladybugs<br>· Lacewings (Green & Brown)<br>· Braconid Wasps, Paper Wasps<br>· Birds<br>Natural Insecticide<br>· Bacillus thuringiensis (Bt)<br>· Neem Oil<br>· Insecticidal Soap<br>· Spinosad<br>· Pyrethrin<br>· Diatomaceous Earth (DE)<br>Chemical Insecticide⚠<br>· Pyrethroids: Permethrin, Cyfluthrin, Bifenthrin<br>· Acetamiprid | Cultural & Physical<br>· Handpick & drop in soapy water<br>· Remove weeds<br>· Plant trap crops-sunflowers<br>· Remove plant debris to eliminate overwintering sites<br>Natural Predators<br>· Birds<br>· Assassin bugs<br>· Parasitic wasps (*Trissolcus basalis*)<br>Natural Insecticide<br>· Neem oil<br>· Insecticidal soap<br>· Kaolin Clay (a protective coating on plants)<br>Chemical Insecticide⚠<br>· Pyrethroids: Bifenthrin, Permethrin, Cypermethrin |

*Photo credits: Differential Grasshopper, David Riley, University of Georgia, Bugwood.org | Tomato Hornworm (larvae), Eric R. Day, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Bugwood.org | Brown Marmorated Stink Bug, David R. Lance, USDA APHIS PPQ, CC BY 3.0*

⚠Chemical use instructions: Follow Label Instructions – Always adhere to the manufacturer's dosage and safety precautions guidelines to ensure effective and safe application. Synthetic insecticides can harm beneficial insects.

# Rooted in North Texas: Pest Patrol (Cont.)

***Vegetable Plants – Common Insect Pests (Cont.)***

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Identification** |  **Beet Armyworm (larvae):** Small, mobile caterpillars that can vary in color from yellow to green, gray, or brown. |  **Squash Bugs**: Large, flat, dark gray to brown, with orange markings, typically growing to about 1 inch in length. |  **Squash Vine Borer (larvae):** Larvae are white caterpillars with brown heads. |
| **Damage** | · Feed on developing leaves (beans, beets, cole crops, corn, lettuce, onions, peppers, potatoes, peas, tomatoes)<br>· Skeletonized leaves<br>· Fruit damage<br>· Burrow into lettuce & cabbage, damaging from the inside out | · Pierce stems, leaves, & fruit, sucking out juices<br>· Wilting, yellowing, browning<br>· Stunting & deformation<br>· Viral transmission<br>· Scarring & discoloring fruit<br>· Immature fruit can shrivel & die | · Wilting of leaves & vines, often irreversible<br>· Sudden collapse of the plant, especially during fruiting<br>· Sawdust-like frass (excrement) at entry holes in stems<br>· Hollowed-out, damaged stems that break easily<br>· Reduced yield or total plant loss |
| **Control** | Cultural & Physical<br>· Handpick eggs & caterpillars<br>· Row Covers<br>· Companion Planting-marigolds, basil<br>· Remove weeds<br>· Plant trap crops-mustard greens<br>Natural Predators<br>· Parasitic Wasps (*Cotesia marginiventris, Trichogramma spp.*)<br>· Damsel bugs<br>· Lacewings (Green & Brown)<br>· Minute Pirate Bugs<br>· Spiders<br>· Birds<br>Natural Insecticide<br>· Bacillus thuringiensis (Bt var. aizawai & kurstaki)<br>· Spinosad<br>· Neem Oil<br>Chemical Insecticide ⚠<br>· Pyrethroids – Bifenthrin, Permethrin, Lambda-cyhalothrin<br>· Chlorantraniliprole<br>· Methoxyfenozide | Cultural & Physical<br>· Crop rotation-avoid planting cucurbits in the same place<br>· Remove end-of-season plant debris to prevent overwintering<br>· Row covers protect young plants<br>· Hand-picking & squashing or dropping in soapy water<br>· Trap crops-radishes<br>Natural Predators<br>· Predatory beetles (e.g., *Staphylinidae*)<br>· Green Lacewings<br>· Spiders<br>· Parasitic wasps (*Trichopoda pennipes*)<br>· Beneficial Nematodes (*Steinernema carpocapsae*)<br>Natural Insecticide<br>· Neem Oil<br>· Diatomaceous Earth (DE)<br>· Insecticidal Soap<br>· Spinosad<br>Chemical Insecticide ⚠<br>· Pyrethroids – Bifenthrin, Permethrin, Lambda-cyhalothrin<br>· Imidacloprid | Cultural & Physical<br>· Crop rotation-avoid planting squash in the same place<br>· Early planting avoids egg-laying period<br>· Row covers limit egg laying<br>· Bury stems to encourage root growth<br>· Hand-picking & squashing or dropping in soapy water<br>· Trap crops-Hubbard squash<br>Natural Predators<br>· Tachinid flies (*Lixophaga sp.*)<br>· Braconid wasps<br>· Ground beetles<br>Natural Insecticide<br>· Neem Oil<br>· Bacillus thuringiensis (Bt) injected into stems<br>· Diatomaceous Earth (DE)<br>Chemical Insecticide ⚠<br>· Pyrethroids: Permethrin, Bifenthrin<br>· Neonicotinoids: Imidacloprid |

*Photo credits: Beet Armyworm (larvae), John Capinera, University of Florida, Bugwood.org | Squash Bugs, Whitney Cranshaw, Colorado State University, Bugwood.org | Squash Vine Borer, Clemson University - USDA Cooperative Extension Slide Series, Bugwood.org*

Aphids, Spider Mites, and Whiteflies are common insect pests in vegetable gardens. Please refer to the ornamental plants' insect pest control methods.

⚠ Chemical use instructions: Follow Label Instructions – Always adhere to the manufacturer's dosage and safety precautions guidelines to ensure effective and safe application. Synthetic insecticides can harm beneficial insects.

# Blue Ribbon Scholarship Awards

BY LYNDA HARVEY

The Denton County Master Gardener Association proudly awarded three scholarships this year through the Blue Ribbon Club, which supports local youth in 4-H, FFA, and FCCLA programs. The celebration took place on March 31, 2025, during a lively banquet at the Denton County Cowboy Church in Ponder. Raeline Nobles, President of the Denton Master Gardeners, and Brenda Martin, Member at large, presented the scholarships.

Each recipient was selected based on a combination of financial need, academic performance, involvement in youth organizations, leadership, volunteer work, and participation in the Youth Fair. Here's a look at this year's outstanding scholarship winners:

## *Laken Chambers – $2,000 Janet Laminack Memorial Scholarship*

Laken Chambers, a Lake Dallas High School senior, received the prestigious $2,000 Janet Laminack Memorial Scholarship. This award honors the memory of Janet Laminack, Denton County's former Horticulture Agent and interim 4-H Agent.

Laken is deeply involved in her school and community. She serves on Student Council and is active in organizations like Fellowship of Christian Athletes, PALS, and the Student Advisory Board. A dedicated 4H member, she has served as the Ag Leadership 4H Club secretary and has played a key role in organizing agriculture awareness events. Laken has also shown pigs at the Youth Fair for seven years and held leadership roles as president and secretary of Lake Dallas FFA. She plans to attend Oklahoma State University to study sports media.




L to R: Brenda Martin, Lauren Hamilton, Laken Chambers, Christy Dyer for Macy Punches, and Raeline Nobles

## *Macy Punches – $1,000 Scholarship*

Western Texas College freshman Macy Punches was awarded a $1,000 scholarship for the second time, thanks to the program's support of continuing students. Macy is pursuing an associate degree in agribusiness while competing on the college golf team. Her future plans include transferring to a four-year university to study agronomy and continuing to pursue her golf career.

# Blue Ribbon Scholarship Awards (Cont.)

## *Lauren Hamilton – $500 Scholarship*

**Lauren Hamilton, a senior at Denton High School, was awarded the $500 Master Gardener Scholarship. She is a well-rounded student involved in the National Honor Society, Varsity Choir, and the Women in STEM Club. A three-year member of FFA and a chapter officer, Lauren has shown breeding rabbits, floral arrangements, and entered baked goods, photography, and horticulture exhibits at the Youth Fair. She will be attending Texas A&M University to major in Animal Science, with plans to pursue a career in equine rehabilitation.**

**The Denton County Master Gardeners are proud to support these promising young leaders as they pursue their education and continue to give back to their communities. Congratulations to Laken, Macy, and Lauren – your hard work and dedication are an inspiration!**

# Denton County Youth Fair Showcases Student Talent

**BY LYNDA HARVEY**

The 2025 Denton County Youth Fair Horticulture Contest featured 60 plants and 58 floral arrangements crafted by local FFA and 4-H students. Held April 1–5, the event reflected months of student preparation and community support.

Twenty-nine students submitted plant entries, while 37 created floral arrangements. Assisting them were 25 Denton County Master Gardeners, with 10 helping during February's Plant Validation. Many volunteers worked multiple shifts to ensure a smooth event.

Two new judges brought fresh insight: Erin Smith, Denton County AgriLife Horticulture Agent, judged the plants; Mary Ann DeBerry, an experienced florist, handled the arrangements. Judging criteria included plant condition, potting, and uniqueness for plants; and composition, harmony, and creativity for floral designs.

Each student received feedback to support growth. Beyond horticulture, participants built skills in responsibility, teamwork, time and money management, and sportsmanship.

This year's Grand Champion was Briley Corbin of Sanger FFA, and the Reserve Champion went to Brady Fleitman of Denton FFA. Both earned belt buckles from the Denton County Master Gardeners and qualified for the Live Auction. Brady chose to auction his livestock entry instead of his floral arrangement. Four top horticulture projects also appeared in the Silent Auction.

Congratulations to all the students, and thank you to the judges and volunteers who made this event a success.


Briley Corbin, Horticulture Grand Champion

L to R: Molly Beadle, Alex Knibbs, Chloe Gammill, Beck Gonzalez

Photos: Lynda Harvey, CC BY-NC-SA 4.0, Denton County MGA

# Project Spotlight: Bob Jones Nature Center

**BY LIZ CHANEY**

If you are a looking for a place to connect and soothe your soul, this is the place for you! The Bob Jones Nature Center and Preserve is home to acres of mature trees, grasslands, walking trails, wildlife, and gardens, all set within a Cross Timbers habitat. Tucked away from the world's noise, gardeners enjoy the serenade of a chorus of birds, rustling trees, and swaying grasses. One only needs to spend a short time here to leave refreshed and rejuvenated.

This hidden oasis was a homestead for the Tucker family, who sold the land to the City of Southlake on the condition that it be preserved for both humans and wildlife. The property features a Nature Center and a newly completed barn, both of which preserve the ambiance of a homestead. A small group of Master Gardeners from Tarrant and Denton counties work together to support the maintenance and design of the gardens. In addition, the gardeners provide education to school students on "best practices" when students come to assist with mulching and planting. The abundance of waving daffodils around the Nature Center and gardens is a testament to their collective efforts.

The Pollinator Garden is currently the Master Gardeners' primary project. Created out of a battle with Inland Sea Grass and lacking irrigation, it has now become a haven for a diverse range of pollinators. Working in the garden is comforting with the soothing sounds of a bubbling fountain and gurgling artificial stream, which provide a water source for pollinators. During hummingbird migration, workers must be on the lookout for birds as they dart between the Redbud trees and the Coral Bean plants. Coral Bean plants are tropical in nature, but with the help of Master Gardeners, the hummingbirds have a consistent food source on their long migration. It is host to swallowtails, fritillaries, and other butterflies, as well as providing a haven for the offspring. Don't forget the native bees. They come to the pollinator garden to feast, too.

Master Gardeners and Interns gather on the third Wednesday of every month from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., with time changes in effect during the summer, at 355 E. Bob Jones Road,Southlake, TX 76092. Residents can visit the Experience Southlake Texas website to find a list of scheduled public programs. https://www.experiencesouthlaketexas.com/583/Nature-Programs

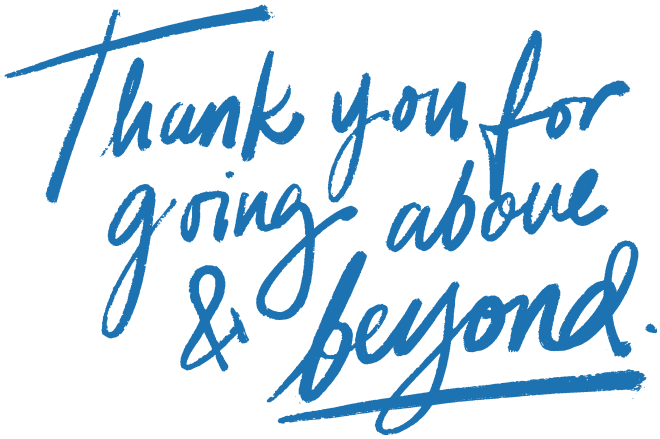
# 2024 DCMGA Cumulative Service Awards

**At the April 2024 meeting, we proudly celebrated this year's Cumulative Volunteer Service Award recipients! These awards honor both our newly graduated interns and longtime members for reaching impressive volunteer hour milestones—from 100 hours to over 5,000 hours throughout their DCMGA careers. Whether just getting started or continuing a legacy of service, each recipient has made a meaningful impact through their time, energy, and dedication to our mission. Congratulations to all!**

Photos: Mike James, CC BY-NC-SA 4.0, Denton County MGA

## Butterfly (100+ hours)

Cynthia Aguilera (105)
Dina Busch (204)
Liz Chaney (104)
Maria Chapa (181)
Janice Criswell (104)
Meaghan Dawson (258)
Donna Esposito (167)
Alice Fraga (128)
Andrea Garner (118)
Harry Gornick (270)
Chuck Guarnaccia (119)
Patricia Gunnison (153)
Pam Hancock (127)
Clare Harris (280)
Melanie Harris (280)
Rene Henderson (172)
Rene Hilliard (112)
Traci Horton (209)
Irene Myers (100)
Ruvan Nanayakkara (263)
Jill Olhausen (173)
Ann Marie O'lone (145)
Krystal Palyu (104)
Brianne Pegoraro (104)
Joni Pritchett (108)
Judson Sherman (115)
Barbara Smith (148)
Jacy Williamson (173)



# 2024 DCMGA Cumulative Service Awards (Cont.)

## Trowel (500+ hours)

Bonnie Ambrose
Jeris Bashor
Candy Bennett
Becky Cameron
Martha Cantrell
Mario Casanova
Judy Chenault
Becky Collins
Ellen Gauntt
Bethany Griffin-Loftis
Yetska Jackson
Brenda Martin
Amy Prindle
Lea Watson
Melissa Weaver
Janice Yoder Smith

## Shovel (1000+ hours)

Russ Allen
Barbara Beane
Linda D'Amanda
Jeff Hardgrave
CeCe Kenney
Carol Noble
Chryl Prestemon
Melissa Weaver

## Bouquet (1500+ hours)

Judy Allen
Lori Barr
Sheila Daniel
Cindy Helm
Mike James
Bill Moen
Susan Novak

# 2024 DCMGA President's Service Awards (Cont.)

### Water Can (2000+ hours)

Daniel Arenas
Karen Gibson
Bill Moen
Pam Spooner
Joanne Spurgin
Steve Spurgin
Lee Ann Yates

### Cactus (2500+ hours)

Beverly Duncan
Sharrie Ely
Cheryl Huckabee
Lela Khan
Dolores Payne

### Daisy (3000+ hours)

Lynda Harvey
Cheryl Huckabee
Raeline Nobles

### Bee (4500+ hours)

Janet Gershenfeld
Tammie Gurley
Pat Moyer
Kathryn Wells

### Sunflower (3500+ hours)

Barbara Brown
Shirley Manfredi
Raeline Nobles
Kim Wootton

### Ladybug (4000+ hours)

Dale Powell
Debbie Smith

### Wheelbarrow (4500+ hours)

Susan Cosio
Sue Hudiburgh

*Amazing!*

# Introducing the Shelby Educational Program Award

We're thrilled to announce a brand-new way to recognize outstanding educational efforts in our DCMGA community, the Shelby Educational Program Award! This unique honor was officially introduced at the April General Meeting and will be awarded quarterly in June, September, and December. Designed to spotlight innovation, impact, and collaboration in gardening education, the award celebrates individuals or teams who go above and beyond in sharing knowledge and promoting sustainable practices. Nominating someone is simple—just fill out a short online form. The criteria emphasize creativity in teaching, community involvement, content quality, participation, and other key contributions.

The award itself is a beautifully decorated traveling shovel—yes, a real shovel—transformed into a piece of art by Master Gardener and mosaic artist Teresa Kehrweider. The name "Shelby" was chosen for its connection to the willow tree, a symbol of adaptability and growth, making it the perfect representation of the values behind this award.

The first recipient of the Shelby Educational Program Award is the Flower Mound First Baptist Church Community Garden. This garden is more than just rows of vegetables—it's a vibrant learning space for residents, students, scout troops, and individuals with special needs. With the help of Denton County Master Gardeners, the garden serves as a hub for hands-on education in edible gardening. Volunteers work side by side planting, maintaining, and harvesting produce donated to the Christian Community Action (CCA). This program embodies the spirit of the award: growing food, knowledge, and community.

**Proud recipients of the first Shelby Educational Program Award from Flower Mound First Baptist Church Community Garden.**

# Gardening Grandma Says...

**BY BARBARA BROWN**

***Humans transitioned from hunting and gathering to growing food about 12,000 years ago. Over the millennia, they found some tricks to increase their harvest. What they learned, they passed down to their children. Today, some of us are fortunate to have a grandmother, aunt, or neighbor who continues the tradition of sharing old-fashioned gardening wisdom. Much of that shared knowledge is helpful, but sometimes it is just a superstition with a long history. The Gardening Grandma series of articles puts these tips and tricks to the test of modern science by answering the question, "Does it really work?" Or, is it a myth?***

Gardening Grandma says, "*Save the ashes from your fireplace and use them in the garden to add essential minerals to the soil!*"

## *Gardening Grandma is right!*


Wood ash contains nutrients beneficial for plant growth. "Depending on the type of wood, the ash may contain 5 to 8% potash (potassium), up to 20% calcium, about 1% phosphate (phosphorus), and trace amounts of micronutrients such as iron, manganese, boron, copper, and zinc. Its approximate fertilizer analysis is 0-1-3 (N-P-K), varying with the type of wood ("Using Wood Ashes in the Home Garden").

However, a known side effect of adding ashes to your garden is an increase in your soil's alkalinity or pH value. According to Texas A&M AgriLife, "a soil pH of from 6.0 to 7.0 is ideal for good plant growth." A pH of 7 is neutral. A pH less than 7 is acidic, and a pH greater than 7 is basic or alkaline.

If your garden soil's pH is too high, plants will be less productive and may not survive. "High pH causes interveinal chlorosis and bleaching, pale mottling, and blotchy or marginal necrosis of new growth. Damage is primarily due to reduced availability of minerals, especially iron, manganese, and zinc, so any of the symptoms of those deficiencies may occur in high-pH soils (Managing Pests in Gardens: Trees and Shrubs: Disorders: pH problems—UC IPM)."

Unfortunately, our native North Central Texas soils, especially those with clay as a major component, usually have a pH above 7. Your city water may also be alkaline. Generalizing from several water quality reports for North Central Texas, our irrigation water typically has a pH between 7.1 and 8.2.

# Gardening Grandma Says... (Cont.)

If you are concerned about the impact on your garden soil's pH of adding fireplace ashes, consider having a soil test done before adding ashes and then monitoring the soil pH annually thereafter (Soil Testing Lab).

## *Caution*

Only use wood ash from burning dry, aged wood from trees such as oak, ash, birch, or pine. Do not use ash that contains cardboard, charcoal, or pressure-treated or stained wood, as they often contain trace elements that are harmful to plants. Do not apply ash to newly germinated seeds (Lamborn and UF/IFAS Extension Baker County)."

## *Sources and Resources*


- "Using Wood Ashes in the Home Garden." Yard and Garden, https://yardandgarden.extension.iastate.edu/how-to/using-wood-ashes-home-garden.
- Managing Pests in Gardens: Trees and Shrubs: Disorders: pH problems—UC IPM. https://ipm.ucanr.edu/PMG/GARDEN/PLANTS/DISORDERS/phproblems.html#:~:text=High%20pH%20causes%20interveinal%20chlorosis,occur%20in%20high%2DpH%20soils
- Soil Testing Lab. https://soiltesting.tamu.edu/
- Chapter III: Soils and Fertilizers - Vegetable Resources Vegetable Resources. https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/vegetable/guides/texas-vegetable-growers-handbook/chapter-iii-soils-fertilizers/.
- Understanding Soil pH. https://extension.psu.edu/understanding-soil-ph


Canva Stock


**BY HELP DESK TEAM**

*Q: : Last year my 5-year-old peach tree produced lots of fruit but they were all rotten. The fruit had a funny shape that is hard to describe but ugly. We lost the entire crop. What should I do this year to protect my harvest?*

**A:** It is possible that plum curculio larvae have infested your peaches—a common problem in peaches in North Texas. Plum curculio beetles also target plums, nectarines, pears, and cherries. These beetle-like flying pests are approximately ¼ inch long and are characterized by a curved snout. Their legless larvae are white or yellow and approximately ½ inch long. Adults overwinter in wooded areas and move into fruit trees in the spring. The adults feed on the developing fruit, wherein females lay their eggs. The resulting larvae feed inside the peach and later emerge as adults, poised to infest fruit later in spring and summer.

**Symptoms and Diagnosis**

"Plum curculio beetles, *Conotrachelus nenuphar*, can be found on plum, cherry, peach, and apple trees, less commonly on nectarine and pear trees. Fruit may fall prematurely, in late May and June. The skin of the infected fruit has small crescent-shaped blemishes that eventually become swollen and knotted. Upon closer examination, larvae may be seen feeding near the blemishes. Infested fruit is often hard and misshapen. The larvae create holes in the fruit's skin when they leave it to pupate. These holes are clean-cut and free of frass or webbing (Plum Curculio, n.d.)."

**Integrated Pest Management Strategies**

"1. Shake infested trees. In backyards with only a handful of infested trees, plum curculios may be shaken out of infested trees. This technique works best early in the day when the beetles are sluggish. Lay paper or cloth underneath the trees to collect the beetles. Destroy the collected beetles.

2. Clean up fallen fruit in which eggs or larvae may be developing.

3. Cultivate the soil surrounding infested trees in late spring or early summer to destroy pupating larvae that may have fallen to the ground with the fruit or pupae that may be developing in burrows in the ground.

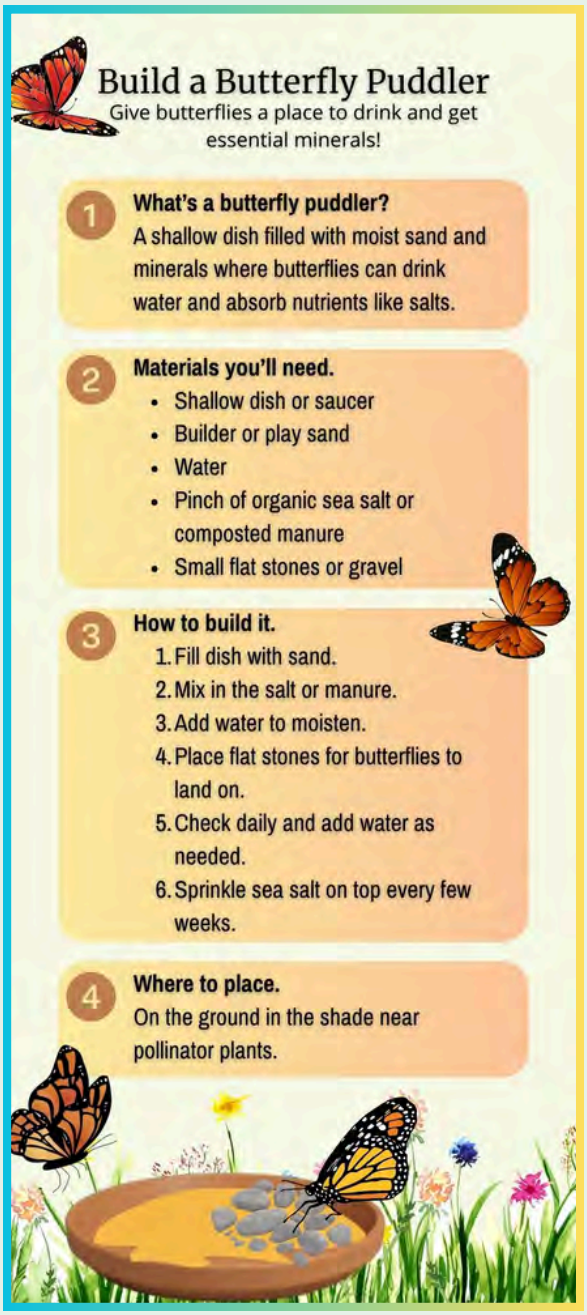
4. Apply insecticides when populations of adult beetles are severe. Typically insecticides are only applied in production farms. It is important to delay the application of the pesticide until after flower petals drop to avoid harming pollinating insects. Reapply pesticides two more times, at 10–14 day intervals. Pesticides registered for use include azadirachtin (Neem), malathion, and pyrethrins." (Plum Curculio, n.d.)

**Additionally, always follow label instructions and safety precautions when using any pesticide. Ensure that the product is registered for use in Texas and that it aligns with your specific pest control needs.**

**Plum Curculio (*Conotrachelus nenuphar*)**

**Sources and Resources**


- Plum Curculio. www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/gardens-gardening/your-garden/help-for-the-home-gardener/advice-tips-resources/pests-and-problems/insects/beetles/plum-curculio.aspx.
- Knutson, A., Ong, K., Ree, B., & The Texas A&M University System. (2018). Insect and disease pests of peaches, plums, and blackberries in a small fruit orchard. https://lubbock.tamu.edu/files/2019/01/ENTO-087-Insect-and-Disease-Pess-of-Peach-Plums.pdf
- Whitney, V. A. P. B. B. (2022, April 14). Fruit tree problems now. Texas A&M AgriLife Organic. https://agrilifeorganic.org/2022/04/11/fruit-tree-problems-now/
- Nesbitt, Monte, et al. Most Common Fruit and Nut Tree Problems in Texas and How to Solve Them. https://wise.agrilife.org/files/2020/02/Most-Common-Fruit-Tree-Problems-in-Texas.pdf

TEXAS MASTER GARDENER
TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION
Denton County

2025

# GARDEN TOUR

Discover, Learn, and Grow:
Inspiring Gardens for Every Gardener

**SATURDAY**
**MAY 10TH**
9 AM - 4 PM

ADVANCED PRICE:
**$20**
DAY OF EVENT: **$25**
(CHILDREN 12 & UNDER **FREE**)

SCAN ME!

OR GO TO **WWW.DCMGA.COM** FOR TICKETS!
**RAIN OR SHINE (NO REFUNDS)**

Shiloh Gardens
FREE ENTRY

## SHILOH FIELD COMMUNITY GARDEN

**Vegetable varieties to grow in North Texas**

The nation's largest community garden, producing over 60,000 pounds of food annually for local food banks with a strong focus on **sustainability**. You can't miss the **beekeeper** and chickens!

## MEET OUR GARDENS!

ACROSS DENTON & OAK POINT

Visit our educational stations, where experts will share the gardening techniques that shaped these beautiful gardens.

## SECLUDED SANCTUARY

**Tranquil & relaxing oasis**

In the heart of a suburban neighborhood, Secluded Sanctuary offers a peaceful escape into nature, celebrating diverse plantings, drought tolerance, and creating a vibrant wildlife habitat. With a **rich diversity of roses**, flourishing vegetable beds, and colorful wildflowers, the garden provides year-round beauty, inspiration, and valuable lessons in raised-bed gardening, effective water conservation, and the importance of **cultivating a wildlife-friendly environment.**

## ALICE IN CACTUSLAND

**Growing & caring for cacti and succulents**

Step into a whimsical world where **art meets nature** in Alice in Cactusland, a garden inspired by "Alice in Wonderland" and featuring an impressive collection of cacti and succulents beautifully arranged along charming pathways. Visitors will find **practical solutions to drainage and space challenges**, explore an enchanting Alice in Wonderland sculpture garden, visit an art studio open house, and enjoy a flourishing fig orchard, all highlighting the resilience and creativity of its dedicated owner.

## WINDBLOWN WILDSCAPE

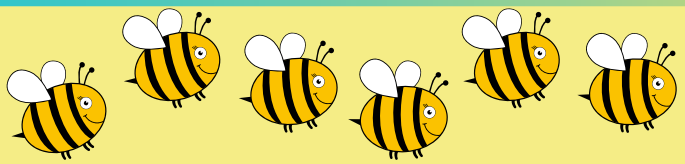
**Shade gardening & planting beds**

Spanning one acre, Windblown Wildscape is a shaded haven that slopes down to a seasonal creek, featuring curving plant beds filled with native plants, raised vegetable beds, and a rain garden. The aftermath of the May 2024 windstorm led to **creative adaptations**, including sun-tolerant plantings in previously shaded areas and the use of downed trees for garden structures, focusing on shade gardening and **water conservation**, with highlights like agaves and vitex.

## GARDEN TAPESTRY

**Composting techniques & rain harvesting**

Nestled in northeast Denton, Garden Tapestry is a serene retreat where **native plants and ornamentals** blend harmoniously in a mix of sun and shade. Managed by a single gardener, this modestly sized garden showcases a vibrant pollinator garden, a tranquil shade garden, and a secluded back garden, with composting, rain harvesting, and **innovative gardening techniques like hügelkultur and lasagna beds**, making it a peaceful place of learning and reflection.



# DENTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**MAY 5, 12, 19, 26**

**COMMUNITY STRONG FARM**

GROWING VEGETABLES FOR LINDA TUTT HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT RUN GROCERY & FIRST REFUGE FOOD BANK. ALL TASKS FROM SOIL PREP TO HARVESTING AS THE SEASON DICTATES. WE WILL GIVE A SHORT EDUCATION ON THE TASKS OF THE DAY. COME LEND A HAND. PUBLIC IS INVITED!
1350 MILAM RD E. SANGER, MONDAY MORNINGS 9AM-11AM

**MAY 7, 14, 21, 28**

**LLELA NATURE PRESERVE WORKDAY**

LAKE LEWISVILLE ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING AREA
201 E JONES ST. LEWISVILLE, TX 75057, WEDNESDAYS 9AM-12PM

**MAY 10**

**GARDEN TOUR 2025 BLOOMS!**

YOUR SENSES WILL BE DELIGHTED AS WE TOUR, LEARN AND ADMIRE FOUR BEAUTIFUL MEMBER GARDENS PLUS A PUBLIC GARDEN.
VISIT OUR DIGGING DEEPER EDUCATIONAL STATIONS, WHERE EXPERTS WILL SHARE THE GARDENING TECHNIQUES THAT SHAPED THESE BEAUTIFUL GARDENS.
CHECK OUT DCMGA WEBSITE FOR INFORMATION AND TO PURCHASE TICKETS.
SATURDAY MAY 10 9AM-4PM

**MAY 14**

**GENERAL MEETING: SOIL HEALTH: BIODIVERSITY UNDERGROUND**

JOIN SAM KIESCHNICK, URBAN WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST WITH TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE, FOR AN ENLIGHTENING PRESENTATION ON SOIL BIODIVERSITY. DISCOVER HOW SOIL FUNCTIONS AS A LIVING ECOSYSTEM, SUPPORTING A VAST ARRAY OF WILDLIFE, AND GAIN PRACTICAL TIPS FOR ENHANCING THE HEALTH OF YOUR SOIL. DON'T MISS THIS DEEP DIVE INTO THE FASCINATING WORLD BENEATH OUR FEET! THE PROGRAM BEGINS AT 10:00 TO 11:00 A.M. AND IS FOLLOWED BY THE GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING. THE PUBLIC IS WELCOME TO ATTEND AND GROW WITH US!
SOLOMON'S PORCH, GLOBAL SPHERES CENTER
7801 S INTERSTATE 35 CORINTH 10AM-12PM

**MAY 20**

**SUCCULENT TEAM MEETING**

JOIN THE SUCCULENT TEAM FOR A HANDS ON LEARNING EXPERIENCE.
PUBLIC INVITED TO ATTEND. LEARN ABOUT SUCCULENT AND CACTUS CARE.
GLOBAL SPHERES CENTER
7801 S INTERSTATE 35 CORINTH 10AM-12PM



TEXAS MASTER GARDENER
TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION
Denton County

Presented by the

## Denton County Master Gardener Speakers Bureau

# MAY 2025

| | |
|---|---|
| **May 3**<br>**9:00 am - 1:00 pm** | **Join Us at the Ask a Master Gardener Booth!, Downtown Sanger Farmers Market** |
| **May 4**<br>**11:00 am - 4:00 pm** | **Join Us at the Ask a Master Gardener Booth!**<br>**31st Annual Denton Redbud Festival, Quakertown Park** |
| **May 9**<br>**9:00 am - 10:00 am** | **Flowering Plants, Denton Senior Center** |
| **May 15**<br>**6:30 pm - 7:30 pm** | **Managing Pests – Strategies for a Healthy, Thriving Garden, The Colony Public Library** |
| **May 24**<br>**9:00 am - 1:00 pm** | **Join Us at the Ask a Master Gardener Booth!, Denton Community Market** |
| **May 24**<br>**10:30 am - 11:30 am** | **Water-Wise Gardening: Save Water, Grow Green!, Carrollton Public Library at Josey Ranch Lake** |

See All Events

## Mission Statement

As Master Gardeners, our mission is to educate and inspire Denton County residents through research-based horticulture, to promote eco-friendly gardens and enduring landscapes that enrich our 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.

## 2025 Board of Directors

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## Social Media

*Facebook:*
https://www.facebook.com/DentonCountyMGA

*Instagram:*
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https://twitter.com/DentonCountyMGA

*Pinterest:*
https://www.pinterest.com/DentonCountyMGA

*YouTube:*
*http://www.youtube.com/c/DentonCountyMasterGardener*

## Save the Date

**May 14** General Meeting & Program, "Soil Health: Biodiversity Underground" by Sam Kieschnick, Urban Wildlife Biologist. Open to the public.

**June 11** General Meeting & Program, "Tough & Beautiful: Must-Have Plants from the Dallas Arboretum!" by Denise & Max Davis. Open to the public.

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## Content

The Submission deadline for the June edition of *The Root* is Monday, May 5. Submissions may be revised at the discretion of the editor.

Ideas, photos, and articles are welcome and may be submitted to Communications Director Donna Hull at doctorhulld@gmail.com .

*Unless otherwise attributed, all photos are courtesy of Denton County MGA.*