

Fruit Orchard and Garden Tour Offered on Saturday, May 16

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service — Galveston County Office



PHOTO BY William M. Johnson

The Milkweed Assassin Bug is a commonly occurring beneficial insect in local gardens and landscapes. A presentation entitled *Beneficials in the Garden and Landscape* will be provided at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 19, at the Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office located in Carbide Park.



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Dr. William Johnson is a horticulturist with the Galveston County Office of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. Visit his website at <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston>.

News column printed in the Galveston Daily News, The Post, and other Galveston County Newspapers.

The Extension Fruit & Pecan Committee, Master Gardener volunteers and Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office will co-sponsor a Fruit Orchard and Garden Tour on Saturday, May 16, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. The program is open to the public and free-of-charge.

Three fruit orchards are on this year's tour route. Each location will be open during the 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon time period. You will have the option of touring all three sites

or any combination of sites, at your own pace and in any order you choose.

This year's tour sites contain a wide variety of fruit trees ranging from an impressive fruit tree orchard (Fruits 'n Such Orchard located at 6309 Avenue U & Bowerman Drive in Dickinson) and the Master Gardener Demonstration Orchard (located in Carbide Park in La Marque). Peach, plum, citrus, fig, apple and other fruit trees can

be seen also.

All sites contain a wide variety of vegetables also. Vegetables are grown in dozens of raised beds at Carbide Park whereas vegetables are grown in the ground at Fruits 'n Such Orchard. Visitors may also tour an impressive herb garden next to the Fruits 'n Such Orchard. If you're looking for the freshest produce to purchase, you can pick it yourself at the Fruits 'n Such Orchard.



If you are interested in seeing the amazing diversity of fruit trees that can be grown in a backyard, be sure to include a tour of Master Gardener Bill Verm's home orchard in Santa Fe.

If you have an interest in roses, be sure to visit the display beds of Earth-Kind roses located at the Carbide Park site. Homeowners love their magnificent blooms and fragrance.

Roses have had a centuries-long reputation of being the most neurotic members of the plant world. Consequently, gardeners spend considerable cash buying fertilizers, pesticides, and fungicides to sustain their roses, and much time pruning, deadheading, and watering them to keep them blooming. Roses that qualify for the Earth-Kind designation are very low-maintenance and perform very well under a variety of growing conditions.

To obtain a map with directions to the tour sites, visit the Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office located in Carbide Park (4102-B Main Street) in La Marque (281-534-3413, Ext. 1-1). A printable copy of the tour map and additional details are available on my website provided with this column (click on the "Extension Educational Programs" link).

Area homeowners who grow—or plan to grow—fruit or vegetables for home use will find the tour sites to be of considerable benefit.

At a Glance

We often find bugs annoying, but there are lots of insects and other critters that help keep gardens and plants healthy. Local gardeners are likely to name lady bugs or honey bees when asked to give an example of a beneficial insect commonly found in Gulf Coast gardens and landscapes. Local gardeners would be surprised at the diversity of beneficial insects already residing (and working) in their backyards.

To learn more about beneficial insects and how to identify them, preregister for an upcoming educational program entitled Beneficials in the Garden and Landscape. The PowerPoint presentation will be provided by Dr. William Johnson at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 19, at the Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office located in Carbide Park (4102-B Main Street) in La Marque. Preregister by e-mail (GALV3@wt.net) or phone (281-534-3413, Ext. 1-2).

