

Gillespie County



Horticulture Newsletter
Spring 2017



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Welcome to the Spring 2017 edition of the Gillespie County Horticulture newsletter. The weather has been unusually warm this year. At the Extension Office the bluebonnets are already starting to bloom. It should be a good wildflower season with the rain that we have received.

This year the fruit crop probably won't be as good as last year, due to the warmer weather and lack of chilling. However, peach trees have been reported to already be blooming down around Stonewall.

Though the weather has been pleasant and everything is starting to flower, don't go out and plant your entire garden just yet, unless you are willing to cover it. Despite the warm weather, we could still get a late frost.

In this issue we have articles about black spot, controlling insects, information about upcoming programs, garden tips and announcements. Enjoy!

BLACK SPOT ON ROSES

If your roses have had a history of black spot, it's a good idea to spray preventively this year, instead of waiting to spray after they start to get the disease.

Start spraying preventatively in March, after the leaves fully emerge and when the weather is warm and wet. Mancozeb, chlorothalonil, propiconazole and triphorine are good preventative fungicides, but make sure you rotate their use to prevent the disease from becoming resistant.

Once a leaf becomes infected with black spot, there isn't a cure for it. Remove the leaf, and spray the new leaves when they appear.

Black spot isn't instantly fatal, though it can lead to plant death. The continual loss of leaves during the growing season stresses the plant, and reduces its life expectancy. Also, black spot can infect canes, which will weaken and eventually kill them.

If you don't wish to spray, there are black spot resistant roses available. Dr. Steve George of Texas A&M University began a low input rose trial in 1996, with the goals of using less pesticides and water, but to be able to still get great roses. Roses were planted in locations with full sun and good air circulation. They were not sprayed, fertilized, pruned or irrigated (after the first year). Several locations were used across the state. The survivors of these trials became the first Earth-Kind Roses.

Earth-Kind Rose varieties include "The Fairy", "Caldwell Pink", "Perle d'Or", "Belinda's Dream", "Carefree Beauty", "Else Poulsen", "Spice", "Mutabilis", "Sea Foam", "New Dawn", "Reve d'Or" and more. The list originally began with 11 survivors, but it is now 20 plus. "Knock-out" is supposed to be an antique rose as well, but has been overplanted, and the previous resistance it had isn't as great anymore.

There are roses with larger flowers that are supposed to be black spot resistant, but these haven't been tested in Texas as extensively as the Earth-kind roses, and may not be as successful as reported. But if you are curious, you can see a list at <https://ag.tennessee.edu/spp/Documents/Alan%20Windham/Roses%20resistant%20to%20black%20spot%20and%20cercospora%20leaf%20spot.pdf> Or <http://www.lsuagcenter.com/portals/communications/publications/agmag/archive/2013/summer/finding-lowermaintenance-easytea-hybrid-tea-roses>.

Please note! The "McCartney" rose mentioned is not the same as the invasive Macartney rose, which has white flowers and yellow centers. The hybrid tea "McCartney" rose is a beautiful pink flowering hybrid tea and is not invasive.



Black spot



Belinda's Dream



"McCartney" rose

Non-invasive hybrid tea that is black spot tolerant.



Macartney rose

Invasive rose. Do not plant!

Ongoing Program Updates!

Gardening by the Month

The gardening by the month program has met twice, covering topics such as raised bed gardening and spring vegetable gardening preparation. Upcoming programs include "Potatoes!" (March 17th), "Organic Gardening" (April 21) and a guest presentation on bugs (May 19th). Special to month of March, **while supplies last**, attendees will receive "free" potato seed to try in their gardens or in containers. These will include two varieties that you cannot find locally. They aren't totally free, participants will be asked to fill out a simple survey and return it later in the year. Potential survey questions include: how many potatoes did this plant produce; what was the average size; and did they taste good? Please contact the extension office if you are interested in signing up for the gardening by the month program.



Junior Master Gardeners

With much appreciated help from the Hill Country Master Gardeners, there is a junior master Gardener program at the extension office in Fredericksburg. Kids have learned about plant parts and needs and how to plan a garden. Cool season vegetables have already been planted.

4-H Plant Identification Team

The team currently has four very hardworking kids. Various grasses have been covered and the first contest will be in May. The team meets in Harper. If you are interested in adult plant identification classes, or have a child you think would be interested in the Plant Id team, please contact the extension office at 830-997-3452.



BUG MANAGEMENT WITHOUT PESTICIDE USE

If you are concerned about pesticide use in your landscape and garden, there are a few things that you can do to naturally keep the insects from eating your plants.

Pests and disease can accumulate in the same spot if the same crop is grown there year after year. If you have annual plants, rotate where you plant the same kind of plant, waiting at least two years before planting that same kind of plant in that location again.

Instead of using a pesticide, you can use a blast of water to wash away various insect pests. This can be helpful for aphids and scales, but for flying insects, probably won't be as effective.

Ants can farm aphids for the honeydew they produce, and they may even "plant" aphids or scale on your beloved plants. If you have a lot of ants, aphids or scale, starting an aggressive control program for the ants may help you control these other insect pests as well. Applications of pesticides are the most effective, but to decrease populations you can try pouring boiling water on ant nests. Unfortunately, this has only a 60% success rate and may kill neighboring plants.

Companion plantings such as marigolds haven't been scientifically proven to ward off insect pests. If used for nematode control, the effects from the marigolds are only seen after the plant residue has been tilled into the soil, and this is only for specific marigold species such as the French Marigolds. Companion planting can be a more effective way to utilize space with species that don't compete, such as the three sisters combination. Also there might be some benefit of planting flowers among other plantings. Flowers attract predators and parasitoid insects, which could decrease insect pests.

If you have had problems with cutworms or burrowing insects you can make a collar of thick paper or cardboard, and press that around stem of plant. Sticky traps can also be used to trap insect pests, but these won't be effective for a giant invasion.

If you like this topic and would like to learn more, come join us at the Extension Office for our Organic Gardening presentation on April 21.



Aphids at work, harvesting honeydew from circled scale insect.

Announcement!

Native Landscape Certification Class Level 1

April 22, 2017 8:30 am-4:30 pm
Central Texas Electric Building

Offered by the Fredericksburg Native Plant Society, this class will cover including and preserving native plants in landscapes and wildlife habitat, becoming familiar with the ecology of the Edwards plateau, and distinguishing between sustainable and conventional development. The cost for the class is \$37. Register online at <http://npsot.org/wp/nlcp/> Please contact Meg at 512-589-1316 for more information.

GREEN INDUSTRY WEBINARS

Do you work in the green industry, or are looking for more hardcore information about upcoming issues in the green industry? Don't have time to go anywhere for a program? If this describes you, you may be interested in Dr. Gu's short webinars.

Dr. Gu is a horticulture extension specialist who works for Texas A&M University. Occasionally she hosts webinars addressing upcoming issues in landscape horticulture.

Topics this year include:

Intro to Green Roofs Part 1. *May 17th, 2017 from 11:00-12:00 pm.* Covers designing a green roof and installation methods.

Intro to Green Roofs Part 2. *May 24th, 2017 11:00 am -12:00 pm.* Part two of the above presentation.

Intro to Green Walls. *May 10th, 2017 from 11:00 am – 12:00 pm.* General introduction to a few off the shelf living wall systems for interior and exterior applications. Also a brief overview of current trends in LED lighting for interiorscape applications.

Chili Thrips, an emerging pest of roses in Texas . *March 8th, 2017 from 11:00 am-12:00 pm.* First detected in Texas in 2005, the chili thrip has spread to several counties and continues to impact roses and other landscape plants. Learn from this webinar how to detect this pest and help manage it.

Can't make the date for the webinars above, or want to try another one first? Recorded versions of these webinars can be found for free listening at : greenviion.wordpress.com/webinars/

Past topics have included crapemyrtle cultivars and their landscape use, rainwater harvest for commercial landscapes, a virtual tour of 2016 California spring trial, landscape weed management, honeybees and neonicotinoids Parts 1 and 2 and more landscape horticulture topics.

Go to greenviion.wordpress.com/webinars/ to sign-up for the webinars and click the link where it says "reserve your seat". Webinars should be free.

Extension Office Closures

The extension office will be closed on
April 14th and May 29th for county holi-
days.

Announcement!

The Harper High School FFA will be selling vegetable transplants, including peppers, tomatoes, herbs and more starting Mid-March until April.

Six pack trays will be priced competitively with big box stores and you will be supporting the Harper FFA program. Contact Michael McMahon with your order, or come visit with them at the Harper HWY 290 Market on April 15th. Contact Michael McMahon at 830-864-4044 (press 2 or 0) for more information.

Strange Tales of Horticulture

Do plants feel pain?

The short answer to this question is that they don't feel pain as animals or humans do. But plants certainly react to being damaged.

Some plants release chemicals into the air. This has been suggested to be an intentional signal to attract parasitoids. For example, Turlings and Fritzsche in 1999 did a study that showed parasitoid wasps can more easily locate caterpillars by means of odors emitted by the plant after a caterpillar attack.

Whether this is of benefit to the plant is debatable, because it was noted that while the caterpillar was parasitized, it wouldn't die right away, which wouldn't help the plant much. However, parasitized caterpillars do eat less, which would be beneficial to the plant.

Besides attracting parasitoid insects, plants have also been reported to show different reactions to sounds of caterpillars chewing on their leaves versus regular wind or insect song.

In experiments by Appel and Croft in 2014, they demonstrated that the arabidopsis plant in lab settings would "prime" their chemical defenses if they heard caterpillar chewing sounds, when compared to plants that hadn't heard the sounds. This effect wasn't recorded when wind or leafhopper song was played.



Local Horticulture Info on the Go!

Don't wake up early enough for the Ranch News on KNAF 910? You can listen to the garden shorts as a podcast on the web. Download or stream the podcasts on feeds.soundcloud.com/users/soundcloud:users:163318849/sounds.rss

New podcasts are posted weekly on Wednesday. Topics include hill country oriented gardening tips, horticulture happenings and program announcements, lawn and landscape problems, and Hey Hey What's Blooming.



Upcoming Programs and Events Gillespie County

Harper Public Library Oak Wilt Program

March 4th, 10:30 am

Come learn about oak wilt prevention and control methods from a landowner's perspective. Program is free.

Gardening by the Month: Potatoes!

March 17th, 2017

12:10 pm Extension Office

Come learn everything you ever wanted to know about potatoes.

Free potato seeds will be given out for you to try growing potatoes on your own (as supplies last). Program cost is \$10, \$20 for the entire series. See gillespie.agrilife.org/agriculture-2/horticulture/upcoming-programs/ for more details or call 830-997-3452.

Common Problems of West Gillespie County Landscapes

March 18th, 2017 10:30 am

Harper Public Library

A short free presentation on common lawn and garden problems of West Gillespie county will be given at the Harper Public Library. Please contact the Harper Library at 830-864-4993 or the Gillespie County extension Office at 830-997-3452 for more information.

Peaches in High Tunnels

April 5, 2017

9:00 am- 4:00 pm starting at extension office.

Presentations and tours of high tunnels (a type of greenhouse). Please RSVP to Mike Brewer by March 20th. For info, please contact Mike Brewer at 717-725-6896 or email Michael.brewer@haygrove.com

Gardening by the Month: Organic Gardening

April 21st, 2017

12:10 pm Extension Office

Come learn about organic gardening. Program cost is \$10, \$20 for the entire series. Call us at 830-997-3452 for more info.

Wings over the Hills

April 28th-30th

Lady Bird Johnson Park

Birding trips with additional presentations that include nature walks, butterfly, native plant and pollinator programs, and nature photography. Some of the programs have costs associated. Vendor and exhibition hall is free.

See wingsoverthehills.org for more information

Gardening by the Month: Bugs

May 19th, 2017

12:10 pm Extension Office

Master Gardener Barbara Banks will speak on insects. Program cost is \$10, \$20 for the entire series. Call us at 830-997-3452 for more info.

Green Expo

May 20th, 10-3 pm

Marketplatz, Fredericksburg

If interested in green additions to your home or green living, you should visit this free expo. Vendors will be present, and short talks on topics such as water, solar and backyard chickens will be given. Please contact Juli with the city of Fredericksburg at 830-997-7521 for more information.

Vendor spots are still available.

Upcoming Programs and Events

Near Gillespie County

Llano Master Gardener Garden and Lawn Show

April 1st, 2017 9:00 am—1:00 pm
St. James Lutheran Church, 1401 Ford Street, Llano
Native wildflowers, cacti, ornamentals, and other plants available for sale. Educational displays for viewing. Raffle tickets available for items and door prizes through the day. Contact the Llano Master Gardeners at 325-247-5159 for more info.

Blooms & Barrels Hill Country Master Gardener Plant Sale

April 8th, 2017 9:00 am —2:00 pm
Hill Country Youth Event Center, Kerrville
Come shop for plants, see local horticultural related exhibitors and non-profits, attend free educational programs and walk on tours of the Demonstration Gardens. Rain barrels are also available for purchase. Free admission. Contact the Hill Country Master Gardeners 830-257-6568 for more information.

Pecan Grafting and Production Workshop

April 18th, 2017 9:00 am
Bill Hathaway Orchard, TX HWY 173, about 4.5 miles from Kerrville-Schriener state park. Turn left on Center Point River road and enter first gate on the right (signs will be posted).
Learn how to graft pecans! Early season insect and fertilization management will also be discussed. 3 Pesticide applicator CEUS will be available. Program cost is \$10. Pre-register by calling the Kerr County Extension office at 830-257-6568.

Garden Gourmet Backyard Basics Program

April 14th, 2017
Don Strange Ranch , 103 Waring Welfare Rd, Boerne
Workshop topics themed around growing and making your own food, topics tentatively including making pickles, yogurts and smoothies, container gardening, herbs and more. Lunch is included. Program cost is tentatively set at \$55. Times are tentatively 8:30 am—2:30 pm. When registration opens it will be online at <https://agriferegister.tamu.edu/productListings/1> . Contact Jana at 830-249-9343 for more information.

4th Hill Country Land Stewardship Conference

April 20-21, 2017
Y.O. Ranch Hotel, Kerrville
Two day annual conference on managing land in the Texas Hill Country area, sponsored by the Bennet Trust. Topics this year include “managing deep rooted Invaders” with Dr. Lyons, “Top Laws Texas Landowners Need to Know”, with Dr. Lashmet, “Landscaping for wildlife, and more. Tours include Hillingdon Ranch, or a “Wine and Roses” tour that focuses on horticultural and agritorusim aspects in Gillespie and Llano County, or a Kerr Wildlife area tour. Cost for the two day program is \$75, and most meals are included. You can register onsite or beforehand. Pre-registration is preferred and will close April 14th. Register at agriferegister.tamu.edu/productListingDetails/2265 . Contact your local county extension agent or Linda Francis (979) 845-2425 for more information.

Garden Calendar

With tips taken from "Dr. Welch's Garden Tips"

March 2017-May 2017

March

- Dig and divide summer and fall flowering perennials just before they initiate their spring growth. If they have initiated spring growth, leave alone.
- Select and order caladium tubers for late April and early May planting. Do not plant caladiums until soil temperature reaches 70°F.
- Start weeding early in the flower garden. Early competition with small plants can delay flowering. A mulch will discourage weed growth and make those that do come through easier to pull.
- Plant beets, kohlrabi, potatoes, swiss chard, and turnips. Plant with caution tomatoes, watermelon, summer squash, corn, cucumber, eggplant, cantaloupe and beans.
- Begin spraying roses for black spot if weather is warm, wet and humid.

April

- Prune spring-flowering shrubs soon after flowering. Keep the natural shape of the plant in mind as you prune, and avoid excessive cutting except where necessary to control size.
- Begin fertilizing roses.
- Continue to spray rose varieties susceptible to black spot. Use every 7 to 10 days, or as label suggests.
- Allow foliage of spring flowering bulbs to mature and yellow before removing.
- Plant beans, cantaloupe, corn, cucumbers, eggplant, okra, southern peas, peppers, pumpkins, radishes, summer and winter squash, sweet potatoes, tomatoes and watermelons.

May

- Continue to fertilize roses every four to six weeks with small amounts of a balanced fertilizer.
- Pinch back the terminal growth on newly planted annual and perennial plants. This will result in shorter, more compact, better branched plants with more flowers.
- Plant caladium tubers, petunias, impatiens and begonias in well prepared shady areas.
- Replace or replenish mulch materials in flower beds and shrub borders to conserve moisture and reduce weed growth.
- Remove or cut back frost-damaged crape myrtle and other ornamentals as soon as the extent of the injury can be determined.
- Plant watermelon, okra, sweet potatoes, winter and summer squash, southern peas, peppers and cantaloupe. If planting tomatoes, use heat tolerant varieties ("Phoenix", "Florida 91").

Name that Plant!



What is the name of this plant? First person to respond with the correct answer will get their name featured in next quarter's newsletter. Family members of extension employees are not eligible to reply.

Last Quarter's Winner

Allen Hogan



Answer was Dixie Rosemallow, also known as Confederate Rose.

This newsletter is a publication comes out quarterly, with issues out on February/March (spring), June/July (summer), September/October (fall), November/December (winter). If you would like to stop receiving this newsletter, please contact us me at elizabeth.mcmahon@agnet.tamu.edu.

For other questions, comments, and concerns, please contact us at:

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