



Preview

Hello! Thanks for reading the Gillespie County summer 2017 horticulture newsletter.

At the time of writing this, we are very dry. Hopefully rain comes soon.

Bluebonnet season is past, and the native plants seem to be slowing down as we slip into summer. Meanwhile gardens are ramping up in production, as are the insect populations.

Oak wilt is on the move. Included in this issue is a guide to oak wilt, with emphasis on foliar characteristics.

Youth program updates and general announcements are in this issue as well. Ever want to enter the county fair, but not sure what they are looking for? See the county fair article for tips.

As always, keep in mind that you if have questions, we at the Extension office, have answers. Don't feel bashful about calling. The number is 830-997-3452.

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Oak Wilt Ramping up Once More

Oak wilt is a common fatal disease of live oaks in the Texas Hill Country. Symptoms include leaves with brown or yellow veins on a background of green or yellow (veinal necrosis). Trees may defoliate at varying speeds.

Though the veinal necrosis is very telling, it isn't a surefire diagnosis. Other diseases and stresses may cause this condition. To more accurately verify that your tree is dying from oak wilt and not another disease, testing of branches that are six inches long and one to two inches in diameter is suggested.

There is around a 20% survival rate for live oaks infected with oak wilt, but that doesn't mean that they are going to look pretty after the disease. Even if the trees survive, they may transition into live oak decline.

Every type of oak that grows in Texas can become infected from oak wilt, though infections outside of live oaks and red oaks are very rare. Like live oaks, red oaks will show leaf symptoms, but these look different. The leaves will have a broad brown edge burn. Leaves will eventually turn completely brown, but remain attached to the branches. Again, as with live oaks, these leaf symptoms are not limited to oak wilt. Red oaks can die in as little as 4-6 weeks.

Oak wilt is commonly spread through grafted root systems and/or beetles that carry the spores to open wounds. Contaminated equipment, such as pruning saws, can also transmit the disease though chain-saws do not. Preventing spread by the beetles is easier than preventing spread by the root grafts. To avoid periods of highest beetle activity, only prune your live and red oaks in the dead of winter or hottest heat of summer, and always seal the wounds with paint afterwards.

Oak wilt options are mainly preventative, including trenching and injections. Trenching severs the grafted root systems, preventing the trees from transmitting the disease. A rock saw is used to dig a trench down four feet down (deeper in deep soils), which severs the grafted roots. The trenching needs to be done at least one hundred feet from infected trees. It isn't permanent, and may need to be repeated in the future if the disease is still present in the area.

Injections of fungicide can be used to protect trees from oak wilt. This involves drilling holes into the tree base and pumping the pesticide in. Chemjet style injection treatments have not yet been scientifically proven to be effective for oak wilt, and are not recommended.

Both the injections and the trenching can be expensive, though there are cost saving programs for the trenching. Hopefully less expensive options will be available in the future.



An oak wilt hot spot in Gillespie County.



Coming back after a week or two to spray the wounds isn't sealing the wounds correctly.



Live oaks that survive oak wilt may transition into oak decline. Many trees slowly die after entering decline, but a limited few recover.

Foliar Symptoms

Suspicious Leaves



Veinal Necrosis

It's not always very obvious, as in this picture. This was caused by oak wilt. Leaves also have tar spot.



Possibly Oak Wilt

May be seen in late spring. Recommended to be tested.



Very Suspicious Leaves

Probably not oak wilt (especially in late summer and early fall) but should be tested.

Not Oak Wilt



Leaf Rust



Oak Leaf Blister

Green stage on left, brown stage on right.



Twig Blight

Causes small groups of leaves to die.



Powdery Mildew and Tar spot

Mildew is the faint powdery cast to leaves. Black spots are tar spot.



Stress Burn

Could be due to lack of water, too much water, too salty soil, too hot, or general tree issue.

Youth Program Updates



Bed in February 2017



Beds in late April 2017



Bed after program ended

Junior Master Gardeners

The Junior Master Gardener program ended with an apple tasting on Tuesday, May 9th. Kids and volunteers got to vote on which apple had the best appearance and which apple tasted the best (“Granny Smith XL” won both categories). Kids also got the opportunity to try several uncommon vegetables, including turnips and kohlrabi.

Throughout the year, kids got to learn about gardening, with a few special lessons on soil and water. They worked in their own garden onsite. Radishes were the first crop to be harvested, and everyone got the opportunity to eat some. Broccoli, basil, swiss chard and onions were harvested later in the season. Unfortunately, not much was ready by the time the program ended. The next session will be moved to the fall in order to allow the kids more time to eat what they grow.

Thanks to all the volunteers who participated in this program!

Junior Master Gardeners will return Fall 2018. If you have a child or grandchild that would be interested, watch for an announcement in this newsletter in Spring 2018, or watch the newspaper for more information.

4-H Plant Identification Team

The Gillespie County Plant Identification Team did well this year! They placed second at the 4-H District 10 contest, with two individuals in the top five juniors. The contest season has currently ended.

If your children or grandchildren may be interested in this contest, please contact us at the Extension Office.



Photo from 4-H District 10 contest. Bryson, Jonathan and Garret. Not pictured is Macie.

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS & NEWS

Gardening by the Month

After the June Gardening by the Month Program on Composting, presented by guest speaker, Chris Seifert, the Gardening by the Month program will be taking a short hiatus during the summer, and will be returning in September 2017.

The fall slate of programs, same time and same third Friday include:

[September 22th, 2017 Fall Gardening \(Date Change!\)](#)

October 20th, 2017 Seed Saving

November 17th, 2017 Growing and Cooking with Winter Squash

Extension Office Closures

The extension office will be closed on July 4th for Independence day and August 25th for the Gillespie County Fair.

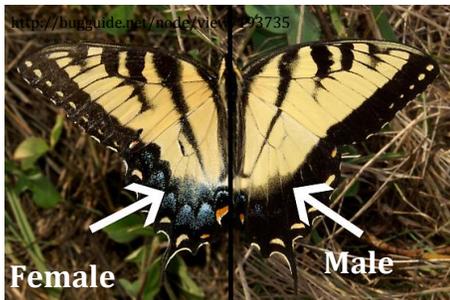
Local Horticulture Info on the Go!

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.

Learn a Bug!

Eastern Tiger Swallowtail



Female

Male

Light Form



Dark Form



Caterpillar

Winning at the County Fair

One of my goals this year is to increase the number of entries into the Gillespie County Fair Agricultural Exhibits show. Gillespie County is fortunate to have this opportunity, and with this piece I hope is to encourage those who lack confidence to enter vegetables this year and win!

Entries in the produce and eggs categories are judged anonymously by judges from out of town. This prevents people from winning purely on name recognition. Names are put on colored tags after the winners have been chosen.

Participation in the adult division is limited to citizens of Gillespie county or surrounding counties. Entries are free, but they must have been grown by YOU. Kids can show in the adult open show, but they cannot show in both the junior and open show. Cash prizes are awarded for champions, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place. Entries must have been grown from between September 1st, 2016 and August 24th, 2017. They are due at the Agricultural Exhibit hall by 6 pm, August 24th, 2017. Multiple entries into the same category are not allowed. Item pick-up is on Sunday, August 27th, 2017.



Picture taken from Gillespie County Fair Facebook page

Entries in the adult division.



Picture taken from Gillespie County Fair Facebook page

Entries in the junior division.

Categories exist for different varieties of agricultural products, so you need not worry about that mega pumpkin being judged against your pie pumpkin. Last year categories with fewer entries included: cucumbers (last year was an off year), beets, garlic, irish potatoes, sweet potatoes, tomatillos and carrots. Yes, carrots are a cool season crop, but the carrots entered last year were clearly homegrown, so it can be done. Eggs are usually very competitive, as are pumpkins and watermelons. Normally tomatoes are very competitive, but weren't last year. The key to winning some of the more competitive categories is getting your vegetable plants to survive and thrive in the summer, while everyone else's aren't.

It's very important that vegetable entries only be washed. They cannot be oiled, waxed, polished, sanded, or have their appearance otherwise altered. The judges do notice this, and your vegetables/fruits may get last place or be disqualified.

Winning at the County Fair

continued



Picture by Michael McMahon

Uniformity is key with entries that require more than one of the same item

If you are entering the type of exhibit that requires more than one of the same item (like eggs or jalapenos), make sure that all of your entries are uniform. For example, you may have the biggest, prettiest, tomato that anyone has ever seen. But if you only have one, and the exhibit requirements ask for three per entry, and the other two tomatoes are a lot smaller than the first, your exhibit won't do as well, even though your first tomato is the prettiest tomato on that table.

Make sure that the produce you enter is perfectly ripe. Overgrown, orange cucumbers aren't going to do as well as those perfectly sized and still green. Rotten tomatoes are never appreciated. Likewise, the judges can tell if the produce needed to ripen more.

Items normally aren't damaged during their display time at the fair, except for the sunflower heads. Birds fly into

the building and peck out the seeds (and humans pick them out with their fingers). If you

are entering sunflower heads, do not worry about this effecting your chance at winning. The entries are judged the same night that they are received, so if damage occurs to the sunflower heads after Thursday night, it isn't counted against them.

In addition to the agricultural exhibits, there is also a Plants and Flowers exhibit as well. The rules are simpler: you must have the name of the plant on the pot and it must have been grown by you. Categories include potted plants, hanging baskets, succulents, cactus, dish gardens, and both fresh and dried arrangements. If you enter, choose plants with well distributed growth, no disease and/or insect damage and that don't look as if you planted them last week in a pot. Blooming plants do better.

For more information about these exhibits and contests, please call the fair office at (830) 997-2359 or email them at Info@gillespiefair.com. A fair magazine will be out within the next couple of months with updated class descriptions. Check out their website at <http://www.gillespiefair.net/gillespie-county-fair/> to view it online, or stop by the AgriLife Extension Office for a copy (when available).



Picture by Lynne Renaud

The plant and flowers exhibit.

FARMERS MARKETS AND WHERE TO FIND THEM

The Texas Hill Country is blessed to have many local farmer's markets. Look below for more information on the few that are closest to Gillespie County.

Fredericksburg Farmer's Market

Marketplatz, Fredericksburg

Thursdays 4-7 pm

Peaches, meat products, vegetables, honey, food prepared on site, and more!

<http://fredericksburgfarmers-market.com/>

Kerrville Farmer's Market

Open Area West of Hill Country

Youth Event Center

Wednesdays 3-7 pm

Goat cheese, vegetables, jams, soaps, sweets and more.

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

Llano Farmer's Market

Courthouse Square

Saturdays 8-12 pm

Vegetables, canned goods, eggs, live plants, etc.

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



Mason County Farmer's Market

On the Square

Some Saturdays 5-7 pm

Contact/check facebook before attending to check if it's open.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1028102043866833/>

Ingram Farmers & Artisans Market

107 Old Ingram Loop West

Thursdays 2-dark

Art, lotions, candy, bread, produce, etc.

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



Don't forget! Many local peach stands sell locally grown vegetables that they grow themselves (in addition to the peaches) or buy from local growers. Check out your favorite stand for more information. See complete listing of peach stands here:

<http://www.texaspeaches.com/>

Strange Tales of Horticulture

Plants with Tentacles

Is it an alien invasion? Are pears growing hair?

No, it's neither of these things. It's a fungal disease.

Cedar quince rust on rosaceous hosts can cause tubes that look like hairs or tentacles to emerge from the leaves and fruit. These tubes release spores, which infect new plants.

But this story gets weirder. Many diseases need only one plant in order to survive. Cedar quince rust needs two; a cedar (juniper) tree and a pear or quince tree (or a close relative). It has to alternate between these two plants in order to survive.

On juniper trees, the fungus produces galls that look like large splotches of yellow bird poop. This goop, unless pruned out of the tree, will produce infectious spores for possibly more than six years, according to the Missouri Botanical garden.



Damage on the leaves is possible.



Damage on the young fruit.

Fruit and flowering tree hosts include quinces, pears, crabapples, hawthorns and more. The “Keifer” pear variety is very susceptible. Juniper (cedar) hosts include Eastern Red Cedar, Rocky Mountain Juniper and various ornamental junipers. Ashe Juniper, the common cedar tree of the Hill Country, is not supposed to be a carrier for this disease. None of the juniper hosts grow here naturally, though they may be intentionally planted in landscapes.

This disease is uncommon here in the Texas Hill Country because of the lack of an alternative host. But if your trees get the disease year

after year, there are a few things you can do to prevent it.

The best recommendation is removal of all junipers from your area. The problem with this recommendation is that even if you get rid of all your juniper trees, the spores can travel long distances on the wind. So if your neighbors have some, your trees may still get the disease.

What you can do is:

- Prune out any yellow goopy galls that you see on your juniper trees.
- If you have had a problem with this disease in the past on your fruit trees, apply a preventative spray of myclobutanil or mancozeb according to label instructions. Spray the tree at bloom, at intervals as directed by the label, until leaves have fully emerged.

Upcoming Programs and Events

Gillespie County

Gardening by the Month June Program

Composting

With special guest, Master Gardener Chris Seifert

June 16th, 2017

12:10 pm Extension Office

Come learn how to compost and to recognize beneficial creatures in compost. 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.



Fresh compost in the making.

Stonewall Peach Jamboree

June 16th-17th

Stonewall

- Live peach auction. Peach salsa and biggest peach contest. BBQ meal available on Saturday, with 42 and washer pitcher tournament. Dance and rodeo on Friday and Saturday night.

Advanced Grape Grower Workshop

June 19th-20th

1- 5 pm June 19th; June 20th, 8:30-5 pm

Hill Country University Center, Fredericksburg,

3 General, 1 IPM Pesticide CEUS

Geared toward seasoned grape growers, topics will include: controlling fungal diseases, managing acidity in the vineyard and winery, frost protection, mechanization, the glyphosate controversy, variety performance in Texas and more. Contact Laura Nelson at 830-990-4046 for more info. Cost is \$150. Register online at agriliferegister.tamu.edu/productListingDetails/2307 . **NO REGISTRATION AT DOOR.** Registration closes June 12th.

Fredericksburg NPSOT Chapter Meeting

June 27th, 2017

6:30 Social with Refreshments

7:00 Program and Meeting

Fellowship Hall, Memorial Presbyterian Church, 601 North Milam Street.

- Join the Native Plant Society for their June program "Attracting Birds in the Texas Hill Country: A Guide to Land Stewardship" with speaker Rufus Stephens.

Gillespie County Fair

August 24th-27th, 2017

Gillespie County Fairgrounds

- County fair with agricultural and home products show, livestock shows, carnival , agricultural and local organization exhibits and horse racing! See the fair magazine or <http://www.gillespiefair.net/> for more information.

Selected Upcoming Programs and Events Outside of Gillespie County

Hill Country Master Gardener Meeting

June 7th, 2017

Hill Country Youth Event Center, Kerrville
2 pm

Speaker presentations are open to the public. This month's speaker is Elizabeth McGreevy with her presentation on "Ashe Juniper Facts". Call (830) 257-6568 for more information.

Texas Association of Olive Oil Annual Conference

June 16th, 2017

Freeman Coliseum, San Antonio, TX
8 am-5 pm.

Cost for members is \$50, non-members is \$150. Lunch included.

Program includes a review of climate constraints on olive growing in Texas, orchard establishment, cotton root rot in olive orchards, pre/post harvest of olives and more. Association meeting after program. Includes an olive oil showcase. CEUS might be available. See here for more information: <http://conference.txaoo.org/>

Texas Pecan Growers Association Conference

July 9-12

Embassy Suites, Frisco, TX

Pecan themed programs and judging of the state pecan show. Contact 979-846-3285 for more information. To register online, see here: <https://www.eply.com/tpga2017>

UGRA River Clean-Up

July 22, 2017

Flat Rock Park, Kerrville

Help clean up the Guadalupe river. Register at arrival and get assignment at that time or pre-register before July 14th. Pre-registering allows you to skip check in and to go directly to your clean-up site. Start clean up at 8:00 am, return trash by 11:00am. Stay for snacks and distribution of awards for biggest item and most unusual item. First 200 pre-registered volunteers get free t-shirt. All are entered in raffle for prizes. See here for more information : <http://www.ugra.org/annualrivercleanup.html>

Texas Sheep and Goat Field Day

August 18th, 2017

Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center

78876 N. U.S. Highway 87, San Angelo, TX
8- 1 pm

Texas Sheep and Goat Expo

August 18th, 2017-August 19th, 2017

San Angelo Fairgrounds

August 18th, 2017 1:30-7:30 pm

August 19th, 2017 7:00 am-4 pm

Sessions on sheep shearing, hair sheep, angora goat session, ram sale, selecting breeding animals, livestock forages, guardian dog demonstration and more. Pesticide CEUS will probably be available, but which and how many are unknown at this time.

Contact Mrs. Bengé at 325-653-4576 for more information.

Garden Calendar

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

June 2017-August 2017

June

- Water lawn and garden thoroughly, but not too frequently.
- Check for insects and diseases. Destroy badly infested plants.
- Consider digging and dividing any crowded spring bulbs. Once the bulbs have matured and the foliage has turned brown, it is time to spade them up and thin out the stand. Crowded bulbs produce fewer and smaller blooms. They usually need thinning every 3 to 4 years.
- Fertilize roses every 4 to 6 weeks. Apply a high-nitrogen fertilizer immediately after a flush of bloom. Continue to spray susceptible roses with a black-spot control every 7 to 10 days or as the labels advise.
- Re-blooming salvias, such as *Salvia greggii* and *S. farinacea*, should be pruned back periodically during the summer. To make the job easier, use hedging shears, and remove only the spent flowers and a few inches of stem below.
- Plant pumpkins around late June for county fair and Halloween.

July

- Trim off faded flowers on crape myrtles and vitex to encourage later re-bloom.
- Sow seeds of cool-season flowers and vegetables in flats for planting outside during mid-to-late fall.
- Pick okra, peas and peppers often to maintain production.
- Plant pumpkins around early July for county fair and Halloween.

August

- Plant your fall tomato transplants. Choose plants with short days to maturity like "Early Girl" in order to get tomatoes sooner. Carrots can be planted this month too.
- Fall planted bulbs are usually on sale this month and September. Get your order in early and save money.
- Plant bluebonnet and other spring wildflowers.

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.

Last Quarter's Winner

Allen Hogan



Answer was Crow Poison, aka false garlic (Nothoscordum bivalve).

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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