



# As the Garden Grows

*A Publication of the Gonzales Master Gardeners*

*Gonzales, Texas June/July 2018 Volume 8, Issue 6*

**MG Class #9 Starts September 2018**

**Will the Classroom be Full or Empty?**



## **Who are the Gonzales Master Gardeners?**

We are an all-volunteer organization working under the direction of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension. Master Gardeners love gardening and want to share their knowledge with others and promote the love of gardening. What really sets Master Gardeners apart from other home gardeners is their special training in horticulture and their commitment to sharing their knowledge by working through Texas A&M AgriLife Extension to provide horticulture-related information to the community.

The Texas Master Gardener training program is designed to prepare members to volunteer in the community. We offer a minimum of 50 hours of instruction taught by Texas AgriLife Extension specialists and other experts.

Topics Include:

- ❖ Horticulture & Plant Growth
- ❖ Insects & Pest Management
- ❖ Plant Identification

- ❖ Diagnosing & Managing Plant Problems
- ❖ Lawn Care Maintenance & Disease
- ❖ Plant Propagation
- ❖ Water Conservation
- ❖ Herbs & Vegetables
- ❖ Tree Care & Pruning Principles
- ❖ Composting/Organic Horticulture
- ❖ Home Fruit & Nut Production

## Volunteering

Master Gardeners volunteer in the community to teach others about horticulture. We follow the research-based recommendations of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension. Members who complete 50 hours of volunteer service in the year after training earn the designation “Texas Master Gardener.” We use our title only when engaged in Texas A&M AgriLife Extension activities.

The type of service done by Master Gardeners varies according to community needs and the interests and abilities of the Master Gardener. No matter what makes you flower, we have a place for you.

Our next upcoming MG training class will be starting on September 11, 2018. Applications are available online at [www.gonzalesmastergardeners.org](http://www.gonzalesmastergardeners.org) or can be picked up at the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Office. Please return all applications to:

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Office  
Gonzales Master Gardeners  
1709 E. Sarah DeWitt Drive  
Gonzales, TX 78629

Phone: 830-672-8531

Fax: 830-672-8532

E-mail: [gonzales@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:gonzales@ag.tamu.edu)

For more information contact Fran Saliger, 830-672-2953 or [fsaliger@gvec.net](mailto:fsaliger@gvec.net)

**Set a goal to recruit at least one new student to join the  
Gonzales MG Training Class!**

# BEWARE OF THE ASP OR PUSS CATERPILLAR

(Prepared by Camille Goodwin, MG 2008 Texas AgriLife Extension Service Galveston County Office Dickinson, TX 77539) posted at [www.aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu](http://www.aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu))

**Note:** In my meandering through Facebook, I have come across two posts about people being bitten by this caterpillar that ends up in the emergency room. I thought it would be good to pass this information onto all of you. Fran Saliger



Figure 1

## Asp or Puss Caterpillar

**Type Pest:** chewing insect (*Megalopyge opercularis* J. E. Smith)

**Type Metamorphous:** complete (egg, larva, pupa, adult stages)

**Other Common Names:** flannel moth, puss caterpillar

**Period of Primary Occurrence:** late spring to late summer

- Moths emerge in late spring to early summer to lay eggs
- One or two generations can occur each year
- Asp moth caterpillars are more commonly encountered in late summer and into the fall when they attain half to full size

**Plants Affected:** Oaks, pecan, elm, hackberry, dwarf yaupon, and hollies

## Identifying Characteristics of Insect Pest

- Adult moth approximately 1" long with blunt wings covered with long wavy hair; wings are orange at the base and cream-colored at the tips
- Moths lay eggs that hatch into a dangerous larva (caterpillars about 1" long) with 7 pairs of prolegs (suction cup-like claspers on rear of the body)
- Caterpillars are teardrop-shaped with long silky hairs, resembling a tuft of cotton or fur (Fig. 1-4)
- Colors vary from yellow or gray to reddish-brown or a mixture of colors (Fig. 1-4)



Figure 2



Figure 3

## Description / Symptoms

- Venomous hairs stick into the skin causing painful burning and a rash

- Other symptoms include headaches, nausea, vomiting, shock or respiratory stress
- Pain usually subsides within an hour and spots disappear within a few days
- Infests shade trees and shrubbery around homes, schools and in parks, but cause no serious damage to the plant; infestation not limited to vegetation, can be found on hard surfaces near trees and shrubs; hazard is to children and gardeners who encounter them or others who brush up against them



Figure 4

- One of the most toxic caterpillars in North America
- Intense throbbing pain develops immediately or within five minutes of contact with the caterpillar
- Blood colored spots in a grid pattern and swelling may occur at site of sting
- Severe sting happens when the asp moth caterpillar rubs or is pressed against skin

### First-aid for Stings

- Ice pack applied to site of sting
- Oral antihistamines, **for allergic reactions such as itching and for difficulty breathing, see a physician immediately**

### Best Management Practices (BMP)

- High populations of asp caterpillars can be controlled by spraying with a residual pesticide such as permethrin, cyfluthrin or other sprays labeled for control of caterpillars on ornamental plants

## Greenhouse and Children's Garden Update

The Greenhouse workday headed up by Shirley on Monday, June 11 went very well. It was cloudy and therefore it was in the low 80's most of the time. Thanks go to Fran, Robbie, Sandy, Donna, Jeff, Nancy Foster, Cheryl, Dee and Lynette for working.

We were able to move and spread out the grape vines where some of the non-sprouting walnut seeds had been. The Trifloriata Rootstock trees were moved from the green house to some of the empty spots in the walnut tree orchard. These are now a year old and will be used



for future citrus tree grafting classes. Roses and other plants that were in the propagation tent were potted up. There is still work to be done to add a few more drips lines to the Walnut Tree Orchard for future trees and shrubs. Hopefully this will be completed sometime in September or October.



Arline, Carolyn W., Dwaine, Nancy F and Jennifer volunteered at the children's garden the week of June 11 weeding the beds. It was hot and dry but they did a tremendous job in getting a good start on cleaning up the beds. This will be an ongoing process as there is always a need for weeding at the gardens. It is really looking great after a few days of hard work. With the great rain we had on June 19 those weeds will be popping up again! If you have time this summer, stop in early and pull a few weeds. This is our "Showcase Garden" and many visitors stop by to see what's going on.



## FALL TREE/PLANT SALE

Shirley and Donna are busy getting ready for **the Fall Plant Sale on October 20, 2018**. The membership decided at the May meeting to host the sale at Texas Heroes Square.

Donna will have a planning meeting sometime in the future to plan for the event. If you are growing any of the bare root trees/blackberries, keep them watered and fertilized. Osmocote should be applied now (June) and again in September. Shirley and her team of Dwaine and Jeff have been diligently been taking care of the plants in the Greenhouse this summer and checking the plants/trees in the Gonzales Elementary Orchard (the new name for the walnut tree growing area).

Shirley is requesting Master Gardeners to start some cool season vegetables for the fall plant sale. Transplants of cabbage, broccoli, Brussel sprouts, lettuce and spinach are great choices for fall planting. The seedlings can be grown at the greenhouse. Let Shirley know what you will be growing. Dee is going to plant Swiss chard while Robbie and Dwaine are still deciding what to grow.

---

## Arline's Butterfly Garden

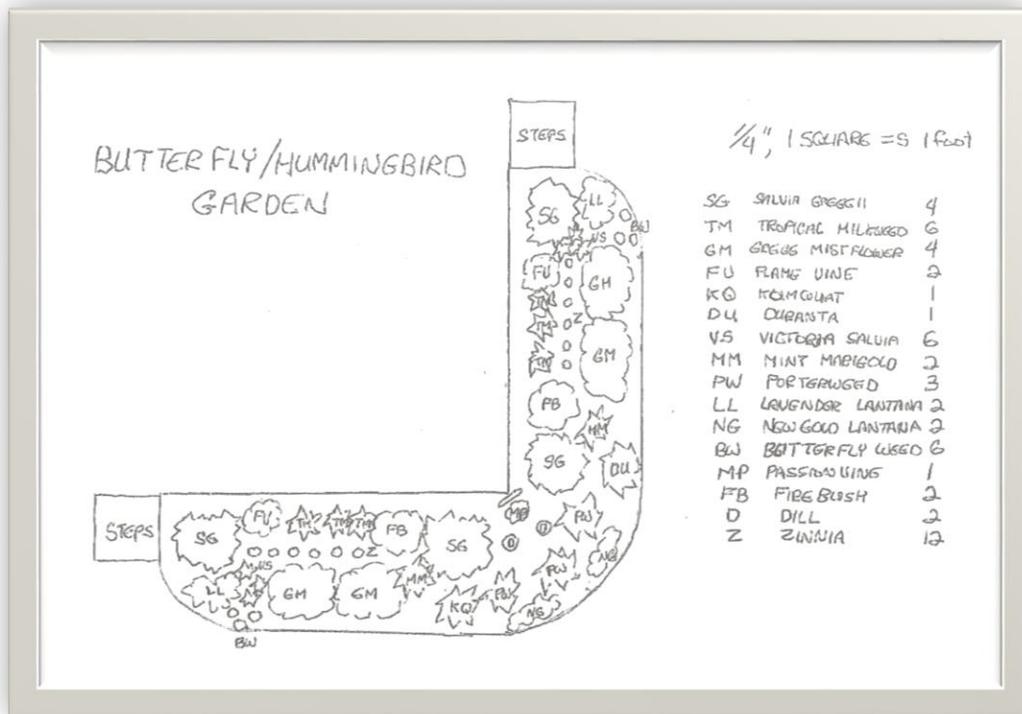
(Submitted by Fran Saliger)

Arline Schacherl was the winner of the South Texas Home Garden and Environmental Show's Hummingbird and Butterfly Garden Raffle on March 4, 2018. The project included the design, all plants, compost, mulch, drip irrigation, and labor. Arline chose to have the garden installed at her country home in Waelder.

Dr. Calvin Finch along with some volunteers from the Garden Volunteers of South Texas and a few GMG did all the work! Dr. Finch came out on Thursday, May 31 after all the materials were delivered to prepare the site for planting. On Friday, June 1 the other volunteers came to add the soil, add a stone edging, plant the many butterfly/hummingbird friendly plants (see diagram below), and mulch in just a few hours. Drip Irrigation was added at a later date. Leon and Arline rewarded the volunteers with a delicious meal



of Bar B Q pork ribs and all the fixings. A few butterflies were seen before everyone left for the day. Arline reported that everything is doing very well and some plants are starting to bloom.



*Congratulations Arline and Leon*

---

## Be On the Lookout!



It's time to check your tomato plants for hornworms. They are often difficult to see on the green stems of tomato plants but you know they're there because of stripped leaves/stems and poop. Just cut off the part that the worm is on and drop it in a bucket of water or feed it to the chickens.



---

## Area Events

Check out [www.txmg.org](http://www.txmg.org) for events around the state

New Braunfels area: <http://txmg.org/comal/events>

Austin Area: <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/travis/>

San Antonio, Texas- <http://www.bexarcountymastergardeners.org>

---

**DATES TO REMEMBER: (Check elsewhere in newsletter for details)**

**Unless otherwise noted, all meetings/classes are at  
623 N. Fair Street (Plantatarium: A Center for Exploration-aka PACE)**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
JUNE 24	25	26	27	28 Board Mtg. 9:30 am	29	30 Volunteer hours due
JULY 1	2	3		5 Noon MG Lunch Mtg.	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24 MG Class #9 Organization mtg. 9:30 am at Extension Office	25	26 Board Mtg. 9:30 am	27	28
29	30	31 Volunteer hours due	AUGUST 1	2 Noon MG Lunch Mtg.	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18

---

**Editors:**

Fran Saliger

[fsaliger@gvec.net](mailto:fsaliger@gvec.net)

Charlotte Knox

[lotteknox@aol.com](mailto:lotteknox@aol.com)

Carolyn Parratt: Photographer

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Office

1709 E. Sarah DeWitt Drive

Gonzales, TX 78629

Phone: 830-672-8531

Fax: 830-672-8532

E-mail: [gonzales@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:gonzales@ag.tamu.edu)

Web pages:

<http://gonzalesmastergardeners.org>

<http://gonzales.agrilife.org>



Extension programs serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability, or national origin. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas cooperating. Individuals with disabilities who require an auxiliary aid, service or accommodations in order to participate in this meeting are encouraged to contact the County Extension Office at 830-672-8531 to determine how reasonable accommodations can be made. The information given herein is for educational purposes only. Reference to commercial products or trade names is made with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by the Texas A & M AgriLife Extension

