



## **FROM A GARDENING PERSPECTIVE...**

### Gardens that Inspire Gardeners

By

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August is a very difficult month to plant new landscapes in Palo Pinto County. Historically, the weather is hot and dry with no hope for relief until the first cold fronts come through in September. All new landscapes—even well planned xeriscape gardens—require a period of establishment. So August is better used as a planning time. The new landscape (or a few new plants) will survive better if installed in the fall or spring.

Now is the time to visit well-established gardens to get inspiration for your own garden. Go and see what is blooming in the heat of summer. Notice which plants have finished blooming and still supply structure and interest. Pay attention to plant combinations and interesting arrangements. Imagine the things you like being transplanted to your yard. Are they too big? Could you plant fewer of them? Are they too small? Could you add to the arrangement? Ask other gardeners about their planting experiences. They can tell you where they look for inspiration and about their “champion” plants. Make lists of the things that you like; take photos; walk around your property and imagine the plantings you desire.

So, where can one go to get inspired? If you live in Palo Pinto County, you are surrounded by opportunity! There are three gardens that are just wonderful to visit: Clark Gardens Botanical Park, Mineral Wells (one mile north of Hwy 180 on Maddox Rd - admission \$5-\$7) and the Vietnam Memorial Gardens, Mineral Wells (3 mi E of Mineral Wells on Hwy 180 – admission free), and Chandor Gardens, Weatherford (711 W. Lee, Weatherford - admission \$5).

The Palo Pinto County Master Gardeners have installed successful plantings at the Courthouse, Extension Office and Historic Christian Church in Palo Pinto. The Parker County Master Gardeners have demonstration gardens at the Parker County Extension Office, 604 N Main St., Weatherford. The Fort Worth Botanic Gardens (130 at University Dr., Fort Worth) are generally outstanding, and they have a dedicated Native Texas Garden which can really pique your imagination.

When driving through neighborhoods, you probably notice some yards are more appealing to you than others. Stop to think about what makes them appealing. It could be specific plants that you like. It could be a combination of plants, mulch, sidewalks, benches, or maybe even a water feature. Write down any ideas you want to consider. Keep in

mind that in today's drier climate, we need to conserve water. That means a landscape needing lots of water - such as lawns, tropical foliage or mossy groundcover - should be planted somewhere with a wet climate, not Palo Pinto County!

August is a time for us to stay cool, enjoy iced drinks, visit inspirational gardens and plan future landscaping. If you, or someone you know, has an inspirational garden, the Palo Pinto Master Gardeners would like to know.

Also, call the Palo Pinto County Extension Office at 940-659-1228 if you would be interested in a Mineral Wells Garden Tour Day in October or April (and which you would prefer).