



## Master Gardener Certification Program for 2013

Are you ready to take your Gardening skills to the next level or are you a novice and ready to learn? Then the Master Gardener Certification Program may be right for you! All you need to do is ask yourself some questions: do I have the time commitment to learn and to volunteer in my community and to promote Sustainable Gardening in the Hill Country on behalf of the Environment, the Community, and the Home?

So, if you are ready to apply your skills and abilities to developing a gardening ethic in order to promote a sustainable environment; to apply your time and energy to developing a volunteer ethic in order to promote sustainable natural beauty in your community; and to enjoy the direct benefits of these efforts and learning experiences in your home landscape, then you are ready to become a Master Gardener.

What is involved? – Study, Volunteering, and Advanced Training. The Master Gardener Certification Program, sponsored by the Highland Lakes Master Gardener Association and the Texas AgriLIFE Extension Service, begins with 40 hours of interactive class study. These classes, taught by experienced specialists, begin on February 19th, 2013, and continue each Tuesday afternoon (from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.) for 10 more weeks in Marble Falls (at the First United Methodist Church, 1101 Bluebonnet Drive) and at field-trip locations around the Hill Country. Topics covered in the classes include: local weather patterns, water, soil, pollinators, plant taxonomy, native plant and vegetable gardens, and landscape design. Also, Master Gardener Volunteer Service Projects in the local area provide unique opportunities for hands-on applications of topics covered in these classes. And numerous presentations on horticultural topics are available for Advanced Training.

How do I become certified? By contributing to the environment, volunteering in the community, and enhancing the home landscape you can earn state-wide recognition as a Certified Master Gardener. You receive this distinction upon completion of 40 hours of interactive Class Study, 50 hours of Volunteer Service, and 10 additional hours of Advanced Training during your first year. Upon completion you will enjoy the advantages of membership in the Highland Lakes Master Gardener Association: access to ongoing education and opportunities to participate in a wide range of community volunteer efforts. These projects range from the Burnet Farmers Market and the Lawn and Garden Show to working in the Helping Center Garden in Marble Falls, along with various Fairs and special events. It is a time commitment, but well worth the effort.

How do I start? Joining this exciting activity costs \$150.00, which covers materials, entrance fees at field trip locations, Associate Membership dues for 2013, refreshments, as well as a soil and a water test. Applications are available at the Burnet County AgriLIFE Extension website, <http://burnet-tx.tamu.edu>, click on Publications at the top, then on Master Gardener, then on 2013 Master Gardener Application. You may also call the Extension Office in Burnet at 512-756-5463 and request an application. Or you can get an application and more information about the HLMGA at [www.yantislakesidegardens.com/mghome](http://www.yantislakesidegardens.com/mghome). Along with your check, made payable to the Highland Lakes Master Gardener Association, mail the completed application form to Ray Buchanan, Master Gardener Certification Program Coordinator, 204 W. Oak St., Buchanan Dam, TX 78609.

NOTE: the application deadline is January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2013. Class size is limited, so get your application in early. Also, there will be a mandatory meeting of all applicants on Tuesday, February 5, 2013 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. in the First United Methodist Church. For questions, contact Wade Hibler, Burnet County Extension Agent, at 512-756-5463 or Ray Buchanan, Master Gardener Certification Program Coordinator, at 325-379-1455. All class information will be sent via email.

Individuals with disabilities who require auxiliary aid, service, or accommodation in order to participate in this program are encouraged to contact the Burnet County Extension Office at 512-756-5463 to determine how reasonable accommodations can be made.