



# MG Grapevine

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## NOTICE

**MG Association Meeting  
August 7<sup>th</sup>  
Rose Garden Center  
11:30 AM**

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### Extension Office

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## August Meeting

Joe Daniel the Extension agent for Cherokee County will present a talk on the *August Landscape* for our August meeting.

### See It Now

The Heritage Garden is in full bloom. If you haven't had an opportunity to visit recently now is the time to see many of the annuals and perennials at their prime.



Rudbeckia Goldilocks, Gaillardia, Porter Weed (both Red and Blue), and Gaura are planted in the new flower bed that was created when the Martha Gonzales Roses and Japanese Hollies were removed.

Other plants in bloom now are Turnera, Asclepias tuberosa, Verbena rigida and a short, multi-color Alternanthera is also in this bed. Plants in this bed are meant to attract butterflies, bees and to move in the wind.

In other areas of the garden are Heliotrope, Calibrachoa, Pseuderanthemum 'BlackLeaf Shooting Star', a Candy Corn Vine (Manettia lutea rubra) and a new Salvia coccinea 'Forest Fire', which has variegated leaves purchased at Hope Farm in Conroe. There are several varieties of Salvia including Pineapple Sage, Mojave Sage, and Mystic Spires. Dianthus Cheddar Pinks 'Firewitch' is outstanding with its blue-green foliage and bright pink blooms. The 'Grandma's Yellow' rose is blooming and, with its bright blooms, attracts everyone's attention and the Pomegranate has been feeding Hummingbirds for several weeks. Come see the garden. Anne Brown

## Looking Ahead

The Fall Conference & Bulb Expo is not until October 11<sup>th</sup>, but the first information bulletin is out. Some information includes: The conference location is Pirtle Hall in Marvin United Methodist Church, 300 W. Erwin, downtown Tyler. Entrance and free parking is on Elm Street. The bulb sale and expo is at Harvey Hall, 2000 W Front Street. Presentations by two recognized experts will include Dr. Bill Welch's "Garden Ideas from Near and Far" discussing perennials, bulbs, and roses and Chris Wiesinger's "Bulbs are the Best Investment."

The bulb sale following the conference will offer thousands of bulbs with many varieties not often found in local nurseries. During the exposition SCMGs will provide a help-desk to answer questions and perform demonstrations of bulb forcing techniques, division of perennials, and how to plant bare root roses.

Visit the SCMG website to view the entire text of the bulletin.

## NE Texas Gardening Guide

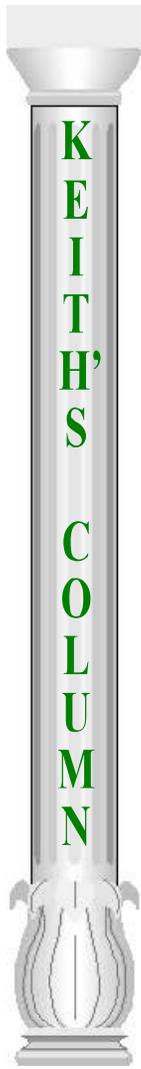
The 2009 version guide and calendar is about to go to press now and will be available at the Conference. The September MG Grapevine will contain full details.

## Scarecrows Anyone?

How about making scarecrows for fall display in the IDEA garden?

MG classes have been divided into five groups: 1-10-15, 2-9-14, 3-8-13, 4-7-12 and 5-6-11. Frames will be provided and each group is asked to dress, accessorize and name their scarecrow. More information will be provided at the August meeting.





You don't need me to tell you it looks like it will continue to be hot, and apparently dry this month. Keep your lawn and garden plants out of drought stress by timely and targeted watering.

Trees and shrubs will benefit the most by a periodic deep soaking. Remember that the roots that are responsible for water uptake are not mainly near the trunks, but out around the dripline of the tree and beyond. You may need to soak the soil every few weeks if we don't get some soaking rains soon.

Check your irrigation system periodically for broken, plugged or misaligned heads. And, if you have never conducted an irrigation audit of your sprinkler system, you should do one. You might be really surprised to find learn how much, or how little, your sprinklers are putting out.

I'm a hose dragger, so by necessity I irrigate my lawn, shrubs and garden as infrequently as possible. I have several different sprinkler hose attachments, and I discovered a tremendous variability in how much they put out. One put out an inch of water in about 50 minutes, while another took 2 hours to put out the same amount. Their distribution pattern was also not uniform, so

some areas could get overwatered in order to apply sufficient water over the entire area. I measured the irrigation precipitation using some small rain gauges I picked up a conference somewhere. These are spread out around the sprinkler heads to get 1) an average of the overall output, and 2) to determine the uniformity of the spray pattern (distribution uniformity).

To learn more about irrigation auditing, read the EarthKind Irrigation Auditing publication which outlines all the steps you need to get the most out of your irrigation system: <http://earthkind.tamu.edu/EKAudit.pdf>

Speaking of EarthKind, I encourage each of you to take the Earthkind Challenge <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/earthkind/EKChallenge.html> This short questionnaire will help you look at your yard and garden to see if your landscape contributing to a healthy and sustainable environment. It doesn't take too long, and should give you some insights to how you can better manage your landscape. Also, *please fill out the evaluation* at the end of the Challenge to help us in

Extension better serve you in this critical area of taking care of our environment.

## Yellow Alder

by Anne Pattullo

A favorite flower in my August garden is *Turnera ulmifolia* commonly known as Yellow Alder or Cuban Buttercup. It is a small round bush about 2 ½ feet tall and wide. The leaves are dark green and serrated and the flowers are much like those of *Impatiens* only a little larger and bright vivid yellow. Some people think the flowers resemble tiny hibiscus blooms.

*Turnera* is a hot weather annual here. It is native to Mexico and the Caribbean and is even considered a noxious weed in the Marshall Islands. In Hawaii they call it Sundrops. Transplants are a little hard to find but I have always located it at one of the smaller nurseries. If you can find seed, it is best to sow it in the spring.

Grow *Turnera* in most any well drained soil. Plant it in full sun with a little protection from the hot afternoon rays. The flowers open each morning and close in the afternoon when the full sun beats down on them. This is its only real drawback, as you have to view it before noon to see it at its best. Even after the flowers close, however, the foliage is crisp and striking. It requires regular water and fertilizer and is fairly drought tolerant once established. During a long season it can get a little leggy and is best kept pruned to under three feet.



*Turnera* is reported to root easily from cuttings and because it is so hard to find, I think I will take some this fall and try to start my own for next summer. This year I have several plants growing near Veronica, Sunny Border Blue, and I really like the combination. It would also work well as a container plant. I have never had problems with pests other than an occasional leaf miner. It is a butterfly magnet and a real asset to a hot summer garden.

## The Beauty of Crape Myrtles

From the Heritage Garden to the Woods, from north Tyler to Hollytree, they bloom and they haven't been pruned. See them without ever leaving your house. Go to: [www.pbase.com/mrd/cm](http://www.pbase.com/mrd/cm)

## F the CORNER R O M



### Things, They Are a'Changin' Again

In the mid-seventies our world as we knew it turned upside down. Energy costs skyrocketed. Gasoline and other energy sources were rationed. Many thought we were doomed. Many thought we could not survive.

But we did survive and even thrived. We changed the way we

lived, we learned to carpool, we learned to drive smaller cars and we turned our thermostats down.

Now energy costs are once again skyrocketing. Will we learn to live with that? Yes we will. Will it hurt? Yes it will, but we will adapt and thrive.

However we are seeing another problem raise it's ugly head and this problem scares me more than the energy problem. Although it has not really affected us until now there is a developing water shortage in this country that has the possibility of being much more damaging to us than the energy problem.

We've been hearing about water rationing for years but it hasn't really affected us until now. I'm sure all of you have heard about the limited watering schedule in Bullard and the outright ban on outside watering in Whitehouse. These two problems will be solved shortly with new wells coming on line. Both Bullard and Whitehouse have ample water supplies and the problem at this time is system capacity. Water system supply and/or delivery problems will affect everyone but will affect us (Master Gardeners) more than most folks. In times of shortage, outside watering will be the first affected and that affects gardeners most. Water shortages will require that we make changes in our lives just as the energy shortages made us change.

Yes you are thinking, "so what, I know all that." And I know you do but all this is just setting the stage to talk about rainwater harvesting. Rainwater harvesting is a simple relatively inexpensive way to get "free water" so to speak. Is it actually free? No it is not but it is readily available.

We've all heard about rainwater harvesting, some of you have seen the small-scale demonstration we have at the IDEA Garden. Perhaps now is the time to seriously consider using rainwater harvesting at your house to collect water for your garden(s).

Is rainwater harvesting the solution to our impending water shortage? No, it is not, but it will help. And if we were to have a ban or severe reduction on outside watering it might save your garden.

Is rainwater harvesting cheap? It is relatively inexpensive, especially if you already have gutters on your house. The

cost is impacted mostly by the size of your storage, the more water you store the more the cost. Will rainwater harvesting solve all your watering needs? You probably will not be able to water your lawn from rainwater harvesting, but you could at least water your vegetables and your more important ornamentals.

Why not wait until we actually have a shortage in our area? You could certainly do that and most people probably will. The longer you wait the more it costs. For instance a year ago storage tanks cost about \$1.00 per gallon. Today because of the increase in the cost of oil they cost over \$1.50 per gallon.

If you're interested in learning more about rainwater harvesting we have two rainwater harvesting specialists in the group who will be happy to answer any questions you have. They are Sue Clark and Keith Smith. Give them a call if you have any questions.

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### Old Words

Mary Hamlin got a book of old words, not in use today, and looked up those that are plant connected. We presented the first of those words last month and we continue this month with another word.

The word this month is: **drupe** (dr̥oo̯ p)



Botanical term for a fleshy fruit with a single stone enclosing the seed that does not split along defined lines to liberate the seed, e.g. apricot, cherry, date, mango, olive, peach, plum.

A fleshy fruit, such as a peach, plum, or cherry, usually having a single hard stone that encloses a seed. Also called *stone fruit*.

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### New E-Mail Address

Craig Reiland (at home) - [creiland1952@dishmail.net](mailto:creiland1952@dishmail.net) His office e-mail address is unchanged.

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### Volunteer Hours Reports

Your reports of volunteer hours are important and we appreciate each MG who faithfully reports monthly. During July, notices were sent via e-mail to each MG who had not reported any volunteer hours during 2008. Some who received those e-mails have responded, but others have not. If you have not made your report, please take a few minutes to do so.

For the certified MG's who attended the Overton Field Trials in late June, please remember that you are entitled to claim two CE's. If you attended the afternoon lectures, you may claim an additional 2 CE's.

### **The Masters of Gardening**

The Dallas Arboretum invites Master Gardeners and their families to enjoy a day in the garden on September 6. Complimentary admission is being provided for the Master Gardener and one guest. You will need to show your badge to receive complimentary admission. Also, the agreement with the city requires charging to park, so there is a \$5 parking fee per car.

As an added bonus, Jimmy Turner will present a 90 minute presentation on his field trials for the year. The talk will begin at 9am and will require registration. Cost is \$15. To register call 214-515-6540 or e-mail [education@dallasarboretum.org](mailto:education@dallasarboretum.org).

### **MG Specialist - Greenhouse Management**

September 17-19, 2008 Texas AgriLife Extension Service, Tarrant County, Fort Worth, Texas. This training was created as a hands-on, intensive multi-day training that will empower Master Gardeners with knowledge and skills required to effectively support and multiply Texas AgriLife Extension efforts in educational programs. The class is divided into separate tracks, commercial and hobby greenhouse for more specialized situations.

If interested, contact Keith Hansen for more details.

### **Landscape Design Study Course II, Series XXI**

Dr. William C. Welch announces that the third in the latest series of the Landscape Design Study Courses will be presented in College Station, TX on September 15-16. The course is held in conjunction with the Texas Garden Clubs, Inc. and the Texas Cooperative Extension, and is offered in four separate schools, approximately six months apart, in the Bryan-College Station area. Participants may take the four courses in any sequence. Garden Club members, Master Gardeners, nurserymen and others who are interested in furthering their knowledge of landscape design are welcome to attend.

Master Gardeners who complete a course may apply 12 hours of CE credit. Further information and registration info. <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/southern-garden/contents.html>

### **Adobe Acrobat Reader**

If you have had any trouble downloading the PDF version of the MG Grapevine, it may relate to the version of the Acrobat Reader that you are using. Some who have had trouble were using version 5 of the reader. Downloading version 9, their latest version, solved the problem. Check it out at [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com)



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