



# MG Grapevine

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March 2011

Volume 18

Number 3

## NOTICE

March 3<sup>rd</sup>  
MG Association  
Meeting at the Rose  
Garden Center  
11:30 AM

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Published for the Master Gardeners of Smith County, Texas under the auspices of the Smith County Office of Texas AgriLife Extension Service, 1517 W. Front St. Tyler, TX 75702.

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### Extension Office

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## March SCMG Association Meeting



At the March meeting we have our first opportunity to welcome the new class. What a better way than having an update on our many projects....what we have accomplished in the past year...and where we are headed this year. This

will give the new class a chance to see what we are all about and maybe rejuvenate us into trying something a little different than what we have done in the past. As you make friends with the new class see if there is not someone that it would be fun for you to mentor, come on folks we are talking half a day on the phone and half a day gossiping with me in the garden and you will make a new friend for years.

Anne Pattullo will then give a short presentation on working the "Home Garden Tour". This year's tour will be extra spectacular so everything needs to run smoothly so we all enjoy the experience.

The first Tree Identification class was a huge success, unfortunately I was puny and missed it!! Thank goodness we will have another Tree ID class with leaves on, I guess I'll never know what those naked trees are.

Don't miss the meeting as I have another great surprise up my sleeve...you will love this one. Joanie Matthews, President

## First Lecture of the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday in the Garden Series

The lecture this month has been moved to the Heritage Garden (instead of the usual IDEA Garden). The lecture, *Selection & Care of Azaleas*, presented by Anne Brown, begins at noon on March 1st. Free and open to the public.

## Master Gardener Training Continues

March is the third and last month of training for Class XVIII. Their schedule includes the following, which certified MGs may audit if they desire. Classes at the Extension Office, except as noted:

March 1 - Home Vegetable Production, Dr. Joe Masabni, Extension Vegetable Specialist. **Class will be at Overton.**

March 3 - The class joins the SCMG meeting at the Rose Garden Center.

March 8 - Advanced Earth-Kind Landscaping, Keith Hansen



March 15 - Diagnosing Plant Problems: Working with the public, Keith Hansen.

## Wood County Spring Conference

On March 12<sup>th</sup> the Wood Co. MGs will be holding their Spring Garden Conference at the Mineola Civic Center.

The speakers are Judy Barrett, garden writer, speaking on heirloom vegetables; and James Wilhite, owner of Wilhite Landscaping.

Registration starts at 8AM, the conference will be from 8:30 to 11:30 followed by tours at the Wood County MG projects at the Mineola Nature Preserve and the Gov. Hogg Park Botanical Gardens and Arboretum in Quitman. This event is free.

## Nacogdoches Azalea Trail Symposium

Held on March 12, 2011 from 8:30 am until 2:00 pm in Room 110 of the Agriculture Building on Wilson Drive on the SFA Campus in historic Nacogdoches.

Noted SFA horticulturist, Dr. David Creech, will be the featured speaker. Dr. Creech will See **Symposium** - page 2



What a welcome change in the weather! Hopefully we will not see anymore prolonged sub-freezing temperatures. But, it can, and probably will, go below 32 degrees again before spring comes to stay.

The prolonged cold may have damaged a range of plants. Perhaps you saw the article in the February 20 edition of the Tyler Morning Telegraph about the damage to the Noonday onion crop. Most of my container-grown cool season veggies are history, with the exception of the spinach, which looks rough, but should come back with a little care and fertilizer.

It is possible St. Augustine lawns may have been injured and weakened by the extended freezing weather. One of the common questions we get is about using a pre-emergence herbicide to prevent spring and summer weeds in lawns. It used to be a standard Extension recommendation to apply in February or early March, and then again in early summer, if the yard has a history of weeds. But, Extension turfgrass specialists are saying the early application can also cause potential damage to the turf, especially if it is already under stress. That stress could be from cold, drought, disease, or cultural mismanagement. They also advise against

applying pre-emergent herbicides to heavily shaded St. Augustine lawns.

St. Augustine and Centipede are particularly susceptible to injury to pre-emergent herbicides since they can reduce root growth. It is common to see fresh, new stolons with roots that are clubbed or have knobby ends which are stunted when they reach the herbicide barrier on the surface of the soil.

A good publication on herbicides for lawn weed control: <http://publications.tamu.edu/publications/Turfgrass/HerbPublicationSCS200713.pdf>

Timely watering, proper fertilizing and frequent mowing will help develop a thick turf that will be weed resistant.

Other plants that look fine now may show dieback as they begin to leaf out. In most cases, it is best to wait until spring and new growth, and at that time assess damage, especially for woody plants. The good news is that this cold snap came after several months of progressively and consistent cooler weather, so most plants should have been completely dormant. Plants with soft, herbaceous tissue can be pruned now to remove the ugly, but hold off on woody plants.

## Spring Unfolds: Exciting Time For Gardeners

by Dee Bishop

We had some pretty rough and cold times this winter and may have lost most of our 'iffy' things. Do not be too quick to give up though. I have had things put out growth several weeks later than usual after really cold spells. Do get all the frozen woody stuff cut back. Cut it back to the ground. 6" of little sticks at ground level does not look good on a fresh green plant. Cut grasses to the ground now if you haven't. Cut all the old brown fern fronds off or mow them back. Holly ferns took a beating so cut them to the ground and let them come out new. Aspidistra and liriopie can still be mowed off, unless it's coming out already. If you cut the new leaves off, especially the liriopie, will have notched leaves all summer.



Mid-March is big time planting time for vegetables and some flower seeds. Plant tomato plants with cages wrapped in plastic or frost cloth or use cloches to cover them from frosts. Plant green beans, lettuce, cabbage, greens, turnips for quick crops by June. Plant cosmos, celosia, amaranths, basil, and other seeds that like to get started before the weather gets too hot. Be prepared to protect them some. You can set out begonias that are hardened off well the last 2 weeks of March, impatiens too. Have some straw to pitch on them when it frosts or use frost cloth.

Do not cut back hydrangeas even though they look awful. Let them come out so you can see how far back you will have to cut them. Cutting back before bloom will decrease bloom or stop it completely. Many of the newer hydrangeas will bloom on new growth, so just wait.

Crape myrtles may be damaged also, but wait til May before cutting them back. Lantana, turks cap, and brugmansias too.

This spring remains a surprise. Some old standbys may be forever lost, but many will have made it. Be patient and give them time. Get out and enjoy every minute the sun shines and plan and enjoy nursery hoppin'.

**Symposium** - from page 1\_\_\_\_\_



share his enthusiasm for native and other azaleas in his lecture, "Deciduous Azaleas, New Landscape Accents for Your Garden." Deciduous azaleas bloom before the foliage emerges and sport fragrant showy flowers in unusual color combinations including bright yellow and orange. Lunch is provided, followed by tips on propagating, growing, and pruning azaleas, plus a guided tour of the SFA Ruby M. Mize Azalea Garden by Barbara Stump and Dr. Creech. The program is sponsored by SFA Gardens. Admission is \$30 to SFA Gardens members; \$40 to non-members. Contact 936-564-7351 or [sfagardens@sfasu.edu](mailto:sfagardens@sfasu.edu) to register.

## Good Bug - Bad Bug

by Anne Brown

I realize that Nematodes are not insects, but gardeners hear about them so often that they deserve some attention.

Nematodes are microscopic, non-segmented roundworms that live in the soil. The many varieties of Nematodes occupy more different habitats than any other animal group except invertebrate animals. Nematodes are colorless, simple organisms that may cause diseases in plants, animals and humans. Some varieties of nematodes are beneficial, feeding on bacteria, fungi and other nematodes.



Nematodes multiply rapidly in favorable conditions. There are six (6) life cycles, eggs, four larval stages and the adult stage, usually taking 21 to 28 days from egg to adult. Immature, or larval stages, and adult males are long, slender worms while mature females may remain slender worms or become swollen, pear-shaped depending on the variety.

Most gardeners have had plants that develop Root Knot, a swelling of the roots (galls), that are caused by the feeding and developing of second stage larvae. Adult males will leave the roots but the females remain and lay eggs. The eggs are a jellylike mass that extends through the root surface and into the soil. The galls damage the plants ability to absorb water or nutrients. The galls may also rupture allowing microorganisms that cause diseases to enter the roots. In addition to damaged root systems, the infected plant may look wilted, loose vigor, have yellow leaves and grow more slowly than other plants. Some plants that have been infected by nematodes may not develop galls but will still have similar symptoms. Nematodes thrive in warm, irrigated, sandy soils, can kill annuals and are very difficult to control. Selecting plants that are resistant to nematodes and practicing good sanitation of garden tools can help to prevent infestations. If the soil is infected practicing crop rotation may help. Do not move infected plants from one area of the garden to another or allow water to flow from infected areas to clean areas. Planting while soil temperatures are cool may help to reduce the number of nematodes. Solarization, covering the soil with clear plastic for four to six weeks during the hottest part of summer, will pasteurize the top twelve inches of the soil. The soil temperature should reach or exceed 125 degree F for 30 minutes to kill nematode eggs. The longer the plastic stays in place the better. Prepare planting beds and wet the soil before putting on the plastic so the soil is not disturbed after the plastic is removed. This is a temporary method to reduce the number of nematodes, weeds and other garden pests. After time passes and the soil is again disturbed the nematodes will return. French Marigold (Tagetes) species can suppress root knot and lesion nematodes, but nematodes will feed on signet (signata or tenuifolia) species. Marigolds work best when planted as a mass and mowed before the flowers open. Elbon rye is another nematode trap crop that can be grown in the fall and winter.

Beneficial nematodes can help to control insect pests and other nematodes. The third stage immature male larva is the only infective stage. They locate susceptible hosts by detecting excretory products, carbon dioxide and temperature changes. They invade the host through body openings or by piercing the exoskeleton. The larvae carry a bacterium that causes the insect to die in 24 to 48 hours. One variety of nematode mates while inside the dying insect, another variety has sexual organs of both sexes. Eggs are deposited inside the insect tissue, the bacteria breaks down the insect remains and that becomes food for the larvae. Once the third larval stage is reached, they leave the remains. Other benefits are parasitic nematodes can be produced commercially and the infective stage can live for several months. Tests show that insect pests have not developed resistance to the bacteria carried by nematodes unlike many commercial pesticides and the bacteria does not infect vertebrates. Timing and environmental conditions are important factors when using nematodes and all precautions should be used.

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Univ. of California  
"It's a Nematode World", E. O. Wilson, Univ. of Nebraska-Lincoln  
Tim Abbey, Extension Educator, Nursery, Univ. of Connecticut

## Had a Tetanus Shot lately?

by Sue Adee

Several gardening magazines lately have had articles on the importance of gardeners keeping up their tetanus immunization. Since most of us were immunized as children, we do not think about them as adults. Actually a tetanus booster is needed every 10 years to be protected. Tetanus is widespread in our environment and naturally present in the soil, potting media and manure, thus putting gardeners at a greater risk of contracting the infection. All it takes is a break in the skin for the bacterium to enter our body. So, have you had a tetanus booster lately? It is a simple thing to do to keep you healthy.

## Canna Virus

by Sue Adee

Just for your information, there is a canna virus that is affecting canna's worldwide. Because there is no way to tell if a rhizome has the disease, wholesale nurseries such as Old House Gardens, have stopped selling canna's for now. The virus doesn't kill the plant but weakens it down so it may not survive the winter. If you notice white streaks on the flowers and light green streaks parallel to the leaf veins on the leaves that turn brown and die, please discard the plant. Hopefully, a control of this virus, will be found and we will be able to buy new varieties of this plant in the future.

## New E-Mail Addresses

Brenda Mooring - [curtismooring@yahoo.com](mailto:curtismooring@yahoo.com)

Ed McGee - [emcgee1238@aol.com](mailto:emcgee1238@aol.com)

**During the coming month a new address book will be put together. Notify Martin of any change that you don't believe he has.**



**The Executive Committee** met on January 27th and considered the following:

A report on sales of the SCMG calendar of which 596 have been sold. The remainder will be made available at the Spring Conference.

Anne Pattullo reported that entries have been submitted for state awards for every category for which Smith County was eligible.

Joanie Matthews reminded everyone that Doris Waits is our Sunshine Chairman and to notify her of illness, death, etc so that she may send a card.

Discussed participation in the Rose Season programs during the Rose Festival. The committee decided to have a booth at the Rose Garden on October 15th only for plant sales and information. Other fund raising was discussed.

Heard a report from the Home Garden Tour committee. They will be using booklets, in which they will sell advertising, instead of individual sheets to provide information on the gardens on the tour.

Anne Pattullo advised the purchase of a book on Coleus, which will be presented to the MG library in memory of Master Gardeners who have passed away in the past year.



**Sue Clark Dies Suddenly**

Sue, a member of Class 10, died on February 16<sup>th</sup> following a short bout with a very aggressive form of cancer.

During her time with the Master Gardener program Sue received the President's Award in 2006, was chairman of the very first Flower Market project in 2007 and in 2008 she was honored for having the most volunteer hours. That same year her home was on the SCMG Home Garden Tour. She also was a Rainwater Harvesting Specialist.

Our prayers go with her husband Bob and the rest of the Clark family. We will miss her.

**April Events**

**April 2** - Annual Spring MG Plant Sale Angelina County Farmers Market at 2107 S. Medford Drive in Lufkin, Texas. Open at 8:00am and close around 3:00pm .

**April 16** - SFA Spring Garden Gala Day and Plant Sale - 9 AM till 2 PM. New location at SFA Pinewoods Native Plant Center, Raguet St. Nacogdoches, TX.

**April 27 - 29** - TX State MG Conference - Glen Rose.

**April 30** - SCMG Home Garden Tour.

MGs look at tree during Tree ID Class



Work day in the Gardens

