



MG Grapevine

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NOTICE

**September 3rd
MG Association
Meeting at the Rose
Garden Center**

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Monthly meeting notes

Everyone will want to attend our September meeting and hear Carl and Wincie Caskey present a program about irises entitled "The Poor Man's Orchid". Carl and Wincie started growing irises 20 years ago, while living in Iowa. Many of their original cultivars were purchased from Cooley's and Schreiners, while on trips to the Pacific Northwest.

They moved to Texas in 1999 intending to grow irises commercially, but the vastly different climate and soils here changed their minds. They now grow them for enjoyment and sharing with fellow gardeners. Wincie is an artist and in addition to growing irises she paints beautiful pictures of them and has promised to bring some with her. The Caskey's are two very busy people, with many talents and gifts. Come learn all about irises, from dividing to planting and caring for them. You might even get an iris to take home if you are lucky.

After Meeting Garden Tour

This month we will visit the tropical garden of Rena Towler. Her address is, 19450 Meadowood in Country Place. This garden was suggested by Dee Bishop and she said it was absolutely beautiful this month.

The directions to Rena's house: South on Broadway, left on CR 346, right at main entrance of Country Place. The road will wander around until you reach Copperoaks. Meadowood will be second street on left. Rena's house is the second house on right.

New Computer

A new Dell computer has been purchased to replace the MG office computer. Thanks to Bill Kelldorf who arranged the purchase and installed the new hardware.

Heritage Rose Garden

by Anne Brown

Although we have had some really harsh weather this summer the Heritage Rose Garden is doing very well. At the beginning of April we had several interns who were there every week as scheduled. Shirley & Victor Long and Jay Dickson were the first to finish their five visits and, happy days, are still coming on Tuesday mornings to lend a hand. Chris Steavenson has helped on several Tuesdays; Brenda Ilschner and Eloise Muxwothy have been to the garden on two Tuesdays while Sherri Matthews, Janis Morris and Ilene Healey were able to come to the garden once. All of the help the garden has received from Bibi & Wayne Blonn, Kay & Gary Dobbs and Ronnie Duncan now shows in the good appearance of the garden.

Craig Reiland and the garden crew have helped by making sure that the irrigation system is working and adding sprinkler heads when the volunteers noticed that some areas were not getting adequate water. The committee that made our plant labels has added to the educational value of the garden too. My thanks to everyone who found some time to come to the garden and make these hot, humid days shorter for all of us. Anne

Scarecrows in the IDEA Garden



Scarecrows are being built for display the IDEA Garden. Go to the SCMG website, "What's New?" to see pictures of last year's scarecrows. Teams building them are made

up MGs: #1 - classes 1, 6, 11 & 16; #2 - classes 2, 7 & 12; #3 - classes 3, 8, 13 & transfers in; #4 - classes 4, 9 & 14; and #5 - classes 5, 10 & 15.

The new scarecrows should be in place by September 22nd.



What a summer it has been – actually, like a whole lot of Texas summers – hot, humid, muggy, and dry. September should bring some welcome changes. I had a big change – after 17 years in the same office, I moved down the hall to occupy the larger office vacated by Shelia Lewis who is now the new AgriLife Extension District 5 Administrator (ie. my new supervisor).



A very huge thank you to Master Gardeners Victor Long, Chris Steavenson, and Clayton Turner who turned a seemingly monumental task of moving the office into an enjoyable and relatively quick job. Thanks guys!!! Now, if I can only find that If you ever need to move some heavy furniture, get Clayton to show you his moving skids. One of the greatest inventions for moving!!

AgriWorld is at the end of this month, and we will have a fantastic exhibit again (Our Secret Garden) at the East Texas State Fair. Thanks to all of you who signed up to help in the various aspects of this big project. If you were not at the August meeting and would like to help in some way, either with set up, tours, watering (icing) plants, or take-down, please contact Hazel Bateman, who is coordinating this year's Secret Garden project.

Labels – Many thanks Anne Kelly, Victor Long, Chris Steavenson, Jim and Laquita Showen and Sherri Watts who have been involved with getting our demonstration gardens labeling up to date!! Also thanks to Craig and his staff! It is exciting to anticipate that with this team we can stay caught up on our labeling in our demonstration gardens. Also, labels for some the more temporary plants have been made and are in place. Plant labeling is one of the greatest challenges of any public garden, and those in the Rose Garden present even greater challenges with so many different people adding and replacing plants all the time. So, thanks again for helping with this important educational project.

Weeds - Remember that September marks the time when the first cool fronts make it through, temporarily dropping the temperature, thus stimulating cool-season weeds to start germinating. Mid to late September would be the time to get your pre-emergent out to reduce the annual weed population.

One of the frustrating weeds we have in the IDEA Garden (and in many of our home gardens) was identified by Rhonda Rholes – Mulberry weed. It is on many top 10 weed lists for nurseries also. One reason it is so troublesome is because it can produce seed in as little as 2 weeks. And the seeds are shot out like little cannonballs,

helping it to spread all over the garden. A pre-emergent can help reduce the incident of this pesky weed.



An interesting phenomenon was observed in the IDEA Garden this week. Several of the cockscomb Celosia plants started going crazy with flattened, distorted growth. Of course, the flowers of cockscomb are typically distorted (flattened) from the normal Celosia, but the stems of these plants were also flattened, some 2 inches wide, with the growth starting to curl over on itself. This type of growth pattern is fasciation, and we call this fasciated growth.

Don't Miss It

The monthly *First Tuesday in the Garden* lecture series resumes for the fall season, at noon Tuesday September 1st when Anne Brown will share information on plants to select to attract wildlife, birds and butterflies. Her topic is "Attracting Wildlife to Your Garden."



The Smith MG Association's Executive Committee, made up of the officers of the association, usually meets monthly on the fourth Thursday. These notes are published here to inform the membership of the things considered by the committee. The following are notes from the July 30th meeting:

- Keith Hansen and Anne Brown have met with Habitat for Humanity personnel regarding landscaping opportunities.
- In preparation for the AgriWorld project at the E.T. State Fair, Keith and Hazel Bateman continue to meet with fair officials, planning for the MG Secret Garden.
- With consideration for the planned design for the Heritage Garden which will not be completed until April 2010, the special donation for use in the garden will be placed in a separate bank savings account.
- The scholarship plan presented by Bill Kelldorf was reviewed and will be revised as suggested.
- A group headed by Pat Welch has been researching the association's policies and procedures. Pat presented a copy of the manual which will be revised as suggested.
- A potential open house in the IDEA, shade and Heritage Gardens was discussed. Input from those who work in the gardens suggests early spring as the best time of the year for the event.
- An update on the Fall Conference & Bulb sale advised that most bulbs have been ordered. Denyse Cummings will be the keynote speaker.
- Potential changes to the bylaws were reviewed.
- Scarecrows will again be built and placed in the IDEA Garden prior to the fair. Cindy Harrington will coordinate.

A Time To Dig and A Time To Plant

by Dee Bishop

Time to dig and divide perennials like: phlox, iris, daylilies, daisies, and spring bloomers that are overgrown and haven't been divided in 2-3 years. Dig and pull apart the clumps. Discard the oldest part and any diseased or insect infested parts. Replant the strong newer parts. Prepare the soil well, as if it were the first time, and replant.

Remember to make a saddle for the iris to 'ride upon'. The rhizomes like to 'see the sun'. Discard all parts that are mushy (caused by borers or rot) .

September is fall planting time for many seeds. Consult the plant lists from the extension office. Veggies and fall annuals of all kinds can be planted the first week or so of September. Either plant them in little pots or in large pans to be sliced apart and set out when large enough. Seeds planted in September will be ready to set out in mid to late October. The good part about fall seeding is you can grow them off right on your patio. Just remember to water as needed and use fertilizer at 1/4 strength each time you water and you will have good healthy vigorous transplants.



Seed Calendula, delphinium, hollyhock for transplanting. Seed larkspur, poppies, bluebonnets, linaria (toadflax), bluebonnets, luneria (moneyplant), durmonds phlox, and coreopsis in the ground where you want them to grow. Till and rake the area to be planted, drop the seeds, cover according to the seed size. Keep watered til they sprout. These

will grow much larger and bloom much better than transplanted ones.

Veggies like lettuces, kale, carrots, kohlrabi, chard, and greens of all kinds are also better seeded in the ground. Herbs like cilantro, dill, fennel, chervil, chives, parsley all can be planted in pots or in the ground to be set out later. Seeds are just so rewarding, plus you can grow many plants for the price of one.

Plant enough parsley to edge a bed for winter. Soak the seeds overnight and plant two or three in each 4 inch pot. Have patience though, parsley takes 2 weeks or more to sprout, but it will.

You still have time to plant basil seeds for a fresh fall crop. Get your pots ready, plant a small pinch of seeds in the center of each pot and press gently down. Don't cover. Don't water after planting (dampen the soil before planting). They will pop up in about 5-7 days. They grow so fast and are so much fun you won't ever buy basil plants again! Ditto chives, dill, and cilantro.

Remember--- you don't have to plant all the seed in a packet. Just plant the amount you need. Fold the packet down and store in a zipper bag or a screw top jar in the freezer til spring!

Now get out and plant some seeds to enjoy all winter!

Good Bug/Bad Bug

Anne Brown

Since we will soon be gearing up for the Fall Garden Conference and Bulb Sale, now is a good time to look at some pests that can damage bulbs. Some of these critters are Pillbugs, Sowbugs, Millipedes, Root Aphids, Bulb Fly and Bulb Mites. Pillbugs, a child's favorite known as "Roly Poly" are very common, found in almost all of the United States. They can live for several years spending the day in cool, shaded locations and feed at night. Pillbugs have very small mouth parts so they do little damage to healthy plant tissues but do feed on damaged or rotted plant material. Pillbugs and Sowbugs are distant, land living relatives of lobster, shrimp and crab.



After spending the winter as eggs, Root Aphids crawl into cracked soil and reach plant roots during the summer. They have a large range of plants where they feed on roots during part of their life cycle. Tulip Bulb Aphid is common, found on the bulbs, roots and stem bases of gladiolus, tulip, iris, carrot, celery and various grasses. Ground mealybug can be found on many ornamental plants causing wilting and decline of infested plants.

Bulb Mites feed on decay fungi and are usually seen on damaged plant parts. They can escalate the damage and spread of decay organisms in plants. If the population is high enough they can damage the growing tips of bulbs of both flowers and vegetables. Bulb mites can grow on bulbs in storage going through many stages when mild temperatures, high humidity and food are available. Bulb Flies are found most everywhere Narcissus and Daffodils are grown. They work their way into the bulb base, weakening or killing the plant and causing the bulb to rot. Bulb Flies spend the winter inside the bulb in the larval stage and emerge in spring after the blooms have faded.

Eggs are laid in the soil around the plant stems and the maggots crawl down the stem and tunnel into the bulb. Bulb flies more closely resemble bumble bees that the housefly but the larvae do resemble maggots.

Check for soft spots and/or small holes at the bulb base since these can be clues to bulbs that may be home to some critters it would be better not to carry home to your garden. After several years in the ground, it would also be a good idea to dig up your bulbs and check for any signs of damage.

Compiled from Garden Insects of North America by Whitney Cranshaw and A Field Guide to Common Texas Insects by B. Drees, Ph.D. and J. Jackman, Ph.D.

New Addresses

Jack Quisenberry, 1302 W. Rieck Rd., Tyler, 75703
Phone 903-939-0106

Nancy Nelson, Box 205, Overton 75684
Phone 903-834-0245, Cell 903-780-0940

Sue Clark, 11613 CR 137, Flint, TX 75762
Phone 903-894-3218, E-mail sbclark@nctv.com

Mary McGee no longer has e-mail.

Fall Conference/Bulb Sale



The Smith County Master Gardener Association, a volunteer program of Texas AgriLife Extension Service, will sponsor its annual Fall Gardening Conference at Harvey Hall in Tyler on Saturday, October 17th, 2009,

9:00 a.m. until 11:30. A bulb and plant sale following the conference will offer thousands of bulbs to the public with many varieties not often found in local nurseries.

The keynote conference presentation will be given by Denyse Cummins, LSU AgCenter Horticulture Agent and Master Gardener Coordinator.



Admission to both the Gardening Conference and the Bulb Sale is free.

More details in next month's *MG Grapevine*.

Trivia Quiz

1. Of all vegetables, only two can live to produce on their own for several growing seasons. All other vegetables must be replanted every year. What are the only two perennial vegetables?
2. What fruit has its seeds on the outside?
3. In many liquor stores, you can buy pear brandy, with a real pear inside the bottle. The pear is whole and ripe, and the bottle is genuine; it hasn't been cut in any way. How did the pear get inside the bottle?
4. Name the only vegetable or fruit that is never sold frozen, canned, processed, cooked, or in any other form except fresh.

Answers below:

1. Asparagus and rhubarb
2. The fruit with its seeds on the outside. Strawberry.
3. It grew in the bottle. The bottles are placed over pear buds when small, and are wired in place on the tree.
4. The bottle is left in place and when pears are ripe, they are snipped off at the stem.



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