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June 2013

<http://easttexasgardening.tamu.edu>

Number 6
Volume 20



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MG Association Meeting
June 6, 2013
Rose Garden Center

MG Grapevine Staff
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Published for the Master Gardeners of Smith County, Texas under the auspices of the Smith County Office of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, 1517 W. Front St. Tyler, TX 75702.

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Our President says.....



Master Gardeners, one of our big fund raisers is right upon us; The Annual Home Garden Tour. Please volunteer to help at one of the five homes if you possibly can.

We need volunteers to “man” two hour shifts at one of the homes from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM on June 1, 2013. Each shift requires several people. Probably four to six persons per shift, which means we will need about 60 to 80 volunteers to act as “Docents” or ticket takers. Contact our coordinator, Jean Smith if you haven’t already. Her phone numbers are: Home; 903-316-2313 and Cell; 903-316-8501.

Our VP, David Gary, has arranged for, what I believe will be, a real fine program for our June meeting. Marnelle de Wet Durrett from Kiepersol Winery will inform us about the grape and wine industry in East Texas. Remember even the great Apostle of the Gospel, St. Paul, advised his protégé Timothy to no longer drink water but to, “...use a little wine for his stomach sake and other infirmities.” The key words, of course are, “...a little wine.”

AgriWorld

There will be an organizational and planning meeting for "Our Secret Garden", the AgriWorld exhibit during the East Texas State Fair. An organizational meeting will be held June 4th 1:00 PM Room 114 down the hall from the Extension office.



There is a need for people to set up various areas, teachers, anyone who is willing to give a few hours of their time. Come and see what we have planned for this year.

Fair dates are Sept 20-29 and set up will be during the month of September. Teaching dates are Sept. 24-27.

We can always use silk flowers, plants, garden related items that you might be discarding.

Contact Jean Smith with questions or plan on attending the meeting June 4.

E-Mail correction

Bob McCrae—rmcrae@suddenlink.net

June 6th MG Meeting

Growing up immersed in agriculture, Marnelle de Wet Durrett, Proprietor and Winemaker for Kiepersol Enterprises, developed a love for the finer things the land had to offer. Marnelle will share her knowledge and dreams with the SCMGs at the June meeting.



She apprenticed at Trefethen Vineyards in Napa Valley. Due to the unique climatic conditions in East Texas, Marnelle marries the Old World style of winemaking with her Californian background to create the first class cellar selections of Kiepersol wines.

SCMG Scholarships

Each year the Smith County MGs offer a scholarship to two students, one at Texas A&M University and the other at Stephen F. Austin State University.

This year's recipient at Texas A&M is Sarah Hollis who said, in part:

“It is an honor to receive a scholarship from the Smith County Master Gardeners Scholarship Fund. I would like to sincerely thank you for awarding me this scholarship as it will be very beneficial to my education. I am ending my freshman year at Texas A&M University and have enjoyed every minute of my time spent here.”

Jordan Len McGee, a freshman at SFA said: “Thank you for selecting me for the Smith County Master Gardener scholarship. Taking on the new journey of college has been a challenge, but I am thrilled to receive your support in this endeavor. Thank you for presenting me with this great honor. I will do my best to live up to the expectations that you, SFA and my family have for me.”

Home Garden Tour

The tour is on June 1st—9 AM to 3 PM.

Tickets are \$10 pre-sale—\$12 at the tour.
Go to <http://txmg.org/smith/coming-events/>
For pictures and addresses of the homes on the tour.



What a weird year, weather-wise, this has been so far! However, it looks like summer heat has arrived to stay for a while. Lots of plants were slow to develop or rapidly come out of dormancy due to not only cooler air temperatures, but also cooler soil temperature. Of course, the late freezes didn't help any, either. Keep your fingers crossed for timely rains this summer!

I want to make you aware of a new pest that seems to have made its way into our neck of the woods. A few years ago, a scale insect was discovered infesting crape myrtle trees in the McKinney area. These scale insects infest the trunk and limbs, and are being called crape myrtle bark scale. They produce lots of honeydew, upon which black sooty mold grows. The effect of large numbers of scales on the trunks, along with black sooty mold resulted in it being easily observable driving along the boulevard. It is suspected to be the same genus as an azalea bark scale, which I had not seen before, at least not until this year. Earlier in April I was called out to a landscape where some azaleas were defoliating and a white bark scale was the obvious culprit. Sooty mold was also present. The crape myrtle bark scale is a new species for the U.S., and to my knowledge, has only been found in the Dallas/Fort Worth metroplex area.

For more information, see Dr. Mike Merchant's CityBugs.tamu.edu web site:

<http://citybugs.tamu.edu/2010/05/10/scale/?s=crape+myrtle>

On the right is a photo of it I took on a tree in Tyler, which Merchant says sure looks like the same thing as in the Dallas area. It "bleeds" red or pink if crushed. If you run across this scale on crape myrtle, please let me know.



I'm putting out a call again for help with setting up result demonstrations of home yards, where owners would implement some water conserving measures so we can measure and document the effectiveness of water conservation practices. We would compare pre-implementation monthly water bills (from 2012) to current water bills for documentation. I realize that all of you are Master Gardeners, and therefore have probably already implemented many of these best practices. If you haven't, but plan to, please get with me about this opportunity. And, maybe you have a friend or neighbor who would be a good candidate for this program, and would be willing to cooperate.

What are some of these water conservation measures?? Outdoors: Using plants with lower water requirements; maintaining 2-4 inches of mulch in planted areas; doing an irrigation system evaluation/checkup to improve efficiency; converting spray nozzles to multi-stream nozzles; convert spray irrigation to drip irrigation; harvest rain-water for irrigation; install/retrofit water-sense labeled smart controller; install rain/freeze sensor; use "cycle and soak" irrigation schedule; aerate lawn and apply 1/2 inch compost; use Potential EvapoTranspiration (PET) for scheduling irrigation.

Indoors: take the 40 gallon challenge - see <http://www.40gallonchallenge.org/pledge.cfm?state=TX> (this web site is a place to pledge to do only new practices or actions to save water, not things you are already doing, it includes both indoors and outdoors practices).

OPHIPOGON SILVER DRAGON

by Herb Coursey

Like so many other Ophiopogons, O. Silver Dragon is a short-growing plant of neat, grass-like appearance. It grows well **in sun**, where its blade-like leaves consist mostly of generous white streaks, but it will also do beautifully **in shade**, changing into rich deep green, with a few hair-thin streaks left from the white. So it is **gorgeous** year-round. But when the leaf-blades are changed to green, they won't be restored to white, even by moving those plants into



bright sunshine. Once they are there, though, they will produce new leaves which will be largely white. Indeed, those fresh new leaves are so spectacular they seem almost silver. So you just can't lose! O. Silver Dragon is a truly magnificent ground cover to use for beds. Perhaps it is too vigorous for some gardeners - meaning that it could be criticized for such healthy, flagrant growth, as being too "overrunning" for some folks. OK. But the other side of that is, you don't have to buy or exert much of anything because it

grows easily, vigorously, and is so-o-o cheap! If you cannot find a source for purchasing plants of it to begin growing, give me a call; I would be happy to provide you with some free small plants to get it started for you. I have tools for the digging, but you'll be glad if you bring along a freezer gallon bag or two, just so you don't "dirty" your car interior on the way home! Enjoy! - 'erb



My wife Josephine made her own list of aspects of this wonderful and beautiful grower. These are her observations: It is a great evergreen ground cover; small (~ 4-6 inches high), whitest in sun, but will grow in shade. It's about the first to come out in spring. So if you cut the old leaves off in early February, you can avoid damaging the new ones. It's a very vigorous spreader by underground rhizome, so you'll have to use your preferred kind of edging to restrict any growth you don't want. Occasionally a plant may grow taller and revert to solid-green. But it's easy use a trowel to dig out what you don't want.



by Dee Bishop

ASTER YELLOWS - A DISEASE TO WATCH FOR

This disease has many characteristics and can easily be mistaken for other plant maladies. Twisted, misshapen blooms, flowers open green and stunted or malformed, and often you will see what looks like leaves in the flower bloom. Foliage may turn reddish and the root system is stunted and if seeds are made they will be sterile. This disease is often mistaken for herbicide damage.

We have had aster yellows in the IDEA Garden for several years in our purple coneflowers. The blooms open green and are malformed. When you see this, pull the plant up and dispose of it (not in the compost pile). There is no cure at this time. Aster yellows are caused by aster yellows phytoplasma (A.Y.P.) a bacteria-like organism that is spread by the aster leafhopper.



Many plants are affected by this disease. All plants in the aster and daisy family such as coneflowers, coreopsis, marigolds, zinnias, thistles, dandelions, black-eyed susan, plantain, and wild carrot (Queen Anne's lace). Vegetables affected are carrots, lettuce, celery, and onions. Watch for malformed and greenish color in these plants. This disease has wreaked havoc with carrot growers in particular.

When buying plants, look for peculiar blooms or leaves, anything that looks stunted or malformed and don't buy it.

At this time, the only control is to control the aster leafhopper.

June is the month to take cuttings of spring flowering shrubs and everything you want duplicates of. Water the night before and take cuttings the next morning when foliage is crisp. Take cuttings, about 6 in. long just above a node. Pull or cut leaves off until you have only 4-5 left. Dip in rooting hormone and stick in a good well - drained mix. I often use a mix of perlite and vermiculite. Keep them damp but not wet and in the shade. Roots should form in 3-6 weeks. It's a lot of fun and a good way to get more plants to share. Once the weather gets in the high 90s and up, rooting cuttings is next to impossible; so get it done ASAP.

Executive Committee Notes

The Executive Committee met on May 17th.

Monette Colman reported that the new MG shirts were in and available for pickup at the MG office. She suggested the possibility of ordering shirts from the web for direct shipment. She will check for further details and report back to the committee.

Sue Adee advised that Past-President Ronny Duncan was never given presidential rock. Following discussion it was decided that rocks be obtained for all Past Presidents who served prior to the practice of giving rocks, as a token of their service.

The problem of plant thefts in the Rose Garden was discussed, including the possibility of purchasing a camera for placement in the garden. No action was taken.

Martin Davis asked that the committee consider adopting a policy with regard to use of the MG e-mail when requests for personal messages are made. In the future, the only personal messages that will be sent to the MGs are those where plants are offered free.

Getting to Know Us

by Pat Turner



I am quite certain master gardeners would agree with me that this month's subject is indispensable to our organization. Yet how much do we really know about Martin Davis? He was born in Lisbon, Iowa and attended the University of Iowa at Iowa City. He and his wife, Edith, recently celebrated their 60th Anniversary. They have two children and two granddaughters, all of whom live in Tyler.

Martin spent his working career with Dearborn Brass, first in Cedar Rapids, Iowa and then in Tyler when Dearborn relocated in 1979. He retired in 1995 as Engineering Manager after forty years with the company. Martin served on the team that negotiated with the labor union at Dearborn and is very proud of the compliment given him by one of the union officials. Although he seldom agreed with Martin, he knew he could always trust him because he always told the truth.

Retirement offered him the opportunity to pursue his other interests such as gardening. A graduate of SCMG Class 3 Martin served as president in '98-99. His interest in gardening began with the pride he felt when his grandfather, who enjoyed grafting peach trees, developed a yellow peach that would survive Iowa winters. Martin and his father maintained a large vegetable garden where he learned a structured approach to gardening which influences him today. His garden strategy is to keep it simple, know what grows well here and don't try to grow plants that don't do well here such as his beloved Iowa lilacs.

Besides gardening Martin has many other interests, some of which may surprise you as they did me. He enjoyed more than forty years of sailing his own sailboat. Martin also has a love for auto racing (watching, not driving) having attended the Indianapolis 500 several times and still enjoys watching races on TV. His current hobby is photography, particularly birds, butterflies, and flowers.

Click http://www.pbase.com/mrd/2013_at_home to view one of his online galleries.

He really enjoys computers and all the ways he can use them for the SCMG program. As web master of our award winning website, editor of the Grapevine and patient collector /reporter of volunteer hours and CE credits Martin is a very valuable asset to the SCMG association and we appreciate all his hard work.

Jim Shown reported that the TX MG Association is considering a volunteer reporting system whereby MGs could log-in to report their volunteer hours directly into the program.

Keith advised that the MG office computer is being updated to Windows 7, which should solve the slow response problem of that computer. Keith will investigate the possibility of a separate e-mail address for that computer.

FIRST DETECTOR – PLANT DISEASE

*When? Start: 1:00pm June 24, 2013 End: 12:00noon June 26, 2013
Where? Texas A&M Horticultural Sciences Department building
on Texas A&M campus in College Station.*

The Master Gardener Specialist First Detector-Plant Disease training will introduce participants to the National Plant Diagnostic Network's efforts to protect US agriculture and plants through awareness information of invasive, non-native pests and pathogens. Trainees will learn basic plant disease diagnostic skills and symptom documentation skills. This training will prepare the Master Gardener Specialist to serve as a First (early) Detector. The subject emphasized in this training will be the disease, Boxwood blight. In addition to recognizing symptoms & signs of the pathogen that cause this disease, trainees will also learn various strategies to manage landscape disease problems in EarthKind approaches.

This program is partially funded by a USDA-APHIS grant to enhance the awareness, detection and surveillance of invasive plant pests and pathogens.

Early Registration Deadline: May 31, 2013; \$125 per person

Final Registration Deadline: June 17, 2013; \$175 per person

ONLINE REGISTRATION: <http://agriferegister.tamu.edu>
(Keyword search: *Master Gardener*)

2013 JMG® Specialist Training

Williamson County Ext. Office 3151 SE Inner Loop
Road, Georgetown, TX July 23-25, 2013

With your help, the National Junior Master Gardener® Program is growing good kids by igniting a passion for learning, success, and service through a unique gardening education. To support your efforts, a dynamic and intensive 3-day JMG® Specialist Training will be held July 23 – 25, 2013. The JMG® Specialist Training is designed to assist those coordinating or supporting JMG programs at the local and regional level.

Upon completion of the JMG® Specialist Training Conference, you will receive certification as a JMG® Specialist by the National Junior Master Gardener Program office and a host of invaluable resources that will help grow JMG® and youth gardening programs in your area.

Registration Cost: \$275 (\$300 after July 2, 2013)

Only two registrants per county association please.

For more information and registration forms, go to:

<http://txmg.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/williamson/files/2013-JMG-Specialist-Training-Registration-final-edition.pdf>

THERESA AND LES REEVES LECTURE SERIES - Agriculture Building, 1924 Wilson Drive, Stephen F. Austin State University, Nacogdoches, TX 75962. 6:30 refreshments/social, 7:00 PM lecture followed by exciting plant raffle!
June 20- Darren Duling, Mercer Arboretum, Houston, TX –Making Mercer Magnificent – Opportunities and Challenges.

Home Garden Tour Gardens



Photos by Jean Smith