



**SOMERVELL
COUNTY
MASTER
GARDENERS
ASSOCIATION**

**SCMGA
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SCMGA Newsletter

**TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION**

THE GREEN PIECE

Volume 5, Issue 10

October 2012

Plant Propagation!

SCMGA Community Horticulture Education Program

Monday, October 8, 6:30 PM

Somervell County Citizen Center, 209 SW Barnard

Free and Open to the Public



The Community Horticultural Education Session scheduled for October 8th at 6:30 p.m. at the Citizens' Center is a program on Plant Propagation. Somervell County Master Gardener, Debbie Botkin-Parker, will be presenting the program and it will cover plant propagation by seed, by plant cuttings, by plant roots and plant leaves. She will also be demonstrating a soda bottle mini greenhouse and a self watering propagator. So if you want to learn how to propagate your own plants come out and join us on October 8th. The meeting is open to the public and free. Refreshments will be provided.

Final CHES Program for 2012

November 12 - Special MG Panel

Don't miss this year's final Somervell County Master Gardener's Community Horticultural Education Session scheduled for Monday evening, November 12th

at 6:30 p.m. November's program will be a special event featuring a question and answer format provided by our own local certified Master Gardeners. Our group has a lot of combined knowledge, training and experience and we want to share that with our community. We look forward to hearing your gardening and horticultural questions and helping you find the answers! Feel free to email us ahead of time if you want to make sure to get the most in depth answer! somervellmg@gmail.com. Refreshments will be provided and this interesting and informative program is FREE. We are also beginning to plan our programs for next year, so bring us suggestions for topics you would like to see covered!



Got a Gardening Question?

We Have Answers!

October Gardening Tips

By Sandi Stringer, Somervell County Master Gardener

Whew! Fall is finally here and this month is a great time to plant—both for you and the plants because of milder temperatures. While you are



noticing colorful plants this month, think about planting some native grasses such as Little Bluestem, Gulf Muhly, Inland Sea Oats, and Bushy Bluestem or fall blooming perennials such as Mexican Bush

Sage and Mexican Mint Marigold (the foliage has a licorice scent) and of course Chrysanthemums. You can actually keep planting through the fall and into winter. After planting, you want to mulch, as it will trap soil warmth, which will benefit the roots. And yes, mulch will help keep winter weeds at a minimum. If there is no rain, watering once every 3-4 weeks is sufficient to keep your plants

alive through the fall and winter.

This is also the month to plant wildflowers. It is best to control existing weeds prior to planting or to at least mow them very close to the ground. Rake the soil surface so that the seeds have a place to fall into, sow the seeds, and tamp the ground.



Now through November is an ideal time to plant woody ornamentals such as Crepe Myrtles.

Last but not least, as the leaves start falling from the trees, think of putting them in a compost bin or just create your own compost pile.

For a more extensive list of native and adapted plants to plant during the fall and additional information, go to our library at the County Extension Office.

Favorite Plants Of Master Gardeners - “Cedar Elm”

By Bob Lancaster, Somervell County Master Gardener

Common Name/Scientific Name: Cedar Elm / *Ulmus crassifolia*

Native/ Adapted: Native

Height: Normally around 60 feet tall, can reach 90 feet.

Spread: Varies-should plant 20-30 feet apart.

Light: Part shade to Full Sun

Evergreen/Deciduous: Deciduous, with leaves turning yellow to gold in fall.

Seasonal Interest: Unlike other elms, the Cedar elm’s seeds ripen and spread in the fall.

Color/Features: Each tree has its own unique shape. The leaves are small and rough to the touch and the bark is corky.

Water: Very drought tolerant.

Maintenance: A hardy tree that grows reasonably fast, easily transplanted and requires minimum care.

Wildlife: Minor importance, seeds consumed by squirrels, mice and turkeys.

Deer Resistant: Young trees should be protected until they reach about 6 feet tall.

Comments/Experience: Cedar elms are excellent trees adapted to rocky calcareous soils in Somervell County. During the bad drought years I have found this tree to perform even better than some of the other native years in my area. I also enjoy the unique shapes of each of my Cedar elms.



Life with Guineas - and Goats!

Submitted by Donna Hagar, Somervell County Master Gardener

One of the advantages of being the Newsletter Editor is it gives me the opportunity to share pictures of those things closest to me. Okay, maybe a little sad that right now that is fowl and livestock, but hey, they are SO much fun! My four chickens have been laying eggs regularly for about 5 weeks now. The guineas are laying, too, but I can't find their nests! Sneaky critters keep moving around. I managed to nab a couple before they started roaming out in the pastures. The eggs are a bit smaller and speckled compared to standard chicken eggs. The guineas aren't completely full grown, their wattles will continue to get more red as they age and they have a bit of growing to do. People say "oh guineas are SO noisy". True but they squawk much less the older they get, and it is kinda cute anyway - unless it is at 3 am!



Mr. Cogburn and his entourage!

Now for some real entertainment! <http://youtu.be/KdVyfUu6d3c> This is just an example of the activities we get to witness daily! Coco goes for a ride! Notice the audience at the bottom!

Wade's WallyWorm Word - "Leaves"

Submitted by Wade Moore, Somervell County Master Gardener

"Hey! WallyWorm, I found out that raking leaves burns up about 240 calories per hour. So, if I rake leaves for 30 minutes I can offset the 120 calorie cola drink I consume about 4oclock most days." brags Wade

"Get down out of that tree before you fall. You might fall on me and make me an ooie gooie worm." pleads WallyWorm

"Good point. I think I'll just wait a few more weeks and let the autumn season work its transformation magic, turning green to red and gold. Brisk Northern winds will scatter these leafy sails onto my yard and then I can rake them up. I can't leave them on the yard very long though, or they will suffocate the grass, besides if you can't see the grass, it can't grow.

I may just power mow them with a mulching blade mower instead. The mowing will have to take place every few days to keep the leaf build-up from getting too deep. By shredding the leaves, the smaller pieces will settle down into the grass; giving you, WallyWorm, your buddy Sluggo the slug, and Woody the woodlouse more groceries. Your orts will then decompose leaving complex chemical compounds, ergo enhancing the existing soil.

The neighbors across the street are going to compost their leaves. Shredding takes place as well and a handful of lime and a handful of blood meal thrown into the compost pile; along with enough water to keep the pile moist. One neighbor has one of those contraptions that shreds the leaves after it vacuums them up off the ground. Some of the leaf shreds they place about ½ deep in the flower beds, helping to control weeds and retain soil moisture. For the acid loving plants, peat moss is put down with the leaf shreds on top of that.

Leaf mold can be accomplished by putting wet leaves into a plastic bag, closing the mouth of the bag and then puncturing the bag in several places with a sharp stick or the like. Store the bags in an out-of-the-way place and just wait. Free compost, high in calcium and magnesium will result after some months." concludes Wade

"Thanks for the leafy lesson and while we are waiting for the falling leaves to appear, we can mull this over. "Does killing time damage eternity?" answers Wallyworm

Raked up from bits and shreds of knowledge lingering from past articles and experiences.



Transplanting Shrubs and Trees

By Bonnah Boyd, Somervell County Master Gardener

BEST TIME

The best time to transplant shrubs and trees is in the late winter when the plants are as dormant as possible. Also, the larger the shrub or tree is, the lower the chances of success. If the shrub is over 4 feet tall or a tree has a trunk diameter more than 3/4 inch, forget trying to transplant it yourself. Hire a professional to do it.

Success in transplanting shrubs and trees starts with giving the plant some advance warning that you are going to move it.

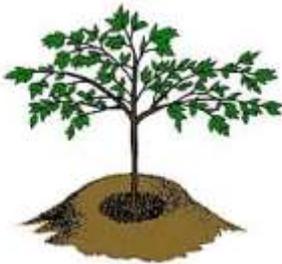
NOTIFICATION

Tell the plant you are going to move it by notifying it in the fall. This involves precutting the rootball you will dig in late winter. Take a "sharp shooter" shovel (a long, narrow blade shovel) and cut a 16 to 20 inch diameter circle in the soil around the plant. Each cut should penetrate 12 inches deep. Space each cut one width of the shovel apart as you progress around the plant. Leaving uncut soil allows some roots to remain unaffected by this pre-transplant process. The cut roots will regenerate new roots during the fall and winter. More roots in the soon-to-be-dug rootball increase the chances of success.

MOVING DAY

In late December or January, complete the transplanting process. Finish cutting the uncut portion of the circle around the plant. Create the rootball by digging on the outside of the circle you cut, progressing around the plant to dig the soil cylinder. Once the digging is completed, wrap the cylinder of soil with burlap or an old blanket to provide support to keep the cylinder intact.

If you are going to move the plant to a new spot in your landscape, dig the new hole before you make the final cuts to remove the plant from its current location. The new hole should be slightly larger in diameter (a couple of inches) and no deeper than the soil cylinder. Back at the plant, make the final cuts below the soil cylinder to cut the remaining roots and free the plant. Pick the plant up by the soil cylinder without breaking it. Slip a blanket underneath the soil cylinder, and bring the ends of the blanket together at the base of the plant's trunk or main stems. You may want to bind the blanket corners with rope or tape.



Now lift the plant by supporting the cylinder, and move it immediately to the new hole. DO NOT carry the plant by its trunk. Place the transplant in the new hole. Carefully remove the burlap or blanket. Backfill any voids around the cylinder with the soil you dug from the hole. Water to settle the soil.

Build a 4-inch berm (a small soil dam) around the edge of the hole. Fill the berm with mulch and water.

If you don't intend to plant the newly dug shrub or tree immediately, place the soil cylinder in a container as close to the same size as the cylinder as possible. Water the plant and keep the plant in a shaded location until spring growth begins.

Reference: Doug Welsh's TEXAS GARDEN ALMANAC, Texas A&M University Press, College Station



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We're on the web!

<http://www.somervellmastergardeners.org>

The Somervell County Master Gardeners are volunteers who work with the AgriLIFE Extension to improve gardening skills throughout the community. Program objectives are implemented through the training of local volunteers known as Master Gardeners. We collaborate with Extension to conduct youth and community education; establish and maintain demonstration gardens; and provide a speakers bureau. We work with special audiences in the community for youth and community outreach of a horticultural nature. We recruit and educate new Master Gardener candidates for effective volunteering.

The training for Somervell County is held in combination with Hood and Johnson Counties and is currently held only every other odd year. The next training for our area will be held in the spring of 2013. If you are interested in the SCMGA, we would like to invite and encourage you to visit one of our monthly meetings, so that you might learn more about our various projects and activities. Our regular monthly business meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 10:00 a.m. in the Somervell County Extension Office. For more information, please contact Somervell County Extension office at 254-897-2809 or you may email the SCMGA at somervellmg@gmail.com.



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