



Denton County Master  
Gardener Association

# THE ROOT

Grow  
With  
Us



## 35 YEARS AND STILL GROWING



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# Buds From The Board

BY CHERYL HUCKABEE, PRESIDENT

Gardening in July in North Texas brings both challenges and rewards. Despite the intense heat, my garden is brightened by the resilient blooms of Texas lantana, rock rose, canna, zinnias, Texas star hibiscus, and salvias 'Henry and Augusta Duelberg.' These plants soften the harsh summer sun with their vibrant colors. Meanwhile, the vegetable garden thrives with heat-loving crops, offering a bountiful harvest of okra, peppers, and southern peas.

As the summers here keep heating up, I've learned to give my garden extra TLC by ensuring plenty of hydration and keeping an eye out for pests and diseases. We gardeners need to remember to protect ourselves from the North Texas summer heat as well by staying hydrated, wearing a hat and sunscreen, and taking breaks in the shade.

Thank you to everyone that participated and volunteered at our terrific Fruit, Veggie, Herb, and Flower Show! This year's event featured separate categories for Master Gardeners and the public, plus the beloved floral arrangement category. Kudos to Debby Ishee for organizing educational opportunities and Steven Chamblee's delightful presentation, and all the volunteers who made the day special. With 12 educational booths and collaboration with nearby MGAs to judge the entries, eight talented gardeners won accolades. An awesome day all around!

We're excited to announce the new [DCMGA Achievements page](#), brought to you by the DCMGA Website Management Team! This page celebrates the incredible hard work, dedication, and successes of our members. Check back often, as we'll be updating it with our latest achievements and milestones. Thank you for making our community amazing!

Take a break from the July heat with us at one of our educational events.

- July 10, 10 am-noon, Monthly Meeting & Program, "Prune Like a Pro! Master Tree Care Tips," Global Spheres Center
- July 10, 6:30-8:00 pm, "Landscape Planning, Installation, and Maintenance," The Colony Public Library
- July 12, 3:00-4:00 pm, "Cacti and Succulents," Lewisville Library
- July 25, 6:30-7:30 pm, "Native Plants in Schools," sponsored by NPSOT, Ann Stuart Science Complex
- July 31, 6:30-7:30 pm, "Landscape Design," The Colony Public Library

Stay cool out there, and thank you for your continued support in making our gardening community thrive in North Texas!



# Community Strong Farm

## A Community Gardening Experience!

BY RUSS ALLEN

CSF is Growing and needs Your time & talents. On any one day (Every Monday and 4th Saturday, 8:am-10:am) we are prepping veggie beds, turning Mulch into Compost, pulling weeds, watering, planting Veggies & Flowers, Harvesting, and delivering the harvest to the Linda Tutt High School Student run Grocery Store and/or First Refuge Food Bank!

Best of All, Our dreams are coming to fruition! We already have more than 1/2 the \$\$ for a Large Hoop/Grow House, are drawing up plans for our Pollinator Garden, searching grants for a Fruit & Berry Orchard, and changing our current inground rows to raised & wider beds!

CSF is quickly becoming an educational garden for the Community, High Schoolers, Jr High, & Elementary age kids. With your help, CSF can be one of the largest Community educational garden projects for DCMGA in the County!

If you want to volunteer individually, or with family/groups, just call or text me for the details: Russ Allen, Project Manager, 940 577-9794.



# You're Invited

July 2024, Monthly General Meeting & Program  
"Prune Like a Pro! Master Tree Care Tips"



Discover tree care secrets! Join Kimberlee Peterson from Texas A&M Forest Service for pruning tips, planting methods, and maintenance timing. Cultivate confidence in tree care!

July 10, 2024, 10 am  
Global Spheres Center  
7801 S Interstate 35E, Corinth, TX 76210

# Plant of the Month - Mexican Plum

BY LIZ CHANEY

It is just plum hot outside! As we languish in the heat dreaming of cooler weather, thoughts of fall fruits come to mind – juicy apples, peaches, and plump plums. You could have your own fruity plums if you had a Mexican Plum tree. This tree satisfies interests in many areas, from ornamental intrigue to a pollinator magnet with blooms arriving as early as March, as well as supporting native wildlife and producing fruit. In addition, the Mexican Plum can tolerate diverse soils, drought, and heat. Planting should occur in the fall to enjoy the full impact of the many spring blooms and visiting pollinators.

## Characteristics

Name: *Prunus Mexicana*

Family: Rosaceae

Also known as Mexican Plum, Big Tree Plum, or Inch Plum

Plant: This is a single-trunk, non-sucking tree with a short trunk approximately 8-10" in diameter, The height can be up to 25' with an irregular crown and dark green foliage. It is a monoecious species; therefore, only one tree is needed.

Leaf: The upper surface is smooth and thickened, with a textured yellow-green lower surface that will be lighter and hairy along the veins. Leaves will turn yellow or red in the fall.

Flower: Appear in numerous clusters of white or pink 5-petaled flowers beginning in March. Flowers will appear before the leaves.

Bark: Dark grey, nearly black in color. When young, the bark is marked with horizontal lenticels that will develop broad plates and curled edges as it gets older.

Fruit: Plums ripen in late summer and are about 1.25" in diameter. The color begins as yellow, turning to mauve, and finally a dark purple with a bluish undertone. A smooth stone will be under the juicy flesh of the plum.



Photo Courtesy [Joseph A Marcus, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center](#)

## Mexican Plum Blossom

## Mexican Plum (Cont.)

### **Growing Conditions:**

Water: Low use

Light Requirement: sun /partial shade,

Soil Moisture: Dry, wet, well-drained soils such as sand, sandy loam, medium loam, clay loam, clay or limestone based.

### **Benefits:**

Ornamental: Attractive, showy, floral production, aromatic and bark characteristics

Wildlife: Attracts birds, butterflies, nectar bees, and mammals.

Laral Host: Tiger Swallowtail and Cecropia Moth

Fruit: Jellies and jams



Photo Courtesy [Sally and Andy Wasowski, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center](#)

### **Mexican Plum Fruit**

### **Resources**

**Texas A&M Forest Service, Trees of Texas, "Mexican Plum"**

<http://texastreeid.tamu.edu/content/TreeDetails/?id=85>

**Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, "Prunus Mexicana"**

[https://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id\\_plant=prme](https://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id_plant=prme)



# In The Veggie Patch: Black-Eyed Peas

BY BARBARA BROWN

In the brutal heat and dry conditions of North Texas summers vegetable gardeners are challenged to find a crop that will survive and produce. One option to try is black-eyed peas. A member of the legume family they have pale cream with a tell-tale black spot on each pea. Black-eyed peas are native to Africa and are sometimes called cowpeas or southern peas. Black-eyed peas are a good source of nutrients and antioxidants. Black-eyed peas seeds may be planted from June through early July.

If you have extras, they can be easily preserved for later use. To save them, leave the pods on the plant until dry. Then, snap the seed pod off the plant and break it open. Remove the seeds and let them dry completely. Then store in a Ziplock bag, a container, or vacuum seal. A bit of black-eyed pea trivia: It is a Southern tradition that eating black-eyed peas on New Year's Day will bring a year's worth of good luck.

## Select the Right Variety

“Some of the varieties recommended by the Texas AgriLife Extension Service include 'California Blackeye #5', which produces 6- to 7-inch pods and meaty peas with a slightly sweet flavor; 'Colossus Crowder', with extra-large, brown-colored peas in straw-colored pods; 'Mississippi Silver', a crowder pea with 6-inch-long, silver-colored pods; purple-hull peas, which naturally have purple pods; and 'Zipper Cream', with green pods and creamy white peas.” Dallas Morning News



## Planting

Prepare the soil by breaking up any dirt clods and integrating some organic material to enrich the soil nutrients. Follow the directions on your seed packet which generally recommend planting one inch apart at a depth of 1½ inches. Keep the soil moist until seedlings emerge in about 7 to 10 days. Thin the plants to three inches apart and add mulch to conserve soil moisture and moderate temperature. You may add a bit of fertilizer but don't overdo it as too much leads to healthy vines but less pod production.

## Maintenance and Care

Add supplemental water when the soil at a one-inch depth is dry. Black-eyed peas have few disease or pest problems. But, keep an eye out for aphids and beetles. Use an insecticidal soap or

## In The Veggie Patch: Black-Eyed Peas (Cont.)

neem oil if infestations occur. Although not essential using a trellis to support the growing vines will help with air circulation around the pods and support the vigorously growing vines.

### *Enjoying your harvest recipe*

If using fresh black-eyed peas, you are good to go. Dried black-eyed peas must be rehydrated before cooking by soaking them overnight in the refrigerator. (This recipe comes from the West Heritage Cookbook compiled to celebrate the 1986 Texas Sesquicentennial).

**“Good Luck Peas”** Sauté 2 to 4 slices of chopped bacon (or smoked ham). Add 1 medium chopped onion and cook until almost crisp. Add an 8oz can of tomato sauce and black-eyed peas. Simmer on low heat for 15 minutes. You may add more onions, green or hot peppers, and a bit of salt to taste.



### What to Plant in July

- Set out indoor transplants you started that are ready
- Plant melon and winter squash seeds in the garden for a fall harvest
- Direct sow carrots, beets, and other root crops
- Direct sow seeds, beans, and summer squash for fall harvest
- Fertilize roses now for a great fall bloom
- Keep your soil mulched to hold in precious moisture and cut down on weeds

For more monthly tips:

[https://www.dcmga.com/maintain-and-solve-problems/maintain/  
monthly-gardening-tips/](https://www.dcmga.com/maintain-and-solve-problems/maintain/monthly-gardening-tips/)

# Self-Watering Planter Gardening

## *An Alternative Irrigation Method*

BY JANICE YODER SMITH

Denton residents recently received notice of stage 2 water restrictions being in force. What? With all the rain we've had in spring 2024? Why? The regional water district leaders know alternating periods of brief flood and longer drought are constants in this area. They cannot build enough reservoirs and pipelines fast enough to serve the rapidly expanding population in the area, so water restrictions take effect.

Our gardens need water; some vegetable plants may need much more water than others. Our soils vary in their abilities to retain and release water. What's a gardener to do as summer heat causes plants to lose more water but restrictions are in place?

Self-watering(self-wicking) planters provide opportunities to improve garden production while conserving water. How? Self-wicking planters (SWP) provide a reservoir of water that moves water into roots through capillary action and diffusion. As the upper layers lose moisture, water moves from the reservoir into the drier soil. Plant roots grow toward the reservoir. The air gap included in the SWP promotes air pruning, resulting in increased numbers of smaller diameter, healthy roots throughout the soil.

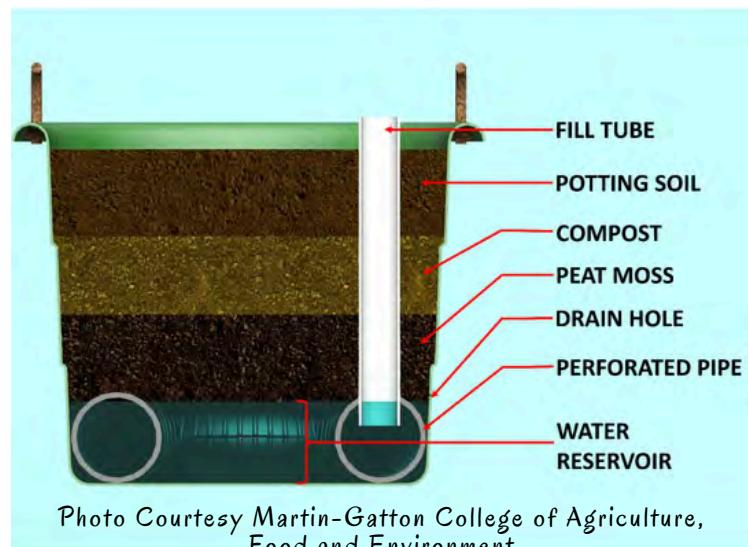
Commercial versions of SWPs exist, but their cost and smaller size may limit the number of their products an individual gardener uses. Alternatives using free, already on hand, or less-expensive items exist. Assembling SWPs requires a bit of time initially. Since SWPs reduce the time spent watering each week and can be reused for years, the initial time investment pays off.

What is needed to construct a SWP? Some gardeners choose to use 5-gallon buckets. Some modify decorative ceramic pots. Some find that empty cattle protein or mineral tubs serve well for small fruit trees, large vegetables, or a combination of herbs or flowers that have similar water requirements. If using a cattle tub or large container, place it in its desired location before adding water or soil. It will be very heavy once completed.

The size and shape of the water reservoir determine the type of wick used. Bucket SWPs tend to use single, perforated small plastic containers that insert into the base of the soil reservoir into the water reservoir. Larger containers like cattle tubs may use perforated, corrugated drain pipe in a single or double layer to contain water. Others may choose to use milk jugs or soft drink bottles containing multiple 0.25-1" holes in their sides to contain the water. An overflow hole in the side of the container creates an air gap between the soil and water and prevents plants from standing in water during times of heavy rain.

## Self-Watering Planter Gardening (Cont.)

The soil and water are separated by a layer of permeable fabric. Landscape fabric will last the longest, but sheets, frost cloth, or other fabrics will work for at least one growing season. A 3'x4' piece of fabric will work well in 40-gallon tubs. Most of the fabric extends up the inside wall of the container, but pockets formed in openings between the irrigation tubing, jugs, or bottles will contain soil and serve as wicks. Placing one wick in the center with 3-4 others equally spaced and a few inches inside the wall works well for many plants.



**Wicking container garden**

Before adding soil, fill tube with a 45° angle on bottom must be inserted between the wall of the container and fabric. The soil reservoir will sit on top of the fabric water reservoir in tubs or in the bottom of the top bucket if using that SWP system. The best soil for SWP is a mix of potting soil or landscape mix amended with perlite, compost, peat or coir, and well-composted manure. Some gardeners add granular or powder organic fertilizers, fish emulsion, or other amendments depending on the type of plant grown. Mix thoroughly before adding plants.

Fill the water reservoir. Add the plants to the soil. They will need supplemental top water for a week or so as they grow new roots and the SWP equilibrates. Adding a layer of mulch on top of the soil helps reduce water loss.

### References

*University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service*, Publication AEN-157, "Self-Watering Wicking Container"

<https://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/AEN/AEN157/AEN157.pdf>

*Oklahoma State University Extension*, "Container Garden 101"

<https://extension.okstate.edu/county/pottawatomie/container-gardens.html>

*University of Florida IAS Extension*, "Beat the Heat with a Self-Watering Container Garden"

<https://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/media/sfylifasufledu/leon/UF-IFAS-Leon-County-and-FAMU-Cooperative-Extension-Self-Watering-Bucket-Instructions.pdf>



# My St. Augustinegrass Is Dying!

BY JANICE YODER SMITH

Does your St Augustinegrass look sad? Do the grass blades have brown tips and brown-edged spots with tan to gray spots? Is the green grass coverage thinning? Or maybe you have wide circular areas with irregularly shaped damage?

If so, you are most likely dealing with two issues caused by different organisms attacking your lawn. The brown tips and gray spot damage is likely from Gray Leaf Spot fungus, *Piricularia grisea*. Our recent high rainfall and high humidity provide favorable conditions for the fungus to reproduce and spread. As the weather continues to warm, the fungus will continue to spread. One stage in its life cycle is the production of gray mycelia, which look like gray fuzzy spots on the leaves. For more information, see “Gray Leaf Spot on St. Augustine Grass” from Clemson University. <https://hgic.clemson.edu/factsheet/gray-leaf-spot-on-st-augustinegrass/>



Gray Leaf Spot Fungus. Credit: Jay D. Smith, Bugwood.org  
Creative Commons License: D. Smith, Bugwood.org

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**Gray Leaf Spot Fungus (above)  
& Brown Patch in Grass (below)**



Brown patch (Wikimedia Commons)

The irregular-shaped damage is consistent with a fungal infection called Brown Patch or Large Patch. *Rhizoctonia solani* is the culprit. Our unusually cool, wet spring may have contributed to its survival and causing further damage to your lawn. The regrowth of grass in the center of the affected area may indicate a partial recovery. “Brown Patch and Large Patch Diseases of Lawns”: <https://hgic.clemson.edu/factsheet/brown-patch-large-patch-diseases-of-lawns/>

## Here are two helpful resources:

The soil testing lab at TAMU will provide information to help you proactively limit some fungal infections. The basic soil test will include the soil's pH and nitrogen, phosphorous, and potassium concentrations. Recommendations for how much of each should be added, if any, will be given in your report. <https://soiltesting.tamu.edu/>

The Plant Disease Diagnostic Lab at Texas A&M University (TAMU) can provide a specific diagnosis and treatment recommendation for each area of your lawn affected by fungus. Instructions and a fee schedule can be found at <https://plantclinic.tamu.edu/>.



## Bountiful Tomatoes!

BY KAREN GIBSON

Spring of 2024 proved to be a banner year for tomatoes. Even long-time Texas gardeners were amazed at the lush growth and their bountiful tomato harvest.

If you had a similar bounty, perhaps you are wondering what to do with all of those tomatoes. If not, there is always this fall, which is traditionally the better tomato-growing season – if we are lucky enough to have a late frost.

The August In the Veggie Garden article will provide information on growing tomatoes for the fall, but in the meantime, we'll tease you with some Master Gardener members' recipes and also mention their favorite tried & true tomato varieties.

Monique Goodhart grows several varieties of tomatoes (see photo bottom left). She has success with Roma, Juliet, Celebrity, Sungold, Yellow pear, Sweet 100, San Marsona, and Sun sugar tomatoes.



Photo Courtesy DCMGA Member Kari Row Miley



Photo Courtesy DCMGA Member Monique Goodhart

Monique's new favorite tomato recipe sounds so easy and delicious!

Fill a Pyrex or other baking dish with:

- Cherry tomatoes
- one Boursin or Allouette cheese round (or a brick of feta)
- sprinkle olive oil generously
- garlic
- salt
- pepper
- Add whatever fresh herbs you like
- 

Roast 400 for 20-30 minutes, stir, and serve over fresh pasta with liberal Parmesan!!

## Bountiful Tomatoes! (Cont.)

Meg Rogers had good luck growing Celebrity, Roma, and Juliet tomatoes this spring, especially Roma. She says, “the Juliet is new to me and is producing like crazy.”



Photo Courtesy DCMGA Member Meg Rogers

Lea Watson mentioned Lemon Boy, 4th of July, and Sun gold as her standouts this year.



Photo Courtesy DCMGA Member Lea Watson

Becky Collins had a successful harvest this year from plants provided by other Master Gardeners. Marmalade Skies (shared by Donna Hull) and Early Girl (shared by Judy & Russ Allen), plus seeds from Everglades tomatoes (shared by Mike James). Becky states the Everglades are “ridiculously prolific.” She’s been enjoying delicious sandwiches outside on these hot gardening days.



Photo Courtesy DCMGA Member Becky Collins

The small red tomatoes are Everglades.

The Yellow tomatoes are Marmalade Skies.

The medium-sized red tomatoes are Early Girl.



Photo Courtesy DCMGA Member Becky Collins

## Bountiful Tomatoes! (Cont.)

Barbara Brown shared this recipe for a tomato quiche using fresh tomato slices, caramelized onions, and minced fresh basil:

1. Start with a basic quiche recipe: you can follow any quiche recipe to get the quantities for the mix. Choose the cheese that you like (gruyere, Parmesan or Gouda are good options).
2. Caramelize the onions by sliced thin and heating them until slightly brown, but not overcooked.
3. Layer the caramelized onions with slices of tomato and sprinkle with minced leaves. Pour the liquid mixture of eggs, a small amount of salt, and cream over the ingredients, then sprinkle some more cheese.
4. Bake at 3:50 for about 50 minutes or until the center comes out clean with a toothpick. Sprinkle a little bit more of the minced basil and allow to cool to room temperature.



Photo Courtesy DCMGA Member  
Barbara Brown



Photo Courtesy DCMGA Member  
Karen Gibson

This spring I tried two varieties recommended for north Texas, Juliet and Arkansas Traveler. The Juliet produces small, teardrop-shaped red tomatoes. It has set and ripened a few tomatoes each day since mid-May. The Arkansas Traveler is a medium-sized red tomato.

This Chili Sauce recipe is a generations-old family favorite. It is a sweet sauce, perfect for hamburgers, chicken, bean burgers - my daughter even spread it on salmon last week!

### ***Grandma Clark's Chili Sauce***

- 12 ripe tomatoes (medium)
- 3 peppers (sweet)
- 2 onions
- 2 cups white sugar
- 1 cup vinegar
- 1 Tablespoon salt
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon

1. Blanch tomatoes to remove skins, chop
2. Chop peppers & onions
3. Combine ingredients in large sauce pan and cook 1 hour or until thick. (I cook mine at least two hours. The longer you cook it, the thicker it gets.)
4. Hot water bath process for 15 minutes.
5. Makes approximately 6 pints.



# Gardening Grandma Says...

BY BARBARA BROWN

*Humans transitioned from hunting and gathering to growing their food about 12,000 years ago. Over the millenniums they found some tricks to increase their harvest. What they learned they passed down to their children. Today, some of us are fortunate to have a grandmother, aunt, or neighbor who continues the tradition of sharing old-fashioned gardening wisdom. Much of that shared knowledge is helpful but sometimes it was just a superstition with a long history. The Gardening Grandma series of articles puts these tips and tricks to the test of modern science by answering the question, “Does it really work?” Or, is it a myth?*

*“Spray plant leaves with milk to cure powdery mildew.”*

## **Truth or myth? Let's find out.**

Powdery mildew is a fungal disease that infects plant leaves, stems, flowers, and fruit. Powdery mildews are characterized by spots or patches of white to grayish, talcum-powder-like growth. The disease is most commonly seen on the upper sides of the leaves although it can affect the bottom sides of leaves and other plant parts. Although powdery mildew usually does not kill the plant, it is unsightly and negatively impact growth.



Artwork: aberry89 on DeviantArt

“Powdery mildews are severe in warm, dry climates. This is because the fungus does not need the presence of water on the leaf surface for infection to occur. However, the relative humidity of the air does need to be high for spore germination. Therefore, the disease is common in crowded plantings where air circulation is poor and in damp, shaded areas. Young, succulent growth usually is more susceptible than older plant tissues.” (Colorado State University Extension: <https://extension.colostate.edu/topic-areas/yard-garden/powdery-mildews-2-902/> )

According to Dr. Kevin Ong, (while speaking on *The Garden Party Podcast* Episode 207 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rop4wOVYSPU> ), there is some scientific evidence to support the belief that spraying powdery mildew with 1 part milk to 1 part water helps eliminate powdery mildew because the fat in milk acts similarly to neem oil inactivating the fungus's protein molecules.

## Gardening Grandma Says... (Cont.)

*Other science-based recommendations for treating powdery mildew are:*

- Plant resistant varieties.
- Remove the affected leaves being sure to sterilize your gloves and any tools used afterward.
- Some preliminary research suggests that spraying plants preventively is more effective than after an outbreak of powdery mildew.
- Apply fungicides when the first powdery mildew leaf spot is found. For shrubs with a history of disease, apply fungicides before you see disease symptoms.  
(<https://extension.umn.edu/plant-diseases/powdery-mildew-trees-and-shrubs>)
- Control Measures for Powdery Mildew Species  
(<https://ipm.ucanr.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn7406.html>)
- Chemicals are most effective when combined with cultural controls. Apply fungicides at seven to 14-day intervals to provide continuous protection throughout the growing season. Follow the instructions on the fungicide label for use on specific plant species, varieties, rates to be used, timing of applications, and waiting periods before harvest.  
(<https://extension.colostate.edu/topic-areas/yard-garden/powdery-mildews-2-902/>).
- “Managing Cucurbit Powdery Mildew Successfully in 2022”: <https://bpb-us-e1.wpmucdn.com/blogs.cornell.edu/dist/1/7446/files/2022/06/Cucurbit-Powdery-Mildew-MGT-2022-NY.pdf>



### Denton County Master Gardener YouTube Channel

Click on "Videos" and check out our new presentations!  
And don't forget to subscribe!

<http://www.youtube.com/c/DentonCountyMasterGardener>

## North Texas Gardening

Timely articles from [DCMGA](#) and [The Root](#)



[Planning a Fall Vegetable Garden \(7/2018\)](#)

[Growing Tomatoes in the Fall \(7/2020\)](#)



[Landscaping for Energy Conservation \(7/2021\)](#)

[Preserving Your Harvest \(7/2022\)](#)



[Plant Facts - Mexican Mint Marigold](#)

[Gardening Basics - Planting Your First Herb Garden](#)

[Gardening Basics - Building a Garden for Pollinators](#)



[Gardening Basics - Spider Mites](#)



Photo Courtesy DCMGA Member Angie Lindsey

**Pearl Crescent (Phyciodes tharos)**

## DCMGA Class of 2024

### *Keeping the Tradition of Excellence Alive*

BY KIM WOOTTON, CLASS PLANNING CHAIRPERSON

On April 30, the members of the DCMGA Class of 2024 completed their classroom training. 40 Interns successfully completed the class hours required to certify in January as Denton County Master Gardeners.

The last class for 2024 celebrated on April 30 with congratulations from AgriLife staff, our Board of Directors, and their mentors. The day began with the wonderful team of Pat and Don Edwards, fresh off the Plant Sale, giving a lesson in vermiculture, complete with a worm give-away. Additionally, the Class Mentors were on hand to provide a delicious picnic lunch, take plenty of pictures, and pause to reflect on the accomplishments of all those present. The highlight of the day for many was our second annual Parade of PODS, where the mentors and their mentee teams got to strut their stuff and take well-earned bows.

In addition to 70 hours of class time, the Interns are also required to log a minimum of 70 hours of volunteer service on approved projects for the organization. To date, 32 interns have already completed all of their volunteer service hours, but they say they are not done yet! This is the highest number of interns we've ever had to complete their requirements by this time of year, and the entire class is still going strong. We're so appreciative of all the interns' positive attitudes and their willingness to step up to volunteer for a variety of our DCMGA volunteer service opportunities. Graduation for everyone who completes the requirements will be held in January at the annual DCMGA Awards Banquet.

The Class Administration Team of Barbara Beane, Melissa Migis, and Kim Wootton want to thank everyone on the Class Planning Team, the Board of Directors, Zach Davis, the AgriLife staff members, and all the Denton County Master Gardener veterans that continue to ensure the success of our Interns and the Intern Class Program.

Class of 2024, congratulations once again on your accomplishments thus far! We can't wait to see what you've yet to accomplish!



Class of 2024



# Unveiling Beauty, Learning, and Community at Our 2024 Garden Tour!

BY CHERYL HUCKABEE

*What an incredible day we had on Saturday, May 11 at our annual Garden Tour! Mother Nature blessed us with perfect weather as 1,972 adults and 76 youth explored four stunning Master Gardeners' home gardens and the Flower Mound First Baptist Community Garden. A huge thank you to the homeowners for opening your gardens to the community. And let's not forget the Garden Tour Team and all the dedicated volunteers who made this event possible! Ninety-two volunteers on Tour Day ensured every visitor had an incredible experience. Our members dedicated over 3,700 hours preparing these inspiring educational experiences. Thank you to our visitors and members for making this event unforgettable!*



**At Flower Mound First Baptist Community Garden, visitors learned about food waste through real-life examples, gaining valuable insights into sustainable gardening practices.**



**Visitors to Century Oak garden discovered the ancient technique of using ollas, an efficient watering method that conserves water and promotes healthy plant growth.**

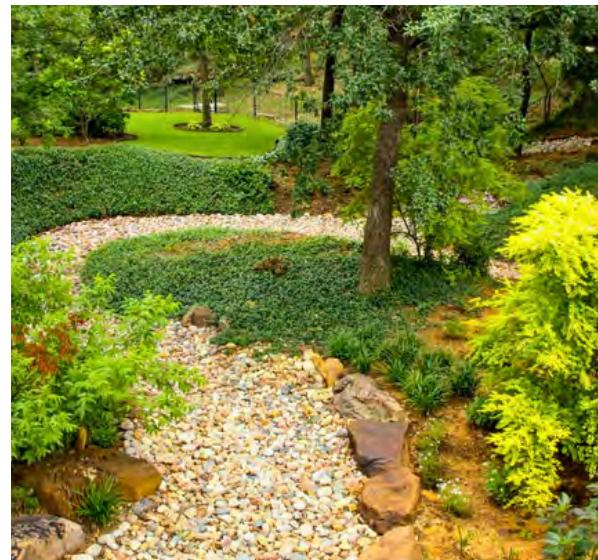
**At Shades of Eden and Art garden, visitors discovered how to grow vegetables in a small keyhole garden, perfectly suited for suburban landscapes.**



## Unveiling Beauty, Learning, and Community at Our 2024 Garden Tour! (Cont.)



At Hidden Gem garden, visitors learned how to create a stunning garden that complies with HOA regulations, showcasing the possibilities for beautiful landscaping in any neighborhood.



At Possum Creek garden, visitors marveled at dry creek beds, which not only added beauty but also served as a lesson in erosion control, showcasing nature's practical yet aesthetic solutions.



## 2024 Fruit, Vegetable, Herb and Flower Show Recap

BY DEBBY ISHEE

Wow! What a great day we had at this year's Fruit, Vegetable, Herb and Flower Show! Once again, the North Texas Fairgrounds allowed us to use their West Wing building. It was great being indoors and in air conditioning. We are so grateful for the use of this building.

In spite of the deluge of rain we received in May, the gardeners in Denton County and beyond were able to bring an abundance of beautiful flowers, herbs, fruits, vegetables, succulents, and arrangements. Twenty-five Youth, Adults (Public), and Master Gardeners brought 116 entries to compete for ribbons and bragging rights! This year, Dallas, Tarrant, and Grayson County Master Gardeners volunteered to be our judges. They were very excited to be part of our event and did a spectacular job of judging! It was great fun meeting them and sharing ideas with them. Though we were later than expected in returning the results of the show, most people were patient and were there to accept their awards.

## 2024 Fruit, Vegetable, Herb and Flower Show Recap (Cont.)

And the winners are....

In the Youth Division, Henry Fitzgerald took the Grand Champion honor with his rose mallow. Bowen Prestemon took the Reserve Grand Champion honor with his onions as well as First Runner up with his Basil.

In the Adult (Public) Division, Michelle Curran won both the Grand Champion with her eggplant and the First Runner Up Ribbon with her basil. The Reserve Grand Champion honor was awarded to Amanda Martin for her zinnias.

In the Master Gardener Division, Janet Gershenfeld was the Grand Champion with her beautiful arrangement. Reserve Grand Champion honors went to Lea Watson with her blackberries and First Runner Up was CeCe Kinney with her Chickory.

Best of Show was awarded to Carolyn Stoy for her red onions.

Congratulations to all the winners! All the entries were spectacular and many thanks to all who entered!



## 2024 Fruit, Vegetable, Herb and Flower Show Recap (Cont.)

As the judging was going on, our guest speaker, Steven Chamblee, was educating and entertaining the crowd with “Creating an Easy Care Texas Garden.” He is a delightful speaker and such a kind and generous man. After speaking, he stuck around with the Help Desk and answered questions. He also brought an abundance of gardening books and magazines to give to us.

After the speaker, there were ten education booths ready and waiting to share information. Our Master Gardener groups were Propagation, Succulents, Drip Irrigation, Aquaponics, and Help Desk. In addition, we had Master Naturalists, Native Plant Society of Texas, as well as City of Denton Wastewater Management and City of Denton Sustainability. Thanks to all who came and provided such a wealth of information.

So many volunteers helped to make this year’s show successful. I wish I could list them all! I just want to give a big Thank You to all who contributed!



**D C M G A**  
**HELP DESK**  
Question of the Month



Help Desk Team Contact Information  
940-349-2892  
master.gardener@dentoncounty.com

**BY HELP DESK TEAM**

*Q: There are so many bees and wasps in my yard that I am concerned about letting my children out to play. What should I do?*

**A:** You're right to be cautious around stinging insects while appreciating the critical role that these pollinators play in our gardens, landscape, and agriculture. Learning about their behavior, however, should help you and your children enjoy the outdoors with less anxiety. For example, not all types of bees in North Texas are a stinging threat. Many native bees in Texas are stingless and docile. About 90% of Texas native bees are solitary, and they don't defend their nests, so they pose little risk of stinging. However, the native mason bee, bumble bees, and honey bees can sting you and several types of wasps seen in our North Texas yards cause painful stings.

To help you identify the types of bees and wasps in your yard, here are some guides: The Texas Apiary Inspection Service of Texas A&M AgriLife offers descriptions and pictures on their website: <https://txbeeinspection.tamu.edu/public/be-e-identification/>

and Bees, Wasps and Other Species  
<https://txbeeinspection.tamu.edu/photo-gallery/bees-wasps/>.

And, here are three quick reference guides: [Texas Bee Field Guide](#) from the Texas Parks and Wildlife; [Native Bees of Texas Guide](#) from Texas Master Naturalists and [Texas Bee Identification Guide](#) from the Texas Beekeepers Association.

If you see a swarm of bees, usually in the spring, here is what happening. Honey bee colonies reproduce by swarming, a process where about one-third to one-half of the workers in a colony leave in a swarm with the queen to set up a hive in a new location. Swarms are temporary and the bees will move on if you patiently ignore them. Stay back and keep others away from the swarm. You can also contact a local beekeeper association (<https://www.dentonbees.org/>) or bee removal service such as BeeRescue: <https://thebeerescue.com/bee-removal>.

Although wasps are also pollinators for our plants, they tend to be more aggressive than bees. The most common wasp in North Texas is the paper wasp, which builds nests in protected areas, like dog houses, children's play equipment, shrubs, and storage benches.



You can treat nests in high-traffic areas using insecticides in pressurized containers that shoot a stream 15-20 feet, so you can stay away while spraying. Treat in the late evening, when most of the wasps have returned for the night. Thoroughly saturate the nests, leaving them in place until all the wasps are dead, which can take up to two days. Dispose of these abandoned nests in regular trash. Throughout the spring and summer, continue to look for new nests in the same location or nearby; surviving wasps often rebuild in the same location. Other wasps to watch out for are yellowjackets, hornets, cicada killers, and bald-faced hornets.



Photo: PickPic

Immediately seek emergency medical care if a person stung by a wasp or bee has trouble breathing, which is a symptom of an allergic reaction. Teach your children and other family members never to swat a bee or wasp, but to leave the area quickly, covering their head and face without blocking vision. While each bee can sting once, wasps can sting repeatedly. What to do if you're attacked by bees/wasps: <https://citybugs.tamu.edu>.

*If you have questions about any horticulture-related subjects, please contact our Master Gardener Help Desk at 940.349.2892 or [master.gardener@dentoncounty.gov](mailto:master.gardener@dentoncounty.gov).*

*It's free of charge, and our pleasure to assist you.*



***Resources & Education Opportunities for Master Gardeners and the Community we serve can be found on the Calendar at [Upcoming Events](#).***

*For non-DCMGA events, [Continuing Education Opportunities](#).*

#### DCMGA Members & Interns

**Plan Your Week (PYW) has the most current VS/CE Opportunities and is sent via VMS every Friday.**

**Denton County Master Gardener Association**

### Upcoming Events

<b>JULY</b>	<b>Community Strong Farm Work Days</b> Growing Vegetables for Linda Tutt High School Student Run Grocery & First Refuge Food Bank. All tasks from soil prep to harvesting as the season dictates. We will have a short education on the tasks of the day. Meet every Monday morning in July. 9AM-11AM 1350 Milam Road E., Sanger
<b>JULY</b>	<b>Flower Mound First Baptist Community Garden</b> Learn and grow veggies to help the community. Wear comfortable shoes, hat, and sunscreen. Bring water. Meet Thursdays in July 9AM-11AM 1901 Timber Creek, Flower Mound
<b>JULY</b>	<b>Landscape Planning, Installation and Maintenance -July 10 &amp; 31</b> Sponsored by The Colony Public Library On the 10th, Learn some of the secrets to a beautiful, healthy landscape from the Denton County Master Gardener EarthKind team, Kathy Rainey and Lee Ann Yates. This will be an information-packed presentation, so bring a notepad! July 10th. 6:30PM-8:00PM.
<b>JULY</b>	On the 31st, Struggling to develop a landscape that complements your home? Don't know what will grow in specific areas or how to choose bed sizes? Let Denton County Master Gardener Kathy Rainey help you with design tips to assure your landscape is an asset that supports your property and your lifestyle. July 31st. 6:30PM-7:30PM The Colony Public Library- 6800 Main, The Colony.
<b>JULY</b>	<b>Monthly Meeting and Program - Prune Like a Pro!</b> Unlock the Secrets of Tree Care! Discover the art of precise pruning, optimal planting methods, and ideal timing for tree maintenance. Join us for an enlightening session with Kimberlee Peterson, Woodland Ecologist from the Texas A&M Forest Service, and cultivate your green thumb with confidence. Don't miss out on this opportunity to enhance the health and beauty of your trees! The one-hour program begins at 10 am followed by our general meeting. 10AM-12PM Global Spheres Center, Corinth
<b>JULY</b>	<b>Cacti and Succulents</b> Learn all about how to put together cacti and succulents for beautiful and long-lasting arrangements. These are bound to bring a new interest to your patio or window sill with minimal effort or upkeep. Our speaker is LeeAnn Yates, Denton County Master Gardener. 3:00PM-4PM. Lewisville Public Library. 1197 W. Main St., Lewisville
<b>JULY</b>	<b>Earth Kind Design 3 Day Class</b> 3-day course on Earth-Kind practices and landscape design. Open to the public and Master Gardeners. Thursday 6-9 pm, Friday 6-9 pm, and Saturday 9 am to 4 pm. Participants must attend all three days as lessons build over time. Hands-on demonstrations and active learning. End the course with a landscape plan sketched out for your use. Class cost: \$55.00 Single participant, includes lunch on Saturday; \$80.00 Companion participants (two working on a single design project) includes two lunches on Saturday. MGs can earn CE hours. Held at Precinct 3 Government Center, 400 N. Valley Parkway, Lewisville, Texas 75067. Registration Link <a href="https://form.jotform.com/dcmga/2024-earth-kind-design-july-class-r">https://form.jotform.com/dcmga/2024-earth-kind-design-july-class-r</a>
<b>JULY</b>	<b>Native Plants in Schools - Haeley Giambalvo</b> Sponsored by the Native Plant Society of Texas, Trinity Forks Chapter Native Plants in Schools presented by Haeley Giambalvo, founder of the website Native Backyards, author of the book Native Plant Gardening for Beginners, and winner of the 2023 Digital Media Award for outstanding work in digital media. This presentation discusses how teachers, students, parents, and community volunteers can incorporate native plants into their school gardens and yards. In-person and Zoom. Link: Registration Link <a href="https://www.npsot.org/chapters/trinity-forks/tf-events/">https://www.npsot.org/chapters/trinity-forks/tf-events/</a> 6:30PM-8:30PM Ann Stuart Science Complex. 1201 Old Main Circle, Denton

**Check our calendar for updated events.** <https://www.dcmga.com/events/>

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension is an equal opportunity employer and program provider. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.



## **Landscape Design Class Registration Opens May 15, 2024!**



*Learn sustainable design & installation techniques for creating or renewing your home landscape!*

**Thursday & Friday, July 18 & 19, 6pm to 9pm, & Saturday, July 20 9am to 4pm  
Precinct 3 Government Center, 400 N. Valley Parkway, Lewisville, TX 75067**

Limited class size • Individual or Companion registrations available • Reserve your spot now!  
Classes build on each other. Register once for all 3 classes.



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### Mission Statement

Denton County Master Gardener Association educates and engages county residents in the implementation of research-based horticultural and environmental practices that create sustainable gardens, landscapes, and communities.

### Extension EO/EEO Statement

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension provides equal opportunities in its programs and employment to all persons, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.

### 2024 Board of Directors

President	Cheryl Huckabee
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Treasurer	Dale Powell
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Past President	Kathryn Wells

### Social Media

#### Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/DentonCountyMGA>

#### Instagram:

<https://www.instagram.com/DentonCountyMGA>

#### X (formerly Twitter):

<https://twitter.com/DentonCountyMGA>

#### Pinterest:

<https://www.pinterest.com/DentonCountyMGA>

#### YouTube:

<http://www.youtube.com/c/DentonCountyMasterGardener>

### Save the Date

July 10 DCMGA Monthly Meeting & Program, "Prune Like a Pro! Master Tree Care Tips," Kimberlee Peterson, Texas A&M Forest Service

August 14 DCMGA 35th Anniversary Celebration (Members Only)

### Contact Information

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<https://dcmga.com>

### Content

The Submission deadline for the August edition of *The Root* is Monday, July 15. Submissions may be revised at the discretion of the editor.

Ideas, photos, and articles are welcome and may be submitted to Editor Karen Gibson or Communications Director Judy Allen at [jupiterjudyjudy@gmail.com](mailto:jupiterjudyjudy@gmail.com).

Unless otherwise attributed, all photos are courtesy of Denton County MGA.