

Denton County Master Gardener Association



THE ROOT

Grow With Us 



Spring Daffodils, DaveLongMedia, Getty Images Signature, Courtesy of Canva.com



STILL GROWING



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Buds From The Board

BY DONNA HULL, DCMGA DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

Greetings, Denton County subscribers to *The Root*! My name is Donna Hull, and I am the Director of Communications for the Denton County Master Gardener Association. The Board of Directors decided that we would take turns writing “Buds from the Board” this year so that you can meet all of us and learn what we do. I am a graduate of the DCMGA Class of 2023. Prior to that, most of my career was spent teaching middle and high school science, with a few years as a high school principal. After “retiring” in 2022, I filled out the application to become a Master Gardener in Denton County, and as they say, the rest is history. As Communications Director, I oversee DCMGA’s marketing and publications, including this e-magazine, *The Root*, which I hope brings you as much joy as it brings us. My gardening passions? I love growing vegetables, preserving food, and I have a half-acre vineyard of European grapes that keeps me on my toes, to put it mildly.

Spring is decidedly on its way. Like everyone else, I’m hoping that these warm February days haven’t fooled my plants too much. Meteorological spring may have begun, but we all know that the cold Arctic air can still find its way south for a few more weeks. The average last frost date in Denton County is around March 21st, but remember that the latest freeze on record is April 22nd; be ready to cover and protect your plants if necessary. It is time to finish winter pruning and complete any bed preparation that you wish to do. A few cool-season vegetables can still be planted, and tomato seedlings should go outside in March – but exactly when depends on the forecast *and* your risk tolerance!!

We hope you enjoy *The Root* this month. We are always ready to tell you more about the plants we know and love. Check out “Upcoming Events” at the end of the issue to see if there are any Master Gardener presentations that might be of interest near you. And don’t forget a couple of Save-the-Dates: (1) our annual Plant Sale is at the North Texas Fairgrounds on April 25th, 9:00 am until 2:00 pm (or sell-out); and (2) the 2026 DCMGA Garden Tour, in Carrollton and Coppell this year, will be on May 9th. Tickets are already on sale (see on p. 5), and it is a “rain or shine” event.

Welcome Spring!!



Photo Courtesy of DCMGA Member Donna Hull.

*Tomato seedlings are almost ready -
but is the weather??!*



2026 Garden Tour Preview: Rhapsody in Green

Three Home Gardens and Two Public Gardens

May 9, 2026

Our 2026 Garden Tour will feature herbs, raised bed vegetable gardening, succulents, Earth Kind® gardening, Texas Superstar plants, and more. Public gardens will have information on raising grapes, pruning fruit trees, water conservation, and growing native plants. See ticket information on Page 5.

Join us for a great day of gardening!

Rhapsody in Green

A visit to “Rhapsody in Green” on the 2026 DCMGA Garden Tour will take you to a place of both beauty and learning, nestled up against a wooded area of Indian Creek in Carrollton, Texas. A musician by training, the homeowner has brought harmony to his own landscape with the help of EarthKind® techniques, waterwise irrigation, composting, and Integrated Pest Management. You will see native plants thriving in both sun and shade, as well as a beautiful selection of succulents, including a “Crown of Thorns” (*Euphorbia milii*). Roses, trumpet vines, towering live oak trees, and even a small “Fairy Garden” fill the landscape.

The DCMGA Succulent Team will be available at Rhapsody in Green to answer questions and provide educational material on growing your own succulents. Our irrigation specialist will be here to discuss irrigation techniques, and for those



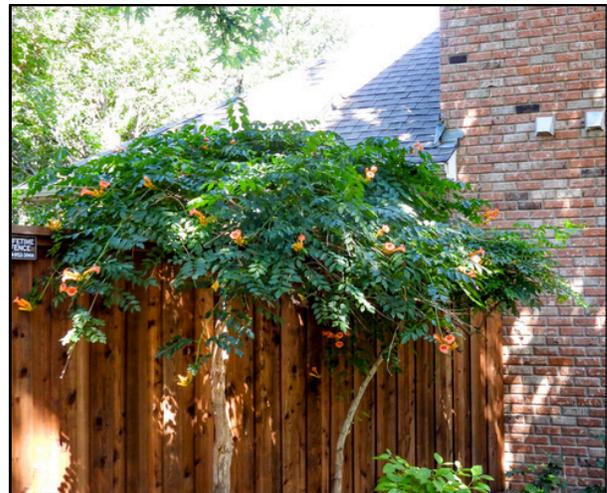
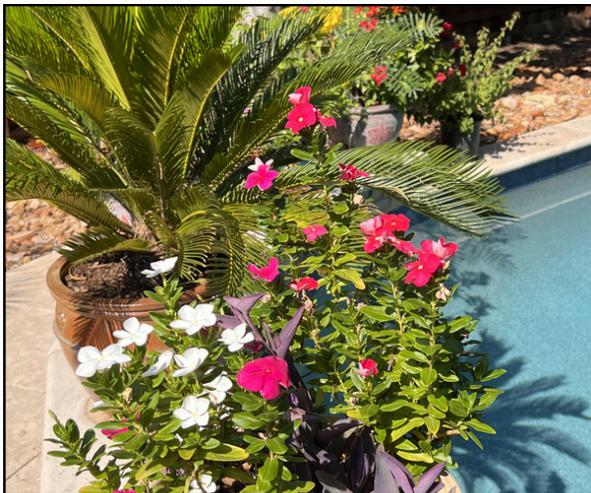
All Photos Courtesy of DCMGA Members.



2026 Garden Tour Preview Rhapsody in Green (cont.)

who are interested in water capture, come see how this homeowner (with permission!) captures water from his neighbor's downspout to fill his own water barrels. Composting will be another educational topic offered at this site, where the homeowner has developed a composting plan with 100-gallon grow bags. Finally, our DCMGA plant Propagation Team will be available to demonstrate and answer questions about creating your own new plants.

Please join us on May 9th to see Rhapsody in Green and all of our wonderful gardens!



Rhapsody in Green is home to a host of native plants, including both sun and shade selections. Come here to learn about composting, rainwater harvesting, succulents, and plant propagation.

All photos are courtesy of DCMGA members.



2026

TEXAS
MASTER GARDENER
 TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION
 Denton County

GARDEN TOUR & EDUCATION FAIR

Discover, Learn, and Grow:
 Inspiring Gardens for Every Gardener

SCAN ME!

OR GO TO WWW.DCMGA.COM FOR TICKETS!

SATURDAY MAY 9TH
 9 AM - 4 PM

ADVANCED PRICE:

\$20

DAY OF EVENT: \$25
 (CHILDREN 12 & UNDER FREE)

RAIN OR SHINE

MEET OUR GARDENS!

ACROSS CARROLLTON

SAGE AND SERENITY
 Right Plant, Right Place

This calm, English-inspired retreat teaches how **Earth-Kind® Principles** guide design choices, **Drainage** and **Soft Landings** support pollinators, and how **Square-Foot Gardening** makes the most of small raised beds.

JOSEY RANCH POCKET PRAIRIE
 Small Prairie, Big Impact

A compact ecosystem where **Native Plants** restore habitat, **Pollinators** find refuge, and **Beekeeping** showcases the buzz of urban conservation.

ROOTED TOGETHER
 Where Memories Take Root

A nostalgic, neighborly space where **Texas Superstars** take center stage, **Sensory Gardening** invites hands-on connection, and thoughtful **Tree Care** shows how to grow without topping or over-pruning.

RHAPSODY IN GREEN
 Nature's Living Symphony

A lush, shaded landscape where **Composting** turns waste into renewal, **Shade Gardening** thrives beneath mature maples and oaks, and smart **Irrigation** keeps every layer of this living garden in harmony.

THE GROVE
 Grow Smart, Garden Together

Explore **Fruit Tree Selection and Care**, talk with experts at the **Ask a Master Gardener Booth**, learn about **Viticulture**, and see hands-on demonstrations in action.

Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Service is an equal opportunity employer and program provider.





DENTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

NORTH TEXAS FAIRGROUNDS

2217 N. Carroll Blvd. Denton 76201

Spacious, covered sale area

Plentiful, convenient parking

April 25, 2026

9:00 A.M.- 2:00 P.M. or Until sellout

RAIN or SHINE!!!

Bring your own wagons or carts so you can take home as many of these wonderful plants as your garden can hold.

Master Gardeners available to help answer your gardening questions

Special container plants

PLANT SALE

Texas native plants, tough-as-nails perennials, and no-fuss roses

Pass-along plants from Master Gardeners' own gardens

Heat tolerant and drought resistant plants

Bedding plants, Herbs and Hard-to-find Ground covers

For more information, Visit our Website: dcmga.com
Email: master.gardener@dentoncounty.gov
Call Garden Help Desk phone: (940)349-2892

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"Persons with disabilities needing accommodations for effective participation in the meeting should contact Denton County AgriLife Extension office at least a week in advance of the meeting or event to request mobility, visual, hearing or other assistance."

Our mission is to educate and inspire Denton County residents through research-based horticulture, to promote eco-friendly gardens and enduring landscapes that enrich our communities.



Rose Varieties for North Texas

BY ERIN SMITH
DENTON COUNTY AGRILIFE HORTICULTURAL AGENT
(PART II OF A 3-PART SERIES ON ROSES)

Roses are an eye-catching element in any mixed landscape bed. They produce blooms, often with an enticing scent, and come in every shape, type, and color imaginable. “But wait!” you may say. “Don’t roses need specialized care?” Well, what if I told you some types of roses thrive on low care once they get established in your garden? Pruning is still necessary, but careful selection and good cultural practices will help you be successful with roses. This article will guide you to rose selections available in the retail trade that are easier to maintain and will fulfill your desire for rose blooms in your landscape.

The first group of roses that fit our criteria is known as “heirloom,” “found,” or “old garden” roses. Heirloom roses are defined by the American Rose Society as any rose that was introduced prior to 1867. However, most rose collectors consider any rose that is 75 years or older an heirloom. These plants have been passed down within families from generation to generation, and some can still be seen in old cemeteries or homesteads. These helped settlers bring a piece of home with them. Their blooms are commonly in pastel colors, and a majority are in shades of pink. They are grown on their own roots, which increases their hardiness. Many of them are disease-resistant or at least tolerant of rose diseases. As a bonus, most retain the beautiful scent that many hybridized roses have lost.



‘Duchesse de Brabant’
Photo by Malcolm Manners (Flickr), CC by 2.0



‘Mrs. B.R. Cant’ Rose
Photo by Malcolm Manners, Flickr, CC by 2.0.



Rose Varieties for North Texas (cont.)

Specialty nurseries have built their business around these lovely plants. Although there are many heirloom varieties available, in my opinion, you cannot beat Duchesse de Brabant, Mutabilis, or Mrs. B. R. Cant.

The next group of roses we should consider are roses that have been designated Earth Kind® roses by the Texas AgriLife Extension Service. The Earth Kind® rose program began nearly 30 years ago when Dr. Steve George, Texas A&M Professor and Extension Specialist in Horticulture, began the search for rose varieties or cultivars that thrive in low-input, environmentally conscious landscape situations.

In order for a rose to be designated Earth Kind®, it must withstand multiple years of evaluations in multiple sites that hold to Earth Kind® principles. Many roses that have been named Earth Kind® belong to the heirloom rose group because they have passed the test of time for hundreds of years and keep on going! A full list of Earth Kind® roses can be found on the Aggie Horticulture Earth Kind® website. While all of the Earth Kind® selected roses are very strong, truly exceptional varieties include Belinda's Dream, Perle d' Or, Carefree Beauty, and Ducher.



'Belinda's Dream' Rose
Photo by Adey Deresse, Getty Images, Courtesy of Canva.com



'KnockOut® Roses' come in many different colors for the landscape. Flickr, CC by 2.0.



Rose Varieties for North Texas (cont.)

Our search for low-input roses should include some modern roses (cultivated after 1867). Have you ever heard of Knock Out® roses? The original Knock Out® shrub rose was considered groundbreaking at the time of its release by Star Roses and Plants in 2000. After many years of testing, Star Roses found that this cultivar was drought-resistant, cold-hardy, resistant to black spot and powdery mildew, reblooming and-cleaning. What else could you ask for? The original Knock Out® shrub rose was named Earth Kind® many years ago, but in 2025, Double Red and Double Pink Knock Out® were added to the list.

More modern roses that stand out as cultivars that can be counted on in low-input landscapes are part of the shrub and Floribunda classes. Roses in those classes are quite often found to be heavy bloomers that stand up to rose diseases as well. A fairly new cultivar from Star Rose, known as Cherry Frost, is an excellent selection for a large shrub rose. Much like Knock Out® rose, it has the ability to rebloom without pruning—and seems to be in bloom 90 percent of the time! It may have small to medium blooms, but they appear in large clusters all over the plant.

The Sunbelt series has proven to be a strong group for Texas yards. Sunbelt Savannah, Sunbelt South Africa, and Sunbelt Desmond Tutu are great options for Central North Texas. This series of floribundas can provide blooms throughout the growing season.

Cultural considerations for maintaining healthy roses include planting your roses with ample space between them to allow air circulation around the foliage once they mature, keeping supplemental irrigation off of the foliage, and selecting varieties that are disease-resistant. One other practice that will help reduce the likelihood of issues is to maintain biodiversity in your landscape. It is much better to have mixed landscape beds than to have monoculture situations where all of your plants are susceptible to the same issue.

Resources

Antique Rose Emporium Nursery & all things garden. (n.d.). Antique Rose Emporium. <https://www.antiqueroseemporium.com/>

Earth-Kind® Rose Cultivars - Earth-Kind Roses. (n.d.). <https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/earthkindroses/cultivars/>

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Plant of the Month

Abelia x grandiflora: A Texas-Tough Flowering Shrub

BY DONNA HULL

Introduction

Abelia x grandiflora is a medium-sized flowering shrub that loves North Texas. Native to eastern Asia, *Abelia* is named after Dr. Clark Abel, a British naturalist and surgeon who first collected seeds and specimens in China during a diplomatic expedition to Beijing in the early 1800s. Botanically, *Abelia* is a member of the Family Caprifoliaceae, which includes honeysuckles and valerians.

Description & Mature Size

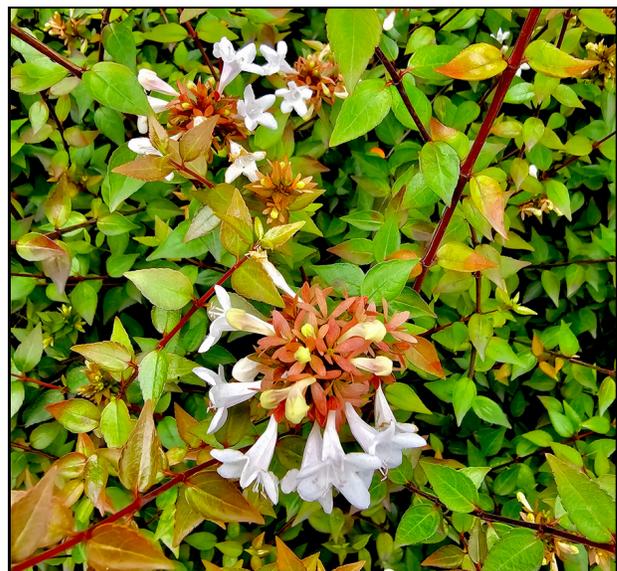
Abelias are evergreen to semi-evergreen. Their mature size in North Texas ranges from 4 to 6 ft wide and high, with long, arching branches that extend out from the center of the plant. Leaves may be glossy green or variegated, and some varieties also turn orange to purple in the fall. White, pink, or lavender tubular, fragrant flowers bloom from spring until fall. Dwarf varieties are more compact, mounded, and grow 1 to 3 ft tall and 3 to 4 ft wide.

Garden Uses & Benefits

Non-dwarf varieties need space to grow. These varieties can be used in groupings or as an informal hedge or screen. Smaller varieties do well in mass plantings. Because of their tubular-shaped flowers, *Abelia* is attractive to various pollinators, including bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds.



Abelia x grandiflora
Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA, 3.0



Abelia x grandiflora
Wordpress.org,CCo 1.0 Universal



Abelia x grandiflora: A Texas-Tough Flowering Shrub

Growing Conditions

Abelia can be planted in full sun or part shade, but flowers best in full sun. It tolerates many soil types but prefers well-drained, slightly acidic soil. When growing in North Texas, amend clay soil with compost to improve drainage. The best time to plant is fall or early spring.

Water & Care

Abelia is both heat- and drought-tolerant once it has been established in the landscape. During its first year, *Abelia* requires watering 2-3 times per week to help roots become established. *Abelia* will always need additional watering during extremely hot, dry periods in the summer. Fertilizing is not required, although it will benefit from a spring application of nutrient-rich compost or slow-release fertilizer. Prune *Abelia* in late winter or early spring to encourage the growth of new wood, which produces the flowers. This plant has no serious insect or disease problems.



Abelia x grandiflora, 'Edward Goucher'
Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA, 3.0



Abelia x grandiflora, 'Kaleidoscope'
Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA, 4.0 International

Tips for Growing

If possible, grow *Abelia* where it has space to reach its full size without significant pruning; otherwise, choose one of the more compact, mounded varieties. Harsh winters can be hard on *Abelia*; they typically lose their leaves and die back during severe cold. With some protection during these events, they will come back.

Recommended varieties for North Texas include:

- 'Kaleidoscope': White flowers, variegated yellow and green leaves that turn color in the fall. This is a larger variety of *Abelia*.
- 'Rose Creek': Compact, mounded variety with white flowers with rose-colored sepals, glossy green leaves, and red stems. It is mostly evergreen in Texas.



Abelia x grandiflora: A Texas-Tough Flowering Shrub

- ‘Little Richard’: Compact, mounded variety with white flowers and dark green leaves that become dark purple-bronze in the fall.
- ‘Edward Goucher’: Lavender-pink flowers and dark green, glossy leaves that turn to a dark purple-bronze in the fall. Slightly larger variety, reaching 5 ft in height and width.

Conclusion

Abelia is a worthy choice for the North Texas landscape - hardy enough to survive our hot, dry summers and harsh cold winters, while providing beautiful foliage, fragrant flowers, and resources for pollinators.

Resources

Abelias are tough and beautiful. (2022, July 1). LSU AgCenter.

<https://www.lsuagcenter.com/articles/page1656691852098>

Yates, Lee Ann, Denton County Master Gardener Association. (2020). Meet the Abelias: Rose Creek and Kaleidoscope. *The Root E-Magazine*, 3(8), p. 5-7. <https://www.dcmga.com/wp-content/uploads/docs/root/root-2020-08.pdf>

Hansen, K. (n.d.). Outstanding Landscape Plants for Northeast Texas.

<https://agriflifeextension.tamu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Outstanding-Landscape-Plants-for-Northeast-Texas.pdf>

Abelia x grandiflora - Plant Finder.

<https://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?kempercode=j150>

Denton County Master Gardener YouTube Channel

Click on "Videos" and check out our new presentations!

And don't forget to subscribe to @DentonCountyGardenerAsso

<https://www.youtube.com/@DentonCountyMasterGardenerAsso>



In The Veggie Patch

Tomatillo: Our Favorite Tomato Impersonator

BY LAURA FRANKLIN

Origin & Benefits

There are two main species of tomatillo, *Physalis philadelphica* and *Physalis ixocarpa*. While part of the nightshade family, the tomatillo is actually a ground cherry. It originated in Mexico and Central America. Cultivation began in the pre-Columbian era; it became a staple crop for several cultures, including the Aztecs and Mayans. Today, tomatillos are commonly used in Latin American cuisine, and since their introduction in the 1950s, tomatillos have been integrated into Indian food as well. Tomatillos are frequently used in a similar way to tomatoes, adding a bright, sharp flavor to dishes. Although called a vegetable, tomatillos are fruits. They are cholesterol-free, low in sodium, calories, and fat, and are good sources of vitamin C.

Plant Requirements

Overall, these plants will do well in the same conditions that are suitable for tomatoes. Plant two or more to ensure pollination and fruit production. While there are no specific varieties recommended for North Texas, there are many types of tomatillo in shades of green, yellow, and purple.

Soil: Tomatillos prefer a well-drained sandy loam, ideally with a lower pH (5.5- 7.3)

Light: Full sun, 6-8 hours a day

Temperature: Tomatillo grows best with day-time temps of 80-90°F, night-time between 60-70°F.

Planting

Plant tomatillos when the soil temperature is above 60°F Begin seeds indoors six to eight weeks before the average last freeze date, or sow them directly in the garden when there is no more chance of freezing (usually late March). Plant seeds 0.5" deep in hills, 24-36" apart. Transplants should be placed



Tomatillos on the vine.
Photo Courtesy of Canva.com



Tomatillo flower.
Photo Courtesy of DCMGA member Laura Franklin.



Tomatillo: Our Favorite Tomato Impersonator (cont.)

24" apart, burying up to 2/3 of the plant if leggy. Generally, plants will be around 3-4' and need to be supported with stakes, cages, or trellises.

Maintenance & Care

Water: Considering the tomatillo's origins, it is no surprise that they are generally drought-tolerant. They require deep, infrequent watering, about 1-2 inches per week. Water at the base and avoid wetting the leaves to help limit the spread of fungal diseases.

Fertilization: There is no consensus on the best type of fertilizer for tomatillos. There is agreement that over-fertilizing will yield big, leafy plants and inhibit fruit growth. Begin with a well-balanced, nutrient-rich soil. If you desire to fertilize again, do so once flowers begin to appear, about 6-8 weeks after planting,

Pests/diseases: Tomatillos have few pests and diseases, but keep an eye out for cutworms, root-knot nematodes, and whiteflies. Watch plant leaves for the development of black spot and tobacco mosaic virus. (See Table 1, TAMU "Easy Gardening, Tomatillos for further information.)

Harvesting & Storage

Tomatillos will usually begin bearing fruit 65-85 days after planting. Fruit should be picked just as the tomatillo fills out the husk. They should easily be picked, but can be snipped. Many gardeners prefer to harvest them a little early, as their flavor tends to degrade if overripe. Tomatillos will continue to ripen after harvesting, and they should be kept in their husks until they are used.

Before using this produce, remove the husk and rinse off the sticky residue on the tomatillo under running water.

Resources

Utah State University Extension. (2023, December 14). How to Grow Tomatillos in Your Garden. <https://extension.usu.edu/yardandgarden/research/tomatillos-in-the-garden>

South Dakota State University Extension. (n.d.).

Tomatillos: Harvest and storage <https://extension.sdstate.edu/tomatillos-harvest-and-storage>

University of Minnesota Extension. (n.d.). Tomatillos. <https://reallifegoodfood.umn.edu/vegetables/tomatillos>

Masabni, J., King, S., & Taylor, C. (2013). Tomatillos (Easy Gardening). Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. <https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/vegetable/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2010/10/EHT-025-Easy-Gardening-Tomatillos.pdf>



Creature Corner: Tiny, Terrible Thrips

BY JANICE YODER-SMITH

Thrips are tiny insects that are difficult to see - adult thrips measure less than 0.1" (3 mm) and can often be found on the undersides of leaves or at the bases of flowers. Four thrip species are found in North Central Texas: the Western flower thrips (*Frankliniella occidentalis*), Tobacco thrips (*Frankliniella fusca*), Short-spined thrips (*Thrips parvispinus*), and Chilli thrips (*Scirtothrips dorsalis*). Despite their size, thrips cause millions of dollars in damage to ornamental and food crops each year. They damage annual flowering plants, roses, many perennial shrubs, vegetables, native plants, some grain, and are major cotton pests, causing significant damage to crops, leading to higher consumer costs.

Integrated pest management (IPM) strategies can help reduce thrips populations. Planting yarrow, cosmos, marigolds, and daisies attracts minute pirate bugs that prey on thrips. Plan gardens so that flowers that attract the pirate bugs are present throughout the year. Ground cover supports predatory mites that eat thrips, and shallow watering stations or puddle sites encourage beneficial insects. Minimizing pesticide use protects these natural enemies and strengthens long-term control.



Tobacco Thrip

Photo by Timothy Lindsey, CC-BY-NC 4.0



Chilli Thrip

Photo by Naturalist81239, CC-1.0 Universal-2.0



Chilli Thrip damage on *Hydrangea macrophylla*
Photo from Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 2.0



Creature Corner: Tiny, Terrible Thrips (cont.)

Thrips have a six-stage life cycle. The female inserts eggs beneath leaf or petal surfaces, and within a few days, the first instar larvae emerge. Using rasping mouthparts, they puncture plant tissue and feed on nutrient-rich cell contents. These larvae grow into second instar larvae, continuing to feed and often causing targeted plant parts to curl or discolor abnormally. Second instars develop into non-feeding pre-pupae, move into the soil, and become pupae. After several days, adults emerge. In North Texas, when temperatures exceed 80°F (27°C), most thrips complete their life cycle in 10 days. Development slows in cooler weather but does not stop. Because the region seldom experiences more than two weeks of temperatures below freezing, thrips are present year-round.

All four thrips species can transmit plant viruses. Viruses associated with thrips include the Tomato Spotted Wilt Virus, Impatiens Necrotic Virus, Chrysanthemum Stem Necrotic Virus, and Chilli Leaf Curl Virus. Larvae acquire viruses while feeding and then spread them to other plants. Infected adults can transmit viruses throughout their lives.

Because thrips are difficult to see, early detection relies on inspection techniques. Shake leaves or flowers over a blank sheet of paper and watch for any movement of tiny, hyphen-shaped creatures. Blue or white sticky traps placed near plants can attract flying adults, which appear as small dash marks. Examining them with a magnifier may reveal their fringed wings.

Plant damage is often more visible than the insects themselves. Look for silvery trails on leaves, small patches of gold-to-bronze damage, curling leaf edges, deformed buds, or oddly colored or disfigured petals. Finding thrips frass (tiny brown to black fecal dots) near damaged areas also signals an infestation. Remove and discard infested plant parts; do not compost them. Use the same inspection technique when purchasing or relocating plants. If thrips damage is present, report suspected infestations to the source.

This article includes links to science-based resources for the public to learn more about thrips. Those wishing to see more images may search the internet for “extension: thrips damage” and then click on images.



Creature Corner: Tiny, Terrible Thrips (cont.)

Resources

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DCMGA HELP DESK

Question of the Month



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

QUESTION: I live in a North Texas suburb with an average-sized backyard, about 70' by 30'. I want to start a backyard vegetable and herb garden, but I have very little experience, and I don't know where to begin. Can you help?

QUESTION: I live in a North Texas suburb with an average-sized backyard, about 70' by 30'. I want to start a backyard vegetable and herb garden, but I have very little experience, and I don't know where to begin. Can you help?

ANSWER: Good for you! Growing your own vegetables and herbs is fun, rewarding, and will provide healthy food for your family. Learning what grows well in North Texas and how to grow it will greatly increase your chances of success.

Choose your garden type

Your first decision will be whether to plant your vegetable garden in existing soil, in a raised bed, or in a planter box or container. There are pros and cons for each choice, including initial cost, physical effort, and available space for growing plants. In-ground gardens are the least expensive and are best for sprawling, large plants. However, new plants often struggle with our poor native soil. Raised beds provide excellent drainage, warmth, and soil control, reducing bending but cost more initially, and need more water than in-

ground gardens. Container gardens offer portability and precise soil control, ideal for patios, balconies, and small yards. Be aware that containers dry out faster than in-ground or raised beds. Containers restrict root growth, so be sure to match container size to that of a mature plant. Your best choice depends on your budget, space, soil quality, and desired plants. ("Soil, Plots, and Planters":

<https://content.ces.ncsu.edu/collard-greens-and-common-ground-a-north-carolina-community-food-gardening-handbook/soil-plots-and-planters>)

Pick the right location

For most of the common home garden vegetables, choose a location that receives several hours of direct sunlight each day. If you choose to clear an area of your yard, you will want to have a soil test done to identify any nutrient deficiencies that require attention before planting ("Soil, Water and Forage Testing Laboratory": <https://soiltesting.tamu.edu/>) and "How to do a soil test": <https://www.dcmga.com/wp-content/uploads/docs/garden-basics-prepare/gb-soil-testing.pdf>).



Help Desk (Cont.)

Prepare your soil

When working with existing soil, you will very likely need to add significant amounts of organic matter (compost) to improve the fertility. This is true also for raised beds that use existing soil. Containers and planter boxes can be filled with fertile, packaged soil for containers.

The Texas A&M Agrilife Extension website contains several resources to help you start and succeed in growing a vegetable and herb garden in North Texas. The links below access dozens of webpages that provide quick-start guides and detailed information on site selection, soil preparation, varietal recommendations, garden care, harvesting, and problem-solving.

What and when to plant

Vegetable Resources: <https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/vegetable/>

Vegetable Variety Selections for Denton County”: <https://www.dcmga.com/wp-content/uploads/docs/agrilife/edibles/al-recommended-vegetable-varieties-denton-county.pdf>

“Gardening Guides and Fact Sheets:

<https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/organic/crops/vegetable-gardening/> and “Home Vegetable Gardening” <https://agrilifeextension.tamu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/EHT-077-texas-home-vegetable-gardening-guide.pdf>

When your garden site is ready, and you know which vegetables you want to grow, your next task is finding out when to plant them. See: https://txmg.org/rockwall/files/MG-Vegetable-Planting-Guide_2024.pdf for guidance for commonly grown vegetables in North Texas.

“Growing herbs in Texas”: <https://teea.tamu.edu/files/2019/09/EHT-079-growing-herbs-in-texas.pdf> and “Culinary Herbs for Oklahoma Gardens: Culture, Use and Preservation”: <https://extension.okstate.edu/fact-sheets/culinary-herbs-for-oklahoma-gardens.html>.

Starter Tip

- Start small—one or two beds or containers.
- Choose 3–4 easy vegetables like tomatoes, peppers, or herbs.
- Follow seed or plant spacing directions carefully.

As you watch your plants grow and you begin harvesting your own vegetables, your family and neighbors will celebrate your accomplishment! You can do this!



You're Invited

March 2026, Monthly General Meeting & Program

**Preserving Nature's Legacy at FWBG
and the Vital Role of the BRIT Herbarium**

*Presented by Ashley Bales,
Herbarium Collections Manager*



The Botanical Research Institute of Texas (BRIT) at the Fort Worth Botanic Garden (FWBG) is an internationally recognized center for research and education. BRIT drives conservation efforts that highlight the essential role plants play in our environment, inspiring our community to protect and value the natural world. BRIT's state-of-the-art molecular and structural lab, conservation seed bank, an established press, library, and 1.5 million-specimen herbarium make it a unique place for plant research in the heart of Fort Worth.

March 11, 2026, 10 am
Greater Denton Arts Council
400 E. Hickory Street, Denton, TX





Denton County Master Gardener Association

Community Strong Farm Work Days

**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 Mondays 9AM-11AM
1350 Milam Road E., Sanger**

LLELA Nature Preserve Workday

**Lake Lewisville Environmental Learning Area
201 E Jones St. Lewisville, TX 75057, Meet Wednesdays 9AM-12P**

**Grove and Gazebo Workdays (2nd and 4th Fridays each month) 9AM-11:30AM
The Grove at Sandy Jacobs Government Center
1029 W. Rosemeade Pkwy. Carrollton**

Your paragraph text

First Work Day is March 26th

**Flower Mound First Baptist Community Garden Work Days
Learn and grow veggies to help the community. Wear comfortable shoes, hat, and sunscreen. Bring water. Meet Thursdays 8:30AM-10:30AM
1901 Timber Creek, Flower Mound**

**Mar
2**

Native Cactus and Succulents

**Succulent Team meeting with CE presented by Jay Caddell,
Tarrant Country Extension Agent.**

Flower Mound Public Library 3030 Broadmoor Lane Flower Mound 7PM-8:30PM

**Mar
4**

Wildlife Gardens-Promised Garden Series

Wildlife in my gardens? Yes! Bees, birds, insects, small critters, maybe even "bigger" ones! They are a crucial part of a healthy and efficient garden. they are needed. Your garden should be a "home" for many of them. We will learn about plant selection, natural habitats, and strategies to invite, or protect your planting areas.

Global Spheres Center 7801 S. Int. 35 Corinth 6PM-8PM

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C4CA5AE29A3F9C07-62123855-wednesday>

**Mar
4**

Gardening Techniques

Whether you're looking to simplify your routine or start a new hobby, join us for an inspiring session with Master Gardener, Mario Casanova, focused on accessible, low-stress gardening. You'll walk away with practical, confidence-building tips for soil prep, plant selection and easy maintenance, ensuring your garden remains a source of joy. 6:30PM-7:30PM

The Colony Public Library 6800 Main Street. The Colony

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Denton County Master Gardener Association



- Mar 7 Residential Composting & Rainwater Harvesting & Design Strategies**
7 Soil and Water quality are essential for any kind of garden, and there are great ways to harvest rainwater and enhance soil nutrition by composting at home. and we will brainstorm possibilities as you merge these two garden essentials together!
Global Spheres Center 7801 S Interstate 35E. Corinth 8:30AM-12:30PM
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C4CA5AE29A3F9C07-62122235-saturday>
- Mar 7 Tool Maintenance**
7 How to care for essential garden tools including cleaning and sharpening techniques to keep them in good working order.
Corinth Butterfly Garden 3901 Corinth Parkway Corinth 9AM-10AM
- Mar 7, 21 Ask a Master Gardener – Downtown Sanger Farmers Market**
7, 21 Head over to Downtown Sanger’s Farmers Wife Markets for their Annual Plant Sale. Be sure to swing by the Denton County “Ask a Master Gardener” booth. Our experts will be there to answer all your spring gardening questions.
Downtown Sanger Farmers Market. 307 Bolivar St. Sanger 10AM-2PM
- Mar 7 Edible Gardening-Sanger Public Library**
7 Nothing beats home-grown vegetables for taste and texture! Grow your own and incorporate them into your existing landscape. Denton County Master Gardeners share their tips for successful vegetable growing in north Texas soil.
Sanger Public Library 501 Bolivar St. Sanger 1PM-2PM
- Mar 11 Soil and Compost Power – Promised Garden Series**
11 Everything in nature takes something away, to give something back is a natural cyclical process. Soil quality is key for a prosperous garden, and composting is the best way to build nutritious soil for your plants, as you also “feed” the extremely important microscopic life in the soil. In this class you will learn all about it!
Global Spheres Centerv 7801 S Interstate 35E Corinth 6PM-8PM
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C4CA5AE29A3F9C07-62123855-wednesday>
- Mar 11 DCMGA General Meeting at Greater Denton Arts Council, Denton**
11 Please join our monthly meeting and hear Ashley Bales, Herbarium Collections Manager, speak to Preserving Nature’s Legacy at Ft. Worth Botanic Gardens and the Vital Role of the BRIT Herbarium. Program begins at 10AM- Business meeting at 11AM.
Greater Denton Arts Council 400 E. Hickory St. Denton

PAGE 2





Denton County Master Gardener Association



Mar 14 Landscape Design- Principals/styles/Colors – Promised Garden School

This class is all about opening your eyes and hearts to better understand how to identify your landscape style of preference, the cause and effects of different color behaviors, and what are the key design principles and functions to keep in mind.

Global Spheres Center 7801 S Interstate 35E. Corinth 8:30AM-12:30PM

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C4CA5AE29A3F9C07-62122235-saturday>

Mar 18 Gardening Techniques for Container Gardening

Join Tammie Gurley, Denton County Master Gardener, to learn how to create a thriving garden in off-ground containers! This is a perfect solution for those who have little space or those who move around and would like to take their garden with them.

Denton Sustainability Office 3228 Teasley Ln. Denton 6PM-7PM

Mar 18 Waterwise Gardens – Promised Garden Series

Waterwise Gardens focuses on creating sustainable landscapes designed to thrive with minimal irrigation by using drought-tolerant plants, efficient watering systems, and mulching to reduce water usage. Achieve a vibrant, low-maintenance garden.

Global Spheres Center 7801 S Interstate 35E Corinth. 6PM-8PM

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C4CA5AE29A3F9C07-62123855-wednesday>

Mar 19 Come join Barbara Smith, Denton County Master Gardener

Barbara will be there to answer all your questions about soil, compost, and mulch. This is all part of the Frisco Garden Club's annual Plant Swap, where you can get your hands on some great plants and get ready for spring planting. Barbara will have info on soil testing so you'll know exactly what your garden needs. It's going to be a great time, so come and learn a thing or two about gardening!

Frisco Public Library. 8000 Dallas Pkwy Frisco 6PM-7:30PM

Mar 26 This is Lake Dallas Ace Hardware's annual Ladies Night Fundraiser for Children's Miracle Network. It's a 2-hour event in their store and Garden Center with raffles, food, cocktails, and more! There are a LOT of plants and a lot of people, too! Bring all your gardening questions to the experts at Denton County's Ask a Master Gardener booth.

We'll be there ready to help you get your garden growing! 6:00-8:00PM

Ace Hardware, 101 South Lake Dallas Drive. Lake Dallas

Mar 28 Mark your calendars for the Annual Flower Festival and Easter Egg Hunt

It's going to be a blast. You'll find live music, local artisans, a ton of plants, and nurseries. Bring all your gardening questions to Denton County Master Gardeners

Gina Kemna and Donna Hesters. Get ready to get your garden growing!

Pilot Point Town Square. 55 S Washington St. Pilot Point 9AM-12PM





Denton County Master Gardener Association



**Mar
28**

Integrated Pest Management

Join Denton County Master Gardener Mario Casanova for an informative session on pest control in our gardens. Learn about common pests, and explore the differences between harmful pests, beneficial insects, and nuisance bugs. Mario will share the principles of Integrated Pest Management (IPM), including cultural and mechanical pest control methods, biological solutions, and organic vs. chemical options.

Carrollton Public Library at Josey Ranch Lake
1700 Keller Springs Road. Carrollton 10:30AM-11:30AM

**Mar
28**

Gardening Techniques successfully grow native plants from seed
Gardening can be a fun and productive hobby, but not it feels like work! Let Kelli Bixler, Denton County Master Gardener, clue you in on how to successfully grow plants from seeds – both native plants and produce for our north Texas soils.
Clear Creek Natural Heritage Center. 3310 Collins Rd. Denton 11AM-12PM

SAVE THESE DATES!!

Denton County's Extraordinary Plant Sale

Saturday April 25th 9AM-Till Sell Out

Choose from over 8,500 plants. Perennials, trees, annuals, herbs. Many are grown by our own Master Gardeners!

North Texas Rodeo and Fairgrounds, Denton

2026 Garden Tour

& (first ever) Education Fair

May 9th 9AM-4PM in Carrollton

Tickets just \$20 Presale and \$25 day of tour



Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service is an equal opportunity employer and program provider.





As Master Gardeners, our mission is to educate and inspire Denton County residents through research-based horticulture, to promote eco-friendly gardens and enduring landscapes that enrich our communities.

Extension EO/EEO Statement

Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Service 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.

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Social Media

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

YouTube:
<https://www.youtube.com/@DentonCountyMasterGardenerAsso>

Save the Date

- April 25 DCMGA Annual Plant Sale
North Texas Fairgrounds
9:00 am - 2:00 pm or sell out
- May 9 2026 Garden Tour
9 am - 4 pm
Carrollton, Coppell

Contact Information

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Help Desk:
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Content

The submission deadline for the April edition of *The Root* is March 5. Submissions may be revised at the discretion of the editor.

Ideas, photos, and articles are welcome and may be submitted to Communications Director Donna Hull at communications@dcmga.com

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

