

Tarrant County Master Gardeners



TEXAS AGRILIFE EXTENSION AGENCY

Volume 4 Issue 1

February 2020

TCMGA Celebrated Our Hard Work at the 2019 Annual Luncheon

On a chilly Thursday in December Tarrant County Master Gardeners arrived at Diamond Oaks Country Club dressed in our finery to celebrate 2019. We had a delicious lunch, inducted new officers, and announced the Annual Award Winners. They follow:

Master Gardener of the Year, Rocky Deutscher.

Master Gardener Extra Miler, Betty Story.

Master Gardener Educator of the Year was a 3 way tie; Patsy Miller, Claire Alford & Teresa Day-Fickel.

Intern of the Year, Jim McLean.

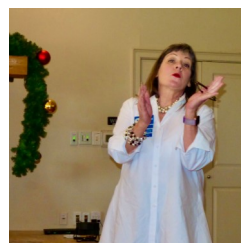
Intern Extra Miler, Gail Johnson.

Mod Squad Intern of the Year, Gloria Hardy.

Mod Squad Extra Miler, Susan Barker.

Mercy Kettler was awarded the Master Gardener Rock.

Congratulations!

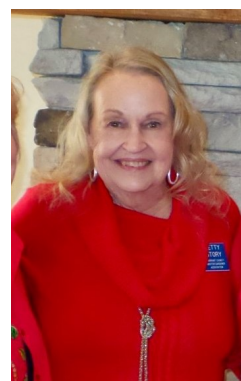


Left, Lorie is cheering.

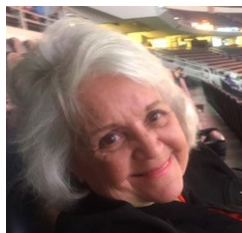
Photos by Gay Larson.



Above left to right: Intern Extra Miler Gail Johnson. Intern of the Year Jim McLean. Master Gardener of the Year Rocky Deutscher. Educators of the Year Patsy Miller and Claire Alford.



Photos on the left: Our 2020 officers, Greg Hubbard, Debra Rosenthal, Shelley Hamilton, and Margaret Shuping. Left, Extra Miler Betty Story.



Tarrant County Master Gardeners

President's Message

HERE'S TO THE START OF ANOTHER GREAT YEAR

As you read this, many committees have kicked off their activities for the coming year. Plant Sale Committee! Yes, we are in the planning stage of the 2020 plant sale. There will be more information as the plans come together. Bobby Hitzfeld and Janet Shull are the co-leads for this year.

The Audit and Awards Committees have been working getting things completed. Thank you for all your time and hard work.

Other Committees are in high swing also such as Garden Resource Table, Hospitality, Ways and Means, Membership, Newsletter, Speaker's Bureau, Photography, Bulbs, Intern and MOD Squad and Education. But we do need your help with several of the committees that need committee members and/or leads:

- Newsletter – members need to send any information about different happenings in our Association and in the community to Editor Lorie Grandclair-Diaz @ lgrandclair@gmail.com
- Historian – needs a coordinator .
- Hospitality – members to work with Mary Lou before and after the meetings.
- TCMGA Field Trips/Tours – Betty Story has agreed to help and has a couple of great ideas for a field trip but needs your help.
- TCMGA Garden Tour – Lorie Grandclair-Diaz has agreed to help but we need members to work alongside her.
- The 2020 Handbook is just about done and will be available soon. Thank you everyone that is making this happen.

The new Executive and Advisory Boards had their first meeting in January. If you were not there, we missed you.

If you need a place to get involved just ask and the Board will be glad to direct you to the right person.

Theresa

It was such a pleasure to sink one's hands into the warm earth, to feel at one's fingertips the possibilities of the new season. Kate Morton

Plant of the Month

HOLLY – Favorite Evergreens

My favorite evergreen is the Holly (*Ilex* sp.), from the Aquifoliaceae family. There are about a dozen that are popular in Texas and all are evergreen with one exception, the Possumhaw. The Possumhaw Holly drops its leaves in the winter but puts on a dazzling show of red berries that look like a Christmas tree. At this time of year, they will be covered with red berries unless the birds stripped them.

Hollies grow in zones 7-9, and many as cold as zone 5.

They are basically disease resistant. That tidbit always makes several dozen ears perk up. These are tough, tolerate to most any type of soil, temperature and moisture conditions and they keep putting on a show. Most of the hollies have fruit, but to be sure buy your tree/ shrub when there are berries on the plant. These often have slow to medium growth habits so don't expect overnight results.



Content Provided by Theresa
Thomas

A note from the Editor

I hope that everyone had a fabulous holiday season! I needed to take a hiatus from the Newsletter for a few months but am happy to be back, and excited to share news about your special goings on in our association! Please email me tidbits and pictures.

Thanks!

Lorie Grandclair-Diaz

Odds & Ends

YUM - YUM!

February is Hot Dog month. Bring your dollars. Remember how good those were last year?

2020 TEXAS MASTER GARDENER CONFERENCE IN WACO

May 12-14, 2020 Master Gardener State Conference in Waco, TX

For more information check this web site.

txmg.org/conference

Gardening Resources Exchange

It's time to think about sharing all those seeds and plant materials we have all produced over the past year. A favorite feature of the monthly meetings is the sharing of all the wonderful resources we have collected and produced as our gardens prosper and produce. Dave Wilson and Patti Maness are the coordinators of this activity has "cleaned house" and discarded all of last year's resources so that we can start the new year afresh. Many MG's were faithful and frequent contributors to this activity, and we all enjoyed the bounty of their efforts and stewardship. We thank the uncounted and unnamed members for their continuing support of this endeavor.

Here are a few suggestions to help all members in providing resources, as well as benefit from our members' generosity:

Any gardening related items are welcome: seeds, plants, tools, materials, pots and planting/propagation aids.

Please bring seeds in clear "zip-lock" bags with notes or labels to identify them for those of us who may not be able to recognize them by shape and color. Photos of mature plants would be helpful, as well.

Plants need to have identity "sticks" in the pots as well for the same reason.

If you have a plant that is too large to easily transport, or great quantities of plants, create a notice with all the particulars on an 8 1/2 X 11 sheet for the bulletin board.

If you are searching for particular plants or other exchange resource items, create a notice for the bulletin board and label it boldly "WANTED" or "LOOKING FOR..."

The object of this activity is to share that which we have to help other gardeners with their gardening needs. Please participate in every way that you can...that is the mission and purpose of this organization.

Please contact Dave or Patti with questions, suggestions or comments.

Odds & Ends

LADYBUG BEETLES

Ladybugs are very beneficial beetles. They can be used for pest control because they eat mainly scale insects. Pest control is anything that reduces the life span of insects or any other small creatures.

CHARACTERISTICS

All species of ladybugs (coleoptera) use their antennae to smell, have six legs, all are red, orange, or yellow and often have black spots. They're about 1/4 inch long and are generally oval shaped. They have a pair of hard shiny wings called elytra. The elytra cover a soft pair of wings, which they use to fly. When a ladybug flies, they use their under pair of wings and move the elytra out to the side. A way to tell different ladybug species is by their color and marking. These variations are most likely caused by the habitat and conditions in which they are used to living.

DIET

Aphids, known to be their favorite food, suck the liquids out of leaves. This leaves a shiny substance called "honeydew" which attracts ants and sooty mold. The ladybug is a carnivore and isn't a picky eater because they will eat almost any type of scale insect. Even the larvae eat aphids.

HISTORY

In the 1980's about 88,000 ladybugs were imported from Asia to save the citrus crops of California from the cottony cushion, a scale insect.

HIBERNATION

Ladybugs are cold-blooded so they hibernate in the winter. They will get into buildings through bad foundations, poor insulation, cracks or windows.

Since ladybugs are tree dwelling insects, buildings in heavily wooded areas are most likely to get infested. When inside their winter destination they hibernate until it is warm again. But on warm days they will come out for a little while to enjoy the warmth of the sun. They come out of hibernation when the spring flowers bloom or when it is 59°F.

PROS AND CONS OF LADYBUGS

Ladybugs are very beneficial because of their appetite for aphids. They can be used as biological pest control. Farmers can collect them when hibernating and be used later on for biological pest control. Every species but two are beneficial for farmers. Those two can destroy crops. However, Ladybugs can be pests if they gather in large numbers to hibernate, and you don't appreciate their presence.

LIFE CYCLE

Some ladybugs can live up to two to three years. The ladybug has four main stages of life. The first is the egg; the second is the larval stage; the third is the pupal stage; the last stage is the adult.

During the lifetime the body size increases while the exoskeleton doesn't. So it gets molted, which is like shedding the outer shell. This happens about four times in its lifetime. The fourth time this happens it is called a pupa, and goes through a stage called metamorphosis, the time when its final colors and spots begin to show. Metamorphosis lasts about one week, during this time the beetle does not move unless it is disturbed or to regulate the body temperature. After metamorphosis the pupa has undeveloped adult body parts.

SUMMARY

The Ladybug beetle is a predator and parasite of bad insects. Ladybug beetles including their larvae eat aphids and scale insects. They should not be destroyed unless their presence in your home becomes out of control.

—Derald Freeman. TCMGA Newsletter April 2008

TARRANT COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION CERTIFIED PROJECTS

TCMGA Community and Demonstration Garden

Leads: Randy Walker

Harold Taylor

Workdays and times: Tuesday and 3rd Saturday 8:00 am to 12:00 noon

TBA – other workdays can be arranged – contact Randy Walker

Peter Rabbit Players

Leads: Henry Cole

Sian Rees

Workday and times: Contact Henry Cole - the time and day varies depending on bookings

STARs (Skills Training Achieves Results)

Leads: Claire Alford

Nancy Curl

Workdays and times: Every Wednesday – 8:30 am to 12:00 noon

ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS

Bob Jones Nature Center

Leads: Carol Dowd

Susie Emmons

Workdays and time: 3rd Wednesday – Winter 9:00 am to 12:00 noon, Summer 8:00 to 10:00 am

Compost Outpost at FWBG

Leads: Bill Hall

Susan Houston

Workdays and times: Friday - Winter – 8:30 am to 12:30 pm, Summer 7:30 to 11:30 am

Veterans Park Wildscape

Leads: Ann Knudson

Hester Schwarzer

Workdays and times: Wednesday and the 1st Saturday of the month – 9:00 am to 12:00 noon

A mini class on Saturdays at 11:30 am

Tarrant County Southwest Sub Courthouse

Leads: Gailon Hardin

Dawn Hancock

Workdays and times: 2nd Tuesday & the last Saturday– Winter 9:00 am to 12:00 noon, Summer – 8:00 to 10:00 am.

Southwest Regional Library Native Demonstration Gardens

Leads: Char McMorrow

Theresa Kay Thomas

Workdays and time: 2nd and 4th Thursday– 8:30 am to 12:00 noon

TBA - Saturdays

FORT WORTH BOTANICAL GARDEN PROJECTS

Botanical Research Institute of Texas (BRIT)

Lead: Kay Young

Workdays and times: Contact Kay Young

Begonia Greenhouse

Leads: Taddie Hamilton

Judy Jackson

Workdays and times: Wednesday and Friday – 8:30 am to 12:00 noon

Trail Garden at the FWBG

Leads: Carol Vance

Rene Muhl

Workdays and times: Thursday – March to November 8:30 to 11:30 am, June to August 7:30 to 10:30 am

FWBG Japanese Garden and Docent Programs

Leads: Diane Jones

Marie-Jose Smith

Workdays and times: Wednesday – 9:00 am to 12:00 noon

Docent Tours – when scheduled, tours are given 7 days a week

Backyard Vegetable Garden at FWBG

Leads: Kim Corbo

Rachel Howe

Workdays and times: Friday starting at 9:00 am

Perennial Garden at FWBG

Leads: Valarie Soens

Mercy Kettler

Workdays and times: Wednesday – 9:00 am to 12:00 noon, Summer 8:00 to 11:00 am.

TBA – 1st Saturday – 8:30 am to 11:30 am

OTHER GARDENS

Common Ground NRH Community Gardens

Leads: Dick Pafford

Ray Morrell

Workdays and times: Wednesday – 8:00 to 9:30 am

Saturday – 8:30 to 11:30 am

Grapevine Botanical Garden Greenhouse

Leads: Debbie Boyle

Coral Gates

Donna Bufton

Workdays and times: Wednesday 9:00 to 11:00 am September to June,

Every other Wednesday July & August 9:00 to 11:00 am

Samaritan House

Leads: Mary Brown

Janice Sims

Workdays and times: Tuesday – 9:00 am to 11:00 am, Summer start at 8:00 am

Thistle Hill

Leads: Keith Olmstead

Elizabeth Staples

Workdays and times: Wednesday – Winter – 8:00 am to 11: am, Summer & Fall – 9:00 am – 12:00 Noon

Teen Challenge

Leads: Ginger Bason

Mike Warren

Workdays and times: Contact: Ginger Bason

Union Gospel Mission

Leads: Gay Larson

Patti Maness

Workdays and times: Monday - 9:00 am to 12:00 noon

SCHOOL PROJECTS**Alice Carlson Elementary OLE**

Leads: Deborah Brown

Needs a co-lead – contact Deborah Brown

Workdays and times: Monday and Thursday – 9:00 to 11:00 am, Summer 8:30 to 11:00 am

Durham Intermediate

Leads: Sian Rees

Henry Cole

Workdays and times: Thursday except on MG Meeting day – 9:00 – 11:00 am

Fitzgerald Elementary OLE

Leads: Lee Ann Rosenthal

Patsy Miller

Workdays and times: Monday – 8:30 am to 12:00 noon

Heritage Elementary OLE

Leads: Pam Braak

Harold Annis

Dick Pafford

Workdays and times: Monday – 9:00 am to 11:00 am during school year, summer 8:00 to 10: am,
1st Monday is garden club, 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm

Meadowbrook Elementary School Vegetable Garden

Leads: Cathy Thomas

Mary Brown

Workdays and times: Thursday 1:30 to 3:00 pm. Garden Club meets from 2:00 – 2:55 pm.

Please note that you may find the phone numbers and email addresses
of the Project Leads in you Master Gardener Directory.

From our Friends at Water is Awesome

(Reprinted with permission)

- **Twice a week or less.*** If you're watering more than two days a week, you're likely watering too much.
- **Don't water between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.*** Most cities prohibit watering during this time period since up to 30 percent of outdoor water used in the heat of the day is lost to evaporation.
- **Cycle and soak to avoid runoff.** Irrigate in shorter bursts to give water a chance to soak in, and allow 30 minutes or more between cycles.
- **Tune up your irrigation systems.** Fix leaks or damaged sprinkler heads and make sure they're aimed at the landscape, not the street or sidewalk. A quick 2-minute test walk-through every month the sprinklers are operating is recommended.
- **Rain and freeze sensors are water savers.*** They trigger automatic systems to shut off during downpours or when temperatures dip near freezing. And they could reduce your outdoor use by 5–10 percent.
- **Add a blanket of mulch.** Don't forget to add a 3" layer of mulch to landscape beds to help conserve water in the soil and deter unwanted weeds.
- **Water by the drop.** Use drip irrigation for trees, shrubs, and flowerbeds. Drip systems put water in the root zone - that's right where the plants need it. DIY adapters make it easy to convert from spray to drip.

Replace that thirsty turf. Grass is great for play spaces, but do we really need so much? Replace those little-used areas of your lawn with other types of landscaping or water stingy plants. Tips on landscape design, maintenance and plant selection can be found at <http://txsmartscape.com/>

- *Some of these measures may be adopted by ordinance where you live. Please check with your water provider if you have any questions.

Respectfully,

Your friends at Water is Awesome

A Cautionary Tale

When freezing temperatures were recently predicted, I hurriedly gathered up most of my succulent plants and shoved them into the sunroom with the idea that I would move some to my greenhouse another day. My indoor/outdoor cat claims that same sunroom as her own when it is cold outside. So last Friday I thought the room might be beginning to have the faint odor of a day-old hunting trophy gifted by the cat. Making a quick tour of the room, and not finding the source for the mildly unpleasant odor, I chastised the cat, closed the sunroom door, and finished other errands.

Saturday arrived. When I opened the door to the sunroom, the very strong odor of a dead rat or a dead bird was obvious. Again, I did a search for the origin of the stench, but found nothing. While standing in the middle of the room, I looked down at the plants I had shoved into the room the previous week, and there it was – the origin of the stench.

Stapelia gigantea, the “Starfish Cactus”, also known as a “Dead Man’s Cactus” was blooming. The blossom is huge, but its fragrance is the smell of rotting flesh. The unpleasant odor attracts flies and ants, which then pollinate the flower. I quickly removed the plant and aired out the sunroom. I also gave the cat an appropriate apology.

And so, the cautionary part of this tale is to suggest you enjoy the huge blossom of *Stapelia gigantea* , but do it while gazing at it from afar!

