

# Tarrant County Master Gardeners



TEXAS A & M AGRILIFE EXTENSION AGENCY

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## Bulb Propagation by Scaling and Chipping

Prepared by Betty Cupps, Class of 2009  
TCMGA Propagation Specialist (deceased)  
From Sharecropper 2011

Since we are soon approaching the end of summer, I thought many of us may be considering bulb division. Scaling and chipping are methods of propagation that are unique to bulbs.

The part of the bulb which stores information regarding regeneration/ reproduction is cut or broken into pieces which later become new bulbs.

### Bulb Propagation by Scaling

Scaling can be done with any bulb with scales or small leaf-like segments. They may be purchased or from your own garden.

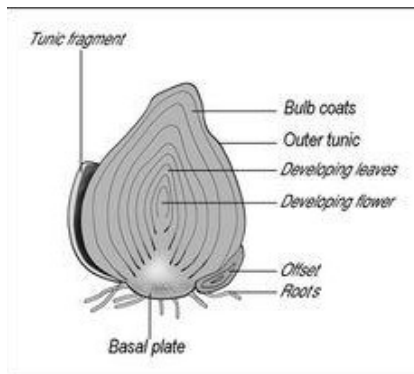
In late summer or early fall, before new roots begin to grow, gently lift the bulb from the soil. Clean the bulb and snap off the number of outer layers or scales needed. For many new plants use all the scales. Be sure to get as close to the basal plate as possible. If not using all of the outer scales, re-plant the bulb.

Next, put fungicidal powder in a plastic baggie. Add the scales and shake gently to coat the scales thoroughly. Fungicidal solution may be used instead of the powder. If solution is used be sure to drain the liquid from the bag.

Step three is the preparation of the potting mixture. Use equal parts perlite and moist peat or a peat substitute in a plastic bag. Place the coated scales gently in the bag. Be sure to inflate the bag; seal and label. Keep the bag in a dark place at a temperature of just below 70 degrees.

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Content provided by  
Theresa Thomas



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## Bulb Propagation by Scaling & Chipping Continued

Step four must wait for a while. Usually by the spring, small bulblets have formed. Take the scales from the bag. If the scales are soft and look rotted, pull them off. If they are still firm and in good shape, or if roots are emerging from the basal plate, leave them alone.

Fifth, pot the bulblets in equal parts potting mix and fine grit. Water, label, then place a top layer of grit over them. Keep in a cool, shady place over summer.

The final step is repotting into larger pots each spring or fall. When they reach flowering size, plant them into the garden or into a large container. Bulbs may last for generations.

### ***Bulb Propagation by Chipping***

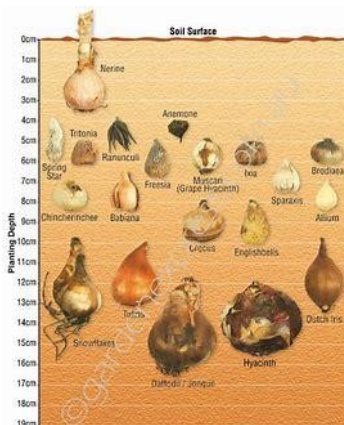
Chipping is for bulbs that are built like an onion.

Dig up a healthy bulb when dormant and clean thoroughly. Remove any papery skin and trim back the roots. Hold the bulb care-fully with the basal plate uppermost. Cut 8 to 16 sections or chips depending on the size of the bulb. Be sure that each chip has a piece of the basal plate.

Soak the chips in a fungicidal solution for about 10 to 15 minutes to kill all bacteria and fungus. Allow the chips to drain for up to 12 hours.

Place the chips in a clear plastic bag containing ten parts vermiculite to one-part water. Keep in a dark, cool place. I keep mine in my closet. Check the bag occasionally for chips that appear rotted.

Allow about 3 months for the bulblets to form above the basal plate. When ready, plant in small pots, 3 to 4 inches. Be sure to plant the new bulblet with the basal plate down in good potting mix. Leave the scales exposed and they will slowly rot and drop off as the bulb develops. Enjoy the beauty after the long wait.



### Velvet Leaf Senna

Flower of the Month

by Josephine Keeney

Master Naturalist and Native Plant Society of Texas

Velvet-leaf Senna, Lindheimer's Senna, *Senna lindheimeriana*  
Fabaceae (Pea Family)

This plant has to be one of the nicest plants to have around, if only for the lovely soft feel of the leaves, they really feel like velvet, but it also has many other virtues.

It can grow up to six feet tall with many stems that terminate with many flower clusters. The flowers are a bright yellow and have five petals and start blooming in June continuing for about a month.

This plant is drought tolerant and can grow in average soil, in full sun or part-shade. It can be used as specimen plant or in the wildflower garden where it makes a great target for bees and butterflies.

It makes a lot of seeds making it easy to propagate. It dies to the ground in the fall then in spring it returns with renewed vigor for another season of growth in our area.

If all this wasn't enough, it also is the larval host for the Little Sulphur butterfly. With all these great attributes, this is a very good plant to have around.



Content provided by Theresa Thomas

# President's Message



Just a few thoughts as we start to wrap up our 2019 MG recertification year.

Our October 3th meeting is the last monthly meeting you can get CEs for recertification. There will be 5 CEs available. November is vendor meeting and December is the Annual Christmas Party, no CEs.

If for some reason you are not recertifying, please let your timekeeper know. If you need help, talk with your timekeeper.

Dues notices are being collected at the meetings for 2020, so come early and pay your 2020 dues. Because there is a crowd paying dues at the meetings you can mail them to Steve Purdy or send them to the office. That way you don't have to worry about forgetting your checkbook at the next meeting or having something come up and miss the meeting and not pay on time.

The telephone calendar spaces are slim picking, so sign now for the rest of the year.

Garden Demonstration Hours – the weather getting better, only 3 months left to get those hours. Each garden and greenhouse could use your help.

Our many great Projects throughout Tarrant County would really use your time and energy. Join them as they maintain the gardens and provide education each week. They are listed on the website.

The “**SNOW SISTERS**” event is coming up Saturday October 26, 2019. It is going to be a great time. We look forward to partnering with them to landscape a Retired Veteran's new home that the sisters will be donating to a lucky veteran. You can sign up online at the website or at the meeting in October for the event.

Join us at the TCMGA Greenhouse Advance Training Class on October 17-19, 2019.

There is a Plant Sale before and afterward the October Meeting at our own Demonstration Garden. Plants grown by our Master Gardeners.

Scholarship – The TCMGA does offer a \$1000.00 Scholarship to encourage the study of Horticulture, Floriculture, Landscape Design, Conservation, Forestry, Botany, Agronomy, Plant Pathology or other related subjects. If you know of a student that would be eligible, please contact: Donna Findley at 817-845-6021 or [rfindley58@yahoo.com](mailto:rfindley58@yahoo.com)

I wonder who our Photo Contest winners will be? Come and see their photos at the October meeting.

See you all in October. We will also be electing our 2020 Executive Board and it is very important that you attend and let your vote be counted.

Theresa