



# Sharecropper



## Tarrant County Master Gardener Association

October 2015

October  
2015

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## RED CARPET TREATMENT FOR A PLANT

### THE CORPSE FLOWER BLOOMS AT THE DENVER BOTANIC GARDENS

By Pam Braak, 2009 MG



How often does a flower get the red carpet treatment with 10,000 people per day visiting? A giant Corpse Flower, *Amorphophallus titanum*, known affectionately as Stinky captured the imagination of the people of Denver and they arrived in swarms to see it and to smell its aroma of rotting meat. The local media followed the plants progress for days and it finally began to bloom on Tuesday night, August 18<sup>th</sup> about 5 hours after I first saw

it. The flower only lasts for 12 to 24 hours so the combination of rarity, short duration of the bloom and of course the anticipation of being grossed out was a great lure. Word went out to Botanic Garden members and they began to arrive at the Gardens at 4:30 a.m. to be first in line to see and smell it. We returned to the garden at 9 a.m. and had to park many blocks away to find that the wait time was 3 hours. The line snaked around the gardens and the crowd seemed cheerful and expectant as they waited for this rare event. We decided instead to tour the gardens with a friend who was there for her first visit but we did have our chance to see the opened flower and have a whiff from afar. The smell is reported to be a mixture of Limburger cheese, dirty socks, rotten fish and mothballs.

This quote from the LA Times summed up the odor:

"I definitely see the similarities between what I smell here and what I smell down at the office," said Gary Broyles, who conducts autopsies for a living.

It was great to be a part of this amazing buzz of excitement about a plant. The Denver Botanic Gardens is a very special place even without a celebrity plant and I highly recommend you visit. Your Fort Worth Botanic Gardens membership will get you in for free. More horticultural information on Stinky can be found at:



<http://www.livescience.com/51923-denver-stinky-corpse-flower-blooms.html>

TEXAS A&M  
AGRILIFE  
EXTENSION

If you have an idea or would like to contribute to the newsletter, please contact Jackie Heidinger [jackieheidinger@verizon.net](mailto:jackieheidinger@verizon.net)



**Marilyn Satterfield,  
TCMGA President**

# President's Message

## Welcome Fall!!

These cooler mornings are nice to be out in the garden and enjoying the outdoors.

And it's encouraging to see the plants that survived the summer have started growing and producing again. Our fall gardens should be well on their way to harvest soon.

Fall is a busy time to prune, divide, cleanup and plan for the spring growing season.

All of our Master Gardener projects are going through the fall ritual and could really use help with their to-do lists. So this is a good time to get volunteer hours done before the end of the year in October.

Our project leads are dedicated to maintaining their gardens and sometimes put in many extra hours. Our gardens speak to the public about our association, and we want them to experience the best we have to offer. That means a lot of time commitment and hard work, so let's show our project leads how much we appreciate and support them by volunteering and helping make their work a little easier.

There are over twenty Master Gardener Projects throughout the county, try one or try them all, I am sure you will find one to call home.

If outside work isn't your cup of tea, think about joining one of the committees that is listed in the front of our Membership Directory. The Committee Chairs would be glad to have more help and you still get volunteer hours.

We still have the Biggest and Bestest Association because our members are the bestest.

Each one of you are deeply appreciated for all you do!!

Until we meet again,

**Marilyn Satterfield  
TCMGA President**



# MGs at the Arlington EcoFest by Patsy Miller

Hester Schwarzer at the Terrarium Table



Dave Wilson Tool Sharpening

The MG table at Arlington EcoFest was a busy place! Kids and adults learned how to make seed tapes and seed balls. Visitors who brought their garden tools got a lesson from Dave Wilson on how to sharpen them. Mod Squad intern Brenda Townsend watched Dave and took a turn at sharpening some shears. She's ready to buy sharpening tools of her own. Hester Schwarzer made a fairy garden which delighted children -- and their parents. We held a drawing for our three examples of container gardening using vegetables, annuals and herbs. Away from the booth, Richard Kurth, Warren Tingley, Dave Wilson and Gailon Hardin offered talks on composting, efficient irrigation, rose rosette and rose care and native plants, respectively.



# Nora's Notions

## Supreme Gifts by Nora Coalson, 2014 MG

**M**any of our fellow Master Gardeners are supremely gifted. Some have enviable landscape design skills. Our Speakers Bureau members are a talented and dedicated bunch. The Propagation Team takes care of training our own organization and much more. Every hour spent helping out at our Community Demo Garden allows me to rub elbows with some from this talented assortment of colleagues. Though I may have earned the blue badge and thus the right to call myself a Master Gardener, at times I find it intimidating to be a member of such an august group.

It was with these thoughts that I sat down one day and wondered if I have any unique gifts. I don't think I was standing behind that proverbial door when they were handed out. The answer came to me while ensconced in my hammock enjoying a risky third cup of coffee. I have been allotted not one gift, but two! My husband will no doubt confirm that I am a supremely gifted putterer and a supremely gifted cogitator. I am ever so fortunate that both of these activities are enhanced by a glass of good Pinot Noir.

I had this epiphany as I thought back to my experience in an abbreviated landscape design class given last spring by Weston Gardens. At the end of the one-day class, we were tasked with putting our newly-learned skills to use on some chosen area in our own yards. This was a tough decision in a landscape where so many areas screamed for attention. My choice was an oddly shaped patch of yard bordered by a low iron fence on one side, a six foot wood fence on the other, and shaded by four old-growth Post Oak trees. It was bereft of anything resembling a plan. I called it No Man's Land. Grass refused to grow, for obvious reasons. With soil containing more rocks than organic matter, gardening here could be accomplished only with a rock hammer.

My designs were grandiose and illogical. Had I attempted the lovely raised beds around the base of the Post Oaks, the trees would have gasped and died. It was only after a day spent puttering in the space removing dead things, trash and the failed remains of a grassy area that a plan began to emerge. What I wanted was a meandering flagstone path, which would be an extension of an existing one. That it might be a path to nowhere was a notion soon dismissed by the thought that the arrival point would come to me later. I quickly scratched out a route

for the path and then got out my tracing paper and drew it in. Backwards, I know. The teacher would never know.

Flagstone is expensive stuff - more than my meager budget would accommodate. So I puttered over to the area in front of our tool shed which the original homeowners used to house some large dogs and their run area. Why do dogs need flagstone? It certainly made a lousy surface for pulling lawnmowers and wheelbarrows over, so I started relocating all 160 square feet of it to a staging area where my new path would take shape. In the midst of this task my husband appeared on sight, observed for a moment and flashed a disapproving frown. "You do know this will turn into a mud bath the next time it rains. Have you some plan in mind for resurfacing what you have just destroyed?" Such hyperbole. Of course I didn't have a plan in mind. That was what cogitating was for.

Break time in the hammock led to some productive cogitating. I found myself staring at that unidentified plant making its usual late summer push in an area around a lovely Texas redbud tree. When we moved here ten years ago, this plant grew like a hot mess all over the place and looked like heck-a-doodle-do except for about a one month period in late August and early September. I yanked it all out and continued to yank its progeny out for years to come. Persistent bugger that it is, sure enough, a small patch was reappearing. So it occurred to me that anything that determined to survive should be given a chance. Besides, I did enjoy its lovely purple blooms on the tall spikes at a time everything else was shriveling up. Serendipitously, I ran across that same plant at the Demo Garden and now know it is called Obedient Plant, a misnomer in my humble opinion. Maybe it can be corralled to fill in a blank area where nothing much else wants to grow.

Delighted with my progress, I now invited my husband out to share in a bottle of wine. There is forgiveness in every sip of a nice wine, so this phase pulled double duty. I took the hammock and hubby pulled up a lawn chair. One of the things I love about the man is his ability to be quiet comfortably. He also makes a good sounding board. At the glass half empty point I tossed out ideas for resurfacing the area I'd just turned into a mud pit.

# Nora's Notions –cont'd

“What about some lovely, smooth concrete pavers?”

“Too expensive.”

“We could just pour concrete.”

“Didn’t you tell me it needed to be permeable?”

Eureka! It came to me. This area is almost invisible from the rest of the yard. It didn’t need to be beautiful – just functional.

“Remember that stuff we used under the patio we did a couple of years ago? What do you call it?”

“Paver base. Might work.”

It took more than a couple of days to prepare the surface, digging down the ridges of dirt outlines formerly bordering the flagstone. It hadn’t been installed properly over sand, so I was working on dirt mixed with pebbles and the occasional rock. I dug down to a depth of two to three inches, more or less, sat down to figure out how much of the paver base I might need, threw up my hands in frustration, and went to the store to buy landscape cloth and 10 bags of the base stuff. What I love about living in the city is how close by the stores are. Saves a lot of hassling with complicated math.

When my husband came out to help with the unloading process, he cast a skeptical eye over my load. “You do the math?” Now we’ve only been married almost 19 years, so I guess he might be forgiven for not knowing my avoidance of all things math related. I gave him the evil eye in response. He finished dumping my load near the work site and headed indoors to do whatever husbands do when they don’t want to help you with a big project. “Let me know when you need some more paver base. I’ll run get it for you.” Isn’t he a prince?

I may not have done the math, but I had looked up the best way to put down paver base, so I knew to put down the landscape cloth first. I was not going to have my entire paver base load ground into the dirt because I’d skipped this critical step. Self-congratulations complete, I got down to work. A stiff breeze had by that time blown in, making the job ever so annoying. With only a brief break to think about the wisdom of working in such conditions, I plugged along using brick bats as weights. It occurred to me to go look up the term ‘brick bat’ since those broken bricks do not in any way resemble bats. That’s just what I’ve always heard them called. Blessedly I resisted the impulse and finished laying the landscape cloth.

About that time the Prince reappeared. He quickly slit open the paver base bags, dumped them on my cloth and handed me the rake. “Call me when you’re done.” After two more runs to the store for additional paver base, thirty minutes of tamping the stuff down to the point that my arms had turned to rubber, and much grunting and groaning, the job was done. With his ever perfect timing, my husband came out of the back door, walked over to where I stood and started to step on my hard work. Out shot my brake arm. I turned and growled, “Oh hell no. You do not get to be the first one to set foot on my hard work!” Even we putterers and cogitators have our limits.

## 2015 Programs

### October 1, 2015

Marilyn Simmons of the Cowgirl Gardeners

**Topic-Perennial Gardening**

November 5, 2015

Dr. Barney Lipscomb of BRIT

**Topic-Poisonous Plants**



## October 2015

10/1	Mary Reagor
10/2	Rene Muhl
10/4	Nancy Searl
10/5	David Livings
10/6	Diana Berg, Avis Sorenson
10/11	Sandra Hightower, Margaret Shuping
10/12	Lynda Edwards
10/13	Gailon Hardin
10/14	Karen Simmons
10/16	Lorie Grandclair-Diaz, Susan Houston, Diane Hughes, Dick Pafford
10/17	Jeanie Browning, Dottie Bucy
10/18	Frank Durda, Donna Jobe, Carol Vance
10/19	Bill Hall, Marianne Levine
10/22	Betsy Kalina
10/28	Nancy Hunter
10/29	Kay Yount
10/30	Bill Vandever, Tom Hightower

If your birthday is this month and you don't see it, please contact LaVonne Nowlin.

If you know of anyone who is ill in the Master Gardener Association and/or deaths in their immediate family, please contact LaVonne Nowlin.

Also we are in need of cards to send to our membership. If you could bring any extras you can donate, please bring them to the meetings; it would be so appreciated.

**LaVonne Nowlin (817) 581-1850** or email [lavonnen@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lavonnen@sbcglobal.net).

## TCMGA MEDIA COMMITTEE

The TCMGA Media Committee is looking for volunteers interested in assisting with development of the monthly newsletter, the TCMGA website and producing videos.

If you enjoy writing, like to research gardening information, have graphic design abilities or like to make videos, then we have a wonderful opportunity for you!

Please contact Jackie Heidinger at [jackieheidinger@verizon.net](mailto:jackieheidinger@verizon.net) if you are interested.

**We would love to have you join the committee!**

## TCMGA SWAP/SELL

Who:	Donna Fry <a href="mailto:dfry1212@hotmail.com">dfry1212@hotmail.com</a> (817) 584-0842
What:	Epson portable projector Model H369A. Original price \$500. Used 3 times for presentations. Can connect to laptop with cables or to Ipad with cord which is included.
Price:	\$250—\$300

## TCMGA FALL BULB SALE!

**Bulbs can be pre-ordered at the October meeting.**  
**Orders can also be mailed to Jeanie Browning with payment as designated on the order form.**

**Bulbs will available for pick up at the November TCMGA meeting.**

## 2015 TCMGA FALL PLANT SALE

### TEXAS NATIVE TREES AND SHRUBS

September 3 - October 23

Order online at [tarrantmq.org](http://tarrantmq.org) starting September 3

## *Membership/Background Investigation Update*

We will start collecting Membership dues at the August monthly meeting. Dues are \$20. If you are over 80 years of age, the dues are \$10. You can pay in cash or by check made out to TCMGA. Dues must be paid by Oct 31, 2015.

Please note that some TCMGA members will owe an additional \$10 for an update to their Background Investigation. This update is required every three years. You will be notified by e-mail if you require a Background update. If you have questions, please call Steve Purdy.



If you have changes in you address, phone number or email, please let Steve Purdy know.

**Steve Purdy - Membership**

# Upcoming Events

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## OCTOBER

1	9 am social 10 am- meeting	TCMGA Meeting	
3	10 am	NPSOT Fall Native Plant Sale More info at <a href="http://www.txnativeplants.org">www.txnativeplants.org</a>	 <p><b>NPSOT Fall Native Plant Sale</b> North Central Chapter Native Plant Society of Texas</p> <p><b>Sale Features:</b> The sale features a large variety of plant species grown organically by our Chapter Members, including Ground-Cover Perennials, Shrubs, Vines and Trees.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grown from local seeds</li> <li>• Better adapted to our climate</li> <li>• Low requirement for water</li> <li>• No need for pesticides or herbicides</li> </ul> <p><b>When:</b> Saturday, October 3, 2015 <b>Where:</b> Harold's Hill Park Pavilion 1001 W. Harold's Hill Road Arlington, TX 76010 <b>Time:</b> 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. <b>Other:</b> See our website for more information about native plants and our organization. <a href="http://www.txnativeplants.org">www.txnativeplants.org</a></p>
4	10 am to 4 pm	The Garden Conservancy's <b>OPEN DAYS PROGRAM</b> More info at <a href="http://www.opendaysprogram.org">www.opendaysprogram.org</a>	 <p>The Garden Conservancy's <b>Open Days Program</b></p> <p><b>Fort Worth Open Day</b> <b>Sunday, October 4</b> 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. \$7 per garden</p> <p>Explore seven of the area's best private gardens, open for one day only. You'll be inspired by the creativity and individuality!</p> <p>We are proud to partner with Tarrant Master Gardeners to bring you this Open Day.</p>
9-10		Ft. Worth Botanic Garden <b>Fall Plant Sale</b> More info at <a href="http://fwbg.org/events/361/fall-plant-sale/">http://fwbg.org/events/361/fall-plant-sale/</a>	
10	10 am to 1 pm	Butterflies Unlimited Annual Open House No Tour Fee 1732 Hampton Road, Glenn Heights	
10	8:30 am to 12 Noon	Rose Rosette Disease Seminar: <b>New Research Information</b> No Tour Fee Collin College—Spring Creek Campus Conference Center 2800 East Spring Creek Parkway, Plano, TX	
14	9 am	FWBG Perennial Garden Guided Tour	
15	9 am	FWBG Trial Garden Guided Tour	
15-18	9 am	The <u>Native Plant Society of Texas</u> will hold its annual symposium on October 15-18 at the Airport Hilton in Austin Texas. <a href="http://npsot.org/wp/symposium2015/">http://npsot.org/wp/symposium2015/</a>	

## OCTOBER

17 9 am— 1 pm

### Grapevine Garden Club Plant Sale

More info at  
[www.grapevinegardenclub.org](http://www.grapevinegardenclub.org)



17 9 am— 1 pm

### Big Tree Tour

Cost \$375  
To Register Contact  
Courtney Blevins  
[cblevins@cfs.tamu.edu](mailto:cblevins@cfs.tamu.edu)  
817-879-39794



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### TCMGA Fall Austin Field Trip

To Register go to:  
<http://www.tarrantmg.org>



24-25 9 am— 5 pm  
Saturday  
1 pm— 4 pm  
Sunday

### Orchid Society Show Ft. Worth Botanic Garden

24-25 10 am— 5 pm  
Saturday  
11 am—5 pm  
Sunday

### Ft. Worth Botanic Garden Fall Festival in the Japanese Garden

31 10 am— 2 pm

### Discovery Garden Plant Sale

Fair Park, 3601 Martin Luther King Blvd, Dallas, TX  
More info at  
[http://texasdiscoverygardens.org/plant\\_sale.p](http://texasdiscoverygardens.org/plant_sale.p)