Everything is going green in Austin... including your yard!
with Denise Delaney

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March Meeting Speaker — Denise Delaney

Everything is going green in Austin ... including your yard!

Denise Delaney is the City of Austin’s Grow Green Coordinator in the City of Austin’s watershed Protection Department.

Denise has over 25 years of professional horticultural experience in Central Texas.

From 1992-2002 Denise was employed at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center. She was there during the construction of the facility in southwest Austin, which opened in the spring of 1995. As the Director of Horticulture, she was responsible for managing the Center's extensive native plant gardens, and helping develop the volunteer and garden education programs.

Denise started the biannual Native Plant Sale and Gardening Festival in the early 1990’s. Under her direction the plant sales grew from $2,000 at the first festival to over $70,000 at the last one she oversaw in 2002.

Denise has also worked for Cimarron Hills, a private development with a Jack Nicklaus Signature golf course, for landscape maintenance companies, on private estates, in retail nurseries and for the UT Biological Sciences Department.

When she is not gardening, Denise enjoys traveling, playing tennis, swimming and fast cars!

Master Gardener Meeting information:
Wednesday, March 2nd, 2011 starting at 7 pm.
Zilker Botanical Garden
Hello Master Gardeners:

A Message From Your President

It may be the shortest month, but February has packed a powerful punch! We encountered snow, ice, and days of freezing temperatures which then turned lovely and mild — reminding us all that we have no earthly idea what the weather will be doing next week!

In my garden, I have found the outline where a succulent once lived and curled up leaves on my roses from the freezing weather. Our fireplace had a roaring good time for about four days and I, once again, remembered how good soups and stews taste on bitter, cold nights.

Now, looking forward to spring ...

March is to me one fickle month — cold and windy one day changing to balmy, spring-hinting weather the next. It’s a hard month to be a good gardener; do I go ahead and plant or wait another week? Do I brave the odds and if so, do I really want to be outside covering plants when that last bitter cold front returns?

On another note, March also brings forth several great opportunities to volunteer. Mark you calendar and sign up for:

A Passion for Plants, The East Austin Garden Fair on March 19th
New Covenant Fellowship of Austin Church (new location)
1507 Wilshire Blvd., Austin 78722
Contact: Margarine Beaman, oleo50@hotmail.com

Zilker Garden Festival on March 26th – 27th
Zilker Botanical Garden
Contact: Chris Giaraffa, cgiaraffa@austin.rr.com

There also will be many opportunities to volunteer for work days in the greenhouse. Please watch your TCMGA Yahoo e-mails for announcements concerning all these upcoming volunteer opportunities.

I hope to soon hear the distant rumblings of spring. The smell of warm, damp soil, the sky suddenly changing to a blue/black color as an early spring thunderstorm marches across the horizon. When you hear the thunder rolling and see lightening bolts crease the heavens, there is no doubt that spring is emerging from its winter cocoon!

It is time to sharpen your tools, find your garden gloves and start planting!

Enjoy the coming of spring!

Carolyn Williams

Do you have the latest Garden Guide?
If you haven’t purchased your copy of the revised 4th edition of the TCMG Garden Guide, now’s your chance to get one (or more) at a discount.
At the March 2nd meeting we will be offering the guide for only $12.00, tax included (a 20% discount!).
This is your opportunity to buy several copies for gifts for friends and family as well, and get everyone off on the right foot with spring gardening projects.
The guide includes plant lists, a planting date calendar, month-by-month gardening chores and hints, references, and special topics such as pruning and composting.
This is a must-have resource for successful gardening in our difficult Central Texas climate.
Elaine Dill
Do you know that vegetable intake in the United States has increased in the last 40 years?

According to data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, vegetable consumption has gone all the way up to 125 pounds per person per year in 2007. Can you guess what’s driving this seemingly healthy trend? Part of the increase is attributed to salad greens, because we are eating more salads, but the most popular vegetables are the ones that end up on our hamburgers. Yep, Americans get plenty of iceberg lettuce, no such thing as a bad vegetable, but there is such a rut. What about broccoli, beets, squash, collards? C’mon here in Central Texas where we can grow health-promoting vegetables in our gardens year round.

One of the key recommendations from the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, released recently by the US Department of Agriculture and the Department of Health and Human Services, is to “make half your plate fruits and vegetables.” I heartily agree – we cannot go wrong by “supersizing” our vegetables servings. There are thousands of phytochemicals in the plants that we eat, and scientists have barely scratched the surface in understanding all of the potential benefits these compounds may have on our health. Variety is key, and a vegetable garden is the perfect place to experiment with new or unusual vegetables.

If Mother Nature cooperates we can begin planting many crops in mid-March, including bush and pole beans, squash, cucumbers, tomatoes, eggplant and peppers. Beans, squash and cucumbers can be planted directly in the garden since the large seeds germinate quickly and grow to maturity in 55-65 days. Tomatoes, eggplant and peppers take longer to reach maturity, so they should always go into the garden as transplants. Be sure to have a supply of floating row cover on hand to cover your emerging seedlings and wrap tomato cages in case of a cold snap. Row cover can sometimes be found at local garden centers or it can be ordered from a variety of online sources, including Texas Gardener (www.texasgardener.com), Southern Exposure Seed Co.

Right: ‘Contender’ green beans, a long-time Texas favorite. Plant seed in mid-March for late May harvests.

Photo by Bruce Leander.
Exchange (www.southernexposure.com) and Johnny’s Seed (www.johnnyseeds.com).

My all-time favorite vegetable garden book is *The Vegetable Book, A Texan’s Guide to Gardening* by Dr. Sam Cotner. First published in 1985, this book is a comprehensive guide to growing vegetables successfully in Texas. A revised soft cover version of the book was published in 1996, and I had always hoped that after his retirement from Texas A&M in 2001 Dr. Cotner would go to work on a third “Millennium” edition, but sadly he passed away on January 20, 2011. Texas has lost an expert horticulturist and a devoted Aggie, yet his wit and wisdom have left an indelible imprint on the lives of many fortunate Texans, and his legacy lives on in our vegetable gardens.


Above: Patty’s autographed copy of Sam Cotner’s *The Vegetable Book*, an indispensable reference and another keepsake in her collection of gardening treasures. Photo by Bruce Leander.
Roadtrip to Blanco and Waco
by Liz Caskey and Frankie Hart

Roadtrip Updates!

Texas Specialty Cut Flowers (Arnosky Flower Farm)

There’s exciting news at the Arnosky’s flower farm! They have decided to cut back on wholesale business and start providing fruits, vegetables and bedding plants for public sales at their Blue Barn and Market near Blanco.

They announced in their newsletter, “We just planted 2 acres of pecans, we have 500 blackberries to go out, and we are putting 100 peaches under high-tunnel culture for frost control. We also have 2 acres of Asian pears and 2 acres of peaches already in production, or nearly so. We have ramped up the bedding plant business for our market sales (annuals and vegetable plants), and are growing container perennials, David Austin Roses, greenhouse tomatoes, potted fruit trees and berries, hanging baskets, potted cannas, caladiums and geraniums.” The exciting part is that the varieties they grow are usually heirloom and/or different from other nurseries.

Also, there will be tours of the farm on April 2nd “We think that some folks would like to know more about how we grow things, and this is the time to show that. What we do on a larger scale can be used in your own backyard gardens.”

And even more good news — all this means that Pamela will be at the barn more often to greet us!

The Arnosky farm is located between Blanco and Wimberley, at the junction of RR 165 and FM 2325. They are at 12550 FM 2325. Sign up for their weekly newsletter at their website, www.texascolor.com. 830-833-2729 phone or arnosky@moment.net e-mail.

Bonnie’s Greenhouse in Waco

Bonnie’s is celebrating 30 years in business! I stopped by this wonderful nursery a few months ago and it is growing by leaps and bounds! The owner’s husband recently retired and he is working hard to clean up the site and add new structures. In addition, the nursery is now hosting both speakers and classes.

Mike Shoup from Antique Rose Emporium will speak on March 10th. There is no fee for his seminar. Classes include Sedum Container Garden Class on March 5th 10:00 for $40 which includes a container, soil, plants and handouts.

The owner, Sandra, wants you to know that they will have lots of herbs and perennials this spring.

Contact information is: http://bonniesgreenhouse.com, 5198 Orchard Lane, Waco, Texas 76705, (254) 799-7909 or e-mail sandrakillough@hotmail.com.

Garden to Garden Plant Exchange
Scheduled for the May Meeting

It’s time to get ready for the plant exchange after the May meeting. We are moving the plant exchange from April, so that we’ll have plenty of time with our speaker, Felder Rushing. So, as you clean up your gardens for the spring, save those extra plants that would make your gardening friends happy. In addition, put aside those extras seeds, garden magazines and pots that you’d like to share with other Master Gardeners. More information will be provided in an upcoming Compost Bin.

Liz Caskey and Frankie Hart
Announcing an Advanced Citrus Education Class

Growing Citrus in Central Texas

This free Advanced Education class will earn TCMGA members 3 hours of CEU toward recertification. Class is also open to the public so invite your spouse, fellow gardeners, neighbors and friends. Class is being repeated so you may attend during the week or on Saturday. Reservations not required. Just be sure to sign-in to obtain CEU credits.

Thursday, March 3, 1 – 4 p.m.
Carver Library, 1161 Angelina Street, Room #1, Austin, Texas 78702
and repeated,
Saturday, March 5, 9 a.m. – Noon
West Rural Community Center
8685 Highway 71 West, Building A,
This is approximately 1 mile west of Hwy 290/71 "Y" in Oak Hill. At the Covered Bridge Drive stoplight, turn up the hill, past the fire station to the next building on the left which is Building A.

Central Texans are showing an increased interest in growing citrus plants. The class will discuss the varieties of citrus which do well in Central Texas and how to grow and maintain citrus plants. Travis County Master Gardeners initiated a citrus project with selected varieties of citrus trees in 2004. Results have been monitored over the years. The study proved certain varieties can be grown in the Austin Area.

Class will include information about Citrus Greening (CG), a new devastating disease of citrus plants spreading across the US. Learn CG disease management, early detection and prevention of this disease.

Texas AgriLife Extension Service, Texas A&M System, conducted Citrus Greening specialist training classes at San Antonio for Master Gardeners which both Venkappa and Ratna Gani attended. They are conducting these two public educational classes to fulfill their requirements for Citrus Greening Specialist certification. The seminar is free and open to the public. It is presented by the Travis County Master Gardeners, a volunteer arm of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service in Travis County. www.tcmastergardeners.org.

Venkappa and Ratna became certified Master Gardeners in 2000 in Montgomery County. They transferred membership to Travis County Master Gardeners Association in 2003 when they moved to Austin. Venkappa helped initiate the citrus growing project at the TCMGA greenhouse in Zilker Botanical Garden with fellow Master Gardeners in 2003. Venkappa was instrumental in planning and building the rainwater harvesting system at Zilker and has shared his rainwater harvesting expertise at venues for the City of Austin. In 2005, Venkappa received the Texas Master Gardener of the Year statewide award.

Both Ganis belong to The Garden Club of Austin where Venkappa is life member and has received numerous awards. Venkappa Gani is past president of Austin Organic gardeners club. He writes frequent gardening articles for the Austin South Asian Newspaper.

Kudos for two February Presenters

A big thank you goes out to our speakers for the February public education seminar "Everything’s Coming up Roses"! The weather was dicey but Carolyn Williams and Holly Plotner provided an informative and fun two hours of instruction for over 30 rose lovers who braved the ice and cold! Cher Groody
Winter Plant Damage — A Gardener’s Woe
by Bob Beyer

During February 2011, Austin and Central Texas experienced rare winter conditions that even put native plants to the stress test. With a week that saw low temperatures from the mid-teens to near 20 degrees. For a prolonged period of over 72 hours temperatures never got above freezing. This was just too much for some plants to bear. On top of that, the deep freeze followed a healthy rainfall just ahead of plunging temperatures which dropped temperatures 60 degrees within just 48 hours. During this period, an inch of powdery fine snow fell also. Since then winter temperatures have frequently been running 20 degrees below normals.

With the exception of an approximately 20 mile radius of central Austin in hardiness zone 9a, Central Texas lies primarily in Zone 8b. This means that the average lowest winter temperature that can be expected, based on historic records, is between 15 and 20 degrees, so weather of this kind should not come as a surprise. Even native plants like the Anacacho Orchid (*Bauhinia lunariodes*) can be damaged below 25 degrees and killed at temperatures below 20 unless they are in a protected location. These conditions are even more critical for non-natives in our gardens, where we gardeners love to push the envelope, take chances, and believe we can adequately protect our plants should hard freezes occur.

OK, let’s reflect on the situation.

Covering non-native or adaptive plants to protect them during deep freeze conditions still isn’t enough to prevent damage. To minimize damage, protective covers must be thick, non-plastic, and tied down to the ground to isolate the cold completely. It is better to have a damaged plant rather than a dead plant and such coverings may prevent the latter.
Winter Plant Damage

Micro-conditions may exist that determine the fate of a plant in a deep freeze such as protected locations, heavy mulching to prevent root freezing, snow and ice covering which will actually provide insulation to stems and foliage, exposure to wind, etc.

Knowing and learning about the plants in your garden through research, trials, and documenting outcomes of plant reaction to certain conditions will help the gardener succeed in getting though the harshness of future winter conditions with minimal impact.

Have an emergency hard freeze plant protection plan in place which will allow you to respond quickly and effectively should weather conditions change for the worse rapidly or unexpectedly. This involves an assessment of each plant and its ability to survive and/or what level of protection it will require to survive the predicted weather.

Well, once the damage is done and assessed, there are some recovery strategies that you can implement for your ornamental garden. Having to buy new plants every year is expensive and not the best solution for most gardeners.

Here are a few tips and suggestions:

Plant damage sometimes shows immediate effects but often it is not shown until a month or more later — with a delayed decline and death. In the case of some perennials that have turned to mush, there is the dilemma of whether to cut off the dead portion of the plant which could act as an insulator during future freezes or conversely could possibly create a haven for disease organisms which could hurt the plant further. I suggest that as long as there might be future hard freezes (and this is guesswork), that the insulation barrier be left in place as disease organisms won’t be a problem at low temperatures, but remove it when temperature rise consistently above 40 degrees.

Don’t be in a rush to trim back damaged plants. If they are unacceptably unsightly, trim back to a point where at least 1” of dead branch is left intact, otherwise, living tissue will be exposed and further damaged, or budding will be stimulated only to be killed at the next freeze. Look for cracking bark, or other telltale signs of die back, or use the fingernail test, nicking the bark to expose cambium at intervals, looking for live tissue, to determine how far back damage has occurred. Often a plant which looks dead, isn’t and that won't be known until spring initiates new growth.

In certain plants, if the core hasn’t been frozen, the plant will recover, such as with palms, cycads, and agaves — whose growth is one dimensional or from a single source. Some plants will regenerate from root buds, such as yuccas, and many perennials. If after a month of warm spring weather, a plant doesn’t emerge, you can dig and examine the health of the roots — to tell whether they are alive or gone. In that case, trim off the dead roots or portion of the base and replant. Many plants are late to rise in spring such as Hamelia patens, so be patient.

If you are fortunate enough to have a greenhouse, cuttings of plants that can be potentially lost during a harsh winter period can be propagated.
Winter Plant Damage

in advance of winter, kept in the greenhouse and planted as replacement plants in spring. This is a particularly good strategy for hard to find plants which would be difficult to replace.

In the case of Agaves that may have turned to mush, examine closely the base and core of the plant and if still firm and alive, the plant will regenerate its form quickly in spring. So called “hardy” citrus may lose all their leaves but will regenerate them in spring. Oleander, pomegranate, and other semi-evergreen plants will likewise respond after spring pruning.

Remember to bring all container plants into a garage or similar protected place. Roots of plants in containers are exposed to rapid freezing more so than those in the ground where the soil absorbs and retains some heat. Only true Zone 8 hardy plants should be planted in containers if they can’t be moved.

The worst hit part in my garden this winter has been the cacti, agaves, and related plants. Accordingly, I have changed my gardening goals for the coming year. I am challenging myself to develop a cacti and succulent garden that will truly withstand mid-teens and Austin winter conditions without protection. That doesn’t mean I get rid of all those plants that were damaged this winter. They will be nurtured back to health and grown in containers so, in the future, they can be removed from the damaging elements as necessary. Slowly but surely, year-by-year, my garden is transitioning to a sustainable ornamental garden that will survive Central Texas extremes naturally.

This is Central Texas where environmental and climate extremes are commonplace. The argument for growing native and adaptive plants is based on this fact as these are proven survivors in this challenging environment. Consider transforming your garden more in this direction to avoid the agonies of plant damage and loss each winter. But most of all, don’t despair if your garden suffered considerable damage this winter. Everyone else is in the same boat as the winter of 2011 has been an out of the ordinary season. Life in the garden will return in miraculous ways — it always does.

A great article on the subject of freezes and frosts written by Skip Richter, Travis County AgriLife Extension Director also is very helpful in understanding the intricacies of winter damage to plants. Check it out at http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/travis/docs/FrostsandFreezes.pdf.

Used with permission from the Gardening In Central Texas blog www.centraltexasgardening.blogspot.com
Grasshoppers: Start Early in the Season for Better Control
by Wizzie Brown

Grasshoppers can be a common sight in most yards each year. They tend to feed on various plants and some year can occur in large numbers and lead to severe damage. So why am I writing about grasshoppers this early in the year when they won’t be doing much damage until later on? It’s best to start looking for grasshoppers now and managing them while they are still small and do not have fully developed wings.

Grasshoppers (Fig 1.) lay their eggs in the soil in groups of 20-100 eggs. Eggs can be laid in ditches, fence-rows and weedy areas. Eggs begin to hatch in April-May and continue hatching throughout June. Immature grasshoppers, or nymphs, resemble adults but do not have fully developed wings. It usually takes about 1-2 months for a grasshopper to reach adulthood.

Grasshoppers have natural enemies and many may succumb to things such as fungus, protozoa, nematodes and predators such as beetles, robber flies, birds and small mammals.

The protozoan, *Nosema locustae*, is sometimes incorporated into a bran-based bait for grasshoppers. The baits may kill some nymphs, but have little effect on adult populations. There is reduced egg-laying in adults, but the bait will not be helpful in areas that need immediate grasshopper control or there is high pressure of grasshoppers moving in from adjacent areas.

Plowing or hoeing areas before planting can help to unearth grasshopper eggs and reduce hatch rate. Controlling weeds in and around your property can help reduce food sources as well as egg laying sites.

Prized plants can be covered with row cover; make sure the cover is firmly attached to the ground. Residual pesticides may also be used for grasshopper control.

Refer to the following publication for a list of non-preferred food plants:
http://citybugs.tamu.edu/factsheets/landscape/lawns/ent-1005/
### Coming Events

#### Growing Citrus in Central Texas

*Thursday, March 3, 2011, 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.*

Carver Library  
1161 Angelina Street, Room 1  
Austin, Texas 78702

**OR**

*Saturday, March 5, 2011, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.*

West Rural Community Center  
8686 Highway 71 West, Building A  
Austin, Texas 78722

This is approximately 1 mile west of Hwy 290/71 “Y”. At stop light at Covered Bridge turn up the hill, past the fire station to the next building on the left which is Building A.

There is a new citrus disease which is present in Florida and California and is spreading across the U.S. The disease kills citrus plants in about 3 years! Learn how to take samples so an expert can determine if your citrus is infected. The class will also discuss the varieties of citrus which do well in Central Texas and how to grow and maintain citrus plants.

This free advanced education class will earn TCMGA members 3 hours of CEU toward recertification. Class is also open to the public so invite your spouse, fellow gardeners, neighbors and friends. Reservations not required. Just be sure to sign-in to obtain CEU credits.

#### Chickens in the Garden

*Saturday, March 12, 2011, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.*

Zilker Botanical Gardens  
2220 Barton Springs Road  
Austin, Texas 78746  
(512) 477-8672

Most any size garden can benefit from a few chickens. They root out persistent perennial weeds, eat insects, fertilize the soil, and provide eggs in the bargain! All it takes is a little planning and a small investment in fencing and shelter. Master Gardener Joy Williamson will explain how to select breeds, raise chicks, build and maintain a coop and how to protect these garden mascots from predators. Join us for this free seminar to explore the fascinating world of chickens in the garden!

This seminar is free and open to the public. It is presented by the Travis County Master Gardeners, a volunteer arm of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service in Travis County. For more information see www.tcmastergardeners.org or call the Master Gardener Public Gardening Help Desk at (512) 854-9600.

#### 5th Annual A Passion For Plants: An East Austin Garden Fair

*Saturday, March 19, 2011, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.*

New Covenant Fellowship of Austin Church  
1507 Wilshire Boulevard,  
Austin, Texas 78746

A Passion for Plants will be in a new location this year on the last weekend of Spring Break. The theme of our fifth annual fair is Edible Landscaping. This free public gardening event will feature hands-on demonstrations of how to dig a garden bed, harvest rain water, grow fruits and vegetables organically, start plants from cuttings and seeds, and how to cut back on chemicals that harm our environment and ourselves. Come for advice from our on-site experts to answer all of your gardening questions, for tips on living healthier and happier, and for fun educational activities for kids to get them out in nature in your own back yard!

Hosted by Texas AgriLife Extension Service, Travis County Master Gardeners Association, the Sustainable Food Center, and the Holistic Education and Health Network. For more information see www.tcmastergardeners.org or call the Master Gardener Public Gardening Help Desk at (512) 854-9600.
### Termite Training for Homeowners

**Wednesday, March 30, 2011, 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.**

Travis County AgriLife Extension Office
1600-B Smith Road,
Austin, Texas 78721
(512) 854-9600

There’s an old saying in the pest control industry ... “there are two types of homes in Texas — those with termites and those that will have them within 7 years.” Which category do you fit into?

This class will arm homeowners with information so they feel comfortable discussing management options for termites with pest professionals. Do you know how termites look for food? Can you tell the difference between ants and termites? Come to learn how to identify the types of termites found in Central Texas and their management options.

This seminar is free and open to the public. It is presented by the Travis County Master Gardeners, a volunteer arm of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service in Travis County. For more information see [www.tcmastergardeners.org](http://www.tcmastergardeners.org) or call the Master Gardener Public Gardening Help Desk at (512) 854-9600.

### Spring Vegetable Gardening

**Wednesday, March 30, 2011, 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.**

Old Quarry Branch Library
7051 Village Center Drive,
Austin, Texas 78731

Enjoy the pleasures of fresh homegrown vegetables. Imagine baskets of okra, tomatoes, squash and green beans from your own garden! Learn how to plant and maintain this garden from Master Gardener and Vegetable Specialist, Patty Leander.

Patty will share popular varieties for Central Texas, recommended planting dates and tips for organic gardening and insect control. This free seminar, packed with information and color photographs, will benefit both new and experienced gardeners, so don’t miss this great kick-off to spring gardening! Arrive early to ensure a seat as this is one of our most popular seminars.

This seminar is free and open to the public. It is presented by the Travis County Master Gardeners, a volunteer arm of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service in Travis County. For more information see [www.tcmastergardeners.org](http://www.tcmastergardeners.org) or call the Master Gardener Public Gardening Help Desk at (512) 854-9600.

### An Afternoon with Felder

**Wednesday, April 6, 2011, 2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. (maybe even to 4:00 p.m.)**

Austin Community College, South Campus,
1820 West Stassney Lane, Room 1130
Austin, Texas

Nearing capacity! Call Rosalie Russell to see if there are any seats left. You will laugh and learn as Felder Rushing discusses how to write books & articles, give presentations, talk on the radio and generally communicate about gardening. Rushing is the author or co-author of 15 gardening books and a former Extension Service urban horticulture specialist writing thousands of gardening columns, and has had hundreds of articles and photographs published. He has hosted a television program that was shown across the South, and appeared many times on other TV garden programs. Felder currently co-hosts a call-in garden program on NPR affiliate stations called The Gestalt Gardener.

Cost: $25/person received by April 1st. Class limited to 50. Checks payable to TCMGA and mailed to Rosalie Russell, 2401 Spring Creek Drive, Austin, TX 78704. Please write your e-mail address on check. You will be notified when your check arrives. Check must arrive on or before April 1st. Attendees will be e-mailed full details several days prior session.

Questions? e-mail: GISatHCCS@aol.com
What’s Bugging my Vegetables?

Saturday, April 9, 2011, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Homewood Heights Community Garden
2606 Sol Wilson Avenue, Austin, Texas 78702

Learn about the most common garden insects ... good and bad. Knowledge is power and you’ll walk away knowing you can identify the eggs, nymphs and adults. Discover Integrated Pest Management (IPM), an effective and environmentally sensitive approach to pest management that relies on a combination of common-sense practices. IPM programs use current, comprehensive information on the life cycles of pests and their interaction with the environment. This information, in combination with available pest control methods, is used to manage pest damage by the most economical means and with the least possible hazard to people, property, and the environment.

Park in the neighborhood. The garden is on the north side of street west of Sol Wilson/Ridgeway intersection. This seminar is free and open to the public. It is presented by the Travis County Master Gardeners, a volunteer arm of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service in Travis County. For more information see www.tcmastergardeners.org or call the Master Gardener Help Desk at (512) 854-9600.

Making Great Compost

Saturday, April 16, 2011, 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Spicewood Springs Branch Library
8637 Spicewood Springs Road, Austin, Texas 78759

Compost is organic waste matter decomposed and recycled as a fertilizer and soil amendment. Soils that include compost are responsible for healthier plants and can be used in all indoor and outdoor gardening. Composting yard wastes can reduce what goes to the local landfill by 30% or more! Get the scoop on what to use and how to make compost at this informative seminar led by Master Gardener, Richard Moline. We’ll provide you with reference material you can take home and use to get your garden growing!

This seminar is free and open to the public. It is presented by the Travis County Master Gardeners, a volunteer arm of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service in Travis County. For more information see www.tcmastergardeners.org or call the Master Gardener Help Desk at (512) 854-9600.

Funky Chicken Coop Tour

Saturday, April 23, 2011, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Throughout Austin, Texas

Come join us for the third annual Austin Texas Funky Chicken Coop Tour! Have you been thinking about keeping urban chickens? Do you need coop design ideas? Then this is the tour for you! Hey, this is even for those of you that already have backyard chickens and are thinking about changing your coop design (there’s always room for improvement, right?). Also, feel free to come peck (oops, meant pick ;-)) our brains on raising chickens.

Tour will go on rain or shine.

Where: All around Austin city limits. Carpooling or other green alternatives highly recommended!

This free event features coop design ideas and community fellowship.

For more details visit the http://fccooptour.blogspot.com website. Watch for a map closer to the tour on our website.
Deer populations in Central Texas are a growing problem as suburban neighborhoods sprawl into our natural areas. As deer grow accustomed to living around people, they do more damage to gardens and landscaping. In this seminar you will learn about deer behavior and how to manage them in your environment.

Master Gardener Sue Nazar will equip you with information about non-preferred plants, chemical repellants, scare techniques and devices to help you devise a strategy for your own property.

This seminar is free and open to the public. It is presented by the Travis County Master Gardeners, a volunteer arm of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service in Travis County. www.tcmastergardeners.org. For more information see www.tcmastergardeners.org or call the Master Gardener Help Desk at (512) 854-9600.

Discover the needs of your vegetables by observing the physical condition of the plant. Need water, has a disease, infested with pests? Many practical tips will be shared by Master Gardeners to improve plant health and vegetable production. Park at Nelson Field Stadium and enter the Reagan High School grounds from the St. Johns Avenue fence opening and proceed to the garden (near the Berkman and St. Johns Avenue side of campus).

This seminar is free and open to the public. It is presented by the Travis County Master Gardeners, a volunteer arm of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service in Travis County. For more information see www.tcmastergardeners.org or call the Master Gardener Help Desk at (512) 854-9600.

Excess stormwater carries urban landscape contaminants into storm drains and soil erosion causes sediments to accumulate in our water resources. Dr. Dotty Woodson, Water Resources Specialist with Texas Agrilife Extension, will tell us how to protect streams, rivers and lakes by building a rain garden.

These lovely gardens are attractive landscape features planted with perennial native plants designed to absorb stormwater which filters it through plant roots and soil microorganisms. Attend this free presentation and you’ll be ready to make your own beautiful solution.

This seminar is free and open to the public. It is presented by the Travis County Master Gardeners, a volunteer arm of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service in Travis County. www.tcmastergardeners.org. For more information see www.tcmastergardeners.org or call the Master Gardener Help Desk at (512) 854-9600.
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The End...

Time to Get Gardening!