The Compost Bin

May 2011

A Publication of the Travis County Master Gardeners - A volunteer program of Texas AgriLife Extension

Meteorologist
Bob Rose
on
Will it every rain again?
When?
Are we heading into another
super hot summer?

Stratocumulus perlucidus clouds
(photo by Lipton sale)

In this issue ...
In the Vegetable Garden
Spider ID
Help, I'm A Plant Nerd!
Winter Aftermath Surprises
Gardening with Bambi
Garden Plant Exchange
Drought-Resistant Garden Book
President's Message
and More!
Will it every rain again? When? Are we heading into another super hot summer? Gardeners are always concerned about the weather. Analyzing and predicting the weather is meteorologist Bob Rose’s job! Bob, the chief meteorologist at LCRA, will touch on the reasons for the unusual weather in Central Texas but will concentrate on the typical weather we experience including extremes we have experienced. He will present information about the climate and why it appears to be changing.

Mr. Rose graduated from Texas A&M in 1979 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Meteorology. Before Bob graduated, he was employed as Weekend Meteorologist, KBTX-TV, Bryan, Texas (ABC/CBS). He was responsible for the forecasting, preparation and presentation of 10 PM weekend weathercasts. In September 1980 he was promoted to Promotion Manager and Public Service Director at the station.

In Feb. 1988 Bob became Meteorologist, KVUE-TV (ABC), Austin, Texas. In this position he was responsible for morning and midday newscasts for 4 years. He was responsible for weekend newscasts for 3 years. Bob prepared a weekly astronomical report called Skywatch, and did occasional science and environmental reporting.

From Jan. 1995 to the present Bob Rose has been the Chief Meteorologist for the Lower Colorado River Authority. He is responsible for daily forecast of weather conditions affecting Lower Colorado River Basin and Electrical Service Area. He works with area emergency management officials along with city and state agencies. Each day he produces a written forecast and blog about Central Texas weather that appears in LCRA’s website and the Austin-American Statesman.

Bob’s professional memberships include the American Meteorological Society (TV Seal #501). He is past president of the Central Texas Chapter, American Meteorological Society. He also serves on the Board for Private Sector Meteorology with the American Meteorological Society.

Mr. Rose regularly contributes reports to the National Drought Monitor. He is a member of the Southern Climate Impacts Planning Program (SCIPP) as well as CoCoRaHS coordinator for Travis and Williamson County.

Master Gardener Meeting information:
Wednesday, May 4th, 2011 starting at 7 pm.
Zilker Botanical Garden
Hello Master Gardeners:
A Message From Your President

Who Has Seen The Wind?

Who has seen the wind?
Neither I nor you.
But when the leaves hang trembling,
The wind is passing through.

Who has seen the wind?
Neither you nor I.
But when the trees bow down their heads,
The wind is passing by.


We are in the middle of a bad nightmare, spring with no rain, high winds that should be contained in West Texas and the risk of wildfire outbreaks everywhere. Not an ideal spring, but here we are and here we onward garden!

I have an absolute plethora of bird nests. Baby birds hopping inside of bird houses, in my ‘Mrs. B.R. Cant’ rose, in my rose arbor and even one little momma bird patiently sitting on six tiny eggs in an abandoned pot inside my garden cottage. They are everywhere! Spring is such a joy when it comes to watching nature renew itself ... even if I am on constant alert watching the fragile nests swing back and forth in gusts of wind. Neither of us stop our pursuit, they with feeding their little ones or hanging on inside their nest of precious eggs and I with my hoe or pitch fork.

Tomatoes are beginning to produce little green ones. This year’s crop will come from ‘Black Cherry’, ‘Black Krim’, ‘Big Beef’, ‘Cherokee Purple’, ‘Crimson Carmello’, ‘Juliet’ and ‘Sun Gold’. Surely that will provide enough for the two of us. Basil is growing nearby in the new herb area ... if only Michael would let me buy a goat! Dinner could be served so easily!

I have squash, zucchini, chard, onions, cucumbers and loving to travel, have both Italian and French green beans. Let’s hope half of them make it to our dinner table. I’ll keep you posted on progress.

My bloomers are blooming and make me happy with their wild array of color. They are my love; my roses, iris, wildflowers, etc. Even with a bad back and a garden full of rocks, I push onward to create the garden that I envision. Perhaps it is the quest that keeps me going. Who knows! But a gardener understands and, with this in mind, I am very much looking forward to our upcoming Inside Austin Garden Tour on May 14th. If you have not yet volunteered and wish to do so, please contact Link Davidson as he is in charge of this year’s event “Water Wise Gardening.” A perfect theme for this year of no rain! Come out, tour the gardens and learn more about this important subject.

Happy windy gardening!
Carolyn Williams
And now we wait! The seed has been sown, the plants have been tended and now we wait for that first cucumber, potato, squash or tomato. Gamblers who planted in February or early March may have already gotten an early reward of a quick-maturing squash or cucumber.

I attended Link Davidson’s excellent presentation on Integrated Pest Management at the Homewood Heights Community Garden on April 9 and afterwards went on a search for squash vine borer eggs with several other attendees. We could not find a one, but we did find some beautiful summer squash, seeded in February, perfectly ripe for harvest. However, back in my own garden the squash vine borer moth has been very active as I am finding eggs on a few squash that I did not protect with row cover. The female moth is quick moving, but I am persevering and so far have been able to dispatch at least three moths with my low-tech, hard-working fly swatter. The leaf-footed bugs are gradually starting to appear, so I am on the lookout for the egg cases, hoping to eliminate several would-be adults at once.

If you planted potatoes in February your plants should be large and vigorous by now. Potatoes are edible at any stage of development so try digging a few new potatoes late in the month. Strawberries have probably seen their best days, so once your plants begin to wane it is time to pull them out. We tend to have better luck growing them as annuals from fall through spring than trying to nurse them through a hellacious summer.

Heat lovers like okra, sweet potatoes and Southern peas can be planted anytime this month, but the sooner they get established the better they will be able to withstand the heat that is to come.
It is critical to mulch everything growing in your garden to help conserve moisture and regulate soil temperature. Over the summer, the mulch will gradually break down and enrich the soil for future plantings. To keep vegetables growing vigorously fertilize lightly when the first fruit appear and again 3-4 weeks later. A general recommendation is 1 cup of organic fertilizer per 10’ of row. If you have a small garden with only a few plants, work in 1-2 tablespoons of fertilizer per plant.

This spring’s severe lack of rain has zapped some of the enjoyment from gardening, but this, too, shall pass. Isolated storms are predicted as I write, so perhaps relief is in sight. Consider a rain water collection system, no matter how small, and conserve water by using drip irrigation rather than overhead sprinklers. And remember to water the soil, not the plant.

Left: No others taste better than growing your own strawberries!
Right: One of the good guys — a lady bug larvae.
Below: Ripe tomatoes and cucumbers are on the way.
Photos by Bruce Leander.
Even though months have gone by, I still can’t say goodbye to some of the plants I lost during our nasty winter freeze and hope that a gardening miracle will happen and my Loquat, Bougainvilleas, Plumbago, Cycads will spring to life (even a hint of life would be a welcome sign). Below the sad remains of a young Loquat.

But to my surprise, it’s not all bad news in the garden after winter’s brutal blast!

Here are some of my winter surprises:

A bumper crop of self-seeded (left) edible purple lambsquarters/tree spinach (*Chenopodium giganteum*) and some (middle) variegated ornamental peppers and (right) native sunflowers (*Helianthus petiolaris*?).
And some perennials and shrubs that love to have cold winter temperatures are blooming much better than they ever have: Achillea ‘Peachy Seduction’ (left), Penstemon ‘Prairie Twilight’ (right) and a variegated rose of Sharon ‘Sugar Tip’ (Hibiscus syriacus ‘Sugar Tip’) (middle).

And lastly, the poor prickly pear cactus that collapsed and flopped all over the front walk from the excessive cold has recovered and sent out a ton of new pads (shown here with the ever reliable Jerusalem sage (Phlomis fruticosa) on the right). And blooming better than usual is a Verbena hybrid called ‘Princess Dark Lavender’ (right).
Creating a **Drought-Resistant Garden** in Central Texas

Newly updated by Travis County Master Gardener’s

Launching May 14th at the Inside Austin Gardens Tour. $24.95 (245 pages)

With contributions from Daphne Richards, Texas AgriLife Extension Service, County Extension Agent — Horticulture. Travis County Master Gardener’s: Vicki Blachman, Susan Decker, Cheryl Harrison, Sherill Nilson, Holly Plotner, Manda Rash, Steve Reynolds, Marian Stasney, Don Telge, Anne Van Nest, Becky Waak, and Carolyn Williams.

Photographs by Bob Beyer, Debbie Hyde, Bruce Leander, Patty Leander, Mike McGiffin, Marian Stasney, Anne Van Nest, and Carolyn Williams

Thanks to Vicki Blachman and JaNet Barkley Booher for their title suggestions.

Central Texas is a wonderful place to live and garden. It also can be a challenge to keep plants healthy and happy when the weather turns hot and dry.

The Travis County Master Gardeners Association has harvested a bounty of advice, facts, lists and tips specifically for gardeners who are dealing with the challenges of drought and dry weather. It is possible to create a beautiful garden while saving a precious natural resource — one drop of water at a time.

Filled with collective wisdom from local gardening experts, *Creating a Drought-Resistant Garden in Central Texas* is about surviving and thriving when Mother Nature brings dry weather. Included are ways to conserve water in the garden without sacrificing the entire area to a no-water “zero-scape” area of stone, desert cacti or sun-withered succulents. The principles and tips outlined in this book are important, not only for the drought-prone region of Central Texas, where outdoor water restrictions are ongoing, but also for anywhere gardeners want to be more water-conscious.

Creating a Drought-Resistant Garden in Central Texas includes:
- Planning and Design
- Improving the Health of Soil
- Selecting Appropriate Plants (with numerous plant lists)
- Creating Practical Lawn Areas
- Using Efficient Irrigation
- Applying Mulches
- Watering Appropriately
Help I’m a Plant Nerd!
by Felder Rushing

From the garden experience of Felder Rushing.

It hit me the other day and, going in to wash up, found a sprig of rosemary soaking in a water glass on the kitchen sink. I had slipped it into my shirt pocket a few evenings earlier during a “date” with daughter Zoe at an upscale restaurant, promising to root it for her when we got home. Somebody help me!

Have you ever bought plants you didn’t need, or really even want, but just couldn’t resist? I have set pots and even entire flats of flowers on the driveway, and watered them for weeks and months until they eventually just melted away, because there simply was no place to plant them.

I suppose outsiders could see our passion as tame when compared superficially with, say, indoor soccer (“dry hockey”) or Nascar racing. But I don’t have to explain to real gardeners how fast a heart rate can get from a few pulls on the starter rope on a recalcitrant gas engine, or how sweat drips from our eyebrows as we toss bulbs and mulch into freshly-prepared soil, or how itchy fire ant stings (and even poison ivy) can be, between toes and fingers. Or how our hearts sing when we discover a delicate detail, flavor, fragrance, or other bonus in a newfound plant.

And gardening is addictive. We could even compose a Gardeners Anonymous Twelve Step Program. I can hear it now: “Hi, my name is Felder, and I am a gardener...” (In unison, the other gardeners in the group reply “Welcome, Felder, we are glad you are here. Come back often.”)

“I gardened just this morning. (“Amen.”) Pulled a few weeds on the way down to pick up the morning paper, and before I knew it, found myself dividing daylilies and repainting a fencepost. Coming to this GA meeting, I found a mail order catalog under my car seat, and people behind me at the stoplight had to honk to get my attention back on the road.”

“I need help with my gardening. I can’t stop on my own. And I am sorry for my family that, even though I don’t own a bass boat or belong to a golf club, I did spend my last paycheck on shrubbery, a new greenhouse door, and a big bucket of Miracle Grow...”

Sound close to home? Here’s a simple test to see if you are a garden nerd:

- You grow ten or more different kinds of the same plant (rose, daylily, daffodil, iris, African violet, camellia, tomato, whatever), and know their names (extra points if they’re labeled).

- You subscribe to three or more garden magazines, and keep a small shovel in your car trunk. Turn your compost weekly. Buy bird seed by the fifty pound sack. Own a pair of Felco pruning shears (bonus points for the clip-on leather scabbard).

- Vegetables are growing in your flower beds. You mow around a weed because it has pretty flowers, or to save a place to hide Easter eggs later.

- Have you ever willingly taken a tour of a garden by flash-light? Double bonus points for luring guests outside after dark (“Hey, wanna see something really neat?”). Do we need to search your purse or camera case for purloined seeds, after a visit to a botanical garden?

- Extra points if your cuticles are dirty right now. And last, but not least, triple points of you would appreciate a special someone sending you a load of manure for an anniversary...

I’m not suggesting we gardeners should quit — though we all claim we can, any time. But maybe our motto should be Easy Grow It, or simply One Flower at A Time!

Thanks to Liz Caskey for the suggestion to reprint this article from Felder Rushing that was in the September 2008 Compost Bin.
Gardening with deer is a love/hate relationship. We love living among and seeing wildlife, but with a “stay out of my garden” rule. Why are deer such a problem to gardeners? Destruction of their natural habitat has led to their adaptation to our suburban environment. Vehicles do more to control deer population than natural predators. When overpopulation results, deer will eat anything when they are hungry enough. In addition, male deer antler rubbing damages and can kill young trees.

Understanding deer is part of the resolution to this problem. Their primary food is tender broadleaf plant leaves, twigs, and branches — but not grasses. They are territorial and have habitual traffic patterns that they follow within their area. The hungrier a deer gets, the more difficult it is to control. Summer and early fall tend to be a period of food shortages and deer are naturally curious to sample new plantings.

Some other things for the gardener to consider is that ornamental plants may lose their deer resistance characteristics through plant breeding. For example, the Lantana you buy at a nursery may be hybridized and not as resistant to deer as the smellier native Lantana. Sometimes new growth may be nipped but the rest of the plant untouched since they favor tender new growth. Deer exposure to human presence and their comfort level with being around humans makes it more difficult to ward them off. Never feed deer. Unestablished plants with tender growth pull up easily if nipped so may need temporary protection until the roots “dig in.” And did you know that deer are State of Texas property (TPWD)? As such, it is illegal to kill, trap and relocate or injure these animals without express permit from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept.

All this begs the question, “How do we manage deer”? There are four main methods.
1. Use of non-preferred landscape plants — the least expensive and most effective way.
2. Tall (8 ft.) physical barriers & fencing — the most expensive but an effective method.
3. Motion-activated scare devices. These are good investments and fairly effective.
4. Scent-based repellants. The most expensive and least effective way to repel deer since they require continuous reapplication.

Let’s first focus on the plants deer do not prefer. These have five characteristics: a strong, unpleasant odor; bitter, disagreeable taste; prickly, stiff-textured foliage; fuzzy (pubescent) foliage; have a milky sap which is caustic &/or sticky. Some examples follow but remember that this is just a very small sampling of deer-resistant plants.

Deer-resistant plants with unpleasant scents include: Rosemary, Mexican Oregano, Copper Canyon Daisy, Mexican Mint Marigold, Sanolina, Lantana, Wax Myrtle, Sumac, or any strong scented herbs.
Plants with unpleasant tastes include: Texas Mountain Laurel, Flame Acanthus, Thryallis, Blackfoot Daisy, Esperanza, Plumbago, Shrimp Plant, Texas Betony, Desert Willow, Rock Rose, Skullcap, Columbine, Coreopsis, Eleagnus, Mock Orange, Sage, and Flowering Senna.

Plants with prickly or tough foliage include: Agarita, Basket Grass, Fragrant Mimosa, Fan Palms, Cacti, Yucca, Pomegranate, Holly, Agave, and Sago Palm (really a Cycad).

Plants with fuzzy foliage include: Artemisia, Black-eyed Susan, Lamb’s Ear, Coneflower, Wooly Butterfly Bush, Wooly Stemodia, Texas Sage, and Germander.

Plants with sticky, caustic sap include: Oleander, Confederate Jasmine, Euphorbia family, and Arizona Cypress.
Gardening with Bambi

When looking at lists of deer-resistant plants, there are no guarantees that they are deer-proof — remember deer will eat anything if hungry enough. You should place wire fencing up to 8’ to protect young trees until they reach at least 6” diameter or put barriers around new plantings until established. Consider cost vs. benefit in the choice of the method you use. It all depends on your individual circumstances. Learn to live with and enjoy wildlife. The goal is to minimize damage, not eliminate it. Become familiar with deer population habits. Assess your needs for plant protection — have a plan.

Some good resources to help you garden with deer include:

1. The City of Austin “Grow Green” book, 52 pages, free at garden centers within Austin.

2. Grow Green Program: Deer Resistant Design Phamplet — free at garden centers within Austin or posted on the Grow Green website.

3. Website: City of Austin Grow Green Program — www.ci.austin.tx.us/growgreen

4. Texas Cooperative Extension Article “Gardening in Deer Country”

http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/travis/docs/gardening_in_deer_country.pdf

Enjoy our native wildlife and have a beautiful garden at the same time. It is possible!

Used with permission from the Gardening In Central Texas blog www.centraltexasgardening.blogspot.com

Garden to Garden Plant Exchange
Scheduled for May Meeting

I know it’s hot and dry, but it’s time to get ready for the plant exchange after the May meeting. And as you clean up your gardens for the spring, pot up those extra plants that would make your gardening friends happy. In addition, plan to bring those extras seeds, garden magazines, pots and other gardening supplies that you’d like to share. Don’t forget to label your plants and please, no muddy messes. Also, do plan to take home any of your plants or items that don’t find a home. In order to get a better selection of plants, prizes will once again be awarded for the most coveted plant and the best labeled plant! If you can help out, either before the meeting and/or after the exchange, please let me know, by emailing me at luciludog@austin.rr.com

Liz Caskey and Frankie Hart

Above: A bountiful array of blooms including poppies, larkspur and Louisiana Iris are sweet seasonal rewards in Carolyn’s garden.
Photos by Carolyn Williams.
Spider Identification

by Wizzie Brown

Spiders are arachnids and can be distinguished from insects by counting body regions and legs. Spiders have two body regions and eight legs whereas insects have three body regions and six legs.

All spiders have fangs and venom, but the majority of spider venom does not react with our body chemistry in a negative way. It is good to think of spiders as beneficial organisms that help reduce pest populations within the environment.

Here’s a breakdown of some common spiders that you may find in your backyard.

Wolf spiders (Fig. 1.) are large spiders with brown, black or grey coloring. These spiders often have stripes on the body. Wolf spiders are often found on the ground and are solitary spiders that prefer to hunt at night. Females carry the egg sac under the abdomen until the eggs hatch. Spiderlings climb on the mother’s abdomen for a short period after hatching from the egg. Webbing is spun to provide daytime shelter, not to capture prey.

Green lynx spiders (Fig. 2.) are large, bright green spiders with spines on their legs. Abdomens are sometimes an elongated oval shape. They are hunters that are found on shrubs and other low-lying vegetation. These spiders do not use a web to capture prey but will trail a dragline when jumping.
Spider Identification

Jumping spiders (Fig. 3.) come in a variety of sizes and colors. Many are stocky in build with bright contrasting colors. These spiders are daytime hunters with good eyesight. They will trail a dragline when jumping and may be seen dangling from the dragline when they miss their target.

Thomisid crab spiders (Fig. 4.) have a somewhat flattened shape and the front two pair of legs are elongated. The spider often holds the front two pairs of legs out and slightly raised, similar to the way a crab holds its claws (hence their name). Color can vary from drab colors to very bright colors. Most crab spiders do not rely on a web to capture prey. They are ambushers and will wait motionless on flowers for prey to come to them. Crab spiders can walk forwards, backwards or to the side with ease.

Orbweavers (Fig. 5.) come in a variety of sizes, colors and shapes. Orb-weaving spiders produce the well-known flat ornate web that comes to mind when someone says “spider web.” The web is well organized and often in a rough circular grid pattern. These spiders need upright structures—fences, trees, shrubs, etc. — to build their webs. Orbweavers have poor vision and rely on their web to capture prey.

Above Right: Jumping spider (figure 3)
Left: Thomisid crab spider (figure 4)
Below Right: Yellow garden spider (figure 5)
Spider Identification

Cobweb spiders (Fig. 6.) are small to medium sized and come in a variety of colors. These are often mistaken with some orbweavers, and often it’s best to look at the spider’s web to tell the difference between and orbweaver and cob web spider. Cobweb spiders create a web that appears messy and disorganized. The abdomen of cobweb spiders is usually larger and more spherical than orbweaver abdomens. These spiders are predators that use their web to capture prey.

Tarantulas (Fig. 7.) are very large, hairy spiders often more than 3 inches long. Texas tarantulas are usually brown or black in color. Tarantulas hide during the day under rocks, burrows or other sheltered areas and emerge at night to hunt. Webbing may be used to line the burrow.

Recluse spiders (Fig. 8.) are about the size of a quarter (including legs) and tan to dark brown in color. They have a violin or fiddle shaped marking on their back. The eye pattern is very distinct — three pairs of eyes in a semicircle at the front of the head. These spiders prefer dark, secluded areas and usually hide during the day and hunt at night.

To avoid being bitten by spiders while working in the garden, it is recommended that you wear gloves.
Coming Events

Gardening in Deer Country

Saturday, April 30, 2011, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.
Steiner Ranch Bella Mar Community Center
12401 Bella Mar Trail, Austin, Texas 78732

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.

Austin Community Garden Tour

Sunday, May 1, 2011, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Throughout Austin, Texas

Please join the Coalition of Austin Community Gardens and Sustainable Food Center for the Second Annual Austin Community Garden Tour, on May 1st. The Community Garden Tour is a free, open house-style tour providing the opportunity to visit each of these unique places, talk to the gardeners there, learn how to get involved, and maybe even start your own. We hope you’ll join us in celebration of these community spaces for locally grown (and self-grown!) food in Austin. A downloadable map of participating community gardens will be available here http://communitygardensaustin.org soon.

Close out the tour with a Panel and Potluck from 6 - 8:30 p.m. at 5604 Manor (home of the Workers Defense Project and Third Coast Activist Resource Center). Speakers will share information about the current landscape of community gardening in Austin. Bring a dish made with locally grown food! Space is limited, if you’d like to attend the Panel and Potluck, visit www.facebook.com/home.php#!/event.php?eid=170433056342051 to RSVP. For more information contact Sari Albornoz at sari@sustainablefoodcenter.org or call 236-0074.

Inside Austin Gardens Tour

Saturday, May 14, 2011, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Throughout Austin, Texas

The Travis County Master Gardeners Association, in cooperation with the Texas AgriLife Extension Service of Travis County, will host the Inside Austin Gardens Tour 2011 on Saturday, May 14, 2011, from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. This year, the tour focuses on water-wise gardening. Gardening through a Central Texas summer can be trying. At the same time, escalating water rates and mandatory restrictions have made a water-sapping plant palette or a grass lawn a luxury or an impossibility for many. Increasingly, Central Texas gardeners are turning to water-wise techniques, native and adapted plant selections, and various principles of xeriscaping. The Inside Austin Gardens Tour 2011 will include gardens that feature rain-water collection systems, drip irrigation, xeric and native plant selections, rain gardens, shade gardens, and water-conserving practices. Each garden will feature educational sessions throughout the day.

Tickets can be purchased at each garden on the event date at $10 for the entire tour ticket or $5 for a single garden entry. Please, no dogs. Consult www.tcmastergardeners.org/what/gardentour.html for information. Save the date for a day-long look at what other gardeners are doing to weather the heat and conserve water. You’ll be glad you did.
### Coming Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How To Read a Plant</th>
<th>Propagate Your Own Plants</th>
<th>Plant Propagation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Saturday, May 21, 2011, 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.</strong>&lt;br&gt;Reagan Community Garden (at Reagan High School)&lt;br&gt;7104 Berkman Drive,&lt;br&gt;Austin, Texas 78752</td>
<td><strong>May 21, 2011, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.</strong>&lt;br&gt;Sunset Valley City Hall&lt;br&gt;3205 Jones Rd.,&lt;br&gt;Sunset Valley TX 78745</td>
<td><strong>Friday, June 3, 2011, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.</strong>&lt;br&gt;Travis County AgriLife Extension Office&lt;br&gt;1600-B Smith Rd.,&lt;br&gt;Austin, Texas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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](http://www.tcmastergardeners.org) or call the Master Gardener Help Desk at (512) 854-9600.

Learning how to propagate from existing plants is a great way to fill your garden or pass along favorites to your friends. Join Master Gardeners Tommie Clayton and Susan Jung who will teach you how to make cuttings and divisions and successful strategies for starting plants from seed. You’ll also get tips on how to transplant and care for your new plants to get them off to a good start when placed 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. [www.tcmastergardeners.org](http://www.tcmastergardeners.org)

Plants have developed many methods to ensure survival. Learn propagation techniques which take advantage of some of these methods to create multiple plants from a single plant. Discover the importance of the propagation media, moisture, light, humidity, temperature, rooting hormones which ensure success. Examples of propagation by seeds, leaf and stem cuttings will be covered.

This free seminar 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.
Rain Gardens

Saturday, June 18, 2011, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Zilker Botanical Garden

2220 Barton Springs Road,
Austin, Texas 78746

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.

The Joys of Container Gardening

Friday, July 15, 2011, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Texas AgriLife Extension Office,

1600-B Smith Rd,
Austin TX

Blooming flowers and vegetables can thrive in a container! This gardening method is especially useful if space is limited. Containers may also serve as accent points on the patio or in the garden. Learn how to select a container and the right soil, discover ideal container plants, and witness arranging techniques you can replicate to create your own mini-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 Help Desk at (512)854-9600.
TRAVIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION
2011 EXECUTIVE BOARD

Carolyn Williams, President
Manda Rash, Immediate Past President
Rosalie Russell, Vice President for Programs
Cher Groody, Vice President for Education
Margarine Beaman, Volunteer Coordinator for Projects
Richard Moline, Co-Volunteer Coordinator for Trainees
Pat Mokry, Co-Volunteer Coordinator for Trainees
Susan Jung, Secretary
Mary Lou Bell, Co-Treasurer
Ferne Mizell, Co-Treasurer
Barb Powell, Membership Director
Dorothy Akin, Greenhouse Manager
Chris Giaraffa, Greenhouse Manager
Vicki Olson, Greenhouse Manager
Joe Posern, Austin Area Garden Council Representative
Jackie Johnson, State Council Representative
Tommie Clayton, State Council Representative
Vacant, Director of Publications

Past Presidents (Non-voting):
Bill Baldwin
Bill Boytim
Susan Cashin
Tommie Clayton
Susan Decker
Don Freeman
Manda Rash
Peggy Stewart
Becky Waak
Will Walker

Ex Officio Member of the Board (Non-voting):
Texas AgriLife Extension Travis County Horticulture Agent
Daphne Richards
1600-B Smith Road, Austin, Texas 78721
512-854-9600  drichards@ag.tamu.edu
This issue of the Compost Bin has been published thanks to the contributions of the following Travis County Master Gardeners and Wizzie Brown — Texas AgriLife Extension:

Contributing Writers: Bob Beyer
Liz Caskey
Frankie Hart
Patty Leander
Rosalie Russell
Anne Van Nest
Carolyn Williams

Editor and Layout: Anne Van Nest

Webmaster: Paula Middleton

© 2011 Travis County Master Gardeners Association
512-854-9600

Visit the websites: www.tcmastergardeners.org and http://travis-tx.tamu.edu

The End...

Time for a Rain Dance!