

Urban Dirt

Gardening Events and Information for Texans

Double duty plants

By Terri Simon, Master Gardener

We use different plants and trees for ornamental landscaping, for cooking and as crops, but sometimes we forget or overlook the possibilities that those plants can have other purposes as well. Take corn for example. It feeds us, it feeds livestock; it is also processed and used in a variety of other products. Fuel, oil, industrial and beverage alcohol, sweeteners and starch are all by-products. Then there's bamboo. We may grow it for hedges or for its ornamental value, but bamboo can be turned into many other products, including art forms. In China and Asia it's being used to build roads. Some cultures believe it has medicinal value and bamboo shoots



Bamboo artwork

Photo courtesy of kiarts.org

can feed people and animals. Kitchen utensils, furniture, beer and even diapers can all be made from bamboo. Plants are a renewable resource and by using them in different ways we can have eco-friendly products while getting the most out of our landscape, gardens and fields.

There are many alternative uses for the plants we grow. They can provide us with fiber for rope, cloth, and paper. Some wax-bearing plants have a wax that can be refined. Early Americans used wax myrtle (also called Southern bayberry) trees to make candles and soaps. Fiber plants, vegetable oil and soap plants are other types of vegetation used to make everyday products. Hops are an example of a fiber plant. It is used to flavor beer. Indian hemp is a herbaceous perennial found here in North America that can produce a

fiber used for garden nets, twine and sails. Did I mention the soap plants? Some plants produce saponins, which can be turned into soap. The soap lily in California can be used to make soap and the bulb can also be eaten. Believe it or not, yucca plants have a variety of uses in addition to landscaping. They can be eaten, the fibers can be used to make rope and their leaves can be woven into baskets or used as brooms. Vegetable oils can be made from many plants. There are three types of oils: drying, non-drying and semi-drying. Drying oils become solid quickly and can be used in varnishes and paints. An example of this is linseed oil. Non-drying oils remain liquid longer and are ideal for lubricants. Semi-drying oils fall in the middle of drying and non-drying. Most oil seed crops are annuals. Sunflower, safflower, rape, linseed and soya plants are example of oil seed crops.

Some plants are used for clothing. There are even plants with seeds that can be used as buttons. Woad is an example of a plant that produces a beautiful blue dye. When the dark blue-green woad leaves are processed, the end result is an indigo blue dye. It was used for thousands of years in Europe and the Middle East. The Egyptians used it and woad dyed cloth has been found wrapped around mummies



Wool dyed with woad

Photo courtesy of Mike Roberts

Finally, plants have also been used for ceremonial and religious uses. What would Christmas be like without Christmas trees?

cont'd on pg. 5



Upcoming Events	2
Plant of the Month	3
Herb of the Month.....	4
Mexican Mint Marigold.....	5
Are You Wearing Bamboo?	6
Landscapes for Pollinators	8
Genoa Friendship Gardens - Open Garden Day	9
Bear Creek Extension - Open Garden Day	10
Garden Tools	11



Upcoming Events

July 2017

Green Thumb Gardening Series

Raised Beds, Drip Irrigation & Rain Barrels

July 13, Barbara Bush Library, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

July 18, Spring Branch Memorial Library, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

July 15, Maude Smith Marks Library, 10:00 - noon

July 20, Freeman Branch Library, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Educational Program

July 13, 10:00 - 11:30 a.m., *Tomato Culture*, by Lawrence Gibson, Retired Liberty and Harris County Master Gardener. Genoa Friendship Garden Education Building, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Rd

Open Garden Day: *Meet the Master Gardeners!*

July 3, 17, 8:30-11:00 a.m., Genoa Friendship Garden, Plants for sale in the Greenhouse. 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Rd. 77034

July 25, Workshops & children's activities, *Raised Beds, Drip Irrigation & Rain Barrels*, Bear Creek Gardens/Extension, 3033 Bear Creek Drive, Houston, 77084

August 2017

Green Thumb Gardening Series: *Plant advice and tips from the Master Gardeners*

Fall Vegetables

Aug. 10, Barbara Bush Library, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Aug. 15, Spring Branch Memorial Library, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Aug. 17, Freeman Branch Library, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Aug. 19, Maude Smith Marks Library, 10:00 - noon.

Educational Program

Aug. 10, 10:00 - 11:30 a.m., *Attracting Blue Birds* by Linda Crumb
Genoa Friendship Garden Education Building, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Rd., Houston, 77034

Open Garden Day: *Meet the Master Gardeners!*

Aug. 7, 21, 8:30 -11a.m., Genoa Friendship Garden, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Rd., Houston, 77034

Aug. 27, Workshops & children's activities, *Fall Vegetables*, 10:00 - 10:45 a.m. Bear Creek Gardens/Extension, 3033 Bear Creek Drive, Houston, 77084

Have Garden Questions?

Master Gardener Help Line - 713.274.0950

9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., Mon.-Fri.

Email your questions to: phonehcmga@gmail.com

You can also drop in, or mail us at 3033 Bear Creek Dr., Houston, TX 77084

Herb of the Month - Marigold (*Calendula officinalis*)

By Karen McGowan, Master Gardener

Modernly, herbs used chiefly for their ornamentation are sometimes all-but-forgotten for their ancient medicinal and/or culinary purposes. There are quite a few garden beauties that first arose to landscape prominence for their practical use, rather than by way of their colorful glory. The popping, bright marigold is a perfect case in point. There are actually two genres of marigold: marigold of the *Tagetes* genus is that which is now most often planted in the garden to add color, repel bugs, and provide a pleasant fragrance, while marigolds of the *Calendula* genus are utilized for their many anti-inflammatory, antispasmodic and antifungal compounds. The second genus, *Calendula*, is the focus of this month's article and is sometimes referred to as "pot marigold".

Today grown on every continent, marigolds are native to Egypt along with parts of the Mediterranean and, according to several sources, date back to the 11th and 12th centuries. As were many plants originating within these regions, marigold was first introduced to other parts of the world by the Romans, who dually



transported their Egyptian use as a "rejuvenative herb". Medicinally, marigolds have documented, historic usage by a wide range of peoples: from Persians and Ancient Greeks to the Aztecs of Mexico, where

marigold petals currently remain in use in Day of the Dead celebrations. Elsewhere today, they remain in festival use throughout eastern Europe. Here in the Northern Hemisphere, marigolds are in



bloom and may be used in the warmer months of the year, generally May through September. Propagation is by seed.

Marigolds' medicinal applications were and remain diverse. In traditional and homoeopathic medicine, *C. officinalis* has been used for poor eyesight, menstrual irregularities, varicose veins, hemorrhoids and duodenal ulcers. In the Middle Ages, Calendula flowers were for liver obstructions, snake bites and to strengthen the heart. Marigold was utilized in the 18th century as a remedy for headache, jaundice and red eyes. The plant was employed by Civil War physicians to treat wounds on the battlefield, and as a remedy for measles, smallpox and jaundice.

We've taken a mini-tour of the international history of *C. officinalis*, and now let's talk about how it applies to us with a recipe for today; but first, I will add in a bit of my own history. Several years ago in my home state of Louisiana, I was invited by a local college to teach a class on "An Ayurvedic Approach to Eating". Unaware of the extensive research that lay ahead, I agreed, then

cont'd on pg. 7

Citations:

Arora D, Rani A, Sharma A. A review on phytochemistry and ethnopharmacological aspects of genus *Calendula*.

Phcog Rev [serial online] 2013 [cited 2017 Jun 4];7:179-87. Available from:

<http://www.phcogrev.com/text.asp?2013/7/14/179/120520>

<https://draxe.com/marigolds/>

<http://www.gardening.cornell.edu/homegardening/sceneff01.html>

<http://www.cloverleaffarmherbs.com/calendula/>

<http://www.rd.com/health/conditions/medicinal-herbs/>

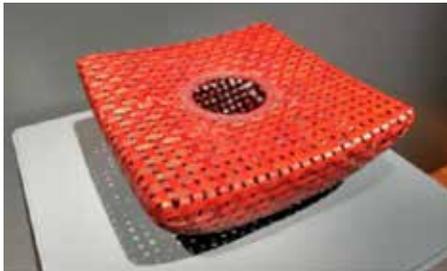
<http://www.offthegridnews.com/alternative-health/medicinal-uses-of-marigolds/>

<https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2010/07/recipe-quick-pickled-cucumbers-with-marigolds/59945/>

Plant of the Month - Bamboo (*Bambusoideae*)

By Beth Braun, Master Gardener

These two pieces are part of the exquisite exhibit, Modern Twist: Contemporary Japanese Bamboo Art, at Asia Society Texas Center through July 30. Quoting from the exhibit notes, “Bamboo is characterized by strength, flexibility, and lightness—bending, not breaking, with strong winds, while enduring harsh winters.”



Bamboo art Photos courtesy of Asia Society Texas Center



ing, not breaking, with strong winds, while enduring harsh winters.”

The Asia Society building in Houston’s museum district is worth seeing in and of itself. Designed by Japanese architect Yoshio Taniguchi, the clean design, beautiful materials, and exceptional workmanship create a serene

space for events and exhibits such as this one, representing 16 artists who have revived and reinterpreted a traditional art form.

<http://asiasociety.org/texas/exhibitions/modern-twist-contemporary-japanese-bamboo-art>

Bamboo is a grass in the family Poaceae. Incredibly, certain species of bamboo can grow 3 feet in a 24-hour period, making it a champion among renewable resources. It has a long and important history of economic and cultural significance in Asia as a source of food (shoots, pith, and sap), building materials, and raw product. It withstands compression better than wood, brick, or concrete, and its tensile strength rivals that of steel.

We’ve probably all seen videos of adorable Giant pandas eating soft bamboo shoots, stems, and leaves. The Red panda of Nepal, Bamboo lemurs of Madagascar, African Mountain gorillas, chimpanzees and elephants also rely on bamboo as a food source.

Here in the U.S., bamboo is a popular flooring product and is used in the manufacture of fabrics, pillows and cushions, kitchen utensils, drawer organizers, furniture, decorative objects, fishing rods and more. Bamboo bicycle, anyone?

Traditional cultures have used bamboo to make weapons and percussion and wind instruments. Bamboo wind chimes create a quiet clatter when a breeze stirs them, while the low-pitched hollow sound of Giant bamboo bumping each other as they sway in the wind is almost mystical. There’s a small water feature at the Japanese Garden in Hermann Park where a bamboo shaft seesaws as it fills with water, tips over and empties with a pleasant ‘clunk’, and then pops up again to be refilled.

Bamboos have jointed stems called culms that emerge from the ground at their full diameter, and grow to their full height in a single growing season



of three to four months. The culms gradually harden during the next few years, and are ready to be harvested for use as construction material in three to seven years.

You may have heard the warning to plant “clumping” bamboo, and not the “running” bamboo. As someone who has tackled a stand of clumping bamboo, I would warn you to think twice about planting it at all. Even though it’s a slow grower, an established clump is hard to whittle down. As to the running bamboo, I have heard of runners getting past 8 foot deep barriers. Perhaps you have your own glory or horror story involving bamboo.

How about Lucky bamboo, so readily available in grocery and big box stores? This ornamental plant is actually a totally unrelated member of the lily family, but you may be happier in the long run to settle for this non-bamboo as an indoor container plant.

If this column has sparked your interest, here’s a fun thing to do: Search the word “bamboo” in Amazon, YouTube, Wikipedia or your favorite search engine and see the amazing range of references and products that come up. Amazon even subdivides search results into categories because of the sheer volume of products related to bamboo. As I write, I’m listening to a 3-hour recording of relaxing bamboo flute music on YouTube.

Mexican Mint Marigold

By Terri Simon, Master Gardener

It's more than just another pretty face. Mexican mint marigold, *Tagetes lucida*, a native of Central and South America, has been used for more than a thousand years. In addition to its ornamental use in the landscape, the perennial has been used as an herb, a tea and a medicine. The perennial was used in a variety of ways by the Aztecs. A strong tea brewed from the leaves provided stamina to long distance runners. The leaves were also used in *chocolatl*, the cocoa drink favored by the Aztecs. In different parts of Mexico and the southern U.S., it has been used as a cure-all for a variety of ailments. The dried plant has been used as incense and the Huichol people mixed it with tobacco to smoke. The yellow flowers are edible and can also be used to make a yellow dye. It has been placed on the graves of family members during the *Dia del Muerte* holiday (Day of the Dead). Relatives believe their deceased loved ones will be attracted to their alters by its vibrant colors and scent.



Mexican Mint Marigold

Photo by Terri Simon

One of the more common uses is as a substitute for tarragon. It has several common names: Mexican tarragon, Texas tarragon, and Spanish tarragon. The plant resembles marigolds and its leaves have an anise or licorice scent. It blooms from midsummer to late fall and migrating butterflies will visit while passing through. It is heat tolerant and somewhat drought tolerant, but it does appreciate weekly deep watering. Mexican mint marigold likes full sun and will grow in poor soil but it requires good drainage. The compact plant will eventually grow about 18 inches wide and one to three feet tall. I bought this plant because a relative of mine stopped to admire it at a nursery one day. She told me her mother always had it growing at the house and she frequently used it to make a tea if someone was sick. I bought two plants that day. One for her and one for me. I have enjoyed it ever since. Try the recipe below if you want to explore another option for your Mexican mint marigold.

Mexican Mint Marigold Vinaigrette

- 2/3 cup extra virgin olive oil.
- 1/3 cup light sesame oil or grape seed oil.
- 1 tablespoon white wine vinegar.
- 2 tablespoons Mexican Mint Marigold leaves and flower petals, finely chopped.
- 4 tablespoons chopped parsley.
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard.
- 1 teaspoon honey.
- Salt and Pepper to taste.

Double duty plants, cont'd from pg. 1

Palm leaves are used for Palm Sunday. Germanic tribe rituals included oak trees and in the far east the Bo tree is sacred to Buddhists. Here in North America the Aztecs used Mexican mint marigold to make incense for their religious ceremonies and today Mexicans use it to celebrate *el Dia del Muerte* (day of the dead).

As we research our history and develop new techniques and technologies, more uses will be made of plants. We will increase our knowledge and that will enable us to reach the full potential of our green friends.



Photo courtesy of experiencemayahuel.com



Are you wearing bamboo?

Alternative uses for plant materials that may surprise you

By Becky Lowicki, Master Gardener

From fitness apparel to casual wear, chances are the clothing you're wearing might be made of bamboo, a fast-growing, long-term sustainable resource known for its soft texture that is often seen as an economic alternative to cotton and other materials in the fashion industry.

Categorized as a grass with an aggressive root network, bamboo has been known to grow more than a yard per day and does not need to be replanted. It's also hypoallergenic for people that struggle with irritation by cotton or hemp, needs little ironing and has a built-in antibacterial within its composition that minimizes microbes that cause odor.

Beyond green gardening, there are many common alternative uses for plants in everyday scenarios from construction materials to home remedy cleaners and more.

Here are a few top categories to consider of how you can repurpose your plants in and around your home:

Fibers

Plant fibers can be spun into filaments, threads and rope to make paper, cords, sewing material, baskets, brushes, brooms, mats and bedding, along with construction materials used in roofing and caulk. Fibers are sourced from the plants stems such as flax, hemp and jute, as well as the leaves of cattail, agave and yucca.



Bamboo towels

Dyes

Since the beginning of time, plants have been used for the natural dyes, resulting in vivid colors with long-lasting properties. Sumac (*Rhus* spp.) and walnut (*Juglans* spp.) are native plant examples of direct dyes. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service, because these species are high in tannic acid, they do not require additional substances to be added for the dye to attach to fibers and form a durable bond.

Top photo courtesy of USDA Forest Service

Oils

About 70% of the global production of plant oil comes from four plant species: soybeans, palm, rape and the sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*), the only one which originates in North America, according to the USDA.

Essential oils comprise a large portion of the fragrance and flavorings market including the following families:

- Carrots (anise, dill, angelica)
- Ginger (cardamom, ginger)
- Laurel (cinnamon, camphor)
- Mint (peppermint, rosemary, thyme)
- Myrtle (clove, allspice)
- Orchid (vanilla)



Mountain monardella (Monardella odoratissima) is a wonderful aromatic member of the mint family.

The process of extracting oils from plants for home use, such as lemon for cooking, rosemary oil for your hair and scalp, as well as a multitude of other uses, is available online and in health and wellness resources.

Soaps and Cosmetics

Handmade soaps are often made with fats, such as oil with lye. Oils from tallow as well as palms, such as African palm and coconut palm, provide plant oils that often dissolve very quickly and produce significant lather.

According to the nonprofit Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI) based in the U.K. at the Royal Botanic Gardens (Kew), one of the oldest and best known plant oils is derived from lavender, the scientific name of which *Lavandula* is derived from the Latin 'lavare,' meaning to wash, after the widespread Roman practice of throwing lavender into their baths.

Cleaning agents

Lemon juice is often cited as a wonder cleaner when mixed with water to remove underarm stains and also brighten white tennis shoes. When mixed with cream of tartar to form a paste, it becomes a polish for brass, aluminum and stainless steel.

Natural Insecticides

One of the most successfully used plant products is the powder from pyrethrum flowers (*Chrysanthemum cinerariaefolium*),

cont'd on pg. 7

Are you wearing bamboo, cont'd from pg. 6

according to the BGCI. Pyrethroids act as insecticides, killing insects effectively before decomposing into harmless products.

Neem, another naturally occurring pesticide, originates in seeds from the neem tree, *Azadirachta indica*, a South Asian and Indian plant common as an ornamental shade tree. It is yellow to brown in color and has a bitter taste and a garlic/sulfur smell. It has been used widely as a natural approach to controlling pests and diseases.

From consumer products to improving air quality, plants are intricately woven into the fabric of our everyday lives in more ways than we even realize. Explore new ways you might use plant materials at the following reference sites/links used for this article:

USDA Forest Service -- Ethnobotany

Botanic Gardens Conservation International

Plants for a Future.

Herb of the Month - Marigold, cont'd from pg. 3

spent the months leading up to the fall session in preparation by scouring public and private library networks, book stores, and the Internet. I spoke to Ayurvedic experts and physicians from this Indian school of medicine, from India to Colorado. The single most impactful piece of information gleaned from this experience, and what I strive to continue to pass along today, is that food is in fact medicine. With that, probably the most immediate, widely available method through which to access significant health benefits from food is by the daily utilization of herbs in food preparation; whether for the purpose of an antioxidant (also known as cancer fighters), an anti-inflammatory agent, or as a digestive aid – to name a handful of medicinal usages.

Helping to substantiate this claim, according to *Pharmacognosy Review*, more than 200 different commercial and medical formulations now contain concentrated calendula marigold. Due to their antioxidant properties, uses for marigold include skin treatments, digestive-soothing teas, immune boosting aids, and topical salves for skin wounds, burns, and rashes. With internal use in mind, try this simple recipe from *The Atlantic*.

Quick Pickled Cucumbers with Marigold

Serves 2

1 English cucumber, peeled and sliced

1 teaspoon salt

1 marigold head, pulled and trimmed

1/2 green onion, thinly sliced

1/4 cup white vinegar

2 tablespoons olive oil

Slice the cucumber, add the salt, and refrigerate for a half hour. Drain the excess liquid from the cucumbers. Add all the ingredients and serve.

Note: Because of the industrial growing process, not all “edible” flowers are actually edible. Be sure to use untreated, pesticide-free marigolds that are totally food safe.

Landscapes for pollinators

By Betty Bailey, Master Gardener

In case you missed last month's Pollinator issue, here's another article with great tips for creating the perfect landscape for pollinators.

Bees and other pollinators fly from plant to plant in a landscape designed for pollinators. If bees smile, they will as they buzz around in yards full of diversity of plant life.

Welcome pollinators by filling your yard with a variety of plants and a mix of colors like the picture below.



Pollinators are drawn to color and scent. Yards with beebalm, African blue basil, milkweed, cornflower, lantana, and zinnias, just to name a few of their favorites, will draw them like a flashing sign to your yard.



We've heard the expression "The Bee's Knees". It was often used in the 1920's to mean something was impressive, good, or cool. Why knees on a bee? Because the knees of the bee are where they carry pollen in the midsegments of their legs. Some of that pollen

is for them and some is for our benefit, as they spread pollen from plant to plant. Bees are a key link in our food chain and the most important, prolific pollinator.

In yards full of herbs, flowers, vines, and blooming trees, bees and other pollinators flourish. Butterflies, hummingbirds, beetles, wasps, and moths are all after the pollen that is their breakfast, lunch, and dinner. They provide the perfect symbiotic relationship by spreading pollen across fruits, vegetables, and nuts. Nuts? Sure, think about the almonds we enjoy along with apples, squash, lemons, limes, blueberries, and dozens of your favorite foods. Consider planting vegetables in flower beds to create an edible landscape.

Encourage pollinators by designing landscapes offering both a tranquil and enjoyable habitat for people and opportunities to gather pollen. Some tips:

- Plant a variety of flowers, herbs, and flowering trees. If you plant them the pollinators will come. African blue basil attracts

so many bees you may not be able to pick any basil. Trees also offer a home during winter and give shelter year-round.

- Plant native superstar plants known to thrive in our Texas climate.
- Have plantings and perennials that bloom across multiple seasons so pollen is readily available across seasons. This month is a good time to plant.
- Place water sources, such as a fountain or bird bath, which are clean and chemical free to help pollinators thrive.
- Pollinators have preferences for color and scents that attract them. For example, butterflies like red flowers. Hummingbirds flock to reds and oranges. Watch them zoom around and collect nectar from Bottlebrush flowers. Bees enjoy purple, yellow and white flowers.



Landscapes that are pollinator friendly are like an ongoing movie. The Monarch caterpillar in the picture above is a long caterpillar



that transforms into a butterfly. Color rules with the plants and the pollinators.

Food for both pollinators and people are a partnership for enjoyment, the environment and sustenance. We have a perfect, mutual connection with

pollinators in our landscape. This summer salad recipe includes ingredients of mostly fruits and honey. The dressing is made of citrus juice, mustard and honey which is placed on top of melon and cucumbers.



References:

Native Plant Society of Texas, February 22, 2014, Bill Hopkins
Pollinatorgardens.org, January 2016, Annie White; Houzz.com., California Fusion Award 2009, David Thorne

Open Garden Days at Genoa Friendship Gardens



The Orchard



The Water Garden



The Greenhouse

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and Harris County Master Gardeners invite you to join us

Open Garden Days

on the 3rd Monday of every month, 8:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m., January through December, and the 1st Monday of every month, June through August.

Admission to the Exhibit Gardens is free, and register at the Welcome Table to receive additional monthly notices for children and family events.

The Genoa Friendship Gardens

is located at

1202 Genoa Red Bluff Road

Houston, Texas 77034

Email: phoneHCMGA@gmail.com **Phone:** 713.274.0950

To schedule a special event for your garden club, school or professional organization please contact us to make your arrangements.

- Tour the variety of exhibits to inspire you with vegetable, perennial, rose, tropical and native gardens.
- Meet and talk with a Master Gardener about planting citrus, fruit or berries for your home orchard.
- Contemplate the joy in the Serenity Garden and catch a view of the Water Garden.
- Don't leave the GFG until you have shopped the Greenhouse where seasonal herbs, vegetables and perennials are available for bargain prices until September.

2017 Monthly Open Garden Days & Special Events

January 16	Open Garden Day	June 5 & 19	Open Garden Day
February 18	Fruit Tree & Tomato Sale	July 3 & 17	Open Garden Day
February 20	Open Garden Day	August 7 & 21	Open Garden Day
March 18	Perennial, Herb & Pepper Sale	September 18	Open Garden Day
March 20	Open Garden Day	October 16	Open Garden Day
April 17	Open Garden Day	October TBD	Family Fun Day
May 15	Open Garden Day	November 20	Open Garden Day



Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and the Harris County Master Gardeners invite you to join us for the educational and enjoyable:

Open Garden Days

On the 4th Tuesday of every month from January, 2017 through October, 2017.
The event is FREE. However, please register in the lobby when you arrive.

We are located at: 3033 Bear Creek Drive, Houston, TX 77084

Email: ogd.harrishort@gmail.com Phone: 281-855-5600

Like us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/HarrisCountyMasterGardeners/>

From 9:00 to 11:30 you are welcome to wander around the grounds and to visit with the Master Gardeners as they work in the gardens.

From 10:00 to 11:00 workshops and activities adapted for all ages are held.

Workshop for adults and older teens will include a hands-on gardening experience related to the Green Thumb Lecture topics listed below.

Activities for 7 year olds to younger teens will include hands-on gardening and/or a project with a nature theme. A parent or responsible adult must be on the premises, and is welcome to attend the adult workshop.

Pre-school to 6 year olds and their parents can share a hands-on gardening and / or a nature theme craft activity.

If you wish to participate in the workshop / activity session from 10:00 to 11:00 AM, please RSVP to the email or telephone number above by the Sunday before the event, and include the ages of children attending with you. We want to have enough supplies for everyone.

Monthly 2017 Green Thumb topics and the Open Garden Day dates:

January 24 – Soils and Compost

February 28 – Spring Vegetable Gardening

March 28 – Roses: Planting, Growing & Upkeep

April 25 – Herbs

May 23 – Insects in the Garden

June 27 – Propagation and Seed Saving

July 25 – Raised Beds, Drip Irrigation & Rain Barrels

August 22 – Fall Vegetables

Sept. 26 – Gardening with Children and Grandchildren

Oct. 24 – Trees: Planting and Care (includes fruit trees)

Gardening Tools

This chart is a handy guide for knowing the best times to plant in Harris County.

Vegetable Garden Planting Dates for Harris County	FACT SHEET											
	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
ASPARAGUS, Crowns												
BEANS, Lima & Snap Bush												
BEANS, Lima & Snap Pole												
BEETS												
BROCCOLI, Plants												
CABBAGE, Plants												
CAULIFLOWER, Plants												
CARROTS												
CHARD, Swiss												
CHINESE CABBAGE												
COLLARDS												
CORN												
CUCUMBER												
EGGPLANTS, Plants												
KOHLRABI, Plants												
LETTUCE												
MUSKMELON, Cantalope												
MUSTARD												
OKRA												
ONION, Bulb-type sets												
ONION, Transplant for scallions												
ONION, Multipliers												
PARSLEY												
PEAS, English & Snap												
PEAS, Southern												
PEPPER, Plants												
POTATO, Irish												
POTATO, Sweet												
PUMPKIN												
RADISH												
SPINACH												
SQUASH, Summer												
SQUASH, Winter												
TOMATO, Plants												
TURNIP												
WATERMELON												



Not a Master Gardener?

Get Master Gardener Event Notifications
 Sign up for email alerts for upcoming
 Master Gardener events open to the public.



TEXAS A&M AGRI LIFE EXTENSION

TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION SERVICE
3033 BEAR CREEK DR.
HOUSTON, TX 77084

713.274.0950 Fax: 832-927-0027

harris.agrilife.org/program-areas/hort/

hcmga.tamu.edu

Like Us On Facebook

The Harris County Master Gardeners as well as Texas A&M Agrilife Extension - Harris County Horticulture are actively participating on Facebook offering tips, lists, news and plant advice almost daily. The best part, instead of locating planting guides or insect documents, and sale dates for individuals, you can add the HCMG site



your account and easily share information with others. This is a definite timesaving device for these busy garden days and helps promote our organization.

www.facebook.com/HarrisCountyMasterGardeners

www.facebook.com/HarrisCountyHorticulture

URBAN DIRT • JULY 2017



JULY Green Thumb Gardening Series

Raised Beds, Drip Irrigation & Rain Barrels

July 13

Barbara Bush Library

6:30-8:30 p.m.

July 18

Spring Branch Memorial Library

6:30-8:30 p.m.

July 15

Maude Smith Marks Library

10 a.m. - Noon

July 20

Freeman Branch Library

6:30-8:30 p.m.