

# Urban Dirt

Basic Yard Maintenance

Gardening Events and Information for Texans

## Maintaining Your Lawn Tools

by Terri Simon, Master Gardener

Now that dreary winter has rolled in, what can a gardener do? Plenty! If you are like me, you lost a good portion of your plants. Hurricane Ike wiped out several of my plants and now the snow may have wiped out a few more. I am busy planning my spring garden. Plant catalogues are my best friends right now. But even more importantly, I am using this down time to get my tools ready for my new garden. New plants and shiny tools, what more could a gardener ask for?

Every gardener needs a few basic items to help maintain their tools. Tools that have been properly cared for make gardening easier and will last longer. A list of the essentials needed to take care of your tools includes: safety goggles, leather gloves, a dust mask, medium grit sandpaper, steel wool, a metal hand file and a sharpening stone, a putty knife, a wire brush, lubricating oil, alcohol or bleach to disinfect tools (the wipes are nice), old cotton rags or towels and shellac or paint for wooden handles. You can use a rotary wire brush attachment for your drill or a grinder, but I generally avoid those. They can cause the metal to become thinner and even change the original shape of the tool. You should definitely wear goggles, a mask and leather gloves if using the drill or grinder. You do not want metal splinters in your eyes or skin.

To begin with, develop good habits. Never put your tools away dirty! Take the time to clean and sharpen them and they will be ready for the next time they are needed. Don't get into the habit of leaving them outside either. Storing them in a dry area increases the life span of your precious, expensive tools. Wooden handles deteriorate rapidly outside. One gardening tip: install a large



Photo courtesy of <http://www.keysindy.com>

mailbox in your garden to store small tools that you use regularly.

For cleanup a putty knife can be used to pry off stubborn dirt clods, etc. Make sure to wipe off any resin or sap. If you have used shears, trimmers or pruners, they should be disinfected with bleach or alcohol between trimming each plant to prevent the spread of disease. Use a hose to remove mud and grit. Dry with an old towel. Use steel wool to remove any rust that may be present. Don't forget the wooden handles. Sand them with sandpaper to remove splinters. Tighten any loose screws. Wipe the tools to remove wood or metal dust. One tip I learned from Louis Mickler during his excellent lecture on tool maintenance: paint the handles of your tools. Then if you loan them out, finding your tools is easier. Use a metal file to lightly sharpen; an oiled sharpening stone is necessary afterwards for cutting tools like hatchets. Some tools like bow saws do not need sharpening because replacement blades are cheap. If you keep an oil soaked rag stored in a closed

*cont'd on pg. 6*

## Upcoming Events

*The January 2018 Fruit Tree Sale will be held in the Houston Farm and Ranch parking lot (adjacent to the Bear Creek Extension parking lot.) No Plant Sale Preview will be provided for this sale.*

*The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Office, in Bear Creek Park, will be permanently relocating in the future due to the flooding from Hurricane Harvey. We have no information on this new location at this time.*

*Our satellite location, Genoa Friendship Gardens, is operating as normal. Visit the Demonstration Gardens on Open Garden Days at 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Road, Houston 77034.*

## January 2018

### Educational Program

**Jan. 11**, 10:00-11:30 a.m., *Selection & Production of Peach and Plum trees for our area.* Speaker: Herman Auer, Galvesto County Master Gardener, Genoa Friendship Garden Education Building, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Rd., Houston, 77034

### Green Thumb Gardening Series

#### Basic Yard Maintenance

**Jan. 17**, Spring Branch Memorial Library, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m

**Jan. 18**, Freeman Branch Library, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

**Jan. 20**, Maude Smith Marks Library, 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

## 2018 Plant Sales

### *Bear Creek Extension*

#### Fruit Tree Sale

**Jan. 27**, 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Citrus, apple, peach, pear, avocado, berry, pecan suitable for our area. Bear Creek Extension parking lot, 3033 Bear Creek Drive, Houston, TX 77084

#### Tomato/Pepper, Herb and Vegetable Sale

**Feb. 17**, 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Tomatoes, peppers, vegetables, and herbs suited to our summer growing season. Location: TBA

### *Genoa Friendship Gardens*

#### Fruit Tree and Tomato Sale and Workshops

**Feb. 24**, 8:00 a.m., Plant Sale Preview / 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., Sale. Citrus, apple, peach, pear, avocado, berry and pecan suitable for our area. Campbell Hall, Pasadena Fairgrounds, 7600 Red Bluff Rd., Pasadena, TX 77507

#### Spring Sale - Perennials, Herbs & Peppers

**Mar. 24**, 8:00 a.m., Plant Sale Preview / 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., Sale. Perennials, peppers, vegetables, and herbs suited to our summer growing season. Campbell Hall, Pasadena Fairgrounds, 7600 Red Bluff Rd., Pasadena, TX 77507

## Have Garden Questions?

Email your questions and photos to: phone [hcmga@gmail.com](mailto:hcmga@gmail.com) or

Call us Monday – Friday 9:00 am to Noon at 713-274-0950

# Plant of the Month - Mexican Plum (*Prunus mexicana*)

by Beth Braun, Master Gardener

After our recent friendly snowfall and low temperature the following night, I've watched my garden for signs of dieback. Nothing so far. But it reminded me of a big landscaping mistake I made some years back.

The house I bought came with palms—lots of them. The side yard, visible from a wall of picture windows, had a thicket of Sago palms, all of them infested with scale. It was impossible to weed the bed, and I watched with shame as the dreadful Cat's claw vine (*Macfadyena unguis-cati*) took over the fence and then the palms. Eventually I hired a crew to dig up and haul off the palms.

I had a fresh canvas!

The new bed would be colorful and attract hummingbirds, butterflies and bees. The Mexican plum went in first, followed by various perennials that fit the bill. The result pleased the senses, and I enjoyed looking at the bed through the living room windows. What I didn't take into account was that the Mexican plum is deciduous, and the other new plants were cold sensitive.

A harsh winter came, and the new view was of the fence behind a bed of bare and dead plants. If you're planning a new bed or redoing a bed for any reason—loss to flooding comes to mind—you can learn from my mistake and include cold hardy plants in the landscape. The winter months are a perfect time to plan your spring work.

So let's explore the Mexican plum at the center of my bed. It's celebrated as the star of our native plums by Sally and Andy Wasowski in their book, *Native Texas Plants*. In *Landscaping with Native Plants of Texas and the Southwest*, George O. Miller says this tree's small size enhances confined areas like side yards and corners. In *Habitat Gardening for Houston and Southeast Texas*, Mark and Mary Bowen describe the Mexican plum as being remarkably versatile in terms of light and soil conditions.

The genus name *Prunus* is the ancient name for plum, and *mexicana* refers to this species' native distribution from Central to East Texas and down to Mexico. *Prunus* includes a wide variety of shrubs and trees grown for their ornamental spring blossoms or fruit, such as cherries, almonds, plums, peaches, and apricots.

Like the redbud, Mexican plum blooms in early spring before the leaves emerge. The white to faintly pink flowers are about 1 inch across, prolific and fragrant. The cloud of bloom is a promise of

spring to come, described by George O. Miller as a "late snowfall". In his words, the ripened reddish-purple fruit that follow "dangle from the tree like Christmas ornaments in mid-summer".



*Prunus Mexicana* flower

Photo by Bill Lindemann, Native Plant Society of Texas



*Mexicana plum leaves and fruit*

Photo courtesy Dallas Arboretum

The plums lend themselves to jellies and jams, but you'll have competition from mammals and Eastern bluebirds, mockingbirds, and redheaded woodpeckers who feast on them. The Bowens report that Henry's elfin butterfly larvae eat the leaves and Viceroy butterfly larvae eat the fruit. For these reasons, the Mexican plum deserves a place in your yard if you're a habitat gardener. The fruit can be messy, so you'll want to plant it away from patios, sidewalks and driveways.

Interestingly, Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo, California, gives the Mexican plum a Favorable rating in its ability to resist fire.

*cont'd on pg. 7*

**NEW LOCATION  
FARM & RANCH LOT  
@ BEAR CREEK**

**9:00- 12:00PM**

Open to the public  
with featured special  
events and vendors

**9:00 AM Sale  
Gates Open**

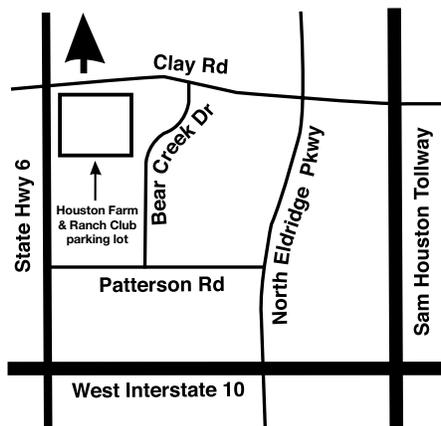


Harris County Master Gardeners Association

# 2018 FRUIT TREE SALE

## Saturday JANUARY 27<sup>TH</sup>, 2018

### 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM



**3033 Bear Creek Drive • Houston, TX 77084**

# Herb of the Month - Lovage (*Levisticum officinale*)

by Karen McGowan, Master Gardener

Welcome to the first edition of Herb of the Month for 2018, featuring lovage (*Levisticum officinale*)!

A member of the parsley family, lovage's origin is in southern Europe, and cultivated in western Asia, Germany, Italy, France, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and the United States. Known also as "sea parsley," lovage can reach heights of six or seven feet, or more, making it a great choice to line the back of your herb garden. Lovage enjoys full sun, but will survive in partial shade, although it won't grow quite as tall.



Lovage

Loaded with vitamins C and B, ancient Greeks and Romans used lovage's seeds, leaves, and roots in their cooking. Italy's modern chefs include lovage with oregano and garlic in tomato sauces. Lovage has remained throughout the years a common flavoring in Britain and southeastern Europe, although still not widely implemented in United States' dishes.

The flavor of lovage is anise-like, similar to celery's – although with twice the pungency -- with a scent that hints of both celery and lemon. At one time, lovage's seeds were nearly as expensive as black pepper. Before celery was adapted as a salad ingredient, chopped lovage was frequently tapped for table salads. Lovage lends itself particularly well to soups and sauces, and chimes heartily with leeks. Noting its flavor assertiveness, cooks substituting lovage for celery should reduce the amount called for by half.

If you have a garden home for lovage featuring fertile soil, full sun, and good drainage, coupled together with some patience, you may wish to try planting lovage seeds. Grown to one foot, the plant can

begin to be harvested. Germination of seeds can be spotty, so if you prefer bullet-proof gardening, a lovage transplant might be a better choice.

Lovage is a hardy plant with few issues other than one notable exception: Aphids. Keep an eye out for those pesky invaders and treat as necessary.

In addition to its culinary use, lovage has a storied history of therapeutic purposes, including infusions, tinctures, vinegars, elixirs, lozenges, and bath and foot soaks.

Lovage is in the same family as osha (*Ligusticum porteri*) and therefore, some herbalists consider it as possible lung ailment relief (Wood, 2007).

Relatively unknown in our herbal world today, lovage is one of the ancients' favored herbs that should, perhaps, be given another look as either a culinary or health-supporting herb to grow in your garden. Should you decide to try lovage in the garden or have a gardening friend already tuned into to lovage's secrets, here is a delicious recipe for the soup lovers:

## ***Lovage and Potato Soup***

### Ingredients

- 1 ounce butter**
- 2 medium onions, finely chopped**
- 4 tablespoons lovage leaves, finely chopped**
- 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour**
- 2 cups chicken broth**
- 1 cup milk or heavy cream**
- 2 or 3 chopped potatoes**
- Salt and white pepper to taste**

### Preparation

Melt butter in a saucepan and gently sauté the onions for 5 minutes or until tender. Add the lovage.

Whisk in the flour and cook at medium heat for one minute, stirring constantly.

Gradually whisk in the broth, cover and simmer gently for 15 minutes.

Add the milk, salt, and pepper, bring to a gentle simmer. Do not boil the soup or it will curdle.

### Citations:

<https://theherbalacademy.com/little-known-ways-use-lovage/>  
<http://theepicentre.com/spicellovage/>

## Maintaining Your Lawn Tools, *cont'd from pg. 1*

container, you can use it to wipe down the handle and blades of tools. Remove excess oil before storing away. Store tools by their handle to protect the blades or you could also store them upright in a bucket of sand. Another suggestion: keep two shovels on hand. Dedicate one shovel for working on rocky or gravelly areas. That shovel will wear down quickly. Use a separate shovel for digging or transferring materials. Don't forget to maintain your lawn carts also. Axles and metal parts need to be lubricated, tires may need air. Right now I am changing the tires on my favorite lawn cart. The old tires are cracked and worn out. That cart will get plenty of use when my seedlings need transplanting.

With proper maintenance, your tools will be ready for spring's arrival. Here's hoping many of your plants survived the harsh weather conditions our area had this past year. Happy planting and happy new year!

The videos below can provide guidance for maintaining your garden tools:

Daily maintenance of long handled tools:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wStVAsO8V7k>

How to clean and sharpen garden tools:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5IqSvZr4Yz8>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E9yCfU-Lbmc>

## Steps to Remove Rust from Tools .....

### Equipment

- 1 old cotton rag
- 5% vinegar
- 1 trash bag
- Wire brush
- Safety glasses
- Leather gloves
- Oil for tools



*A rusted set of shears left outside by someone (yours truly)*



*Vinegar and an old cotton t-shirt (if it's in his bottom drawer it must be old, right?). Saturate t-shirt thoroughly with vinegar*



*Wrap saturated t-shirt around rusted tool.*



*Seal wrapped tool in trash bag to slow evaporation of vinegar.*

**Wait 24 hours. \*\***

*\*\* For heavy rust buildup, another 24 hours may be necessary. There is also a cleaning vinegar with a higher percentage of acetic acid available at hardware stores that can be used.*



*Unwrap tool. Most of the rust should be gone.*



*Wearing safety goggles and leather gloves use a wire brush to remove any remaining rust.*



*Sharpen and oil tool.*

# Open Garden Day - Weekley Center

Open Garden Day will be moved from Bear Creek to:  
 Weekley Community Center  
 8440 Greenhouse Rd.

**Jan. 16** 10:00 to 11:00-Program for Children

Open Garden Day for children is back! Due to Harvey damage, there is no access to the Bear Creek Extension. OGD has been relocated to the Weekley Community Center at 8440 Greenhouse Road, Houston. We won't have outdoor gardens, so the activities will focus on nature crafts, small plants in pots and games.

The first of our monthly events will be Jan. 16 from 10:00 to 11:00am. Activities will include decorating seed pods and making pine cone bird feeders and acorn jewelry. There will be coloring pages, legos, playdough and toddler puzzles. We hope you can make it! Please RSVP to [ogd.harrishort@gmail.com](mailto:ogd.harrishort@gmail.com) with the ages and number of children coming so we are sure to have enough supplies for everyone. Also, please contact us with questions or comments.

## 2018 Open Garden Day schedule

(children's program only for now)

Jan. 16th  
 Feb. 13th  
 Mar. 27th  
 Apr. 24th  
 May 22nd  
 Jun. 26th  
 Jul. 24th  
 Aug. 28th  
 Sep. 25th  
 Oct. 16th  
 Nov. – if participation is high, there may be an OGD  
 Dec. – Winter break

**PLEASE NOTE:** *As of this time adult workshops have not been scheduled.*

## Plant of the Month, *cont'd from pg. 3*

We don't often think of the fire resistance of plants in our region, but it's a relevant characteristic as we witness the massive fires that have repeatedly struck parts of California.

One of my favorite traits of this tree is its bark, which develops more interest as the tree matures. It's a feature in itself, especially in winter when the tree is bare. The bark is a dark silvery brown, with fissures running horizontally around the trunk. Bits of it peel like the bark of birch trees.

Expect this fast-growing tree to reach 20 to 25 feet in height with an irregular spreading crown. Texas A&M's <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu> website highlights it as a beautiful single-trunk tree that doesn't sucker and form thickets, as do other native plums. Because of its drought tolerance, it's often used as a root stock.



*Viceroy butterfly larva*

*Photo by Eric Whetmore, ninnescahlife.wichita.edu*



# Snowy Surprise in Houston? Yes, there is a Santa Claus!

by Becky Lowicki, Master Gardener

Like many in Houston and the surrounding area, I awoke to the gentle patter of snow falling early one morning in December only to find a beautiful dusting of white amidst my azaleas, graceful old oaks and climbing roses that had just begun to form buds after a mild and wet Thanksgiving holiday.

As quickly as it arrived the snow-filled scene was a figment of the imagination, having melted by mid-morning, but the experience left me wondering what to do next to help my plants. Would gentle pruning be out of the question at this late date? Or was it best to take the “wait and see” approach and hope for a mild reprieve to coax greenery out of the shock stage. Everyone—plants included—was mildly confused!



*Tupelo Tree Oleander*



*Sun Katrina Rose*

A quick online search provided a few tips and reassurance that this winter’s bite from Jack Frost wouldn’t be as detrimental as expected. Here’s the straight skinny on plant hardiness:

1. The USDA Agriculture Research Service produces a Plant Hardiness Zone Map that lists the majority of the Houston region as Zone 9a able to withstand 20°-25°F. The 2012 maps (the most recent year available) are the standard by which gardeners and growers can determine which plants are most likely to thrive at a location and is based on the average annual minimum winter temperature, divided into 10-degree Fahrenheit zones.
2. More specific plant recommendations can be found on the U.S. National Arboretum (USNA) website, which includes a list

*cont'd on pg. 9*

## Snowy Surprise in Houston?, *cont'd from pg. 8*



*Duranta*

of cold hardiness ratings for selected woody plants in Zone 9 as reference.

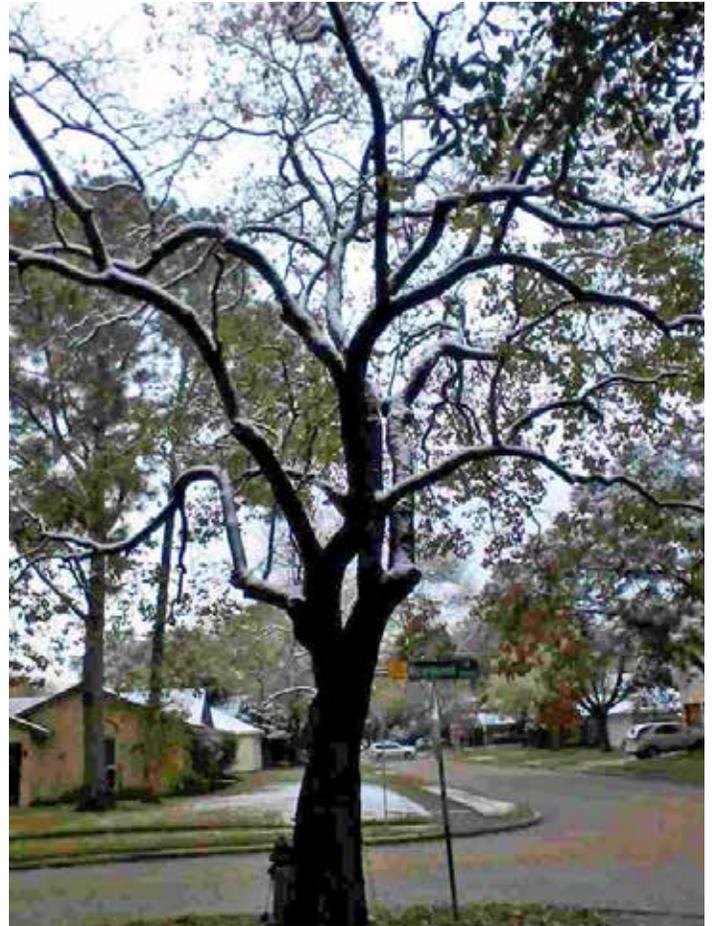
3. As always it's a good rule of "green" thumb to provide a protective layer of mulch during the winter months, especially given Houston's variable weather from the rainy season to sporadic dips into chilly temps.

4. Container plants do best when protected from the elements, either clustered against the house, brought indoors or in an area shielded from the bitter winds. Providing row-cover is often recommended, but be sure to remove it once the sun begins to warm up the next day after a chilly night.

5. A brief forecast outlook from the Farmers Almanac for 2018 for January in Houston predicts an average temperature 49° (1° below avg.) and precipitation 3" (1" above avg.) with alternating

weather conditions so commonly found in Houston—in other words, sunny, mild, cold, rain and repeat!

Lastly, reach out to the Harris County Extension Service Ask a Master Gardener Hotline as well as the Harris County Extension Service Horticulture home page for more information on surviving the snow, ice, rain and any combination thereof that Mother Nature serves up in our region regularly. Overall just enjoy the variable weather, and if a plant doesn't make it—look at it as an opportunity to try something new in your garden!



*China Berry Tree*

# Success with Citrus

by Betty Bailey, Master Gardener

Growing citrus trees offers a bounty of pleasure including fruit, fragrant flowers to delight our senses plus colors in the landscape to brighten our day. The zest of citrus flavors our food, citrus drinks are full of vitamin C and the juices can be used for desserts that we all love. Who can refuse key lime pie or lemon squares?

The familiar saying: “when life gives you lemons, make lemonade” speaks to how citrus lifts our mood and will give us a glass of tart, delicious lemonade. Or that lime in a bottle of Corona on a hot day.

Citrus trees are the show horses and workhorses of trees grown in Harris County. They work to provide us a variety of fruit and show off our landscapes whether on patios or in backyard plantings.

People need food, water, sunshine, and protection from too much heat or cold. Those are needs we share with citrus trees.

## Growing Citrus Successfully



Citrus trees are tropical trees. When choosing a citrus tree select ones that are cold hardy to survive the temperature swings across Harris County and are ones adaptable to where you choose to

plant your tree. Citrus trees need winter “chill” temperatures to encourage flowers which become fruit along with sun for fruit development.

Being sun lovers make sure they have six to eight hours of sun. Whether in a container or planted in the ground, growing tips include:



- Plant on the south or southeast side of the house to protect your tree from northwestern winds and cold fronts
- Plant six to eight feet from buildings, fences, or driveways so the tree has room to spread its branches and root system
- Avoid planting near septic systems to ensure roots don’t clog sewer lines

- When planting in patio containers start off with a roomy container, based on the size of your tree, with several drainage holes so the tree has proper drainage and air flow.
- Your container needs either wheels or heavy-duty coasters so you can move your patio tree to a warm place when cold fronts hit. Frost cloth can offer protection for your citrus trees and is light weight for easy placement around the tree. Cold snaps are common in Harris County. Brief drops in

temperatures below freezing don’t cause as much tree damage compared to several hours of freezing temperatures across multiple days. Watch your favorite weather channel to prepare to help your tree survive.

Moist soil preserves heat better than dry soil. Water trees before a cold snap and cover your trees with frost cloth, sheets, or light blankets. Keep the covers in place until the temperature is consistently in the 40’s and above. Anchor your coverings so they won’t blow off with blustery winds.

As your citrus tree grows it will need soil that drains well. Based on the tree, some fertilizer and appropriate amounts



*cont’d on pg. 11*

## Success with Citrus, *cont'd from pg. 10*



of water are important for healthy growth. Overwatering patio container plants is common. To avoid drowning your plant, check the soil before you water. The top soil should be dry to the touch and dry to mid finger or one inch. Less frequent, deep watering is best. Cooler weather will slow tree growth. Reduce watering in winter months. Conversely, during hot, dry months water can be increased.

What about fertilizer? Check with the grower for requirements or Agrilife Extension offices with questions. Citrus trees need well balanced soil and can benefit from compost and organic fertilizers to enhance fruit production and your tree's health.

### ***Fun Citrus Facts and Lemon Chicken Recipe***

Did you know that you can create your own air freshener by slicing lemons, covering them with water and simmering them for an hour? Also, small amounts of lemons or limes freshen up garbage disposals.

#### ***Roast Chicken with Lemons***

Ingredients: 3 to 4-pound chicken, salt, pepper, 2 lemons, optional: garlic, tarragon, parsley, and white wine.

##### **Step 1**

Preheat your oven to 350 degrees.

##### **Step 2**

Wash the chicken in cold water and remove giblets, let it drain and reach room temperature.

##### **Step 3**

Wash lemons and soften each lemon by rolling it back and forth with firm pressure on a plate or cutting board. Next puncture the lemons in several places with a fork

##### **Step 4**

Season the chicken and place the lemons in the chicken cavity. Use toothpicks or cooking twine to pull the legs and body together slightly to close the chicken cavity to keep the lemons in place, not too tightly or the chicken may split.

##### **Step 5**

Put the chicken in a roasting pan, breast face down. After 30 minutes, turn the chicken breast face up. The chicken may swell some like a balloon, but that's ok.

##### **Step 6**

Cook for another 30 to 35 minutes. Next turn the oven thermostat up to 400 degrees and cook for another 20 minutes. Calculate between 20 and 25 minutes total cooking time for each pound.

##### **Step 7**

Leaving the lemons inside, carve the chicken. The juices are wonderful and can be spooned over chicken slices or vegetables of your choice.

***\*\*\*Adapted from Marcella Hazan and New York Times Cooking***

# Gardening Tools

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

	 <span style="float: right;"><b>Fact Sheet</b></span>											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Asparagus Crowns												
Beans - Bush												
Beans - Pole & Lima (Butterbean)												
Beets												
Broccoli Plants												
Brussels Sprouts												
Cabbage												
Cabbage - Chinese												
Carrots												
Cauliflower Plants												
Chard, Swiss												
Collards												
Corn												
Cucumbers												
Eggplant Plants												
Garlic												
Kale												
Kohlrabi Plants												
Leeks - Transplants												
Lettuce												
Melon - Cantaloupe, Honeydew												
Mustard												
Okra												
Onion - Bulb-type sets												
Onion - Transplant for Scallions												
Onion - Multipliers												
Parsley												
Peas - English & Snap												
Peas - Southern												
Pepper Plants - Sweet												
Pepper Plants - Hot												
Potato - Irish												
Potato - Sweet												
Pumpkin												
Radish												
Spinach												
Squash - Summer												
Squash - Winter												
Tomato												
Turnips												
Watermelon												

# 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.

### *2018 Monthly Open Garden Days & Special Events*

January 15	Open Garden Day	June 4 & 18	Open Garden Day
<b>February 24</b>	<b>Fruit Tree &amp; Tomato Sale</b>	July 2 & 16	Open Garden Day
February 19	Open Garden Day	August 6 & 20	Open Garden Day
<b>March 24</b>	<b>Perennial, Herb &amp; Pepper Sale</b>	September 17	Open Garden Day
March 19	Open Garden Day	October 15	Open Garden Day
April 16	Open Garden Day	November 19	Open Garden Day
May 21	Open Garden Day		

# TEXAS A&M AGRI LIFE EXTENSION

TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION SERVICE

3033 BEAR CREEK DR.

HOUSTON, TX 77084

713-274-0950

[harris.agrilife.org/program-areas/hort/](http://harris.agrilife.org/program-areas/hort/)

[hcmga.tamu.edu](http://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](http://www.facebook.com/HarrisCountyMasterGardeners)

[www.facebook.com/HarrisCountyHorticulture](http://www.facebook.com/HarrisCountyHorticulture)

URBAN DIRT • JANUARY 2018



## January Green Thumb Gardening Series *Basic Yard Maintenance*

**January 17**

**Spring Branch Memorial Library**

**6:30-8:30 p.m.**

**January 18**

**Freeman Branch Library**

**6:30-8:30 p.m.**

**January 20**

**Maude Smith Marks Library**

**10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.**