

Urban Dirt

It's all about the Herbs!

Gardening Events and Information for Texans

An Herb Primer

by Terri Simon, Master Gardener

We use them daily to flavor our food. Growing up in a Hispanic household, our food was always seasoned. Today I can limit my salt intake because of my use of herbs and spices. I love herbs. I have several varieties of mint, oregano, thyme and rosemary. My

weakness is basil. I try to grow at least eight varieties every year. No, I can't possibly use all of them so I do it for the glory.

One thing I have learned is the difference between herbs and spices. Herbs are the dried or fresh leaves of a plant. Usually herbs are green. Spices can be the bark, roots, seeds, fruit or flower of a plant. Many spices come from tropical plants and their color is varied. Spices have a stronger flavor than herbs since they have essential oils. Occasionally a plant can be both an herb and a spice. The plant *Coriandrum sativum* has leaves which are classified as herbs while the seeds, called coriander, are considered a spice.

The use of herbs and spices has been documented throughout history. The Bible mentions herbs in Genesis, the first chapter in the Bible. Herbal and spice usage has been documented at least 3,500 years ago in an Egyptian scroll called the Ebers Papyrus. Spices were traded for gold and silver. The Romans used herbs and spices in foods, medicines, perfumes and lotions. When the Goths conquered Rome in 410, they required 3,000 pounds of pepper along with other precious items in a trade for Roman lives. In the 5th century, B.C., Hippocrates listed about 400 herbs that were in use. Herbs were used as preservatives and antibiotics in the past. In the Middle Ages herbs could also disguise rotten foods when there was no refrigeration and they also helped cover the odor of people who did not bathe routinely.



An edible landscape

Photo courtesy www.rosalindcreasy.com

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Upcoming Events

March 2019

Green Thumb Gardening Series

Herbs

Mar. 14, Barbara Bush Library, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Mar. 16, Maude Smith Marks Library, 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Mar. 19, Spring Branch Memorial Library, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Mar. 21, Freeman Branch Library, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Open Garden Day

Mar. 18, 8:30 - 11:00 a.m., Genoa Friendship Garden, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Rd. *Plants for sale in the Greenhouse.*

Mar. 26, 10:00 - 11:15 a.m., Weekley Community Center - Open Garden Day Children's Activities. **Registration required by Sunday, Mar. 24th to: ogd.harrishort@gmail.com.** Weekley Community Center, 8440 Greenhouse Rd., Cypress, TX

Master Gardener Lecture Series

Mar. 14, GFG Second Thursday 10:00 - 11:30 a.m. *Small Scale Backyard Composting* by John Ferguson, Nature's Way Resources. Genoa Friendship Gardens Education Center building, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Rd.

April 2019

Green Thumb Gardening Series

Soils and Composting

Apr. 11, Barbara Bush Library, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Apr. 13, Maude Smith Marks Library, 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Apr. 16, Spring Branch Memorial Library, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Apr. 25, Freeman Branch Library, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Open Garden Day

Apr. 15, 8:30 - 11:00 a.m., Genoa Friendship Garden, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Rd. *Plants for sale in the Greenhouse.*

Apr. 16, 10:00 - 11:15 a.m., Weekley Community Center **Registration required by Sunday, Apr. 14th to: ogd.harrishort@gmail.com.** Weekley Community Center, 8440 Greenhouse Rd., Cypress, TX **gmail.com.** Weekley Community Center, 8440 Greenhouse Rd., Cypress, TX

Master Gardener Lecture Series

Apr. 11, GFG Second Thursday 10:00 - 11:30 a.m. *Cucurbit Culture - Squash & Melons* by Herman Auer, Master Gardener. Genoa Friendship Gardens Education Center building, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Rd.

2019 Plant Sales

West Side (formerly Bear Creek)

Location: Richard & Meg Weekley Park, 19110 Longenbaugh Road, Cypress, TX

Tomato/Pepper/Herb, Roses & Perennials Sale

Mar. 9, 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Genoa Friendship Gardens

Location: Campbell Hall, Pasadena Fairgrounds
7600 Red Bluff Rd.

Perennials, Herbs & Peppers Spring Sale

Mar. 30, 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

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 Mint Marigold, Spanish Tarragon, Texas Tarragon, Sweet Mace, Yerbis Anis, Santa Maria . . .

(Tagetes lucida) TAG-e-teez, ta-JEE-teez - Named for Tages, an Etruscan god who sprang up from ploughed earth¹
Loo-sid-uh - Bright, clear, lustrous¹

by Beth Braun, Master Gardener

We had a problem on our hands: an area designated for an almost-xeriscape (often mistakenly pronounced zero-scape) color garden was more like a slow-draining bathtub. Weeks and months of discussions followed, some involving landscaping and drainage experts. Slowly a consensus developed around amending the soil and creating rain gardens and raised areas.

“A rain garden is an attractive method for controlling storm-water damage and runoff. A rain garden captures and temporarily holds rainwater until the ground can absorb the water.” This description introduces Texas A&M’s AgriLife Extension’s article, Texas Rain Garden Plant List.²

What’s a rain garden? How is it different from a pond?

A rain garden is a way of harvesting rain water to slow runoff and allowing it to soak into the ground over a period of 12 to 48 hours. Rain gardens can capture and filter pollutants from streets, parking lots and sidewalks, as well as pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers (including man’s best friend’s leavings). In fact, rainwater harvesting is one of ten Earth-Kind® landscaping principles for creating beautiful, low maintenance landscapes, while conserving and protecting natural resources and the environment.³

Using plants that tolerate both wet and dry soils, a rain garden can be a thing of beauty that integrates into the existing landscape. Native plants, especially grasses, typically have deeper roots than common landscaping plants, which allow for better water absorption.

For the wonks among you, additional information can be found at <https://rainwaterharvesting.tamu.edu/> and in publication B-6247, *Stormwater Management: Rain Gardens*.⁴ It’s full of formulas for calculating rain water runoff volume and the size of rain garden and underground drain pipe(s) needed to handle that volume. You can wander farther afield online to see the beautiful ways rain gardens are being implemented from Portland, Oregon all the way across the country to the Chesapeake Bay region.



Mexican Mint Marigold

Photo courtesy TheWaterUniversity.tamu.edu

The happy coincidence is that Mexican mint marigold is included in the Texas Rain Garden Plant List mentioned earlier. The list is an excellent resource with plants organized by type (perennials, ornamental grasses, shrubs etc.), botanical and common names, height and width, light requirement and moisture tolerance. Our Plant of the Month is described as reaching 1-2’ in height and 1-3’

cont’d on pg. 9



Herb of the Month - Dill (*Anethum graveolens*)

by Karen McGowan, Master Gardener

This month's herb focus is on a favored Irish herb in honor of St. Patrick's Day, dill (*Anethum graveolens*). From Irish Soda Bread to Irish Boxty with Smoked Trout and Dill, the herb is widely celebrated by its usage in traditional Irish cooking.

An annual herb that belongs to the carrot, parsley and celery family, dill's geographical origin is placed in the southern Russian and Mediterranean regions. Although part of quite a large plant family, dill is the sole species of its genus. The word "dill" actually comes from a Norwegian word, "dilla," meaning "to soothe," pointing to dill's ancient medicinal usage.

Dill boasts a long, storied history of medicinal benefits, one that, in part, began with superficial gains tied to roots of superstition. First century Romans considered dill good luck, while to the Greeks, the herb signified wealth. Among a handful of herbs mentioned in the Bible, dill has been long-utilized to soothe an ailing stomach. Puritans and Quakers gave their children dill seeds to chew on while at church as an appetite suppressant. Modern wisdom credits dill seed as both a breath freshener and as anti-bacterial, and it is believed to stimulate milk production in breastfeeding women and alleviate colic in babies. Dill has been shown in scientific research to potentially reduce cholesterol. In a 2014 study involving 91 participants, half were given dill tablets for two months. Subsequent cholesterol and triglyceride measurements in those individuals revealed a reduction of total cholesterol of up to 18% and triglyceride by 7.38%. These are substantial reductions that bear consideration for those struggling with high cholesterol and perhaps seeking a natural remedy.



Dill leaves' airy, feathery texture lends a beautiful and fragrant addition to either an herb or ornamental/edible mixed garden. Seeds should be planted now in a full sun growing site and in an area protected from high wind, as the stalks of dill are thin and hollow. Dill grows in rich, loose soil that is slightly acidic, moist and well drained. Whether installing dill seeds or plants in the garden, once dill has reached significant enough height, slender bamboo stakes can be lightly tethered to the dill stalks for stabilization.

At maturity, dill leaves are often mistaken for fennel, and while both carry a distinctive licorice flavor, dill is the more delicate of the two. This herb lends itself extremely well in both seed and leaf form to any number of dishes, included soups, sauces, salads, and pickling. As dill is one of my personal go-to favorites and I am constantly on the search for ways to boost flavor in creative ways without adding salt, I have experimented with both the seeds and leaves of dill. For deviled eggs and potato and chicken salads, I discovered that dill seed adds a very distinct, delicious flavor that elevates these sometimes pedestrian standby dishes. Garnishing any of these with the fresh dill leaves imparts even more flavor and interest, as well as smartly hinting at and pairing with the inclusion of dill seed. Dill's chopped leaves make a fantastic addition to sauces for cold water fish, such as salmon. These are just a few ideas -- dill is actually considered an appetizer, and is therefore used extensively in culinary applications.

There are surprising nutritional benefits of dill, derived from its organic compounds, vitamins, and minerals. These include



Dill

cont'd on pg. 8

NEW LOCATION

Weekley Park
19110 Longenbaugh
Cypress, TX. 77433
**Near the Weekley
Center

9:00AM - 1:00PM
Free and open to the public
Featuring special Children
Activities with our Open
Garden Day Crew
*Children under 7 need a parent
or responsible adult within clear
sight, please.*



Harris County Master Gardeners Association

2019 WEST SIDE SPRING SALE

Saturday MARCH 9TH, 2019

9:00 AM to 1:00 PM

19110 Longenbaugh @
The Richard & Meg Weekley Park
Cypress, TX. 77433

Please see map below as GPS may not recognize this address

**TOMATOES, PEPPERS, HERBS, ROSES,
DAY LILIES, PERENNIALS, SOILS & FERTILIZERS**



Directions to our sale:

From TX -290: Travel TX-290 to Barker Cypress Rd. South, 3.6 miles to Right on Longenbaugh Rd. 1.3 miles to Weekley Park on the Right, into parking area.

From I-10: Travel I-10 East or West exit Barker Cypress Rd. North and Travel 7.7 Miles to Left on Longenbaugh Rd. 1.3 Miles to Weekley Park on right, into Parking area.

From Grand Pkwy TX-99: Exit FM-529 Travel East 2.0 Miles to Left on Fry Rd., 1.3 miles to Right on Longenbaugh Rd. the .9 miles to Weekley Park on left, into Parking area



Doors Open at
9:00AM
No Pre-Sale
Lecture

HCMGA
SALE LOCATION:
7601 Red Bluff
Rd.
Pasadena, TX
77505

Ask A Master
Gardener Booth as
well as vendors

Harris County Master Gardener Association *Genoa Friendship Garden's*

2019 PEPPER & PERENNIAL SALE

Saturday *MARCH 30TH*, 2019

9:00 AM to 1:00 PM

Campbell Hall, Pasadena Fair Grounds
7601 Red Bluff Road, Pasadena, TX 77505



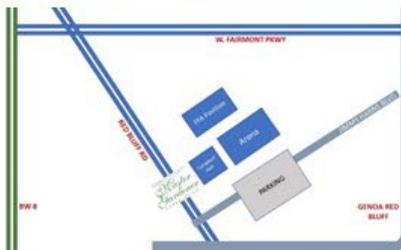
Night Garden Whites
White Loan Star Hibiscus Cat's Whiskers
Night Blooming Jessamine



Perennials
Fireworks Gomphrena,
Indian Blankets
Pink Surprise Bush



Lilies & Irises
Red Louisiana Iris Cherry Landscape Supreme
Russell Manning Rain Lily



Harris County Master Gardeners at the 2019 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™

by Brandi Keller, Master Gardener Program Coordinator

During the twenty-one-day run of the Livestock Show and Rodeo, *Ask a Master Gardener*, a volunteer program offered by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, will be on hand every day from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. to talk to the public about their gardening questions.

What makes our volunteers unique? We provide unbiased, research-based information to residents of Harris County. Our volunteers have a passion for horticulture and strive to learn all that they can about lawns, trees, shrubs, flowers and gardens.

This year, we are located in AGVENTURE, in Hall A of the NRG Center. AGVENTURE has a little of everything to educate about agriculture. Our booth can be found beside the bees and behind the Seed Planting in front of the bright blue rainwater harvesting building. Stop by for handouts on our most common questions, to chat with a gardener or to check out our insect displays. We will also have coloring or activity pages for families with children. We hope to see you there!



Insect collection made by Harris County Master Gardeners



Maria Sibylla Merian (1647-1717)

by Christa Kaiser, Master Gardener

On one of my visits to the Museum of Natural Sciences Houston, I discovered a large poster about a German woman, who was born during the seventeenth century in Frankfurt and then already recognized for her research of the metamorphosis of caterpillars and other insects. I could not remember her being mentioned in any of my biology school books in Germany. This was quite exciting for me to discover such an early artist-naturalist interested in studying and drawing butterflies and other insects and plants.

She received her artistic training from her stepfather Jacob Marrel. Maria Sibylla Merian began to collect caterpillars when she was 13. At the age of 22, she published the first volume of a two-volume series on caterpillars in 1679. Each volume contained 50 plates engraved and etched by her. She documented evidence on the process of metamorphosis and plant hosts. Merian painted with various kinds of watercolors because in the “guild” system women were not allowed to paint in oil. In 1699, she sold all of



Maria Sibylla Merian

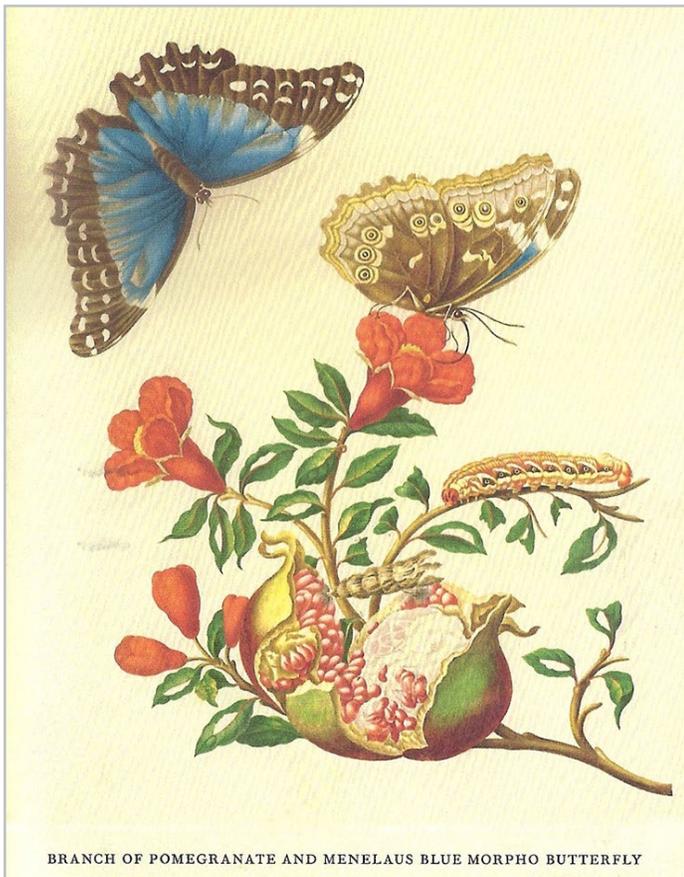
her possessions to sail with one of her daughters to the jungles of South America.

Thus, three hundred years ago, a fifty-two-old German woman set sail on a solo scientific expedition to study insect metamorphosis. She could not have imagined the routine magic that scientists perform today-but her absolute insistence on studying insects in their natural habitats was so far ahead of its time that it is only now coming back into favor. Her book “Chrysalis” restores Maria Sibylla Merian to her rightful place in the history of science, taking us from the golden-age of Amsterdam to the Surinam tropics to modern laboratories where Merian’s insights fuel new approaches to both ecology and genetics.

There are quite a few available books about and of her work and life, but I want to mention only the following two:

Maria Sibylla Merian and the Secrets of Metamorphosis by Kim Todd, a spellbinding biography.

Metamorphosis Insectorum Surinamensium published in 1705. It was published in German, Dutch, Latin and French.



BRANCH OF POMEGRANATE AND MENELAUS BLUE MORPHO BUTTERFLY

Youth Horticulture Innovation Program: Horticulture Therapy and Career Skills for Youth in Detention and Probation

Meagan Terry, Youth Horticulture Coordinator



A new group of urban gardeners is forming throughout Harris County: juvenile detention residents and students of the Harris County Juvenile Probation Program. At three different locations we are building existing gardens into soon to be bountiful and beautiful spring gardens in ordinarily bleak environments. Teenagers that are currently in rehabilitation and under the care of Harris County for various reasons are learning how plants grow, how to propagate them, and the maintenance required for vegetable, fruit, herb, and flower gardens.

At the Bayland-Burnett Rehabilitation Center (BBRC) and Harris County Leadership Academy (HCLA) residents participate in a 6-week after-school program: basic horticulture courses with short classroom lessons and extensive hands-on experience in the garden. BBRC is an all-boys facility, and currently we meet twice a week with about 3-6 residents between the ages of 12-17. We also involve additional residents that are part of a young offenders and drug rehabilitation program with a therapist who brings out 7 or 8 residents for short intervals during our outdoor garden work time. This program just began in mid-February, and is in its beginning stages to bring their four raised beds (about 8' by 15' each) back into production. At Leadership Academy we started last week in an after-school program with a group of about 8 teenage girls, and a group of about 9 teenage boys. Residents have already said they are excited to work in the garden to learn how to plant at home upon their release, in order to "stay out of trouble!" There is a lot of potential at the Leadership garden; they have ample space outdoors and a current garden bed 32' by 62' with about nine rows for vegetables.

At JJAEP Excel Academy, Master Gardeners Alexa Haass and Claudia Griera worked over the spring and summer of 2018 with the Service Learning program, and established a water garden, vegetable beds, and a certified monarch butterfly way station with native flowering plants. This now serves as a natural refuge for not only pollinators, but many urban students who may never have interacted much with plants and insects. The Service Learning program was where the connection began with AgriLife Extension, starting with Horticulture Agent Paul Winski teaching classes to students. On Friday afternoons a Service Learning group of about 10 high school students meet to discuss horticulture topics and then work in the garden together to coordinate planting, maintenance, and planning. After their spring break in March, MG Theresa See will be conducting a one-day workshop for rainwater harvesting, and they will install rain barrels to catch rainfall from the garden shed. We also work in the classroom alongside JJAEP teachers three times a week, working with 4th - 8th grade twice a week, as well as high school students once a week. Students will be able to earn course credit at their middle and high schools from the horticulture class, and spend 15-20 minutes in the garden, as permitted, doing investigative work and to learn about how the garden operates as an ecosystem.

To quote the famous Los Angeles urban gardener, Ron Finley: "If you put beauty into a place that generally that doesn't have it, that's a game changer." This program holds the potential for young people to create beauty, learn useful gardening skills, and cultivate a future career in horticulture. These young people are excited to get outside in the garden and grow their own food, and we thank you for the support to help them do so!

Herb of the Month, *cont'd from pg. 4*

powerful monoterpenes like limonene, carvone, and anethofuran, as well as flavonoids like vicenin and kaempferol. As for vitamins and minerals, dill boasts a significant amount of vitamin A and C, as well as trace amounts of folate, iron, and manganese.

Modern news reports frequently address the problem of insomnia. Along with limiting screen time and providing a transitional period between work and rest, consider tapping herbs to help with insomnia. The essential oils found in herbs have peculiar and powerful properties. They are simultaneously stimulating, sedative, and hypnotic; that is to say, they stimulate as well as pacify. The essential oils in dill are no exception. The flavonoids

and vitamin-B complex present in dill's essential oils activate the secretion of certain enzymes and hormones which have calming and hypnotic effects, thereby helping people get a good night's sleep.

A final note, although dried dill is widely available on grocery store spice aisles, the flavor and properties of dill leaves don't translate well at all to the dried version, while dill seed can and should be purchased in the organic spice section, if culinary use is desired.

Find an appropriate spot to plant dill in your garden today and enjoy throughout the spring and early summer!

Citations:

<http://homeguides.sfgate.com/dill-weed-come-from-70793.html>
<https://www.organicfacts.net/health-benefits/seed-and-nut/dill.html>
<https://www.thespruce.com/the-history-of-dill-1807592>
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4235097/>

An Herbal Primer, *cont'd from pg. 1*

American Indians used herbs to tan and dye leather. One warning that still applies today: liberal use of herbs and spices can cover the taste of rotten food.

Nowadays we have access to many herbs and spices from around the world regardless of the season. The association of salt with high blood pressure has made herbal and spice use more popular. Aromatherapy has made herbal and spice oils popular also. More research is being done to discover other unique uses for herbs, particularly for medicinal purposes.

For those of you who want to broaden your horizons, try growing your own herbs and spices. It is so satisfying to be able to step outside and harvest my herbs for cooking.

You can purchase herbs at our upcoming Master Gardener sales. On March 9th the Bear Creek–West Side Master Gardeners sale will offer herbs, tomatoes vegetables and perennials. On March 30th, the Genoa Friendship Garden Master Gardeners will have their herb, pepper and perennial sale. Check out our website for more info at <https://hcmga.tamu.edu/plant-sales/>. See you there!



Rosemary

Photo by Terri Simon

The Rose Corner

by Christa Kaiser, Master Gardener

What to do in February-March

February and March are the designated months to prune the roses. The annual task of pruning is devoted to encourage more, or finer blooms. Consider these basic groups of roses as your pruning guide: Modern Roses, Shrub Roses, Climbers, Tree Roses. The internet will help you with a more detailed description for each group. Quite a few books are available on pruning. The American Horticultural Society published a great manual on *Pruning & Training* by Christopher Brickell – David Joyce. Here are the basics:

- Clean and disinfect your sharp pruners
- Remove dead, diseased and damaged wood as soon as it is noticed
- Prune out old, less productive wood using loppers or a pruning saw, make a straight cut.
- If suckers grow from the root stock below the bud union, remove them
- Cut away spindly shoots and crossing or rubbing growths
- Shape the plant to prevent overcrowding
- Remove flowers and old and diseased leaves
- Roses have alternate buds. Make angled cuts above a healthy bud, away from the bud that faces in the direction in which you want a new shoot to develop
- Bush heights: Miniatures should be reduced down to 12"-18", Hybrid Teas and taller Floribundas should be reduced to 24"-30", but use your own judgement.

After pruning, fertilize and start a spraying program. All organic is preferred!

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

in width, preferring sun and tolerating both wet and dry soil. As herbs and landscape plants go, Mexican mint marigold is one of my favorites, and found a place in my radically downsized home garden.

There is a lot of lore surrounding this plant's historic use. Aztecs allegedly used it in a medicinal powder that was blown into the faces of those about to be sacrificed in order to stupefy them. The leaves were burned in incense as a mosquito repellent and to ward off evil spirits.⁵

The Incas, Aztec and Mayans mixed ground cacao seeds with various seasonings including Mexican mint marigold to make a spicy, frothy drink which they called chocolatl.

The fragrance and flavor of the leaves can best be described as anise. In the heat of the summer sun, you may pick up the aroma a foot or two away from the plant. It's an excellent culinary

substitute for French tarragon, which doesn't grow well in our heat and humidity. The leaves and flowers of the Mexican mint marigold can be eaten raw in salads or as a garnish, while dried leaves can be used in savory dishes. Steep fresh or dried leaves in hot water for a soothing tea.

The Mexican mint marigold is considered hardy to Zone 8 and root hardy further north. It can be cut back to the ground in the rare event of freeze damage in our region.

One of the charms of this plant-that-goes-by-many-names is the cheerful golden-yellow blooms in late summer to fall, when so many other blooming plants are fading. The blossoms appear on top of the long stems, which sway in the breeze. We don't often read or talk about movement in the garden, but that characteristic adds great interest and tranquility in a landscape composition.

¹ <https://davesgarden.com>

² <http://agrilife.org/rainwaterharvesting/files/2011/05/Rain-Garden-Plant-List-11-02-09.pdf>

³ https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/earthkind/files/2015/02/eht_10ways2earthkind.pdf

⁴ <https://www.agrilifebookstore.org/Stormwater-Management-Rain-Gardens-p/b-6247.htm>

⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tagetes_lucida

*Visit the Harris County Master Gardeners
Facebook page for event details!*

www.facebook.com/HarrisCountyMasterGardeners



Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

in partnership with

Hermann Park Conservancy

are pleased to present

Master Gardeners in the City at McGovern Centennial Gardens

Saturday, March 9th & 23rd

McGovern Centennial Gardens at Hermann Park

1500 Hermann Drive

Houston, Texas 77004

Events include garden tours and children activities.

These educational programs are FREE and OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.

Extension programs serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability or national origin.
The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas cooperating.

Ask a Master Gardener

Ask a Master Gardener is a volunteer program offered by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. Volunteers staff booths and tables to provide free, research-based horticulture education to the public throughout Harris County.

In March we are going to be in the following locations!

- Mar. 2** **Urban Harvest** - 1st Saturday, 7:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
3401 Westheimer Rd. (corner of Buffalo Spdwy. & Westheimer), Houston
- Garden Oaks/Heights** - 1st Saturday, 8:30 a.m. - 11 a.m. at The Farmstand,
938 Wakefield, Houston
- Mar. 9** **Tomball** - 2nd Saturday, 8:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. at 205 W. Main Street, Tomball, TX
- Mar. 17** **Town Lake** - 3rd Sunday, 9:30 a.m. - 3 p.m. at 9955 Barker Cypress Rd.
Cypress, TX
- Mar. 21** **Westchase** - 3rd Thursday, 3-7 p.m. at 10503 Westheimer Rd., Houston
- Mar. 23** **Memorial Villages** - 4th Saturday, 8:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. at 10840 Beinhorn Rd.,
Houston

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 the month, March through October, 8:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
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 sale until September.

2019 Monthly Open Garden Days & Special Events

February 23	Fruit Tree Sale	June 17	Open Garden Day
March 18	Open Garden Day	July 15	Open Garden Day
March 30	Spring Plant Sale	August 19	Open Garden Day
April 15	Open Garden Day	September 16	Open Garden Day
May 20	Open Garden Day	October 21	Open Garden Day

***Second Chance Sale** bargains can be found in the Greenhouse after our February and March plant sales.*

Open Garden Days at The Weekley Community Center

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

Open Garden Days

one Tuesday each month, January through November, 10:00 –11:00 a.m.

Open Garden Day Activities

is located at 8440 Greenhouse Road, Houston, Texas 77433

For information about upcoming topics, dates and registration, please email us at ogd.harrishort@gmail.com. Registration is required before each program.

Children and their parents looking for hands-on ways to learn, create, and have fun inspire our Open Garden Day volunteers to offer programs that do just that.

This FREE monthly children’s event includes a variety of activities:

- Planting seeds, veggies or ornamentals into pots so children can continue to grow them at home.
- Creating a “nature theme” craft project with materials that are provided.
- 30-40 minute hands-on lesson that focuses on a single topic each month.

Previous lessons have included making a worm farm, putting together a compost bin, learning about the importance of butterflies, and making a feeder to attract pollinators.

Past projects



Seed Pod mobile



Fantasy Garden



Recycled soda bottle

2019 Monthly Open Garden Days

February 26 *Registration required by Sun. Feb. 24*
March 26 *Registration required by Sun. Mar. 24.*
April (TBD) *Registration required TBD*
May 28 *Registration required by Sun. May. 26*
June 25 *Registration required by Sun. June. 23*

July 23 *Registration required by Sun. July. 21*
August 27 *Registration required by Sun. Aug. 25.*
Sept. 24 *Registration required by Sun. Sept. 22*
October, November and December dates are TBA at this time.

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												Texas AgriLIFE Extension Service Harris County Office 713-274-0950 https://harris.agrilife.org/hort/	
		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Legend	
Planting times are for seeds unless otherwise noted															
Artichoke	Dormant Crowns									Transplants					
Asparagus (dormant crowns)	Dormant Crowns														
Beans - Snap & Lima (Butterbean)			Snap&Lima						Snap						
Beets															
Broccoli (transplants)															
Brussels Sprouts (transplants)															
Cabbage (transplants)															
Cabbage - Chinese (transplants)															
Carrots															
Cauliflower (transplants)															
Chard, Swiss															
Collards (transplants)															
Corn															
Cucumbers															
Eggplant (transplants)															
Garlic															
Kale (transplants)															
Kohlrabi (transplants)															
Leeks	Transplants									Seeds					
Lettuce - also Arugula, Mache, Sorrel															
Melon - Cantaloupe, Honeydew															
Mustard															
Okra															
Onion - bulbing	Transplants										Seeds				
Onion - multiplying/bunching															
Peas - English & Snap															
Peas - Southern															
Pepper (transplants)															
Potato - Irish (cut pieces)															
Potato - Sweet (slips)															
Pumpkin															
Radish															
Spinach															
Squash - Summer															
Squash - Winter															
Tomato															
Turnips															
Summer Greens - Malabar, Amaranth															
Watermelon															

Average Last Freeze Dates (Hobby 2/8, Bush 3/1) ↑ ↑ Average First Freeze Dates (Bush 11/30, Hobby 12/20) ↑ ↑
 Plants grown over winter may require protection during freezing weather. Seeds and transplants started in the heat of summer will benefit from shading during establishment.

Download the
 Vegetable Garden
 Planting Guide here!

TEXAS A&M AGRI LIFE EXTENSION

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HOUSTON, TX 77084

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

hcmga.tamu.edu

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The Harris County Master Gardeners as well as Texas A&M AgriLife Extension - Harris County Horticulture are actively participating on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram 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 to your account and easily share information with others. This is a definitely a timesaver for these busy garden days and helps promote our organization.



www.facebook.com/HarrisCountyMasterGardeners

www.facebook.com/HarrisCountyHorticulture



<https://twitter.com/pharrishort>



<https://www.instagram.com/harriscountymastergardeners>



Green Thumb Gardening Series

Herbs

March 14

Barbara Bush Library

6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

March 19

Spring Branch Memorial Library

6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

March 16

Maude Smith Marks Library

10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

March 21

Freeman Branch Library

6:30 – 8:30 p.m.