

MILBERGER LANDSCAPE & NURSERY

THE GARDENING NEWSLETTER FOR SOUTH CENTRAL TEXAS

MARCH 2015

PLANT QUESTIONS

My 3-year-old saucer magnolia does not flower. What can I do to make it flower? I suspect that patience is going to be the solution. Soulangiana (Saucer Magnolia) should bloom at age 3 to 5 years.

I am building a small garden 8'x 8' about 16" above ground. What mix of soil will be best suited for peppers? If you use native soil then you should condition it with a goodly amount of coarse sand and a lot of organic material such as compost. In the 16 inches, you should have about 6 inches of a good soil mixture like Lady Bug's Square Foot Gardening Blend.

Which type of grass to use around our new swimming pool? I assume that the area is in the full sun. If so, I recommend that one of the wide bladed zoysias be used. These zoysias can be maintained using a regular rotary mower.

If you have gardening or landscaping questions we have the answers. Just ask any of the friendly, knowledgeable, and experienced nursery staff at Milberger's Nursery.



A classic cut flower, **gladiolus** produces tall flower spikes adorned with large, showy flowers. Often relegated to the cutting garden, gladiolus also suits the back of the border where the tall flowers can complement bushier plants.

SPRING GARDENING EXPERTISE

Bold Gladiolus Color

By Dr. Jerry Parsons

Gladiolus can be planted most everywhere. They are especially impressive when combined with other summer annuals and perennials in the garden. They can be left alone to grow in rows, or brighten up a corner of the vegetable patch. Gladiolus are grown from bulb-like corms during the spring and summer. If you haven't tried growing gladiolus in recent years, then you're in for a pleasant surprise – and a real treat. Today's modern gladiolus and caladiums have been vastly improved in color, size, beauty, and performance.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE THREE)

Our web site and the email version of this newsletter contain many color photographs, how-to-do-it diagrams, more complete articles, links to many gardeners references and many more answers to your gardening and landscape questions. Visit www.MilbergerNursery.com to sign up. We respect your privacy and we will not share your address or information with anyone not associated with this newsletter.

MARCH GARDENING EVENTS

Thurs., Mar 12 – 6:30 pm
San Antonio Herb Society introduces Archi's Acres, to help train people in organic hydroponic herb growing. Free. San Antonio Garden Center, 3310 N New Braunfels. 210-826-6860

Sat., Mar 14., – 10:30 'til Noon
Spring Vegetables FREE Earth-Kind Educational Seminar presented by David Rodriguez, Extension Horticulturist for Texas A&M AgriLIFE Extension Service. At Milberger's. Free. (210) 497-3760

Sat., Mar 21 – 11 'til 3
Certified Rosarians from the San Antonio Rose Society will be at Milberger's Nursery to "Talk Roses" and help customers make rose selections, providing tips and free advice on growing roses in San Antonio. 210-658-8074

Sat., March 21 – 10am 'til 1:30 pm
Milberger's Blood Drive. An opportunity to give the gift of life. As a thank you, each donor will receive a \$10 Milberger Gift Certificate. In addition, all presenting donors will receive a gift from South Texas Blood and Tissue Center. 210-497-3760

Sat., Mar, 28 – 10am 'til 11am
Fun Facts About The Wonderful World of Insects. Kids Gardening Class at Milberger's presented by AgriLife Extension Service Entomology Department. Live lady bug release. For children 5 to 10. Free but call to reserve a spot because class size is limited. 210-497-3760

Find more Gardening Events – visit www.MilbergerNursery.com



To find us:
Take the Bulverde Exit off of Loop 1604. The entrance to Milberger's is next to the Valero gas station.

Milberger's Landscape Nursery

Open 9:00 to 6:00 Monday to Saturday
And 10:00 to 5:00 on Sundays

3920 North Loop 1604
San Antonio, TX 78247
(210) 497-3760

Or on the World Wide Web at
www.milbergernursery.com
nursery@milbergersa.com

Milberger's Nursery March Features

Milberger's Landscape Nursery ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

March 18th thru March 31st

Celebrated with weekly sales

Visit our website, and check our advertisements in the **San Antonio Express News** for our great anniversary sale items.

Get Paid to Plant a Tree with CPS Green Shade rebates

\$50 per Tree

UP TO FIVE TREES

Just ask one of the South Texas tree experts at Milberger's



LOOK for our new website



At the same place as our current website:
www.MilbergerNursery.com

**Watch for our weekly sale specials in
The San Antonio Express-News
or at
www.MilbergerNursery.com**

PlantAnswers on the air at KLUP (am 930)

Saturday and Sunday 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.
To have your gardening questions answered during show hours ONLY

Follow us



@milbergerssa

call
308-8867 or
1-866-308-8867

"LIKE" us



Facebook.com.milberger's nursery

SPRING GARDENING EXPERTISE

Gladiolus In Your Garden

(CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE)

Unlike other kinds of flowers, gladiolus take up very little space in your garden. You can plant one dozen or several dozen bulbs in a row, or group them in clusters for a massed effect. A small area devoted to gladiolus can produce a bounty of beautiful blooms.

In gladiolus, you'll find nearly any color to suit your fancy – from shades of pure white, cream, and pink to bizarre combinations of tan and brown. Or how about green or blue?

While the tall-growing, large-flowered types are extremely popular, the relatively new miniatures or tiny tots (as they are sometimes called) are creating excitement in the gardening world. They yield profuse numbers of spikes, 2 ½ to 3 feet tall, each with 15 to 20 dainty flowers measuring 2 to 2 ½ inches across.

No matter which gladiolus you prefer, be sure to choose quality bulbs. You'll be happier in the long run and when they bloom, you'll agree that you got your money's worth.

Where to plant:

Anywhere there is full

“Stagger your gladiolus by planting a few corms beginning in March and then again every two weeks until May. They can be grown in rows, or bunches and will tolerate a little crowding, but will grow bigger if given some room. Gladiolus grow wonderfully in South Texas' warm spring.”

— Heather Rhoades, GardeningKnowHow.com



If you want to experiment with bold color in your garden try **gladiolus**, which come in a vast range of hues.

sunlight most of the day, in a row or bed, or in clumps among other flowers and vegetables. Avoid planting them close to buildings or large trees.

Depth and distance

apart: Plant large bulbs 5 or 6 inches deep and about the same distance apart.

Cultivation and

watering: Keep well cultivated and weeded. Don't cultivate too deep or you may damage the root system. Use lots of water if drainage is good. Deep soakings are preferred to light sprinklings. Gladiolus prefer at least one inch of rainfall or supplemental watering per week. Don't underestimate the value of water to gladiolus. They need it to grow well.

You will find fresh stocks of blooming plants on sale at Milberger's Nursery through the spring. Watch for our weekly ads in the **San Antonio Express News** or you can keep an eye on our newly redesigned website at www.milbergernursery.com. Our website will also provide you with many tips and guidelines for gardening, lawn care, tree selection and water gardening in our part of Texas.

YOUR ROSE GARDEN

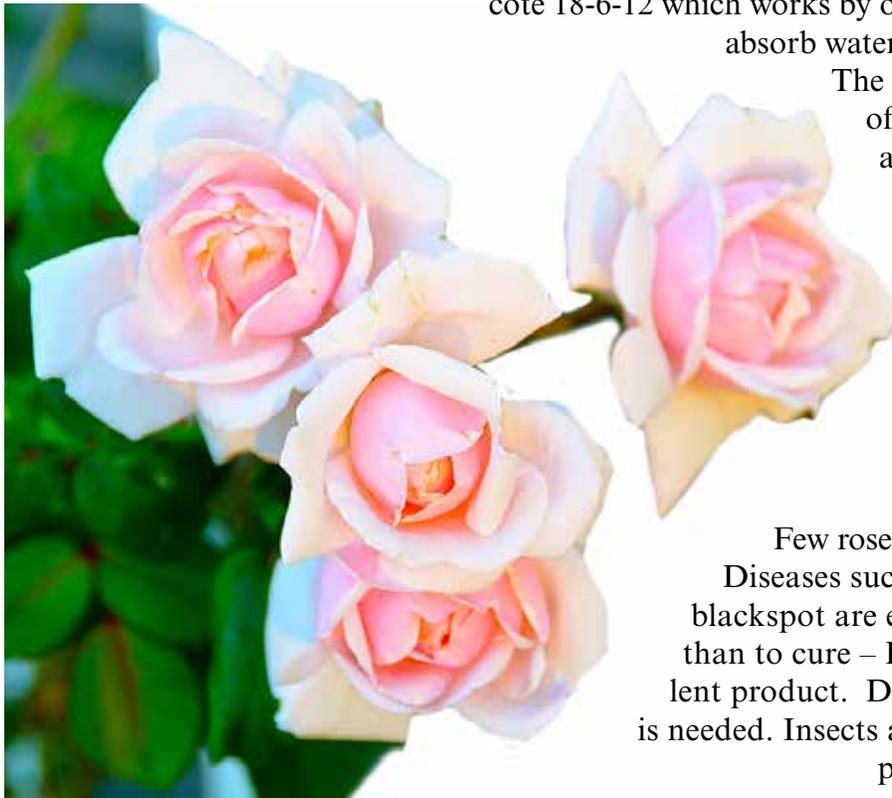
March Rose Care

By Jackie Clark, ARS Master Rosarian, San Antonio Rose Society

Notwithstanding our unusual winter weather our roses should already have been pruned – Spring Pruning should take place in our part of Texas around the third to fourth week of February. Ever-blooming climbers are usually pruned along with other types of roses whereas one-time bloomers, which bloom on old wood, are pruned after they bloom. After completion of pruning, it is very beneficial to spray with a Horticultural Oil – Rose Defense or Neem Oil – to smother “over-wintering” disease and insects (specifically scale), I usually repeat this application about 10 to 14 days later.

March thru October is the normal fertilization period. There are three methods of feeding – granular, water soluble and time release:

Granular is a 4 to 6 week application – one cupful of Milbergers Lawn Fertilizer (19-5-9 with Trace Elements) strewn in the 3 by 3 root zone of the bush gives dependable results. Medina Granular is an organic fertilizer which is showing promising results.



New Dawn rose is one of Texas AgriLife Extension’s recommended Earth Kind® Roses. This vigorous climber has an arching form and seems to be a bit more shade tolerant than other selections. New Dawn makes a stunning accent plant in the Spring.

Water soluble comes in several formulations to be applied every two weeks because it is fast acting, and also fast disappearing – about a gallon per bush in the same 3x3 area of bed.

Slow Release is a product something like Osmocote 18-6-12 which works by osmosis – the capsules absorb water and release fertilizer.

The lifespan of this type of fertilizer is only half as long as the label indicates due to our rather warm temperatures. This is an excellent fertilizer for container grown roses – apply at rate of 1 tbs per gallon of pot size.

Few roses are disease free. Diseases such as mildew and blackspot are easier to prevent than to cure – Fertilome is an excellent product. Do not mix more than is needed. Insects are typically not a problem at this time of year and will be discussed later. Beneficial Nematodes are supposedly an outstanding control of thrips, which attack not only roses but many other flowering plants as we get into summer temperatures.

Roses like water, but they don’t like wet feet – they like a soil that retains moisture but yet drains well. How much and how often is the most frequently asked question – the gardener has to be the judge.

VEGETABLE GARDENING

Growing San Antonio's Top Tomato

By Dr. Calvin Finch

It is too early to put your tomato transplants directly into the garden, but it is a good time to pot them up in 1-gallon containers so they will be large and ready for action by April 1.

Plant tomatoes in full sun with 3 to 4 feet between plants. The soil warms up enough about April 1. If you plant too early the plants harden off or even die back.

Potting up is the practice of buying transplants early and planting them in 1-gallon containers filled with high quality potting soil and Osmocote or other slow-release fertilizer for containers. Place the pots in a sunny location out of the wind. If temperatures are forecast to drop below 40 degrees F. in an evening, move the pots in the house.

Organic gardeners can also use the cage as a frame to drape Gro-Web or other agricultural fiber over the plant. Gro-Web, if sealed tight with clothespins, will exclude thrips and other insects from the plant. Thrips carry disease such as the spotted wilt virus. The fabric lets in the sun and also provides a few degrees of cold protection in case we receive a late freeze. Remove the fabric when the foliage fills out the cage. The plants are safe from the virus by then.

Tomatoes can be grown in containers as well as in the garden. A half

“Plant your tomato plants deeper than they come in the pot, all the way up to the top few leaves. When planted this way, tomatoes are able to develop roots all along their stems. And more roots will make for a stronger plant.”

— Marie Lannotti, Gardening Expert

whiskey barrel is ideal for one plant. If you use anything less they will have to be watered at least once per day. A 5-gallon container is the smallest recommended container. Fertilize tomatoes in containers once per week with a soluble (water dissolved) fertilizer.



Potting up allows you to take advantage of the short window of ideal fruit setting weather that we have in San Antonio. Tomatoes in the pots grow fast and should be in the bloom stage by April when they can be placed in the garden just in time to set fruit before the weather gets too warm. Keep your transplants off of the ground with trellises or cages.

Bring your tomatoes to Milberger's Top Tomato Contest held in June and you could win the award one of four categories. The contest is judged by an independent panel of experts and all entrant receive a Milberger's Gift Certificates. Watch our website for details: www.milbergernursery.com and our weekly ads in the *San Antonio Express-News*.

LAWNCARE

Preemergent Herbicide: A Matter of Timing

By D Hairlloyde, Freelance Writer and Casual Gardener

Weeds are the inevitable enemy of your lawn and will take over if nothing is done to stop them. A single weed may be capable of dropping thousands of seeds, and then you hit that weed with the lawn mower and those seeds are spread literally everywhere. If you have convinced yourself you don't have a single weed in your lawn, odds are your neighbor does, and a nice breeze will carry those weed seeds hundreds of yards where they can last upwards of 50 years just waiting for the right conditions to take root in your finely manicured lawn.

Fortunately for all of us, technology has lent us a hand at battling weeds. A quick application of a preemergent herbicide product and all those pesky weeds will lay dormant another year. A pre-emergent weed control product isn't a pre emergent weed killer. It keeps the weeds from growing which is why it's necessary for you to put down a pre emergent herbicide product every year.

When to apply pre emergent herbicides – simple: March 15th & September 15th. Basically you want to

control summer weeds and winter weeds. As soil temperature rise above 50°F the summer weeds begin to take root and begin growing. The major offenders, crabgrass and clover, will not emerge until the soil is consistently over 50°F. If you do live in a warmer area you may need to apply your pre emergent herbicide before March 15th, so it's not quite as simple as I first made it sound.

Late in the growing season the weeds begin to set new seed.

This is where you want to catch any late growth with the application in September. Remember keeping on top of the weeds will save you much time and aggravation next spring when the lawn mowing season begins again.

Application of a preemergent herbicide too early may cause the elements to dilute or wash away the herbicide and allow the weeds to grow uninhibited. Application of the herbicide after the weeds start to grow will not stop the growth since its already rooted.



That pesky perennial weed, **the dandelion**, got its name from those long, lance-shaped leaves. In Old French: Dent-de-lion means lion's tooth. While many people think of the common dandelion as a weed, herbalists find it a valuable herb with many culinary and medicinal uses. Dandelion is a rich source of beneficial vitamins and minerals. It has been used in salads, teas and wine.

MARCH GARDENING AND LAWCARE TIPS

The Gardeners Favorite Time for Planting

By Dr. Jerry Parsons

South Texas gardeners are ready to get those transplants into their places in the garden. The last frost of spring may have occurred but, even if it doesn't freeze, the wind will blow. Protect tender transplants and seedlings with a plant guard or windshield. Windshields help repel insects and unexpected cold (4 degree cold protection).

Plant: Plant hibiscus, bougainvillea, mandevilla and allamanda vines in containers for tropical landscape color. Impatiens, fibrous begonias and coleus are summertime favorites for shade. Perennials which can be planted now include perennial phlox such as 'John Fanick' and 'Victoria,' iris and daylilies. Roses can still be planted. March is a month to plant the gardener's favorite vegetables such as tomatoes. Put the containerized tomatoes in the ground towards the end of the month. Save some for April planting and a few for May in case of weather problems. In areas where space is limited you can plant your favorite flowers and vegetables in containers or hanging baskets.

Lawn care: Establish or renovate the lawn as needed. Re-sod or replant with turfgrasses

adapted to this part of Texas and suited to the planting location (shade or sun). In areas which receive shade where grass is difficult to grow, consider planting a dependable groundcover such as English ivy, Asian jasmine, vinca, or one of the prostrate junipers.

Fertilize: Use a pre-plant application of a slow-release fertilizer analysis such as 19-5-9 at the rate of 3 pounds per 100 square feet of garden planting area. Early March is the ideal time to fertilize landscape plants because you give them food just before the spring growing season starts.

On the lookout: Be on the lookout for a spectacular spring wildflower display. The spring months in South central Texas are perhaps best known for their Indian paintbrush, mountain laurel, winecup, pink evening primrose, prairie verbena, horsemint and, of course, the bluebonnets. Bluebonnets are actually "winter weeds," so to rid the lawn area of unwanted wildflowers, use a broad-leafed weed-killer spray or simply mow them. If a weed-killer is used, follow label directions carefully to avoid damage to desirable plants.

For more detailed and complete Gardening Tips from Jerry Parsons go to our newly redesigned website: **www.MilbergerNursery.com** and follow the newsletter link that reads "**Monthly Gardening Tips.**"

SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE FREE

Subscriptions to Milberger's Gardening Newsletter for South Central Texas are free, compliments of Milberger's Landscaping and Nursery. The newsletter is published at the beginning of each month.

TO RECEIVE this free newsletter, complete this form and return it to **Milberger's Nursery** or by calling (210) 497-3760. You can sign up on-line at **www.milbergernursery.com**.

We respect your privacy. Your name will not be shared with anyone not associated with Milberger Nursery.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____

EMAIL _____

Milberger's Landscape Nursery
3920 N Loop 1604 E
San Antonio, TX 78247

PRSRT STD
U. S. Postage
PAID
Kerrville, TX
Permit 89

Planning for a Water Garden?

Water Garden Kits ~ Koi ~ Water Plants



Lantana gives you clusters of brilliant flowers in yellow, orange, lavender and multi-colored flowers for sunny areas; attracts hummingbirds and butterflies; resists deer and is drought tolerant. It thrives in the full summer sun and heat, requiring little water once established, and can be used as a shrubby ground cover in dry, poor soil. It takes the blistering heat of summer to bring it into its own, covering the entire shrub with multi-colored flowers through the worst triple-digit heat.