

# MILBERGER LANDSCAPE & NURSERY

THE GARDENING NEWSLETTER FOR SOUTH CENTRAL TEXAS

JUNE 2017

## PLANT QUESTIONS

**Do daylilies do well in our area?** Daylilies are an excellent perennial for use in Central Texas landscapes. I especially like the large flowered orange, yellow, and rust colored selections. Daylilies are relatively drought tolerant and pest free other than deer and slugs and snails.

**Why are our live oak trees dropping leaves since the hot dry weather has started?** We have very poor, thin soil but the trees were very lush with all the rain. This is to be expected. The sandier and thinner the soil in your landscape, the quicker that a leaf drop in response to hot dry weather will occur. The trees make an adjustment in leaf load that is necessary but should be fine in the long run.

**When do we pull our spring tomato plants to make way for the fall crop?** Late June is a good time to pull the spring planted tomatoes. Plant the new transplants after mid-July.

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.

**Hummingbirds** relish salvias of all colors. These perennials flower in several colors, and there are salvias for spring, summer, or fall blooms.



## SUMMER GARDENING EXPERTISE

### Tough Summer Color

By Keith Hansen, A&M Extension Agent

One of the most diverse and useful groups of plants for summer color are the Salvias (sages). Native to many places in the world, including Texas, salvias have become a staple for garden designers creating long-lasting colorful beds. Garden-worthy salvias range from Texas-tough perennials to tender annuals that have been extensively bred for the bedding plant industry. Colors take on the rainbow, from purple to red, with blues, whites, and even yellow. Salvias are hot weather plants, most preferring full sun for best performance. Many salvias bloom non-stop from spring through first frost. An occasional shearing is recommended to keep most varieties more compact, resulting in a new burst of heavy blooming in just a few weeks or less.

(MORE SALVIAS 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](http://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.

## JUNE GARDENING EVENTS

**Sat., Jun 3 – 10am 'til 1:30pm**

**Milberger's Blood Drive.** Take advantage of this opportunity to give the gift of life. South Texas Blood and Tissue Center will be conducting our next scheduled Blood Drive this Saturday. Milberger's will offer a \$10 gift certificate to each person willing to donate.

**Sat., Jun 10 – starts at 10:30am**

**Summer Color with Texas SuperStars™ FREE Earth-Kind Seminar** with Extension Horticulturist David Rodriguez. Learn what you can do to keep your garden beds blooming throughout the heat of the summer, how to attract butterflies and humming birds and how to prepare your landscape for summer heat. At Milberger's Nursery. 210-497-3760.

**Sat., Jun 17 – judging at 12:15pm**

**Milberger's Top Tomato and Best Salad Bowl Contest.** Your homegrown tomatoes and garden produce could be winners. And all entries get a \$10 gift certificate. See our web site for rules and details. 210-497-3760.

**Sat., Jun 24 – 10am 'til 11:00am**

**Birds of Prey** at Milberger's June Kids Class. Your kids will enjoy this dramatic, close-up educational experience with Texas predatory birds. Raptor handlers from the Birds of Prey Conservancy will give your kids an educational experience they will not forget. Kids Class are designed for children 5 to 10. Classes are free but call to reserve a spot because class size is limited: 210-497-3760.

**Find more Gardening Events – visit  
[www.MilbergerNursery.com](http://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](http://www.milbergernursery.com)  
[nursery@milbergersa.com](mailto:nursery@milbergersa.com)

## Milberger's Nursery June Features

# Summer is here.

**School is out. Days are longer.** So it's time to pour yourself a **LONG GLASS OF ICED TEA** and enjoy your garden and landscape.



## Milberger's Popular TOP TOMATO CONTEST



Your homegrown tomatoes could be **BIG WINNERS**. Bring the best from your garden to the nursery **June 17 – before noon**

### 5 CATEGORIES:

**Cherry and Smaller Tomatoes ~ Regular Tomatoes ~ BIGGEST TOMATO** (based on weight) ~ **BEST OF SHOW GRAND CHAMPION ~ Best Salad Bowl**

Every one who enters receives a **\$10.00 Milberger Gift Certificate**  
CONTEST RULES AT THE NURSERY OR ON OUR WEBSITE

**Shade Trees**

**Palm Trees.**

**Ornamental Trees.**

**Shrubs**



Fresh well-rooted trees for the San Antonio area. Visit our tree lot and select a species that is well adapted for our growing area.

**Watch for our weekly sale specials in  
The San Antonio Express-News  
or at  
[www.MilbergerNursery.com](http://www.MilbergerNursery.com)**

**Gardening South Texas 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

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Our Writers have the answers: **Dr. Jerry Parsons** is a well known Horticulture Specialist who is retired from the Texas AgriLife Extension Service in San Antonio; **Dr. Calvin Finch** is the retired Director of Water Conservation and Technology at the Texas A&M University System. The Gardening Newsletter for South Central Texas is edited by Marc Hess at [mhess@hctc.coop](mailto:mhess@hctc.coop).

## SUMMER GARDEN EXPERTISE

# Salvias for Your Landscape

(CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE)

Salvias are in the mint family, all of which have a characteristic square stem. And many are strongly scented, including common culinary sage and pineapple sage. Flowers of many varieties are borne on flower spikes held above the foliage. Most salvias, whether red or blue, are very attractive to hummingbirds and butterflies.

Many of the native perennial *Salvia* species are drought tolerant once established, but most will need regular water to look their best. However, do not over-water or over-fertilize, or floppy plants will result.

There are many other varieties and exciting new hybrids of *Salvia* in the trade, but these two should be easy to find and are proven performers in the garden.

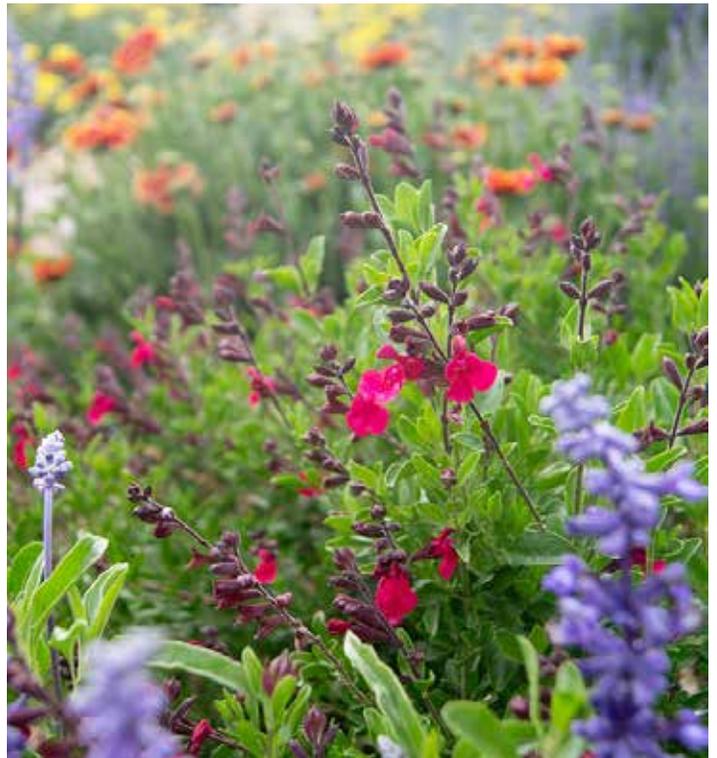
The genus *Salvia* probably got its common name “sage” from the Mediterranean herb *Salvia officinalis*, known the world over for its medicinal and culinary values.



**Mealy-cup** or **blue sage** is a South and Central Texas native with spikes of blue flowers that bloom all summer, growing about 3 feet tall. Like many salvias, it looks best if cut back once or twice during the summer.

“Place tall salvias in front of evergreen shrubs; mass them for incredible impact; spot them around in an herb garden to complement the mostly green garden. One of the most delightful aspects of salvias is that they attract butterflies and hummingbirds.”

~ Jerry Parsons, Bexar County Horticulturist



While blue is the predominant color in the species salvias come in a wide range of colors like the Autumn sage (*Salvia greggii*) shown here behind the blue Mealy-cup salvia. **Autumn sage** is really misnamed because it blooms spring through fall. While most perennial salvias are herbaceous perennials, freezing to the ground each winter and returning from the roots, Autumn sage is partly evergreen and semi-woody. Autumn sage needs full sun and excellent drainage to do best, and is very drought tolerant. Flowers colors include the most common red form, plus white, pink, rose, purple and orange.

Milberger's new butterfly garden has been certified by the North American Butterfly Association. Stop by and see exactly how you can transform a portion of your landscape into a beautiful haven for butterflies and hummingbirds. You can also find our weekly sale items on our web site at [www.milbergernursery.com](http://www.milbergernursery.com).

## SUMMER LAWCARE

# Nematodes to the Rescue

By Nathan Riggs, SAWS project coordinator

Spring is well underway and warm temperatures are getting many insects into the swing of their life cycle. For fleas, white grubs and fungus gnats, the crucial part of the life cycle occurs in the warm, moist soil during the larval and pupal stages.

White grubs feed on the roots of grasses and plants from late May through August or September before going deeper in the soil during fall and winter. Flea larvae develop in the soil where pets sleep and lounge. Fungus gnats become a problem for indoor container plants that have been overwatered by their owners.

Both of these insect stages are vulnerable to a natural and living predator that's available to purchase: beneficial nematodes.

Adequate soil moisture is a must. It doesn't have to be wet, just moist. Nematodes are so tiny that they need to be able to swim in the moisture that occurs between soil particles. Dry soil results in poor nematode survival and performance.

Measure the area to be treated and be sure to purchase enough nematodes per label directions.

Time of treatment is crucial: apply nematodes in late evening when sunlight is low and soil temperatures are cooling down. Grubs will be higher in the soil and flea larvae will be active.

For container plants, mix the recommended amount of nematodes with a gallon of water and water them into the potting soil. Only water container plants when the soil is dry down to about 1 inch deep.



You can't see them but they killed these grubs. **Beneficial nematodes** are microscopic soil worms that can be purchased at Milberger's Nursery and watered into the lawn to attack white grubs, flea larvae, fungus gnats and other insects (like termites) in the soil. They are harmless to humans, plants and pets. Nematodes are a living organism and must be treated with care by keeping them out of sunlight and extreme heat.

Note about termites: termites are found everywhere. They're in every yard and doing their job as nature intended: eating and breaking down cellulose and wood in the soil. Termites find houses because there is wood to soil contact at the house, or a trail of water (usually a leak or dripping outside faucet) in the soil that leads them

to the house. While a nematode yard treatment for termites won't likely result in termite colony death, a treatment of nematodes around the house foundation may reduce termite numbers locally.

## NEW TEXAS SUPERSTAR®

# Victoria Red grapes

By Adam Russell

Texas grape growers face various obstacles, including disease, but an established variety has been recognized for its resilience, vigor and productivity as both an ornamental and edible plant – the Victoria Red grape. After years of field trails around the state, Victoria Red grapes have been named a 2017 Texas Superstar plant by Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service.

The Victoria Red grape has grown successfully in the Victoria area for more than three decades and has succeeded where other grape varieties fell short because of their susceptibility to disease, said Dr. Larry Stein, AgriLife Extension horticulturist in Uvalde.

The variety is a seeded grape with both large berries and clusters that are attractive and long with a bright red skin color, according to the Texas Superstar promotion literature. Average cluster weights at Tarkington Vineyards exceeded one pound.

“Victoria Red fits the bill for a Texas Superstar® plant. It’s tolerant to disease, productive and fruit quality is high. It requires a little management but is a very well-adapted plant with great aesthetics and flavor.”

~ Dr. Larry Stein, AgriLife Extension Horticulturist

Stein said clusters can reach 1 foot in length and berries are typically the size of 50-cent pieces.



The most significant characteristic of **Victoria Red** is its sustained health, vigor and productivity in the coastal area of Texas, which has extremely high Pierce’s disease pressure.

“The Victoria Red has been growing around Victoria for more than three decades and there are many more grape varieties that have been introduced in that area that have died due to Pierce’s,” he said. “It’s a great variety for Texas and has strong aesthetic characteristics as an ornamental plant and as an edible table fruit.”

The variety does best in well-drained soil with full sun and when spaced widely, 8-10 feet apart, said Stein. The plant may require iron chelate in high

pH soils. Victoria Red will grow luxuriantly, and it’s best not to over-fertilize the plant and prune to keep in bounds each year, he said. Bare root plant the variety in early winter or plant container-grown plants in early spring.

You can find Victoria Red grapes at Milberger’s Nursery while supplies last. Texas Superstars® are plants that undergo extensive tests by AgriLife Extension horticulturists and are selected by a board for their ability to perform well for consumers and growers. Find our weekly sale items on our web site [milbergernursery.com](http://milbergernursery.com) or look for our ads in the **San Antonio Express-News**.

## TREES AND SHRUBS

# Summer Satisfaction with Crepe Myrtles

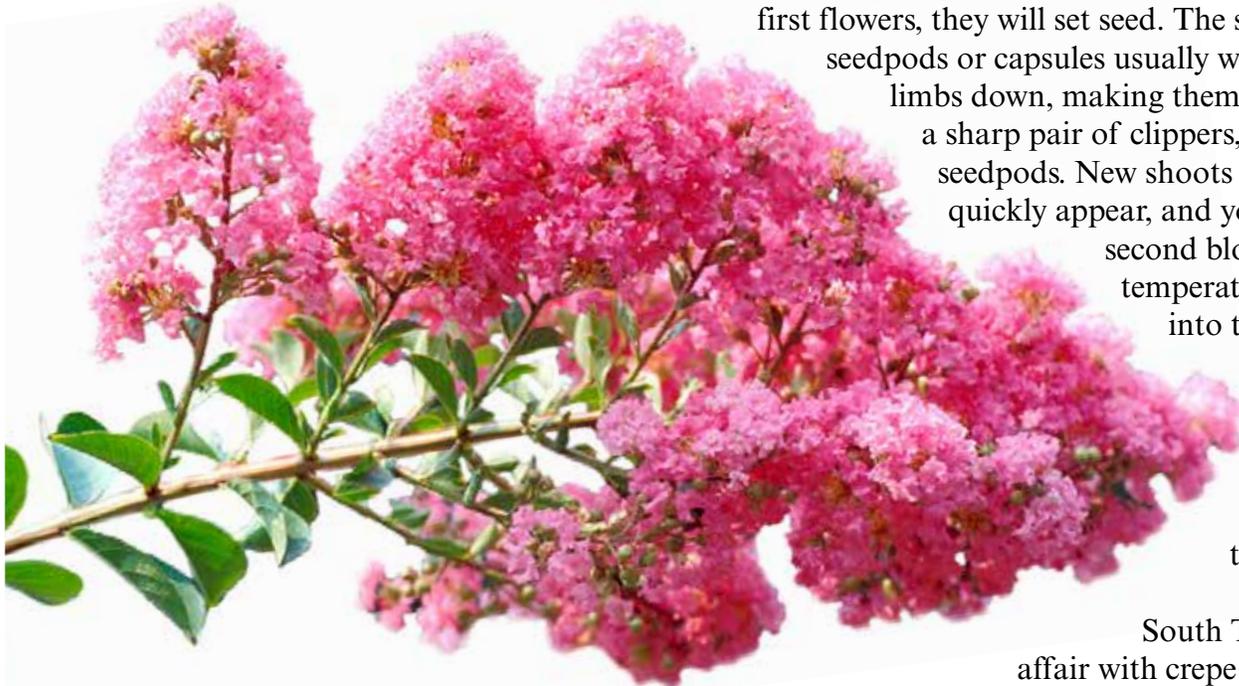
Few plants can match the combination of spectacular summer flowers, colorful autumn foliage, and handsome sculptural trunks of crepe myrtles. Seeing a crepe myrtle in its full summer splendor sends some of us running to the garden shop to buy a plant the same color. Make sure that the stock you buy is not only the exact color that you want, but also the right size and look you hope to achieve. Crepe myrtles range in size from miniature selections that grow less than 3 feet tall to several that reach upwards of 30 feet. Knowing the mature height of a plant before you buy it and planting the proper size for the site will save you much heartache and backache in the future.

Crepe myrtles have many landscape uses. Planted together, they make a large deciduous hedge or screen. A single tree can create a distinctive focal



point, while a pair framing a front door greets visitors with a warm Southern welcome.

Once crepe myrtles have bloomed and shed their first flowers, they will set seed. The small round seedpods or capsules usually weigh the limbs down, making them sag. Using a sharp pair of clippers, cut off the seedpods. New shoots with buds will quickly appear, and you will get a second bloom. If the temperatures stay warm into the fall and you continue to remove spent flowers, you may get a third or fourth.



Some **crepe myrtles** will bloom with large clusters of flowers in May, while other varieties wait until July or later. Blooms may continue well into the fall. After the flowers fade and fall from the tree the fruit can be cut from the plant to stimulate more blooms.

South Texas' love affair with crepe myrtles is undeniable. In some areas, you see them on practically every street—and for good reason.

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Milberger's has the largest selection of fresh, well-rooted trees in the area. Our South Texas landscape and tree experts can give you advice on which A&M recommended trees would be most suitable for your landscape. Visit our web site at [www.milbergernursery.com](http://www.milbergernursery.com) and click through to our on-line tree lot for section and planting guidelines.

## JUNE GARDENING AND LAWCARE TIPS

# Enjoying Your Summer Garden

By Dr. Jerry Parsons

June is the time to pour yourself a long glass of iced tea and enjoy your garden and landscape. For color, firebush is a favorite hummingbird plant and lantanas are a great butterfly bush. Lantanas are deer resistant.

**Plant** vincas in full sun. Shade plants include coleus, caladiums, firespike and begonias. Leave the bougainvilleas in full sun and fertilize them regularly with hibiscus food or soluble fertilizer. Moss rose and purslane are showy all month long in full sun. Remove spent flowers from perennials for more blooms. Don't let the weeds get ahead of you.

**Shade Trees and Shrubs.** Your established trees and bushes should do well without supplemental watering. Newly planted trees, however, need deep watering by hand when the soil dries to one inch. Remember to mulch 4 inches deep around new trees so that they don't have to compete with grass. There are a large number of salvias available. Most species are deer resistant in some neighborhoods and drought tolerant. Keep them compact by shearing. Crape myrtles reach full bloom in June. Deadhead spent flowers for more bloom.

**Vegetables.** Harvest your vegetables on a regular basis to keep quality high. You can still plant southern peas, eggplant, and okra for mid-summer vegetables.

**Lawn care:** Irrigate the lawn grass only if it hasn't rained in the last two weeks, and then no more than 3/4 inch of water on the St. Augustine, less for Zoysia, Bermuda, and Buffalo. Water only the most important part of your lawn and let the rest go dormant until we get rain. Keep the mower blade sharp.

**On the Lookout:** Aphids on tender, young foliage; lacebugs on pyracantha, lantana and sycamore; bagworms on junipers; stinkbugs on fruit and vegetable plants; webworms on pecan trees. Chinch bugs can appear in St. Augustine lawns anytime from now through late summer.

**Odd Jobs:** Use mulch generously around (but not piled on the trunks) trees, shrubs and landscape and garden plants. Apply sufficient moisture to soak the soil to a depth of 6 to 8 inches. Watering early in the day is preferred to early evening or mid-day.

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.**

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The bowl-shaped blooms of **Pride of Barbados** always catch the eye. The blooms of Pride of Barbados shine in hot weather with terminal flower clusters showing an orange-red with a tinge of gold on the edges. Easy to grow in alkaline well-drained soils the Pride of Barbados one of the most attractive heat loving plants in the San Antonio area.

