

MILBERGER LANDSCAPE & NURSERY

THE GARDENING NEWSLETTER FOR SOUTH CENTRAL TEXAS

JUNE 2018

PLANT QUESTIONS

There are little suckers coming up at the base of my live oak trees. Can I cut them without fearing oak wilt? Those are root sprouts. You can mow them with the lawn mower or string mower. Research indicates the cuts are not an entry for oak wilt spores because the cuts are close to the ground and very small diameter.

If I collect the seed pods from my sweet peas can I plant them next fall?

Yes, collect the full-size seed pods once they show some browning. Place them in a paper sack. When dry the pods will release the seed into the bag.

I grow my peppers in large pots and so far I've gotten good production. Then

almost overnight my plants leaves have started turning yellow. The plants could have gotten water-logged. Fertilization of vegetable crops (pepper) in pots should be more than ornamentals where you just want to keep the plant green and growing slowly.

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.



You can't beat **portulaca** (moss rose) if you are looking for a colorful, low-growing plant or temporary ground cover. They are perfect for sunny borders, pots and hanging baskets as well. Brilliant, glossy flowers will form a carpet of color over attractive, spreading plants. This easy-to-grow plant is excellent in hot, dry, sunny spots and is often grown in rock gardens, walls, hanging baskets, between stepping stones, and as edging.

SOUTH TEXAS SUMMER GARDENING EXPERTISE

Bright and Colorful Summer Gardens

By the time the first day of summer officially arrives on June 20, we should be well into the hot, sticky 90s on a regular basis. After that it's the dog days. But that doesn't mean that you have to settle for a drab landscape. There are plenty colorful summer blooming choices for your garden beds, patio containers and landscape. June is the month for gardeners to adjust accordingly and look for those plants that not only survive, but thrive in our tropical heat. The pansies and snapdragons you put in for spring are done. If they're not dead already, go ahead and take them out to free up space for some summer color that will take you through to pumpkin season.

(MORE SUMMER COLOR 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.

JUNE GARDENING EVENTS

Sat., Jun 9 – Judging Starts at Noon
Milberger’s Top Tomato Contest. Bring your finest homegrown tomatoes and/or a bowl filled with your best garden vegetables to Milberger’s before noon and yours may be selected a winner in one of five categories. Every entrant will receive a free \$10 gift certificate redeemable at Milbergers on the day of the contest only. 210-497-3760.

Sat., Jun 9 – Starts at 10:30am
Adult seminar Growing Texas Superstars™ for Summer Color. You can 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. Presented by David Rodriguez, Extension Horticulturist for TexasA&M AgriLIFE Extension Service. David will answer your specific questions about your gardening issues. Bring a notebook. 210-497-3760.

Sat Jun 30 – 10 ’til 11am
Birds of Prey. One of our most popular Kids Classes at Milberger’s. 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 and educational experience they will not forget. Milberger’s Kids Gardening Classes are free and but be sure to call to reserve your 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.

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 Open 9:00 to 6:00 Monday to Saturday
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 (210) 497-3760
 Or on the World Wide Web at
 www.milbergernursery.com
 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 9– 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 out 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

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
 call
 210-308-8867 or
 1-866-308-8867
 Follow us @milbergerssa
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Our Writers have the answers: **Dr. Jerry Parsons** is a well renown 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.

SOUTH TEXAS SUMMER GARDENING EXPERTISE

Summer Color

(CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE)

When choosing plants that will get through a South Texas summer native plants are a good place to start, mainly because being native means they are genetically accustomed to the conditions of this area and will do well. Purple coneflower and black-eyed Susan are popular drought-tolerant natives that add bright color spots to any garden, either in the ground or in pots. Texas lantana is another native that provides yellow-gold blooms in a spreading bush that's knee high or taller. Turk's cap



Lantanas come in many versions and colors. 'Popcorn' is a mounding variety with an off-white color. 'New Gold' is an aggressive spreader. 'Samantha' has a light green leaf with some variegation and a lemon-yellow flower. It mounds but is more upright than 'Popcorn'. Spreading lavender is less aggressive than 'New Gold' that makes a very low groundcover. It also comes in white.

There are several upright lantanas as well that offer bicolor flowers including pink and white, yellow and white, and carmine and orange. Lantana blooms are a favorite of hummingbirds and butterflies. Deer in most situations pass up the plants. Use most lantanas in full sun. The lavender does seem to tolerate some shade.

“Take advantage of the relatively mild days of early June to plant these hot weather bloomers. All the rest of the summer you will enjoy the color without excessive water.”

~ Calvin Finch, retired Director of Water Conservation and Technology at The Texas A&M

is a flowering bush native to Mexico and Texas that produces red blooms with overlapping petals that look like a fez; hence, the plant's name. It does well in shade or partial shade but also can take the hot temps, no problem, and will draw hummingbirds.



Esperanza (Texas Bells) is another hot weather bloomer. In many neighborhoods deer do not eat the lush green foliage or yellow tubular flowers. On most sites it is a root hardy perennial that reaches five or six feet in the summer after freezing back in the winter. In sheltered locations esperanza grows to a small tree.

Anyone who has seen this plant in bloom can understand why one of its names is Yellow bells, as it produces great, attention-grabbing, yellow blossoms. In recent years, it has become a popular landscaping plant, valued as much for its drought-tolerance as for its spectacular appearance. The flowers have an odd but pleasing fragrance and also provide nectar for bees.

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. Texas Superstars are readily available at Milberger's Nursery where you will frequently find them among our weekly on sale items. Find our weekly sale items on our web site milbergernursery.com.

YOUR SUMMER VEGETABLE GARDEN

It's Not Over Yet

As the cool season ends and the warm season approaches, it's time to switch things up in your vegetable garden and grow new crops. Summers are hot, with the temperatures from June to September averaging 90 degrees or above. Whether you're a seasoned or beginning gardener, you'll find a variety of vegetables to please your palate and fit your summer garden. Summer garden vegetables are planted throughout the summer months and are ready for harvest during the fall.

Beans make a healthy addition to summer salads and side dishes. Beans are easily grown from seeds, and require between 40 and 60 days to maturity. Plant fava beans throughout the summer months. Runner beans are best planted during the months of June and July.

Eggplant and Tomatoes: The time to plant eggplant is usually during the late spring. However, eggplant grows well when planted through the month of June. They are best grown from seedlings rather than seeds. Similarly,

tomatoes grow well from seedlings when planted throughout the month of June. Both these crops require between 60 and 80 days before they begin to produce. Tomatoes and eggplants are members of the nightshade plant family. Do not place these two in the same planting space.

Carrots, Cucumber and Corn: The month of June lends itself to growing cucumbers and sweet corn.

Sweet corn takes between 60 and 95 days to reach maturity. Slicing cucumbers take approximately 60 to 75 days, while the pickling varieties require 50 to 60 days.

Peppers, Pumpkins and Squash: Peppers add flavor and spice to your summer vegetable garden.

Peppers are best grown from seedlings. While most peppers are planted during the spring, planting can continue up through the month of June to ensure fresh peppers all summer long. Start summer squashes in your garden as early as May, but also planted throughout the months of June and July.



Harvest time brings the reward of planting and caring for your vegetable crops. For best flavor, harvest vegetables when they are mature. A vegetable's full flavor develops only at peak maturity, resulting in the excellent taste of vine-ripened tomatoes, tender green beans and crisp, flavorful lettuce. For maximum flavor and nutritional content, harvest the crop the day it is to be canned, frozen or eaten.

Milberger's Top Tomato Contest is June 9th. Bring your finest homegrown tomatoes and/or a bowl filled with your best garden vegetables to Milberger's Nursery before noon and fruits of your garden may be selected a winner in one of five categories: Every entrant will receive a free \$10 gift certificate redeemable at Milbergers on the day of the contest only. Judging Starts at Noon.

LANDSCAPE IDEAS

Ornamental Grasses Give Landscapes Relaxed Look

By Keith Hansen, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

Landscapers have long used grasses for their striking architectural qualities and rhythm. Until recently gardeners have been slower to adopt the widespread use of grass for the landscape design. This may be due to the fact that, traditionally, Americans are used to thinking of landscape plants as round (or squared-off) balls of green, perhaps accented with bright flowers. Grasses, after all, are what we walk on, and are so commonly seen in meadows and pastures in the countryside.

But recently as wildflowers and native plants have become more popular and formal, squared-off

“If you need plants that can stand up to heavy traffic, urban conditions and also make an impression, that’s a tall order. One type of plant that fits the bill is ornamental grass. This foliage option will give your landscape texture, color and lively movement.”

~Ben Collinsworth, Native Land Design

landscape designs gave way to more naturalistic curves and flowing lines.

Ornamental grasses make very striking accents, and thus it might be more difficult to imagine using them in a more formal landscape setting. But, use of ornamental grasses is increasing, and more varieties are now available in garden centers and through mail order. Ornamental grasses can be used in a variety of ways.

Ornamental grasses vary in their mature height (some get very tall) and in other growth habits, so learn all you can about any variety you might consider introducing into your landscape. Many are bunch grasses, but some types have underground stems called rhizomes (just like bermuda grass and bamboo) and can invade neighboring plants. Vigorous rhizomatous spreading types, like *Phalaris* (ribbon grass) work well for erosion control and for larger settings where their spreading can be tolerated. Also use them in constricted areas like between the sidewalk and street where they will be contained.



In South Central Texas **Inland Sea Oats** (*Chasmanthium latifolium*) is a favorite grass for shade or part shade. It is perennial, growing to two to four feet tall. It has graceful, drooping foliage with the "oats" on the end, very decorative.

Looking for turf grass? Visit Milberger’s sample lawn areas. You are invited to examine and walk on these sample lawn areas to help you determine the look and feel of the turf you prefer. We also have information and specification sheets on the different sods. Visit www.milbergernursery.com.

TREES AND SHRUBS

Texas Lilac Vitex, A Hot Summer Texas Superstar™

By David Rodriguez, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Agent for Bexar County

Horticulturists from Texas A&M's Superstar™ program developed the Texas Lilac Vitex to mimic the lilacs that grow up north but thrive in our southern climates. Texas Lilac Vitex goes by several other names: Mexican lavender, lilac chaste tree, hemp tree, sage tree, monk's pepper, Indian spice or Vitex.

The bloom spikes on these improved selections are not only large and beautiful; they also are fragrant and provide long-lasting cut flowers. However, after the bloom spikes have provided several weeks of spectacular beauty, many aromatic black or dark-brown seeds are produced. Not only do these seeds prevent a profusion of additional bloom

spikes, they may, in some regions of the state, produce a seedling population that will not have the same characteristics as the original plant and become a nuisance.

Vitex grows best when planted in full sun and in a location that drains well. It will grow well in all



If you are looking for a tough, yet gorgeous, shrub or small tree that attracts butterflies, bees and hummingbirds then at **Texas Vitex** will suit your landscape. This versatile plant can be trained as a large shrub or small multi-trunked tree about 10 to 15 feet tall and wide. Shoal Creek vitex is more vigorous and produces larger flowers and deeper color than common vitex.

The older selections of Vitex had small spikes of flowers which were pale lilac, mauve, off-white or light pink. The blooms were small and, for the most part, unattractive. Horticulturists now have identified and tested improved selections such as "Montrose Purple," "LeCompte," and "Shoal Creek" which have spikes as long as 8 to 12 inches. All of these selections will be marketed under the name of Texas Lilac Vitex.

areas of Texas, in both acid and alkaline soils. It prospers in hot and dry environments. The Texas Department of Transportation recognizes its toughness, and plants Vitex in highway medians. It is a spectacular butterfly-attracting plant and is deer resistant in that deer will not eat it, although they can damage it with their antlers if it is allowed to grow very large.

JUNE GARDENING TIPS

Planting for Summer Color

By Dr. Jerry Parsons

June is the time to pour yourself a long glass of ice 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.

Lawncare: 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 (except for Floratam St. Augustine which is chinch bug resistant) 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 for this month visit www.MilbergerNursery.com.

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.

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Bouganvillea is the premiere patio plant for full sun in San Antonio. It is very colorful, relatively easy to grow and very heat tolerant. Grow bouganvillea in full sun at the hottest location in your landscape. Bouganvillea is one of the few plants that is actually easier to grow in a container than in the ground.