

MILBERGER LANDSCAPE & NURSERY

THE GARDENING NEWSLETTER FOR SOUTH CENTRAL TEXAS

JULY 2018

PLANT QUESTIONS

Our "New Gold" lantana has quit blooming and the leaves look dusty. Is it a fungus? The symptoms sound like those caused by lacebugs on lantana. The recommended treatment is to cut the lantana back and treat them with acephate or another systemic insecticide.

Which are the tough roses we can grow without having to spray every week? Consider Belinda's Dream, Grandma's Yellow, Katy Road (Carefree Beauty) and Knockout. All of the roses on the list qualify as Xeriscape plants in that they can survive with very little water. All, however bloom better with regular irrigation.

What is the most efficient way to water vegetable and flower gardens? Drip irrigation slowly places the water right on the root system. That is why it is so efficient.

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.



Among the varieties of cacti that thrive in South Texas, **Mammillaria sphaerica**, stands out as a great bloomer. When this clustering cacti is in bloom, you can barely see the plant beneath the lemon-yellow flowers. When not in bloom, the plant is equally intriguing. Native to warm and humid southern Texas and northeastern Mexico the mammillaria is tolerant of humidity and a reasonable amount of summer irrigation, but good drainage is a must.

SUMMER GARDENING EXPERTISE

Cacti: A Different Kind of Color

As hot and dry as the summers in Texas are, some people wonder if there is anything that is really easy to grow during the dog days of July through September. For those of you who want to grow a low maintenance plant, you may want to consider cactus. Cacti and succulents are some of the strangest yet most artful sculptural species of plants on the planet. Environmentally speaking, they are great for a native garden, where water conservation is given top consideration. For those of you who live in apartments, these make a great addition to your balcony. They grow excellent in pots so no huge yard is needed. Some cactus and succulent types can be used as pot plants. These include Aloe Vera and Echeverias. Larger-growing cactus and succulents, such as Yuccas, make dramatic floor plants with heights from three to ten feet or more. Cacti are native only to the Americas. (MORE CACTI 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.

JULY GARDENING EVENTS

Sat., Jun 30 – 10 'til 11am

Milberger's Kids Gardening Class *Birds of Prey.*

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 we provide all the materials but be sure to call to reserve your spot because class size is limited. 210-497-3760

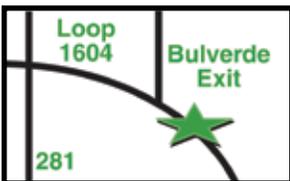
Wed., July 4 – 5:30 'til 9:30

Fourth of July Fireworks at the San Antonio Botanical Garden, a perfect spot to celebrate the Fourth of July with friends and family on the lush grounds of the Garden. Picnics, blankets, and lawn chairs welcome. General admission applies (\$12-\$9). SABOT members enjoy this event for free. 555 Funston. 210-536-1400

Sat., July 28 – 10 'til 11am

Texas Butterflies at Milberger's Kids Gardening Class. Despite their small size, butterflies and moths are some of the World's most wondrous animals. Their beauty, seemingly miraculous metamorphosis, and apparently carefree flight all spark our imaginations. Milberger's Kids Gardening Classes are free and we provide all the materials 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.

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
July Features**



**MILBERGER'S
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★ **and Safe** ★

Independence Day

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JULY
FEATURES GREAT
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**ANNUAL AND PERENNIAL COLOR:
BLOOMING TROPICAL HIBISCUS
and BOUGAINVILLEA are
ABSOLUTELY BEAUTIFUL
AND LOVE SOUTH TEXAS WEATHER.**

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Select BEAUTIFUL COMBINATIONS
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of **blooming color** at Milberger's
Nursery where you will find plants that are



**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

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SUMMER GARDENING EXPERTISE

Cacti

(CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE)

What kind of cacti or succulent you select depends on where you plan to grow them. They grow well on a brightly light windowsill, planted in rocky soil. They grow wonderfully well interspersed with flowering natives in the ground. And if planting among other bushes, be sure and build a small mound for them to grow on. They don't like to hang out in water, so to speak. Some succulents will crawl along the floor like ground cover, while other cacti will grow

“Cacti are a group of plants that are not only easy to grow, but offer a variety of shapes, color and form. They can be grown in any sunny, well-drained area. They require little maintenance. They make excellent houseplants and many hardy varieties may be grown outside.”

~ Jerry Parsons, Bexar County Horticulturist

vertical like a pole-shaped sculpture. Talk to a knowledgeable attendant at your local nursery, and be sure to let them know where you intend to grow them in order to find the best selection for your needs.



Cacti and succulents are some of the strangest yet most artful sculptural species of plants on the planet. Environmentally speaking, they are great for a native garden, where water conservation is given top consideration. For those of you who live in apartments, these make a great addition to your balcony. They grow excellent in pots so no huge yard is needed.

Plant cacti and succulents in well-draining soil. Their roots prefer to stay dry. The trick is not to over-water them, otherwise you will drown their roots, and they'll rot. Water twice a month if they're in pots, and if they're growing in the ground, let them be.

While many cacti can handle eight hours of full-blazing sun, many delicate succulents do not thrive in desert-like sun exposure. When they get too much sun, their leaves burn. Rotate the pot from time to time so their shape remains straight instead of at an arc. Experiment and find the best place for your plants. If your cactus or succulent is doing great, don't move it.

To spice up your summer landscape with dramatic summer color visit our nursery where you will find Texas ® plants that will thrive in your summer landscape. Take a look at our web site www.milbergnursery.com or look for our ads in the **San Antonio Express-News** to find which plants are on sale.

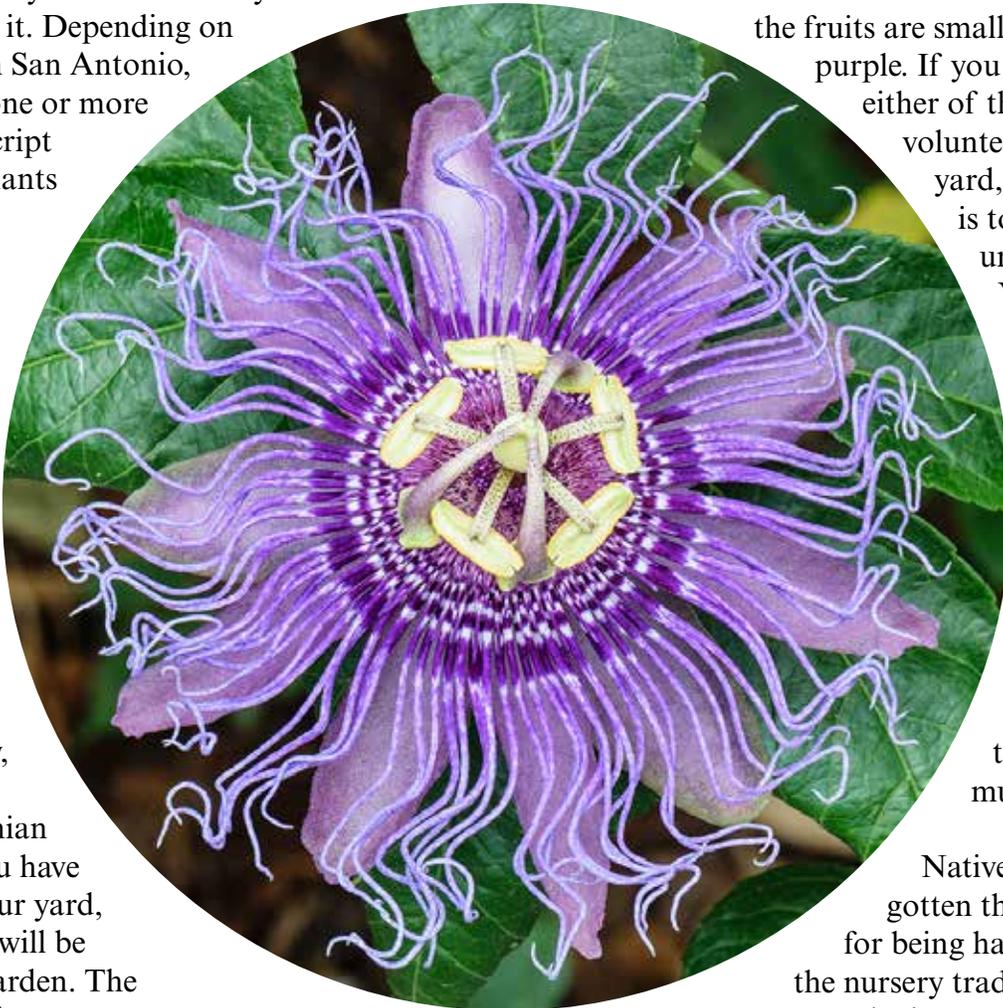
SUMMER COLOR

Get Passionate About Passionflower

By Cleveland Powell, SAWS Conservation Consultant

If you've seen a boastfully bright orange butterfly beating about your bushes, you might have a passionflower vine hiding in plain sight. In fact, depending on where you live in San Antonio, you might discover several of these stealthy pollinator plants loitering around your yard. Sometimes, uninvited guests can actually be helpful. That's the case with the passionflower vines that may currently be coexisting with your shrubs and you don't even know it. Depending on where you live in San Antonio, you might find one or more of these nondescript but important plants hiding in plain sight.

In addition to being great nectar sources for many pollinators, the passionflower vines native to Bexar County are the larval host plants to the gulf fritillary, zebra longwing and Julia heliconian butterflies. If you have these vines in your yard, these butterflies will be drawn to your garden. The fruits are attractive to birds and if you didn't plant the vine its seed was probably a present of a winged friend.



Passionflower isn't fussy. Provide light soil that drains well (pH 6.1 to 7.5.) and keep the plant moist. Passionflower likes sun but will tolerate partial shade. It's accustomed to poor soil, so give it a deep hole filled with sand and other soil lighteners, but don't pamper it too much. Consistent watering is a good idea, but this isn't a persnickety plant.

Bracted and yellow passionflower vines, *Passiflora affinis* and *Passiflora lutea*, are similar looking vines that I've noticed most often in gardens on the North Side. They sprout well in shady protected areas, and apparently manicured hedges are ideal nurseries. I've seen many neatly trimmed boxwoods and Indian hawthorns with the characteristic leaves of bracted passionflower nestled within.

The flowers are small but intricate and the fruits are small and dark purple. If you want to see if either of these vines have volunteered in your yard, the best way is to look for their unique leaves.

Yellow passion flower has a three-lobed leaf, that I think looks a little like the outline of a cowboy hat. Bracted passion flower has three to five lobes and the lobes are much deeper.

Native plants have gotten the reputation for being hard to find in the nursery trade, but if you're lucky one of these native vines might find you.

WATER GARDENING

Planting Aquatic Plants

By D. Hairlloyde

Gardening with aquatics is similar to other forms of gardening in that you have to be aware of proper soil conditions, kinds of containers, proper planting techniques, fertility needs, and after planting care. What makes water gardening unique is that the plants you grow are growing in a water filled environment. Things like water depth, water temperature and what to do with plants during the winter become a consideration.

Soil used for planting should be damp. If using containers fill them about two-thirds full of soil.

“Compared with other types of gardens, water gardens require a minimum of attention. There is very little weeding, certainly no watering, and there are fewer insects or diseases which attack the plants.”

For hardy water lilies, the rhizome should be placed so that the growing point is directed toward the center and at a slight angle. Look for buds or “eyes,” similar to what would be found on a potato to determine which end is the growing point. This is done so that it can grow across the center of the pot. After the rhizome is in place, cover it with soil so that the growing point is just barely above soil level.



Container water gardens make it easy to redesigning a planting by simply moving the pots around. Water plants are tough—most are almost hard to kill and require virtually no maintenance. All you need is a sunny spot with at least six hours of direct sun a day, something that holds water, and a few plants.

Timing the placement of plants in your pond is important. Hardy water lilies, lotus and emergent plants are tolerant of cooler water temperatures and can be placed in the pond when temperatures reach about 50 degrees. Tropical water lilies and some floaters cannot tolerate cold temperatures and should not be placed in the pond until the water temperature reaches at least 70 degrees. Placing them out too early can cause dormancy, injury and restrict potential growth of the plant. Hardy water lilies will grow horizontally across your pond. Water lilies start growth faster in shallow water.

TREES AND SHRUBS

Surviving the Summer

By The Texas Tree Foundation

In spite of our wet winter and cool spring the summer temperatures in South Central Texas will be soaring into the triple digits, drying winds and lack of rainfall, the Texas Trees Foundation receives calls daily from area residents asking the question, "How much water do I need to apply to my new and existing trees?"

Seventy percent of all water usage is in the landscape and much of that water never reaches the roots of the trees. The majority of tree roots are in the top 12-18" of soil. So, you must saturate the soil to water your tree. Sprinkling your lawn won't provide the amount of water needed to nurture your trees.

Summer tree care is important. Water trees at night with an open end hose and slowly trickle water until the soil is saturated to a depth of 12-18" of soil.

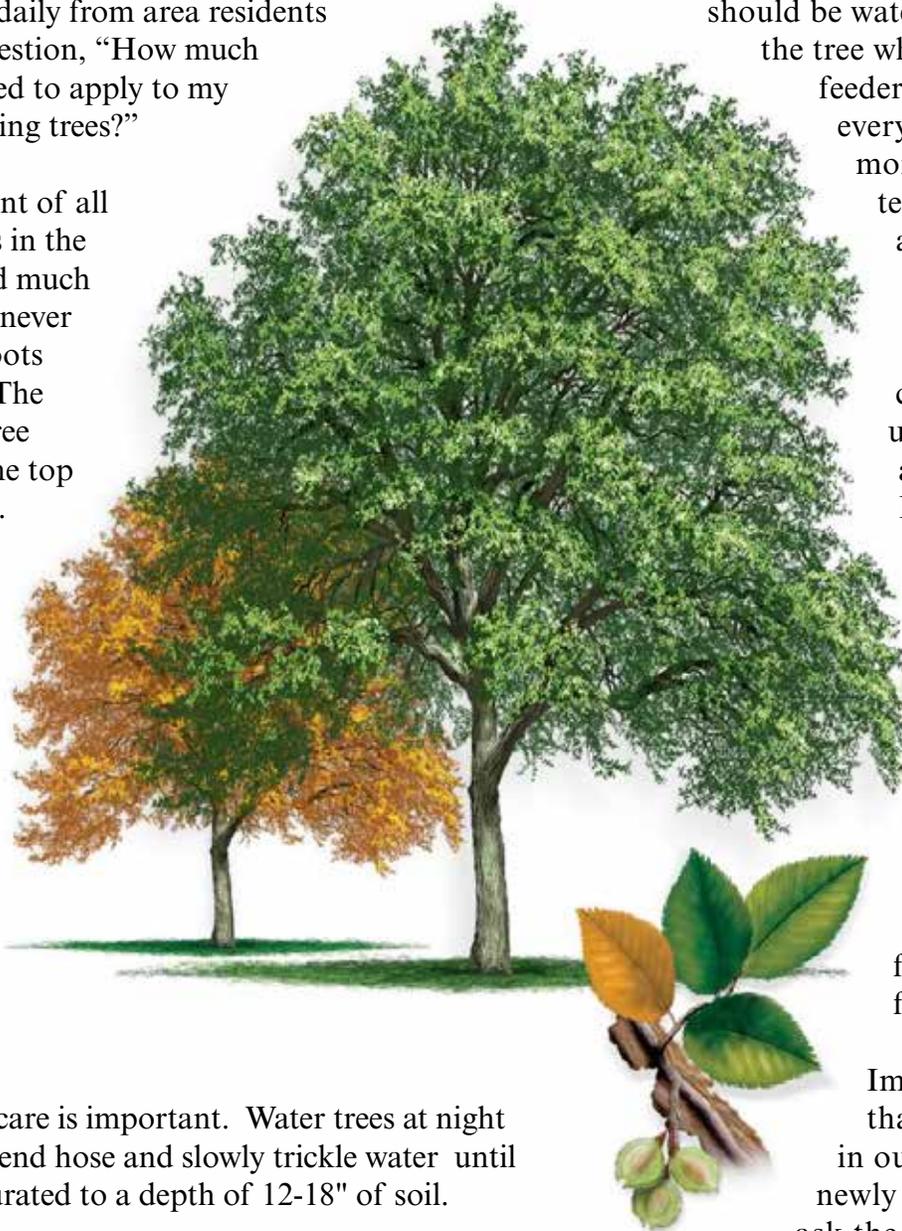
Water newly planted trees at the base of the tree making sure to saturate the entire root ball area.

Water as needed, perhaps as often as twice a week during the first two years after planting and mulch with a minimum of 4" of mulch to help retain the moisture. Trees that are 2" in diameter or larger should be watered at the drip-line of the tree where the majority of the feeder roots are located. Water every two weeks – water more when there are high temperatures, windy days and not much rain.

String-trimmers and lawn mowers are the leading cause of tree death in urban and sub-urban areas. When scars left by Lawncare equipment allow fungi and insects to enter the tree.

The over use of weed herbicides is the second greatest killer of landscape trees. You should be sure to read the label instructions and keep these herbicides away from trees, shrubs and flowering plants.

Improper planting, in holes that are too deep, especially in our clay soils, can suffocate newly planted trees. Always ask the advice of nursery experts when placing a new tree in your landscape.



JULY GARDENING TIPS

Enjoying Your Summer Garden

By Dr. Jerry Parsons

Plant: For summer color and fall beauty, plant Texas' tough annuals and heat-loving tropicals in beds and containers. To brighten a landscape in the heat of the summer, plant lantana, bougainvillea, mandevilla vine, allamanda, hibiscus, salvia, periwinkle, marigold, zinnia, portulaca, purslane, copper plant, and Bush Morning Glory.

Prune: Roses (except climbing varieties) should be pruned early August to insure fall bloom. Remove one third of the bush with old canes, dead canes, spent bloom stems comprising the majority removed. This will stimulate vigorous new growth and abundant fall blooms.

Keep tree pruning to a minimum during summer especially on oaks.

Fertilize hanging baskets and other containerized plants regularly with a water-soluble fertilizer. If you failed to make a second application of fertilizer to your lawn in June and moisture is available, do so now.

On the Lookout: Insects to watch for include white flies, spider mites, webworms, tent caterpillars, aphids and grasshoppers. Symptoms of chinch bug damage can appear anytime in healthy St. Augustine lawns. Look for dry, burned-looking patches in the hottest parts of the lawn. Control with any contact insecticide.

Trees and shrubs may experience some leaf drop this time of year, caused by summer's heat and dry weather stress. There is nothing which can be done except mulch and hope for cooler weather. Fall webworms may appear on pecan, mulberry, ash, persimmon, and other trees.

Odd Jobs: Give special attention to water requirement of leafy garden plants such as coleus, caladiums and elephant ears during hot, sunny periods.

Mulch heavily. Maintain a heavy (two to four inches) mulch throughout your landscape and gardens to reduce water needs and eliminate weeding. Water plants when needed and not according to the calendar or day of the week. Water (soak) thoroughly rather than applying frequent light sprinklings.

For more detailed and complete Gardening Tips for this month visit www.MilbergerNursery.com.

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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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Planning for a Water Garden?



Milberger's has Water Garden Supplies, Koi, Water Plants and expert advice.



Brazilian Red Hots' tropical perennial's foliage includes bright pink accents on its leaves. These tropical perennial Texas Superstars™ are easy to grow low-input and prefer partial shade. Its attractive foliage color is most vibrant if planted in intense sunlight. Brazilian Red Hots is an excellent stand-alone plant that can be planted as a mass border planting or to accent a variety of other popular Texas Superstar™ selections, such as Cora Vinca, Butterfly Pentas, Serena Angelonia and Baby's Breath Euphorbias. The plant can also complement combination plantings in containers.