

MILBERGER LANDSCAPE & NURSERY

THE GARDENING NEWSLETTER FOR SOUTH CENTRAL TEXAS

AUGUST 2018

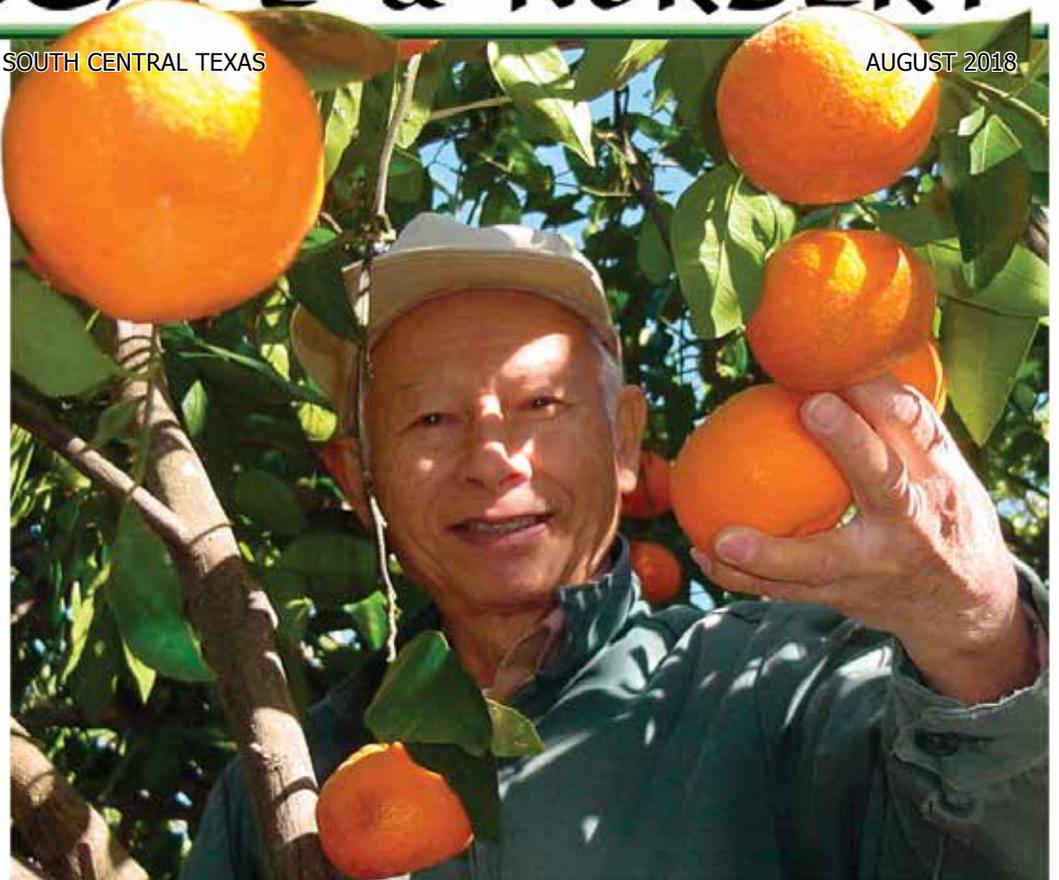
PLANT QUESTIONS

Is mulch still useful when your soil is dry? Will it prevent water from reaching the roots? Mulch can collect a certain amount of water before it reaches the soil. That would mean it may intercept a rainfall of 3/8 inch or less. In addition to reducing evaporation from the soil, mulch reduces weeds and keeps the soil cooler than bare soil. The net impact of mulch over the long term is positive.

What's a good evergreen shrub for a hedge in the shade that deer won't eat? My favorite is Sandankwa Viburnum. It grows to seven feet tall to form a compact egg-shaped plant. Another choice, primrose jasmine produces showy, waxy, yellow blooms in early spring.

I have grubs in my lawn. What should I treat them with? It is too late to treat this year's crop of grubs. They are not actively feeding. The insecticide won't be effective. Next year treat the grubs on or about June 1. Use a soil insecticide labeled for grubs and chinch bugs.

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.



Satsumas are a variety of mild mandarin oranges that are the hardiest of the citrus varieties and the easiest to grow in Central Texas. Among the sweetest citrus varieties they are also the easiest variety to peel. Containerized satsumas can be moved into the garage to protect them during prolonged periods of cold. Dr. Ying Doon Moy (shown above) worked with Dr. Jerry Parsons, to hybridize and to produce a Satsuma hybrid that would grow well in Central Texas. (PlantAnswers photo.)

SUMMER GARDENING EXPERTISE

Your Very Own Backyard Citrus Orchard

Citrus trees can be an elegant form of edible landscaping. As evergreens, most citrus are attractive plants throughout the year and they will fill your landscape with brightly colored fruit from late winter and early spring. Citrus is ready to harvest between October and May, during cooler months when many regional fruits don't naturally grow. The popularity of citrus has increased as many homeowners are creating urban backyard orchards in Central Texas. Most citrus are picked ripe and ready to eat.

(MORE CITRUS 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.

AUGUST GARDENING EVENTS

Sat., Aug 4 – 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. To support this drive Milberger's will offer a \$10 gift certificate to each person willing to donate. 210-497-3760

Sat & Sun., Aug 5 & 6 – 9am 'til 5pm

Dog Days of Summer at the San Antonio Botanical Gardens. The Garden welcomes leashed dogs and their companions from 9am – 5pm throughout the summer weekend. Proceeds from the weekend benefit local animal charities. Admission (\$12-\$9) per person + \$5 per leashed dog. Members enjoy free admission + \$5 per leashed dog. 555 Funston Place, San Antonio. 210-536-1400

Sat., Aug 25 – 10am 'til 11am

Fall Vegetable Planting for Kids. Your children will have fun learning the basics of fall vegetable gardening. This class will include "little" hands-on planting and seeding tips as well as craft activities. 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 August Features



It isn't easy to become a

Texas Superstar™

Every plant earning the **Texas Superstar** designation undergoes years of extensive field trials. They must prove to be **SUPERIOR PERFORMING PLANTS** under **Texas** growing conditions. You can find selected varieties **on sale** at **Milberger's**.

THIS MONTH look for fresh shipments of your favorite varieties including **GOLD STAR ESPERANZA, NEW GOLD LANTANA, FIREBUSH, BLUE PLUMBAGO, DWARF MEXICAN PETUNIA** and more.

Fresh Hanging Baskets

for sun and shade
are arriving almost every day.
THESE ARE THE PRETTIEST BASKETS OF THE SEASON

Fall Garden Mums and Asters

ARE ABOUT TO MAKE THEIR DEBUT.
GET YOUR GARDEN READY FOR FALL!

When you need
turfgrass and sod visit
the experts at
Milberger's Nursery

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

Follow us



@milbergerssa

call
210-308-8867 or
1-866-308-8867

"LIKE" us



Facebook.com.milberger's nursery

SUMMER GARDENING EXPERTISE

Backyard Citrus

(CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE)

If you want to be successful at growing citrus in our area, stick with cold hardy varieties or be prepared to grow in containers that are protected or moved indoors in the winter. Oranges and Grapefruit- True oranges (not Satsuma oranges) and grapefruit are not cold tolerant in our Central Texas climate.



The best lemon variety for our area is the **Meyer Lemon**. It is actually a cross between a lemon and a mandarin orange. The lovely, waxy off-white blossoms open from a purplish-white bud, have a wonderful, sweet-perfumed scent and attract bees and butterflies. The fruit is thin-skinned and less acidic, and you can actually eat the whole lemon, peel, pith and all, or use the whole lemon chopped up in cookies, cakes, muffins or other dishes you prepare.

“You can have citrus in our area as long as you choose the right variety, put it in the right place, and pay a little attention to their care and maintenance requirements.” ~ Calvin Finch

New varieties of citrus are being introduced into Texas markets that are touting to be more cold hardy than the old standbys. This is exciting news for Central Texas because it means we have a better chance at successfully raising citrus in our landscapes and in containers.

If you want to grow your citrus in a pot, choose a quality potting soil. It is a good idea to plant your citrus in the plastic nursery pots, then “double pot” them into my decorative pot. This makes it much more manageable to move indoors in the winter.

If you decide to put your citrus in the ground, put it in a protected area such as the south or southeast side of your house to provide shelter from the cold Northwestern wind brought by cold fronts. The house will also provide a little bit of heat to keep it warmer during the winter, but be sure to plant it at least 4-6 feet away from the structure to allow for future growth.

LAWNCARE

To Sod or Not To Sod?

By Donna Fossum, SAWS Conservation Consultant

Before you consider re-sodding your lawn, make sure you know SAWS policies regarding new turf. It could save you money. Maybe you're looking at your lawn thinking it isn't looking so hot and perhaps re-sodding it will give it new life. But before you go and spend a boatload of money on it, let me give you the "skinny" on SAWS policies for variances on new landscapes.

During drought restrictions, SAWS may issue five-week watering variances for new landscapes, but only for brand new construction or for lawns that have been destroyed by specific circumstances such as foundation repair. The lawn area being refurbished must be more than 50 percent of the total landscape area of your lot.

We will not issue a variance for replacing spot areas in the landscape, and any variance approval will be on a case-by-case basis. Also, we reserve the right to inspect any landscape with a variance to make sure it meets the criteria. If upon further inspection the landscape is deemed non-compliant, the variance will be revoked at that time.

There are other options to consider instead of replacing grass with more grass. Since turf uses the most water, we would certainly encourage you to forgo the grass .

Right now we are in drought restrictions and variances are required, If you're still interested in new turf, you can apply for a variance with SAWS at www.SAWS.org. There is no guarantee of an approval.



One of the benefits of living in warmer climates, like South Texas is that you can get a new lawn installed year-round without too much concern, as long as it's installed correctly and you follow the recommended watering schedule.

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.

A NEW TEXAS SUPERSTAR™

The “Basket of Fire” Pepper

By Adam Russell

A new pepper variety – Basket of Fire – was named the latest Texas Superstar release and combines ornamental and edible variety characteristics.

The Basket of Fire pepper variety was named a 2018 Texas Superstar plant by Texas A&M AgriLife Research, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and Texas Tech University horticulturalists after a year of field trials around the state.

“It’s typically planted in June, and they grow superbly all summer with blooms and peppers that emerge early and can last through December,” Russell Plowman, horticulture instructor, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, and Texas Superstar Executive board member said, “There are not many ornamental plants you can get seven months of color out of.”



The **Basket of Fire** pepper is an annual plant bred especially for hanging baskets, but it also serves as a good edible ornamental pepper for beds, vegetable gardens or containers.

“It’s a hot little pepper. They pickle great and look great in jars with the assortment of color. It’s definitely a Superstar. It shows all the qualities an ornamental plant should have to make it in Texas.”

~ Russell Plowman, Texas Tech University

“The pepper has a low, spreading branching habit, which makes it ideal for hanging baskets or planting with other ornamental or edible plants,” he said. “You can plant it with pansies or cabbage, and it will perform well.”

Plowman said the pepper will thrive in cooler temperatures and in extreme heat and low humidity. It prefers full sun and adapts to most soils, but needs good drainage.

“The hotter it gets the more this plant likes it,” he said. “It also does better than most pepper plants in cooler temperatures, and the peppers’ colors intensify as temperatures cool. So, it’s also a good addition to any fall garden as well.”

Plowman said the pepper can produce hundreds of peppers per plant. Peppers are relatively small, 1-2 inches, with a heat rating of approximately 80,000 Scoville Heat Units, which for comparison would fall between Cayenne and Thai peppers.

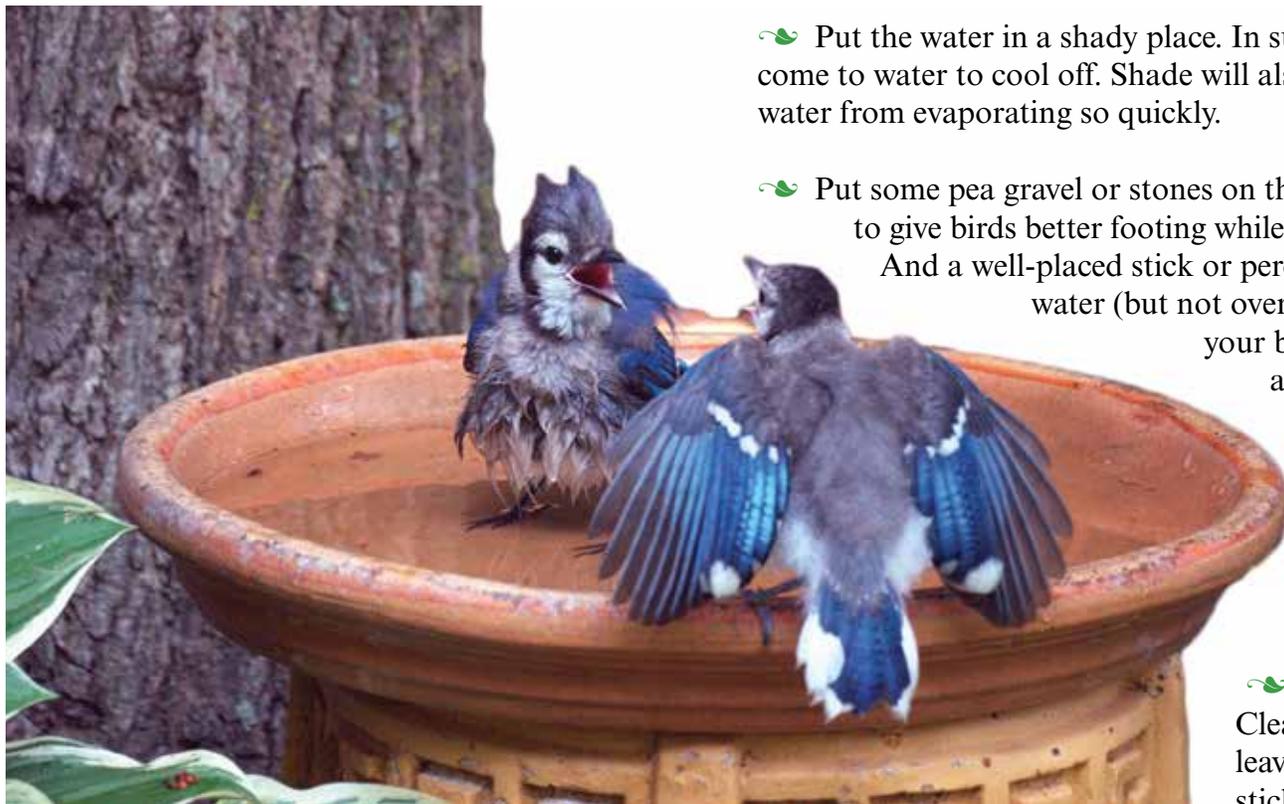
Texas Superstars™ are plants that undergo extensive tests by AgriLife Extension horticulturists and are selected by a board for their ability to perform well for consumers and growers. Texas Superstars are readily available at Milbergers Nursery where you will frequently find them among our weekly on sale items. Find our weekly sale items on our web site MilbergerNursery.com.

WILDLIFE IN YOUR LANDSCAPE

Water for Your Birds

Tips from Bird Watchers Digest

Summer bird feeding in your backyard is very rewarding, both for you and the wild birds. Some people are of the opinion that it is not necessary to feed the wild birds during the summer. The truth is that it is never necessary for us to feed wild birds at any time of year. Birds have survived for thousands of years without our help. It is only for our pleasure and curiosity that we lure them to our backyards for bird watching.



Feed your birds, not your cat. Birds need to have some protective cover nearby (but not too close). This will give the birds a place from which they can approach the bath, and a place to flee to should danger approach.

An equally effective way to attract birds is to provide a source of water. Bird baths can be works of art, but they do not need to be to accomplish the job of providing water to thirsty birds.

Here are some things to consider:

- 🌿 Birds don't bathe in deep water. Keep the level in your birdbath to about two inches or less. This is perfect for songbirds to wade into and splash around.
- 🌿 Add Motion. Nothing makes a birdbath more alluring than moving water. Moving water also prevents mosquitos from reproducing.
- 🌿 Put the water in a shady place. In summer birds come to water to cool off. Shade will also keep the water from evaporating so quickly.
- 🌿 Put some pea gravel or stones on the bottom to give birds better footing while they bathe. And a well-placed stick or perch near the water (but not over it) will give your birds an easy approach.

🌿 **Keep It Clean.** Remove leaves, feathers, sticks, insects, and other things that will accumulate in

the water of your birdbath. Plan to scrub out your bath basin with a stiff-bristled brush and use an abrasive cleaner on hard-to-remove algae.

AUGUST GARDENING TIPS

Clear Out Your Garden & Prepare for Fall

By Dr. Jerry Parsons

What you do in your garden and landscape in August will make a big difference in how things come up in the fall. When you are out there working be sure to drink plenty of water, use sunscreen, and work in the gardens early in the morning or late in the evening. Take plenty of breaks and don't get overheated. Just relax and enjoy the fruits of your labors.

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. Start over in the vegetable garden. The new 'Valley Cat' can be used but is not technically a heat-setting variety so some late cold protection may be required to produce vine-ripened fruit if unusual weather conditions occur. Other popular vegetable crops to plant in August for fall production are beans, sweet corn, cucumber, eggplant, lima beans, black-eye peas, peppers, and squash. A complete listing of what to plant for fall and when to plant it can be found on the website: MilbergerNursery.com

Lawncare: Remember when laying new sod, roll the turf to insure good soil-root contact and water thoroughly on a daily basis until the grass is established – in a week or 10 days.

Trees: Windmill palm, Mexican fan palm and Sabal palm are especially well-adapted to this area, and now is a good time to plant them. Palms require warm soil to establish their root systems.

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. 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.

Odd Jobs: Mulch throughout your landscape and gardens to reduce water needs and eliminate weeding. Water (soak) thoroughly rather than applying frequent light sprinklings.

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.

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?



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



A summer shade bloomer, **Firespike** will give you shiny green foliage that is attractive enough to use as an indoor plant. The flowers appear in late summer and persist into the fall. Hummingbirds like firespike and you can use it in a container to bring autumn hummingbirds to the shady patio. But beware, deer will eat firespike foliage and stems.