

MILBERGER LANDSCAPE & NURSERY

THE GARDENING NEWSLETTER FOR SOUTH CENTRAL TEXAS

OCTOBER 2018

PLANT QUESTIONS

My iris bed doesn't seem to be blooming anymore. What should I do? Now is an excellent time to thin out the iris. Replant the rhizomes about 18 inches apart in full sun. The top of the rhizome should be at the same level as the soil surface. They do not prosper in soggy soil and do not need mulch.

How much spinach should I plant for a family of four? Spinach is the most nutritious green, isn't it? Spinach is not as productive as collards, kale or chard so that you would probably need 24 plants to meet your family's needs. Fertilize generously to maximize production. Kale is the most nutritious green and spinach usually shows up second on the list.

When will my pecan branches quit falling? Most pecan trees are loaded with nuts and extra foliage. Branch breakage will slow down when the pecans fall in October and November.

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.



As the darlings of cool weather, **violas** are often considered the little cousins of pansies. Colorful and full of cheer, violas are among the happiest of your cool weather bloomers.

COOL WEATHER GARDENING EXPERTISE

Cool Season Color

By D. Hairlloyde, The Accidental Gardener

In South Texas we enjoy year-round gardening and one of the best things you can do for you and your garden is to plant seasonally. You can add months to your gardening season by planting cool-weather annuals in the early spring when temperatures are too chilly for more tender varieties.

An annual is a plant that lives for just one season. Whether you plant from seed or purchase seedlings to plant, an annual will sprout, flower, seed, and then die—all in the same year. Annuals tend to bloom all season long, and are often bright and showy. Though you will have to replant the following year. You could choose another plant to put in your annual's place. Annuals plants tend to be cheaper than perennials and are less of a commitment. Cold hardy annuals are a great way to extend the color in your garden into the cool months.

(MORE COOL 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.

OCTOBER GARDENING EVENTS

Sat., Oct 6 – 10am 'til 11:30am
Herb Uses and Culinary Demonstration with Mary Dunford. Free. 210-497-3760

Sat., Oct 13 – Starts at 10:30am
Winter Color and Trees. Fall is an ideal time to plant. Join David Rodriguez, A&M Horticulturist and learn what you can do in your specific landscape this fall. 210-497-3760

Sat., Oct 20—10am 'til 11:am
Adult Bonsai Class with Bonsai Artist Sherry Disdieder. It's free but only 30 spaces available. You must call to reserve your spot. 210-497-3760

Sat. & Sun., Oct 27 & 28 – all day
Milberger's Happy Halloween Weekend. Bring your kids for a fun filled weekend of free Halloween events: Pumpkin Patch and hay maze (open daily during regular nursery hours) . . . and much, much more. See web site for times and details. 210-497-3760

Sat., Oct 27 – 10am 'til 1:30pm
Milberger's Fall Blood Drive. Take advantage of this opportunity to give the gift of life. \$10 Milberger gift certificate to each person willing to donate. 210-497-3760

Sat., Oct 27—10am 'til 11
Pumpkin Painting. Free kids class but space is limited. Call to reserve your spot. 210-497-36760

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
October Features

Autumn in South Texas

IT'S THE BEST SEASON
 FOR PLANTING

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Bring your kids or all ages and let them run through our **Monster Maze** ride **The Terror Train** or take a memorable photo in our **pumpkin patch.**

A donation from food purchases go directly to the SAN ANTONIO FOOD BANK.

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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COOL WEATHER GARDENING EXPERTISE

Cool Season Color

(CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE)

Primula or **primrose** is one of our two cool season annuals that are appropriate for shadier areas. Primula flowers come in a variety of colors, but I favor the blues. Plant 6 inches to 8 inches apart with organic matter and a sprinkling of coffee grounds.

Snapdragons: come in a variety of colors (orange, red, pink, yellow and white) and heights (6 inches to 4 feet) and that's the best way to present them. I prefer the low and medium growing cultivars — but some folks just can't resist the big, bold 'Rocket' series. Add small amounts of compost and organic fertilizer, and dead-head them for maximum flower production.

“Cool weather annuals may have stopped blooming for a while but they will reload some time this month and have their best bloom from late February through May. Fertilize them now with slow release lawn fertilizer to fuel the reblooming.”

~ Calvin Finch

Cyclamen are the aristocrats of the cool season annuals — delicate, showy and pricey. They come in a variety of colors including pink, red, violet, lavender and white. Some hybrids have silver blotching or veins. Cyclamen grow best in partial shade and in moist soils. Plant 6 inches to 8 inches in beds or closer in containers for a more dramatic show.

Keep in mind that all annuals use more water than perennials, but it's still nice to carve out a little space for a bit of winter color.



Stocks is an old-fashioned cool season annual that should be promoted more often. They come in a variety of colors, but their most endearing feature is the lovely scent they provide either in beds or as a cut flower for the dining room or kitchen.

A visit to Milberger's Nursery will help you find healthy plant stock that is selected to thrive in South Central Texas' cool weather. You will also find the good advice and creative suggestions for your specific landscape and gardening needs. To see what is on sale each week visit our web site at www.milbergernursery.com or look for our ads in the **San Antonio Express News**.

LAWNCARE

Ground Covers for South Texas

By Barbara Storz

Ground covers are usually plants, short plants — less than 18 inches in height — that are vigorous in growth and are planted as an alternative to turf grass or in areas such as shade, where grass does not grow well. In South Texas, we have several native plants, and well adapted plants, that can serve as a ground cover and support several butterfly species.

Horseherb is a low growing, dense ground cover that will tolerate light foot traffic and mowing. It has small yellow flowers, appearing from early spring through late fall, that provide nectar for several small butterflies. It does well in full sun, but will tolerate partial or full shade, as well. It grows from cuttings or seed. It might be best to try it in a small area in partial shade. Horseherb will require moderate irrigation. Most of the lawns where I have seen it thriving receive irrigation during the warm months.



Wedelia forms a dense ground cover that reaches about eight to ten inches. It is very drought tolerant, once established, and will not perform well if over watered. It needs well drained soils and can be used on slopes where nothing else will grow and is especially good for erosion control. It flowers in partial shade and full sun. If a freeze occurs, mow it back, just before the weather warms up in February, and it will come back as thick as ever. Bees and butterflies enjoy the nectar of these bright yellow daisy type flowers.

Sawfoot frog fruit or common frog fruit are two different frog fruits that are low growing, dense ground covers bearing small white daisy-shaped flowers. The phyla incisa is two to four inches taller than the ground-hugging common frog fruit. The foliage is evergreen. It requires regular irrigation, especially during the summer, but do not over water. Soils must be well drained.

Moss rose or chisme, is a native purslane that has small elongated leaves and a small purple to dark pink flower. This plant blooms from spring through fall and is happy in full sun to partial shade. It requires good drainage and will not tolerate standing water. Once established, it will need irrigation only during warmer months of the year. The moss rose can recover from some foot traffic, but it is not aggressive in its growth habitat. This plant is probably best in a rock garden or used in small areas as a ground cover.

IN THE ROSE GARDEN

Preparing Your Roses for Fall

Though the temperature is usually warm here in the fall, that's the time to think about preparing your roses for winter. During their growing season roses need one to two inches of water each week. As cold weather sets in you can reduce the amount of water but do not let them dry out completely. Plants need water during dry spells, even during winter months.

Continue spraying for black spot fungus. Watch for insects and treat only if there is a problem. Use pesticides labeled for the pests you are targeting and follow label directions.

You can discontinue fertilizing your roses in the fall. To slow down the plant growth and allow the plant to harden off, leave the rose hips on the bush after the last blooming cycle.



The peak rose bloom season usually begins in mid-October. Stop using fertilizers after October 15th so that growth can slow and harden for the winter cold. You don't have to water them as much but don't let them dry out.

“Fall is ideal for rose blooms. Cooler temperatures stimulate rose bush growth and intensify the color of the rose blooms. Many people do not prepare their roses for our beautiful fall weather, so they miss the most spectacular, longest-lasting bloom period.”

~ Dr. Jerry Parsons, Bexar County horticultural expert

Add additional mulch to protect roots and conserve moisture. Roses grown in containers need to be put in the ground, container and all, in a protected area of the yard.

To prevent wind damage on large rose bushes, cut the canes back to 3 feet.

Fall is a good time to plant new roses. When you are preparing your fall rose bed do not plant them too close together. Roses can easily grow to be quite large, so give it plenty of room to begin with. Choose a site that receives full sunlight, and if possible, has deep soil. If your soil is very shallow you may be better off creating a large raised bed for your rose bushes.

Visit our nursery to find the winter blooming plants that will thrive in your landscape. Take a look at our web site www.milbergernursery.com or look for our ads in the **San Antonio Express-News** to find which plants are on sale. For expert advice on plants and trees and take advantage of the growing season in South Texas' "Second Spring."

TREES AND SHRUBS

Fall is the Best Time to Add Trees to your Landscape

Many of you may guess that spring would be the best time to plant trees in your South Texas landscape because you think of new growth and new beginnings. Actually experienced horticulturalists—experts in South Texas growing conditions—would say that fall is the best time to plant trees. That is because trees that get planted in the fall have a head start on establishing roots before the summer sun makes its return.

Tree roots will grow whenever the temperature is above 40 degrees. In the often mild winters of Central Texas, this gives the roots time to grow before they have to face the brunt of summers full on heat and long dry spells. Because the roots have been establishing themselves throughout our mild winter fall-planted now burst forth with new growth when spring arrives.



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A great shade tree, **Monterrey Oaks** are extremely drought tolerant and they can adapt to many soil types from sand to well drained clay soils. In south Texas Monterrey Oaks will retain their leaves almost all year long. In early spring Monterrey Oaks produce peach and red colored leaves that mature into a dark green color.

Whether you are transplanting from containers or planting ball-and-burlapped specimens getting your new tree in the ground this fall will give them ample time to recover from transplanting and proliferate roots before spring growth begins. When you buy your trees from Milberger's Tree Lot you will know that they are healthy and ready to be planted in your landscape.

All trees have growing requirements. You can ask us about the trees that will work best in your landscape. Plan before you plant. Be sure to consider how much space your trees will occupy when they are mature; how close they are to buildings, fences and power lines; how much sunlight they will need and how much shade they will create.

Plan well because trees in your landscape will give you a more attractive landscape, a more enjoyable environment and increasing the value of your home.

With fresh tree stock arriving throughout the fall Milberger's Tree Lot offers you the healthiest trees ready for transplanting. Visit our web site, www.milbergernursery.com where you will find illustrations and specific information on planting trees in South Central Texas. Also you can talk directly to the tree experts when you visit Milberger's Nursery.

OCTOBER GARDENING TIPS

Growing in South Texas' Second Spring

By Dr. Jerry Parsons

October is a great time for gardening and landscaping. Many plants can be set out now, and this is the perfect time to be replacing plants lost due to the summer drought.

Plant Flowers: The most popular of the cool season flowering annuals to be set out now are pansies. There are so many types and colors of pansies it might be hard to pick just one. There are pastels shades, varieties with no faces, and miniature flowers, so you should have no trouble finding one you like. One tip for flowering annuals - the brighter the color, like reds or yellows, the easier they will be seen from a distance. Blues are best viewed up close.

Besides pansies, other bedding plants that can be planted now include pinks, dianthus, flowering cabbage and kale, snapdragons, violas, and calendulas.

Wildflowers and seeded annuals like California poppy, oriental poppy, larkspur and bluebonnets should be sown early this month.

October is also a great month to divide and plant spring-blooming perennials like native columbines, daylilies, phlox, Louisiana and bearded irises, dianthus, coreopsis, coneflowers and daisies. If you have extras after dividing, give to or trade with a gardening friend or neighbor.

Trees and Shrubs: The fall season is also a perfect time to establish new trees and shrubs. Plants set out now undergo less stress, and their roots have months to grow and become established before spring growth begins and summer heat and drought arrive next year.

Fertilizer: October is time for the most important lawn fertilization of the year — application of a winterizer fertilizer to condition the grass for winter survival. Wait until the lawn grass slows growth and mowing every two weeks is adequate before applying. A light application of garden-type fertilizer will boost annual and perennial flowering plants.

Grass: Tall fescue and ryegrass can also be planted in early October. It is too late to sow Bermuda or centipede seed. Beware that armyworms could quickly devour newly sprouted ryegrass.

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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**Milberger's Pumkin Patch
And Monster MAZE**

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Halloween Fun For The Entire Family

A perfect plant for edging beds, the **Blackfoot Daisy** is a short, slowly creeping perennial that you'll find blooming from early spring through fall. It's a Texas native that likes alkaline soils and full sun (but it will also take some light shade). It self seeds easily, but it's not invasive.

