

MILBERGER LANDSCAPE & NURSERY

THE GARDENING NEWSLETTER FOR SOUTH CENTRAL TEXAS

JUNE 2020

PLANT QUESTIONS

Our bougainvillea were in full bloom when we bought them but nothing now? They are in full sun and we keep them well watered.

My initial guess is that the plants are being over watered. To bloom well, bougainvillea must be allowed to dry out between watering. Some gardeners even allow them to wilt before they are re-watered. Full sun is a necessity for bougainvillea. Bougainvillea bloom best when they are root bound.

My tomato plants are dark green, vigorous and healthy but they are not forming much fruit. The main reason tomato plants do not set fruit is because they are not planted where they can receive 8-10 hours of direct sunlight daily. Any less direct sunlight will result in a spindly growing, nonproductive plant with healthy foliage.

How long will zinnias last if I plant them by transplants in this heat? Zinnias will bloom well for three to four months if you mulch them and water two or three times per week.

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 enjoy a wide variety of beautiful adult butterflies flitting about your yard. The key to attracting butterflies to your landscape is to have both nectar-producing and egg-laying plants available. A diverse perennial flower garden, mixed with annuals, perennials, vegetables, flowering shrubs and vines, will attract an assortment of butterflies. While at Milberger's you can visit our butterfly garden, certified by the North American Butterfly Association, and ask for our complete list of butterfly-attracting plant

YOUR BUTTERFLY GARDEN

If You Plant It, They Will Come

A butterfly garden is as simple as choosing flowering plants that will invite adult butterflies to your garden to feed. Butterflies are attracted by two kinds of plants; host plants that they lay eggs on, and nectar-producing plants that the adult butterflies need for food. Among the best nectar-producing plants are Gregg's mistflower, milkweed, sunflower, and porterweed. Lantanas, salvias, duranta, and cosmos are also popular nectar plants. In addition to producing nectar for all butterfly species, milkweed is the only species on which Monarch butterflies will lay their eggs.

(MORE ON PLANTING BUTTERFLY GARDENS 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.

PLANTS THAT PERFORM



Texas Superstar® Plants are Texas plant selections made by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension horticulturists for proven performance across the state of Texas! These plants have typically been trialed at various locations throughout the state to ensure that they will be superstars when it comes to flower power and reliability. The Texas Superstars® plants program is an extension of the Earth-Kind® Landscaping program.

Some Texas Superstar Recommendations for Full Sun

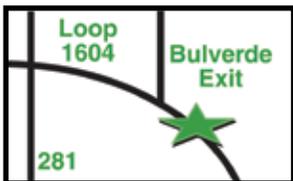
Laura Bush petunia was selected as a Superstar because it is a fast growing, spreading plant with attractive pink or violet blooms. Additionally it is more heat tolerant than most other petunias.

Another Texas Superstar that prospers in full sun is the **Cora vinca**. It is available with red, pink, violet and white blooms. Be sure to water just the soil and not the top of the plant to avoid fungal disease.

The Texas Superstar, **Angelonia** is also called summer snapdragon. It is an annual flower that grows to 18 inches tall with white, pink, lavender, or purple flowers. It is drought tolerant and in most neighborhoods escapes being eaten by the deer.

For salvias choose from among **Mexican Bush Sage**, **Henry Duelberg Salvia**, and **Mystic Spires Blue Salvia**. Grow all of the blue salvias in full sun.

Mexican Blue Sage grows to 4 ft. tall and 3 ft. wide. The blooms are purple with some white borne on long spikes that make good cut flowers.



To find us: Take the Bulverde Exit off of Loop 1604. The entrance to Milberger's is next to the Circle K 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
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Or on the World Wide Web at
www.milbergernursery.com
nursery@milbergersa.com

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.

**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.



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**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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YOUR BUTTERFLY GARDEN

Butterflies

(CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE)

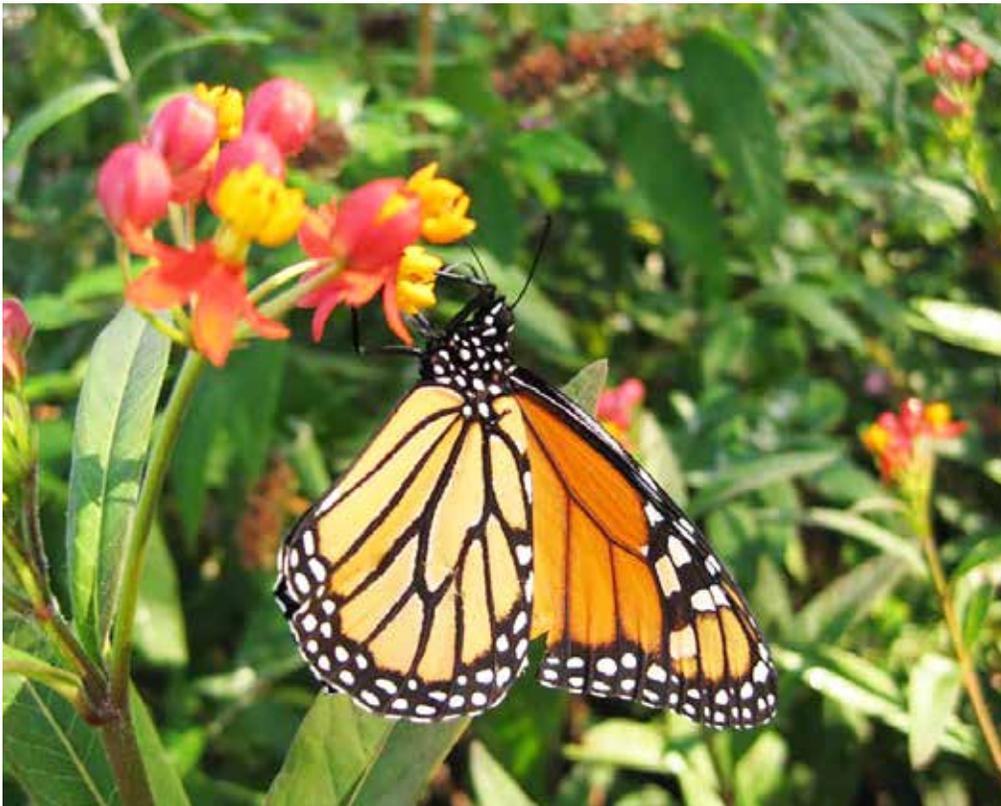
Site location for butterfly gardens:

The majority of plants in a butterfly garden require a sunny location to thrive. These plants also require deep, rich, organic soils (compost) to grow to their full potential. We recommend raised beds. Plants should be planted en masse to attract adult butterflies. Establishing windbreaks in exposed gardens is necessary. Butterfly gardens will attract bees, wasps, hummingbirds, moths and other forms of wildlife. This is a good thing.

“Provide flat stones in sunny locations for butterflies to warm their wings on as they’re cold-blooded and have no other mechanism for creating heat.”

~ Sarah Galvan, Texas master naturalist, and SAWS conservation consultant

Adult butterflies don’t drink water as we think of it, they “puddle” or draw their water from the mud. Not only does this provide water but the mud provides needed minerals.



Milkweed is a critical food plant for monarch larval or caterpillar stage, which feed almost exclusively on several different species of milkweed. While milkweed sounds weedy, they are actually very well-behaved and attractive plants for any flower garden. They are also a magnet for many other insects. We often see them loaded with aphids – tiny, sap-sucking insects that crowd along the stem and on tender, new growth. Since the milkweed doesn’t seem to be adversely affected by the aphids, we suggest leaving them alone, because many beneficial insects come to dine on these fat little insects. Thus, the milkweed also helps build up the population of the good bugs in your garden.

Texas gets hot, and adult butterflies like shade. Shrubs, trees, grasses, garden benches and other garden structures provide a cool place to hide & pupate!

Using any pesticide is strongly discouraged for your butterfly garden. Spray insect infections with water or remove infected plants. Aphids can be wiped off by hand. Fire ants can be treated with boiling water or diluted orange oil

Another joy of planting and maintaining a butterfly garden is that while it may be intended for butterflies, it will invite other beneficial wildlife to your yard, too. Don’t be surprised if you encounter songbirds, hummingbirds and bees in your “butterfly” garden.

Milberger’s 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 website, milbergernursery.com.

SUMMER LAWCARE

Insects and Lawn Diseases

By Dr. Becky Grubbs, Texas Lawn Companion

INSECTS: Three common lawn insects to be aware of during summer months are bermudagrass mites, grubs and chinch bugs.

Bermudagrass mites will thrive in hot temperatures and be very active during the summer. They are not visible to the naked eye. When severe infestation occurs, they will cause turfgrass to thin out and will create a tufted “witch’s broom” appearance. One effective way to get rid of them is to scalp the infested area and remove the grass clippings, physically displacing many of the mites.

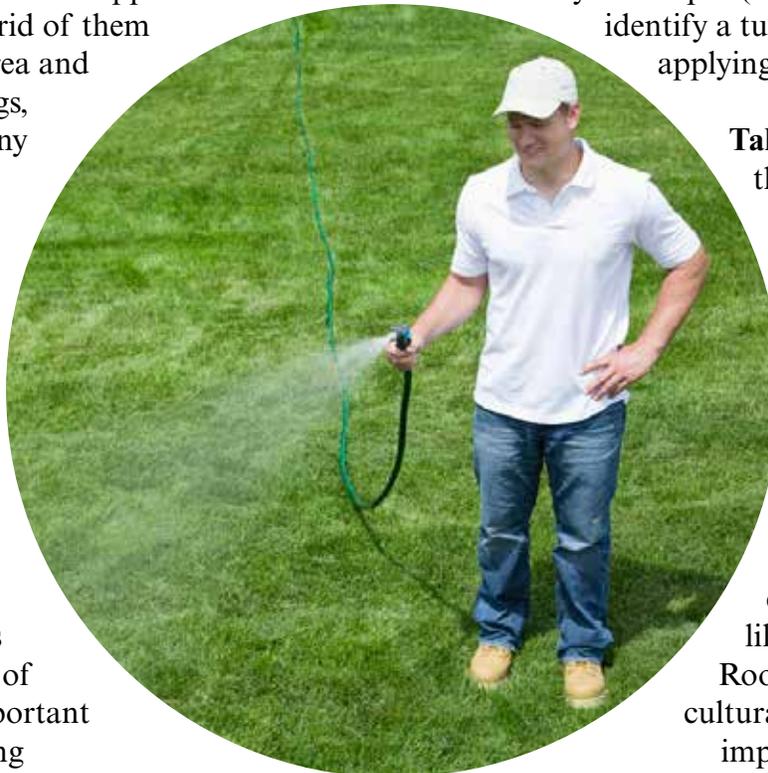
Damage from **turf-feeding grubs** is most visible during summer and early fall. Grub damage appears as irregularly shaped patches resembling drought stress.

Another sign of grubs is that animals: skunks, armadillos, and possums will start to dig up areas of your lawn. Timing is important for treating grubs. Waiting too long can drastically reduce the effectiveness of lawn insecticides.

Chinch bugs are common summer pests in southern lawns. They cause the most damage to St. Augustine grass but can also affect other types of turfgrass. Chinch bug damage shows up as irregular-shaped patches that spread outward. If your yard has bermudagrass mixed in, you may

notice tufts of bermudagrass still standing in the middle of dead or thinning St. Augustine. Chinch bugs are visible without magnification, but still somewhat small and sometimes hard to spot without help.

DISEASES: Two common turfgrass diseases during summer are Take-All Root Rot (TARR) and Gray Leaf Spot (GLS). Be sure to properly identify a turfgrass problem before applying treatments.



When watering your lawn, be sure to water as efficiently as possible to conserve resources and to promote dense, healthy turfgrass growth. Allowing your grass to go dormant is an option when you don’t want to water on a regular basis during the hottest and driest weeks of summer. Your lawn will come back.

Take-all Root Rot is usually the most active during spring and early summer but can be visible at any point during the growing season when turfgrass is under stress. Temperature extremes, poor water quality, drought, compaction, and even herbicide injury can all increase the likelihood that Take-all Root Rot will appear. Good cultural practices are especially important in preventing this disease.

Gray Leaf Spot is a foliar disease found on St.

Augustine grass lawns during this point in the growing season. It is commonly found in shady, moist areas of a lawn. Control this disease by keeping the area mowed and aired out. Some St. Augustine grass varieties will be more sensitive, and in severe cases fungicides may be required.

PERENNIAL COLOR

A Rich Blue Lily for Your Summer Garden

Free-flowering, Blue Agapanthus is a compact semi-evergreen African Lily boasting loose clusters of rich blue flowers, adorned with a darker stripe running through each petal. After five years, it will produce more than



Familiar yet entirely unique, **Blue Agapanthus** or **Blue Lily of the Nile** has long stems and bright sprays of lavender blue blooms, slightly reminiscent of alliums. Great form for unique bouquets. They'll rise up above a stylish clump of arching, strap-like foliage, which fills out a container nicely. Butterflies and other beneficial pollinators appreciate the blooms, deer aren't likely to visit it.

“Noted for its numerous, extra-long heads of rich blue flowers held on very sturdy stems, the Blue Lily of the Nile is a vigorous grower that performs well in perennial borders or as a cut flower.”

100 flowers each summer. The ravishing blossoms sit atop slender stalks that arise from a lush clump of strap-shaped, fresh green leaves. This dwarf Agapanthus is very suitable for perennial borders or container planting on the balcony, terrace or patio. May remain evergreen in milder winter climates.

- ☞ Bloom time is variable, depending on the local climate and water availability, but this plant usually blooms from mid to late summer.

- ☞ Easy to grow, pest and disease free, this African Lily grows from fleshly-rooted rhizomes up to 20 in. high and wide (50 cm).

- ☞ Thrives in full sun in fertile, moist and well-drained soil. In a hot climate area, Agapanthus will do better in partial shade. Do not allow plants to dry out except when dormant. Bear in mind that most varieties will lean toward the sun, which makes a south facing border the best location.

- ☞ Spectacular when planted in great swathes, this Agapanthus is effective in most garden settings or mixed borders, makes a fantastic accent plant in containers and excellent cut flowers. A great choice for coastal areas as African

Lilies cope well with windy and salty air.

- ☞ Deer and rabbit resistant, it attracts butterflies, bees and birds.

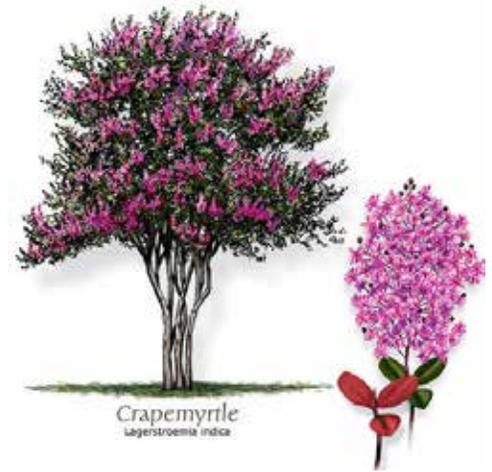
Ask the gardening experts at Milberger's Nursery for more suggestions that will help get your garden into full bloom. You will find healthy plant stock, good advice and creative suggestions for your landscape and gardening needs from the experienced nursery staff. To see what is on sale each week visit our web site at www.milbergernursery.com.

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.



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.

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.

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

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 and click through to our on-line tree lot for selection and planting guidelines.

JUNE GARDENING TIPS

Enjoying Your Summer Garden

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 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 details 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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Planning for a Water Garden?

Milberger's has pumps for your water garden,
Koi, Water Plants and expert advice.



Periwinkles—which are also called vincas—are known for taking hot summers, and the disease-resistant Cora™ series of periwinkles comes in a mix of colors that bloom in summer. The leaves and the flowers of this series are larger and the foliage is glossy and deep green. This is a great flower for potted containers or in the garden.