

MILBERGER LANDSCAPE & NURSERY

THE GARDENING NEWSLETTER FOR SOUTH CENTRAL TEXAS

AUGUST 2022

PLANT QUESTIONS

Which shrubs and small trees are deer proof and can grow in the shade?

There is a group of evergreen viburnums that prosper in the shade and are not eaten by deer: Mexican plum tolerates shady conditions to produce a 15ft tree that deer do not eat and standard pittosporum is another large shrub to consider.

Our tomatoes have been unbelievable: Red Deuce, Tycoon, and Solar Fire. Is everyone having the same success?

Your success is partly because you used proven selections but it has been generally a great year for tomato production because of the moderate temperatures.

We have a weed that grows upright with alyssum like flowers and sticky seeds the size of aphids? My dogs get in them all the time.

I believe you are describing beggar's lice, a winter annual weed. Apply a pre-emergent herbicide such as Dimension, Amaze, XL, or Trimec in September to prevent its germination in the lawn or shrub border.

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.



Turk's Cap is a native shrub that attracts butterflies, bees, and hummingbirds. It thrives in direct sun but it also grows in filtered sun—like underneath trees. This perennial dies to the ground in winter but emerges soon in early spring. Turk's Cap has a long bloom period. It starts blooming in May and doesn't stop until November. In Texas in the heat of summer it can be hard to find a plant that wants to bloom, but Turk's Cap will do so happily.

TEXAS NATIVE PLANTS

The Wisdom of Natives

Gardening with plants native to Texas offers many advantages. Native plants tolerate our summer heat better than most, require less water, they need less maintenance, provide habitat for birds, butterflies and other wildlife, protect the soil and save money on fertilizer and pesticides. Our climate can vary from baking hot heat and drought one year, to frequent rain and flooding in the next. Some years we may get a hard freeze and some not. Plants from other parts of the country are often poorly suited to our conditions and that may result in disappointment in your garden. Also, as Lady Bird Johnson said, native plants “give us a sense of where we are in this great land of ours.”

(MORE NATIVES ON PAGE THREE)

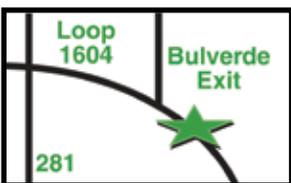
Our web site and the email version of this newsletter contain many color photographs, how-to-do-it diagrams, more complete articles, links to many gardeners references and many more answers to your gardening and landscape questions. Visit www.MilbergerNursery.com to sign up. We respect your privacy and we will not share your address or information with anyone not associated with this newsletter.

GARDENING EVENTS AT THE NURSERY

Sat., Aug 6 10am 'til 3:00pm
MILBERGER's BLOOD DRIVE. Give the gift of life. The South Texas Blood and Tissue Center will be here at the nursery to conduct our regularly scheduled August Blood Drive. Your donation could save the life of someone in need. Appointments are preferred but walk-ins are welcome. You can make an appointment on our web site or call 210-757-9595.

Sat., Aug 20 10am 'til 11:30pm
Preparing Your Fall and Winter Vegetable Garden PART I Warm Weather Crops.
Free Adult Seminar – No sign-up required.
 It's not just spring. South Texas offers vegetable gardeners two great growing seasons every year. David Rodriguez, Extension Horticulturist for Texas A&M AgriLIFE Extension Service will answer your specific questions about your gardening issues. Only 39 spots available! 210-497-3760

Sat., Sept. 10. 10am 'til 11:30
Preparing Your Fall and Winter Vegetable Garden PART II Cool Weather Crops
Free Adult Seminar – No sign-up required
 David Rodriguez, Extension Horticulturist presents this FREE adult seminar on Cool Weather Crops. Fall's milder temperatures bring out the best flavors in home vegetable gardens. Insects and disease are less bothersome. And we can grow warm- and cool-season crops. David will answer your specific questions about your gardening issues. Only 39 spots available! 210-497-3760



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
 (210) 497-3760

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 fullfathom505@gmail.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.**

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

MILBERGER'S OFFERS

CURB-SIDE PICK UP

SAME-DAY or NEXT DAY

CALL US AT

210-497-3760



Give us your list of plants. We will gather your order and call you back to confirm your order and collect your payment.

We will have your order ready at the pick-up area at the office, and one of our friendly gardening experts will load your purchases in your vehicle. **NO SOD OR TREES, PLEASE.**

FALL GARDEN MUMS AND ASTERS

ARE ABOUT TO MAKE THEIR DEBUT.

GET YOUR GARDEN READY FOR FALL!

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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TEXAS NATIVES

The Wisdom of Natives

(CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE)

By keeping native foliage in your landscaping, you help to support the local ecosystem which co-existed with the plants way before the city of San Antonio first sprouted. As urban development encroaches on native habitats, not only is the foliage lost, but the birds and insects that depend on them suffer. Bring back the birds and the bees and save water by planting a native plant that is right for you and your home. Here are some to consider. The deciduous Esperanza is a popular native perennial that blooms spring through fall with large, yellow flowers. They do best if you plant them in early spring or fall and need full sun. You must cut them back to the ground each year.

You can also enjoy colorful blooms with Texas Lantana (also deciduous). It blooms summer through fall with orange and yellow flowers. It needs full sun

“Native plants create a beautiful, natural look and attract wildlife such as birds and butterflies to your yard. Native plants are well suited to our climate and soil conditions. Once these plants become established, they require less watering and need no chemical fertilizers, pesticides, or herbicides to thrive.”

~ Dr. Jerry Parsons, Bexar County Horticulturalist

and must be cut back each year. You should plant it in early spring or fall. It reaches three to five feet high with a four-to-six-foot spread.

Not only does planting native habitats make water sense, it also makes sustainability sense. Native plants are those which occur naturally in a particular region – with roots that run deep in the area’s history.



Penstemon blooms in the summer with vibrant red flowers that attract hummingbirds like these along the wall at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center. There are two dozen penstemons native to Texas. Surely this year has proven that penstemons are drought-tolerant perennials, well worth having in your garden.



The deciduous **Black-Eyed Susans** are good for landscapes in Central Texas. The perennial blooms with large, yellow flowers throughout the summer. You should plant them in early spring or fall. Black-Eyed Susans can grow one to two feet high with a two foot spread and they must be cut back in the winter.

The **Native Plant Society of Texas** is a membership organization that carries out its mission through volunteers to protect our state’s native plant heritage and preserve it for future generations. Professional and amateur photographers are invited to enter our photo contest featuring native plants of Texas to be held during the Fall Symposium. <https://npsot.org>

WILDLIFE IN YOUR LANDSCAPE

Heat Tolerant Plants for Attracting Hummingbirds

By K K Thornton

We are lucky to have a good selection of beautiful and colorful flowers that are heat tolerant and that also have the tubular flowers that draw hummingbirds to your garden like magnets. We are well into summer, now and it's time enjoy a backyard full of jewel-like hummingbirds.

Almost any *Salvia* will attract hummingbirds to your garden. **Black and Blue Sage**, does well in heat and full sun. It is one of the few non-red flowers that reliably attract hummingbirds into my yard. Black and Blue Sage is drought tolerant as well as heat tolerant, and hummingbirds are attracted to its beautiful cobalt tubular flowers. It blooms all summer long and well into the fall and it does well in containers.

Red sage is another heat tolerant plant that reliably attracts hummingbirds. There are two types of heat tolerant red sage to consider: Mountain Sage (*salvia greggii*) and Scarlett O'Hara (*salvia coccinea*). Both species feature tubular red blooms that hummingbirds love and like a true Texas native, it does not wilt in the full Texas sun.

Mountain Sage is a hummingbird-attracting plant that does well with only morning sun, and is very heat tolerant. Mountain Sage does not bloom until later in the summer, which makes it a good choice for attracting

hummingbirds as they migrate through Texas to their winter homes in Mexico and Central America.

Plant some **Pentas**. Of all the flowers in my hummingbird garden, hummers seem to love *Penta lanceolata* most of all. Pentas are heat tolerant, drought tolerant and almost impossible to kill. Any plant that can thrive in the stifling heat of August, and still be around to attract hummingbirds as they migrate through Texas in the fall is a valuable plant for your landscape. Pentas are available in colors ranging from white to dark magenta. Also known as Egyptian Star Flower, the darker pink and reddish shade of Pentas attract the most hummingbirds. Butterflies are attracted to Pentas, too.



Hummingbirds love **Lantana**. Aside from being heat tolerant, Lantanas are ridiculously easy to grow and bounce back from periods of drought with no apparent problems. Lantanas also look lovely in containers, where the hummingbirds love to work over their beautifully trailing vines.

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 web site milbergernursery.com.

SUMMER COLOR

The Tropics of Central Texas

By D. Hairlloyde, The Accidental Gardener

There's nothing more breathtaking than the bright colored blooms and elegant foliage that tropical hibiscus plants provide through the spring and summer months. They give us the opportunity to enjoy the exotic look of the tropics in your own front or backyards. Along with their awesome color displays they also offer many unique choices for foliage in various colors, shapes and sizes. As its name suggests, tropical hibiscus is not cold hardy and requires protection when temperature go below 45° F. This makes it practical to grow tropical hibiscus in containers.

Most hibiscus varieties have one-day flowers; the blossoms open early in the morning and wilt late that

“Tropical Hibiscus are probably the most recognizable and popular tropical plants used in San Antonio landscapes. Tropical Hibiscus offers a wide array of colors and blooms types including single and double reds, pinks, yellows and oranges. They can also be trained into patio trees or used as bushes.”

~ David Rodriguez, Extension Horticulturist for Bexar County

afternoon. Flowers of a few varieties remain open for two days. Few summer-flowering shrubs surpass the tropical hibiscus for glossy, dark green foliage and nonstop flowers in shades and blends of pink, yellow, orange, white, lavender and scarlet.

Tropical hibiscus can be grown in the ground. They also adapt well to container culture, which also makes their protection from unfriendly weather convenient. Usually, a 14-inch pot is the largest size that mature plants will need.

Tropical hibiscus prefer sunny locations and well-drained soil high in organic matter and nutrients. Tropical hibiscus like frequent water rations to stay very moist, but they can't stand wet feet, which means good drainage is essential.

During our hot summers when rainfall is low, hibiscus in pots have to be watered almost every day to keep the top of the container soil lightly moist. Once it is established, a hibiscus can be watered deeply once or twice a week during dry spells.

While tropical hibiscus can occasionally survive our typically mild winters, growers should plan early to protect them in the winter. Growing tropical hibiscus is an easy way to add a tropical touch to your garden.



With proper protection, **Tropical Hibiscus** can provide almost non-stop blooming from spring through the fall. When planted in containers they can be easily protected from cold weather.

Blooming plants that will keep your summer landscape alive with colorful blooming plants that have made the ranks of Texas SuperStars® can be found on our web site www.milbergernursery.com. For expert advice on plants and trees and how to make them thrive in your landscape just ask the experts at Milberger's Nursery which provides the freshest stock of plants and trees for your landscape and flower beds.

TREES AND SHRUBS

Stately Salvias

By Judy Barrett, Texas Garden Writer

Possibly no family of flowering plants is better adapted to Texas growing conditions than the salvias. Resistant to disease and pests, this family of plants can provide color in almost every region with minimum care and attention. Salvias are available as annual or perennials, tall or small plants, sun-lovers or shade-dwellers. There is a salvia for almost any spot in the garden.

Many of the salvias have fragrant leaves and/or flowers. The common name “sage” points to that scent. Depending on variety, salvias provide fragrance in the garden and indoors as cut flowers.

If you look at the profile of a salvia flower, you will notice that it is a perfect fit for the hummingbird’s head.

Salvias are favorite food plants for hummers whose long sipping-straw beak fits perfectly into the cupped flowers. Although rumor has it that hummingbirds prefer red flowers, they really prefer salvias — red, blue, purple, or pink.

Several varieties of salvia are native to Texas. Other varieties, while not natives, are very well adapted and will flourish in your garden. In the past few years, more and more landscapes, particularly public

landscapes have utilized the sturdy *Salvia greggii* as a full-sun tolerant plant. As a result, we may think of salvias as plants that need full sun, but there are many varieties that will do well, and appreciate, some shade. A browse through the different varieties available in your garden center will surely reward you with plants that you will love to ignore! A relative of the familiar kitchen sage, flowering salvias produce spikes of small, densely packed flowers atop aromatic foliage. These heat- and drought-tolerant beauties bloom from early to late summer in shades of blue, violet, red, pink, and white. Plants grow 18-inches to five feet tall, depending on the variety.

Use care when choosing salvias, because not all plants are hardy in all regions. When planting salvia in your landscape select a site with full sun and very well-drained soil. Plant salvia in the spring. Apply a thin layer of compost followed by a inch layer of mulch to retain moisture and control weeds. Water plants during the summer if rainfall is less than one inch per week. After the first killing frost, cut stems back to an inch or two above soil line. Divide plants every 3 to 4 years as new growth begins in the spring.



‘Henry Duelberg’ Salvia is a low maintenance, heat tolerant, native perennial with masses of showy blue flowers. A variety of the mealy cup or blue sage it is a perennial native plant of South and Central Texas and a Texas SuperStar due to its heat, drought and humidity tolerance. A growing favorite of Texas native plant gardens, plant this gem in the rear of flower beds due to its three-foot height and width. It grows thicker and will flower better in fall if cut back in mid-summer.

AUGUST GARDENING TIPS

Clear Out Your Garden and 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 labor.

Plant: For summer color and fall beauty, plant Texas' tough annuals and heat-loving topicals 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 "Valley Cat" tomato 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: PlantAnswers.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.

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 details and complete Gardening Tips for this month visit www.milbergernursery.com

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We always respect your privacy. Your email address will never be shared with anyone who is not associated with Milberger's Nursery.

HOW TO

Plant Fall Tomatoes in August

It's hot, we know. But now is the time to plant your fall tomatoes using transplants in one-gallon containers. Use the recommended varieties such as HM 8849, HM 1823, BHN 968, Ruby Crush, Tycoon, 444, Red Deuce, Celebrity, Valley Cat, Phoenix, and Roma.

- 🍷 Pick up the starter plants now. In August it's too late to start from seed.
- 🍷 You'll need to select a location with at least six hours of direct sunlight each day.
- 🍷 Dig a hole in the middle of your tomato bed that is at least a few inches deeper than the depth of the pot and place the transplant deep with only the topmost leaves aboveground.
- 🍷 Apply a layer of bark mulch across the soil surface.
- 🍷 Provide the right structural support. Plant with heavier fruit sometimes need a stake to stand tall, but many bushier varieties will be fine on their own.
- 🍷 Prune off the "suckers." With these little shoots gone the plant will direct its energy towards developing sturdier stems and producing fruit faster.



New transplants may be heat sensitive. If your newly planted tomatoes are looking a bit haggard, try providing them with a little shade and watering them early every morning with cold water until they're looking fresh and healthy again.



A tropical looking shrub or small tree with electric orange blooms, **Pride of Barbados** aka **Mexican Bird of Paradise** grows rapidly to reach a mature height of about five to eight feet tall by late summer. It may freeze to the ground in a typical Texas winter (the weak-wooded branches can be cut back freely), but the roots will survive and put out a big flush of fernlike leaflets in spring. Also known as Poinciana, Dwarf Poinciana, and Peacock Flower, this draught-hardy bloomer shrugs off dry weather and offers up fantastic cone-like racemes in orange, red and yellow which is why it had been declared a Texas Superstar™ plant.