

# MILBERGER LANDSCAPE & NURSERY

THE GARDENING NEWSLETTER FOR SOUTH CENTRAL TEXAS

JUNE 2019

## PLANT QUESTIONS

**My newly planted 3-gallon oleander has one bloom on it. Should I prune it and when?** Your oleander requires very little in the way of attention or care. Since they bloom on new growth, pruning is normally done just before they break dormancy in the spring. Tip pruning at that time will increase the fullness of the plant and therefore the blossoms.

**Is a purple leaf plum tree an edible fruit tree?** Yes it is. It produces a rather small, sour plum which makes excellent jelly or jam.

**My hibiscus have grown tall and sparse. Should I cut them back? When can I do that?** The hibiscus should be pruned back quite drastically to force new growth and bushiness. This needs to be done periodically to keep the plants from getting in the shape they are now in. It can be done anytime, but is best done just as you are bringing it outside from the winter protection.

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.



Nothing beats the taste of garden-fresh, homegrown tomatoes. To grow healthy plants and healthy fruits, whether you're growing tomatoes in the backyard or on a balcony, their needs are essentially the same.

## HOMEGROWN TOMATOES

### Growing Award-Winning Tomatoes in San Antonio

In San Antonio, you plant tomatoes in April to harvest fruit in June. We plant again in late July to harvest fruit in October and November. Tomatoes are the most popular of all garden vegetables. Successful tomato growing really can be simplified to a few key factors: good soil, adapted varieties, early planting, lots of sunlight, dependable moisture and wise fertilizing. With a little attention to these key factors, you can grow a bumper crop of delicious award-winning tomatoes. If you want home-grown tomatoes all fall, and your spring planting normally wears out too soon, consider planting more tomatoes in July. Plant them deeply, keep them well-watered and mulched, and provide some shade 'til the new plants are established enough to withstand our intense Texas sun. Tomatoes love the heat and will grow more rapidly than your spring crop.

(MORE TOMATOES 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](http://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.

## JUNE GARDENING EVENTS

**Sat., Jun 8 from 10am 'til 1:30pm**

### 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 Blood Drive. **For this drive Milberger's will double our incentive gift for those willing to donate to a twenty dollar (\$20) Gift Certificate.** Please plan to participate. 210-497-3760.

**Sat., Jun 8 Judging starts at Noon**

### Milberger's Top Tomato Contest

Bring your finest homegrown tomatoes and/or a bowl filled with your best garden vegetables to Milberger's Nursery before noon and fruits of your garden may be selected a winner in one of five categories. Every entrant will receive a \$10 gift certificate redeemable at Milbergers on the day of the contest only. 210-497-3760.

**Sat., Jun 8 from 10:30 'til Noon FREE**

### Growing Citrus on Your Patio and in Your Landscape.

In San Antonio you can successfully grow bountiful citrus from trees planted in your landscape or in containers. The trick is to select varieties that do well in our area and protect them from the occasional freezes that we get. Learn how to be successful with citrus at this free Earth-Kind Seminar presented by David Rodriguez, Extension Horticulturist for Texas A&M AgriLIFE Extension Service. Bring a notebook. 210-497-3760.

Find more Gardening Events, visit  
[www.MilbergerNursery.com](http://www.MilbergerNursery.com)



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](http://www.milbergernursery.com)  
[nursery@milbergersa.com](mailto:nursery@milbergersa.com)

## 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.



## Milberger's Popular TOP TOMATO CONTEST



Your homegrown tomatoes could be **BIG WINNERS**. Bring the best from your garden to the nursery **June 8— before noon**

### 5 CATEGORIES:

**Cherry and Smaller Tomatoes ~ Regular Tomatoes ~ BIGGEST TOMATO** (based on weight) ~ **BEST OF SHOW GRAND CHAMPION ~ Best Salad Bowl**

Every one who enters receives a **\$10.00 Milberger Gift Certificate**  
CONTEST RULES AT THE NURSERY OR ON OUR WEBSITE

**Shade Trees**

**Palm Trees.**

**Ornamental Trees.**

**Shrubs**



Fresh well-rooted trees for the San Antonio area. Visit our tree lot and select a species that is well adapted for our growing area.

Watch for our on-sale specials in  
**The San Antonio Express-News**  
and  
[www.MilbergerNursery.com](http://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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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@htcc.coop](mailto:mhess@htcc.coop).

## HOMEGROWN TOMATOES

### Your Award-Winning Tomatoes

(CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE)

The keys to successful tomato growing include timing, variety selection, site preparation and pest control. We usually plant tomato transplants in the garden on or after March 15 if the temperature has been warm. If it has been cold, wait until after April 1. You will enhance your success if you plant your tomatoes in raised beds in full sun. The site should be enriched with 2 inches of compost and 1 cup of slow-release lawn fertilizer per 50 square feet of garden.

“*Too late for tomatoes? Many varieties of tomatoes will bloom, but fruit will not be set when temperatures are above 90 to 95 degrees. Gardeners who plant too late may have lush plants without any tomatoes unless there are a few days of cooler temperatures in late May and June. Cherry tomatoes will generally still produce fruit in the heat.*”

~ Central Texas Gardener

Plant tomatoes in the garden three feet apart. Tomatoes are not xeriscape plants so keep them well-watered. Drip irrigation is the best option.

Surround the transplant with an aluminum or steel tomato cage to support the plant and fruit. Use live oak leaves for mulch over the root system.

Select a tomato variety that grows to its full size quickly and then concentrates on setting and maturing fruit before it becomes too hot in the summer. It will ideally finish its production by mid-July when it can be pulled and retired to the compost pile. A new crop is planted from mid-July to mid-August. Tomato plants that stay in the garden beyond July are more likely to produce fungal diseases and insects than more fruit.

Tomato plants need to move and sway in the breeze to develop strong stems. That happens naturally outdoors.



**JUNE TOMATO TIP:** Pinch and remove suckers that develop in the crotch joint of two branches. They won't bear fruit and will take energy away from the rest of the plant. However, go easy on pruning the rest of the plant. You can thin out a few leaves to allow the sun to reach the ripening fruit, but it's the leaves that are photosynthesizing and creating the sugars that give flavor to your tomatoes.

This year **Milberger's Top Tomato Contest** is June 8th. Bring your finest homegrown tomatoes and/or a bowl filled with your best garden vegetables to Milberger's Nursery before noon and fruits of your garden may be selected a winner in one of five categories. Every entrant will receive a free \$10 gift certificate redeemable at Milbergers on the day of the contest only.

## VINES

# The Versatility of Star Jasmine

Star jasmine has an old common name, Confederate jasmine, but this plant is not native to the Southeast, nor is it a true jasmine. It is actually native to China and is known scientifically as *Trachelospermum jasminoides*.

In early spring and summer, star jasmine produces clusters of small, white flowers that look like tiny pinwheels (or stars).

Despite their diminutive size, the flowers pack a huge punch of sweet fragrance and can easily perfume an entire yard.

Star jasmine is a fast-growing, twining vine that can be grown on lamp posts, trellises, or arbors. It will easily twine through chain link fences and makes a great, evergreen screen. It will not climb on masonry walls unless a support structure is added.

Take care if planting star jasmine near trees, as its energetic tendrils can quickly reach heights where they may be difficult to prune.

Some sources recommend star jasmine as a ground cover, but keep in mind that it's a vigorous grower and may not work well in all situations. A great alternative groundcover is Asiatic jasmine (*T. asiaticum*), though it rarely blooms.

Star jasmine prefers well-drained locations that receive full or partial sun. Plants grown in full sun will produce the most flowers.

Be sure to provide plants with adequate space, since vines can grow twenty feet or more if left unpruned. Pinching back the tips of the vines will encourage branching and produce fuller plants.

Star jasmine does respond well to pruning and can even be shaped as a small hedge or espalier. The sap of the plant is quite sticky and

can stain clothing, so be sure to clean tools and any soiled clothing promptly after pruning.

Star jasmine is relatively pest free and drought resistant, making it a great plant for many Southern landscapes.



**Star jasmine** has a twining habit and becomes a strong vine when tied to a support — it can even make an attractive living fence. Grow it on a front porch or allow it to twine up trees. Use it to cover an eyesore, such as an old shed or fence, or let it tumble down walls and terraces. It will not attach to masonry without additional support.

## IN YOUR ROSE GARDEN

# Growing Roses In Containers

With the exception of large climbers, most roses can be grown successfully in containers. It is important that the container be large enough to provide ample space for the roots; also to have good drainage, good soil and a location with adequate light and air circulation. The container may be plastic or clay.

Plastic fares better in cold climates where freezing may actually crack clay containers. Clay containers do provide a cooler condition for the roots during



You will find it easy to move your potted roses to a more sheltered position in extreme weather conditions.

“Roses in pots extend the scope and possibilities of gardening. Wide walkways can be highlighted with tubs of roses, entryways can be graced with the beauty and fragrance of roses. Miniature roses can dress up window boxes in the summer, and then be brought indoors in winter to perk up the house.”

~ Dr. Jerry Parsons, Bexar County Horticulture Specialist

hot weather. If choosing plastic, it is better to obtain the lighter terra-cotta color rather than the darker plastics, as they heat up faster.

Container roses may grow up to five feet tall.

It is important that bush roses and small shrub roses be placed in containers no less than 15 inches in diameter. They will do well there for about two years and then will need transplanting. Roses in containers tend to deplete the soil of its nutrients more rapidly than if they were in the ground. Often they will also outgrow their containers and need a larger home. In this case one can provide the rose with a container one or two sizes up from the previous one.

Place your potted roses in a location where it receives some moving air. This will reduce the incidence of fungus-related rose diseases. A rose should also have a full day of sun, or at least seven hours.

To spice up your summer landscape with dramatic summer color visit our nursery where—along with roses—you will find Texas SuperStars® plants that will thrive in your summer landscape. Take a look at our web site [www.milbergernursery.com](http://www.milbergernursery.com).

## TREES AND SHRUBS

# Crepe Myrtles – The Belle of the Summer

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.

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](http://www.MilbergerNursery.com) and click through to our on-line tree lot for section and planting guidelines.

## JUNE GARDENING TIPS

# Planting for Summer Color

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 (except for Floratam St. Augustine which is chinch-bug resistant) anytime from now through late summer.

**Odd Jobs:** Use mulch generously around trees (but not piled on the trunks), 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 detailed and complete Gardening Tips from Jerry Parsons go to [www.MilbergerNursery.com](http://www.MilbergerNursery.com) and follow the newsletter link that reads "Monthly Gardening Tips."

## 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](http://www.milbergernursery.com).

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## Milberger's Tree Lot

**has the largest selection of healthy, well rooted, ready-to-plant-trees in the area.**

To find the specific tree for your landscape talk to the tree experts at Milberger's Nursery.



**Gold Star™ Esperanza** is a fast-growing shrub valued for its large clusters of non-stop, golden yellow, bell-shaped flowers. As a Texas Superstar™, esperanza has recently become a popular ornamental plant in Texas gardens. Arching stems of dark green foliage form sprays of green and gold. Very heat tolerant and easy to grow. Great for sunny borders and containers. Evergreen in mild winter climates.