



Of Leaf & Limb

Hill Country Master Gardeners Association

"Promoting education on horticulture and the environment"

August, 2006

Volume 4, Issue 8

Wednesday,
August 2,
1:00 p.m.

Extension Office

Speaker:

This month's program will be on Fire Ant Control by Molly Keck of the Bexar County Extension Office.

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President's Message:

Hi Everyone!

Time sure flies, and with it as hot as it is, that's a good thing. I hope everyone's gardens are surviving and thriving.

We have a very important meeting coming up in September. As you are all aware, a committee was formed to review and revise the original bylaws. The goal of the committee was to produce a document which would guide the organization over time, and I think that is what has been done. The committee, chaired by Tommie Airhart, consisted of Howard Platte, Anna Osborn, John Osborn, Fay Drozd, Otis Fox and myself. Carol Seminara was kind enough to lend her expertise to the wording of the document, and Sharon Johnson prepared it for your review. The bylaws, with proposed changes

highlighted, is included in this newsletter. I hope that everyone will carefully review it and be prepared to discuss the changes in the September meeting. We will then vote on the resultant document in October. These are your bylaws, and careful review and meaningful discussion of the proposed changes is vital to the future growth of the HCMG.

The convention planning committee continues its monthly meetings, and the convention is coming along very well. All the tours are set, as are most of the speakers. We discussed the registration form last meeting, and Carol Seminara and her husband Joe are working on designing the form. By the way, a huge thanks to Joe for all his support of our efforts. He not only designed our logo and printed a large sign for us to display at this year's

convention, but he also is helping out with our convention needs. Whenever you run into him, be sure to tell him how much we appreciate him. Check out the latest convention news on our website, hillcountrygardeners.org, under 2007 Convention.

The demonstration garden is progressing. Tony Pacini and John Osborn, and a crew of helpers, are going to install the sprinkler system in mid August, and then Tim Goode will get our sod delivered. Following that, we will begin planting plants. It's a very ambitious project and thanks to Tony and John for their leadership role in this project.

I hope to see you all at the August meeting.

by Anne Browne

HCMG Website of the Month

<http://www-aes.tamu.edu/> Agricultural chemicals and environmental safety information from the Texas Agricultural Extension Service



Inching Toward Eden

By Carol Seminara

It's too (expletive deleted) hot. And too (ditto) dry.

My e-mail is full of jokes: it's so hot ...the birds have to use pot holders to pull worms out of the ground; ...trees are whistling for dogs; ...farmers feed their chickens ice cubes so the hens won't lay hard-boiled eggs; etc. While initially amusing, as the summer sizzles on, these gags no longer seem as funny or as far-fetched. Gardening has ceased to be a challenge and turned into a battle with despair.

When we moved to the Hill Country in September 2004, we discovered the "immaculate landscaping" of the previous owner amounted to mowing whatever grew in the yard -- grass, burrs, weeds and all -- to a crisp 1-inch height every week and allowing the two largest pecan trees to "self-prune." Granted there were random plantings here and there, but no discernable beds or viable foliage other than a three-foot juniper shrub, a sickly Arizona ash and an unruly hedge of unfortunate red-tipped photinia.

By typical HC standards, we have an abundance of soil -- up to nine inches in some places -- but who knew soil could be simultaneously rocks and clay? We immediately set out to improve our grounds by composting, mulching and watering as much as municipally permitted. By sticking (mostly) with native plants, we've managed to add some color and variety to our environment. Our landscaping method is strictly trial-and-error, with heavy emphasis on error and a scant few victories.

In that win column, however, I firmly count our fennel farming an overwhelming success despite the fact we have not harvested one single, edible bulb. Well after the fact, I learned I had planted the sweet fennel variety, which is grown primarily for its leaves and seeds. The other, bulbous or Florence fennel, generally grows to about two feet in height and

has the enlarged, edible bulb I was hoping to use in salads and sautés. Bronze fennel, like the sweet variety, grows up to 6 feet tall and makes a handsome addition to any garden.

A member of the parsley and carrot family, fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*) grows best in full sun with good drainage and ample watering. A vigorous self-seeder, fennel can be grown as an annual but established roots will survive mild winters. Roots can be divided in the fall after the seeds are harvested. Fennel is not a good neighbor to coriander or dill and should never be grown near these herbs.

At their peak, BC (before caterpillar), my fennel bed was filled with fragrant 5-foot tall, feathery green foliage and flat umbels of tiny yellow flowers. Bees and lady bugs abounded, and I would snip leaves for inclusion in sauces and butters, or just to munch while pulling weeds.

Then the Anise swallowtail butterflies (*Papilio zelicaon*) found us. The resulting larva was at first small and black but soon grew into a beautiful, fat white and green caterpillar with orange and black markings. If I moved the stem it was feeding on or touched one on the back, the caterpillar would rear up and a pair of bright orange "horns" emerged from its head, along with a distinctly odd smell. The osmeteria are a forked, fleshy eversible organ located behind the caterpillar's head, which are used for defense. The caterpillar tries to repel predators with its bright color, aggressive behavior and foul smell.

Each fennel plant was host to several hungry larva, and I spent way too many minutes idly watching them munch their way through leaves and flowers, occasionally poking one to watch it flare up (I apologize; I know teasing is wrong). The caterpillars have pupated and my "crop" of butterflies has flown. Now, the fennel is going to seed and the birds are feasting. I will

always have fennel in my garden!

So we muddle on, fingers crossed, in the belief we are moving in the right direction. We are encouraged by the fact our share of fauna has grown in proportion to our increase in flora. Birds, squirrels, butterflies and lizards abound. Rob and Laura, our robin couple, returned this spring and, same as last year, insisted on lingering well into July. White-wing doves, brilliant cardinals, noisy jays and ubiquitous sparrows all have made homes in the aforementioned photinia, which is trimmed and, for the moment, black-spot and iron chlorosis free. I've even spotted a genuine Texas horned toad sunning on my patio one morning!

After more than twenty years of abundant, extravagant landscaping in an effortless climate, the hard-won victories of Texas Hill Country gardening remain subtle. Some days, when my hair is matted to my skull under my sun hat and my vision is blurred from too much salty sweat in my eyes, I wish it were a little easier and the rewards a little showier. But the sight of the little native morning glory, whose tendrils I adjust every morning, blooming on my iron gate, makes my heart glad.

Still, it is discouraging to watch my beloved tomato plants wither even with my best intentions and efforts. I'll continue scratching in the dirt, working to make our home a paradise, but there's a darn good reason John Graves called it "hard scrabble."

And, while it may seem disingenuous to bemoan the state of my little plot while those whose livelihood depends on bringing in a crop are suffering much greater losses, my heart goes out to the farmers who pray daily for rain. I thank them and raise my small voice with theirs.

Kudos

Jean Anderson, Eleanor Baldwin, Marguerite Belec, Mildred Coggin and Leo Wagner for volunteering to help in the greenhouse and attending the training session.

John Osborn and Tony Pacini for their work on our demonstration garden



Calendar of Events: (Attendance at events other than Master Gardener Meetings is optional; events are listed for those wishing to attend other educational offerings)

August - Native Plant Society of Texas, Kerrville Chapter. Meetings on summer hiatus and will resume in September.

August 2 – HCMG State Conference Steering Committee Chairs meet at 10:00 a.m. at the Extension Office.

August 2 - HCMG monthly meeting at 1:00 p.m. at the Kerr County Extension Office. This month's program will be on Fire Ant Control by Molly Keck of the Bexar County Extension Office. A quarterly meeting of all committee chairs will follow.

August 15 - Kerr Cactus and Succulent Society meets at 7:00 p.m. at Butt Holdsworth Library, 505 Water Street, Kerrville.

August 20 – Deadline for HCMG newsletter articles (send to Martha at hnews@kctc.com)

August 26 – Kerr County Market Days at Kerr County Courthouse, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Master Gardeners will have a booth and lots of plants. If your gardens need a boost, drop by and pick up some new plants.

August 29 - Native Plant Society of Texas, Fredericksburg Chapter, meets at 7:00 p.m. in the Gillespie County Historical Society

Bldg., 312 W San Antonio St., Fredericksburg.

September 5 - Native Plant Society of Texas, Kerrville Chapter, meets at 2:00 p.m. at RNC.

September 6 – HCMG monthly meeting at 1:00 p.m. at the Kerr County Extension Office.

September 7 – RNC lunchtime “Brown Bagger Series” presents “Seeds: The Fruit of the Matter” by Barbara Lowenthal & Linda Riner. Bring a sack lunch (noon – 1:00 p.m.) Cost is \$3 for non-members of RNC and includes beverages & dessert. RNC members free.

September 16 – Native Plant Society of Texas, Fredericksburg Chapter, will host Wildscapes: Gardening to Attract Wildlife at Gillespie County Historical Society Bldg. Fredericksburg. 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Costs vary (box lunch & drinks included) and seating is limited.

September 25, 7:00p.m., Hill Country Master Naturalists meeting - “Guadalupe Bass Restoration Project” by Dr. Gary P. Garrett. Riverside Nature Center, 150 Francisco Lemos St in Kerrville.

Committees

Education:

Debbie Russell, Chair;
Cheri Bolden, Fay
Drozd, Otis Fox,
Eileen Haden, Ida
Luckey, Sandra Martin,
Mary Allen Meriwether,
Judy Russell, Judy
Simmons, Huibert Van
Demmeltraadt, Beverly
Weidenfeller

Greenhouse/Market

Days:

Tony Pacini, Chair

Horticultural Inquiry:

Pam Bresler-chair
Carol Johnson, Betty
West,
Judy Simmons

Jr. Master Gardeners

Committee – Fay
Drozd

Newsletter:

Martha Stevens-editor
Carol Seminara-
assistant editor
Contributors: Betty
West, Ida Luckey,
Anne Brown, Carol
Biggs, Debbie Russell

Nominating:

Tommie Airhart-chair

Program:

Phyllis Knight, Chair

Volunteer

Hours/Record

Keeping:

Ida Luckey, Chair

Mentoring:

Judy Simmons-Chair

H/C Garden Book

Publication:

Christine Millar, Chair

Hours and Tracking

You are to be commended for volunteering in our community in spite of these very high temperatures we have been facing. It is also summer, and some of us are spending time with our grandchildren for awhile. My husband, Glen Luckey, and I have had the pleasure of spending two weeks with three of our grandchildren, Kelsey Sullivan, Shelby Sullivan and Taylor Sullivan. It had been a year since they moved to the east coast and we were thrilled to see them.

Even with all these multi-tasking, the following Master Gardeners were recertified for this year: in April Peggy Benson, in May Nancy Dickinson, Anna Osborn and John Osborn. In June Huibert VanDemmeltraadt was recertified for 2006 as well. I am sure that we have other members with enough hours for recertification. When things slow down during these hot days, please sit down and fill out the Volunteer Hours Form. You know that I appreciate it, and I am sure that our Extension Agent does too.

by Ida Luckey, Chair

Bylaws Committee

Please review the bylaws before the September meeting. We will discuss the changes, which are highlighted in red and underlined, at the meeting. We will vote at the October meeting.

Copies will be available for members who do not receive the newsletter.

by Tommie Airhart, Chair

Education Committee: We Need You!

We're looking for a few good men and women. No, this isn't the Marines but the HCMG Education Committee. We need volunteers to serve from Aug. 22 to end of May/June or longer (if you wish). This is a great way to get in those volunteer hours plus. We meet once a month for about an hour setting up and planning the classes for our 2007 interns.

When the classes start, the monthly meetings will probably end, but members of the committee are needed to help the speakers and lead the class so each lesson runs smoothly. There are twelve classes and two field trips this year, and the committee needs one person to be the leader each class or trip.

After registration, when we see how many incoming interns are registered, we may have to adjust the class size and make appropriate changes in the schedule of classes. Please keep in mind that changes could be coming after December.

If you are interested in serving on the Education Committee or if you have questions, please contact me via email at: russhill@ktc.com.

I'm looking forward to hearing from many or all of you.

Thank you.

by Debbie Russell, Chair
Education Committee

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Flowers are the sweetest things that God ever made and
forgot to put a soul into.

-Henry Ward Beecher

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**Hill Country Master
Gardener Association
2005 Executive
Committee**

Anne Brown – President
Harold Pieratt - Vice
President
Sharon Johnson -
Secretary
Carol Johnson -
Treasurer
Fay Drozd - Ex-officio
Advisor
Roy Walston - C. E. O.
Advisor

**Of Leaf &
Limb
Newsletter**

Editor - Martha
Stevens
Assistant Editor -
Carol Seminara
Contributors –Betty
West, Anne Brown,
Ida Luckey, Carol
Biggs, Debbie
Russell

**Comments,
Submissions...**

We welcome and encourage any comments or suggestions regarding this newsletter. Also, if you would like to submit an article for an upcoming edition, please send to: hnews@kctc.com. Indicate "Editor HCMG Newsletter" in the subject line.

Wildscapes Gardening Seminar this September in Fredericksburg

The Fredericksburg Chapter of the Native Plants Society of Texas (NPSOT) is hosting an all-day seminar on gardening to attract wildlife on Saturday, Sept. 16. Seminars begin at 9:00 a.m. and continue through 3:00 p.m. at the Gillespie County Historical Society Building, 312 San Antonio St., Fredericksburg.

The five session topics include: Gardening 101: Using Native and Adapted Plants in Your Garden; Attracting Butterflies to Your Garden; Building Habitats for Wildlife; Building Water Features to Attract Wildlife; and Maintaining Your Garden Organically. Each session is presented by a regional expert in that field.

Cost for the seminar, including a box lunch, is \$25 for NPSOT members and \$30 for non-members. Registration is due by Sept. 8, and late registration after Sept. 9 is being offered at \$35. Couples attending will receive a \$5 discount.

In addition to the educational sessions, the program includes exhibits, a list of gardens/habitats available for touring after the seminar, books and plants sale, and door prizes. Seating is limited and those wishing to attend are encouraged to register early.

For more information, contact HCMG Peggy Benson by phone (830) 997.9960 or by e-mail at: peggyben@austin.rr.com

Bylaws of the Hill Country Master Gardeners Revised March, 2006

Article I. Name.

The name of this organization shall be the Hill Country Master Gardeners.

Article II. Objective.

This organization shall be a non-profit, educational, literary and charitable association to support Texas Cooperative Extension. This organization is organized exclusively for charitable and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the organization shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by an organization exempt from Federal Income Tax under Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law) or (b) by organization contributions which are deductible under Section 107 (c) (2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law). This organization shall not be affiliated with any commercial enterprises. Its objectives shall be:

- A. To increase the knowledge of gardening among members and the general public.
- B. To support and assist the Texas Agricultural Extension Service by providing the community with information on good gardening practices through educational projects, including publishing news articles and other mass media, presenting programs at garden clubs, schools and other community groups, and responding to telephone inquires.
- C. To assist Master Gardener Interns in fulfilling their volunteer commitment.

Article III. Membership.

Section 1. Members of this organization shall be graduates of a Texas Master Gardeners program and certified by Texas Cooperative Extension, the Texas A&M University System, or an equivalent Master Gardener program.

Section 2. Non-voting associate membership shall be extended to Master Gardener Interns in the Hill Country Master Gardener Program. No dues will be required of associate members.

Section 3. To maintain good standing, each member must have paid the dues for the current year.

Section 4. Dues set annually by members of this organization shall be payable in January.

Section 5. Associate members will be accepted into full membership upon certification with dues payable the following year.

Section 6. Members must be recertified each year to retain membership in the organization. Recertification hours will include a minimum of six hours of education and a minimum of twenty-five hours of Extension volunteer work.

Article IV. Meetings.

Section 1. Meetings will be held monthly unless otherwise announced.

Section 2. Special meetings may be called at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

Article V. Fiscal Year.

Section 1. The fiscal year of the organization shall run from January first to December thirty-first of each year.

Article VI. Officers.

Section 1. Officers of this organization shall be: President, Vice-president, Secretary and Treasurer.

Section 2. Officers shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and a slate of candidates shall be presented in October. Officers shall be elected at the November meeting, installed at the December meeting and assume their duties upon installation.

Section 3. Officers may be re-elected to the same office to serve the maximum of two full, consecutive terms.

Section 4. All nominees for office must be active members in good standing.



Article VII. Duties of Officers.

Section 1. The President shall:

- A. Preside at all meetings of the organization.
- B. Appoint a chairman of each standing committee and any special committees.
- C. Be an ex-officio member of all committees except the Nominating Committee.
- D. Oversee the operation of the organization.

Section 2. The Vice-president shall:

- A. Take charge of meetings in the absence of the President.
- B. Attend committee meetings assigned by the President.
- C. Chair the Projects Committee.

Section 3. The Secretary shall:

- A. Record the minutes of the meetings.
- B. Be custodian of all records.
- C. Be the corresponding secretary.

Section 4. The Treasurer shall:

- A. Be responsible for all receipts and disbursements of money in accordance with good fiscal policy.
- B. Keep adequate records of all financial transactions.

.Article VIII. Committees.

The need for standing or temporary committees shall be determined by the Executive Committee and appointments to these committees shall be made by the President.

Section 1. The standing committee chairs shall be appointed by the President.

Section 2. Certified members may serve as members and chairs of committees. Interns may serve only as members.

Section 3. The standing committees are:

A. Educational Committee, which:

- a. Shall plan and conduct Master Gardeners-in-training programs.
- b. Evaluate the Master Gardeners-in-training program.
- c. Obtain information from other Master Gardener programs.
- d. Plan future Master Gardener-in-training programs.

B. Horticulture Inquiry Committee, which:

- a. Shall be responsible for scheduling Master Gardeners and interns for service at the Extension office.
- b. Shall develop best practices in researching, communicating and documenting public inquires.

C. Project Committee, which:

- a. Shall be responsible for the selection and completion of special projects.

D. Speaker Committee, which:

- a. Shall coordinate speaking engagements.
-

E. Nominating Committee, which:

- a. Shall consist of a chairman and two members who are not currently serving on the Executive Committee.
- b. Provide a slate of candidates for officers at the October meeting.

F. Program Committee, which:

- a. Shall be responsible for arranging programs for monthly meetings.

G. Public Relations Committee, which:

- a. Shall publicize the Master Gardener program and activities.

H. Archivist Committee, which:

- a. Shall document and maintain records of the organization's activities.

I. Volunteer Coordinator Committee, which:

- a. Shall organize volunteers for any event needed.

Article IX. Executive Committee.

Section 1. The Executive Committee shall consist of the President, who will serve as chairman, the Vice-president, the Secretary, the Treasurer and the immediate past-president who will serve as ex-officio advisor.

Section 2. The County Extension Agent shall serve as advisor to the Executive Committee.

Section 3. The Executive Committee shall meet monthly or when necessary.

Section 4. In the event a vacancy occurs on the Executive Committee, said vacancy shall be filled for the remainder of the term by a person approved by a majority vote of the Executive Committee and of the general membership.

Article X. Voting.

Section 1. A quorum shall consist of 51 percent of the active members present and voting.

Article XI. Amendments.

Section 1. These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the active membership.

Section 2. Notice of all proposed amendments to the Bylaws must be presented in writing at the regular monthly meeting with a copy mailed to absent members. Proposed amendments will be voted on at the next regular meeting. Members not present may vote by written proxy.

Article XII. Indemnification.

Section 1. Indemnification of Board of Directors.

The ~~Corporation~~ Organization shall indemnify its past and present Directors to the fullest extent permitted and in the manner provided by Article 1396-2.2A of the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act and other applicable laws, who were, are, or will be threatened to be named defendants or respondents in a proceeding because the persons are or were Directors in all instances, except if it is determined by a court of competent jurisdiction that the persons did not (i) conduct themselves in good faith, (ii) reasonably believe that his/her conduct was not opposed to the ~~Corporation's~~ Organization's best interest, and (iii) in the case of any criminal proceeding, have reasonable cause to believe their conduct was unlawful.

Section 2. Indemnification of Officers/Members

The ~~Corporation~~ Organization shall indemnify its past and present officers/members to the fullest extent permitted and in the manner provided by Article 1396-2.2A of the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act and other applicable laws, who were, are, or will be threatened to be named defendants or respondents in a proceeding because the persons are or were an officer/member in all instances, except if it is determined by a court of competent jurisdiction that the persons did not (i) conduct themselves in good faith, (ii) reasonably believe that their conduct was not opposed to the ~~Corporation's~~ Organization's best interest, and (iii) in the case of any criminal proceeding, have reasonable cause to believe their conduct was unlawful.

