

July 2018

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### HCMG will meet on July 11, 2018

Location:  
Kerr County  
Youth Event Center

**Noon - Networking**  
**1:00 - Meeting**  
**Vegetable Competition**  
**2:00 - Program**

**"Square Foot Gardening"**  
**Jim Reed**



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Texas A&M AgriLife Extension provides equal opportunities in its programs and employment to all persons, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity"



*Jackie Skinner*

## President's Message

Sedum is a hoarder. There's no sign beside its display at the nursery warning the unwary buyer that this plant has a proclivity for trash collecting. So many plants that teem in the lower levels of plant society are struck with this affliction. Like maids crowding in for the bridal bouquet, they clammer after low flying detritus and snatch it up: dead leaves, twiglets, catkins, bits of old newspaper, grass and weed seeds...all the good-for-nothing stuff none of the rest of us want...and neither should they! The result is a slum among the high rises. I sometimes wonder why Sedum and others of its ilk were designed to grab onto and almost bury themselves in objects which, when given enough volume, are likely to block out water and sunlight. Are they protecting their shallow roots from heat or cold? In the case of ground cover Sedum, their tiny stems are so fragile, perhaps the accumulation serves as a cushion against falling objects (most of which they can't wait to add to their collection). About every six months I can't stand the sight of it a moment longer. I don my Swat gardening gloves and "go in." However, hand protection doesn't work. You've gotta be brave, rip off the gloves, and go at it with bare fingers...mano a mano. The job is dangerous, filled with the possibility of unpleasant encounters such as pill bugs or slugs actually touching your skin (yuk!) or even worse, a scorpion touching your skin (OWchee!). Each trashy article has to be worked free carefully because Sedum is extremely reluctant to L..E..T G..O! It will fight and hang on, even at the cost of sacrificing tendrils. Courage, determination, and tough love are required if you're gonna clean house.

Eventually the stuff on the bottom of the stack should rot into mulch. But if that was meant to be the case, something has gone very wrong with Sedum's decomposter. Maybe it has become overwhelmed and buried in the heap.

I suppose I should learn to appreciate the beauty and unique qualities of Sedum enough to overlook this one bad habit, but when one's yard is perfect and orderly in every way like mine (tee-hee), it's pretty hard to stomach that fly in the ointment. Mother used to say, "A little boy is noise with dirt on it." Sedum is a plant with dirtiness under it. Both can be highly annoying.

**HCMG 2018, Calendar of Events** prepared by **Raeann Reid**

*Attendance at events other than Master Gardener meetings is optional. We list events for those wishing to attend other educational offerings, not all events are eligible to fulfill CEUs credits toward annual recertification. Please verify the event with the provider.*

**July 7, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Herff Farm.**

Compost Queens, a family-owned food waste collection and composting service, will present a composting methods and systems workshop. Cost is \$15 per person. Register online. Pay at the door registration is also available. For more information contact Stephanie Patillo at 210.551.6722 or [farm@cibolo.org](mailto:farm@cibolo.org)

**July 11, Hill Country Master Gardeners,** 1:00 p.m. business meeting. 2:00 p.m. Jim Reed, Leahey Garden Club member and Bexar County Master Gardener, will present a program on square foot gardening. Hill Country Youth Event Center. HCMGs and interns.

**July 12, 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Riverside Nature Center** presents a program about the benefits and importance of trees. Riverside Nature Center.

**July 24, NPSOT Fredericksburg,** 6:30 p.m. social, followed by the meeting at 7:00 p.m. Mr. David Vaughan, a certified arborist and officer/member of several organizations dedicated to arboriculture will present "Get the Dirt on Soil." Memorial Presbyterian Church. Visitors welcome.

**Addresses for Events Listed Above**

Herff Farm, 33 Herff Rd, Boerne

Hill Country Youth Event Center, 3785 Highway 27, Kerrville

Memorial Presbyterian Church, 601 North Milam St, FBG

Riverside Nature Center, 150 Francisco Lemos Street, Kerrville



**Mexican Flame Vine**  
*Senecio confuses*

*Photo Credit: Pat Wolters*





## Hill Country Veggies

July 2018

**By Allen Mace**

This has been a spring to remember, or in my case maybe forget. I started out this year with high hopes of a successful spring

growing season. Everything was going great until all of a sudden it got hot, very hot. I've said in the past, that we have two growing seasons here in the Hill Country. The spring season is a hit or miss season. I find that the fall season tends to be more reliable. Spring time brings thunder storms with heavy rains and a chance for hail. Sometimes we go from winter straight to summer with a chance



**Squash**



**Cucumbers**

of spring. That was the case this year. I had a cool spell in mid-April with light frost and then pegging out over 100 degrees before the end of May. On top of that, I had some good rain early on and then it became very dry, at my house. Because of the dry and hot weather, I had to water a lot more. I've been using those black soaker hoses this year. I've got three beds linked together watering the cucumbers and watermelons and one

hose in the squash bed. The tomatoes were grown in bags so I hand watered them as needed. The squash went nuts this year, so the Keyhole concept worked. I will be doing more of that in the future. The three linked beds work pretty good as well. Hand watering the tomatoes, not so well. They started out great, good healthy plants with lots of blossoms producing fruits. Then the rains came and most of the fruits developed that black rot on the bottom of the fruits that comes from too much water. By the time they started to produce flowers again, it had gotten very hot and dry.

One night, I forgot to go out and turn off the water and close the gate before bed time. The next morning I walked out and found that some deer had gotten in and had destroyed the tomatoes. They had chowed down on some cucumbers and had started on the watermelons and squash. It's amazing how much damage these guys can do. They must have thought they were in heaven, they had found a feast laid out before them and made themselves at home. I tried to nurture the plants back, but there was too much damage. The fact that we were still flirting with triple-digit temperatures and no rain in sight didn't help any.

I usually target July 4th as clean out the spring garden day. Since I'll be heading to Colorado in July, I guess I'll get a head start, and go ahead and close things down early this year.



**Open Gate**



**Watermelons**



## HCMG Hosts Texas Master Gardeners' Greenhouse Management Specialist Training Class

**Texas Master Gardeners  
Greenhouse Management Specialist Training  
May 23 - 25, 2018  
Bastrop through Llano Counties**



**Texas Master Gardeners  
Greenhouse Management Specialist Training  
May 23 - 25, 2018  
Lubbock through Wood Counties**





## Greenhouse Management Specialist Training Class cont'd



Patti Schlessiger, Duane Robinson, Dee Dunton and Melayne Arnold greet early arrivals.



Instructors for the program were Anne Brown, Certified Greenhouse Management specialist; Tom LeRoy, retired Texas A&M AgriLife Extension agent with advanced degrees in horticulture and plant breeding; and Duane Robinson, Certified Greenhouse Management Specialist and program coordinator



Some of the HCMG volunteers who worked on the 3-day event gather for a photo on the final day. Seated (from left: Linda Proffitt, Fernando Gonzales, Anne Brown (instructor and volunteer) and Kara Grant. Standing from left: Allen Mace, Kathy Lewis, Janice Walker, Janell Dahms, and Jackie Connelly (assistant program coordinator). Not pictured: Melayne Arnold, Kim Courtright, Dee Dunton, Vickie Killeen, Shawn Richard, Duane Robertson (instructor and program Coordinator), Betsy Scheffe & Patti Schlessiger.



A vegetable production hydroponic greenhouse in Hunt was one of the greenhouse tour stops.



Treana Cullins of Plant Haus 2 in Kerrville, guides the class through her mechanized holding greenhouse that houses retail plants available to the public.



## Greenhouse Management Specialist Training Class cont'd

Photo Credit: Vickie Killeen, Anne Brown and Duane Robinson



1. During a break Dusty Gillam, left, and Duane Robinson, center, visit with Dusty's classmates. Other HCMGs enrolled in the class were Judy Beauford, Nancy Person and Shirley Smith.
2. Nancy Person, right, wins fertilizer spikes during the door prize drawings. Janice Walker, left, was among the volunteers kept busy with numerous door prizes awarded at the completion of the class.
3. Kara Grant, right, awards a HCMG –grown mealy blue sage to one of the lucky door prize winners.
4. Texas Master Gardener T-shirt sales were brisk. Keeping it all organized are volunteers Jackie Connelly and Janice Walker. Nancy Person, center, is one of their eager shoppers.
5. Volunteer Kara Grant, left, enjoys an afternoon snack prepared by Hospitality Committee members Linda Proffitt, center, and Betsy Scheffe.







## Try this NICE native groundcover or pot-spiller

By Cindy Anderson, Native Plant Society & HCMG

The Native Plant Society of Texas (NPSOT), Kerrville and Fredericksburg Chapters, are putting the spotlight this summer on a delightful plant — **Silver Ponyfoot (*Dichondra argentea*)** — as part of their quarterly program called “Operation N.I.C.E.”

N.I.C.E. is an acronym for “Natives Instead of Common Exotics,” a program designed to introduce people to great native plants that are currently available locally to use in place of non-native (exotic) species.



Silver Ponyfoot is a low-growing (1 to 4 inches tall) perennial plant, loved for its use as a groundcover in drought-tolerant landscaping. It is native to West Texas, Arizona, New Mexico and northern Mexico. It is very useful for covering large areas in open, sunny sites in well-drained soil.

The silvery gray hoof-shaped leaves have an almost metallic appearance, creating pale pools of silver in the garden. One plant can form low mats up to 30 inches across — creating a dense ground cover useful for erosion control — or it can trail gracefully down the side of a pot. In the heat of summer, it survives on very little water. With occasional watering, it thrives. While not

considered invasive, it can spread fairly quickly in an irrigated setting, but must have good drainage. As it grows, silver ponyfoot sends out little runners that look somewhat like small feet. Similar to strawberries, these runners put down roots at the nodes and a new plantlet is formed, giving this plant the ability to roam far and wide if not kept in check. But if you need to replace some lawn in a sunny spot, this is the plant for you. Again, it also works beautifully in pots, where the plant gracefully spills over — and it also looks great trailing over rock work. Silver ponyfoot is considered “semi-evergreen” (or should we say evergray). In a very cold winter its foliage may die back, but as a perennial it will return to life in the spring. With time it will form a thick silvery mat that will beautifully complement other design elements in your yard. Also, it can be easily propagated by stem cuttings or by rootball division. This plant grows well in full sun or part shade. It is drought-tolerant and resistant to diseases and pests. And, like all native plants, it provides food and shelter for bees, butterflies and birds. While listed by some resources as deer-resistant, others say it may be browsed by deer. A small test area covered over with chicken wire might prove helpful while it becomes established. The Lady Bird Johnson Wildlife Center reminds us that “few plants are completely deer resistant. Several factors influence deer browsing — including the density of the deer population, environmental conditions such as drought, and plant palatability.”

Our local N.I.C.E. nurseries have agreed to stock up on this plant in order to have it available to the public this season. These independent nurseries carry only the best plants for our area, as well as high-quality soil amendments and gardening supplies. Look for the “NICE Plant of the Season” sign stake at these nurseries and growers in the Kerrville area:

Natives of Texas, 4256 Medina Highway, Kerrville (830) 896-2169

Plant Haus 2, 604 Jefferson Street, Kerrville (830) 792-4444

The Gardens at The Ridge, 13439 S. Ranch Road 783, Kerrville (830) 896-0430

Friendly Natives, 1107 N. Llano Street, Fredericksburg, (830) 997-6288







### Flowers in the Vegetable Garden

Clockwise from upper left: Gladiolas at Cultivar Farm, Giant Zinnias in Pat Wolters vegetable garden, Butterfly Weed at Cultivar Farm, and Rudbekias at Cultivar Farm.



**Photo  
Credit:  
Shirley  
Smith**





## HCMGs participate in “National Get Outdoors Day (GO DAY)” at Louise Hays Park in Kerrville



Go Day is an annual event meant to encourage healthy, active outdoor fun.

HCMGs (from left) Rachel Garrison, Donna Bellis, Anne Brown, Debra Bass, and Fernando Gonzales (not pictured) participated in this event.

Part of their “fun” was holding the poles of their shade structure so it wouldn’t blow away again!



### Live Oak Wilt

HCMG Anne Brown makes “house calls” to advise on the status of trees. The last thing you want to hear is that your stand of live oaks has wilt.

If you have live oak trees, look carefully at these photos of live oak leaves with oak wilt. Learn this pattern. Look for it on your live oak trees - especially if you have noticed any with a “thinning canopy” that lets more light through than normal. Once the infection is as severe as that pictured above, you can cut the trees and use the wood for firewood. Look for these signs on your trees and take action early.

If you’re worried about your trees—talk to Anne!





## HCMG Monthly Business Meeting

June 6, 2018

Hill Country Youth Events Center

### AGENDA

Jackie Skinner called the meeting to order.

Donna Guthrie led us in the pledge of allegiance.

Patty Zohlen gave the invocation.

Patti Schlessiger stated there was a quorum with 65 members present.

### Treasurer's Report

Bernadell Larson provided handouts of the budget.

Melayne Arnold moved the budget be accepted as presented, Brian Strickland seconded the motion, it was accepted.

### Approval of March, 2018 Minutes

Anne Brown moved the minutes be accepted, Sandy Lewis seconded the motion, it carried.

### Old Business

- Caryl Hartman thanked everyone who donated items to the Garden Shed's success and asked that they start saving items for next year.
- Beth McMahon asked for help with the Jr. Master Garden program in Gillespie County. There will be a meeting June 7 if you want to help and can attend. She also talked about the test plants that were available if anyone wanted to raise them. Jackie Skinner took the last two to grow in the demonstration garden.

### New Business

#### Announcements

- New Members Susan Toensing & Shanna Ciano, transferring from Bexar County were introduced.
- Results of Greenhouse Specialist Class – Jackie Connelly introduced and thanked the committee for all their help. She stated 51 attended class, with 4 being HCMGs.
- UGRA River Clean-Up, July 28th – Kim Courtright asked for someone to man the children's booth, as she will be out of state. No one volunteered at the time.
- Bandera Boys' and Girls' Club Project – Bob Huff reported this project has been cancelled due to existing unsafe conditions. Roy Walston is working with A&M on accident reporting protocol.
- Master Gardener T-Shirts for Sale – Debbie Bacon is taking orders for the T-Shirt from the Greenhouse Specialist Class. They are selling for \$15.00.
- Current News from the Demonstration Gardeners

- \* Work Day Thursday, June 7, 9:00 a.m.
- \* Our peach tree has peaches!
- \* Looking for someone to do the mowing/edging-Cindy Anderson gave a description of what she does as far as mowing/edging goes. She has done it for several years, and would like a break. No one offered to take it over at the meeting.

- Gillespie County Landowner Workshop – June 22  
Need volunteer for information table and brief introduction of HCMG during attendee lunch time- two volunteers needed; no one offered. Must take own table and a few handouts. Must reserve space by June 18
- National Get Outdoors Day, Saturday June 9, 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Anne said they have plenty of help.
- Total Intern Hours To Date – Jackie Connelly reported 9 out of 15 interns have met their 26 volunteer hour requirements. Two have finished their 24 research desk hours. Certificates will be given at the July meeting for those meeting all requirements.
- Plans for 2018 Christmas Lunch – Linda Proffitt stated the luncheon will be at the Riverhills Country Club. Cost will be \$20.00 per person, due in November. A charitable organization will be selected.
- Greg Smith of 2012 Class is very ill – Carl Luckenbach asked everyone to keep Greg in prayer as he has bladder cancer. He has had three surgeries.
- Clark Gardens – Carl Luckenbach presented a slide show of the gardens, which are in Wichita Falls.

### Reminder – July Business Meeting will be July 11

Reminder – Vegetable Competition July 11- Participants need to bring 3 of each vegetable (tomato, potato, and onion) and 6 green beans.

**June CEU Program** – Chris Anderson, “Virtual Tour of Enchanted Rock”-Chris gave an interesting power point presentation.

July CEU Program - Jim Reed, “Square Foot Gardening”

Adjournment

Respectfully submitted:  
Patti Schlessiger  
Secretary



**Hill Country Master  
Gardeners 2018  
Executive  
Committee**

Jackie Skinner  
*President*

Wil Rolfe  
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Patti Schlessiger  
*Secretary*

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*Ex-officio Advisor*

Roy Walston  
*C.E.A. Advisor*

**Committees &  
Project  
Coordinators are  
listed on our  
website**

**Newsletter & Website**

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## Keyhole Gardens by Pat Wolters

Keyhole gardens originated in Africa and are catching on in other hot, dry places. This sustainable gardening method uses kitchen and garden waste and grey water (wash water) as food for your garden. A bucket in your shower—how's that for water conservation? Create the garden shape with rocks, cinder blocks, wood, tin, or use your imagination. Next you will need to fill it. Layering is proven to enhance soil health. Layering suggestions from **Texas Co-op Power**: wood on very bottom, next cardboard, next a bit of compost, next petroleum-free newspaper, manure, worms, straw, topsoil. Repeat, compost, straw, topsoil or some such combination until you reach the desired height. When it rains or when you water your compost bin, the nutrients will seep into the surrounding bed.

The keyhole garden below was photographed on a walk in Golden, Co. The frame can be covered with clear plastic and serve as a greenhouse and the decomposing materials in the central compost bin generate heat to increase the growing season. You can also use the frame with shade cloth when the summer gets too hot. Use square foot spacing technique to

max-  
imize  
grow-  
ing



Note the wire compost bin with 4 inch PVC pipe with holes in it for even irrigation.