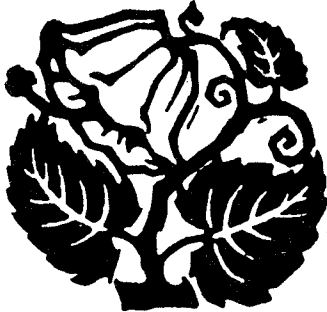


# URBAN DIRT

Published for the Harris County Master Gardeners

July/August 1995

Vol 4, No. 4



## SUMMER TIME...

and the living isn't exactly easy, at least not in the Houston garden. White flowering plants may make the garden look

cooler. You might also consider installing a water feature. The moors brought this idea to Spain and it does seem to have a cooling effect on the garden. Shade is difficult to achieve in new developments. A covered porch can be a lifesaver. Did you know that the ancient people of India had a form of air conditioning? They put lattice work on outside rooms and wet it down thoroughly several times a day so that summer breezes were cooled. It is said to have lowered the temperature quite a bit.

We have to remember to water outdoor potted plants often (some plants demand twice a day watering). Water your azaleas well and trim branches of any trees that may be giving them too much shade. They are setting buds now.

It's a good time to sow bluebonnets (make sure the seed is fresh). Coax summer annuals to continue blooming by adding a balanced fertilizer. When they look like they're bloomed out, you might try sowing fall flowering annuals like marigolds, cosmos, petunias and zinnias. Remember to remove faded blooms and seed pods from crepe myrtles so that they will continue their blooming cycle.

This is harvest time for many in the Gulf Coast region. It's time to bring in herbs to dry. Wait until the dew is off them in the morning and the natural oils in the plant have begun to rise (11:00 a.m. is a good time to start). Remember, most culinary herbs have to be harvested before they have flowered. You can retard flowering by cutting off any blooms you see, of course you might want to allow some flowering simply for the beauty that they give the garden. Many people also dry herbal flowers for wreaths and other craft projects. It's also harvest time for other things you may have planted in your garden such as young okra pods, tomatoes, strawberries and other berries. Enjoy the bounty of your beautiful summer garden, you've worked hard for it!

### JULY MEETING: 7/18/95

|                    |           |
|--------------------|-----------|
| Executive Board    | 5:30 p.m. |
| Dessert and Coffee | 6:30 p.m. |
| General Meeting    | 7:00 p.m. |

SUBJECT:  
"New Plants"

Speaker: Robert Grove, Hines Nursery.

### AUGUST MEETING: 8/15/95

|                    |           |
|--------------------|-----------|
| Executive Board    | 5:30 p.m. |
| Dessert and Coffee | 6:30 p.m. |
| General Meeting    | 7:00 p.m. |

SUBJECT:  
"The Perfect Houston Garden"

Speaker: Elvin McDonald, Editor in Chief, *American Horticultural Society*