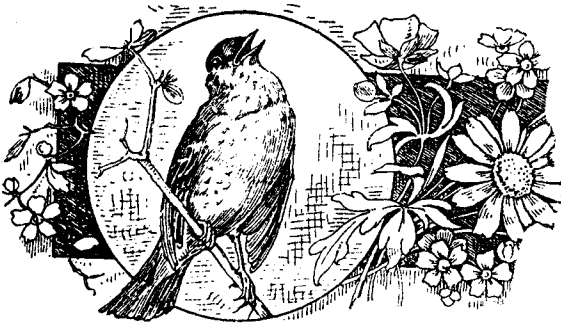


URBAN DIRT

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AT LAST, IT'S SPRING!!

by Pam Libby

This is the very best time of the year to garden in Harris County. You can go out in the cool of the morning and really work hard, without feeling that old southern urge to swoon (from the heat, of course). And when you're finished with the day's work, you can sit out on the patio and enjoy a glass of lemonade and admire your work. The camellias, gerberas, redbuds, hyacinths, daffodils, tulips, narcissus and snowdrops are the first to bloom, along with the pretty pink magnolias. Then the hawthorns and azaleas will follow and soon it will be bluebonnet time. The sweet almond will flower and all the citrus trees as well, aren't you glad you worked so hard all year. Of course, there is still plenty of work to do, if you have prepared your beds, it's finally time to transplant those seedling tomatoes and you can put in some peppers, asparagus roots, lettuce, eggplants and kale. Early march is about the latest for parsley as the heat will get them later on.

I guess you are noticing plenty of little seedlings in your beds (are they reseeding annuals or weeds?) a few weeks should tell the truth of it. Most likely it's bad news, but a little work with the trowel may be all that's necessary. Remember to water well after you fertilize. More and more of us are going organic with that fertilizer, I hear they're even making a fish emulsion that doesn't smell too bad. I don't know where to find it though, so don't call me, unless of course you've found it and want to let me know.

This is also the year that I've decided to treat myself to a good field guide about Texas birds. I already have the guides for snakes and insects (by necessity). There are so many beautiful birds in Texas. We really are lucky. People come from all over to go to Rockport and other Texas coastal areas to see the bird migrations. I guess that's another reason, I'm beginning to get serious about organic solutions, the other reasons are just plain selfishness, after all it is our drinking water, our land and our skies that will be effected. Okay, off the soapbox, have a lovely spring and do come around to the Extension Center and see the marvelous gardens our volunteers have been putting in. My grandchildren were delighted with The Children's Garden and all the other gardens are really taking shape too. I know volunteering is hard work, but I'm beginning to think the volunteers are having quite a bit of fun too! May be you should consider joining the fun!!

MARCH: 3/17/98

Executive Board 5:30 p.m.

Dessert and Coffee 6:30 p.m.

General Meeting 7:00 p.m.

SUBJECT: "Endangered Plants of Texas"

Speaker: Dr. David Creech, Professor, Stephen F. Austin, Univ.

APRIL: 4/21/98

Executive Board 5:30 p.m.

Dessert and Coffee 6:30 p.m.

General Meeting 7:00 p.m.

SUBJECT: "A Kinder and Gentler Flood Control"

Speaker: John Koros, Environmental Manager, Harris County Flood Control