

Urban Dirt

IN COOPERATION WITH THE TEXAS COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

Coreopsis

Coreopsis grandiflora

By Dr. William Welch
Extension Specialist - Texas A&M University



Photograph by Carol Cammack

Perennials are finding their way back into many gardens after many decades of absence. By definition, perennials are plants that return each year from a permanent crown or root system.

C. grandiflora is a native to Texas along with a number of other *Coreopsis* species. The species itself is a useful and colorful plant but is tall and falls over after spring rains or wind. New selections, such as 'Baby Sun' and 'Sunray' are valuable because they are compact and therefore, more useful in the landscape. Plants of these two varieties are usually 8 - 10" tall with bloom heads reaching to eighteen inches. 'Sunray' is a double flower more orange than yellow in color. 'Baby Sun' is single and a rich, golden yellow. 'Zagreb' and 'Zamphir' are also low-growing varieties - the latter has rolled petals which are unusual for flower arranging. Culture is undemanding with a sunny location being the primary requirement.

Coreopsis are very drought and heat tolerant. They flower from April through most of the summer. Like most spring and summer flowering perennials, they should be divided and reset in the fall. This should be done every one to two years. New plants can also be started from seed, which is available from many mail order seed sources. Started plants are being grown and made available by nurseries specializing in perennials and native Texas plants.

Although most people use the genus name coreopsis, *Hortus Third* lists the common name as tickseed, which describes the mature seed of the plant. Annual forms of *Coreopsis* bloom earlier and are more common than the perennial types. *Coreopsis tinctoria* is especially conspicuous in mid-spring with its fine textured foliage and dark red, or bi-colored red, brown and yellow disc flowers.

With increasing emphasis on utilizing our native Texas plants, *Coreopsis* seems a logical choice for homeowners. Groups of 'Sunray' or 'Baby Sun' spaced 12" apart are highly effective as a mass display in the landscape. Once established, they are exceptionally heat and drought tolerant and are among the easiest perennials to grow.



Photograph by Carol Cammack

President's Thoughts

Calla Lily *Zantedeschia aethiopica*

I have been awed by the elegant, sophisticated and majestic blooms of the Calla Lily that I planted in one of the bog ditches. Even though it is all of the above it also has simple and classic lines. It is one of the oldest living plants known to man.

The Calla Lily was imported from South Africa to America in the mid-nineteenth century. The waxy white blooms appear with spear-headed leaves. It wasn't until early in the twentieth century (1920s and 30s) that the calla lily became a favored subject of painters and photographers. It has been one of the most painted, photographed and sketched flowers of the twentieth century. Over the years it has also been used to celebrate both weddings and funerals.

Calla Lilies are an outstanding cut flower. By using distilled or bottled water they can last up to three weeks. With the use of other cut flowers, it will give you that length of enjoyment. In today's market there are many colors to pick from. All of them are exotic, beautiful and fit the above description.

One legend of the Calla Lily is as follows: It is said that when Eve left the Garden of Eden, lilies sprang from the earth where her tears of repentance fell. Through out history, lilies have been a popular symbol in religion.

In spite of all of its beauty, the Calla Lily is poisonous if consumed. The roots are the most poisonous part of the plant. Poisonous ingredients are oxalic acid and asparagines.

Take some time and enjoy the beauty of this wonderful plant.

Wear your smile and come into the garden.



By Virginia Joiner

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Michael's Corner

SMOKING!

By Michael Morrison

Nicotiana alata syn. *N. affinis*

I used to smoke cigars and cigarettes, now I plant tobacco.

From the *Solanaceae* family Flowering tobacco, or Jasmine tobacco is recommended in all zones as a summer annual. It likes full sun to part shade. It originates from northeastern Argentina to southern Brazil. Genus name honors Jean Nicot, 16th century French consul.

The growth habit of flowering tobacco is a rosette forming, tender, short lived perennial generally grown as a half-hardy annual. It grows to a height of 18 inches to 3 feet, depending on the variety, with a 12 inch spread. It likes to be watered regularly in well drained soil, with good organic matter content. The flowering period is from summer to fall and the racemes are tubular with funnel shaped mouths and white, fragrant flowers. Bloom color of the flowering tobacco is usually yellow-green to white.



Photograph by Michael Morrison

Upper stem leaves are much smaller and sessile. They do come in many colors and the leaves are ovate and green. The leaves are sticky to the touch and small insects are seen stuck on the plant. The flowers give off a sweet fragrance at night, so plant them close to windows so the fragrance will come into your home when you open the windows in the evening. They are attractive in border plantings, and rock gardens, and the soft colors mix with other annuals and perennials. There has also been a significant increase in the number of dwarf varieties and now there are various colors to plant in your garden. Remember that the flowering tobacco is poisonous. The most impressive plantings are the self seeded ones. Bees like to do hybridizing and if you plant different colors you might let the bee

shade family members (e.g., eggplant, tomato, potato, or peppers) because of susceptibility to common viruses. There are no serious insect or disease problems. Occasionally, you should watch for beetles. It is also susceptible to tobacco mosaic virus. Some aphids may bother them a while, but usually this plant does well in the garden setting and is very low maintenance.

Species plants are rarely available except from seed, having been replaced by compact cultivars which feature mostly non-fragrant flowers that open during the day and come in red, pink, lime-green and white. Cultural practices include buying nursery plants, growing your own, or sowing in place. They should be started indoors with the seeds lightly covered. Germination will normally occur within 10-14 days. Harden seedlings off and plant outdoors then enjoy the fragrance!

I planted some from seed last year and they got up to 2 feet. They made it through the winter in Waller and this year with fertilization they are now four feet tall! When you drive up to the entrance in the evening as the sun is setting you are overcome with the fragrance that welcomes you.

If you get a chance to go by Mercer Arboretum and look in the beds you will see that they have different colored ones for you to enjoy.

Enjoy the colors of spring, laugh, smile and stop and smell the tobacco!

On the Road

By Katherine Peterson

On March 15th the Master Gardeners had a Carpooling Event to Bayou Bend. Bart Brechter led us on a special tour of the gardens during which he related the history of the gardens as well as providing horticultural and landscaping information. He answered our many questions and let us in on the secrets pertaining to the maintenance of the gardens. The Azaleas were beautiful and we truly enjoyed our tour on a normally closed day. We were also treated to the opportunity to purchase plants – plants from a Garden Club Sale offered during the Azalea Trail and plants they actually dug up from the gardens just for us. A special thanks to Roy Wood for making the arrangements for this tour.

On March 31st we boarded a bus to Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches. We began our tour on the Piney Woods Trail. Lance Craig was our tour guide. This area is a “work in progress” so we were able to see the beginnings of many areas and on future trips we will be able to see the progress they have made. After a buffet lunch at The Fredonia Hotel we continued our journey to The Mast Arboretum. Here Dawn Parish and Elyce Rodewald welcomed us and then Dawn led the tour through this garden. We experienced the many scents of the garden and were introduced to several new species of plants (at least for many of us). Our tour ended in the Azalea Garden with Barbara Stump leading the tour. Barbara had designed the garden as part of the work on her Masters Degree. The Azaleas were in full bloom and the rolling terrain created a beautiful picture. It seemed that many of us were especially interested in the fragrant native Azaleas.

Our next tour will be our own HCMGA Home Garden Tour on May 15th. We have five home gardens that our own Master Gardeners have invited us to tour. The gardens are as diverse as the gardeners are themselves so they should be of interest to each of you.

Volunteer Opportunity

A Junior Master Gardener group in the Cypress - Jersey Village area would like some gardening assistance from a Master Gardener. If you are interested in earning some volunteer hours working with this group or one in your area, please contact Carol Cammack at (281)855-5600.

HCMGA News & Events

Bear Creek Events

May 1 - Plant Propagation Workshop. The recently formed Outreach Education Advisory Committee has been working on developing new workshops and seminars for the public. The committee is pleased to announce their first workshop 'Plant Propagation' will be held from 8:00 am – 5:00 pm on May 1st. Come learn to propagate your own plants through seeds, cuttings and grafting. The fee is \$45 and attendance will be limited to 40. at (281) 855-5635.

May 4 - Hamburger Tuesday and Book Sale. After a morning of working in the gardens followed by our Hamburger Lunch, we will have the privileged of hearing our own **Michael Morrison** speak on his favorite topic **Palms and Other Tropicals**. As a special treat, **Anne O'Neil**, Book Committee Chairman, has a wide variety of selections for you to choose from. Some you may have and others you may want. So come prepared to purchase that book you've been wanting or buy a gift – Mother's Day is just a few days away!

May 6-8 - Texas State Master Gardener Convention.

Registration information available at <http://nueces-co.tamu.edu> or you can contact **John Plotzki** or **Charles Reass**. The conference always has good speakers, great tours, and lots of good fellowship. Try to go. We'd like to be well represented at this conference.

May 15 - Master Gardener Home Garden Tour. We have a variety of gardens this year and you will be disappointed if you don't attend all of them. Tour guides will be available at the Extension Office for those who do not have Internet access. We are planning to have the Tour Guide available on the Internet.

General Meeting – May 18th. A **Potluck Dinner** will be a part of this evenings events. Meat, beverage, and bread will be provided. Bring a salad, vegetable, or dessert to share with everyone. Our speaker this evening will be **Melody Mixon** on **Honey Bees**.

Hamburger Tuesday – June 1st. Volunteer in the garden then enjoy a hamburger lunch around 11:30 a.m. **Ceil Dow** will be speaking on **Gingers**.

General Meeting – June 15th. The **HCMGA Awards Banquet** will be the meeting this month. This banquet is for everyone – not just those receiving awards! It will also include election of officers for 2004-2005. The banquet is always an enjoyable time, a good opportunity to get to know fellow Master Gardeners better. So plan now to attend this year's banquet. Reservation forms are available in the Master Gardener Office.

May 1 - Plant Propagation Workshop. 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. at the Extension Office. \$45.

May 4 - Hamburger Tuesday
8:00 a.m. Garden Volunteer Hours
11:30 a.m. Home Cooked Burgers
Noon: **Palms and other Tropicals**
by **Michael Morrison**

May 6-8 – Texas State Master Gardener Convention. Corpus Christi, Texas.

May 15 – Master Gardener Home Garden Tour. Tour Guides available May 1st.

May 18 – General Meeting
6:00 p.m. **Potluck Dinner.** Come early with your dish to share.
7:00 p.m. **Honey Bees** by **Melody Mixon**

June 1 - Hamburger Tuesday
8:00 a.m. Garden Volunteer Hours
11:30 a.m. Home Cooked Burgers
Noon: **Ceil Dow** on **Gingers**

June 15 - Master Gardener Awards Banquet

Garden Gifts

News from our Outreach Gardens

By Kenneth Dorman

The garden is beautiful again this year. We didn't make the Garden Tour this time, but everyone is welcome to come by and visit any time you are in the neighborhood. Some of us are here from around 8:30 till 11:00 on Monday, Wednesday and Friday and quite often during the busy harvest season in June and July we are here every morning. We are in the back parking lot of Central Presbyterian Church, 3788 Richmond Avenue; Timmons is the cross street. Zip code is 77027.

May is when we fine-tune the plants to get maximum production of the best produce available. Every one of them gets a regular inspection for growth rate, general health and insects. Adjustments are made as necessary. When the potatoes began blooming I noticed a good many lady beetles on the leaves and upon closer inspection found scattered aphids. As time passed further inspections found about the same small number of aphids, but now we had lady beetle larvae eating on them also so Nature is in control and all is well in the potato patch. We are even getting some expert advice on potato growing from a Greek lady in one of the apartments overlooking the garden. She told me it was time to stop watering the potatoes and I think she probably is right so I am going to shut off their irrigation system and see what happens. (I actually shut the water off about a month before the harvest; which is going to happen the first week of May. This writing in the future can get confusing for a farmer.)

Speaking of fine-tuning, I went to hear **Tom Leroy's** lecture to the new Master Gardener class on vegetable gardening and fruit trees and I came away with some good tips that I have already started using. He is really good on just about everything horticultural. And, a really nice person.

All my helpers at Bonita Street House of Hope are gone and the community labor has about dried up so **Bob**, **Walter** and **Shirley** helped me get this garden in shape with compost and cottonseed meal and planting. We have tomatoes, melons, cucumbers, bell peppers, hot peppers, potatoes, corn and snap beans all doing nicely. I hope it gets watered properly.

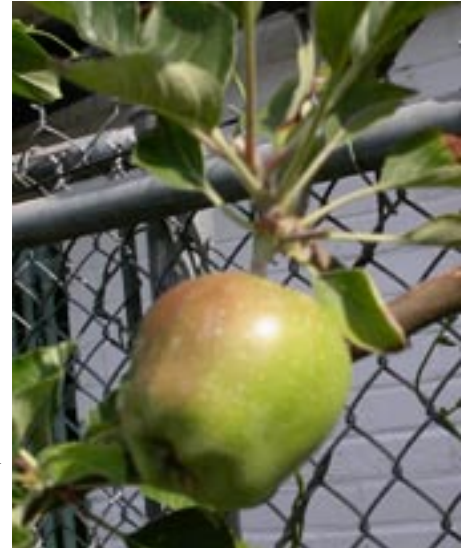
I mention cottonseed meal often and as you probably know it is a byproduct of the cottonseed that is removed from cotton bolls at a cotton gin. This reminds me of the definition of gin from my Dictionary For Weedpullers, Slugcrushers & Backyard Botanists by Henry Beard & Roy Mike. I have used this before, but I like it.

Gin - 1. Remarkable agricultural aid developed in the 19th century by Yankee tinkerers. 2. Remarkable agricultural aid developed in the 18th century by British distillers. With tonic and homegrown lime, please.

Fruit trees really give me a thrill. The thought of having your very own apple tree or orange or peach or fig or pear tree making apples and oranges and peaches and figs and pears just does something for me. Of course, the trees are not ours

□
two papaya trees that **Bob Kish** gave us so we are pretty big in the orchard business. Between the two gardens we have five fig trees, four peach trees, two apple trees, two papaya trees, two Satsuma orange trees and eight pear trees for a total of twenty-three. Now, if we just had someone who knew anything about fruit trees we would be all set.

Think good thoughts about yourself and smile.



Apple growing at CCSC Garden

Volunteer Hours

See below for instructions.

Name _____

Phone Number _____

Email address _____

Period covered – from _____ to _____

Date	Facility or Garden Name	# Contacts	Hours
Total hours this worksheet			

To submit your volunteer hours, please drop off completed forms in the inbox on **Scott Hume's** desk or fax it to (281) 855-5638. Scott can be reached at (281) 855-5600 or oshume@ag.tamu.edu.

Want to fill out this form on your computer? The volunteer hours form included here is for printing out and filling in by hand. But we've posted a spiffy version on the MG website, which you can fill out on the computer in Acrobat Reader before printing to save you all that tedious handwriting. The downloadable version even prints the current date and totals your hours for you. Get it at <http://hcmga.tamu.edu/hcmga/urban.htm>.

May 2004

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Precinct 2 News & Events

Progress is being made in the Precinct 2 Genoa Friendship Garden. Work has begun on two major projects that many smaller projects hinge on. The first is the installation of a brick path through the Rose Garden. **Christa Kaiser** is heading up the walkway expansion. Once the pavers have been laid, the Rose Committee can begin building their new beds. Thanks to **J. C. Whitney** for staking out the new lily pond, the other project underway. Now that the liner has been delivered, thanks to **Rita Vasak**, we can begin digging as soon as the ground dries out a little.

Mary McGowan, **Shirley Jackson** and **Pat Mitrowski** designed and planted a Biblical Garden, completing the last of rings at the back of the garden.

Angela Chandler and **Barbara Morrison** have been working hard to complete the Vegetable Garden renovation. **Pat Mitrowski** tested out the new cultivator Angela purchased for us and it works great to prepare the beds. **Ginia Keen** has been hard at work in the Herb Garden and planting around the tool shed.

March 25th we made our field trip to the Rose Emporium. Thank you to **Marliene Oren** and **Janice Patrick** for driving. We had a great time, thanks to Eleanor Borda for the suggestion and **Gloria Gibson** for getting us organized.

Our April First Wednesday Program was well attended. We appreciate **Greg Harmison** for making the trip from Mercer to talk to us about tropical plants for our area.

Janelle Kister and the class committee are making preparations for our summer class. Applications have been coming in steadily and we look forward to meeting a new group of gardeners.

On April 14th we took a trip to Teas Herbs and Orchids in Magnolia. **Janis Teas** will be giving a presentation on Orchids at the June First Wednesday Program that falls on June 2nd, at 10 am. She will have orchids available for sale after the program.

May 5 – First Wednesday

9:30 a.m. Registration

10:00 a.m. **Gloria Gibson & Angela Chandler on Copper Tubing Garden Art.** Fee is \$20.00 and the deadline for registering is May 2nd, or until the class is full. Call (281) 991-8437.

11:00 a.m. **Pot Luck Luncheon.**

Bring a dish to share. 1202 Genoa Red Bluff. For reservations call (281) 991-8437.

May 6-8 – Master Gardener's "Texas State Convention"

Corpus Christi, Texas

June 6 – First Wednesday

9:30 a.m. Registration

10:00 a.m. **Janis Teas on Orchids.**

11:00 a.m. **Pot Luck Luncheon.**

Bring a dish to share. 1202 Genoa Red Bluff. For reservations call (281) 991-8437.

June 15 - Master Gardener Awards Banquet

Web Surfin'

Tech News for Master Gardeners

By Tom H Robb, Jr



eDirt and Adobe Acrobat Reader Tips

Up until lately, my favorite Internet browser has been Netscape Communicator 4.79. I say 'lately' because since AOL bought Netscape, some time back and Communicator has become less and less reliable - at least to me. So, for the most part, I have switched to Netscape 7.x or Internet Explorer 6.x and on occasions even to Mozilla 1.5. This is not surprising since AOL has determined not to update Communicator and frankly they would like to get rid of it.

What I'm driving at is that if a program is not kept up-dated, it sometimes won't accept data that has been created by another updated program. And for that reason many of our Master Gardeners have been unable to download eDirt. Of course, that is only one of several others at fault. And, I'll try to cover some of them.

The first eDirts were produced using Adobe Acrobat Version 5. These could be read by Reader Version 4.0. Beginning last summer Acrobat was upgraded to Version 6.0 which can be read only by Version 5.0 or later. Reader 6.x is FREE and available for downloading and my advice is to spend the amount of time needed to download it. Some of our members are using old versions of browsers which won't support new .pdf files - the new versions of these are also FREE for downloading.

For Windows users you will need to have (according to Adobe) Intel® Pentium® processor (AMD will work also), Microsoft® Windows 98 Second Edition, Windows Millennium Edition, Windows NT® 4.0 with Service Pack 6, Windows 2000 with Service Pack 2, Windows XP Professional or Home Edition, Windows XP Tablet PC Edition, 32MB of RAM (64MB recommended), 60MB of available hard-disk space, Internet Explorer 5.01, 5.5, 6.0, or 6.1 (Netscape or Mozilla also work),

There are several ways that you can get the file. You can go directly to <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html> where you will find a three step procedure - really only a 2 step procedure, unless you want to download the program in Norwegian or some other foreign language. The English Version has already been selected for you. You select your Platform, by which Adobe wants to know if you use Windows 98, ME, 2000, XP or some version of Macintosh. Then you select the version - full or basic. If you have broadband cable or DSL, select the full version. On the other hand if you use dial-up, select the basic version. These are large programs - basic is a little over 9 meg and takes a very long time to download - go watch a television movie.

You can also go to the HCMGA web-page at <http://hcmga.tamu.edu/hcmga/> - click on Urban Dirt and then click on the Adobe Reader button and follow the procedure above. Or you can go to the address sent to you for the current month's issue of eDirt and click on the Reader Icon.

Be sure you keep track of the name of the program you are downloading and where you are downloading it to. It is a self extracting .exe Zip file which should install itself but if it doesn't you need to know where it is. Also, if you have an older version of the Reader be sure that the new Reader is installed in a different location than the older one and after you are sure the new version works, uninstall the old version. Otherwise, the old

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Web Surfin'

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version may try to take over.

“Well,” you say - “I’ve got version 5 which has been working but now I can’t download the new issue of eDirt - what’s wrong.” Well, a lot of things could be wrong - there could be trouble at your end or at the server end. One way of checking your end is to go out to the HCMGA website, select Urban Dirt and try to download one of the issues that you previously have downloaded. If you can’t do what you did previously, try again but first open the Reader. If you still can’t open the file the chances are that your Reader file has become corrupted.

What could have caused the problem? Files become corrupted for any number of reasons. You might have had a power interruption, you could have had another program that didn’t like some of the space that your Reader occupied - programs sometime fight each other just like people do. The solution to a corrupted file is to uninstall the program and install it again. To guard against this always have a spare copy of your programs where you can get to them.

If you can download the previous issue of eDirt but can’t read the current issue be sure that you have used the full address name shown in the email message. Sometimes an address gets split and ends up on two lines. Generally, when this happens only the top line gets sent and, of course, this gives you an error message. If this is the case, select the entire address and copy and paste it into the address line of the browser. By the same token, don’t select more than just the address or you will also get an error. This happened some months ago when a period ended up next to the address.

Another thing that you might try. If you have the trouble using Netscape, try again using Internet Explorer and visa-versa. I’ve found that weird things sometime happen, just ever so often, that result in one browser working and the other not working. If none of the above works, let us know, it might be our problem - we’re not perfect.

If you haven’t tried to download the eDirts, or if you given up because of a download problem, you’re really missing a beautiful publication. And you don’t have to read it only on your computer - you can print it in color. And you can save ink by just printing in draft mode - I use draft for everything unless I’m printing a photograph - and I do a huge amount of printing. You really owe it to yourself to give it a try. It takes only a little time to download if you’re using dial-up and there’s really no excuse for those of you on broadband - that’s why you pay a premium <grin>.



Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens

May Classes at Mercer

Saturday, May 1 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Join us for Family Day, a day of fun filled family activities at Mercer Arboretum. Visit "Education Stations" where kids will be able to make and take home garden crafts, and learn about plants and their uses. This is a great opportunity to make a gift for Mothers Day. Free of charge.

Saturday, May 8 from 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. **Daylily Show.** Come to Mercer to see the Cypress Creek Daylily Club's Flower Show. See 200 beautiful varieties of daylilies in all colors and sizes.

Wednesday, May 12 from noon to 1 p.m. **Lunch Bunch: Growing Cactus and Succulents as a Hobby.** Join **Greg Harmison** as he discusses growing cactus and succulents in the Houston area. Learn how to deal with wet weather and pests and how to grow these plants in containers as a fun hobby. Bring a sack lunch to enjoy during the program.

Saturday, May 22, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. **Water Smart Landscaping.** Join **Carol Cammack** of Texas Cooperative Extension as she talks about water smart landscaping. Prepare for the summer by learning which plants and landscaping techniques require less water and help preserve our natural resource.

Ongoing

The Piney Woods Wildlife Society meets the third Tuesday of each month from 7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. Piney Woods Wildlife Society is a nonprofit organization for people interested in nature and the environment. Featured speakers give presentations on nature topics. New members and visitors are welcome.

The Cypress Creek Daylily Society meets the fourth Sunday of each month from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. The Cypress Creek Daylily Society is an organization of daylily enthusiasts that have monthly meetings with featured speakers. A sanctioned daylily show is sponsored at Mercer each year. New members and visitors are welcome.



Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens is a Harris County Precinct 4 facility, under the leadership of Commissioner Jerry Eversole, located at 22306 Aldine Westfield Road, one mile north of FM 1960. Harris County Precinct 4 programs serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, sex, religion, national origin, or physical ability. Anyone requiring special assistance to participate in any program, or for more information, please contact Mercer at (281) 443-8731 or by email at mercerarboretum@cp4.hctx.net. On the web at <http://www.cp4.hctx.net/mercer>.

Events Around Town

Urban Harvest Classes

Classes are held at Urban Harvest, 1900 Kane, unless otherwise noted. For detailed class listings and more information, visit www.urbanharvest.org or call (713) 880-5540.

Urban Harvest



Working with Gardens & Orchards
to Build Healthy Communities

Saturday May 1 - Rainwater Cisterns and Other Ways to Use Rainwater in the Landscape by **Jennifer Walker**. 9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. \$20. Registration required. Learn cost-effective methods to save yourself irrigation money and reduce flooding. Jennifer Walker is a civil engineer with professional experience in rainwater retention for flood control.

Monday May 10 - How to Start a Community or School Garden by **Gary Edmondson**. 4 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. Free. Registration required. Have you been thinking about starting a community or school garden? Learn the basic ingredients for a successful community garden, including planning, coordination, finances, and garden design. Gary Edmondson is the School & Youth Gardens Coordinator for Urban Harvest.

Monday May 17 - How to Start a Community or School Garden by **Dr. Bob Randall**. 1 p.m. – 3:45 p.m. Free. Registration required. Have you been thinking about starting a community or school garden? Learn the basic ingredients for a successful community garden, including planning, coordination, finances, and garden design. Dr. Bob Randall has advised over 150 community garden projects since 1987.

Bulb Mart Pre-Ordering

The Garden Club of Houston is expanding their “pre-order department” for the **62nd Annual Bulb and Plant Mart** 2004 set for October 7, 8, and 9. Pre-order requests should be sent to: jjedbetter@houston.rr.com. Please include name, address, phone number, and e-mail address.

Invasive Species Workshop

June 19 at Jones Forest in Montgomery County. The USDA entomologist from Lufkin will put on an Invasive Species workshop that will include a two hours class lecture on invasive insects including the ash borer beetle that is expected to invade the Houston area this summer. This Emerald ash bore beetle is devastating northern ash trees and could effectively wipe out many shade trees if it moves into our area. Beneficial insects, along with 10 or so invasive plants species will be also be discussed. After lunch there will be a two hour field study to learn about monitoring protocols for invasive plant species and the ash borer. CEUs will be available for foresters, arborists and nursery and landscape professionals. If you would like to addend this workshop, please RSVP to **Teri MacArthur** at texasnaturelover@earthlink.net.

UrbanDirt

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Editor's Notes

By Carol Cammack

I recently had the opportunity to enjoy a visit to the **CCSC Gardens** and the **Upper Kirby District Community Garden** at Levy Park. **Ken Dorman** and **George Williams** were excellent tour guides. Both Gardens look terrific! Ken was busy haversting a bumper crop of Sweet Success Cucumbers. Over at Levy Park, George had decided the Blue Princess Verbena needed some whacking back. It seems to want to take over the entire bed. It is a **Texas Superstar** and a definite show stealer. If you have a chance to go by either of these gardens it would be well worth your time. If you don't have time to stop by the gardens, you can find out what's happening there in Ken's monthly article: Garden Gifts (see [page 6](#)). **Ken, George, Shirley, Walter** and **Bob** should all be congratulated on a job well done!

If you have something you would like to contribute to Urban Dirt, please send it in. We would love to hear from you. Suggestions and comments are welcomed and appreciated as well. We do have space limitations so try to limit your articles to 500 words or less. Submit all articles electronically by the **15th** of every month to: ccammack@ag.tamu.edu.



George Williams & 'Blue Princess' Verbena.