

Gillespie County

Horticulture Newsletter Fall 2022



Plant Wildflowers in Fall



Add some beauty to your landscape and support your natural pollinators with a wildflower planting. Wildflower seeds should be planted in the fall, after the weather cools but well before first frost. Native grasses should be planted

in late winter, preferably January before the ice storms are finished.

The first step is to select a mix with only Texas natives. Plant a diverse mix so that if the conditions are not right for one plant, they are right for another. Avoid mixes with larkspur (delphinium) if planting in a location where livestock will graze. It is poisonous.

Most wildflowers are disturbance species. They need open spots to grow. Clear existing vegetation, or rake away dead grass, and scatter your seeds in these spots. Gently press them in. To evenly disperse very tiny seeds, mix them with sand.

If possible, water thoroughly after planting. Water every three days after that until germination. If you are unable to water they will still grow if we receive rain in the fall. Do not graze livestock where you planted your seeds.

Current long range predictions say we will have a drier warmer winter, at least until January. It may be difficult to grow wildflowers this year unless this changes.



Highlights

Agricultural Termites	Pg. 3
Grow It Cook It Topic Survey	Pg. 3
Results Demo Updates	Pg. 4
Texas Two-Step Fire Ant Removal	Pg. 5
Top 3 Lawn Problems	Pg. 7
Stressed Trees	Pg. 8
Upcoming Programs	Pg. 10
Gardening Calendar	Pg. 12



**\$35
lunch
included**

LEARN YOUR LAWN & LANDSCAPE

**RSVP by
Sept. 20th,
2022**

*Door
Prizes!*

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24TH, 2022

FROM 9:00 A.M. - 3:30 P.M.

AT THE GILLESPIE EXTENSION OFFICE

LOCATED AT 38 BUSINESS CT. FREDERICKSBURG, TX 78624

lunch provided by Capital Farm Credit

**Come by the Extension Office to register
(cash or check only), or register online
using the link below!**

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/learn-your-lawn-landscape-tickets-367136052817>

(small online fee)

**Topics to Include:
Turfgrasses, Native
Plants, How to
Landscape/Plan Your
Yard, & Trees to Use in
Your Yard**

Great for New Landowners!

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT THE
GILLESPIE EXTENSION OFFICE AT (830) 997-3452**



The members of Texas A&M AgriLife will provide equal opportunities in programs and activities, education, and employment to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identity and will strive to achieve full and equal employment opportunity throughout Texas A&M AgriLife. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating

Agricultural Termites Make a Return

Agricultural termites feed on live and dead plants, tree bark, and in desperate times, cactus. Dry hot weather in the late summer makes them more noticeable.

Typically homeowners only encounter them in sandier soils. They will most likely be an issue on bermudagrass than any other turfgrass. Agricultural termites do not sting, nor are they a threat to houses.

There are no pesticides specifically labeled for the control of agricultural termites. If present in a lawn, water it to help compensate for the damage. They will disappear when the weather turns cold.



*Agricultural termites build mud tubes to protect themselves from drying out while they feed at night.
Pictures by Beth McMahon.*

Help Choose the 2023 Grow It Cook It Vegetables and Fruits!



Help us choose our 2023 Grow It Cook It Program topics! The Grow It Cook It Program covers not just how to grow the theme vegetable or fruit, but how to cook it too. The program includes cooking demonstrations, recipe samples and sometimes plants for you to take home and try growing yourself.

Shea and I need help choosing our 2023 program topics, so please click the survey link below and let us know what you want to see. Programs are typically at noon on Fridays. There are three a year.

Survey Link

[https://
agrilife.az1.qualtrics.com/
jfe/form/
SV_8qXzc84ViHHfeJM](https://agrilife.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8qXzc84ViHHfeJM)

QR Code



Lavender Trial Update

All lavender varieties in the Gillespie County Lavender trial are doing great. Varieties “Papillion Rose” and “New Madrid Rose” have even bloomed (weakly). Nutritional deficiencies seen a few weeks after planting have mostly faded and plants generally look good. Deer damage has ceased, though ag termite damage may be a future issue. If curious about growing lavender, in the landscape or commercially, stop by the Gillespie County Extension Office at 38 Business Court to take a look at the trial.



(A) is “Anouk”, (B) Shows the entire row of lavender, (C) Agricultural termites moving in, (D) is “Dilly Dilly”.

Elderberry Trial Update

The elderberry plants at the Kerr County location are doing mediocrely. Though there are some nutritional deficiencies, 64% of the plants have survived. Average condition rating each variety is 4 (out of 5) for

“Marge” (43% survival), 3.5 for “Adams” (25% survival), and 2.4 for “Wlydewood” (86% survival). This location will be evaluated this fall if replacement plants will be provided next spring.

The elderberry planting in Gillespie County is doing poorly. Only 25% of the plants have survived. The “Adams” variety has completely died out, “Marge” has a condition rating of 2.5 (33% survival) and “Wlydewood” has a condition rating of 2.75 (33% survival).



“Wlydewood” elderberry at Fredericksburg location.



Row of “Marge” elderberry at Fredericksburg. One plant remains at the end.

Texas Two-Step to Con- trol Fire Ants



Fire ants are nuisances. They sting, build large mounds, and nest in your vegetable plants. They even can introduce aphids to your plants so that they can “farm” them for the honeydew that aphids produce, and which leaves a black mildewish film on your vehicles and whatever else is under the tree.

But you don’t have to put up with them. One of the best ways to get rid of them from your yard is to try the Texas Two Step method.

First Step!

The first step is to apply a fire ant bait product. The ideal time to do this is once between late August to early October. Apply it all over your yard. Make sure to apply it when no rain is anticipated for 0-2 days after treatment. Because it’s a bait, it is slower to work, but may eventually show up to 80-90% control.

If you are using a bait product in your garden, make sure to get one labeled for your garden. Bait products with spineosad are commonly labeled for garden use, but check the label first.

Second Step!

The next step is to individually treat each mound. Use a granular product, the kind that you apply to the mound, and then water it in. Read the label for how much water to use, but it is typically a gallon. Pour the water out slowly to let it sink in and not run off.

If you want to be organic, you can use boiling water. Take 2-3 gallons of very hot or boiling water. Dump it on the mound. This has about a 60% success rate, and might kill the surrounding plants. But it’s definitely the cheapest method.

Mis-step!

Avoid using home remedy mound treatments that do not kill fire ants:

- Club soda
- Coffee grounds
- Cinnamon

Diatomaceous earth will cause the ants to move their nest, but will not eliminate the problem.

While this should keep the fire ants away for a while, and if done on a yearly schedule keep your yard relatively fire ant free, fire ants are a part of Texas, and it would be difficult to get rid of the permanently. To reduce their numbers, you should try this two step treatment.



Fire ants planting aphids on a okra plant.



Picture by Bart Drees



Picture by Bart Drees

A close-up photograph of several ripe, red strawberries with green stems and white flowers, arranged in a dense cluster.

\$15

Friday, September 23


12:00 - 1:00 pm

Gillespie County Extension Office

38 Business Court, Fredericksburg, TX 78624

GROW IT COOK IT

STRAWBERRIES

A close-up photograph of several ripe, red strawberries with green stems and white flowers, arranged in a dense cluster.

Learn how to grow strawberries and
different ways to cook them
Contact the Extension Office
to register (830) 997-3452

The members of Texas A&M AgriLife will provide equal opportunities in programs and activities, education, and employment to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identity and will strive to achieve full and equal employment opportunity throughout Texas A&M AgriLife.

The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating

Top 3 Current Lawn Issues

Lately when I've been looking at a lawn, the problem is either one or two of the following three things.

Improper Irrigation

- Usually an issue with automatic systems
- To test, dig hole in dried dead areas and green areas, feel for soil moisture.
- Check the sprinklers by putting out tin cans or plastic containers in green and dried areas, compare received amounts.
- Fix sprinklers or use a hand sprinkler if water not sufficient.

Chinch bugs

- Grass looks dried out, typically starts in hottest spots in yard.
- Look for chinch bugs at intersection of green and dried grass
- Put metal can with bottom cut out in ground, keep filling until water starts to pond. Look for chinch bugs that rise to the surface.
- Treat with a labeled insecticide.

Moles

- Looks like very patchy damage, green tufts here and there. Squishy feeling in lawn, dig and find tunnels.
- Normally grass can recover from mole tunneling damage.
- Turf unable right now to grow roots back fast enough to survive damage.
- Use a worm based bait, or something labeled for moles only. Can also trap.
- Moles will likely be back.



Lawn with uneven watering. Brown areas not getting as much water as other spots.



Chinch bugs are tiny but destructive in mass.



Texas Fruit Conference 2022

Registration Now Open

Program topics include starting a new orchard, pest animal control, and more. Cost varies. Come only for first morning, or for more. See website to register <https://tamu.estore.flywire.com/products/texas-fruit-conference>

Drought Stress in Trees

As of July 2022, Fredericksburg has received

only 5.36 inches of rain this year. Looking at the chart above, the rainfall slowed to a trickle in December last year. Our soil moisture is depleted, and the trees are starting to show signs of drought stress.

For drought damage, the sign you want to see is gradual leaf loss. Leaves will turn yellow or burn at the tips and drop, but the foliage does not die at once. A tree that shows these signs is stressed, but is entering fall dormancy early to conserve moisture.

If the tree foliage dies all at once and remains attached to the tree, it is either freeze damage (unlikely right now) or sudden loss of moisture in the branches or trunk. These trees may have died, but it is worth leaving them until spring to make fully certain.

The only solution for drought damage is watering or rain. A recently planted tree doesn't have an established root system and should receive

priority with watering. Apply 1-2 gallons per inch of trunk, once a week. More mature trees should only be watered if they are starting to show the first signs of drought stress. Apply the same way you would for the younger trees, but not as often. If we get rain, wait until the soil dries out some before watering.

Trees will not fully recover instantly after you add water. Regrowing the roots that have died takes time. During this time over-watering is easy to do. The tree has lost foliage, it will not need as much water, and sitting in too saturated soil will rot roots.

Pruning should be avoided at this time unless it is utterly necessary. It is a stress on the tree.

Fertilizer should not be applied either.

To help the soil retain moisture better and promote root health, do not park under trees as to avoid compacting the soil. Mulching will help retain water, as well as letting grass grow taller underneath trees.

One of the problems with drought stress is that it can lead to future issues. Hypoxylon canker, borers, and Ganoderma are problems that take advantage of stressed trees. Trees in some areas were stressed already by the freeze of 2021. Issues from the 2011 drought occurred for a long time. It is likely we will see extended problems from this drought.

NOWData - NOAA Online Weather Data													Enlarge results	Print	X
Monthly Total Precipitation for FREDERICKSBURG, TX															
Click column heading to sort ascending, click again to sort descending.															
Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual		
2021	1.04	0.11	1.04	2.07	4.57	2.48	7.18	0.77	0.43	3.74	1.32	0.09	24.84		
2022	0.84	0.37	0.25	1.35	1.02	0.55	0.90	M	M	M	M	M	M		

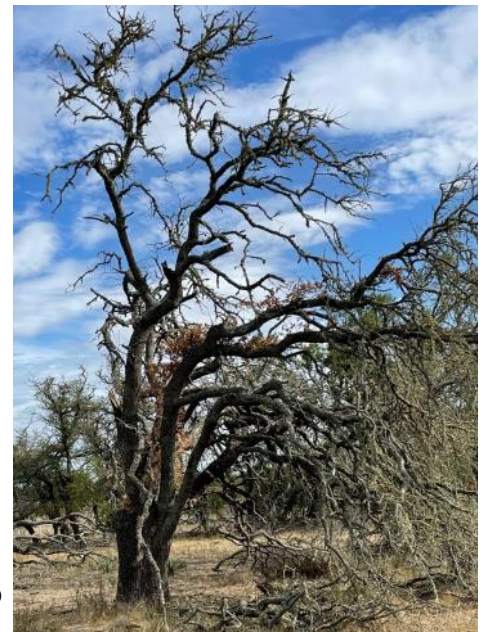
Rainfall data taken from <https://www.weather.gov/wrh/Climate?wfo=ewx>. Updated monthly.



Leaf scorching in cottonwood.



Catalpa foliage beginning to yellow.



A live oak that survived oak wilt and last year's freeze damage runs out of energy, and begins to give up.

Kids Gardening Program

**For
Ages
8-12**

**Cost
\$30
per child**

Flower Power

**Learn about
growing flowers
and vegetables, and
go on a field trip to a
flower farm!**

**Every Wednesday
4:30-5:30pm from
September 7th-
November 9th**

**at the Gillespie Extension
Office
38 Business Court,
Fredericksburg, TX**

**Minimum of 4 kids
Maximum of 10 kids**

**If the minimum has not been met by
September 6th, the program will be
canceled and refunds will be given to
those who have already paid**

**The child does NOT need to be a
4-H member to participate**

**Register
by calling
or coming
in today!**

**For more information:
Call (830) 997-3452
38 Business Court
Fredericksburg, TX**

Cash or Check Only

Make checks payable to: Gillespie ANR Committee



Save the Dates

Gillespie County & Nearby

iNaturalist for Science and Education

August 23rd, 2022. 6:30-8:00 pm. Gilbriar Gazebo 208 Danos Drive, Fredericksburg.

Craig Hensley, Texas Nature Tracker Biologist with Texas Parks and Wildlife, will give a presentation on how to use iNaturalist. Part of Native Plant Society monthly meeting, open to the public.

Junior Master Gardeners “Flower Power”

September 7th-November 16th, 2022. 4:30-5:30. Gillespie County Extension Office.

Kids will learn how to grow a vegetable garden, but more emphasis will be placed on flowers. Age range is 3rd-6th grade or equivalent age if homeschooled. Cost is \$30. Please contact the extension office at 830-997-3452 to register.

Grow It Cook It: Strawberries

September 23rd, 2022. 12:00-1:00 PM. Gillespie County Extension Office.

Come join us at the Gillespie County Extension Office to learn how to grow and cook strawberries. Cost is \$15, unless you registered for the entire series prior. Call the Gillespie County Extension Office at 830-997-3452 to sign-up.



Fresh strawberries picked at Marburger's farm (now closed).

Learn your Landscape New Landowner Program

September 24th, 2022. 8:30-3:00 PM. Gillespie County Extension Office.

Program with emphasis on learning landscape design and plant selection. Will cover landscape plants, trees and turf. See website for more information. Online registration or in-person registration available. Online registration available at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/learn-your-lawn-landscape-tickets-367136052817>. Credit cards only accepted with online registration for a small fee.

Gillespie County Fair

August 25th-28th, 2022, Gillespie County Fairgrounds, 2000 S State Hwy 16, Fredericksburg.

You're coming for the Agricultural Products and Vegetable Show? No? Coming for the live music, carnival or horse races instead? Entries for the clothing, food, vegetables, agricultural products are due Thursday by 6 pm. Entry is free on Thursday. Please see website or fair catalogue for more details. <https://gillespiefair.com/>

Bennett's Trust Land Stewardship Women's Program

October 10th-11th, 2022. Inn on Baron's Creek, 308 S. Washington St., Fredericksburg.

Come learn about different ranching options, agricultural law and prescribed fire. Tours on the second day. Cost is \$125. Register online at <https://bennetttrust.tamu.edu/>

Save the Dates

Harper Volunteer Fire Department Fish Fry Fundraiser

11:00-2:00 (Until fish runs out), November 5th, 2022. Harper VFD & EMS Station, 84 N. Ranch Road 783, Harper.

Come support the Harper volunteer fire department and eat some excellent fried fish.

Five Hour CEU Program

November 17th, 2022, 8:00 AM-2:30 PM. Gillespie County Extension Office.

Cost is \$75 dollars, includes coffee & donuts as well as lunch. Program topics include pond weed management and legalities regarding pond weed control, landscape disease identification plus solutions and ants. Ag applicator CEUS 2 general, one laws and regs and 2 IPM. Structural CEUS have not been approved of this time, but 1 general, 1 general laws & regs, 1 pest, 1 weeds and 1 L&O have been requested.

Nearby & Statewide Programs

Concho Valley Master Gardener Annual Fall Landscaping Symposium

September 10th, 2022. 8:00 AM-4:00 PM.

Cost is \$30, \$40 with optional hands-on floral design workshop. Program topics include tree planting landscape design challenges, west Texas lawns, traveling plants and floral design from your yard. Lunch included. Registration must be received by September 7th. For registration links and more information, see here:

<https://txmg.org/conchovalley/>. Hotel block available.



AgriLife Extension specialist Lisa Whittlesey demonstrates home floral design. Picture by Aggie Horticulture.

Home Mushroom Cultivation

September 17th, 2022. 10:00 AM-11:30 AM. Herff Farm, Teaching Barn, 33 Herff Road, Boerne.

Join Louis San Miguel of Mycobuddy and learn about the basics of home mushroom cultivation. Includes supplies to start oyster mushrooms. Limited to 20 people, register early. Cost is \$40 non-members, \$35 members.

2022 Texas A&M Turfgrass Field Day

October 12th, 2022. 3100 F&B Rd, College Station.

Cost is \$50. Registration is <https://tamu.estore.flywire.com/products/2022-texas-am-turfgrass-landscape-field-day>. Pesticide applicator CEUS available. Field day will have demonstrations, talks on new research and information on turfgrass selection & drought recovery.

Lawn & Landscape Calendar

September October November

- Plant trees, but remember to mulch afterward.
- Plant garlic & cole crops (broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, Brussel sprouts, kale)
- Start sowing wildflowers later this month.
- Before first cool front and cooler temperatures, apply pre-emergent to control rescuegrass and other cool season weeds
- Fertilize lawn for fall after recovery from drought
- Plant strawberries.

- Instead of raking leaves, mow/ mulch them in yard.
- Dig/store caladium tubers. Divide irises.
- Last month to plant sod for lawn. Do this in early month. Save seeding for next spring.
- Fertilize cool season vegetables
- Plant beets, spinach, other vegetables that can tolerate a light frost
- Plant cool season flowers like pansies.

- Plant the last vegetable you can, lettuce, in your garden this year.
- Cut fall bloomers back to ground after they freeze back.
- Winterize irrigation system.
- Evaluate warm season container plantings. Are they worth moving inside or protecting from frost, or time to replant with cool season flowers?

Office Closures

We will be closed on August 26th, September 5th, November 11th and November 24-25th.

Name That Plant!



What is the name of the spiky/bristly flower? Bonus question: Name all three different flowers. First person to respond with the correct answer and first person to respond with correct answer to bonus question will get their names featured in next quarter's newsletter.

Last Newsletter's Plant



Last quarter's plant was Red-Seed Plantain. First to guess correct was Paula Stone

Picture policy-Unless specifically cited, all pictures were taken by the author of this newsletter. This newsletter is a publication that comes out seasonally. If you would like to stop receiving this newsletter, please contact me at elizabeth.mcmahon@ag.tamu.edu.

*For other questions, comments, and concerns, please contact us at:
Gillespie County Extension office
38 Business Court
Fredericksburg, TX 78624
830-997-3452*

Educational programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, sexual orientation or veteran status. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating. Information compiled by Elizabeth McMahon, Gillespie County Horticulture Agent, except where indicated.