

Gillespie County

Horticulture Newsletter
Winter 2023



Recent Cold Damage



After the weather that had been so mild for much of December, the cold snap before Christmas Eve surprised many plants. Fortunately some plants like Cenizio (A) should recover even though the foliage was frozen.



Oak trees such as this Lacey oak (B) were surprised by the frost and leaves suffered rapid damage, leaving behind foliage that is symptomatic of oak wilt, but is not oak wilt.



Even live oaks, one of the most common native trees in Gillespie County, suffered injury from these intense cold temperatures. Though the foliage is damaged, there are still green leaves behind them.

If your plants suffered damage from the cold as such, scratch the bark to see what color it is underneath. If it's brown and dried, the plant is at the least top-killed. If it has some green to it, do not prune the plant for two months and see what foliage re-emerges.

Highlights

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Gulf Muhly Named New Texas Superstar

Native perennial ornamental grass offers toughness, versatility, and showstopping color.

By Adam Russell, Communication Specialist for Texas A&M Agrilife

Gulf muhly, *Muhlenbergia capillaris*, also known as hairy-awn muhly or pink muhly, has been named the newest Texas Superstar plant. To be designated a Texas Superstar, a plant must perform well for growers throughout the state. Texas Superstars must also be easy to propagate, ensuring the plants are widely available and reasonably priced.



Gulf muhly in full bloom. Picture by Dr. Mike Arnold

Get to know gulf muhly

Gulf muhly has an upright mounding habit and grows to 2 to 3 feet wide with unbranched long, wiry deciduous green leaves. This perennial grass has a dramatic pink cloud of blooms that may extend to about half the plant's height.

Gulf muhly is tolerant of a wide range of well-drained soils in U.S. Department of Agriculture Plant Hardiness Zones 6-9. It is also soil pH adaptable and prefers low-fertility sites. The plant will tolerate light shade but blooms best in full sun. It is very heat and drought tolerant once established but mulching around plants with a good layer of double-shredded hardwood mulch can help its performance. David Rodriguez, Bexar County Horticulture Extension Agent and Texas Superstars program associate, also noted Gulf muhly can be planted as an individual specimen but add striking color when planted in groups.

Gulf muhly is versatile, shareable

Gulf muhly is very low maintenance once established, Rodriguez said. These grasses provide natural sanctuary for many small birds and pollinators and are known to be deer-resistant and largely pest- and disease-free. Plants typically die back during winter and can be cut back to the crown, about 6 inches above the ground, while still dormant, he said.

Rodriguez said Gulf muhly is also a plant that can be spread or shared. Once plants are older and become full, root clumps can be dug out and split into halves or quarters to place in other locations or give to friends and family.

Gulf muhly offers a variety of options to utilize in landscapes or to apply in other ornamental ways, he said. Plants should be widely available, and many nurseries stock muhly grasses in the late season for fall planting and to showcase their color. "Some people like Gulf muhly's dead appearance and cut it back hard just in time for new emergence," he said. "The bloom stalks also work well in floral designs as a blend plant. Gulf muhly has a little bit of everything for folks, and I think that is why it is popular and part of what makes it a Texas Superstar plant."

Grow It Cook It

LEARN HOW TO GROW, PREPARE AND COOK THE FRUIT/VEGETABLE



**\$15
Each**

**\$25
for the
Series**

**JANUARY 11
ASPARAGUS**

**APRIL 12
CUCUMBERS**

**JULY 19
PEACHES**

**12:00 PM - 1:00 PM
GILLESPIE COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE,
38 BUSINESS COURT**

Register online through [Eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/grow-it-cook-it-tickets-486898595807) or Scan the QR Code
or in person with cash or check at the
Gillespie County Extension Office
checks should be made payable to Gillespie ANR
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/grow-it-cook-it-tickets-486898595807>



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.



Lavender Trial Update



Picture A is "Imperial", a French lavender variety. Picture B is Anouk Supreme, a Spanish lavender variety. Picture C is "Provence", an Lavandin variety.

Before 12/23/2022

All lavender varieties in the Gillespie County Lavender trial are doing very well. Varieties "Provence", "New Madrid Purple", "Dentata French", "Imperial" and "Papillion Rose" have all bloomed. The blooms on "Primavera" and "French Dentata" are most attractive. There was some slight wilting on the blooms from a light frost. Plant foliage looks good for most varieties. No deer damage has been detected, though deer droppings have been found in the area.



Picture A is "Imperial". "Imperial" is rated to USDA climatic zone 8. Picture B is "Anouk Supreme", rated to USDA climatic zone 6a. Picture C is "Provence". "Provence" is rated to USDA climatic zone 5.

Lavandin varieties were undamaged.

After 12/23/2022

A clear difference in cold tolerance has been shown. Temperatures reached 9 degrees Fahrenheit here at the Gillespie County Extension office on December 23rd, 2022 and stayed at 9°F for two hours.

The French varieties "Imperial" and "French Dentata" were crispy top-killed. No Lavandin varieties suffered any harm, except that the flowers on "Provence" froze. "Anouk", "Anouk Supreme" and "Primavera" had spotty green foliage, but bark looks dead underneath. "Papillion Rose", and "New Madrid Rose" did not have green foliage, but bark wasn't completely dead underneath.

Plants can take time to show cold damage. Varieties with spotty green foliage will be given a month to evaluate if they are top-killed or not. Crispy top-killed plants will be trimmed back in the hopes that green foliage may sprout from the roots.



Want to become a Texas Master Gardener?



Are you interested in volunteering with other people who love plants as much as you do? Registration is now open for the 2023 Hill Country Master Gardener Class. Join to learn about gardening, landscaping, plant selection, growing vegetables, insects, soil, how you can help your community through gardening and more. Classes will be on Tuesdays and Thursdays weekly from February to March 2023. Cost for the class is \$200. Applications must be received by February 5th, 2023.

In addition to taking the class and meeting the 50 hour educational requirement, to become a Master Gardener you must volunteer 50 hours community service your first year and then 25 volunteer hours with 6 continuing education hours following years to keep your certification. A background check must be passed to become a Master Gardener.

The Hill Country Master Gardeners meet every first Wednesday at the Hill District Youth Event Center from 1- 3 pm. Find out more information about the Hill Country Master Gardeners at hillcountrymastergardeners.org



Gillespie County Chill Hour Tracker

Want to keep up with the latest amount of chill hours for Fredericksburg? Please see <https://gillespie.agrilife.org/agriculture-2/horticulture/chill-hours/> for updates.

Current Chill Hours

Chill Hours as of 8:40 AM
1/5/2023

Under 45 F Model: 243
35 F - 45 F Model: 141

Turfgrass Doesn't Grow in Shade

If you are currently in the planning stages for replacing your lawn this year, please keep in mind that no turfgrass will grow in absolute shade. Areas such as this are better for sedges or landscaped with shade tolerant perennials.





Scan the QR Code
to Register Online

*paper registration is
available upon request*

PLANTASTIC

Gardening Seminar

Pre-Registration Deadline: February 21st

Topics Include:
Basic Gardening
Hands-On Irrigation
Tomatoes
Vermiculture
Composting
Melons
Container Gardening
Pests & Varmints

Contact Beth McMahon at (830) 997-3452 for more information

February 24th
8:30a.m. - 3:30p.m.

Gillespie Co.
Extension Office
38 Business Court,
Fredericksburg, TX
78624

Cost:
\$40 with lunch
\$30 no lunch
\$30 at the door & no
lunch

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

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AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/grow-it-cook-it-tickets-486898595807>

Strange Tales of Horticulture

Laser Gun Zaps Plant Pests?

Using UV-C Light to Kill Spider Mites



This gun uses salt to kill bugs, not lasers. The laser is only used as a sight. Sorry. Picture by <https://www.amazon.com/Bug-A-Salt-Bug-Beam/dp/B078CPWMK9>.

If you've ever had a spider mite problem, you've probably noticed they are hard to kill. Spider mites are very small, sucking insects that can multiply rapidly. Severe infestations can cover plants with webs and plants will struggle to grow.

I haven't had luck with any common insecticides in my garden, organic or non-organic. So the idea of using just light to kill spider mites gets me more than a little excited. Yet is this idea as true as it sounds?



The red dots are spider mites. Discoloration on the leaf is caused by their feeding damage.

This experiment comes from the University of Florida. The press release on the results certainly sounds promising, being an organic method that can "effectively control the mites by applying light twice a week, at night." (<https://blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/news/2022/11/29/uf-study-uv-lamps-can-control-strawberry-pest/>).

If the only thing I needed to do control spider mites would be to shine a light up and down my tomato plants twice a week in the dark, I'd do it, weird looks from the neighbors or not.

But if you read the actual scientific article, it's not that simple. In this experiment, they tried two strengths of UV-C light, no control for spider

mites at all and a common miticide. None of these treatments had any impact on the spider mite population the first year, because there wasn't a high enough infestation to control. There was a significant difference between plants treated at the strongest light strength compared to no treatment at all, but the article didn't say if it was as or more effective than the pesticide, or if was more effective than the lower light strength. The treatment seems to do something, but is it worth the hassle?

There are additional difficulties for using UV light that the article doesn't cover. One is that the levels needed to suppress spider mites are dangerous to humans as well. In this experiment the UV-C light was applied using a robot. How one would find and adapt a robot to apply UV-C light aside, obtaining a UV-C light strong enough is unlikely without a special and expensive order.

The low light level used for this experiment is similar in strength to home UV light emitters, but this experiment didn't show any effectiveness of its use. I doubt it will be any use to get a home UV light and try to kill spider mites that way.

UV-C light to kill spider mites will require special equipment that isn't even available to commercial growers, let alone homeowners. Yet this experiment does demonstrate the first steps to a new organic pest control method that might eventually result in a home laser gun that kills plant pests.



Webbing caused by spider mite infestation.

Save the Dates

Gillespie County

Grow It Cook It Asparagus

January 11th, 2022. 12:00-1:00 PM. Gillespie County Extension Office, 38 Business Court, Fredericksburg.

Learn how to grow and cook asparagus. Recipe demonstrations will be performed at the program. Trial asparagus plants will be given in February. This is the first program in a three program series. Cost is \$25 dollars for series, \$15 per program. Register by calling or coming by the Gillespie County extension office or online at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/grow-it-cook-it-tickets-486898595807>. There is an additional credit card fee to register online.



Learn how to grow these tasty spears at the January 11th Grow It Cook It Program.

Gillespie County Livestock Show

January 11th-14th. Various times. Gillespie County Fairgrounds, 530 Fair Dr, Fredericksburg.

Come see the kids show their livestock projects, including chickens, sheep, goats, cattle, pigs and breeding animals. Sale on January 14th. Free entry.

Fredericksburg Native Plant Society Monthly Meeting

January 24th, 2023. St. Josephs Halle, 212 W. San Antonio.

Social starts at 6:30. Meeting starts at 7. Come talk and meet other native plant enthusiasts. Program topic is "The Fibonacci Sequence in Nature and Native Plants".

Plantastic Gardening Seminar

February 24th, 2022. Registration 8:30. Program 9:00-3:30 pm. Gillespie County Extension Office, 38 Business Court, Fredericksburg.

New or experienced gardeners, come learn techniques and tips for your home vegetable garden. Cost is \$40 pre-register with lunch, \$30 pre-register no lunch or \$30 at the door and no lunch. An additional credit card fee is applied for online registrations. Payment is required to pre-register. Pre-registrations due on February 21st, 2023. Register with the paper form at the end of this newsletter or register online at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/plantastic-gardening-seminar-tickets-493804190627>

Fredericksburg Native Plant Society Monthly Meeting

February 28th, 2023. St. Josephs Halle, 212 W. San Antonio.

Social starts at 6:30. Meeting starts at 7. Come talk and meet other native plant enthusiasts. Program topic to be determined.

Save the Dates

Near Gillespie County

Winter Container Gardening

January 14th, 2022. 10:30-11:30 am. Butt Holdsworth Library, 505 Water Street, Kerrville.
Learn about winter container gardening. Presentation given by Master Gardener Joan Leach. Free. No pre-registration required.

Tree Management Workshop

January 19th, 2023. 8:00-4:30 pm. San Antonio Botanical Garden, 555 Funston Place, San Antonio.

Covers oak wilt, tree health, tree stressors and tree pests. Lunch included. Four ag pesticide applicator CEUS and ISA CEUS available. Register online at <https://tamu.estore.flywire.com/products/2023-tree-management-workshop-81124>

Care of Houseplants

February 11, 2023. 10:30-11:30 am. Butt Holdsworth Library, 505 Water Street, Kerrville.

Learn about caring for your houseplants. Given by Master Gardener Kay Nelson. Free. No pre-registration required.



Learn how to help your pet succulents grow better at the houseplant program on February 11th in Kerrville.

Choosing the Right Plants for Your Landscape

March 25th, 2023. 10:30-11:30 am. Butt Holdsworth Library, 505 Water Street, Kerrville.

Plant selection for landscapes. Given by Master Gardener Janelle Dahms. Free. No pre-registration required.



Improve or start your own pecan orchard. Learn how at the Pecan Short Course January 23rd-26th near College Station.

Statewide

Pecan Short Course

January 23rd-26th, 2023. Texas A&M HortTREC 3199 County Road 269 E Somerville, Texas

Guides prospective pecan growers through the planning, development, business considerations, and annual crop production facets of commercial pecan production. Over four full days, the class encompasses both classroom teaching and hands-on demonstrations of harvest and spray equipment, tree planting, training, pruning, and grafting. Cost is \$300. Register online at <https://tamu.estore.flywire.com/products/texas-pecan-short-course-january-23-26-2023>

Save the Dates

Statewide

Texas Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association Conference

January 29th-31st. Mesquite, Texas.

Two days of in-depth workshops and learning sessions, plus a preconference day with multiple off-site intensives and farm tours. Additional highlights include a farm-to-table feast with keynote speaker, social and networking opportunities, and a trade show. Main conference is January 30th and 31st. Full conference, nonmember cost is \$275. Full conference, member cost is \$225. One day passes available. Register online at <https://www.tofga.org/event-5013132>

Turfgrass Ecology & Management Short Course

February 20-23rd, 2023. Scotts MiracleGro Turfgrass and Landscape Research Facility, 3100 F and B Road, College Station.

For turf professions and enthusiasts looking to expand their knowledge of turfgrass systems and best management practices. Includes classroom, group and hands-on activities. Cost is \$675. Some meals provided. Shorter Spanish session available. Register online at <https://tamu.estore.flywire.com/products/2023-turfgrass-ecology-shortcourse-81296>



Virtual

Organic Plant Breeding Webinar Series

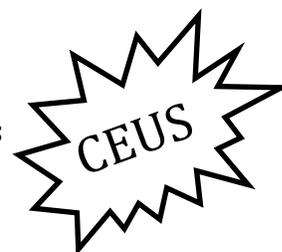
January 10th, 17th, 24, 31st, February 7th and February 14th. All webinars start at 1:00 PM central time.

In-depth series of webinars geared towards selecting plant breeding material and scaling up a breeding project. Targeted towards upper mid-west, but general information should apply to our region. Geared towards farmers and plant breeders. Register online at https://oregonstate.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_2wh1-ycQsg2Vpjszp4vlFQ

Victoria/Calhoun Counties Virtual CEU Seminar

January 26th, 2023. 8:00 AM.

Covers weed and brush control, feral hogs, laws and regs and IPM. Geared towards coastal south Texas. CEUS: 1 hour laws & regs, 2 hours IPM, 1 hour drift, 1 hour general. Cost is \$50. Register online at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2023-victoria-calhoun-counties-virtual-ceu-seminar-tickets-459038515557?aff=ebdshpsearchautocomplete>



Lawn & Landscape Calendar

January

- Water lawn if no rain every 2-3 weeks.
- Plan gardens and flowerbeds.
- Sow seeds of petunias, begonias, and impatiens in flats in early January. Sow seeds of tomatoes, peppers, marigolds, and periwinkles in late January or early February.
- Avoid “topping” crape myrtles.
- If desired, test your soil.
- Plant onion sets in your vegetable garden.

February

- Plant trees and fruit trees. Mulch afterward.
- Before weather becomes consistently warm, apply pre-emergent to reduce warm season weeds.
- Water lawn if no rain every 2-3 weeks.
- Select and order gladiolus corms for February/ March planting.
- Finish pruning pecan trees and fruit trees before spring bud break.

March

- Before weather becomes consistently warm, apply pre-emergent to reduce warm season weeds.
- Cut back ornamental grasses before new growth appears.
- Do not prune spring flowering shrubs and vines, until after blooming including plants such as forsythia, quince, spirea, etc.
- Allow foliage on spring bulbs such as daffodils to die back and dry before removing, to create food for next year’s plants.

Extension Office Closures

We will be closed on January 16th, February 20th, March 2nd and April 7th.

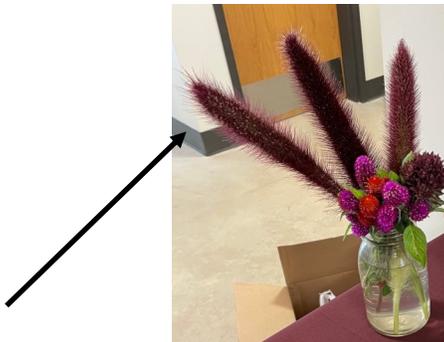
Gillespie County Horticulture Newsletter

Name That Plant!



What is the name of this wispy plant? First person to respond with the correct answer will get their names featured in next quarter's newsletter.

Last Newsletter's Plant



Last quarter's plant was ornamental millet. There were no correct guesses for this plant.

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*

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Plantastic Vegetable Gardening Seminar February 24th, 2023, Pre-Registration Form
 Pre-registration is due at the office by February 21st, 2023.

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email address: _____

Zip Code: _____

Cost is \$40 with meal, \$30 without meal, or \$30 dollars register at door (no meal). The meal is a boxed lunch from Woerner Warehouse. Circle yes or no if you want the meal, then circle and check your sandwich option. All sandwich options are served cold and on 9 Grain Bread.

Yes No

Sandwich Option	
Cali Club Sandwich	
Napa Chicken Salad Sandwich	
Turkey Stack Sandwich	
Woerner B.L.A.T.	
The Veg Head	
Tuscan Cobb	
Greek Salad	
House Spinach Salad	
Linda Salad	

Mail form with payment to Gillespie County AgriLife Extension Service, 38 Business Court, Fredericksburg, Texas. Checks should be made payable to Gillespie ANR Committee. Registration is **due at the office** on February 21st, 2023. Full refunds for paper registration will be given until February 21st.

We'd like to email you an anonymous follow-up survey on how your garden went. Filling out this survey is voluntary. The intent is to find out if the program was helpful to you or not. Circle yes if you are ok with receiving the survey, or no if you do not want it emailed to you. A.

Yes No