

MILBERGER LANDSCAPE & NURSERY

THE GARDENING NEWSLETTER FOR SOUTH CENTRAL TEXAS

MARCH 2016

PLANT QUESTIONS

My Bermuda lawn is well established. Do I still have to aerate? I am worried about damaging my sprinkler system. Aeration followed by a top dressing can only improve your lawn. Is it absolutely necessary? Probably not. If the lawn is so compacted that water will not penetrate it after irrigation or rain, or if the thatch is built up to a detrimental amount, then perhaps aerating is necessary.

How do I get rid of mud dobbers? They build their nests in everything. Mud dauber nest may be a nuisance; however they provide a beneficial service by eliminating many spiders (especially black widows).

Should I use coffee grounds in my garden beds? Yes. Coffee grounds will be of benefit to any and all of your flowers. Compost them with other kitchen scraps, or just incorporate them into your garden soils.

If you have gardening or landscaping questions we have the answers. Just ask any of the friendly, knowledgeable, and experienced nursery staff at Milberger's Nursery.



Among your many choices at our nursery you will find a selection of **Knock Out Roses**, perhaps the most adaptable roses for South Texas. Used for accent, borders, rose gardens or hedges and a Texas Superstar plant as well.

SPRING GARDENING EXPERTISE

Lots of Roses to Choose From

Deciding to plant roses in your garden can be exciting and at the same time intimidating. Buying rose plants does not need to be intimidating if you know what to look for. Decide on color. How will the color of your roses affect your garden? Look at different catalogs, as well as your neighbors' gardens, to get an idea of the colors you like best. Consider size. In addition to color, the size of the roses you choose is very important. Consider the height of your roses at full-growth. Think about climate. In order for your roses to grow healthy and mature, you will need to select a variety that will thrive in our South Texas climate. Consider maintenance. There are several types of roses which are very high-maintenance. Although they will look beautiful in your garden, they will require a lot of your time. The classification known as "Modern Roses" are very beautiful, long blooming, and highly fragrant, however they are very high maintenance and are prone to disease.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE THREE)

Our web site and the email version of this newsletter contain many color photographs, how-to-do-it diagrams, more complete articles, links to many gardeners references and many more answers to your gardening and landscape questions. Visit www.MilbergerNursery.com to sign up. We respect your privacy and we will not share your address or information with anyone not associated with this newsletter.

MARCH GARDENING EVENTS

Wed., Mar. 2 – 10am 'til Noon or so

An Orchid Workshop presented by the owners of Miller's Tropicals in Dripping Springs. Hands-on help with potting, diagnosing, and problem-solving. A range of supplies, mixes, and tropical plants will also be available for sale. San Antonio Garden Center Clubs at 3310 N. New Braunfels @ Funston. Join us for coffee at 9:30; meetings are free and open to the public. www.sanantoniogardencenters.org or call (210) 824-9981.

Sat., Mar 19 – 11am 'til 3pm

Rosarians "Talk Roses" at the Nursery. Rosarians from the San Antonio Rose Society will be at the Nursery to "Talk Roses" and share their expertise on Growing Roses in San Antonio. They will be able to help you with your specific questions about selecting, planting and caring for the roses in your landscape. (210) 497-3760

Mon., Mar 21 – 8am 'til 4:30pm

Introduction to Native Landscapes. Native Landscape Certification Program (NLCP) presented by Native Plant Society of Texas. First in a series of three all-day workshops. Learn the value of including and preserving native plants in landscapes, soil types, 40 plants, 40 native Texas plants for your landscape and 5 exotic plants to avoid. Phil Hardberger Park, Urban Ecology Center. \$37. nlcp@npsot.org or call Meg Inglis at 512-589-1316.

Sat., Mar 26 – 10 'til 11am

Fox Farm Gardening Class for Kids Kids Gardening Class at Milberger's are hands-on, fun-in-the-garden workshops on gardening designed for children 5 to 10. Free but call to reserve a spot because class size is limited. 210-497-376

**Find more Gardening Events – visit
www.MilbergerNursery.com**



To find us:
Take the Bulverde Exit off of Loop 1604. The entrance to Milberger's is next to the Valero gas station.

Milberger's Landscape Nursery

Open 9:00 to 6:00 Monday to Saturday
And 10:00 to 5:00 on Sundays

3920 North Loop 1604
San Antonio, TX 78247
(210) 497-3760

Or on the World Wide Web at
www.milbergernursery.com
nursery@milbergersa.com

**Milberger's Nursery
March Features**

Milberger's Landscape Nursery

**ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION**

March 16th thru March 28th

Celebrated with weekly sales

Visit our website, and check our advertisements in the *San Antonio Express News* for our great anniversary sale items.

**Get Paid to Plant a Tree
with CPS Green Shade rebates**

\$50 per Tree

UP TO FIVE TREES
Just ask one of the
**South Texas
Tree Experts
at Milberger's**



We Have Your Roses!



Milberger's regularly carries OVER FIFTY VARIETIES of Antique and Modern roses that are recommended by Texas A&M and the San Antonio Rose Society.



**Watch for our weekly sale specials in
The San Antonio Express-News
or at
www.MilbergerNursery.com**

Gardening South Texas on the air at KLUP (am 930)

Saturday and Sunday 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

To have your gardening questions answered during show hours ONLY

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308-8867 or
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Facebook.com.milberger's nursery

Our Writers have the answers: **Dr. Jerry Parsons** is a well renown Horticulture Specialist who is retired from the Texas AgriLife Extension Service in San Antonio; **Dr. Calvin Finch** is the retired Director of Water Conservation and Technology at the Texas A&M University System. The Gardening Newsletter for South Central Texas is edited by Marc Hess at mhess@hctc.coop.

SPRING GARDENING EXPERTISE

Choosing Your Rose Bush

(CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE)

Choosing a Rose Bush

Thank goodness there are thousands of rose varieties; more every year. Rose gardeners have all sorts of hopes for their rose gardens. Whether you want a prize winning hybrid tea rose, old fashioned cabbage roses, sprawling ramblers and climbers or just a whiff of the way you remember roses smelling, there's a rose for you.

“If you're new to gardening and want to try your hand at growing roses, landscape roses may be your best option. These roses are easy to care for and disease-resistant. They'll look stunning just about anywhere.”



HYBRID TEAS: Hybrid teas come in medium-to-tall bushes and have a vase-shaped profile. Elegant pointed buds precede big, gorgeous flowers that are usually one to a stem. They bloom continuously throughout the growing season.

FLORIBUNDAS: Floribundas are short compact cluster-bloomers and were bred to be hardier than hybrid teas.



GRANDIFLORAS:

A cross between hybrid teas and floribundas, grandifloras are hardier than the teas but not as cold-tolerant as floribundas. They bloom all summer.

POLYANTHAS:

Polyanthas have a compact, shrubby habit. Their smaller flowers, which the plants produce in profusion, bloom all summer long.

ANTIQUER ROSES:

These historical roses generally bloom only once in late spring for a few glorious weeks. They are also referred to as vintage, heirloom, or antique roses.

Rosarians from the **San Antonio Rose Society** will be at Milberger's to talk to you about roses in your landscape on Saturday, March 19 from 11am until 3pm. Milberger's regularly carries over fifty varieties of Antique and Modern roses that are recommended by Texas A&M and the San Antonio Rose Society.

YOUR SPRING GARDEN BEDS

Petunias & Dianthus: Plant Them Now

With spring upon us it is only a matter of weeks until the hotter dryer days slows down our spring blooming plants. If you have empty place space in your garden you may be considering whether it pays to buy transplants now with only a three or four month bloom period remaining. Petunias and dianthus have the most heat tolerance so they would be your best investments.

PETUNIAS come in two different flavors. **Grandiflora petunias** have very large flowers and are best grown in containers or hanging baskets because they are more susceptible to rain damage. **Multiflora petunias** have smaller, but more abundant flowers and are ideal for summer bedding or in a mixed border because they are more tolerant to wet weather.



Dianthus are the most versatile of the cool weather annuals. They will bloom fall through late spring, and even into the summer if you cut them back with your string mower or pruners in April.

DIANTHUS or its common name, **Pinks**, is a perennial that is perfect for our climate. Dianthus likes a good compost and rich soil. Dianthus does need watering in the hot months of July, August and September, about one inch per week, but it remains a drought tolerant plant. Dianthus likes to be fertilized, and does best with a bit of afternoon shade.



Masses of flowers should completely cover the **petunia** plant. Choose red, white, pink, blue and purple. Loves our mild spring and easy to grow in beds or containers.

It's best to buy transplants and plant them in light, well-drained soil in full sun after the last spring frost. Petunias can grow in partial shade, but they will have fewer flowers. It's better if the plants have shelter from the wind. Space the plants about 1 foot apart. If you're planting petunias in containers, use a soil-less mix.

Petunias are tolerant of heat so you don't have to water them regularly.

A visit to Milberger's Nursery will help you get your spring garden going. You will find healthy plant stock that is selected to thrive throughout our South Central Texas summers. You will also find the good advice and creative suggestions for your specific landscape and gardening needs. To see what is on sale each week visit our web site at www.milbergernursery.com or look for our ads in the **San Antonio Express News**.

LAWNCARE

Spring Lawn Care

By Keith Hansen

The most common landscape feature of most yards, big or small, is the lawn and it's just about time to bring mowers and spreaders out of winter storage and attend to the lawn. Lawns sometimes get a bad environmental rap for the amount of water, fertilizer and pesticides that are applied to keep them green. However, lawns do provide important qualities. They eliminate soil erosion, reduce runoff and pollution, lower surface temperatures, muffle noise, reduce glare, and filter harmful pollutants from the air. Lawn grasses, like other living plants, consume carbon dioxide and release oxygen. Plus, lawns provide inexpensive recreational areas.



Although maintaining a quality lawn is a year round task, there are 3 simple points that, if followed, will result in a thick, weed-resistant, healthy lawn.

“Wait until after April 1 to fertilize the lawn or until you have mowed real grass two times. St. Augustine, Bermuda, zoysia, and buffalo grass are warm weather grasses. They do not grow well or pick up nutrients efficiently until the soil and air temperatures are warm.”

~ Calvin Finch, Retired Director of Water Conservation and Technology at the Texas A&M University System

MOWING tops the list of factors that can make or break a good lawn. There are two interrelated points that go into mowing: 1) mowing at the proper height for your type of grass, and 2) the proper frequency – both go a long way to develop and maintain a top-notch lawn.

FERTILIZATION. For slow, even growth, use a fertilizer containing nitrogen in a slow-release form. This is especially important for lawns on sandy soil. Organic fertilizers provide sources of slow release nutrients and also help build up the soil.

WATERING. Providing adequate supplemental irrigation for spring green up is very important. If rainfall does not occur, then approximately 1.0 inch of supplemental irrigation water should be added to the lawn each week. While it is important to make sure adequate soil moisture is available for spring transition, it is also important to make sure the landscape is not over watered. Excess irrigation will create shallow rooted plants going into the hot, dry summer months, and it can also encourage disease problems such as gray leaf spot in St. Augustine grass.

Water in early morning. Less water is lost through evaporation in the morning, and the grass dries quickly, resulting in fewer disease problems.

TREES AND SHRUBS

Best Texas Shade Trees

Texas is hot. Planting large shade trees not only adds value to your home, but it can also offer respite from the heat, shade your home to reduce energy costs, provide a home for habitat, and add beauty to your landscape. When you live in an urban environment, it's even more important to provide shade to homes and surrounding areas – all that extra concrete from roadways, sidewalks and buildings significantly increase temperatures in the city. Shade trees are a great way to cool things off. These are a few of our Texas-tough shade trees to consider for your landscape.

CEDAR ELM is highly drought tolerant once established. This large, native tree sports small, deep green leaves in spring that turn to a golden hue in autumn. Grows large, up to 90', to offer a wonderful amount of shade.



CHINESE PISTACHE are easy-to-maintain trees that are beautiful, as well as pest and heat tolerant. In fall, leaves turn bright orange to red. Grows 40'-50' tall and 30' wide. Perfect for shading a one story house.



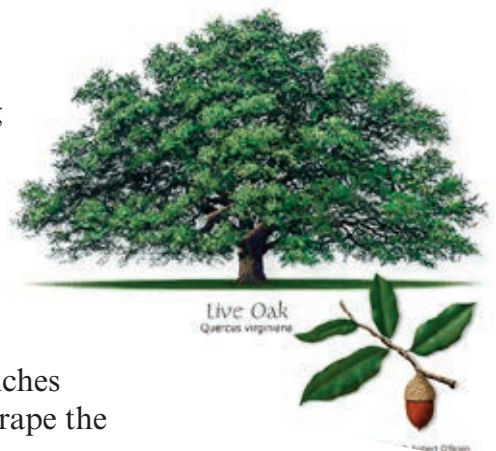
MONTERRAY OAK has wonderfully textural, dark to light gray bark and oblong, deep green leaves, except in spring when new leaves are a lovely peach color. Grows to 40'. Great for urban landscapes.



SHUMARD RED OAK has rich green leaves that turn fiery red in fall. It has a beautiful, open canopy and thick branches. Leave lots of room as it can grow upwards of 120 feet. Enjoy acorns through summer.



LIVE OAK has a dense, wide canopy, offering wonderful shade in summer; is very long-lived; has adapted to our clay soil; and has unique branches that over time drape the ground beneath.



Take advantage of CPS's Green Shade Rebate to save \$50 per shade tree for qualifying customers. Visit our web site www.milbergernursery.com for a list of recommended Small Trees. (Under Gardening Expertise in the lower right hand corner of our home page.) You can also download information sheets on the varieties that are available and ready to plant.

MARCH GARDENING AND LAWCARE GUIDELINES

Spring Planting Time

By Dr. Jerry Parsons

March is a major gardening month in our area. The weather stabilizes and by the end of the month it is warm enough to consider the warm weather plants. The average last freeze date occurs during mid-month. This is the time to prepare beds for planting flowers and vegetables. You may want to go in with a neighbor and rent a tiller for this laborious task—of course a shovel or spading fork will do the same job, it's just harder.

COLOR: March is great geranium month. Use them in morning sun. You can cut tulip foliage down as soon as it is unattractive because they probably won't come back. On daffodils, Dutch iris and other low-chill bulbs, however, leave the foliage until it turns brown. The green leaves are replenishing the bulbs for next year's blooms. Fall-planted pansies, snapdragons, dianthus, stocks, alyssum and larkspur are spectacular this month. It is not too late to plant daylilies and irises if they are well rooted in containers. And March is a month to plant the gardener's favorite vegetables such as tomatoes, sweet corn and snap beans and pepper as well as cucumbers, lima or butter beans, cantaloupe, okra, southern peas, pumpkin, squash, peanuts and watermelon.

PRUNE: If you didn't get around to pruning your spring flowering and evergreen shrubs during February, do it in early March.

LAWN CARE: March is a good month for aeration and adding a half-inch of compost as a soil dressing. It's still too early to fertilize the lawn. It may begin to green up, but the root systems are not fully active until warmer weather arrives. Tune up the lawnmower and be sure the blade is very sharp. Dull blades tear the grass, sharp ones cut it.

FERTILIZE: Use a pre-plant application of a slow-release fertilizer analysis such as 19-5-9 at the rate of 3 pounds per 100 square feet of garden planting area. Early March is the ideal time to fertilize landscape plants because you give them food just before the spring growing season starts.

BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR a spectacular spring wildflower display. The spring months in South central Texas are perhaps best known for their many, many wildflowers.

For more detailed and complete Gardening Tips from Jerry Parsons go to our newly redesigned website: **www.MilbergerNursery.com** and follow the newsletter link that reads "**Monthly Gardening Tips.**"

SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE FREE

Subscriptions to Milberger's Gardening Newsletter for South Central Texas are free, compliments of Milberger's Landscaping and Nursery. The newsletter is published at the beginning of each month.

TO RECEIVE this free newsletter, complete this form and return it to **Milberger's Nursery** or by calling (210) 497-3760. You can sign up on-line at **www.milbergernursery.com**.

We respect your privacy. Your name will not be shared with anyone not associated with Milberger Nursery.

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Milberger's Tree Lot

has the largest selection of healthy,
well rooted, ready-to-plant-trees
in the area.

To find the specific tree for your landscape talk to the tree
experts at Milberger's Nursery.



The **Bougainvillea** is an immensely showy, floriferous and hardy plant. Virtually pest-free and disease resistant, it rewards its owner with an abundance of color and vitality when it is well looked after. With at least 5 hours of direct sunlight per day, a typical, healthy bougainvillea may remain in a blooming period for 3 to 5 weeks. Thrives in containers—you will need to bring your bougainvillea indoors to winter-over.