

MILBERGER LANDSCAPE & NURSERY

THE GARDENING NEWSLETTER FOR SOUTH CENTRAL TEXAS

JUNE 2016

PLANT QUESTIONS

The row of crape myrtles along my street and sidewalk wilt all the time except after rain or watering them. I thought they were a xeriscape plant. Crape myrtles are fine xeriscape plants. Still, they are as quick as any tree to show their displeasure by wilting, aborting their blossoms and looking very sad. That small area where they are planted will need supplemental water in the absence of rain.

How long will zinnias last if I plant them by transplants in this heat? Zinnias will bloom well for three to four months if you mulch them and water two or three times per week.

How tall should I be mowing my Emerald zoysia grass? When should I fertilize? Mow buffalo at 5 inches, St Augustine at 3 inches and Bermuda at 1.5 inches tall. Fertilize all of the hot weather grasses in early May and then again in October.

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.



Native Lantana is a perennial that blooms with eye-catching yellow, orange and pink flowers in the spring and dies back to ground at frost. Typical of all native plants they are low maintenance and attract bees and butterflies.

SUMMER GARDENING EXPERTISE

Going Native

Choosing native plants allows developed landscapes to coexist with nature, rather than compete with it. This is important in South Texas where the fate of your garden beds, foundation shrubs and even container plants depend on selecting varieties that thrive in our hot and dry climate. Fortunately we have a lot of colorful plants to choose from. Native plants are frequently used around homes and in gardens to create sustainable landscapes. Most native plants are perennial and have extensive root systems. They support wildlife including beneficial insects, pollinators, and native birds. Native plants are hardy, do not require fertilizer once established, and provide food and habitat for native animals. Most native species are perennial, and they also maintain themselves by reseeding on the same site.

(RECOMMENDED PERENNIALS 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.

JUNE GARDENING EVENTS

Sat., Jun 11 – 10am 'til 1:30pm

Milberger's Blood Drive. Take advantage of this opportunity to give the gift of life by donating to South Texas Blood and Tissue Center. Milberger's will offer a \$10 gift certificate to each person willing to donate. 210-497-3760.

Sat., Jun 11 – 10:30am 'til Noon

Summer Color with Texas SuperStars™.

FREE Earth-Kind Seminar with David Rodriguez. Learn what you can do to keep your garden beds blooming throughout the heat of the summer, how to attract butterflies and humming birds and how to prepare your landscape for summer heat. At Milberger's Nursery, 210-497-3760.

Sat., Jun 11 – 12 Noon 'til 2pm

Milberger's Top Tomato Contest. Bring your finest homegrown tomatoes and/or a bowl filled with your best garden vegetables to Milberger's Nursery before noon and fruits of your garden may be selected a winner in one of five categories. 210-497-3760.

Sat., Jun 25 – 10am 'til 11am

Birds of Prey, Kids Gardening Class. Your kids will enjoy this dramatic, close-up educational experience with Texas predatory birds. Raptor handlers from the Birds of Prey Conservancy will give your kids and educational experience they will not forget. Classes are free but call to reserve a spot because class size is limited: 210-497-3760.

**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 June Features

Summer is here.

School is out. Days are longer.

So it's time to pour yourself a LONG GLASS OF ICED TEA and enjoy your garden and landscape. You can still plant vincas in full sun or shade plants. **Enjoy.**

Milberger's Popular TOP TOMATO CONTEST



Your homegrown tomatoes could be BIG WINNERS. Bring the best from your garden to the nursery
June 11 – before noon

5 CATEGORIES:

Cherry and Smaller Tomatoes ~ Regular Tomatoes ~ BIGGEST TOMATO (based on weight) ~ **BEST OF SHOW GRAND CHAMPION ~ Best Salad Bowl**

Every one who enters receives a **\$10.00 Milberger Gift Certificate**
CONTEST RULES AT THE NURSERY OR ON OUR WEBSITE

Shade Trees

Palm Trees.

Ornamental Trees.

Shrubs



Fresh well-rooted trees in the San Antonio area. Visit out tree lot and select a species that is well adapted for our growing area.

**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

Follow us



@milbergerssa

call

308-8867 or
1-866-308-8867

"LIKE" us



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@htcc.coop.

SUMMER GARDENING EXPERTISE

Why Should You Use Native Plants In Your landscape?

(CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE)

They require less water: It just makes sense. There are many native plants in North Central Texas — that is, plants that originate or grow naturally without human intervention that can be used in your landscape. Countless other plants originally found in other parts of the world have adapted to thrive in this region. Native or adapted drought-tolerant plants are more



Lowrey's Legacy Cenizo's azalea-like lilac blue flowers are some of the largest and most attractive blooms of any Texas sage on the market because of the reliable and continuous profusion of flower displayed throughout much of the year. It is also a Texas Superstar™ plant.

“The advantage of using native plants in the landscape is they are capable of surviving the droughts and local pests without excessive irrigation or pesticides since they evolved in the local climate and soils.”

~ Jerry Parsons, Bexar County Horticulturist

likely to survive and thrive in South Central Texas than plants from other regions or countries where the climate and average rainfall is much different. By selecting native and adapted drought-tolerant plants for your landscape, you'll water less and save more – time, water and money.

They require little maintenance: Native or adapted drought-tolerant plants are naturally disease and pest resistant; they require little or no fertilizer; and once established can usually thrive with the average annual rainfall here in Texas. During unusually dry periods they may need a little supplemental water – but much less than their more thirsty cousins.

If you'd rather spend less time watering, feeding and chemically controlling pests and disease in your landscape, plant native or adapted drought-tolerant plants.

They're hardy and beautiful: Some people think that a water conserving landscape won't be as pretty as a landscape that demands lots of water. But nothing could be further from the truth. Texas native and adapted drought tolerant plants come in all shapes, sizes, colors and heights. With a little planning, you can create a lush, colorful landscape with these natural beauties

To spice up your summer landscape with dramatic summer color visit our nursery where you will find Texas SuperStars® plants that will thrive in your summer landscape. Take a look at our web site www.milbergernursery.com or look for our ads in the **SanAntonio Express-News** to find which plants are on sale.

SUMMER COLOR

Tropical Hibiscus

Often called the *Queen of the Tropics*, Tropical Hibiscus will provide you with an excellent source of summer landscape color and is one of South Texas' most popular tropical or sub-tropical flowering plants. With their bright showy flowers in many colors along with their glossy leaves tropical hibiscus will bloom from mid spring through fall. Although suited for more tropical regions this brilliant bloomer can grow to heights upwards of 15' tall but most average 5' to 6' tall. You can expect the blooms to average 4" to 6" wide.

Tropical Hibiscus are tender plants that don't like big temperature variations, most particularly temperatures that approach freezing. With a little strategic planning during the cooler months, hibiscus can weather our periodic cold snaps and their bloom cycle in the spring without missing a beat.

Hibiscus like sunny, well-drained places with some protection from the hot afternoon sun. Keep you plants

evenly moist but avoid wet feet as their roots will rot if they don't have adequate drainage. These plants will need regular feeding if you expect them to produce their showy blooms all summer long.

Hibiscus belong to the mallow family and are closely related to cotton, hollyhock, turks cap, mallows, shrub althea, confederate rose, and okra. Even in the older hibiscus varieties there is considerable variation in the size and texture of the foliage. Their colors also vary from white through pink, red, yellow, apricot, and orange. The form of their blooms generally is either singled or double.



Hibiscus are well suited to being grown in containers especially on patios, balconies or for poolside plantings. Containerized plants can easily be moved to a protected spot when it gets cold outside.

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

The Groundcover Alternative

Most people think of turf grass when groundcover is mentioned. Turf grass does fulfill all the requirements for a good groundcover. The problem with turf grass is the amount of water, chemicals and time required to maintain a traditional turf grass. In this web site, turf grass is covered in the grass section instead of the groundcover section.

Groundcovers have several benefits associated with their use. They minimize erosion, dust and mud around your house. They provide a cooling effect during hot summers. Some are very drought tolerant. Some make excellent choices for narrow or isolated areas that are difficult to maintain. Some

“Lawn grass, if we manage it in the traditional way to be lush and green all summer, requires more water, pesticides, and labor than alternative groundcovers.”

~ James McAfee, Extension Turfgrass Specialist

ground covers are tolerant of complete shade, so you can use them as substitutes for lawns in dark parts of your landscape. Best among them you will find mondo grass, liriope, English ivy, Asian jasmine, wood ferns and, in protected spots, aspidistra.



Trailing lantana is an outstanding pick for any drought resistant flower bed design as shown here around an agave like this. Unlike its big brother, Texas Lantana, Trailing lantana is less erect and more sprawling; acting as a solid and colorful groundcover. It will work well in both full sun and part shade, and performs outstandingly planted in terraces, cascading down.

You can reduce turf areas by adding groundcovers wherever possible. You will use less water and after it is established you will not have to spend as much time caring for the planting.

If necessary, you can trim or mow Asiatic jasmine one to two times a year to keep it compact. Mondo grass and liriope can be mowed once a year in February to remove damaged foliage.

LANDSCAPE IDEAS

A Mediterranean Garden for Texas

By Dana Nichols, Conservation Manager at SAWS

San Antonio's climate and geology are ideal for a Mediterranean garden. Our climate similarities include short wet winters, long springs, hot dry summers and mild falls. Soils in both regions are characterized by thin soils on a limestone substrate, alkaline clays and some sandy areas.

As for large, expansive lawns, they derive from England and northern Europe where temperatures are cooler and rain is more regular, and are very rarely part of any Mediterranean garden. In fact, our Hill Country-like soils present the perfect opportunity for colorful, drought-hardy lawn alternatives.

Mediterranean garden design elements include:

- ✿ Significant patios often made of tile, brick or stone.
- ✿ Well placed container plants. Invest in one or two large pots instead of lots of little ones, they're easier to care for and more impactful.
- ✿ A statue or two, or as we say in Texas, some yard art.
- ✿ Fountains create a serene atmosphere and are a better use of water than a thirsty lawn.
- ✿ Fragrant plants like mountain laurel, sweet olive or confederate jasmine.



Using a xeriscaped area this Mediterranean-style landscape brings color and adds interest to the front entrance of a suburban home.

✿ Interesting textures and vivid colors in the form of plants or paint. Textural plants include Texas persimmon, nolina, giant crinum lily or fuzzy lamb's ear. For vivid color try Moy Grande hibiscus, Pride of Barbados, esperanza or plumbago. Or just paint a feature wall or fence a bold, bright color.

Since Mediterranean weather often means hot you will want to incorporate a shady retreat and an outdoor-rated ceiling fan, if possible. Be sure to include a nice size table and enough chairs so you can gather with family and friends as you enjoy your Mediterranean fare.

JUNE GARDENING AND LAWCARE TIPS

Planting for Summer Color

By Dr. Jerry Parsons

June is the time to pour yourself a long glass of ice tea and enjoy your garden and landscape. For color firebush is a favorite hummingbird plant and lantanas are a great butterfly bush. Lantanas are deer resistant.

Plant vincas in full sun. Shade plants include coleus, caladiums, firespike and begonias. Leave the bougainvilleas in full sun and fertilize them regularly with hibiscus food or soluble fertilizer. Moss rose and purslane are showy all month long in full sun. Remove spent flowers from perennials for more blooms. Don't let the weeds get ahead of you.

Shade Trees and Shrubs: Your established trees and bushes should do well without supplemental watering. Newly planted trees, however, need deep watering by hand when the soil dries to one inch. Remember to mulch 4 inches deep around new trees so that they don't have to compete with grass. There are a large number of salvias available. Most species are deer resistant in some neighborhoods and drought tolerant. Keep them compact by shearing. Crape myrtles reach full bloom in June. Deadhead spent flowers for more bloom.

Vegetables: Harvest your vegetables on a regular basis to keep quality high. You can still plant southern peas, eggplant, and okra for mid-summer vegetables.

Lawn care: Irrigate the lawn grass only if it hasn't rained in the last two weeks, and then no more than 3/4 inch of water on the St. Augustine, less for Zoysia, Bermuda, and Buffalo. Water only the most important part of your lawn and let the rest go dormant until we get rain. Keep the mower blade sharp.

On the Lookout: Aphids on tender, young foliage; lacebugs on pyracantha, lantana and sycamore; bagworms on junipers; stinkbugs on fruit and vegetable plants; webworms on pecan trees. Chinch bugs can appear in St. Augustine lawns (except for Floratam St. Augustine which is chinch bug resistant) anytime from now through late summer.

Odd Jobs: Use mulch generously around (but not piled on the trunks) trees, shrubs and landscape and garden plants. Apply sufficient moisture to soak the soil to a depth of 6 to 8 inches. Watering early in the day is preferred to early evening or mid-day.

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.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____

EMAIL _____

Milberger's Landscape Nursery
3920 N Loop 1604 E
San Antonio, TX 78247

PRSRT STD
U. S. Postage
PAID
Kerrville, TX
Permit 89

**When you need
turfgrass and sod
visit the experts at
Milberger's Nursery**



Pink skull cap is a heat, sun loving drought tolerant perennial. Blooms for months providing bright color for your water wise landscape. With small leaves that resemble thyme skull cap has a neat, compact mounding growth habit that works well as an edging plant or ground cover. The tiny snapdragon-like blooms are plentiful and look lovely spilling over a rock wall.

