



NEWSLETTER OF THE SAN ANTONIO HERB SOCIETY

MICROGREENS WITH JEREMIAH SLAVIT



Texas A & M classifies Microgreens as an Herb! And what is the big deal about Microgreens? Why, excellent nutrition and good health in a very small packet.

Our speaker, Jeremiah Slavik, does the heavy lifting of growing these marvelous morsels and he will tell us about people who have reversed their diabetes. This is not just an anecdote; Jeremiah has actual measurable results he can share with us. He will explain why Microgreens have a huge impact on nutrition, how to grow and use them, and then he will save you the effort by bringing Microgreens for sale.

The color in the picture is not off, he is holding Amaranth sprouts which have a lovely ruby color. He grows a wide variety of these sprouts: broccoli, wheatgrass, beets, basil, cilantro, sweet pea and sunflower. We'll let him explain the differences. We will also learn how to use these in a variety of ways. Prices range from \$5 to about \$30 for concentrated dehydrated Microgreens.

Jeremiah not only grows, he delivers his product. You can become a subscribing member. But enough, Jeremiah is an excellent speaker, who has a lot to tell. I will leave it up to him. You need to come the second Thursday of the month, August 11, for Microgreens.

P.S. Remember that we will have a Salad Pot Luck for our social time. Herb Society will provide some salad dressings, lettuce, spinach and some greens; you provide anything else that you like to put into a salad.

**SAN ANTONIO
HERB SOCIETY**
Mark your calendar for
August 11, 2022
3310 N. New Braunfels
San Antonio, 79209

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My grandmother said that her hair was still as dark as ever because she used black strap molasses in lots of cooking. Everyone marveled at how she had so little white in her black hair. So, I must take after her. I no longer attribute it to molasses, just a lucky genetic gene. Or, maybe because I was raised on organic vegetables all of my life, and whole wheat, and no junk food, and fruits and vegetables. Snacks around our house were easy: celery or carrot sticks, you get a choice. Ranch dressing had NOT been invented. Lunch, sent with me to school, had a sandwich, carrot or celery sticks, and an apple. We went through many variations of how to keep an apple from turning brown. The only time I ever saw potato chips was the day after Thanksgiving, when my grandmother included them with the turkey sandwiches she made for our picnic on the trip back home. My dad's favorite treat was dried fruit. Figs, apricots, prunes or raisins. Or pistachio nuts as a very special treat.

As soon as I was on my own, potato chips became a staple food. I tried all sorts of easy short cuts, snacks and cookies. Went right to my waist! It has taken me a long time to return to those roots of really good nutrition. I am lucky, in that I really like the foods I eat that are good for me. I have learned to cut back on coffee, to limit sweets and sugar, to make wiser decisions. None of this good living helped prevent cancer in me. I attribute it to a bad gene.

Our focus here at Herb society is on good health, as well as education. Our speaker this month will have another very good idea for you to consider. That is, adding microgreens to your diet. They used to be called sprouts in the 70's. There was only one kind, a bean as I recall. We put them in a jar with a screen lid, rinsed the beans each day and let them sprout. Times have changed. Varieties have grown. Nutrition has broadened.

With the cost of food going up. It makes sense for us to gather forces and talk about saving money on groceries. And saving money in other ways, too. I would be curious to know what your tactics will be. How much thought do you put into nutritious eating? What issues do you face in your plan for food? Some are single, which poses an issue of cooking for one. Others have family members with allergies, teeth and mouth issues, strong preferences. Some people do not cook for various reasons. What works here? And how do you incorporate herbs into your dishes?

How do you arrange your shopping? How do you save on purchases? How do you make a plan so that everything you buy is used and nothing goes to waste? How do you arrange your refrigerator and pantry to prevent waste and make food prep efficient?

Best of all where do you get the best bang for your buck? I am currently reading *Atomic Habits* by James Clear. I highly recommend this book. As one who hates to waste time, his examination of how to change habits, how to approach your systems and change them for more efficiency are excellent. He is a good writer; the book is hard to put down. It is also worth reading over a number of times. I am currently trying to answer some of the questions I posed above. The pantry is getting a make-over as soon as this newsletter is written. I'll update you on the results.

In the meantime, I would love to hear from you. robinmaymar@gmail.com

WEED AND GLOAT



When we come to the garden, the staff have already put out tools for us to use. We usually bring small hand tools. Clippers are such a personal choice, so we usually bring our own. We try to remember the alcohol, to clean the blades. Especially roses, which are threatened with disease from foreign gardens, we want to be sure to cut with sterile blades. We have resorted to weaving the long pieces of climbing roses back through the fence to their side when we are not armed with clean blades.

We left the garden last time with a nice layer of mulch. You can see from the picture how lush the garden still looks. But, there is drought.

The bird bath was completely empty. And the chamomile had died back. We made an effort to bend over the stalks that were still green, in hopes to layer/propagate and grow a new plant.

We cut the dead part back severely.



The mint has gone to flower. It was covered with honey bees. Across the way the Medicinal Herb Garden was lush with new plantings.

The Dittany of Crete continues to surprise us. It had grown over a large rock which looked like it should be very hot most of the day, but it was blooming away.



Volunteer coordinator for the Botanical Gardens, Jasmine joined us again this month. She is working on a spreadsheet so that all volunteers can register hours on line. We applaud her efforts. And we are always looking for more volunteers to join us on the last Monday of the month. August 29th will be the day. Come at 8 or 8:30 to take advantage of the cool of the day.

We weeded, then adjourned for lunch at EZ's at Brees coffee there, but nice variety of pizzas.

and N. New Braunfels. No



WEED AND GLOAT

Come weed with us at the

Botanical Gardens!

**Feel welcome to come to join us
this month in the sunshine.**

Next Weed and Gloat is scheduled
for Monday, August 29

We meet at 8 A.M.

Contact robinmaymar@gmail.com for
simple safety measures we need to take .

See you then.

Upcoming events

Back to School August 10 for some districts. Watch out for school crossings.

August 25 New Products meeting 10 am at 110 W. Brandon

October meeting: Sandra Woodall needs someone to make and serve the tea. The volunteer should take the “tea boxes” home from our September meeting. Thanking you in advance for helping.

September Board meeting Monday September 12, 10 am La Madeline on Broadway

Herb Market October



LEMON GRASS TEA AVAILABLE

We have probably mentioned it before, but you can make a tea out of the leaves of the lemon grass. As with any grass, it is good to cut the lemon grass back. Take the long leaves, fold them together and tie into a bunch. We left them to dry. When you want tea, just cut off about half a cup, steep in boiling water.

The flavor is lemony but not the citrus of lemon. It has a lovely color and fragrance if steeped for a period of time. This is all ‘seat of the pants’ as you need to brew it to your taste., choosing quantity of tea and water.

We will have bundles of lemon grass at the next meeting for you to take home and try out.

It makes a nice break from plain water. We find that the flavor never wears out.

Culinary Contributions

BEAN / CORN DELIGHT

By Mike Belisle

“Beans, corn, cheese over cornbread. You’re done!,” Mike explained.

The Details:

Look in your refrigerator for these elements:
Cut up some sweet cornbread into cubes
Pour beans (drained we assume) over the cornbread.
Put corn on top of this
Add whatever cheese is in the refrigerator
Microwave, stir, microwave, stir.
Serve

It helps if you have a beautiful hand-thrown pot from a known potter
And good taste in cheese.
Can be served warm or cold; good either way.



Coming next month: Jasmine’s Mojito

The San Antonio Herb Society does not advise, recommend or prescribe herbs for medicinal use; Information is provided as an educational service and the San Antonio Herb Society cannot be held liable for its content. Please consult a health care provider before pursuing any herbal treatments.

AUGUST TO DO LIST

GARDEN

- Garden in the morning or in the evening when it is cool. Drink plenty of fluids and wear a hat. Gardening should be fun and not a threat to your health.
- **MULCH! MULCH! MULCH!** Prepare for fall garden by accumulating a stockpile of mulch.
- Use the intense heat and sunny days to solarize the veg. garden by applying clear (black plastic will only heat the top couple of inches of soil) plastic over tilled soil.

Add compost to the vegetable gardens before planting tomatoes, peppers, okra and southern peas this month. Spread 2 inches of compost and till to a depth of 6 to 8 inches.

3rd WEEK: START YOUR NEW BEDS NOW!

You can do a simple soil test to see if your soil is alkaline or acid. Place a pinch of garden soil into a bottle or glass of vinegar. If the vinegar starts to bubble, your soil is alkaline. If it doesn't bubble, then it is acid. With the exception of east Texas and a few other locations, Texas soils are generally alkaline.

Continue to protect young vegetable transplants from scorching afternoon sun.

TOMATOES

The best ***tomato plants to grow here are Sunmaster, Tomato 444 (Healthy Surprise), Celebrity, Amelia and Merced ; also try Solar Fire, Sunpride, Top Gun and Surefire. Buy the tallest, lankiest plants you can find and bury in 1-gallon containers all the way up to the first set of leaves (if these leaves are withering, take off and plant at next set of leaves). Roots will form all along the buried stem and produce a good root mass. When established, then remove and plant.

A good tomato for containers is Patio. For Patio tomatoes, buy the shortest plants.

Tomatoes planted in the first weeks of August may not have grown much with excessive heat. Mulch the plants and keep them watered so the roots will be established and plants can grow when temperatures fall in September. With rains and cooler weather, the fall vegetable should be starting shortly.



You might want to provide some shade to tomatoes planted now. Covering the upper half of tomato cages with *Grow-Web* or other shade fabrics, can help the tomatoes survive a hot August.

Tomato, eggplant and pepper plants can be transplanted into the fall garden now, but the tender plants will need protection from scorching sunlight and pests.

Plant beans, lima beans, cucumbers, sweet corn and black-eyed peas for the fall harvest

***We would like your opinion on this. We are talking about fall tomatoes. Which ones have produced for you in this last year?

In Our Herb Garden: Perennial plants should be cut back during the stress of the hot days. Allowing leggy, old growth to remain is doing a disservice to them, as this old growth uses up moisture. If the plant is

showing new growth at its base, the plant should be cut back to that point. Mints, as an example, should be cut back to only several inches in height. The plants (all) should be mulched to conserve moisture.

Seed frost tolerant herb perennials indoors for later transplanting. * Start indoor cuttings of perennial herb to promote fall plantings. Or use layering outdoors to create new plants * Use mornings to prepare garden soil for fall herb garden by adding and spading in manure, peat moss, compost, coarse sand, or a combination of these * Preserve your herbs by drying them in the air, refrigerator, or microwave, freeze in ice cube trays or as an oil paste; make herb flavored vinegars, jellies, butters, oils, honeys, pickles, relishes or mustards. - *HERBS: A Resource Guide for San Antonio*

Don't let your fall garden transplants wilt; keep them watered and mulched to establish vigorous root systems.

Endure August heat and consider these plants for colorful fall: Marigolds (Discovery Gold & Discovery Yellow); Zinnias; Celosias (Cockscombs); Joseph's Coat; Mexican Bush sage (Salvia leucantha); Fall aster (Blue); Chrysanthemums (garden-type); Spider lilies (reds); Belladonna lilies; Fall crocus (Sternbergia lutea); Sweet autumn clematis; Coral vine or Queen's wreath.



Prune autumn sage to encourage a fall bloom.

Develop a landscape plan now so you can take advantage of autumn planting weather.

ROSES

Feed roses lightly also according to rainfall (water before and after feeding)



Anything that can be done to reduce stress will build a better bush and provide the basis for the best flowers of the year in October.

Watering every day is advisable and water-washing 2 or 3 times a week around 7:00 pm (just as the sun is going down, but enough time to allow leaves to dry) can be used to supplement the water needs and provide mite protection. Whatever your schedule permits, the roses will respond to just about any extra water you can give them (remember to mulch them). Flowers will be small during this period, but with frequent small amounts of additional organics (fish meal, kelp, blood meal) and additional chemical fertilizers (cut normal amounts at least in half, but keep up the watering), the bushes should continue to maintain or even grow bigger and occasional basal breaks may appear. Mid to late August is the ideal time to apply the organics for the fall bloom cycle.

The work outside during these dog days can be hazardous, but it doesn't have to be done all in one day. Stretch it out, but most important take care of yourself!

FLOWERS

Order wildflower seeds for planting this month or next. Plant heat-loving plants such as lantana, bougainvillea, allamanda, hibiscus, mandevilla, copper plant, zinnia, portulaca and salvia. Start sowing flowering winter annuals, such as Alyssum, Calendula, Larkspur, Poppy and Stock. Include Marigolds and shasta daisy transplants in the landscape for bright blooms through October. Clean up iris beds and thin out clumps if crowded (showing small, poor blooms). They can be transplanted and divided from now until October. For best selection,, order bulbs from catalogs now.

BIRDS AND BUTTERFLIES Hummingbirds are everywhere. Attract them to your yard with a sugar-water feeder. Keep birdbaths full, and make sure the water is clean. (Most birds prefer water in a birdbath to be no more than 2 1/2 inches deep) **Third week** Migrating ruby-throat and rufous hummingbirds have begun to arrive in San Antonio. Keep feeders clean and full of sugar water (3 parts water to 1 parts sugar instead of the usual 4 to 1 ratio). Keep a shallow bowl with rocks and water for the butterflies.

Have you noticed an abundance of owls this year? We wonder if this is a product of the drought.

WEEDS AND PESTS 1) Spider Mites On roses- They are here, you better believe it. Check the bottom side of your rose foliage for fine, white webbing while the topside and edges of the leaves will show a rusty coloration. If you have mites, either spray with *Greenlight* mite spray (2 tsp. per gal. of spray) or water wash the bottom side of the foliage for 9 days at 3 day intervals. 2) Thrips- If you want to keep blooms clean; just mist the buds and flowers. Thrips will migrate from pastures, fields or other host plants in the area like honeysuckle, oleanders, magnolias, etc. Use Orthene at 2 tsp. (powder), or 2 Tbsp. (liquid) per gallon of mix. * Visit the San Antonio Rose Society's web site @ www.sarosesociety.org.

Consider replacing areas of your lawn with low-water use plantings. See SAWS website for suggestion

Now is a good time to choose crape myrtles for your landscape. They are blooming, so you can be certain of the color of the blooms. This is a good time to plant windmill palm, Mexican fan palm and sabal palm in the landscape. * If we are still locked in a dry spell withhold transplanting for a week or two.

Trim leggy petunias and impatiens to encourage new blooms.

Trim cherry sage (*Salvia greggii*) and mealy blue sage (*Salvia farinacea*) for more blooms. Cut spent blooms and a few inches of stems.

Caladiums need plenty of water during drought-like conditions to remain active and lush until fall. Also apply 1/3 to 1/2 lbs. of a 21-0-0 fertilizer per sq. ft. of caladium bed. Water in thoroughly.

Once your bougainvillea is root bound, fertilize with hibiscus food every 4 weeks or use a soluble fertilizer in your water can every week for maximum bloom.

Even if you see Pansies for sale, please resist; they should not be planted until mid-October.

Bougainvilleas are spectacular patio plants. Place in full sun, water only when the soil dries, feed every 2 weeks, let them get rootbound and prune the tips to encourage blooms.

4th WEEK:

Feeding Roses now for show stopping fall blooms: 1) Organic Boost - In late August give your roses a mix of equal parts of fishmeal, cottonseed meal, and alfalfa meal. To this mixture add blood meal. Divide by 1/4 the total of the first three ingredients. For example, if you used 10 lbs. of the first three, then you would add 7 1/2 lbs. of blood meal to complete the mix. Give each bush at least two cups of this mix. For minis, give about 1/2 cup per plant. Water in. 2) Liquid Feed - A feed such as 20-20-20 can be applied every two weeks through September into mid-October. Using a 32 gal. garbage can, mix two cups of 20-20-20, one cup fish emulsion and one cup of chelated iron (Sprint). Give each bush one gallon of this mix while miniatures need only about one quart. 3) Dry feed - If you prefer to dry feed with a granular dry fertilizer of your choice, give each bush one cup. Miniatures should get only 1/2 cup per plant.

Cooler temperatures - in the low 90's, as opposed to over 100 - will prompt blooms on hibiscus, lantana, mandevilla, allamanda, bougainvillea and other warm-weather plants. Don't forget to fertilize.

It's time to apply pre-emergent herbicides to control winter weeds. Read the label closely to match your

Herb Society Board

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Robin Maymar
robinmaymar@gmail.com

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Our website: <https://sanantonioherbs.org>

Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 by president Robin Maymar. Clouds gathered and the air temperature dropped, there were storms in parts of the city. Some members came late because of the weather.

Robin welcomed members and renewing members. She thanked Robert Smith for helping set up cameras with Milan. She thank everyone for bringing wonderful food.



There was no tea because both she and Sandra forgot to ask at the last meeting. It was noted that an e-mail had gone out to all members and people on the Yerba Buena mailing list asking for help with this task. It seemed odd that there were not any volunteers out of about 200 people contacted. Then it was realized that if you have too many names in an e-mail it gets stuck in the system and nobody is contacted. This will be remedied.

Robin also asked for help in the October meeting because Sandra will be traveling. The tea boxes (bulky but fairly light) can be transferred at the September meeting.

Because of the topic for August it was suggested we have a “Get Out of the Kitchen Salad”. Everyone bring pot luck, something to go in a salad, and we can construct what we like. Herb Society will supply lettuce/spinach base, and cold chicken. There were no objections.

There are no upcoming events until Herb Market in October but would like to get together to work on items/ideas for sale at that market. We may have a back to school event we can attend. Does anyone know of upcoming event?

If members wish to see a treasurer’s report, one is available at meetings.

In December the Garden Center will be closed because of the LightScape at the botanical Gardens usurping all the parking lots. Would we like to have a Banquet in November? January? Or Not at all until spring? There were no responses.

Weed and Gloat for this month is Monday July 25 We will meet at 8 a.m. because it gets too hot later. We have a new coordinator: Jasmine Torrez. She came to meet us, stayed to weed for a whole hot morning. We are so glad she has come to the Botanical Garden

Next meeting: August 11 Topic: Microgreens with Jeremiah Slavitt. Microgreens will be available for sale at the meeting. Most are around \$5

Our speaker was Betty Anderson. She is a certified Naturalist. She is here to tell us about bees and specifically the Mason Bee



NOTES : Betty Anderson and the Bees

Can we sell you on the idea of becoming friends with Mason Bees?

Home owners associations will not allow some neighborhoods to keep bee hives but none of them have regulations against Bee Boxes. There are 20,000 native species of bees in the world. Four thousand are native to north America and 1000 are native to Texas. Mason bees make up 129 of those species in Texas.

Bees have co-evolved with native plants. Which means that if native plants are removed, that affects the bees. And if bees die off or are removed, this affects the native plants. A gentle balance there. Betty gave the example of coffee co-evolving with the bees that pollinate the coffee plants. The roots have caffeine in them, that prevents diseases from the soil affecting the plant. It also has caffeine in the leaves, which acts as a preventive from insects eating the leaves. However, the blossoms have caffeine in the nectar and it turns out that specific bees are strongly attracted to this caffeine and prefer it over all other flower nectars. Bingo, co-evolution at work.



Mason bees are also home bodies. They seldom travel further than 300 feet away from their place of emergence. Their life spans are also very short. So, what happens close to the bee box stays close to the bee box. When Betty put up her first bee houses, she did not have anyone put eggs in it for a number of years. This makes sense; there may not have been any mason bees close by to inhabit the box.

The other selling point is that mason bees are busy bees. Way more productive than a honeybee in comparison. They are estimated at collecting 150% more pollen than honeybees. True, they may not produce honey, but the trade-off is that they very, very seldom sting because they do not have a hive to defend. And their sting does not trigger an allergic reaction. She called her illustration (above) the Cheeto Bee, because it was so covered with pollen it resembled a Cheeto.

Attract mason bees with flowers blue, purple, yellow white. NO RED because red looks black to them. We wonder if that avoidance was also a protective evolutionary change....

After the eggs are laid and sealed off, mason bees spend the rest of their lives inside their nesting chambers - eating, growing, spinning cocoons, developing into adults, and eventually hibernating as fully formed adults until the temperatures are warm enough to emerge in the spring.

Mason Bees are busy earlier than other bees. Once-daily temps warm to around 55°F/13°C, mason bees begin to emerge as fully formed adults. They spend the next several weeks mating, building nests, collecting food for their offspring, and laying eggs. Typically, mason bees have one generation, or brood, per year. Males always emerge first - about two to four days before the first female.



When the temperature in the spring rises to 55 degrees for about three days in a row, the bees begin to emerge. The female has carefully laid female eggs in the tubes first, then male eggs. As the males hatch they then dig a hole through the mud plug at the end of the straw, emerge and fly away looking for flowers and nectar. It is important that flowers be around in your yard at the time for them to visit. Later, the females emerge

also looking for pollen, nectar and a mate. Once mated, the males die. They may only last 30 days. The females by then have to have found the bee box, begin to lay eggs, gather nectar to make a food pellet called bee bread for the larva, then seal off the chamber to lay more eggs. They may only be active four to six weeks in the year.

All sorts of tragic and drastic things can happen to the larvae. We leave it to your creative imagination and the concepts of mites, predators, impostors and all varieties of evil which we shall not approach in this brief

history. There is a lot of literature on this subject, if you wish to know

Betty traveled on from there to show us how to build the bee boxes. These bees are very exacting creatures who appreciate a straw, made of paper exactly six inches long. Now, this makes sense when you think about honeybees who make little hexagonal wax cells for their hone. Each cell is exactly the same size. Now, how do they know what the exact size is? Do they have some sort of rule-of-thumb where they use a foot to measure the distance? Or with Mason Bees, maybe it is so many body-lengths? Anyway, six inches, research shows, is the ideal length for our bee box. The quart half-and-half waxed boxes from the grocery make a good case for the straws. A metal can the size of a 28 ounce Bush's Baked Beans can is the ideal length also. Cut off ends of the straws can, apparently, also be used.

The straws can just be put in the box, or they can be secured with light weight hot wax or other materials that will keep the straws in place.

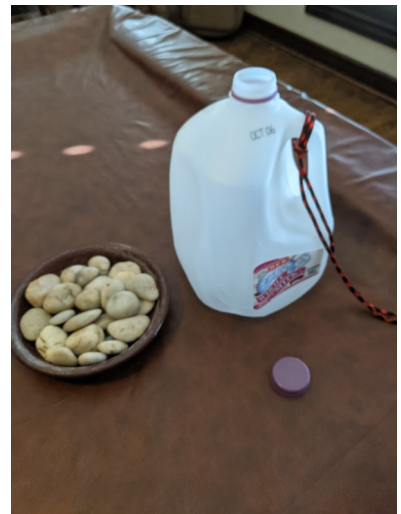


Placement of the box is also crucial Mason bees do not want to be disturbed in their egg-laying process. Vibrations from wind are very disturbing, as are vibrations from boards the houses are placed on. So, the surface needs to be very stable, facing south and out of the wind. Photos show bee houses with the opening perpendicular to the surface they are attached to. For show, gardeners have made bee houses with complex drilled holes and straws of different sizes and different materials in beautiful patterns. This is more for decorative effect, as Mason bees, dull little souls, like a very hum drum system of paper straws, all the same, thank you very much. Place the bee box about four feet off the ground for best effect.

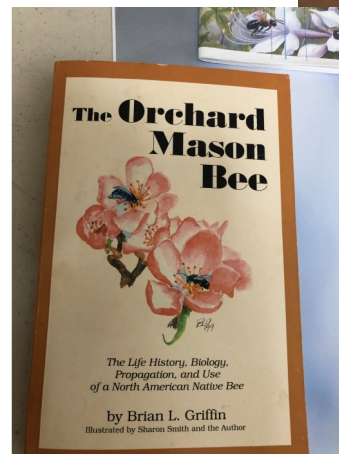
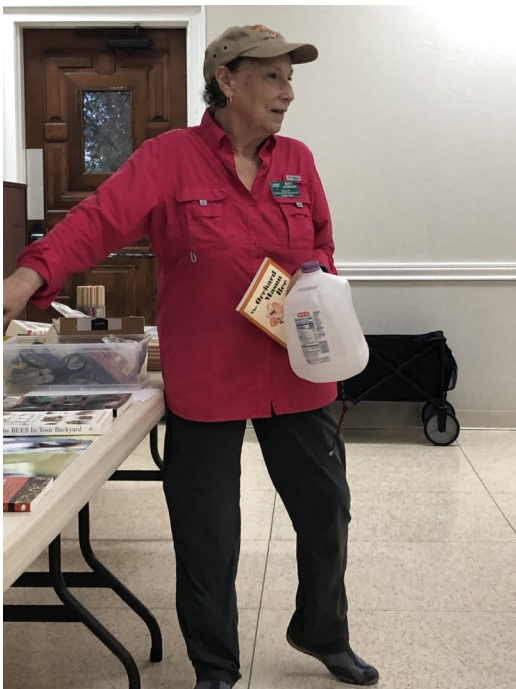
Another necessary element is open soil of some kind the bees can make mud out of. They are named mason bees because they actually use the mud to wall off each part after the egg has been laid. Condensate from an air conditioner is controversial for the mud, as it can be contaminated with bad bacteria which will affect the larvae. If there is a spot by the garden or in the yard where water can form mud, apparently a large area is idea, this should be left for the masons.

Another necessary element is open soil of some kind the bees can make mud out of. They are named mason bees because they actually use the mud to wall off

Bees also need water to drink. A bowl of rocks with some water gives them a landing place and access. Or a jug can be suspended from a limb. A small hole where water drips can make both a watering spot and develop mud below.



With normal weather patterns the Mason' emerge in March.



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