



NEWSLETTER OF THE SAN ANTONIO HERB SOCIETY  
 JULY 2023

SPEAKER CYNTHIA BROWN

COOKS WITH GINGER

Ready for a taste treat? Cynthia Brown will join us Thursday evening July 13 with a variety of dishes featuring ginger. As we continue to celebrate Ginger, the Herb of the Year, members will also be bringing not only dishes with ginger featured, but also their recipes. At 6:30 when we have our social time, make a note of the dish you like. They will be featured in the August Yerba Buena.



Cynthia has a lot of experience both gardening and cooking. She was a member of the Houston Herb Society, is a Master Gardener and a member of the Native Plant Society of Boerne. She loves international cooking as well as cultivating a variety of gingers.

When she lived in Houston she grew many kinds of ginger. We are looking forward to her presentation on cooking with ginger. Be sure to bring your recipe with your dish. The editor would appreciate it if you also emailed your recipe to [robinmaymar@gmail.com](mailto:robinmaymar@gmail.com).

**SAN ANTONIO  
 HERB SOCIETY**  
 Mark your calendar for  
 Thursday  
 July 13  
 3310 N. New Braunfels  
 San Antonio, 79209

Social at 6:00 Members N– Z bring refreshments,  
 ginger related if possible  
 Meeting at 7

Meetings are free and open to the public.  
[sanantonioperbs.org](http://sanantonioperbs.org)

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## BE RESOURCEFUL

The Festival of Flowers was a very successful event. We have never sold as many Ollas as we did that day. We ran out of them before the event ended!

So, this month and next we do not have any fund-raising events to attend. We will turn our attention toward building up some inventory for sales that begin in the fall.

We had two great advantages at the last sale. First, our inventory was unique and made by us. No imports from China, no mass produced items, each one useful not very expensive. Second, we have a wonderful group of people that meet together, and visiting our group is open to the public. We had such a happy time at the Festival and want to continue that great feeling.

We have a variety of items both old and new to prepare. Simplest, are the sachets we make. We either use lightweight, found fabric or estate sale hankies to make the sachets. We have created both lavender and rose ones. We especially like giving them to students returning to school. My granddaughter said that every time she opened her school locker she knew I was thinking of her because, even on the last day, the locker still smelled of lavender.

Second, we have a HUGE amount of corks from wine bottles (see p. 8). We have devised a variety of items we can make with these, but really need to test market them to see which are most popular. We have done some test items and need to have in-put from the artists in our group to determine which ones to go forward with.

Third, we have Ollas themselves. They either need to be sealed at the bottom or glued together or caulked or painted. There are sets of each, as we have a very slow production line But there is plenty for everyone to do.

That leaves pinecones. We don't have quite as many as the corks, but enough to make some cute items. And Lavender Spritzers to make. And herbal salts to construct. These items can wait until we closer to our first big sale. Finally, clay is available to make bird stations for the garden, but that will be distant future. We will have lots of products to sell.

We usually have fun getting together to do all these projects. I am putting on the calendar for July three dates.

Saturday July 15 3-6 in the afternoon (my air conditioning will be on for all three meetings)

Friday July 21 from 10- 12, bring snack or lunch for after

Monday July 24 10-12, with lunch

Since the Ollas take a number of sessions, we can start with them. Will have sachets to make and the corks. Hands will be busy at all meetings. We will have sign-up sheets at the next general meeting, July 13.

## FESTIVAL OF FLOWERS AND LAVENDER FESTIVAL IN BLANCO

We enjoy listening to Dawn the Minimal Mom on YouTube. She thinks that when your house is cluttered that you need to de-clutter ‘fantasy projects’, things that you purchased at one time with the intention of doing the project when you have time. Now that I have retired and have decluttered, I find that I do have lots of time to do those fantasy projects. What a delight for my retirement, time to garden and to attend big information events like Festival of Flowers.

I keep a large desk blotter calendar on the wall in the kitchen and I put upcoming events there. Festival of Flowers got put there as a last-minute entry, it had limped along for a few years because of Covid. The return this last month was spectacular. There must be a pent-up need for gardeners. They came out in droves.

Part of the joy of this event, for a small group like ours, is that we can set up our table the day before. It is indoors and very air conditioned. This takes a lot of pressure off the chairperson who is directing the sale. Cindy and I set up Friday. Saturday, Annette carpooled with me and Cindy met us. Then Patsy arrived. Later Loretta joined us then Marsha.

We felt very odd because the whole row of sales tables were each selling just one item. Our table was overflowing with all sorts of products: lavender spritzers, lavender sugar, herbs in packets, garlic salt in jars and packets, ollas, cookbooks and free brochures. We had very few moments the whole 9 to 4 where we were able to say “Hi” to each other. We met so many cheerful gardeners and invited every one of them to our next meeting.

And to our delight, many of them joined us for the next meeting, on Lavender.

So, mark your calendar for the Festival of Flowers on NEXT year’s calendar. We’ll do our best to remind you the month before. Even the anticipation is fun.

Speaking of Fun- our jaunt to the Lavender Festival in Blanco was a jolly good time, in spite of the heat.

Our new friend, Betsy, offered to drive. She has a shiny new car and we luxuriated in it all the way to Blanco, Found a handicapped parking place unbelievably close to the event and shopped to our hearts content. We cruised the market area around the court house, then had lunch at The Redbud Café. They were ready for a crowd, had simplified the menu and had crazy fast service and good food.

Then we drove to the Hill Country Lavender Farm for more shopping and buying of lavender. The owner, Tasha Brieger Corradini, gave a brief talk (see P. 4 Lavender) She was very knowledgeable about new varieties coming on board. The heat and humidity of our area makes it hard to grow lavender. The new varieties are especially adapted for our weather, both hot and cold.

Across the street was another sale we stopped in to enjoy- a huge barn with both cut flowers and plants.

Then on to a hidden treasure. To get to Blanco you go up 281. There is a section of this road where the highway is divided and you do not see the southbound cars at all. Well, the southbound side has an incredible garden center hidden a little off the road : Spring Creek Gardens Thanks to Betsy who asked people a lot of questions, we sought this place out.

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.

## LAVENDER

Notes on Lavender gathered from the meeting in June, posted information from lavender farms, and from talk given at Lavender Farms during the festival in Blanco.

**Uses of Lavender** The leaves, stems, buds and flowers of lavender all contain essential oils and all are valuable for different purposes. The parts can be used fresh, dried or distilled. With the essential oil extracted.



The flowers are more esthetically pleasing than the stems, but if you are stitching sachets where the aromatic stuffing would be hidden to the observer, you can make a meager crop go further by using the finely chopped bits of stem and leaf along with the flowers.

**Medicinal** The aroma of lavender is said to have soothing properties that will relieve stress and help you sleep. Five to ten drops in a warm bath before sleep is soothing to the nerves. And several drops of essential oil on the temples may alleviate or cure headache. The oil is absorbed by the skin. The oil may be effective because some chemical components help slow nerve impulses reducing nervousness and excitability and thus inducing sleep. Try making a mask filled with lavender buds to place over the eyes when drifting off to sleep or just for relaxing purposes. Use five drops to rinse hair in tub Use directly from garden, tie in bag to float in tub or under tap.

**Growing Lavender** Lavender needs full sun. Lavenders can stand a brief summer drought if they are established but should be watered if the drought is prolonged. Root rot is one of the few hazards of growing lavender. They won't tolerate standing in wet soil and it's helpful to plant them in raised beds, on a slope or in a rock garden. In an herb garden bordered by bricks, the beds are often raised at least 6 inches to achieve better drainage.



Lavenders are usually listed as hardy or tender. These categories refer to the ability of a plant to withstand frost. Our zone is 8b and 9a If you want a perennial, select a plant that is hardy in our area. If you want a tender one or you are north of the hardiness zone, treat the plant like an annual by planting directly in the garden and saying good-bye at the end of the season, or plant it in a container that you overwinter indoors and set out again the next summer

Lavender is considered to be moderately drought tolerant and is one of the plants recommended for xeriscaping. Lavenders can take dry heat but they do not do well in high humidity. The

Prune in spring each year, after danger of hard frost, shaping the plant and lopping off about one-third of the top and sides. This process will encourage new growth and prevent the growth of woody and gnarled. Stems that make a five-year-old plant look ancient.

**Flowers** Not every spike on a plant ripens at the same time. Harvesting by hand gives us the advantage of getting our lavender at the peak of its time. Cut when the spike has achieved full color and first bud is starting to open; The flower will turn brown when it dries, so the spike will have better color if cut in bud stage. Cut spikes for drying when all the dew is off the flowers, late afternoon is a good time for lavender. Cut down to the first leaf for culinary uses.

Bunch the stems in small handfuls, bind with rubber bands and hang with paperclips in a warm, dark, dry spot. As with any dried flowers, the warmer, darker, and drier the atmosphere the faster the bunch will dry and the better the color and fragrance will be preserved. The bunch will dry in about a week or two,

depending on the humidity

Test for dryness by crushing a flowers in your fingers. If it feels soft or mushy, keep drying. They should crumble when truly dry. When fully dried, pack away in a cardboard box and seal until you are ready to use your harvest in craft designs. The darkness will help keep the color from fading.

For culinary lavender, ~~seal in a plastic bag to keep dust off.~~ Store in glass containers, in a dark cool place. Make sure lavender is fully dry.

### *Types of lavender to grow here in South Texas*

**Phenomenal** is a patented lavender from PA. It was grown to be adaptable to this area Originally from Provence With heavy rain one season, the Provence lavender died, but the Phenomenal came through Will not grow in pots. **Sensational** is an even newer variety. Both are French varietal patented varieties. Sensational handles both moisture and humidity. Less fickle, grows large, used for all essential oils, the growers are very happy with them. Can grow in pots.

**Sweet and Goodwin Creek-** are tender, don't do well in field. Great for landscape, large and pretty. Cover them if it is going to freeze. Need no chill hours. Only for pretty not for oil or fragrance, just pretty.

**English** can grow in pots. **Bigtime Blue** and **Munstead** are smaller, size of basketball, go in a pots ok. Can cook with them but because they have high oil content, use less otherwise tastes like soap. Culinary is usually a French variety. Hill Country Lavender purchases their culinary dried lavender from Organic Lavender supplier here in Blanco Our choice in town is Central Market.

Do not amend the soil Water in the evening. Use rainwater if possible.

This is the information on the Farm.

## HILL COUNTRY LAVENDER FARM'S RECIPE

FREE TO VISIT / NO RESERVATION NEEDED

OPEN WEEKLY: **THURSDAY - SATURDAY 10 AM - 4 PM**

AT 8241 FARM TO MARKET 165, BLANCO, TX 78606(please enter our address on your cars GPS not our business name. By entering the name it is sending you to our old location. We are working to get this fixed.)

## CHAMPAGNE LAVENDER & CRANBERRY GIN FIZZ

SEE PAGE 13

## WEED AND GLOAT By Becky Barnes

It was a hot June summer morning at the SA Botanical Gardens but the hummingbirds were playing in the sprinklers as the first members arrived at 8 AM. When I arrived 30 minutes later it was a humid 79 degrees and there were four early birds hard at work pulling weeds and tending to the herbs in the section the SA herb society keeps. The June “Weed and Gloat” was off to a good start, even though it was a hot and sweaty one!

The lemongrass and parsley were struggling in the oppressive summer heat but we were keeping hydrated and taking breaks as need be to greet the happy gardeners trailing in: Becky (me! =), Gloria, Marsha, Robin,, Patsy, Esther, Cindy, Basil and Mary Jo. We welcomed newcomer, Joy. Some kept cool by sitting and chatting in the shade in the benches under the tree while others were tending to weeds or cutting back herbs that have been very successful. The Angelica that was thriving will die in the heat and come back in October so the dead debris was cleaned up. This wild herb, also known as a wild version of celery, can be grown as a flavoring agent or for it's medicinal properties. For those interested the Latin name is '*radix angelicae daheria*' and the Chinese name is *bai zhi*.

The ginger was doing very well, along with the fennel and bronze fennel which were both flowering. Even though these had grown tall they were left alone to keep flowering and attract beautiful butterflies. The sage had grown very big so it needed to be cut back, along with the bee balm. Esther filled us in on the fact that it's botanical name is *Monarda*. You could put a cutting of this plant in a container or garden bed to see if it might grow. Her positive attitude was to say- you never know if at least one might take and if not, oh well, it becomes compost which benefits the garden. Bee balm is a Native American plant that has beautiful scarlet flowers that bloom in the summertime and attract hummingbirds, butterflies and of course bees. This perennial pollinator is a great addition to any garden.

Some other herbs thriving in this Texas heat are Oregano, pot marjoram and lemon balm. There was lemon balm galore, so it was cut back to make room for its neighbors. It is a wonderful natural mosquito repellent and can be used in cooking as well as to make a delightful calming tea. It can be enjoyed hot or cold and is made by putting cuttings in a glass jar along with a scoop of honey (if desired) and pouring boiling water on top. After it sits for at least 20 minutes pour it over ice and add a fresh sprig of lemon balm and squeeze of lemon. It is delightful! The last herb doing very well in the garden was thyme, which we were able to cut back. If you harvest thyme, hang the thyme to dry. Patsy says it can be enjoyed in soup or several delicious recipes. After looking back at all of our progress in weeding that morning, we noticed 2 large bare spots that needed filling.

Robin said she would speak with the Botanical Gardens workers to figure out what can be put in those bare spots next.



By 10:00 all the work was done!! Everyone had been so helpful in lending a friendly voice of encouragement or giving helpful hints. Marsha had brought some cold golden cherry tomatoes from her garden that were very delicious and flavorful! She even brought baggies to share them as she has an abundance of them in her garden. She also shared some big juicy red tomatoes perfect for a sandwich (which I enjoyed later!). After chatting a bit we all gathered in front of the benches for a group picture and then said farewell to Basil and Mary Jo and our friends. We decided some refreshments and air conditioning sounded divine so we headed over to WD Deli on Broadway.

We sat at a large table and enjoyed coffee, tea, lots of water and some yummy food. We chatted and discussed several things along with history, politics, religion, reading and current culture. Somehow though, the subject almost always came back to gardening as it is the common joy that brings us all together. It was a delightful morning spent among friends and fellow gardeners. This is such an important thing to do in today's world; not only stop and smell the flowers (or herbs) but also do a little weeding and gloating every once in a while. It nourishes the body and soul.

## **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, July 31

We meet as early as 7:30 A.M. because of  
the heat. Come when you can. We stop  
about 10

Contact [robinmaymar@gmail.com](mailto:robinmaymar@gmail.com) for  
simple safety measures and directions for  
parking. See you then.

## **Herb Society Board**

### **President**

Robin Maymar

[robinmaymar@gmail.com](mailto:robinmaymar@gmail.com)

**1st Vice-President (Programs)** **Currently**  
**supplied by membership at large.**

**Treasurer Milan Maymar**

**Secretary Volunteer at meeting**

**Membership Cindy Moore pro tem**

**Publicity Patsy Nicholas and others**

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

## **TED'S TALK ON WATER**

Ted Ritchie spoke about watering at our May meeting. Notes had been misplaced, but here they are. Ted has a way of distilling thoughts down to very clear, simple ideas. So we will expand a little on a few he told us.

Know your garden. Be a keen observer of all that is in your garden. Visit it every day. Plants will tell you if they are over watered or underwatered. Over water leads to decay, fungus infections, damp soil or mud. Underwater has leaves curling up, turning yellow, plants wilting. If either occur, adjust time and amount. Dig hole a hole in your garden bed. Fill it with water to see how long it takes to drain. This gives you a sense of how absorbent the soil is. Clay may take an hour to drain, good humus, a few minutes. Sandy soil, almost immediately.

Ted suggests that you water once, then water other parts, then come back and water again. We add, when the soil looks very wet and the water begins to form a puddle, there is sufficient water at the top of the bed. You can tell how saturated the soil is by how fast the water is being absorbed when you take the hose away. Once saturated, wait a while, then return to water a second time. This lets the water seep deeply into the bed. Plants straight from out of a nursery are well-watered and fed. Ted's method of watering a new plant or potted plant is to use a 5-gallon bucket of water. Put pot and plant into water until it stops bubbling, then remove and allow to drain.

We had a question and answer time. Here are some of the notes. Ted's wife was a Latin Scholar, so she is a great help with the Latin names of all the plants. Speaking of Blackberries, Brazos are the thorny ones: Nachez are thornless The Uvalde Ag Station is doing a lot of vegetable trials, focusing on flavor rather than just size of quantity. Article continues on p 12





# Meeting Minutes

## MEETING MINUTES JUNE 8 2023

The meeting was called to order by president Robin Maymar at 7 p.m. She thanked everyone for coming and welcomed many guests who had heard about us at the Festival of Flowers. We welcomed new member Joy Salmon

Cindy Moore and Sandra Woodall decorated the table with the theme of Lavender. There was lavender chicken as a main dish and some lavender cookies, as well as lemon grass tea and many other wonderful dishes.

Bay leaves were available for members to take home and make tea or use in Italian dishes.

Milan gave the treasurer's report, telling us that there was money in our bank account.

The editor apologized for not having included the minutes of the last meeting in the Newsletter. As soon as they are located they will be included in the following Yerba Buena (p 12)

There was an appeal from the editor who needs help navigating the WordPress program that helps us publish our newsletter. The WordPress people have updated their program, leaving the editor befuddled and not able to navigate. Hence, the "New" newsletter was erroneously published with last month's edition. The error was corrected, but witnesses don't know how.

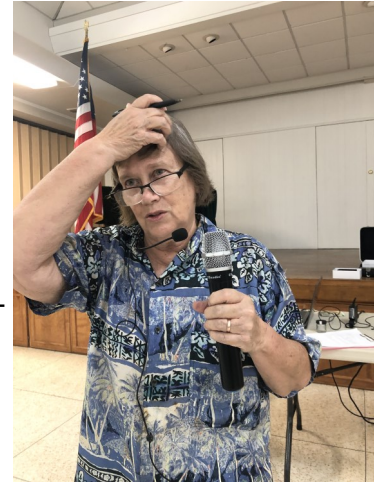
The president suggested that we could probably move our storage unit to a less costly space, but we would need some help and logistics to get things moved. She asked, half-heartedly, for volunteers.

Sandra Woodall presented the three tools that are used regularly at the Herb Garden. This presentation was promised for the last meeting, but the tools finally made it to this meeting: Grandpa's Weeder, Ergonomic spade and hardware window putty tool.

The evening presentation was given by president, Robin Maymar on the topic of Lavender. Her two goals were to encourage members to go to the lavender festival in Blanco, and to make an outline for a booklet to publish with the most up-to-date information for gardeners here in the South Texas area.

Note from the presentation: Urban Heat Index is what Greenlinks Analytics uses to analyze the heat in the city. For more information see: [San Antonio's Five Most 'Energy Burdened' Neighborhoods](#)

Our next meeting will be held July 13. We will have a presentation on cooking with Ginger, given by Cynthia Brown.



# TO DO IN THE JULY GARDEN

## 2023

Pace yourself this month and next.

**OUTSIDE** At dawn the temperature is pretty consistently 79 degrees. This is the best time to be outside working in the garden.

This is a maintenance month: continue to avoid drought stress, to check and replace mulch layers, and to pinch back blossoms.

Harvest and preserve herbs Enjoy harvesting dill, cilantro, basil and other annuals that go to seed in the heat. Make pesto with basil leaves. Pesto freezes well. Feed basil after harvesting.

Prune, trim and shape plants. Trim back mints to ensure a continuous supply of young, tender leaves. Continue to cut them back throughout the summer (keep them off the ground).

For hot-weather nematode control, plant Mari-Mum marigolds.

Till, compost and prepare fall garden area.

Plant Asters, Firebush, perennial garden Mums, Salvias, Marigolds (spider mites are less problematic in the fall), etc. for fall bloom in sunny sites.

For roses, if we want to implant organics such as fish meal or alfalfa into the soil, the last of July or first part of August is the time to give a tremendous boost to the fall bloom. The alfalfa can be spread on the mulch like fertilizer but fish meal needs different treatment. Holes punched in the ground around the drip-line of the bush provides a means of getting the meal out of reach of the neighbors dog (and away from the neighbor's nose). (4<sup>th</sup> week)

If you can find sturdy American hybrid marigold transplants that are not blooming yet, plant now for a spectacular fall display. (4<sup>th</sup> week)

It is time to plant your vegetable garden (or start in shelter if the temperature is hovering around 100 deg.). Put in a simple drip irrigation system for efficient



watering. Kits are easy to use. A soaker hose is a simple method to install drip irrigation in vegetable gardens and flower beds. But don't turn the faucet on full blast. A quarter turn of the spigot is all you need. (4<sup>th</sup> week)to the right) for shaded areas.



Firebush(left), planted in full sun on a patio, will attract hummingbirds. Use fire spike (above) for shaded areas.

If you need more summer color in your landscape, use periwinkle, moss rose, firebush, lantana and esperanza in sunny spots. Use firespike, coleus, caladiums or impatiens in the shade.

Trim leggy petunias and impatiens to promote new growth and new flowers.

Continue to prune fall-blooming perennials through August.

There is still time to set out another planting of annuals such as marigolds, zinnias and periwinkles.

They will require extra attention for the first few weeks because of the heat, but the plants should reward you with color from late September until November.

Establish a new compost pile to accommodate the upcoming fall leaf accumulation.

**2. Still Outdoors** As the temperature rises, cool off by watering.

a. If dead areas on the lawn pull up like a toupee, or looks moth-eaten, GRUBS probably are the problem. Verify by examining the soil underneath the dead patches. Treat with beneficial nematodes.

b. Don't waste water. Water most plants deeply on the day before they would have wilted. (i.e. keep a sharp eye on those plants) Do not try to cure heat stress by spraying haphazardly during the mid-day. **DO NOT OVERWATER.**

**3. Inside** Go inside as the heat of the day approaches and do 'desk chores'



a. Note on saving seed: ideal storage conditions are 45 Deg. (F) and humidity below 50%. Store freshly harvested seeds in brown paper bags until thoroughly dry. Write name of plant, date harvested on the bag. Try not to store for more than 1 year. Parsley seeds especially should be fresh each sowing season.

b. Perhaps you have thought about it but never done it. Now, in July, between our two gardening seasons, is a great time to have your soil tested. Just think, you won't have to guess anymore about what your soil needs. You can obtain testing information from your county extension office or online at <http://soiltesting.tamu.edu>.

c. Take a critical look at your landscape (from your windows) and note plants that need replacing, overgrown plants that need to be removed and possible activity areas that can be enjoyed by your family. This will give you a head start on planning winter projects.

d. Now is the time to decide if you can carry your spring-planted tomatoes through for a fall crop. Vines that have been ravaged by early blight (a big problem for a lot of gardeners this year) or are under attack by spider mites should probably be removed and new transplants set out in a different part of the garden. Don't worry, those newly planted seedlings will survive just fine. Just be sure to give them plenty of water, some mulch and a little afternoon shade until established. If your spring plants appear healthy, then cut them back some, re-apply mulch and they will be productive until the first frost in the fall.

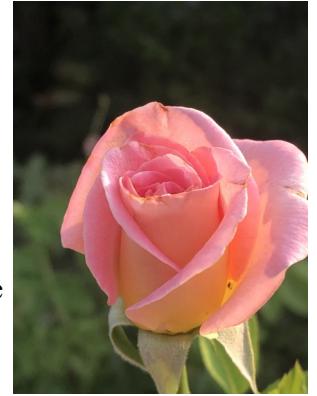
e. Conserve water by buying plants adapted to the area.

f. Begin preparing vegetable garden for fall planting; tomatoes look for Surefire, Heatwave and Merced.

g. The driest time of the year is the best time to paint and reseal wooden outdoor furniture, decks and fences. Also, paint or repaint the tool handles. Herb Society members think bright orange is a good non-loseable color.

h. Select and order spring-flowering bulbs so they will arrive in time for planting. Check with the extension service for proper chilling and planting times.

**ROSES** July and August separate the rose growers from those who just planted some roses. Once one has learned to have good roses in mid-summer in our climate he has become a Rosarian and has opened the door to a much greater enjoyment of one of God's great gifts. The statement that, "Roses always look bad in summer" is not true. Only neglected roses look bad in summer.



Roses will tolerate a bit (but not too much) of benign neglect in summer. For example, the tedious chore of cutting spent blooms can be modified to simply snapping off the dead flowers at the peduncle. The rose bed will look just as good and roses probably will be the better for it. They can use all the leaves possible including those with only three leaflets.

We should not let our roses go too long without water, however. The three-times-a-week routine suggested by some growers is necessary only in very loose sandy soil but a deep watering as the soil begins to dry will be good in any bed. Some varieties, such as FRAGRANT CLOUD and its close relatives are more susceptible to water deprivation than others, and if allowed to get too dry, will defoliate completely.



Another treatment of a heaping tablespoon or two of Epsom salt may stimulate some more much needed basal breaks. We would hope they come sooner rather than later, because breaks after August or September usually are winter damaged too much to be value at pruning time next February.

Mildew should not be a problem until the end of September. The spores of this disease need cool nights to germinate and we are not likely to get night-time temperatures below 80 degrees for quite a while yet. With routine spraying we should not see it.

**BIRDS** Hummingbirds will be bringing their young to sugar-water feeders now. Keep feeders clean, dumping old solution once a week (twice a week if in the sun and the temperatures are in the 90's) into a shallow pan for butterflies (or around plants to stimulate good bacteria growth). A bird bath or other source of water will help birds, bees and other critters survive a drought condition. Turk's cap and shrimp plant are good blooming plants that attract hummingbirds and grow in light shade.

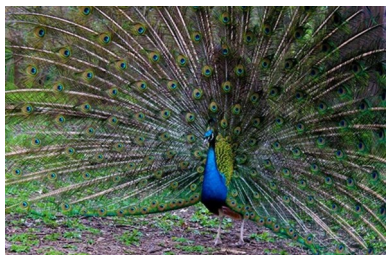
**YARD** Remove spent crape-myrtle flower heads to encourage more blooms, even through September. Maintain mulch over the root system of young trees to increase growth rate by as much as 50% by controlling the moisture content and temperature of the soil, as well as providing necessary organics. Raise mower height in turfgrass to help provide more shade for roots. Remove suckers from the base of fruit trees. They grow from the root system (stock) and are a different variety than the top, called the scion. Suckers will quickly dominate the scion if left uncut. Water apple and pear trees weekly. Check the moisture level of your compost pile. Skim the top of lantana and verbena with a string mower every six weeks to keep the plants blooming consistently.

#### TED'S TALK CONTINUED.

Ted is always on the lookout for culantro a spiny cilantro, also a cool weather plant.

We talked a bit about finding good compost. Here are some suggestions. New Earth Garden Center and plant nursery at I 10 and Foster road; 7800 IH- 10 East 78219 Bring your truck, they deal in quantity. Burnin' Bush Landscape for compost (where the fire was located) in Helotes; 10020 FM-1560, 78254 On the west side, Atlas Organics 8963 Nelson Rd, 78252

Milk and hair can both go into compost heap. Leon Valley is known for its elderberries and grapes. Guinea fowls are best for not tearing up your garden.



## Trouble with Kevin the Peacock

By: Becky Barnes

If you have been to the SA Botanical Gardens recently you may have spotted this beautiful male peacock roaming around. Kevin, the name some herb society members jokingly gave him, has made several appearances during the monthly Weed and Gloat sessions. The task of pulling weeds was brightened when Kevin came strutting around showcasing his magnificent, beautiful feathers. Unfortunately, the peacock will no longer be seen at the SA Botanical Gardens. He was taken away by ACS after the police were called to the gardens one May evening where he had pecked 2 children who were there with several other families to check out the fire-breathing dragon. Authorities say the children may have been tormenting him and several of the guests were crowding around Kevin to take pictures which most likely agitated him as well. They believe the peacock belongs to a nearby neighbor but were unable to get in touch with them. In San Antonio, there are several large ostentations – the name of a group of peacocks – around the city. If you see one, it's best to leave it alone, ACS recommends. The peacocks can survive by foraging on their own so don't need help from humans. Kevin had been spotted in and around the gardens several times this spring spreading his gorgeous feathers which is natural at this time of year since a male peacock spreads its feathers to intimidate predators and to attract a mate. After several unsuccessful attempts with a humane trap, the bird was caught and taken to a wildlife sanctuary. There are rumors that he has since been relocated to a vineyard in the hill country where he can live out his life with a couple of peacocks already there. Hopefully Kevin now can relax and take it easy in the Texas hill country with his bird buddies this summer.

# Culinary Contributions

## CHAMPAGNE LAVENDER & CRANBERRY GIN FIZZ

### Ingredients:

- 1 ounce Gin
- 1/2 ounce lavender & cranberry simple syrup {recipe below}
- 1/2 ounce freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 3-4 ounces Brut Rose Prosecco

### Instructions:

1. In a shaker, add the gin, lavender & cranberry simple syrup, and lemon juice.
2. Add ice and shake vigorously.
3. Strain into a Champagne flute and slowly top with the brut rosé. Garnish with cranberries on a skewer and a sprig of freshly lavender

### Cranberry Simple Syrup

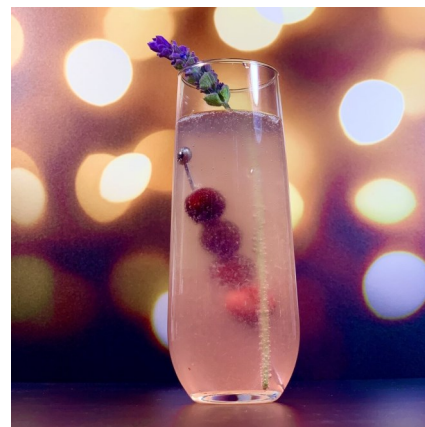
- 1/2 cup cane sugar
- 1/2 cup water
- 4 ounces (1/2 cup) fresh or frozen cranberries
- 1 tablespoon of culinary lavender

### Instructions:

1. In a saucepan, combine the sugar and water.
2. Bring to a boil, add the cranberries, and reduce heat to a slow simmer.
3. Stir until the sugar dissolves and the cranberries just start to pop.
4. Remove from heat and add the lavender
5. Cover and let steep for 20 mins.

Strain off the solids and store in the refrigerator until ready to use

# Two



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