



NEWSLETTER OF THE SAN ANTONIO HERB SOCIETY
 August 10, 2023

Who is the busiest in your garden? Why bees, of course. This month, come to hear about our best little garden helpers. Mr. James Bills will discuss his practice of keeping wild bees versus the European honeybees; and why he has frozen honey from this spring and what he is doing with it now.



He will speak about the advantages of native plants within the ecosystem, climate challenges beekeepers face, along with the impact of monoculture on bees. He is a State Certified Beekeeper and a Master Beekeeper with 12 years of experience. He manages and maintains bees within San Antonio. James is a classroom teacher within the Northeast Independent School District.

Want to know what you can do to preserve the bee population and our ecosystem? Come with your questions to our meeting the Second Thursday of each month. We will have honey-themed snacks for our social time, and an engaging speaker.

**SAN ANTONIO
 HERB SOCIETY**
 Mark your calendar for
 August 10, 2023
 At the Garden Center
 3310 N. New Braunfels
 San Antonio, 79209

Table theme: Seeds
 Members A to M bring refreshments.
 Something with honey?
 Social at 6:30 Meeting at 7

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Vegetable Garden Notes from all over.

Howard Garrett posts on Facebook “A lot of the garden crops are looking scorched and tired now with the summer heat, but in a typical year they would be finishing up production now anyway. With a long growing season in Texas it is typical to have a fall garden with many of the same crops planted last spring. If you grow from seed, there is still time to start new plants in pots for transplant into the garden in late August or early September. Generally healthy fall crops include broccoli, cauliflower, garlic, cabbage, kale, radishes, turnips, carrots and green onions and you can put in many of the herbs as well.”



I'm with you, Howard. Let's start some seeds this week! Becky brought broccoli Waltham 29 seedlings to the meeting last month. We planted the Pac Choy seeds. To our delight, they came up in three days. They did not all survive, but we have a lot more seeds. They seem to be less annoyed by chewing bugs that devour my cabbages, and they cook about the same. They grow way faster than a cabbage but are smaller. Think I will try some of these in a few beds.

PLANTanswers.com has an article *THE BETTER-LATER-THAN-NEVER TOMATO PLANTING SCHEME*

They suggest “Plant large (tomato) transplants by no later than August 15; use heat-setting varieties; expect the first fall cool-down to occur a month after transplanting or around September 15; and this cool-down, especially for night-time temperatures, will cause blooms to set small fruit which will ripen in 50 to 60 days or by mid-to-late October.” If the cool-down does not occur until October, usually the first hard frost will kill plants before tomatoes can be ripened on the vine. They suggest Surefire. Our experience is that the first frost is very brief. If covered carefully, tomatoes just keep going, and the weather warms up again.

Here's how to plant “Regardless of how good the varieties and transplants are, if prior soil preparation is not adequate you will be doomed to failure before you begin. If your garden has been deserted during this long dry period, you must pre-irrigate to insure adequate soil moisture throughout the entire soil profile before you plant the first transplant. This can be accomplished by thoroughly watering (at least one hour) twice – 5 days apart. After the second watering, wait another 5 days. Then dig and or till the area.... (Remove weeds) Apply 19-5-9 slow-release fertilizer per 100 square feet (10 feet by 10 feet) and safely plant your fall garden. Transplants should be watered in thoroughly at planting with a water-soluble fertilizer.

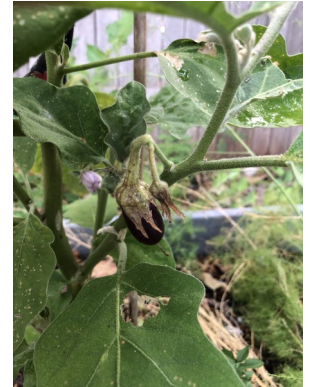
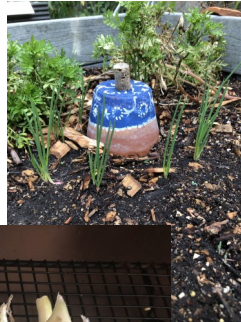
Water-soluble fertilizer should be used EVERY time your vegetables are watered.

They suggest drip irrigation, especially in this time of drought It is also a good idea to put tomato

cages around the fall plants, wrap in spunweb translucent , fabric-like material as an insect barrier.

What else to put in the fall garden? The egg plants seem to be slowed by the heat but are still blooming and forming fruit. Egg plant are so fun to watch growing. Like a big wad of black gum, they emerge from the blossom and expand each day. The cucumber is still flowering and producing fruit, but at a much slower pace.

The bunching onions are coming up when planted. They need water and are heavy feeders, but with shortening days, seem to be thriving. (pictured harvested, full grown, new planted with olla to help water).



The Jewel of Ofir is dropping seeds and new seedlings are coming up.

A sweet potato is still taking over one bed. Undeterred, bunching onions from last year that I missed are now coming up through the potatoes.



And the chard, when watered, seems to be holding up. Peppers, both hot and green are still growing. The hot peppers are producing fruit, but not as large as earlier. The Green peppers are still forming blossoms, but not fruit. Our experience is that they will bear fruit later when it gets cooler.



Culinary Contributions

Mango Thai Noodle Salad, serves 8 from Cynthia Brown

8 oz. rice noodles
2 yellow mangos or 1 globe mango, diced
1 red pepper, thinly sliced
2 c. snow or sugar peas, cut into bite size pieces
2 c. cabbage, thinly sliced
¼ c. each: chopped cilantro, mint, and Thai or sweet basil
¼ c. cashews or peanuts
Sesame Ginger Dressing:
¼ c. cooking oil
3 T. each: sesame oil, rice wine vinegar, soy sauce
2T. Each: Tahini and honey
1T. Minced ginger
2 cloves garlic, minced
½ t. salt



1. Cook 8 oz. noodles according to package directions, usually 2 min. If using vermicelli rice noodles, just pour boiling water over the noodles. Once cooked, drain in a colander then cool them under cold tap water. Set aside to drain completely.
2. In a small bowl, whisk the dressing ingredients.
3. Place the cooked rice noodles and all remaining ingredients in a large salad bowl. Pour dressing over and toss.

Note: this can be prepared ahead and served room temperature or cold.

Ginger Squash Soup from Joy Salmon

4 lbs. winter squash
1 tablespoon oil
2 medium onions, chopped
3 cloves of garlic, minced
1 tablespoon fresh ginger, grated
1 teaspoon ground ginger
½ teaspoon salt to taste
8 cups vegetable broth
Fat free plain yogurt for garnish

Halve, seed, peel and cube squash

Heat large pot, add onion and sprinkle salt in oil. Cook until translucent.

Add garlic, cook for a few minutes more.

Add squash & broth. Bring to a boil. Cover and simmer for 20 minutes

Transfer in batches to a blender. Use a towel over the lid to prevent spills, hot liquids sometimes grows in volume when blended.

Serve topped with dollops of yoghurt.



Triple Ginger Cookies (From Alton Brown, no relation to Cynthia)

Yield: 4 ½ dozen

- 1 ¾ c. plus 2 T. flour
- 1 ½ tsp. baking soda
- 1 Tbs. ground ginger
- ½ tsp. EACH cardamom, cloves, and salt
- 1 c. plus 2 Tbs. brown sugar
- 10 Tbs. softened butter
- 4 Tbs. molasses
- 1 egg
- 2 tsp. grated ginger
- 4 oz. finely chopped candied ginger, about ¾ c.

Procedure for Ginger Snaps

1. Heat oven to 350. Line 2 cookie sheets with parchment.
2. Wisk together dry ingredients (flour, spices, salt) in medium bowl.
3. Cream brown sugar and butter in mixer on low speed until light and fluffy. Add molasses, egg, and fresh ginger and beat medium speed for 1 min. Lower speed to lowest speed and add candied ginger until just combined. Add dry ingredients to the wet and stir until just combined.
4. Drop spoonfuls (about 2 tsp sized) of dough on to cookie sheets about 2 inches apart. Bake on middle rack 10-12 min.
5. Remove from oven and transfer to rack to cool.

These were incredible!



Gingerbread Layer Cake recipe is not included. It is very long and complicated. Copies available to anyone who desires it. Also is available on line at *Cooks Illustrated*. It has three different types of ginger to be incorporated into the recipe. Hardest part: remembering to include all three!

Thought the Ermine Frosting was unique. Not as sweet as traditional frosting. Looked spectacular and set up well when refrigerated.

Tea Punch

Cynthia Brown says “I hate over sweet punches.”

I make a “Tea Punch” that uses either herbal or caffeinated tea, and then mix in some fruit juice (orange, coconut water, passion fruit), slices of citrus, mint, edible flowers, and sometimes soda (unsweetened or sweet).

If I have tender, fresh ginger, I will grate it, squeeze and add juice from it .

Sometimes I will sweeten lightly with honey.

Serve with ice.

Herb Society Board

President

Robin Maymar

robinmaymar@gmail.com

1st Vice-President (Programs) Position vacant

Treasurer Vacant

Secretary Volunteer at meeting

Membership Milan Maymar, protem

Publicity Membership at large.

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

**Watermelon Tomato Salad
with Ginger Lime Dressing**

In a large bowl, add the following:

Cut up small watermelon into bite sized chunks.

Cut up 3 tomatoes into chunks.

Cut an English cucumber into chunks.

Mince or grate a 1 inch piece of fresh, peeled ginger and whisk into 3 tablespoons of lime juice, and 1 tablespoon of minced fresh mint leaves.

Toss gently.

Served chilled



Note on basil: In the picture you can see where we cut off the top four leaves last week. The plant has now doubled the number of leaves. Each time you harvest, it stimulates the plant to put out more leaves.

"As you weed out negativity your garden of possibilities grows."



Weeding is a must in every gardener's life; and while it is not a task I look forward to, I always look forward to the SA Herb Society's Weed and Gloat at the SA Botanical gardens the last Monday of every month. Maybe working on weeding out the negativity is easier with others who are there to lend a helping hand or a seed of knowledge your way? Regardless, I was smiling as I walked up to the Herb Society's garden and saw several ladies working hard in the heat. Robin and Cindy were the early birds to arrive around 7:30AM Monday morning followed by , Patti, Marsha, Patsy (shown working hard in the pic to the left) and me (Becky). After an extremely hot July in SA (a month that saw the 2nd largest stretch of triple digit heat since 1962!!) there were a lot of weeds or negativity to get rid of, so we all went to work with smiles, hats, and gloves on and tools in hand.

While weeding, a good rule of thumb to remember, Patti shared with our group, is if you see something suffering cut back 1/3 of it to help replenish growth. So we went to work trimming back the Jerusalem sage, thyme and fennel since they all looked pretty sad. Although fennel can resemble dill Robin explained to us that since the beautiful seed heads were yellow, we can identify it as fennel. I later learned (thanks to Mr. Google) that both dill and fennel can sprout yellow umbels or flowers that are clustered in a certain fashion, but only fennel plants have a large bulb that is edible, while dill plants have no bulb. Plant identification is important in this instance, especially if it will be used for culinary purposes, since they definitely taste different. Fennel has an extremely distinct anise/licorice taste, and dill has a fresher more grassy flavor. Dill leaves are also more delicate than fennel and the seeds are flatter and thinner. If you like the anise-y, licorice-y flavor you can just chew on fennel seeds when they are young and it will be sweet. Most of the Jerusalem sage had to be pulled since it had wilted too much from heat and dehydration.

While we were filling barrels with brown and crispy sun-dried herbs not everything was struggling in the brutal Texas summer heat; the lemon-grass, lemon balm, rosemary, mint, and oregano were all thriving. The SA Herb Society has chosen to put a native form of these herbs in the garden which means these herbs will have an easier time thriving in this climate and provide benefits to native pollinators and in turn the environment. As we were all working on trimming these native herbs, the nice, friendly workers at the SA Botanical Gardens delivered several wheelbarrows full of mulch for us to use as ground cover. This will help keep the herbs from drying out or overheating as the mulch provides a layer of protection from the sun and retains moisture in the soil so the plants won't dry out as quickly. As we were standing back observing where to put the mulch we noticed a small plant popping up that wasn't labeled.

WEED AND GLOAT

Come weed with us at the

Botanical Gardens!

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

Weed and Gloat meets the last
Monday of each month , August 28

We meet at 8 A.M.

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

See you then.

After further inspection, Marsha and Patsy came to the conclusion that it might be Mexican Oregano, which is a native oregano to this area, since it is more flavorful than other types of oregano. She further explained that the Ornamental Oregano in the garden is not for culinary use but good for hummingbirds and other pollinators. Some of the Mexican Oregano, along with the thyme were taking a beating and needed some trimming.

As the SA Herb Society members, who I like to think of as not just gardeners but artists, were working on their masterpieces one plant at a time. Robin had asked for stepping stones and Cindy had rounded up eight nice stones. The rule of thumb is "never step in the garden" because it compacts the soil. While debating placement of the stones Robin gave us all a seed of knowledge: "Mint...you can stomp on it and it won't get it's feelings hurt" while other herbs like oregano, thyme, and basil will definitely get their feelings hurt and not perform to the best of their ability. This held true when inspecting the thyme, oregano and basil so they needed a stepping stone close by to offer protection. The only basil in the SA Herb Society garden is Thai Basil which is not a sweet basil. Basil became the topic of conversation for a moment and we all agreed that Sweet Basil is the best for culinary use, but it is very hard to grow in the ground in the SA summer. Many of the Sweet Basil plants that are seen thriving now in SA gardens are in containers or pots and can be easily moved to be kept in the shade if wilting. The water content of the soil can be controlled easier in a container as well and Sweet Basil likes rich, moist soil, not too wet and not too dry or damp, not drenched. This is definitely not typical SA soil! While thyme doesn't like being stomped on, like basil, it doesn't like to be pampered either. You should keep thyme in moist soil, but it needs to be very well drained. Most thyme often dies due to root rot from overwatering but it can also be from age, lack of sunlight, or fertilizer over-use. Thyme is known as perennial to most gardeners, but in SA, TX, Marsha claimed it is more of a triannual in this dry hot, climate.

As the temperature was climbing up, the weeding was winding down around 9:30-10AM, and we were working on protecting the plants from the remaining summer heat by covering the ground at and around the plant's roots with mulch. This mulch was generously provided for us by the Botanical Gardens along with some cold bottles of water which were greatly appreciated. Marsha took one bottle and went around to pour cold water on our forearms to help us cool off and it felt wonderfully refreshing and cool. Marsha pulled out a great garden tool to share with us and told us it is an Asian weeding knife called a "hori hori". She laughed as she told us that "hori" in Japanese literally means "to dig" so the tools name is "dig dig". I later learned that "hori hori" is considered the onomatopoeia for a digging sound in the Japanese language! Thanks to the unique shape and size of this tool it is wonderfully versatile in the garden. You can use it to dig, transplant, saw, cut, and even measure soil depth for planting bulbs. This tool can be found online or possibly at your local gardening/hardware store. We all agreed that shopping local means much better quality, so check out your local stores.

After stopping for a group picture (minus a few) we all headed off to La Madeline to meet at 10:30 for a quick "pick me up". As we were cooling off and fueling up our conversation was never dull. Although we all love plants and definitely enjoy gloating about our own gardens, we discuss a variety of topics. Books are another common interest and I left the café with a few titles to add to my reading wish list. We discussed medicine, culture, education, cooking, history and much more. Education is critical for humans to thrive and one of the best ways to learn is through experience and learning from other friends and experts. This is one of the reasons being a member of the SA Herb Society is such a privilege and attending excursions like weed and gloat can be such a great experience. Along with weeding out the negative for possibilities to grow, you extend your knowledge and have fun while doing it! Come join us and see what new herbs will be planted at the next weed and gloat on 8/28. You never know what seeds of knowledge you might leave with.

Upcoming events

Meeting August 10

THREE WORKSHOPS- NO PICTURES

July we had three workshops. It's not that we did not take pictures; more that I want to tease you to come to our meeting. Three sessions of hard work has produced a lot of products to sell in the fall. There will be two tables of display items for everyone to appreciate at our August 10 meeting.

We have an ulterior motive for displaying them. We are look for price points. Some item sell well at one point and sit quietly on the table at another. We are doing our market research at the meeting.

What was produced? Ollas were plugged at the bottom, and glued one pot rim to another. Then they were painted. Then we poured water into each one to determine that they actually held water. If a defect was observed, the pot was re plugged or re-caulked. We have a tremendous amount of ollas to sell. Our last sale, at Festival of Flowers, we sold out. We think the market it hot as is the price point.

Secondly, we worked with corks. Michael's has corks in a plastic jar, about 20 for \$9.99. Patti's donation of two large black garbage bags of corks, worked out to be five large boxes of corks. What a wealth to work with. We saw that about half of the corks were all one brand of wine, and all one size of cork. When we started making things, some of the patterns really needed a consistent size of cork. We sorted them into this one brand, then used the other two boxes of mixed corks for projects where the variation was pleasing to the eye.

We noodled around with the two bags of pinecones also. Nothing seemed to inspire the group, so we tabled our work with them and devoted our time to the corks.

The most successful pattern was a simple trivet. We all decided that this would be a good seller. We made pumpkin decorations, apple decorations for fall, coasters, angel Christmas tree decoration, open boxes, key holders, and votive light holders of different sizes.

So, come cast your vote for your favorite design. Help us determine which ones to put into production for fall sales.

We are turning our energies toward developing a fall garden,. Once that is established, in September, we will have further workshops to complete our tasks.

Thank you to all those who attended and helped Cindy, Becky, Joy, Betsy, Loretta, Sherri, Marsha Andrew. And a huge thanks to Patti who gave us all the corks.

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.

Meeting Minutes

MEETING MINUTES July 13, 2023

The meeting was called to order by president Robin Maymar at 7:07 pm. She thanked everyone for attending the meeting and introduced a visitor, Ed Elbel.

She thanked Cyndy Moore for setting our table with the theme of Ginger, Herb of the Year. A marvelous punch was provided by our speaker, Cynthia Brown (recipe in this issue) . Sandra Woodall provided ice and water. She thanked the many members for preparing such generous offerings of lovely food. She asked members to send copies of their recipes to Robin Maymar, for inclusion in the Newsletter.



A copy of the treasurer’s report is available upon request.

Minutes from the last General meeting were in the newsletter. There were no additions or corrections.

Robin asked the membership to vote on the issue of paying a monthly fee to MailChip for delivery of the Yerba Buena, our newsletter. It was pointed out that we used to spend \$200 in printing and postage to send out our newsletter. This fee is \$13 a month. The membership approved.



Everyone thanked Becky for writing the Weed and Gloat article for the newsletter. We also thanked Patsy for giving us the alerts for Weed and Gloat. And we also thanked Sandra Woodall for sending out email to invite everyone to the monthly meeting.

Weed and Gloat will be August 31 at 8 a.m.

There were three workshops announced in the last Yerba Buena. Sign up sheets were circulated for those who could attend. July 15, 17 & 21.

Our speaker was Cynthia Brown.

She brought a variety of dishes prepared with ginger. The recipes are included in the newsletter. (Copies of the gingerbread cake available on request, also at Cooks Illustrated on line)

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45



TO DO IN THE AUGUST GARDEN

WATER As of today we are in Stage 2 watering. Once a week on your designated day. From 7- 11 a.m. or p.m. Watering by hand any time. Target your watering to most vulnerable spaces. Bermuda and Buffalo grass have gone dormant. Will wake up when it rains. 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.

Water raised beds and plantings weekly (according to rainfall, soil & plant conditions). Make sure you keep the top 6-8 inches of soil moist so that the feeder roots can pick up nourishment and water. Container roses and plants should be watered probably every other day if they are in all sun. Use the "old moisture meter" . . . your finger, to check the soil dampness. Use moisture-absorbing crystals when potting a plant (or small ollas); adding extra fertilizer to container plants will not help bloom and may cause problems. When it is 100 degrees day after day, many plants will not bloom. Keep them watered and be patient.



In Our Herb Garden: Seed frost tolerant herb perennials indoors for later transplanting. Start indoor cuttings of perennial herb to promote fall plantings. 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 (several mixes available at local shops). 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. Make pesto using your basil plants. It freezes well with a small layer of oil on top to seal it. Prune autumn sage to encourage a fall bloom. (Take out about 1/3 of the branches, leave the 2/3 to grow)



BIRDS 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). 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.

FLOWERS July/August is usually dry in San Antonio and vincas prosper. You may observe the vincas are "melting" because of aerial phytophthora, a fungal disease. There is no fungal treatment. Discard infected plants. Water plants at ground level and avoid splashing water on the foliage. Use of mulch helps greatly.

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. Prune summer-blooming shrubs and vines as they finish flowering. (see note p. 6

Cut back Poinsettias and pinch back subsequent growth. Languishing spring-blooming perennials may be cut back and divided. Replant immediately and water them in. Pinch shoot tips on Mums and Asters. Cut back 'Texas Gold' columbines if they are looking ratty. They will put on new foliage next month. Trim leggy petunias and impatiens to encourage new blooms. Include Mari-mum 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. Mulches are essential to keep the soil cool, conserve water and reduce weeds. Replenish mulch this week. Consider cocoa shell mulch, pecan shells or cedar for a more decorative look.

Plant heat-loving plants such as lantana, bougainvillea, allamanda, hibiscus, mandevilla, copper plant, zinnia, portulaca and salvia. Cut back mallow hibiscus plants to 8 inches to encourage a second bloom this fall. 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. 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

Order wildflower seeds for planting this month or next. Endure August heat and consider these plants for colorful fall: Marigolds (Discovery Gold & Discovery Yellow); Zinnias; Celosias (Cockscombs); Joseph's Coat; Mexi-

can 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. Start sowing flowering winter annuals, such as Alyssum, Calendula, Larkspur, Poppy and Stock. For best selection, order bulbs from catalogs now. Cooler temperatures - in the low 90's, as opposed to over 100 (toward the end of August?) - will prompt blooms on hibiscus, lantana, mandevilla, allamanda, bougainvillea and other warm-weather plants. Don't forget to fertilize.

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

ROSES provide the basis for the best flowers of the year in October.

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!



Late August is also the time when bushes can be cleaned out. Small, twiggy growth and blind shoots should be removed to provide sunlight, airflow, and spray materials to penetrate throughout the bush. This cleaning out process can include some shaping of the bush, eliminating the weaker of two canes where they fork. The biggest flower in October will come from basal breaks or a single flower coming from one large cane. Remember, if it is not size that you want, and if you want as many flowers as possible, do less thinning or cleaning out of the bush.

Mulching- Keep the thickness at a 2 to 3 inch depth.

Watering- As the summer sun bears down; keep the top 6 to 8 inches of soil moist by watering early in the morning (by hand 5:30 to 8:00 AM allows more time to penetrate). Also, a good rose practice to follow at least once or twice a month is to water wash your bushes. It's best to do this in the early morning on the tops and bottoms of the foliage. Try to coordinate water washing with your spray program. The day before you spray, do your water washing routine. This water washing will help refresh your bushes and maintain active bush growth. Either use a pistol nozzle or some other water-washing device you have rigged up. Also, remember that container-grown roses need water more during the hot summer months.

For best results foliar feed with Garrett Juice every 2 weeks, but at least once a month. When soil is healthy, nothing but Garrett Juice is needed in the spray. During our hot Texas months, try watering and spraying in the morning.

It takes longer to waterbeds properly that have heavy soil than those with loose sandy soil. On the other hand, the loose beds dry out quicker, so we have to use a little judgment as to how often and how long to water. A good way to check is to probe the bed with a sharp stick and note the resistance.

Most good rosarians will continue monthly or bi-monthly fertilization with their favorite materials, but they should not over-do it. More roses do poorly in summer from over fertilization than too little. Beds rich in humus can tolerate (and benefit from) more inorganic fertilizers than those lacking this life-giving substance. 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 (that is by hand every day, per SAWS)

Check the mulch and, if it has become packed, stir it for better aeration to the soil and for better insulation. Add to it if it has become thin. An organic mulch added at any time of the year is never wasted.

START YOUR NEW BEDS NOW!



GARDEN Use the intense heat and sunny days to solarize the vegetable 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.

If part of your garden is infested with NEMATODES, forgo a fall crop of vegetables in favor of African or American marigolds. The marigolds are beautiful; they will make for a great fall showing and will help to reduce population of root-damaging pests. Buy them as sturdy transplants without blooms. Plant the flowers every 8 to 12 inches.

The best tomato plants to grow here are Sunmaster, Tomato 444 (Healthy Surprise), Celebrity, Amelia and Merced (JP); also try Solar Fire, Sunpride, Top Gun and **Surefire** (see From the Prez). A good tomato for containers is Patio. For the former, 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). (or carry over from spring if healthy) Roots will form all along the buried stem and produce a good root mass. For Patio tomatoes, buy the shortest plants. You might want to provide some shade to tomatoes planted now. Covering the upper half of tomato cages with *Grow-Web* 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. Use special fabric products designed for the garden. Continue to protect young vegetable transplants from scorching afternoon sun



BINDWEED (*Convolvulus arvensis*) aggressively strangles other plants and was known for centuries as the thunder flower. Pulling it was supposed to cause thunder before the end of the day. This idea probably came about to discourage children from picking the plants and causing damage to the host plants (remove carefully).

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

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.

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.

YARD Test sprinkler output with a shallow container such as a tuna can or cake pan. Run the sprinkler for 15 minutes and measure the amount of water collected. The goal is to apply 1/2 to 3/4" per week to sunny areas and 1/2 to 3/4" in shaded areas for most lawn grasses to maintain root system health (with 100-degree days it is hard and wasteful to keep grass green), subtract if we receive any rain. Mow lawns weekly (at least every other week if we are in a drought situation), you should be removing no more than 1/3 of grass blade height and leave clippings on the lawn. Both lawn and soil will benefit. Mowing your lawn often will help prevent weed seeds from germinating. Vary direction of mowing to avoid developing a grain (blades growing/leaning in one direction) to your lawn.

If your pecan trees are loaded with nuts, one deep watering per month in the absence of rain will help fill out the nuts. The squirrels will thank you. Apply borer-prevention spray to trunks of fruit trees such as peaches, plums and other stone fruit. BORERS create holes in an irregular pattern on trunks and sometimes on branches. If the holes appear in a straight line on the tree trunk, woodpeckers are the culprits. 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.

Be on the lookout for "clearances" and "closeouts" of garden supplies and stuff! Develop a landscape plan now so you can take advantage of autumn planting weather. Keep lawn mower blades sharp. Jagged cuts on grass blades are entry points for disease.

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