



## Aransas/San Patricio

### The President's Corner

May, 2010

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**Secretary:**  
**Thea Edmundson**  
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**Website:**  
**www.aspmastergardeners.org**

### Seeking Serious Plant Lovers

Texas Master Gardeners are a team of volunteer horticulture educators who are under the auspices of:



Green Acres is our award winning demonstration garden located at 611 E. Mimosa, Rockport, Texas. The gardens showcase plants and landscape schemes suitable for the Coastal Bend. For help with plant problems, or for class information, please call (361) 790-0103, or email [aransas-tx@tam.u.edu](mailto:aransas-tx@tam.u.edu)

#### Editors

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Ellen Reisinger

Dallas County hosted the 2010 Texas Master Gardener Conference on April 8-10. Many Aransas/San Patricio Master Gardeners attended. This is the first conference I have attended. It was inspiring and awesome to have so many gardeners in one place at the same time. The conference drove home the message of dedication of service to the community and the fellowship we all share in accomplishing this goal. It was enlightening to speak with other Master Gardeners and learn about their organization and what they are up to. The highlight of the event was the TMGA Award Brunch when we won first place in the Mass Media Category for our wonderful web site. Thank you to everyone who worked on the web site and made this possible. We should all be very proud of this accomplishment. Ellen

### Aransas/San Patricio Master Gardeners Website Wins 1st Place

Congratulations to the A/SP Master Gardeners for the First Place in the Mass Media Award category for 2009, medium associations, for the website! The award was announced at the Texas Master Gardener Association Conference held April 8-10 in Dallas. The always up to date website (<http://www.aspmastergardeners.org/>) is educational, informative and has great photos.

Pictured are website committee members, from left, Gail Bergan, Beth Wilson, Ronell Burke, Elayne Arne, Richard Snyder, and Susan Thompson.



Educational programs of Texas AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, or national origin. Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.

**GA Garden Days**  
May 7th & 21st  
8:00 - 11:00 am

**May Brown Bag**  
**Tuesday, May 18**  
12:00-1:00 pm  
*Tough and Beautiful, Meet the Salvias*  
By Ellen Reisinger, Master Gardener Aransas County Library, 701 E. Mimosa, Rockport

**10th Annual Hidden Gardens Tour**  
**Saturday, May 8 - 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

**Explore beautiful gardens in Aransas and San Patricio County.** More details on page 3.

### Happy Birthday !

Russ Bell, 9<sup>th</sup>

D.J. Chilcoat, 22<sup>nd</sup>

Marsha Hendrix 15<sup>th</sup>

Marilee Bell, 25<sup>th</sup>

Janie Moon, 28<sup>th</sup>

## From Our Writers

**DODDER – A TRULY PARASITIC PLANT**

Todd L. Cutting, Master Gardener

We usually write about dodder, *Cuscuta exaltata*, in August or September when it is full grown, in bloom, and very noticeable in the tops of live oaks and other trees. Dodder is a parasitic plant that requires a living host plant to sustain it. It produces haustoria, or pegs when the vine contacts green living tissue. These haustoria penetrate the host and suck out the sap for its use, to the detriment of the host. There is really no chance of controlling dodder in the fall because it has attached its self to the host in innumerable places.

The AgriLife Extension Office has already received several calls and samples of new growth from people who became aware of the problem last year. Dodder is an annual plant; it grows from a seed, flowers, and dies all in the same year. It overwinters as seed which start to germinate in late winter and early spring and will continue to germinate until the soil gets hot and dry. The seed can survive in the soil for at least four years. Right now, the dodder vines are anywhere from tiny seedlings to vines waist high. The vines are leafless, but do have nodes and buds. The haustoria emerge from these bud nodes.

The vines are probably reddish in color but may be light green to yellowish orange.

If you had a dodder problem last year, it will most likely be a bigger problem this year unless you take measures to mitigate it. There are several steps you can take to reduce the dodder. It is unlikely you'll eliminate it in a season.

First, apply a pre-emergence herbicide to the soil in the area where you had the problem last year. This will prevent dodder seeds from germinating and emerging for from two to six months, depending on herbicide, rate, and weather. Trifluralin, (Preen), is labeled for use on many landscape plants, but be sure and read the labels for a herbicide that fits your



situation. Under trees, if you have turf of any quality, there are several different products on the market that would be suitable, most of those recommended for annual grasses will control annual broad-leaved weeds.

Second, if you see a twining, leafless, reddish colored vine growing among your plants or trees, and you didn't plant it, it is most likely dodder. If it is still attached to the soil, it probably hasn't penetrated host plants yet. Untwine it. Pull it up. Dispose of it in your garbage.



Third, on live oak trees and other trees where dodder has to grow up the trunk and large branches, it can be sprayed with glyphosate herbicide. This herbicide has the potential to injure your trees. Do not get it on green tissue of plants you want to live. Roundup is a popular glyphosate containing product. Use the "Ready to Use" formulations that are available in spray containers. Carefully spray the dodder only when it is on woody sections of the trees. On shrubs or groundcover plants you wouldn't do this.

Spray only until the dodder vines are damp, not dripping. If the glyphosate drips, it may injure the plants underneath. Wait ten days before giving up on the glyphosate treatment. It takes a while to be effective.

There are other herbicides that could be used to control the small germinated dodder plants but they would be injurious to your trees. If you had a dodder infestation last year, and you see seedlings emerging now, you can spray these with household (white) vinegar without endangering your trees.

Now you have all this information about how to control dodder but still aren't sure what it is? If you had a mass of orange/yellow vegetable spaghetti in your tree tops last fall, you had dodder. It flowered and went to seed. Strange seedlings in that area are probably dodder. Bring them into the AgriLife Extension Office, and we'll identify them for you. We also have several publications that expand on this parasitic plant problem.

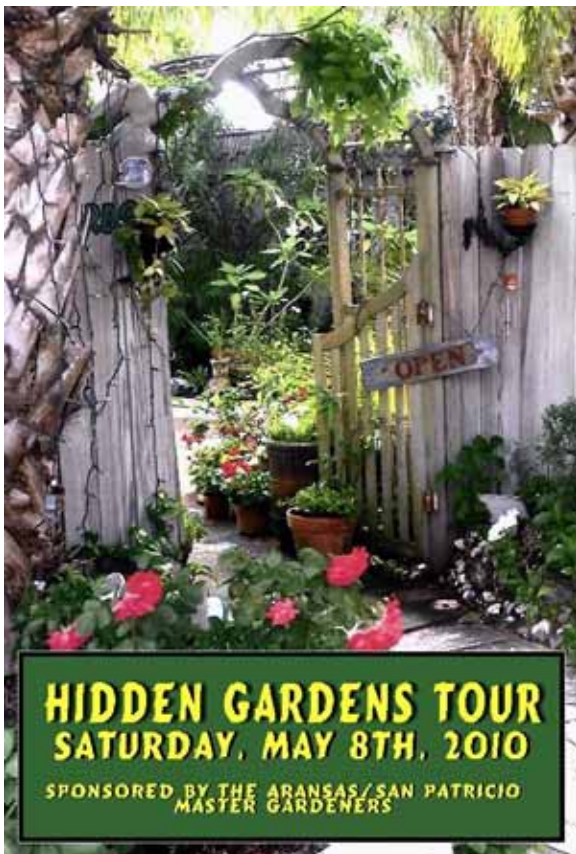
### Hidden Gardens Tour

#### Explore beautiful gardens in Aransas and San Patricio Counties

Tickets \$10, available at Texas AgriLife Extension - Aransas County Office and at H-E-B in Rockport Thursday May 6th and Friday May 7th.

RAIN DATE: the following Saturday - May 15

Go to <http://aspmastergardeners.org/> to learn about the gardens on the tour.



### Kids' Garden Fest

Kid Fest was a great success due to all the MG's dedication and improvising to make things work.

I didn't realize how much Sharon did in organizing this event. For example on the morning of the event I failed to get a key to open the office, so John Jenkins could not get the tables and chairs. Nor did I make arrangements for water for the teachers. No one complained.

Behind the scene:

Publicity: Elayne Arne and Mary Ware

Tote bag seamstresses: Cyndi Kuhn, Barbara Morran, Joyce Scott and Janice Holland.

Kudos to Suzie Cook for providing snacks.

Thanks, Todd Cutting, the shade tent was sure appreciated by registrars Drew Jacobs and Loretta Brandt. Also under the tent were teachers D.J. Chilcoat and Mary Ann Davis who had the children stencil tote bags.

Francis Frizzell and Sarah Shugart used origami to make sailor hats. Patty Bidwell and Jean Beck helped create sail boat pictures. Annette Fowler, Marthanne Mitchell and Janie Moon made beautiful shell necklaces. Chris Kelly and Marsha Hendrix managed the bookmark station. Christine Grohman and John Jenkins gave Red Wiggler Worms. Children created a fish refrigerator magnet with Lois Atwood and Nan Jackson.

Linda Collins, Barb McSpadden and Emily Cutting provided a very fun game of golf. What a crew! Thank You!

Pat Baugh



# Around the State

## **Evening Hours At Botanical Gardens & Nature Center May 1 through Labor Day**

Transitioning into warmer weather, the South Texas Botanical Gardens & Nature Center will be open daily, 7:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., beginning Saturday, May 1 through Labor Day Monday, September 6. Cooler evening hours are being added to benefit birders, nature photographers and other visitors needing a longer visit to explore the recently-added Butterfly House and Anderson Bromeliad Conservatory. Normal hours--7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. daily-- will resume September 7.

## **Gene Blacklock leads Coastal Bend shorebirds workshop/fieldtrip at Botanical Gardens May 8**

Acclaimed, humorous South Texas birder and author Gene Blacklock, from the Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program, leads this day-long short course studying Coastal Bend shorebirds, including breeding plumage, for all levels of birders. Morning lecture will be in the Visitors Center from 8:45am to noon, followed by a lunch break. Afternoon field study will focus on the Botanical Gardens' Gator Lake, large wetland and adjacent Oso Creek. Students should bring binoculars. Class fee is \$15 including admission, \$11 members; and prepaid registration is required by May 6. For more information, call 361.852.2100.

## **Expert soil-building techniques & additives at Botanical Gardens & Nature Center May 15**

Learn a layman's guide to healthy soil including addition of organics, from 10 to noon. Third generation soil scientist, Dr. Shad Nelson, Associate Professor of Agronomy and Resource Sciences at Texas A&M University – Kingsville, not only will discuss methods of soil building, but also practical theory behind today's common practices. Seminar fee is \$7, \$3.50 members including admission. For reservations, call 361.852.2100.

## **Rainwater Harvesting Seminar at Botanical Gardens & Nature Center May 22**

From drenching rains to killer droughts, South Texas experiences nearly every moisture extreme. But come sun or soaker, from 10 a.m. to noon, Cecelia Ray Hawkins, a **Rainwater Harvest Specialist accredited by the American Rainwater Catchment System Association**, will teach students storage methods to take advantage of those rainy spells, catching and saving free fresh water for landscape, vegetable garden or greenhouse for the dry period bound to follow. Seminar fee is \$7, \$3.50 for members, which includes Botanical Gardens admission. For reservations, call 361.852.2100.

## **Art in the Gardens Event At Botanical Gardens & Nature Center May 29, 30**

The first annual *Art in the Gardens*, a partnership between the South Texas Botanical Gardens & Nature Center and Art Center of Corpus Christi, will be from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday and Sunday, May 29 and 30, on Botanical Gardens grounds, 8545 S. Staples St.

Artist applications are now being accepted. The nature-flavored fine arts and crafts event will be a juried art fair, designed as a family-oriented festival. Art in the Gardens applications are now available at the Art Center, 100 Shoreline Dr., or the Botanical Gardens at 8545 S. Staples St., and should be returned with application fee and three large plain paper digital photographs to the Botanical Gardens. Application deadline is May 18.

Individual artists, or Art Groups now may reserve a 10 by 10-foot booth space at \$45 for the two-day festival; \$35 for members of the Art Center or Botanical Gardens. Artists may bring their own tent and equipment. Eight-foot tables are available prepaid for \$12 each, chairs for \$2 each.

For further information, call the Art Center, 361.884.6406.

# May 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 8:30am Hidden Garden Pre- tour
2	3	4 9am MG Monthly Meeting	5 8:30am Propagation Committee	6	7 8-11am Green Acres Garden Day  10:30am Landscape Committee	8 <b>10th Annual Hidden Gardens Tour</b>
9	10	11	12 8:30am Propagation Committee	13	14	15
16	17	18 12-1pm Brown Bag  1:30pm Board Meeting	19 8:30am Propagation Committee  10am Tree Team Visits	20	21 8-11am Green Acres Garden Day	22
23  30	24  31 May Hours Due County Holiday	25	26 8:30am Propagation Committee	27	28	29