

The Seedling

Newsletter of the Northwest Louisiana Master Gardeners Association

An Affiliate of LSU Ag Center

www.lsuagcenter.com/nwlamg

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Walking through a field of sunflowers is
like having your very own yellow,
eye-level parade!



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THE PRESIDENTS REPORT



Mark Wilson,
Northwest Louisiana
Master Gardener Agent
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GOOD NEWS!

2019 NORTHWEST REGIONAL

LSU AGCENTER SUPER PLANTS EVALUATION
AND EDUCATION DAY

The focus of this event is to help evaluate the regional Super Plants trail garden, to make suggestions on the future of Super Plants, to listen and learn from Dr. Paul W. Wilson, Professor Emeritus, Food Processing and to learn how to keep your harvest longer.

Registration Required! 318 698 0010

Friday, September 20th, 2019. 9:00 AM-1:00 PM

Register at 318. 698 0010 by September 6, 2019

You will earn 3.5 hours of continuing education for this event!

Gramma's Table

Mary Dumars has a wonderful story to tell....



“Gramma’s table was cold, hard and aluminum. It was a square table with curved ends, no sharp edges. Each leg was made two rods forming a ‘V’ at the foot, enticing chubby little legs to get stuck and requiring a rescue. The shiny top and vinyl chairs were red and the kitchen walls yellow, and there was a hanging rotary Princess Phone nearby..

The table sat in the middle of the narrow L-shaped kitchen, in the center of our tiny house. In the spring, Gramma would pull out her farmer’s almanac to set dates for gardening by the moon. She would pull out an old tin box and pick seeds for the planting season. When the harvest came in, she would sit and peel, shuck, and shell everything in sight.

In the summer, Gramma sat sideways at the table with a big pot of scalded tomatoes and bag them for the freezer. She preserved jams, jellies, and pickles there too, before placing them on the back porch. All night, we’d hear the familiar pop of the mason jar lids sealing.

In the mornings, we ate breakfast at the table, then headed to school or work. In the afternoons, we did our homework there. In the evenings, we ate dinner, then cleaned the table.

This table marked a place vital, almost sacred to our lives.

There were no strangers at our table. When visitors came, they ate at our table. When the sick came, they . at our table. When death came, they were comforted from our table. When the deep freezer was thawed, last year’s bounty was dispersed from our table. This table was VITAL to the community.

There were no secrets at our table. I read my college acceptance letter at this table. It was displayed here just like my report cards had been. Not on the fridge, *but on the table*. My mother and Gramma sat here when I said I was a lesbian. The table shook under pounding fists; it reverberated with cries of “Why didn’t you tell us?” I did not come out because I was never in. I saw no reason to announce my preference, just as my siblings had not announced theirs.

The table held the last thing my Gramma cooked before her death. As I sliced the hogshead cheese to serve to visitors who came to comfort us, I felt my legs go weak. My eyes went dim as my spouse took the knife away and led me to a quiet place. She resumed serving the last food prepared at that table.

I believe that table remained until the house was condemned and torn down by its owners. Though the narrow lot is empty now, all that that table witnessed and meant still lives on in each of us. I have my own table now and it is the central hub of our life, witnessing and sustaining, just like Gramma’s table did.”

This story is bound to bring memories of YOUR kitchen table. Thanks to Mary Dumars for sharing this precious memory.

BIG BUGS

LITTLE BUGS

PESKY, PRECIOUS INSECT-BUGS

Are they going to stick around?



Conservation biologist Anne Sverdrup-Thygeson warns that the world's insect population is on the decline—which may have serious consequences for human beings and many other species.

Our planet is at the beginning of the sixth mass extinction in its history, with insects being at the forefront of this extinction.

Why is this extinction so unnerving and so very important?

Ecosystems can't function without the millions of insects that make up the base of the food chain, and we are learning that human activity and climate change are chiseling away at those foundations. This sounds serious! What does this extinction mean?

The Smithsonian Institution estimates that 40 percent of the 30 million or so insect species on earth are now threatened with extinction. Moreover, this extinction is crazy rapid.

Why is this extinction so important anyway? They're only bugs.

Not So! Insects are vitally significant to the food chain as they are one of the major pollinators on our planet. They pollinate the whole gamut of plants, including many of those that humans rely on for food. They also are key players in other important jobs including breaking dead things down into the building blocks for a new life, controlling weeds and providing raw materials for medicines. And they provide sustenance for a spectrum of other animals—in fact, a Puerto Rico study showed a decline in the density of insect-eating frogs, birds, and lizards in this country parallels the insect nosedive.

This extinction is proving to be very rapid. **One-third of the insect population is considered to be on the endangered species list.** Furthermore, forty percent more of the world's insects could go extinct in the next few decades. Consider what this would mean for humanity.

What are the triggers that cause this extinction? Let's think about the myriad reasons for the sharp decline in the insect population.

1. Habitat loss caused by intensive agriculture and urbanization
2. Pollution caused mainly by pesticides and fertilizers
3. Diseases and competition with newly introduced species
4. Climate change, both in the tropics as well as the Arctic.

Is there a solution to this dreadful issue? Perhaps. But, it will be difficult to implement planetwide. The world must change the way it produces food. Think about it like this. A) Organic farms tend to have more insects. B) New classes of insecticides including neonicotinoids and fipronil are particularly damaging as they are routinely used in agriculture as well as home gardens. These chemicals sterilize the soil and kill all of the grubs. This loss impacts not only insects but

also the microbes that enrich the soil, and feed roots of our plants. We cannot feed the world's population without the help of insects.

This story "should be of huge concern to all of us, for insects are at the heart of every food web; they pollinate the large majority of plant species, keep the soil healthy, recycle nutrients, control pests, and much much more. Love them or loathe them, we humans cannot survive without insects" states Professor Dave Goulson of the University of Sussex in the United Kingdom.

This is a sobering article. If you are interested in following the subject, the world wide web is filled with information about this sixth mass extinction of our planet.

Before you spray or apply a pesticide to your garden plants, note the ingredients in the chemical to ascertain they are not toxic to soil or insects. If the plants you like to grow subsist because you spray them regularly, re-think your options. Or, use only chemically free, organic products.

This is where it begins, and where you can make a difference in your own back yard.

MID TO LATE SUMMER, STILL HUMID AND HOT, YET-THE GARDEN CALLS.....

Have you noticed? We've been on a journey together this year. We've shivered through winter gardening chores, discussed early spring gardening practices, have talked about the advent of summer, and now are getting into the gardening doldrums of pulling weeds and keeping plants from drying and dying. But, all along, I guess you've noticed, we've been going through a year of gardening together.

From last winter and even before then, the Seedling has discussed good gardening practices throughout the seasons. We are in the late middle of, but certainly NOT finished with Summer. Far from it, there is much work to be done, the last vegetable planting to complete or to clean up, and flower gardens are still growing as we speak! Keeping up with maintenance (pulling weeds!) during the hottest days of summer will assure the health of your garden next spring. (Caution: Drink water, Go out early or late in the day, Give thanks to plants which can survive our HOT weather!

1. **Weeding and Dead Heading:** No doubt, weeds are EVERYWHERE in late Summer and even into Fall. As hot weather refuses to budge, weed seeds are becoming well established and are seeming to flourish-even crowding out our favorite flowers! Now is the time to grab your weeding tools and keep those pesky plants from overtaking your flower beds. Promptly pulling weeds will deter them from seeding themselves, allowing fewer to propagate next year. Each year you do this (believe it or not) you will have fewer weeds in your garden (except Not Sedge!). This rule is true for deadheading as well as keeping perennial gardens and annual plants looking their best. (This is something we already know, don't we? (My mother would say "The spirit's willing...the flesh is weak!)
2. **Harvesting and Clearing Space:** In September, notice when any landscape (edible or not) turns into a mess of failing green and brown plants trying for one last round of blooms. By removing this last gasp, their dying portions it will create less 'garden cleanup' later in the season. So, go ahead and prune lightly, deadhead always, and clean up weeds and trash.) Make sure to fill in empty spaces with mulch. (2-3 inches of mulch is not too much.) Just don't leave the ground bare to invite weeds and pests.

3. **Preparing mulch and compost:** If you have a compost pile, nurture it through hot weather. Add organic materials like rotted vegetables, plant scraps (not weeds!) and leaves to create a pile that can be used as compost at a later date. Keep it somewhat moist, but not wet.
4. **Flowering Shrubs, Plants and Tree Maintenance:** For shrubs, trees or other perennials, its TLC time! Don't deadhead or fertilize anything that won't make it through the cold months ahead, as now is not the time to encourage new growth. (Rose gardeners, ignore this rule! You prune heavily, but not deeply in early September to encourage an autumn bloom. Prune about 1/3 of plant size, once the fall-blooming is over. If shrubs and trees are still growing strong, provide them with deep drinks of water, especially in this hottest time of the year. Hot August and early September temperatures will quickly dry out the soil, and a light sprinkling of water will evaporate before the benefits of the shower have promoted the plant. Water deeply these days.

Because flower gardening in NW Louisiana is never REALLY completed until later in the year, and regular maintenance will not decrease until late September to mid-October, remember your plants. That's when the last flush of rose blooms delights us. It's when we clean out the corner cabinet in the back porch patio, when we sharpen our pruning shears one more time, and bid summer annuals a not-so-fond farewell, and begin planning for spring.

VANISHING POLLINATORS

Our pollinators are vanishing at an alarming rate. At one time Monarch butterflies blanketed the Oyamel trees around Michoacán Mexico, their winter feeding grounds, with so many butterflies the trees fluttered with orange and the limbs sagged, now their population has been reduced to a mere 2.5 acres and they have started moving to a higher, cooler elevation due to climate change.



In California, our other migrating butterfly, the Painted Lady, used to make swarms that filled the skies after heavy rains created more wildflowers. The last such kaleidoscope of ladies occurred in 2005, after that heavy rain period. This year's rains also created more wildflowers and more painted ladies, but their numbers were much smaller. Other butterflies are experiencing a similar decline in numbers.

Bees are suffering even more than butterflies. Honeybee Keepers reported a nearly 38% loss last year, up nearly 9% over the 13-year average of bee colony losses. In a recent survey, the four common bumblebee species reported a decline of 96%. With Orchard bees and wild bees reporting similar losses. These insects join other pollinating insects suffering declines including moths and hover flies. Even the lowly fly, which pollinates flowers that butterflies won't, is declining.

What's happening?

Each class of insects has its own particular problems, but in general, the decline in pollinators can be attributed to the use of pesticides, particularly neonicotinoids like Imidacloprid, which even finds its way into a flower's nectar and pollen. Plus, the destruction of the insect's natural habitat. More homes are being built which results in more weed less and flowerless green lawns.

Bees face an additional problem. Their declining populations result in inbreeding, which creates a smaller genetic pool, which causes reduced adaptability to environmental changes like climate change. This smaller genetic pool has also left it vulnerable to diseases as those caused by the varroa mite which has decimated colonies.

What can be done to help the pollinators?

Each person can do a little. Don't use neonicotinoids, and plant a few flowers, instead of a totally green lawn. Better still, leave a small space in your yard unmowed for Clover in the spring and goldenrods in the fall; even better, create a pollinator garden. Fill it with plants that flower at different times of the year so that the pollinators will always have nectar and pollen and make sure that your garden has a variety of colors and shapes to attract different pollinators, and whenever possible, choose native plants.

Thanks again to Mike Livingston, who always has thoughtful insights into our issues and concerns.

COMMUNITY INVESTMENT PROGRAM.

**What is the Community Investment Program?
What does this mean to Caddo, Bossier, Red River, Minden, DeSoto Parishes?
What is our mission for the projects in these parishes?**

Each year, the Northwest Louisiana Master Gardeners give money from grant proposals for worthy projects which encourage gardening, landscaping and beautification projects which keep our communities safer, prettier, and healthier.

The Community Investment Program is designed to best use monies raised from Le Tour des Jardins, the Plant and Bulb Sales, and any other resource to invest in the gardening communities of Caddo, Bossier, Red River and, DeSoto Parishes. Grants may range from \$300.00-\$10,000.00.

2020 Northwest Louisiana Master Gardeners Community Investment Program

On September 1, 2019, the Northwest Louisiana Master Gardeners (NWLAMG) will begin accepting applications for its 2020 Community Investment Program. Applications for community grants and donations will be accepted.

NWLAMG will accept applications for projects in **Bossier, Caddo, DeSoto, or Red River Parish.**

NWLAMG will accept electronic applications from eligible groups at nwlamggrants@gmail.com between September 1 and September 30, 2019.

Award decisions will be announced no later than **December 31, 2019.**

[2020 Application Form](#)

[2020 Program Guidelines](#)

For more information and for assistance in completing this application, contact the NWLAMG Community Investment Committee by phone (318-564-1180 or 318-465-0000) or by e-mail(nwlamggrants@gmail.com)

AUTUMN, AND THE NWLA MASTER GARDENER BULB SALE IS RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER!



Just a heads up everybody!

We have placed most of our orders for bulbs for the October 26th “Bulb Sale.” As a committee, we think you would like to know about what the committee has been doing to make this our most profitable bulb sale EVER!

To make that happen, we have gone “looking” to find bulbs from fields and roadsides that we think you will like. We have already had members and friends offer to give us bulbs from their yards (or friends yards) that we can sell the day of the sale. In the bulb sale this year, there will be heirloom bulbs and many standard treasures that we and the public will want to grow in our yards.

Thing is, you can never have enough free bulbs or tubers. That’s what this note is about. What have you got in your yard that you can donate to the sale? All of us have to thin out our flower beds at times so if you have an abundance of daffodils or amaryllis, hyacinth or lilies, bluebonnets or arums, consider sharing them with us. We are also going to sell daylilies and irises this year if some are donated (no flags). ((**big hint!**)) It would be super helpful if you could have a picture and description of what you bring to us but, if all you can say is ‘daffodils’?, we’ll still take them and offer them in a “surprise bag. Thanks in advance to all of you bulb loving Master Gardeners.

Ron Calk, Bulb Sale chairman, and bulb sale committee members

A Little bit of THIS, And, a Little bit of THAT! Events, News, Tidbits, and More

September 8, New Orleans

Plant Sale

New Orleans Botanical Gardens – Pelican Greenhouse

Come shop a wide variety of plants from 9 a.m. until noon, including annuals, perennials, roses, ginger, edibles, succulents, and native plants. Admission to the plant sale is free. For more information, call 504-483-9464 or e-mail plants@nocp.org.

September 10, Baton Rouge

Reflections in the Garden – Stunning, Show-stopping Tropicals

Ione E. Burden Conference Center

September 12, Baton Rouge

LSU Hilltop Arboretum's Fall Garden Trip – Cajun Prairie

We will begin the journey to Pitkin for a morning visit with Dr. Charles Allen and his lovely wife Susan at Allen Acres Natural Area. Our second stop of the morning will be for lunch and dessert at Cecil's Cajun Kitchen in DeRidder and then back on the bus for a short drive to Almost Eden Nursery in Merryville. Owner Jeff McMillan will welcome us with open arms and lead a tour of the nursery test gardens and greenhouses. Plants will be available for sale. Our last stop of the day before heading back to Baton Rouge will be Eunice, Louisiana, to visit the ten-acre restored Cajun Prairie on the corner of Martin Luther King Drive and East Magnolia Street. A paved walking trail around the perimeter of the prairie will provide breathtaking views of the fall display of flowers and butterflies. Tour will depart at 7 a.m. with an estimated return at 8 p.m. All-inclusive trip pricing – members \$145, non-members \$180. Non-member rate includes annual members

September 15, Hammond

Pollination Celebration

Taking place at the Hammond Research Station from 9:00 am-3:00pm The Tangipahoa Parish Master Gardener Association and LSU AgCenter hosts the third annual Pollination Celebration in the beautiful gardens and grounds of the Hammond Research Station to bring attention to the importance of pollinators and how people can become involved in supporting their habitats. Parking: \$5.00. Fill the car, the only cost is parking! Pollination Celebration! Learn about bees, birds, bats, and other pollinating animals. Presentations, kids activities, Bugmobile, Crafts, Food, Plant sales.

Saturday, September 30, 2019:

82424 Highway 25, Folsom. Admission is free. Sponsored by the Southeast Louisiana Nursery Association, wholesale plant nurseries from the Folsom and Amite area will offer a variety of plants and materials. It's not often that the gardening public can meet and talk to the growers that produce much of the nursery stock offered at local retail nurseries. There also will be children's activities, concessions, and displays of garden equipment and accessories.

Saturday, September 30, 2019,

Folsom Fall Garden Festival

Don't miss the Folsom Fall Garden Festival on Saturday, Sept. 30: "Fall is for Planting" is the theme of the festival, held from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Midway Church Park, 82424 Highway 25, Folsom. Admission is free. Sponsored by the Southeast Louisiana Nursery Association, wholesale plant nurseries from the Folsom and Amite area will offer a variety of plants and materials. It's not often that the gardening public can meet and talk to the growers that produce much of the nursery stock offered at local retail nurseries. There also will be children's activities, concessions, and displays of garden equipment and accessories.

October 7-8, 2019,- 10:00 am-5pm and October 8 from 10a.ma-4pm

NewOrleans Botanical Garden's Fall Garden Festival

Plant sales, educational programs. Tickets \$10. Adults, \$5.00 Children 5-12. Children under age 5, free.

October 11, 2019 8:30 am-2:30 pm –

Floral Fashion Show

The LSU AgCenter Botanic Gardens, 4560 Essen Lane, Baton Rouge, will host a fall fashion show Oct. 11 at 8:30 p.m., featuring designs incorporating fresh flowers. Students and faculty in the LSU College of Agriculture School of Textiles, Apparel Design and Merchandising worked with florists and others to create one-of-a-kind pieces. After the show, refreshments will be served and attendees will get a closer look at the designs

Tickets are \$35 at Eventbrite, <http://bit.ly/2wK6dol>.

October 13, 2019, 9:00 am-3 pm

Christ the King, 2205 Little Creek Road, Mandeville. Speakers include Rick Darke, consultant and author on the design and management of living landscapes presenting "Designing and Caring for living Landscapes" and Photography as a Gardener's Tool"

Tyler Carr, landscape manager, LSU Ag Center, Burden Botanic Gardens. Bring your lunch; drinks provided. Noon-1 p.m. \$10 (free for members). Call 225-763-3990 for more information.

Neil Odenwald will talk about his Top 25 Garden Plants. After the program, Dr. Odenwald will lead a walkabout through the more than 5,000 plants that will already be set up for PLANTFEST! the following weekend (Oct 6 & 7). 1-4 p.m. at the arboretum's new education facility; registration 12:30 p.m., program 1-4 p.m. \$10 members, \$15 non-members. For more information or to register for the teaser event, contact LSU Hilltop Arboretum at 225-767-6916, visit lsu.edu/hilltop, or email hilltop@lsu.edu.

October 6 & 7, Baton Rouge

35th Annual PLANTFEST!

LSU Hilltop Arboretum

Brace yourself for a botanical plant feast: trees, shrubs, perennials, vines, ferns, fruits, gingers, camellias, edibles, ornamental grasses, and more from native and traditional to eclectic and electric newcomers. Plants are from a diversity of nurseries in Louisiana, Alabama, and Texas. More than 5,000 plants will be assembled representing 600 different species. Saturday 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Sunday noon-4 p.m. For more information, contact LSU Hilltop Arboretum at 225-767-6916, visit lsu.edu/hilltop, or email hilltop@lsu.edu.

Oct. 13, 2018 – Shreveport Rose Society meeting 10:00 a.m. Klima Building Program: “Grooming Roses for Show”

October 19-20, St. Francisville

Southern Garden Symposium

Various sites in St. Francisville

With featured speakers including Rick Darke, Doug Tallamy, Andrea Wulf, and more, no other gardening program brings together top quality speakers and historic plantation settings as well as the Southern Garden Symposium. Known as much for its engaging social events and historic venues as for its outstanding gardening lectures and workshops, the Southern Garden Symposium – now in its 30th year – has become an annual tradition for garden enthusiasts from across the South. Often described as a town “two miles long and two yards wide,” the quaint community offers Southern hospitality, fantastic shopping, and breathtaking scenery. Symposium events are held at several historic and picturesque locations, both public and private, including The Oaks Plantation, Hillcroft, Afton Villa Gardens, Rosedown State Historic Site, Grace Episcopal Church, and more. For more information, visit <http://www.southerngardensymposium.org/schedule>.

October 20, West Monroe

Northeast Louisiana Master Gardeners 2018 Fall Bulb and Plant Sale

Pavillion at Seventh Square, 1700 N. 7th Street

Spring-blooming bulbs especially are chosen for our Southern climate, as well as hard-to-find native and heirloom bulbs and plants that add beauty and interest to your garden and landscape. Master gardeners will be on hand to help with your selections and answer questions. 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. For more information, call 318-323-2251.

Needing Volunteer/Education Hours?

Listed below are terrific opportunities to earn them!

Maintaining the Grounds at the Randle T Moore Center

This project is ongoing. Regular workdays are scheduled during the year and will be announced at regular Master Gardener Meetings. Also, watch your email for notifications. See Susan Shriver or call her Suzanne Shrive is your contact. Her phone number is 318 286 4454 (cell). Susan also alerts us by emails when she is planning workdays.

Phone DUTY:

Did you forget? Every Master Gardener is required to man to phones at the Carriage House:

This is a requirement clearly stated and understood by all Master Gardeners in good standing (i.e. paying dues, attending meetings, participating in Master Gardener projects). Master Gardener Linda Hammond, reports that any master gardener who needs hours or who wants a day to chat up other gardeners can do so by serving phone duty in the MG Office. She says someone is needed every Thursday & Friday from Friday from 10-1, on Monday from 8-12, on Tuesday 9-12 or Wednesday 1-4.

Newsletters wouldn't matter at all
If there weren't people at the other end of them.
THANKS FOR BEING HERE!

**You read this issue of The Seeding clear to the very last page.
Good on you.**

Ever Onward, Northwest Louisiana Master Gardeners.