



Grow, Know, and Go

February 2024

Gardening in North Texas

DCMGA Garden Tour Preview: White Rock Lake Bath House Cultural Center

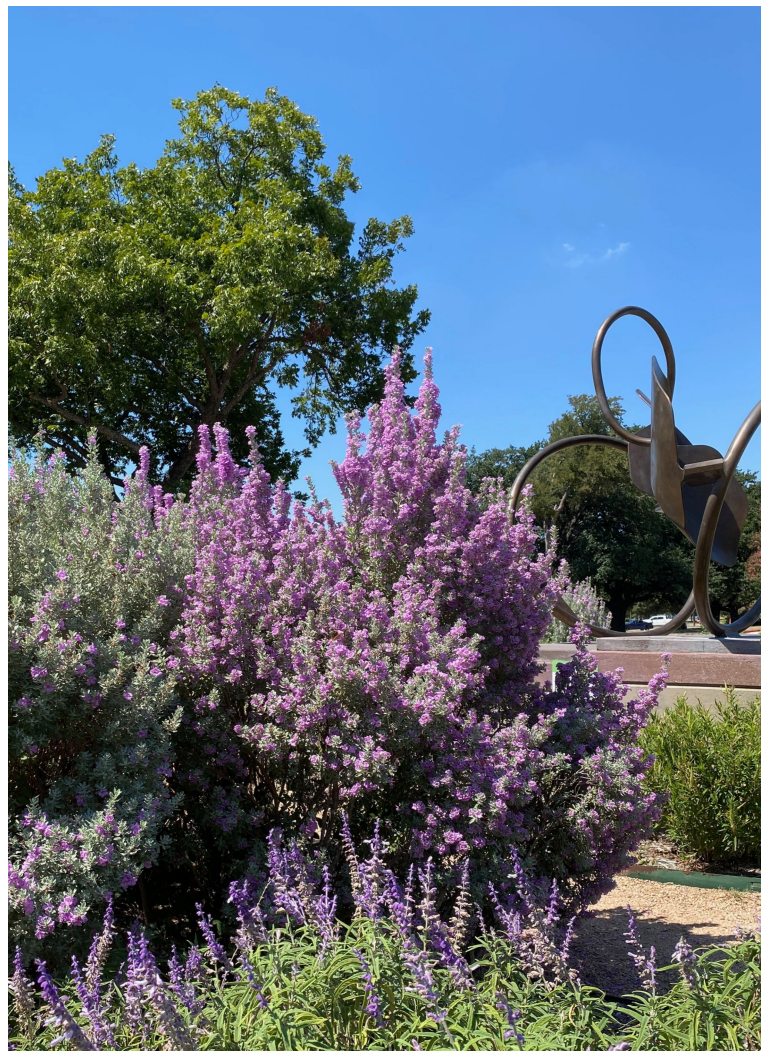
By Alan Rister, Dallas County Master Gardener

The upcoming DCMGA Garden Tour is scheduled for Saturday, May 18th from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. It will feature a total of eight beautiful gardens, including those at the White Rock Lake Bath House Cultural Center.

The Bath House Cultural Center Garden

While she was yet a student in the Dallas County Master Gardeners Class of 2005, Janet D. Smith envisioned the creation of a demonstration garden to be installed as an enhancement to the neglected White Rock Lake Municipal Bath House. This architecturally significant, art deco structure, had been renovated and repurposed in 2004 as Dallas' first neighborhood cultural center. But members of the advocacy group For the Love of the Lake noted with dismay that the recently restored Bath House building was fronted by unattractive and uninviting beds filled with weeds. As the project founder, Janet seized upon this opportunity to create an inspirational teaching garden. Thus, like all demonstration gardens, it could become a place for the public to discover "plants that they could use in their own home gardens," says Janet, who remains the long-time leader of the project.

Twenty years ago, Earth-Kind® roses were promoted by Texas A&M AgriLife and by the DCMGA, so initially this garden was conceived as



being a showplace for new rose varieties. However, by the time the Bath House garden was eventually



installed in 2008, the concept had evolved to include all kinds of Earth-Kind® plants, as well as a prominent representation of native and well-adapted plant varieties. The garden has a special emphasis on pollinator-friendly plants.

The centerpiece of the main bed facing the entrance to the Bath House Cultural Center is an abstract sculpture by artist John Christensen entitled "Whirl." It is part of the City of Dallas Public Art Collection, and the initial planting bed was designed by Dallas County Master Gardener Carmel Womack. Additional beds were added in 2018 and 2021, the more recent of which were designed by Dallas County Master Gardener Karen Meder.



The Bath House garden has been certified as a Wildlife Habitat and a Monarch Waystation, both of which distinctions flow naturally from the predominance of native plants in the garden. Recently, the Bath House garden has been recognized by the new [Homegrown National Park®](#) program, whose goal is "to regenerate biodiversity and ecosystem function by planting native plants and creating new ecological networks." It now appears on the HNP national biodiversity map.

As one of the oldest functioning community projects, the Bath House Cultural Center garden stands out as an exemplary showcase, especially of the effective use of

native and adapted plants in landscape design. Learn more about the [DCMGA's Garden Tour](#) and check in with the [DCMGA website](#) for the latest information on featured gardens and how to get tickets.

The DCMGA Japanese Maple Sale Begins March 6th



It's time for our Fourth Bi-Annual Japanese Maples Sale, featuring a large selection of Japanese maples from Metro Maples for purchase, with all proceeds going to DCMGA. If you were disappointed because you missed out buying one of these lovely trees in the October sale, be sure to get online early to make your selections. The [SignUpGenius](#) for ordering and purchasing maples **will go live March 6 at 8:00 a.m.** At that time, you can order and pay for your selection(s).

One-gallon trees are \$35.00 (including tax)
Two-gallon trees are \$46.00 (including tax)

The [SignUpGenius](#) will close at 5:00 p.m. on March 13, or earlier if all trees are sold. Our inventory of trees sold out within hours last October.

Please bring your confirmation to the pickup on Saturday, March 23 between 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. at Raincatcher's Garden at Midway Hills, 11001 Midway Road, Dallas.

Now Is Not The Time to be a Tidy Gardener

By Carol Gonzales, Dallas County Master Gardener

It is a common scenario in North Texas and throughout our Southern region. After a few months of dreary, frigid weather, the clouds clear, the sun comes out and the weather warms for several days. It's a wonderful opportunity to finally enjoy the outdoors. Many homeowners rush to tidy up their properties during these warm spells, pruning away frost damage and clearing away leaves.

The problem is, despite the warm spell, it is still winter. More cold weather and freezing temperatures can lie ahead, with the average date of the last freeze in Dallas County occurring March 21st – March 31st. Cleaning up your landscape now can actually be detrimental to your plants and the wildlife of your environment.



A Few Points to Keep in Mind During the Winter Months

If your plants have experienced some frost damage, do not prune away the damaged leaves and branches. They help to cover and protect the rest of the plant from future freezing and damage. Pruning too early can also stimulate tender, new growth, which will quickly fall victim to future freezing temperatures. It is best to wait until spring when the threat of frost is over before pruning frost-damaged plants.

Be cautious about pruning back your perennial plants, too. As they die back during winter, many of our favorite plants, like frostweed, coneflowers, black-eyed Susans, and asters, provide many species of birds with much-needed seeds. Birds are an important component of a healthy ecosystem, providing pest control, seed dispersal, and even plant pollination.

Leaf litter not only provides protective mulch for your plants and shrubs, but it also provides a habitat for beneficial insects and a food source for earthworms and soil microorganisms. Mulch the leaves that fall on your turf with your lawnmower, and blow or rake the ones in your beds to provide an even layer of protection around plants and bushes. The leaves will help keep the soil warm and moist for your plants, and it will also provide a habitat for hibernating caterpillars and other insects. These insects will, in turn, give birds a food source throughout the winter and into the spring when baby birds need it most.

Did you know that oak trees in our area support some 450 species of caterpillars and moths? Mexican Plum and Cherry Laurel trees host over 250 species. Don't miss out on the many benefits of providing these creatures with environmental habitats within your landscape.

Check out these articles from Texas A&M AgriLife Extension for more information about [Using Plants to Attract Wildlife](#) and [Gardening for Wildlife](#).

What Can I Plant Now in My Vegetable Garden?

By DCMG Help Desk Team

Spring is approaching quickly, and although it is not quite time to set out warm-season vegetables, there is still time to get some [cool-season crops](#) in the ground. These are plants that grow well and perform best in temperatures roughly between 60°F and 80°F. Some will perform at daytime temperatures as low as 40°F. Cool-season plants may not die with the onset of hot weather, but they will go to seed or lose quality and flavor, therefore it is important to plant early enough in the spring to allow for optimum growth.

Many cool-season crops can be started directly from seed. Others must be started from transplants if they are to reach maturity before hot weather sets in. Broccoli, cauliflower and cabbage are traditionally set out as transplants in late winter. When selecting seeds and transplants, look for varieties that are recommended for your growing area. Much research has gone into identifying cultivars that are adapted to our unique North Texas climate.

While many warm-season crops can tolerate a wider range of soil conditions, cool-season vegetables and herbs require well-drained soil that can be worked to a depth of 8-12 inches. If you have hard, compacted or shallow soil, consider a raised bed or containers to increase your chance of success.

So What Exactly Can I Plant?

From seed, you can plant radishes, carrots, beets, leeks, peas (English/snap type), parsley, cilantro, lettuce, spinach, collards, asparagus, and mustard. From transplants, you can plant cabbage, broccoli, and any of the cool-season vegetables mentioned above. It is generally not recommended to transplant root vegetables, but some sources report success as long as the transplants are handled with extreme care. Plant potatoes from seed pieces up to March 1st.

The best way to determine what and when to plant is to consult a planting chart. Here is a great [Vegetable Planting Guide from Texas A&M](#) that shows spring and fall planting dates for North Texas. If you plant a bit earlier, you will need to be



ready to protect your crops from a cold snap. If you plant a bit later, you may run into a very hot spring, which may decrease the productivity of many plants.

Another excellent resource to find the specific varieties of vegetables that do well in our region is from Texas A&M's Aggie Horticulture®. This [List of Recommended Vegetable Cultivars for North Central Texas](#) offers planting dates and specific cultivars for everything from asparagus to zucchini.

Don't Feel Like Digging?

Maybe it's time to consider growing vegetables and herbs in containers. Check out this AgriLife Extension publication on [Vegetable Gardening in Containers](#).



February 21, 2024 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm [Stories that Plants Tell](#) The Jewish Community Center, 7900 North Haven, Dallas. Plants have stories to tell and the stories may be about the history associated with a plant, how it got its name, unusual characteristics of the plant itself, and usefulness of the plant. Which plant is known as the alcoholic plant, which was Chaucer's favorite plant, which is associated with a bicycle? What are the odds of 'he loves me,' or 'he loves me not?' These stories and more are presented. Speaker is Carolyn Rozier.

February 21, 2024 10:00 am to 11:00 am [Best Trees for Your Landscape](#) Carrollton Public Library, 1700 Keller Springs Road, Carrollton. The Good List and the Not-So-Good List. Learn about the best trees to plant in your landscape and learn which tree species you might not want to choose. Speaker is Eric Lerner. Sponsored by the Brookhaven Garden Club.

February 22, 2024 12:00 pm to 1:30 pm [DCMGA Monthly Meeting: Annual Awards Ceremony](#) Dallas County District 1 R & B Complex, 715 Rowlett Road, Garland. A great occasion to thank all Master Gardeners for their work over the previous year and Glen McGee will also be giving a short presentation on Propagation. Public is welcome.

February 22, 2024 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm [Growing & Using Salad Greens](#) Dallas Public Library - Lakewood Library, 6121 Worth St., Dallas. Don't overlook salad greens for spring and fall for tasty and healthy eating in North Texas. Move over lettuce, here come kale, Swiss chard and salad greens! Speaker is Stephen Seewoester. Contact: candice.cogburn@dallascityhall.com.

February 23, 2024 11:00 am to 12:00pm [Landscaping with Native Plants](#) Dallas Arboretum Test Pavilion, 8525 Garland Road, Dallas. Provides an overview of plants that do well in North Central Texas and good horticulture practices that help ensure success. This presentation includes photos of the speaker's yard and garden. Speaker is Kevin Burns.

February 24, 2024 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm [Containers That Grow](#) Park Forest Branch Library, 3421 Forest Lane, Dallas. This talk covers tips for creating attractive container gardens in large pots or containers for the out-of-doors. You will learn what to look for when searching for flowers or plants and how to position and plant them so your containers become the envy of your friends and neighbors. Speaker is Carolyn Hicks. Contact: paige.shank@dallas.gov.

February 24, 2024 1:30 pm to 2:30 pm [Preparing a Vegetable Garden from the Ground Up](#) Dallas Public Library - Prairie Creek Branch, 9609 Lake June Road, Dallas. Vegetable gardening is more than just sticking plants in the ground. This talk explains preparing the ground for a vegetable garden, what to plant and when, and what to do after the garden is done to preserve the fertility of the soil. Speaker is Stephanie Smith.

February 24, 2024 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm [El maravilloso y exótico mundo de plantas tropicales](#) Garland Public Library, 713 Austin St., Garland. Aprende cómo crecen las orquídeas, bromelias y tillandsias silvestres y cómo cuidar y mantenerlas en su casa. La oradora es Gina Woods. Contact: dajohnson@garlandtx.gov.

March 1, 2024 10:00 am to 11:00 am [Unusual Herbs: Beyond the Basics](#) Juliette Fowler Communities, 1234 Abrams Road, Dallas. From Anise Hyssop to Cutting Celery or Salad Burnett, delve into lesser known herbs that can be grown in the Dallas area. For gardeners who crave variety and enjoy plants with unique properties. Speaker is Barbara Gollman.

March 6, 2024 11:00 am to 12:00 pm [Taking the Mystery Out of Plant Propagation](#) North Haven Gardens, 7700 Northaven Road, Dallas. Are you ready to solve the mystery of propagating new plants? Learn how to create new plants from cuttings, division, and layering, and discover the ABCs of seed collection, storage, and germination. Speaker is Roseann Ferguson. Contact: Sue Cobb suecobb217@gmail.com.

March 8, 2024 11:00 am to 12:00 pm [Tons of Tomatoes](#) Dallas Arboretum Test Pavilion, 8525 Garland Road, Dallas. Learn how to grow the best Texas tomatoes ever. Speaker is John Hunt.

March 9, 2024 11:00 am to 12:00 pm [Year-Round Blooms with Native Perennials](#) D L Hopkins Senior Center, 206 James Collins Blvd., Duncanville. Think globally and act locally! This talk, inspired by *Nature's Best Hope* by Doug Tallamy, explains how native plants support the local ecology while non-natives do not add to the food web that is needed to sustain all kinds of life forms that make our planet livable. Speaker is Janet D. Smith.

March 9, 2024 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm [Texas Native & Adapted Plants](#) D L Hopkins Senior Center, 206 James Collins Blvd., Duncanville. Provides an overview of plants that do well in North Central Texas and good horticulture practices that help ensure success. This presentation includes photos of the speaker's yard and garden. Speaker is Kevin Burns.

March 12, 2024 11:30 am to 12:30 pm [Year-Round Perennials for The Landscape](#) St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 400 N. College Street, McKinney. This presentation shows how to have an interesting landscape all year round by using perennials instead of having to spend time and money planting for each season. Contact: McKinney Garden Club dbrooksh@gte.net.

March 16, 2024 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm [Preparing a Vegetable Garden from the Ground Up](#) Dallas Public Library - Mountain Creek Branch, 6102 Mountain Creek Parkway, Dallas. Vegetable gardening is more than just sticking plants in the ground. This talk explains preparing the ground for a vegetable garden, what to plant and when, and what to do after the garden is done to preserve the fertility of the soil. Speaker is Stephanie Smith.

March 18, 2024 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm [Container Gardening](#) Dallas Public Library - Audelia Road Branch, 10045 Audelia Road, Dallas This demonstration talk covers the four basic elements of container gardening: pots, soil, plants and time. Plant combinations for shade, sun, and different seasons are discussed, as well as new container systems. Speaker is CA Hiscock.

March 20, 2024 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm [Ground Covers for North Texas](#) The Jewish Community Center, 7900 North Haven, Dallas. Ground covers reduce turf area, introduce texture into the landscape and solve a variety of problems. During this talk you will learn where to use ground covers and how to maintain them. You will also learn which ground covers do well in North Texas. Speaker is Kevin Burns. Sponsor: Garden Club of Dallas.

March 21, 2024 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm [Container Gardening](#) Lakewood Library, 6121 Worth St., Dallas. This demonstration talk covers the four basic elements of container gardening: pots, soil, plants and time. Plant combinations for shade, sun, and different seasons are discussed, as well as new container systems. Speaker is CA Hiscock.

March 23, 2024 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm [Homegrown Herbs for Healthier Home Cooking](#) Garland Public Library, 713 Austin St., Garland. Explore 10 favorite herbs that are easily grown in North Texas and discover culinary tips and techniques to create delectable, healthy dishes. Speaker is Barbara Gollman.

March 28, 2024 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm [Pollinators 301: A Deeper Dive into Plant-Pollinator Pairings](#) Bath House Cultural Center, 521 East Lawther, Dallas. Maybe you have mastered the basics of butterflies, have learned a bit about bees and know the hummers hover. You are ready for a deeper understanding of what makes certain plants and pollinators pair up so well. Come learn the surprising ways certain pollinators are specifically suited for the plants they pollinate. This talk is known for the photography and video it contains. The talk also contains recent research on the co-evolution of hummingbirds, bees and salvias. Contact: jessica.trevizo@dallas.gov.

March 29 11:00 am to 12:00 pm [Insects in the Garden - Good or Bad?](#) Dallas Arboretum, Test Pavilion, 8525 Garland Road, Dallas. This talk discusses the importance of allowing the good bugs to help control the few bad bugs, thus creating a garden environment that requires little or no insecticide. Speaker is Judy Meagher.

[View More at the DCMGA's Current Calendar of Events](#)



March

Don't be fooled! The average date of "last freeze" in Dallas is March 21st - 31st.

Download the [Vegetable Planting Chart for North Texas](#)

Planting

- Plant ornamental trees and shrubs while the weather is still cool.
- Divide and replant fall flowering plants such as asters and mums.
- Complete transplanting of established woody plants before budbreak.
- Plant cool-season flowers such as alyssum, daisies, dianthus, and geraniums (mid-to-late March).
- Plant spinach, radishes, and lettuce through mid-April. Also, plant snap beans, cucumbers, sweet corn, lima beans, mustard, tomatoes, and squash in late-March when soil temperatures are warm enough.
- Begin to plant warm-season flowers as temperatures increase towards the end of the month and as they become available in nurseries.

Plant Care

- Based on a soil test, fertilize established shade and ornamental trees and shrubs as new growth begins.
- Based on a soil test, fertilize pecan and fruit trees before budbreak. (See PlantAnswers.com for details.)
- Check new growth on ornamental plants weekly for aphids and scale insects and treat, if necessary.
- Mow fescue/ryegrass lawns, now growing vigorously, at five-day intervals, or as needed.

- Fertilize fescue lawns in early March as per soil test results.
- Continue to feed pansies and other cool season annuals to extend their bloom season.
- Continue to protect tender plants from late freezes.

Pruning

- Prune back overgrown ground cover such as English ivy and Asian jasmine to maintain the height you prefer. Do so before new growth begins.
- Cut back ornamental grasses before new growth appears.
- Wait to remove winter damage from shrubs and other ornamentals until the end of March.
- Do not prune spring flowering shrubs and vines, until after blooming such as forsythia, quince, azaleas, spirea, etc.
- Allow foliage on spring bulbs like daffodils to die back and dry before removing, to create food for next year's plants.

New this month on our DCMGA Website:



The DCMGA 2024 Garden Tour is Just Around the Corner!

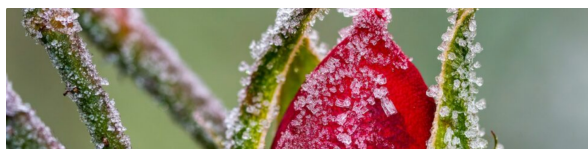
By Christy Lawrence



The DCMGA 2024 Garden Tour is scheduled for this spring! The tour will be held on Saturday, May 18th from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm and will feature 5 private home gardens and a public demonstration garden, as well as a new concept to the tour this year – two “bonus” gardens that are just too packed full of native and adaptive botanical marvels to leave out. [Read more ...](#)

Are Your Plants Cold Hardy?

By the DCMGA Help Desk Team, Margaret Ghose



Many cold-hardy plants may look dead after the frigid temperatures of January, but they very well may not be. A plant's cold hardiness is determined by the coldest



that it should survive. [Read more ...](#)

minimum temperature that a fully dormant plant can withstand. Being cold hardy does not mean that a plant will remain evergreen all winter, rather it simply means

Plant of the Month - *Ungnadia speciosa* (Mexican Buckeye)


By At Home Botanist Team



Mexican Buckeye is an attractive, deciduous native shrub known for its brilliantly colored flowers and ornamental appeal. Showy clusters of sweet-smelling, pink blooms which attract butterflies and other pollinators dominate the branches in early spring before the foliage emerges.

[Read more ...](#)

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Carol Gonzales, Editor-in-Chief
Contact: carol@dreammaterial.com

Georgeann Moss, Associate Editor
Contact: gemoss3@gmail.com

Our mailing addresses:

6820 LBJ Freeway, Suite 3200
Dallas, TX 75240

715 Rowlett Road
Garland, TX 75043