



Grow, Know, and Go

July 2024

Gardening in North Texas

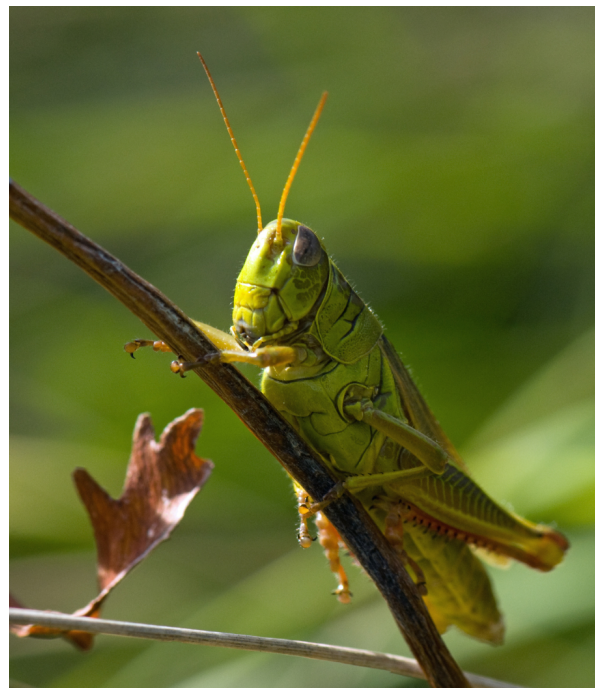
They're Here

By Georgann Moss, Dallas County Master Gardener

If you're starting to spot grasshoppers in your yard, you're not alone. Grasshoppers begin hatching in June or July and thrive in hot, dry conditions. There has been an increase of local posts on social media regarding grasshopper damage. While major infestations of grasshoppers are more common in rural communities, they can travel to urban areas as well. "I would not say we are having an uptick in grasshoppers," says Bryant McDowell, Texas AgriLife Extension Program Specialist for Urban IPM. "But, it is still early in the season to say if they will be an issue."

How To Deter Grasshoppers

- Control tall grass and weed growth in and around your property. This will reduce their food source and expose them to predators.
- Select plants that grasshoppers don't like. Apparently grasshoppers are picky eaters. Try incorporating some of the "Plants Grasshoppers Don't Like" listed below in your garden.
- Provide nest boxes, food, and water for birds. Many birds love to eat grasshoppers, and they will help you keep the population down.
- Protect your valuable plants with geotextile fabrics, a thin fabric similar to row cover yet thinner and more porous. To install insect fabric, prep the bed as usual then lay the cover directly on the ground and over the plants, making sure to provide enough slack plant growth. Seal the edges of the fabric with sandbags, soil or row cover pins.
- For problem areas, till the soil in the spring and fall to expose and destroy egg nests. Unfortunately, tilling may also reduce soil moisture and contribute to erosion. You'll need to weigh these disadvantages against future potential grasshopper damage.



- Use biologic controls such as Nosema locustae. The protozoan, Nosema locustae, is sometimes incorporated into a bran-based bait for grasshoppers. The baits may kill some nymphs but have little effect on adult populations. Baiting can reduce egg-laying in adults but will not help in areas that need immediate grasshopper control.

Fun Facts About Texas Grasshoppers

- There are five main species of grasshoppers that cause most of the damage seen by urban residents in North Texas: Differential, Red-legged, Migratory, Two-striped, and Packard.
- Usually, only one generation of grasshoppers is produced each year. It can seem like more because there are so many species emerging consecutively
- It takes 40-60 days for grasshoppers to mature from nymphs to adults.
- Immature grasshoppers are easier to kill with pesticides than adults because they are smaller and don't yet have wings to escape the treatment area.
- Adult grasshoppers are the hungriest and most destructive. They can also travel the furthest because of their strong wings

Major Rural Grasshopper Infestations Can Be Economically Devastating

According to the Tri-State Livestock News, "In the 1930s, grasshoppers destroyed millions of acres throughout 17 western states, leading to a nationwide state of emergency. The National Guard was summoned, desperately addressing the problem with flame-throwers, dynamite, and eventually, arsenic."

The National Guard reported, "When it was all said and done, more than 31 million pounds of the toxic bait was spread across the state, costing more than half a million dollars. However, while more than \$3 million of crops were lost to the hoppers, stopping the advancing insects resulted in saving an estimated \$9 million worth of crops."

Plants Grasshoppers Don't Like

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| American beautyberry | Dwarf Mexican petunia |
| Artemesia | Eldarica (Afghan) pine |
| Bridal wreath spirea | Euonymous |
| Confederate jasmine | Forsythia |
| Coralberry | Juniper |
| Crape myrtle | Lantana |
| Dwarf yaupon | Mexican bush sage |
| Dwarf burning bush | |

Now's the Time to Start Your Fall Vegetable Garden

By Carol Gonzales, Dallas County Master Gardener

It's hard to believe during this sweltering, Texas heat, but it's time to start planting your fall vegetable garden. From now until early September, you can take advantage of our second growing season of the year. Now's the time to begin planting peppers, melons, cucumbers, tomatoes, Lima beans, summer squash and more for a fall harvest. For the best chances of success, look for specific varieties of vegetables recommended for North Texas by Texas A&M's Agrilife Extension Service at this [link](#). They also offer an information-packed [Fall Vegetable Gardening Guide](#) that includes a guide for planting fall herbs.



How About a Quick and Easy Option?

If you're weary from a long, hot summer, the prospect of planting a vegetable garden may not be appealing. However, container plantings of favorite fall vegetables might be just right for you.

Container gardening has many attractive features over traditional, in-ground plantings. First and

foremost, it requires far less physical effort. There is no tilling, raking or hoeing to amend the soil. And, there is less bending and stooping involved in planting and weeding. Container gardens also bring mobility, better nutrition and improved health to plants. Pots can be moved to adjust sunlight exposure and to provide frost and freeze protection. Fertilization is easier and more targeted within containers, and plants are far less likely to get soil-borne diseases.

Which vegetables are suitable for containers?

Almost any vegetable that will grow in a typical backyard garden during the fall will also do well as a container-grown plant. This includes leeks, onions, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, lettuce, Swiss chard, greens, kale, winter squash, radishes, turnips and parsley.

Table 1. Varieties for Container Grown Vegetables

Broccoli (2 gallons, 1 plant)	Packman, Bonanza, others
Carrot (1 gallon, 2-3 plants. Use pots 2 inch deeper than the carrot length)	Scarlet Nantes, Gold Nugget, Little Finger, Baby Spike, Thumbelina
Cucumber (1 gallon, 1 plant)	Burpless, Liberty, Early Pk, Crispy, Salty
Eggplant (5 gallons, 1 plant)	Florida Market, Black Beauty, Long Tom
Green Bean (2 gallons minimum, space plants 3 inches apart)	Topcrop, Greencrop, Contender, (Pole) Blue Lake, Kentucky Wonder
Green Onion (1 gallon, 3-5 plants)	Beltville Bunching, Crystal Wax, Evergreen Bunching
Leaf Lettuce (1 gallon, 2 plants)	Buttercrunch, Salad Bowl, Romaine, Dark Green Boston, Ruby, Bibb
Parsley (1 gallon, 3 plants)	Evergreen, Moss Curled
Pepper (5 gallons, 1-2 plants)	Yolo Wonder, Keystone Resistant Giant, Canape, Red Cherry (Hot), Jalapeno
Radish (1 gallon, 3 plants)	Cherry Belle, Scarlet Globe, (White) Icicle
Spinach (1 gallon, 2 plants)	Any cultivar
Squash (5 gallons, 1 plant)	Dixie, Gold Neck, Early Prolific Straightneck, Zucco (Green), Diplomat, Senator
Tomato (5 gallons, 1 plant)	Patio, Pixie, Tiny Tim, Saladette, Toy Boy, Spring Giant, Tumbling Tom, Small Fry
Turnip (2 gallons, 2 plants)	Any cultivar

It is important to select the right variety of plant for your container, and the graphic at left shows some recommended varieties and container sizes. Detailed information about planting and caring for your vegetable container garden is available through the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension [information sheet here](#).

We are fortunate in North Texas to have two growing seasons. Hopefully, the challenging growing seasons of the past will not overshadow your enthusiasm for a productive, rewarding growing season to come.

Average Planting Dates for Fall Vegetables in North Texas

Beans, snap bush	Sep 1
Beans, Lima bush	Aug 20
Beets	Oct 15
Broccoli	Sep 1
Brussels sprouts	Sep 1
Cabbage	Sep 1
Carrots	Nov 10
Cauliflower	Sep 1
Chard, Swiss	Oct 1
Collards	Oct 10
Corn, sweet	Aug 20
Cucumber	Sep 1
Eggplant	Jul 1
Garlic (cloves)	Oct
Kohlrabi	Sep 10
Lettuce, leaf	Oct 10
Mustard	Nov 1
Onion (seed)	Nov 1
Parsley	Oct 10
Peas, southern	Aug 1
Pepper	Jul 1
Potato	Sep 1
Pumpkin	Aug 1
Radish	Nov 25
Spinach	Nov 15
Squash, summer	Sep 10
Squash, winter	Aug 10
Tomato	Jul 1
Turnip	Nov 1

Firebush: A Plant That Can Handle the Heat

And Attract Hummingbirds

If you're looking for a plant that can beautifully handle the heat of a Dallas summer, consider the long-blooming Texas Superstar® firebush. Though it is a tropical annual in our zone, it has many benefits that make it a worthy yearly investment in your garden.

Firebush, sometimes called "Hummingbird Bush," is a prolific bloomer, producing flowers nonstop from June to November. It's also heat and drought tolerant and will grow in almost any soil type as long as there is adequate drainage. And as its namesake implies, the firebush's many tubular, red flowers attract hummingbirds and pollinators in mass. As a designated Texas Superstar, firebush is pest-resistant and has proven, superior performance under Texas growing conditions.

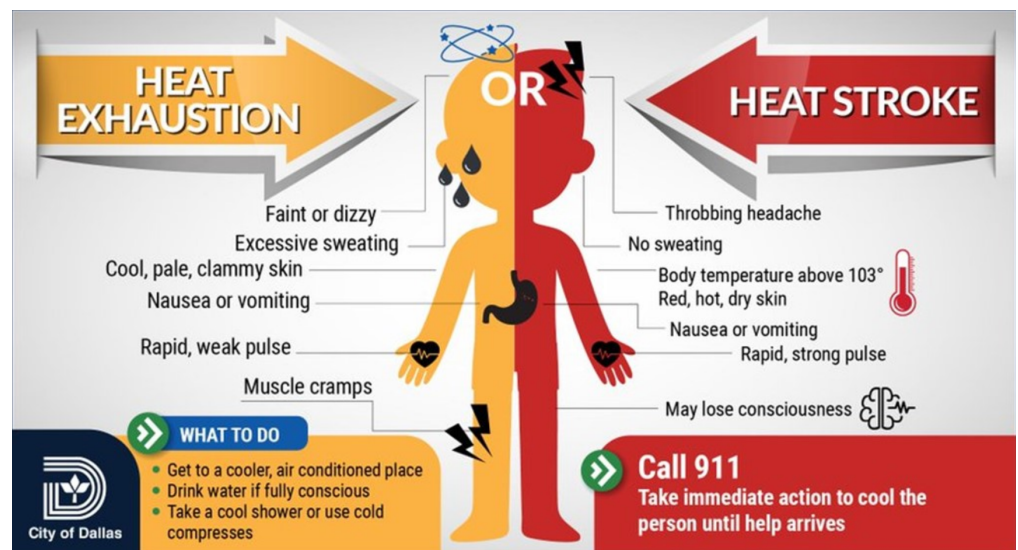


Firebush prefers full sun but can tolerate partial shade, though it may have reduced flower production. Growing three feet tall and about the same in width, it is best suited planted in mass at the back of a bed, or in front of a fence. It performs exceptionally well as a container plant as long as the pot has good drainage. Firebush plants in containers can be overwintered in a sunny location in the house and will be even larger the following summer.

Learn more about planting and using firebush at the [Texas Superstar's website](#).

Gardeners spend a lot of time outdoors. Know the signs of heat-induced illness and how to keep yourself safe while gardening outside.

[Tips to Avoid Heat Exhaustion and Heatstroke](#)



July 21, 2024 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm [Texas Plant Tales](#) Cozby Library & Community Commons, 177 N. Heartz Rd.,

Coppell. Native Texas plants have stories to tell. Find out which plant helps us sweep, which plant was needed by the Navy in WWII, which Texas native is associated with the French Legion of Honor Medal, which native Texas tree made its way to Patrick Henry's home. These stories and more are presented. Speaker is Carolyn Rozier.

July 27, 2024 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm [Gardening in Small Spaces](#) Dallas Public Library - Fretz Park Branch, 6990 Belt Line Rd., Dallas. Apartment patios or urban courtyards can produce a bountiful stand of plants if you make the proper choices. Everything from containers to reclaimed grassland can be the basis of a pocket garden. Speaker is Barbara Gollman.

August 2, 2024 10:00 am to 11:00 pm [Can I Eat That?](#) Juliette Fowler Communities, 1234 Abrams Rd., Dallas. This presentation covers some of the flowers, fruit, leaves, and roots that can be grown and eaten in the Dallas area. The nightshade (tomatoes, petunias, tobacco and potatoes) and umbel (hemlock and carrots) families are discussed as they include both edible and poisonous members. Speaker is CA Hiscock.

August 21, 2024 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm [Taking the Mystery Out of Plant Propagation](#) The Jewish Community Center, 7900 North Haven, 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.

August 25, 2024 2:30 pm to 3:30 pm [Biocontrol, Beneficial Insects and Banker Plants](#) North Haven Gardens, 7700 Northaven Rd., Dallas. The presentation will focus on beneficial insects and banker plants. Host: Greater Dallas Organic Garden Club. Speaker is Matt Orwat.

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



August

Get out of town! Head north to Colorado! Last chance before school starts!

Planting

- Complete installation of warm-season turf grasses by late August to mid-September to ensure they're established before the first fall freeze.
- Plant ground covers and tropical and warm-season annuals.
- Plant fall flowering perennials such as asters, Mexican mint marigold, Mexican bush sage (*salvia leucantha*), rain lilies, and garden chrysanthemums.
- Plant snap beans, lima beans, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, collards, eggplant, kohlrabi, okra, onion, parsley,

Irish potatoes, squash, and watermelon for the fall.

Plant Care

- Watch for powdery mildew on cedar elms, crape myrtles, and euonymus, and treat with fungicide, if necessary.
- Check pecan trees for aphids, shuck worms, webworms, and foliage diseases.
- Protect ornamental and peach trees from borers by applying a labeled borer preventive to the trunks in late August according to label directions.
- Be on alert for chinch bugs in St. Augustine lawns which will appear near paved surfaces and other yard hot spots.
- Watch susceptible ornamental plants for iron deficiency (yellowed leaves with darker green veins), aggravated by the hot dry weather, and treat with chelated iron if needed. Drench plants and avoid contact with hard surfaces that will stain.
- Keep young vegetable plants adequately watered and shade new plants from hot mid-day and afternoon sun.

Pruning

- Prune out any dead or broken branches of woody ornamentals (trees and shrubs) but avoid major pruning until the dormant season.
- Pinch off spent crape myrtle seeds to encourage new blooms and prune basal shoots to keep plant in tree form. This is necessary all-season long.
- Prune bush roses, and fertilize all roses according to soil test recommendation for fall blooming.
- Remove spent flowers of some perennials to encourage new blooms.
- Trim back leggy spring-planted annuals and fertilize if needed to encourage new growth and continued flowering.
- Stop pinching back chrysanthemums and Mexican mint marigold to ensure good bud development for fall blooms.

New this month on our DCMGA Website:



Foundation Plants for DFW Homes

By Georgeann Moss



If you've lived in north Texas for more than a year or two, you know that foundation maintenance is a must for concrete slab foundations in the DFW area. But what is the right way to maintain your concrete slab? And can your foundation plantings help you maintain your foundation in an economical and efficient manner? [Read more ...](#)

It's Time To Plant Fall Tomatoes!

By the DCMGA Help Desk Team, Margaret Ghose



It may be hot but, yes, it's time to plant tomatoes. According to people in the know, fall tomatoes in Texas taste great. The trick is nursing the plants through the hottest part of the summer so that they begin producing as the weather becomes more favorable towards autumn. [Read more ...](#)

Texas Kidneywood

By the At Home Botanist Team



Texas Kidneywood, a native leguminous shrub, is renowned for its fine-textured, fragrant foliage and aromatic white blooms. This plant's distinctive vanilla-like scent, released when its leaves are crushed, makes it stand out among other garden species. [Read more ...](#)

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Monthly Newsletter, July 2024

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