

MILBERGER LANDSCAPE & NURSERY

THE GARDENING NEWSLETTER FOR SOUTH CENTRAL TEXAS

FEBRUARY 2016

PLANT QUESTIONS

My winter annuals like my pansies are starting to get aphids. However, they still have blooms and I hate to get rid of them. What should I do?

As soon as it gets hot, get rid of them! Throw them into the compost pile. Once the weather is hot the cool season plants become breeding grounds for insect infestations. A few blooms are not worth it

It's pretty hot during the day. Why do we wait to plant certain annuals like periwinkle and caladium?

Although the air is warm during the day, the soil has not yet warmed. Cooler soils combined with moisture lead to rot and disease on certain plants.

I have tons of caterpillars hanging down from my trees. What should I spray on them to kill

them? Caterpillars are usually a temporary problem in the spring. If they are on your well-adapted trees, don't worry about it. Birds trying to feed their new babies will take care of a lot of them for you.

If you have gardening or landscaping questions we have the answers. Just ask any of the friendly, knowledgeable, and experienced nursery staff at Milberger's Nursery.



Petunias provide eye catching color as we head out of the winter and into the spring. With so many Even when the plant is not in bloom, it still looks phenomenal in the garden.

WINTER GARDENING EXPERTISE

Color in Cooler Weather

In February you can continue planting cold weather annuals such as pansies, dianthus, snapdragons and chard. They will continue to bloom for you well into April. Spring is all about color in the garden. Annuals add value to our garden space by adding big, showy, colorful blooms for a particular season, often adding the instant "wow factor" to our green spaces. Because annuals are short lived, grow quickly and bloom almost continuously, they provide maximum color for the yard scape instantly. Oppositely, perennials usually hit their full stride in the second year of their lives or later. Many perennials stop blooming for a period after being transplanted as they adjust to their new surroundings and set their roots. Annuals don't have that kind of time, so they just get busy blooming, which makes them great blooms to fill out the thin parts of your garden beds.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE THREE)

Our web site and the email version of this newsletter contain many color photographs, how-to-do-it diagrams, more complete articles, links to many gardeners references and many more answers to your gardening and landscape questions. Visit www.MilbergerNursery.com to sign up. We respect your privacy and we will not share your address or information with anyone not associated with this newsletter.

FEBRUARY GARDENING EVENTS

Wed., Feb 3rd from 10am 'til Noon

River Romance: Beauty and Restoration. San Antonio Garden Clubs will host Lee Marlowe, Sustainable Landscape Ecologist for the San Antonio River. FREE at the Sat Antonio Garden Clubs, 3310 N. New Braunfels. (210) 824-9981

Sat., Feb 6th from 10am 'til 1:30pm

Milberger's Blood Drive. Take advantage of this opportunity to give the gift of life. South Texas Blood and Tissue Center. To support this drive Milberger's will offer a \$10 gift certificate to each person willing to donate. 210-497-3760

Thurs., Feb 11 from 6:30pm 'til 8:30pm

San Antonio Herb Society hosts Pat James-Hasser to present how herbs were transported to this country on the Mayflower and stored and used in colonial times. FREE at San Antonio Garden Center at 3310 N. New Braunfels. www.sanantonioherbs.org or mbelisle@satx.rr.com.

Sat., Feb 20 all day

Join the Rodeo Fun at Milberger's Nursery where *The 2016 Rodeo Tomato* will be announced and available for sale. Brisket Tacos (\$1) and live music. FREE at the nursery. 210-497-3760

Sat., Feb 27 from 10:30 'til Noon

Adult Seminar: Spring Clean Up. Learn the best practices for preparing your spring garden: proper pruning, mulching and fertilization with David Rodriguez, Extension Horticulturist for Texas A&M AgriLIFE Extension Service. Bring a notebook. FREE Earth-Kind Seminar at the nursery. 210-497-376

Find more Gardening Events – visit www.MilbergerNursery.com



To find us:
Take the Bulverde Exit off of Loop 1604. The entrance to Milberger's is next to the Valero gas station.

Milberger's Landscape Nursery

Open 9:00 to 6:00 Monday to Saturday
And 10:00 to 5:00 on Sundays

3920 North Loop 1604
San Antonio, TX 78247
(210) 497-3760

Or on the World Wide Web at
www.milbergernursery.com
nursery@milbergersa.com

Milberger's Nursery February Features

No Better Time to Plant Trees and Shrubs

and you can take advantage of the
CPS Green Shade rebates



\$50 per Tree

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Just ask one of the
**South Texas
Tree Experts
at Milberger's**



FRESH STOCK
ARRIVING
EVERY DAY

Roses for 2016

Milberger's will carry over
50 varieties of Modern and
Antique this year.

See our website for a listing of
ROSES for 2016



Watch for our weekly sale specials in
The San Antonio Express-News
or at
www.MilbergerNursery.com

Gardening South Texas on the air at KLUP (am 930)

Saturday and Sunday 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.
To have your gardening questions answered during show hours ONLY

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Our Writers have the answers: **Dr. Jerry Parsons** is a well renown Horticulture Specialist who is retired from the Texas AgriLife Extension Service in San Antonio; **Dr. Calvin Finch** is the retired Director of Water Conservation and Technology at the Texas A&M University System. The Gardening Newsletter for South Central Texas is edited by Marc Hess at mhess@hctc.coop.

WINTER GARDENING EXPERTISE

Color in Cooler Weather

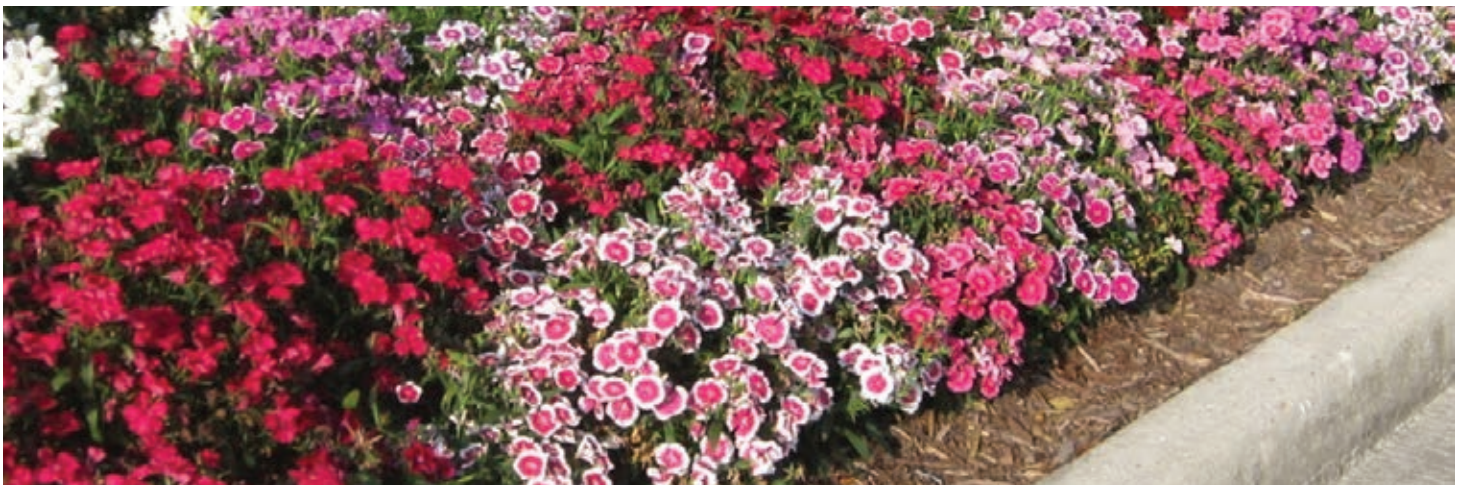
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Annuals and perennials can work hand-in-hand in the landscape. Because some perennials die back in the winter taking a while to return in spring, many gardeners plant annuals in front of and around perennials to add blooming color while some perennials are still in a dormant stage. Another use for these short-lived beauties is to usher in a new season.

Garden Tips for February

- 🌱 Continue planting winter annuals such as pansies, dianthus, snapdragons and chard on warmer days.
- 🌱 Sow your seeds for spring annuals and veggies, inside, per instructions based on the last frost date for your area. Remember, they need full sun and temperatures around 65 to 70 degrees (watch out for those cold window sills!).
- 🌱 Don't forget to divide and replant your summer and fall blooming perennials while they are still dormant.
- 🌱 Now is an excellent time to plant or relocate native and cold hardy trees and shrubs while they are dormant. It is also the perfect time to perform any tree trimming.
- 🌱 Finish pruning your roses. Don't forget that your climbing roses won't need any trimming until after they bloom in spring.
- 🌱 Get mulch into your flower beds before the weather warms up and weeds really begin to sprout.
- 🌱 Don't forget to fertilize your winter annuals throughout the winter and continue into spring. Use a complete, water-soluble fertilizer to help them get established while it's still cold.

“This has been a relatively cold winter with a number of days with temperatures below freezing. The result is freeze-killed foliage and dormant grass. If you want to perk up the landscape, however, there are still lots of options. The cold weather annuals will bloom from now until the end of April.”



It's not too late to plant your dianthus. This is a hardy annual that grows best in cool conditions. You'll find Dianthus in a variety of colors such that can be used to make strong borders.

A visit to Milberger's Nursery will help you get your spring garden going. You will find healthy plant stock that is selected to thrive throughout our South Central Texas summers. You will also find the good advice and creative suggestions for your specific landscape and gardening needs. To see what is on sale each week visit our web site at www.milbergernursery.com or look for our ads in the **San Antonio Express News**.

WATER GARDENING

Beauty In A Barrel

By Dr. Jerry Parsons

Barrel water gardens are an excellent alternative to in-ground ponds if space or physical constraints are limiting your alternatives. In addition, barrel water gardens are less expensive, quick, moveable, and require no edging. Probably the outstanding factor influencing barrel gardening has been their practicability. Using barrel water gardens, water gardening can be carried on in a space no larger than six square feet.

The basics of the barrel water garden are just like those of the in-ground ponds. These can be as simple as putting a flexible PVC liner in a whisky barrel, filling it with 6 inches or more of a good clay-loam pressed down firmly and evenly.

Water lilies should then be planted in the center of the barrel with submersed aquatics surrounding

them. In small tubs, only one water lily should be planted. Instead of planting into soil directly, choose some of the dwarf water lilies and put them in the barrel in their pots. Add water and the pond is ready. If you live in the southern half of Texas and use hardy water lilies, they should over-winter successfully in the barrel. However, if you live in

areas where the water in a barrel may freeze solid, or if you chose to plant tropical water lilies, you must over-winter the plants in an area that is cool but not freezing.

Probably the most important factor to be considered when choosing a site is that the barrel should receive maximum sunlight, preferably from morning until night.

When flowers and leaves begin to appear on the surface, they should be thinned out as much as possible so that the others will spread out and the blossoms will receive the full benefit of the sun.



Repurposing old wine or whisky barrels into a pond water garden is a great way to build a simple, and sustainable water feature. Whether you plan to use it on a patio or in the garden, you will find that making this simple half barrel water garden pond will provide pleasure not only for you, but for wildlife that relish a habitat in or near water.

Barrels may be placed above the ground and very often match their surroundings but for best landscaping,

they should be sunk in the ground. In this way the temperature of the water can be more evenly maintained. A suitable site in the garden for the pool would be a low spot where it would look most natural and then when it is placed in a hole, about an inch or two of the rim should be allowed to extend above the ground level.

Whether you want to install your own water garden or have it installed by professionals Milberger's has the materials and expertise to help you add a water feature that will add value to your landscape. Visit our web site www.milbergernursery.com for ideas and information.

IN YOUR ROSE GARDEN

How To Growing Roses in Containers

By Andrea Grant

With the exception of large climbers, most roses can be grown successfully in containers. It is important that the container be large enough to provide ample space for the roots; also to have good drainage, good soil and a location with adequate light and air circulation. The container may be plastic or clay.

Plastic fares better in cold climates where freezing may actually crack clay containers. Clay containers do provide a cooler condition for the roots during hot weather. If choosing plastic, it is better to obtain the lighter terra-cotta color rather than the darker plastics, as they heat up faster. When met with these requirements one can grow miniatures right through roses that can attain a height and spread of up to five feet.

“Roses in containers will need more water than the same roses in the ground. Not only are all sides of the container subject to drying sun and winds, there is also no ground water to fall back on. Watch planters carefully and water whenever the growing medium starts to dry out.”

~ Jerry Parsons, Bexar County Celebrity Horticulturist.

To prepare a container for the rose to be planted in, place a layer about one inch deep of gravel or other medium sized rocks in the bottom of the container. This serves as drainage and prevents the soil from becoming too compressed at the bottom. Next, to prepare the soil, combine one third good quality commercial potting soil, one third well- aged garden compost (if this is not available

then substitute more of the potting soil) and one third well-composted mushroom or steer manure. You may wish to add an extra cup of perlite to the mix to enhance drainage. It is beneficial to the rose to add one cup of bonemeal to the soil. To increase the nutrient level, fishmeal and bloodmeal may be added. Roses are heavy feeders, as they need fertile conditions to produce many blooms over the growing season.



Roses in pots extend the scope and possibilities of gardening. Wide walkways can be highlighted with tubs of roses spotted here and there. Steps to the front or back door can be graced with the beauty and fragrance of roses. Miniature roses can dress up window boxes in the summer, and then be brought indoors in winter to perk up the house.

Space containers about two feet apart. This will reduce the incidence of fungus-related rose diseases. A rose should also have a full day of sun, or at least seven hours.

New 2016 rose varieties will be appearing at the Nursery this month. Rosarians from the **San Antonio Rose Society** will be at the nursery on March 19 to "Talk Roses" and help you choose the rose varieties that are best suited for your landscape and your gardening style.

TREES AND SHRUBS

No Better Time to Plant Fruit Trees

February is a great time to get your fruit trees planted. Milberger's tree lot is freshly stocked with a wide selection of healthy fruit trees and if you get them planted in your landscape this month they can get their roots established before the heat



Avocados are widely consumed in our part of Texas, in part because of the popularity of Tex-Mex cuisine. In addition to their unique flavor, Avocados have more potassium than do bananas and are a good source of key vitamins. Avocado trees grow well in containers and certain varieties grow well in South Texas landscapes when sheltered from the cold.

of summer arrives. When you select the proper varieties, plant and care for them properly these fruiting trees will thrive in south central Texas. Besides the basic apples, peaches, plums and pears our tree lot includes citrus trees, avocados trees, pomegranates, olive trees, blueberries, raspberries, Japanese persimmons, blackberries and more.

When you plant the tree make sure you remove the mulch, soil and burlap from the top of the root ball so that the trunk flare is well-exposed. Set the tree

in a generous hole with the root flare above the ground's surface. Even bare-rooted trees are usually planted too low, so avoid that common mistake.

Most people choose to grow fruit trees in containers for easy mobility. For this purpose, the ideal container size is about 10-15 gallons — substantial enough to support a tree, but small enough to move easily. This size is perfect if you're growing in a window, balcony or patio, so you can bring the tree indoors for protection when the weather starts getting too cold. It also comes in handy if you need to relocate your tree to an unheated garage, shed, or basement during winter.



If you are just beginning to add fruit to your landscape start with **citrus**. It's easy to grow, fun to eat and beautiful in the landscape. Not only can homegrown citrus reward you with a sweeter taste and juicier texture than store-bought but the citrus gardener gets to enjoy that fragrance of blossoms and the beauty of the developing fruit dangling from their branches on your patio.

Fruit trees do not qualify for the CPS Green Shade Rebate program. That program, which runs through April 30, 2016, reimburses CPS customer \$50 per newly planted shade tree. The program specifies which shade trees qualify for the discount and you will find shade trees that qualify for the CPS Rate along with the fruit trees in Milberger's tree lot.

FEBRUARY GARDENING AND LAWCARE GUIDELINES

Get Ready for Spring Planting

By Dr. Jerry Parsons

February is the month that kicks off the Children's Vegetable garden Program at the San Antonio Botanical Garden. The 16 week program begins February 22 and continues through June 7. Each child is allotted a 3.5' x 28' garden plot and will have fun growing different types of seeds, vegetables, and ornamental annual flowers with the guidance of Master Gardner volunteers. Children can also earn their Junior Master Gardener certification by participating in fun, hands-on activities each week after they have tended their garden.

In order to gain the most from the learning experience and to help ensure successful growing, participants are required to attend all sessions (two absences are allowed). Families are welcome to share the gardening experience with their child. See sign-up information below.

In Your Home Garden

Plant: February is the month to begin spring gardens and is the ideal month to prepare your rose beds; be sure to check all the antique

and modern roses as they are freshly stocked at Milberger's from now through April.

Prune: Finish pruning started in January in February. Do any major fruit or ornamental tree and shrub pruning. Spring pruning of roses in South Central Texas is normally done between the third week of February and the first week of March.

Lawncare: Mid-February to Mid March is the time to apply pre-emergent herbicides.

On the Lookout: Wait for a time period which will ensure temperatures above freezing for at least 48 hours to apply a dormant oil spray to euonymus, hollies, oaks, pines, pecans, and fruit trees which are prone to scale.

Odd Jobs: If you want to treat for ball moss, February is the idea month. Ball moss does not kill trees. Divide summer and fall-blooming perennials, including cannas, mallows, fall asters, mums, coneflowers, lythrum and perennial salvias before growth begins.

For more detailed and complete Gardening Tips from Jerry Parsons go to our newly redesigned website: **www.MilbergerNursery.com** and follow the newsletter link that reads "**Monthly Gardening Tips.**"

SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE FREE

Subscriptions to Milberger's Gardening Newsletter for South Central Texas are free, compliments of Milberger's Landscaping and Nursery. The newsletter is published at the beginning of each month.

TO RECEIVE this free newsletter, complete this form and return it to **Milberger's Nursery** or by calling (210) 497-3760. You can sign up on-line at **www.milbergernursery.com**.

We respect your privacy. Your name will not be shared with anyone not associated with Milberger Nursery.

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Milberger's Tree Lot

has the largest selection of healthy,
well rooted, ready-to-plant-trees
in the area.

To find the specific tree for your landscape talk to the tree
experts at Milberger's Nursery.



Gerber daisy (also Gerbera daisies or Gerbera jamesonii in Plant taxonomy) flowers exhibit large (4") blooms with yellowish central disks surrounded by colorful rays. The rays are most commonly yellow, red or orange. Gerbera daisy flowers reach a little over one foot in height, with a width slightly less than that. In Texas they are popular in perennial beds. They line full to partial sun in well drained soil. As houseplants they will bloom for six to eight weeks.