

MILBERGER LANDSCAPE & NURSERY

THE GARDENING NEWSLETTER FOR SOUTH CENTRAL TEXAS

MAY 2015

PLANT QUESTIONS

I trimmed my bougainvillea and now have new growth that is very healthy. Can I transplant it in a sunnier location? You don't say where you live but you should be able to relocate your bougainvillea at this time. It may be necessary to cut back some of the new growth if it is already excessive.

Can the ball moss go into the compost pile along with the live oak leaves? It is falling off of the trees. Yes, both materials are suitable for the compost pile.

When can we plant zinnias and the other warm weather annuals? Zinnias, cosmos, moss roses, begonias, purslane, caladiums, pentas and coleus can be planted now. I usually wait for May until the snapdragons, stocks, pansies, cyclamen and primrose decline from the heat.

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.



Brilliant **bougainvillea** at Milberger's ready for your containers or planting in the ground. Bougainvilleas are thorny, evergreen and some are fragrant. Bougainvilleas are popular for their large, colorful blooms which are produced most profusely in the summer. (PHOTO BY DAVIS BLACKMON)

GARDENING EXPERTISE

Bougainvillea for Brilliant Tropical Color in South Texas

Prized for their spectacular display of color and their love of hot direct sunlight the bougainvillea is a tropical vine whose bright, vibrant flowers positively glow in the landscape. Bougainvilleas can produce two or three beautiful displays of flowers in spring, summer and fall. The colorful parts are actually modified leaves called bracts. The true flowers are small and white. The bougainvillea can be grown in a pots or hanging baskets. Bougainvillea makes unique and graceful forms if grown for bonsai or topiary purposes.

(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.

MAY GARDENING EVENTS

Sat., May 2 – 1:00 pm 'til 4:00 pm
Spring Rose Show and Seminar presented by the San Antonio Rose Society. Over 300 entries of roses and artistic floral designs. **2:00** seminar on Growing Roses. Free and open to the public. San Antonio Garden Center, 3310 N. New Braunfels at Funston. 210-829-5360

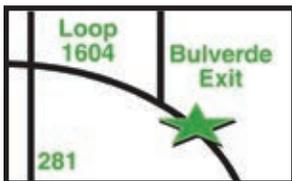
Sat., May 23 – 10:30 am 'til noon
Citrus Trees for your Landscape. FREE Earth-Kind Seminar at Milberger's. Tricks to successful citrus for trees planted in your landscape or in containers. Presented by David Rodriguez, Extension Horticulturist. Free and open to the public. 210-497-3760.

Sat., May 23 – 10:30 am 'til 1:30 pm
Milberger's Blood Drive
 An opportunity to give the gift of life. Milberger's offers a \$10 gift certificate to each person willing to donate. At the nursery. 210-497-3760.

Sat May 23 – 9:00 am - 5:00 pm
San Antonio Festival of Flowers
 San Antonio's Premiere All-Gardening Show with seminars, Organic Roundtable discussions, Plant Exchange and much more. \$6 at the door. Free parking. Alzar Shrine Auditorium, 901 N Loop 1604 West. www.safestivalofflowers.com. 210-380-3535

Sat., May 30 – 10:00 am 'til 11:00 am
Birds – Kids Gardening Class at Milberger's
 Volunteers from Mitchell Lake Audubon Society host a hands-on, fun-in-nature event about feeding and attracting our local and migratory bird population. Like all of our Kids Gardening Classes this class is designed for children between the ages of 5 to 10. It's free but call to reserve a spot because class size is limited and we need to be sure that we have enough materials for every child. 210-497-3760

**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
 May Features**

May is One of the **MOST COLORFUL TIMES** OF THE YEAR

The Nursery is **STOCKED TO THE FENCES WITH ANNUAL, PERENNIAL AND TROPICAL COLOR.** Look for weekly **BOUGAINVILLEA** specials on **HIBISCUS** & **OTHER BLOOMING BEAUTIES** that thrive in our hot South Texas sun.

TOP TOMATO CONTEST



Bring your best tomatoes to Milbergers **June 13— before noon**
 You could win in one of four categories:

- CHERRY TOMATOES**
- Large Tomatoes**
- Biggest Tomato**
- Best of Show**

Every one who enters receives a **\$10.00 Milberger Gift Certificate**
SEE OUR WEB SITE FOR DETAILS

Planning for a Water Garden?

**Milberger's has it all:
 WATERGARDEN KITS
 KOI - WATER PLANTS**

Not only do water features add an **AIR OF TRANQUILITY** to your landscape they **INCREASE THE VALUE** of your property.



**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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 1-866-308-8867

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Facebook.com.milberger's nursery

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 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 mhess@hctc.coop.

GARDENING EXPERTISE

Bougainvillea

(CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE)

Taking care of bougainvilleas is not difficult. The most common problem people seem to have is getting them to bloom. There are many, many different types of bougainvillea varieties on the market, and they can vary tremendously in how reliably and how often they bloom. The following advice is designed to produce a healthy plant with the best chance to bloom.



Since **bougainvilleas** bloom on new growth, feel free to cut them back to keep them under control and encourage branching. An ideal time to cut back bougainvillea is right after they finish a bloom period. Bougainvilleas may be kept bushy, allowed to sprawl and trail or trained on a trellis, whatever your taste or situation dictates.

“You should grow bougainvillea in relatively small containers. Don't be in a big hurry to replot them when they look like they have outgrown the pot they are in. Restricting the root system to some extent will not hurt as long as they are well watered and fertilized, and encourages flowering.”

The first step is to provide your plant with as much light as possible. Bougainvilleas bloom best when they receive full sun most of the day.

In South Texas bougainvilleas are sometimes planted in the ground in a protected location that gets sun all or most of the day. Handled this way, they make huge, spectacular plants that produce amazing displays of flowers. Cold can be an issue, and substantial winter damage will occur when temperatures hit the mid to low twenties. Flowering will be greatly reduced for a year or two if the plants get frozen back.

Like all plants, bougainvilleas need adequate moisture for proper growth. Keeping the plants evenly moist, but allowing them to dry slightly between waterings is recommended. If your plants seem reluctant to bloom, however, growing them a little more on the dry side will help encourage flowers.

Ask the gardening experts at Milberger's Nursery for more suggestions that will help get your garden into full bloom. You will find healthy plant stock, good advice and creative suggestions for your summer landscape and gardening needs from the experienced nursery staff. 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**.

LAWNCARE

Shade Loving Groundcovers

By Dr Calving Finch,

Director of Water Conservation and Technology at the Texas A&M University System

Shade is a blessing in the San Antonio area but it also can be a problem when it comes to trying to grow a lawn. Even St. Augustine grass requires four hours of sun for a thick lawn. Zoysia grass can tolerate shade but requires more sun than St. Augustine. Bermuda and buffalo grass do not last long unless they're in full sun. The solution for shade is to grow one of the wonderful shade tolerant

groundcovers.

The list includes Asiatic jasmine, dwarf ruellia, monkey grass, English ivy, and liriop for groundcovers under 18 inches tall. If you have lots of ground to cover and want a taller groundcover consider Texas gold columbine, blue plumbago, Turk's cap or shrimp plant.



My favorite groundcover for shade is **Texas gold columbine**. It has light green scalloped leaves that form mounds 18-24 inches tall. The flowers rise out of the mound of foliage and resemble shooting stars.

Planting groundcover is not really that difficult. If the ground is bare the ideal thing to do is add 2 inches of compost, spread 1 cup of slow release lawn fertilizer per 50 square feet and till up the soil.

In rocky uneven soil you can forego the compost or tilling if you must, the groundcovers like tender loving care but they are tough and will survive and prosper with much less water and care than a lawn.

Even if you have a lawn in place it is easy to replace it with a groundcover. Spray the growing lawn grass with Round-up or Finale. In a week you

can plant the groundcovers in to the dying grass. The killed sod will serve as a mulch to help prevent weeds while the groundcover is spreading. The first year water the groundcover as much as you would a lawn and fertilize again in September. By year 2 the groundcover will not require any irrigation.

Use lawn grass where you need it but use groundcovers and permeable hardscape where possible. You will use less water and after it is established you will not have to spend as much time caring for the planting.

SAN ANTONIO FESTIVAL OF FLOWERS

San Antonio's Premiere Gardening Event

The Festival of Flowers is San Antonio's most exciting gardening-exclusive event. Presented by San Antonio Water System, it is a day of informative seminars and shopping for plants, landscape materials and gardening accessories. It's a time to swap plants and seeds at the City-Wide Plant Exchange — the largest exchange in the state.

Discuss with the experts the latest in natural and organic gardening at the Organic Roundtable. Talk one-on-one with the area's most experienced gardeners at the "Ask the Expert" booth. See demonstrations on rain water harvesting, floral design and herb cooking. You can find all the information you need at www.safestivalofflowers.com.

2105 Saturday Morning Seminar Series features:



Your Own Spa Garden with Trisha Shirey, author of *Guide to Vegetable Gardening in the Southwest*.



Texas' Flowering Trees with Mark Bird, Arborist for the City of San Antonio and coordinator of the Alamo Forest Partnership.



Full Scorch Gardening presented by Mark Peterson, Conservation Project Coordinator for San Antonio Water System.



\$1 off

ONE REGULAR ADULT ADMISSION TO THE 2015

San Antonio Festival of Flowers

SATURDAY ~ MAY 23, 2015 ~ 9AM - 5PM

PRESENT THIS COUPON
WHEN YOU ENTER THE
FESTIVAL OF FLOWERS

AT THE ALZAFAR SHRINE
901 N. LOOP 1604 WEST
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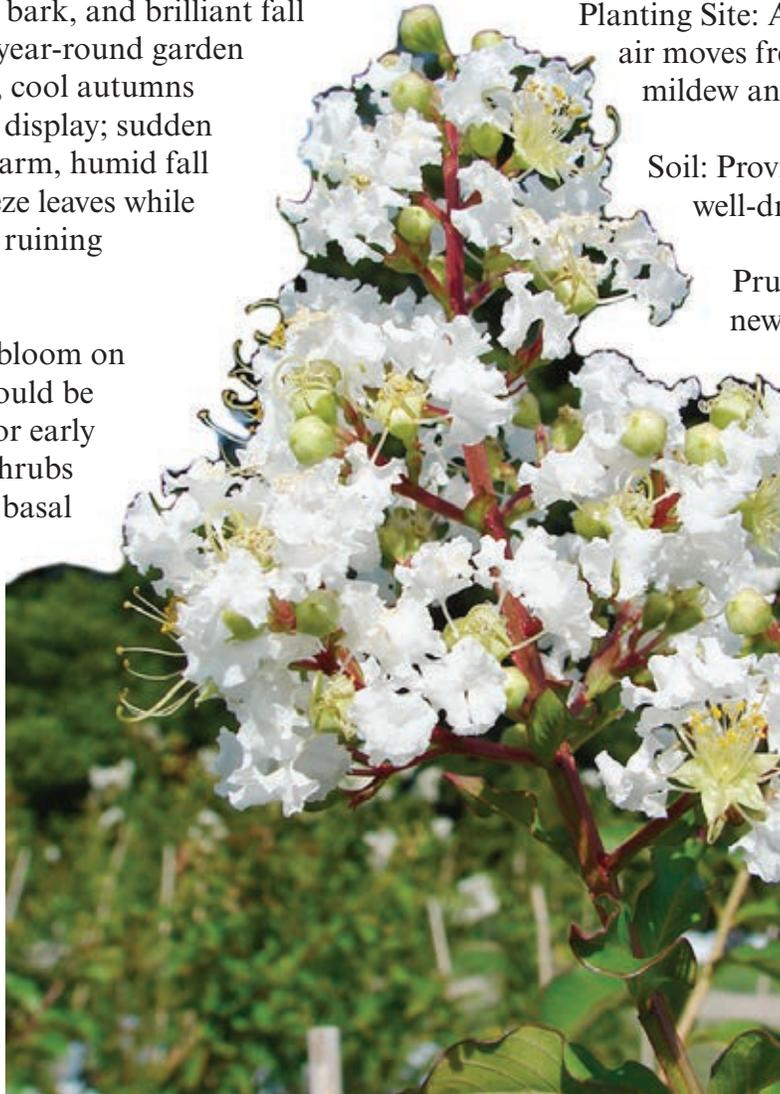


TREES AND SHRUBS

Crepe Myrtle: The Essential South Texas Tree

Crepe myrtles are among the most satisfactory of plants for the South: showy summer flowers, attractive bark, and brilliant fall color make them year-round garden performers. Long, cool autumns yield the best leaf display; sudden frosts following warm, humid fall weather often freeze leaves while they're still green, ruining the show.

All crepe myrtles bloom on new wood and should be pruned in winter or early spring. On large shrubs and trees, remove basal suckers, twiggy growth, crossing branches, and branches growing toward the center of the plant. Also gradually remove side branches up to a height of 4–5 ft.; this exposes the handsome bark of the trunks. During the growing season, clip off spent flowers to promote a second, lighter bloom. Also prune dwarf forms periodically throughout the growing season, removing spent blossoms and thinning out small, twiggy growth.



Crepe myrtle is a handsome, summer-flowering, deciduous tree-shrub-groundcover. It has been called the lilac of the south. With its blooms and attractive bark, this flowering tree will please the eye year-round.

Crepe Myrtle Growing Tips:

Planting Site: A sunny location where the air moves freely will help limit powdery mildew and other diseases.

Soil: Provide moist, moderately fertile, well-drained soil.

Pruning: Crepe myrtles bloom on new wood, so prune them in late winter or early spring to increase next summer's flower production. Pruning off old flowers in summer before they set seed may produce a second wave of blooms. Except on dwarf types, remove side branches on trunks up to the 4- to 5-ft. level. To reveal attractive trunks, also remove branches growing inward toward center of plant.

Considered one of the most versatile plants in the Texas landscape, crepe myrtle is available in different colors, different shapes and sizes from groundcover to shrub to tree, is drought tolerant after it is well established (approximately two years), grows well in alkaline or acid soil, is a fast-growing plant with a long life span, is disease resistant and the foliage displays fall color.

MAY GARDENING AND LAWCARE TIPS

Planting for Summer Color

By Dr. Jerry Parsons

Plant: For color get the begonias and impatiens in quickly if you expect them to fare well when the heat arrives. Wait to mid-month to plant periwinkles. Hot weather plants include firebush, lantana, poinciana, esperanza, firespike, caladium, coleus, begonia, moss rose, hibiscus, bougainvillea, purslane, cannas and blue princess verbena

Plant sun-loving, heat tolerant annual flowers such as portulaca, purslane, copper plants, lantanas, and ornamental peppers. Let your wildflowers go to seed before mowing.

Prune pillar or climbing roses as soon as they have finished their major bloom to allow time for the development of new canes for next spring's blooms. Prune storm-damaged tree branches immediately after damage occurs.

Fertilize: If you have not applied fertilizer to the lawn, May is a good month to fertilize lawn grasses after the lawn grass has been mowed twice. Slow release fertilizers are best because they feed throughout the growing season and do not leach (wash) into the ground

Odd Jobs: After spring bulbs have finished flowering, wait until the foliage turns brown before cutting it off. Food is being manufactured and stored for next year's blooms. Mulch plants to reduce watering requirements, suppress weed growth and minimize soil temperature changes. Peach fruit should be thinned to six to eight inches apart along the fruiting branches which generally leaves about 600 fruit per mature tree; apples and pears should be thinned to one fruit per spur or cluster.

On the Lookout: To encourage more rapid re-blooming, pinch off old flowers on bedding plants after their first flower cycle is completed. Roses may encounter insect problems. Watch for aphids on tender new growth, thrips on flowers and cucumber beetles on foliage. Beetles are especially a problem if a vegetable garden is nearby. Fear not, this is the normal season of leaf shed for photinias, gardenias, ligustrums, pittosporums and magnolias.

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.

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Zinnias, begonias, penta, purslane, coleus and caladiums and all kinds of roses—all the color you will need for your summer landscape and garden beds can be found now at Milberger's Nursery. With fresh stock arriving almost daily, this is the time to get those summer bloomers into your garden. (PHOTO BY DAVIS BLACKMON)