

Nottingham Country Garden Club

Newsletter
January, 2012



January Extra Activity

Making a Rain Barrel

Tuesday, January 17th
1:30 p.m.
Gwen Heck's Home

You will need to bring a 30-50 gallon plastic trash can **with a lid** and **no wheels**. All other supplies will be furnished for \$10.00. If you wish to attend or have any questions please contact Gwen Heck at 281-394-2827 by Tuesday, 1/10. If you wish to just come and observe, that is fine too!

Extra activities are for



Looking Ahead

The February NCGC meeting will be a field trip to Katy Christian Ministries Garden Site and Food Pantry and Nelson's Water Garden. We will meet at **9:15** (this is earlier than normal!) at the KCM building at the corner of Katy-Fort Bend Rd. and 5th Ave. in Katy.

NCGC Meeting /January 5, 2012
9:30 a.m. MUD Bldg. #81

Program: Water Conservation for the Small Landscape

Speaker: Dr. Shari Grahmann, Fort Bend County Agent Horticulturist

Last summer we all learned firsthand the devastating effects of a drought. Dr. Shari Grahmann will instruct us in more responsible ways to use our water and practical ways to conserve it. This program will be directed toward small landscapes, not citywide conservation efforts.



A Word From Our President

Cheers and Happy New Year to everyone! I hope you're ready for a great new year of gardening club speakers, activities, and field trips. Make it your resolution to spend some time each week in your garden. It's good for the garden and good for the soul.
Sue

Events and Workshops

Outings for the Gardener

*Harris County Master Gardeners' Annual Fruit Tree Sale and Symposia

Saturday, January 28, 2012

Location: Extension Office
3033 Bear Creek Dr.
Houston

Check the website at
hcmga.tamu.edu for price list

*Katy Home and Garden Show

Saturday, January 28th

10:00-6:00

Sunday, January 29th

11:00-5:00

Location: Merrell Center and
Robinson Pavilion Check the
website at

katyhomeandgardenshow.com
for all the details and admission
prices.

Houston Federation of Garden Clubs

Friday, January 13, 2012

Houston Civic Garden Center

1500 Hermann Dr., Houston

Program: "Famous Trees of Texas: Big,
Bold and Beautiful"

Presenter: Pete Smith

Following the meeting the Arbor Day
Celebration will take place at the V.A.
Hospital's Fisher House located at 2002
Holcombe Blvd., Houston, beginning at
1:00 p.m.

For more information or for carpooling call
Donna Luther @ (281) 492-1512

Fort Bend Master Gardeners Monthly Program

Thursday, January 19, 2012

6:30 Social Time

7:00-8:00 Program

Bud O'Shieles Community Center
1330 Band Road
Rosenberg, TX

Program: Citrus and Fruit Trees
Presenter: John Panzarella

Planning Ahead

*Houston Federation of Garden Clubs' February 10th program will be "Painting with Paper: An Ancient Technique Made New". The presenter will be Barbara Harmer.

*Fort Bend Master Gardeners' February 16th program will be "Lessons from a Rose Rustler". The presenter will be Mike Shoup, rose expert and owner of the Antique Rose Emporium.

Last Chance to Help Our Fundraising Committee!!

The Fundraising Committee has some exciting raffles planned this year to raise much needed funds for our guest speakers, but they need our help! Look over the following list of items they need donated and bring in one or two (or even more!).

In order to allow time to arrange the baskets **please bring your contributions to the December, January, or February meetings** or contact Janet Blowers (janetblowers@hotmail.com) or Lori Fay (luvgingerpug@yahoo.com) to come pick them up.

Sweet Treats: Any baking item or sweet item (can be sugar free) Suggestions: baking mixes, chocolates, mints or hard candies, oven mitts, rolling pin, cupcake wrappers, decorations for cookies or cakes, sprinkles

Herbs: Any item related to herbs or herb gardening. Suggestions: Any herb seeds, pots, gloves, plant labels, gardening tools, spice jars

Your contributions are greatly appreciated! Thanks to everyone for your continued support.



NCGC Plant and Bake Sale
Saturday, March 31st
WalMart on Grand Parkway

Please help make the sale a success by contributing plants grown from cuttings, seeds, or divisions ready for the sale.

Magazine Donations

Just a reminder to bring in your old, "gently read" issues of magazines. Magazines can be on any subject (gardening, cooking/food, health/wellness, family/parenting, decorating/home, travel/leisure etc.) Magazines will be available for purchase at each meeting.

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS



A Reminder from Horticulture

Do you have some lovely flowers blooming in your yard, or an unusual plant? Bring in a sample or cutting and share it with the club. Do you have something growing in your yard and have no idea what it is? Bring a sample in and we'll try to solve the mystery. Please remember to complete the horticulture form found in the October newsletter with as much information as possible.



Monthly Gardening Tasks -January

Sources: Fort Bend Master Gardeners;

Dr. Doug Welsh, professor and horticulturist, Texas A&M University, Texas Garden A/mtnac
Fort Bend County Master Gardeners, Inc. website (www.fbmga.com), "Texas Gardener
Magazine", Chris S. Corby Editor.

*Perennials & Annuals

Cool-season annuals planted in the fall will benefit from a light application of a balanced fertilizer every 4-6 weeks throughout the winter. You can continue to plant cool-season flowering (pansies, violas, stock, snapdragons, dianthus) or foliage plants (ornamental cabbage and kale, dusty miller). They will continue blooming into the spring with care. Mulch flowerbeds to keep weeds from germinating. January is a good time to plant those tulip and hyacinth bulbs that have been chilling in the refrigerator. This is also a good time to start warm-season flowers (and vegetables) indoors from seed to be set out in spring as transplants. Follow these guidelines:

- Check seed packet for the length of time required to reach transplant size. Count back that many days from the average last freeze date for your area (see freeze dates below) to get the approximate time to start the seeds indoors.
- use pots, clean plastic food containers with drainage holes, styrofoam cups, or egg cartons as containers. Place containers on a tray to catch excess water and help keep soil moist by watering from the bottom.
- use sterile soil or seed-starting mix.
- water in seeds just enough to keep moist, and cover with plastic to increase humidity until seeds germinate.
- when the first leaves appear, remove plastic, and move containers to a bright, sunny window. (or use a fluorescent grow light.)
- Transplant seedlings to individual pots when about 2" tall.
- Harden off seedlings before planting them outside, that is, put them outside a few hours a day in temps above 60 degrees. Gradually increase time outside to toughen up plants for their new environment.

***Vegetables & Herbs:** Many cool-season vegetables can still be planted this month. Asparagus crowns, onion transplants and artichoke plants (with some protection) can be set out. Transplants of broccoli, cabbage, Chinese cabbage, mustard, kohlrabi, collards, kale, cauliflower and Brussels sprouts are all cold hardy and need to go in soon to allow enough time for growth and production before the weather heats up. Beets, carrots, English peas, greens, leaf lettuces, radishes, sugar snap and snow peas, and turnips can be sown from seed this month. Remember to add organic matter to your beds and mulch for added protection from the cold. If a freeze is expected, plants will need to be covered.

***Trees and Shrubs:** Transplant or plant new shrubs and trees while they are dormant. Examples of summer blooming shrubs that can be pruned in late winter are althea (rose of Sharon), butterfly bush, crepe myrtle, glossy abelia, and vitex (chaste tree).

***Last spring freeze date:** According to Doug Welsh, the average last freeze date is February 14th in Houston, and March 1st for Katy and Fort Bend County. Continue to cover tender plants if freezes are predicted. Wait until February to vigorously prune freeze-damaged plants. The dead leaves may provide some insulation for the rest of the plant and plants may try to produce new growth which would be easily damaged by freezing weather.