



An educational program of the LSU AgCenter

ST. TAMMANY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

P. O. Box 2074, Mandeville, Louisiana 70470

Website: stmastergardener.org

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To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow.
 Audrey Hepburn

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Photo by J Blazek

STMGA Project: Boys and Girls Club Covington Unit Chevron - American Heart Association Day

Thirty-five volunteers from Chevron and the American Heart Association gathered at the Boys and Girls Club of Covington in October 2018. The event was organized by Gordon Kuehl and Dave Maher. Some volunteers painted a mural on the wall in the courtyard.



Another group weeded, pruned, and added soil to existing planters. A raised concrete block bed was built for satsuma and kumquat trees.



STMGA Project: Boys and Girls Club, continued



The children arrived after school and with assistance from the volunteers planted cabbage, broccoli, collards and cauliflower. They sowed carrot, radish, and lettuce seeds.



STMGA Project: Boys and Girls Club, continued

By partnering with community groups, STMGA shares its knowledge of horticulture and promotes its mission of service and education. Through events like these STMGA provides volunteer opportunities to members and to the general public.



Dave Maher and Gordon Kuehl
Boys and Girls Club of Covington

Editor's note: The children's smiles were radiant! But I was not able to show them without written parental permission. So sorry you could not see the joy in their beautiful faces.

Vegucator Notes: Milkweed Lecture from Pat Drackett



Pat Drackett, the director of Crosby Arboretum in Picayune, MS, has a world of experience when it comes to the best and most successful milkweeds for butterfly gardens in this region. She shared her knowledge at the February 5, 2015 Vegucators meeting. Milkweed is the host plant of the Monarch butterfly. But not all milkweeds are equally useful to the species. So what milkweeds should we choose for our gardens?

Pat says that some milkweeds have higher concentrations of cardiac glycosides, which render the monarch caterpillars toxic to predators. Research has found the butterflies will more likely lay eggs on the milkweeds with higher levels of cardiac glycosides. A female butterfly scratches the leaf surface to determine whether it is suitable for her eggs. Apparently, they can smell with their feet! Whatever the reasons, monarch butterflies definitely have their preference of milkweeds with a higher cardiac glycosides level.

Pat's recommendations for this region:

Asclepias incarnata and
Asclepias perennis



A. incarnata photo from www.wildflower.org

A. incarnata, "swamp milkweed," is the top performer in our area. It has the most leaves. Caterpillars eat voraciously, so they need lots of leaves. If a caterpillar falls to the ground, it needs another leafy plant close by to survive. Swamp milkweed is recommended for wet to average soils. It averages 2-4 feet tall, according to the Native Plants Database at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center. But don't be surprised if your plants grow taller.

Vegucator Notes:

Milkweed Lecture from Pat Drackett, continued

A. perennis, “aquatic milkweed,” is also a good choice. It likes some shade and continually moist soil. It is great for the “mucky” soils some of us have. It grows 3-6 feet tall in ideal conditions.



Pat’s expertise is the result of three years of field trials at the South Mississippi Branch Experiment Station, the Crosby Arboretum Pollinator Garden, and in-home gardens of Pearl River County Master Gardeners.

Click on the following links for more information on milkweed:

[Crosby Arboretum research and poster on milkweed](#)

[Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center Plants Database Search](#)



Monica Pierce
Vegucator Notes

Spring Seminar 2019: Think Spring

The STMGA master gardener class of 2018 hit a home run with the “Think Spring” seminar on January 19, 2019. They started planning the seminar on their last day of class in October. Before leaving the AgCenter classroom that day all of the chairpersons were chosen, the theme was in place, the first planning meeting date was set, everyone had joined a committee, and seven table talks were selected. What a great start!



Photo by J Schexnayder



Photo by E. Pickering-Jaster

The seminar flyer was developed and distributed to the general membership by mid-November. Nine “Sustainable Herb” baskets were planted and nurtured for several months to be used as decorations. By January there were 166 registrants.



Photo by E. Pickering-Jaster

On the morning of the seminar, the Castine Center was set with white table cloths and purple/gold/green balloons, table talks were in place, the registration table was open, and the stage set.

Spring Seminar 2019: Think Spring, continued

Will Afton, gave a superb presentation on “Sustainable Landscapes”. Kathryn “Kiki” Fontenot shared her expertise on colorful and practical combinations of plants in her presentation “Dual Purpose Plants.”



Photo by C Lang

Thank you STMGA Class of 2018 for a job well done.



Earlyn Pickering-Jaster
Spring Seminar 2019 Chairperson

Garden Safety Tips

As we get back into our gardens let us not forget a few safety guidelines. One study in Great Britain cited 87,000 people were seen in the emergency room in 2009 for gardening accidents. The overwhelming majority were falls and cuts. There are many articles and papers written on gardening safety guidelines. Of course, the obvious guidelines include use of clean sharpened tools that are in good working order, using the right tool for the job and following manufacturer guidelines on use of tools, equipment and chemicals. But what about the lesser known safety guidelines concerning our physical health. Here are a few to keep in mind.



Photo by J Blazek

Protect your skin:

- Use sunscreen. Consider hats and clothing that have UV protection.
- Use insect repellent.
- Wear long sleeves and long pants to avoid scratches and scrapes.
- Wear the right gloves for the job. Gloves protect against blisters and insect bites. Leather gloves also protect against thorn scratches and punctures. Plastic or latex gloves protect against poison ivy as well as chemicals and harmful soil microbes.
- Cuts, scrapes and punctures can result in infections, such as tetanus. When was your last tetanus immunization? They are available at many local drug stores.
- Wear protective clothing when using or mixing pesticides.



Image from stevewhysall.net

Click link for more info:

<https://theconversation.com/at-least-five-reasons-you-should-wear-gardening-gloves>

<http://www.assh.org/handcare/Hand-Safety/Gardening>

<https://www.cdc.gov/family/gardening/index.htm>

Garden Safety Tips, continued



Use good body mechanics:

- Start with some gentle stretching to warm up muscles and joints.
- Do no more than 1.5 hours per day initially.
- Kneel with both knees on a pad when weeding or planting. Raised plant beds are easier for those who have difficulty bending, stooping or kneeling.
- Use a small spade when digging. Large spades can place extra strain on the back and joints.
- Avoid prolonged repetitive motions. Switch tasks frequently: every fifteen or twenty minutes.
- When lifting, bend the knees and keep the back straight.
- Keep your wrist in a relaxed neutral position when using hand tools. You lose 25% of grip strength when the wrist is bent.



Click for more info: <http://buffalorehab.com/blog/tips-for-proper-yard-clean-up/>

Garden Safety Tips, continued

Protect your lungs:

- Wear a mask when using chemicals that are in powder form.
- Certain pneumonias, such as Legionnaire's disease, can be caused by inhaling dry dusty airborne soils. These pneumonias are rarely associated with gardening, but have been documented. Here are practices to minimize risk:
 - Wear a mask when opening bags of potting soil to prevent inhaling potting soil dust.
 - Open a new bag of potting soil outside or in a well-ventilated room.
 - To open a new bag, first slit it with a knife or shears. Then gently wet the mixture down with a low-pressure hose. Gently add moistened soil to pots or into garden.



Gardening has many health benefits that override the concerns about health risks. But it is always smart to be thoughtful about our gardening practices. Be careful out there!

Jamie Blazek
Master Gardener & Vegucator
Editor: Gardengoer

Click for more info

<https://extension.psu.edu/what-you-need-to-know-about-protecting-yourself-when-using-pesticides>

<https://www.cdc.gov/legionella> associated with potting soil

<https://worksafe.govt.nz/working-safely-with-soil-compost-and-potting-mix>

New Louisiana Super Plant for Spring 2019

The Louisiana Super Plant program is an educational and marketing effort by the LSU AgCenter to promote quality plants that work well in the Louisiana landscape. Plants are currently trialed at four locations throughout the state. There are established research trial gardens at the Hammond Research Station, New Orleans Botanical Garden, Red River Research Station in Bossier City, and Ira Nelson Horticulture Center at the University of Louisiana Lafayette. In the next few years, the LSU AgCenter will expand by adding research gardens at the Dean Lee Research Station in Alexandria, the Macon Ridge Research Station in Winnsboro, and Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry headquarters in Baton Rouge.

Super plants are selected and promoted during the spring and fall seasons. They represent different plant categories like bedding plants, annuals, perennials, groundcovers, shrubs, trees, etc... Since the beginning of the program there have been 42 different plants selected. This year three more plants will be added to the catalog.



The first Louisiana Super Plant release for the spring of 2019 will be Lemon sedum, *Sedum mexicanum*. Sedums are members of the Crassulaceae family (stonecrops), which includes jade plants and kalanchoes. Lemon sedum stands out from crowd with its bright lime-green foliage. It is vibrant and eye-catching. The fine textured foliage and spreading growth habit are great additions when used in combination planters. Like all sedums, Lemon sedum, is drought tolerant and loves full sun all day. Plant in a well-drained area for best results.

Will Afton
County Agent
LSU AgCenter



A Message from the Vice-President

The 2019 St Tammany Master Gardener Board met with the Facilitators, Educational Outreach Chairs, and Project Chairs for a retreat at the home of our President, Suzanne Krieger, for the purpose of reviewing organizational procedures. There were twenty-nine members in attendance who engaged in lively discussions and who had a wonderful time getting to know each other a little better. A delicious lunch was served during our meeting, which added to the festive atmosphere.



Photo by J. Pesses

Points of discussion included

- The role and responsibility of each leadership position.
- The appropriate procedure for new projects, including a checklist (now posted on the website [stmastergardener.org/members only/documents and forms](http://stmastergardener.org/members%20only/documents%20and%20forms)).
- Coordination of publicity between event chairs and STMGA publicity chair.
- Formation of a committee to develop guidelines for soliciting donations, grants and sponsorships.



Photo by J. Pesses

We all play a vital role in our organization, as educational chairs, project chairs, committee workers and facilitators. Our organization works because we work! Please contact a member of our leadership team if you have any questions on our organization.

An updated and corrected list of the leadership team is on the following pages.

Jan Pesses
STMGA Vice-President

2018 St. Tammany Master Gardener Association Board of Directors & Committee Chairpersons

President:	Suzanne Krieger (1st year)
Vice President:	Jan Pesses (1st year)
Treasurer:	Donna Moran (1st year)
Secretary:	Mary Kathryn Villere (2nd year)
Past President:	Jan Gardener
LSU County Agent:	Will Afton

Plant Sale:	Julie Deus (2nd year)
Membership Chair:	Helen Babb (2nd year)
Scholarship Committee:	Kay Hanson (2nd year)
Nominating:	TBA
Finance:	TBA



Facilitators (no term limit)

Audio /Visual:	Mark Flynn
Awards:	Sandy Arnoult and Sandra Pecoraro
By-laws:	Art Scott
Facebook:	Betty Cronin
Gardengoer:	Jamie Blazek
Gloves :	Marilyn Bingham
Historical:	Janet Reuther
Hospitality:	Barbara Moore
Merchandise:	Pam Perret
MG Master Calendar:	Leslie Boucher
MoM:	Art Scott
Muscle:	Wes Goostrey
Parliamentarian:	Mary Ann Brannan
Publicity:	Caryn Lang
Webmaster:	Caryn Lang

2018 St. Tammany Master Gardener Association Board of Directors & Committee Chairpersons, cont

Educational Outreach: Mimi Padgett

Educational chairs: no term limits

Covington Farmers Market:	Diane Cammatte and Billie Stanga
Fall Seminar:	Mary Kathryn Villere and Kendra France
Historical :	Janet Reuther
LSU AgCenter Volunteers:	Cindy Manger
Mentoring:	Jenny Graffeo
Slidell Farmers Market:	Sue Clites
Speakers Bureau:	Donna Howland
Spring Seminar:	Earlyn Jaster
STMGA Library:	Kim Burt
Table Talks:	Kim Burt
Vegucators:	Dawn Lavoie and Mimi Padgett

Projects Coordinator: Dave Maher **Projects Chairs: no term limits**



Abita Library Garden:	Sandy Tomaszewski
Beau Provence Rehab Garden:	TBA
Boys and Girls Club, Covington:	Dave Maher
Habitat for Humanity:	Jenny Graffeo
Hospice Foundation of the South Gardens:	Paul Andres
Lacombe Butterfly Garden:	TBA
Lang House:	Peter Weaver
LSU AgCenter Super Plant Garden:	Ana Maria Montoya
Magic Wings Butterfly Garden:	TBA
Otis House Rose Garden:	Ann Durel
School Gardens:	
Lee Road Elementary:	Lynn Monteleone
Marigny Elementary:	Sue Maguire
Woodlake Elementary:	TBA
Slidell Library Herb Garden:	Linda Franzo

The Class of 2018 and their mentor, Mimi Padgett, gathered for lunch on January 31, 2019 at Abita Roasting in Madisonville to celebrate their success in planning the spring seminar.



THE GARDENGOER
THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
ST. TAMMANY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION



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