



Horti-Bull

HORTICULTURAL BULLETIN

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Todd Mernin

From The President

Fellow Gardeners,

I hope this spring finds you rejuvenating your yard and garden following our freeze. It gave us an excuse to have a fire and get rid of the excessive amount of dead shrubs and plants. This past week our purple martins returned from some where in South America. Due to their return to our backyard we had to relocate our burning area to the front of our house on the sidewalk. This prompted my neighbor to be alarmed. They ran across to check on me to make sure things were all right. I assured him that I was o.k. and was

not losing it. I can see how he would think that because I was stoking the fire with palm fronds and getting big flames. As many of you know, we like you were scratching bark to search for green, cutting out gelatinous parts of cactus that were frozen, and mulching and watering like crazy. This evening I saw a miracle in the form of two leopard frogs that survived the weather, many others did not. It is my wish for you that you can see these types of survivors and travelers in your gardens this spring. See you at our April 1st zoom meeting when we welcome once again Mr. Mark Peterson as our guest speaker. I understand Mark will be talking about his favorite subject, trees. Love, Todd

P.S. My 'Flower of The Month' is on page 6.

THANK YOU DARLENE

I would like to express my personal gratitude to Darlene Badorski who was, as usual, the spark plug that gets things going in managing the entire Hollywood Park Yard Sale event from preparation before, execution during, and the post event reporting as well. She planned, organized, and executed like a good CEO and got excellent results. While she had good help from those mentioned elsewhere in the Horti Bull, it was her dedication before, during and after the event that made it a great success. Most people do not realize how much time is spent before such an event in buying materials and plants, making arrangements, and setting everything up for the sale. It was especially important that we succeed this year as we have not been able to have the normal fund raisers due to the pandemic, and Darlene made it happen. I would be remiss if I did not thank and acknowledge Joyce Siebold, our sponsor, who allowed us to use her beautiful yard once again for the fifteenth year. Without her, the event would not have happened.

From Paul D Huegel

**ZOOM MEETING
1 APRIL 2021
7PM**

April ZOOM Speaker



MARK PETERSON

Mark A. Peterson is a conservation project coordinator for the San Antonio Water System. With more than 30 years of experience as an urban forester and arborist, Mark is probably the only person you know who actually prunes trees for fun. When not expounding on the benefits of trees and limited lawns, you're likely to find him hiking San Antonio's wilderness parks or extolling the virtues of geography and history to his friends.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

To all who will be celebrating another year of life in April, it is truly a blessing. May God continue to bless you with his love, peace, and happiness with family and friends.



Calvin's Corner

By Dr. Calvin Finch, Retired Texas A&M Horticulturalist

. HortiBull Gardening Calendar for April

If you want to produce tomatoes for salads and recipes this summer it is time to get transplants planted. Ruby Crush, the Rodeo tomato for 2021 is a productive grape tomato with an outstanding sweet taste. It is also determinate so once it is planted it grows quickly to full size and then concentrates on setting fruit. If you want the best tasting tomatoes available in Central Texas, match the Ruby Crush with the cherry tomato BHN 968. BHN 968 is slightly more tart and a little less sweet but paired with Ruby Crush they will be everybody's favorite tomato

tastes. For large tomatoes consider Tycoon, HM 1823, HM 8849, Red Snapper, Valley Cat, Solar Fire, Celebrity, and Red Deuce.

Most of the plants that were damaged by the big Valentine freeze last month have defined the extent of their damage but for some shrubs and perennials it is still unclear whether they will produce leaves on the damaged stems and some it is still unclear whether they are going to live. Most of the esperanza, thyrallis, firebush, and duranta should sprout this month. Unfortunately a portion of the poinciana may not survive. A good portion of sago palms are expected to live and produce new fronds so don't write them off too quickly even if they look lifeless.

For color in your cut flower garden and as a nectar source for hummingbirds and butterflies plant zinnia seeds such as California Giant and/or Dreamland hybrid transplants. Mistflower, milkweed, porterweed, and blue curl also serve as favored nectar sources. Milkweed is the only plant that Monarch butterflies will lay their eggs on.

The onions are ready to harvest when the tops fall over. Harvest the first potatoes when the plants bloom. The rest will be ready when the plants decline and brown.

Fertilize the lawn with slow release lawn fertilizer (19-5-9) in late April after you have mowed real grass twice. If you have had trouble with sand burs or crabgrass use a preemergent herbicide such as XL, Amaze, or Dimension in March or early in the month of April. Follow label instructions.

The purple martins are finally settling in to their houses for the year. It may be worth the effort to lower the houses one more time to remove the sparrow nests. The purple martins do not seem to be bothered by the disruption caused by the sparrow nest removal.

MEMBER INFORMATION

It was great to see so many of our members participating in the zoom meeting in February and the annual Hollywood Park Plant Sale at Joyce Seibold's house last week. I hope all of you will get vaccinated if your health allows it. We are responsible for taking care of ourselves physically, mentally, and spiritually. Please use the website www.mensgardenclubofsaa.org to share and get information about the club.

From Vallerie Hartfield

MGCSA Officers for 2021

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Looking Ahead to Our May Speaker

Get your questions ready because
Manuel Flores will be here to answer all
your questions on plants and planting.

The Big Freeze

How cold was it in mid February? It was so cold that even Texas Bluebonnets were killed in a frost-pocket valley near Leon Springs.

The Bluebonnets and many other types of plants were either severely injured or killed because they had initiated spring growth. In early February, San Antonio had the following daily temperatures in February 2021.

1 st day 45>68>42	4th 59>80>57	7th 39>71
2 nd 39>66	5th 51>57>46	8th 50>76
3 rd 42>76	6th 50>78	9th 64>79>54

Lengthening days and temperatures in the mid to upper 70's signaled the beginning of spring, a premature spring. Then, temperatures dropped, with several record lows being recorded the following February days. (R=Record Temperature)

10 th day 54>40	14th 30>13R (R20-1905)	18th 28>32
11 th 40>33	15th 9R>28 (R21-1895,1909)	19th 19R>46 (R23 1978)
12 th 32>36>31	16th 12R>26 (R16 1895)	20th 26R>60 (R27 1908)
13 th 32>29	17th 24>45	

The horticultural result was devastating. Otherwise, cold-hardy plants were lost because they were no longer dormant. Any who had harbored tropical delusions, or were unprepared, now had huge landscape losses.

I, for one, now realize only a handful of **Agave** (Century Plant) species are completely cold-hardy in San Antonio. While many other of our 70+ Agave species will recover slowly, and some might resprout only from rhizomes, their prominence in our landscape will have to be rethought.

Palms: Another group of plants beloved in this area, palms, also suffered damage. Some, like the Queen Palms (*Syagrus*), sold here by big box stores will not recover. They were never cold hardy for our zone.

My palms and cycads, both at home and a few miles away in my test plot near mile marker 555 of IH 10, fared as follows:

Palm species with individuals showing no damage: *Rapidophyllum hystrix* – Needle Palm; *Sabal bermudana*; *Sabal blackburniana*; *Sabal minor*; *Sabal X Riverside*; *Serenoa repens* – Saw Palmetto.

Palm species with individuals showing minimal leaf tip damage: *Chamaerops humilis* var. *cerifera* – Atlas Mountain Fan Palm; *Guaiacum argyrata*.

Palm species with all individuals showing extensive leaf damage but base of leaf stalk still green (NOTE: Leave green leaf stalks jutting out, don't remove them because they are photosynthetic and provide a small amount of nourishment to the palms): *Jubaea chilensis* – Chilean Wine Palm; *Sabal mexicana* (S.

texana) – Texas Palmetto; *trachycarpus fortunei* – Chinese Windmill Palm; *Washingtonia filifera* – California Fan Palm.

Cycads: While all our sago Palms, *Cycas revoluta* and *Cycas taitungensis* had extensive leaf damage, *dioon angustifolia* from NE Mexico had no leaf damage at all. The related *Dioon edule* from east-central Mexico lost their leaves like the Sago Palms.

The *Ceratozamia latifolia* under our Live Oaks kept most of their leaflets, but those with some overhead exposure lost all of their leaves. The related *Ceratozamia hildae* also lost all of their leaves. All of those *Ceratozamia* should make a full recovery.

What about Citrus plants? I cultivate more than three dozen species and varieties; all but four of them are seed-grown. By mid March, at least one third of them were leafing out. Some have extensive stem die-back and will recover from basal shoots. I mounded soil to protect the bud unions of the few grafted citrus. Their exposed stems have died, and recovery will be from basal sprouts above the graft point. Any shoots from the root stock will be removed.

I removed the deep mulch protecting tender perennials after the spring equinox to permit soil warming and hasten their recovery. A groundcover, Philodendron from coastal Brazil, already had emerging leaves.

Many of our subtropical shrubs have stem die back to varying degrees. I'll remove deadwood once new sprouts emerge.

Manuel Flores, Horticultural Consultant

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HOLLYWOOD PARK PLANT SALE

As we end another Hollywood Park Plant Sale, a very special **THANK YOU** to Joyce Siebold for hosting the club's event and opening her residence to the men's garden club. Thank You to all the following members for their donation of plants for the sale: Sharon Hughes, Barbara Lamm, Ken Wolfgram, Joyce Siebold, Ivan and Isabel Roman, Vallerie Hartfield, Diana Fox, John Opiela, Paul Huegel, Linda Hollingsworth, Jane McDaniel (selling handmade masks), Sharon Hughes (selling handmade pot scrubbers), Ken Wolfgram (selling handmade pottery), Barbra Hall (repotting plants at the greenhouse).

All our members who came in to help work the sale: Larry Cromer, Mary Martinez, Debra Beyer, Jeff Brown, Frank Rios, Jane and Robert McDaniel, Ken Wolfgram, Barbra Lamm, Vallerie Hartfield, Paul Huegel, Sharon Hughes, Elena Schriner.

Thank You Robert McDaniels, John Opiela and Paul Huegel for the transportation of all supplies and plants delivered to show.

Setting up the show and the cleanup each evening, thanks to: Paul Huegel, Robert McDaniel, Leonard Martinez, Larry Cromer, Mary Martinez, Barbra Lamm, Frank Rios.

The following members helped with advertising the Hollywood Park Sale: Teresa Martinez, Vicki Jamvold, Ken Wolfgram and Paul Huegel.

All our members listed above helped make this an outstanding sale, we **APPRECIATE** your support for our club.

We have no firm confirmation of any future events to be held this year, the board will keep you posted as we receive more information.

Thanks to everyone.

Darlene Badorski



The mighty 10. We couldn't get everyone who participated in the three day plant sale together at one time for a picture. But we did get these Wednesday workers.



Saturday's number one attraction was the 'dog on a golf cart'. Frank just had to check it out. The dog got a little too friendly, but all survived, and the parents purchased some plants. Photo by T. Mernin

On John O's Farm after the freezing and snows

OK, today is a month after the cold, cold weather we had. The snow that covered everything and froze everything is gone. When I first walked outside the day after the snow had melted everything was frozen solid and everything was underneath a blanket of snow for a week. It looked like there was nothing still alive. After a week the snow melted and a month later I walked out in front and I saw my bluebonnets and butter cups (showy primrose) were coming up. They were all growing strong in my front yard. See my picture below.

The day after the snow melted, I walked into the backyard and everything was



laying down flat. That is the parsley, cilantro, and the dill. Everything! My multiplying onions looked to be half dead. The white crystal wax onions I planted from seed were laying all the way down on the ground. They looked dead too. But they came back in three weeks and grew 12 to 14 inches. My Swiss Chard grew 12 to 14 inches also. The kale still looked good; in fact, it was standing up in the snow. This was right after the snow melted.

I had put my orange trees under three blankets, wrapped tightly, and then I covered them with a thirty-gallon trashcan and an eighty-gallon trashcan. Those were two orange trees that I had in the yard with no heaters. I had another orange tree that was in my cold frame with my tomatoes. The cold frame orange tree put on oranges and I picked tomatoes from the cold frame the day after the freeze. My aloe vera were in the cold frame and survived.

Today I walked outside and looked at everything in the backyard. The parsley had sprung up in all of my pots. The cilantro and the dill did not make it. The kale

was not harmed at all. Almost everything grew hard and fast after the cold, and the multiplying onions were not harmed.

The cold frame that I had in the garden was 5 foot high 5 foot wide and 16 feet long and was made with 2 inch plastic pipe and was covered with 6 mill plastic covering. I also had a 1500-watt milk house heater. That heater and the sun kept the temperature between 50 and 100 degrees all thru the cold spell. My garden pretty much survived the cold and it's going strong now.

I am going to stray off the subject a little. Larry Stein (the Bexar County extension agent) gives talks at Fanick's Nursery every February about pruning fruit trees. I always go to his talks. Some garden gurus say you can prune fruit trees all winter long. That is true - but if you want to know where the blooms are, you always wait until Bulb Break. That is what Larry Stein said, and it makes good sense. That way you will know what blooms to leave and which to prune. About two weeks after the freezes all of my fruits started to Bloom. It was easy to know what to prune and what not to prune. He said that any dead wood should be cut off, open the center, and cut any crossing branches. That is all I have to write about this month. After all of this snow, cold weather, and the rain received afterwards, my garden is looking real good. Next month I will have much more growing.

Remember, if your hands ain't dirty, you ain't gardening. *From John Opiela*

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Health Benefits of Sunflower Seeds

Resource: Well and Good—Emily Laurence, May 16, 2020

Primarily sourced from North Dakota, South Dakota, and Minnesota, sunflower seeds are the fruit of the sunflower plant, harvested from the heads, and then dried and washed before being packaged and landing on store shelves across the country. According to registered dietitian Alana Kessler, RD, these little guys are full of benefits. She recommends buying organic sunflower seeds if you can because they are much less likely to have pesticide residue. She says dry roasted sunflower seeds tend to be easier to digest than raw seeds. Packaged, sunflower seeds last about 10 months.

1. Sunflower seeds are a good source of healthy fats. Polyunsaturated fats and monounsaturated fats are the “good” fats, linked to cardiovascular health and other health perks.
 2. They are a good source of protein. Sunflower seeds are high in protein; one serving has 7 grams.
 3. They are recommended as a healthy snack because the combination of protein and fats are needed to truly feel satiated.
 4. Eating sunflower seeds could benefit your brain. Sunflower seeds as a power snack is good for brain health because they contain vitamin E. Vitamin E is a helpful nutrient for combatting brain fog in the short-term and also for protecting against native decline in the long-term.

The plant I will be profiling this month was chosen due to its survival of our cold weather episode.

It's called the iceberg (white) climbing rose. It was bred in England from a German rose and is more disease resistant and cold hardy than most other climbers. At maturity, this climbing rose can reach 12 to 14 feet high and 6 feet wide. The characteristics of this plant are: it can take lower light than other roses, blooms in waves through the season, and when planted in mass, are noted to be a delight to the observer by the tendrils dancing in the breeze. I have these planted in my backyard on my 14-foot white fan trellises. Please note that I had few roses die in the freeze. I wish I could say the same for my other plants. Until we meet again, lets all grow and show what we got. *Todd Mernin*





5. They are a good source of magnesium. Magnesium is an essential nutrient for muscle recovery and especially important if you work out a lot. It helps keep muscles working properly.

6. Eating sunflower seeds can give you more energy. Selenium is a huge nutrient for energy. The iron in sunflower seeds also help because it helps with blood flow, which helps deliver oxygen to your body and thus keeps you feeling energized.

7. Sunflower seeds are good for your immune system. Sunflower seeds are also a good source of zinc, with 7 milligrams per serving. Kessler says that's about what you need for the entire day. Zinc is directly linked to benefitting the immune system.

Sunflower seeds can be used to make crunchy granola, cookies, sunflower seed butter, and flour. *From Vallerie Hartfield*

From Vallerie Hartfield

