



APRIL 2012

# The GREENLEAF

## NEWSLETTER



HOURS: MON - SAT 8:00 A.M. TO 6:30 P.M.  
SUN 10:00 A.M. TO 6:00 P.M.

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# Don't Be Fooled!

By Rob Wier

Our philosophy is simple. Offer plants and products that promote successful gardening naturally. Remember that commercial that said "You can't fool Mother Nature!" How true. The ultimate test is to put that plant out there and see how it holds up to what Mother Nature dishes out, good and not so good.

We've observed the plants we promote over 30 years to be well-adapted to our local area. We've purposely discontinued carrying plants that were problematic for most gardeners. No amount of picture tags, fancy pots, catchy names or marketing dollars are going to fool Mother Nature.

Jeff and I decided back in 2000 that enough is enough with Azaleas. Azaleas just don't live in our alkaline, clay soil, and most people do not do the proper bed preparation; it is quite a lot of work and expense. As a result, we would lose over 50% of them each year. Customers were unhappy with them, and frankly, I was tired of the phone calls from unsuccessful and unhappy customers about frail and dead azaleas.

I garden as an outlet to relieve stress, and azaleas were clearly creating stress for both our customers and for me. I'm proud to say we have been Azalea free for over twelve years. Don't get me wrong, they are a beautiful

*(Continued on page 3)*



Dallas Blooms,  
Dallas Arboretum



# TIMELY HINTS

By Rob Wier

**PLANT...Annual Color** now! Our selection and quality is excellent! Be patient and wait until the soil is warmer to plant Caladiums, Impatiens ... etc ... later into April. We'll have Periwinkles and the large flowering Zinnias in May when the time is right – again be patient. We specialize in Native Texas Perennials and right now our selection is OUTSTANDING. Brice always grows beauties for us. Come on in and feast your eyes. Of course you can plant trees, specimen hollies, all shrubs, roses, vines, and groundcovers now. Tropicals are beginning to come in now and the selection will grow as the season permits. We have several beautiful color bowls planted up and ready for you – come on in and choose some to brighten your front porch and patio. Or let these creations bring out your inner artist and come in and create your own from our large selection of color!

**FERTILIZE...**with **Gardenville 7-2-2** if you did not do so in February or March. If you procrastinated, it's ok ... it's organic! Seriously consider avoiding any weed & feed products. We do not recommend them or trust them – they are dangerous for your trees and shrubs. Foliar feed your plants as they begin to grow with **Maxicrop® Seaweed**, **Garrett Juice**, or **John's Recipe**. Apply **Colorscaapes** when planting your annuals, perennials, and planting your color bowls. Re-apply every 4-6 weeks to keep your plants green and blooming. It's that easy. Don't forget to use your **Superthrive™** on anything newly planted or neglected and stressed – it IS a miracle product!

**PRUNE...**to maintain form only.

**WATER...**keep sprinklers **OFF** of their 'automatic' setting. Run manually if we have a dry period (a couple of weeks without rain) to supplement between the spring rains. Check and hand-water newly planted plants if needed, every couple of days for the first two weeks to insure they get settled in. Get weekly watering notices emailed to you from Frisco's water department at <http://listsrv.friscotexas.gov/ListSelect2.asp>. They have a weather station to monitor conditions and provide weekly watering recommendations. Please, be active and monitor your watering needs, and follow your city's watering restrictions.

**PESTS...**look out for Cankerworms in your trees. These larva hang from your trees on thin almost transparent threads and can strip trees of their new foliage. Use **Bacillus Thurengiensis** (BT) as a biological control. Safe for people, pets, and wildlife. Control Slugs (those slimy little critters) with **Sluggo**. Be on the watch for Scale on plants – especially Crape Myrtles. Use **All Seasons Oil** to control. We have an organic fungicide called **Serenade** that can be used to prevent a wide variety of fungal diseases. We also have **Ladybugs**. Come see us to learn how to use them in your gardens.

Control fungal diseases on your roses with an application of **Horticultural Corn Meal** ... apply on the root zone and lightly scratch it into the soil. There's still time to apply **Dry Molasses** for Fire Ants. They hate it and it increases the microbial activity in the soil. Plus, before you know it you'll have a large population of earthworms, which is a really good thing!

## OTHER ...

- ☼ Get outside with your family ... this is the absolute **best time** of year here in North Texas to enjoy your outdoors. Grill up some dinner and eat 'al fresco' in the backyard!
- ☼ Maintain 1-1½" mulch on your beds to conserve water.
- ☼ If you grow more than enough veggies, share them with your neighbors, or with the food pantry at Frisco Family Services.



*(Don't Be Fooled, Continued from page 1)*

plant. I recommend seeing them where someone else has spent a fortune helping them grow here, such as the Dallas Arboretum, along Beverly Drive by Turtle Creek, or where they grow naturally and happily in the more acidic soil of Tyler, Texas.

We try different plants each year. Some do great while others don't make the cut. Mother Nature puts them to the test; we just sit back and observe their performance (sometimes on the back porch with an ice cold beer. Oh yea, stress relief gardening!). Be sure to check out Brice's suggestions for perennials to plant this spring that passed the test. We all are fortunate for his endeavors to introduce us to something new.



**Tyler, TX Azalea Trail, 2011**



**Four Nerve Daisy**

When you plant well-adapted plants they perform and are happy. As gardeners, when we go around our yard and we see them blooming, we are happy. The other day doing my spring cleanup, I noticed my Four Nerve Daisy had dozens of seedlings coming up. This little plant is happy enough to bloom and raise a family in my front yard. It's the little things that can bring gardening happiness. Come visit us this spring. Mother Nature needs more happy gardeners!

**LEARN 2 LIVE GREEN**  
learn2livegreen.com  
10 am to 4 pm Saturday, April 14, 2012  
The Shops at Legacy, DN Tollway at Legacy Dr  
We'll Be At The Show & Hope To See You There Too!

**Color Your World**  
**\$5 OFF** Any Annual Or Perennial Color Purchase Of \$20 Or More  
One Coupon Per Household  
Expires April 30, 2012 Not Valid With Any Other Offer

## APRIL BITS & PIECES!

Be a good steward of your property. None of us really owns our little patch of land. We are simply stewards of it for a certain amount of time. When we move on from this property how will we have left it? Hopefully, with long-lived trees and plants that flourish, reseed, and are also good stewards of our local resources.

Gardeners believe in tomorrow. We plant for future enjoyment. Remember, "Haste Makes Waste" as in striving for "Instant Gratification."

*continued on pg 5, see Bits & Pieces!*

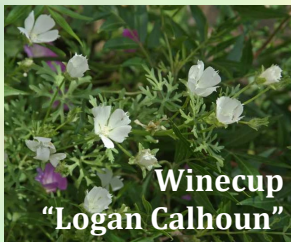
**Tyler CANDLE COMPANY™**  
**Candle Of The Month**  
**15% OFF**  
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Please Present Coupon Expires April 30, 2012



# Survivor 2011 — Why Are These Plants Still Here?

By Brice Creelman

We are constantly looking for plants that will survive and thrive in North Texas. At our Van Alstyne proving ground, it's a harsh country setting that isn't open to the public (my house). Heck sometimes I can't stand looking at it, but really tough plants that come back, you gotta appreciate. One sunny spot and the rest is shade. And dry, no irrigation system, one rain barrel, three acres. But I'll be danged, these tough contestants are still here three years into it! Drought and flood, sometimes in the same day.



Callirhoe alcaeoides "Logan Calhoun" found by the late, dedicated native American plantsmen and named in his honor (he was from Dallas Texas). This is the white flowering variety of Winecup. 24"x30" spread, 4" tall. Native, full sun. Blooms so hard it is covered with white. Shocked at how well this does and looks. Centerpiece of our southern, horribly named 'septic bed'.

Iris spuria "Fontanelle" stuck in a hole at the end of an all shade walk way, took a year to catch on (slow growing). Since then, has bloomed each year, multiplied and thrived in less than perfect conditions. 30" tall, blue flowers with yellow. Typical iris blooms. Found at an old homestead in the Midwest. Upright sword like foliage never burns. Blooms in June, it's the tallest plant around so the dog waters it a little each day. That's all it gets. Not native. Sun or shade but does prefer shade.



Phlox pilosa "Eco Happy Traveler", also called Prairie phlox. Shade loving phlox, pink blooms in April and May. In dry shade conditions stays 12" tall and spreads 24". In moist conditions it spreads to totally cover some ground. Fragrant. Excellent shade plant. One of our best. No care needed, even you can't kill it! Native selection.

Amsonia illustris "Shining Bluestar", One of Sally Wasowski's favorite plants (she is one of our best garden book authors for Texas). Truth is, I've never seen the plant, but it is a native, and I think it is worth taking a chance. I have two other native Amsonias planted but they haven't bloomed yet. Light blue flowers, thick leathery foliage, gold fall leaf color. 3' tall x 3' across. Impossible to find, easy to grow. Any Amsonia will give your native garden some important credibility. Shade is best, native plant.



Saponaria x lempergii "Max Frei", Soapwort. Yep, let's just call it Soapwort. Nice blue green foliage with a cloud of pink flower masses for 6-8 weeks in late spring, 8" tall x 18" across. Never asks for anything, never receives anything. I do believe the foliage is rubbed with water and becomes sudsy. Shouldn't do well in Texas, but it does. Perfect little border plant. Sun to part shade, not native.

Continued on pg 5, see Survivor!





Tradescantia "Concord Grape", Planted in dense, dry, shade in a couple of places. Usually likes more moisture but tolerates dry conditions. All the trades (spiderworts) do well. Three varieties this year. Great for dry shade.

Hypericum "henryi". Impossible that this plant is still alive. Dry raised bed with some kind of soil-less mix with native soil. Blooms consistently each year in dry shade. Yellow blooms cover this shrub in May. Was evergreen this year. Has done so well, I'm going to take better care of it this year. That should kill it!



Salvia 'Henry Duelberg' named variety of our native salvia farinacea. Found by plantsmen Greg Grant in a cemetery. Named the 'green side up' plant of the year 2012. Growing 3'tall and 24" across with blue flowers. Sun or shade, wet or dry, hot or cold, sweet and un-sweet. Never stops. Re-seeds when it is happy. Blue flowers all season long. "Augusta" is the white variety. Love it, use it, abuse it. Native.



Bletilla striata, Chinese ground orchid. Spectacular hardy orchid native to Asia. Seems to like it here in Texas. Bright pink flowers in April. 12" x 12". In a spot on the North side with some sun, slow to get started by you will have it forever with no additional care. Blooms for 2 weeks. Enjoy it and put no pressure on it to do more. You won't believe so delicate a flower will survive in our dry conditions. Not native.



Salvia greggi "Teresa" Found in a hill country garden and named for someone's wife, not easily found anymore in Texas. We love this greggi. More upright, blooms constantly and hardy winter and summer. This is planted in the medians on Preston Road in Frisco. That's a tough spot. Appreciate those blooms when you are stopped forever at those red lights. 24" x 24", cut back in spring. One of the best bloomers. Great in containers too. Native.



Some of these plants are in limited quantities this year. I will keep them in Collinsville until April. These are all excellent drought tolerant, fragrant, and easy to grow. Hummingbirds, butterflies, and pollinators of all kinds of livestock will be attracted to these plants and you will too!

We've been blessed with rains this spring. Water will continue to be a precious and scarce resource. Plant wisely, garden wisely, choose well adapted plants, be water-wise in your everyday living. Our region will continue to prosper if we all do our part.

Connect with your yard. We all deserve a moment to sit in our yards and enjoy their natural beauty. Some quiet time with your plantings is healthy (but be careful when your plants start talking back to you).

And perhaps most importantly, enjoy this beautiful spring!



*McKinney Garden Club*  
presents  
**2012 Garden & Home Tour**



**Friday, June 8 ~ 7pm-9pm**  
*Evening Garden Party - \$20*

**Saturday, June 9 ~ 10am-4pm**  
*Garden & Home Tour - \$15*

*Combined Friday Party & Saturday Tour - \$35*

Sponsored by: Medical Center of McKinney

**FRISCO GARDEN CLUB**

*Celebrating 80 Years Of Continuous Service!*

INVITES YOU TO

**2012**  
**WILD FLOWER**  
**LUNCHEON**

**THURSDAY, APRIL 26, 2012**  
**SILENT AUCTION 10:30 AM**  
**LUNCHEON 11:30 AM**  
**HELD AT**



**STONEBRIAR**  
COUNTRY CLUB

*A Member of the ClubCorp Family*

**Tickets \$30 For Reservations Call**  
**Patti Kabell 972-661-0274**  
[dlkabell@gmail.com](mailto:dlkabell@gmail.com)

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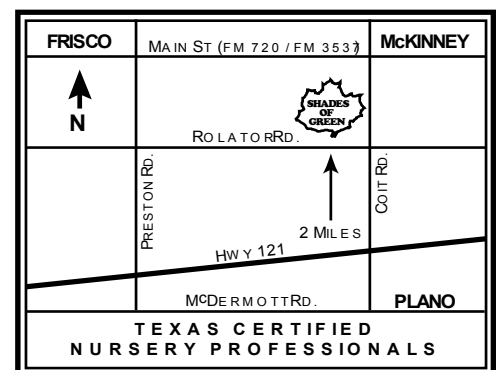
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**Spring/Summer Hours:**

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**SUN 10:00 A.M. TO 6:00 P.M.**

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**Just 2 Miles North of Hwy 121**  
**in Frisco!**



# 2012 Plano Garden Club Garden Tour

*"Great Inspirations for Gardens Large and Small"  
Living with Water Restrictions*

**Saturday, April 28 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. and  
Sunday, April 29 1 to 5 p.m.**  
(rain or shine)

*5 home gardens featuring a  
variety of landscapes using  
drought-tolerant and perennial  
plants and water-wise techniques.*

**\$15 at garden**

**\$12 advance purchase**

Children under 12 years may attend free

For advanced ticket information, visit:  
[www.planogardenclub.org](http://www.planogardenclub.org)

*Tickets  
Available At  
Shades Of Green*

*Proceeds from the tour ticket sales go to the PGC scholarship funds awarded to  
Collin County residents studying horticulture and natural science-related fields.*

