

NOVEMBER 2013



The GREENLEAF

NEWSLETTER

HOURS: MON - SAT 8:00 A.M. TO 5:30 P.M.
SUN 10:00 A.M. TO 5:00 P.M.

Closed Thanksgiving Day, November 28, 2013

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By Rob Wier

A North Texas Gardener Gives Thanks

I was having a difficult time coming up with a topic to write about, so my lovely wife Tammy gave me this idea. Here is a random list of items I am thankful for as a North Texas Gardener. First, a big thank you to my wife and family for being supportive of my career as a gardener, horticulturist, landscape designer, small businessman, and all round 'nature-boy'.

- 1) Rich Soil—The foundation of all good gardening. That earthy smell that says "we can grow something in this!"
- 2) Parks & Greenbelts—Mother Nature does it best with landscaping. Having and taking the opportunity to walk around her handiwork is inspiring.
- 3) Young Gardeners—We've all been there. They are quick to learn and absorb the natural processes of gardening. They instinctively want to care and nurture nature.
- 4) Comfy Patio Furniture—Might as well be comfortable while you are outside! You know it's good when you can nap out there!
- 5) Greensand—Our soil lacks iron. Greensand is the best iron treatment I've found. Small item, but makes a big difference.
- 6) Container Gardens—We all deserve to have color greet us at our entry or on the back porch. Container gardens are living arrangements that can be changed out season to season. Will make you smile, we promise!
- 7) Sharp Hand Pruners—if you are going to prune you want a sharp, quality pruner. No one likes a dull kitchen knife, gardeners don't have time for dull pruners.



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Timely Hints

By Rob Wier

Plant ... winter color! Pansies, Violas, Snapdragons, Dianthus, Ornamental Kale and Cabbage, and Cyclamen. Now is the **best** time to plant shrubs, perennials, and vines ... as well as **TREES** (take advantage of our Annual Tree Sale!). Planting them now allows them to root-in and become established to prepare for next summer's heat. Refrigerate bulbs now and wait on planting until December.

Fertilize ... pansies and other winter color with blood meal. Sprinkle over the top and water in every two weeks. Use '**SUPERTHRIVE**' on newly planted trees once per month to get those roots established and growing.

Prune ... Pick-prune as needed to keep things shapely. You can trim back old flower stalks and unsightly foliage on perennials if you are a tidy type. Personally, I leave it all until mid-February with the excuse that I'm leaving it for the birds and wildlife. Besides ... there aren't any football games in mid-February! Wait on major tree pruning until trees are dormant – usually mid-December to mid-February. Call an arborist for major tree trimming!

Pests ... Fire ants can mound up in cold, wet, weather. Use 'COME & GET IT!' (a great bait), or 'Mound Drench' to knock them out. If you've ever had scale on your trees, you can spray an insecticidal oil or dormant oil late in the month to suffocate the critters and prevent their return. Remember, with any pest, we need to visually identify it to make a proper recommendation for control. It's often difficult to prescribe a method of control over the phone.

Water ... Hand water newly planted plants instead of running the whole sprinkler system. This concentrates the water where it's needed most – and saves water! Once trees and plants have shed their foliage and gone dormant, they require less water. Water your plants once per week if we go two or more weeks without rain. Use a moisture meter to help determine how dry your soil is before you water. Run your sprinkler system manually.

Odd Jobs ... Remove the wires and stakes on trees that have been in the ground a year or longer. Keep your bird feeders filled with seed and fresh water in the bird baths.

Misc ... Use branches, foliage, and berries from your yard to decorate for the holidays.

TREE SALE In Progress!!! Save up to 30%!!!
Details at www.shadesofgreeninc.com/events.htm



Hint: There is one at the nursery and it's one of Rob's favorites!

Do you know this endangered Texas tree?
Email your answer to info@shadesofgreeninc.com
by November 15, 2013 for a coupon worth \$10
OFF any purchase of \$10 or more!

We Are Thankful For
YOU!

\$5.00 off Any purchase \$20.00 or more!

\$10.00 off Any purchase \$40.00 or more!

Thank You *Grazie* *Merci* *Gracias* *Obrigado!*

Expires Nov 30, 2013, Limit One Per Household



Cool Soil, Cool Days, Cool Plants, Cool Gardeners!



By Brice Creelman

Cool plants, cool gardeners. Not many excuses not to dig a hole or two. Usually, a lot of the new plants we try each year show up for sale in April. Oddly enough we have some cool plants ready now. Hope y'all feel like planting this fall. All are hardy and can be planted anytime you can dig. Some are tried and true; some are new to us and you! Get them in the ground now and they will grow larger and bloom longer come next season.

Agastache x "Ava"

30" x 30", Full Sun, Dry conditions, ½ native (*A. cana* x *A. barbieri*)

From High Country Gardens in Santa Fe, NM. Available only by their catalog till now. Deep Rose pink flowers all summer long. Loved by hummers and others. Great dried cut flowers also heat tolerant. Plant high and dry.

Agastache is the new salvia! Please stay hip and plant some now or you will end up planting that spot with bland begonias.



Agastache x "Ava"



Echinacea "Hot Papaya"

Echinacea "Hot Papaya"

18"-24" tall, summer to fall bloom, kinda native, butterflies are free.

I don't have much faith in any new hybrid coneflowers doing all that well in our area, but they are gorgeous and fragrant and worth a shot. Keep them dry and a little afternoon shade will help keep foliage from burning. We aren't doing our job if we ain't pushing it one way or another. Double orange-red cone, tons of blooms the first year. We'll try a new one each year and send pictures.

Heucherella "Buttered Rum"

Sounds yummy, no? Not Native, shade preferred, best in mixed shade containers. 7"x15" with white flowers in late spring. "Foamy Bells" do better here than it's parents, Heuchera and Tiarella. Hybrids usually give you the best of its parents. (Kinda like kids are supposed to work.) Cool maple-like leaves last year round. Yes, morning sun is ok, but shade necessary the rest of the day. Prefers well-drained soil but don't we all. Heavy clay soil? Plant with compost. Did we buy this plant because of its name? What do you think? Please don't drink and garden.



Heucherella "Buttered Rum"

"Cool Plants" continued fr pg. 3



Salvia greggi "Apricot"



Salvia greggi "Sierra San Antonio"



Salvia greggi "Wild Thing"

These three—*Salvia greggi* “Apricot”, “Sierra San Antonio”, “Wild Thing” - all share the same growth and needs as all *Salvia greggi*. Native, 2'-3' both ways, cut thru season to promote more blooms.

“Apricot” – new color for us definitely. In style for fall. And makes a great kolache!

“Sierra San Antonio” - bicolor has been around quite some time and now you have enough experience to grow it. A little slower than other *greggi* and could use a little shade in the afternoon. Maybe short lived (2-3 years) but in your yard could last a long time, no? If I had a nice specimen of “Sierra San Antonio” it would show I know what I’m doing and my nosy neighbor won’t have a clue as to how to do it. Make us proud!

“Wild Thing” – We don’t have a reliable source for *Salvia* “Pink Preference” and it may be the best *greggi* as far as growth habit and flower power. If you have “Pink Preference” check out “Wild Thing”, which is rumored to be the same plant. Hardy, perennial, native, butterflies, hot pink flowers, more upright growth. Probably one zone hardier also for those closer to Oklahoma. Geez, sounds like the perfect plant, no?



Sedum "Desert Black"

10"-12", sun to part shade, not native.

Oh, we’ll keep searching for a dark or black leaved sedum, but the heat here knocks them on their butts by June or July. “Desert Black” will be best in a container and will hang over the side nicely with rose-pink flowers in fall. Also, newer hybrid sedums will do better with a bit of afternoon shade. Plant with lemon coral sedum just because.

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- 8) Rain Barrels—Collects the best water to use for houseplants and containers. And it’s free!
- 9) Hummingbirds—They only live in the Americas. Like amazing little fairies that visit our gardens. They always make me stop and watch when I see one.
- 10) Trees—Shade and fall colors. “Trees are the answer!”
- 11) Drip Irrigation—Thanks to Simcha Blass of Israel for this modern method of irrigation. Like a hybrid car vs. a Hummer, drip irrigation waters your landscape much more efficiently, conserving our most precious natural resource.



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- 12)Earthworms—Nature's own little aerators. Top your beds with some compost and let them improve your soil naturally.
- 13)Turk's Cap—Great Texas native takes wet or dry, sun or shade, hummingbirds visit for free. Plant green side up!
- 14)Water Features—The sound of running water is soothing to our souls. Admired by all, kids, birds, and even grumpy old men!
- 15)Time on the Back Porch—Sit out there with your spouse or others and catch up. Or by yourself to reflect on life.
- 16)Organic Fertilizers—You can not damage or 'burn' plants with them. They feed and improve the biology of your soil. Been working since Adam & Eve, so works for me.
- 17)Landscape Lighting—You've got a great yard! Why not accent it at night?
- 18)Blackfoot Daisy—if you're going to live in Texas you should have at least one Blackfoot Daisy in your yard.
- 19)Moss Boulders—Nothing makes a landscape more natural than boulders. Some have moss, some have 'lichen'. Learn the difference.
- 20)"Superthrive"—All gardeners agree that it works, whether they have a radio show or just plant for fun.
- 21)Garden Clubs & Gardening Friends—Gardeners love to share their experiences. Forever the student, we learn a lot from others.
- 22)Butterflies—Dr. Jeckel & Mr. Hyde of the insect world. We love them as brightly colored adults, and disdain them for gobbling up all our foliage as larvae. Want to know their life cycle? Ask a fifth grader!
- 23)Perennial Color—A splash here, a splash there, a few in some containers, or a great big mass of color that comes back each year! Color my world!
- 24)Bark Mulch—conserves water, regulates soil temperatures, discourages weeds, and earthworms will convert it into organic matter. Natural mulches only please. Colored mulch—yuck!
- 25)Animal Stopper & Rabbit Repellant—Works for me, keeps the rabbits off my pansies and violas. Spread it in front of the plants to mask their scent.
- 26)Decomposed Granite—Makes great walking paths and patio areas. Packs down hard unlike rounded pebbles or gravel that always rolls or slides away.
- 27)Rain—My first horticulture professor at Texas A&M said many years ago that water would be the greatest challenge of my career. Here's to you Dr. Blackhurst, horticultural visionary! It's the best water for your yard, and it's free!
- 28)Gardening Livelihood—Making a living growing plants, improving the environment, and helping plants with people problems for over 37 years. Could not have done it without all of you . . . family, friends, staff, and our great customers.



Turk's Cap



Thanks for letting me share,

Rob