



# MG GAZETTE



**MISSION:**

The mission of the association shall be to organize and promote volunteer efforts that Support Extension programs advancing sound horticultural practices in Nueces County.

**Nueces Master Gardeners, Inc. Issue 7 July 2013**

**HTTP://NUECES.AGRILIFE.ORG**

**Plant**  
Firecracker Plant



**Botanical Name**  
*Russelia equisetiformis*



**July Topics**

- ⊗ *MG Officers*
- ⊗ *President's Corner*
- ⊗ *Happenings*
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- ⊗ *Volunteer Opportunities*
- ⊗ *Thinking of You*
- ⊗ *Flamingo Fandango*
- ⊗ *MG's in Action*
- ⊗ *MG Guide*
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- ⊗ *How Plants Defend Themselves*
- ⊗ *Juneau Glacier Gardens*

**MG Officers and Elect**  
**2013**

<b>President</b>	<b>Stephanie Martin</b>	<b>(361) 814-7776</b>
<b>Elect</b>	<b>Norma Hernandez</b>	<b>(361) 816-8206</b>
<b>Vice President</b>	<b>Martha Gonzales</b>	<b>(361) 510-8945</b>
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<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Linda Lamprecht</b>	<b>(361) 215-7738</b>
<b>Elect</b>	<b>Carol Barragy</b>	<b>(361) 658-9424</b>
<b>Treasurer/ Bookkeeper</b>	<b>Mary Lambert</b>	<b>(361) 813-7596</b>
<b>Elect</b>	<b>Phyllis O'Brien</b>	<b>(361) 387 1692</b>
<b>Publicity</b>	<b>ALL MASTER GARDENERS</b>	
<b>Gazette Editor</b>	<b>Jenny Mohundro</b> jlmohundro@gmail.com	<b>(361) 850-7904</b>
<b>Ex-Officio</b>		
<b>Members-at-large</b>	<b>Barbara Bassett, Betty Rogers, Gary Martin</b>	
<b>State Directors</b>	<b>Jenny Mohundro, Carlos Valdez</b>	
<b>Extension Office</b>	<b>Lisa Martinez</b>	<b>(361) 767-5217</b>
<b>MG Helpline</b>		<b>(361) 767-5250</b>

*Firecracker Plant is a weeping shrub that, when in full bloom, looks as if it is raining flowers. These slender, red, tubular flowers appear in the summer and hang on the plant like little firecrackers during most of the year. The flowers occur in 12-inch-long sprays and are a delight to the onlooker. The slim and pendulous branches of this plant lack foliage; the leaves are reduced to bracts. However, the branches and bracts are of fine texture and have a very pleasant color.*

*This 4-foot-high shrub can be used as an unclipped hedge if there is enough space to accommodate its wide spreading habit. It is also useful as a tall ground cover. It is quite charming in a container or large hanging basket and is lovely when cascading over a wall. The Firecracker Plant is tolerant of different types of soils as long as they are well-drained. It does require full sun for best flowering and fullest growth.*

<http://nassau.ifas.ufl.edu/horticulture/demogarden/Printables/Firecracker%20Plant.pdf>



## President's Corner

We are looking at Class 24 Orientation on July 24, 9:00 a.m. at the Extension office.

We are also linking up with LYNC for a website via TAMU as well. Deb Holliday and Gary Martin are teaming up for techno-geek status, along with several alternates. More later....

We have huge potential LTG project negotiations underway with CCISD. It may expand to about 60 beds in various locations and training sessions for the Phys Ed coaches who will be responsible for them. We will need every available body to help put these together when the contract is signed. We are still looking for a site to set up storage containers to house timbers, tools, and soil. LTG will purchase them as soon as we have a place. There will be plenty of Youth hours to be had building those beds....

Dr. John Fucik announced he is leaving Port A in favor San Antonio. He donated \$1,000.00 to the LTG funds toward the purchase of the storage containers. What a remarkable member he has been for Master Gardeners! Even the children at the school in Port A gave him a wonderful gift of pictures, drawings, and fanfare which he shared with the membership. Photos were taken and should appear in the upcoming Gazette.

We are closing in on Class 24 MG certification class. We will need all your energy and support to keep it going for 16 weeks. The Passion teams will be getting re-activated and recruits solicited to assist with the class as well as the Home and Garden Show in September.

Cheryl Lewis and Carlos Valdez are camping out at Ray all summer long on Mondays and Thursdays to keep the greenhouse going. They got a huge amount of pots and flats donated to plant stuff. Now all they need is members and friends to donate plants to propagate. Contact Cheryl or Carlos.

Remember to get your time sheets in by the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month (keep copies for your records), check on your background checks (once every three years to be certain you are not delinquent), sign the Member's Agreement form (if you haven't already), and pay dues on time each year. Any one of those infractions will cause you to fall out of good standing (meaning you cannot vote, hold office, or chair a committee). Class 23, remember, you have until December 31<sup>st</sup> of this year to complete your 50 hours to certify or you will be starting over with your hours as well as paying dues in 2014. We want and need your input and your energy.

Have a great month, be safe, and keep us informed what's happening out there!

*Stephanie*

*Stephanie Martin*

*President 2013*

*Nueces Master Gardeners, Inc.*

## Other Happenings July 2013

Mon. Jul 1 thru Wed. Jul 31

\*Flamingo Fandango exhibit, BG, 9am, 852-2100

Wed. Jul 3

\*Coastal Bend Cacti & Succulent Society, 7pm, GC, 512-592-1538

\*South Texas Orchid Society, 7pm, GC, 364-3425

Thur. Jul 4

\*Orchid Novice Class, 7pm, BG, 854-7624

Mon. Jul 8 thru Fri. Jul 12

\*Kids' Summer Nature Day Camps, BG, 9am-12, ages 7-9, 852-2100

Sat. Jul 13

\*"New Plumeria Passions" seminar, 10am, BG, 852-2100

Mon. Jul 15 thru Fri. Jul 19

\*Kids' Summer Nature Day Camps, BG, 9am-12, ages 5-6, 852-2100

Tue. Jul 16

\*MG Executive & General Meetings, 10am and 12Noon, GC, 814-7776

Wed. Jul 18

\*Bromeliad Society, GC, 7pm, 658-8650

Sat. Jul 20

\*Plumeria Society's annual plumeria sale, GC, 10am, 852-2100

Mon. Jul 22 thru Fri. Jul 26

\*Kids' Summer Nature Day Camps, BG, 9am-12, ages 7-9, 852-2100

Wed. Jul 24

\*Plumeria Society, 7pm, GC, 813-9616

Thur. Jul 25

\*Bonsai Society, 7pm, GC, 992-0009

Sat. Jul 27

\*"Selecting a Spotting Scope for Bird & Butterfly Watching" seminar, BG, 10am, 852-2100

\*Native Plant Society, 2pm, Janet Harte Library in Flour Bluff, 776-3285

**Be sure to note all of the opportunities for educational hours (601) at the Botanical Gardens, local nurseries, plant societies and Master Gardeners' programs. (Program portion only)**



TEXAS A&M  
AGRI LIFE  
EXTENSION

Agent's Notes

Coming August 1<sup>st</sup>  
New Horticulture Agent  
*Jessica Weizer*

## **Class 24 Interns Orientation 399**

**July 24<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m.**

**AgriLife Extension Office**

**WANTED! Attendance by all Master Gardeners!**

This is our opportunity to show the incoming interns what a great group of enthusiastic gardeners they are joining.

As we introduce ourselves, we can exhibit the wide scope of talents and interests that are represented in the Nueces Master Gardeners.

## **July Meeting Lunch**



**Rita Phillips 361 991 0750**  
**Norma Hernandez 361 816 8206**  
**Lan- Lee Lin 830 660 4533**  
**Teresa Stelzig 361 643 6491**

To volunteer for future lunches,  
Contact Rita Phillips 991-0750  
Or e-mail  
[rnphillipsctcx@grandecom.net](mailto:rnphillipsctcx@grandecom.net)

### **More Garden Bloopers**

My neighbor had a big, beautiful garden on the side of a hill, and as her family was getting smaller, she offered me all the space I wanted. I planted a lot of vegetables, but the mistake I made was that I planted the whole packet of turnip (rutabaga) seeds. I had a row of turnip 50 feet long. I had the nicest crop of turnip you could imagine. There was only my husband and myself to eat them, but I know lots of people that like them, I could give some away.

When it came time to harvest them, I worked my heart out. I'd cut off the root and leaves, and fill the wheelbarrow, trot the wheelbarrow down the row and pile the turnips on the grass. I worked for hours!

Finally, I was done, I took the knife into the house and washed it off, and went back out to the garden to admire my turnips. I had a pile of turnips as tall as I am. I was almost up to this great pile when a few turnips at the bottom of the pile moved, the whole lot of them started rolling down the hill. I was chasing after them, I'd gather a few in my arms and when I'd reach for another the ones in my arms would get away and continue down the hill. I must have made quite a sight, because my brother-in-law was laughing at me. "You'd better catch them," he called, "They're going to wipe out the neighbor's house!"

I eventually got them rounded up, but it turns out everyone doesn't like turnip the way I do! :-)) I wound up serving turnip at least once a week in every way you can imagine. I served them boiled, fried, in stew, I cooked them up and added pumpkin pie spice and made fake pumpkin pie! I thought it was rather inventive of me, but it was the turnip fritters that finally did me in. My husband took one bite and gasped. He had thought that he was biting into an apple fritter. He said he didn't care if he NEVER ate another turnip! I was NOT to grow them ever again! I guess he just doesn't have a sense of humor!

<http://faq.gardenweb.com/faq/lists/peren/2002092316009274.html>

### **Next MG General Meeting 301**

**July 16th , 12 noon at GC**

**Program: Succulents 601**  
**Speaker: Jan Thornton**

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### **Next MG Board of Directors Meeting 308**

**July 16th , 10:00 a.m. at GC**  
**(3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday monthly, except December)**

## **What are those little red numbers scattered throughout the MG Gazette?**

**Your MG Gazette Editor and the MG Timekeeper post the reporting category number for meetings and events to use on the volunteer hours reporting form.**

**Example:**

**Next MG General Meeting 301**



07/04	Jeanne O'Leary	Class 12
07/09	Gary Martin	Class 13
07/13	Ronnie Maxwell	Class 04
07/20	Karen Easton	Transfer
07/22	Carol Carroll	Class 15
07/25	Karen Smith	Class 15

**MG's ARE IN HIGH DEMAND!  
Be Ready To Do Your Part**

- **Speakers for Home & Garden Show (earns MG's a free booth which will still need booth sitters).**
- **Presenters and helpers at MG Intern Classes**
- **Builders and mentors for school garden beds when new all-school program for 41 beds begins this fall.**
- **Speakers for children's program requested for Nueces County Keach Family Library in Robstown in July.**
- **Support for all of the on-going MG volunteer projects.**

***You Know You Have Been Gardening Too Long***

...when you have fashion shots of your Tomatoes and Peppers on your office shelf.  
 ...when your idea of a hot date on a Saturday evening is in the garden hand pollinating plants.  
 ...when you rush home from work and go straight to the garden and hug your roses (Ouch!), then you go in to your house and see your family.  
 ...when after the first frost, you hold funeral services in your garden.  
 ...when you start packing "Weed be gone" in your purse .  
 ...when you begin to recognize weeds by their roots.  
 ... when taking your last ride in a hearse you reach out take cuttings off the wreaths.

# Volunteer Opportunities

**Ongoing: Ray High School Greenhouse**  
*Behind Ray H.S., Staples & Texan Trail.*  
**Summer Schedule: Monday & Thursday**  
**9:00-10:30 am**

**199**

**Ongoing: Food Bank Project "Outgrow Hunger"** 826 Krill Dr. (Navigation then right on Savage Lane to Krill).  
**Tuesdays 7:30a.m. (Except MG meeting day then Wednesday) Contact: Mary Lambert**  
**813-7596 or e-mail her at**  
**cwlmel@yahoo.com 499**

**Ongoing: Nature Conservatory, Monday 3:30 & Blucher Park 4:00 until sundown.**  
*(Behind the Main Library) Bring gloves, bug spray, plus a bag lunch & chair if you plan to stay for our Chat & Chew time. Contact: Karen Smith 877-9723*  
**499**

**Ongoing: Courtyard Maintenance at the Senior Garden Center, 1<sup>st</sup> Monday, 9:15 a.m. Contact: Betty Whitt**  
**991-5375 499**

**Ongoing: Botanical Gardens, Summer Schedule: Wednesdays, 8:00 a.m. Contact: Jessica Latimer 993-6013 403**

*Areas to work:*

1. Hummingbird Garden
2. Butterfly Garden (new)
3. Sensory Garden
4. Earth Kind Garden **402**

Check With Michael, Carol, or Billy for work tasks.



*The following Master Gardeners need our caring thoughts and support:*

**Gretchen Perrin**  
**Concern for surgery recovery at MD Anderson**





# 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Botanical Gardens' Flamingo Fandango July 1 – July 31

In addition to elaborately-costumed birds, *Flamingo Fandango*, which opens Monday, July 1, running through Wednesday July 31, includes an additional *feathers-only flock* of 200 birds for some *flam-tastic* visitor *foto ops*.



# Nueces Master Gardeners In Action

## Dr. John Fucik



Nueces Master Gardeners wish to thank Dr. John Fucik for his generous parting gift, a check for \$1,000. After many years of service to the Nueces Master Gardener Association, Dr. Fucik is moving to San Antonio.



He has endeared himself through his gracious service in many MG activities. Most of us first met him when he came to our Intern Class with his box of red wiggler worms to introduce the science of vermaculture.

He also volunteered many hours at the Olsen Elementary School in Port Aransas, Texas, as well as other projects around Port A.

Dr. Fucik, you will be missed! Enjoy your new home!



## Nueces Master Gardener Member's Guide Revisited Some "Why's" for MG Rules and Deadlines

Submitted by Jenny Mohundro, Nueces MG



Rules and deadlines are a fact of life for everyone. We all know the deadlines and the consequences of missing the April 15<sup>th</sup> IRS date, a late payment on credit card bills, and overlooking auto registration, or home or auto insurance renewals. These are all facts of life and we usually comply.

Sometimes other rules are just a bother and we comply or not, according to their importance in our lives. But most rules are made for a reason and that applies to our Master Gardener rules and deadlines. It always helps me if I understand the "whys", so I looked into the "whys" of some of our Master Gardener deadlines and consequences. I gleaned information from the NMG Members' Guide and State Directors meetings.

### **Volunteer Hours**

*The Nueces Master Gardeners Association is part of and created under the Texas AgriLife Extension Service, Texas A&M University System. The volunteer aspect of the MG program allows individuals to dedicate their time and talents to enhancing the quality of life for citizens of Nueces County using the science and art of horticulture. (NMG Guide, p. 5, II B)*

Our 30 volunteer hours are a requirement of our certified membership status (NMG Guide, p.8, III A2). The hours are required to be reported on a **monthly** basis (NMG Guide, p.11, IV A). Because we are part of A&M University, monthly reports are required which the AgriLife Extension office must submit. They have strict timelines from their superiors, and the reports reflect on the job performance of the agent and office staff in overseeing all of the programs under their direction.

When we get sloppy and wait until the end of the year to report all of our hours at once, the monthly reports from Nueces AgriLife Extension Service are inaccurate and do not show the great job we are doing in Nueces County in fulfilling our purpose and responsibilities of "enhancing quality of life for citizens of Nueces County..." This reflects poorly on the Nueces AgriLife Extension Office. Our new agent will be required to do monthly reports and we want to aid in her success by supplying information in a timely manner.

At the end of the year, there is a January 15<sup>th</sup> deadline for getting all hours for the previous year submitted. These hours go into required Extension Office annual reports with their own deadlines. If our monthly deadlines are not observed, this makes a huge job for our Timekeeper in tabulating a full year's worth of paperwork for each member in a short period of time. Remember, our Timekeeper is doing this as a MG volunteer like the rest of us. No wonder she sports the big Texas award badge with sparkling gems showing huge numbers of volunteer hours!

Also at the end of the year, all of the volunteer hours are translated into an estimated dollar amount. This amount is then written on a big check poster which is presented to the Nueces County Commissioners at commissioners' court. What a great way to show the amazing monetary effect that all of our efforts contribute to the citizens of the county. By having our hours reported before the deadline, the dollar amount can truly show our significant contribution to our community.

Make our Nueces Master Gardeners star shine brightly by reporting your hours by the monthly deadline.

### **WHAT IS THE REASON FOR ALL OF THE DETAILED NUMBERED REPORTING CATEGORIES?**

The Agent's required reports ask for data in many varied categories. By having our hours reported in small, specific categories, the data can be pulled and assembled in many different ways to answer the specific questions posed in the various county, university, and state reporting systems.



*From time to time, the MG Gazette includes information on Specialist Training Classes provided by the Texas Master Gardeners Association. It would improve the qualifications of our speakers and enhance our service to the community if our Nueces Master Gardeners were to have more trained Specialists in our group.*

*Watch for the announcement of a training session on a specialty of interest to you in the MG Gazette or on the Texas MG website. Reimbursement for the cost of the class may be approved by the Executive Board. Instructions, application process, and eligibility requirements are provided in the NMG Members' Guide, p.12, IV D.*

*The article below gives full information on the Texas Master Gardener Specialist Program.*

## **Texas Master Gardener Specialist Program**

**Purpose:** To provide advanced training whereby a corps of Master Gardeners can obtain a specialization which supports or expands specific county educational programs of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service.

**Guidelines:** The primary purpose of a Specialist program is not to

designate “experts” in a field of study or topic; rather, it is designed to identify Master Gardeners who have received special training to support specific county educational programs or projects. Specialist training should be designed to empower the Master Gardener with the knowledge and skills required to effectively support designated programs or projects. This may include administration of projects, training of Master Gardeners, clientele presentations, and/or applied research and demonstrations.

**Basic Requirement:** To be eligible for a Specialist designation, an individual must possess an up-to-date Master Gardener certification.

**Training and Volunteer Requirements:** Specialist training should be a minimum of 8 hours in length. Hours of training will depend on subject matter and level of expertise to be obtained. Training might include: formal classroom training, field trips and tours, mentoring by experts, and/or self-directed study. Following completion of the training requirement, an individual should complete a minimum 15 hours of volunteer service in a designated program or project to obtain this title of Master Gardener Specialist.

**Reporting Volunteer Service:** Upon completion of Specialist training, Master Gardeners are expected to be a local county resource and contribute volunteer service by training other Master Gardeners and the public. Master Gardener Specialists should document and report volunteer service hours to the Specialist

training coordinator. These hours are used to gain Specialist certification and evaluate the effectiveness of the Specialist training effort. The training coordinator will keep a roster and records of all classes and report all qualifying specialists to the State Master Gardener Coordinator. Specialists will be given certificates at the State Master Gardener Conference.

**Specialist Titles:** Specialists titles should reflect the program or project in which the Master Gardener is being trained. Examples of existing or potential specialist titles include:

- Junior Master Gardener
- Entomology
- Earth-Kind Landscaping
- Irrigation Efficiency
- Plant Propagation
- Greenhouse Management
- Vegetable
- Rainwater Harvesting

## **Upcoming Training Sessions**

**Texas Junior MG Specialist  
July 23-25, 2013  
Georgetown, TX**

**Landscape Design Course  
September 23-24, 2013  
College Station, TX**

**For Details  
&  
Deadlines**

**[txmg.org/training](http://txmg.org/training)**



## HOW PLANTS DEFEND THEMSELVES

Maybe it's time to reconsider what we think about plants:

They hear, touch, see and even "talk" in order to survive.

By Natalie Angier

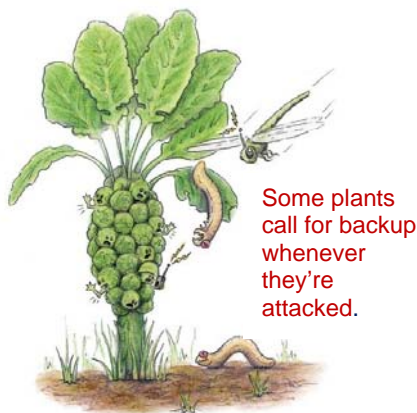
I stopped eating pork about eight years ago after a scientist happened to mention that the animal whose teeth most closely resemble our own is the pig. Unable to shake the image of a perky little pig flashing me a brilliant, George Clooney smile, I decided it was easier to forgo the Christmas ham. A couple of years later, I gave up on all mammalian meat, period. I still eat fish and poultry, however, and pour eggnog in my coffee. My dietary decisions are arbitrary and inconsistent, and when friends ask why I'm willing to try the duck but not the lamb, I don't have a good answer. Food choices are often like that: difficult to articulate yet strongly held. And lately, debates over food choices have flared with particular vehemence.

In his book *Eating Animals*, novelist Jonathan Safran Foer describes his gradual transformation from omnivorous, oblivious slacker who "waffled among any number of diets" to "committed vegetarian." Gary Steiner, a philosopher at Bucknell University, argued on the Op-Ed page of *The New York Times* that people should strive to be "strict ethical vegans" like himself, avoiding all products derived from animals, including wool and silk. Killing animals for human food and finery is nothing less than "outright murder," he said.

But before we cede the entire moral penthouse to "committed vegetarians" and "strict ethical vegans," we might consider that plants no more aspire to being stir-fried in a wok than a hog aspires to being peppercorn-studded in my Christmas clay pot. This is not meant as a trite argument or a chuckled aside. Plants are lively and seek to keep it that way. The more scientists learn about the complexity of plants—their keen sensitivity to the environment, the speed with which they react to changes in their surroundings, and the extraordinary number of tricks that plants will rally to fight off attackers and solicit help from afar—the more impressed the researchers become, and the less easily we can dismiss plants as fiberfill backdrop, passive sunlight collectors on which deer, antelope and vegans can conveniently

graze. It's time for a green revolution—a reseeding of our stubborn animal minds.

When plant biologists speak of their subjects, they use active verbs and vivid images. Plants "forage" for resources such as light and soil nutrients, and "anticipate" rough spot and opportunities. By analyzing the ratio of red light and far red light (light at the far end of the spectrum) falling on their leaves, for example, plants can sense the presence of other chlorophyllated competitors nearby and try to grow the other way. Their roots ride the underground rhizosphere and engage in cross-cultural and microbial trade.



Some plants call for backup whenever they're attacked.

"Plants are not static or silly," says Monika Hilker, Ph.D., of the Institute of Biology at the Free University of Berlin. "They respond to tactile cues; they recognize different wavelengths of light; they listen to chemical signals; they can even talk (via chemical signals)." Touch, sight, hearing, speech: "These are sensory modalities and abilities we normally think of as only being in animals," Hilker says.

Plants can't run away from a threat, but they can stand their ground. "They are very good at avoiding getting eaten," says plant geneticist Linda Walling, Ph.D. of the University of California, Riverside. "It's an unusual situation where insects can overcome those defenses." At the smallest nip to its leaves, specialized cells on the plant's surface release chemicals to irritate the predator or sticky goo to entrap it. Genes in the plant's DNA are activated to wage systemwide chemical warfare, the plant's version of an immune response. *We need terpenes, alkaloids, phenolics—let's move!*

"I'm amazed at how fast some of these things happen," says Consuelo DeMoraes, Ph.D., of Pennsylvania State University. DeMoraes and her colleagues did experiments to clock a plant's systemic response time and found that, in less than 20 minutes from the moment a caterpillar

began feeding on its leaves, the plant had plucked carbon from the air and forged defensive compounds from scratch.

Just because we humans can't hear them doesn't mean plants don't howl. Some of the compounds that plants generate in response to insect mastication—their feedback, you might say—are volatile chemicals that serve as cries for help. Such airborne alarms have been shown to attract both large, predatory insects such as dragonflies, which delight in caterpillar meat, as well as tiny parasitic insects, which can infect a caterpillar and destroy it from within.

Enemies of the plant's enemies are not the only ones to tune in to the emergency broadcast. "Some of these cues, some of these volatiles that are released when a focal plant is damaged, cause other plants of the same species, or even of another species, to likewise become more resistant to herbivores," says Richard Karban, Ph.D., entomology professor at the University of California, Davis.

### Nip Trouble in the Bud

Hilker and her colleagues, as well as other research teams, have found that certain plants can sense when insect eggs have been deposited on their leaves, and will act immediately to rid themselves of the incubating menace. They may sprout carpets of tumor-like neoplasms to knock off the eggs, or secrete ovicides to kill them, or sound the SOS.

As reported in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, Hilker and her co-workers determined that when a female cabbage butterfly lays her eggs on a Brussels sprout plant and attaches her treasures to the leaves with tiny dab of glue, the vigilant vegetable detects the presence of a simple additive in the glue, benzyl cyanide. Cued by the additive, the plant swiftly alters the chemistry of its leaf surface to beacon female parasitic wasps. Spying the anchored bounty, the female wasps in turn inject their eggs inside the butterfly eggs. The gestating wasps feed on the gestating butterflies, and the plant's problem is solved.

Here's the lurid Edgar Allan Poetry of it: the benzyl cyanide tip-off was donated to the female butterfly by the male during mating "It's an anti-aphrodisiac pheromone, so that the female wouldn't mate anymore," Hilker says. "The male is trying to ensure his paternity, but he ends up endangering his own offspring."

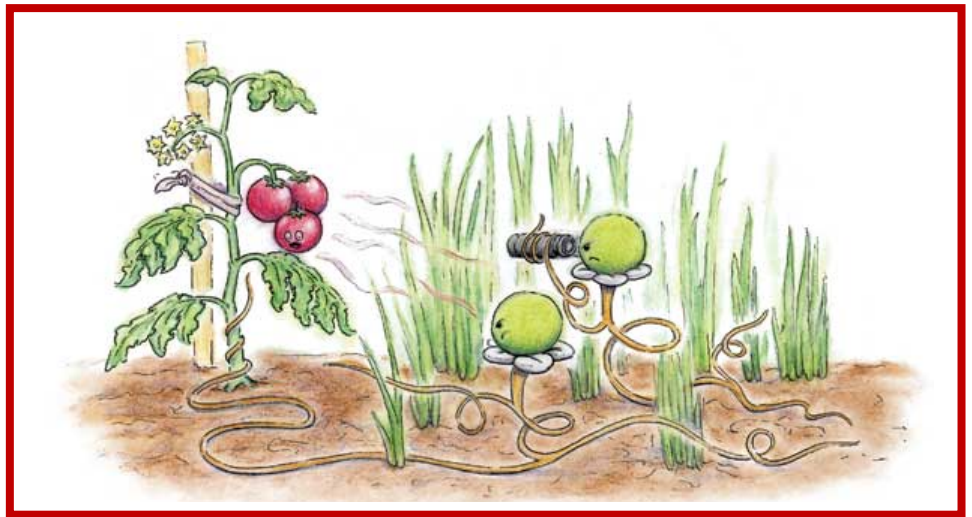
Plants eavesdrop on one another benignly and malignly. As they described in *Science* and other journals, DeMoraes and her colleagues have discovered that



seedlings of the dodder plant--a parasitic weed related to the morning glory--can detect volatile chemicals released by potential host plants such as the tomato. The young dodder then grows inexorably toward the host until it can encircle the victim's stem and begin sucking the life phloem, the vascular tissue, right out of it. The parasite can even distinguish between the scents of healthier and weaker tomato plants and then head for the hale one.

“Even if you have quite a bit of knowledge about plants,” DeMoraes says, “it’s still surprising to see how sophisticated they can be.”

It’s a small daily tragedy that we animals must kill to stay alive. Plants are the ethical autotrophs here, the ones that wrest their meals from the sun. Don’t expect them to boast: They’re too busy fighting to survive.



*Mother Earth News, April/May 2013, pp. 63-67.*

## Juneau Glacier Gardens Rainforest Adventure

Glacier Gardens in Juneau, Alaska, were established around 1984. The rich farmland was totally devastated by a mudslide. The land owner tried to restore it to its once beautiful state, but restoration did not go well. Frustrated, he threw down a fallen tree trying to smash it, but if it did not work. Instead of getting smashed, the tree stuck in the mud upside down.

Well, if things do not work the way you want, you should be smart and make the best of it! He planted some flowers on the roots of the upside down tree, giving the start the most unusual garden on the North-West. Given the short, cold and rainy summers, the flowers in the gardens are just amazing.



HAPPY  
4<sup>TH</sup>  
of July



CEA, Horticulture  
Editor: Jenny Mohundro

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*Individuals with disabilities who require an auxiliary aid, service, or accommodation in order to participate in any Extension event are encouraged to contact their County Extension Office at 361-767-5217 at least one week in advance of the program in order for proper arrangements to be made.*

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*In the event of a name, address or phone number change please contact the office at:*

*Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service  
710 E. Main, Suite 1, Attn. Horticulture  
Robstown, Texas 78380  
(361) 767-5217*