LSU AgCenter Research · Extension · Teaching

Gardener's Gazette

A LAFAYETTE PARISH MASTER GARDENERS PUBLICATION

VOLUME 26 ISSUE 6

June 2024

Louisiana Master Gardener

LPMGA General Meeting
June 5th, 12 Noon
SouthSide Library
Lafayette, LA
Dan Gill
Container Gardens

Meeting
June 18th, 1PM
IRA NELSON
2206 JOHNSTON ST.

WHAT'S INSIDE

- **Meetings/Board pg 2**
- **What Plant is This pg 2**
- **Maddox Miller pg 3**
- **Mentors pg4**
- **Got Seeds pg 5**
- **Answer pg 6**
- **Field Trip pg 6**
- **Demo Bed 7**
- **Calendar pg 8**

Ambrosia trifida

RAGWEED

This plant came up in my garden this spring as a volunteer. At first, I thought it was a Mexican Sunflower, but soon knew it was not. It is located in a good spot to shade my Bromeliads that are on the fence, so I left it alone to see what it would become. As of this writing it is 5 feet tall and spreads out around 3 feet. Turns out it 'is' Ragweed, which is native to North America. It can grow up to 10 feet tall and is an annual.

I was ready to dig it up and my sister, who thinks any thing Native must be good, asked me to keep it. I decided to give it a chance and look up any benefits and pesky traits it my have.

Turns out it does have some helpful uses for both people and animals. Native people used the leaves and roots to make an astringent and to reduce fever. Teas and tinctures were used to treat fever, pneumonia, nausea, intestinal cramps, diarrhea and menstrual disorders. Poultices are applied externally to insect bites, rheumatic joints and various skin conditions. Ragweed Pollen is harvested to use commercially for pharmaceutical preparations for the treatment of allergies. In terms of wildlife, the seeds of ragweed are rich in oil, and the seed production per plant is enormous. Some of the seeds will remain on the plant into the winter and are forage for birds and other wildlife.

However, ragweed affects the crop of farmers causing reduced yield, and it is a major contributor to allergies, specifically hay fever. The articles I read even worked in global warming, as it has been shown that the increase in pollen production is related to higher levels of carbon dioxide.

Do I keep this plant or get rid of it? I see some good things about this plant, it is certainly a wildlife friendly plant and a good pollinator. However, I live in a small neighborhood with houses that are close together, and since the pollen travels a good distance, it would not be fair to expose my neighbors to expose them to allergies and the symptoms that they bring.

I am hopeful that the swamp mallow I planted will now shade the Bromeliads, without the side affects of Ragweed.

Mary Gladney

MEETINGS AND WHAT PLANT AM I

2024 LPMGA General Meetings
First Wednesday Monthly
Daytime: 12:00pm
Evening: 6 pm

2024 LPMGA Board Meetings
1pm on Third Tuesday

Dates, times, topics, and locations are subject to change

GENERAL MEETINGS	BOARD MEETINGS
June 5	June 18
NONE	July 16
August 7	August 20
September 4	**September 17**
October 2	October 15
November 6	November 19
December 4	December 17

NO NEWSLETTER IN JULY

WHAT PLANT IS THIS

By Karen Trahan

A native of the Middle East and southern Europe, this herbaceous annual grows to a height of 1 to 3 feet and a width of 1 to 1 ½ feet. It grows in full sun in average, well-drained soil with a PH of 6 to 7 in Zones 3 to 10. It is a fast-growing plant which readily re-seeds. Because of this, it may become invasive. It produces a long tap root which makes transplanting difficult.

The gray-green leaves of this plant are large (4 to 6 inches) and edible, with a flavor similar to cucumber. Finely chop the younger leaves and use in sandwiches, or mixed into cream cheese, yogurt and dips. The younger leaves are used because older leaves become hairy and tough. Use gloves when working around this plant because the hairy leaves can irritate sensitive skin.

The edible flowers of this plant are borne on sturdy, hollow, round, branching and prickly stems. Periwinkle blue, the flowers are 5-petaled stars with prominent black stamens. They, too, are edible, and are added to punches, and other drinks, as well as to desserts when crystallized in sugar. The Romans floated them in wine. They were thought to provide courage. Research suggests that the high calcium, potassium and mineral salts work on the adrenal glands, where courage begins. They dry well and make a colorful addition to potpourris.

To propagate, plant the relatively large black seeds, which are tri-sided and lozenge-shaped, in well-drained soil in spring or early summer. Seeds are often viable up to 8 years! Plant ½ inch deep and keep moist while they are germinating. When 3 inches high, thin to 18 to 24 inches to make room for its large basal leaves. This plant will be fully grown in 5 to 6 weeks. It may repel tomato hornworm and cabbage white butterflies. It is very attractive to bees and is a companion plant to strawberries. Medieval literature records the use of its dried leaves to brew tea to treat coughs, colds and fevers.

Do you know what plant this is?

Pine Colaspis Beetle

There's been a steady flow of calls over the past couple of weeks regarding the browning of pine and cypress trees. Some of these trees appear "torched" as if the foliage has completely died. Without first noticing a pest or pathogen, one may assume that it could be related to root issues, drought stress, or some other factor. When homeowners are prompted to look more closely at the damage, small ¼ inch beetles are evident in large numbers. These beetles are out in force this year and are called pine colaspis beetles, *Colaspis pini. A close relative to this beetle is the grape colaspis, which is nearly identical in appearance and is a pest of several fruit and vegetable crops.*

The pine colaspis beetle is typically seen in the late spring and early summer in Louisiana. These beetles feed on many species of pine trees including loblolly pine, slash pine, spruce pine, and longleaf pine. This pest has also been readily seen on another conifer, bald cypress. The affected foliage appears to be jagged from the feeding and turns brown. One positive aspect of the pine colaspis life cycle is that there is only one generation per year. Therefore, the beetles will eventually fade out and give the tree time to recover without a successive generation. Typically, a healthy tree will be able to "bounce back" from the damage and appear healthy by mid to late summer. After feeding, the beetles will mate and lay eggs. The next generation of beetles will persist as grubs feasting on the roots of grasses and other weeds until they pupate the following spring and emerge shortly thereafter.

Regarding control of the beetles, home landscape pyrethroids such as permethrin can be effective at killing the beetles present on foliage. On large trees, control may be more difficult due to the sprayer's limitations. As with most conditions, earlier detection often leads to a more positive outcome. If the homeowner does not notice the damage until the tree is completely brown, insecticides do not offer much help. If the condition can be caught early at the first sign of foliage browning, contact insecticides can prevent further damage and expedite the recovery process. It is important to note that the beetle damage is not thought to be health threatening, but the tree may need supplemental watering if we encounter a dry stretch. Keep your fingers crossed for an "average" summer of moderate temperatures and adequate moisture to aid in the recovery of stressed plants from last year!

Maddox Miller, LSU AgCenter

ATTENTION PAST MENTORS AND NEW FRIENDS

Call for Past Mentors and anyone that would like to join our team!

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Unbelievably the time is getting close and I am contacting you regarding the new MGIT class that will start Thursday, August 1, 2024, at the INHC 8:00am.
I am sending this request via email through Janel and I am inserting it in the June Newsletter making sure I cover all my bases.

My request is that if you were a mentor last year in good standing, if you would like to continue as a mentor to the 2024 class please let me know via text: (337 288-0283) or email colette.anzalone1@louisiana.edu that you would like to join our great team again this year.

If you are not a mentor and would like to join our team any master gardener in good standing and the 2023 class members also please again call me (337 288-0283) or email me colette.anzalone1@louisiana.edu .
If you do not know what we are doing and why do not hesitate to call me so we can discuss it.

This is a terrific way to meet the new class members and a chance to make volunteer hours. A good majority of this activity is making a phone call to your assigned mentee and making sure you advise them on any and every activity the MG host to get them involved and become comfortable to attend events and make a new friend.

IF any of this interests you and again if you have any questions, please call me so we can discuss. Please let me know who will continue so I will know how to proceed.
Thank you will wait to hear from you.

Colette Anzalone
Chair

GOT SEEDS?

If you find yourself with excess, or leftover seeds to spare, please consider donating them to the **Seed Library** by Healthy Acadiana. The Seed Library is located at Lafayette Parish Library's Main Branch downtown. Read more about this wonderful community resource You may drop off seed donations (vegetables, herbs, flowers, pollinators) to: https://tinyurl.com/2txsr6p2

- The Cottage (look for the donation container inside
- Main Library (front circulation desk)
- LPMGA general membership meetings

Please attach a **Seed Donation Form** to all donations. Forms are located next to the donation box and at the Seed Library, or you may print the attached document.

Anna Gauthier
louisa.anna@gmail.com

ASSOCIATION CULTURAL LATINO-ACADIANA DONATES WATERING CANS

Louis Mora and the ACLA donated 24 watering cans to the LPMGA School Gardens.

ACLA is a non-profit organization founded in Acadiana to connect its citizens with Latino culture. Through dancing, music, food and more they celebrate the happy union between Cajun and Latino heritage.

WHAT PLANT IS THIS ANSWER

Borago officinallis:

Borage, beebread

On May 9, this group of Master Gardeners traveled to Palmetto State Park. We enjoyed an interesting and very informative lecture about the Abbeville Red Iris. Our speaker was Patrick O'Connor who is in charge of efforts to preserve the iris, and the environment it thrives in. Afterwards, we toured the area of the park where the red iris blooms. This photo was taken on the deck overlooking the area where they grow and where workers harvest the seeds. After the lecture, we were taken on a hike by the park's ranger, Louis Nichols. He also guided us through the nature station where we learned about the many animals that live in the park. As you can see it was well attended, and enjoyed by all.

CHILDRENS DEMONSTARATION BED NEEDS CHAIRPERSONS.

As most of you know the Children's Bed at our Demonstration Gardens is one of the largest beds we have. I am searching for as many co-chairs as I can find to help maintain this educational, award-winning, multi-sectional garden. It's divided into many different types of gardens that are very interesting and informative to children.
Please contact me if you're interested in taking care of one or more of these sections.
Thanks,
Gail WakeField

gailwak@cox.net

LSU AGRICULTURAL CENTER
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE
1010 Lafayette Street, Suite 325
Lafayette, LA 70501-6884

innovate . educate . improve lives
for the latest research-based information on just about anything, visit our Web site at www.lsuagcenter.com

JUNE 2024

June 5, 12 Noon, LPMGA General Meeting, Southside Library, Dan Gill

June 18th LPMGA Board Meeting, 1 PM Ira Nelson

Gardener's Gazette is issued to all members of the Lafayette Parish Master Gardeners' Program. All members are encouraged to submit news, educational features, and photographs. **The deadline for all submissions is the 17th of each month for publication in the next month's issue unless otherwise noted.**

Please send newsletter items to:
Editor Mary Gladney newsletter@lpmga.org
The Master Gardener program is a division of the
Louisiana Cooperative Extension Agency
1010 Lafayette Street/Suite 325,
Lafayette, Louisiana 70501
Telephone (337) 291-7090 Fax (337) 291-7099
The AgCenter website is www.lsuagcenter.com

The Louisiana cooperative extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment. Louisiana State University and A&M College, Louisiana Governing Bodies, Southern University, and the United States Department of Agriculture A State Partner in the Cooperative Extension System.
It is the policy of the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service that no person shall be subjected to discrimination on the grounds of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, or disability.

If you have a disability which requires special assistance for your participation in our meetings, please call the LSU AgCenter 291-7090

Please note: All meeting and event dates, times, and locations are subject to change.