

Plant of the Month

Mock Orange (*Philadelphus*)

The Mock Orange is a native Texas shrub or small ornamental tree depending on how it is maintained. Its semi-evergreen leaves are the backdrop to a grand spring show of fragrant white blooms.

It responds well to pruning offering either a heavily pruned denser shrub or an unpruned graceful tree. However, caution should be taken to only prune after the Mock Orange has bloomed as it blooms off of the old wood.

The Mock Orange thrives in well drained soils reminiscent of the rocky soils in its native area of the Edward's Plateau. However it has proven to be adaptable to North Texas clay soils as well.

Whether you are in need of a blooming shrub or tree, the Mock Orange should definitely be considered for your landscapes.

By: Patrick Dickinson



Benefits of Rainwater Harvesting

- Saves money
- Reduces demand on municipal water supply
- Makes efficient use of a valuable resource
- Reduces flooding, erosion, and contamination of surface water

A Rainwater System Consists of

- The supply – rainwater
- The demand – landscape water requirements
- Collection system
- Storage
- Delivery system

Irrigation Essentials

Irrigation Check up

Irrigation problems damage a landscape by creating too dry and/or too wet areas resulting in water loss and high cost. Irrigation check-ups identify problems with the system, sprinklers and help you estimate how long to run each station or zone.

Step 1 Copy original irrigation system design to make notes on or sketch the irrigation layout and number of sprinkler heads in each station.

Step 2 Run each station and

observe each sprinkler head to see if the head is running and distributing water properly. Note which sprinkler heads are working correctly and which require attention.

Look for these Sprinkler Head problems:

- Spraying water onto the sidewalk, driveway or road
- Heads missing, not operating, with reduced water flow or poor distribution pattern



- Broken, gushing water out the top or not popping up
- No longer straight up and down
- Heads that cause a cloud of mist
- Grass, shrubbery or tree blocking distribution pattern
- Dry landscape areas

April 2013

There are simple systems or complex ones.

Simple System Components

- Catchment area – roofs, paved areas, and the soil surface.
- Distribution system-gutters and downspouts, sloped sidewalks, hillsides, street and parking lot curb cutouts and channels, ditches, and swales.
- Landscape holding area - a concave or planted area with a border or earthen berm to retain water for immediate use.

Complex System Components

- Catchment
- Collection system-Direct water from catchments to storage containers via gutters and downspouts
- Storage - tank which stores enough rainwater in an average year to irrigate an entire landscape based on the demand.
- Distribution system - Distributes water to plants from storage containers via garden hoses, soaker hose, or drip system



2013 Upcoming Courses

Earthday Symposium

April 22, 2013

101 Landscape Basics

10 am—12 pm

110 The Edible Front Yard

1 pm—3 pm

109 Rain Gardens

3 pm—5 pm

107 Rainwater Harvesting

Rain Barrel Making

6 pm—8 pm

Water Wise Irrigation Workshop

May 4, 2013

3 sessions

9 am, 10 am & 11 am

Register at <http://dallas.tamu.edu/courses/>

At the Center

Water Wise Irrigation Workshop

"GET TO KNOW YOUR SPRINKLER SYSTEM"

Like most things, your sprinkler system needs maintenance and since summer is just around the corner, now is a great time to ensure that your sprinkler system is operating at peak efficiency. Outdoor watering accounts for up to 60% of water use in the spring and summer and this FREE workshop will help you make sure your system won't waste a single drop.

The Workshop is designed for residents to gain a better understanding for how an automatic irrigation (sprinkler) system operates. This outdoor event (rain or shine) will have operating above ground irrigation systems with professional irrigators to guide you through specific conservation items such as high pressure symptoms; simple repairs; programming controllers, and more. Registration is limited so sign up today!"

The event begins at 9 am and ends at 12 pm and takes about an hour to visit all stations. Some stations have specific times for demonstrations.

May 4, 2013, 9 am - 12 pm

Presented by:

- Texas A&M Agrilife Research and Extension
- City of Allen
- City of Frisco
- City of McKinney
- City of Mesquite
- City of Plano
- City of Richardson
- Dallas Water Utilities
- Dallas Irrigation Association
- EPA Water Sense
- Ewing Irrigation
- Hunter
- Netafim
- Rain Bird
- Toro/Irritrol
- Weathermatic

Resources

RAINWATER HARVESTING

Encourages:

- Landscape Water conservation
- Stormwater Control

<http://rainwaterharvesting.tamu.edu/>

https://agrilifebookstore.org/publications_browse.cfm

Who We Are

The Texas A&M Agrilife Research and Extension Center at Dallas is a gateway to science, researchers and Extension educators across the U.S. The Center serves all of urban Texas, and the Dallas-Arlington-Fort Worth metropolitan area in particular.

We're on the web!!

<http://dallas.tamu.edu/>

Landscape Essentials

"Don't Bag It! "

Bagging your grass clippings is a decades old cliché that offers no benefit to you or your lawn. In fact, when you bag your grass clippings and put them out with the trash you are only adding to the landfill. Grass clippings account for an astounding 20% of landfill waste!

Benefits of not bagging it

Keep in mind that when you remove grass clippings from your lawn you are removing FREE natural fertilizer. Imagine not having to stop to empty your mower bag over and over and at the same time fertilize your lawn.

Why you should not Bag It

- This will save you time and money
- By recycling your grass clippings back onto your lawn, you are reusing the nutrients in the grass clippings thus reducing the amount of fertilizer needs need

- Also, don't let rumors scare you, grass clippings do NOT contribute to thatch in your lawn.
- Grass clippings are made up of 90% water and break down too quickly to create thatch in your lawn. In fact, grass clippings help hold moisture to your lawn when you mulch.

So Join the many happy non-bagging American and give yourself more time in your day and more money in your pocket. "Don't bag it, MULCH it!"

