

Plant of the Month

Zexmenia

(*Wedelia texana*)

This native Texas perennial, also known as Texas Creeping Oxeye, is a great addition for most Texas landscapes. Its compact shrub growth and yellow flowers are a great welcoming border plant.

The leaves of the Zexmenia are shiny, dark green, and have a rough texture. The golden yellow daisy-like blooms are nickel sized and begin blooming in summer and continue through fall. It prefers full sun for maximum bloom production but adapts well to some partial shade. Prune the Zexmenia back a third in July to shape it up and encourage new growth. In most areas it will die back in the winter but has been known to remain evergreen.

No matter whether you have rocky or rich organic soil, simply make sure the soil is well drained and this plant will not disappoint!

by: Patrick Dickinson



July is traditionally the month of a peak demand for water for lawns, gardens, and landscapes in North America. The Irrigation Association named July as Smart Irrigation Month to increase public awareness about simple practices and innovative technologies homeowners, businesses, and property managers can use to:

- Save money on utility bills;
- Minimize or defer investments in infrastructure to store and carry water, typically paid for by property taxes or municipal bonds;
- Protect their community's water supply for generations to come.

Homeowners typically overwater lawns and landscapes by up to 30 percent. By select-

ing and planting carefully, watering wisely, and maintaining and upgrading automated irrigation systems, consumers can save money, save water, and see better results.

To find a certified local professional to design, install, maintain, or audit your irrigation system, visit www.irrigation.org/hirecertified. For tips on efficient irrigation, go to www.smartirrigationmonth.org.

Smart Irrigation Month is an initiative of the Irrigation Association, a non-profit industry organization dedicated to promoting efficient irrigation. Visit www.irrigation.org to learn more.

A good irrigation contractor can check for leaks, broken sprinklers, and other problems. Ask what you can watch out for between visits. http://www.irrigation.org/Certification/Find_a_Certified_Professional.aspx

Don't Spray It: Replace spray sprinklers with high-efficiency nozzles that produce droplets, not mist that can evaporate or blow away.

Irrigation Essentials



Pressure Regulation

All sprinklers operate best at a certain water pressure. At those pressures, the water distribution is most uniform over the target area. That allows shorter run times, because for an entire lawn to

be green, you basically end up setting a schedule to provide sufficient water to the driest spot.

Benefits of Pressure Regulation

Eliminates problems such as

- misting sprinklers;
- potential irrigation system damage.

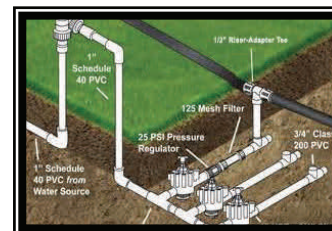
Every 5-point reduction in water pressure, you actually use 6 to 8 percent less water.

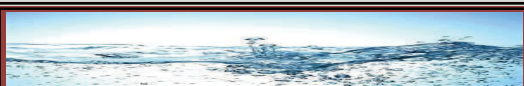
Those savings can add up quickly. Water pressure reg-

ulation devices are easily added to:

- Valves to control a whole irrigation zone;
- Individual sprinklers.

Contact a professional irrigation contractor today if you feel your system needs a pressure check.





2013 Upcoming Courses

118 Controlling Your Controller
July 16, 2013

12 am - 5 pm & 6pm—8 pm

106 Drip Irrigation DIY
July 23, 2013

12 am - 5 pm & 6pm—8 pm

116 Irrigation Quick Fixes
July 30, 2013

12 am - 5 pm & 6pm—8 pm

107 "Saving From a Rainy Day" Making a Rain Barrel

August 6, 2013

6pm—8 pm

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

News to Know

DFW Builder Symposium

"Understanding the WaterSense Labeled Home"

Escalating drought conditions in the Southwest United States have created a need for more water efficient homes in this area.

As a result of this need, Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center – Dallas has partnered with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Region 6, WaterSense Program to host a symposium for Builders, Municipalities, Utilities, City Council, City Code Enforcement, City Planners, and Landscape Architects. This symposium will increase awareness of EPA's WaterSense Labeled New Home Program and other voluntary partnership programs, to promote building water efficient homes in our communities that are in harmony with other green home energy saving efforts.

Constant extreme drought conditions in the Southwest United States are now a fact. A fact recently emphasized by the passage of House Bill 4 by the Texas Assembly and signed

by Governor Perry. This bill, which is a milestone for water conservation policy, provides \$2 billion to support various water supply, water conservation, and water reuse projects. It is the largest dedicated conservation and reuse project funding in any state to date. It was created because Texas recognizes that as the droughts continue, water shortages will intensify, and unless there is an increase in water conservation measures, including water efficient homes, Texas will suffer extreme physical and economic hardship.

Mark your calendars today for Wednesday, October 16, 2013, to attend this dynamic symposium on "Understanding the WaterSense Labeled Home" and to learn how you can lead your community in promoting and building water efficient homes.

For additional information about the DFW Builder Symposium, please contact Karen Sanders, Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center at Dallas at karen.sanders@tamu.edu or (972) 952-9671.

Resources

Water My Yard

Contains:

- Weather information
- Current and average evapotranspiration data
- Irrigation watering recommendations.

www.watermyyard.org

[Keeping your Lawn Alive During Drought](#)

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

"Tough, Drought Tolerant, Summer Flowering Perennials"

Garden Centers are still full of color and in many cases these colorful flowering plants are tough drought tolerant perennials that will flower all summer for many years.

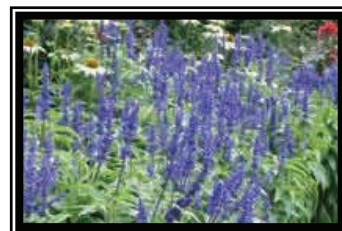
A few of my favorite plants for the hot sunny areas are the many colorful varieties of

- **Perennial Lantana.** Give lantana plenty of room to spread. The label on the plant will list the plant's color, potential height, and width. Lantana is a native Texas plant. Many colors and sizes of lantana are available. Some of the most popular varieties are sterile, so these lantanas do not go through the flower seed cycle. These just keep flowering all summer long.
- **Autumn Sage, *Salvia greggii*,** are the first plant to start flowering in the spring and stop flowering in the fall. Varieties are available with white, purple, pink and red flowers. *Salvia greggii* does not

freeze down during the winter.

- **Mealy blue sage, *Salvia farinacea*,** flower with blue or white flowers. Different heights are available, so pay attention to the label.
- **Turk's cap, *Malvaviscus arboreus*,** is available with red, pink, or white flowers. Turk's cap can also grow and flower in part shade.

All these plants, once established, require very little water. Colorful foliage plants are also still available. Try to include lamb's ear, dusty miller, copper plants, purple fountain grass, Joseph's coat, red star cordyline, and the many colors of sweet potato vines. When planting this fall, try some of these varieties in your annual bed to save you money, time and water in the future.



Mealy Blue Sage