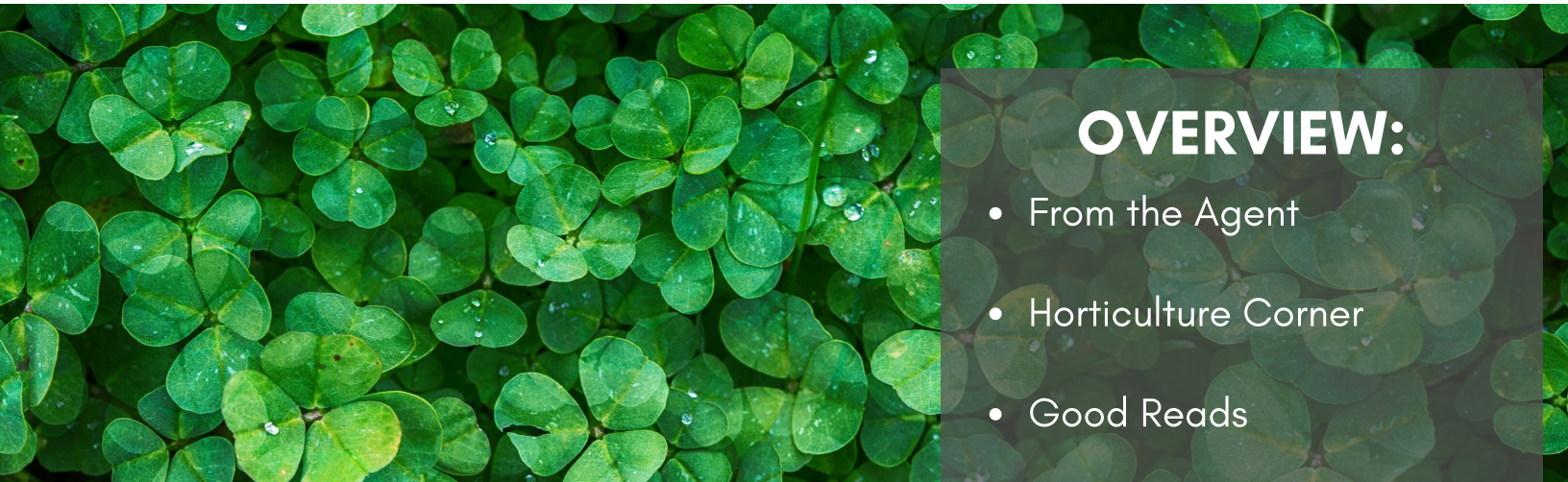


VOL. 3 | MARCH 2020

OUR BACKYARD

An agricultural newsletter by Hardin County AgriLife Extension



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From the Agent

Howdy!

We have kicked the year off with our first program "So you think you want to be a beekeeper?" and "Backyard Basics: Backyard Chickens". I am very grateful to those that came and enjoyed the programs and look forward to seeing you at more programs in the future.

Things are beginning to get busy around the office and I really appreciate all the call and questions! I would like to thank everyone that has welcomed me into the community and made me feel right at home. As always, send me your questions or stop by to talk with us.

Happy Planting.

Katie A. Pace | Hardin County Extension Agent



HORTICULTURE

Corner

In the Garden

Let's cross our fingers we won't have a late frost and remember to do the following in March:

Fruit Trees should be fertilized, do soil testing first

Mulch around young fruit trees and berries

Finish planting cool season vegetables

Wait till later in the month to sow summer veggies

Apply pre-emergence herbicides for crabgrass or grassburs

What should I plant this month?

Transplant:

Broccoli
Cabbage
Collards

Seed:

Beets
Collards
Mustard Greens

Lettuce
Radish
Spinach

Wait till later March:

Beans
Sweet Corn
Cucumber
Melons
Squash



Native Texans

Our Texas Native plant this month is Lantana. Native to South Texas, Lantana is a very low maintenance annual that can provide color over a long period in your landscape. They thrive in full sun and require little fertilization, if any.

Lantana has bicolor mixtures of yellow, red, pink, white, and orange. Frequent tip pruning during the growing season will promote more flowers, but is not necessary. They make a lovely addition to any landscape if you are wishing to promote butterflies and other pollinators to visit your yard. However, watch the pets around this plant as the berries are poisonous.

G O O D

reads

Eavesdropping on Soil Insects

By: Michael Graw Adapted by: Katie Pace

“There is so little work being done with soil insects, and it’s because it’s really hard,” says USDA researcher Richard Mankin, who has spent much of his career studying subterranean critters. One approach to monitoring soil insects that scientists such as Mankin and David Chesmore, an acoustics researcher at the University of York, have explored is to listen for the sounds larvae make. Soil scientists have spent decades trying to detect white grubs and other crop pests by the sounds they make while moving or feeding, but “sounds in soil don’t travel far,” says Chesmore. As a result, most of the noise that reaches underground microphones, such as the ones Chesmore has spent his career developing, are quiet and indistinct.

Carolyn-Monika Görres teamed with Chesmore in a lab study using this technology. When listening to the initial recordings they heard not only feeding sounds but a series of unexpected chirps, or stridulations. Stridulations are most commonly associated with above-ground insects such as crickets, which produce the noises by rubbing their legs over a hardened, comb-like organ on their bodies. Importantly, the researchers were able to distinguish between two species just by listening to the patterns of their sounds. They also found that the average stridulation rate per larva increased with increasing amount of grubs in the container of soil. The ability to differentiate species within the soil based on their stridulations could be a major step forward both for researchers and for farmers, notes Kyle Wickings, a soil ecologist at Cornell University.

Using stridulations to “not only detect the presence of pests, but also to tell [species] apart and relate that to a management decision is a pretty big deal.” Görres is hopeful that placing microphones in agricultural fields could one day offer farmers a cheaper and less destructive method to monitor infestations. As part of her upcoming Underground Twitter study, which aims to determine when and why insects in the soil communicate with one another, she plans to bury multiple microphones in a field to record around the clock for six months.

Upcoming Programs for *Hardin County*

All programs to be held at the Hardin County Annex Building
1135 Redwood Kountze, Texas 77625

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From the Ground Up

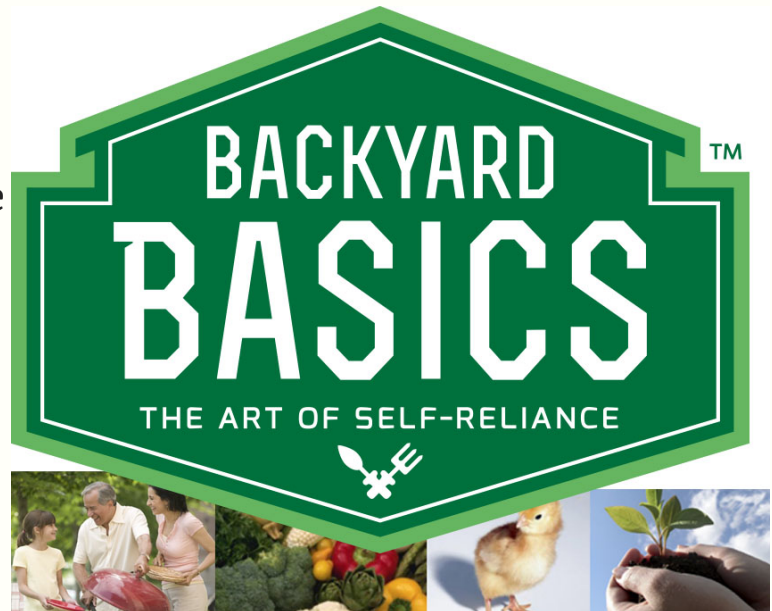
If you are struggling trying to know where to start with gardening, come attend our next Backyard Basics class, **Backyard Basics- Gardening From the Ground Up**, that will be held March 5, 2020 at 6:00 PM. Please RSVP by March 3, 2020

Lunch Webinar Series

We will be hosting several **FREE** lunch webinars over the next few months. Just grab a lunch and head over March 5 from 12:00 - 1:00 for **Pasture Weed Management** presented by **Dr. Vanessa Corriher Olson, Extension Specialist.**

Please RSVP by March 4, 2020.

Offering 1 IPM CEU



Ideas for Starting Rural Agriculture Businesses

Stop by from 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM on March 19, 2020 for a **FREE** webinar from a grant with the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture on **Ideas for Starting Rural Agriculture Businesses** presented by **Dr. Greg Clary, Business Consultant with Texas Center for Rural Entrepreneurship**

Please RSVP by March 18, 2020



United States Department of Agriculture
National Institute of Food and Agriculture

Huntmaster Training Program

Come join us March 20, 2020 at 5:00 PM and March 21, 2020 at 9:00 AM for Texas Youth Hunting Program Huntmaster Training. With this training you will be able to guide, volunteer, and organize hunts for youth across the great state of Texas.

Must attend both days of training

The cost is \$90 to non TWA Members or \$55 to those who are already TWA

members



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The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating

Individuals with disabilities who require an auxiliary aid, service or accommodation in order to participate in this meeting are encouraged to contact the Hardin County Extension Office at (409) 246-5128 two working days prior to the meeting to determine how reasonable accommodations can be made.

Get involved with Hardin County Extension

Please consider joining the Hardin County Agriculture Committee to provide leadership and suggestions for upcoming programming. You don't have to make a large time commitment, with as few as four meetings per year, but we would love to hear your ideas and for you to share input on your county!

Please contact the office to update your email address, or if you know someone that would like to be added to this list, at (409) 246-5128, or by email katie.pace@ag.tamu.edu. We also welcome suggestions for upcoming newsletters!

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<http://hardin.agrilife.org>

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