

# Fruit Orchard and Garden Tour Offered on Saturday, May 14

*Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service — Galveston County Office*



PHOTOS BY **William M. Johnson**

**Golden wave coreopsis is a wildflower native to Texas. It is providing a vibrant yellow display of flowers in the cemeteries located on Galveston Island between 40th and 43rd streets on Broadway.**

The Master Gardener volunteers and Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office will co-sponsor a Fruit Orchard and Garden Tour on Saturday, May 14 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. The program is open to the public and free-of-charge.

Three fruit orchards are on this year's tour route. Each location will be open during the 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon time period. You have the option of

touring all three sites or any combination of sites.

This year's tour sites contain a wide variety of fruit trees ranging from an impressive fruit tree orchard (Fruits 'n Such Orchard located at 6309 Avenue U - Bogeyman Drive in Dickinson) to the Master Gardener Demonstration Orchard (located in Carbide Park in La Marque). Peach, plum, citrus, fig, apple

and other fruit trees can be seen also.

All sites contain a wide variety of vegetables also. Vegetables are grown in dozens of raised beds at Carbide Park whereas vegetables are grown in the ground at Fruits 'n Such Orchard. Visitors may also tour an impressive herb garden next to the Fruits 'n Such Orchard. If you're looking for the freshest produce to pur-



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chase, you can pick it yourself at the Fruits 'n Such Orchard.

If you are interested in seeing the amazing diversity of fruit trees that can be grown in a backyard, be sure to include a tour of Master Gardener Bill Verm's home orchard in Santa Fe.

If you have an interest in roses, be sure to visit the display beds of Earth-Kind roses located at the Carbide Park site. Homeowners love their magnificent blooms and fragrance.

Roses have had a centuries-long reputation of being the most neurotic members of the plant world. Consequently, gardeners spend considerable cash buying fertilizers, pesticides, and fungicides to sustain their roses, and much time pruning, deadheading, and watering them to keep them blooming. Roses that qualify for the Earth-Kind designation are very low-maintenance and perform very well under a variety of growing conditions.

To obtain a map with directions to the tour sites, visit the Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office located in Carbide Park (4102-B Main Street) in La Marque (281-309-5065). A printable copy of the tour map and additional details are available online (<http://aggiehorticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/index.html>).

Area homeowners who grow—or plan to grow—fruit or vegetables for home use will find the

tour sites to be of considerable benefit.

#### Wildflower of the Week . . . Golden Wave Coreopsis

I have received numerous e-mails asking about the name of the plants that are providing the vibrant yellow display of flowers in the cemeteries located on Galveston Island between 40th and 43rd streets on Broadway.

The flowers are produced by *Coreopsis basalis*, more commonly known as goldenmane tickseed, golden wave coreopsis or dye flower. Since one of the common names include "tickseed", I should point out the tickseed moniker describes the appearance of the mature seed of the plant. The word "coreopsis", which is the scientific name for the plant, is derived from the Greek word for "bug-like" due to the resemblance that coreopsis seeds bear to ticks. Tickseed is the common name for coreopsis but for practical purposes the scientific name is also used as the common name. Perhaps this is because retailers feared consumers would shun a plant associated with such a common name—even if only subconsciously.

Golden wave coreopsis is a Texas native wildflower that also brightens roadsides and fields in other areas of the county from early April into mid-June. Golden wave coreopsis is very heat and drought tolerant and require little fussing to produce lavish

amounts of color in the garden.

Golden wave coreopsis can also be found growing in other southern states. It has been observed as far north as Connecticut and Illinois. Golden wave coreopsis typically grows 1 to 1.5 feet tall.

Golden wave coreopsis produces showy yellow petals (botanically known as ray flowers). Located at the base of each petal (ray flower) is a distinctively colored spot that ranges from dark red to maroonish in color. The size of this spot is variable and at times is barely noticeable in some plantings.

As golden wave coreopsis and other species of coreopsis finish their bloom cycle, the seed heads are unsightly. In small beds of coreopsis, it is best to cut the seed heads as close to the foliage as possible to prevent an untidy mass of stubble. Removing spent blossoms and stems often stimulates another cycle of flowering.

This wildflower reproduces by re-seeding itself. New plants can also be started from seed, which is available from many mail order seed sources.

