



OCTOBER'S GARDEN CHECKLIST

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service — Galveston County Office



PHOTO BY William M. Johnson

Jan Brick, a Master Gardener and longtime resident of Jamaica Beach, is the author of "The Island Garden." She will provide a seminar entitled "My Favorite Perennials" at the Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office in La Marque on Saturday, October 5.

You know that it has been a really hot summer if you feel energized when the daytime temperature only makes it to the low nineties! The first "teaser" cool front arrived a few days ago along with some much-appreciated rainfall. And while you're in such good spirits, be sure to be mindful of October's garden checklist and upcoming educational programs as follows:

"MY FAVORITE PERENNIALS" SEMINAR: Perennials are perfect

for gardeners who do not want to have to re-plant the landscape every spring. Whether you plan on making major or minor renovations to your perennial garden or you just plan to make a few additions, the fall season is an ideal time to plant the garden that will bring color to the landscape over the coming year and beyond.

With such a huge variety of perennials to choose from, area gardeners need to know how to pick and choose which perennials will

be best for our Texas Gulf Coast growing area. When it comes to rating perennials for their hardiness, low maintenance and color production, the Galveston County Master Gardeners are an awesome source. I consider Master Gardeners to be the gardener's version of "Angie's List."

Jan Brick is a Master Gardener and a long-time resident of Jamaica Beach. She is also the author of "The Island Garden," a 176-page gardening book tailored to the Galves-



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Dr. William Johnson is a horticulturist with the Galveston County Office of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. Visit his website at <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston>.

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ton Island area. Jan's programs will focus on her favorite perennials, some of which survived the flood waters of Hurricane Ike in 2008. Her program will include descriptions and growth habit, growing tips, insect pests and diseases as well as some personal stories about selected perennials.

The seminar will be conducted from 9:00 - 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, October 5, at the Galveston County AgriLife Extension Office in Carbide Park (4102-B, Main St. La Marque). Pre-registration is required by phone (218-534-3413, ext. 12), e-mail (GALV3@wt.net), website (<http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston>) or visit to the office.

ANNUAL ORNAMENTAL & PERENNIAL PLANT SALE: The Ornamental and Perennial Plant Sale will be conducted on Saturday, October 12, from 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. A wide variety of plants recommended for Galveston County will be offered including heat-tolerant perennials, shade-loving plants, tropicals, gingers, plants for butterfly or hummingbird gardens, and hard-to-find varieties.

The sale will be held in the parking lot next to the Wayne Johnson Community Center in Carbide Park, 4102 Main Street (FM 519), La Marque.

Save Caladium Tubers: Caladiums are getting past their prime with the onset of cooler weather. If you plan on saving

caladium tubers for another year, be sure to dig them up before the top growth disappears—those tubers can be very difficult to locate after the top growth is gone. Allow the tubers to air-dry for 7-to-10 days in a well-ventilated but shaded area.

After drying, gently remove any attached leaves and large soil particles from the tubers then store in dry peat moss, vermiculite or similar material in a well-ventilated container. Pack so that the tubers do not touch each other. Dust with an all-purpose fungicide to help prevent decay. Store the tubers in an area where temperatures won't drop below 50 degrees F.

Plant Cool Season Vegetables: Transplants of broccoli, Brussels sprouts and cabbage can be set out this month. Seeds of beets, carrots, kale, lettuce, mustard, radish, and turnips can be planted and cloves of garlic can be set out throughout October.

Control Cool Season Weeds: Most lawn weeds that we see during late winter and early spring actually sprout in the fall. They are cool season weeds and, in fact, their germination is stimulated in the fall by the onset of cool temperatures. They grow during winter if temperatures stay warm enough, then produce a crop of seeds in the spring and die out when hot weather arrives.

Use of pre-emergent herbicides to control cool season weeds is effective only if properly timed, i.e., they should be applied very soon after the onset of relatively cool weather conditions. Several pre-emergent herbicides are approved for lawn use and are sold under a variety of commercial labels. Check with your area garden center or feed store for available products. Always read and follow label directions.

Plant Shrubs and Trees: This is an excellent time for planting container-grown ground covers, shrubs and trees. Thanks to our mild winters, trees and shrubs planted now will have several relatively stress-free months to establish a good root system before hot, dry weather returns.

Collecting for Dried Arrangements: Carefully harvest material for dried arrangements at this time. Choose cockscomb, flowering artemisia, mature okra pods, and others to enhance fall and winter bouquets.