



# WEEKLY WEEDER

August 11, 2023

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Image by Iris Slevin

## Progress on the Accessibility Garden

Community engagement has been fantastic in expanding Sunshine's accessibility garden. When completed, we will have a total of 10 accessibility beds!

We have a couple weeks work left and then they will be ready. Please join your fellow gardeners this Saturday from 8 am to 10 am — *Submitted by Iris Slevin*

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A swallowtail caterpillar on a mostly-denuded fennel plant. Although most unproductive plants should be pulled up, let those that support bees and butterflies remain in place through the fall. Photo by Maria Beach.

## Your August Sunshine Garden

Last month was the hottest July on record for Austin, and the long string of triple digit temperatures will likely continue through most of August. The unrelentingly hot, dry weather is hard on both plants and people. August is typically a difficult month for gardening in Austin, and August 2023 may be even more challenging than most years. Take caution, drink plenty of water, and be strategic about the time you work in your plot. Clear out unproductive plants and celebrate the hardy ones that are still going. (For instance, I promised myself back in June I would pull out all my spring-planted tomatoes just as soon as all the green tomatoes started to show some color so I would not waste water on plants that were not productive. My heirloom tomatoes were gone long ago, but by some gardening miracle two of my Celebrity plants produced tomatoes all through July and inexplicably have new green tomatoes on them now. I do not comprehend how they set fruit when days have been over 100 degrees for a solid month, and yet, I still have tomatoes.) Peppers do well in the heat and those planted in the spring will typically keep producing through the summer and fall, although the peppers may be smaller than those harvested earlier in the year. Spring-planted eggplants may also make a fall comeback if the plants still look healthy, and will benefit from application of some seaweed or fish fertilizer.

Yet despite how formidable this month may be, many things may be planted in August. The first part of the month is the time for planting heat loving crops like okra, Malabar spinach, and black-eyed peas. Some plants that need a long growing season, like fall tomatoes and winter squash, also need to be planted soon so that they may yield a harvest before the first frosts arrive in late November or early December. Cucumbers and summer squash may be planted all month, preferably in a spot where no cucurbits have been grown for a season or two to lessen the chance of mosaic virus affecting the plants. The last week of August is the earliest time to plant most cabbage family crops, although those may also be planted in September.

If you plant transplants, consider giving them some shade. Newly planted seeds will need to be watered frequently. Gardeners will also benefit from frequent applications of shade and water.

### **Vegetables to Plant in August**

- Beans, Snap and Lima (second half of August)
- Beets (last week of August)
- Broccoli (transplants; last week of August)

- Brussels Sprouts (transplants; last week of August)
- Cabbage (transplants; last week of August)
- Carrots (last week of August)
- Cauliflower (transplants; last week of August)
- Chard, Swiss (seeds or transplants; last week of August)
- Collards (seeds or transplants; last week of August)
- Corn (first half of August)
- Cucumber (all month)
- Eggplant (transplants; first half of August)
- Greens, Warm Season (first half of August)
- Kohlrabi (seeds or transplants; last week of August)
- Mustard (seeds or transplants; last week of August)
- Okra (first half of August)
- Peas, Southern (first half of August)
- Peppers (transplants; first three weeks of August)
- Potatoes, Irish (last half of August)
- Squash, Summer (all month)
- Squash, Winter (first half of August)
- Tomatoes (transplants; first three weeks of August)
- Turnip (last week of August)

Planting calendar adapted by Maria Beach from the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Vegetable Planting Guide for Travis County, compiled by Patty G. Leander, Master Gardener Vegetable Specialist, and used with permission.—  
*Submitted by Maria Beach*

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## Citizen Science: Dead Butterfly/Moth Info

The U.S. Geological Survey wants you to send in dead butterflies for research:  
<https://www.npr.org/2023/08/04/1191988090/usgs-dead-butterflies-moths> — *Submitted by Randy Thompson*

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## ACGA Conference

Registration for the American Community Gardening Association's conference is open! This year's conference is in Houston, so it's not too far away. It would be cool to see a big group of Sunshine Community Garden members at the conference this year. <https://www.communitygarden.org/event> — *Submitted by Marsha Riti*

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## Slack at Sunshine

Are you looking for a Sunshine Community Gardens social media space to chat with fellow gardeners? Look no further, we have Slack! This is not a new account for our garden. What is new is that we have a Slack "Pro" account for non-profits as of this week. This means we are able to retain our message history past 90 days and we have other cool new features. Check out this link to see what the pro account gets us: <https://slack.com/pricing>

If you would like to be on our Slack account use this link: [https://join.slack.com/t/sunshinegardens/shared\\_invite/zt-i1eonkmu-SwLdZplidAeA0XiljPpY\\_g](https://join.slack.com/t/sunshinegardens/shared_invite/zt-i1eonkmu-SwLdZplidAeA0XiljPpY_g)

Only Sunshine Community Gardeners are allowed on our account, so I'll be checking new Slack members against our database. Just call me your friendly Slack Bouncer. — *Submitted by Marsha Riti*

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## Meet a [New] Member!

Featured New Gardener, Emmett Tassin!

Emmett Tassin is very excited to join SGC! He has worked in plant nurseries in the past and is a big fan of flower arranging. When he's not at work for the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality he enjoys swimming at Barton Springs and spending time with family.

He's at plot G6-1sx come by and say hi! — *Submitted by Marsha Riti*

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## Lost Gardening tool

Lost Hori Hori knife. It was lost Wednesday July 26th around 2:30pm. Likely somewhere between the chicken coop and the compost area. The knife shown is not the exact lost knife, but it is similar. If found please contact Marsha Riti, SCG Vice President, [marsha@marshariti.com](mailto:marsha@marshariti.com)

## Garden Education by Ila Falvey

Upcoming event: tomorrow, Saturday, August 12 from 9:15-11 a.m. at Zilker Botanical Garden in the Oak Grove: [Fall Planting Workshop with Austin Davenport](#)

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# Garden Notes from Marsha Riti

*The lovely icons for this section were created by Marsha Riti*



## Stay Hydrated

With temperatures in the hundreds it is of great importance to stay hydrated. There are electrolyte packets in the cool room. Also, it would be best to not work during the heat of the day. Here's a link to the CDC heat related illness guide: illness <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/heatstress/heatrelillness.html>.



## Help Needed!!!

Our community garden needs help with:

- A Silent Auction Volunteer for the 2024 spring sale. If interested contact [marsha@marshariti.com](mailto:marsha@marshariti.com)
- An Entertainment Volunteer for the 2024 spring sale. If interested contact [marsha@marshariti.com](mailto:marsha@marshariti.com)
- Volunteers for the Plot Helpers crew. This team of people help gardeners who are sick or are caretaking. The work is rewarding and fun! If interested please contact **both** Bill Gaventa: [bill.gaventa@gmail.com](mailto:bill.gaventa@gmail.com) and Bill Cason: [Wccason@gmail.com](mailto:Wccason@gmail.com)
- A Volunteer to put the Sunshine Community Gardens newsletter (the Weekly Weeder) together. If interested contact [marsha@marshariti.com](mailto:marsha@marshariti.com)

Volunteering for these roles counts towards your SCG service hours in the Green Binder.



## General Workday

Details coming soon



## Beautification Committee Workday

Need service hours? There is always a workday every Sunday (9-12pm) in the flower beds around the trailer. Hosted by Matthew Johnston.



## Kid's Garden!

Thanks to the volunteerism of Sunshine gardeners, Sunshine is ready to get young members of the community gardening. While there is more to come, in terms of tools for the kids and shade areas, the beds are ready for the kids to start planting!

Gardeners who made contact about sponsoring a child aged 5-11 will be contacted soon by the Children's Garden Zone Coordinator, Pam Kirby. We still have some available beds for children. If you are a garden member in good standing and wish to sponsor a child who would enjoy gardening in his or her own 3x3 bed, contact Pam for further information.



### **OMG, Cars, slow down!**

Please drive slowly (3 MPH) in the garden. There are cats, kids, and gardeners who use this space, and we need it to be safe for everyone.



### **Mowers and Weed Whackers**

Don't know how to use the gas or electric grass cutting equipment? Please contact:

Steve Camp (electric mowers / weed wackers)

Ray Porter (gas mowers)



### **More grass than garden?**

Please clean up your plot. If you have health issues that are keeping you from working on your plot contact your Zone Coordinator or the Vice President for assistance. Also, if you'd like to fallow your plot for the rest of the summer, posted below is how to do that (taken from page 28 of the Handbook). Please make sure your Zone Coordinator or Vice President knows you are fallowing your plot.

#### Fallow Season or Cover Crop

Occasionally, members may choose to leave a plot fallow for a season. This is a good practice to provide the soil a break. Fallow plots should be cleared of plants and weeds, then covered completely with compost and then cardboard, a thick layer of leaves, or other material that allows water to permeate. Avoid using plastic as it creates a good environment for fire ants underneath, and water pools on top. An alternative to a fallow season is to plant a cover crop to serve as green manure; this can be turned under at the end of the season to condition the soil. Consult the literature or local garden center for details on this technique for soil improvement.

Contact both Kristin Phillips & Maria Beach to contribute the Weekly Weeder.





