

Kerr County Soil & Water Conservation District

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Meet Sid! I've hidden him inside this Newsletter. The first person to find him and post it on the Kerr County SWCD's Facebook page gets a prize!

~Missie Dreiss, Kerr County SWCD District Technician



Mexican Plum

The Mexican Plum has a diverse look especially during bloom season which is early Spring, February through March. Its snowy white fragrant flowers just cover the tree in awe. Some say they have an acute sweet smell, somewhat like grape-cool aid. The Mexican Plum is part of the Rosaceae family and is also known as Big Tree Plum or Inch plum. It is grown as a small to medium deciduous (shedding its leaves annually) flower and fruiting tree with a single trunk. The Mexican Plum ranges in growth from 15-30 feet in height and can have a spread of 15-25 feet in width at maturity. The flowers are white, 3/4 to 1 inch in diameter in early Spring, before the leaves are exposed. The fruit matures Mid-Summer through Fall. Fruits are round ball shaped close to one inch in diameter. They are edible though can be tart to some. The plums are mostly used for jams and jellies more than eating them fresh off the tree. Mature fruits are a dark purplish red color and are collected then when fallen off the tree to produce the jams and jellies. The bark of the Mexican Plum tree is slick with a metallic greyish color when young, older trees have a brown papery exfoliating or scaly bark to them. The mature bark becomes very rough and deeply furrowed. Leaves alternate along the branches which have thorn like edges on them and are deciduous. Its Fall color ranges from yellow to a beautiful orange. These leaves are 2 to 4 inches in length, smooth dark green on top, and lighter beneath. They can sometimes be folded and can look like they are drooping from lack of water. The culture of the Mexican plum is an easy to grow ornamental tree that is drought tolerant, it requires little fertilizer and does well in either sun or shade. It can be grown in either acidic or alkaline soils, loamy moist sandy, silt loams, well drained and clay soils with a pH greater of 7. Wildlife value can be beneficial to several species of birds that eat the fruit. Its blossoms provide food for pollinators such as bees, butterflies and humming birds. The tree itself provides value for nesting sites and material for birds as well. ~Richard Atkinson, NRCS Soil Conservationist

References:

Garret, Howard. The Dirt Doctor, Mexican Plum. Retrieved from https://www.dirtdoctor.com/garden/Mexican-Plum_vq703.htm

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Kerr County Soil & Water Conservation District January 2019 Volume 9, Issue 1

Plan on attending our Spring Field Day
Friday, May 3, 2019



Brushwork
Seedbed Preparation



Aerial Chemical Control for
Cactus & Early Weed Control

Conserve Your Soil Don't Lose Ground!
As you plan for 2019, consider applying these practices in the next few months.
Brushwork/Seedbed Preparation: The key to a successful Range Planting/Forge and Biomass Planting is proper seedbed preparation. There are several methods to achieve a proper seedbed, including mechanical brush work and disking/plowing.
Spring Spraying: You can spray cactus anytime, but when using aerial application, you get the best chemical coverage when most other brush species are dormant.
Planting: Get with your local NRCS/ SWCD to create a seed mixture that will enhance the plant diversity on your property.
Grazing Deferments: Following your Brush Management and Range Planting, it is recommended to defer or rest those pastures from grazing during the Growing Season. (April 1—November 15)



Range Planting & Forage and
Biomass (pasture) Planting



Grazing Deferments during the
Growing season (April 1-Nov.15)

In this issue: Planning Ahead 1

Brushwork & Seedbed Prep

Aerial Chemical Control for
Cactus & Early Weed
Control

Range Planting & Forage
and Biomass Planting

Grazing Deferments

Conservation 2 Planning- A Roadmap to Success

Thank You To Our 2 2019 Calendar Sponsors

NRCS 2018 Annual 3 Report

Mexican Plum Tree 4 Dates of Interest:

USDA Office Closed:

Jan. 1 New Year's Day

Jan. 21 MLK Day

Feb. 18 Presidents Day

January 13-19, 2019

Hill Country District Jr. Livestock
Show

February 20-21, 2019

Leadership Development Workshop-
Temple, TX

April 28-May 5, 2019

Soil Stewardship Week

May 3, 2019

Spring Field Day

Conservation planning - A roadmap to success

Why It Matters

Conservation planning and Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA) are the core approaches NRCS has used successfully for more than 80 years to reach out to farmers, ranchers and private landowners to provide one-on-one land steward consultation needed to properly care for their land, water and other natural resources. Just like drivers use a road map to get from point A to point B, landowners can work with NRCS technical experts on developing and tailoring a conservation plan to reach their land use goals, while also addressing natural resource concerns and needs along the way. A conservation plan is also the first step in becoming eligible for USDA financial assistance. Local NRCS assistance across Texas is just a phone call away. It's as easy as contacting the local USDA Service Center and requesting a conservationist to visit the property to evaluate the land's soil, water, plant and animal resources. In turn, the conservation technical expert can offer economically feasible alternatives for addressing degraded resource conditions.



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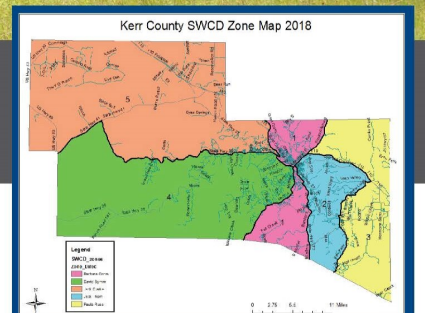


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Helping People Help the Land

Cole Jacoby, Resource Team Leader
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Kerr County 2018 Report



Conservation Implementation - A snapshot of success

Practice Name	Units	Applied Amount
Brush Management	ac	1,773
Fence	ft	15,320
Livestock Pipeline	ft	1,816
Prescribed Grazing	ac	16,678
Pumping Plant	no	1
Range Planting	ac	52
Watering Facility	no	5
Water Well	no	1
Upland Wildlife Habitat Management	ac	212
Grazing management that protects sensitive areas-ground water from nutrients	ac	10,701
Grazing management for improving quantity and quality of cover and shelter for wildlife	ac	18

Through conservation planning assistance in Fiscal Year 2018, the below conservation outcomes were accomplished in Kerr County:

Conservation plans were written on **26,589** acres of agriculture land.

Conservation practices applied on **499** acres of agriculture land to enhance wildlife habitat.

Conservation practices were applied on **37,342** acres of grazing land.

Conservation practices were applied on **35,680** acres to improve overall water quality.

Conservation practices applied on **37,342** acres to improve overall environmental quality.

Conservation program payments for financially assisted practices totaling **\$564,226.72**

FY 2018 Farm Bill Program Investments*

NRCS Program	Dollars	Number of Contracts
Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)	\$ 34,781	2
Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)	\$ 669,892	23

*Obligated

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