




# Mansfield Garden Club

APRIL 2026  
NEWSLETTER



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Spring is here, and so is the work that makes this club meaningful. Our members have already been busy this season, from planting iris rhizomes at the Man House to cleaning up the butterfly garden at the Mansfield Public Library. It's a great reminder of what we're capable of when we put our hands to it together.

This year's Farmers Market season looks a little different than years past. We're navigating some real logistical challenges, and Russ Martin and his committee have worked hard to put together a thoughtful, realistic plan. Our success will depend on member participation, and there are opportunities to help in a variety of ways. Whether you can donate plants, volunteer at a sale, or simply show up and cheer us on, every bit of support matters.

I also want to say something I mean sincerely: this club is made up of people who show up in all kinds of ways, and I'm grateful for every one of you. Whether you're here for the programs, the friendships, the outings, or you love getting your hands dirty, you belong here and you matter to this club. We have a lot ahead of us this season, and I'm glad we're doing it together.

Sonya Byrne, President, Mansfield Garden Club

# GENERAL MEETING

## APRIL 14, 2026

Social hour at 6 pm and meeting at 6:30 pm at the  
Chris Burkett Service Center, 620 S. Wisteria St. Mansfield.

### **April Speaker:**

Sherri Williams

Sherri and Chris Williams felt called to begin a new chapter in life focused on their passion for nature, as outdoor enthusiasts and devoted backyard birders. They launched Wild Birds Unlimited over the past two and a half years, allowing Sherri and Chris to share their love of birding with many groups including the River Legacy Nature Center, Arlington and Grand Prairie Women's Clubs. Their very successful podcast offers a variety of information for backyard birders ('Wild Birds Unlimited Nature Centered' on Apple Podcasts) and Sherri does in-store talks on Saturdays throughout the year at their store.



# UPCOMING EVENTS

## **Mansfield Garden Club Scholarship**

- Deadline for entries: April 19, 2026
- Details: a graduating senior from Mansfield ISD will be eligible for a \$1500 scholarship. Applicants must be pursuing post-secondary training at a college, university or technical school. They must be enrolled in a program related to Horticulture, Environmental Science, Forestry, Agriculture, Conservation, Landscape Design, Agronomy, Environment Management/City Planning, Botany, Plant Pathology or other related subjects.
- Contact: Rebecca Sales, MGC Vice President of Youth and Education Programs at beccasales57@gmail.com or 817-371-0656
- Details and application on the Mansfield Garden Club webpage: <https://mansfieldgardenclub.org>

## **Tarrant County Master Gardener Association Spring Plant Sale**

- Date: Saturday, April 18, 2026, 8 am- 1pm
- Location: 1801 Circle Dr. Fort Worth, TX 76119
- Native and perennial plants, hanging baskets, education classes, tool sharpening, kids activities and snacks.

## **Earth Day and First Mansfield Garden Club Sale**

- Date: April 25, 2026. 9 am- 1 pm.
- Location: Chris Burkett Service Center, 620 S. Wisteria St
- Details: this family-friendly event offers a variety of giveaways including trees (while supplies last), educational booths, kids' crafts, live music and a butterfly release.

## **Mansfield Garden Club Spring Fling Picnic**

- Date: May 12, 2026, 5-9 pm
- Location: Town Park, 500 N. Main Street, Mansfield 76063
- Details: a gathering and potluck by club members and their families. Music and games, along with great garden club fellowship.

# RECAP OF MARCH MEETING AND UPDATES

Michael Smith, co-founder of the Dallas-Fort Worth Herpetological Society and author of *Herping Texas* and *The Wild Lives of Snakes and Amphibians*, shared a host of pictures and stories about the critters that help us in the garden, including frogs, toads, lizards, and turtles (sad to hear that Box turtles are disappearing). Lots of questions from those in attendance made for a lively discussion.

A reminder to members that **club membership dues** were due at our March meeting. Please see Baronda Bradley to pay your dues.

Russ Martin presented an update on the **Mansfield Farmer's Market and our MGC plant sales**. A new lease has been signed for the Farmer's Market, which may get more traffic as the city heavily advertises the Geyer Commons on Saturdays (at the former MISD administration/Geyer Field site). We've lost our storage place for plants ahead of plant sales so the proposal is to reduce the number of sales and work with members to bring plants from their own yards to sell. The proposal is to hold 5 sales, plus Earth Day and Founder's Day. Members would be asked to bring 10-12 plants to the sale with a goal of 125-150 plants available the day of the sale. Since no storage will be available after the sale, members would have to bring their plants back home. If members need pots, please contact Rhonda Oertwich at [Woertwich@aol.com](mailto:Woertwich@aol.com).

**Proposed MGC plant sale days:** April 25 (Earth Day) May 16, June 13, July 11, Sept 12, Oct 3 (Founders Day), Nov 14. Volunteers to set up, tear down and drive the trailer will be needed, as well as plants (please label clearly). These are fun opportunities to interact with the public, recruit new members to the club while serving as a resource to our community. All are welcome!

**A volunteer survey** was distributed at the March meeting to identify volunteers for our various events. If you did not fill it out and wish to join us, please reach out to Russ Martin [mjmartin9921@gmail.com](mailto:mjmartin9921@gmail.com)

## **Upcoming tours:**

**April 21 at 8:45 am:** Tarrant County Master Gardener Community and Demonstration Garden. Bring hat, water and wear comfortable walking shoes. Meet at Mansfield Cinemark parking lot at 8:30 am. [https://www.tarrantmg.org/demo\\_garden.html](https://www.tarrantmg.org/demo_garden.html)

# TIDBITS

## **Burkett Service Center Work Day**

- Volunteers needed March 26, 28, April 16 and April 18 from 9 am-noon.
- The goal is to get the gardens ready for Earth Day, April 25 festival at this site
- There are various beds that demonstrate planting with native plants, including cactus.
- Contact Russ Martin at [mjmartin9921@gmail.com](mailto:mjmartin9921@gmail.com) with questions

## **Build your Own Bee House**

- Monday March 30, 10-11 am
- Geyer's Commons
- FREE. Register at <https://www.mansfieldtexas.gov/2205/Project-365-Mansfield-Unplugged>

## **Tarrant Water District Sprinkler Evaluation**

- Sign up for a FREE evaluation of your sprinkler system by a licensed contractor paid by Tarrant Water District.
- A detailed report with recommended changes to help increase efficiency and reduce water waste will be provided.
- <https://savetarrantwater.com/sprinkler-evaluation/>

## **Tarrant Water Rebate**

Spring Go N Grow Gardens are now available for sale! Two NEW garden types available:

- Monarch Magnet
- Pocket Prairie

Go N Grow Gardens have all the plants you need to create an entire 125 sq. ft. garden – complete with 24 plants perfect for Texas home landscapes, planting and care guides, and example designs so you can plant by number.

Save Tarrant Water is offering special opportunities for two garden rebates! Get a \$20 rebate for attending an online class **or** get a FULL rebate for removing a portion of your lawn to make way for the garden. Rebates are only available to Tarrant County residents or residents in TRWD's service area. More info at <https://savetarrantwater.com/gongrow/>

## CLUB ACTIVITIES

Spring time means it's time to get our trowels dirty and get to work beautifying our natural spaces around Mansfield. The Mansfield Garden Club got to a great start with two events, one of them highlighting the partnerships we build with other Mansfield organizations!



After 2 hours of digging, we retrieved between 100 and 125 iris rhizomes from a club member's yard who had stored them for us as we waited for the right time to replant these heirloom flowers. On March 12, MISD student volunteers helped us plant around of these 85 rhizomes at the Man House, most in the entrance bed and back bed of the Visitor's center.

We had over 20 student /teacher volunteers from MISD. Under the watchful eyes of Pam, Diane, Winnie and Val, these young adults did the majority of the Man House bed weeding, trimming and planting. Those young adults did an outstanding job.

Another group of hard-working MGC members tackled the butterfly garden in the courtyard of the Mansfield Public Library on Friday, March 19. Volunteers removed dead shrubs from the most recent freeze, trimmed vines and cleaned up the area as we await the arrival of migrating Monarch butterflies.



# PLANT OF THE MONTH



Common Name	Cosmos
Botanical Name	Cosmos sulphureus
Plant Type	Annual
Mature Size	3-6 ft
Sun Exposure	Full sun
Soil Type	Drought Tolerant
Bloom Time	Summer until frost
Flower Color	orange, white, lavender
Hardiness Zones	USDA 7b-11
Native Areas	Mexico, South America, Asia
Toxicity	Not toxic to pets or humans

This is a wonderful summer annual that attracts many butterflies and other pollinators. Seeded in spring when the soil warms up, cosmos will bloom until frost. These are great plants for filling in a large area on a low budget because they're best planted from seed in the spring or even as late as now. They will grow tall very quickly. Plant them like you would wildflowers: add the seed to some sand and broadcast with a hand spreader for a naturalistic look. Rake the top of the soil to press those seeds in lightly. They will spread as they drop seeds. Deadheading will prevent seeds from dropping. Normally it takes from 8-12 weeks from seed to first bloom. They do not tolerate fertilizer or too much water and thrive on neglect.