



## Henderson County Master Gardeners Weekly News Article      April 5, 2016

### Dreaming of a Spring Garden

by Lydia Holley

Spring has come to the Dream Garden, the garden created and maintained by Henderson County Master Gardeners Association (HCMGA), located at the East Texas Arboretum. Although the winter berries of the Savannah holly are still bright and showy, it is the blooms that capture your attention as you walk through this cottage style garden.

Two mock orange (*Philadelphus*) shrubs welcome you with blooms that drape over the fence. These shrubs are also known as English dogwoods, and when you see the blooms, you will know why. Although dogwood trees are in the Family Cornaceae, while English dogwoods are in the family Hydrangeaceae, the blooms from these two plants look very similar to a layman. Which is surprising when you begin to trace the lineage of these two plants. A step up from Family, comes Order. One step up from Order comes Subclass. They are not in the same Order, but are in the same Subclass, Rosidea. However, there are 18 Orders in the Rosidea Subclass, so you can see that they are not very closely related at all.



Another bush heavily blooming in the Dream Garden is the Snowball Viburnum. It is named for its large, round, white blooms. If each bloom represents a snowball, the tree as a whole looks like a blizzard has hit East Texas. This tree is heavy laden with blooms, becoming the seasonal focal point instead of the nearby statue that is usually the center of attention. Trying to compete, Lady Banks rose shines with a crown of gold over the feminine statue. This entire corner of the garden is an artistic masterpiece.

The crossvine (*Bignonia capreolata*) that is trained over an arch is also in full bloom right now. It entices you, and the hummingbirds, to the back corner of the garden toward its orange, bell-shaped blooms.

The amaryllis are stretching their flower stalks to put on an exquisite expedition. They are being overlooked by an agave's flowering spike which is soaring toward the sky almost ten feet high at the time of this writing. It is not to be missed.

No one should miss seeing the blooms of the annual poppies at the Dream Garden either, and many people time their visits to see these exotic flowers that look as delicate as crepe paper. Margaret Dansby, who heads this HCMGA project along with Linda Benton, states that she has sown some new colors of poppies in the garden this year. Just in case you were wondering, these are not *Papaver somniferum*, the opium poppy. The poppies in the Dream Garden are grown for a stunning show, not for eating the seeds or shady activities. The poppy performance will probably peak during the last two week of April. Then, the orange California poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*) will begin to bloom.

Come and enjoy, or find some new plants for you to add to your own garden. Occasionally you may find a Master Gardener or two working there, and we welcome your comments and questions.

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