

➤ Announcements

➤ Our Speaker this Month: Kim Townsend

Kim Townsend accidentally (albeit fortuitously) stumbled into beekeeping several years ago when a colony of honey bees selected the eaves of her garage as their new home... and, instinctively, she knew to hire someone to come save (rather than exterminate) them. The very next day, she found herself in possession of her very first hive in her backyard (a different group of bees), and has never looked back! Fast forward to current day, and in addition to beekeeping, Kim is now a Texas Master Beekeeper, swarm-catcher, and conducts live bee rescues/removals/relocations. Most importantly, she shares (along with her Mom) in full-time caregiving for her uber-creative, hilarious brother, Clint - who was diagnosed with ALS in 2006. Originally from Lubbock, the Townsend family (including Dad!) now lives in the beautiful outskirts of Heath, TX... where there's never a dull moment! She will be talking about swarms and cutouts.

- **Contact lists for the public (ie swarms, bee wranglers, bee placement, etc)** We are placing notices on our **website** for contacts for swarms, cutouts, and out yard services.
 - This time of the year I get lots of calls from people interested in having bees placed on their land (mainly for Ag). If you are interested in having out yards or doing bee wrangling me know.
 - Also, at this time of the year I get calls from people that have swarms and cutouts. If you are interested in doing either let me know.
 - Email me if you want to be listed on our website for any of the above.
 - JanRHodson@gmail.com or president.elmfork@gmail.com

April Monthly Tips:

- Don't let the green out there fool you! Any rain washes away nectar and pollen. Check honey and pollen stores. Feed syrup and pollen if needed for colony buildup. Check hives for:
 - Swarm and supercedure cells
 - Crowding
 - Egg laying room
 - Brood box has 3 frames of honey/nectar
 - Room for more honey
- Nectar flow should be ramping up. Have at least one empty super per hive ready during honey flow. Air out any wax that was stored with PDB before using.
- Do not medicate during honey flow. Test for varroa and treat before installing honey supers.
- Don't install queen excluder until the bees begin to draw out comb or put nectar in the super. You can use an 8 frame queen excluder or turn the excluder sideways, to allow easier access for the worker bees.
- April is an ideal time to make splits using new queens.
- You can strengthen a weak hive by taking capped brood frames from a strong hive shaking off the bees and adding them to a weak hive. First ask, **Why is the hive weak?**
- Consider whether the hive maybe in a bad location, aging queen, mites, etc.



A few blooming nectar plants:

- Take pictures of bees on nectar plants and email to ianrhodson@gmail.com or text to 214-417-9071
- Arugula
- Little Blue Eyes
- Showy Primrose
- Bastard Cabbage
- Gulf Coast Penstemon
- Vetch (Common and Hairy)
- Dewberry and Blackberry
- Blue Muscari

Arugula

Also called Rocket, Corn Salad, Rocket Salad

Scientific name: *Eruca vesicaria*

Family: Brassicaceae (cruciferae/mustard)

Annual-perennial

Garden Herb, green salad ingredient having a peppery taste



Blue-Eyed Grass

Sisyrinchium Pruinosum, member of the : Iridaceae (Iris) family. Native



Showy Primrose/ Pink Lady

Scientific name: *Oenothera speciosa*

Family: Onagraceae

Texas native

It is a herbaceous perennial wildflower. It frequently escapes from gardens. The specific name, *speciosa*, means "showy".

The plant's wild habitat includes rocky prairies, open woodlands, slopes, roadsides, meadows and disturbed areas. While it makes an attractive garden plant, care should be taken with it as it can become invasive, spreading by runners and seeds. This drought-resistant plant prefers loose, fast-draining soil and full sun. But, can tolerate clay and part shade.

Note: The leaves can be used for salad or greens, best before blooms appear.



Bastard Cabbage

Rapistum Rugosum (*Mustard family*)
Introduced invasive, native to Eurasia and
parts of Africa, annual
Bloom: All year if conditions are right.

Photos by: Michael Barber



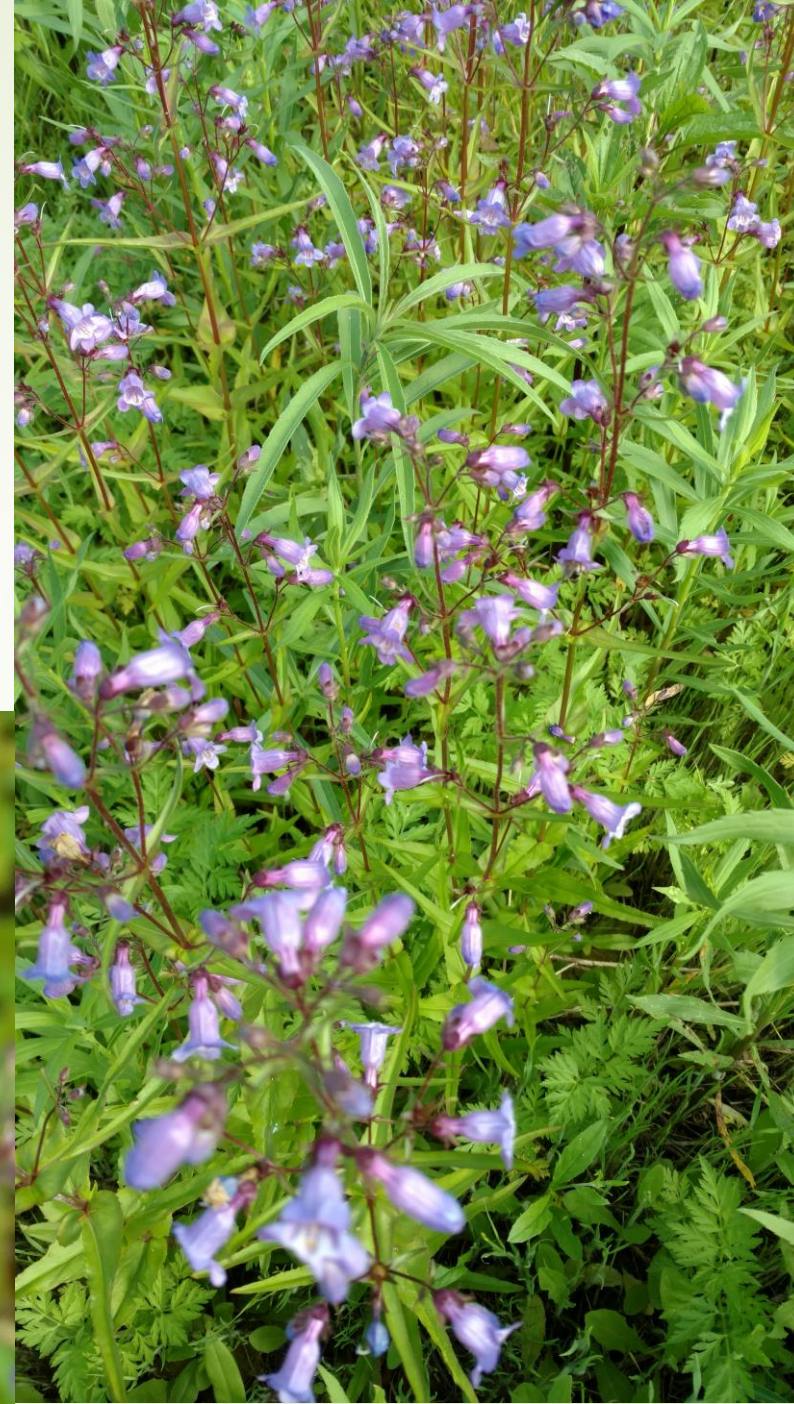
Gulf Coast Penstemon

Scientific name: Penstemon tenuis

Family: Scrophulariaceae (Figwort Family)

I started my penstemon with 3 plants several years ago. Those plants are gone. But, during the winter I weed wack them down. It throws seeds everywhere now they popup in strange places. Bees crawl down in the blooms. Most penstemons like well drained soil, these guys are not real picky, sand, loam, clay or gumbo. They will grow in part shade or full sun.

Perennial, reseeds



Common Vetch

Scientific name: Vicia

Sativa

Family: Fabaceae
(legume)

Many species,
introduced annual
Cover crop



Hairy Vetch

Vicia villosa, known as the **hairy vetch**, **fodder vetch** or **winter vetch**, is a plant native to some of Europe and western Asia. It is a legume, grown as a forage crop, fodder crop, cover crop, and green manure. Although non-native, it occurs in all US states and is considered invasive by some states, such as Alaska, Florida, Georgia, Michigan, Minnesota, Oregon, and Washington state — as well as in Japan and some parts of Europe where it is not native. It is also found in most Canadian provinces.



Black Berry

Scientific name: *Rubis Fruticosis*

Member of the rose family

Native, perennial

Common Blackberry is also called brambles or briars. This member of the rose family has a love/hate relationship with Texans. Folks love the fruit but hate the rose like thorns and invasive habits of this hardy thicket shrub.

The delicious fruit is consumed by humans, birds, coyotes, foxes, raccoons, skunks, armadillos, opossums, and rodents. The leaves are used in herbal teas. The thickets provide cover and protection to small animals from predators.

Dewberries (*rubis aboriginium*) are very similar. They small trailing brambles growing closer to the ground and have hairy fine pickles instead of rose like thorns.



Blue Muscari (common name grape hyacinth, but is not a hyacinth)

Scientific name: *Muscari*, 42 species

Member of the *Asparagaceae*
Family

Origin Eurasia, has naturalized in many
countries, perennial bulb

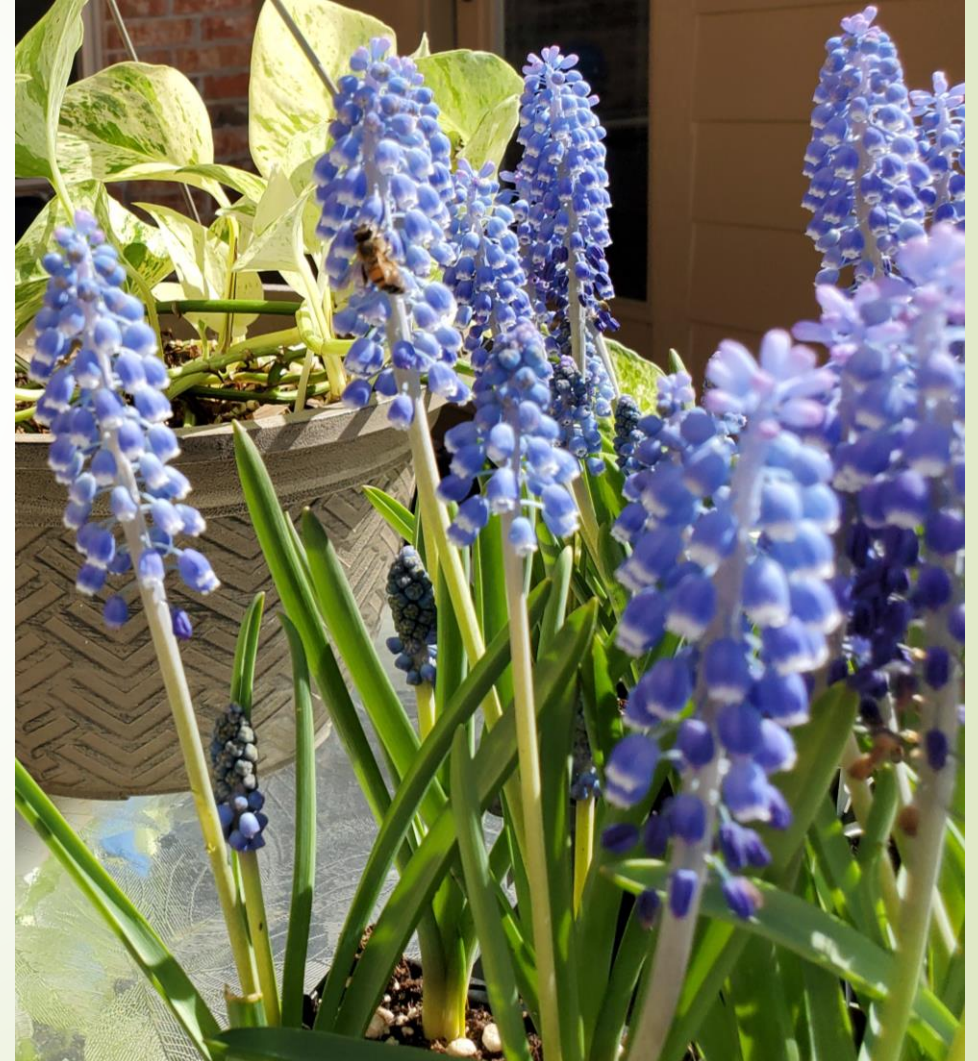


Photo: D. Bragg



Little Stingers:

This is from The Dilbert Principle by Scott Adams

Origin of the Word "Leader"

The word "leader" is derived from the word "lead" as in the material that bullets are made out of. The term "leader" was popularized at about the same time as the invention of firearms. It grew out of the observation that the person in charge of every organization was the person whom everyone wanted to fill with hot lead. I don't recommend this, it's just a point of historical interest.

An historical use of bee's wax:

Back in the 1770's personal hygiene left much room for improvement. As a result many women and men had developed acne scars by adulthood. The women would spread bee's wax over their face to smooth their complexions. When they were speaking to each other, if a woman began to stare at another woman's face she was told, "mind your own bee's wax." Should the woman smile, the wax would crack, hence the term "crack a smile." In addition, when they sat too close to the fire, the wax would melt... therefore, the expression "losing face." I also I don't recommend this...