

October Yard of the Month



A house with a wrap-around front porch on a corner lot offers an unusual landscaping opportunity, which Casey and Christina Smith have used to showcase native and naturalized Texas plants and to attract pollinators such as butterflies and hummingbirds. The Smith home at 1061 Sycamore Street, in the Rio Vista Terrace neighborhood, is Spring Lake Garden Club's choice as Yard of the Month for October.

The Smiths moved into their home late in 2008, but lived overseas for three years while Casey taught at an international university campus in Saudi Arabia. Christina recalls that she felt at home seeing a yellow flowering shrub there which was a twin to the Esperanza which graces so many local gardens here in San Marcos. She also loved the Date Palms in Saudi, but unfortunately neighborhood squirrels spoiled the trees she tried to grow here. Casey and Christina chose other trees for their property, joining several large Texas Pecans at the back and neighbors' side of the house, along with an old Tallow tree shading the front steps, and a few volunteer Mountain Laurels.

Christina explains that except for new trees, everything in the yard originated as seeds or cuttings. One of the four Smith children succeeded in growing a seed from a Texas orange, and the outcome now graces the side street yard, near a peach tree, caged to deter deer. A Mexican Plum fills out this orchard trio, and a tall Esperanza provides a splash of yellow among its green-leaved neighbors. Trees planted facing Sycamore Street appropriately include two Sycamores (a gift from Christina's mother) and a Buckeye, acquired from a plant sale at San Marcos Nature Center years ago.

The centerpiece of the Smith's front yard is a butterfly garden, ringed with limestone rocks from a family property in Kerrville. A Texas Bird of Paradise (*Caesalpinia gilliesii*) reminds Christina of El Paso where she grew up. This colorful bloomer, also called Desert Bird of Paradise, is similar to the popular Pride of Barbados (*Caesalpinia pulcherrima*) but distinct from it and from the Mexican Bird of Paradise with more rounded leaves. Other plants attracting pollinators in the garden are Blue Mistflower (an Aster), Red Salvia, Rosemary, Lantana, Butterfly Bush (*Buddleia*), and gray Cenizo. Christina suspects that aphids attacked the Milkweed plants now bearing leaves only at the end of their stems, but the plants still stand tall in the garden to attract migrating Monarch butterflies.

Another mid-lawn planting bed near the corner protects a maturing volunteer Mountain Laurel, surrounded by Salvias, Lantana, and other drought-resistant natives. Garden beds near the front of the house include plants that "came with the property" - deep purple Wandering Jew (*Tradescantia*) and Daylilies. Near the porch steps, a concrete bird bath is surrounded by Four-o'Clocks grown from seeds from Casey's grandmother's garden. Beds on the side of the house feature ornamentals: Irises, Roses, and Moonflowers. All beds are thickly mulched with material available every second Saturday from the City of San Marcos.

All garden areas, including vegetable beds in the backyard, rely on rainwater for irrigation. The Smiths have a total of eight rain barrels for landscaping and occasional car washing. A mixture of Horseherb and Bermuda Grass makes a sustainable lawn which requires little mowing. Perhaps the best advantage of this corner landscape is that the whole front yard- butterfly garden, new trees, pass-along plants- can be viewed from a seat on the front porch, where the gardeners may enjoy the visual fruits of their labors.

• Submitted by Spring Lake Garden Club



The above photo displays the Smith's wrap-around front porch and butterfly garden at their home in Rio Vista Terrace. These plants are maintained with irrigated water collected by the Smith family using barrels. The photo below shows the Smith's elevated barrels beside the house that collect rainwater from the roof at the Smith home. The irrigated rainwater quenches the garden, which consist of a specifically-chosen variety of plants that attract helpful pollinators, such as butterflies, bumblebees and hummingbirds. This type of water-collecting system preserves water that would have been otherwise wasted. Using barrels for water collection is both environmentally conscious and fiscally responsible. PHOTOS COURTESY OF SPRING LAKE GARDEN CLUB

School of Music releases performance calendar

Texas State University's School of Music offers a variety of musical performances and lectures open to faculty, students and the general public. Events scheduled for October 2016 are listed below. Further information can be found at www.music.txstate.edu/events. Tickets are available for purchase at txstatepresents.com. All \$10 ticket prices (and \$5 for students and military) will be accompanied by a \$2 processing fee, purchased online or at the window.

October 3

- Faculty artist Mark Cruz (classical guitar) 6 p.m., Music Building Recital Hall \$10 Adult/\$5 Students, senior citizens and military with ID
- Ensemble: Texas State Jazz Ensemble 7:30 p.m., Performing Arts Center Recital Hall \$10 Adult/\$5 Students, senior citizens and military with ID

October 4

- Ensemble: Texas State Jazz Orchestra 7:30 p.m., Performing Arts Center Recital Hall \$10 Adult/\$5 Students, senior citizens and military with ID

October 5

- Ensemble: Texas State Jazz Lab Band 7:30 p.m., Performing Arts Center Recital Hall \$10 Adult/\$5 Students, senior citizens and military with ID

October 6

- Ensemble: Texas State Concert Band and Texas State Symphonic Winds Concert 7:30 p.m., Evans Auditorium \$10 Adult/\$5 Students, senior citizens and military with ID

October 7

- Ensemble: Texas State Wind Symphony 7:30 p.m., Evans Auditorium \$10 Adult/\$5 Students, senior citizens and military with ID. All Girl Scouts or Boy Scouts are invited to attend with free

admission.

October 9

- Ensemble: John Peterson's "Shadows of Light," performance I 4 p.m., San Marcos High School Auditorium \$10 Adult/\$5 Students, senior citizens and military with ID

October 10

- Ensemble: John Peterson's "Shadows of Light," performance II 7:30 p.m., Evans Auditorium \$10 Adult/\$5 Students, senior citizens and military with ID

October 11

- Guest demonstration and clinic: Jody Espina (Jody Jazz) 4 p.m., Music Building Recital Hall Free admission
- Stars at Night concert series: Gail Williams (horn) and Daniel Peratoni (tuba) 7:30 p.m., Performing Arts Center Recital Hall \$15 Adult/\$8 Students, senior citizens and military with ID

October 12

- Guest artist Christopher Guzman (piano) 6 p.m., Performing Arts Center Recital Hall \$10 Adult/\$5 Students, senior citizens and military with ID

October 13

- Guest lecturer Carl Leafstedt, musicologist 6 p.m., Music Building Recital Hall Free admission
- Guest composer Joel Hoffman 8 p.m., Music Building Recital Hall Free admission

October 14

- Salsa Night 9 p.m., Stonewall Warehouse, 141 E. Hopkins St. \$5 cover charge for 18-20 yr. olds; free admission for those 21+. Under 18 not admitted

October 16

- Faculty artist Daria Robotkina (piano) 6 p.m., Performing Arts Center Recital Hall \$10 Adult/\$5 Students, senior citizens and military with ID

October 17

- Masterclass with Vincent de Vries (piano) 4 p.m., Performing Arts Center Recital Hall Free admission

October 18

- Guest artist Vincent de Vries (piano) 6 p.m., Performing Arts Center Recital Hall \$10 Adult/\$5 Students, senior citizens and military with ID

October 20

- Texas State Opera: Opera Scenes 6:30 p.m., Performing Arts Center Recital Hall \$15 Adult/\$8 Students, senior citizens and military with ID

October 21

- Masterclass with Ellen Rose (viola) 12:30 p.m., Evans Auditorium Free admission
- Texas State Opera: Opera Scenes 7:30 p.m., Performing Arts Center Recital Hall \$15 Adult/\$8 Students, senior citizens and military with ID

October 22

- Texas State Opera: Opera Scenes 7:30 p.m., Performing Arts Center Recital Hall \$15 Adult/\$8 Students, senior citizens and military with ID

October 23

- Texas State Opera: Opera Scenes 2 p.m., Performing Arts Center Recital Hall \$15 Adult/\$8 Students, senior citizens and military with ID

October 25

- Masterclass with the Dan Haelre Quintet 1 p.m., Performing Arts Center Recital Hall Free admission
- Ensemble: Texas State Flute Choir 8 p.m., Music Building Recital Hall Free admission
- Guest artists the Dan Haelre Quintet 8 p.m., Performing Arts Center Recital Hall \$10 Adult/\$5 Students, senior citizens and military with ID

October 27

- Musicians Forum 6:15 p.m., Music Building Recital Hall Free admission
- Somos Musicos! 7:30 p.m., Music Building Recital Hall Free admission

October 28

- Faculty artists Soon Cho (mezzo soprano), Ames Asbell (viola) and Joey M. Martin (piano) 6 p.m., Performing Arts Center Recital Hall \$10 Adult/\$5 Students, senior citizens and military with ID (plus \$2 processing fee for tickets online or at the window)

October 31

- Ensemble: Texas State Symphony Orchestra 7:30 p.m., Evans Auditorium \$10 Adult/\$5 Students, senior citizens and military with ID

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