



The Jester Warbler

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NATURE WATCH

A GAINFUL GRAPE

by Jim and Lynne Weber

Few plants have a higher ecological value to wildlife than the Winter Grape or Spanish Grape (*Vitis cinerea* var. *helleri*). This hardy deciduous vine, which can grow to 72 feet long, is common in east, north, and central Texas, and is primarily distinguished from Mustang Grape (*V. mustangensis*) by the smooth surface on the underside of its leaves. It makes for an excellent wildlife plant as its fruit is a food source to both mammals and birds, its dense climbing foliage provides cover and nesting habitat, and it is the host plant for more than a dozen species of moths. Common in woodland areas and thickets near streams and riverbanks, it thrives in part shade while clambering over other plants, even in the heat of summer.

When mature, the leaves of the Winter Grape are up to 4.5 inches long and 5 inches wide, and have white cobweb-like hairs only on the leaf veins. Roughly heart-shaped, the leaves have two broad lobes, a pointed tip, and serrated edges. While this vine does produce palatable, reddish-purple fruits in clusters up to 8 inches long that ripen from August to October, it is its leaves that provide the food for the larval stage of notable moths such as the Nessus Sphinx (*Amphion floridensis*), Vine Sphinx (*Eumorpha vitis*), Eight-spotted Forester (*Alypia octomaculata*), and Mournful Thyris (*Thyris sepulchralis*). In addition to nectaring on flowers in the adult stage, these moths often pollinate those flowers at the same time.



Both the Nessus and Vine Sphinx are members of a family of moths called the Sphingidae are more commonly known as hawk moths, hummingbird moths, and sphinx moths. Generally speaking, these moths are named not just for their streamlined bullet-shaped bodies that have long narrow forewings and short hindwings, but also for their distinct behavior that comes in the form of swift, hovering flight. The leaf-feeding caterpillars or larva of these moths typically have a smooth body with a characteristic horn near their posterior end, hence the common name hornworm. They pupate in an earthen cell or loose cocoon at or near the soil surface.

The Nessus Sphinx has a stout abdomen with two bright yellow bands and a tuft at the end. The upper side of its wings are a dark



red to chocolate brown, and its hindwings have a red-orange band with a yellowish fringe. Its wingspan is 1.5 to just over 2 inches, flying during the day and at dusk, from March to May and July to September. The Vine Sphinx has dark brown forewings with a striking pattern of thick, pale bands and three fine pinkish veins, and hindwings with a pink patch along the inner edge. Its wingspan is 3.5 to just over 4 inches, flying mainly at dusk, from April to May and July to October.

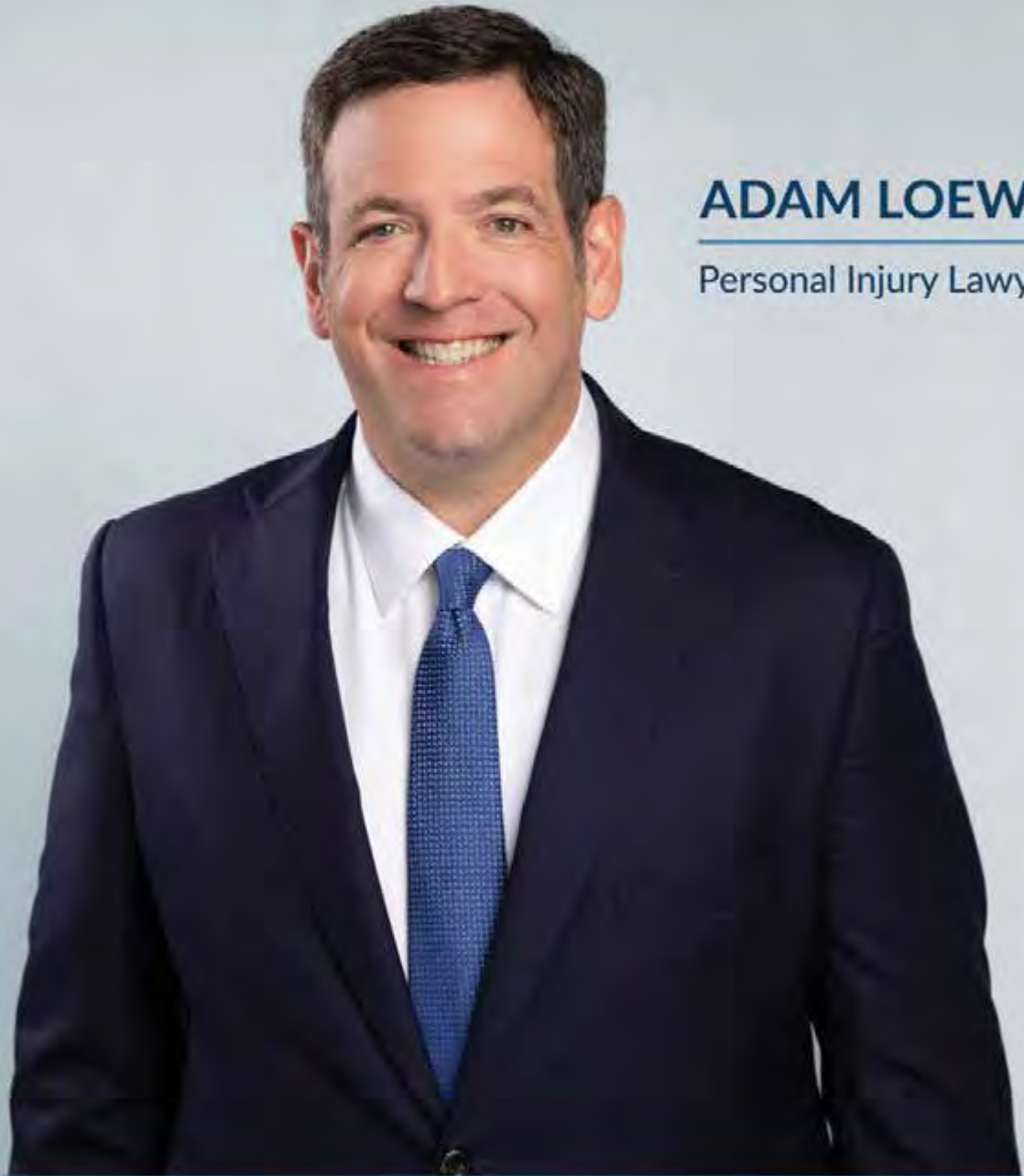


Part of the Noctuidae family, the Eight-spotted Forester has black forewings with two pale yellow spots and inconspicuous metallic blue bands, and hindwings that are black with white spots at the base and in the middle. Its black body has pale yellow at the base of the forewing, and orange fringe on its front and middle legs, and like many species in this family, when perched it holds its wings above its body like a roof. With a wingspan of 1.0 to 1.5 inches, it flies during the day, most commonly from February to May. With black wings and body spotted with white, the Mournful Thyris is a member of the Thyrididae family, generally small moths with stout bodies and relatively short wings, that perch in a distinctive position with a raised body and outspread wings. Its wingspan is just over 0.5 to just under 1.0 inch, flying mainly during the day, from April to August.

Whether you are looking for a hardy vine for your summer garden, or just a profitable plant for serving the needs of several species of native wildlife, look no further than the gainful grape!

Send your nature-related questions to naturewatch@austin.rr.com and we'll do our best to answer them. If you enjoy reading these articles, check out our books, *Nature Watch Austin*, *Nature Watch Big Bend*, and *Native Host Plants for Texas Butterflies* (all published by Texas A&M University Press), and our blog at naturewatchaustin.blogspot.com.

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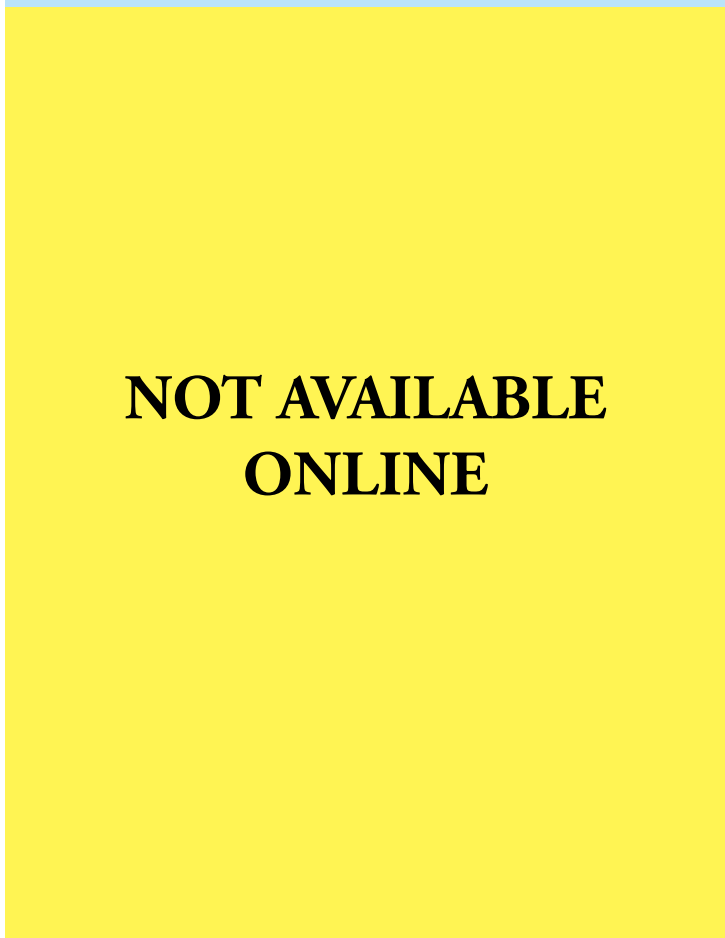
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What is 2222 CONA and What Does it Do?

*by Ron Herzfeld
Jester Estates 2222 CONA Board Member*

The 2222 Coalition of Neighborhood Associations, Inc. (2222 CONA) was incorporated as a Texas non-profit in December 2005. 2222 CONA is led by a Board of Directors, with each Director appointed by their corresponding member neighborhood association.

The purpose of 2222 CONA is to:

- Provide monitoring and investigation of development and zoning changes that may affect various neighborhood associations related to proposed developments in Austin and Travis County, Texas along and near RM 2222;
- Communicate with affected neighbors concerning developments that may adversely affect the natural environment, safety and general welfare of their neighborhoods;
- Coordinate and represent the interests of its Members before the various governmental agencies responsible for zoning and permitting of development activities within its area of interest;
- Conduct any other related charitable, educational or scientific purposes as deemed appropriate by its Board of Directors.

The mission of 2222 CONA is to:

- Provide a forum for influencing development of the 2222 Hill Country Corridor in a manner that benefits the people who live, work, and enjoy recreation in the 2222 Corridor. Our focus is to encourage development that minimizes traffic safety problems, minimizes negative impact on the environment, preserve the natural resources, and blends aesthetically with the natural beauty of the Hill Country.

The current member neighborhoods of the coalition represent approximately 3,000 households and include, Jester Estates, Glenlake, Long Canyon Phase I, Long Canyon Phase II & III, River Place, Shepard Mountain, and Westminster Glen Estates. We welcome other area neighborhoods to join 2222 CONA.

Jester Estates Architectural Control Committee

Members of the Jester Architectural Control Committee (JACC) are responsible for maintaining the aesthetic and structural integrity of the Homeowner Association neighborhood and enforcing the Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions (CCRs). The CCRs for Jester Estates are found on the HOA's website, jesterhoa.com, at the Documents Page.

The JACC primary purpose is to review any applications for modifications, additions, or architectural changes in the neighborhood community. The HOA Architectural application form is at the Contact Page of the HOA website.

The JACC is responsible to the Jester Estates Board of Directors to assist it with its fiduciary duty to do what is best for the whole community. The JACC attempts to promptly review the applications and work with the neighborhood to approve all reasonable requests.

There is another important purpose for working with residents of Jester Estates, for the benefit of the resident. The decisions made by the JACC carry forward in issues that may be concerns at a time of selling a home. The JACC can grant variances on building too close to property lines, issues of drainage, heights of fences, and many other issues that would be documented in the records of the Jester Estates management company.

Jester Estates is a highly desired community, with beautiful homes, yards, and some spectacular views. It is important for all residents to help the JACC maintain the standards we have for the aesthetic and structural integrity of our neighborhood.

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TOMATO TART

SERVES: 8-10
UNITS: US



THE INGREDIENTS

- 1 piece frozen puff pastry, thawed
- 1 egg white
- 4 medium tomatoes (heirloom in different colors)
- 3 tablespoons whole grain mustard
- sea salt
- 1 shallot, thinly sliced and slices separated into rings
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme

DIRECTIONS

- Preheat the oven to 375°F.
- Lightly grease or line a baking sheet with parchment paper or a silicone liner.
- On a lightly floured surface, roll the dough out to about a 12- by 15 rectangle. Place on the prepared pan and flip over a 1/2-inch border,
- using water to hold down the edges and then crimping with a fork.
- Whisk the egg white with 1 tablespoon water, and brush this over the edge of the tart. Prick the inside of the tart in several places with
- the fork. Par-bake until lightly browned and slightly cooked in the center,
- 12-15 minutes. Let cool slightly.
- Meanwhile, cut the tomatoes in half through the equator,
- then gently squeeze to remove seeds and excess liquid. Slice into 1/8 to 1/4
- inch-thick slices.
- Spread the prepared crust evenly with the mustard, then
- layer the tomatoes on top in alternate colors, overlapping them by about 1/2
- inch and arranging them tightly within the edges (they will shrink a bit).
- Season well with sea salt, then top with the shallot rings and thyme.
- Cook until the tomatoes are softened and the crust is cooked through in the center, 20-25 minutes.



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