



The Jester Warbler

Official Publication of Jester Homeowners Association, Inc.

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Greetings Jester Neighbors:

I trust that this finds everyone well and healthy as we navigate the Covid-19 pandemic and all that that entails. Jester social activities will remain on hold until restrictions are lifted and we can proceed safely. Watch the JHOA website for updates in that regard (www.jesterhoa.com). I'm sure we are all looking forward to being able to move about more freely and enjoy each other's company again.

Let's continue to be mindful of our neighbors and those in need – a smile or a wave may be just the small bit of encouragement needed to lift spirits and brighten a day ... Throughout the week as I come and go, I am heartened to see families and friends outside enjoying the beauty of our neighborhood. The summer heat has been oppressive of late but that too will soon be behind us as Fall approaches.

As a Board, we continue to seek more active community involvement with the HOA and on the various committees. We are all volunteers so please come join us! There are many ways to get involved – bring new ideas and friends to help and let's continue to improve our neighborhood.

Of specific note, we are needing someone to take the helm as editor of our community paper, The Warbler. It can be more than one person if a couple of friends would love to work on this project together. The focus is on gathering items of interest and perhaps seeking article

input from the neighborhood ... pictures of community activities are a favorite but have been missing with the CV19 social restrictions. Writing is not a requirement -

For those of you who have questioned when the Jester Hill is to be resurfaced, it was scheduled for this Fall, but CV19 closures have pushed the timing a few months making it likely to be done in the Spring –

Stay Safe –
Christi Campbell
Jester HOA Board President

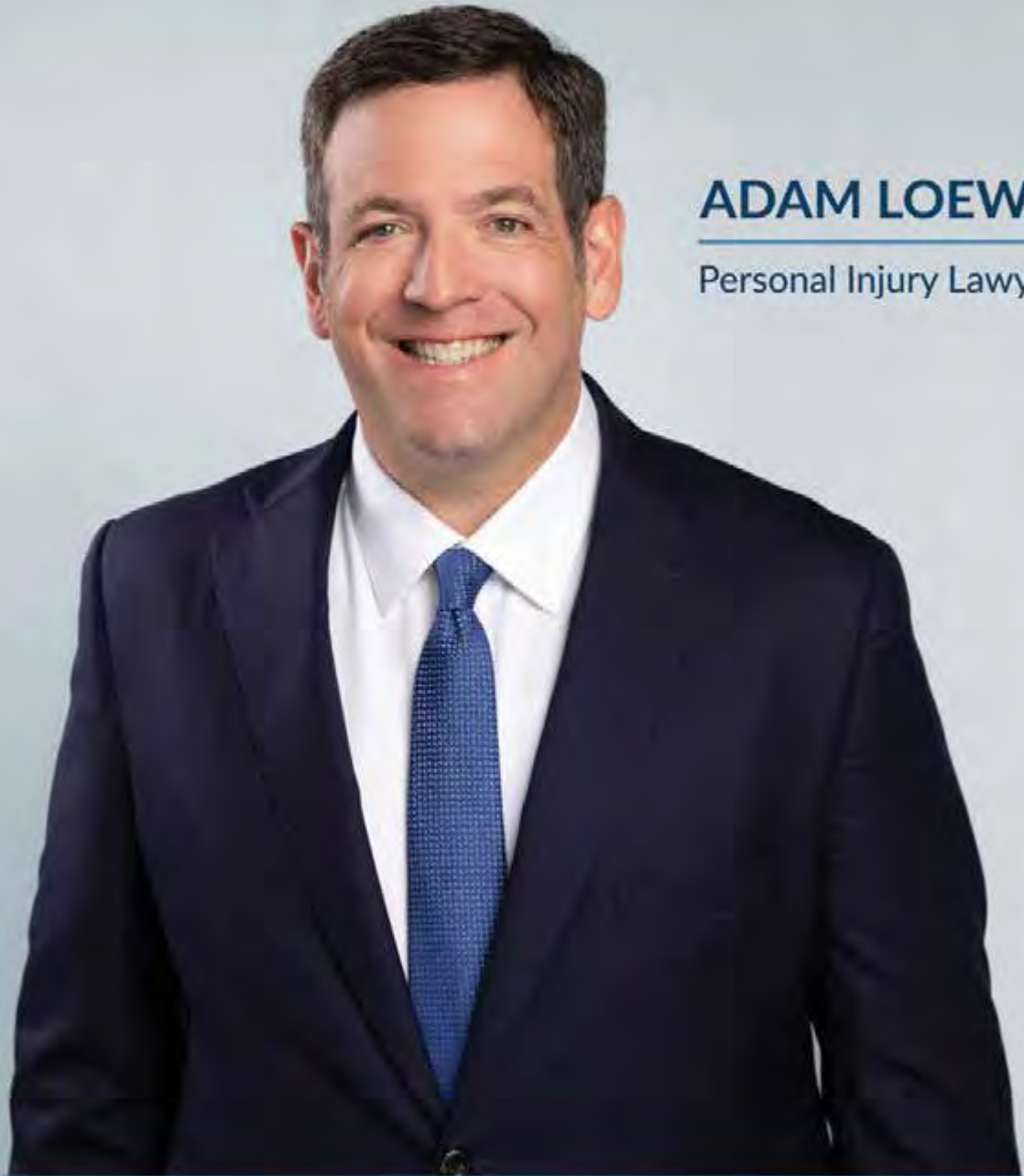
SEEKING WARBLER EDITOR

Jester resident(s) needed to take the helm of the monthly community paper – oversee submitted articles, seek community interest stories and/or pictures of nature, wildlife ...etc. Organization and timeliness important – writing ability not required. Direction and training will be provided.

For further info, please contact either:

Christi at chcaustin@gmail.com
or Teresa at tgouldie@gmail.com

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ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS

Interested in submitting an article? You can do so by emailing
tgouldie@gmail.com or by going to:
www.peelinc.com/articleSubmit.php.

*All news must be received by the 12th
of the month prior to the issue.*

Teenage Job Seekers

Name	Baby Sit	Pet Sit	House Sit	Yard Work	Phone
Anderson, Layla*+	•	•	•	•	(512) 496-6536
Beach, Annika.....	•	•	•	•	839-0387
Ferrens, Ashley	•	•	•	•	512-767-3003
Fricke, Samantha+	•	•	•	•	512-948-2717
Gerrie, Jack	•	•	•	•	210-290-3842
Gerwels, Emily	•	•	•	•	795-9270
Gilliam, Ava*+	•	•	•	•	512-633-3664
Hayes, Alice.....	•	•	•	•	952-0512
Hilliard, Ashley.....	•	•	•	•	345-9481
Hull, Carter*+.....	•	•	•	•	512-963-3254
Kellar, Allison	•	•	•	•	909-1009
Moore, Kaitlin	•	•	•	•	739-7652
Orton, Claire.....	•	•	•	•	346-0434
O'Toole, Emily	•	•	•	•	917-9397
Pantaleoni, Nicholas	•	•	•	•	310-200-6006
Parouty, Ava	•	•	•	•	512-298-9160
Reed, Emery	•	•	•	•	592-2141
Shafer, Owen	•	•	•	•	512-786-2378
Thibodeaux, Medeline ..	•	•	•	•	619-0291
Trautman, Colin.....	•	•	•	•	342-2422
Ware, Sonoma	•	•	•	•	796-4013
Werth, Amanda* +	•	•	•	•	217-398-2833

*-CPR Training +First Aid Training

*If you would like to add your name, send email to tgouldie@gmail.com
with the jobs that interest you, your age and phone number
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Ten Tips FOR CREATING A HOME Wildscape

by Lauren Simpson



After severe drought killed much of our traditional landscaping, my family decided to adopt new landscaping that would support local wildlife. This kind of gardening is sometimes called “wildscaping,” which is simply landscaping with the primary purpose of supporting wildlife. The thing is, I didn’t know anything about

wildscaping or even about gardening! But I found mentors in various local groups, like the Houston Chapter of the Native Plant Society of Texas; I read voraciously; and I experimented in the gardens, learning as much from my mistakes as from my successes. Now, six years later, our home gardens have welcomed 50 species of butterfly and around 30 species each of bee and wasp, among many other insects. And because insects provide many important eco-services, our local eco-system also benefits from their abundance in our gardens.

I wanted to share ten helpful things I’ve learned on my wildscaping journey, for those looking to start their own home wildscape:

1. Use native plants. The most important rule of thumb is to incorporate plants that are native to your eco-region as much as possible. There are many reasons for this, but one of the most important is that insects often cannot consume plants with which they have not co-evolved because they cannot digest the chemicals in the leaf or pollen. Moreover, if an aggressive native plant gets out of your garden, it doesn’t matter because it has been part of the local eco-system for millennia. In contrast, if a non-native, invasive species that nothing here eats gets out, it will have an advantage over our native plants, crowding them out and leaving less food for our native insects. Always lean toward using native plants and if you incorporate non-native plants, first ensure that they are not invasive.



2. Don’t use pesticides. Pesticides are equal-opportunity killers. They might kill those insects eating your plants, but they will also kill many other insects, including those that would keep pests in check naturally. In a healthy garden, predators and parasitoids, many of which are insects themselves, will take care of the pests in our gardens.

3. Plant in clusters of species. The more you plant clusters of individual plant species, the more intentional your garden will look. A

good rule of thumb is that you want to plant clusters of odd numbers of a single plant: three, five, seven. You can have multiple clusters of the same species in different parts of the garden. Not only does clustering serve an aesthetic purpose, giving the eye a place to rest and looking intentional, but it also serves a biological function. For example, some insects (especially bees) practice “flower constancy,” where they like to feed on the nectar and pollen of a single plant species before moving on to another. If you give them a big cluster of a single plant species, you make their life easier. The same goes for pollen and leaf specialist insects, who can digest the leaf or pollen of only those plants in a particular family, genus, or species. By clustering some of your plants in the garden, you might be helping them find the food sources they need more easily.

4. Plant a variety of colors, shapes, and sizes. Variety is the spice of life, including for insects! This takes several forms. First, you want to ensure that you have something blooming in the garden during all seasons, so that critters can feed throughout the year. When you select plants, consider their bloom time. Second, you want flowers of different colors. Insects do not see colors the same way as each other or as humans do. For example, bees have a hard time distinguishing red from green, but they can see yellow, white, and purple particularly well. Likewise, hummingbirds and butterflies are particularly drawn to reds. Having an assortment of colors in your garden supports more insects. Third, you want a variety of flower shapes and sizes. Insects have a wide range of mouthpart shapes and sizes, and their bodies are bigger or smaller, relative to each other. The more shapes and sizes of flowers you have, the wider variety of insects you will invite.

5. Plant for the babies. When we think of pollinators, we often think of the adults and what they need to survive, for example, adult butterflies and the nectar sources they need. But insects may eat very different things in their larval stages. Make sure to incorporate plants that feed the larvae, not just the adults. To support a robust butterfly population, you need not just nectar plants, but also plants with leaves the caterpillars can eat (host plants).

6. Aim for density. You want to think about how the plant will eventually fill the space. Density without overcrowding is a good thing, just as plants grow in the wild. Dense plantings suppress the growth of weeds underneath and this means less time spent weeding.

7. Put plants with similar needs together. Make sure that you plant things that have similar needs in the same area. In thinking about the needs of plants, consider sun, water, and soil. You don’t want to put a plant that wants lots of water beside a plant that doesn’t.

Continued on Page 5

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8. Think about plant height. You also want to think about how tall any plant you install might ultimately become. Put those tall “structural” plants in strategic areas, with medium and low plants around them, to make your garden look intentional. “Layering” plants like this will also help support wildlife, which

may use different plant layers for shelter, nesting, etc.

9. Use borders. To make your garden look more intentional, border your garden beds distinctly. Doing this shows deliberate design, which can help the community accept your wildscape.

10. Embrace imperfection. Doing less in a wildscape can actually benefit wildlife. For example, do not cut back stems over winter. Some native bee and wasp species nest in pithy or hollow stems, so that if we cut and compost dead stems, we might be throwing out their larvae. Leave the leaves that fall on the ground, or collect them and use them in place of mulch, because some wildlife will overwinter under them, and insects’ pupae might still be attached to them. For the same reasons, don’t shred these leaves, wherever they are placed. And also avoid mowing over early spring wildflowers because these may be the only food source available to insects coming out of diapause (like hibernation).



NATURE WATCH

WIZARD LIZARDS

by Jim and Lynne Weber



'Horny toad' is the colloquial name for three species of horned lizards that are present in Texas. The Texas Horned Lizard (*Phrynosoma cornutum*) is the only one found in our area, with the Round-tailed Horned Lizard (*P. modestum*) occurring in West Texas and the Panhandle, and the Greater Short-horned Lizard (*P. hernandesii*) restricted to the higher elevations in the Trans-Pecos. All three species are protected by the state of Texas, with the Texas Horned Lizard being the first species in Texas to be granted this status.

With a proportionally small, spiny head with a blunt snout, a distinctly flattened body fringed with a double row of spiny scales, the dorsal or top side of the Texas Horned Lizard is covered with numerous small scales, each keeled or ridged down the center making them rough to the touch. The back of its head is bordered with 8 enlarged spines, four on each side, with the middle pair being the largest and often referred to as the lizard's 'horns.' Its overall color is gray or tan, with a light line down the center of its back, and a series of light-bordered brown spots on either side of the center line.

Active from late February to October, the Texas Horned Lizard is a strict dietary specialist, feeding almost exclusively of native harvester ants in the genus *Pogonomyrmex*. Estimates show that one lizard requires 20 ant colonies, and it will feed by moving from one colony to the next, consuming about 20 or so ants at each. These lizards are wizards at avoiding predators, having a wide variety of defenses. They can flatten themselves against the ground and easily blend into a substrate or forcibly stab their head spines into the mouth of a predator, but the most fascinating defense is the ability

to squirt blood from the corners of their eyes. They can aim a jet of blood directly into the face of a predator, and their blood elicits a powerful distaste that coyotes, foxes, bobcats, and even mountain lions cannot tolerate.

In the past, the Texas Horned Lizard was present in all parts of Texas except for the southeast and the extreme northeast portions of Texas. Populations began to decline after huge numbers of these lizards were shipped across the country as part of the commercial reptile trade, only to perish due to the lack of harvester ants as a main staple of their diet. Since then, the decline has continued, mainly as a result of broad pesticide use to control imported red fire ants that has also resulted in the loss of harvester ants from the landscape. Today, these lizards have largely been extirpated east of I-35 and I-37, except in a few localities with sandy soil. If you'd like to get involved in helping Texas Parks & Wildlife gather information on the presence, abundance and decline of this species, join the citizens science project by the Texas Nature Trackers called the Texas Horned Lizard Watch, which is available on their website.

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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The Importance of Choosing the Right Ground Cover and/or Mulch

By Carol Phillipson



The right landscaping can not only enhance the beauty and increase the value of your home but protect your home from wildfire. When preventing a wildfire from encroaching on your home, it is best to use fire resistant materials at least 3' from the perimeter of your home.

Asian Jasmine, Ivy, etc. - common ground covers are NOT the best choices. Not only do they become very invasive consuming everything in their path but will fuel the fire consuming your home. Generic Wood Mulch is NOT much better but at least stays where you put it.

"Fire Resistant Mulch". This is wood mulch treated with iron oxide, a compound of iron and oxygen. As the compound deteriorates iron is released to the soil but not at toxic levels. Be sure to ask your supplier for the source of the wood used in making mulch as it may be derived from recycled wood, i.e. wood scraps, pallets, and wood from construction and demolition (C&D). If C&D wood is used, there is a possibility of chromated copper arsenate contaminated mulch which is toxic to plants

and ground water.

Rubber Mulch sounds like the perfect solution; recycled tires, found in a variety of colors which lasts longer than natural wood mulch. Unfortunately, it is NOT the best choice environmentally especially for Austin with Texas high heat and the probability of toxic chemicals entering an aquifer. Like everything, rubber mulch breaks down, and when it does, it leaches a witch's brew of heavy metals and toxic chemicals into the soil. Rubber mulch is also a huge Fire Hazard -- it burns at a much higher temperature than natural mulches and belches toxic smoke. On hot summer days, rubber mulch releases gases smelling like stinky rubber tires.

The best choice for durability and fire resistance is stone, pavers, or crushed granite as least for 3' around the perimeter of the home.

To learn more tips about protecting your home www.jesterhoa.com for a FREE FireWise Evaluation.



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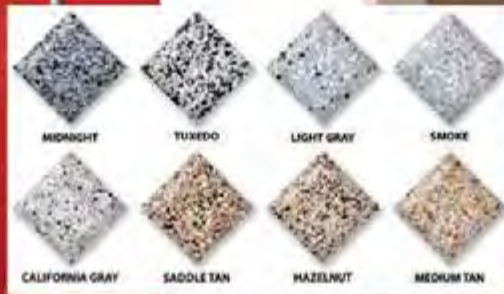
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