



NEWS FROM THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SOIL AND PLANTS

By John Ferguson

This time of year, most of the Monarch butterflies are migrating back to Mexico for their winter rest. This process takes several generations of butterflies. Below is a short video on life cycle of Monarch Butterfly:

[SAVE THE MONARCH BUTTERFLIES](#)

The October issue of Texas Wildlife had a nice article on one of our wildflowers called the “Cat Claw Sensitive Briar” botanically known as *Mimosa nuttallii*. This plant is a highly nutritious native forb eaten by many animals (deer, quail, turkey, doves, and many other song birds).

This plant is a legume with deep roots which helps it be very drought tolerant. It runs along the ground and makes a nice filler between other plants. It even grows well on poor gravelly soils and disturbed sites.

It normally blooms from May to September, however I saw some blooming a few days ago in a field near La Grange. It has fragrant, light pink, powder puff flowers that many pollinators love. I noticed several swallow tails enjoying the nectar and pollen while I was watching.

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As a boy I loved to touch the leaves and watch them fold up, hence one of the common names like "Touch-Me-Not".



One of the new products I am excited to see are biodegradable pots for plants that are becoming more available. There are several types now available for gardeners and nurseries to use.

Some like Proven Winners Eco pots are made out of PLA (polylactic acid) that is derived from corn, switchgrass and sugar beets (selfecogarden.com).

Other materials being used are rice hulls, bagasse from sugarcane, cow manure, starch, feathers, newspaper, other fibers like recycled fabric like (smartpots.com), bamboo or coconut, etc.

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Some manufactures are blending in fertilizer into the pot materials. This helps the pot breakdown faster in the soil and allow the roots to spread quicker and the nutrients eventually get released to the soil.

One of the benefits is that plants often grow faster in the biodegradable pots. Another advantage is that one plants the pot and its plant, there is no transplant shock. Lastly root circling is reduced as the roots often grow into and through the pot walls.

The bottom-line is that gardener get healthier plants that are less work to plant and no plastic waste to dispose of.

Another research paper published in the journal Neurotoxicity (2022) has found that synthetic pyrethroid insecticides cause developmental delays in toddlers. In 2019 the EPA removed a “safety factor” intended to protect children’s health from these toxic chemicals which allowed them to sprayed on food, in homes, and sports fields around the country.

Along the same lines, investigative journalist Carey Gillam and the Guardian Newspaper, has uncovered hundreds of pages of internal documents that show the chemical company Syngenta knew the herbicide paraquat could cause Parkinson’s disease. Published in “The New Lede”

Carey Gillam was also the author of the book, "**WHITE WASH** - The Story of a Weed Killer, Cancer, and the Corruption of Science", that exposed the cover up on the dangers of the herbicide glyphosate (Round Up). ISBN-13: 978-1610918329

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Recently, the FDA found pesticides in 59% of the food samples tested. For domestic fruits it was 77% and for vegetables 60%. As noted above the EPA has steadily approved increases in the amounts of pesticides allowed on foods at the request of companies that sell the pesticides. Their nickname of the “Enhanced Profit Agency” is well deserved.

As consumers, to protect our families we need to demand organically grown food and grow as much of our own vegetables and fruits as possible using the modern biological methods known as “organic”. Purchasing organically grown food from local farmers markets is another good option to protect one’s health.

Below is a link to a new video from the Organic Consumers Association and other environmental groups on how to protect the health of your families.

GMOs, Chemicals, and the Foods Affecting Your Health



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Watch this informative and alarming two-hour video featuring panelists Stephanie Seneff, Jeffrey Smith, Andre Leu, Julian Cribb, Ronnie Cummins, and Joanna Malaczyski-Moore.

The all-out assault on our health and environment has reached a crucial turning point.

[Learn about what's going on and what we can do about it: GMO's, Chemicals, And The Food System And How They Directly Affect Your Health](#)

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