Express News Gardening Tasks

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* It is time to plant your fall tomatoes if you want to harvest a crop before cold weather arrives. Use fast maturing varieties such as Surefire, Lavaca, Roma Surprise and BHN 368 plus heat-setters such as Solar Fire, Phoenix, Valley Cat and Tycoon. Experiment with Red Deuce to see if it performs as well in the fall as the spring.
* The Monarchs will be migrating through Central Texas in September and October. Plant milkweed, mistflower, zinnias, sunflower, cosmos, and fall asters for color and as nectar sources for the butterflies.
* The lace bugs have attacked beds of “New Gold” lantana. The plants quit blooming and the leaves look dusty. Cut them back, treat with an insecticide such as acephate, and fertilize to encourage regrowth this fall. Mark your calendar for next year so you can pre-treat next year before the sucking insects cause the damage.
* Esperanza, poinciana, thyrallis, and firebush are prospering in the dry, hot weather and can still be planted for blooms this summer and fall.