**Q&A**

**Calvin Finch Ph.D.**

**Horticulturist and Director**

**Texas A&M Water Conservation and Technology Center**

Q: Why would our eggplant leaves turn white?

A: Spider mites and lace bugs suck the juices from the eggplant leaves. The result is sometimes white leaves.

Q: Does it really work to open webworm nest with a cane pole so that wasps will eat the caterpillars?

A: Yes, to see photos of the wasps feeding on webworms, go to plantanswers.com. Breaking open the webs also subject the worms to the full blast of the sun which kills many of the pests.

Q: Is it too late to plant Bermuda grass seed now?

A: The seed will germinate in September but it will have a hard time hardening off in time for any cold weather. I wouldn’t plant Bermuda seed after the middle of the month.

Q: My wife and I love cyclamen for the winter shade garden. When will they be available at area nurseries?

A: They show up at some nurseries in late September but wait to plant them until late October or November. Cyclamen is sensitive to the hot spells that occur in September and October. They decline quickly in the heat. Pansies for the sunny winter garden have a similar sensitivity to hot spells in the fall.

Q: Is it best to select wildflower seed by species or to get a mix? Do the mail order wildflower seed sources work?

A: There are a number of good mixes designated for Texas and Oklahoma. Look at the list of varieties they include and select a different mix if your favorite flowers are not included. You can also order some specific varieties in addition to the mix. There are at least two good mail order wildflower seed sources in our area: Wild seed Inc. and Douglas Seed Company. Their prices are reasonable, the seed is high quality and they send it quickly. Google them to find their internet address.

Q: What is the recommended time for the fall lawn fertilization?

A: On or about Nov. 1 is the best time to apply the lawn fertilizer to achieve cold weather tolerance and fast green-up in the spring.

For questions about horticulture, water conservation and the environment, email Calvin Finch at Calvin.finch@tamu.edu