

## Gardening Q&A

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Q. We are considering planting more Texas sage in our landscape. What are the positive characteristics of the selection Lynn's Legacy? My son in San Antonio listens to your radio show and he went ahead and bought several after he heard the discussion on the show.

A. Lynn's Legacy cenizo a compact plant that slowly grows to 5 or 6 feet. The foliage is silver, but the most distinctive characteristic is that the flowers are more blue than other selections. In general, we select cenizo because the foliage is distinctive, they are very drought tolerant, and bloom just prior to rainfall events. Cenizo are also deer proof and can be pruned to a hedge but still bloom. Grow them in full sun.

Q. What is your recommendation on dealing with cicada killers? We have several with holes in our yard. They look fierce and seem to hassle the dog but so far, they haven't stung him or any of us.

A. Your description of the cicada killer's behavior is consistent with my experiences. You did not mention that they feed on cicadas so qualify as a beneficial insect. It is best for all concerned (except the cicadas) if you share your landscape with them.

Q. The corner of my lawn near the intersection of the sidewalk and driveway has turned brown. How do I tell if it is from chinch bugs and how should I treat it?

A. The browning could be caused by chinch bugs, but it also could just be dried out. Generously hand water the patch every other day for six days. If the cause of the browning is just drying out of a hot area in the lawn, it should green back up. If it does not green up, you will also probably be able to see small bugs with clear wings at the base of the grass blades. If so, apply a soil insecticide as per the label instructions. The same insecticides work for grubs too.

Q. Now that the purple martins have left can we lower our martin houses and block the entry holes to prevent more English sparrow nesting?

A. Yes, if you have not seen any martin residents or visitors for the last two weeks it is time to lower the houses and clean out the apartments.

Q. We are now in drought restrictions. What is the best way to get enough water to our peach trees to ensure that the buds develop for next spring? We normally would use our drip irrigation twice per week but now are limited to once per week.

A. Increase the amount of water you provide on your designated irrigation day and provide a transition on the second day by hand watering once a week for a few weeks until we get by this record hot weather. Good luck!