**Q’s & A’s**

**By Calvin R. Finch, Ph.D., Horticulturist and Director**

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

Q: What is causing my rose blooms to be deformed and brown around the petal edges?

A: The usual cause is thrips. They are small rasping insects. Control them with acephate (Orthene) or spinosad (Conserve).

Q: Can we go ahead and plant Bermuda grass seed now? Is it worth it to spend three times as much money for an improved selection such as Cheyenne?

A: Yes, the soil and air temperature are warm enough that Bermuda grass seed will germinate. Irrigate at least twice per day for the first week after which the grass should emerge.

I don’t think it is worth the money to pay for improved selections of Bermuda grass. They may start out with finer blades and a better color but within a few years it is hard to tell the difference between “common” seed and the high priced selections.

Q: Is it too late to fertilize the lawn for the summer? How about applying a herbicide to prevent sand burs?

A: The fertilizer should work as long as you can water the lawn. Use a slow release lawn fertilizer like 19-5-9.

If you apply Amaze, Crabgrass Preventer or XL now, it will prevent some of the sand burs but not all of them. Some are already growing.

Q: Is the white duranta just as vigorous as the purple? I like the white but my white spreading lantana is a disappointment compared to the lavender. I have heard all white selections are less vigorous.

A: I grow both versions (white and purple) and think the white is slightly less vigorous than the purple.

Q: How long do the purple martins stay around? It seemed like last year they left in June?

A: Purple martins have a short breeding period. They do finish breeding in June. After breeding they “form up” in assembly areas and seem to be heading south in July.

Q: Can we prune live oak now?

A: Yes if you can paint the wounds right after cutting.

For questions about horticulture, water conservation and the environment, email Calvin Finch at [Calvin.finch@tamu.edu](mailto:Calvin.finch@tamu.edu).