**Q’s & A’s**

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Q: Why aren’t my bougainvilleas blooming? We water them every other day and use a soluble fertilizer. They are in full sun.

A: The fertilizer and full sun are good. Cut back on watering. Bouganvillea bloom best when the soil dries out between irrigations (or rain).

Q: Which zoysia grass is the best? I like zoysia because it makes a tight sod and is capable of going dormant in a drought. A neighbor had it in our old neighborhood and it never showed chlorosis, disease or insect damage.

A: Zoysia is my favorite grass as well. I think Emerald, the fine bladed selection, is the prettiest but it is the hardest to mow. If I selected a zoysia for a new lawn now, I would select from El Toro or Jamur. They are wider bladed and easier to mow. Select the one that is least expensive from a dealer you like.

Q: What can I do to protect my tomatoes from the birds? They all have peck marks before they get full ripe.

A: Harvest them early. They will ripen in the house if they are picked when they change from dark green to light green or light orange.

Q: Fire ant hills are appearing everywhere. I am frightened for my puppy. He is lovable but not too aware yet. He may get covered by ants before he moves away.

A: Apply a fire ant control with acephate or spinosad on the hills close to where the puppy plays. The product will kill the hills within a few hours.

Spread a bait like Amdro to the rest of the yard. The foraging fire ants will carry it back to the hills and eventually kill all of them in the yard.

Q: How long will petunias last? They still look great.

A: Petunias have prospered in our cool spring. Some of the hardiest (VIP, Laura Bush, Wave) will hang on through the summer. Most however will decline in June.

Q: Are we going to be overwhelmed by acorns again this year? Is there anything we can do to reduce the crop?

A: I don’t know of anything to do to affect the acorn crop. The good news for you (bad news for squirrels and deer) is that the crop will be less this year because it was so large last year.

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