

PRESS RELEASE
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SOUTH TEXAS BOTANICAL GARDENS & NATURE CENTER

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Botanical Gardens says no BIG BLOOM this year!

The South Texas Botanical Gardens & Nature Center has announced its popular BIG BLOOM Plant Sale won't happen this year, due to drought-caused water shortages and resulting watering restrictions. BIG BLOOM usually is held the first Saturday in April drawing 4000-5000 people.

"We can't in good conscience ask people to purchase plants at a fundraiser, wondering if they can water them enough to get established, when the entire community is in water-saving mode," explained Marketing Director MaryJane Crull.

Crull says the staff normally would be well into event planning by now, but attendance could drop, sponsors may be reluctant, and public perception is important. "We conserve our natural resources. Ignoring our critical water situation is not the image we want to project," she emphasized.

"As a botanical garden, we try to be the example of good environmental stewardship, especially with low water supplies," added Executive Director Michael Womack. We don't want our residents to feel they have to buy plants to support us this year," he concluded.

'Birdiest Festival in America' COMMUNITY DAY includes BIG BLOOM fun!

There is good news! BIG BLOOM's popular butterfly and ladybug releases will join *Birdiest Festival in America's \$2 Community Day, Saturday, April 26*, which also includes Jonathan Wood's Raptor Project, Birding Industry Vendor Tent, artisan booths, food trucks and meeting birders from all over the country, says Womack.

He hopes at that event, along with artisan vendors, the Gardens also might sell some orchids and water-wise natives for pollinators, so plant lovers can make wise environmental choices.

The eighth **Birdiest Festival in America** is **April 23-27**, plus two pre-trips and one post-trip. Birders flock to Corpus Christi from all over the U.S., Canada and beyond to experience spring migration on the Gulf Coast with unique field trips, presentations, workshops, keynote speaker, this year new "Birds & Beers," and "Authors Wine & Cheese Night." Find all Festival information, at www.birdiestfestival.org. Artisan vendors should apply to denise@aquariaservicesinc.com.

NOTE: Water restriction logic assumes if we can fill our pools, it's okay to fill our bird baths, too!

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