

## Garden Tour 2015

Mark your calendars! The Tuolumne County Master Gardener 20<sup>th</sup> annual Garden Tour will be held on **Sunday, May 31, 10:30am – 4:00pm**. This year the theme is **‘Changing Times, Changing Gardens’** and will feature six sites organized to demonstrate three different types of gardens. Proceeds from the tour provide master gardener scholarships for Columbia College students, purchase gardening reference books for the Tuolumne County Library and the master gardener library, and provide operating funds for the demonstration garden.



Tickets, \$10.00 per person, are available at the following locations: Columbia Nursery on Parrotts Ferry Road, Columbia; Sonora Lumber, South Washington Street, Sonora; Nature’s Whole Food Depot in Standard; The Nest in Twain Harte; Antiques, Etc. on Washington Street in downtown Sonora; and the University of California Cooperative Extension Office at 52 North Washington Street, Sonora. Tickets can also be purchased on-line at <http://ucanr.edu/tuolumnegardentourtickets2015>.

The three types of gardens featured on the tour are: home gardens, school gardens and public education sites. Two examples of each theme will be presented on the tour. Site locations range from the Phoenix Lake Road area in East Sonora to Rawhide Road in the Jamestown area. In subsequent articles we will describe school gardens and public education sites. Today, we’ll give you a brief taste of what to expect from the home gardens on the tour.



The Phoenix Lake area home is located on a cul-de-sac with a seasonal creek on two sides, creating a very private, peaceful setting. The property is surrounded by native oaks, pines, and cedars. About two acres are deer fenced. Organic gardening practices utilized for the past 15 years have created an environment where beneficial bugs, frogs, lizards, butterflies and birds abound.

Meandering pathways wander throughout the drought-tolerant landscaping. Complete drip systems have been installed to include deck plants and birdbaths. Be sure to check out the ingenious rainwater catchment system with multiple levels to catch overflows.

This garden has been featured twice by the Sierra Foothills chapter of the California Native Plant Society and has appeared on the Master Gardener Garden Tour in 2005 and 2010. If you visited this garden in the past, be sure to look for the many changes that have occurred over time.

The Columbia area home garden is a delightful private garden designed and created to be a lovely place for pleasure and entertaining. The home owners make the space available for



community organizations to enjoy and use as a place for fund-raising parties and events. The yard and gardens are constantly being revised to be both beautiful and water-wise.



The owners have added Synlawn this month (old terminology = AstroTurf) on half the front yard, which nicely demonstrates the tour's theme, "Changing Times, Changing Gardens." They now have a green front lawn and have removed all irrigation sprinklers! The landscaping is separated into specific "islands." The islands are mulched, which also supports the theme of this year's tour. A map will be available for guests, created by the home owners, showing which plants are in each island.

The bocce ball court and surrounding areas are extraordinary in layout and beauty. Be sure to look at the birch tree copse, the vegetable planting beds, the turf replacement area in the front of the home (mentioned above), and the rosemary plantings by the driveway. They are some of the best varieties for bloom and beautiful color of the leaves.

Garden tour tickets contain a map with directions to each of the sites. There will be directional signs on streets and roads leading to the gardens. Master Gardeners will be on hand at all the gardens to answer any questions you may have about the display gardens, your own garden or gardening in general.

*The descriptive articles and photos describing the annual garden tour are produced by a collaborative effort between Master Gardener volunteers and home owners.*

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