



CELEBRATE GARDENING

by Susan Schieferle, UCCE Master Gardener

Cinco de Mayo, the celebration of the Mexican army over the French forces of Napoleon III is May 5th! On May 5, 2018, the UC Master Gardeners of Tulare/Kings counties are also having a celebration in the Master Gardeners Demonstration Garden in Visalia, CA. We are celebrating our second annual Spring into Gardening, Central Valley Style.

Unfortunately, we are not celebrating an abundant rainfall this past winter, but we can celebrate the fact that we have experts to show you how to have a beautiful, drought-tolerant garden, despite our low rainfall amounts.

Celebrate our biggest garden bed which displays a small scale front yard and back yard. This garden uses all Water-wise California Native Plants. Come sit in our "mini" backyard at a bistro table and envision you and your family relaxing! No lawn mowing or heavy watering here!

Celebrate our Alternate Lawn Substitute Beds which have 7 recommended drought tolerant groundcovers. Choose your favorite, and we can show you how easy it is to replace your lawn with very little hard labor. No sod cutter or digging out of turf required! We have some groundcovers that will tolerate light foot traffic and others that are just pretty and hardy.

- Dwarf myrtle "Prostratum" (*Myoporum pavifolium*) is a tough, fast-growing evergreen groundcover. Leaves are shiny dark green, and the flowers are tiny and white. Myoporum does best with full sun most and little water.
- Frogfruit or Lippia, (*Phyla nodiflora*), is a flowering, broadleaf ornamental groundcover. It has thick-like turf, and is fast growing, sun-loving and walkable.
- Buffalo Grass (*Bouteloua dactyloides*) is a warm-season, drought resistant grass. It goes dormant in winter like Bermuda grass. It can be mowed and will tolerate some foot traffic.
- Mother-of-Thyme or creeping thyme, (*Thymus serpyllum*) is a low growing groundcover. Its flowers and stems stand a bit taller, but will take a light mowing to improve appearance. It also will tolerate some foot traffic.
- Common Yarrow (*Achillea milleforlium*) is a mat-forming, aggressive perennial groundcover. It has ferny, finely-textured green foliage with yellow flowers. A dwarf version is available.



- Blue fescue (*Fescue glauca*) is a clumping icy-blue ornamental grass. It is perfect for edging borders or mass planting as a groundcover, and it is drought tolerant when established.
- Valley violet, (*Ceanothus maritimus*), is a low, creeping groundcover. It tolerates both sun and shade, and is drought tolerant. It produces gorgeous deep purple flowers.

Celebrate with our other garden beds including our Square Foot Garden where you can learn how to plant a vegetable garden to feed your family in a very small space while saving on seeds, water, and your valuable time!

Celebrate our Salad Garden which contains everything you need to make a crisp, juicy salad every night! Lettuces, tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, or whatever your palate desires! Plant a seed here to take home!

Celebrate our Herb Garden with our expert herb Master Gardeners, one of whom is a published author. See how easily you can grow herbs and make a "sniffie" to take home!

Celebrate in our Themed Garden which has the "backbone" drought tolerant plants that you NEED in your yard. Adding your own touches of preferred annuals and perennials will enhance your seasonal garden.

Celebrate our Pollinator Garden consisting of flowering perennials and native plants to attract both beneficial and non-beneficial insects (pollinators). See a replica of an ancient Indian birdhouse!

Celebrate our Succulent Garden with over 20 succulents on display. Propagate your own succulent to take home!!

We sincerely thank our partnership with Visalia Unified School District and our many sponsors to make this garden possible!

Cal Water and NRCS (Natural Resource Conservation Service) will be there also! NRCS is a part of USDA. These are the soil folks who do public outreach to educate about soil health. Come find out how to make your soil healthier! Bring your children to our worm and snail table. Lots of hand-on activities for the entire family! Bring your plant questions!



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