



Clippings Newsletter

information to grow by...



May/June 2010

Workshops at the Great Park

10:00 am -12:00 pm on Saturdays at the Farm & Food Lab
Free Parking & Admission

The University of California Cooperative Extension Master Gardeners (UCCEMG) Speakers Bureau is presenting a series of gardening education workshops on sustainable home gardening practices at the Great Park in Irvine. This information and future workshops will be posted on the UCCE MG website (www.uccemg.com) as well as the Great Park website (<http://www.ocgp.org/2010/02/spring-garden-workshops/>)

Workshop Schedule

Although you missed the first two workshops on growing warm season vegetables held on March 13th and the 'how to' of planting and growing tomatoes on April 10th, there are still 3 more workshops in the spring series:

Tool Time

Saturday, May 1, 10:00 a.m.–12:00 Noon
Okay, okay – there are some trusty standby tools that you need in your garden. And then, there are the cool tools – the ones that take your breath away, that you don't want to live without, that you see in your dreams. The Master Gardeners will discuss and demonstrate tools for home gardens. Be there!

Smart Gardening

Saturday, May 15, 10:00 a.m.–12:00 Noon
What does it take to be a Smart Gardener? Knowledge – and application of that knowledge – about irrigation, soil care, pest control, energy, and wildlife. Sound complicated? The Master Gardeners will simplify it as they provide tips for you to save time, money, and create a healthier garden. If you want to be a Smart Gardener, attend this workshop.

The Backyard Orchard

(This workshop has been postponed and a new date will be determined. Watch the website for the date).

Not enough room in your backyard for an orchard? With a little planning and know-how, it could happen. Learn about the varieties of fruit trees suitable for backyard growing and how to plant and care for them. The Master Gardeners will provide tips for fruit trees in small gardens. Valuable information...ripe for picking!



Be A Water Miser

by Karen Ward, MG

Did you know 20% of all electrical energy in California is used to move water? If asked, you would find out that most people do not realize this. We all need to use less water and prevent runoff to decrease pollution within the local water-sheds, avoid the use of invasive plants, decrease green waste, decrease energy consumption, and air pollution.

The City of Newport Beach recently hosted the second annual Water Miser Workshop. Attendees had the opportunity to visit with various vendors promoting different techniques to minimize urban landscape runoff and water pollution. The speakers for the evening were Ron Vanderhoff of Rogers Gardens and Wendy Proud on behalf of Mountain States Wholesale Nursery.

During his presentation, Ron discussed twenty-one steps to use less water in the landscape and how to garden "greener". So what can we do to garden "green"?

1. Plant the right plants: Mediterranean plants, California natives, succulents, water-wise plants, and California friendly plants as suggested by the Metropolitan Water District "bewaterwise" website
2. Plant a lawn only where needed for pets and children.
3. Use turf alternatives such as *Carex pansa* and *buffalo grass*.
4. Use fertilizer intelligently – apply the appropriate amount and keep fertilizer on the landscape, not the pavement.
5. Create hydrozones– group plant material with other vegetation with like water needs.
6. Avoid open soil on slopes and above paving.
7. Fix sprinkler leaks and breaks.
8. Fix clogged, broken, or misdirected sprinkler heads.

9. Adjust sprinklers or designs – remember curves are hard to irrigate.
10. Use drip or trickle irrigation where appropriate.
11. Use small space irrigation – for micro-irrigation, you need to decrease water pressure to 20-30 PSI.
12. Switch conventional sprinkler heads to efficient water conserving rotator heads which delivers water at a slower rate and creates very little mist.
13. Switch to SMART irrigation "timers" which adjusts watering to the weather and saves 25-30% of water, producing healthier gardens.
14. Use permeable surfaces.
15. Drain water to the garden, not to the gutter.
16. Consider water harvesting rain-barrels.
17. Do not wash down the driveway, sidewalk, etc.
18. Do not create excessive green waste.
19. Compost!
20. Use mulch.
21. Use organic products.

Wendy Proud's presentation addressed the many benefits of the Arizona desert-adapted plants for Southern California, noting that minimal water use plants come in all shapes, sizes and textures.

As many species are becoming available, her recommendations included:

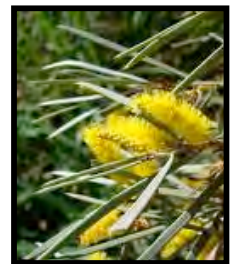
Trees -

Acacia aneura - evergreen, approximate height of 15 feet, minimal leaf litter, non-invasive roots.

Caesalpinia mexicana - winter flowering, approximate canopy of 15' x 15'.



Acacia aneura



Shrubs -

Eremophila hygrophana - 3' by 3' growth habit, grey foliage with bluish flowers most of the year, slow grower. Does very well in the coastal valleys.

Eremophila maculata - approximately 3' x 3' growth habit, green foliage with red flowers, requires full sun. Does well in pots.



Eremophila maculata

Salvia x 'Trident' (hybrid of three salvias: *S. mojavensis*, *S. clevelandii*, and *S. dorrii*) - 3' x 3' growth habit with violet blue flowers.



Salvia X Trident

Accent Plants -

Yucca pallida - low growing, 2' x 2' growth habit with a 4' flower stock, requires little supplemental water once established.

Belandiera lyrata (Chocolate Flower) - 1 1/2' x 1 1/2' growth habit.

Bulbine frutescens 'Tiny Tangerine' - 1' x 1' growth habit, good for narrow areas or hanging baskets, long bloom season of Orange and yellow flowers on slender 9" stalks.

Have You Heard?

(Excerpt from the UCCE MG Spring 2010 Brochure)

A new exotic pest appears in California every 60 days. Such a species may not be a problem in its native habitat because other organisms have evolved to feed on them, keeping their populations under natural control. Most pests usually arrive without their natural enemies at which point they can rapidly become a problem, until researchers and regulatory agencies learn how to control them.

The Master Gardener hotline has been contacted about another recently arrived exotic species, the Bagrada Bug.



You may think you have beneficial lady bugs because to the untrained eye, Bagrada adults and larger nymphs may look like lady bugs in size and bright coloration. But if you see hundreds of these bugs on your crops, large stippled or wilted areas on leaves, and stunted new growth, suspect the Bagrada bug. The Bagrada bug is a major pest of crops such as cabbage, kale, turnip, cauliflower, mustard, broccoli, and radish, but has also been recorded attacking papaya, arugula, potato, maize, sorghum, cotton, capers, and some legumes.

If you find an unusual pest in your garden, you can contact the Master Gardener hotline @ (714) 708-1646 for information on how to identify it and what controls may exist.

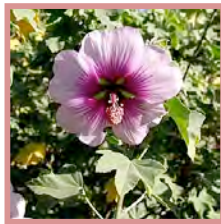
Got Color?

By Helen Magruder, MG

Want color? Drought tolerant? Low maintenance?
You can have it all!!!

It's the end of March. The beginning of spring - the sky is a bright, clear blue, the air is warm and dry, and there is a rainbow in my garden.

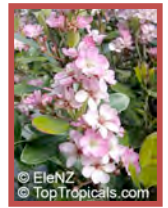
An Australian tea tree (*Leptospermum*) is in full bloom with tiny, bright deep fuchsia, multi-layered fluffy blossoms covering the 12 ft. tall shrub. It's unrestrained branches blend into a tree mallow (*Lavatera maritime*) displaying 2-3 inch flowers with deep purple centers, (reflecting the fuchsia blossoms of the tea tree), and almost yellow stamen surrounded by pale pinkish blue petals flaring outward to light nearly white edges. The rainbow blends into the next shrub of tiny bright white rosettes covering the branches of a second *Leptospermum*. At the center of the white rosettes is a dark, dark purple berry which will remain against the green almost needle like leaves after blossoms fall away.



Peripheral vision expands the rainbow to the newly leafed out very dark purple foliage of the non-fruit bearing deciduous *Prunus*. The blue-grey variegated *Pittosporum* hedge in the background, and yellow leaf *Euonymus* beyond, add to the rainbow through very contrasting shades of foliage color. *Euryops* nearby with bright yellow daisy-like flowers compete with the masses of pink flowers of the prominent indian hawthorn (*Raphiolepis*),



which are already starting to morph to the bronze leaf stage. As warmer days follow, the mass of pink will soon be replaced by a sea of blue agapanthus.



Looking on, other color catches the eye as the huge, orange clusters of blooms of the potted *Clivia* have suddenly erupted, not too harsh in the dark shade. White *Calla lilies* nearby are a sharp contrast. They seem to grow anywhere - sun or shade, and need less water than people think. Performing double duty, the clumps of callas are capturing the landscape drainage near a small bed of grass.



In the front yard, facing the mid-day and afternoon sun, shiny dark green leaves of trailing California lilac (*Ceanothus*) are already making room for stems of bright blue flowers. (Once established, these require very little water at all.) Nearby, various shades of camellias, which seem to grow anywhere here near the coast, have been blossoming since Christmas.



Now, the confession...there is a small, narrow confined bed between the driveway and front entry stairway where multi-colored dwarf snapdragon annuals have been planted to show-off for guests as they arrive this spring. It's OK. When they are finished, hidden between the colorful annuals are severely cut-back native salvia quietly emerging with fresh growth and will happily provide bright flowers all summer and fall with very little or no water.

Many flowering perennial shrubs such as those mentioned, require very little maintenance, water, work, food or pesticide. Plant material that has a low impact on the environment and those plants, which are drought tolerant, do not have to be drab! The high impact color is out there waiting to fill your rainbow.

Suggested Weekly Watering Schedule

for SPRAY HEAD IRRIGATION SYSTEMS

April

Turf grass:

3 days, 2 cycles* of 4 minutes each

Trees, shrubs, groundcover:

2 days, 2 cycles* of 4 minutes

May

Turf grass:

3 days, 3 cycles* of 3 minutes each

Trees, shrubs, groundcover:

2 days, 3 cycles* of 3 minutes

*By “cycling” your irrigation timer to turn on for the suggested number of minutes an hour apart, you reduce runoff and gain deeper watering and healthier root growth. Start with this weekly schedule and increase the times only if your plants show signs of stress. If stress occurs only in isolated areas, check your irrigation system before increasing the time.

Irvine Ranch Water District website:

www.irwd.com

Other resource: www.bewaterwise.com

Don't forget....

Remember to check with your Home Owners Association (HOA) and Architectural Committee to inform them and gain approval if you want to make major landscape or hardscape changes to areas that are on view to the community.

Water Saving Tips or Garden Questions?

For free information about gardening, watering or garden pests, call the experts at UCCE Master Gardener Hotline (714) 708-1646 or e-mail: hotline@uccemg.com or visit our website @ www.uccemg.com

Website for Future Water-wise Events and Past Clippings Newsletters

Please visit our **OC Master Gardener Water Quality Outreach** website for future water-wise events and past newsletters:

<http://groups.ucanr.org/garden4h2o/>

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