



UCCE Master Gardener's of Glenn County Newsgram

March 2021

Starting from scratch with raised bed gardens.

By Sheila Skemp, Master Gardener

As a first-time homeowner I am super excited to finally be able to have a garden. I have done some container gardening and I have gardened with others, but this is my first real chance to garden on my terms. I am older and the idea of crawling around on the ground and bending over is just not appealing to me. In my opinion, the best solution then is to build raised beds. This is where I stop and tell you that I am extremely fortunate to have a significant other that is extremely supportive of my hobbies and interests and that he is not only supportive with his time but also his money. As you will see in my pictures, he bought for me new pressure treated lumber, this is not a necessity in the least. You can build raised beds out of just about anything that is structurally sound enough to hold the dirt. The articles included here contain many ideas for building materials. They also address concerns over pressure treated wood and old railroad ties, both of which of been deemed safe for gardening.

What we did: Our boxes are 4' wide, 8' long and 3' feet high. Those dimensions allow me to stand while gardening, and from any reach any place in the garden. As you can see, we chose to put our in a "u" shape, this is because I would like an arbor over the middle for growing beans and peas. The arbor is still a work in progress. After building the boxes, we lined the bottom with cardboard as a weed barrier and to keep the grass from coming up. Next, we put tree trimmings that we had, limbs and basically anything large we had lying around. This was topped with some leftover wood chips that we had previously used as mulch. The wood chips fall through and fill in many of the open spaces created by the limbs. The wood chips were covered with dirt, plain dirt that we had left over from getting the driveway paved. Any dirt will work here, the goal is to bring the level of fill up to within 12-18" of the top of the garden boxes. Finally, we topped each box with garden soil, that we purchased locally. Each box has about 2 yards of garden soil.

For more information about garden beds see the following websites.

http://sonomamg.ucanr.edu/Vegetable_Garden_Methods/Constructing_a_Raised_Bed/

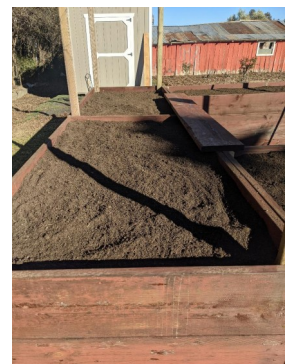
<https://mastergardenerssandiego.org/schools/plant-a-seed/deciding-what-to-plant/raised-beds/>

More information about using treated wood in garden beds can be found at this link,

<http://npic.orst.edu/factsheets/treatedwood.html>



Picture of raised beds taken by Sheila Skemp. More pictures of the raised beds can be found in Glenn County VMS under photos tab.





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What Is A Harmony Garden?

When two or more different entities in a garden (plants, insects, pollinators) come together to form a pleasing, healthy and consistent whole.

By Donna Moore, Master Gardener

Whether you have a lot of land, a small yard or no land at all. Whether you live in the city, the suburbs or the country. The principles of establishing a pleasing and consistent whole landscape, aka, a Harmony Garden, are the same. By planting nectar and insect attracting plants, and adopting gardening practices that encourage pollinators and beneficial insects, you are well on your way to establishing an ecosystem in harmony.

Start by making a plan. A plan can be as simple as deciding to grow a few herbs in containers to use for home cooking; or as elaborate as removing the lawn in the front of your house and replacing it with plants capable of supporting insects of all sorts. In an existing vegetable garden you may want to include beneficial insect-attracting flowers to promote a balanced landscape. Adding nectar plants to an existing perennial border is also a good way to start. They are very attractive plants, and by using them as part of a foundation planting adds color, texture, and complexity to what is often an uninteresting part of a landscape. Covering just 1 percent of your property with insect attracting plants is a good initial target. Here is an example of a small space in my yard used to plant a Harmony Garden.



Small Space Nectar/Insect Garden

Achillea 'Little Moonshie' (Yarrow),
Salvia microphylla (Berkeley Barb **Salvia**)
Gaura (Rosy Jane **Gaura**),
Penstemon (Glitterbelle **Penstemon**) and
Salvia (Lyrical Blues **Salvia**)
Picture taken by Donna Moore



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Master Gardener Business

Monthly Meeting

Our next meeting will be on March 3 at 1:00. We will be meeting in the demonstration garden. Bring a chair.

UCCE Office Status

The office is a Glenn County Office and it is open to the public. UC is still in a work at home status. The plant clinic can't be conducted in person, it will continue to be done remotely.

Volunteer and CE Hours

The direction on hours was sent to all volunteers. There is some additional information about COVID exception hours. The hours of work done under "COVID exception hours" are not official Master Gardener program projects. It is highly unlikely that the program's insurance policy will cover claims related to activities listed under COVID exception hours.

Continuing Education

Colusa County Master Gardeners are having a Drip Irrigation Workshop on Friday March 5, 9AM, 499 Margurite Ave in Williams. It is a free in person event.

Butte County Master Gardeners are having a workshop on Companion Planting. Companion Planting is described in the Harmony Garden article written by Donna Moore in this Newgram issue. The workshop is on March 10, 10-11 AM using ZOOM. See their website to register.

Humboldt -Del Norte Master Gardeners are having a workshop on Poisonous Plants and Pets. The workshop is on Saturday March 6, 10-1130 AM. Its is a virtual workshop using Zoom. See their website to register.

Youtube is great source of videos and recorded webinars for CE Hours. UC Master Gardeners, UCIPM, Xerces Society and CA Native Plant Society all have their own channels where you can view videos.