



UCCE Master Gardener's of Glenn County Newsgram

May 2021

Spring Cleaning, for houseplants! Part 2

By Sheila Skemp UCCE Glenn County Master Gardener

Last time I told you the benefits a spring cleaning your houseplants to get the dust and pests off, this time let's look at the soil. Another benefit to spring cleaning your house plants is "cleaning" the soil of an excess build up of soluble salts. Houseplants are particularly susceptible to salt build up.



Photo by Sheila Skemp of houseplants

You should be watering your plants from the top only and being sure to remove any water the collects in the catch tray so that the plant does not just draw it up later. Even so, your houseplants will benefit from a good soil rinse. Once a month, I take my plants to the bathtub or the kitchen sink for a shower. If this is too much for you, try to do it at least once every four to six months.

Make sure your pots have adequate drainage, to do this I prop mine up on a rock or marble so that I can be sure the flow is not slowed. Next run water through the pot, at least twice the volume of the pot and let it drain. I usually, dedicate several hours to this. I run the water through, let it drain and come back in an hour or two and do it again. When the weather is nice, I take them outside and do this on the sidewalk.

You maybe surprised how well your houseplants respond. Read the attached article for more information on how to spring clean your house plants.

http://cagardenweb.ucanr.edu/Houseplants/Soluble_Salts/#:~:text=Soluble%20salts%20may%20accumulate%20on,the%20outside%20of%20clay%20pots.

<https://extension.umd.edu/hgic/topics/watering-and-soluble-salts-indoor-plants#:~:text=Soluble%20Salts%20Buildup,dead%20root%20tips%2C%20and%20wilting.>



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The New Normal

When you listen to weather reports current conditions are often compared to normal. For example, the rainfall in Willows, CA this year is 41% of normal. What is normal? NOAA defines climate normal as three-decade averages. The current 30 year climate normal uses the period 1981 to 2010. Climatologists from NOAA and NCEI are currently reviewing and compiling 30 years of weather data to prepare an updated climate normal for the next 10 years. The new normal will be based on data from 1991 to 2020. The data will be released on May 4, 2021. The new data will likely result in there being fewer above normal temperature days.

These 30 year averages are not used for climate change studies, these studies use more-lengthy time periods such as 1901-2000.

More information can be found at this link <https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/news/Upcoming-NOAA-2020-Climate-Normals>

Calendar Year 2020 Master Gardener Accomplishments

For most of 2020 the in office plant clinics were cancelled but Master Gardener's did not stop working. The UCCE was open and was taking phone calls from people asking for help with garden and landscape problems. The office staff took the information and emailed the Master Gardeners to solve the problems.

Master Gardeners helped 17 people during 2020. Most of the questions and problems were about landscape trees. Problems with Raywood ash, palms, ornamental plums, Bradford pears and Japanese maples were taken on by the Master Gardeners. Fruit tree questions were second in questions asked of Master Gardeners. Master Gardeners provided information to clients about peach leaf curl, fire blight, borers and pruning. Other clients asked for help with weed identification, how to control bamboo sprouts, brown spots of dead grass in lawns and problems with tomato plants.

Master Gardeners attended one outdoor community market and craft fair where they made contact with about 25 people. The Master Gardeners gave out information about garden pests and explained who they were and the services they have for the community.

Before the shut down in March, Master Gardeners were able to get one work day completed in the demonstration garden. The area mulched was expanded to help with weed control. In 2019 nectar and milkweed plants were planted in the demonstration garden to create habitat for pollinators including monarch butterflies. These plants were watered and pruned and monitored in 2020 and became well established.



Photos from the march 2020 work day.





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Master Gardener Business

Monthly Meeting

Our next meeting will be on May 5 at 1:00. We will be meeting in the demonstration garden. Bring a chair.

Plant Clinic

The in office plant clinics can start again. There are a few changes. There is a capacity limit of no more 10 people for indoor activities and no more than 6 in the conference room. Masks and social distancing will be required. When people from outside the office come in we will meet with them in the conference room and not in the office. The sign-up schedule for the plant clinics will be at the next meeting.

Continuing Education and Volunteer Hours

There are two months left to get your volunteer and CE hours and input the information into VMS. A reminder that a copy of the current direction on volunteer and CE hours is posted in VMS under the News/ Docs tab on the home page. Master Gardeners need to have 12 hours of CE and 25 volunteer hours. This year you can use up to 25 hours of Continuing Education as volunteer hours using the COVID exception hours category.

Check the Statewide UC Master Gardeners webpage under the events tab is a list of upcoming workshops. New events are added frequently. <http://mg.ucanr.edu/Events/>

Oregon State has several on-line free workshops to view. <https://extension.oregonstate.edu/topic/gardening/vegetables/events?page=0>



Master Gardeners have been out about town in the last month. At Ace Hardware in Orland, the Rusty Wagon Garden Event at the Boysenberry Farm and at the Friendly Garden Club Plant Sale.