

The Bones of a Garden: Evergreens
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Conifers, like pine trees and cedars, are not the only kind of evergreen plants. Evergreens are considered as any plant that does not go dormant and that keeps its leaves year-round.

Evergreens take a leading role in a garden plan. Interspersed with deciduous trees and shrubs, evergreens bring “pop” to a garden in several ways: variegated foliage, height, architectural structure, bright flowers, and more.

Examples of plants with architectural structure are Italian Cypress, *Cupressus sempervirens*, which have a columnar structure but can also be trained into an arch. Japanese Boxwood, such as *Buxus microphylla japonica*, ‘Winter Gem’, can be trained into a topiary adding interesting shapes and even whimsy.

Some evergreens provide year-round interest such as the Strawberry tree, *Arbutus marina*. It has a smooth red bark, blossoms of pink bells that look like dainty rain chains that then form into red fruit, hence the name Strawberry Tree. The Weeping Blue Atlas Cedar, *Cedrus atlantica*, ‘Glauca Pendula’, twists into a gentle corkscrew as it grows. It is quite dramatic in its own controlled and structured way.

Evergreen shrubs are also useful in your design. Variegated shrubs are beautiful year-round. Variegated rockrose, *Cistus x hybridus*, ‘Mickie’, has bright yellow leaves with lime green centers all year round and large white flowers in summer. Holly leaf Osmanthus, *Osmanthus heterophyllus*, ‘Variegatus’, is so well behaved. It leads a quiet and orderly life while displaying its variegated leaves of white with green centers. It does like a bit a shade in the afternoon, but other than that, it does not ask for much.

Ornamental grasses that stay green and keep their pom-pom shape year-round can add structural shape to a garden too. A fun one is Lomandra, *Lomandra longifolia*, ‘Breeze’. One might even think of some succulents as evergreens. They have some very interesting shapes and textures that can bring an eye-catching element to any garden. Examples are Datil Yucca, *Yucca baccata*, ‘Datil’, or the variegated Yucca, *Yucca filamentosa*, ‘Golden Sword’.

As luck would have it, every one of these examples of evergreen trees, shrubs, and ornamental grasses can be seen in the Sherwood Demonstration Garden, at 6699 Campus Drive in Placerville, located behind the Folsom Lake College – El Dorado Center. The 16 themed gardens have many other examples of evergreens along with other trees, shrubs, flowers, ornamental grasses, and succulents you may want to include in your own garden design. We are just transitioning from our winter hours to our warm weather hours. The garden is now open Friday and Saturday, from 9 a.m. to noon.

Master Gardener classes are offered monthly throughout the county. You can find our class schedule at: http://mgeldorado.ucanr.edu/Public_Education_Classes/?calendar=yes&g=56698, and recorded classes on many gardening topics here: http://mgeldorado.ucanr.edu/Public_Education/Classes/.

The Sherwood Demonstration Garden is open weekly on Friday and Saturday from 9 a.m. -noon until March through October. We do close in case of rain, please check our website for details
https://ucanr.edu/sites/EDC_Master_Gardeners/Demonstration_Garden/

Mark your calendar for our annual plant sales in April! Edible plant sale; including fruit, veggies and herbs will be on Saturday, April 16, 2022 8:00AM · 2:00PM. Choose your favorite edibles and shop our incredible tomato selection grown cared for locally by Master Gardener volunteers! The ornamental plant sale will take place on Saturday, April 30, 2022 8:00AM · 2:00PM. We will have a huge selection of trees, shrubs, grasses, succulents, native and perennial plants. Location: Sherwood Demonstration Garden 6699 Campus Drive, Placerville. <http://ucanr.edu/edcsale>

Have a gardening question? Master Gardeners are working hard to answer your questions. Leave a message on our office telephone: 530-621-5512, or use the “Ask a Master Gardener” option on our website: mgeldorado.ucanr.edu. We’ll get back to you! Master Gardeners are also on Facebook, Instagram, and Pinterest.

For more information on the UCCE Master Gardeners of El Dorado County, see our website at <http://mgeldorado.ucanr.edu>. To sign up for notices and newsletters, see http://ucanr.edu/master_gardener_e-news.