



You Did It! All Of You!

You poured out your socks, your time, and your money for postage and fulfilled our need for socks for the rest of our fisher wildlife study. In less than a month you brought an end to us ever again having to wait in Wal-Mart's check out line with carts of socks! You have saved us money as well as time and we would like to thank you!!



Anne Lombardo, left, and Rick Sweitzer, right

You are part of a select group of people from all over California, 16 additional states and Canada who felt empathy for our work and efforts and we are touched. We received notes from many of you, and the stories swept from Earthday projects for school kids to donations of socks from loved ones passed on. The depth of the human cord that we pulled with a simple sock drive has left us in awe. So, we commend your efforts to recycle your socks to become part of something bigger!! We promise to put them good use.



Donated Socks

I have attached a brief look at your work in picture form. Please feel free to read more about our sock drive on our website at

<http://snamp.cnr.berkeley.edu/teams/fisher>.

Thank you once again,
Anne Lombardo

To read Anne Lombardo's blog titled "You socked it to us!" click on the link below:

<http://ucanr.org/blogs/Green/>

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Master Gardeners

Advice to grow by ...

Amador County

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Tuesday–Thursday

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El Dorado County

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Camino Composting Basics



Master Gardeners Cindy Young and Kathy Pearson will lead a free introduction to composting basics at the Apple Blossom Coffee House in Camino, on Saturday, February 11 at 12:30pm.

Cindy takes the used coffee grounds from the coffee house to help create the perfect environment for her worm composting. Learn to maximize the benefits of composting for your own vegetable and/or flower garden.

Special treat: Joan Delfino will share the experiences of her latest project - a greenhouse warmed in the winter by the natural energy of her large rabbits.

The Apple Blossom Coffee House is at the intersection of Carson Road and Snows Road in Camino.

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Fruit Tree Grafting

If your home orchard has all the fruit trees that space permits, but you would like some additional varieties, grafting a scion of the varieties you want may be the answer.

Join Master Gardener Dennis Miller for a Grafting Clinic on Saturday, February 11. The clinic starts at 9am at the GSA building at 12200-B Airport Road, in Jackson.

We will have a number of scions from many of the more popular apple, peach, and other fruit trees to share. Generally you can graft fruits with pits to other fruits with pits and fruits with seeds to other fruits with seeds.

Please feel free to bring your own scions to share with others. Wrap the scion cuttings in damp newspaper right after cutting them, place them in a plastic bag, label the bag with the variety name, and then store the bag in the refrigerator until you come to class.



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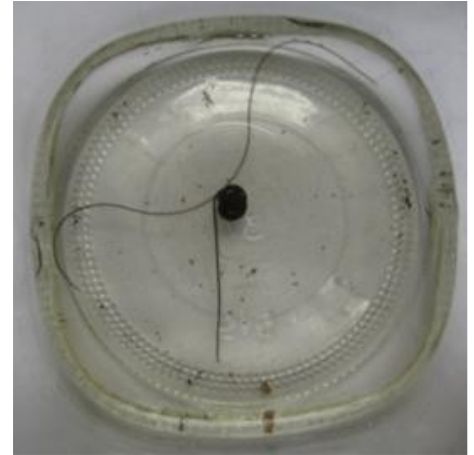
Horsehair Worms

Sue Mosbacher, UCCE Program Representative

Recently in Amador, a man brought in a glass jar with two long stringy wormlike creatures he'd found in a puddle in his horse pasture. He wanted to know what they were and if they were harmful to him or his horses.

They are horsehair worms, and they are not harmful to humans or livestock. But they are deadly to some unfortunate insects.

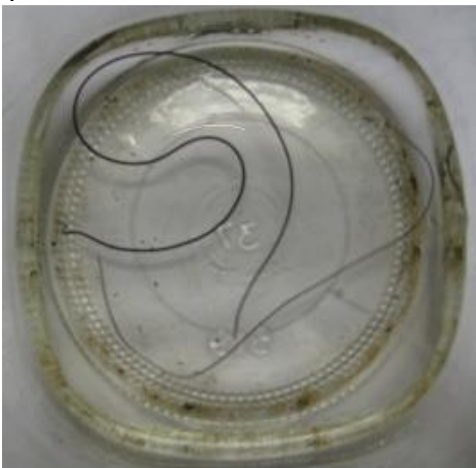
Horsehair worms occur in knotted masses or as single worms in water sources such as ponds, rain puddles, swimming pools, animal drinking troughs, and even domestic water supplies. Adult worms measure 1/25 inch in diameter and may reach 1 foot or more in length. They will often twist into a loose, ball-shaped knot.



Horsehair worm larvae are parasitic and must have a host in which to develop. Insects are their target hosts.

- Some larvae are ingested directly by the host, where they immediately move into their parasitic stage and develop within the host.
- Some larvae are ingested by larvae of water-inhabiting insects (mayflies, mosquitoes, chironomids) or tadpoles. When they enter these organisms, they encyst (enclose themselves in a cyst-like structure) in the host's body cavity and remain encysted as this initial host develops into an adult. If the parasitized adult is eaten by an insect such as a mantid, cricket, or carabid beetle, the worm emerges from the cyst and completes its development in the second host.
- When a water source dries up, some larvae encyst on leaves or other debris which are later eaten by a suitable host (such as a millipede).

That's when trouble begins for the host insect. The horsehair worm larva develops within the host and slowly eats it from the inside. About 3 months after the horsehair worm parasitizes a host, the host is impelled to seek out water. When the host enters the water, the mature worm emerges.



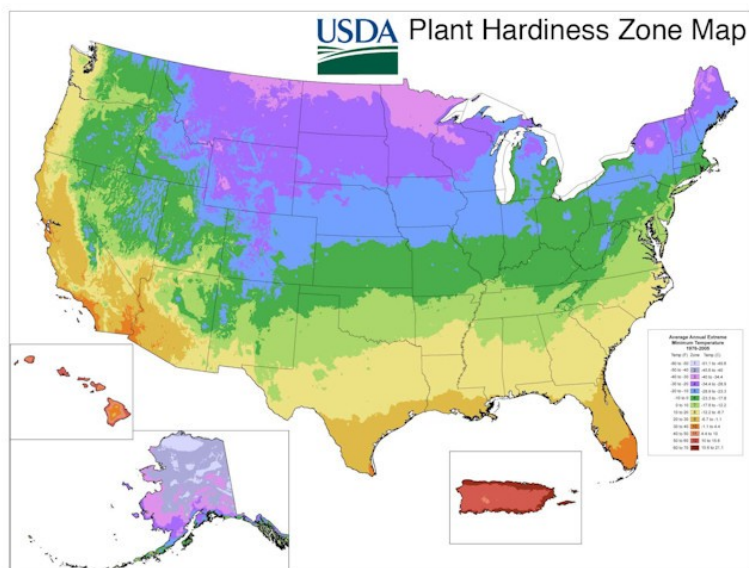
Adult worms are free-living in water and do not feed, but they can live many months. *(That's why after several weeks the two worms pictured here are still moving in the jar sitting on my desk. It's kind of creepy, but is a great conversation starter.)* They overwinter in water or mud, and the cycle repeats itself the following spring.

Horsehair worms only parasitize invertebrates such as insects. Horsehair worms are harmless to vertebrates because they cannot parasitize people, livestock, pets, and birds. They also do not infect plants. If humans ingest the worms, they may encounter some mild discomfort of the intestinal tract but infection never occurs.

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New Revised USDA Hardiness Zones

Glen Johnson, Amador County Master Gardener



The USDA has issued a revised plant hardiness zone map. It reflects a new reality: The coldest day of the year isn't as cold as it used to be, so some plants and trees can now survive farther north.

The new guide also uses better weather data and offers more interactive technology. For example, gardeners using the online version can enter their ZIP code and get the exact average coldest temperature.

Calculations also include more detailed factors such as prevailing winds, the presence of nearby bodies of water, the slope of the land, and the way cities are hotter than suburbs and rural areas.

Use the plant hardiness zone map, the Sunset Western Garden zones map and your experience with your area's micro climate zone when considering what to plant in your home garden.

Read more about the map here: http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/46131869/ns/technology_and_science-science/ and visit the plant hardiness zone website: <http://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov/PHZMWeb/>.

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February Is A Berry Good Month

Glen Johnson, Amador Master Gardener



If you are considering adding berries to your garden, February is the time to do it. You can obtain bare root stock from your local nursery or for special varieties check out the internet or mail order. For specifics on planting berries go to <http://ucanr.org/sites/gardenweb/Berries/>.

If you have blackberries and didn't get the old canes cut out last fall and the new canes put up on wires, you can still do it, but you need to finish it before March. You will likely find that the new canes that were touching the ground have sprouted roots. If you would like more plants, just pull or dig them up preserving as much root as possible and cut the rooting end from the cane with about 12" of cane and the roots. Plant them about 5' apart in mounded soil with the roots just covered with soil. Water occasionally if we have a long dry spell.

If you have all the berries you need, share the new plants with a neighbor or friend. Just put the plant in a 1 gallon pot with some moist potting soil and it will keep until ready to plant. If it will be just a few days before they are planted you can put several in a pot with moist potting soil. The main thing is to keep the roots moist but not wet. For raspberries, dig up the sprouts from the roots outside of the area you want to keep them growing in. Planting and keeping are about the same as for blackberries.

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February To-Do List



February seems to be the month for creating to-do lists. We asked a few of the Master Gardeners what is on their list for February.

Penny Smith, Amador County Master Gardener

I'm starting my peppers from seed now so that I can get them into the soil soon. I plan to get all my veggies that I grow from seed in the greenhouse as early in February as possible. Being in Plymouth I am able to do my starts early. I am hoping to grow early spring veggies for a local restaurant. My fava beans were slow to start this year; the gophers don't help!

Janice Johnson, Amador County Master Gardener

I don't start my tomatoes until mid-March to plant in mid-May or early June (like last year). I find that no more than 8 weeks in pots is the best for me. Keeping them in artificial conditions is hard and the quality of the seedlings starts declining if I have to mother them for very long. I do start peppers in mid to late February as they take longer to get going.

In February I'm not doing much gardening except looking at seed catalogs and thinking about spring. Although this year may be different as we seem to be having spring early.

Cathy Koos Breazeal, Amador County Master Gardener

I recently found a six-pack of broccoli and another of swiss chard hidden under a patio table. I completely forgot about putting them in last fall! So I popped them in one of my new raised beds and then made a small hoop house over them, covered with 6-mil plastic. We'll see if they make it.

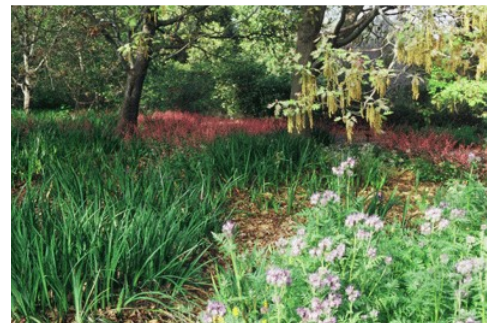
This coming weekend, I plan to get my tomatoes started, and possibly some cutting flowers.

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Planner's Guidelines For Oak Woodlands

The University of California Oak Woodland Group is hosting a series of webinar lectures based on the concepts in the ANR publication, "A Planner's Guide for Oak Woodlands" (UC ANR Publication 3491).

The goal will be to create an awareness of the ecological, economic and social values of California's oak woodlands, and some general planning strategies to ensure long-term conservation of this resource. The selected audience includes city, county, regional and statewide planners, environmental consultants, conservation organizations, land trusts, resource professionals, elected officials, and NGOs.



A four part series of 2-hour lectures will be offered on-line through a link to Adobe Connect. The series will be taped and a link to the taped webinar series will be provided for those unable to participate on the date and time of the live broadcasts. There will also be a weekend field trip to Hopland and/or Sierra Research

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Planner's Guidelines for Oak Woodlands, Continued from Page 5

and Extension Centers at the end of the series.

The cost of the webinar is a nominal fee (\$30) which includes a copy of the publication, "A Planner's Guide for Oak Woodlands". A social network site will be developed to enhance the sharing of information, and to provide follow-up networking opportunities. Following the completion of the series, surveys of participants will determine the program effectiveness, and planning activities implemented.

Topics and Schedule

March 8 - Session 1: Overview of the Hardwood Rangeland Resource

10:00 - 10:10 - Overview of series, goals of webinar
 10:10 - 10:30 - Planner's Role in Oak Woodland Conservation (Ch.1)
 10:30 - 10:50 - The Biology of Oak Resources (Ch. 2)
 10:50 - 11:15 - Oak Woodlands as Wildlife Habitat (Ch. 3)
 11:15 - 11:40 - Threats and Impacts to Oak Woodland Resources
 11:40 - 11:55 - Questions of panel
 11:55 - 12:00 - Plans for next week

March 15 - Session 2: Land Management Strategies

10:00 - 10:05 - Introduction to week 2
 10:05 - 10:35 - Working Landscapes - public and private lands
 10:35 - 11:00 - Watershed Management (Ch. 4)
 11:00 - 11:20 - Fuels and Fire Issues
 11:20 - 11:45 - Production and Conservation Values (Ch. 9)
 11:45 - 11:55 - Questions for Panel
 11:55 - 12:00 - Plans for next week

March 22 - Session 3: Planning Strategies

10:00 - 10:05 - Introduction to week 3
 10:05 - 10:35 - Planning Options (Ch. 6)
 10:35 - 11:05 - Regional Planning (Ch. 5)
 11:05 - 11:35 - Oak and Oak Woodland Ordinances (Ch. 8)
 11:35 - 11:55 - Questions for Panel
 11:55 - 12:00 - Plans for next week

March 29 - Session 4: Sources of Assistance, Developing Plans

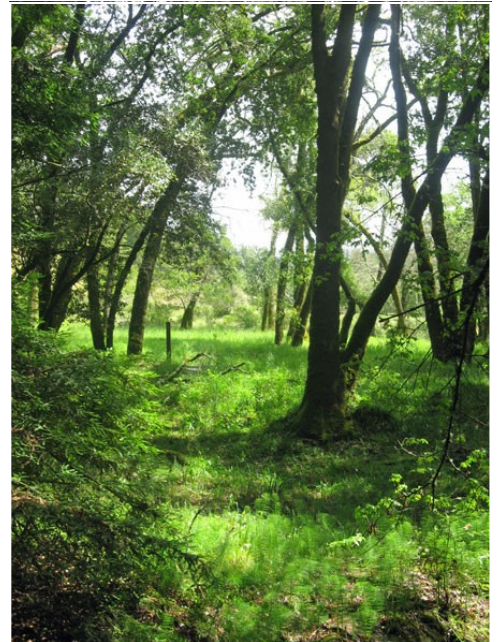
10:00 - 10:05 - Introduction to week 4
 10:05 - 10:50 - Mapping Resources and Modeling Risk (Ch. 7)
 10:50 - 11:35 - Planner's Roundtable - Successful local planning
 11:35 - 11:45 - Questions of panel
 11:45 - 12:00 - Field trip information, wrap-up

Session 5: Field Trip (optional) - Hopland Research and Extension Center (April 21, 2012) and Sierra Foothill Research and Extension Center (May 5, 2012)

10:00 - 3:00 - Oak planting projects, landscape considerations, mitigation approaches, addressing ecological functionality through the planning process.

Register for the event at <http://ucce.ucdavis.edu/survey/survey.cfm?surveynumber=7740>.

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Public Education Classes & Events for Amador and El Dorado Counties – Free!!



Most classes are from 9am – Noon. Please call ahead to confirm locations.

Amador County

Unless otherwise noted, location for all Amador classes: GSA Building, 12200-B Airport Road, Jackson.

February

11: Fruit Tree Grafting Clinic

Learn various methods of fruit tree grafting at this hands-on class for home gardeners. Master Gardeners will demonstrate techniques and types of equipment used in grafting. Grafting is the art of inserting a piece of one plant into another with the expectation that the parts grow together and form a permanent union.

Please bring scion wood to trade. For information on this class or how to collect and store scion wood, call the Master Gardener office at 209-223-6838 on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, or Thursdays from 10am until Noon.

25: Beekeeping

Amador County Master Gardeners invite you to join local backyard beekeepers to learn how to start beekeeping and improve your knowledge of keeping honeybees in the foothills. There will be honey tasting, equipment demonstrations, discussions on swarm collection, queen rearing, and more.

March

10: Hands-on Seed Starting, Asparagus, and Backyard Chickens

Starting your own seeds is not only cheap but gives you more choices of varieties to grow. We'll also explain how to grow asparagus. After you get your seedlings growing, take the next step and add a small flock of chickens. Fresh eggs from your backyard beat store-bought just like home-grown tomatoes beat the ones from the store. Learn the pros and cons of keeping your own chickens.

El Dorado County

Unless otherwise noted, location for all El Dorado classes: Veterans Memorial Building, 130 Placerville Drive, Placerville.

February

4: Citrus In The Foothills

Would you like to grow oranges and lemons in your own orchard? With the right microclimate, variety and rootstock it is possible to grow citrus in the foothills. Join Master Gardeners Julianne Melchor and Suzanne Wisowaty and as they explore ways of becoming a successful citrus grower in our marginal climate.

11: Weather And Climate

Join Master Gardener Steve Savage as he presents critical climatic factors affecting your garden and dictating suitability of planting in your location. Topics included are micro-climates and frost dates.

Location: Bethel-Delfino Ag. Bldg., 311 Fair Lane, Placerville

25: Spring And Summer Vegetables

It's time to prepare the garden for the delicious spring and summer vegetables. Master Gardener Zach Dowell will discuss garden plant selection, planting times, garden site selection, soil preparation, proper seed planting techniques, and pest management.

Check out the El Dorado Master Gardener Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/El-Dorado-County-Master-Gardeners/164653119129>.





El Dorado County Master Food Preservers, Class of 2012

El Dorado County Master Food Preservers are accepting applications for their 2012 training, which starts in March. Space is available in the Saturday morning classes.

Master Food Preservers provide free public classes on safe home food preservation techniques within El Dorado County. Volunteers give at least 35 hours of volunteer service and 12 hours of Continuing Education each year to the program.

For more information and to apply, go to <http://ucanr.org/edmf>.

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Pest Notes

Free Pest Notes are available on a variety of topics. For more information, call or email your local Master Gardener office.

To explore the Pest Notes on the UC Integrated Pest Management (IPM) website, go to <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu>.



Get Answers to Your Gardening Questions Online

http://cecentralsierra.ucanr.org/Master_Gardeners

- Information about Master Gardeners and even how to become one
- List of public classes
- Calendar of Master Gardener events
- Useful links to gardening websites
- Home gardening publications

Got a specific question?
Just email us!

Amador: mgamador@ucdavis.edu
El Dorado: mgeldorado@ucdavis.edu

Amador & El Dorado Counties Master Gardener Newsletter
Editor: Linda Hagye
Assistant Editors: Janice Johnson, Kim Cohen

Not on our e-newsletter distribution list yet? Know someone who would like to receive our newsletters and notifications on classes and events? Sign up online at <http://ucanr.org/mgenews>.



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AND AMADOR/EL DORADO COUNTIES COOPERATING