



What to Replant After the Trees Die



By Susie Kocher, University of California Cooperative Extension, Forester and Natural Resources Advisor

Background: California, and the Sierra Nevada in particular, is experiencing an unprecedented die off of trees on both private and public lands. Aerial detection surveys done in 2016 showed that over 102 million trees have died since 2010 coinciding with four years of drought, including over 62 million in 2016 alone. The scale of tree mortality is the largest in

the southern Sierra, significant in the central Sierra, and patchy in the northern Sierra. Mortality is concentrated at lower elevations though significant mortality is also occurring at higher elevations in the southern Sierra. The hardest hit species has been ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), but many incense cedars (*Calocedrus decurrens*), sugar pine (*Pinus lambertiana*), white fir (*Abies concolor*), and some oaks have experienced mortality as well. At higher elevations, Jeffrey pine (*Pinus jeffreyi*) and lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta*) have also died.

Die off of trees at this scale is a result of two intertwining factors, the historic drought and the overstocked condition of our forests and woodlands. Decades of fire suppression and harvesting of the largest and most resilient trees means that the Sierran landscape has become overcrowded with vegetation vulnerable to wildfire and insect epidemics. Western pine beetle (*Dendroctonus brevicomis*) is the primary culprit this time, though mountain pine beetles (*Dendroctonus ponderosae*) and pine engravers (*Ips paraconfusus*) have also been active.

Tree death and removal: Removing dead trees from your landscape is important, especially around the home. Dead trees should be removed in order to reduce the danger of falling on homes and infrastructure. Dead trees will also eventually fall and become large fuels on the forest floor leading to more intense fires. After tree removal by heavy equipment, branches, needles or even parts of the tree trunk may have been left behind. Usually this debris must be cleaned up or burned before starting a new landscape. Also, dragging the trees out may have

Continued on page 2 ►

SPRING 2017

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► *What to Replant... (continued from page 1)*

disturbed the soil and some raking out of the forest floor around the home may be a good idea.

Assessing the landscape: It is important to assess what is left after tree removal before considering replanting, as there is often a lot of live vegetation remaining. Making a survey of your property and mapping what is growing and where it is growing is a good approach. Mark where you find living trees and identify them by species and size.

Ponderosa pine grow well only in sunny conditions and do not tolerate shade. You may find young pines have naturally regenerated in gaps created by canopy trees dying resulting in more sunlight. Other trees including incense cedar and white fir do tolerate shade and are often found growing in the understory. In addition, oaks may be doing well where nearby conifers have died. Oaks have the ability to drop leaves during drought and re-leaf in the spring. Oaks can also re-sprout if their tops are killed. So, even oaks that look dead may be able to rebound after the drought is over.

Nurturing existing trees: If you have a significant number of trees left, you may not need to replant. Instead you may want to promote the smaller trees left after the dead ones have been removed. These young trees may benefit from some nurturing. You may want to thin trees out so that available sun and soil moisture is focused on the healthiest individuals. Some watering of these trees



in the summer may help counter stress caused by increased solar radiation. Consider clearing out shrubs, grass and other competition around seedlings to help them grow. Competition from these types of vegetation are especially difficult for pine seedlings. Digging up natural conifer seedlings and moving them is not recommended as it is very difficult to do without harming the tree's already developed root system.

Replanting trees: If you have fewer living trees than you want, or would like more pine than you currently have, replanting native conifers is a good strategy. Native trees are best adapted to our local climates. Though many pines have died, this is not necessarily a sign that conifers are no longer adapted to your location, even with a warming climate. There may be some locations where trees were at the farthest south (warmest) and lowest elevation (driest) that they could tolerate, meaning that they may not do well in the future. However, for most areas, local growing conditions should support native conifers in the near future. Planting individuals and species from slighter lower elevations may be a good way to hedge against warmer temperatures in the future. Although some native shrubs and plants may have died during the drought (or been battered during the tree removal process), these plants are generally hardy and come back on their own without planting. Shrubs can re-sprout while native herbaceous plants generally store seed in the soil and should be able to regrow during non-drought conditions.

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http://cecentralsierra.ucanr.edu/Master_Gardeners

- Information about UCCE Master Gardeners and how to become one
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- Useful links to gardening websites
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► *What to Replant... (continued from page 2)*

You have a few options for replanting trees. These include:

Large nursery tree saplings – Since large trees are more expensive to purchase, they should be placed in the most advantageous locations possible near the home for visual screening or wind breaks. These require the most care including soil amendments and weekly watering in the dry season for the first few years.

Small container-grown tree seedlings – Small container-grown seedlings (picture to right) are much less expensive to purchase although they also require some care including watering during the dry season. Therefore they are best planted around the home landscape or within a distance that allows for watering. These are typically planted in the early spring or late fall during periods of high soil moisture.

Bare root seedlings – These are the least expensive option and do not require soil amendments or watering after they have been planted during periods of high soil moisture. They are the best option for planting numerous trees on large acreages.

Oaks – Native oaks extend very deep roots in their first few years of growth thus are best planted using acorns gathered locally in the fall. This method is inexpensive and germination can be high if done right.

Soil conditions may have been adversely affected by post-mortality activities such as tree removal and debris clearing. Soil amendments such as compost, Driwater¹, and mulch may be helpful before planting any of these tree types.

Where to plant trees: Planting trees in the right location is one of the most important factors in their long term success. Take care to plant trees to not create future problems:

► **Spacing** – It is important not to plant trees too densely or you may create a need to thin them out in the future. Trees should be planted at least 10-14 feet apart.



- **Defensible space** – All new landscaping will need to conform to defensible space requirements. Trees and flammable vegetation should be kept at least 10 feet from the home and thinned within 30 feet. In the 30-100 foot zone, trees should be widely spaced so their crowns will not touch when they are mature. Trees can fill in to a more natural looking forest 100 feet from the home.
- **Power line clearance** – Trees should be planted at least 10 feet from power lines. Trees planted too close to power lines will eventually need to be trimmed or topped.
- **Road right of way** – Trees should not be planted within the road right away so there is no interference with snow clearance, maintenance, or construction projects.
- **Sun availability** – Plant pines where there is now a lot of sun because trees were removed. The potential for future solar energy generation should also be assessed before planting. Do not plant sugar pine on the driest sites.
- **Views** – Consider future views and don't plant trees that will block these desired views.

For more information about tree mortality visit <http://cecentralsierra.ucanr.edu/> or <http://ucanr.edu/barkbeetle/> or call University of California Cooperative Extension Central Sierra office at 530-621-5502. ♡

¹Driwater (or similar products) is a time-released irrigation solution that can help provide irrigation to remote tree plantings.

Check Out *Kurapia*

By Bonnie Toy
UCCE Master Gardener of Amador County

What do you do if you want to replace your lawn with something requiring less water and maintenance? If your lawn is mostly for show, and doesn't have heavy use—as with children or dogs—then Kurapia may be the answer.

Kurapia (pronounced cur-AH-pee-ah) is a relatively new low-use perennial ground cover developed in Japan. It is deep rooted, and hence requires little irrigation. It is low growing, and grows and spreads quickly. It tolerates many soil conditions, and will do well in USDA hardiness zones 7–15.

The botanical name is *Lippia nodiflora* L. 'Kurapia S1,' but unlike the naturalized variety of Lippia, which is often regarded as invasive, it is sterile so unwanted seeding does not occur.

I heard about this plant a year or so ago, when a friend who lives in Sacramento replaced her front lawn with Kurapia. Here are some pictures of her "lawn" over the first year.

Quoting from her email:

"We are very happy with the Kurapia. In the past year, it has filled in and looks enough like a lawn to make us happy. It has been green all year with small white flowers during summer for several months."



"We haven't done anything in the past 6 months (no mow either). We have mowed it only once since installing it. We did that mostly to try and get it to spread faster but it was so low growing that mowing didn't really do anything. We edge it quarterly where strings jump across concrete edging. We fertilized once with Osmocote. This week I spent 3–4 hours removing a few weeds and pulling out heavier strings where it jumped to spread."

According to research done at UC Riverside, Kurapia forms a very dense mat. If the soil is treated with a pre-emergent prior to plugging, weeds are not much of a problem. The small flowers are very attractive to bees, and the bloom period is long, so if you do not want so many bees around, you will have to remove the blossoms by mowing or using a string trimmer. It does spread beyond the area initially allocated for it, so occasional edging or otherwise trimming to the desired perimeter will be required. Under extreme deficit irrigation (40% ETo) Kurapia, Kikuyugrass, and buffalgrass performed the best of all tested grasses in terms of color and quality.

The plugs are now available from a number of nurseries. The UC Arboretum at Davis is no longer selling plugs.

UC Davis UCAN conducted irrigation trials for Kurapia in 2012–2014. Following is a summary of the design and results of the trials.

The plants were irrigated with 80% of evapotranspiration from fall of 2012 until spring of 2014. In May of 2014 all the plants were irrigated

► *Check Out Kurapia (continued from page 4)*

prior to beginning the deficit irrigation trials. There were four treatment levels: 80%, 60%, 40% and 20% of evapotranspiration. At each irrigation, water was applied to a depth of 18 inches. Thus there were 9, 7, 4 and 2 treatments.

There was no significant differences in growth or quality between treatments. Flowering was slightly lower on the lowest irrigation treatment, but was still very acceptable. The flowers begin to turn brown at the end of the blooming season. If the plant is used in an application where it will be viewed at close range, they might be removed with a string trimmer.

Kurapia showed no sign of disease during the trial, and only minor chewing of leaves by insects. The vigor and vivid green color made this minor damage unnoticeable.

The appearance of the plant was severely affected by frost. It generally died down from the edges, the centers were somewhat bare, and the long stiff stems were exposed through March. By April all plants had grown back over the bare spots.

Kurapia appears to be a very interesting replacement for a turf lawn. Because it is deep rooted, it would likely be a great ground cover for a steep bank or other low-use area.

There are a number of articles on the internet, and some interesting videos all giving more details, and lots of pictures. ♡



References:

Irrigation Trials Results for Kurapia 2012–2014, UC Davis/UCANR, Karrie Reid, Loren Oki, Jared Sisneroz, David Fujino. ccuh.ucdavis.edu/Programs/kurapia/kurapia-irrigation-trial-results

Evaluation of Turfgrasses and a Ground Cover Under Drought and Extreme Deficit Irrigation, UC Riverside, Ryan Nichols, Alea Miehis, Jim Baird, Darrel Jenerette and Lindy Allsman. ccuh.ucdavis.edu/Programs/media/UCRExtremeDeficitIrrigationStudy2012.pdf

Kurapia a “new” low use perennial, California Center for Urban Horticulture. <http://ccuh.ucdavis.edu/Programs/media/KurapiaPowerPoint012613.pdf/view?searchterm=kurapia>

KURAPIA @ UC Riverside Field Day Sep 15, 2016, YouTube video posted on the Kurapia Groundcover channel. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c_ms0tctv7o



Sherwood Demonstration Garden Reopens April 1

by Sue McDavid

UCCE Master Gardener of El Dorado County

We are excited to be reopening the demonstration garden to the public once again on April 1. El Dorado County MGs have been scrambling to ready the 16 themed gardens for visitors—the very wet winter delayed pruning, cutting back and general cleanup and March has seen a flurry of activity. Our dry creek bed certainly was not dry all winter; water has been forcefully flowing through it for months. However, it is that time of year when plants are beginning to show signs of life again, and it won't be long before bloom bursts forth.

A welcoming kiosk at the garden entrance is very close to being finished and a retaining wall to prevent soil erosion was built in our construction yard over the winter months. Several public education classes were held in the garden over the last several months, which seem to be very popular with the public, and young children from area schools are being introduced to various aspects of home gardening. Our spring plant sale is also right around the corner: Saturday, April 29 from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the garden. We will again be offering hundreds of tomato starts, herbs and vegetables as well as shrubs and trees, perennials, ornamental grasses, ground covers, and native plants.

Formal, docent-led garden tours can be scheduled by contacting Carolyn Gravelle at 530-306-5153 or fort.cluck@gmail.com Open days for the public will be Fridays and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to noon beginning on April 1, so bring your friends and family to enjoy some time strolling through the garden. We are located behind the El Dorado Center of Folsom Lake College at 6699 Campus Drive in Placerville (off Green Valley Road); on Fridays, there is a \$2 parking fee.

For more information about the Sherwood Demonstration Garden, please call the UCCE Master Gardener office at 530-621-5512 (Tuesday–Friday from 9 am–noon) or visit the website below.

 [Sherwood Demonstration Garden](#)



Don't Miss the Spring Plant Sale at the Sherwood Demonstration Garden

by Merry Campbell

UCCE Master Gardener of El Dorado County

It's that time of the year again: spring is right around the corner and that means the UCCE Master Gardeners of El Dorado County are busy preparing for the 7th spring plant sale. This year, as it was last year, the sale will be held at the Sherwood Demonstration Garden located at 6699 Campus Drive in Placerville on Saturday, April 29 from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m..

The Sherwood Demonstration Garden is a perfect venue for the sale. Not only will the garden be in its spring glory but it also provides an excellent opportunity to see many of the plants being offered for sale in a garden setting. Whether you are looking for native plants, perennials, shade lovers, butterfly attractors or ornamental grasses, the sale is just the event for you to attend.

If you are ready to start your vegetable garden, you couldn't ask for a better place to start than the UCCE Master Gardener plant sale. Every spring, we go all out to give you the best selection of heirloom tomatoes possible. Additionally, we offer other favorite vegetables, including peppers. If you enjoy growing the herbs that help to flavor your meals and more, then look no further than the Master Gardener plant sale.

See you there!!!

Raising the Bar on Raised Beds

By Susan Price, UCCE Master Gardener of Amador County

Do you have rocky, compacted, or contaminated soil? Do you wish you could extend your growing season? Are there plants you wish you could grow, but your native soil won't accommodate them? Are you tired of bending to plant and harvest your vegetables? Finally, do you have mobility issues and need a way to garden from a wheelchair? If you are dealing with any of these issues, the answer may be as simple as growing in raised beds.

Raised beds allow you to tailor your soil mix to your particular plant's needs. This is especially important when your native soil is particularly devoid of nutrients, contaminated, or extremely difficult to work. You can use a different type of soil mix in each separate bed to allow for different plant types. For example, blueberries do not do well in clay (high alkaline) soils, but they can be grown quite successfully in a raised bed with an acid-rich soil mix. For most plants, a raised bed mixed with good topsoil, amended with plenty of organic matter such as compost, will work well.

Raised beds insulate the soil, so they tend to warm up earlier in the spring and they remain warmer longer into fall. They also tend to increase yields because the soil used in them can provide the ideal, nutrient-rich mix. Raised beds also help conserve water, especially if using drip irrigation.



They may need less water, but more frequent watering, however, if your soil mix drains too quickly.

Plan your irrigation in advance of building your raised bed. You may want to run your main line underneath the bed to keep it out of sight.

Raised beds can be of any size but 12 inches deep works for most plants, allowing for good root development. They can be as tall as 2 feet for deeper rooted plants or wheelchair access, or as short as 6 inches. If mobility is an issue, be sure to leave enough room between beds for easy maneuvering. Also, it is a good idea to have wide enough paths between beds, e.g., 3–4 feet to allow for wheelbarrow access. Beds are usually around 4 feet wide, allowing you to reach the center from either side. If you only plan to access from one side, beds 2–3 feet wide work well. The length of a raised bed comes down to personal preference and what the space allows. Common lengths are 8–12 feet but any size can work. It is advised to break up particularly long beds. For example, breaking up a 50-foot length into two separate 24-foot beds with a 2-foot walkway between will save steps when tending the garden. Adding capped walls of 2"x6" or 2"x8" boards provides a seating area around your planter beds making it easier and more convenient to do gardening tasks such as weeding and harvesting.

Orient your raised beds to receive the desired amount of sun. This is another advantage of raised beds; you can place them exactly where your plants will thrive. For most vegetables and herbs, that's a sunny spot that gets at least six hours of sun a day.



► *Raised Beds (continued from page 6)*

A north-south orientation is best for low-growing crops, allowing direct sunlight to both sides of the bed. Beds that will contain taller crops, like pole beans or caged tomatoes, might do better on an east-west axis.

Placing your raised beds near your kitchen means you're more likely to use the fresh vegetables and herbs you've planted there. Convenience is everything! Likewise, if you haven't installed an automatic watering system, or need to hand-water on occasion, placing the beds near a water source is essential.

Raised beds can bring style and order to a garden. They can be made from a variety of materials. If using wood, natural woods like redwood and cedar work well, as they resist rot. Natural woods, however, can be costly. Leftover composite decking material is also a good option. Avoid using painted wood, which may contain lead, and treated wood, which may contain arsenic. Chromated copper arsenate (CCA) has been phased out due to safety concerns. Alkaline copper quaternary (ACQ) and copper azole (CA) are the common alternatives. They do contain copper, which can leach from treated lumber, but is not expected to have adverse health effects. If you are uncertain about the safety of treated lumber, place a heavy plastic liner between the treated lumber and the soil to prevent direct contact of plant roots with the treated lumber

Brick, rock, and cinder blocks are also popular choices. The internet is filled with creative ideas using non-traditional materials, like water troughs and clay roof tiles. One of our UCCE Master Gardeners made a raised bed from galvanized scrap metal cut-offs capped with redwood top rails. Another used concrete wall blocks surrounded by a distressed metal bed frame. These unusual beds add beauty and character to the garden, along with serving as a conversation piece! Using repurposed or upscaled products reduces materials sent to the landfill, and so many of these potential cast-off materials make great raised planter "parts." All that is needed is a little imagination! Of course, when choosing materials for your raised bed, it is important to consider durability, toxicity, affordability, maintenance requirements, and



how permanent or portable you want your raised bed to be. There are many clever ideas on Pinterest and other websites that look great but will not stand the test of time. If doing it yourself is not an option, there are numerous raised bed kits available for purchase online, in big box stores, and large nurseries. Many offer a range of materials and prices, and the kits are easy to install.

Raised beds can have a bottom (with drainage holes), if they are going to be used on asphalt or to keep moles or gophers out. Wire mesh works well as a cheap and effective liner. They can be made to accommodate a cold frame (in the winter) or netting, to keep out pests.

Raised beds offer convenience and flexibility. You can customize them to fit your particular needs and preferences. With so many design options and creative choices, they can become one of the favorite features of your garden! ♡

References:

Step-by-step building instructions from Sunset:

<http://www.sunset.com/garden/backyard-projects/ultimate-raised-bed-how-to>

Selecting Lumber and Lumber Substitutes for Outdoor Exposures, University of California, Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

<http://anrcatalog.ucanr.edu/pdf/8144.pdf>

Raised-Bed Gardening, University of Missouri Extension.

<http://extension.missouri.edu/p/G6985>

Calaveras Big Trees State Park UC California Naturalist Certification Course June 2017

Course Schedule:

Thursdays June 1, 8, 15, and 22 from 5:30 PM – 8:30 PM
Fridays June 2, 9, 16, and 23 from 8 AM – 4 PM

Meeting Place: Ralston Classroom at Calaveras Big Trees State Park

Course Fee: \$225 Students must purchase *The California Naturalist Handbook* (2013, UC Press) and bring a field notebook. Registration is limited. Please expect the commitment of a collegiate level class, including reading and required projects in addition to weekly class meetings. A limited number of need-based, partial scholarships will be available.



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Amador County

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Apr 1 [Garden Friends: Summer Vegetables & Annual Flowers](#)

Location: Amador County GSA Building, 12200-B Airport Road in Jackson.

Apr 15 [Raising Backyard Chickens & Goats](#)

Location: Amador County GSA Building, 12200-B Airport Road in Jackson.

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Location: Amador County GSA Building, 12200-B Airport Road in Jackson.

May 20 [Composting & Vermiculture for the Home Garden](#)

Location: Amador County GSA Building, 12200-B Airport Road in Jackson.

Jun 3 [Solving Garden Problems with Integrated Pest Management](#)

Location: Amador County GSA Building, 12200-B Airport Road in Jackson.

Jun 24 [Care & Use of Herbs from the Garden](#)

Location: Amador County GSA Building, 12200-B Airport Road in Jackson.

Jul 15 [Kids in the Garden](#)

Location: Amador County GSA Building, 12200-B Airport Road in Jackson.



El Dorado County

Click on class title for more information.

Questions? Call 530-621-5512.

Mar 25 [Sustainable Gardening](#)

Sustainable gardening—what is it, why should you do it, and how do you do it? Come learn why you need to practice gardening sustainably to maintain your own little piece of the environment and maybe even improve it. Learn how to save resources, money, and time as you garden. Location: Government Center Hearing Room, Building C, 2850 Fairlane Court in Placerville.

Apr 1 [Composting](#)

Compost provides valuable nutrients for your garden soil. Compost helps retain moisture, which saves water, suppresses weeds, prevents soil erosion, and loosens compacted soils for better drainage and water retention. It is rewarding to know you are turning waste into a nutrient rich organic material for your garden. Location: Sherwood Demonstration Garden, 6699 Campus Drive in Placerville (behind Folsom Lake College, El Dorado Center).

Apr 8 [Landscaping with Trees and Shrubs](#)

Location: Government Center Hearing Room, Building C, 2850 Fairlane Court in Placerville.

Apr 8 [Saturdays with Barry \(10 – noon\)](#)

A lot of things are happening in the spring vegetable garden. Barry will explain various planting, thinning and pest control needs for the success of your vegetable garden during each month's demonstration. The Demonstration Garden docents will also be on hand to answer your gardening questions and show you around! Location: Sherwood Demonstration Garden, 6699 Campus Drive in Placerville (behind Folsom Lake College, El Dorado Center).

Apr 12 [Orchids](#)

You don't need a greenhouse to grow some lovely orchids both indoors and outdoors. Several species do well in El Dorado County climate in a shade garden. The class will cover basic care, simple propagation, easy varieties and will show you how to get these enchanting plants to thrive and bloom. Location: Cameron Park Community Center, 2502 Country Club Drive in Cameron Park.

Amador County Plant Sale

Sunday, April 23

PLANT SALE

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Mar 23 Canning Basics

(6:00 pm–8:00 pm) UCCE El Dorado Conference Room, 311 Fair Lane in Placerville.

Apr 22 Innovations from Your Freezer

(9:00 am–noon) UCCE El Dorado Conference Room, 311 Fair Lane in Placerville.

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Apr 8 Fermentation: Kimchi, Kombucha & More

(9:00 am–noon) Amador County GSA Building, 12200-B Airport Road in Jackson.

Apr 19 Boiling/Steam Canning Basics

(6:30 pm–8:30 pm) Calaveras Senior Center, 956 Mountain Ranch Road in San Andreas.

May 13 Spring Fruits

(9:00 am–noon) Amador County GSA Building, 12200-B Airport Road in Jackson.

Follow the link below for updated class information:



[Central Sierra Master Food Preserver Classes](#)



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