

Garden Views

UC Master Gardener Program of Riverside County

Newsletter



University of California Cooperative Extension

Master Gardener Program of Riverside County

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Advice to Grow By ... Ask Us!

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UC Master Gardener Program Mission Statement

"To extend research-based knowledge and information on home horticulture, pest management, and sustainable landscape practices to the residents of California and be guided by our core values and strategic initiatives."

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Heteromeles arbutifolia, Toyon

CA Natives Bloom!

**Garden Views is published bi-monthly by
Riverside County UC Master Gardeners.**

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Riverside County Master Gardeners at Lake Tahoe Conference enjoy the moment!

Master Gardeners Convene at Lake Tahoe

Article and Photos, contributed by Christal Ferlisi and Linda Cummings, UCCE Master Gardeners

UC Master Gardeners from across California gathered for the 2023 UC Master Gardener Conference in beautiful Lake Tahoe at the Granlibakken Tahoe Resort on October 2-6, 2023. Eighteen MGs from Riverside County attended the conference. A few of us flew, but most of us traveled the 450 miles by car.



After settling into our spacious (2 queen beds) and clean room, we gathered at the Granhall dining area for a delicious dinner of lamb medallions, grilled shrimp, and an incredible

Cajun cauliflower dish with black beans and blue cheese. A beautiful medley of asparagus, yellow squash and carrots, along with yummy arugula, watermelon, and strawberry salad along with artisan bread completed the main course. The desert table was laden with a varied assortment of wonderful cakes. Did I mention there was a French pastry chef in the kitchen?

The next morning after a hearty breakfast of scrambled eggs, French toast, sausage patties, yogurt, grits, fruit, assorted cold cereals, and cinnamon rolls (too good to be resisted), created by our French pastry chef, we, Linda Cummings, Marilyn Howard and Christal Ferlisi were off on our excursion adventure aboard a chartered bus.



Linda Cummings (left) and Christal Ferlisi (right) at Tallac Estates.

Our morning tour was of the Historic Tallac Estate and Gardens. We stepped back in time to the 1890's as we strolled through the gardens and summer homes of early Tahoe residents. But long before those summer homes were erected on the south shore of Lake Tahoe, the Washoe Tribe inhabited the area and all lands surrounding it. On our tour we heard how the Washoe tribe lived off pine nut flour, seeds, and dried meat and fish during the winter; early spring saw the young adults making their way from their winter camp in the valleys east of the Sierras to the shores of Lake Tahoe to begin harvesting much needed early spring grasses and bulb plants. Fascinating stuff to master gardeners!

One of the highlights of this tour was seeing the Kokanee salmon run in Taylor Creek. As the salmon spawning season approaches in the fall, the salmon turn bright red as they travel back to Taylor Creek where they were born. The female builds the nest and once the male fertilizes the eggs, both male and female die. (Think Romeo & Juliet!). It's a beautiful if tragic scene to us, but to the bears it is delicatessen! Our guides, Erin Gavlock and David Long, UCCE MGs, advised us to keep a sharp lookout for hungry bears coming to Taylor Creek for lunch.

At tour's end, we filed back through stands of quaking aspen to our waiting bus to discover we were in for an unexpected adventure. An 18-wheeler had jackknifed on the road blocking our return to the hotel. The only way to get back was to circumvent the entire lake! It was an unanticipated scenic journey and a lot of fun! Our bus driver, Stafford, kept us well fortified with lots of yummy treats and beverages he kept tucked away in the belly of the bus for just such emergencies! The Granlibakken was notified of our predicament and quickly prepared gourmet boxed lunches for us to enjoy upon our return.



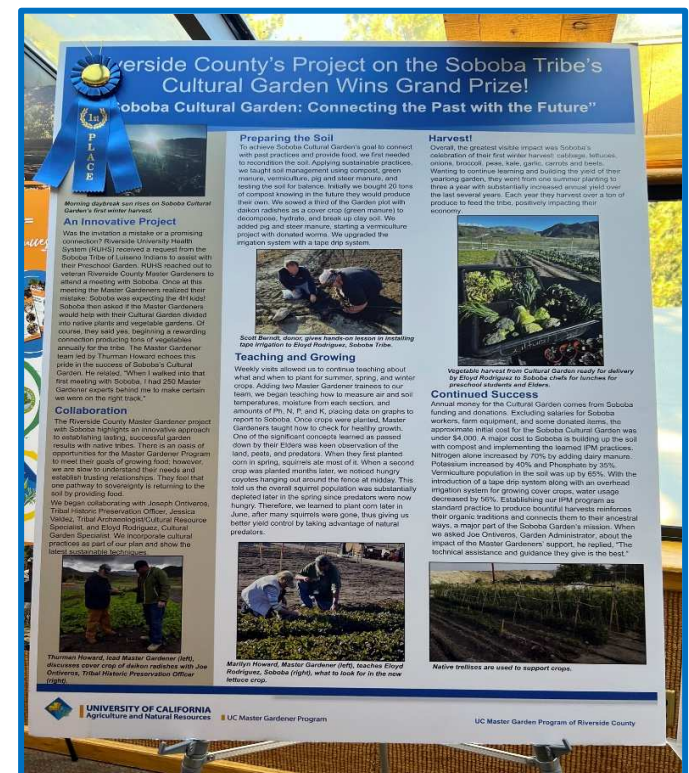
Slow Food Garden

Because of our scenic detour we were off to a late start for our afternoon tour, but our enjoyment of the Slow Food Lake Tahoe Garden and the UC Davis Environmental Research Center was undiminished. Slow Food is a global grassroots organization that was

founded in the late 1980's. (See slowfood.com for more background.) Its purpose is to "combat people's dwindling interest in the food they eat, where it comes from and how our food choices affect the world around us." slowfood.com

At the Slow Food Garden all beds were covered with chicken wire to keep out the ground squirrels and other critters. Crop selection is limited because Lake Tahoe is not a frost-free area. Tender crops such as tomatoes are grown in greenhouses. This garden has an extensive composting program with the public donating much of the materials and labor. Over 700 volunteer hours help turn yard waste into compost gold and provide many pounds of produce to local foodbanks.

We had a fascinating presentation at the UC Davis Research Center in their repurposed fish hatchery. The outside tour included an engaging vignette of a determined beaver who took down all the nearby quaking aspens despite the best efforts of the research scientists to stop him.



Our poster for First Place in the State Search for Excellence Award displayed at the conference.

We learned that Lake Tahoe is the second deepest lake in the US at 1,644 ft deep. The sediment layer adds another 1,600 feet to its depth! The combination of earthquakes, volcanoes, and glaciers worked together to form this magnificent lake. It is actively protected from invasive aquatic pests through stringent boat inspections.

Boarding the bus, we headed back to the Granlibakken for a fabulous Italian buffet dinner. What a day! We learned a lot, had a rollickingly good time, and connected with other UC master gardeners from all over the state.



Marilyn and Thurman Howard present first place project, Soboba Cultural Garden, to a packed room at the conference.



Thurman Howard receives congratulations after his presentation.



Thurman Howard proudly holds First Place Presentation Resolution from State Senator Ochoa-Bogh with Georgia Renne, Marilyn Howard, Rosa Olaiz, Rita Clemmons, and Missy Gable at the celebration banquet.

Congratulations to the Soboba Project Team: Thurman Howard, Marilyn Howard, Georgia Renne, Joyce Allen, Christal Ferlisi, Dave Frelinger, Brenda Kooiman, Marta Nguyen, Vilma Raettig, and Thomas Vineski.

Moorten Botanical Garden Propagation Class

Article and photos contributed by Debbie O'Brien, UC Master Gardener Program of Riverside County Trainee

Veteran Master Gardeners, Barbara Kay-Levin and Freddy Hooper accompanied trainees Christopher Gentile, Dan Garrow, and Debbie O'Brien for a Propagation Class with Jason Moorten at Moorten Botanical Garden in Palm Springs on October 17, 2023.

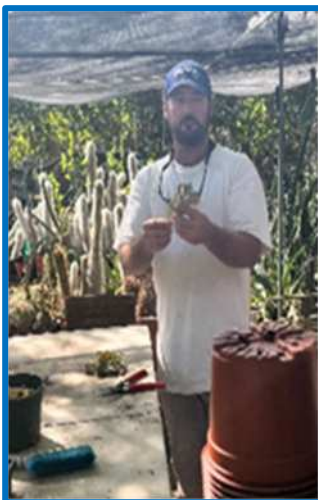
Moorten's is a local botanical gem, that was started by Jason's grandfather over 60 years ago. It is located on approximately 5 acres of the family's yard and is both an educational and commercial operation and should be on the "must do" list for any visit to Palm Springs.



We went "behind the scenes" where plants are stored and propagated until ready to be sold.



Jason talked about how to prepare Lavendar Scallops, *Kalanchoe fedtschenkoi*, for propagation as Dan, Freddy, Barbara, Christopher, and Debbie (not pictured) listened.



Next up was Elephant Food, *Portulacaria Afra*. Jason had trimmed one of the Elephant Food plants on the property the previous day. He said he needed to give the plant time to dry out before planting. Most of the cuttings were pencil size, the bottom leaves were removed, and 5 or 6 stems were placed in each pot. It will take about a month for these plants to generate enough roots to be ready for sale.



Once potted, Barbara watched as Jason marked the tray with the date they were planted which will enable him to monitor watering and root growth. Chris and Dan potted Elephant Food. We also



separated a root bound Snake Plant, *Sansevieria trifasciata* into individual plants so they can root and be planted in smaller containers. It was a fun and educational experience! In addition to the propagation classes, Master Gardeners can volunteer as docents

to give tours for tourists (and trainees) and provide lots of information about the history of the property as well as the many plants that call this property their home. Check out both activities on VMS!

Youth-School Project: STEPCon

Contributed by Kim Coons-Leonard, UCCE Master Gardener

The science of hydroponics was the focus of our Master Gardeners' Youth-School exhibit for the twenty-third annual STEPCon (Science and Technology Education Partnership Conference) event held October 5 at the Bourns Technology Center in Riverside. 2,200 students attended this event, considered the premier student science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) conference in the Inland Empire.

Master Gardener volunteers from across the county ran three activity tables providing an overview on the basics of hydroponics, a water-based planting experience for students, and a microgreens planting kit for teachers.



Master Gardener trainees Margaret Parascand and Skylar McDonald guide students through sprouting bean seeds in water.

Our Youth-School Project also provided virtual exhibits for the online component of the conference that ran through early November. These exhibits were learning pathways for grades 4-5 and 6-8 using resources from our digital lesson series: *Water-The Driving Force of Life*. The full lessons are also featured on the Riverside County Office of Education website. It is estimated that the online STEPCon exhibits reached over 20,000 students.



Master Gardeners Michael Fischer and Steve Moreno discuss the various hydroponic options for growing plants.

Special thanks go to Master Gardeners Michael Fisher who provided general guidance on hydroponics methods and supplies; Kelli Shaw who provided hydroponics examples from her classroom; and Kathy Steckman who helped design a simple interactive hydroponics growing system for students to take home. Do you recall from your school days the seed sprouting activity using just a wet paper towel placed in a plastic bag or cup? Many students expressed surprise that a lima bean would sprout without soil!



Master Gardeners Steve Moreno, Margaret Parascand, Ruben Arias, and Kelli Shaw work with students at the seed planning activity.

Most students expressed surprise that the bean seed did not need to be planted in soil to sprout. Master Gardeners Steve Moreno, Margaret Parascand, Ruben Arias, and Kelli Shaw work with students at the seed planning activity. Most students expressed surprise that the bean seed did not need to be planted in soil to sprout.

This annual event is our project's single largest youth outreach activity. In addition to the volunteers mentioned above, thanks also go to the rest of the team of who joined together to quickly set up all our equipment and enthusiastically share the information with students, teachers, and parents: Ruben Arias, Skyler McDonald, Steve Moreno and Margaret Parascand.

We are already preparing for next year's science focus: Insects!

Behind the Scenes: Janis Binam

Contributed by Jolene Hancock, UCCE Master Gardener



After spending some time with this Master Gardener, I was left with the daunting task of introducing you to this 81-year-old, bigger-than-life lady in just a few paragraphs. So here we go. I will do my best...

If you've ever stopped by any Master Gardener information tables listed on VMS, you most likely already met this poised, soft spoken, barely 4'9" tall giant of a person. Janis Binam is a single, independent, educated woman, and a graduate of the Master Gardener Class of 2015. Sheilah

Bellew, a Master Gardener neighbor, suggested she apply to the Master Gardener Program. She applied and, having no formal training, was surprised to be accepted. She added, "I now have become more aware of the outdoors. I enjoy meeting the public. I have enjoyed learning, and my life has never been the same."

Janis was born in Alhambra, CA. She lived a short time in the Bay Area and in West Covina during her middle and high school years. Janis attended Mt. San Antonio College for her first two years and graduated from Cal State Long Beach with a BA in English. While teaching English and Social Studies, she chose to take Introduction to Anthropology as a night class at Pasadena City College. That choice and that class led to a lifetime occupational change that she loved and embraced.

This newfound love took her back to graduate school at UCR where she received her Master's Degree and PhD in Anthropology. It took six to seven years teaching part time at Cal State San Bernardino, San Bernardino Valley College, and UC Riverside before she was hired as one of the first full-time Anthropology instructors at Riverside City College. Anthropology is the study of what makes us human; Archaeology, Linguistics, Biological and Cultural Anthropology are the pillars on which the whole discipline rests. Biological Anthropology is what Janis loved teaching the most.

Janis retired from Riverside City College in 2008. Since then you can find her at the information tables, reading about history, or natural gardening, taking a walk (in cooler weather) with her dog, Daisy, or puttering around her yard in the Wood Streets of Riverside.

Janis spends time at home focusing on transforming her turfed landscaped yard into a creative, natural, self-sustaining, water efficient garden designed to attract birds, bees, butterflies, lizards and other wildlife. She has planted several California natives and provides fresh water to establish her own "mini wildlife

habitat. She said, “I noticed all my outdoor tasks are taking much longer than they used to, yet I just take my time and enjoy my work.”

I asked Janis how she viewed her future with the program, and she replied, “I am happy to still be able to learn and help people with their gardening questions. At my age, everything can feel laborious. So, at this stage of my life, I can offer ‘Brains not Brawn’. Volunteering at the information tables has allowed me to continue teaching, which I love without having to grade papers.” Friend and fellow master gardener, Thurman Howard observes while volunteering with her, “Janis shares a genuine look of concern and willingness to help. The public seems to gravitate to her sincere charm. Even with her small stature she has no problem anchoring the information table so others can feel comfortable and welcomed.”



Janis Binam volunteering at the Moreno Valley Demonstration Garden.

Just one closing comment about Janis. I was also in the class of 2015 and had the chance to sit with and learn alongside her. I remember our first UCR Botanic Garden Plant Sale and her pushing plant filled wheelbarrows through the grass. I'm not sure how many she pushed, but her strength was impressive. In class she was not afraid to ask the questions we all had but were too timid to ask. You could usually find Janis chatting with the presenter with further questions during and after class. Which explains why she is so knowledgeable. She took her learning seriously and was an inspiration to me. I enjoyed watching her and admired her vibrant nature. We look forward to many more years of rubbing shoulders with you, Janis!

Butterfly Corner: The Sara Orange-Tip

Contributed by Ann Platzer, UCCE Master Gardener

A true herald of spring and the beginning of a new butterfly season is the presence of the Sara Orange-tip, *Anthocharis sara*. As we walked through the Box Springs Mountain Park (Two Trees Trail) several of these beautiful white-winged butterflies with glowing orange wing tips flew by us. This burst of color is characteristic of our spring foothill fauna. As we leaned against a big boulder and watched a male patrol the trail searching for a female, another male flew by in the opposite direction, but they took no notice of one another. Then a female appeared, and the pair flew up in the sky in circles. What a sight to behold!

The distinctive key field mark of the “Sara” is the glowing orange color on the dorsal, forewing tips. The male’s forewing has a large, inner solid orange spot, margined by black (Photo 1: male dorsal view), while the female has a paler orange spot, with a paler, black margin, interrupted by spots of ground color (Photo 2: female dorsal view). The underside of the hind wings of both sexes is marked with irregular patches of greenish scales having a mottled “mossy” appearance (Photo 3: male ventral

view); thus, when resting with wings closed, they camouflage as a leaf.



Photo 1: male dorsal view



Photo 2: female dorsal view

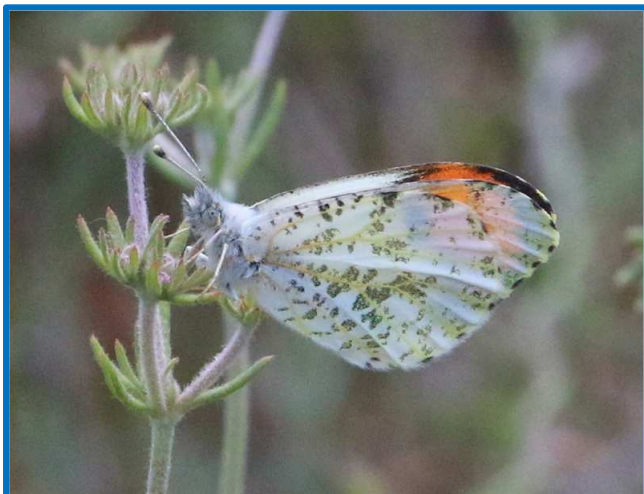


Photo 3: male ventral view

In Southern California, flight time for the “Sara” is from late January to April for the first brood and from May to early July for the second brood. Wingspan is roughly from one to one ½ inches; however, the second brood is larger.

The female Sara Orange-tip lays her eggs singly on native and introduced host mustard plants (Family, *Brassicaceae*,). These **mustard plants contain toxic oils** that the caterpillar ingests and in turn are transferred to the adult, thus distracting would-be predators, to make Sara Orange-tip another flying jewel with toxic wings.

These butterflies **hibernate as pupae** and may remain in diapause for more than three years! Pupae resemble a thorn on a stem or twig thus providing excellent camouflage. The pupae have a head start over butterflies that overwinter as eggs or larvae, to make them one of the earliest flying butterflies in the spring.

The Sara Orange-tip ranges throughout California and Western United States from the Rocky Mountains west to the Pacific Coast. It has a number of subspecies and occurs in a variety of habitats from desert hills, coniferous forests, mountain foothills, open grassy hillsides or widely scattered woodland including chaparral.

The adults nectar on many plants such as fiddleneck, *Amsinckia* spp., and blue dicks,



Dicelostemma capitatum in addition to their host plants, the mustards, that bloom even during the driest of years.


Since the Sara Orange-tip is unlikely to occur in our urban gardens two additional places to visit, besides Two Tree Trail, are the Harford Nature Reserve and Big Morongo Preserve.

Thanks to Edward Platzer for proofing this article.

Free Workshop


Hydroponics

Saturday, December 2, 2023 • 10 am




The Greek word "hydro" means water and "ponos" means labor or work. Hydroponics is a method of growing plants in water without soil. Saves space, water, and minimizes or eliminates many issues with soil (e.g. insects, diseases, and poor quality or nutrient content). It's clean and COOL!

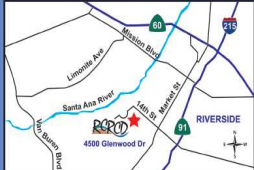
Michael Fisher serves as volunteer coordinator for the City of Moreno Valley's Community Demonstration Garden. He graduated from the UCCE Master Gardeners of Riverside County in 2018 with honors. Michael shares his valued expertise at the "Ask a Master Gardener" information tables throughout the county.



Ask a Master Gardener First Saturdays from 9 - noon.
Stop by the Master Gardener booth to have all your gardening questions answered.



Open Daily, 8 am to 4 pm
4500 Glenwood Dr., Riverside, 92501
For more information, please contact us at (951) 683-7691 ext. 207 or lhc@RCRCD.org



San Diego Seed Company Donation Program to UC Master Gardeners of Riverside County

Contributed by Thurman Howard UCCE Master Gardener



I met Brijette Peña, the founder and owner of San Diego Seed Company at the 2023 Grow Riverside Conference in late March. She was the morning keynote speaker on Thursday and talked about the importance of growing food for the communities of Riverside County.

I was extremely impressed with the concept of San Diego Seed Company seeds being

regionally adapted for our area. As I waited my turn to speak with Brijette, I could not help but overhear the wonderful testimonials of her customers.

I asked Brijette what she did with the seeds after their season was over explaining I was a Master Gardener of Riverside County and currently coordinating our Diverse Community Projects. I then asked her about the possibility of San Diego Seed donating seeds to us, since their seeds are regionally adapted for our area. Brijette asked me how the seeds would be distributed. I then explained.

1. We work with our local Farmers Market Managers to distribute donated seeds to people who utilize WIC, Market Match, and EBT recipients.



2. We coordinate with CalFresh UCCE and Riverside University Health System to promote growing fresh produce in the food desert of our county.

3. We will promote San Diego Seed company donations to Hispanic/Latino/Latinx, Asian and Asian American, Pacific Islander, Native American, and people with disabilities, as well as several other programs making certain these seeds are utilized with education and under supervision.



She agreed to donate seeds to us, and we recently received our first shipment of seed packs to distribute throughout the community.

As UC Master Gardener of Riverside County Coordinator of our Diverse Community Projects, the umbrella project focuses on partnerships with organizations serving our tribal, inclusive, and cultural communities, as well as several other programs. These seeds will be utilized throughout the region.

Here are some of the seeds donated by San Diego Seed Company that we will distribute:

Cal Sweet Bush Watermelon Seeds, Organic Sugar Baby Watermelon Seeds, Organic Green Zebra Tomato Seeds, Organic Black Seeded Simpson Lettuce Seeds, Organic Padron Pepper Seeds, Organic White Scallop Bush Summer Squash Seeds, Organic Tender Green Cucumber Seeds, Organic Burgundy Amaranth Seeds, Red Burgundy Onion Seeds, California Orange Poppy Seeds, Narrowleaf Milkweed Seeds, Bachelor Button Seeds, Luffa Gourd Seeds



Master Gardeners Celebrate These New Riverside County Recognition Awards! November-December

500 Hours Watering Can Pin
Christal Ferlisi
Daniel Weatherford

250 Hours Gardeners' Trowel Pin
Ahmad Barazi
Rita Kraus

100 Hours Bumble Bee Pin
Kate Kramer

Palm Springs Animal Shelter Landscape Revitalization

Contributed by Debbie O'Brien, UCCE Master Gardener Trainee

UC Master Gardener Program of Riverside County Trainees Sam Martin, Debbie O'Brien, and Xochitl Pena joined Master Gardener Jan Seaman for a workday at the Palm Springs Animal Shelter. Jan started the day by explaining the history of this ongoing weekly gardening project and how it has evolved over the years. This is an example of the Master Gardeners of Riverside County partnering with a community organization, in this case, Palm Springs Animal Shelter, to provide mutual benefits to each group. Master Gardeners are working to restore the landscape around the Animal Shelter to its original beauty. Today's task is pruning Brittlebush or *Encelia farinosa*, a common desert shrub. Jan explained the pruning process for this plant and then we got to work.



Riverside County Trainees Sam Martin, Debbie O'Brien, and Xochitl Pena, photo by Jan Seaman

If you are someone that likes hands on gardening and wants to learn about desert plants, then check out this project on most Saturdays from now until Spring. Check VMS for details! Happy Gardening!!



Sam Martin pruning! Photo by Debbie O'Brien

Permaculture Design Course

Second Saturdays 9 am - 3:30 pm
September 2023 - August 2024



September 9, 2023	Introduction, Orientation, Ethics and Principles Overview, Site Tour with Examples of Permaculture Principles. First day is FREE.
October 14, 2023	Communication, Methods and Patterns: Habitat Construction (Bat and Owl Boxes) and Gardening
November 11, 2023	Soils: Soil Preparation, Sheet Mulching and Swales
December 9, 2023	Water and Workshops in Waterharvesting, Greywater and Drip Irrigation
January 13, 2024	Energy Transactions of Trees, Bareroot Selection, Fruit Tree Pruning
February 10, 2024	Weather, Climate Technology: Solar Oven, Solar Hot Water Heater, Indoor/ Outdoor Climate Control
March 9, 2024	Livestock, Earthworks and Earth Resources: Small Animal Care and Natural Building
April 13, 2024	Dryland Strategies, Environmental Energy Harvesting and Management
May 11, 2024	Trees and Maintenance: Designing with Trees in the Urban Environment
June 8, 2024	Principles of Homestead and Permaculture Design PREREQUISITE: Must take the entire design course to attend this module.
July 13, 2024	Conservation and Permaculture Zone 5 Planning and Partnering with Nature
August 10, 2024	Community Strategies and Permaculture Nation, Final Designs, Certificates



Taught by a team of local certified permaculture designers led by Susan Krings of Diverse Habitat Garden Ecological Enterprise (DiHG Eco-Prise). Pricing and more info at: <https://dihgeco.org/home/permaculture-design-course-riverside-california/> or (310) 990-8695.



All classes at Bldg F and the LandUse Learning Center:
4500 Glenwood Dr., Riverside, 92501



Please check the website, Permaculture Design Courses, Demonstration Sites and Eco-Villages (dihgeco.org), for updates to classes.

West County Helpline: Bindweed

Contributed by Bill Floyd, UCCE Master Gardener

The Master Gardener Helpline operates in Western Riverside County and in the Desert area. Both areas receive many questions each month about home gardening topics that are researched and answered by Master Gardener volunteers. The folks that use the Helpline appear to genuinely appreciate the community service we provide. Often, inquiries come from home gardeners that have been referred to the

Helpline by a number of different referral sources such as the MG eBlast, volunteers at MG information tables, the MG website, and a host of government and non-profit organizations. As an example, we recently received an inquiry about field bindweed from Stephanie, who was referred to the Helpline by the Agricultural Commissioner's office.



**Field Bindweed, *Convolvulus arvensis*,
UCANR**

Stephanie said she had been researching bindweed and how to get rid of it. She learned about a mite called *Aceria malherbae*, also known as bindweed mite, that is being used in Colorado to eradicate field bindweed. She asked if we were familiar with this method of bindweed control and if we could recommend a source in California where she could purchase bindweed mites. She noted that Colorado sold these mites but to Colorado residents only. She also wanted to avoid any bindweed management methods that were harmful to the environment.

According to information published by Weld County, Colorado, the "bindweed mite, *Aceria malherbae*, is a microscopic mite imported from southern Europe as a biological control agent for field bindweed. The bindweed mite feeds only on field bindweed and closely related wild

morning glories. It does not damage other plant species, and it requires bindweed to survive. Bindweed mite feeding causes the formation of gall-like growth of plant leaves. Leaves of infested plants are thickened and have a 'fuzzy' texture. In heavily infested plants, the shoots are misshapen, and growth is severely stunted. Recently infested plants have newly emerged leaves that appear folded. The thickened texture and fuzzy appearance are good diagnostic characteristics to identify bindweed mite presence.



**Bindweed gall mite, *Aceria malherbae*
*Invasive.org***

Bindweed mites have the potential to aid in suppression or control of field bindweed in many arid regions, and under many plant management regimes. It can be useful in wildland settings, pastures, roadsides, disturbed areas, landscape plantings, and other areas. The best results will be obtained with active management of the mite population, especially by mowing of the bindweed which moves the mites around and stimulates new growth for the mites to feed on."

In researching this issue, we were unable to find any UC research-based information or programs promoting the use of *Aceria malherbae*, or bindweed mites, to eradicate or otherwise control field bindweed. In fact, we found nothing to indicate that this method was being used in California or that the bindweed

mite was available for purchase in California. This is not to say, however, that this approach to bindweed management is without merit as it is being tried in several states besides Colorado.



Bindweed mite, *Aceria malherbae*, Plant Talk Colorado, Colorado State University Extension

Although we were not able to lead Stephanie to a source in California where she could obtain bindweed mites, we were able to provide her with a wealth of information about field bindweed, including several management practices, by sending her a link to material from the UC Integrated Pest Management website. Here is a link to the information we sent to Stephanie: <https://ipm.ucanr.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn7462.html>.

This is just one of many interesting and challenging questions we receive at the Helpline. In most cases, we are able to provide useful, practical information to resolve the home gardener's concerns. And, even in cases like Stephanie's where we couldn't put our finger on the exact information she was seeking, we were able to provide her with relevant research-based information from UC that addressed her gardening issue. If you are interested in joining the Helpline team, contact one of our Coordinators, Jane Payne in West County and Ralph Thompson in the Desert Area.



Free Workshop Saturday, January 6, 2024



Growing Edible Mushrooms • 10 - 11:30 am



Learn about the role of mushrooms in our environment, the biology of edible mushrooms, and how to propagate them for food, including basic substrate preparation, spawning generation techniques, inoculation methods, harvesting, and pest management.

Join Dr. Hung K. Doan, Small Farms and Specialty Crops Advisor, UC Cooperative Extension. Hung earned his Ph.D. degree in Plant Pathology from the UC, Davis and has taught mushroom identification and cultivation.



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For more information, please contact us at (951) 683-7691
ext. 226 or llc@RCRCD.org



Janet's Jottings *Janet Hartin*

With the holidays upon us, it's time to think about that special book a family member or friend might like. Below are a few suggestions to

consider.

Biophilia, (1984) written by the late Dr. Edward O. Wilson, remains a standard "must read" for anyone interested in the importance of "life needing life" and essential connections we as humans have on a daily basis with nature. The book eloquently describes how our affinity for

life is the core of humanity and our deep connections to other living species.

Fast forward to 2014 when Wilson penned “***A Window on Eternity: A biologist’s Walk Through Gorongosa National Park***. The writing is beautiful and paints a vivid picture of one of the richest ecosystems in the world. The photos are lovely as well. (By the way, Gorongosa National Park is in Mozambique.) Here is some food for thought from the book: “Nature is the birthright of everyone on Earth. The millions of species we have allowed to survive are our phylogenetic kin. Their long-term history is our long-term history. Despite all our fantasies and pretensions, we always have been and will remain a biological species tied to this particular biological world.”

Horticultural Therapy Methods: Connecting People and Plants in Health Care, Human Services, and Therapeutic Programs (2016) written by Rebecca Haller and Christine Kramer, is literally a textbook that describes horticultural therapy techniques and interventions. “Horticultural therapy is a professionally conducted client-centered treatment modality that utilizes horticulture activities to meet specific therapeutic or rehabilitative goals of its participants. The focus is to maximize social, cognitive, physical and/or psychological functioning and/or to enhance general health and wellness.”

Authors discuss how horticultural therapy is used in a wide variety of settings and outlines treatment plans, goals, and expected outcomes. Even if you’re not considering a career shift into this quickly expanding field, the book offers valuable insight into the important role of horticulture in rehabilitation and wellness. (Note: Rebecca Haller has an impressive background, earning a M.S. in Horticultural Therapy from Kansas State University, establishing a successful vocational horticultural therapy program for adults with development disabilities in Colorado and developing and teaching a

horticultural therapy certificate program at the Denver Botanic Gardens. She and co-author Christine now manage the Horticulture Therapy Institute that offers certificates in Horticulture Therapy. <https://www.htinstitute.org>

California Plants: A Guide to Our Iconic Flora (2018) written by Dr. Matt Ritter, a professor of botany at Cal Poly University in San Luis Obispo, is a delightful addition to a plant enthusiast’s library. The book has beautiful photos and an easy-to-follow layout that covers features and descriptions of over 500 species of plants, both native and non-native. A particularly interesting feature of the book is historical accounts and stories of the origins and evolution of many species discussed in the book.

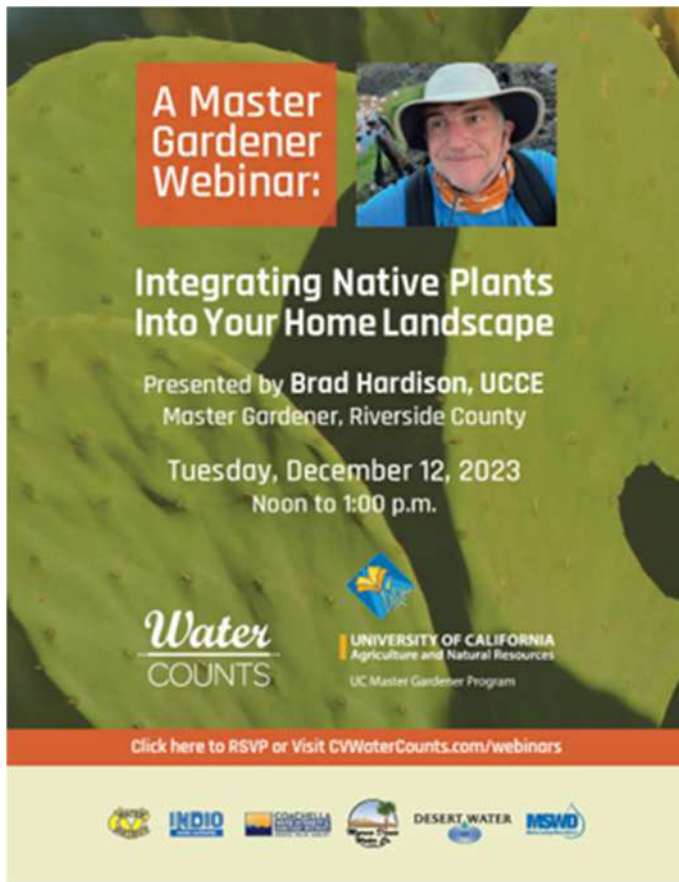


Matt Ritter giving CUFAC advisory committee a tour of Cal Poly SLO trees

A Californian’s Guide to the Trees Among Us: Expanded and Updated (2022) was also written by Dr. Matt Ritter. This book features over 150 species of common trees found in California, some native and some introduced. As in the former book discussed above, Dr.

Ritter adds interesting stories and anecdotes about the trees.

Happy Holidays!



\$3,053. Thank you to the Master Gardeners and Community Members who donated during the 24-hour Giving Tuesday fundraiser. All funds will be used to promote science-based research information in the community.

As we end the year, there are some upcoming continuing education opportunities:

December 14 Search for Excellence Soboba Cultural Garden (virtual)

December 14 Veterans Meeting – History and After Care of Poinsettias (virtual)

December 21 Lunch & Learn – Introduction to Produce Safety Rules (virtual)

Join the Master Gardener to celebrate the holidays with a Cookie Exchange. The Cookie Exchange will be held on December 15 at the Riverside office; check VMS for details.

The UCCE offices will be for the holidays as follows:

Riverside Office closed December 22, 2023, through January 2, 2024.

Palm Desert Office closed December 22, 2023, through January 1, 2024.

Wishing everyone a Happy Holiday Season!



News from Rosa! *Rosa Olaiz*

Happy Holidays!

It is hard to believe 2024 is just around the corner. The year whizzed by with more activities as Covid is behind us. It is wonderful to work with such dedicated volunteers whose passion is to educate the residents of Riverside County.

A special thanks to Pam Elias for heading the Giving Tuesday campaign. During the fundraiser the UC Master Gardener Program Statewide raised \$49,547, while locally Riverside County Master Gardener raised

