UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
Agriculture and Natural Resources
UC Master Gardener Program
UC CE

The Curious Gardener

Vol. 32, No. 4
Fall 2025

In This Issue

Native Bulbs for Fall Planting 1
Unusual Edible: Honeyberry 2
Soil Is a Living Ecosystem 3
Nevada County Demonstration Garden News 4
Insect Bytes: Hornworms 4
Sustainable Pest Management 5
BotLat: Monarch Host Plants 6
Planning School Gardens 6
Invasive Insects 7
2026 Gardening Guide and Calendar 8
Enhance your Garden with a Raised Bed 8
Q&As: Cicadas 9
All-Star: Ivy Leaf Cyclamen 9
Placer County Demonstration Garden News 10
Western Sierra Foothills Garden Guide 10
Events Calendar 11

Dear Readers,
This is the last issue you will receive unless you have taken our survey or subscribed in the past 3 months.
To receive future issues, please subscribe by clicking here.

Native Bulbs for Fall Planting

by Michele Rugo, UC Master Gardener of Nevada County Master Gardener
Photos by Chrissy Freeman, UC Master Gardener of Nevada County


Hartweg's Iris.

There are many benefits to growing plants native to the area in which you garden. Native plants have adapted to local climate, weather patterns, soil conditions and light. They host a large variety of beneficial insects that feed other "good bugs" along with birds and wildlife. Native plants support pollinators so important to plant reproduction and our food supply. They help keep soils balanced and have built-in defenses against common pests and diseases. That means they need little to no pesticides, which can harm people, animals and the environment in general.

Native bulbs are of particular interest as they require minimal care. They emerge with the winter rains and reliably flower year after year each spring. Truly, they are the very definition of low-maintenance gardening!

Spring-blooming bulbs that go dormant during summer can also be good choices for fire safety as many completely disappear after they bloom, leaving nothing behind to catch embers or to burn.

Some simple rules to achieve success with native bulbs:

- Plant in full or part sun and away from water sprinklers and emitters.
- Do not amend the soil or plant in cultivated flower or vegetable beds. (Keep in mind native bulbs have evolved with local soil types.)
- Plant each bulb three to six inches deep in late fall after the first significant rain.
- *Very important*—do not water summer through fall to avoid rot and allow bulbs to rest.

Continued on next page

Continued from previous page

Protect against snails and slugs by following these guidelines. (Except for alliums, our native bulbs are very attractive to these pests.)

Obtain native bulbs from local, trusted nurseries, native plant sales or fellow gardeners.

A few suggestions for low-maintenance, northern California, native bulb varieties to add beauty to your landscape, support beneficial wildlife and contribute to a healthy ecosystem include:

Hartweg's iris (*Iris hartwegii*), also known as rainbow or Sierra iris. Found on low-elevation mountain slopes bearing one to three flowers on a slender, up to one foot, stem. Flowers may be shades of purple or yellow to almost white. Blooms from May to June.

Ookow (*Dichelostemma congestum*). Found throughout the hills and mountains of western North America, including our region. Blooms in dense flower clusters of 6 to 15 flowers on four inch stems in shades of blue, lavender, and purple. Blooms May through early summer.

Papery onion (*Allium membranaceum*). A relatively rare wild onion growing in woody areas of the Sierra Nevada foothills and southern Cascades. Blooms on one foot1' stems with clusters containing up to 35 flowers of white or pale pink petals which become papery as they age. Blooms May through June.

Prettyface (*Triteleia ixioides*), also called "golden stars." Butter-yellow, umbel-shaped flowers grow on eight inch stalks, often with dark purple midveins. Continuous blooming from mid-April through July.

Yellow star-tulip (*Calochortus monophyllus*). Native to the Sierra Nevada and southern Cascades, it bears one to six upright, bell-shaped flower clusters on eight inch tall stems with pointed sepals and rounded petals, all bright to deep yellow. Often with dark, reddish spots at their bases.

References

- Flint, Mary Louise, and Steve H. Dreistadt, et al. *Natural Enemies Handbook, The Illustrated Guide to Biological Pest Control*. UCANR Publication 3386. 1998.
- Miller, George Oxford. *Native Plant Gardening for Birds, Bees & Butterflies*. Adventure Publications. 2022.
- Tallamy, Douglas W. *How You Can Sustain Wildlife with Native Plants*. Timber Press, 2009.
- California Native Plant Society. https://chapters.cnps.org/redbud/
- Calscape. http://Calscape.org

Unusual Edible: Honeyberry

by Julie Lowrie, UC Master Gardener of Placer County

Lonicera caerulea, commonly known as honeyberry, is a deciduous compact bush, usually growing three to five feet tall and wide, with oval, slightly fuzzy leaves and a soft green color. Its small, yellowish-white flowers bloom in early spring. These flowers develop usually cylindrical or oval berries that ripen to a deep blue-purple color, resembling an elongated blueberry. The fruit's skin is thin, with vivid crimson flesh, offering a complex flavor that combines tart and sweet notes, like a blend of blueberry, raspberry and blackcurrant.

Beyond its unique appearance, the honeyberry has remarkable medicinal qualities. The berries are extremely rich in antioxidants, particularly anthocyanins, which give them their deep color and are known for their anti-inflammatory properties, potentially reducing the risk of cardiovascular disease and diabetes. They also contain high levels of vitamin C, vitamin A, and various minerals.

The honeyberry grows best in full sun to partial shade and prefers well-drained soil. It is essential to plant at least two different varieties to facilitate cross-pollination for a robust fruit yield. During warm summers, using mulch to maintain consistent moisture, especially while fruiting, is essential. While cold-hardy, the honeyberry requires enough chilling time for fruit production, making it well-suited to the winter cold of the Sierra Nevada foothill counties.

Soil Is a Living Ecosystem

by Ann Beinhorn, UC Master Gardener of Placer County

An ecosystem is a dynamic balance between plants, animals, and the surrounding environment. We are surrounded by living ecosystems in every climate and terrain. From desert to mountain to seaside, we see plants and animals adapted to the challenges of any natural habitat to ensure their health and survival. To maintain healthy sustainability, living members of a habitat have essential symbiotic relationships among themselves in balance with the non-living components.

Soil health is defined by the USDA-NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service) as "the continued capacity of soil to function as a vital living ecosystem that sustains plants, animals, and humans."

Often overlooked is that within the soil itself there is a vital, complex ecosystem that actually makes life possible above ground. Soils everywhere contain ecosystems of organic and inorganic components. Their biodiversity enables pest resistance, further contributing to sustainability.

Organic matter is so important that it is worthwhile to keep most of the soil covered with plants, organic mulches, compost, or cover crops (i.e. for vegetable gardens in the off season).

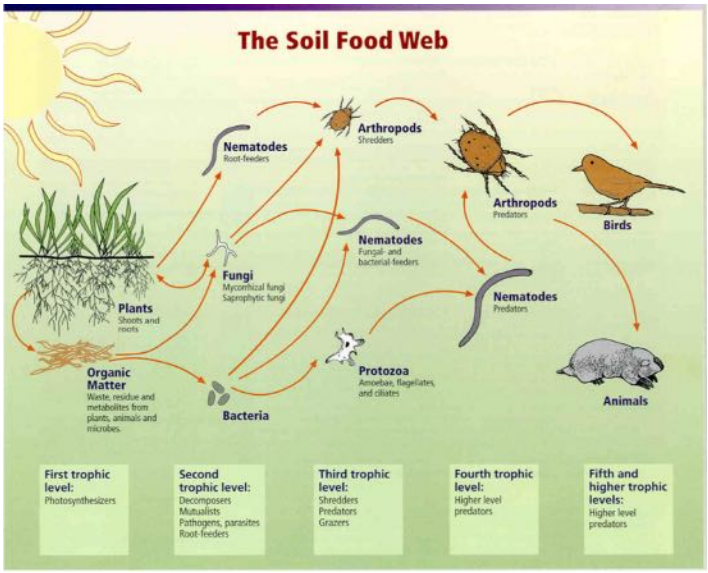
Soil texture is the natural mineral state, derived from earthly "parent material," and determined by the percentages of clay, silt and sand particles. These particles are arranged into soil aggregates. The resulting structure creates pore spaces between aggregates, holding water and air, determining the potential for soil life: roots, microorganisms, earthworms, and other creatures. We have the ability to alter the functions of soil—for better or worse—when we alter the soil structure.

To quote NRCS further, "Soil is a living factory of macroscopic and microscopic workers who need food to eat and places to do their work."

What else is in that soil? We look at the organisms in the "food chain" from small to larger.

- "Good" fungi and bacteria are the most broadly understood microorganisms. Microscopic life depends so much on living plant roots and dead organic matter to thrive, and in turn, feed nutrients to and protect the plant roots, and they become food for the next larger organisms on the food chain.
- The "middle sized" organisms recycle nutrients (Examples: "good" nematodes and protozoa).
- The next size up are animals like earthworms and arthropods (like beetles) who help increase those vital soil pore spaces.

Tilling, historically powered by human, animal and mechanical forces, had a goal to create a soil structure that allows deeper cultivation. But tilling actually damages the structure of the soil, resulting in a disruption of the ecosystem, interfering with life below ground. Tilling also can lead to erosion, and loss of water infiltration, eventually resulting in water runoff or ponding. Unwelcome weed seeds can find a favorable place to germinate after tilling. The nutrient exchange of living and non-living organisms is disrupted as the soil structure is damaged.



There are complex ecosystems underground within the soil that support life above ground. Image courtesy of USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

"No-till," a practice which started in agriculture, is widely practiced today to protect soils, even in the backyard landscapes. Avoiding tilling allows us to retain the underground natural ecosystems as much as we can, keeping vital organic matter while avoiding unnecessary disruption of the soil's structure.

References:

- *Healthy Soils for a Healthy California: Healthy Soils Basics.* UC ANR. n.d. https://ucanr.edu/site/healthy-soils-healthy-california/healthy-soils-basics.
- *No-till gardening keeps soil and plants healthy*. Oregon State University Extension Service. n.d. https://extension.oregonstate.edu/news/no-till-gardening-keeps-soil-plants-healthy
- *Soil Health.* USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. n.d. https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/conservation-basics/natural-resource-concerns/soils/soil-health

Insect Bytes: Hornworms

Article and photos by Bonnie Bradt,
UC Master Gardener of Nevada County

What is big and fat and green and ugly and eats tomatoes?? OK, I'll bet you ALL know. YOU GOT IT!—tomato hornworms or tobacco hornworms are both the answer. Both species of moth larvae are prevalent throughout the country. And both species can demolish your tomatoes in short order.

But tomatoes are not the only target of these little eating machines. (And you thought great white sharks were eating machines!) Hornworms also attack other members of the nightshade family: eggplant, peppers, and occasionally potatoes.

Mama hornworms are nicknamed hummingbird or hawk moths. The tomato and tobacco hornworms look very much alike, and both have the same food preferences with one exception. Tobacco hornworms possess a chemical pathway that enables them to eat tobacco without dying. Nicotine in tobacco is a potent insecticide. The American Chemical Society says, "For centuries, gardeners have used homemade mixtures of tobacco and water as a natural pesticide to kill insect pests." This is no longer recommended because the nicotine in this mixture is highly toxic to humans and pets.

Final advice? Go out right now and check your tomato plants for these cryptically colored pests. They look just like rolled up tomato leaves and they can defoliate your plants in a matter of days, if not hours. You can also search at night using a blacklight. They will glow, making them easy to spot. They do not bite or sting, but if you can't STAND handling them, use gloves. Pull them off and toss them into a pail of bleach or dish soap diluted with water. That's the best method of control.

Tomato hornworm eggs (above) and caterpillar (below).

UC Master Gardener Holly Miner sizes up a sunflower in the Demo Garden. Photo by Ann Wright.

Master Gardeners of Nevada County Demonstration Garden News

by Ann Wright, UC Master Gardener of Nevada County

With recent mild, almost spring-like temperatures, the UC Master Gardeners of Nevada County Demonstration Garden is brimming with color this summer, with hopes the lovely flowers and blooming shrubs will continue to show a gorgeous display into fall. The raised beds are filled with flowering summer perennials and annuals, vegetables and towering sunflowers. The striking colors were also welcoming to hummingbirds and other abundant pollinators.

The Demonstration Garden pavilion is the location for most of our summer and fall workshops, and we have enjoyed having the public tour the garden before and after the workshops. The garden was the site of our first "weed and feed" work day where an energetic group showed up to do some weeding and then to enjoy the potluck brunch.

Work continues on the Oak Habitat, where the small perennials acquired via a grant from the Xerces Society have been doing very well. Some of the native grasses can be seen growing through the tops of their protective wire baskets. We will soon be preparing for fall planting.

In the Cottage Garden area, the area previously devoted to lawn alternatives has been replaced with an area for flowers and a soon-to-be brick hardscape will boast a lovely park-like bench, to allow visitors to sit and enjoy the garden.

We are looking forward to late summer and fall harvests. Tours of the garden are available by contacting us at 530-273-0919.

Sustainable Pest Management (SPM): A New Step Beyond Traditional Integrated Pest Management (IPM)

by Carol Holliman, UC Master Gardener of Placer County

Pest management is the way gardeners and farmers seek to control pests—like insects, weeds, and diseases—that can harm vegetable and ornamental plants. For many years, the main approach has been Integrated Pest Management (IPM). IPM is a smart way to manage pests using a combination of methods, such as biological controls, traps, and limited chemicals, with the goal of reducing harm to both the environment and people's health.

What is IPM?

Think of IPM as a toolbox where gardeners pick the right tools for each situation. Instead of jumping straight to the use of chemicals, they focus on observing pests carefully, choosing the least harmful methods, and only using chemicals when necessary. This method is effective, safer for the environment, and better for our health because it minimizes overuse of harmful pesticides.

Enter Sustainable Pest Management (SPM)

Sustainable Pest Management is a new approach that takes IPM a step further. It's like upgrading from a basic phone to a smartphone—not just doing the job but doing it in a way that is better for the planet, better for people, and better for future generations. The focus is on accelerating statewide adoption of SPM including the transition away from high-risk pesticides toward safer pest control systems.

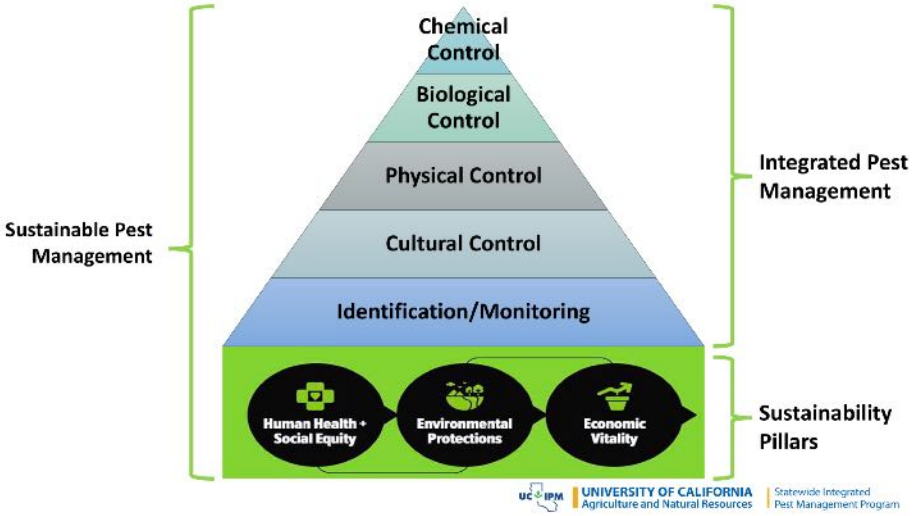
How will SPM be rolled out?

The State of California is leading the way in SPM adoption. In 2023 a workgroup representing public, private, urban, agricultural and tribal interests released its vision and goals in *Sustainable Pest Management: A Roadmap for California*. This roadmap has two main goals by 2050:

1. California has eliminated the use of Priority Pesticides by transitioning to sustainable pest management practices.
2. Sustainable pest management has been adopted as the de facto pest management system in California.

In support of these goals the roadmap defines five Keystone Actions:

1. Prioritize prevention
2. Coordinate state-level leadership
3. Invest in building SPM knowledge
4. Improve California's pesticide registration process and bring alternative products to market
5. Enhance monitoring and data collection



SPM elevates IPM practices on pillars of sustainability to further promote human health and safety, ecosystem resilience, agricultural sustainability, community wellbeing, and economic vitality

How is SPM different from IPM?

- **Looking at the Bigger Picture:** SPM adds broader consideration of human health/social equity, environmental protection and economic vitality
- **Reducing Chemical Use Even More:** SPM aims to accelerate the focus on safer, eco-friendly products and techniques that support biodiversity by finding effective alternatives to the most harmful chemicals, called Priority Pesticides. The roadmap describes Priority Pesticides as a subset of high-risk pesticides, which are defined as active ingredients that are highly hazardous and/or formulations or uses that pose a likelihood of, or are known to cause, significant or widespread human and/or ecological impacts from their use.
- **Holistic Approach:** SPM emphasizes not just controlling pests but also protecting natural resources like water, soil, and wildlife. SPM considers the entire garden as a system. It promotes practices like crop rotation, planting cover crops, and creating habitats that attract natural predators of pests, all of which help keep pest populations naturally in check.

Where Can I Learn More?

SPM and IPM Overview from the CA Department of Pesticide Management. https://www.cdpr.ca.gov/spm-ipm-overview.

Digesting the Sustainable Pest Management Roadmap for California. https://ucanr.edu/sites/default/files/2024-09/402315.pdf.

UC Master Gardeners Help Placer County Schools Plan Gardens

by Carol Holliman, UC Master Gardener of Placer County

School gardens offer a fun and meaningful way for children to learn. They can support lessons in math, science, art, and more, while also helping students connect with nature. Starting a garden can be exciting, but it can also feel overwhelming. UC Master Gardeners of Placer County have developed a process to guide schools through planning and building a successful and sustainable garden.

The first step is an initial meeting between a UC Master Gardener of Placer County and a school representative, usually a teacher, principal, or parent volunteer. They discuss important questions: Does the school garden have support from staff and parents? Will the garden be used as an outdoor classroom on a regular basis? How can the garden be integrated into the required curriculum? These early decisions shape the garden's purpose.

Next, they choose a site that gets at least eight hours of sun daily—key for growing vegetables. They check for shade from trees or buildings and make sure water is easy to access. Then they help plan the layout to make best use of the space.

They also address safety, storage, and long-term support. Fencing may be needed, and tools should be stored securely.

Funding ideas like grants, donations, or student-made products are discussed, along with who will maintain the garden—students, parents, or volunteers from service clubs.

A school garden is much more than just a place to grow plants. It's a place where learning comes alive, where students connect with nature, and where the community works together toward a shared goal. To get started, a school in Placer County can fill out this request form.

agri-cola, ae *m* tiller of the field, farmer, husbandm
caulis, is *m* stalk, stem of a plant; cabbage
colo, colui, cultum 3 to care for; a) to till, culti
farm; b) to tend; *adj.* **cultus** 3 cultivated, t
(**culta, orum** *n/pl* tilled land, gardens,
tions),
cresco, crevi, (cretum) 3 to grow
cultus *m* cultivation, labor, tilling
land; b) care, training, educat
civilization,
florens, tis blooming, flow
floreo, ui 2 to bloom, bl
flos, oris *m* flower, bl
fodio, fossom 3 to
folium, i *n* leaf
herba, ae *f* g
hortus, i *m*
radix *f*
viridi
vita

BotLat Corner

Narrow-leaf milkweed. Photo by Kathleen Wiersch.

Monarch Butterfly Host Plants

by Peggy Beltramo, UC Master Gardener of Placer County

This issue of *The Curious Gardener's* Botanical Latin column will look at the host plant for monarch butterflies. These creatures are migratory, wintering along the California coast where the weather is milder, and traveling inland during the warm months to find nectar and lay eggs to support the continuation of the species. As fall approaches, the monarchs return to the coast and continue the migratory cycle.

Milkweed is **the** host plant for the seriously-endangered monarch butterfly. Monarchs lay eggs on these plants, as that is the only source of food for monarch caterpillars. Do you provide food for monarchs? Plant milkweed in your yard to support monarchs on their annual migrations!

The "BotLat" genus name for milkweed is *Asclepias*, named for the Greek god of medicine, Asklepios. It was believed the milkweed plant had medicinal properties, however some species contain toxic chemicals!

Each geographical area has species of milkweed that are native to that region. You can find a list here of California milkweed species and where they are found within the state.

It is important to plant **only** those milkweeds native to your area! This requires knowledge of the genus **and** species names of your local plants to ensure you get the plants that can survive and thrive in your region. Milkweed species that are **not** native to the area can be very invasive.

Learn more about monarch butterflies here.

WANTED: Invasive Insects

by Carolyn Borden, UC Master Gardener of Placer County

What IS that in my garden? Sharpshooters and weevils. OH MY! My yard has been occupied by invasive insects!

Where do these invasive insects come from? Historically, people brought species of plants with them from other countries to California, either accidentally or intentionally, and some sported invasive, damaging insects.

Many of these invasive pests are of major concern in California. Let's take a closer look at a few of UCANR's Most Wanted, why they are a threat, even in the fall, and resources to mitigate them.

Meet the Glassy-Winged Sharpshooter

Adult glassy-winged sharpshooter next to egg blister on underside of leaf. Photo by Jack Kelly Clark.

Dangerous Threat: The glassy-winged sharpshooter (*Homalodisca coagulata*) is a threat to table, raisin and wine grapes, and almond trees. It is of special concern because of its ability to fly long distances.

Impact: The insect transmits oleander leaf scorch and Pierce's disease (PD).

The new disease known as oleander leaf scorch has spread throughout southern California oleanders for the past several years. It is caused by a bacterium, *Xylella fastidiosa*, that clogs the xylem tissue resulting in drought-like symptoms and eventual death of oleanders. The bacteria are inserted into the xylem cells during feeding by leafhopper insects, specifically the glassy-winged sharpshooter.

Pierce's disease (PD), also known as almond leaf scorch (ALS), is also caused by this bacterium. Almond trees are widely planted in California. As in oleander leaf scorch, the sharpshooter inserts the bacterium into the tree xylem cells during feeding. This disease is incurable in grape vines.

Hosts: Grapevines and almond trees; overwinters in citrus, avocado, riparian vegetables, and ornamental plants.

Location: Sightings in Southern California; San Joaquin Kern, Fresno, Tulare, Santa Barbara, Ventura, San Luis Obispo Counties; Carolyn's backyard?

Fall Mitigation: Destroy infected plants; monitor using sticky traps; apply systemic insecticides.

Enter the Diaprepes Root Weevil.

Adult diaprepes root weevils, Diaprepes abbreviatus, vary in color and striations. Photo by Elizabeth E. Grafton-Cardwell.

Dangerous Threat: Because of its broad host range, the diaprepes root weevil, *Diaprepes abbreviatus*, poses a great threat to citrus and ornamental plant industries in California.

Impact: The diaprepes root weevil is a large, colorful weevil with numerous forms, or morphs, ranging from gray to yellow to orange and black. Adult weevils feed on the outside leaf edge. Weevil larvae cause extensive damage feeding on underground roots and tubers.

Hosts: The diaprepes root weevil feeds on more than 270 species of plants from 59 plant families. More common hosts are citrus (all types), peanut, sorghum, guinea corn, corn, and sweet potato.

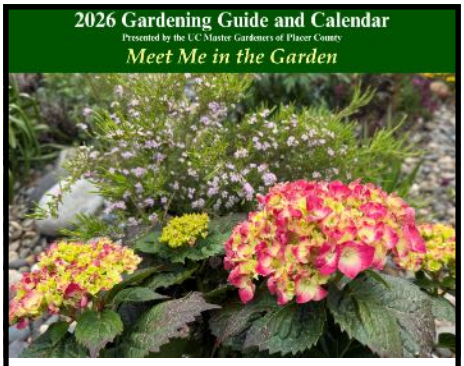
Location: The weevil has been sighted in south and central Florida, Rio Grande Valley of Texas, and intercepted in shipments to California.

Fall Mitigation: Because the primary damage caused by the weevil is to the plant roots, fertilization and irrigation to promote root growth should be practiced. Once the weevil is established, good sanitary practices can help with control.

If you see these pests, or another new or unusual pest in your area, report it! Call the CDFA Pest Hotline at: 1-800-491-1899 or report online.

References

- Grafton-Cardwell, Elizabeth E., Kris E. Godfrey, Jorge E. Pena, et al. *Diaprepes Root Weevil*. UC ANR Publication 8131. May 2004. https://my.ucanr.edu/repository//a/?a=12490.
- Jetter, Karen M., Joseph G. Morse, John N. Kabashima. *The cost of the glassy-winged sharpshooter to California grape, citrus, and nursery producers.* October-December 2014. https://my.ucanr.edu/repository/a/?get=155907.



Breaking News! 2026 Gardening Guide and Calendar is Hot Off the Press!

The theme of this year's edition is "**Meet Me in the Garden**," and presents the latest and best University of California researched information as you follow the 12-months of in-depth articles and daily tips timed to the changing seasons. Articles include topics such as "Wellness Gardens," "Firescaping," "Small Space Gardening," and "The Soil Ecosystem." Each article is accompanied by a beautiful local photo.

Every month, readers will learn what to plant, what is in season at local markets, and how to get the most from their gardens. Additional charts, tables, and resources, accompanied by even more beautiful local images, provide a wealth of information for gardeners of all levels.

Calendars will be available starting in early September at participating nurseries and businesses in Placer, Nevada, and El Dorado counties, as well as through the UC Master Gardeners of Placer County website. For a full list of vendors and ordering information, click here.

Enhance your Garden with a Raised Bed

by Jan Birdsall, UC Master Gardener of Placer County

Fall is the time to consider installing raised beds for your spring vegetable garden. Raised beds have become popular lately among gardeners, but the concept is not new. In fact, the Library of Congress has a photograph of a 1577 woodcut depicting two men tending raised beds (shown at right).

Raised beds overcome many problems for the home gardener. Some native soil conditions are undesirable for productive plant growth such as high soluble salts, heavy metals, or clay soil types. Raised beds are more efficient in small areas because they allow trailing crops like squash to spill over sides, or vine-like crops such as peas to climb vertically on a trellis. Soil compaction is avoided since the elevated planting surface is rarely walked on.

Once you decide to construct a raised bed, find an area in your yard with six to eight hours of sun daily. Have a plan and create a materials list. See further information here and here. Keeping beds no more than four feet across allows for ease of weeding and harvesting. The best practice for raised bed soil is to use 50% compost or potting soil mixed with 50% native soil. This ensures sufficient water holding capacity. If you have burrowing critters, make sure to attach hardware cloth at the bottom of the box before adding compost and soil. In addition, this is a good time to also put in a drip system to water your plants since raised beds tend to drain faster.

Raised beds are easier to install bird netting, shade, or frost cloth with a simple PVC framework of hoops over it.

Raised bed with PVC framework to hold up bird netting. Photo by Carol Holliman.

Garden Q&As

What is causing damage to the twigs on my apple tree?

Have gardening questions? Contact a Master Gardener!

Placer County
530.889.7388
or submit a question electronically

Nevada County
530.273.0919
or submit a question electronically

by Lisa Ann Lowry, UC Master Gardener of Nevada County

Cicada damage, while more prevalent in the eastern United States, does happen in California. There are at least 65 species in eight genera, including at least 36 *Okanagana* species and 18 *Platypedia* species found here. A curious gardener recently sent the hotline a picture regarding damage to an apple twig. It appears that the damage to the twig was caused by cicadas.

Cicadas are insects known for their loud, shrill buzz or click sounds. Those sounds are used by males of many species to attract females. There are three life stages: eggs, nymph, and adult. Nymphs suck and feed on the xylem fluid of roots for several years before emerging from underground, and then shed their skin to become an adult. Adults seek mates and an adult female lays eggs in the bark of twigs. Eggs are narrow, whitish, and several times longer than they are wide.

Cicada damage on apple. Photo by Kevin Marini.

Adult males live only a few weeks. Females can cause terminal dieback when the insertion of their eggs into wood shoots girdles the stem, killing twigs and small branches. Adult cicadas are robust insects up to one-and-a half inches long with clear wings. They are commonly black or deep brown, although some species have green, red, or orange markings.

While predators include birds, moles, other vertebrates, predaceous wasps and spiders, it is believed that natural enemies generally have negligible effect on cicada populations in part because most of their life cycle is spent in soil. Except for preventatively netting your woody plants, cicada control efforts are not generally effective.

For more information see the UC IPM webpage about cicadas.

Ivy Leaf Cyclamen, *Cyclamen hederifolium*

by Elaine Kelly Applebaum, UC Master Gardener of Placer County

Do you have a dry shade area that needs some brightening up? Dainty ivy leaf cyclamen, *Cyclamen hederifolium*, can provide a welcome splash of color as the dog days of summer drag on.

The scented rose-pink or white flowers of these perennial tubers emerge in the late summer and early fall. Four- to six-inch stems hold one-inch reflexed petals that look like butterflies with folded wings. The ornamental silver-white and green foliage follows later, providing a subtle visual sparkle until late spring when the plants go dormant.

Ivy leaf cyclamen needs very little water, especially during its summer dormant period. It is not picky about soil as long as it is well drained. The tubers can last for decades and will spread slowly over time. They are effective as a naturalized woodland groundcover and can also be grown in containers, overplanted with summer annuals.

Also known as hardy cyclamen, these easy to grow plants thrive in Sunset zones 2-9 and 14-24. Please note these are a different species than the florist's cyclamen, *C. persicum*, you will find sold as holiday bedding plants in December. You are more likely to find ivy leaf cyclamen sold as bulbs. Plant them about a foot apart, just below the surface, preferably in the spring.

Read more about ivy leaf cyclamen here.

News from UC Master Gardeners of Placer County Demonstration Garden

by Karen Lopez, UC Master Gardener of Placer County

Summer has settled in at the demo garden. The pollinators are busy doing their important work and our bountiful harvest is a beautiful (and tasty!) testament to their labor.

The Demonstration Garden is a living classroom and we love to talk and share all things gardening related. If you have questions about your home garden, whether they be about food production, attracting pollinators, growing California native plants, pests or a multitude of other topics, we are here to help! Pay us a visit the second Saturday of any month (except December) between 10:00 a.m. and noon. You will find several trained docents on hand ready to address your gardening questions. All Placer County Master Gardener docents have been trained by UCCE and can answer questions with science-based information, or point you in the right direction to find the answers you seek. No appointment necessary!

Just a sample of the bounty harvested from the Demonstration Garden vegetable beds.

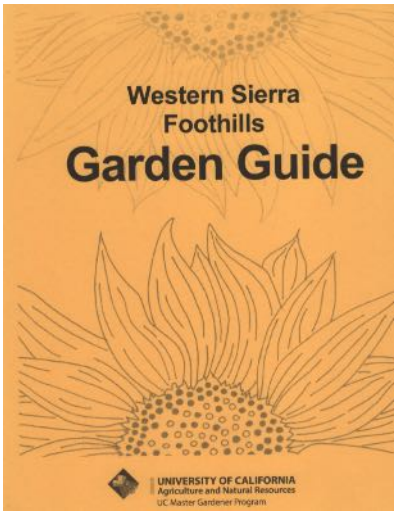
We also offer tours to groups who would like to learn more about the Demonstration Garden and what we do there. Group tours are designed to be informational and are led by trained docent tour guides. You and your group will come away with a better understanding of our Demonstration Garden at the Loomis Library and Community Learning Center and the many different types of sustainable gardening practices we employ there. We have given tours to several HOA boards, garden clubs and philanthropic groups. If you have a group who would like a guided tour of the demonstration garden, you can sign up on our website and we will reach out to schedule one.

Our garden is located at the Loomis Library and Learning Center, 6050 Library Drive in Loomis. Gates are open Tuesday from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Wednesday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Western Sierra Foothills Garden Guide

In 1985, local UC Master Gardeners of Nevada County saw the need for a publication to disseminate gardening information to community home gardeners. At that time the UC Master Gardeners decided to put together a 28-page booklet with climate charts, growing dates and cultural hints for growing vegetables locally. In 1990 it was decided to expand the booklet into a full-fledged gardening book, just for the western Nevada County foothills. Chapters were added and information on growing vegetables was expanded.

From 2002 to 2020, the book continued to evolve, with updates in 2010 and again in 2020. With the 2020 edition, the *Western Sierra Foothills Garden Guide* was published with a focus on Nevada County as well as the surrounding foothill communities.



The *Western Sierra Foothills Garden Guide* provides cultural tips and an abundance of gardening information relevant to the Sierra foothills. New and updated sections on growing native plants, container gardening, composting and vermicomposting have been added to the content. The 2020 edition also provides lists of plants that grow well in our area, as well as expanded information about integrated pest management.

The book can be purchased at many local nurseries in Nevada County as well as in our Nevada County Office. More information can be found on the UC Master Gardeners of Nevada County website.

UC Master Gardeners of Placer and Nevada Counties Workshop and Events Calendar

Always check our websites for the most up to date event information.

Nevada County: ncmg.ucanr.edu Placer County: pcmg.ucanr.edu

Follow Us on Facebook:
Placer County https://www.facebook.com/PlacerCountyMasterGardeners
Nevada County https://www.facebook.com/UCCEmastergardeners.nevadacounty/

September

September 6
10 a.m. to noon
Native Plants
Demonstration Garden, NID grounds

September 13
10:00 am to Noon
Open Garden Day
MGPC Demonstration Garden at the Loomis Library

September 13
10:30 - 11:30
California Native Plants for Habitat Gardening
Loomis Library

Sept 20
10:00 - 11:30
California Native Plants for Habitat Gardening
Roseville Utility Exploration Center
Pre-register in advance by clicking here.

Sept 20
10 a.m. to noon
SOS-Save Our Seeds
Demonstration Garden, NID grounds

Nevada County Events in Green boxes

Placer County Events in Yellow Boxes

Check out recordings of past workshops on our YouTube channels:
Nevada County
Placer County

October

October 4
10 a.m. to noon
Fruit Tree Pruning
Demonstration Garden, NID grounds

October 4
Youth Workshop: Grapevine head wreaths
At the Children's Festival in conjunction with the Renaissance Faire, at Pioneer Park, Nevada City.

October 11
10:00 am to Noon
Open Garden Day
MGPC Demonstration Garden at the Loomis Library

October 11
10:30 - 11:30
Composting & Mulch
Loomis Library

October 11
10 a.m. to noon
Growing Berries: Get Ready to Plant this Winter
Demonstration Garden, NID grounds

October 18
10 a.m. to noon
Compost
Demonstration Garden, NID grounds

November

November 1
10 a.m. to noon
Tools and How to Care for Them
Demonstration Garden, NID grounds

November 8:
10 a.m. to noon
Edible Gardens: Beyond Fruits & Veggies
Demonstration Garden, NID grounds

November 8
10:00 am to Noon
Open Garden Day
MGPC Demonstration Garden at the Loomis Library

November 8
10:30 - 11:30
Successful Container Gardening
Loomis Library

November 15
10:00 - 11:30
The Best Practices of Great Gardeners
Roseville Utility Exploration Center
Pre-register in advance by clicking here.

Workshop Location Addresses

Nevada County workshops are held at **The Nevada County Demo Garden** on the NID Grounds, 1036 W. Main Street, Grass Valley.

Placer County workshops are held at one of the following:
- **The Loomis Library & Community Learning Center**, 6050 Library Dr., Loomis
- **The Roseville Utility Exploration Center**, 1501 Pleasant Grove Blvd., Roseville
- **The Lincoln Library**, 485 Twelve Bridges Dr., Lincoln.

About UC Master Gardeners

Our mission as University of California Master Gardener volunteers is to extend research-based gardening and composting information to the public through various educational outreach methods. We strive to present accurate, impartial information to local gardeners so they have the knowledge to make informed gardening decisions in regard to plant choices, soil fertility, pest management, irrigation practices, and more.

The Master Gardener volunteer program was started in the early 1970s at Washington State University. Farm Advisors became overwhelmed by all the incoming calls from home gardeners and homesteaders so they trained volunteers to answer these questions and the "Master Gardener Program" was born. The first University of California Master Gardener programs began in 1980 in Sacramento and Riverside counties. The UC Master Gardener of Nevada and Placer Counties Programs began soon thereafter in 1983.

Serving Placer and Nevada Counties for Over 40 Years

Have a Gardening Question?

Contact Us!

Placer County Residents

530.889.7388

or contact us through our website or Facebook

Nevada County Residents

530.273.0919

or contact us through our website or Facebook

UC Cooperative Extension Placer County
2855 2nd Street
Auburn, CA 95603
530.889.7385 office
email: ceplacer@ucdavis.edu

UC Cooperative Extension Nevada County
255 So. Auburn Street
Grass Valley, CA 95945
530.273.4563 office
email: cenevada@ucdavis.edu

Production Information

The Curious Gardener is published quarterly by the University of California Cooperative Extension Master Gardeners of Placer and Nevada Counties. All information presented pertains to the climate and growing conditions of Nevada and Placer Counties in California.

Bruno Pitton, Editor
Environmental Horticulture Advisor, Placer and Nevada Counties

Cassie Burzinski, Editor
CES2, UCCE Placer and Nevada Counties

Brooke Johnson, Content Coordination
UC Master Gardener of Placer County

Karen Mead, Content Coordination
UC Master Gardener of Nevada County

Elaine Kelly Applebaum, Production
UC Master Gardener of Placer County

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
Agriculture and Natural Resources

UC Master Gardener Program