



# Advice to Grow by... Ask Us!

## Master Gardener Program

University of California Cooperative Extension 

### October 2023

Officially, fall began in September, yet the Tahoe weather is still sunny and mild. It is time to enjoy the beautiful colors of our local trees and a quieter time on the trails and roads. We hope you are busy getting your garden ready for the long winter sleep. We offer some tips for October, as well as a long list of fall gardening events in the greater Sierra. Our Master Gardeners of Lake Tahoe are preparing for the upcoming training class, and we are very excited to welcome some new volunteers to the program. We are also working very hard to assist several elementary schools in the area with science curriculum.



Sandy Gainza  
UCCE Master Gardener Volunteer, Newsletter Editor

## New Class of UCCE Master Gardeners Begins This Month



**UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA**  
Agriculture and Natural Resources

UC Master Gardener Program

The newest class of UCCE Master Gardeners of Lake Tahoe begins their training this month. We are very excited to welcome this group of volunteers to our program. Several of our trainees already have extensive gardening experience, others are bringing skills such as writing and computer expertise, important for fulfilling our mission to provide practical, scientific gardening information to home gardeners in the Lake Tahoe Basin.

During their training, which will consist of monthly classes, the new volunteers are encouraged to participate in the outreach programs. Experienced UC Master Gardeners will be mentors to enable our new volunteers to get on board as quickly as they'd like.

The UC Master Gardener training program consists of over 50 hours of intensive training. The training is both virtual and in person. At the end, each trainee becomes a full fledged Master Gardener. While the class of 2024 is closed to new applicants, we welcome your interest for our next training. For more information about becoming a UCCE Master Gardener volunteer, please visit our website at [https://ucanr.edu/be\\_mg](https://ucanr.edu/be_mg).

## Upcoming Events

### Living with Fire Hosts 10 hour "Defensible Space for Professionals" Training in November



**Living with Fire** is an agency co-sponsored by the University of Nevada, the Bureau of Land Management, the US Forest Service and the Nevada Forest Service. Their website contain many useful resources and information for homeowners and landscape professionals. The course will be offered at Lake Tahoe Community College on November 15 and 16. Cost is \$60. Among other topics, plant choices and fire wise horticultural practices will be covered. You can get more information and [register here](#).



### Tahoe Environmental Research Center Offers Fall Lecture Series

On Thursday, October 26, UC Davis **Tahoe Environmental Research Center (TERC)** will host a lecture about **Wildfire Impacts on Lakes** with Dr. Steve Sadro. The in-person event will be held at Sunnyside Restaurant and

Lodge in their Mountainside Bar. Dinners will be 20 percent off for interested guests.

Extreme wildfires now occur with increasing regularity in western North America and other parts of the world. These wildfires generate large plumes of smoke and ash that can travel thousands of miles and persist for weeks or longer in the atmosphere. These "smoke storms" block sunlight and deposit ash on surfaces. Lakes and ponds are affected by the reduced light and ash inputs from wildfires, but much about these potential impacts is unknown. Light and nutrients are both important factors that regulate the growth of plants and algae in aquatic ecosystems. Rates of primary production from plants and algae in turn determine how much food becomes available for other organisms, such as fish, and can affect many aspects of water quality. Thus, understanding how and why aquatic primary production is responding to wildfires is a critical research objective.

This lecture will illustrate the scale at which smoke from wildfires is affecting lakes across North America, and highlight some of the effects with data from lakes throughout California, including Lake Tahoe's response to the Caldor fire of 2021.

This talk will feature UC Davis TERC Associate Professor Steve Sadro. Much of his research is conducted in the Sierra Nevada, where steep landscape gradients provide a natural laboratory to test ecological questions. He seeks solutions to environmental problems and contributes to the conservation of aquatic ecosystems. [Sign up here](#).





- [This link will take you to the complete list of UCCE Central Sierra events.](#)
- [Click here to discover UCCE Master Gardener of Placer County events.](#)
- [Click here to discover UCCE Master Food Preserver of Central Sierra events.](#)
- [Click here to see a list of University of Nevada Extension events.](#)



### **Master Gardeners of Lake Tahoe Plan Activities with Local Schools**

At a meeting on September 28, the UC Master Gardeners of Lake Tahoe, the Lake Tahoe Unified School District, Grow Your Own, and the PTA members of several California and Nevada elementary schools met to plan

upcoming activities for this school year.

The Master Gardeners and Grow Your Own Team will provide supplies and a related lesson on microgreens for 2nd and 3rd graders, and a potato lesson for kindergarteners. They also may assist the 4th and 5th graders with a spring plant sale. The future goal is to have one activity per grade (K-6) at each of the four LTUSD schools as well as Zephyr Cove elementary. Another goal is to implement a small team of Master Gardeners, parents, and staff to develop and maintain a garden at each of the five elementary school sites.

If you would like to volunteer to assist with these projects at any of the local south and east shore elementary schools, please contact Master Gardener **Cindy Wise** for more information.

### **October Gardening Tips**



***Master Gardeners Annie Christy and Sandy Gainza offer these tips for Tahoe gardeners:***

1. Be mindful of too much clean up in the fall. It is okay to leave your needles and dead leaves around; they shelter beneficial insects and provide protective cover to the more tender plants in your garden. However, do keep in mind that the risk of fire exists even in winter, so be sure and maintain a needle free zone at least five feet from any structure on your property. If you must clean up, leave piles at the edges to provide the beneficials a place to overwinter. One exception: do remove any diseased foliage you see in your garden beds.
2. Use some of your dead leaves and needles to mulch cold sensitive plants. You

will find that they recover more quickly in spring when mulched. If you are able to shred these materials first, they will break down over the winter and provide needed soil structure.

3. Tie up long branches on shrubs and wrap them if you can. The heavy snows last year destroyed a lot of trees and shrubs that had not been pruned or tied up. Some shortening of shrub branches can be done as soon as it cools down and new growth stops.
4. Be sure and clear any drains or gutters in your neighborhood before it rains or snows to prevent flooding and run off. Remove needles and leaves from any home gutters you have and check your gravel "BMPs" and drain basins to ensure they work properly. Clean out any drain channels in your driveway as the leaves can clog these and cause flooding and interfere with proper run off.
5. You can still plant now, just be aware that the plant will not generally show new growth above ground until spring. You may find that fall planted shrubs and trees enter dormancy sooner than established plants. This is normal due to transplant shock, but not a fatal condition.
6. Water evergreens every two weeks until the ground freezes. Same advice for any newly planted shrubs and trees. Make sure any newly planted material gets some supplemental water until it begins to rain and snow.
7. Scatter wildflower seeds right before the first snow. Rake some soil over them, and if you time it right, more will survive the onslaught of hungry birds and rodents by being covered up by snow.
8. Take a minute to photograph your garden and write down your successes and failures this season. This will help you plan for next year.
9. Plant fall bulbs such as tulips and daffodils before the ground freezes. Be sure to follow planting instructions and dig deep holes to protect the bulbs from emerging too early next spring.
10. If you have a sheltered porch, you can plant cold weather annuals, such as pansies and ornamental kale and cabbages in containers for an extended color show. If you cover them with frost cloth on the colder nights, you will enjoy them for another month or more.
11. Enjoy the color that fall brings and get outside!

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

UC  IPM

Statewide Integrated Pest Management Program



## Thinking about hiring a Pest Control Company?

Effective pest management requires pest identification, knowledge of pest biology and ecology, and an understanding of the different control measures available. If you do not have the time or ability to research your pest problem and control it, you may want to hire a pest control company to do the job for you. Some pest problems including bed bugs, termites, wildlife, and problems with large trees may require special licenses, specialized equipment, professional products, and technical experience to be effectively managed.

An experienced and licensed pest control representative can accurately identify pests and perform proper pest control services to help you solve challenging pest problems. Such services may be one-time or recurring, depending on the nature of the contract. A one-time service is in response to an incidental pest infestation, while a recurring service aims to manage existing infestations and prevent future pest problems over a long period.

Professionals working in this service industry are licensed by the State of California to identify pest problems and to safely and effectively use pesticides and other control methods. These professionals are trained on pest control

regulations and methods as well as the principles of Integrated Pest Management (IPM (**What is IPM?**)). Although professional pest control services may seem costly, the investment may actually save you time and money in the long term. Take a look at **this newly updated guide from the University of California** to get more informed about Integrated Pest Management and using professionals who practice it.

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