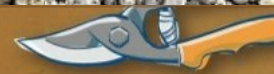




Advice to Grow by...Ask Us! Master Gardener Program

University of California Cooperative Extension 



April 2023

April is the month in Lake Tahoe where you might begin to see signs of spring! The snow is slowly melting and the sun shines more brightly. Although it is tempting to get out and plant, remember our last frost date is around June 15, and may be later for some areas around the lake. However, you can do some clean up and preparation this month. Scroll down for some pruning tips from Master Gardener Jen Cressy and some garden clean up jobs from Master Gardener Annie Christy. Master Gardener David Long continues his series on Tahoe Plants and Trees, and in honor of spring, educates us on the lily. See our calendar of events for some upcoming classes. The Tahoe Master Gardener group has been active in local elementary schools with upcoming events in May. There is a need for Master Gardeners to volunteer to assist with the Children's Forest program May 22-26 at the Tallac Historic Site, and the Tree Factory/Animals are Amazing/Animal and Plant Workshops June 5-9. Please contact Master Gardener **Cindy Wise**.



Would you like to become a Master Gardener? Master Gardeners work to enhance quality of life by extending science-based education to local communities, helping individuals make informed decisions about plants and fostering successful gardeners while protecting neighborhood environments. We are recruiting for our next class! Please see the invitation below and contact our coordinator, Kevin Kamp, to apply.

Enjoy your gardening!

Sandy Gainza
Newsletter Editor

Join our Team! NEW Master Gardener Volunteer Training for Lake Tahoe begins soon!



Extension (UCCE) invites adults living in the Lake Tahoe area interested in helping others learn about sustainable gardening and landscaping to apply to train as a Master Gardener volunteer.

UCCE Master Gardener volunteers participate in a University of California program of scientific-based information on sustainable gardening and then share that knowledge with their communities. Master Gardener volunteers are adults of all ages and from all walks of life with a common desire to help others learn about

sustainable gardening and landscaping. Any adult resident of communities in the four counties (Placer and El Dorado Counties in California and Washoe and Douglas Counties in Nevada) surrounding Lake Tahoe can apply to become a Lake Tahoe Master Gardener volunteer. Training includes bi-weekly web-based and in-person sessions supported by reading assignments, regularly spaced over a 6-month period, as well as hands-on opportunities to join ongoing Master Gardener activities. Applicants need reliable internet access as most communication will be through email and web-based learning. Our training materials are mainly in English but we can provide Spanish language materials as needed.

Our commitment to Master Gardener trainees is to teach you research-based home gardening and landscaping solutions for the Lake Tahoe environment. Training topics and activities will cover basic plant science, plant propagation, fertilization, irrigation, soil science, composting, vegetable and fruit gardening, tree management, integrated pest management, research tools, and outreach techniques. An additional focus will be on fire resilience, climate-based solutions, and food security for home gardeners within the context of the challenges and opportunities for gardening and landscaping at higher altitudes. We will provide you with a Master Gardener mentor and plenty of volunteer and continuing education opportunities.

UCCE will invite potential applicants to attend an in-person orientation meeting to be scheduled in early June in both South Lake Tahoe and Truckee, with options for other locations. Criteria for acceptance into the Master Gardener program include prior community service, experience teaching others, and personal experience and interest in gardening. A specific date for the orientation meetings will be announced soon. For more details about how to join our talented and dedicated Lake Tahoe team please [Click Here](#). You can also email the Lake Tahoe Master Gardener Coordinator, [Kevin Kamp](mailto:kkamp@ucanr.edu), at kkamp@ucanr.edu.

UC Master Gardeners of Lake Tahoe Events



Garden Day Festivals Coming In June!

Everything you want to know about growing food and plants in Lake Tahoe will be at your fingertips. Come join the fun!

June 2, 2023 in Tahoe City from 3 p.m to 7 p.m.

Hosted by UC Davis Tahoe Environmental Research Center

June 3, 2023 in Truckee from 11 a.m to 2 p.m.

Hosted by Slow Foods Lake Tahoe

**June 10, 2023 in South Lake Tahoe, Tallac Estate
from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.**

Hosted by Great Basin Institute

Four knowledgeable and skillful organizations are collaborating to present 3 Garden Festivals in 3 different locations this year. There will be hands-on vegetable workshops, tours of local facilities and gardens, local community vendors and **PLANTS FOR SALE**. All Festivals will be **FREE**. These three one day community events will highlight growing your own food at home or at community gardens around the Lake Tahoe

area. Organizations and vendors are invited, and must register beforehand with the site host organization. Interested individuals can pre-order materials for pick-up at the event. Preorders can be purchased at Slow Foods Lake Tahoe's [website](#) closer to the event.

The **Lake Tahoe Master Gardeners** will be on hand to discuss growing these vegetables in the Tahoe Basin:

Tomatoes and Peppers

Leafy Greens

Potatoes

Peas

Squash and Pumpkins

Onions/Leeks

Edible flowers

Vegetable starts (plants) will be available for sale. Tours of the host sites will be available during the event. A number of community organizations and agencies are expected to participate and provide information related to their organizations. Save the dates, we will have more information as the time gets closer. See you there!

OTHER AREA EVENTS OF NOTE:

UCCE Central Sierra

(El Dorado, Calaveras, Tuolumne, and Amador Master Gardener programs and events in Northern California)

Check out their ongoing events [HERE](#).

Placer County Master Gardeners

April 8 - Firescaping - get ahead and slow the spread, Live (Loomis)

Click [HERE](#)

April 22 - Garden Faire (see below)

May 13 - Spice It Up: Growing Herbs Live AND Zoom Workshop

Click [HERE](#)

UC Master Gardeners of Placer County
invite you to our indoor/outdoor
Garden Faire
free home gardening event



Keep your landscape healthy, beautiful, and water-wise.
Hands-on demos, gardening info, talks by experts, crafts for kids,
food trucks, door prizes, and more!



Saturday, April 22, 2023
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Maidu Community Center
1550 Maidu Drive, Roseville
FREE ADMISSION



(530) 889-7388 • <http://pcmg.ucanr.org>

Sponsored by Roseville Environmental Utilities

UC Integrated Pest Management Webinars continue through April.
Webinar format; no cost but you must register at the link below.

April 20: Aphids, Scales, and Mealybugs, Oh my!

Time: 12:00-1:00pm PDT

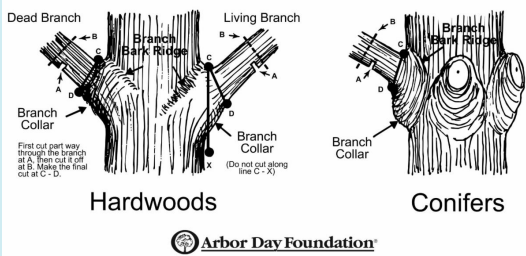
Presenter: Karey Windbiel-Rojas, Associate Director for Urban &
Community IPM/Area IPM Advisor

[Register for this webinar](#)

Limbing Evergreen and Deciduous Trees
By Jennifer Cressy
Lake Tahoe Master Gardener

Now is a good time to trim unwanted
and dead tree branches from around
your home to improve your
defensible space and clear branches

Proper Pruning Principles



from hanging on phone lines (not electrical house service lines).

Defensible space is the area between a house and an oncoming wildfire where the vegetation has been managed to reduce the wildfire threat, which allows firefighters to safely defend the house. Couple that

with **home hardening**, and it could even improve the likelihood of the home surviving without assistance.

Defensible space tree limbing practices include removing the lower 10 feet of branches, not to exceed the bottom 1/3 of the tree's height. Additionally, limbing tree branches that are a minimum of five feet from structures, or any combustible material, and a minimum of 10 feet from a chimney outlet is the best practice. Learn about the five steps to creating effective defensible space [here](#).

With our deep snowpack, you can skip the ladder and opt for your snowshoes instead. With your hand or pole saw, you can easily reach and remove unwanted branches. You'll want your safety glasses and a hard hat if you plan to limb overhead. Also watch out for tree wells, the deep depressions in the snow where dense evergreen branches exclude the snow. You could become seriously injured if you fell into the well. Pruning evergreen trees should be done whenever a branch becomes dead, damaged or diseased, however, major pruning should be avoided in late summer and fall unless it is needed for defensible space. Pruning live branches at that time can stimulate new growth that may not have enough time to harden off before winter.

Proper pruning cuts won't damage the tree trunk or strip away the bark. Whenever removing branches greater than one inch in diameter, use the three cut method. The first cut is 12 inches from the trunk – cut halfway through the underside of the branch. Make the second cut just beyond or outside of the first cut, cutting completely through the limb from the top. For deciduous trees, the final cut should be just outside of the branch collar at a 45 to 60 degree angle, as described in [this publication](#). In this publication, you can also learn how to train a pre-placement leader if your main tree trunk broke this winter under heavy snow load.



As the snowpack settles this spring, you can continue to limb lower branches that are buried in the snow. You can also save your limbs to drape over cold tender plants that could be susceptible to spring frost damage after the snow blanket has melted away. Don't forget to take advantage of free curbside chipping to repurpose your tree limbs as garden mulch.

You can request a free defensible space evaluation and learn about free curbside chipping and other services on the Tahoe Living With Fire [website](#).

Annie Christy

Lake Tahoe Master Gardener



Thinking about what to do in the garden this month? Or do you still have plenty of snow on the ground?

If ***you still have snow***, here's a few ideas:

- Keep reading seed catalogues and order something new.
- If you didn't clean your garden tools last fall, drag your shovels, trowels and other hand tools into a warm room to clean with soap and water, disinfect with a 10% bleach solution and oil with a light machine oil.

If ***your snow has melted***:

- Review and repair irrigation systems!
- Protect tender plants from deer and bunnies by putting cages around them.
- Protect plant roots by covering with mulch.
- If freezing temperatures are over, fertilize lightly to give plants a strong start.
- Unwrap any shrubs or roses so they know to leaf out. They'll need to be covered again if it freezes.
- Prune ornamental grasses nearly to the ground. This will leave some protection for pollinators who are likely hiding in the spent foliage, while eliminating that dead spot in the middle of grasses.
- Prune roses just as new leaves start to emerge. Remove dead or damaged branches and cut plant back by $\frac{1}{3}$ in height. Make cuts just above large healthy buds for the best growth.
- Pruning other flowering shrubs depends on whether it blooms on new wood or old wood. Check before you cut, if in doubt don't prune! Trim off any dead wood or blooms on all shrubs and trees.
- Daffodils and tulips are starting to bloom. Cut a few flowers to enjoy indoors. Wonder why daffodils are always alone in a vase? It's because their sap damages other flowers.
- Sit in the sun and enjoy your garden!

Tahoe Plants and Trees

California Hemlock

(*Tsuga mertensiana* susp. *grandicona*)

By David Long, Lake Tahoe Master Gardener



at higher elevations in the Tahoe Basin, appears often with the Western White Pine, Red Fir and White Bark Pine. These trees make up the subalpine community and are the trees found close to the tree line. California Hemlock is shade tolerant and can be found in small groups where late season snow lingers.

California Mountain Hemlock grows in the Sierras south to Tulare County and north into the Klamath range. Its occurrence in Nevada is restricted to in and around the Tahoe Basin. The largest Hemlock in the Basin is near the Pacific Crest Trail in upper Blackwood Canyon on the west side of Tahoe. A special note: Blackwood canyon is home to several of the Basin's largest tree specimens.

The Hemlock is distinct from other Tahoe conifers in form, having a slender conical shape with somewhat drooping limbs. The crown spire is often bent. California Hemlocks in Tahoe are rarely over 100 ft tall. The needle like leaves are about 1 inch long and spiraled around the branchlets. The needles are very slightly flattened and are green to blue-green in color.

The bark is thin and has a puzzle piece or scaly like appearance. In older trees the bark is more furrowed. Bark is gray, sometimes with a pinkish or orange hue. Cones are numerous and are purplish-green when immature and become brown when mature. Cones are about 2 inches long with fan shaped scales. The tree is found on coarse, well drained soils.

The species name *mertensiana* references German botanist Karl Heinrich Mertens who collected the first specimens as part of a Russian expedition to the west coast of North America from 1826 to 1829. Mertens died soon after on another Russian expedition to Iceland at 34. John Muir thought the Mountain Hemlock was one of the most beautiful conifers in the Sierras. The wood is only rarely commercially harvested. It is used occasionally in woodworking, small dimensional lumber, chipped for plywood and used as pulpwood in paper making. The tree has several interesting environmental aspects. Often found in small groups, these clumps of trees may be multigenerational, with young, mid-aged and mature trees grouped together. Research indicates that remnants of old dead trees can be found in these groupings. The tree is often found in areas of lingering snow that insulate the soil, keeping it from completely freezing. The narrow conical shape and slightly drooping limbs allows for shedding heavy snow loads more easily. The Hemlock cannot tolerate deeply frozen soils, but can photosynthesize and respire more readily than other subalpine conifers with equivalent deep snow depths. The trees regularly live over 800 years with individual specimens attaining ages in excess of 1000 years. Through the use of dendrochronology, the California Hemlock's longevity makes these trees important examples in understanding climatic changes within the subalpine community.

References:

Please email the [Editor](#) if you would like Dave's references on CA hemlocks!

**Close up of the cones of the
California Hemlock**



Needles of the California Hemlock



Bark of the California Hemlock

Floriography - The Lily (Lilium) By Dave Long UC Master Gardener of Lake Tahoe

With spring just starting and Easter around the corner, thoughts turn to the lily. True lilies belong to the genus *Lilium* and include many of the plants described as Easter Lilies. Other plants called lilies but not true lilies include Day Lilies (*Hemerocallis*), Corn Lily (*Veratrum californicum*), Lily of the Valley (*Convallaria majalis*), Toad Lilies (*Tricyrtis hirta*) and Trout Lilies (*Erythronium Americanum*). True lilies are native to Asia, Europe, and North America but are not native to either Africa or South America. Our Tahoe true lily is the Sierra Tiger Lily or Alpine Lily (*Lilium parvum*).

The lily has been associated with Christian and Jewish religious symbolism for centuries. The Madonna Lily (*Lilium candidum*), is believed to be the flower given to Mary by the Archangel Gabriel, who announced her pregnancy (Annunciation). The lily symbolizes the Resurrection, Jesus now being free of sin. Biblical research indicates that the lily of the fields mentioned in the Sermon on the Mount was probably not a true lily but a native Anemone (*Anemone coronaria*). The white lily was thought to have arisen from Eve's tears



as she left the Garden of Eden. The flower was a symbol of the Israelites and appeared on some of their coins. It is one of the few flowers described in the Torah.

In medieval Europe, the Doctrine of Signs held that a plant's appearance was an indication of its value and use. The trumpet flower shape was the herald of rebirth and/or spring. St. Bede, a Benedictine monk in the 7th century promoted the rebirth symbolism of the lily.. Many pagan European cultures saw the lily as a symbol of motherhood.

The plant most often sold as an Easter Lily (*Lilium longiflorum*) is native to Japan's Ryukyu Islands. It was brought to England in 1819 and to the United States in 1880s. Japan was the primary source of the flower bulbs for many decades. Following World War I, Louis Houghton, who was stationed in Japan, brought home several dozen *L. longifolium* bulbs for cultivation in the Pacific Northwest. With WW II the supply of "Easter Lily" bulbs from Japan was cut off. Growers in the area of the California/Oregon border became the primary suppliers of the plant bulbs. Today over 90% of all Easter Lily bulbs come from this area. Bulbs are harvested and supplied to nurseries who then grow the plants that we see for sale.

In floriography, white lilies represent purity and rebirth. Lilies are often found in sympathy arrangements. Pink lilies represent feminine love and admiration. The red lily, as with the red rose, symbolizes passionate love. Energy and confidence are imbued with the meaning of the orange lily varieties. Friendship, joy and thankfulness are ascribed to yellow lilies. Yellow lilies are thought to be the flower of the fleur-de-lis (or it could be a yellow iris). Lilies in a bouquet with yarrow is meant to soothe a broken heart. When included with protea the combination is meant to transform a bad situation into good fortune.

Lily is sometimes used as a girl's name. Other names related to the lily are Lilith, Lillian, Lilibeth, Liliana and Lija. The name Elizabeth also is associated with the lily. In Hebrew the lily (Shoshana) has a connotation with the names Sue, Elisheba, Shana, Shoshana, Sosie, Sussan, Suzana and Suzanne.

References

Please email the **Editor** if you would like a list of references for the Lily.

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