



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

University of California Cooperative Extension 

## July 2023

Greetings Tahoe Gardeners!

The long wait for summer weather is over.

The UCCE Master Gardeners of Lake Tahoe hope you are all enjoying time outside and time with your landscape and gardens.

This month we have updates on several activities which took place during the last month or two, as well as a list of upcoming events we think you should know about. We also have a list of gardening tips for July.



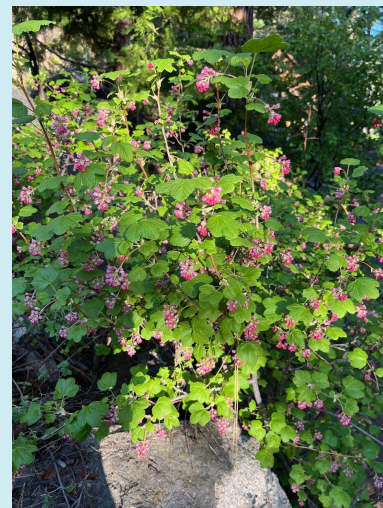
Check out a few native plants that are blooming or have just finished their flowering period: Pictured above from the forest near Zephyr Cove is *Senecio integerrimus* (Single stem groundsel). Below see *Ceanothus prostratus* (Mahala Mat), a low growing green leaved perennial which spreads across the forest floor. The photo shows its purple blossoms. Also pictured in bloom is the Sierra Currant, or *Ribes Nevadense* with the pink blooms, and the Western Serviceberry, *Amelanchier alnifolia* with the delicate white blossoms. All three of these shrubs shown below can be grown in your backyard and are low fire risk plants.



*Ceanothus prostratus*  
(Mahala Mat)



*Amelanchier alnifolia*  
(Western Serviceberry)



*Ribes Nevadense*  
(Sierra Currant)

Due to the amount of moisture and long winter, many of these plants bloomed a bit late, making forest walks extra colorful in June. As we move into July, keep your eyes out for columbines, lupines, and *castilleja miniata*, or Indian paintbrush.

We are continuing to recruit our next class of UCCE Master Gardeners of Lake Tahoe trainees. Classes are set to begin in the fall of 2023 and continue through the winter of 2024. If you are interested in learning to become a UCCE Master Gardener, **visit the [Becoming a Master Gardener page of our website](#)**.

As always, your feedback is important to us, so send us suggestions on what type of information you would like to see in this newsletter. Most importantly, enjoy the long days and warm weather.

Sandy Gainza  
UCCE Master Gardener Volunteer, Newsletter Editor

## Upcoming Events

### Book Sale in Memory of Joanne Geggatt

To honor the memory of local Master Gardener Joanne Geggatt, a special book sale is planned for Tuesday, July 25th from 11:30 to 2:00. The sale will take place at 2158 Inverness Drive, South Lake Tahoe CA. Proceeds will benefit the UCCE Master Gardener program and the South Tahoe Garden Club, both of which Joanne supported.

In addition to Joanne's wonderful collection of gardening and plant books, we are asking for contributions of books that you no longer use but that other gardeners may enjoy. If you have books that you'd like to donate to the sale, please call either Carolyn Meiers (530) 541-4654 or Karen Price (925) 216-2744. You can also email Karen ([pricesrite@comcast.net](mailto:pricesrite@comcast.net)). They can come to you to collect donated items and would appreciate having them by July 14th.

### Visit the Lake Tahoe Master Gardeners at the El Dorado Certified Farmers' Market

Tuesdays from 8 am to 1 pm.

2740 Lake Tahoe Blvd. South Lake Tahoe CA

Join us at the Farmers' Markets this summer. Get your gardening questions answered and pick up some materials on native plants, fire wise gardening, pest management and more.



### Free Gardening Workshop – Planning Your Tahoe Friendly Landscape

Learn how to design your home landscape for beauty, function, and water efficiency.

Tuesday, July 18 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM

South Tahoe Public Utility District

1275 Meadow Crest Drive

### Free Gardening Workshop – Designing Tahoe Friendly Gardens

Do it right the first time. Learn how to place and select the right plants in the right place.

Tuesday, August 1 – from 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM  
South Tahoe Public Utility District  
1275 Meadow Crest Drive

### **Free Gardening Workshop – Efficient Irrigation and Drip Irrigation Design**

What you wish you knew about efficient irrigation practices and technology.  
Tuesday, August 22 – from 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM  
South Tahoe Public Utility District  
1275 Meadow Crest Drive

### **Master Gardeners and Master Food Preservers of El Dorado County Are Providing the Following FREE Workshops:**

#### **Christmas in July**

Class is free, but [pre-registration is recommended](#)

July 15, 2023 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM

311 Fair Lane

Placerville, CA 9566

Contact: [El Dorado Master Food Preservers](#)

#### **Pruning and Care of Fruit Trees in the Summer**

July 29, 2023 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

6699 Campus Dr.

Placerville, CA 95667

Contact: [UCCE Master Gardeners of El Dorado County](#)

[Click this link to go to the complete list of Central Sierra events and more details!](#)

If you are closer to Placer county, [check out their summer events by clicking this link.](#)

Classes offered on fall planting, composting, propagating succulents, and native plant gardening for bees.

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## **July Gardening Tips**

1. Days are longer, temperatures are warmer and the occasional thunderstorm is hard to predict. Humidity is low, and water evaporates quickly. Water early in the day or late in the evening to prevent loss of water to evaporation. Keep in mind that the soil in our area is generally quite rocky and sandy. This means that water flows quickly through the soil. If you water for too long, the water flows down below the root zone of your plants and is wasted. Check out this publication by UCANR on water conservation:  
<https://anrcatalog.ucanr.edu/pdf/8036.pdf>

Check your irrigation systems frequently when they are running to make sure all the emitters are working, that sprinklers are not broken and pipes stay intact. Look for any water runoff and make sure you adjust your system to prevent it.

2. If you have turf, set your mower blades higher during warm weather. Keeping the grass longer helps protect the roots from sun and wind. Runoff from fertilizers endangers the clarity of Lake Tahoe, so be sure and use organic, slow release fertilizer and apply only as much as the grass needs.

3. Defensible space - clear pine needles and other dry debris from crawl spaces, under decks and within 30 feet of any structure.

4. Deadhead perennials to encourage more flowers. Even though our summer is short, you

can maximize blooms by promptly removing spent flowers.

5. Fertilize your container plants with slow release fertilizers.

6. If you are growing potatoes, make sure to “hill” your plants as the green shoots grow. The covered shoots should sprout additional potatoes.



Will Plerz of Greenhouse Project



Photos courtesy of North Tahoe Community Alliance



Master Gardener Melissa Guthrie explains potatoes

## UCCE Master Gardeners of Lake Tahoe Collaborate with Slow Food, TERC and GBI at the Grow Your Own Festivals, June 2, 3, and 10

The UCCE Master Gardeners, Slow Food Lake Tahoe, Tahoe Environmental Resource Center and the Great Basin Institute collaborated on three informative and engaging community days in June. Over 200 people attended each event.

Attendees learned about growing food in the Lake Tahoe area, and were able to purchase vegetable and ornamental plants which were specifically selected to succeed in our area. There were children' activities, short ongoing presentations on crops such as onions, peas, tomatoes, potatoes, edible flowers and more. We are currently compiling videos of these presentations and will let you know when they are available on our Youtube channel. If you were not able to attend the festival days, videos on growing many vegetables and fruits in the Lake Tahoe basin are available here:

<https://www.slowfoodlaketahoe.org/grow-your-own>



### High Elevation Gardening

The Grow Your Own team created notes and a list of tips available on the Slow Food Lake Tahoe website. This is great information for anyone who wants to grow the crops that we featured at the community festivals.

[Check out the grow notes here.](#)

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



**UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA**  
Agriculture and Natural Resources

UC Master Gardener Program

**Want to be a Master Gardener?** The University of California Cooperative 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 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.

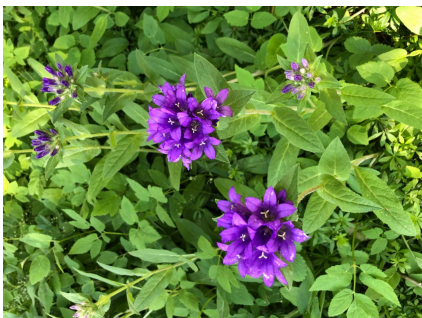
UCCE will invite potential applicants to attend an in-person orientation meeting in June in both South Lake Tahoe and Truckee, (possibly other locations too). We look to consider candidates with prior community service, experience teaching others, and personal experience and interest in gardening. A 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](#).

## Midsummer Garden Planning

**Sandy Gainza**

**UCCE Master Gardener**

*Featured photo: Campanula glomerata, a July blooming perennial adapted to Lake Tahoe.*



Now is a good time to study sunlight and shadows in your garden. With the summer solstice just passed, the sun departs from its most northerly position and begins its journey south. Our short growing season around the lake makes it really important for gardeners to pay attention to where the sun shines during the height of the summer. This way, you can plan for the best sun exposure for vegetable and flower plants. If you wish to add plants to your landscape, now is the time to research what will grow

well. Take a look around your area for what is blooming and what is thriving at this time of year. You have another month to six weeks to get new plants established before fall sets in.

Ensure you have the proper sun and shade exposure, enough irrigation for the type of plants you wish and some good soil amendments on hand to provide a healthy start. The **Tahoe Regional Planning Agency** (TRPA) has some great advice and resources on Best Management Practices (BMPs) for soil. Look **here** for their recommendations on soil amendments and fertilizers. Review this **guide** from the UCCE Master Gardeners of Lake Tahoe website regarding zones around Lake Tahoe for more details. Happy planting!

UCCE Master Gardeners of Lake Tahoe  
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<https://ucanr.edu/sites/mglaketahoe/>

Connect with us

