

Master Gardener
University of California



The Curious Gardener

Vol. 23, No. 3
Summer 2016

A Quarterly Newsletter Published by
the University of California Cooperative Extension
and the UC Master Gardeners of Placer and Nevada Counties

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Auburn Trail of Treasured Trees

By Laurie Meyerpeter, Placer County Master Gardener

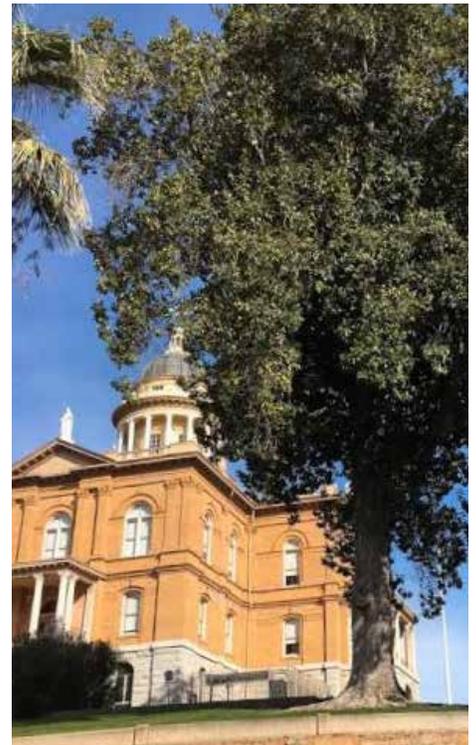
Photos by Lexy Martin and Laurie Meyerpeter, Placer County Master Gardeners

Did you know that we have a great tree walk in our area? It's an easy walk around Auburn and it highlights local "Treasured Trees" and other trees of interest. For gardeners, it's an opportunity to see mature specimens in a landscape setting. Plus it's fun; it's like a treasure hunt for grown-ups!

The walk was originally developed by the local Placer Tree Partners organization and is a pleasant stroll through historic Old Town and downtown Auburn, past cafes, coffee shops, and bakeries, where one can pop in for a scone or a latte. The walking guide not only features a map with marked and numbered trees, it also offers a short description of each tree. Included on the walk are both deciduous and evergreen trees so the trail has year-round interest. In addition, the walking guide contains information on choosing container grown trees, planting instructions, and general care. It's a great resource!

The walk starts in Old Town Auburn at the humongous deodar cedar (*Cedrus deodara*) by the historic fire station. (The tree was planted in 1959 by the local Auburn Campfire Girls.) The trail then meanders through Old Town Auburn and alongside the Auburn Courthouse, marches up the hill to downtown Auburn, circles a local pocket park, and then winds around the far side of the Auburn Courthouse to its conclusion. Most trees are marked by a painted number on the sidewalk as well as a small plaque on the trunk of the tree, although a handful are either missing plaques, miss-

Continued on next page Southern Magnolia at the courthouse.





The walking tour begins at the historic firehouse at the corner of Park St. and Lincoln Way in Old Town Auburn (above). Pictures below are just a sample of the many trees to be seen on the walk.

Auburn Trail of Treasured Trees

Continued from previous page

ing a number, or else it wasn't feasible for that particular tree or location. And it is worth noting that a few of the trees have been removed or replaced. The guide gives the location of each tree and information on each one.

Most of the trees are beautiful, large, and well placed, but the guide also points out potential tree problems on the walk, such as tree roots that are lifting up pavement, conflicts with tree branches and electrical lines, as well as pest and disease problems that may occur.

In addition to the huge deodar cedar at the start of the trail, noteworthy trees include a southern magnolia growing in the courthouse lawn, a massive ginkgo by the Auburn City Hall, an impressive Canary Island date palm, a lovely Japanese maple growing in the front of an old home, a large Atlas blue cedar, and some sizable native oaks. But equally impressive are the less mature trees on the walk, most of which are full landscape size, and include many excellent trees for urban and suburban landscapes.

A problematic issue with the guide is that several trees listed are missing, having been either removed or replaced over the years. The last update was done in 2005 so the guide is over 10 years old. For the most part, the majority of the trees on the map are long lived, the information timeless, and we found that the small handful of missing trees did not distract from the walk and actually contributed somewhat to the feeling of a treasure hunt.

Overall, this is a fun gardener's outing. The walk is pleasant and can easily involve lattes and scones while identifying and learning about trees. The walk has a historical aspect as well and is filled with old buildings, historical tidbits, and a sense of history and of bygone eras. It's informative and is an opportunity to see the size and growth habit of mature trees in a variety of conditions. It's a valuable community resource for our community, both for gardeners choosing a tree for their home landscape and for the added beauty these trees provide to the town of Auburn. And it's a blast searching for each tree while exploring historic Auburn. It really is a treasure hunt for grownups!

Click the graphic above to download a copy of the Auburn Trail of Treasured Trees Walking Guide. Numbered markers on trees and the sidewalk, like those below, identify trees along the trail.



Try Growing Something New: Buckwheat



photo by Nikki Duncan

by Nikki Duncan, Placer County Master Gardener

Want to try something new or unusual in your edible garden? There are vegetables, legumes and grains not commonly grown in backyard gardens that can be grown successfully in our area and will expand your culinary horizons.

What plant has a brown, pyramidal shaped seed that can be ground into flour? It's buckwheat (*Fagopyrum esculentum*). More commonly grown as a summer cover crop, as a nectar plant for honeybees and as an attractor of beneficial insects, if buckwheat is left to go to seed, the seeds can be ground into flour for pancakes, noodles (known as soba) or bread. Buckwheat also helps to improve poor soil so you will be doing lots of good things for your garden and growing food at the same time. See <http://extension.missouri.edu/p/G4306> for more information.

Buckwheat is an easy, quick to grow, summer annual. It does not like hot temperatures and may wilt in the afternoon only to perk back up by morning. Broadcast the seed evenly and press into the soil lightly. Germination is within three to five days. It required little fertilization.

As buckwheat grows, you will see flowers, immature seeds and mature seeds all at the same time. Wait to harvest until three quarters of the seeds have turned brown. Cut the stems close to the ground and lay the plants on a tarp or sheet. Beat the stems with a clean broom, turning stalks frequently. The green immature seed will stay on the plant and the mature seed will break off. The seeds will need to be cleaned to remove the remaining plant matter (chaff). You can do this by pouring them in front of a fan from one bucket to another. Dry seeds on a screen for about a week before storing them away from heat, light and moisture.

To make flour, grind seeds in a spice or coffee mill and then sift out the hulls. Too many hulls left in the flour will impart a bitter flavor. Aim for a light gray color. Most recipes using buckwheat flour include another flour to even out the flavor. Buckwheat is good for you as it is nutritionally high in protein, on par with animal protein. Try growing some buckwheat this summer and enjoy some pancakes or soba noodles from your own garden!

Can Bees Have Heart Attacks?

by Bonnie Bradt, Nevada County Master Gardener

We know that honeybees work hard. They forage for food within a four-mile (or more) range of their hive. They can fly up to 15 miles per hour, and their wings can beat about 200 times per second or 12,000 beats per minute. Sometimes they'll visit 50 to 100 flowers on a collection trip. No wonder worker bees live only four to six weeks during their peak season. It could be said they literally work themselves to death.

But can bees have heart attacks? One curious person posted this question to a website called www.quora.com, a site billed as "Your Best Source for Knowledge." One of the UC Davis entomology doctoral candidates, Matan Shelomi, has answered many insect questions on this site and he tackled this one. In fact, he took it TO HEART! (Get it?) "NOPE" he writes, "No blood vessels!"

When a human is said to have a heart attack, it is due to the fact that blood clots or deposits of fatty materials, like cholesterol, have blocked the blood vessel(s) that provide blood to the heart. The heart muscle can then be starved for blood (and the oxygen it transports) and could die or at least be damaged. So for a critter to have a heart attack, it would need to have a heart and to have attached blood vessels.

Generally speaking, bugs have a circulatory system that is open, without the blood (called hemolymph in an insect) moving around in vessels. Insects' organs float in and are surrounded by the goopy stuff. (Note: that's the stuff that splats all over your windshield when a large insect smacks into your car, and dries into cement that won't come off without a razor blade.)

So an insect's heart can't be deprived of hemolymph by a clogged vessel because there are no vessels. The heart is surrounded by the goo. And incidentally, hemolymph or insect "blood" is not the oxygen carrying system for the critters. They get their oxygen from little openings to the outside of their bodies, called trachea. These are the openings that get blocked up by treating them with diatomaceous earth or boric acid.

So we can stop worrying about honeybees dying from heart attacks. Both we and they have plenty of other stuff to worry about.



photo by Elaine Applebaum

Cabbage and Broccoli and Kale, Oh My!

The Second Act: Your Winter Vegetable Garden

By Barbara Kermeen, Nevada County Master Gardener

Don't put away those trowels and hoes yet! Dedicated gardeners have been successfully growing cool weather vegetables, also known as Fall or Winter veggies, for years. There are many great vegetables to grow that do not do well in the heat of our foothill summers. Many of these crops can be planted in August, September, and October. If noted gardening writer and market gardener Eliot Coleman can grow winter vegetables on the coast of Maine, it should be a piece of cake to have a winter garden in the foothills of Nevada and Placer Counties. And the time to start planning your winter garden is NOW!

So, let's get busy and talk about what you can grow during our cool seasons: late Fall, throughout the winter, and early Spring. Peas, carrots, and many greens, including spinach, love the cool weather and resist growing in our foothill summers. These crops can be planted in the cool spring weather and as soon as the weather shows signs of cooling off in the late summer/early fall.

Other crops, such as potatoes (but not sweet potatoes), onions, garlic, can be planted twice a year. And in some cases, vegetables like scallions, can be established in a year-round bed. And trotting down to the garden certainly beats driving 15 miles to the store when you need a green onion.

Many vegetables can be started inside and planted outside when they are strong and ready before the frost falls. Brassicas, known as cruciferous vegetables, including broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, and their vitamin C-rich relatives, can be started inside or in the greenhouse. And don't forget my favorite: the baseball-shaped kohlrabi. Pick it, wash it, peel it, slice it, salt it, and serve it as a hors d'oeuvre at cocktail hour. It has amazing crunch and it's just fun to grow and eat. Once given a good start inside, the mature brassica plants are much more resistant to winter's cold temps.

Next we can consider those veggies that can be directly seeded such as beets and carrots. There are all kinds of beets: red beets, golden beets, and beets that have a whorled cross section of red and cream colors. Beets can be picked early, as baby beets, picked later, as mature beets, or left in the ground all winter. The garden soil is a great storage medium for root veggies, such as beets and carrots.

It is possible to get two crops a year for potatoes and for all of the onion relatives. About the time your first crop of the year is harvested, your second crop is ready to be planted. Don't forget that

Continued on next page

“...the time to start planning your winter vegetable garden is NOW!”



*Photos by Rob Chase,
Nevada County Master Gardener*

Vegetables you can plant at different times during our cool seasons:

Fall And Early Spring Planting

- Peas
- Greens
- Claytonia (Miner's Lettuce)
- Lettuces
- Spinach
- Swiss Chard

Fall And Winter Vegetables

Direct seed

- Carrots
- Mâche (Corn Salad)
- Parsnips
- Turnips
- Beets

Transplant Starts

Vegetables:

- Broccoli
- Brussels Sprouts
- Cabbage
- Cauliflower
- Celeriac
- Kale (Red Russian)
- Kohlrabi

Greens:

- Mustard,
- Bok Choy/Pak Choy
- Mizuna
- Tatsoi

Herbs:

- Chives
- Cilantro
- Dill
- Parsley

Double Cropping

Alliums (Onions and relatives):

- Garlic
- Leeks
- Onions
- Scallions
- Shallots

Potatoes...but not sweet potatoes

Continued from previous page

you should not plant that second crop in the same place as the first crop. Crop rotation is important to remember so that pests that are particular to any given crop do not get a chance to get a foothold in that garden bed. Also, continued planting of the same crop or related crops in the same garden bed can lead to soil depletion.

Your winter garden will undoubtedly take less work than the summer version. You will not need to water as often. Weed and bug problems are fewer. The key is getting started early; that's why we're talking about it now.

Because of the myriad of microclimates in Nevada and Placer Counties, we will not give you specific dates for planting out in your garden. Gardening conditions in Nevada City are very different from gardening conditions in Roseville. We will help you figure it out by directing you to resources where you can find the information you need. Placer County gardeners will find useful information in the Planting Guide at <http://pcmg.ucanr.org/files/197684.pdf>. Nevada County gardeners can find information in the Western Nevada County Gardening Guide, available at most Nevada County bookstores. The Gardening Guide has a wonderful chart of most of the plants that we have listed in this article; this chart shows optimum planting times based on your first Fall freeze and last Spring freeze dates. This means that it

is relevant for not only Nevada County, but Placer County, as well. The Gardening Guide also has maps of first and last frost dates, but only for Nevada County.

Mark your calendar for the Nevada County Master Gardeners' Fall Plant Sale on September 24, where you can find plant starts for all of the cool weather vegetables that we have featured here.

Remember that your garden can have a second act with a whole new cast of characters. Growing a winter garden is a great way to continue to have fresh, healthy, and convenient vegetables throughout the year. So when summer is coming to a close, don't abandon your garden; get out there and GET DIRTY!

References

- Coleman, Eliot. *Four Season Harvest*. Chelsea Green Publishing. October 1, 1999.
- Coleman, Eliot. *The Winter Harvest Handbook*. Chelsea Green Publishing. April 15, 2009.

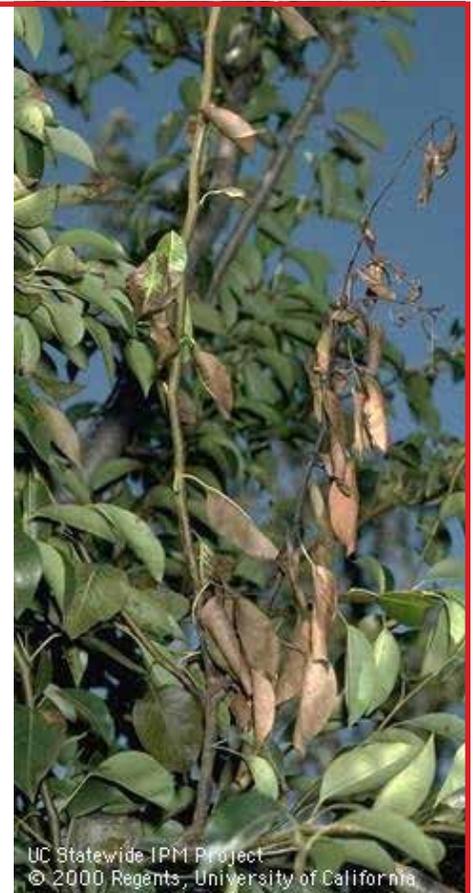
Hotline FAQs

Do you have
gardening questions?
Call the Master Gardener
Hotline in your county
Nevada Co. 530-273-0919
Placer Co. 530-889-7388

My pear trees have several branches that appear to be dead or dying. What is causing this, and what should I do?

by Pauline Kuklis, Placer County Master Gardener

Pear trees are prone to getting a bacterial disease called fire blight, as are other types of pome fruits such as apples and quince. The bacteria lives through the winter in cankers on the branches, and it grows especially well during warm spring weather with periodic showers. Fire blight can kill whole branches on the tree, and may even kill the entire tree. The best way to control Fire blight is to use appropriate blossom sprays early in the spring (such as copper). This will help keep the bacteria from spreading. Once you have a tree that is infected, be sure to completely cut out affected branches and discard them. For detailed information on how to control this pesky disease, see the UC Davis Integrated Pest Management Program Pest Note at www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn7414.html. Good luck!



UC Statewide IPM Project
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Branches infected with fire blight appear scorched, as seen above.

Neomarica caerulea, Walking Iris

by Lynora Sisk, Master Gardener of Placer County

I'm sure you've heard of creeping and climbing plants, but have you ever heard of a "walking" plant? I had not until I discovered the UC Davis Arboretum All Star Walking Iris. This iris acquires the name "walking" from its propagation habit. New plants form at the top of the flower stalks which then bend down to the ground and take root. Therefore it seems to be "walking" through the garden as it spreads.

You can view *Neomarica caerulea* in the Arboretum Terrace Garden where it is used as an accent plant with its glossy sword shaped leaves. It grows in full to part shade and needs very low water. If you ever wanted an iris that repeats blooming even during the hottest part of the summer, this one is for you.

The walking iris flower is very exotic looking and some have referred to it as a poor man's orchid. However, it's much easier to grow than an orchid. This iris has violet blue outer petals and an intricate patterned center. Although the beautiful flowers have a short life, the plant will reward you with repeat blooms. There are other *Neomarica* species that have different flower colors and some do not propagate by walking. So to be sure you get this beauty, ask for *Neomarica caerulea*.

Walking iris is very easy to care for. It does best in mass plantings and can tolerate a range of soil types. The iris is a clumping perennial (in addition to its walking), which can also be grown in containers and hanging baskets. Once flowering has stopped, trim back the stems. The plant can also be divided in the spring if you'd like to spread it to other parts of the garden, or it makes a great gift for a friend.

Enjoy walking with the irises and happy gardening!



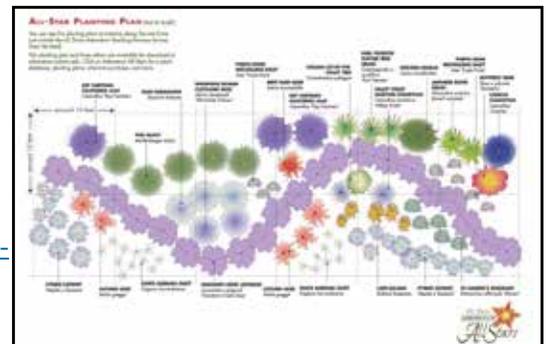
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- *All-Stars Plant Details*. UC Davis Arboretum. n.d. http://arboretum.ucdavis.edu/allstars_detail_27.aspx
- *Walking Iris*. University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, Gardening Solutions. July 28, 2014. <http://gardeningolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/ornamentals/walking-iris.html>

Did You Know?

The plan shown at right is of the mature garden just outside the Arboretum Teaching Nursery on Garrod Drive, across from the Vet Center on the UC Davis campus. It can be downloaded at <http://arboretum.ucdavis.edu/documents/TeachingNurseryDemoBedAllStarPlantingPlan.pdf>

You can download planting plans that use All-Star plants from the UC Davis Arboretum website. Designs include a low-maintenance garden, http://arboretum.ucdavis.edu/plan_lowmaintenance.aspx; a California native plant garden, http://arboretum.ucdavis.edu/plan_california.aspx; and a wildlife attracting garden, http://arboretum.ucdavis.edu/plan_wildlife.aspx. Each plan covers a 10 foot by 10 foot garden bed; they can be combined or repeated to cover larger areas.



Q & A

by Jeanne Powell, Nevada County Master Gardener

Though Photinia is listed as a deer resistant plant, it is not deer proof. I spent several years trying to grow out a boxy photinia hedge along my deck when I first moved to the foothills. It was growing well, starting to lose that boxy look when the deer came through and sheered off the side of the hedge, leaving the top sprouting wildly. It was then that I realized why my neighbors' shrubs all had a kind of "topiary" look. (Originally I thought the locals were craving the look of something "tame" in all the wild grandeur of our foothills...)

Deer Are Consuming My Photinia Hedge. What Can I Do?

References

- Brenzel, Kathleen Norris, ed. *The New Sunset Western Garden Book*. Time Home Entertainment, Inc. 2012.
- Harlow, Nora, ed. *Plants And Landscapes For Summer–Dry Climates of the San Francisco Bay Region*. East Bay Municipal Utilities District. 2004.
- Kirbach, Barbara. *Berberis*. UC Master Gardener Program of Sonoma County. http://ucanr.edu/sites/scmg/plant_of_the_month/berberis

The easiest solution: Change my outlook and "like" those boxy shrubs.

My chosen solution: Barberry!

- Barberry (*Berberis*) comes in both deciduous and evergreen species.
- It grows in all zones with full sun or light shade.
- Once established, Barberry needs little to moderate water.
- Naturally spiny branches keep the deer at bay.

There are many varieties to choose from, one example: Magellan barberry (*Berberis buxifolia*), an evergreen, is hardy to zero degrees and grows to six feet tall and as wide. The leaves are small and leathery. In spring this insignificant bloomer sports masses of yellowy orange flowers, followed by dark purple berries, one or two per leaf cluster.

The toughest thing about creating a hedge? Patience! It takes a few years for small plants to start to look like something. And of course if you are starting with young plants, you must to protect them from grazing deer (who will try just about any young plant because it's tender). As your Barberry grows it toughens and the spiny branches keep the deer away.

Though I still have my boxy photinia hedge, I'm really enjoying the natural look of my more recently planted Barberry.



photo by Jeanne Powell

agri-cola, ae *m* tiller of the field, farmer, husbandman
 caulis, is *m* stalk, stem of a plant; cabbage
 colo, colui, cultum 3 to care for; a) to till, cultivate
 farm; b) to tend; *adj.* cultus 3 cultivated, tilled
 ta, orum *n/pl* tilled land, gardens, plantations
 cresco, crevi, (cretum) 3 to grow
 cultus *m* cultivation, labor, tilling; a) to till, cultivate
 b) care, training, education; c) to grow
 florens, tis blooming, flowering
 floreo, ui 2 to bloom, blossom
 flos, oris *m* flower, blossom
 fodio, fossom 3 to dig, dig
 folium, i *n* leaf, foliage
 herba, ae *f* grass, herb
 hortus, i *m* garden
 radix *f* root
 viridis, e green
 vita, ae life
 xylem

Corner

BotLat

Find Out What Those
Weird Plant Names Mean



photo by Elaine Applebaum

by Peggy Beltramo, Placer County Master Gardener

Each issue, this column looks at some interesting facts you can learn about the plants in your yard by knowing their botanical names and what those words mean.

If you remember from last time, plant names are composed of two parts: *Genus species*, which is “last name,” “first name.” (A confession: In my research I have discovered that *Genus species* to name a plant is currently more accurately *Genus specific epithet*. So, from now on, when discussing the second part of a plant’s name, I will refer to its specific epithet.)

This month’s botanical name is the Arboretum All-Star, *Neomarica caerulea*. The genus, *Neomarica*, is composed of two parts: *neo*, from the Greek word meaning “new,” and *Marica*, the name of a Roman nymph of nature. The specific epithet, *caerulea*, is a color word describing a blue that is a darker shade of sky blue.

Specific epithets are adjectives that often describe some aspect of a plant. They sometimes refer to the color of a plant’s flowers or foliage. Here are some color words to get you started, but the palette is as broad as a painter’s; there are multiple variations for each color:

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| <i>albus</i> = white | <i>niger</i> = black/dark |
| <i>argenteus</i> = silver | <i>puniceus</i> = red-purple |
| <i>aureus</i> = golden | <i>purpureus</i> = purple |
| <i>azureus</i> = sky blue | <i>roseus</i> = rose |
| <i>coccineus</i> = scarlet | <i>rubrus</i> = red |
| <i>lacteus</i> = milky | <i>sulphureus</i> = yellow |
| <i>luteus</i> = yellow | <i>virens</i> = green |

So, now when you see the BotLat name on a plant label you may be able to “see” the color of the flowers by knowing its specific epithet, even if it is not in bloom. Will an iris with dark sky blue flowers fit into your garden? If not, keep looking. Maybe *Mimulus aurantiacus* (sticky monkeyflower, shown above), with orange-red flowers, is a better choice!

The Frugal Gardener Tips to Reuse, Repurpose and Recycle

by Barbara Kermeen,
Nevada County Master Gardener

Do your determinate tomato vines get pinched off when cascading over their cage wires? Cut old garden hose into sections and make a slit along the entire length of each piece. These hose sections will fit over the horizontal elements of tomato cages where needed. They make a soft pad for the cascading tomato vines, prevent dead branches, and promote healthy fruit production.

Another use for those hose pieces is a pain-in-the-foot saver. Put them on the “stomping edge” of a shovel or garden fork to pad your foot from the constant percussion of digging.

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Carefully open the mesh bags in which the onions and mandarins you buy at the market are packaged. Save them to store the garlic, shallots, and onions you grow in your garden. Using mesh bags prevents the buildup of ethylene gases that make your garden bounty go bad by over ripening and rotting.

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Broken pots offer a number of possibilities. If the bottom of the pot is broken but the rim is intact, use the rim as an interesting accent in your flower garden by burying it with only the rim showing, then plant a plant in it. This can be especially interesting when colored, glazed pot rims are used.

If a pot is broken sideways, turn it on its side and fill it up with soil. Plant a trailing flower or some ivy in it. It can be used in the garden or on the deck for that casual country shabby chic look.

Reference

- Mahr, Susan. *What’s In A Name? Understanding Botanical or Latin Names*. Master Gardener Program, University of Wisconsin Extension. November 26, 2007. <http://wimastergardener.org/article/whats-in-a-name-understanding-botanical-or-latin-names/>



Events Calendar

Nevada County Demo Garden

1036 W. Main St., Grass Valley (on NID Grounds)

Placer County Demo Garden

11477 E. Ave., Auburn (Senior Garden, DeWitt Center)

June

June 18

Seasonal Gardening Workshops:

9:00 - 10:00 am

Beyond Zucchini and Tomatoes

10:00 - 11:00 am

Add Zest to Your Yard: Citrus Tree Growing

Placer County Demo Garden

July

July 16

9:00 am-noon

Open Garden Day: Tour the Garden and Ask a Master Gardener

9:00 am - 10:00 am

Maximizing Your Veggie Potential: Fall and Winter Vegetable Gardening

Placer County Demo Garden

July 23

10:00 am-noon

Foothill Vegetable Gardening: How to Grow Cool Season Vegetables in Fall, Winter and Early Spring

Nevada County Demo Garden

August

August 6

10:00 am-noon

A Home Gardener's Guide to Seed Saving

Nevada County Demo Garden

August 10, 11, 12, 13, 14

10:00 am - 7:00 pm

Visit the Master Gardeners Booth at the Nevada County Fair

Come to talk gardening and pick up information. Daily Workshops and Composting Demos

(See NC Fair Guide for schedule)

Ag-Sperience area of Nevada County Fairgrounds, 11228 McCourtney Rd, Grass Valley

August 20

10:00 am-noon

Foothill Vegetable Gardening: Compost is the Gardener's Best Friend

Nevada County Demo Garden

August 20

9:00 am-noon Open Garden Day:

Tour the Garden and Ask a Master Gardener

9:00 am - 10:00 am

Keeping Your Fruit Trees in Form: Summer Pruning

Placer County Demo Garden

August 27

10:00 am-noon

Growing Great Soil, from Cover Crops to Lasagna Gardening

Nevada County Demo Garden

September

September 5

10:00 am - noon

Building Great Soil, from Cover Crops to Lasagna Gardening

Nevada County Demo Garden

September 10

9:30 am - 1:00 pm

"Bite Me" Tomato Tasting & Open House

Nevada County Demo Garden

September 24

Seasonal Gardening Workshops:

9:00 - 10:00 am

Harvesting and Preserving Herbs

10:00 - 11:00 am

Landscaping with California Native Plants

Placer County Demo Garden

Growers' and Farmers' Markets

Saturdays, Mid-May to Mid-Sept.

8:00 am-Noon

Visit Nevada County Master Gardeners at the North Star House Growers' Market, 12075 Auburn Rd., Grass Valley

1st and 3rd Saturdays, May to Oct.

8:00 am-Noon

Visit Placer County Master Gardeners at the Auburn Farmers' Market Old Town Courthouse Parking Lot

Tuesdays, May to Oct.

8:30 am-1:00 pm

Visit Placer County Master Gardeners at the Roseville Farmers' Market Whole Foods Market at Fountains

▶ Nevada County events in green boxes

▶ Placer County events in yellow boxes

About 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 70's at the 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 Nevada County and Placer County Master Gardener Associations began soon thereafter in 1983.

Over 30 Years of Serving Placer and Nevada Counties

Production Information

The Curious Gardener is published quarterly by the University of California Cooperative Extension Master Gardeners of Placer and Nevada Counties.

Kevin Marini, Editor

Community Education Specialist: Home Horticulture and Composting Education, Master Gardener Coordinator

Elaine Applebaum, Production

Placer County Master Gardener

Have a Gardening Question?

Call our Hotline

Placer County Residents

530.889.7388

Nevada County Residents

530.273.0919

Master Composter Hotline

530.889.7399

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ceplacer@ucdavis.edu

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