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March 2018

A Healthy Gardens Approach to Managing Weeds

Keep your friends close and your enemies closer.
Know your weeds.

Sonoma County Master Gardener DJ DeProspero's "healthy garden" approach to gardening uses Integrated Pest Management, or IPM, a method of dealing with garden pests in a way that considers the whole ecosystem, not just the pest. The IPM principles give the home gardener a set of strategies and tools to manage weeds while minimizing risks to people and the environment. In this talk, you'll learn the principles and how to apply them to your garden, whether small or large, whether you're growing vegetables, fruits or landscape plants. He'll cover common weeds and have time for your questions, too.

As usual, the meeting will be at the Sonoma Veterans' Memorial Building, 126 First Street West, Sonoma. Arrive at 6:30 p.m. to pay any outstanding dues, peruse the raffle items and visit with other attendees during the meet-and-greet period. Then enjoy the lecture at 7:00 p.m. followed by a plant raffle and

refreshments. Remember, the meeting is free for club members and five dollars for guests. For questions, call (707) 935-8986.

President's Message

Linda & I purchased some spray paint the other day at Friedman's to create painted flower pots. Here's where you come in.

WANTED:

Clay, ceramic or nice plastic pots for garden club members to decorate for the Spring Plant Sale. Please bring your pots to the March 1st, 2018 VOMGC monthly meeting at the Veteran's building.

AND/OR:

Bring your pots to Studio #1, Adrienne and Bonnie's art studio on Carringer & Grove (a quick left at the Grove Street stop sign). Then help paint them for the Spring Plant Sale

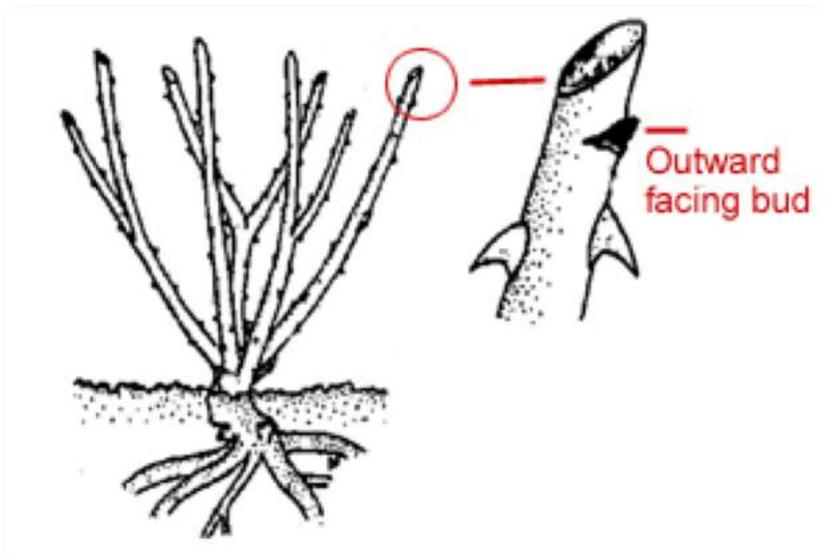
Ad Love & Linda, too!



Horticultural Column

Tasks in the Garden for Late Winter / Early Spring

I have been scurrying all around the garden lately. There are lots of tasks to perform, especially with the food crops like the fruits and grapes but don't forget the rose garden. Here are a few reminders of steps to take this time of year to assure a healthy and productive garden.



Roses

Roses should be pruned during the dormant season. Here's a few tips. First, cut all the shoots to a desired height (1 to 2 feet). Then, select about five of

the strongest and greenest canes and cut off all the others leaving a bowl-shape to the bush. Be sure to leave a couple of younger, greener canes each year and cut out the older dead wood to assure blooming year after year. After pruning, feed the roses. Use a quarter cup of organic slow-release fertilizer for each plant. Just throw it on the surface and the rain or regular watering will carry it into the soil.

Finally, don't forget pest control. Roses are very prone to sap-sucking aphids and mildew. Using preventative spray will assure healthy plants. There are good organic and safe sprays. I like neem oil. It repels the aphids and also inhibits mildew growth. Spray now and once again after the foliage grows in the Spring.

Citrus

Here are a few suggestions. Watch the weather report because it can get cold this time of year. If a frost is predicted, then make sure that the soil is wet. Also, throw a frost cloth over your citrus trees until the frost alert is over. Don't forget to feed your citrus trees. I use an organic slow-release fertilizer. Spread about half a cup per tree around the dripline. We have not been getting much rain lately, so water your citrus if the soil is drying out.



Other Fruit Trees

Yes, that is the notorious Codling Moth larvae. It eats holes in your apples and makes biting into them an adventure. If you have been reading my column, then you know about Captain Jack Dead Bug. I have used it against the Codling Moth and it works for nearly hole-free apples on your tree. Spray with Captain Jack at the directed concentration three times; first when green shoots begin to appear, second after the flowers have dropped and finally, when the little apples begin to form.

Apples and pears are prone to fire blight. If you have seen the burnt leaf and stem of this disease on your apple or pear in the past, then you must spray

during the dormant season with Copper Dormant Spray. Do it on a day when no rain is predicted. Use this same copper spray on your roses and grapes for mildew control. You have a tank mixed up, you might as well kill 3 birds with one stone.

Leaf curl on peaches and nectarines is a real common problem. If you have new trees, then the bacterial disease will eventually find them from contaminated trees in your neighborhood. Preventative dormant copper spraying will help control this problem.

If you're concerned that I have preached minimum impact and reduced chemical usage, don't worry. All the sprays and fertilizers I have recommended are organic and non-toxic (to us not the Codling Moth maggot). And if this all sounds like too much work, think of biting into that ripe, fresh apple just of the tree and finding that you should have used Captain Jack.

Dennis Przybycien



Bonus Column

Monarch Habitat Garden Update And Call for Help!

After hearing our meeting speaker in the fall about dwindling populations of Monarch butterflies, Cindy Lindh, a VOMGC member, brought an idea to her church's Earth Care Committee. She wanted to plant a nectar garden for them to go with the milkweed patch that is already in the works by our club and CA State Parks.

As a result, VOMGC is partnering with CA State Parks, General Vallejo Home State Historic Park and the First Congregational Church Earth Care Committee on Spain Street to create a Monarch Habitat Garden with Narrowleaf Milkweed and nectar plants for Monarch butterflies and other pollinators.

Perennial pollinator plants from 4" pots that were donated by Emerisa Wholesale Nursery were planted in early February on church property. Milkweed plants are being started from seed by VOMGC member and State Parks landscaper Lynn Luzzi to be planted in late Spring on adjoining State Parks land.

On **Saturday, March 3rd from 2:00 to 4:30 p.m.**, you can volunteer at our "shoveling shindig" to help spread organic planting mix in the wildflower nectar

garden area and ditching for the drip system lines. Please bring a rake or shovel. If you cannot work, then share treats or drinks for the workers and enjoy the time. There are several benches for resting. We appreciate your encouragement.

Here are photos of the first planting day. As the plants went in the ground, preschoolers and their teachers came by. Cindy Lindh, a former school teacher, spoke to them about the butterflies and got them enthusiastic about Monarchs and the garden.

Bonnie Brown

Monarch Habitat Garden Work Day

When: Saturday, March 3, 2:00 to 4:30.

Where: First Congregational Church, 252 W. Spain Street, behind the church.



Come enjoy the Monarch Garden and help spread organic soil and dig a shallow ditch for irrigation lines. Don't forget to bring a rake or shovel and pitch in!

An Extra Bonus!

(An Extraordinary) Garden Tour Report

On Saturday, February 17th, fourteen of our club members traveled to Petaluma to tour the garden of Paola Tonelli and her husband, Sparky. Paola spoke in January about the *Geometry in Nature*. It was a beautiful day and a dramatic setting in the hills of West Petaluma. Sparky started the tour by showing us his pet rams with their huge, curled horns. The rams enjoyed a treat of tortillas after giving and receiving a kiss from Sparky. In spite of their names of Bummer and Dinner, they are not headed for the cooking pot.

Sparky then took us through his greenhouse where he starts plants and down through his terraced, abundant winter garden of raised beds. He shared a huge crop of chard, celery, and sage with members and showed how he divides yellow and red onions into pieces so they grow into multiple onions, much like potatoes. The root ends of green onions will sprout into grow new scallions. There's no need to compost leavings. Just plant them. He brings in loads of compost every year to enrich the soil.

Paola set out a beautiful luncheon in their greenhouse overlooking a view of Petaluma and the east hills. She even shared sliced prosciutto from her home

town in Italy. It was one of those rare experiences to visit with each other and our two wonderful hosts.

Thank you, Paola and Sparky!

Bonnie Brown

A Special Extra Bonus!

Willow Wood Wisdom

You will like this poem (and website). I'm sending this to you as lovers of gardens, nature and all the magic they bring. We should write poems for all we receive in healing, joy, food and life!

Debra

***There is a branch for you to sit upon with a beautiful view.
Climb up into her arms, and stay for a spell.
Feel her roots, her bark, her branches, her leaves.
She is shade, shelter, a home, a hide-away.
She is an escape.
She rocks you to sleep in your hammock.
She holds up your birdfeeder and your wind chimes.
She embraces anyone who loves to climb.
In the spring she offers life, and in the fall she gives her own.
She does not judge.***

She just is.

Gwendolyn, 2007

Willow - The Goddess Tree

www.thegoddessstree.com/trees

February 1, 2018 Meeting Minutes

Announcements:

Volunteers are needed for: Club Historical Archiver, Social Media Development person, Garden Tour Coordinator, 4th of July Parade Organizer. Contact the co-presidents for more information on how to help.

Because the **Spring Plant Sale** (April 21) might receive fewer donations from Blooms Nursery, we need to propagate our own plants. Seeds can be sown and then potted up into individual pots. Pollinator and veggie plants are very popular. Succulents and other plants can be divided/grown from cuttings.

Barbara Heiman has started 32 varieties of tomato plants, which will need to be potted up by volunteers in mid-March. There will be a **Tomato Mania Potluck** at Barbara and Michael Heiman's garden on April 19 where members can purchase tomato plants.

Is anyone interested in **mentoring High School Students** in gardening? Kids need encouragement and gardening could become part of their senior project.

Presentation:

Fire-Resistant Landscapes by Dennis Przybycien, Master Gardener and Club VP

The Sonoma County Master Gardeners have been fielding many questions about fire recovery; a group is putting together a program on working with post-fire soil.

Dennis's talk focused on preparing our properties to be defensible in fires. The Master Gardeners of Sonoma County are adapting landscape fire prevention guidelines from many agencies and Dennis previewed this document. The information will soon be available on their website at <http://ucanr.edu/sites/scmg/>. They are also working with the JC to create fire-safe demonstration gardens and plans.

The 3R's of prevention are Removal, Reduction and Replacement. Create a defensible space between your yard and wilder areas. Remove dead trees, or branches, and shrubs. Within a 10' diameter, avoid trees, especially conifers. Within 30', space your trees so that fire can't jump easily between them. Within a 100' area, have less vegetation and keep plants healthy, trimmed and well-watered. Eliminate debris and move woodpiles, scrap lumber and propane tanks 30' from buildings. If your property is sloped, or surrounding areas have heavy vegetation, you need 150' of defensible space.

Separate your plants or make small groups with space between. Eliminate fire ladders by cutting lower tree branches to allow 10–20' of space above shrubbery. Mow grass and weeds (but be aware of mower sparks). Every few years, thin the canopy, but do not top trees. If trees are unhealthy or too large, take them down. Have backup power to run your well.

Organic mulch is flammable, "gorilla hair" being the worst. Look for composted wood bark or use gravel and lots of hardscaping. Small lawns, groundcovers and low-growing non-resinous plants are recommended. Keep gutters and roofs clean, remove dry grass from under decks. Some especially flammable plants: junipers, rosemary, pampas grass, large fountain grasses, broom, acacia, Douglas fir. And, let's drink to the vineyards: defensible spaces with good access roads for firefighting.

The raffle, refreshments, information tables and conversation followed the presentation.



2018 Officers and Directors

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Co-Vice-President: Doug Graham	(707) 334-5472	Penguin52express@gmail.com
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Director: Carol Dickason	(707) 935-0505	dickason05@gmail.com
Director: Jobina Forder	(707) 933-9176	Salisbury2@att.net

Lifetime Members

Barbara and Larry Audiss, Katherine Couture, Helaine Forte, Linda Garaicotchea, Nancy & Herb Heil, Barbara & Michael Heiman, Charlene Hunter, George & Marianne Paul, and Doreen Proctor.

2018 Chair Persons

Meeting Secretary: Liz Vaughn	(707) 799-6939	Lizvaughn707@gmail.com
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Community Services: Doug Graham	(707) 334-5472	Penguin52express@gmail.com
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Hospitality: Katherine Couture	(707) 935-9358	Kc339@sbcglobal.net
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Newsletter eMailer: Iain Pryor	(916) 764-0772	iaindpryor@gmail.com
Newsletter Proofreader: Position Open		
Snail-Mailer: John Naab		



Treasurer's Report

INCOME	
Membership Dues & Raffle	\$522.00
EXPENSES	
Insurance	\$174.00
USPS Newsletter	\$15.00
Speaker	\$100.00
P.O. Box Rental	\$64.00
Miscellaneous	\$11.00
ENDING BALANCE	\$10,073.00



Contact

Website: www.vom-garden-club.org

(Please note that our website is currently down due to a server problem. Thank you for your patience.)

As a VOM Garden Club member, access the "members-only" info on our website by using the
If you are mailing a letter to the Valley of the Moon Garden Club, mail to:

VOMGC Attn: (name of the person you wish your letter to reach)

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Vineburg, CA 95487

