



Garden Notes

www.sustainableclaremont.org

gardenclub@sustainableclaremont.org

November 2013

Welcome to the SC Garden Club newsletter!

🐞 Please send us questions about gardening and we will do our best to answer them!



Chrysanthemums: The quintessential fall flower!

Incurve, pompom, spoon, spider, quill, anemone, reflex, decorative, brush or thistle, exotics—so many forms! There are hundreds of varieties in almost all colors. They look great in the garden and last well in arrangements. Mums are actually groups of flowers (heads) on a single stalk. The outer 'ray' flowers have a single petal and a pistil. The inner 'disk' flowers have no petals but have both pistils and stamens. Garden mums tend to have many small heads like the one above right. Exhibition mums are pinched and disbudded to produce a few large heads like the others shown. Mums are perennials happy in sun or part sun, and do well in the ground or in containers. Cultivars vary from 1-3ft tall and wide. For all the info you could want about growing mums, visit www.mums.org.

Favorite quote (courtesy of Sharron Neyer)

Gardens are a form of autobiography.

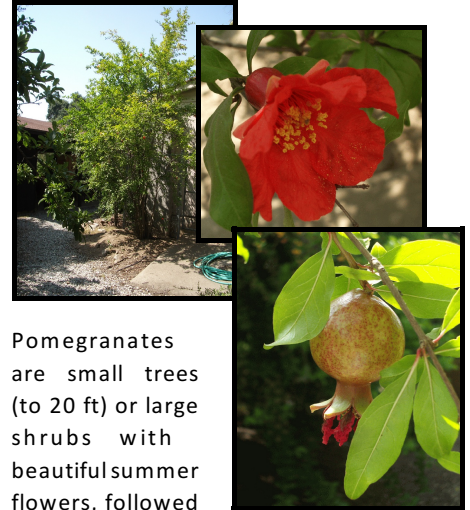
Sydney Eddison

Community Tree Workshop on Thursday, November 7

From the Tree Action Group (trees@sustainableclaremont.org): The City of Claremont is holding a community tree workshop this Thursday, November 7, from 7-9pm in the Grove Room of the Alexander Hughes Center. The purpose of the meeting is to gather input from Claremont residents about the care and maintenance of our urban forest as the City gets ready to revise its Tree Policy Manual and Guidelines.

This second of three workshops will focus on the removal of city trees: Should the criteria for tree removal be changed? Should there be penalties when city trees are pruned or removed without authorization? Who should be notified when a tree is scheduled for removal? Should individual homeowners be penalized if trees on their property cause damage to city streets or sidewalks?

Ornamental of the Month: *Punica granatum*



Pomegranates are small trees (to 20 ft) or large shrubs with beautiful summer flowers, followed by large fruit—usually red but some forms are yellow or purple. Yellow leaves in the fall. There are ornamental as well as edible forms. Full sun, drought tolerant. Common variety is "Wonderful" (seen above).

Edible of the Month: *Basella alba*



Malabar spinach is a beautiful vine to 30 ft native to the Philippines. The mucilaginous heart-shaped leaves can be cooked like spinach or used to thicken soups and stir fries; small pink and white flowers and black fruit in fall and winter. Full or part sun; appreciates some humidity.

Two highly-experienced urban foresters, Dave Roger and Nancy Sappington of the Inland Urban Forest Council, will be on hand to answer questions and speak about forestry best practices. There will be ample opportunity for participants to ask questions as well as express their views. According to the City website, members of the Community and Human Services Commission will also be in attendance.

Note from the editor: The City removed the City Arborist position a while ago in response to the economic downturn. If you believe it would be good now to reinstate the position and have a permanent, dedicated person to supervise our urban forest, please let the City know (<http://www.ci.claremont.ca.us/>).

Impatiens downy mildew

Ordinary Impatiens may be harder to find at local nurseries. This is due to a fatal 'water mold' infection called downy mildew (not to be confused with powdery mildew, a true fungus). This has attacked the plant in gardens in 33 states so growers are producing fewer of them. Most downy mildews prefer damp, cool conditions but this one, alas, seems to be more heat-tolerant. Symptoms are brownish lesions on the leaves and grayish 'fur' on the undersides, as well as wilting. If your plants develop it, remove and destroy infected ones, improve air circulation and avoid wetting the leaves. You might try foliar feeding with a phosphate fertilizer as there are reports that this can help fight the infection. If you want alternatives to plant, some other choices for shade are New Guinea impatiens, begonias, torenia, coleus, caladiums, cyclamen, fuchsia, lobelia, perilla, and viola/pansies.

From Molly Goodreau: The Pomona Organic Farm invites the public to its events, free, Fridays 3-5pm (<http://farm.pomona.edu/get-involved/workshops/>)

November 8: Pest Management. Losing crops to insects and rodents can make many gardeners either give up or turn to inorganic controls. Come learn about organic pest management, as well as how we can use pests to discern soil health.

November 15: Food Justice Discussion. Visiting Professor of Sociology Dr. Nicki Cole will lead a lecture and discussion on topics encompassed by "food justice" including local vs. global farming, racial and labor politics of agriculture, and more.

🌸 **Many thanks** to members Dan Pearce, Sherry Best, and John Best for giving a talk on behalf of the Garden Club at the Chaffey sustainability event Oct 26!

Upcoming events and more: *(The garden club is free and open to all)*

Nov 13: Garden Club meeting (7pm, Napier Center, 660 Avery Rd, Pilgrim Place)

"The Urban Forest", Larry Wheaton, consulting arborist to the City

Nov 6: Town Hall meeting with City Council about possible acquisition of the water company, 6 pm, Taylor Hall, 1775 N. Indian Hill Blvd

Nov 7: Workshop on revisions to the City Tree Policy, 7 pm Grove room, Alexander Hughes Center

Nov 23: Tour of the RSABG container garden; email to reserve a place (gardenclub@sustainableclaremont.org)

No meeting in December

Jan 15: (note this is the 3rd Wednesday rather than the 2nd): **Garden Club Meeting "Square Foot Gardening"**

Did you know?

Botanical Latin: "*granatum*" means 'many seeded'. "*alba*" means "white"

Plant miscellanea: "Allelopathy" is a term used to describe the "chemical warfare" caused when some plants produce compounds that seep into the soil and inhibit the growth of other plants in their immediate vicinity. Black walnuts are notorious for this.

Things to do in November

General

- ✓ Dig in manure or compost so it can break down with winter rains

Pest/disease management

- ✓ Shift mulch under trees back to drip line—helps soil absorb heat during day and reduces overwintering of disease-carrying bacteria and insects.
- ✓ Cultivate around plants to bring pest larvae and weed seeds to the surface—a banquet for birds
- ✓ Use dormant oil spray on citrus to smother eggs of scale, aphids, mites

Edibles

- ✓ Sow lettuce: romaine, small-heading bibb and butter-crunch types thrive with little damage from light frosts
- ✓ Pinch out the main shoot of broccoli a month after transplanting to force several large side shoots. Cutting after it's full-size produces more but smaller side shoots

Ornamentals

- ✓ Prune to shape evergreens like arborvitae, juniper, magnolia, pines, pittosporum (trimmings make good holiday decorations). Don't prune spring bloomers til after flowering to prevent cutting off the flower buds
- ✓ Plant pansies, columbine, coral bells, alyssum, calendula, poppies, primroses, snapdragons, sweet peas, ornamental cabbage
- ✓ Plant azaleas and camellias, add acid mulch if possible; prevent drying out

Please send photos and info about plants you've grown, gardens you've visited, gardening lore you've learned.

Sue Schenk, editor