



Garden Notes

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Welcome to the SC Garden Club newsletter!

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



Pictures from the September field trip: Steve Sabicer's gaily decorated coop; Sherry Best's raised beds with pots of seedlings (her coop is in the background); enjoying Sherry's scrumptious jams, salsa, and pickles!



Tomatoes: Sharon Hightower writes: "The best tomatoes we grew this year were "Great White," a large yellow Heirloom tomato, juicy and flavorful; "Brandywine," a medium red Heirloom tomato, great for slicing; and "Black Cherry," a

sprawling, clustering large cherry-size dark red tomato, really good in salads. "Celebrity" also did well in a container on the patio.

We went on a short trip in mid-August. Before we left, we had pretty much stripped the tomatoes but there were still flowers for future ones. While we were gone the deer managed to leap into our planter garden. They neatly trimmed all of the tomato plants close to their cages. They ate one Japanese eggplant, but ignored the basil, hot peppers, and herbs."

Some additional tomato recommendations from Sherry Best: Box Car Willy, Black from Tula, Momotaro, Supersteak, Early Girl VF, German Johnson, Hillbilly Potato Leaf, Japanese Black Trifol.

Planning to replace some lawn? Here are some tips:

- You can remove what you don't want by digging, by solarization (<http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn74145.html>) or by sheet mulching (<http://www.marinwater.org/controller?action=menuclick&id=601>)
- Decide on the plants you would like to include in your new landscape: some helpful info is at (<http://www.rsabg.org/>), (<http://www.sunset.com/>), (<http://www.water.ca.gov/wateruseefficiency/docs/wucols00.pdf>)

Ornamental of the Month: *Hoya carnosa*



Hoya, called "waxflower" for the thick-petaled, pink or white star-shaped flowers, is an outstanding hanging plant in house or garden. Flowers appear each summer along the stems on the ends of permanent spurs. Thick leaves, plain or variegated, oval or heart-shaped on long, vining stems which twist around nearby objects. Light shade, moderate water, and watch out for mealy bugs. *(photo by Patty Lindberg)*

Edible of the Month: *Cymbopogon citratus*



Lemongrass flavors many Asian dishes. To 5' by 5' in full/part sun with moderate water; grows smaller in containers. Cut 1/2" thick stalks, peel off tough leaves, smash and add to soups, stews, or teas to infuse flavor. Can freeze or dry in bunches. My young plant was started from a division I got at a Garden Club meeting!

- Not all the new plants need to be drought-tolerant of course, but make a landscape plan that groups plants with similar water needs in areas of high, medium and low water use (hydrozones) for efficient irrigation
- Be sure plant needs match the microclimate (sun/shade/part shade, drainage, different soil conditions, etc) where you want them to go
- Plants under trees should have the same water requirements as the trees
- Trees should continue to be deep-watered regularly or they are likely to go into a decline. Most can do with less than they got when they were in or near a lawn (once a month will do for most), but they still need water
- The extra nitrogen released by the breakdown of organic mulch can cause some drought-tolerant California natives to grow too fast and die young—consult the nursery staff to see if crushed granite would be a better mulch
- The most efficient forms of irrigation (most efficient first) are: subsurface irrigation, drip emitters, bubblers, microsprays, stream rotors, pop-up stream rotator heads, spray irrigation. With spray you can lose 50% of the water you apply to evaporation before the plants get it, and with subsurface you only lose about 10%
- The best way to water narrow areas of turf and prevent runoff is to use subsurface or drip, but even better is to design the landscape without them
- Design the irrigation to miss impermeable surfaces or use permeable ones so your water stays on site *(thanks to Bob Traer for some of this info)*

Favorite quote (courtesy of Sharron Neyer)

"It is a golden maxim to cultivate the garden for the nose, and the eyes will take care of themselves."

Robert Louis Stevenson

Sharron's suggestions for the nose: rose, gardenia, jasmine, honeysuckle, wisteria, sweet pea, nicotiana, lilac, lavender, heliotrope, mock orange

Pruning hydrangeas

These deciduous, woody shrubs do fine without pruning but handle it if you want to control size, and sometimes pruning will improve health and increase flower size. You can always remove spent flowers and dead wood, and remove some of the oldest and tallest canes. If you do decide to prune more extensively, prune oakleaf hydrangeas and mopheads, which bloom in summer on old wood, immediately after flowering, and prune fall-blooming paniculata types, which bloom on new wood, in late winter or early spring. More info and a video at (Go to www.finegardening.com and type in 'pruning hydrangeas').

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

Oct 9: Garden Club meeting (7pm, Napier Center, 660 Avery Rd, Pilgrim Place) **"Drip Irrigation Basics"**

Oct 10: Diversity of California's Native Bees, Huntington Library, 2:30pm

Oct 12: Design Principles for Judging a Garden, 10 am-noon, \$25, (register at www.arboretum.org)

Oct tour: The RSABG container garden (date TBD)

Nov 2: Cactus and Succulent Show, the Arboretum, 9am-5pm, free with admission

Nov 2: Fall Planting Festival (plant sale) at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, 8am members, 10 am non-members, ends at 4pm

Did you know?

Botanical Latin: "*Carnosa*" means "fleshy or pulpy". "*Citratus*" means "citrus-like"

Plant miscellanea: The adjective "adventitious" means something is in an unusual or unexpected location such as roots growing on aerial stems (as in philodendrons), or buds growing on leaves (as in some kalanchoes).

Things to do in October

General

- ✓ Use water to spray off dust and spider webs in the morning
- ✓ give lizards and butterflies water to drink in shallow bowls
- ✓ Increase # days between watering

Pest/disease management

- ✓ control moles and gophers: place ½" chicken wire 2-3" below planting area
- ✓ water early in the morning so leaves have a chance to dry; wet leaves at night are prone to fungal infections
- ✓ protect cole crops (cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower) from cabbage moth eggs with floating row covers

Edibles

- ✓ plant pretty pots of "Giant Red" mustard, purple-stemmed "Redbor" kale, and green bok choy
- ✓ plant a cover cop of crimson clover or fava beans in your resting vegetable bed; till under in spring
- ✓ prune figs

Ornamentals

- ✓ plant pots with deep purple "Queen of the night" tulips (www.brecks.com www.whiteflowerfarm.com)
- ✓ add South African bulbs (Watsonia, Babiana, Sparaxis) to the garden
- ✓ include CA native shrubs: lemonade berry, buckwheat, ceanothus
- ✓ divide and replant native Douglas iris

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

Sue Schenk, editor