

Master Gardener  
University of California



# The Curious Gardener

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

Vol. 23, No. 4  
Fall 2016

## In This Issue

Edibles in the Landscape	1
Brussels Sprouts	2
Weeds and Compost	3
Protecting Your Winter Vegetable Garden	4
Tomato Tasting	6
Calendar/Gardening Guide	6
BotLat Corner	7
Fall Plant Sale	7
Hotline FAQs: Pomegranates	8
Hummingbird Sage	9
The Frugal Gardener	9
Events Calendar	10



University of California  
Agriculture and Natural Resources

## Incorporating Edibles Into the Landscape

by Judith Myrick, Placer County Master Gardener

In my neighborhood everyone's back yard is hidden away behind a tall fence. Anything could be going on back there. Are they gardening? If so, chances are they are following the old traditional plans that dictated planting veggies in a veggie bed and ornamentals in a separate location.

The idea of edible landscaping is not new. The term can refer to any landscape plan that includes any number of food plants. The interesting thing is what happens when you mix food plants in with your ornamentals in the same planting beds. Edible plants don't have to be hidden away behind a fence. They can be a part of any planting space that will give them the sun, water, and nutrients they need.

Food plants are beautiful in their own right. We're just not used to appreciating them that way. Think about the beauty of rhubarb with its striking red stems and large glossy green leaves. If you don't have enough shade to grow hosta and you wish you could, consider rhubarb.

If you think green can get monotonous, not all food plants are the same shade of green. Cabbage can be green, blue-green, red, or blue. Some food plants have variegated leaves or fruits; some, like sage and lavender, have gray-green leaves that contrast nicely with other colors; some, like beets and chard, have colorful stems. There are some varieties of root vegetables, like carrots, beets, and turnips, whose underground parts may be white or brightly colored. Of course, if

*Continued on next page*



*Cabbage and onions are attractive additions to this ornamental landscape.*

*Photo by Pauline Sakai*

*Continued from previous page*

you want your carrots to be orange, your beets to be red, and your turnips to be purple and white, you can have that, too.

Who could garden with food plants without including tomatoes? The fruits come in a wide variety of colors and sizes. The plant itself is handsome. Even tomato cages, used to support determinate varieties, are available in colors. Indeterminate tomatoes that bear small fruits, like cherry tomatoes, can be grown on a trellis or pergola, adding vertical interest and perhaps affording some cooling shade to the side of the house. Grapes, hops, and kiwi can also be used this way.

Plant size, shape, color and texture are important elements to consider in any landscape plan. Edible plants can provide all of these. You may want to include in your plan the use of fruit trees, fruiting vines and ground covers. Tree size at maturity needs to be considered. A small tree can be a significant addition to your landscape as long as it does not provide too much shade. Most food plants require 6 to 8 hrs of sunlight a day. Apples, peaches, nectarines, plums, and apricots can be kept to a manageable size by pruning. You might also look for genetic dwarf varieties which top out at 6 to 8 ft at maturity.

There is another benefit derived from mixing edible and ornamental plants in a landscape. Many flowering plants produce nectar, an important food source for pollinators. Nectar attracts pollinators. When they discover the edible plants in flower, the activity of the pollinators as they move pollen among edible plants results in increased food yield.

In order to thrive, food plants require more nutrients like nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium, than typical landscape plants. They also require moisture-retentive soil and a consistent supply of water. Additions of compost and applications of mulch will contribute to soil health and benefit all of your plants.

If you haven't tried growing your own food before, here is a chance to find out on as small a scale as you want how good fresh food tastes. You can choose to grow organically and not worry about chemical residue on your food. If you do use pesticides, read the label carefully. Use only products that are approved for use on food crops. You can have fun growing unusual varieties of fruits and vegetables. You can start your plants from seed or purchase plants from a reputable local nursery whose plant inventory should consist of plants suitable to your area.

Whether you keep your edibles behind a fence or choose to proudly grow them for all to see, you'll probably end up with an attractive landscape, healthier soil, some good food for your table, and a reputation for creativity in your neighborhood.

## References:

- Barth, Brian. *Edibles Out of the Box*. Horticulture Magazine, F & W Media, Inc. May/June 2014.
- Creasy, Rosalind. *Edible Landscaping*. San Francisco. Sierra Club Books. 2010.
- Oregon State University Extension Service. *Edible Landscaping*. <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening/ediblelandscaping>
- Poff, Barbara. *Introduction to Edible Landscaping*. <http://ucanr.edu/sites/sacmg/files/163567.pdf>

## Try Growing Something New: Brussels Sprouts, *Brassica oleracea* var. *gemmifera*

by Nikki Duncan, Placer County Master Gardener

One of the last vegetables to be harvested in the winter, Brussels sprouts bring the gardening year to a delicious close. They are easy to grow if planted at the right time and there is no need to worry about frosts. Brussels sprouts taste better after exposure to frosts, which cause the sugars to become more concentrated for a delightful burst of flavor. They are a tall, unusual looking plant, part of the cabbage family.

Brussels sprouts can be grown from seeds or transplants. Pick a sunny location and set out seedlings in mid-July to mid-August for maturity in the fall. Brussels sprouts are a cool season vegetable with a long maturity (90-120 days) and the plants need to reach about 75% maturity before the first frost in order to form sprouts. Using shade cloth over the new seedlings will protect them from the hot sun. Plant in well drained soil high in organic matter. Water deeply and infrequently and mulch to cool the soil and maintain even soil moisture. Common pests are cabbage worm, aphids and whitefly. For tips on controlling these pests see <http://ipm.ucanr.edu/PMG/GARDEN/VEGES/brusselspr.html>.

Harvest the lowest sprouts first when they are about 1" in size and before they begin to open. Brussels sprouts are low in calories, high in fiber and Vitamin C. Try some this year!





# Compost Corner

## Weeds and Compost: A Love/Hate Relationship

By Kevin Marini, UCCE Placer-Nevada Master Gardener Programs Manager

Imagine this: You have spent six weeks intimately monitoring your compost pile. You first chopped by hand all the organic materials in small pieces, carefully layered the three cubic foot pile with a perfect carbon to nitrogen ratio, utilizing all the debris and animal manure you had. You got the pile to cook at 140°F, kept it moist, and turned it religiously.

Perfectly done, like an artistic masterpiece, the finished compost is ready on the same day your tomatoes are ready to be transplanted into your fertile, ten-year-old, weed-free, raised beds. As you sift your sacred black gold, you are beaming like the sun shining upon your face.

Then, you notice something almost glowing in your compost. Your heart starts to beat rapidly, your face flushes, and you suddenly are perspiring heavily. With a trembling hand, you slowly reach down and pick something white and tender from the pile. “No, No, No,” you say over and over to yourself, but you start to see more of these throughout the pile and soon your eyes begin to water. Finally, you scream at the top of your lungs, “Bermuda grass!!!”

How could this have happened? Your artwork has been infested with your garden’s worst enemy. Your mind races, trying to make sense of it all. And then it hits you: the grass clippings! Now the compost will have to go on your front lawn instead of your garden beds, and you can’t help but mourn the loss for your garden...

Everyone thinks that these types of tragedies won’t happen to them. In fact, it is common practice to use your grass clippings in your compost pile. And that can be a good practice, if your lawn doesn’t consist of potential invasive weeds that reproduce readily by pieces of themselves.

The fact is that weeds can be either a blessing to your compost pile or a nightmare, depending on multiple factors. If you have an abundance of annual weeds that have not started to go to seed yet, then you have a wonderful supply

of “greens” for the compost pile. In this way, these weeds are highly valued and sometimes even sought after (well, ok, maybe that’s going a little too far!).

The idea that getting a compost pile hot enough to kill all reproducing parts (seeds, rhizomes, corms, etc...) is not something to rely on. Compost piles are not uniformly “hot” and, although high temperatures do kill a variety of weed seeds, the chance exists that some will survive and find their way into your pristine garden beds.

Another idea is that you can dry out the pernicious weeds by laying them out on the hot concrete until they are thoroughly dry. This can work, but sometimes it is difficult to determine when the weed is sufficiently dried out. Therefore, once again, it is best to avoid the invasive weeds altogether.

Some examples of invasive weeds to NOT place in your compost pile are: Bermuda grass, bindweed, crabgrass, Johnson grass, and perennial clovers.

Another important consideration is a plant that may be an ornamental in your garden area, but a nuisance in your compost pile. A good example of this is the common groundcover, Vinca minor, which is very hardy and reproduces easily. There are other ornamental plants that fall into this category, so be aware of how your plants reproduce and what parts you are throwing into your compost piles.

Remember, if you have any doubt about a certain weed or plant, err on the side of caution, or do a little research. This will help prevent any misfortune and unrelenting weeping!

**Be certain of your composting success by avoiding weed seeds or other reproducing parts in your compost pile, period.**



*Bermuda grass in lawn clippings can easily survive the composting process.*

### References:

- *Cornell Composting*. Cornell Waste Management Institute. 1996. <http://compost.css.cornell.edu>

# Cabbage and Broccoli and Kale, Oh My! Part II

## Protecting Your Winter Vegetable Garden

Article by Barbara Kermeen, Nevada County Master Gardener

It is said that a picture is worth a thousand words. A thousand words could not describe my sorrow at not having taken a picture of my beautiful, bright green heads of broccoli, emerging in full splendor, through the snow. The plants had a good start in the greenhouse. The soil was warm and my planting was perfect.

That year, I got lucky. But you can't count on Lady Luck! How do you protect yourself and your cool weather garden if she turns fickle on you?

One immediate thought was to build a greenhouse. Previous issues of *Curious Gardener* (Fall 2015, Winter 2016, and Spring 2016) contain articles on greenhouses. Most greenhouses described in these three articles are "traditional" greenhouses which exist without any additional lighting besides the sun. These articles discuss light exposure; site selection; cover; and shelter from wind, frost, and snow—elements that must be considered before taking on greenhouse construction.

However I, being "The Frugal Gardener," work with what I have. In my case, I had an old hot tub surround connected to my house and back deck. The hot tub was cracked, the heater didn't work, and it was generally uncomfortable. But it did have windows on three sides. With minimal expenditures and my handy husband's help, it is now a fully functioning greenhouse.

Now if you are not up to building a greenhouse, traditional or "on the cheap," there are several other protective methods to consider for cool weather vegetables: row covers, cold frames, low tunnels, and high tunnels or hoop houses.

**Row cover fabric** can be found in most local nurseries or in the garden departments of big box or variety stores. It can also be ordered from most internet seed and garden-



Repurposed old windows make great coldframe covers.  
Photo by Dee Whitehill.

ing materials suppliers. Row cover comes in several weights, rated by degrees of frost protection. Check out a few of these websites to see the range of what's available.

Row cover can be thrown directly over a row of plants or held up by stakes. Hold the edges down by using rocks or landscape staples. When the next day warms up, you can remove the row cover completely, or you can gather it up and pile it on one side of the row for future use. If several nights of frost are predicted, you can leave the fabric in place. The beautiful thing about row cover is that it is UV transparent.

Cold frames are loved by the Frugal Gardener. A couple hinges, some scrap lumber, and an old wood-framed window is all that is necessary to build a top-notch cold frame. Scrap lumber, and maybe even some windows, can be scavenged from demolition sites. (Hint: if you scavenge a window, it is best if it is wood-framed, as metal-framed windows can conduct the cold.) All you really need to make a cold frame is four sides and a transparent cover.

Traditional cold frames are constructed of wood with a hinged glass covering. You can even construct the sides of the "frame" out of straw bales. Arrange the straw bales so that they will fit your cover, then fill the enclosed space with planting soil. You can either work with a hinged top or with a top that is light enough to lift or to slide off while you work on the enclosed bed. If you are going to hinge one side of the covering, the cold frame must be narrow enough to reach across. If you use a non-hinged plastic or polycarbonate top,

*Continued on next page*



Row covers can be pulled back or removed during warm days to allow more light to reach the plants.  
Photo by Michael Kluk.

*Continued from previous page*

be sure to anchor it down with some bricks or rocks so that it doesn't blow away.

If you have a choice of where to position your cold frame, the preferred orientation is with the long side running east/west. The south edge is typically lower than the north to allow better access to the low winter sun.

**Low tunnels** are simply a series of hoops, stuck in the soil or fixed to a raised bed that form a tunnel covering the length of one garden bed. The hoops can be constructed from any material that can be bent into a hoop shape. Some nurseries sell heavy gage wire in sections that is designed to be bent into hoops. However, rebar, and plastic and metal conduit can all serve the purpose. Constructing hoops from these materials can result in a stronger structure. To protect against wind damage, it is useful to link the hoops together with a straight section running the length of the hoops at their apex. It should be fastened to each hoop.

**A high tunnel or hoop house** is a bigger version of a low tunnel that may span the width of several garden beds. Given its greater size, the construction needs to be beefier, but the principal is the same: using the inherent strength of a curved roof shape to support a cover that will confine heat and moisture at night. The end walls of the tunnel are typically constructed of 2 x 4s. A door for access and windows for venting can be added. It is also helpful to not permanently attach the cover to the lower three to four feet of one side, so that it can be rolled up on a hot day.

Don't forget that the use of these types of cool weather protection is not an excuse to not tend your garden regularly. Always remember that the world's best fertilizer is the shadow of the gardener.



*Photo by Michael Kluk*

## References

- Coleman, Eliot. *The Winter Harvest Handbook*. Chelsea Green Publishing. April 15, 2009.
- Millner, Patricia, Sara Reynolds, Xiangwu Nou, and Donald Krizek. *High Tunnel and Organic Horticulture: Compost, Food Safety, and Crop Quality*. USDA, ARS Source: HortScience American Society for Horticultural Science. April, 2009.
- Nevada County Master Gardeners. *Western Nevada County Gardening Guide*. University of California Cooperative Extension. 2010.
- Nicholas Griffin. *Sustainable Horticultural Crop Production in Germany*. Department of Horticultural Science, University of Minnesota.
- Pittenger, Dennis R., Ed. *California Master Gardener Handbook*. UCANR Publication 3382. 2002.



*Photo by Michael Kluk*

*Coverings and supports for low tunnels and hoop houses can vary.*

*A few materials and tools you might find helpful include:*

- *Conduit Bender (to bend metal into hoops)*
- *Heat Gun (to bend plastic materials into hoops, with or without a conduit bender)*
- *Cable Ties (to attach fabric to hoops)*

*These items are available on line from industrial suppliers.*

# Nevada County Master Gardeners Tomato Tasting and Plant Sale

Saturday, September 10, 9:30am-1:00pm

NID Grounds, Demonstration Garden  
1036 W. Main St. in Grass Valley

## More Information:

530-273-0919, [ncmg.ucanr.org](http://ncmg.ucanr.org)

Tomatoes will be in the spotlight at the very popular Nevada County Master Gardener's "Bite Me" Tomato Tasting and Open House on Saturday, September 10th, from 9:30 am to 1:00 pm.

Last spring, master gardeners spent hours propagating and growing many varieties of tomatoes for the spring plant sale. Master gardener Emily Jones purchased some for her home garden in northern Nevada City—and she grew some whoppers! Emily's one pound Pineapple tomato, pictured at left, is remarkable and she had success with several other varieties. At the tasting event, there will be Pineapple and dozens of other varieties for attendees to try!



Photo by  
Emily Jones

This is a fun event for participants to explore the vast variety of tomatoes that grow well in our area. A tomato rating sheet will be used again this year to evaluate the varieties. Tasters will

give a numerical rating for each tomato tasted and also vote for their favorite tomatoes. Try one, try them all then vote for your favorite to help the master gardeners decide which variety might be sold at the plant sale next spring!

And, if tomatoes are not enough, a workshop and tour of the demonstration garden will be provided. Join us for a workshop, "Detain the Rain," a look at how to collect rain during our wet season. The workshop is at 10:30am, followed by guided tours of the demonstration garden. There is so much to see and learn about in the garden, including our orchard, native and grassy meadow, and Mediterranean foothill garden.



Photo by Rob Chase

Learn about  
catching rain at  
free workshop



Photo by  
Ann Wright

## Available September 6, from the Master Gardeners of Placer County: 2017 Calendar and Gardening Guide!



This 25th Anniversary Edition 13-month calendar and gardening guide features "Healthy Habitats for People, Plants and Pollinators." The calendar is filled with beautiful photos and articles to help gardeners create healthy garden environments to support pollinators, using native and pollinator-friendly plants while providing gardeners themselves with beautiful outdoor settings. Providing easy, specific ways that gardeners can help support pollinators, monthly topics include building blocks for pollinator habitats; attracting butterflies, hummingbirds, bees, and other pollinators to your garden; vegetable garden success; life after lawn and so much more.

Features of the 2017 calendar include:

- Pollinator plant lists specifically related to monthly articles about healthy habitats (e.g., Plants for Butterflies)
- Daily research-based gardening tips to remind gardeners of what to do and when to do it.
- New "What to Plant by Month" section, with Master Gardener-selected plants for each month of the year.
- References and resources for more gardening information. New this year, QR codes are included for quick access to online resources.

Calendars will be available beginning September 6 at nurseries and businesses in Placer, Nevada, and El Dorado counties, at the Placer County Master Gardener office, and on our website. A list of vendors and how-to-order details are listed online at [pcmg.ucanr.org/2017-calendar/](http://pcmg.ucanr.org/2017-calendar/). Calendars will also be for sale at the master gardener booths at the following:

- Auburn Fall Home Show (Sept. 30-Oct. 2),
- Mountain Mandarin Festival (November 18-20)
- Auburn Farmers' Market (1st & 3rd Saturdays, September through October)
- Farmers' Market at the Fountains in Roseville (every Tuesday, September through October)

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 *adj.* green  
 vita, ae *f* life  
 xylem

Corner

# BotLat

## Find Out What Those Weird Plant Names Mean

sage. The genus, *Salvia*, is a group of over 900 plants. The genus name comes from the Latin, *salvere*, meaning “to heal” and was first mentioned by Pliny the Elder in the first century, C.E. Many *Salvias* were recognized for their medicinal properties.

*Spathacea*, the specific epithet for this plant, describes the broad bracts that surround the flower cluster. I can attest to the fact that hummingbirds LOVE this plant!

With the changing of the seasons, let’s look at some specific epithets which describe seasons when plants bloom:

- vernus/vernum/verna/vernus/vernalis* .....Spring
- aestivum/aestivalis* .....Summer
- autumnalis/autumnale* .....Fall
- hyemalis* .....Winter
- nivalis* .....Snow
- frigidus/frigida*.....Cold
- praecox*.....Early flowering / Spring
- serotina* .....Late flowering
- majalis*.....Of the month of May

Finally, how long will your plant live? Try these specific epithets:

- annua/annuus* ..... one year
- biennis* ..... two years—it grows vegetatively the first year, flowers and sets seeds the second year, then dies
- perennis/perenne* ..... names a perennial (many years); and poetically, *rediviva* ..... describes a “reviving” plant (aka, a perennial)

So, by learning a few Latin root words, you can untangle a good bit of information about when a plant is at its best. If you want winter color, should you choose *Hamamelis vernalis* or *Eranthis hyemalis*? Now, you should know.

by Peggy Beltramo, Placer County Master Gardener

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

Remember, plant names are composed of two parts: *Genus specific epithet*, which is “last name,” “first name.” The first word is a noun, naming a group of closely related plants, and the second is an adjective which describes a single plant in that group.

This month’s botanical name is the Arboretum All-Star *Salvia spathacea*, commonly known as hummingbird

## Nevada County Master Gardener Fall Plant Sale



Nevada County master gardeners are busy starting and growing plants for the fall plant sale, scheduled for Saturday, September 24 from 9:00 am to noon, at the demonstration garden, 1036 W. Main St. in Grass Valley. Cool season vegetables and ornamentals will be offered for sale. A more comprehensive plant list may be found on the NCMG website, <http://ncmg.ucanr.org/>, but some of the plants for sale include:

- Arugula, lettuce, spinach, Asian greens, Swiss chard, escarole
- Kale, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower
- Chives, cilantro and many other herbs
- Milkweed—*Asclepias fascicularis* and *A. speciosa*. Both are native to Nevada County.
- Spanish lavender—*Lavandula stoechas*. Great for attracting pollinators.
- Lemon balm—*Melissa officinalis*
- ‘Elijah Blue’ fescue—*Festuca glauca*
- Silver squill —*Ledebouria socialis*. A lovely succulent house plant, or for outdoor container.
- Other ornamentals include *Phlomis*, *Spiraea*, *Forsythia*, *Hydrangea*, geranium ground cover, and *Iris* ‘Canyon Snow’

We hope to see you there!

## 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/>
- Sutton, John. *The Gardener’s Guide to Growing Salvias*. Workman Publishing Company. 2004.

# Hotline FAQs

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

Staffed Tuesdays and Thursdays,  
9:00 am to noon

Placer Co. 530-889-7388

Staffed Tuesdays, Wednesdays  
and Thursdays,  
9:00 am to noon

If calling outside of office hours, leave a message with your name, number and question and your call will be returned on the next staffed day.

## What is eating my Pomegranates? I see lots of black, strange looking bugs all over them.

by Pauline Kuklis, Placer County Master Gardener

You have an infestation of leaffooted bugs, which are in the family *Coreidae*, and closely related to stinkbugs. These odd looking creatures got their common name because they look like they have a leaf attached to the end of their hind legs. There are three species which are commonly seen in California (*Leptoglossus clypealis*, *L. occidentalis*, and *L. zonatus*), and they can cause extensive damage to pomegranates as well as other fruits and vegetables by piercing through the outer skin and sucking out the yummy juices.

Adult leaffooted bugs overwinter in protected areas. While they can be killed during especially cold winters, this past winter was mild, so many of us are having a problem with large populations. During the spring, the adults can lay more than 200 eggs, which hatch within about 1 week, and mature in 5 to 8 weeks. Adults are good flyers, and therefore difficult to catch. For this reason, the best time to control their population is before they mature. It is also helpful to eliminate protected areas where they can overwinter.

The photos below will help you recognize their eggs and nymphs. The eggs are brown in color and laid in a cylindrical row, usually on the underside of a leaf or along a stem. When you notice the eggs, destroy them or place them in a plastic bag and discard. The nymphs are quite easy to see due to their bright red-orange color. Spray them with an insecticidal soap, or put on a pair of disposable gloves and squash the nymphs.

If you'd like additional information to help you identify and control leaffooted bugs, check out the following websites:

<http://ipm.ucanr.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn74168.html>

<http://ucce.ucdavis.edu/files/datastore/391-534.pdf>



Leaffooted bug eggs are laid end to end in strands



Leaffooted bug nymph



Leaffooted bug adult



# *Salvia spathacea*, Hummingbird Sage

by Lynora Sisk,  
Placer County Master Gardener

I'm sure most of you have heard about sage, particularly the culinary version used in your Thanksgiving turkey dressing. But sages, part of the mint family, come in many different varieties, colors, smells and tastes. In California, we are fortunate to have a native sage, *Salvia spathacea*. This is one of the hummingbird's favorite foods, resulting in the plant's common name: hummingbird sage.

Hummingbird sage is a very fragrant perennial and is an excellent drought-tolerant groundcover. It spreads by underground rhizomes and in good conditions can cover a large area. It has broad leaves and the flower stalk can grow to a foot or more. The pink flowers, which can bloom from spring to winter, have the perfect shape and obviously great taste for hummingbirds.

This sage can be grown in full sun to part shade. However, the Santa Clara County Master Gardeners report that too much summer sun burned the leaves and made the plant unattractive. They are now trying the plant in a shadier spot under oak trees. Caring for hummingbird sage is very easy with a little pruning to remove the old flower stalks at the end of the season.

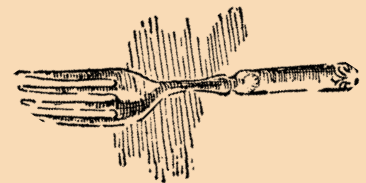
As a UC Davis Arboretum All Star, hummingbird sage can be viewed at the arboretum in the Mary Wattis Brown Garden. Also you may be able to purchase this sage at the Fall 2016 Arboretum plant sale. Fall is a perfect time for planting California natives, so mark your calendar for the first public sale on October 15 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the UC Davis Arboretum Teaching Nursery. For more information check out the Arboretum website: [http://arboretum.ucdavis.edu/plant\\_sales\\_and\\_nursery.aspx](http://arboretum.ucdavis.edu/plant_sales_and_nursery.aspx).

Enjoy the hummingbirds that this native sage will bring to your garden!

## The Frugal Gardener Tips to Reuse, Repurpose and Recycle

by Barbara Kermeen,  
Nevada County Master Gardener

Here's a tip that I learned from my Granny, in Elk River, Minnesota in 1947: What do you do with that last sliver of soap in the soap dish that's kind of squishy on the bottom? Run your fingernails through the squishy part, then let them dry for a few minutes. Now, go about your gardening. When you're done, wash your hands and there will be no dirt under your fingernails. Granny was a "master gardener" from whom I learned the terms "compost," "mulch," and "propagation." I plant marigolds, cosmos, and petunias ever year in honor of her. What do you plant in honor of your ancestors?



I have the perfect tool solution for mini-gardening, i.e., container gardening, small-space gardening, or indoor potted plants. Put an old table fork in a vise, about half-way up the tines, and bend it. Now you have a wonderful little mini-cultivator. I've kept one in my gardening caddy for about 10 years.

Broken handles of kitchen utensils can have a new life as dibbles, pokers, prods, and diggers, all with nice handles. My favorite dibble for propagating roses is an extra part from a hot tub filter!

Every time someone breaks something at my house I think to myself "self, how can I use this in the greenhouse or garden?"



Photo by Lynora Sisk  
at the UC Davis Arboretum

## References

- UC Davis Arboretum website: [http://arboretum.ucdavis.edu/arboretum\\_all\\_stars.aspx](http://arboretum.ucdavis.edu/arboretum_all_stars.aspx)
- Santa Clara County UC Master Gardeners website: <https://www.mastergardeners.org/plant-dictionary/hummingbird-sage>



# 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)

- ▶ Nevada County events in green boxes
- ▶ Placer County events in yellow boxes

## 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**

10:30 - 11:30 am

***Detain the Rain***

11:30 - 12:30 pm

***Tour of the Demo Garden***

Nevada County Demo Garden

### September 24

9:00 - noon

**Fall Plant Sale**

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

### September 30

**Visit Placer County Master Gardeners at the Fall Auburn Home Show**

11:00 am - 6:00 pm

## October

### October 1-2

**Visit Placer County Master Gardeners at the Fall Auburn Home Show**

Sat. 10 am - 6 pm, Sun. 10 am - 5pm

### October 1

10:00 am-noon

***Fear the Rust: Garden Tool Maintenance***

Nevada County Demo Garden

### October 8

10:00 am-noon

***50 Ways to Lose Your Lawn***

Nevada County Demo Garden

### October 15

10:00 am-noon

***The ABCs of Planting an Orchard***

Grass Valley Elks Lodge\*

### October 15

**Seasonal Gardening Workshops:**

9:00 - 10:00 am

***Eureka! Mining Garden Gold: Composting Tips***

10:00 - 11:00 am

***Solving Garden Pest Problems with Integrated Pest Management***

Placer County Demo Garden

## November

### November 5

10:00 am-noon

***The Art and Science of Pruning Fruit Trees***

Grass Valley Elks Lodge\*

\* During inclement weather months, Nevada County workshops may be located indoors at the Elks Club lower level meeting room, 109 S. School Street, Grass Valley

### November 20-22

**Visit Placer County Master Gardeners at the Mandarin Festival**

Fri. 11:00 am-5:00 pm

Sat. 9:00 am-5:00 pm

Sun. 10:00 am-4:00 pm

Gold Country Fairgrounds

1273 High St., Auburn

**Listen to Nevada County Master Gardeners & Friends Talk Radio:**

Listen live on Saturdays from 10:00 am until noon at KNCO 830AM  
Or, visit the KNCO website <http://www.knco.com> and click on "Listen Live"

Call in with questions to (530) 477-5626 or (530) 477-KNCO

Miss the show? Download a podcast of the previous Saturday's show from the KNCO website

**Visit Placer County Master Gardeners at Farmers' Markets Through the End of October:**

**Saturdays: Sept. 3, 17;**

**Oct. 1, 15, 29**

8:00 am-Noon

**Auburn Farmers' Market**

Old Town Courthouse Parking Lot

**Tuesdays: Sept. 6, 13, 20, 27;**

**Oct. 4, 11, 18, 25**

8:30 am-1:00 pm

**Roseville Farmers' Market**

Whole Foods Market at Fountains

## 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**

### UC Cooperative Extension Placer County

11477 E Avenue  
Auburn, CA 95603  
530.889.7385 office  
530.889.7397 fax  
ceplacer@ucdavis.edu

### UC Cooperative Extension Nevada County

255 So. Auburn Street  
Grass Valley, CA 95945  
530.273.4563 office  
530.273.4769 fax  
cenevada@ucdavis.edu

### How to Subscribe

Online subscriptions are free to residents of Placer and Nevada Counties.

Log on to [http://pcmg.ucanr.org/Curious\\_Gardener\\_Newsletter/](http://pcmg.ucanr.org/Curious_Gardener_Newsletter/) to sign up for your electronic delivery.

The University of California prohibits discrimination or harassment of any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, pregnancy (including childbirth, and medical conditions related to pregnancy or childbirth), physical or mental disability, medical condition (cancer-related or genetic characteristics), ancestry, marital status, age, sexual orientation, citizenship, or service in the uniformed services (as defined by the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994: service in the uniformed services includes membership, application for membership, performance of service, application for service, or obligation for service in the uniformed services) in any of its programs or activities.

University policy also prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person in any of its programs or activities for making a complaint of discrimination or sexual harassment or for using or participating in the investigation or resolution process of any such complaint.

University policy is intended to be consistent with the provisions of applicable State and Federal laws. Inquiries regarding the University's nondiscrimination policies may be directed to the Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Director, University of California, Agriculture and Natural Resources, 1111 Franklin Street, 6th Floor, Oakland, CA 94607, (510) 987-0096.

