

Garden Clippings

Orange County *Independent* Master Gardeners' Newsletter

Volume 15 Number 2

February 2009

February Meeting

Saturday, February 7, 2009

510 E. Memory Lane/2615 Valencia, Santa Ana

Schedule

8:15 – 9:00 a.m.	Setup Plants 'n Things
9:00 – 9:45 a.m.	Business Meeting
9:45 - 10:00 a.m.	Plants 'n Things
10:00– 11:00 a.m.	Program
11:00	Clean up

Members with last names starting with **H– Q** please bring a breakfast snack. Other members are also welcome to bring goodies. Also, remember to bring along any items you wish to contribute to our Plants 'n Things raffle and any gardening catalogs or magazines you'd like to share.

It's that time of the year again! Rita Corpin is collecting cards for the class project she does with her world history students. Holiday, birthday, or any other type of greeting card can be used; text inside the card will be covered and can not be seen.

Enrichment Workshop—Classifying & Drought Tolerant Plants – Carlos Ruiz

Carlos Ruiz of Flowerdale Nursery will teach us how to classify plants based on growth habits, structure or form, leaf retention, and climate adaptation. He has taught classes on drought tolerant gardens and his notes from the class can be found at:
<http://www.flowerdalenurseries.com/Drought%20Tolerant%20Planting%20Class.nxg>

Board Meeting: First Thursday of the month at 6:30 pm at the home of Cheryl Borden.

Gardening Events

Fullerton Arboretum. Pre-register for all classes by calling 714/278-3407

Sat.- Sun. Feb. 21-22: Tri-County African Violet Show and Sale, 10 am – 4 pm

This is a very popular venue, so come early for best selection!

That same weekend is the winter clearance sale at the Potting Shed, 10 am – 4 pm. Sale continues Feb. 28 – Mar. 1.

For many other gardening events, check <http://www.orangecountygardeners.org>

It's bare root season! Check out the southern California nurseries listed on our website.

Volunteer Opportunity

A group from St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Tustin has a new project called "Gordon's Garden" after a recently deceased parish priest who loved gardening and social action. Utilizing a former hard pan area with more than waist high weeds, they're working to make it a growing spot for vegetables, flowers, herbs, and fruit. They began around Valentine's Day 2008 and what they grow goes to Isaiah House in Santa Ana, a transitional living site. The group is small and would like more people involved as well as advice on winter planting. Church property is used, but there are no restrictions as to who can volunteer. Contact Jan Hart at 714/838-4119

St. Paul's is located at 1221 Wass Street, Tustin (two blocks north of Irvine Boulevard and two blocks east of Newport Avenue).

Leaves from the President



I would like to say thanks to Fran Lebow for her terrific talk* on worm casting. Nearly all shared in the discussion about the housing, feeding, and care of the little squirmers and their poop. Several people added to the discussion and I know a lot was learned by all. I'm not ready to expand the animal kingdom at our house, but I do now have on my front porch a ten pound bag of castings waiting to be sprinkled around plants and made into tea. For enrichment at a meeting, the board has talked about setting up interest groups so our members can move (or not) from group to group learning more. If you have any ideas about this, please see me. Happy last month and a half of winter (though it's been seeming like summer!)

Janet Meade

*Fran, as may be true with others, did not want to be referred to as a speaker but rather as someone leading a talk; however she did a fabulous job because she knew her scoop. If some of the rest of you feel comfortable "talking" but not "speaking" let us know. We might just be missing out on your knowledge and a mind is a terrible thing to waste.

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☎ Contacts

Janet Meade, *President*

Sharon Neely, *1st^d Vice Pres*

Bob Shaw, *Treasurer*

Fred Snyder, *Plant Clinic*.....

Jill Patterson, *Newsletter Editor*

Submit articles by the 10th of each month via:

e-mail

or snail mail:

Jean Rice, *Vol. Hours*.....

Website: <http://www.ocmastergardeners.org>

Tracking Climate Change in the Garden

Helen Elich

I just finished an interesting article in the Organic Gardening Magazine Feb-Mar 09 pertaining to the title above. It asked if gardeners have noticed that their plants are having different bloom patterns than before.

I really had not, with the exception of my Christmas cactus that prefers to bloom at Easter.

Now there is a way to track the plants' bloom and make a contribution to science at the same time. The program is sponsored by a number of organizations which include the U.S. Forest Service, the National Phenology Network and the Chicago Botanic Gardens. The name "Project Budburst" is a citizen based program developed to monitor the ways in which climate change is impacting the leafing and flowering of hundreds of plants nationwide. By personal contribution, it gives scientists a chance to track data nationwide. In 2008 they had around 4000 participants. Sandra Henderson, director of the project says "plants provide a wonderful context for understanding changes to the environment including climate change."

If you are interested in more information or would like to participate, log onto www.budburst.org.

Vintage Garden Newsletter

RNRS Pruning Trials by Gregg Lowery

Gregg reports on a pruning trial conducted by the Royal National Rose Society in the 1990s in his December newsletter and makes a correction to that report in the January newsletter. Both reports make interesting reading and bring up considerations on why we prune and how much pruning is truly needed. Essentially, the RNRS trials tested 3 methods of pruning: traditional method; 'rough pruned,' with all stems hand pruned back to a single level, square cut, and plants not thinned; and sheered back with mechanical hedge clippers to contain the plants within the spaces allotted them in the beds, but not taking the plants down substantially in height.

Gregg says "Beware the Easy Fix"

Leaving your roses un-pruned may or may not achieve the beauty you seek in your garden creation. Trimming with hedge-trimmers may or may not decrease your work in the rose garden. Jon Dodson of Mottisfont Abbey recently shared with me a letter from the August 2007 issue of *The Garden, Journal of the Royal Horticultural Society*, written by David Bartlett, who had worked at the RNRS gardens on the pruning trials in the 1990s. He was addressing an article by Charles Quest-Ritson in the March issue in which Quest-Ritson asserted that 'a rough clip with hedge-trimmers gives better results than traditional pruning methods.' Bartlett takes issue with the reported results of the trials—he himself had both pruned and gathered observational data—and notably says that the hedge-trimmer pruning took longer; '...it took a great deal of back-breaking labour to clear up the cuttings.' One can easily imagine trying to disentangle the pruned tips that had fallen head first into the plants, thorns locked to thorns. He also indicates that the hedge-pruned roses developed more disease in subsequent years and that the disease spread to all of the roses—the result, weakened plants that had eventually all to be removed and replaced.

At the Huntington Gardens in California a new trial has just been announced by rose curator Clair Martin; 'we are using power hedge shears on the large beds of shrub roses like the yellow 'Sun Flare' in front of the Rose Garden Tea Room...' With characteristic humor, Clair suggests that you may think he's lost his mind! His hope is that this will speed the process and produce improved bloom. You may be curious, as I am, to follow the results. If so, log on to the Huntington website and read more... <<http://www.huntington.org>> We still have much to learn, though I hope that my errors of reporting have not brought on an experiment that may be fraught with ills.

Read the full reports at www.vintagegardens.com.



Fran and other OCIMG members on the Shipley Nature Reserve tour display the compost bin Fran believes is most effective. 3' x 3' and each layer can be stacked.

Another Volunteer Opportunity

Habitat Restoration volunteer events sponsored by Back to Natives involve weeding, planting, and seeding. RSVP for any of these events to volunteer@backtonatives.org or 949-509-4787, and they will send directions and more info. Always bring gloves, sunscreen, a re-useable water bottle, snacks, a hat, and closed toed shoes

2-8-09, 9am – 12pm, at Caspers Wilderness Park in San Juan Capistrano

2-9-09, 9am – 12pm, at Jeronimo Creek in Mission Viejo AND 12:30 – 2:30pm, at San Juan Elementary's Habitat Garden

2-22-09, 9pm – 12pm, at Mason Regional Park in Irvine