

Garden Clippings

Orange County Independent Master Gardeners' Newsletter

Volume 15 Number 5

May 2009

April Meeting

Saturday, May 2, 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-P** 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.

Enrichment Workshop—Victory Gardens

Christy Wilhelmi is the creator of *Gardenerd.com* and began gardening on the balcony of her Los Angeles apartment. She eventually outgrew her space and became a member of the Ocean View Organic Community Garden in Mar Vista and has maintained a plot there for the last nine years.

She teaches classes at her home and at Santa Monica City College covering composting, seasonal garden planning workshops, soil preparation, and water saving solutions.

Christy recently appeared on ABC *Nightline* talking about "Victory Gardens".

Family, neighbors, and friends are invited to this meeting.

Reminder: annual dues will be collected at the June meeting.

Board Meeting: Second Tuesday of the month at 6:30 pm at the home of Cheryl Borden.

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

Gardening Events

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

Sat. – Sun. May 30 -31: Herb Weekend, 10am - 4pm. Free

The Potting Shed will offer hundreds of common and uncommon varieties of herbs for purchase from culinary to medicinal.

Sat. May 9: Mother's Day Fair Garden Basket, 9am – noon. \$40.

Under the tutelage of Master Gardener Jan Bridger, students will create a garden in a basket. Registration includes all supplies except plants—bring your own or come early and purchase at the Potting Shed.

Sat. – Sun. May 2 – 3: "Mary Lou Heard Memorial Garden Tour" 10am – 5 pm.

The annual two-day self-guided charity tour features 40-plus gardens. Donations collected at each site. Information:

www.heardsgardentour.com.

Fullerton College Horticulture Dept., 321 E. Chapman, Fullerton 92832, 714-992-7135.
<http://horticulture.fullcoll.edu>

Sat. – Sun. May 2 – 3, Fri. – Sat. May 8 - 9: Spring Plant Sale, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. May 2, noon – 3pm May 3, 10am – 3pm May 8-9.

Natives, drought tolerants, succulents, herbs and vegetables will be available for purchase.

Sat. May 2: Square Foot Gardening. 11 am.

Mark Fierle will demonstrate his techniques of growing food in whatever space you have.

Board Nominations

Sharon Neely is chair of the nominating committee. We will vote in the new Board at our June annual meeting. Nominations thus far are:

President – Bob Shaw

1st VP – open

2nd VP – Helen Elich

Treasurer – open

Recording Secretary – Barbara Eaves

Corresponding Secretary – Cheryl Borden

Please consider joining your colleagues on the Board by volunteering for one of the open positions; contact Sharon Neely if interested. .

June Plant Exchange

It's time to start planting seeds and rooting cuttings so they'll be ready in time for our annual plant exchange at the June meeting.

For every plant you bring to exchange, you get to take one home. Start your propagating now and be ready with 10-12 (or more) well-rooted plants of any kind and combination. Please label each plant with the **botanical and common names** along with a note as to how to maintain the plant.

If you have requests for particular plants, send them in and we can place your request in the newsletter. *Editor's note: I'm rooting 10 plumerias for the exchange—hope they all take!*

☎ Contacts

Janet Meade, *President*

Sharon Neely, *1st Vice Pres*

Bob Shaw, *Treasurer*

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

Jill Patterson, *Newsletter Editor*

Submit articles by the 10th of each month via:
e-mail

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

Website: [http:// www.ocmastergardeners.org](http://www.ocmastergardeners.org)

Mason Bees

By Barbara Eaves

After reading Helen Elich's article on bees in the April newsletter, I thought I should share some of the information that I've gathered this past winter on native mason bees. We've all heard about the decline in honeybees (*Apis* sp.), and are very concerned about this. I didn't know much about native bees until I saw a mason bee house in a Gardeners Supply catalog. I did some research, and found that there is a mason bee that is native to California. *Osmia californica* and other mason bees are currently being used as pollinators in commercial fruit orchards and home gardens. These bees are not aggressive; they do not sting, and they do not produce honey. They have an interesting life cycle, different in many aspects from the honeybee. *O. californica* is a major flower pollinator, especially sunflowers. *O. lingaria* is a fruit tree pollinator, and is being used in orchards in New Mexico, California and the Pacific Northwest.

I purchased one of the bee houses and set it up on a south facing wall in my garden. I ordered some live bees and, now that the weather has warmed up, have placed them in their new home. Some websites I researched are listed below:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orchard_mason_bee#Life_Cycle

<http://www.pollinatorparadise.com/nm.htm>

<http://gardening.wsu.edu/library/inse006/inse006.htm>

<http://www.gardeners.com/Mason-Bee-House/37-481,default.pd.html>

<http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/ent/notes/Other/note109/note109.html>

http://www.knoxcellars.com/Merchant5/merchant.mvc?Screen=SFNT&Store_Code=KCNP

I'm looking forward to watching my new low maintenance pets and reaping the benefits of having these pollinators in my garden.

More on our May speaker Christy Wilhelmi

Sharon Neely recently participated in one of Christy's workshops at her home and was very impressed with her backyard vegetable garden. The raised beds and drip watering system were state of the art. Her front garden is drought tolerant and was one of the gardens featured in Mar Vista's water wise garden tour. Christy has found that watering every 5 days is all that's needed (4 minutes max). Fruit trees are watered once a month.

Christy's raised bed (photo by Sharon Neely)



Slow Gardening

(from New York Times 3-25-09)

Felder Rushing, a horticulturist and host of "The Gestalt Gardener," a weekly show on Mississippi Public Radio, is an advocate of the "slow gardening" approach. Simply put, the doctrine calls for gardeners to relax, take their time and follow seasonal rhythms, instead of doing everything at once. "People tend to bite off more than they can chew," Mr. Rushing said. "Somebody will plant 24 tomato plants they can barely take care of."

If you lack outdoor space, you can grow something — basil or rosemary, for instance, in a sunny window. To save money, use recycled materials, like old plastic pots or planters made from rubber tires.

If you're a beginner, don't fill your garden with temperamental plants or use too wide a variety.

Mr. Rushing suggests starting with simple things that produce a lot in a small space, over a long period. "Strawberries are sexy, but they take all year and you get sweet bags of water," he said. "On the other hand, lettuce is embarrassingly easy to grow. I grew some in a hanging basket last year. All it took was a squirt of vinaigrette, and I didn't even have to bend over to eat it."

Think beyond spring and fall, he said: "Slow gardening should leave you with something to look at 12 months out of the year." For a list of his tips for slow gardening, check out: <http://www.felderrushing.net> and click on "SlowGardening" on the right.

For the electronically connected

Check out Cindy McNatt's new web site at www.dirtdujour.com where you can sign up for her free newsletter. One short email a day on topics from nests for Western Bluebirds to advice from a tomato guru and book reviews on perennials to a list of 6 plants she can't live without. Very worthwhile!

From Karla Reinhardt:

USA-NPN/USGS seeks volunteers to track climate change (via plant observation). <http://www.usanpn.org/?q=participate> Pretty cool and easy to use. You can track information for many common plants that you may have in your yard.

For more information about native bees, check out this site developed by a researcher in Berkeley: <http://nature.berkeley.edu/urbanbeegardens/>

The site has a list of bee-friendly plants and a guide to urban bee gardening. Did you know that California alone has 1600 native bee species? We have many different types of bees including leafcutting bees, sweat bees, digger bees, mining bees, mason bees, carpenter bees, and cuckoo bees—some are social, most are solitary. And it is not uncommon to see bright green bees, yellow and black striped bees, metallic blue bees, black bees with white polka dots, and white and black striped bees.