

# Garden Clippings

Orange County Independent Master Gardeners' Newsletter

Volume 21 Number 10

November 2015

## November Meeting

**Saturday November 6, 2015**

**New Location!**

**Prince of Peace Lutheran Church  
1421 W. Ball Rd.  
Anaheim, CA.**

### Schedule

8:30 – 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 **A - G**, please bring a breakfast snack. Other members are also welcome to bring goodies. Also, please 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 Program: Bonsai with Donald Martin

We’ve been treated to several articles about bonsai and seen some of Don’s plants. Now he will put it all together. After the program, we’ll be covering future lectures and a permanent home. Bring your ideas for a meeting site.

### Virginia Carlson

I’m very saddened to report that founding member and past president Virginia Carlson passed away on October 5 at age 92. Her entire family was able to visit with her beforehand. Arrangements are pending and will be shared once they’re known. Please send in your memories of Virginia to share in next month’s newsletter.

## Gardening Events

**Roger’s Gardens** 2301 San Joaquin Hills Rd.,  
Corona Del Mar, CA 92625, tel.949/640-5800

**Sun. Nov. 1:** “Edible garden tasks for November”, 10 – 11am. Free.

**Rancho Santa Ana Botanical Gardens** 1500  
N. College Ave., Claremont, CA 91711, just off  
Foothill Blvd. Pre-register for all classes online  
at <http://www.rsabg.org>.

**Sat. Nov. 21:** “Creating Hedges and Screens  
with Native Plants”. 10 – 11am. Free.

Learn about several native plants that can be trained, pruned, or allowed to grow naturally to create privacy for your garden.

**Fullerton Arboretum.** Pre-register for all  
classes by calling 657/278-3407

**Thurs. Nov. 12:** “Plant Propagation Class”,  
9am – noon

This class will explore techniques used to propagate native California and drought tolerant plants from seeds/cuttings collected from the Arboretum.

**Sat. Nov. 14:** “Tri-Counties Violet Show”,  
9am – 3pm

**Sat. Nov. 14:** “Composting III: Composting  
with Worms”, 10 – 11:30am, Bleachers. Free  
for residents of Fullerton, Brea, Placentia,  
Orange or Santa Ana, \$7 for all others.

Introduce and maintain worms in your home  
composting system! Dress for outside weather.

**Sat. Nov. 28:** “Eat the Yard 3: The Thriving  
Edible Landscape”, 9 -11:30am. Pavilion. \$25:

Learn how to grow the most food for the least  
amount of labor and money.

# Leaves from the President



## How to avoid these diseases:

If you buy basil and examine it, chances are you'll find basil downy mildew. They found it first in Florida, now it's wide-spread in greenhouses and it's hard to control, most likely resulting in the loss of the crop. It can be identified by the yellow lesions on the leaf surface. More severe cases will show a browning of the foliage, also known as blight. Sporulation of the pathogen occurs under the leaf, where a dark fuzzy or downy matting can be seen. Soon after, spores will be released to infect new plants.

Damping off is a disease that affects germinating seeds and seedlings. To avoid it, first start with a high quality seed. It is very important not to over fertilize. Fertilizer affects disease development, making plants more susceptible to root-born disease.

Leaf spot is a bacterial disease. It can be found on tomatoes, eggplant, peppers, and potatoes. It's hard to control because traditional fungicides can't be used to combat them. Use copper fungicides when possible. Use disease-free seeds. Discard infected plants and soil and clean the pot with bleach. If you use pruners, use liquid Lysol to disinfect your pruners.

Maintaining a disease-free environment may seem like an unwinnable battle. But using fungicides in conjunction with good cultural practices will increase your chances of effective disease control.

Don Martin  
OCIMG President

*Editor's note: Basil downy mildew was first seen in 2007 and spread to Hawaii by 2011. Using seed not infested with the basil downy mildew pathogen, selecting a less susceptible variety, and applying fungicides are the primary management practices for downy mildew. More*

information can be found at:

<http://vegetablemdonline.ppath.cornell.edu/NewsArticles/BasilDowny.html>

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## Preparing your Garden for El Niño

By Anne Porter

This year has the makings of one of the largest **El Niño** events in a long time. But, be careful what you wish for! All kinds of advice is available in newspapers, on TV and on the Internet. The following is some that might be good to focus on now (in October/November) in your garden. There are a lot more ideas for your home, auto, or neighborhood. Check out some of the links below.

1. **Clean out your gutters and downspouts** – or install them if, like many people here, you don't have any! Clean them now and again after the first rain (See the Rain Chain as a way to divert water from your roof). The regulations on rain water collection/storage are changing, so check your local municipality to learn what is legal.



Nearly all S. California municipalities permit you to store water in rain barrels, to be used for watering your garden (**not for drinking**). Fifty gallon plastic rain barrels are sold at many hardware and do-it-yourself stores. Some water companies give them away for free or at low cost

2. **Do a preemptive strike on any potential ant invasion:** They come when looking for water and to get away from too much of it!
3. **Store emergency repair materials** (sandbags, heavy plastic sheeting) in a safe dry place. This is especially needed if you have sliding doors or a garage door that doesn't seal – mine has a spot where water creeps into the garage even with just a minor rain.
4. **Have materials on hand to divert water:** Sandbags, concrete edgers and straw-waddle tubing can effectively channel water away from structures to drainage areas.
5. **Make sure your yard drains properly.** If you've substituted impervious hard scape, rock, imitation grass, and/or decomposed granite for lawn in the last few years, the drainage pattern in your yard may have changed. Your house was originally graded so water would run away from it. That may have changed. And water that used to percolate through spongy grass will now flow. Landscape architect and USC adjunct professor Bob Perry advises placing 3 to 4 inches of organic mulch in beds and areas where water will drain or collect.
6. **Another issue is "Ponding"** where water pools up during a storm. Make sure it drains away from your home/buildings.
7. **Loosen compacted soil:** Ground that has been allowed to dry out will repel water initially. Tilling in compost and covering with mulch will enable the ground to better absorb rain.
8. **Consider decreasing the area covered with impervious materials.** Traditional walkways, driveways, concrete or mortared patios all are impervious surfaces. Water runs off them and, very often, into the storm drains which can become blocked.
9. There are many ways to make walkways, patios and driveways more permeable.

Some, like replacing your driveway with permeable paving materials, require more time, skill and money. Others, like converting an old concrete patio or walkway into something more pervious, can be done quite economically, if you're able to do most of the work yourself.

10. **Have your trees checked:** With the drought taking a toll on all trees, now is the time to bring in a certified arborist — not a simple tree cutter — to do a health check and risk assessment. "Trees weigh less now because they have less moisture in them, but they are weaker as well," says Nick Araya, an arborist risk specialist at Tree Care LA. "A sudden onset of moisture may be too much weight for some branches to bear." For more information, go to [www.treecareLA.com](http://www.treecareLA.com). We are all being warned against the outfits that canvas a neighborhood offering their services. Be sure anyone working on your property is licensed and insured. Get a referral if you can.
11. **Use the weather forecast to plan fall pruning.** Fall pruning is best done after the fall heat waves but before the winter rains. Predicting the best time to prune can be a challenge. Consult the long term weather forecast when scheduling fall pruning. Don't forget to consider the birds and other creatures that rely on your garden for food.
12. **Turn off your automatic watering system:** It's possible you won't need it until spring.
13. **Rain gardens and infiltration swales** are the perfect complement to rain gutters, infiltrating the water from a roof. While no



two rain gardens or dry swales are the same, they all slow or store water briefly, allowing it

to percolate into the ground. They can be planted or not; they can be disguised as a natural-looking dry creek. Some are used as seating or play areas in the dry season. And

they allow you to use plants that like a little extra winter water, even if the rest of your garden is quite water-wise. Here are some links:

- a. <http://mother-natures-backyard.blogspot.com/2013/03/harvesting-rain-rain-gardens-and.html>.
  - b. <http://www.slideshare.net/cvadheim/infiltration-gardens-2015>
  - c. Plants for Rain Gardens and Vegetated Swales:  
<http://www.slideshare.net/cvadheim/rain-gardensswales>
14. Whether your soil drains quickly, slowly, or somewhere in between, creating modest garden topography has several advantages. First, a planted berm is often an excellent way to screen short, unsightly views (for example, to block views of parked vehicles). Berms and swales can also be used to direct and infiltrate rain water. And they add interest to a flat garden.
  15. Another benefit of berms and swales is that they allow you to grow plants with water requirements slightly different from those available in the rest of your garden. For example, plants that hate wet feet can be grown at the top of a berm (driest place). Plants that like a little extra water often do well at the bottom of a slope or swale.
  16. **Take advantage of winter rains for planting.** Winter is the easiest time to plant in lowland Southern California. Soils are well-moistened and the temperatures cooler. That's why California native gardens are traditionally planted in late fall or winter.
  17. If you're planting winter vegetables, put them in raised beds or elevated rows: Too much water can cause vegetables to rot.
  18. **Secure your yard:** Reinforce your fencing if needed. Store or tie down anything that might blow and cause damage in high wind. Store outdoor furniture or, if it cannot be moved, place wood planks under the legs to lift them off the pavement. Cover glass-top tables with plywood secured with cord. Place potted plants in a sheltered area.
  19. **Talk to your neighbors:** If your house lies below another house, you'll want to find out where their property drains. If they've

changed the natural flow path, they may be liable for damage caused by storm runoff from their property onto yours.

20. **Consider flood insurance** even if you're not in a high-risk area. Flood insurance is not generally covered by regular homeowner policies. For more information, to go FEMA's [www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov) site. **It takes 30 days for any flood policy to become effective.**
21. **Secure important documents** in the cloud or on a thumb drive.
22. **Put together preparedness and disaster supply kits** for your home and car. FEMA, the California Department of Water Resources and the Auto Club are just three of many organizations that list important things to have on hand. For more information, go to [www.floodprepareCA.gov](http://www.floodprepareCA.gov) (California Department of Water Resources), [www.ladbs.org](http://www.ladbs.org) (Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety "Homeowners Guide for Flood, Debris Flow and Erosion Control"), [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) (National Weather Service) and [www.aaa.com](http://www.aaa.com) (Automobile Club of Southern California).
23. [www.floodprepareCA.gov](http://www.floodprepareCA.gov) website information, search tools and a calendar of flood-preparedness events across the state.

**Enjoy today's weather, whatever it may be.** The news on climate change can be downright depressing. The best antidote is to sit in your garden. Enjoy the hot, dry days of late summer. Watch the abundant life that enlivens California gardens this time of year. Enjoy the balmy evenings – and vow to plant more silvery-colored shrubs to enhance your twilight garden.

From the **LA TIMES:**

(<http://www.latimes.com/home/la-hm-el-nino-20151017-story.html>) and

**Mother Nature's Backyard blog:**

(<http://mother-natures-backyard.blogspot.com/2015/08/preparing-for-el-nino-winter-rains.html>)