

Garden Clippings

Orange County Independent Master Gardeners' Newsletter

Volume 23 Number 3

March 2017

March Meeting Saturday, March 4, 2017

Patriot Hall
735 S. Brea Blvd.
Brea, CA 92821

Schedule

8:30 – 9:00 a.m. Setup Plants 'n Things
9:00 – 9:30 a.m. Business Meeting
9:30 - 10:30 a.m. Enrichment Program
10:30– 10:45 a.m. Plants 'N Things
10:45 a.m. – noon Trees

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: Tree Selection, Care & Pruning with Sarah Taylor-Laine

This is a combined meeting with our new students. Sarah Taylor-Laine is an ISA-Certified Arborist with Gruett Tree Company. She received her B.S. and M.S. in Biology from California State University Fullerton, specializing in plant ecophysiology. Sarah is passionate about implementing science-based strategies to influence landscaping and tree care management decisions.

Last month's meeting

Our speaker, Nancy Bird, mentioned a BLM brochure which gives details on the process and locations for finding rocks on BLM land. The website link is:
https://www.blm.gov/sites/blm.gov/files/uploads/Programs_EnergyMinerals_MiningMinerals_About_Nevada_HowToObtainMineralMaterials.pdf.

Gardening Events

Fullerton College Horticulture Dept.

Fri-Sun. March 10-12: "Annual Tomato Sale".
10am-4pm, ends 3pm Sunday. 714/992-7135

Plants will not be held back for Sat/Sun sales, so come on Friday for best selection. See website for plant list:
<http://horticulture.fullcoll.edu/TomatoListMain.shtml>

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

Sat.- Sun. March 18-19: "Veggiepalooza Sale",
10am – 4pm.

Monster tomato and pepper sale. Come early for best selection!

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

Fri. - Sun. March 3-6: "Tomatomania Sale",
9am – 6pm. Free.

Scott Daigre and his staff offer a selection of over 250 varieties of heirloom and hybrid tomatoes. Plus, Fri. at 2pm and Sat. and Sun. at 9am, a 1-hour workshop on growing tomatoes will be presented.

Sat. March 25: "Landscaping with California Native Plants", 9 - 10am. Free.

Christian Lewis and Aaron Potter will share some of their favorite California native plants.

Armstrong Nurseries: Free classes are provided at most locations. March 11 teaches how to grow strawberries, March 18 is on growing tomatoes, and March 25 is how to grow peppers, all at 8am. Website is:
<http://www.armstronggarden.com/pages/classes>

Leaves from the President



Rain, Rain, go away come again another day.

Ok, while it may be politically incorrect to complain about how much rain we have been getting, I think it may be time to look at how too much rain can affect our gardens. The soil can only take so much water; we have had almost 20 inches so far at my house this year. After soil is maxed out on the amount of water it can take, the water can pool, flooding your plants and washing away seeds. Weeds can grow rampant. That nice decorative bark you put down as mulch may end up in your neighbor's yard or down the street.

Excessive soaking after rain showers and storms can ruin plant roots, which affect how plants grow. Waterlogged soil can push out oxygen. All parts of a plant need oxygen to survive. Without oxygen, deep roots will be affected but shallow roots will be damaged quickly if the wet weather continues. It may go without saying, but this is also a bad time to fertilize, because a lot of the nutrients will be washed away.

Some days it is even impossible to get out in your garden to tend your plants without sinking several inches into the mud. You may end up with reduced growth and lower production after too much rain.

You may be tempted on that first sunny day after all the rain to get out there and start pulling weeds and planting this year's new plants. However, experts advise against it as digging in overly wet soil can lead to soil compaction. Which means that any fledgling plants you planted will struggle to grow in heavy soil. Experts recommend waiting a few days after the rains to allow the ground to dry a bit, especially if you have heavy clay soil. It is not as important in sandy soil, as it drains quickly. I guess my only problem with this advice is, if you wait a few days for the soil to dry, the next storm seems to come along and start the clock all over again.

If, like us, you have been purposely selecting drought tolerant or low-water plants for the past

five or six years, mulching and composting to make your plants do better with very little water, they tend not to do as well in bogs. Don't get me wrong, these plants have done well the last few years with minimum water. However, when your backyard has been turned into a mini lake, that might be a different story.

After the soil has dried for a few days, it may be good time to walk out in your garden to see what is doing well and what is struggling with the overabundant water. We will have more dry years and more wet years in the future. Finding plants that can survive in your soil with both extremes is the key. As you walk to the garden to check your plants, please also look for any areas or containers that might be trapping water and potentially breeding mosquitoes.

And speaking of bugs, slugs and snails will also be out in abundance because of the rain. You may need to take measures to control them, either by hand harvesting or by using bait.

Bill McMurrin, President
Orange County Independent Master Gardeners

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Orange County Iris and Day Lily Club needs speakers

Please contact Lois Farr at 714/345-8873 if you can speak on any of the following subjects: Bulbs, Tools, Roses, Fairy Gardens, Soil. Open dates for 2017 are 3/14, 5/9, 7/11, 10/10, 11/14. Remember, you receive volunteer hours for speaking and for the preparation!

New Master Gardener Class

If you'd like to attend classes other than those on our meeting date, please contact Bob Shaw first at paradigmengineering@dslextreme.com

Don Martin's Corner

Use silicon to Fight Leafminers

Silicon is a beneficial nutrient that's all but ubiquitous! The earth's crust is made up of about 27% silicon, making it a major component of most soils. However, like other plant nutrients found in the mineral structures of soil, silicon (SI) can be depleted from the soil through heavy farming. Crops grown in greenhouses are grown in media designed not to break down. This leads to very low silicon availability, which may lead to plants that are deficient in silicon. FYI, plants don't use silicon to complete a specific physiological process like iron and magnesium do in chlorophyll production.

Silicon does provide strength to plant structures and allows it to mount a defense against abiotic and biotic stressors, like wind, temperature swings slowing growth, or pest population exploding quicker than expected. Plants can still grow, flower and make seeds without silicon. Silicon isn't classified as a plant-essential nutrient. Many plants do resist stress events better with silicon present; thus silicon is considered a plant-beneficial nutrient.

The U.C. Davis Department of Entomology and Nematology found that mums treated with silicon in the form of potassium silicate showed reduced damage from the leaf mining fly, *liriomyza trifolii* serpentine leafminer. Leafminer damage happens in two ways: stippling and mining. The female fly feeds and lay eggs. The mining is done by the larva. The damage causes a decrease in photosynthesis and in extreme cases can cause defoliation of the plant and plant death.

"How-To U" at La Habra Library June 17

Our annual plant exchange will be held at our June meeting. The La Habra Library's "How To U" will be held Saturday, June 17. Please start your cuttings now for both events! Also, please sign up to teach a workshop. I have someone for edibles, chickens, and roses. Other ideas are welcome! Thank you so much! -- Jill

Plant Suggestion from Back to Natives:



Wild Morning Glory, *Calystegia macrostegia*, is a twining native vine. It is very drought tolerant. It is easy to grow and great for habitat gardens. The flowers range from white to pale-pink during their long bloom period, which lasts from February through July. It has a handsome appearance even without flowers. In the winter, enjoy its broad, triangular, nearly succulent leaves. It attracts many pollinating insects including butterflies and bees. It can be trained along a trellis on a fence or wall, or even as a ground cover! Plant alongside other chaparral and sage scrub companions like California Encelia (*Encelia californica*), California Sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), Bladderpod (*Isomeris arborea*), and Ceanothus.

Flowers: profuse pink/white flowers in Spring.

Sun: full sun

Soil: sandy soils but can acclimate to clay.

This plant is for sale at the Back to Natives nursery.

Old Home Week in December

We had several members drop by at our December meeting whom we haven't seen for awhile. It was great to see them and hear what's been going on in their lives.

One of our former members, Steve Williams, now teaches home garden classes through Mt. SAC's community education program, targeting older adults. His closest class is at the Diamond Bar Center, Wednesdays at 10am. However, he does teach a class in Brea at his mom's retirement home. They're all free and you can call him at his office at 909-274-2452 for more information.