



Garden Notes

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Welcome to the SC Garden Club newsletter!

🐞 Please send us questions about gardening and we will do our best to answer them!

🌸 Claremont Eclectic: A Tour of Six Local Gardens

Don't miss the chance to visit six outstanding and varied local gardens on **Sunday, April 6**, from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm!

The ticket price of \$25 includes admission to Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, as well as to the special "Tomatomania" event there.

Tickets can be purchased online (www.sustainableclaremont.org, or www.rsabg.org) up to the night before the tour, or on the day of the event at RSABG. Ticket holders can sign in at RSABG as early as 10:00 am to pick up a brochure about the individual gardens and a map and to enjoy the RSABG grounds before the Garden Tour begins at 1:00 pm.

This should be fun and inspiring, and will help us keep the Garden Club dues-free!

Ornamental of the Month:

Phacelia minor



Wild Canterbury bells is one of our most beautiful local native annuals. Normally less than 1ft tall, the plant pictured above is about 2ft tall with unusually large purple flowers. It is growing without any irrigation in the recently burned area of the Bernard Field Station. Some nursery varieties have been bred for very blue flowers.

Edible of the Month:

Laurus nobilis

Bay laurel is a slow-growing evergreen to 25ft but can be kept small. Has leathery, dark leaves, is quite drought tolerant, part shade. Leaves flavor soups, stews, sauces. Can use fresh or dried but have sharp edges, so do not eat (not quite edible!)



Orchids!





With twice as many species as birds, the orchids are tied with the daisy family for the largest flowering plant family. They are found almost everywhere in the world and the blossoms range from long, narrow, bottlebrushes of tiny flowers to huge cattleyas, with a lot of very odd forms and all the colors of the rainbow. Most tropical ones are epiphytes that grow

attached to trees, while most of the North American and European species are terrestrial. *Vanilla* species produce the seed pods we use to flavor desserts. Let us know if you'd like to have a program on orchids.

Favorite Quote (courtesy of Sharron Neyer)

"Hope never dies within a true gardener's heart." unknown

Member question--Dividing plants:

- both spring and fall are OK for most plants
- divide when clump looks crowded but before it looks like it's suffering
- outside parts are usually the healthiest so dig a ways outside of the clump to be sure you include a good number of roots
- separate the clump gently into pieces less than a quarter of the original size but still with a goodly portion of roots and shoots
- use fingers, knife, fork as needed but try to minimize damage
- discard any dead or diseased parts
- don't let the roots dry out before planting
- plant the divisions, spreading out the roots
- amend the soil if some of the divisions go back where they were
- keep watered until they re-establish
- for a good article with pictures and videos, as well as how to treat different root types, go to www.finegardening.com and type in "dividing perennials"

Upcoming events and more

April 6: Claremont Eclectic: A Tour of Six Local Gardens, 1-4pm

April 9 : Garden Club meeting, 7-9 pm Napier Center at Pilgrim Place, "California Native Bees in Your Garden", Nancy Hamlett

April 12: Organic Gardening for Beginners, Armstrong Nursery, 9 am, free, no registration; more classes including Ladybug weekend April 26/27 at <http://www.armstronggarden.com/pages/classes>

April 19: Free Mulch Program, Cahuilla Park, Claremont, first-come, first-served starting at 6 am—bring your own equipment to collect mulch

Now through May 4: Wildflower walks, RSABG, Saturdays at 10 am, Sundays at 1pm, included with \$8 regular admission

Did you know?

Botanical Latin: "Minor" means "smaller"; "nobilis" means "notable"

Plant miscellanea: "Dioecious" species, such as *Laurus nobilis*, have separate plants for male and female flowers. "Monoecious" species have separate male and female flowers on the same plant. Most flowering plants are hermaphrodite and have male and female parts in the same blossoms.

Things to do in April

General

- ✓ Check irrigation—water, dig down and see how far the water is going. Adjust time to reach deeply enough
- ✓ Add/replace mulch
- ✓ Catch weeds before they can seed

Pest/disease management

- ✓ Cherry tomatoes seem to resist hornworms better
- ✓ Mustard attracts lacewings to eat aphids and parasitic wasps (harmless to people) to control caterpillars

Edibles

- ✓ Wait til the end of the month to plant heat-lovers: beans, corn, cucumbers, eggplants, melons, peppers, squash
- ✓ Through June, plant citrus, avocados, kiwis, kumquats, pomegranates
- ✓ Start thinning tree fruits and grapes

Ornamentals

- ✓ Pinch begonias, mums, fuschias, lavender, iceplant for bushier plants
- ✓ Plant "lilies": day, canna, calla, lily of the Nile, and real ones too
- ✓ Plant tuberose and Nicotiana for fragrance

Visit the GC booth at Earth Day, April 26, 10am-3pm, 2nd St, Claremont

Please send photos and info about plants you've grown, gardens you've visited, gardening lore you've learned, questions you have. Sue Schenk, editor

The Metropolitan Water District is offering rebates for turf removal, rain barrels, soil moisture sensor systems. Info at: <http://socalwatersmart.com/index.php/home/?p=res>