



Garden Notes

"Creating edible and ornamental gardens"

www.sustainableclaremont.org

gardenclub@sustainableclaremont.org

August 2014

Welcome to the SC Garden Club newsletter!

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



About two dozen members met at Sue's house for our first annual potluck. The food was great and the company even better! If you weren't able to come, we hope to see you there next year.

Favorite quote:

There are no gardening mistakes, only experiments.

Janet Kilburn Phillips

Ornamental of the Month

Oxalis triangularis



Purple shamrock is a delightful plant for light to medium shade and low to moderate water. Groups of 6" leaves grow from bulbs in late winter and die down in late fall. Pale lavender flowers appear during active growth. The leaves fold down at night. Bulbs can be divided when dormant. May self-sow if happy. A favorite!

Edible of the Month

Satureja species



Summer savory is an annual, while the slightly more bitter winter savory is a perennial. Small leaves can be used like sage. They are seen in many cuisines and are part of "herbes de Provence". Needs sun and regular water. Grows 1-2 ft tall and wide; small, pale flowers. Seeds slow to germinate. Winter savory goes deciduous so take care not to pull up when dormant.

Sue Schenk writes: Hard to believe that these bromeliads in my garden are both in the genus *Aechmea*! The one far left didn't bloom until I cleaned out a lot of dead wood from the tree it is growing under. Amazing what a little more light will do!



We visited the recently opened Sunset Idea House in Manhattan Beach (\$18, www.sunset.com/ideahouse). Some very interesting ideas like the raised bed planter shown at bottom left—metal mesh walls filled with stones, and 'windows' for three plants on the front.



From Sharon Neyer: Saw a cute sign yesterday—"No trespassing - violators will be composted."

The free California Friendly Landscape Training class we advertised was great! DRIP (the new Claremont Drought Resistant Irrigation Program that is being developed) hopes to arrange for more of these and other workshops. DRIP and the GC should have a lot of synergy—we would love to have more people involved. Let us know if you'd like to put in your two cents.



Invasive plants

What is an “invasive” plant?

A plant that thrives and spreads aggressively outside its natural range is termed invasive. Some plants that evolved in one region of the globe can flourish, crowding out native vegetation and the wildlife that feeds on it, when moved (usually by humans) into a new habitat. These foreign invasive species can gain an advantage in their new location since the insects, diseases, and foraging animals that naturally keep them in check in their native range are not present.



What are the impacts of invasive plants?

The economic impact of invasive plants is enormous. In California, invasive plants increase wildfire potential, reduce water resources, accelerate erosion and flooding, threaten wildlife, degrade range-, crop- and timberland, and diminish outdoor recreation opportunities—impacts that are estimated to reach into billions of dollars. Over \$82 million is currently spent each year in California for control, monitoring, and outreach.

In natural areas, invasive plants can crowd out the native plants and wildlife, and some are inedible or even toxic to native animals. They can thus cause severe population declines and seriously reduce biodiversity. Some change ecosystem processes such as hydrology, fire regimes, and soil chemistry.

What are some locally invasive species?

Because our area is so dry, many species that are invasive in wetter areas aren't a problem here. However, some from similar Mediterranean climates can spread into natural areas. Pampas grass, all the different types of broom, olive trees, green or red fountain grass, Mexican feather grass, periwinkle, some ivies, Chilean peppertree (photo at top), fig, some palms, can all be problems. More information at <http://www.cal-ipc.org/landscaping/dpp/> and at <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn74139.html>.

Plant bulbs (From Sunset <http://www.sunset.com>): “In areas that stay dry in summer, try California natives including *Calochortus*, *Dichelostemma*, and *Triteleia*. Good sources are Brent and Becky's Bulbs (877/661-2852) and Telos Rare Bulbs.”

Upcoming events and more

No Garden Club meetings in July or August

August 16: Look Ma, no lawn! Class with Lili Singer at Theodore Payne Foundation, 1:30-3:30, \$35, <http://theodorepayne.org/calendar/>

Armstrong classes, <http://www.armstronggarden.com/pages/classes>

Aug 23: Small space gardening

Sept 6: Cactus and succulents

August 23: Begonia show and sale, South Coast Botanic Garden

<http://southcoastbotanicgarden.org/node/4848>

RSABG events: <http://www.rsabg.org/upcoming-events>

Did you know?

Botanical Latin: No surprise that “triangularis” refer to a triangular shape (in this case of the three leaflets on each leaf of the purple shamrock).

Plant miscellanea: Many plants, including bromeliads, can reproduce asexually by producing “offsets”, new small plants that develop at the base of the parent. These are clones of the mother plant and can be detached and grown on.

Things to do in August

General

- ✓ Harvest summer vegetables
- ✓ Tidy plants as needed
- ✓ Look at catalogs and order seeds
- ✓ Watch for signs of insufficient water
- ✓ Flush out debris from drip systems

Pest/disease management

- ✓ Occasionally mist plants to wash off dirt and spider mites
- ✓ Destroy any oleanders showing signs of leaf scorch
- ✓ Provide water (especially moving water) for birds—many eat insects

Edibles

- ✓ Sow cole crops (broccoli, brussel sprouts, cabbage, etc) and other cool season crops to plant out when 4" tall
- ✓ Don't let avocados or citrus dry out
- ✓ Prune suckers off citrus and stone-fruit trees

Ornamentals

- ✓ Divide bearded iris. Plant rebloomers like Frequent Flyer, Feedback, and Summer Olympics
- ✓ Remove suckers from wisteria
- ✓ Feed container grown succulents
- ✓ Fertilize roses
- ✓ Be careful not to overwater native plants—many don't need any
- ✓ Cut back rangy perennials to encourage more bloom

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>