

University of California
Cooperative Extension

Master Gardener News

Amador County



June 2007

Your Co-Pres' Speak

The growing season is upon us once again. And with it the busiest time of the year for Master Gardeners. That is both from the standpoint of our own at-home activities, as well as our responsibility as MGs to aid other people with public education outreach and answering their questions during the phone clinic, nursery clinics, etc,

Robin Ivanoff and Jim Switzer are both doing an outstanding job as the voice of MG on Hometown Radio and the face of MGs on TSPN. Robin does Master Gardener Minutes for Hometown Radio each week. We need to support her by contributing ideas and scripts that she can use on our program. See the May newsletter for more on what she needs and her contact information.

Since the last message we have had two very entertaining meetings. The first was an evening meeting at Larry Jones' at the end of April. Larry shared with us his Indian artifact finds on the property, and the wide variety of native birds in the area. We went on a garden/orchard tour featuring what he has done and what he plans to do with a background on why he is doing it. The Master Gardeners and their spouses once again showed that they not only have a passion for growing things but also for cooking them. Everyone had a great time and came away a little wiser and a tiny bit heavier.

The regular May meeting was held off-site at Dennis Miller's house. Dennis' program was a mock home visit of his property. He passed out a sheet with several questions which a homeowner might ask. We walked the property with Dennis and answered the questions. It was a good learning experience for everyone. We were very impressed with the amount of work Dennis has put into his land.

In the upcoming months there will be many opportunities to participate in Master Gardener activities. They include public education programs, phone clinics, nursery clinics, GIT program at the Upcountry Community Center, and the Amador County Fair to name a few. We encourage everyone to participate as much as possible. The experience is rewarding in itself and well appreciated by the people of Amador County.

Jerry & John

JUNE CALENDAR

6/2 – 10am-2pm Ridge Road Nursery Clinic
6/14—2-3 pm GIT class, Pine Grove
6/16 – 10am-12pm - Managing Wildlife at the Ag Office
6/19 – 1-3pm- MG Monthly Meeting at the Ag Office, Board Meeting at noon
6/23, 24 – 11am-2pm Amador Flower Farm Clinic

**MASTER GARDENER MEETING
MINUTES FOR MAY 15, 2007**

The meeting was called to order at Dennis Miller's house. Pres. J. Trottier thanked Larry Jones for hosting the April 28 evening meeting at his house. It was a most interesting visit to Larry's on Quartz Mtn. Rd.

An evening meeting will be at Penny Smith's on May 30. The Speaker will be Duke Foster of Dry Creek Watershed Council at 5:30, meeting will begin at 6:30. Penny will provide hamburgers, hot dogs, and we bring a dish to share and a chair.

The June meeting will be on the 19th at 1:00, with Dr. Robert Norris speaking about "Managing Home Garden Pests and Diseases."

BUSINESS: Andrew K. reported that microscope training for MGs is in the works. We were reminded that nursery clinic programs need to be well publicized. The primary focus of these clinics is to answer gardeners' questions but it may be prudent to have a topic-of-interest as well to help draw people into conversation. The lead question should be "Do you have any gardening questions?" We need to be interactive with people.

Robin Ivanoff has taken on the MG Minutes for Radio and needs us to help out by writing 250 word articles for the show. Resources can be any UC publication, Pest Notes, etc. This is a good way to earn hours.

The Upcountry Community Center's "Gardeners in Training" will continue through the summer. With the help of several MGs the group planted peas, peppers, tomatoes, artichokes and is looking forward to their harvest.

Janice Johnson reported that the Tomato and Pepper Class went well and netted \$218 from tomato plant sales.

June 16, is an upcoming Managing Wildlife Program and Larry Jones asked for help on teaching about ground varmits such as skunks, raccoons, etc

On a safety note, Andrew reminded us that "Volunteer's Report of Accident" forms are available in his office and we need to use them if any accident occurs during MG events or home visits.

Due to a couple recent contact sheets, Andrew reminded us that whatever we say as MG's needs to be based on UC research.

The Ridge Road Nursery Clinic went well. The next one is July 2.

Hack S. reported that the Duarte Nursery Field Trip went well and the next one is July 14, a visit to the Calaveras MG Demo Garden.

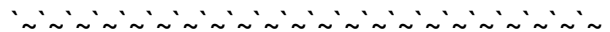
The following garden tours are upcoming: Foothill Garden Club on June 2. Calaveras Garden Tour on June 23, and Calaveras MG Demo Garden Tour on July 14.

The Amador Fair Garden is in full swing and needs more waterers and weeders. Contact Larry.

The business meeting was followed by a tour and home visit session of Dennis's extensive vegetable, flower garden and orchard. His garden is "masterfully" laid out and cared-for. He sets the bar high and inspires/teaches us all. **E. Beals**



**Coffee Grounds Garner
Gardener Gratitude**



"Common Grounds", the "Daily Grind", and "Central Perk", are examples of witty coffee house names I've seen since the beginning of the coffee house boom about fifteen years ago. Originally a phenomenon clustered in metropolitan areas and around Universities, designer coffee stops are everywhere now. You can now travel Highway 49 from Grass Valley to Sonora and never be more than about twenty miles away from a Starbucks. There's a byproduct from coffee-making that has a place in the garden. Many of you may already put your coffee grounds in your compost bins but I've occasionally heard people warn against it due to concerns about it being too acidic. In searching around I found that Sunset magazine sent a sample of Starbucks coffee grounds to a lab for analysis. The analysis showed the grounds had a pH of 6.2, similar to the pH of a lot of our soils in the area. The analysis found the grounds had 2.28% N, 0.06 % P and 0.06% K and levels of Magnesium and Copper that

would also be beneficial to plants when incorporated into the soil. The C:N ratio was 24:1. Based on this analysis, there would not be a risk of coffee grounds turning your vegetable or flower beds too acidic, particularly if they are composted with other materials. Most sources recommend limiting coffee grounds to 25-30% of your compost mix nonetheless. Because of their relatively low C:N ratio, they are a "green" material for composting. The complete article summarizing the results of the analysis can be seen at:

<http://www.sunset.com/sunset/garden/edible/article/0,20633,1208232,00.html>

For tips on using coffee grounds in your compost or garden see an article by the EPA at:

<http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/osw/conservation/2004news/04-star.htm>

Starbucks Coffee has a program called "Grounds for Your Garden" where they make their grounds available to the public for free. The local Starbucks in Martell said the best time to pick them up is around noon (if they haven't been taken already) since the grounds accumulate all through the morning rush. Check with other coffee shops to see if they give their grounds away too.

Andrew Kramer

Getting To Know Our Amador County Soils



In an effort to familiarize ourselves more with the soils in our county I am going to write a monthly article highlighting one of our principle soil associations. O.k., so it may not be as interesting as the "Getting to Know You" article about one of our very own Master Gardeners, but for those of you interested in soils, I think you'll find it enlightening. This month I'll start with a little history and explanation of the Amador Area Soil Survey.

The Soil Survey of the Amador Area, issued initially in 1965, was compiled by scientists from the Soil Conservation Service of the USDA and the California Agricultural Experiment Station. The scientists who did

the work to classify the soils in the area and use that information to make soil maps had a huge job. Can you imagine trying to classify soils and develop soil maps for a whole county? And this was done county after county in the U.S.-that's amazing to me!

Obviously, there was a limit to how many soil samples and pits the scientists could make in order to classify the soils, so the General Soil Map of the county uses color coded Soil Associations to depict the distribution of main soil patterns throughout the county. One soil association might have a few main soils within it even though they differ in some ways. The association is named after the main soil(s) that occurs in it and is often a soil that has been identified and named elsewhere, at an earlier time. The soils are named after places or geographical features where they were first identified. I think the soil names are interesting. Soil names like Ahwanee, Pentz-Pardee, and Josephine conjure up thoughts of historical places and people. The General Soil Map is not used to determine what a specific soil is at a specific location, but to show general patterns of soil type distribution. The more detailed soil maps in the back of the survey are designed to give more specific information on a smaller scale, and if anyone would like to identify the soil (s) on their property, I'd be happy to work with you to find it in the soil survey maps. Knowing the soil type can help make better decisions about what you plant and how to help your plants grow better.

I will start on the eastern side of the county in choosing the first soil association for next month's article and will work my way west in the articles after that. Next month's featured soil association is the Aiken-Cohasset association. This soil association is found at higher elevations in the county, south of Highway 88 near the town of Pioneer and in a large area along the Highway 88 corridor above Mt. Crossman. There are also smaller pockets of this soil association occurring just east of Fiddletown and northwest of Volcano. Read next month's newsletter to find out more about the Aiken-Cohasset soil association.

Andrew Kramer

Announcements



Cultivated Wild Rice Production in California Daniel Marcum

This new publication contains key information for growers on every aspect of cultivated wild rice production from varieties, basin construction, and planting to harvesting, processing, and marketing. Also includes chapters on weed, insect, bird, and disease management. Important consideration is also given to seed and water management and the chemistry of flooded soils. 21622 \$15.00

New Free Publications Recently Posted to the Online Catalog

8258

Predicting and Controlling Stable Flies on California Dairies

<http://anrcatalog.ucdavis.edu/InOrder/Shop/ItemDetails.asp?ItemNo=8258>

Updated Pest Note: Bermuda Grass

<http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PDF/PESTNOTES/index.html>

June Meeting Speaker

The speaker in June will be Dr. Norris from U.C. Davis, talking on Vegetable Garden Pests and Diseases. This is a great opportunity to get the latest scoop for our summer crops!

PUBLIC EDUCATION CLASS

Here's another exciting free class to attend. "Managing Wildlife" will be presented by fellow Master Gardeners Saturday June 16, 2007, 10 AM until noon at the Ag/UCCE office. This class will teach you how to manage deer, gophers, opossums, rabbits, raccoons, skunks, woodpeckers and rattlesnakes. I'm sure all of us have a problem with at least one of these critters so be sure to attend and learn some helpful tips to deal with them.



RECOGNITION



MAY MEETING AND GARDEN TOUR

A big thanks to Dennis and Reita Miller for having the May meeting at their house. It was great to see their great garden. Dennis sure know how to make it happen.

NIGHT MEETING

Thanks to Penny and Phil Smith for inviting us to their house and serving up the hot dogs and hamburgers! The Double PP Ranch certainly has much to see.

FAIR GARDEN PROJECT

There were seven people involved in sprucing up the garden for fair time. Thanks to Barbara and Harvey Parolari, Larry Jones, Marie Loretta, Lucy Martin, and Lou Ohls. Even Andrew found some time in his busy schedule to check out our project.

PLYMOUTH SCHOOL BUTTERFLY GARDEN

Let's hear it for Michael Spinetta! He has done a great job on the Plymouth School garden.

REFRESHMENTS

Thank you Barb and Harvey Parolari for taking care of refreshments for the May meeting!

Plant of the Month

(From the MG Calendar)

Foothill Penstemon

Also known as foothill beardtongue. Easy care and loved by hummingbirds.

Some cultivars to look for in the nurseries right now are

'Catherine de la Mare'-sky blue, turning pink.

'Appleblossom'-clear pink, white throat.

'Midnight'-deep purple'.

'Firebird'-bright red, long blooming.

'Garnet'-dark red.

'Purple Passion'-purple

Getting To Know You.....

By: Lucy Martin

Dave Hennings, what a witty guy – very funny – subtle humor. He gives the impression of being quiet and reserved – and perhaps he is but he loves to laugh and share stories. He is good-natured, very likable - connected and accepting of life and situations and people. He spent thirty-six years with the Santa Clara Probations Department and his relaxed attitude helped to ease the pressures of a very stressful job. He had the wisdom to expand his friendships beyond those associated with law enforcement – it helped to keep him objective and balanced. He began his career as a street officer, advanced to management and then spent 30 years as a probations officer for adults and juveniles. When he retired in 1996 it was with mixed feelings; looking forward to retirement and sorry to be leaving a job he enjoyed so much. He then worked for a small school district as a truant officer and retired from this job in 2004. Dave spent his early youth in Lassen County then Sacramento and then Richmond where he graduated from high-school. He enrolled in Contra Costa Community College; he got bored and dropped out - and Uncle Sam (U.S. Army) was --- waiting. He was drafted into the army and spent 30 months in Germany. He enjoyed his tour-of-duty and said it helped him to mature. After the army he wasn't sure what he wanted to do; a relative with the Contra Costa County Sheriff's Department helped steer him towards his chosen career. He graduated from San Jose State Law Enforcement School with a BA in Penology.

He and his wife Carolyn live on Cottonwood Lane in Pine Grove. Carolyn retired as director of the Career Center at Santa Clara University in 2002. They have three children. Kathleen, married, has five children, lives in El Dorado Hills and is a probations officer like her dad. They were actually in the same department in San Jose for a brief time. Kirsten, married and mother of two is a stay-at-home-mom. They live in San Jose and she is deciding what her second career will be. Todd is a physics teacher at Napa High and is getting married

next month during summer solstice, a quiet ceremony in the woods of Lake Tahoe. Dave and Carolyn have been in Amador County since 2005. After retirement they wanted to get out of the city. They owned a summer place in Tuolumne County so they were familiar with and loved “the hill country”. They began exploring up highway 49 until a friend who lives in Jackson suggested that they look around here. And --- they found a spot that they fell in love with for their new home. While waiting for their home to be completed, he loves to recall - that they lived in a one-bedroom apartment in El Dorado Hills – very cozy, he chuckles!

Jerry Trottier introduced him to Master Gardeners – Carolyn and Kelly were co-worker/friends from San Jose and unexpectedly reconnected here. Dave joined us in 2006 and he absolutely loves it. Last fall he attended the state conference and then gave a presentation during one of our meetings on growing sweet-peas. This year he is Co-Coordinator of Nursery Clinics and participates in many phone clinics. As an adult he has always enjoyed yard work – he landscaped two previous homes and has been busy with this one. He does it all - the planning, the hardscape, the tilling, the planting. It's very therapeutic and rewarding to see the results. His favorite plant is the tomato! Janice Johnson is his hero for introducing him to the Brandywine. He has fruit trees, a vegetable garden and plants lots of cutting flowers for Carolyn. He loves roses - hates the plant! Among his other hobbies Dave enjoys photography and loves to read – in particular mysteries and CSI novels. He also cooks. Carolyn decided to return to college while the children were small and he began by helping out in the kitchen and now does just about everything – soups and casseroles are his favorite meals. They just returned from a trip to Branson, MO - an army reunion. There have been many other trips - a cruise to Alaska was beautiful but too confining – he much prefers to fly/car travel. They plan on enjoying much more traveling.

Dave has some very profound wisdom and he would like to share these words with us, “Enjoy each day, miracles are all around us”!

Just a Bit About Ferns

Adapted from an article by Polly Chapman,
December 1995

Ferns have existed here on earth for about 400 million years, long before any plants had developed pollen or flowers. The vast majority grow in the tropic. Of more than 12,000 fern species, 360 species grow naturally in North America, mostly in the northern and eastern sections where the humidity is high enough to supply the moisture that is necessary for fertilization.

Ferns must spend at least part of their lives in a moist area. They are a primitive species which developed before plants began to use pollen or seeds to reproduce. The sperm cells require water to swim to the female part of the plant in order to fertilize the egg. By evolving tubes to carry the sperm and water, ferns were able to move out of the water and on to land. In contrast, mosses, which are even more ancient than ferns, lack a method of transporting water and other materials and can live only in continuously damp areas.

Most ferns will grow in any soil if the drainage is good, although there are a few that will grow in a bog. They need to be shaded from the midday sun and protected from wind. With so many species, there is endless variety in shape, form and colors. They range in size, some reaching 30 feet down to just a few inches.

There are many fern varieties that do well in our area. Western Sword Fern (*Polystichum munitum*), the most common of the Western forests is hardy to zone 2., spreads by rhizomes, is good for flower arranging and can do well with reduced moisture once established. Christmas Fern (*Polystichum acrostichoides*) is another native that will tolerate cold and can stay green and upright until pushed over by snow.

Deer Tongue Fern (*Blechnum spicant*) is native to the coastal mountains but will do well at higher elevations if given some water and forms a 3 foot clump.

Another is the indispensable Autumn Fern (*Dryopteris erythrosora*), known for its great fall color and ability to endure a bit of sun. In the same family, is Spreading Wood Fern (*Dryopteris expansa*), growing to 3 feet tall and wide and does best in pots.

Then there is the ever so delicate Five Finger Fern (*Adiantum aleuticum*), definitely cold hard as I just saw it in Wisconsin! This fern loves shade and woodland treatment, lots of organic matter.

Japanese Painted Fern which is a show stopper for its grey-green foliage and Holly Fern for its shiny holly-like foliage.

Best stop me now! Can you tell I like ferns?
Jackie Tarchala

RAZZMATAZZ BARS

- ½ C (1 stick) butter or margarine
- 2C (12 oz. pkg.) Toll House white morsels *divided
- 2 large eggs
- ½ C sugar
- 1 C flour
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp almond extract
- ½ C seedless raspberry jam
- ¼ C toasted sliced almonds

Pre-heat oven to 325 degrees – Grease 9 in. square pan – Melt butter in microwave safe bowl on high 1 minute – Stir – Add 1 C. morsels and let stand....**Do not stir**
Beat eggs in large mixing bowl until foamy. Add sugar, beat until light lemon colored (about 5 minutes) – Stir in morsel/butter mixture – Add flour, salt and almond extract – Mix at low speed until combined – Spread 2/3 of the batter into the baking dish – Bake for 15-17 minutes until light golden brown around the edges. Remove the pan from the oven. Heat jam in small microwave -safe bowl on high for 30 seconds – spread jam over warm crust, Stir in remaining morsels into the batter and spread on top of the jam – Sprinkle with almonds and return to oven and bake for another 25-30 minutes – Cool completely – Slice into bars.

