

Master Gardener News

Amador County

AUGUST 2005



Your Co-Pres' Speak

Hello to my fellow Master Gardeners. This has been another busy month for the MGs. On the 7th Dave Andrews and Scott Oneto gave a public education class on controlling pests in the landscape. Although I wasn't able to attend I understand that they made an excellent presentation to a full house.



Bob Allen's field trip to the Blodgett Forest was excellent. We learned a lot about forest management using some research that has been documented since the 1930's. It included tree shaping and pruning for maximum resale value, different types of preventative forest fire suppression options, along with methods of harvest and reforestation by hand or natural means.

Our joint day and night meeting was held at Cathy Koos-Breazeal's home on the 19th. Diana Waller, a rangeland management specialist gave a lecture on California native grasses. After the lecture the MGs had another excellent potluck dinner. Thanks to the MG cooks who provided a wide variety of entrees, salads, and desserts.

On the 28th through 31st we will all be busy at the MG booth and garden exhibit at the county fair. Thanks in advance for everyone's hard work

Co-Present Dennis Miller

If you could not read it in Dennis' report, your co-presidents are very proud of the Amador Master Gardeners activities and send our thanks to all of you for your hard work.

As you all know, I have been very impressed with our new trainees but about half of them do not seem to attend the meetings or events. I am wondering why??? Several have told me that it is their busy season at work and they plan to get active as soon as possible but what about the rest? I am requesting that each mentor contact their mentee to determine how they can assist them in completing the requirements to become certified in the remaining six months. Dennis and I are willing to assist in any way possible to get everyone qualified and active. It really is fun if you participate. "The kiss of sun for pardon, the song of the birds for mirth, one is nearer to God's heart in the garden than anywhere else on earth". Dorothy Frances Gurney "Garden Thoughts"

Co-President Jack Lyall

AUGUST CALENDAR

Aug. 6, Saturday – **Harvest Day 2005**, 8am-2 pm at Fair Oaks Horticulture Center. Details and schedule inside.

Aug. 13, Saturday – **Late Summer Pruning Class**, 10-Noon at Dennis Miller's home.

Aug. 16, Tuesday – **MG Monthly Meeting**, 1:00 pm at the Ag office. Guest speakers Ken & Cindy Dean from **South River Lavender** in Mt. Aukum. Board meeting at noon.

Secretary's Notes

JULY 19, 2005

The July meeting was held at the home of Cathy Koos Breazeal. Jack Lyall called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM and introduced the speaker, Diana Waller. Diana is a Range Management Specialist with the USDA NRCS in Jackson.

Diana spoke about California native grasses and provided information, handouts and a list of references to supplement her basic presentation. She recommended the Manual of Grasses of the United States by A.S. Hitchcock & Agnes Chase, The Jepson Manual: Higher Plants of California by James P. Smith, Jr., Grasses in California by Beecher Crampton, Growing California Natives by Marjorie G. Schmidt and Know Your Natives: A Pictorial Guide to California Native Grasses by Yolo County RCD as excellent reference material. These books contain information regarding common natives, their growth and propagation requirements and much of the data is specific to California native grasses.

Diana said that grasses are her favorite plant family and they also have more significant economic importance than any other plant on the planet. Grasses cover approximately one quarter of the land surface of the earth. There are 600-700 genera and over 10,000 species. All the world's important grain crops are grasses and the bamboos are useful in building and crafts. Grasses are used in lawns and as ornamental annual or perennial plants. Native grasses are perfectly adapted to the areas where they are indigenous but sadly, there are very few remaining intact stands of native grasses. These plants can withstand the elements and even thrive after grazing.

Diana then discussed in detail the structural differences in the various types of grasses and graminoids. The flowers of these two groups are very different as are the leaves of the plants.

The numerous types of native grasses have different cultural requirements and

habits. Some of the grasses are annual grasses and others are perennial. There are grasses like Squirreltail that Diana called "good grasses" and others, such as Medusahead that contain no nutrients and are fire hazards that she termed "bad grasses".

The varied species of grasses flower at different times of the year and may do best with widely differing watering requirements. California Brome is surprisingly drought tolerant while Tufted Hairgrass thrives in partially shaded wet areas. There are bunchgrasses like California Fescue and also the tall, spike-like panicles of Slender Wheatgrass. The native Oniongrass is an attractive, long-lived perennial that has a small edible bulb and will even grow on serpentine rock. Deer Grass is a large, showy long-lived bunchgrass that flowers September through October. Purple Needlegrass is California's State Grass and likes clay loam soil but does not like to be disturbed after planting or want to be watered after flowering in April through May.⁷

Grasses are meant to be grazed and so they can tolerate being cut back by half every year. If the grasses are fertilized the weeds may make use of the fertilizer. Sulfur can be added to the soil where grasses are planted if the soil is deficient in this element.⁷

Diana concluded her presentation by advising that the seeds for native grasses should be planted in the Fall. The native grass seeds are can be quite expensive if a large area is planted with them. The seeds can be purchased through Cornflower Farms and the Department of Conservation.

At 6:50 Jack Lyall began the business meeting. Jack acknowledged that the turnout for the evening meeting was excellent and that in his estimation the meetings at Master Gardener's homes were by far the most interesting and enjoyable. He discussed the arrangement for the Master Gardener area at the Fairgrounds and said that the area will have to be shared with the Food Tasting

group until Friday and then on the weekend the Master Gardener displays can be spread out.

Bernice Honeychurch had the Fair and parking passes to distribute to those who signed up to work at for that event. She asked that they be guarded carefully as no replacements will be available. Bernice also requested that those who work in the morning please water the Master Gardener garden area.

Dennis Miller presented a small gift to Diana Waller to thank her taking the time out of her busy life to come and speak about grasses before the Master Gardener group twice during the past few months.

Bernice Honeychurch spoke about working at the Master Gardener table set up outside Wal Mart and said that they had a wonderful time. She is also looking for people who would like to participate in presentations/demonstrations at the Plymouth Farmer's Market. The first Farmer's Market will be held on July 28.

Jack Lyall announced that the Public Education class held two weeks earlier by Scott Oneto and Dave Andrews was very well attended. The subject matter for the class was the control of poison oak, yellow star thistle and other landscape pests. Many thanks to Sue Harrington who is doing a superb job in advertising the classes.

Jim Wilson is still refining the new MG database and will work with a committee to make final decisions regarding the formatting of the program. Janice Johnson suggested that the information be accessed by entering symptoms and/or pathogens thus leading to a diagnosis and treatment suggestions. Jim said that it is possible that the final product may also include photographs. He stated that the process is moving along.

Cathy Ralston of the Amador County Fair requested that the Master Gardeners conduct hands-on demonstrations at their booth. Dennis Miller said that with such short notice there was no time to prepare properly. There won't be any demonstrations this year but they may possibly be included for next year.

Scott Oneto thanked those that assisted him in the work party to control the yellow starthistle at the Kennedy Mine site.

Cheryl Allen called for a work party to do some weeding at the Food Bank Garden. There have been watering problems at the site and Dennis Miller reprogrammed the timers on the irrigation system.

Jack Lyall said that Dennis Miller will be holding a Late Summer Pruning Class in his orchard on August 13 from 10 - 12 PM. Dennis needs volunteers to help with parking and signing in attendees. The directions to his home and the address will be available only to those who call about the class. The information will be posted on the wall next to the calendar in the MG office.

Jack encouraged everyone to start plants now for the Fall Expo on September 24. The focus of the classes will be the selection and care of landscape trees. Those Master Gardeners who attended the training at UC Davis last year will share the knowledge they gained with the Amador County residents. If you attended the training, please contact Dennis and offer to assist in the education program.

Jill North spoke about the annual Sacramento Master Gardener's Harvest Day on August 6 in Fair Oaks.

Scott Oneto gave kudos to all those involved in the Public Education program this year. Sue Harrington is doing a great job in advertising and the attendance has been outstanding. Scott also thanked Jack Lyall and Bernice Honeychurch for taking over the Fair duties since Larry Jones' family emergency has taken him to Southern California. Special recognition goes to Patti Stadler, MG trainee, who put together an outstanding vermiculture brochure. Scott has compiled the current MG Activity hours and over 1000 volunteer hours have been accumulated already this year.

Jack Lyall adjourned the meeting and announced that yet another fabulous potluck meal was available on the deck. He invited everyone to stroll down to see Cathy's "weed free" garden after dinner.

Announcements

AUGUST GUEST SPEAKER

Ken and Cindy Dean from South River Lavender Farm in Mt. Aukum will tell you everything you want to know about lavender. They will bring some plants and other products that they make at their farm.

Jackie Tarchala

MASTER GARDENER PRUNING CLASSES CONTINUE

The Amador County Master Gardeners will provide a Late Summer Fruit Tree Pruning class, on Saturday August 13 from 10 am - Noon.

This late summer fruit tree pruning class will be a continuation of the earlier winter dormant and early summer pruning classes presented by Master Gardener Dennis Miller. Late summer pruning will help you create the desired shape you want in your tree next season. It will force energy into the remaining tree structure, and eliminate a considerable amount of the leaf drop that would normally occur if this pruning wasn't done. This class will be at the same location as the Early Summer Pruning Class held in June, in the Pine Grove, Ridge Road area. Call the Master Gardener office at (209) 223-6838, between 10 am – Noon Tuesday through Friday for detailed directions.

Sue Harrington

AMADOR COUNTY FAIR

Thanks to all of the people who worked at the county fair and helped to make our sun garden so lovely. We had so many people sign up to help (no arm twisting!).

We took 3rd place in the Sun Garden category (but all of the hardworking volunteers know it is really a 1st place garden.

Bernice Honeychurch

NEW E-MAIL ADDRESSES

Please update your address books to change the following address:

Dave Andrews hort101@volcano.net

Jim Harrington: jharrington@volcano.net

Sue Harrington: susanlh@volcano.net

NEW FARMERS MARKET

The Amador farmers market in Plymouth is planning to operate on Thursday nights 4-7pm starting with a gala event on July 28. Our MGs will have a table every two weeks. We will answer questions if asked but this is basically a PR effort to get MGs in the north end of the county. It will be easy and fun! If the market is successful we may extend. Each week we will have a theme:

July 28 Who are the Master Gardeners and what can they do for you?

August 11 The Dirty Dozen: Noxious Weeds in Amador County

August 25 Fire Safety

September 8 Ornamental grasses

September 22 Perennial flower gardens.

I will be there each time, but need one volunteer for September 8. Penny Smith and Emily Beals have volunteered for the other dates. Thank you Penny and Emily!

Bernice Honeychurch

PLANTS FOR FALL EXPO

The drop off location for plants to be sold at the Fall Expo is Jackie Tarchala's house, 19175 West Clinton Road, Jackson. If you need help dividing or potting you can call Jackie, 223-1976 or Bernice, 245-3608, and they will help make other arrangements.

Jackie Tarchala

HARVEST DAY 2005

The Sacramento County Master Gardeners Harvest Day 2005 takes place August 6 from 8am-2pm at the Fair Oaks Horticulture Center, 8100 Fair Oaks Blvd. Park entrance is on Fair Oaks Blvd. just south of Madison Avenue (east of Sunrise Blvd.). Their schedule of classes and demonstrations is attached. For more information you can contact UC Cooperative Extension at 916-875-6913.

Jill North

PRAYING MANTISES

Information taken from article in California Life Home & Garden

In the world of biological pest control weapons, praying mantises are howitzer cannons. They are efficient carnivorous predators that consume some of the more problematic species. Mantises put a big dent in leaf-eating pests. They go for beetles and grasshoppers in both vegetable and ornamental gardens. They are among the few nocturnal hunters capable of catching and eating moths. While moths themselves aren't a problem for gardeners, the moth's highly destructive larvae can devastate whole plants in a matter of days. Best of all, mantises love to eat roaches.

Praying mantises don't have a larval phase. Their young are born fully formed as nymphs. Considerably smaller than a grain of rice, they leave the egg case to molt at least a dozen times before adulthood.

Female praying mantises mate in late summer. In autumn she will lay her eggs before she dies with the frost. She often deposits them on a branch or twig, but she also leaves them on walls, fences, and eaves. They are surrounded by a frothy liquid, called ootheca, which hardens into an egg case about the size and shape of a cigarette filter. The following spring the nymphs hatch and burst out of the case as a small army of hungry youngsters, each the size of a small ant. From birth, mantises are predators. The nymphs immediately begin attacking leafhoppers, aphids and even small flies.

It is important for every gardener to recognize these egg cases, which become most visible in the winter when deciduous trees and shrubs lose their leaves. When pruning, keep a sharp eye out for them. Any found on twigs and branches should be set aside in protected parts of the garden. If they must be removed from a wall, for example, simply relocate to a sheltered place and the nymphs will survive. Never put an egg case on the ground; the eggs inside quickly will be consumed by ants.



A healthy organic garden relies on a delicate balance of predator and prey species. Beneficial mantises, lacewings and ladybugs are vital to keeping plant damaging insects under control. Just one blanket application of chemical pesticides can wipe out whole populations of mantises that can take years to re-establish. In the meantime, plant-damaging pest insects will return in droves to infest the garden, proliferating without any threat of predators.

CULTIVATION CELEBRATION.....HARVEST DAY 2005 Saturday, August 6th 8:00 am - 2:00 pm Fair Oaks Horticulture Center Fair Oaks Park Presented by SACRAMENTO COUNTY UCCE MASTER GARDENERS

Lecture Speakers

TIME	TOPIC	SPEAKER	LOCATION
8:00-8:45	Tasty Home Grown Tomatoes	Bill Pierce <i>UCCE Master Gardener</i>	Oak
9:00-9:45	Happy, Healthy Water Features	Marco Tjaden <i>Owner, Flora Tropicana</i>	Vineyard Access
10:00-10:45	ABC's of Container Gardening	Ernesto Sandoval <i>Curator, UCD Botanical Conservatory</i>	Oak
11:00-11:45	Water Efficient Ornamentals: Beauty with Less Water	Ellen Zagory <i>Director of Horticulture, UCD Arboretum</i>	Vineyard Access
12:00-12:45	Antioxidants in Your Backyard	Ed Laivo <i>Sales & Marketing Manager, Dave Wilson Nursery</i>	Oak
1:00-1:45	Kiwi and Grapes: Learn, Grow, Harvest	Chuck Ingels <i>Farm & Horticulture Advisor, UC Cooperative Extension</i>	Vineyard Access

Demonstration Speakers

(located in educational booth seating area)

TIME	TOPIC	SPEAKER
8:00-8:30	How-To of Healthy Soil	Steve Zien <i>Owner, Living Resources</i>
9:00-9:30	Growing Dinner: Using Edible Flowers	Marsha Prillwitz <i>UCCE Master Gardener, Author</i>
10:00-10:30	Irrigation Without Irritation: Retrofit To Drip	Don Smith <i>Water Management Coordinator, City of Folsom Utilities Department</i>
11:00-11:30	Staying Alive: Keeping Your Houseplants Healthy	Lori Ann Asmus <i>UCCE Master Gardener, Owner, Emerald City Interior Landscape Service</i>
12:00-12:30	Beautiful California Natives	Megan Williamson <i>Cornflower Farms</i>
1:00-1:30	Cooking With Herbs	Kathleen Frawley <i>Owner, Sweet Courage Herb Farm</i>

& FAIR OAKS RECREATION AND PARK DISTRICT Additional information: (916) 875-6913
www.cesacramento.ucdavis.edu

August Vegetable/Orchard Calendar

PLANT SEED:

Below 2500 feet:

Winter vegetables and root vegetables can be started in containers: beets, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, chard, lettuce (loose leaf is best here), mustard, radish, spinach, turnips, winter greens. Directly sow carrots, onions, peas and radishes.

SET OUT PLANTS:

Use row covers to protect seedlings from the hot afternoon sun and deter bugs.

Above 2000 feet: later in month you can plant the winter vegetables listed above.

Below 2000 feet: Green beans, green onions.

If you wait until soil temps start dropping, plants can bolt. They need to develop roots before cool weather begins.

FERTILIZE:

CAUTION: Never fertilize when it is hot or when plants need water.

Strawberries.

Mature fruit trees (after picking fruit) need the other half of their annual dose of nitrogen. Mix N into the soil and water thoroughly and deep.

When it is time to feed those veggies, leafy crops need a high nitrogen fertilizer (15-8-6). Fruiting crops need phosphorous and potash (5-10-10).

PEST AND DISEASE CONTROL:

Keeping plants healthy prevents stress and reduces chances of disease & pests.

Walnuts for husk fly.

Pick off tomato hornworms.

Tie up heavy laden branches of fruit trees and vegetables.

GARDEN MAINTENANCE:

Wear your favorite sun hat and use lots of sunscreen this month.

Clean up around fruit trees.

Summer prune fruit trees.

Place old shingles or boards under melons and pumpkins.

Pick-pick-pick to keep those summer veggies coming. Harvest your fruit/veggies/herbs in the morning. Look plants over real good so you don't miss any.

Plan and prepare beds for your winter garden.

August Yard Calendar

PLANT SEED:

Above 2000 feet:

Fall & winter-blooming annuals: calendula, candytuft, fairy primrose, pansies, snapdragons, stock and viola.

Below 2000 feet:

Sow perennials in flats or pots for transplanting later: columbine, coreopsis, dianthus, gaillardia, geum, heuchera, Iceland poppies as well as other spring/summer/fall bloomers.

Sow early flowering sweet peas.

SET OUT PLANTS:

Use row covers to protect seedlings from the hot afternoon sun and deter bugs.

Above 1000 feet: cool-weather annuals.

Below 1000 feet: Marigolds, petunias.

For late season color. aster, chrysanthemum, coreopsis, daylily, gaillardia and rudbeckia are good choices.

Purchase crape myrtles while they are in bloom.

FERTILIZE:

CAUTION: Never fertilize when it is hot or when plants need water.

Flowers, shrubs and long blooming plants.

Begonias, fuschias, summer annuals and container plants, roses for fall bloom, final feeding for azaleas, camellias and rhododendrons. Chrysanthemums need 3 feedings between Aug and Mid-Sept.

PEST AND DISEASE CONTROL:

Keeping plants healthy prevents stress and reduces chances of disease & pests.

Deep water trees and shrubs.

Give house plants a bath and a day outside in the shade.

Stake chrysanthemums.

Cut back hydrangea stalks to 12" to encourage a second bloom.

Watch for spider mites which thrive during hot weather. If leaves are stippled or you see fine webbing, look for tiny colorful specs. Spray the underside of leaves with insecticidal soap to remove. Rinsing dust and grime from leaves helps keep these guys at bay.

GARDEN MAINTENANCE:

Harvest flowers for drying.

Wear your favorite sun hat and use lots of sunscreen this month.

Pinch back mums to encourage bigger blooms later.

Cut off faded roses and dead head perennials.

Cut back perennials: coreopsis, delphiniums, Shasta daisies and yarrow.

Look over catalogs for fall bulbs.

Divide iris. NOTE: You can wait until September if it is dreadfully hot.

Check with the California Native Plant Society for fall sales of native plants.



Master Gardener Calendar

August 2005



	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	
	<p>2</p> <p><i>Honeychurch</i> <i>Leora Smith</i></p>	<p>3</p> <p><i>Leen Breesch</i></p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p> <p><i>Dave Andrews</i></p>	
	<p>9</p> <p><i>Diane Ferrell</i> <i>Crystal Rosson</i></p>	<p>10</p> <p><i>Steve Collins</i></p>	<p>11</p> <p><i>Ann Schieding</i> <i>Emily Beals</i></p>	<p>12</p> <p><i>Jack Lyall</i> <i>Dennis Miller</i></p>	<p>Class—'SUMMER PRUNING OF FRUIT TREES' 10 AM TO 12 PM</p>
	<p>16</p> <p><i>Don Rosson</i> <i>MG Meeting</i></p>	<p>17</p> <p><i>Valerie Bonkowski</i> <i>John E Otto</i></p>	<p>18</p> <p><i>Jim Harrington</i> <i>Jerry Trottier</i></p>	<p>19</p> <p><i>Sue Harrington</i> <i>Robin Ivanoff</i></p>	
	<p>23</p> <p><i>Donna England</i></p>	<p>24</p> <p><i>Patti Stalder</i></p>	<p>25</p> <p><i>Jim Wilson</i></p>	<p>26</p> <p><i>Emmi Felberg</i> <i>Patti Stalder</i></p>	
	<p>30</p> <p><i>Donna England</i></p>	<p>31</p> <p><i>Emily Beals</i></p>		<p>Phone Clinic Hours are Tuesday thru Friday 10:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.</p>	