

The Gardeners' Club

September 2011—Part I*

*Editor's Note: Part II to follow next week

We are very fortunate to have Bill Welch, a.k.a. "Bill the Bulb Baron", the world's leading authority on Tazetta Narcissus, as our speaker for our meeting this month. Bill has been growing and hybridizing these fragrant, gorgeous, drought- and varmint-resistant beauties for 40 years. At a young age he was fascinated by a Single Chinese Narcissus growing in his backyard, and so began his life's work.

Tazetta Narcissus are in the daffodil family. Tazetta means "little cups" in Italian. The main difference between daffodils and Tazetta Narcissus is that the latter are smaller flowered and more fragrant. Tazetta has clusters of 3-15 flowers per stem rather than one large flower, even up to 30 flowers per stem. Another name for them is Polyanthus Narcissus. They are uniquely suited for our climate, and thrive on neglect.



Bill the Bulb Baron

leave them alone. Sounds too good to be true! As a result of his hybridizing, Bill grows fragrant narcissus from September into April or May.

Bill will be bringing bulbs for us to purchase. He'll be bringing narcissus, including varieties he has developed himself, amaryllis belladonna hybrids and freesia alba. He says he's bringing LOADS of them, including Golden Dawn and Early Cheer which you can even buy in quantities of 500. He is not set up for credit cards, so bring checks or cash!

Bill also breeds amaryllis belladonna hybrids, which he has developed in many color variations from white to red, as well as heirloom freesia alba.

Bill will be talking about how easy narcissus and amaryllis are to grow – they are drought resistant, grow in any kind of soil, and animals

Go to www.billthebulbbaron.com/about.htm to learn much, much more.

SUPER LOW COST FLOWER BULBS

DEER-PROOF & GOPHER-PROOF

NARCISSUS BULBS

AS EASY TO GROW AS WEEDS! IDEAL FOR THE WORST SOILS:

Clay/Adobe, Rocky, Gravelly, Sandy, Too Hot, Too Dry, Etc.

Ideal for the "Brown Thumb" Casual Gardener - Plant 'Em & Forget 'Em

BUY DIRECTLY FROM THE SOURCE - MOSS LANDING GROWN BULBS



September Meeting
Thurs. - Sept. 8th - 7 p.m.

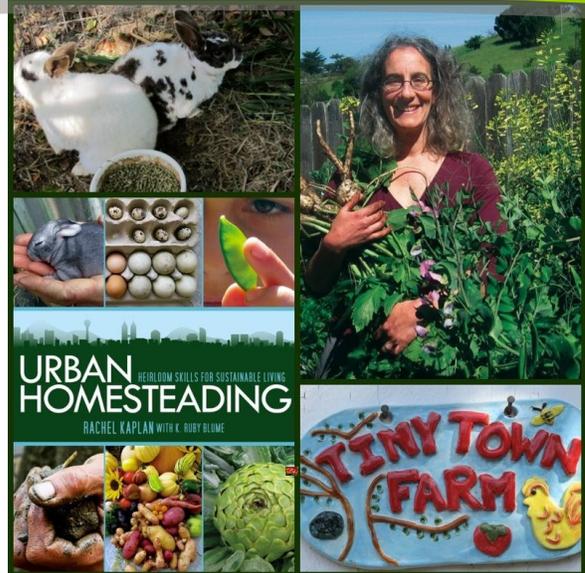
Aptos Grange Hall
2555 Mar Vista Drive

Thanks to Janine Canada for
snack, Marie Mosley for Juice
and Eileen Balian for dessert





The Garden Company Nursery and Gift Shop ((2218 Mission St.) is proudly celebrating its 25th year as a local, independent, family owned business on the Westside of Santa Cruz. They have endured water restrictions, rainy springs, foggy summers, recessions, earthquakes, insect quarantines and competition from big corporate retailers. They cite four core business philosophies as the key to their success: purchase highest quality plants and earth friendly products, hire knowledgeable and personable coworkers, be a fair and socially responsible employer and, always treat customers like friends, with courtesy and respect. To celebrate this miles-tone and thank the community for their ongoing support, The Garden Company is holding a week long sale culminating in a weekend of speakers and activities at the nursery on Sept. 10th and 11th. For more information call 429-8424.



We have two opportunities this month to meet Rachel Kaplan, author Urban Homesteading: Heirloom Skills for Sustainable Living. She is a West Petaluma homesteader, mother, licensed Marriage and Family psychotherapist, educator and holder of a permaculture design certificate. She lives on a small homestead called Tiny Town Farm with her family, their chickens, rabbits and bees.

On September 10th, at 2 p.m., DIG will be offering this free workshop, Urban Homestead Design Lab. “Eager to start homesteading in your urban or suburban lot? Wondering how to fit anything into the small space you have? How to begin? This is an opportunity to learn about the different elements that make up an urban homestead and how to put them together in whatever space you have. Ask questions about the limitations and opportunities of both your land and your lifestyle, and start putting the design elements together. This workshop will offer some basics in permaculture design, as well as some common sense how-to projects for the urban homestead. This workshop is experiential—come with your questions and ideas and expect to experiment with a variety of homesteading options. Rachel’s inspiring book will be available for purchase!” 420 Water Street, Santa Cruz.

On Sunday, September 11th at 5:00 p.m., Capitola Book Café will host Rachel at their Meet the Author series. “A comprehensive and inspiring guide to self-reliance, sustainability, and green living, Urban Homesteading shows city dwellers how to embrace a simpler lifestyle. Kaplan encourages you to start small, where you are, starting with neighborhood-based relationships. Readers will find concise how-to information that they can immediately set into practice, from making solar cookers to growing tomatoes in a pot to raising chickens on a tiny plot to maintaining the mentaof country life in the fast-paced city environment. A joy-filled, practical approach we can all embrace.” 1475 41st Avenue, Capitola.

Saturday, Sept. 10th

10:00-11:00 Robin Stockwell of Succulent Gardens. “Growing succulents”

11:00-3:00 Kerri Gardner of Gardener & Bloome Soils. “Let us plant your pots”

12:00-1:00 Aaron Dillon of Four Winds Citrus Growers. “Citrus selection & care”

4:00-6:00 Lezette Yearby of B.R. Cohn Olive Oil. “Gourmet Olive Oil tasting”

4:00-6:00 Customer Appreciation Reception. Music & light hors d’oeuvres

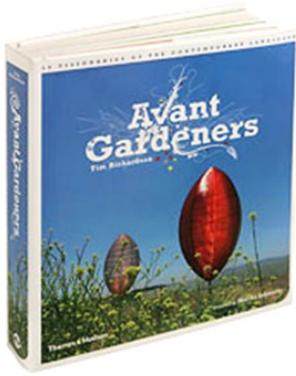
Sunday, Sept. 11th

11:00-12:00 Scott Bender of Green Planet Organics. “Growing fall vegetables”

1:00-3:00 Sheri Howe formerly of The Bird



Book recommendations and short book reviews! Your editor is having a hard time keeping up with all of the wonderful new resources being published for gardeners. Please share information about books you’ve come across that we may like.



“There should be as many kinds of gardens as there are kinds of people.” - Frank Lloyd Wright

Avant Gardeners: 50 Visionaries of the Contemporary Landscape, by Tim Richardson, is a book that, as I glance at it on my coffee table or browse through it, bothers me. It disturbs me, but in a good way. It is a “knock-on-the-side-of-the-head” book, one that jars you and

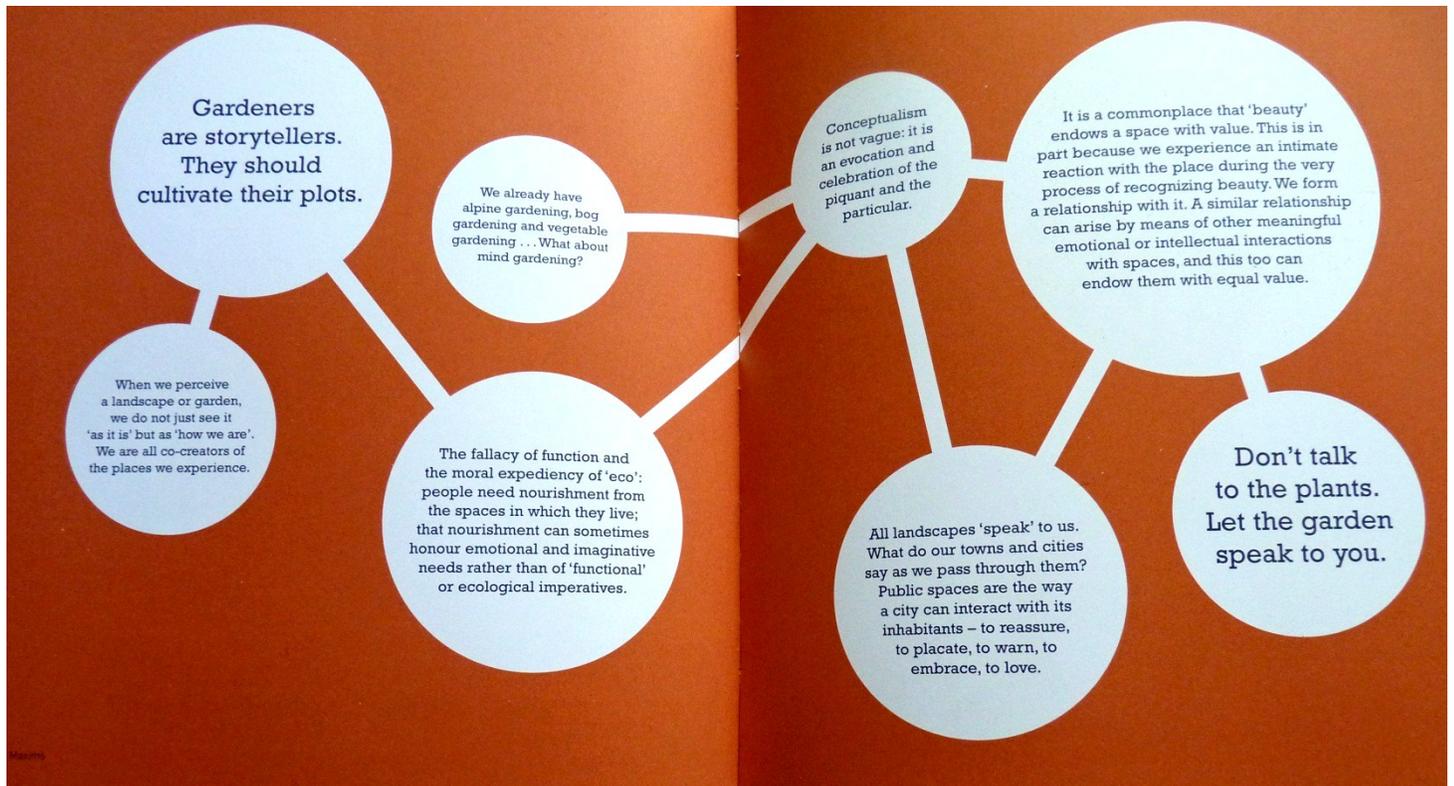
challenges your thinking about the very essence of a garden or landscape. It is not a book to help a gardener garden; very little of it, in fact, has anything at all to do with plants. It is a book about “conceptualist” garden design.

What IS a conceptualist landscape? Richardson says it is predicated on ideas rather than plants or hardscape materials. He says, “This is design in which the central idea of the garden, inspired by the place’s history, ecology or intended use, is ultimately more important than its decorative appeal and planting”. Modern conceptual gardens can be confounding, edgy...inspiring, confusing, outrageous. In his book, you love some of the gardens and others you...well, hate is not a strong enough word. But even thinking about why a garden design does not appeal to you teaches you something. Architect Richard Rogers says, “In certain areas we have come to accept very different ways of living—no one today wears clothes, drives cars, or writes journalism like they did a hundred years ago. The shock of the new has always been with us and it’s high time we all got used to it”. Or not—some of us would be quite content with a backyard that looked just like our grandparents’.

So if you are looking for help planning a cottage garden, this is not the book for you. But here and there are ideas that might inspire you to try something different in your own garden. For instance, I was quite taken with Paul Cooper’s Sensual and Interactive Gardens garden in the UK built at facilities for people with autism and other disabilities. In his gardens, there are series of galleries, each designed to highlight one of the senses—touch, smell, sight and hearing. In another project at a half-way house each element was created with a particular resident in mind. There is an outdoor puzzle, spinning sculptures, noise-making contraptions—all garden-related.



I’ll end this with an excerpt from another interesting part of the book, two pages from a series of diagrams illustrating “Maxims Towards a Conceptualist Attitude to Landscape Design”.





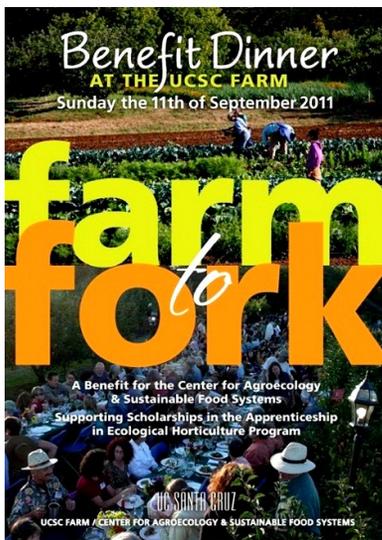
Spring blooming bulbs are a delight, but when the bloom is done the months of unsightly dying foliage is not attractive. Writer Valerie Easton suggests pairing bulbs with early-blooming shrubs and perennials. Such combos maximize garden space and the perennials grow up to cover the dying bulb foliage. In her garden, catmint and

hardy geraniums begin surging in April, disguising the bulbs' foliage. She uses grasses, too - ornamental grasses are at home in a mixed bulb and perennial garden. Plant grasses in the middle or back of a border and cut back in early spring. Plant spring-flowering bulbs like daffodils, tulips and alliums around the grasses, and they will bloom while the grasses are not much to look at; then the grasses and foreground perennials will take off and camouflage the maturing foliage of the bulbs.

Annual One-Hour Sale!



Joe Ghio's 2011 Bearded Iris Introductions

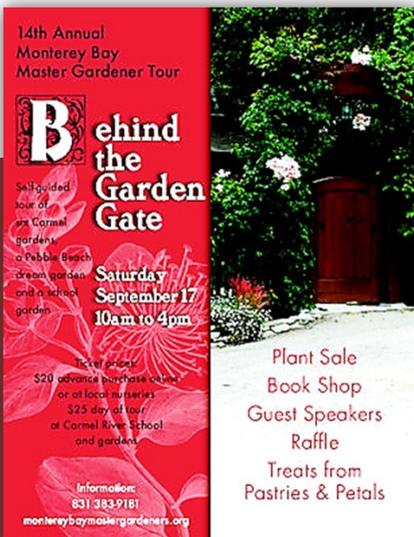


A gourmet field dinner on the landmark UCSC Farm will celebrate the work of the Center for Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems (CASFS) and raise scholarship funding for the CASFS

Apprenticeship's training of new organic farmers and gardeners. The event will take place on Sun., Sept. 11th with a tour of the Farm and a silent auction starting at 3 pm. Dinner will start at 4 pm and features a 5-course meal created with organic ingredients from the UCSC Farm & Garden and other local farms and ranches. The entrée portion of the menu will offer a choice of grass-fed Fogline Farm pork or chicken dishes, and

all courses will include full vegetarian options. Fine organic wines will accompany the meal. Tickets for the event are \$125 per person. All proceeds will support scholarships for participants in the CASFS Apprenticeship in Ecological Horticulture program. More information: 459-3240 or email casfs@ucsc.edu .

While you are thinking bulbs, think rhizomes, Award-winning hybridizer Joe Ghio has been breeding glorious irises for 59 years, and those of us who have some of his varieties in our gardens sigh with joy. You can order a catalog of his irises by mailing a check for \$3 to **BAY VIEW GARDENS**, 1201 Bay St., Santa Cruz CA 95060 . Or partake in the new tradition her has created—the One Hour Sale. Go to the same address above for the 5th annual Sale on Saturday, Sept. 17, 9-10 a.m. The newest and most sought after varieties of the leading hybridizers will be available for \$5 each. Last year they sold out in 10 minutes!



Monterey Bay Master Gardener Tour
Behind the Garden Gate
 September 17, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
 Carmel, California
www.montereybaymastergardeners.org/TourMain.htm
831 38309181

More events in
 September!
 Information to
 come in Part II
 of this
 newsletter .

Peace

by Yan Roberts, of Soggy Creek Seed Co., which sells heirloom seeds and other wonderful things from the gardens of Piebird, a vegetarian bed and breakfast in Nipissing Village, Ontario, Canada.

You can feel it out in the fields, the kind of growth we do in a garden is greater than any other growth. In a garden, the sun still shines, you notice things about life that would be hard to observe in a shadow on an office wall. With a little help from your garden you are bound to have insights that are way to big to bound: your soul feels beautiful, and beauty feels like the only truth, and beauty becomes everything believed in. This is peace.

Gardens are drafting peace-makers. Everyone should have a hoe! In a garden, you learn the ways of cooperation, consideration, courage and compassion. The whole idea of compassion is based on a keen awareness. First you have to see that other being and then realize that you are all one. Then you'll notice all living things and become aware of the interdependence. I don't know when else in my life I have ever had such an awareness of Beauty and sense of spiritual validity than in the garden.

I don't mean to be yammering away, talking about gardening as if I'm describing a dream. All I mean to muster and say is that gardening teaches a different way of being in the world. We all feel a bit helpless that our lives are so deeply woven with a dependence on distant others to feed us. Growing ones own food can satisfy a person who is looking for a simple truth to live by. Why not share that experience with others who have not yet chosen to grow? After, they'll be

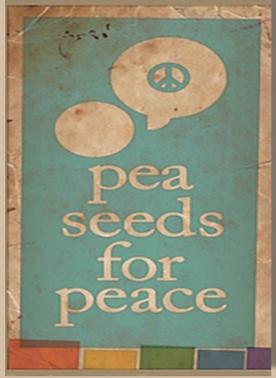


wondering why nobody ever told them about it before!

Doing more for ourselves, like growing our own food and saving our own seed is doable and pleasurable and powerful. People are deeply disconnected from where food comes from and even confused as to what food is. Look at your lawn, sell your lawnmower and buy a fork! Happiness is in the practices preserved in the lifestyles of simple live folk.

With that good feeling gardening gives us, it's almost as if our salvation depends on it. Maybe our humility and spirit cannot be enhanced by television or traffic? Maybe our humanity depends on us helping plants?

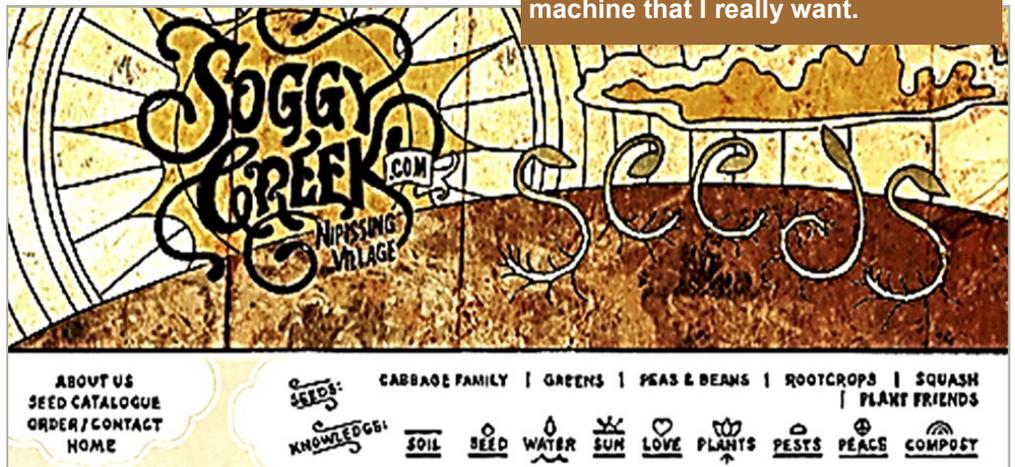
Now, your task is to carry that good feeling that gardening gives with you when you leave your garden. Give some seeds to your friends and neighbours. Connect and co-inspire each other, transform ourselves and change the world in the process. Liberation leads to liberation. Here at Soggy Creek Seed Co., with these seeds we wish to create something new, not new plants, but new attitudes. We're not trying to echo some weird green eco-economic model. We want to demystify organic gardening and show how easy and important it is. Gardening is not some horrendous struggle. Everyone should explore and enjoy the increased richness of the experience.



For many years now Peas have been secretly pulling nitrogen from the air and hiding it in the soil via little nodules on their roots. This is both out of kindness for their plant friends to use, and for a greater concern for our World. Peas really are caring creatures, they'll soon have hidden away all of the nitrogen preventing humans from making bombs with it. Peas are pacifists for peace. What's more peaceful than peas in a pod? *Growing Peas is the new emblem for peace. Wherever there isn't yet peace, grow peas.* PEAS TAKE 60 DAYS. PEACE CAN TAKE EVEN LESS. PLANT PEAS IN EARLY SPRING. SOW PEACE EVERYDAY, FOREVER.

We live in a wild time, we're all wondering what we can do to make a difference. If it bewilders you that the majority still fill their garden plots with store bought annuals, instead of open-pollinated vegetables grown from seed, then grow some plants, save the seeds, share them and spread the joy!

Dilly-dally a while at <http://seeds.soggycreek.com/catalogue/>. Press the "knowledge" buttons for more great articles. You can buy wondrous renamed heirloom seeds such as Learn To Dance With Lettuce and The Bicycling Carrot. You'll learn as much from reading the seed packets as from any garden book, and laugh much more. They also have a great rainbow making machine that I really want.



OF GARLIC AND NARCISSI

Whoever listens, looks and ponders
With earnest eyes of spirit,
On him will breathe the pungent and unpurged;
Petal of the primal will uncurl, urge him and follow him,
Bring to his pristine world a cult of wonder

— *Excerpt of poem by Roland Ryder-Smith*



It is garlic planting time! If you are planning to order heirloom varieties online, better do so soon before your favorites are sold out. You might not be able to braid hardnecked garlic like the Spanish Roja above, but think of the garlic bouquets you'll be able to make.

The Gardeners' Club

1633 Quail Hollow Road, Ben Lomond CA 95005

President

Cherry Thompson, 475-0991
cherrylea@comcast.net

Vice President

Ilene Wilson, 724-4609
mygardensup@aol.com

Secretary

April Barclay, 688-7656
AABarclay@aol.com

Co-Treasurers

Sim & Bob Gilbert, 475-8162
simgilbert@baymoon.com

Membership

Suzanne Mercado, 609-6230
Suzanne.bottomline@gmail.com

Hospitality

Debbie Kindle, 462-6296
poppy-54@live.com

Newsletter Writer/Editor

Lise Bixler, 457-2089
lisebixler@sbcglobal.net

Members-at-Large

Bill Patterson, 479-3729
wilderwill@comcast.net
Pat McVeigh, 475-9357
pmcveigh@baymoon.com
Joanna Hall, 662-8821
jhavelock@sbcglobal.net

Plant Table

Patty Connole, 335-4134
pattyconnolerlr@aol.com
2nd position—vacant
3rd position - vacant

Refreshments

Dey Weybright, 426-3028
DEENART@aol.com

PSAs/Glenwood

Monica Pielage, 460-0215
mpielage@yahoo.com

Website

Joe Thompson



It's easy-peasy to join our club!

Dues are \$12 per calendar year. Make check to "The Gardeners' Club" and mail to 1633 Quail Hollow Rd., Ben Lomond, CA 95005. Meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. on the 2nd Thursday of each month at the Aptos Grange Hall, 2555 Mar Vista Dr., Aptos.

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www.thegardenersclub.org