

The Gardeners' Club

Santa Cruz County, California

August 2015

Writer/Editor: Lise Bixler

liseixler@sbcglobal.net

We are going to have TWO activities at our August 13 meeting! Here's the first:

"Attitude" vase: brucefontain.com



THE RETURN OF THE SILLY VASE EXCHANGE!

Long-time members of the Gardeners' Club will recall the funny Vase Exchange fundraisers was used to have. At long last, Trician Comings is organizing another one for August. Go through your flower vases now and weed out a few to donate to the event. Bring them to the meeting and drop them off at the table near the entrance. They will then be sorted on the sales tables according to their perceived value.

Here's how it works: there will be three separate tables set up with signs on them marked \$4.00, \$2.00 and \$1.00 along with price tags. Ready, set, go grab the ones you want. A timer will be set and after 5 minutes, sales stop. The prices on the tables will be switched to \$2.00, \$1.00 and 50 cents. After another 5 minutes of shopping, the prices are cut in half once more. When choosing vases to purchase, be sure to take a price tag for each one from the table where you picked it up to give when you pay up.

So, if you see a vase you love, here's the dilemma – should you buy it then to make sure you get it, or... wait for a possible bargain? You take your chances! Leftover vases will be donated to a charity thrift shop.

Here's PART TWO of our meeting:



- BRING SOMETHING FROM YOUR GARDEN
- SHARE ITS STORY

Remember when we were kids and we could bring in special things and present them at Show & Tell? Here's your chance to bring something blooming or leafing in your garden, or an edible or seed-producing plant, and then tell us its story. Maybe you have a mystery plant you want to share? Tell us where you garden, your soil conditions, sun exposures, challenges, successes and failures. How are you dealing with the drought? How do you choose what to grow?

You can also bring photos to share. Enjoy a rare opportunity to sit and talk about our gardens!

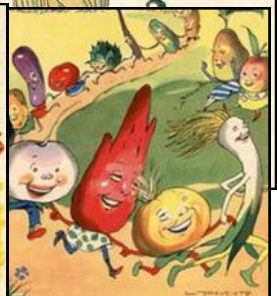
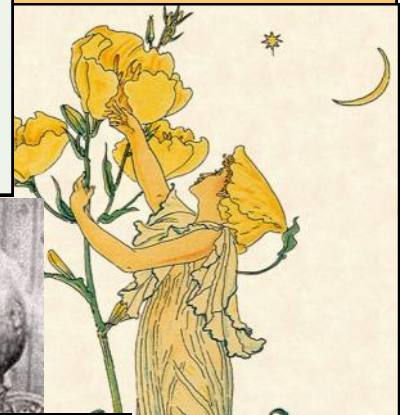


Thurs., Aug. 13, 7 p.m.

Aptos Grange,
2555 Mar Vista Dr
Refreshments will be served



WHAT'S GROWING IN YOUR GARDEN?



Another Successful Social

A good time was had by the many who attended July's ice cream social. Prize winners took home Succulent Sundaes. Thanks to everyone who made it happen.

The Ice Cream Social didn't satisfy your cravings for cool summer treats? Try this.

Lemon Thyme Sorbet

A fast and easy way to cool down on a hot summer's day, this sorbet cashes in on the classic pairing of lemon and thyme. As refreshing as lemonade, this sorbet is easy to make and even easier to eat.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 ½ cups sugar
- 2 cups water
- 2/3 cup fresh lemon juice
- 1 bunch of fresh thyme, about 1/2 cup leaves
- 2 tablespoons lemon zest

INSTRUCTIONS

Combine sugar, water, thyme sprigs and lemon zest and bring to a boil.

Once mixture comes to a boil, reduce heat to medium low and let simmer for fifteen minutes or until mixture thickens forming a syrup. Then, remove pan from heat and let syrup cool.

Strain syrup into a tupperware container and discard thyme sprigs and excess lemon zest.

Add lemon juice to syrup, stir, and let cool. Once the syrup has reached room temperature, chill it in the refrigerator for four hours.

Churn sorbet in an ice cream maker according to the instructions of the manufacturer and freeze for two hours or until sorbet sets.

QUICK NOTES

Once sorbet has set in the freezer, scoop it into small bowls and garnish with a sprig of fresh thyme.

VARIATIONS

Lemon basil sorbet, lemon verbena sorbet, and lemon mint sorbet can all be made according to this recipe by substituting ½ cup of tightly packed fresh herb leaves for the bunch of thyme. All other directions can be followed as per the recipe.

—Recipe from www.freshherbs.com



Buy ollas at The Garden Company!



OLLA: AN OLD NEW WAY TO IRRIGATE

The Garden Company, 2218 Mission Street, Santa Cruz (www.thegardenco.com/) has Ollas of all sorts! This is what they have to say about them in their latest newsletter:

"In our fourth year of drought we are all trying to figure out how to continue gardening using less water. An Olla (pronounced oi-yah) is an ancient, simple, ingenious approach to water efficient gardening. It is thought to have originated in Northern Africa with documented use in China as early as the first century B.C.

An Olla is a bulbous, unglazed terra cotta jug with a wide neck. The idea is to bury the jug in soil with the neck two inches above the surface. Next, plant your seedlings in a circle 12 inches from the center of the neck. It can be used with vegetables, bedding plants or perennials. You then simply fill the jug with water and place the lid on top. The relative porosity of the unglazed clay allows moisture to slowly seep through to the outside surface as it is needed. If the surrounding soil is dryer than the clay surface, water will wick into the soil. When the soil is moist it stops drawing water. Your soil is never too dry or too wet and your plants will thrive. Ecology Action has grown test plots using Ollas. They report using 50-70% less water than conventional irrigation with zero run-off and minimal evaporation.

There are a few key things to remember for successful Olla gardening:

- A soil rich in organic material will wick moisture most efficiently so amend your soil in advance.
- Plant your seedlings no more than 12-15 inches away from the Olla so the roots will grow into the moisture zone.
- Hand water newly planted seedlings for the first week or two until they develop a root system.
- Add water to your Olla when the water level is about half full in order to avoid build-up of salt residues on the inside surface that may inhibit seepage.
- Keep the clay lid in place to prevent mosquito breeding and evaporation



...or Make Your own



If you have the time, energy and inclination, you can make your own ollas with a few materials. This might appeal to those of us who have large collections of used terra cotta pots. Google "DIY ollas" and



you'll find a variety of techniques. One of the easiest set of directions to be found is at the informative website and blog Blue Yonder Urban Farms (<http://blueyonderurbanfarms.com>). You glue

two pots together with silicon glue or Gorilla glue, covering the bottom holes with small coasters or tiles or shards or caps from plastic milk jugs and weigh them down with something heavy to compress them and let them dry. Some people suggest an additional application of joint sealant after the glue is dry. Then dig and plant 'em.

The Essential SUMMER GARDEN CHECKLIST

Grow

what you love

Eat

the best berries

Laugh

at aphids

Listen

to the birds

Play

in the dirt

Nap

in the shade

Watch

the night stars

EMPRESS OF DIRT.NET

Board Meeting

This month the Board will meet on August 24th at the home of Denise Kennedy, 4590 Cherryvale, Soquel. Come at 6:00 to tour her garden. All are invited—you don't have to be a Board member to be a part of this get-together.

our NEWEST Youngest Member

Bill Patterson gave a gift membership to his beloved 3 1/2 year old great-granddaughter Clare, making her the youngest member of our Club. Clearly she's inherited Bill's gardening gene—she is an avid gardener in Edmond, Oklahoma where she excels in growing



vegetables from seed.

Below: Her garden of raised beds and sun screen, made of re-used lumber by her father Phil Fondren.



Here is Clare planting seeds with her father. "Plant a seed, plant hope," says proud great-grandpa Bill.



The Gardeners' Club Membership Application

Our club celebrates the joys of gardening, promoting community, learning, nature and growth. To join, fill out the membership form below. Send the completed form to: The Gardeners' Club, c/o The Gardeners' Club, P.O. Box 3055, Ben Lomond, CA 95009, or bring it to a meeting. Come grow with us!

Our club dues, which are only \$10.00. The membership year is January 1 - December 31. Dues entitles members to all club educational programs, our special monthly newsletter, the awesome monthly newsletter, the "green" option to receive an electronic PDF file, CD, or a version of the newsletter by checking the newsletter and option below.

☐ When garden space is limited, the applicant will be placed on a wait list.

Name: CLARE FONDREN Age: 3 1/2

Address: 412 N.W. 14th Ave

City/State/Zip: Edmond, OK 73013

Phone: 531-479-3729 - 9999999999999999

E-mail: pfondren@comcast.net

Newsletter preference (check one):

☒ E-mail newsletter - PDF in full color (the green option)

☐ Paper newsletter (black-and-white, small mail)

The Dirt on Dirt



How Getting Dirty Outdoors Benefits Kids

Grime is good

Studies show that getting a dirty can be good for a child's mental and physical health. Playing in the direct increases happiness and enhances learning. "The typical human probably harbors some 90 trillion microbes. The very fact that you have so many microbes of so many different kinds is what keeps you healthy most of the time," says Dr. Mary Ruebush, immunologist and author of Why Dirt is Good: 5 Ways to Make Germs Your Friends. Check out the National Wildlife Federation's excellent report, "The Dirt on Dirt" (www.nwf.org/pdf/Be%20Out%20There/Dirt_Report_2012.pdf).

Go to www.kidsgardening.org ("Helping young minds grow") to learn about garden grant opportunities and resources for educational school and youth gardening programs. Help jumpstart school garden programs across the country this September.



consider Buckwheat in Your Landscape



Acmon Blue on buckwheat.

California Buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*) is widespread, occurring naturally in our chaparral and coastal sage plant communities. It is a tough, dependable plant.

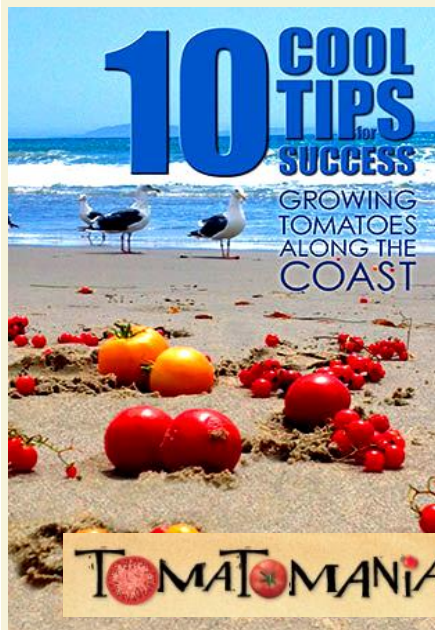
Grown as a native ornamental within zones 7 to 11, it adds year-round color and texture to landscaping with its pale, pinkish-beige flowers and grayish green foliage. California buckwheat grows easily from seed, which germinates best when sown immediately after ripening.

The commonness of buckwheat growing in the wild may discourage some to use it in their landscapes. But its very success speaks for itself— if you have the room, the abundance of long-blooming flowers, drought tolerance and its attractiveness to native bees, butterflies, and other insects would make it a nice addition to any landscape. It is the host plant for several smaller California butterflies.

This plant rarely gets more than 4 feet tall but can grow as large as 8 feet wide. If you need a smaller version, consider one of the cultivars. They are denser, more compact and can be half the size. They include: 'Dana Point', 'Warriner Lytle', 'Theodore Payne', and 'Bruce Dickenson'.



I feel remiss that I didn't discover the Tomatomania website and "10 Cool Tips for Success Growing Tomatoes Along the Coast" earlier this year. Don't you love the photo of the tomatoes



and gulls on the beach? Anyway, go to the website (<http://tomatomania.com>), which has lots of good stuff on it and read all about it, so you'll know what to do next year. Planting short season varieties like Stupice sure seems to work. Consider buying Tomatomania!: A Fresh Approach to Celebrating Tomatoes in the Garden and in the Kitchen, which is now out in paperback.

Perhaps it is not too late for growing advice—some people say you can plant started tomato seedlings out in August. About 90 days are needed to produce a colorful, ripe and juicy tomato from a well-started transplant. If your plants are set in the ground around the middle of August, you could be harvesting the first fruits in November.

class: Walkways, Pathways & Patios

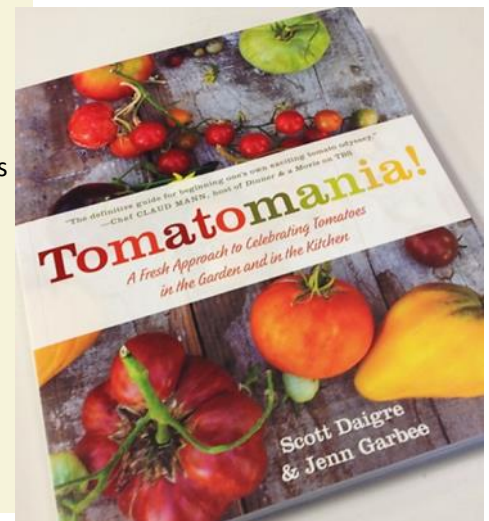
Cabrillo Extension is offering a class to help you create an elegant and environmentally friendly patio or pathway that is also watershed friendly. Help return water to the earth, and save money in the process. In this class you will learn why pervious hardscapes are important to prevent storm run-off and keep water onsite. The instructor, Ken Foster, will discuss cost-saving



sustainable hardscape materials and what embodied energy is and why it matters. Lecture, hands on and field trip included.

Two Saturday class sessions, August 8 and August 15,, 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM, Room 609. Fee: \$25. Register at <https://cabrillo.augusoft.net> or call 479-6331.

Things to do in August. Order garlic now for the widest selection to plant next month. Plant irises, or divide the ones you've got. Take a class in propagating perennials at Love Apple Farm (www.growbetterveggies.com). Take semi-woody cuttings from trees, shrubs and vines to start new plants. Keep after the snails. Fertilize roses and other flowering plants that are about to bloom (use acid fertilizer for azaleas, camellias, hydrangeas and rhododendrons). Sow seeds of fall- and winter-flowering plants (calendula, Iceland poppy, pansy, primrose, stock, etc.) Fertilize tomatoes if you planted them in pots. Deadhead plants of flowers and seedheads to keep them blooming. If raccoons are raiding your garden harvest, try leaving a radio playing out there. Last chance to plant corn for an early fall harvest, and you can plant another row of lettuce. Water your compost pile once in a while. Take a Summer Fruit Tree Care Workshop at the UCSC Farm (<http://summerfruit2015.bpt.me>). Keep hydrated!



Sustain Summer Series

Sustain Supper

Saturday, August 22

VIP Reception

3:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Farm Dinner

4:00 PM to 7:30 PM

New Club member Allison Garcia alerted us to exciting upcoming events. The Homeless Garden Project is having a series of Sustain Supper Series, gourmet dinners hosted at their organic farm. The dinners focus on sustainability, eating local organic food prepared by exceptional local chefs, listening to engaging talks by renowned speakers and enjoying friendship and community. The August event will feature Deborah Madison. The event on September 19 will feature Cathrine Sneed,

founder of San Francisco's "The Garden Project". Proceeds benefit the Homeless Garden Project, which provides job training, transitional employment and support services to people who are homeless. Their programs take place in their 3-acre Natural Bridges organic farm (Delaware Ave. and Shaffer Rd., Santa Cruz) and related enterprises.

The prices for the upcoming event featuring Deborah Madison are \$125 for the Farm Dinner and \$200 for the VIP Reception plus the dinner. For more information and to order tickets, go to www.sustainevents.homelessgardenproject.org.

Featured Speaker: Deborah Madison

Deborah Madison is a chef, writer and founder of San Francisco's celebrated Greens Restaurant. Madison served under Alice Waters at Chez Panisse before founding Greens Restaurant in 1979. She has written more than a dozen cookbooks, including the 1997 classic *Vegetarian Cooking for Everyone* as well as an updated version of that book produced in 2014. She has received the M.F.K. Fisher Award, the IACP's Julia Child Cookbook of the Year award, and three James Beard awards. Madison has been involved with the Slow Food movement in various capacities for more than a decade, serving on the board of the Seed Savers Exchange and co-directing the Monte del Sol Edible Kitchen Garden in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Given her career-long focus on sustainable cooking and eating, she was a natural choice for the Sustain Supper Series.



The featured chefs will John Paul Lechtenberg of Hollins House and Brad Briske of la Bolena. Music will be performed by Nick Gallant.



Jalapeno coconut oil Sore Muscle Rub

Been overdoing it in the garden? Try this homemade rub using a recipe from The Prudent Garden (<http://theprudentgarden.com>) using hot peppers from your garden or the farmers' market.

Measure out one cup of coconut oil in a microwave proof measuring cup. Heat up the oil in the microwave until warm (about one minute).

You might want to wear gloves for this part. Slice a few rings off of your jalapeno pepper. Add the slices to the warmed coconut oil, seeds and all. You can adjust how many pepper slices you want to add. Start out with less to begin with, depending on the heat level of the pepper.

Let the pepper and oil mixture steep. When the coconut oil cools it will solidify again. Remove the pepper slices. In order to whip the oil, it needs to be back in its solid state. If your



house is warm (it needs to be 76 degrees or cooler for the oil to solidify) put the glass in the refrigerator for a bit until it is solid again (but not hard).

Using a stand mixer or hand mixer with beater attachments, whip the coco oil until it forms stiff peaks.

Add your whipped coco butter to a jar. The coco butter will stay in this whipped form unless it gets above 76 degrees.

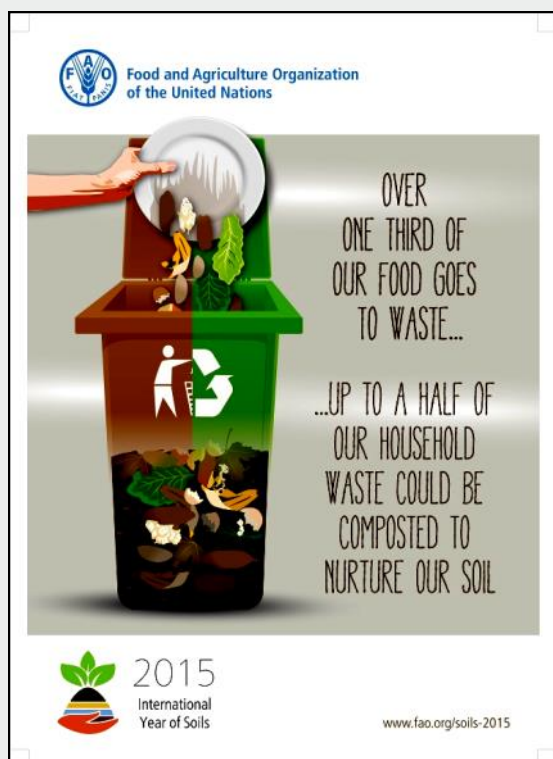
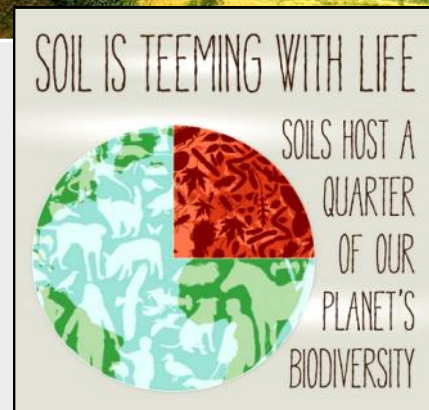
Apply to your sore muscles!

Caution: Jalapenos will produce a burning sensation when it comes into contact with your skin. So, stay clear of the eyes. After applying the rub to the affected area, make sure you wash your hands thoroughly.



International Year of Soil

The 68th UN General Assembly declared 2015 the International Year of Soils. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations has been nominated to implement the IYS 2015, within the framework of the Global Soil Partnership and in collaboration with Governments and the secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. The IYS 2015 aims to increase awareness and understanding of the importance of soil for food security and essential ecosystem functions by raising full awareness among civil society and decision makers about the profound importance of soil for human life, and educating the public about the crucial role soil plays in food security, climate change adaptation and mitigation, essential ecosystem services, poverty alleviation and sustainable development.



Our soils are in danger because of expanding cities, deforestation, unsustainable land use and management practices, too much tilling, compaction, pollution, overgrazing and climate change. The current rate of soil degradation threatens the capacity to meet the needs of future generations.

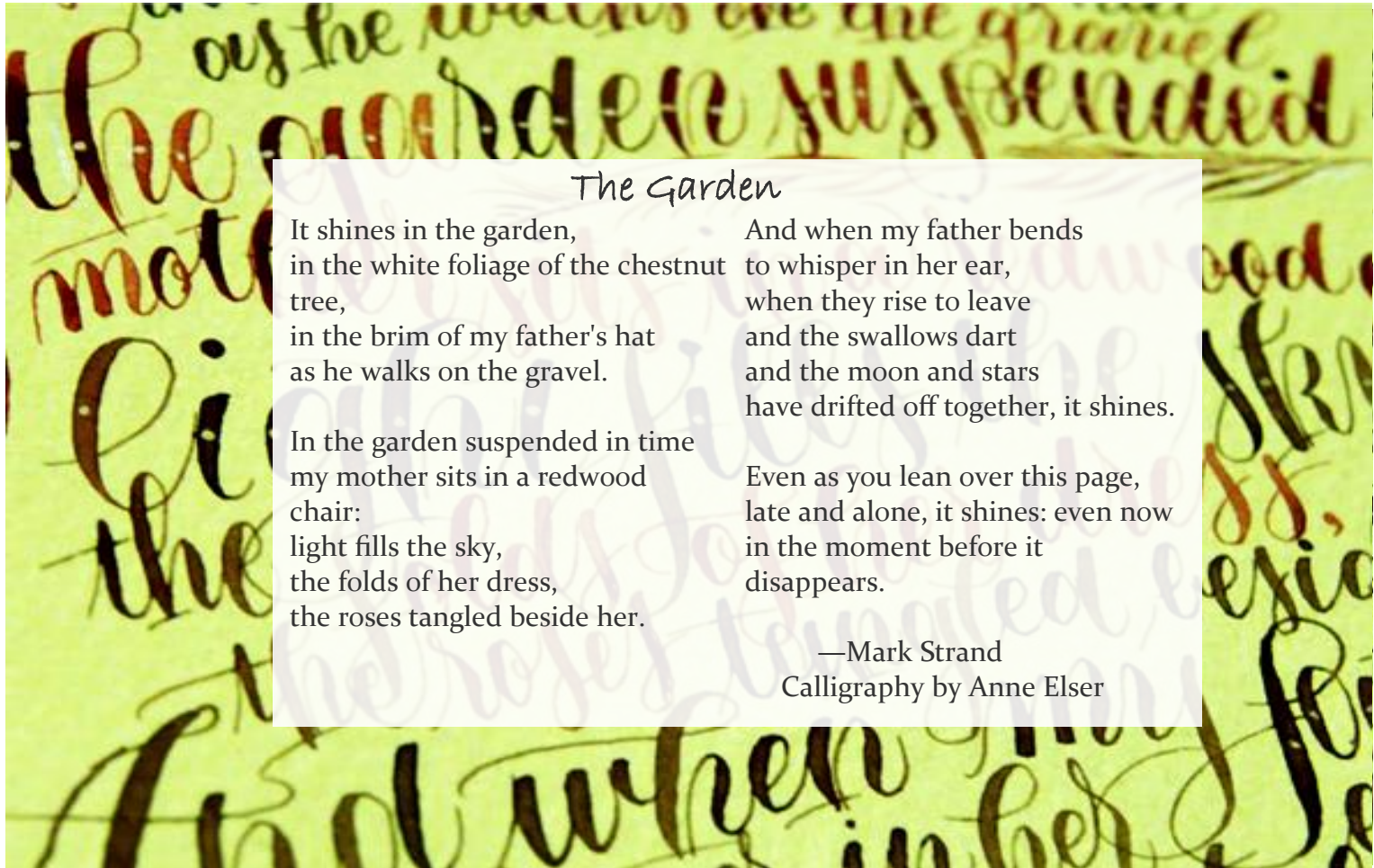
The promotion of sustainable soil and land management is critical. Soils are key in the carbon cycle. They help us to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Watch this video to gain a better understanding:



Soils: Our ally against climate change

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8_69vy7ZBxE





The Garden

It shines in the garden,
in the white foliage of the chestnut
tree,
in the brim of my father's hat
as he walks on the gravel.

In the garden suspended in time
my mother sits in a redwood
chair:
light fills the sky,
the folds of her dress,
the roses tangled beside her.

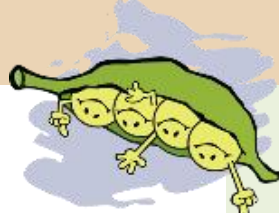

And when my father bends
to whisper in her ear,
when they rise to leave
and the swallows dart
and the moon and stars
have drifted off together, it shines.

Even as you lean over this page,
late and alone, it shines: even now
in the moment before it
disappears.

—Mark Strand
Calligraphy by Anne Elser

Printed on 100% recycled paper

each month at the Aptos Grange, 2555 Mar Vista Dr., Aptos
CA 95005. Meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. on the 2nd Thursday of
to "The Gardeners' Club" and mail to P.O. Box 3025, Ben Lomond,
Dues are \$12 per calendar year. Make check
It's easy-peasy to join our club!



The Gardeners' Club
P.O. Box 3025, Ben Lomond CA 95005

Members-at-Large
Sim Gilbert, 475-8162
simgilbert@baymoon.com
Joanna Hall, 662-8821
jhaveclock@sbcglobal.net
Debbie Kindle, 462-6296
poppy-54@live.com

Plant Table
Patty Connole, 335-4134
pattyconnoletr@aol.com
Lupe Allen, 24702705
lupea@ucsc.edu
3rd position - vacant

Refreshments
Jean Favre, 840-4562
jeancfavre@gmail.com
Webmaster
Joe Thompson

Computer Frustration
Specialist
joe@joehometech.com

Newsletter Writer/Editor
Lydia Johnson, 475-0912
SuzanneBottomline@gmail.com

Hospitality
Suzanne Mercado, 609-6230
drossi3342@comcast.net

Membership
Denise Rossi
475-3081

Treasurer
April Barclay, 688-7656
AABarclay@aol.com

Secretary
mygardensup@aol.com
Ilene Wilson, 724-4609

Vice President & Publicity
cherrylea@comcast.net
Cherry Thompson, 475-0991

President
Lise Bixler, 457-2089
lisebixler@sbcglobal.net

www.thegardenersclub.org