



Into the Garden

Newsletter of The
Gardeners' Club,
Santa Cruz County,
California

February 2017

TALK BY MATTHEW SUTTON OF "ORCHARD KEEPERS"



Matthew Sutton, founder and owner of Orchard Keepers, will be our February speaker. Matthew will talk on the selection, planting, and care of bare root fruit trees. He will teach the basic skills for pruning stone fruits, selection, basic cuts and planting techniques, pollination and pest and disease control.

Matthew's career path began in a drippy forest in Oregon. After 18 years of New Hampshire winters, the young Matthew Sutton joined Americorps, hightailing his way to the Northwest for a year of building trails, caring for public lands, and discovering what the land had to offer. He discovered that he was never going back to New England, that the west coast could produce food year-round, and that horticulture was going to be his life's work.

After four years of apprenticing in sustainable agriculture on farms in Tuscany and Wisconsin, Matthew completed his training at the Center for Agroecology and Food Systems in Santa Cruz. It was this last year at the UCSC campus that Matthew fell decidedly in love with fruit trees. After completing his second year, specializing in fruit tree care, Matthew left with a vision to bring what he had learned to his local community. In 2004, after a brainstorming session with his creative team (parents), the name Orchard Keepers was born. At the beginning, Orchard Keepers consisted only of Matthew, a white Ford, and his dog, Bukhara. For a few years they hauled around Santa Cruz, planting and pruning fruit trees, always lending

an ear to questions and offering advice to those who were eager to learn how to care for their trees.

It turns out, the interest in growing fruit at home was not to be contained. By word of mouth, demand grew, and has only continued to grow since. Over a decade later, Orchard Keepers has honed and expanded its services, serving not only Santa Cruz, but the greater Bay Area with a substantial crew of horticulturists, fruit tree experts, carpenters and craftsmen. Throughout it all, Orchard Keepers has remained rooted in its original vision to enliven its community through thoughtful land-use, fruit tree education, and of course plenty of fruit.



Be sure to visit the Orchard Keeper website at <http://www.orchardkeepers.com>.

You will find a quantity of basic information to get you started on growing fruit trees, as well as care sheets and pest control advice. Lots of resources to utilize!

Thursday, February Ninth
7:00 PM

Aptos Grange, 2555 MAR VISTA DR.

Refreshments will be served. Thank you to Ilene Wilson
for dessert, Julie Williams for beverages and
Dottie Lechtenberg for snack.



LET
LOVE
GROW



Elake

Heart Beet Salad

This salad might cause your heart to skip a beat. Cut cooked or raw beets into hearts to jazz up a green salad with feta. —Amy Sherman



We are delighted to announce the creation of our own Facebook Group! It's another opportunity outside of meeting times to connect and share about gardening and plants.

The Facebook Group setting is to private, so that what we post and share is not visible to the public- you must be added to the group in order to see members and posts. If you have a Facebook account simply login and navigate to the Groups section. Do a search for The Gardeners' Club: Into the Garden. We have the image from the newsletter of the dancing garden tools and it says: Closed Group. As of this writing we have added 27 members!

If you need further assistance, Nikolara Jansons, creator of the group and one of the Admins, is happy to help you get set up. Email her at missjansons@gmail.com.

Thanks, Nikolara!

We have a Facebook page!



Suet is a popular, nutritious and easy food to add to your backyard bird buffet. It is one of the most popular bird foods during the fall and winter, when birds need good sources of fat and calories to help them survive harsh, cold weather. It is a high energy formulation of animal fat and other ingredients to attract insect eating birds. Suet is a quick source of heat and energy for birds, whose metabolisms are set on fast forward. Premade suet blocks are fairly inexpensive, but if you are vegan or vegetarian and want to make your own, try the recipe below.



How many birds will you find?

**20th Annual
Great Backyard
Bird Count**

February 17-20, 2017

Allen's Hummingbird
Photo: Chris Orr/GBBC

The Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) is a free, fun, and easy event that engages "citizen scientists" of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of bird populations. Participants are asked to count birds for as little as 15 minutes (or as long as they wish) on one or more days of the four-day event and report their sightings online at birdcount.org. Anyone can take part in the Great Backyard Bird Count, from beginning bird watchers to experts, and you can participate from your backyard or garden.

Vegetarian "Suet" Cakes - Peanut Butter Cakes for Wild Birds

Servings: 4 standard sized cakes

Author: Starr Wong @ The Misfit Baker



Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 cup Shortening
- 3/4 cup Peanut Butter
- 3 1/2 cup Wild Bird Seed
- 1 cup Quick Oats
- 1/2 cup Corn Meal/Polenta



Instructions:

Stir together your bird seed, oats, and corn meal. Set aside. Melt the shortening and peanut butter together and stir until completely combined (you want the mixture to be a smooth

liquid). Pour into the seed mixture and stir together until the seed mixture is thoroughly coated and no dry spots remain. Spoon the mixture into molds of your choice (you can use leftover plastic boxes from commercial suet cakes you've already used, or silicone molds of any shape), spreading and smoothing to edges, and freeze until set (about an hour). Alternatively, allow to cool in the refrigerator until the mixture can be easily moulded by hand. Form balls (or whatever shape you think your feathered friends would like), use a skewer to make a hole to hang from string, and freeze until set. Store in the freezer until ready to use.



Imagine this suet feeder made of upcycled silverware enhancing your garden! Complete directions for making it can be found at <http://www.birdsandblossoms.com/backyard-projects/recycled-garden-ideas/silverware-homemade-suet-feeder/>

The Traveling Gardener

Lise Bixler Goes Birding in Argentina, and Is Distracted by Things of Botanical Interest

"Once you taste the Calafate berry, you are destined to return to Patagonia...."



"Penguins! We're going to see penguins!" I told everyone when we planned our birding tour to Southern Argentina. And yes, we got to walk through a huge colony of Magellanic Penguins at Punta Tombo Preserve. There they nested in shrubs, roots and caves. I didn't spend much time trying to botanize there, although one of our guides told us the exposed

roots of the trees in the reserve had been used as "viagra" by indigenous peoples. (Someone better fact check me on this.)

We sought more birds and penguins when on a boat on the Beagle Channel in Tierra del Fuego, I learned that the channel was named after the ship that carried Charles Darwin to explore Patagonia in 1833. While Charles Darwin is famous throughout the world for the development of the theory of evolution and natural selection, few appreciate that he was also a preeminent botanist. Darwin's work in botany was extremely varied including 5 books and experiments that are still cited in college-level textbooks (to learn more, read "Charles Darwin: Botanist" at <https://ncse.com/library-resource/charles-darwin-botanist>).

During the Beagle voyage, Darwin displayed great interest in the flora he encountered and collected more than 2000 herbarium specimens!

Some call it desert, some call it steppe.

Darwin's first impressions were of desolation, poor, wretched, useless land. And yet, whe, at the end of his life, he was asked which part of the world he most vividly remembered from his travels, he said, "In calling up images of the past, I find that the plains of Patagonia frequently cross before my eyes... They can be described only by negative characters; without habitations, without water, without mountains, they support merely a few dwarf plants. Why then, and the case is not peculiar to myself, have these arid wastes taken so firm a hold on my memory? I can scarcely analyse these feelings; but it must be partly owing to the free scope given to the imagination."

We traveled to the town of El Calafate, gateway to Los Glaciares National Park and the breathtaking Perito Moreno Glacier. Here I became overwhelmed with wildflowers of every description—geums, orchids, violas, veronicas, senecios, ranunculi, geraniums, anemones—flowers everywhere. Who could concentrate on birds with this gluttony of flora?



Many of the birds we looked at through

binoculars had bills stained with the red juice of the calafate berry. *Berberis microphylla* and *B. darwinii* (both known as calafate and michay) are two plentiful species found in the



Argentinian bush Their edible purple fruits are eaten by wildlife (and tourists like us) and used for jams and infusions. *B. darwini* is still a popular landscape plant in the UK, and you can purchase it at nurseries in the US. Here these barberry plants were thorny, plentiful and full of fruit. Earlier in the year they had been covered with beautiful yellow flowers.



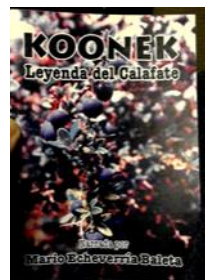
The calafate/michay are symbols

of Patagonia. The original people who lived in this landscape, the tehuelches, began to emigrate walking north at the onset of winter, where the cold was not so intense and the hunting wasn't missing. I purchased a book about one of the legends of calafate.

It is said that once Koonex, an old woman from a tribe of tehuelches, could no longer walk. Understanding the natural law of

destiny, the women of the tribe made a tent and gathered much wood and food to leave with the old woman, saying goodbye to her with the song of the family. They left her alone to die in slumber and silence.

When spring arrived, new shoots were
(continued next page)



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born, and birds arrived—swallows, plovers, chattering parrots. Life again.

On Koonex' tent landed a flock of little birds singing happily. Suddenly the voice of the old woman was heard who, from inside the tent was scolding them for leaving her alone during the long, harsh winter.

One of the sparrows explained, "We went away in the fall because the food becomes scarce. Also during the winter we have no place to take shelter." "I understand you," replied Koonex, "so, from now on you will have food in autumn and good coat in winter and I'll never be alone" and then the old woman was silent.

When a gust suddenly turned the skins of the tent instead of Koonex there was a beautiful thorny bush of fragrant yellow flowers. By mid summer the delicate flowers became fruits and before the fall began to mature taking a blue color of exquisite taste and high nutritional

value. From that day on some birds did not migrate more and those who were gone, hearing the news, returned to try the new fruit.

Tehuelches also tried it, adopting it forever. Seeds scattered throughout the region and, thereafter, the saying persists, "who eats Calafate, always returns".



So, in addition to eating many berries, staining our fingers red, we ate calafate ice cream (look at the color!)

which was not too sweet and not too tart, and I brought home two jars of calafate preserves to use to make treats for you Garden Club members next time you visit my garden!

Valley Churches United Plans Inaugural Garden Tour

Saturday, June 24
10 am - 4 pm



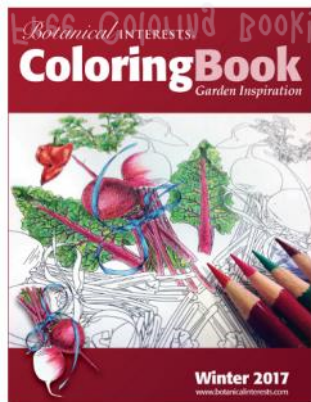
Valley Churches United, a Ben Lomond food and emergency services organization, has served Scotts Valley, San Lorenzo Valley and Bonny Doon with no government funding since 1982.

Powered by volunteers and only three paid staff, the nonprofit organization depends on contributions from the community and special fundraisers to continue our services to neighbors in need.

A garden tour is in the planning stages for Saturday, June 24 from 10 am - 4 pm. We would like the gardens to be located in the Ben Lomond, Boulder Creek, Felton areas.

If you are a gardener in these areas and would be kind enough to open your garden to support a very good cause, we'd love to hear from you. Or spread the news about this opportunity to people you know with gardens in the area so that they will consider joining the tour. Please contact Nancy Lambing at 831-469-0688 or by email at nancyinbonnydoon@comcast.net.

Free Coloring Book!



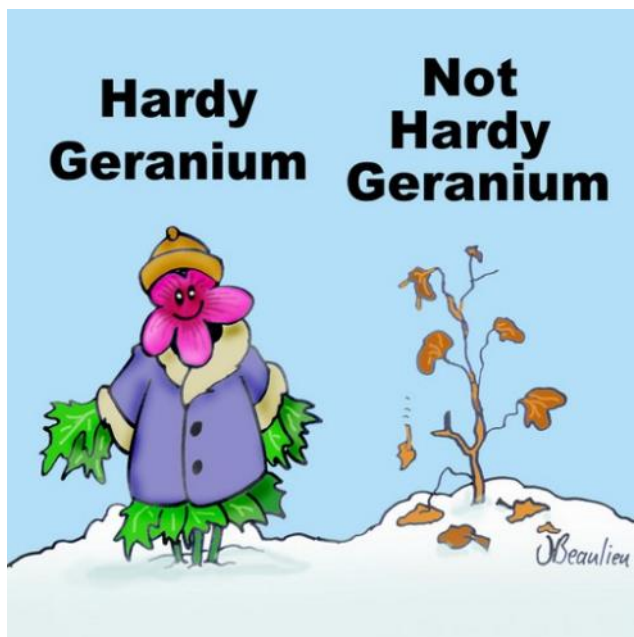
What a beautiful coloring book, and it is free! Thank you, Botanical Interests.
https://www.botanicalinterests.com/img/site_specific/uploads/BI_Coloring_Book_Winter_2017_v1.pdf

News About Our Board



We are pleased to welcome two new members to our Board of Directors. Janine Canada will serve as our Hospitality Chair and Jan Olafsson will join the Plant Table Team. Thank you so much, Janine and Jan!

Our next Board Meeting will be on Monday, February 27th, at 6:00 p.m. at the home of Marge Gregory, 129 Ramada Lane, Aptos). All are welcome to attend; you don't have to be a member of the Board. .



Hardy geraniums are a mainstay of the garden, treasured as much for their handsome foliage and easy-going nature as for their charming flowers, which range from pure white to pink, rose, magenta, lilac, violet, and blue. Whether you're looking for a groundcover, a shade-lover, a rock-garden specimen, or a border beauty, you'll find it here, along with expert advice on cultivation, design, and propagation, in The Plant Lover's Guide to Hardy Geraniums.

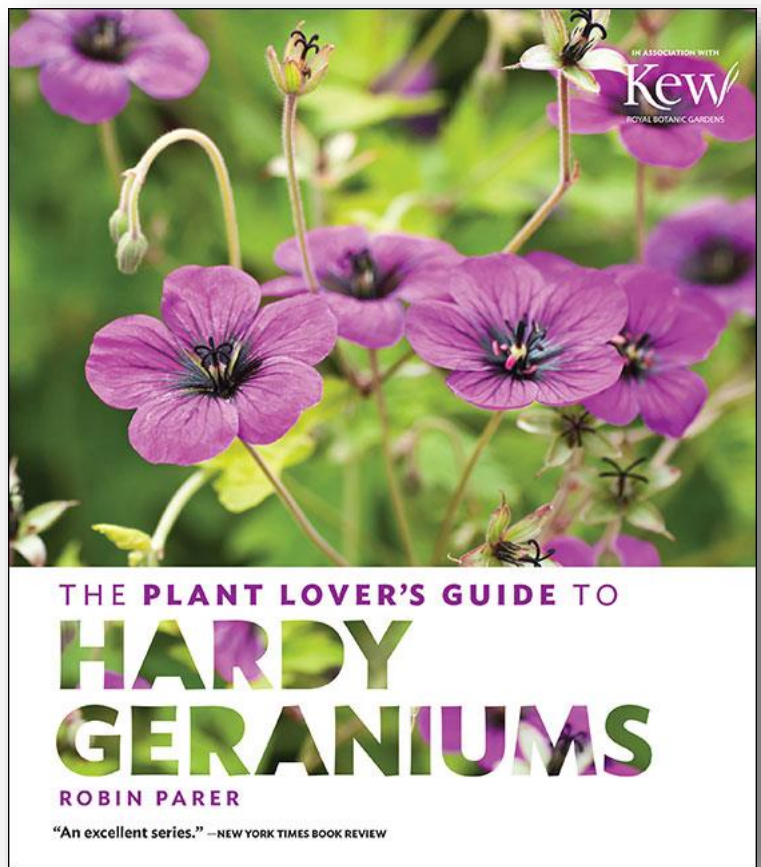


You may have met the author of this book, Robin Parer, at her booth at the San Francisco Garden Show. Robin Parer is the owner of Geraniaceae, a mail-order nursery specializing in members of the geranium family. I lately have developed an enthusiasm for hardy geraniums with white blossoms, and so I ordered a variety of them from Geraniaceae, and was very pleased with how well packaged and healthy they were. "Hardy" is particularly important in my garden this year; I have

never, in the 25 years I've lived in my Bonny Doon home, had so many days of continuous frost as this winter. You can browse or order plants at <http://geraniaceae.com>.

Robin says, in an article for the National Gardening Association, 'Hardy geraniums give a lot and require very little. For instance, they grow in most climates, take shade, serve admirably as a weed-choking ground cover, and produce quantities of flowers. It is even possible to have a succession of geraniums blooming from early spring to late fall. Is it any wonder gardeners are so excited about them?'

Just to be clear, I'm talking here about the plants of the genus *Geranium*, not those other "geraniums" -- the *Pelargoniums*. I apologize in advance for the name confusion, but the habit of gardeners to call those tender southern African plants "geraniums" is deeply rooted. Though both are members of the same plant family, they couldn't be more different. The *Pelargoniums* include common "geraniums" such as the Lady Washington geranium (*P. domesticum*), the ivy geranium (*P. peltatum*), and the scented geraniums (various species including *P. capitatum* and *P. crispum*). The effort to distinguish *Pelargoniums* from hardy geraniums is why you will sometimes see the latter referred to as the "true" geraniums.



Geranium eriostemon 'Ankum's White'

There are about 500 species of geraniums world wide. They thrive on every continent -- throughout Africa, from western Europe to China, from Siberia and Alaska down the Americas to Patagonia. There are even species endemic to the Pacific Islands."



Geranium magellanicum—one of the hardy geraniums I saw in Southern Argentina!

The Gardeners' Club Membership

Have you renewed your membership?

Annual membership dues, which include all benefits, are still only \$12.00, due this month. The membership year lasts through the end of December, 2017. Dues entitle members to all club educational programs, our special events, plant trades and our awesome monthly newsletter. The "green" option is to receive an electronic PDF FULL-COLOR version of the newsletter by checking the newsletter e-mail option below. Consider sharing your passion for gardening, and supporting our club, by giving your favorite gardening enthusiast an opportunity to connect, share and learn with us.



Ours is a club celebrating the joys of gardening, friendship, community, learning, nature and growth. We have a history of giving to the community, and have focused this giving in the last few years on scholarships for high school and Cabrillo College students who are working towards careers in horticulture. Because our dues are so low

and we'd like to be able to give at least one additional scholarship this year if we can, we are giving you the option of making an additional gift with your membership. Thank you!

Renew now so you don't miss anything—you'll be glad you did.

Your Membership

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address _____ Email: _____

Newsletter Preference (check one): _____ Full color PDF via e-mail _____ Paper copy (B&W) via snail mail

Gift Membership

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address _____ Email: _____

Newsletter Preference (check one): _____ Full color PDF via e-mail _____ Paper copy (B&W) via snail mail

Enclose check for \$12 per member, plus any additional contribution to our scholarship fund, made out to *The Gardeners' Club*.

Mail to The Gardeners' Club
c/o Suzanne Caron, P.O. Box 3025, Ben Lomond CA 95005.

| | |
|---|----------|
| Membership amount | \$ _____ |
| I would like to make an additional gift | \$ _____ |
| Total | \$ _____ |



INTERNATIONAL DARWIN DAY

February 12, 2017

The mission of International Darwin Day is to inspire people throughout the globe to reflect and act on the principles of intellectual bravery, perpetual curiosity, scientific thinking, human-well-being and hunger for truth as embodied in Charles Darwin. For more information, visit <http://darwinday.org/>.



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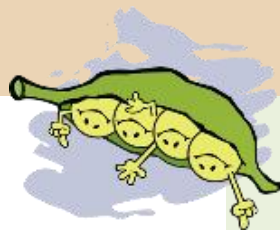
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Joe Thompson



It's easy-peasy to join our club!

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

Our front page logo is graciously shared with us by artist Lisa Zador. Order a print or see more of her work at her Etsy shop

www.etsy.com/shop/curiousprintpattern.