



Into the Garden

The Gardeners' Club
Santa Cruz County,
California

January 2024

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Join us for FRUIT TREE GRAFTING MADE SIMPLE

Want to expand the varieties of fruit in your garden without \$\$\$ or fuss? Come to our January 11 meeting to hear Carol Golsch, 2021-23 Chair of the Monterey Bay Chapter of the Rare Fruit Growers, discuss and demonstrate an easy method for grafting fruit trees!

Carol has been grafting fruit trees to revive her family's 100+ year-old orchard. Having grown up playing in this unique family orchard in the Corralitos Mountains, she longed to revive it to its glory days of figs, persimmons, apples, peaches, plums and nuts. But – she quailed at the cost to purchase so many fruit trees.

By sheer luck, she came across a notice for a "scion exchange" – which is an event where scions (sticks of dormant fruit tree branches) are offered to the public to increase the varieties of fruit in their own garden. Carol was instantly hooked -- and completed bewildered by the vast array of scions available. She came away with 20-odd sticks, a cluster of rootstock, and a determine to master this new skill of grafting.



Master it she did – having now grafted over 100 varieties of trees for her orchard.

Master it you can as well! This time-honored skill is not difficult and can be performed with ease after practice. Unlike many hobbies, only a few simple materials are needed – most notably a good knife – as well as your scion and a tree or rootstock for grafting.

Carol will show slides and demonstrate the technique at our meeting. She also will talk about upcoming events to help put you on the road to a successful grafting hobby.



Join us!
Thursday
January 11, 7 p.m.
Aptos Grange Hall
2555 Mar Vista Dr.

Monterey Bay Chapter of the California Rare Fruit Growers Presents Annual Fruit Tree Scion Exchange January 27, 2024

Interested in adding new varieties to your fruit trees? Or starting new trees? Come to the Monterey Bay Chapter of the California Rare Fruit Growers' Annual Scion Exchange! For just \$5 admission (for general public) you can select your own varieties from an astonishing selection of fruit scions. You can also watch a grafting demo, purchase rootstock suitable for our area, and more!

Open to the general public at noon; open to MBCRFG volunteers at 10 for set up.

Location: Soquel High School, 401 Soquel San Jose Rd., Soquel, CA

Attendees should bring a zip lock bag with their name on it and a damp paper towel inside, and blue painter's or masking tape and a sharpie pen to label scions. If you plan to purchase rootstock, please bring a large plastic bag to keep the roots damp. Check the website

(<http://mbcrfg.org/events/>) for a link to a

database of the varieties expected to be at the exchange – so you can research varieties before you come.



WINTER PRUNING WORKSHOP

December through February is the time to prune most of your deciduous fruit trees. Birdsong Orchard is hosting two winter pruning workshops held from 10 a.m. to noon on Jan. 13 and Jan. 27 at Birdsong, 613 Lakeview Road, Watsonville. Cost is \$45.



Workshops will cover winter pruning and care of fruiting trees, to set them up for a fabulous growing season next year.

It will include the pruning of new, young and mature trees, and discussion on appropriate tools and different pruning styles. Walking through the orchard, you will look at how pruning decisions affect growth and productivity in walnuts, apricots, peaches, plums, figs, apples, pears and roses.

Suitable for ages 16 and older. Limited to 25 people. The location is at the farm, please wear sturdy, closed-toe shoes, comfortable clothing and bring a water bottle. There will be walking 1-2 miles total on a gentle slope. If the

workshop gets rained out, it will be rescheduled for the following Saturday. To reserve a spot visit, birdsongorchards.com.

Fruit Tree Pruning with Terence Welch

Sponsor: UC Master Gardeners

Sat., January 27, 2024

Rain Out Date: Feb. 4

10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

401 Toll House Gulch Rd, Felton

Join professional arborist and orchardist, Terence Welch, for a live, hands-on session on how to winter prune deciduous fruit trees. This class will focus on pome fruits (apples and pears) as well as stone fruits (peach, nectarine, plum, apricot).

Read important details about the class and register at <https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/095d38a0-9e59-4c97-a332->



THE FESTIVAL OF SEVEN HERBS

Greens for a healthy start to the New Year

By Lise Bixler

My husband Cliff and I are going to Japan for a birdwatching tour in January. Yes, it will be COLD. But we will see many species of cranes and, hopefully, the biggest owl in the world, the Blakiston's fish owl. We will arrive in Japan on January 7, which is auspicious for two reasons: one, it is the day before the tour begins, giving us a day to tour the Tokyo area on our own, and, two, it is the day of The Festival of Seven Herbs, the first of five seasonal festivals in Japan every year. Researching possibilities for things to do that day, I learned that over the New Year period, the Mukojima-Hyakkaen Gardens play host to an annual tradition that sees the seven plants of spring (parsley, shepherd's purse, Jersey cudweed, common chickweed, henbit, turnip, and daikon radish) arranged in special baskets called "nanakusa-kago." "Perhaps we could visit those gardens?" I asked Cliff. As you might imagine, he is not enthused, but I will tell you a little about those gardens, even if I don't see them.

During the period from 1804 to 1830 when the cultural aspects of townspeople of Edo began to thrive, the garden was



established by an antique dealer. The name was chosen to mean "a garden with a hundred flowers that bloom throughout the four seasons." The only surviving flower garden from the Edo Period, it is a treasure of botanical gold, with well over 200 different species of plants. It features what are known as the classic seven herbs of spring and the seven herbs of fall. Another feature is the nod it gives to traditional and classical literature. Dotted throughout the gardens

are stone monuments engraved with choice pieces of prose and poetry, merging literature and nature.

The seventh of the first month has been an important Japanese festival since ancient times. This particular day was known as the "Jinjitsu", meaning "Human Day", the day no harm shall befall people, a day for caring for people. Now is is Nanakusa no Sekku, or Festival of Seven Herbs. The Nanakusa-gayu, herbs with healthful properties mixed with rice porridge, is eaten due to the belief that eating it will bring about longevity and good health, and ward off evil spirits. This was because prior to the Jinjitsu there were relatively little greens in meals due to the time of the year. The seven herbs grow wild in the mountains during the winter and can be foraged. Also, the porridge provided a well-deserved rest for stomachs after excessive eating over the New Year celebrations.

Jingchu Suishiji, written in the Six Dynasties China, recorded the Southern Chinese custom of eating a hot soup that contains seven vegetables to bring longevity and health and ward off evil on the 7th day of the first month of the Chinese calendar. One of the five annual ceremonies that were traditionally held at the Japanese imperial court, the origins were Japanese practices merged with Chinese practices and celebrated in Japan since the Nara period in the 8th century CE. The Japanese culture and tradition incorporated this in a unique way. The plants that are celebrated (sansei) are spring mountain vegetables that can be foraged in the wild, although Japanese markets nowadays sell them as a mix in their produce sections. It is still said eating a mixture of the seven plants and rice porridge will drive off disaster and bring wealth and prosperity.

There is considerable variation in the precise ingredients, with common local herbs often being substituted.

On the morning of January 7, or the night before, people place the greens, rice scoop, and/or wooden pestle on the cutting board and, facing the good-luck direction of the year, chant "Before the birds of the continent (China) fly to Japan, let's get nanakusa" while cutting

the herbs into pieces. The chant may vary from place to place.

Nanakusa-gayu involves cooking rice with excess water, so it has a porridge-like consistency. The herbs are chopped and then added to the soup.



The easiest way to make the soup, if you want to try, is to use rice that has already been made. (If you make the rice from scratch, use Japanese short grain, and you could use a higher ratio of water to rice.) All you have to do is slowly simmer previously cooked or leftover rice in water or stock until the rice swells up and starts to lose its shape. Don't stir it too much to avoid gumminess. Add more water if you want a soupier consistency. Then you add your chopped up greens and herbs, cook for about a minute more so that they impart their flavor to the soup (but no longer, so they don't lose their beautiful color!), and then serve!

Take your chopped up greens and mix them in with the porridge. The porridge can be changed by adding ingredients such as beaten egg if desired. Or by adding miso, chicken or vegetable broth to the water. Some people braise the greens or wilt them briefly before throwing them in.

So, here in California, what will our seven herbs be? Lots of possibilities: spinach leaves or baby spinach, watercress, turnip or beet tops, daikon or radish leaves, chives, kale leaves and stems, arugula, cilantro, parsley, chervil, whatever Asian veggies you might have growing in your winter garden (bok choy, Chinese cabbage), dandelions, fennel, green onions, pea leaves, fava leaves, celery leaves, carrot tops, etc. Nothing too overpowering!

IT'S ROSE TIME!

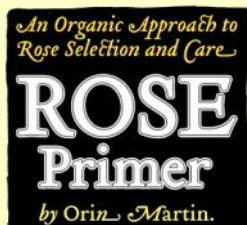


Lots to do in January if you grow roses, would like to grow rose, want **more** roses or more disease resistant roses, etc.

1. Pruning

This is the month to start. Best advice: sharpen your pruners. If you are new

to pruning them or want a refresher, we are lucky that, even though his book is out of print, rose guru Orin Martin's primer, is on-line



and available with a click on your computer or phone.

https://agroecology.ucsc.edu/documents/rose_primer.pdf.

The Monterey Bay Rose Society offers rose pruning and care clinics in January and February but as of this printing the dates had not been set. Stay tuned...<https://montereybayrosesociety.org/index.html>

2. Buying Locally

We are fortunate to have many local nurseries in Santa Cruz, Watsonville and Corralitos where we can buy a wide variety of bareroot and potted roses, or preorder ones we specifically want.

For those of you interested in old, rare, unusual and selected modern roses, you might want to set aside time to visit Roses of Yesterday & Today in Corralitos.



The garden, which has developed with the help of four generations of the Wiley/Stemler family since 1938, has more than 230 rose varieties on display. Picnic tables are available—pack a lunch, or pick up something at Corralitos Market. For sale all year are 1, 2 and 5 gallon potted roses, many of them own-root (see more about own-root roses later on this page).

The Garden is open everyday 9 to 4.

Address is 803 Brown's Valley Road-Watsonville - phone is (831)728-1901.<http://www.rosesofyesterday.com/>

Although they no longer sell bare root roses, they have a great video on how to plant them on their web page.

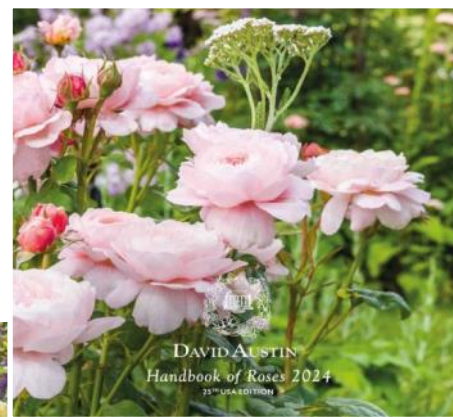
Guinivere Wiley demonstrates how to plant a root rose.



3. Buying Mail Order

Buying bare root roses by mail order opens a world of possibilities. Here are two companies you might consider.

David Austin (<https://www.david-austinroses.com/>) not only has some of the most magnificent roses EVER, they also have great resources for rose growers. You can order a paper copy of this 92-page guide, The Handbook of Roses 2024, or get an electronic copy. https://issuu.com/davidaustinrosesuk/docs/23.07.17_us_handbook_2024_section_2_web_1.



Spend as much time as you need to lusting over their roses, and then note some of the useful information included in the handbook. One feature that is particularly useful is how they rate roses according to health—that is, disease resistance. Another is their page devoted to companion planting, titled "A Few Faithful Friends"!

Another favorite nursery of mine is one I've visited in Oregon and bought roses from many times is **Heirloom Roses**, <https://heirloomroses.com/>. Their motto is, "Making the World Better, One Rose at a Time."

They only sell healthy, virus-free own-root roses and guarantee your success in the first year. They say,, "We are passionate about hand propagating each rose to ensure that we provide our customers with the best own-root roses available. We are committed to providing own-root roses that provide profuse blooms, are winter hardy, are

disease resistant, and are true to variety. While own-root roses cannot be quickly produced, like grafted roses, we think the difference and quality is worth it. " Their website is a treasure trove of how-to articles, rose care information, instructions and videos—lots to learn there!

The Gardeners' Club Membership

Annual membership dues, which include all benefits, are still only \$15.00. The membership year lasts through the end of December, 2023. 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.



ship, community, learning, nature and growth. Renew your membership now so you won't miss a thing...you'll be glad you did.

And...with gift-giving season here, consider sharing your passion for gardening, and supporting our club, by giving your favorite gardening enthusiast an opportunity to connect,

Ours is a club celebrating the joys of gardening, friend-

share and learn with us. A gift membership is a gift nobody will want to return!

Your 2024 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 \$15 per member made out to
The Gardeners' Club. Mail to:

The Gardeners' Club % Suzanne Caron
P.O. Box 3025
Ben Lomond CA 95005

Membership Dues: \$ _____

Gift Membership(s): \$ _____

TOTAL: \$ _____

Best wishes for the New Year!

Best wishes for the New Year! 2024



The name of the month January is derived from the ancient god Janus, the Roman god of endings and beginnings. He is two faced; one looking towards the past, one looking at the future. It is said that he is was a god that aided humanity to build bridges from barbarism towards civilization.

Perhaps now, when parts of our civilized world seem atilt and awry, other parts simply broken, we might pause to remember the origins of New Years and Janus, who is said once helped people move forward into gates of grace and peace. Now out of tune with the rhythms of life and of nature, the rhythms of peace and light and connectedness, perhaps it can be Janus who will again inspire us to end one era so we can enter a new one.

Here's to Janus! May he encourage us to close the doors that no longer serve the earth, humanity and the diverse peoples of our world.

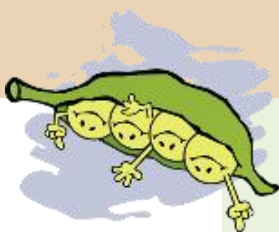
And may he grant the graces to open the doors to new beginnings, and help those courageous enough to find those gateways and step through them.*

*Faranak Mirjaliliworld

www.etsy.com/shop/curiousprintpattern.

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

It's easy-peasy to join our club!
Dues are \$15 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



The Gardeners' Club

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