



Into the Garden

The Gardeners' Club
Santa Cruz County,
California

March 2024

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Growing the Unusual: Rare Fruits To Grow

Join us in discovering the beauty and deliciousness the world of rare fruits has to offer! Our speaker Nate Blackmore is the owner, operator and farmer of Wildlands Farm and Nursery as well as a passionate plant nerd who has been in love with plants and the natural world for the past 10 years.

Nate has a depth of experience in the plant world. He has worked on conservation projects in Hawaii and California as well as conducting research on some of California's rarest plants. Nate has been importing and growing rare subtropical fruits for the past eight years and in 2020 found a place to start putting all of these trees into the ground. He has over 200+ fruiting species that are suited to our climate and have complex and delicious flavors that haven't been introduced to the American public. These fruits range from Cold Hardy Papayas such as Babaco (*Vasconcellea x heilbornii*), to beautiful flowering Myrtles such as Jaboticaba (*Plinia cauliflora*), Pitangatuba (*Eugenia selloi*) and more. Nate has been testing the limits on what plants are capable of growing here and has found some very promising plants for California farmers and home gardeners alike. There's a huge world of diversity and we have neglected so many amazing fruits that have the potential to become a part of our lives. Come learn more about the possibilities for beauty and deliciousness.



Make sure and visit the Wildlands web site to learn more.



Creating California's first ecologically functional rare fruit farm.

<https://www.wildlandsplants.com/>



Join us! Thursday
March 14th, 7 p.m.
Aptos Grange Hall
2555 Mar Vista Dr.

WORKSHOPS AT MOUNTAIN FEED



(831) 336-8876
9550 HWY. 9
BEN LOMOND,
CA. 95005

HEALTH & PRODUCTIVITY IN YOUR GARDEN SOIL

SATURDAY, MARCH 9—10:00 -11:00 am
FREE -RSVP Required, Space is Limited
With Kerri Gardener from Gardener &
Bloomer Soil



Come learn about the amazing world of soil and how to boost

your gardens health and productivity this season! Clay soil vs. sandy soil, feeding and amending, mulching and compost application. We will cover it all.

SEASONAL JAM & WATERBATH CANNING

SUNDAY, MARCH 10 (Daylight Savings Day) 1:00pm to 3:00pm —\$30



There's something fresh at the market, in the garden, or on the trees in every month of the year around here. This class will focus on gathering the best of this seasonal fruit to preserve at it's peak freshness. We will provide a solid overview of all the techniques, equipment and supplies you'll need to get you canning safely. From jams, fruit butters and preserves, the world of water bath canning will open up new avenues of deliciousness before you! <https://www.mountainfeed.com/collections/register-for-classes/products/seasonal-jam-waterbath-canning-january-23-2016>

<https://www.mountainfeed.com/>

GROWVEG.COM— RESOURCES!

GrowVeg.com provides garden planning tools, advice and inspiration to help you grow healthy, abundant fruit and vegetables, whatever the size or shape of your garden or plot. <http://www.GrowVeg.com>. Lots of articles, videos and links to other resources, including gardening apps.

ALYSSUM FLOWER POWER

(written by Benedict Vanheems of GrowVeg.com)



"Now is the perfect time to start many early crops to get a head start on the season. Let's get sowing and planting!

I'm sure you've heard me banging on about marvelous marigolds and awesome alyssum before, but there's a good reason why I absolutely dote on them: they are hugely attractive to both vital pollinators like bees and butterflies, and pest predators such as hoverflies, parasitic wasps and minute pirate bugs. Basically, grow them and watch your gardening woes melt away!

Pollinator-friendly alyssum is a hugely valuable vegetable garden flower

Start these flowers soon to attract pest predators like lacewings and hoverflies before pests descend in early summer.

Start with alyssum, which blooms throughout the summer and often well into the colder months too – this flower is a real trooper! Simply scatter the seeds across pots of sieved all-purpose potting

mix then lightly cover them over and give them a drink to wake up the seeds. Place them on a sunny windowsill to germinate."

ALYSSUM AS LIVING MULCH

Alyssum is also wonderful to use as a living mulch in your vegetable garden! Check out this video from Kathleen Henderson at rootsandboots.com:



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=81fPerSt24g>



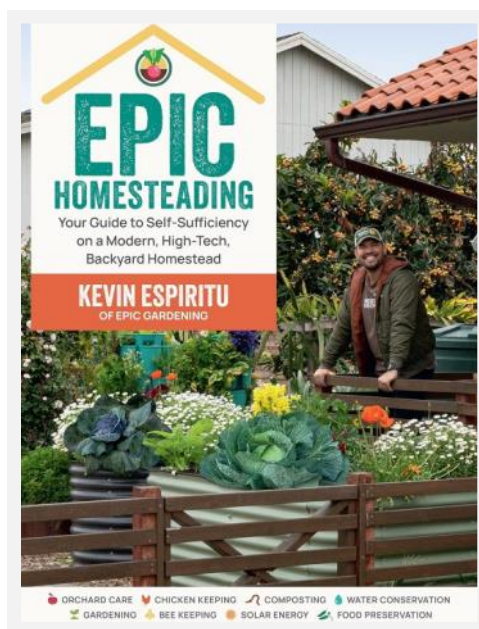
THE MARCH BOUQUET: PLANNING BULBS FOR NEXT YEAR

The Country Libing Gardener Garden Almanac says, "Spring bulbs dominate this month's English bouquet,

with daffodils, hyacinths, fritillarias, tulips, and anemones creating a tableau of bright colors."

The Almanac says, although these bulbs are planted in fall, there is no better time to begin planning for them. Start a list of what bulbs bloom in your garden this season—where, and what colors are springing up. When the bulb catalogs arrive, look for species and cultivars that will add color when and where you need it most. Consider snowdrops and winter aconites for earliest blooms. And the secret to extending the blooming time of daffodils and tulips is careful selection, combining a variety of cultivars describes as "early," "midseason," and "late."

NEW BOOKS



Followed by millions online, author Kevin Espiritu has built a modern, high-tech homestead on a modest urban lot. In *Epic Homesteading*, he teaches you how to do the same, wherever you live.

As Kevin has proven—thanks to his enthusiasm and willingness to experiment—there’s no need to go “back to the land,” live off-grid, and leave behind modern conveniences to improve your self-sufficiency and autonomy. Anyone can do it.

Follow in Kevin’s footsteps with this accessible, beginner-friendly guide to embracing today’s technology to grow and preserve food, raise mini livestock like bees and chickens, set up automated systems like irrigation and greywater recycling, and so much more.

The high-tech homesteading concepts and projects introduced in *Epic Homesteading* show you that, wherever you are in the world—city, country, or suburbia—homesteading is for YOU!

Learn how to:

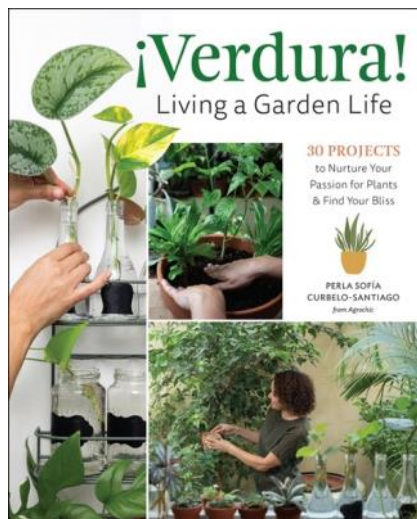
- Use solar power
- Automate rainwater catchment and distribution
- Set up your food-growing spaces, outdoors and in
- Plant and care for a small orchard, including pest management

- Cultivate microgreens and sprouts
- Keep bees, chickens, and quail
- Use laundry and shower greywater in the garden
- Preserve food
- Seek out and utilize free resources
- Maximize energy efficiency through a mini-split system, smart lighting, and timers

I subscribe to a couple of Kevin’s online newsletters, and have learned some interesting things on his YouTube videos. I am trying out one of his recommendations, air layering pod grow boxes. (Although you can make your own air layering devices from large plastic soda bottles or bags, too.) To watch the video where he demonstrates these gizmos, go to https://youtu.be/c5WAK1un5_Y?t=53



And his website and newsletter sign—up are at <https://www.epicgardening.com/>.



¡Verdura! – Living a Garden

Life celebrates the power of adding more green to your life with 30 simple and budget-friendly gardening projects that promote well-being through plants.

From Puerto Rican author and gardening celebrity, Perla Sofia Curbelo Santiago of Agrochic.com, a Spanish-language gardening lifestyle platform, comes this guide to forming a lifelong love of nature, plants, and gardening. Verdura means “greenery” in Spanish, but also refers to any edible plant from the garden. Throughout this book, verdura is used as both a description and an aspiration—it’s all about adding more verdura to your daily life! Perfect for beginners and expert gardeners alike, turning the practice of tending plants into a healthy lifestyle has never been easier. It takes many repetitions to form a habit, and the goal is to use the 30 projects found here to transform the initial spark of joy plants create into a healthy habit that enhances your life in many ways. Indoor and outdoor projects are included, many of which are perfect for small spaces and urban environments.

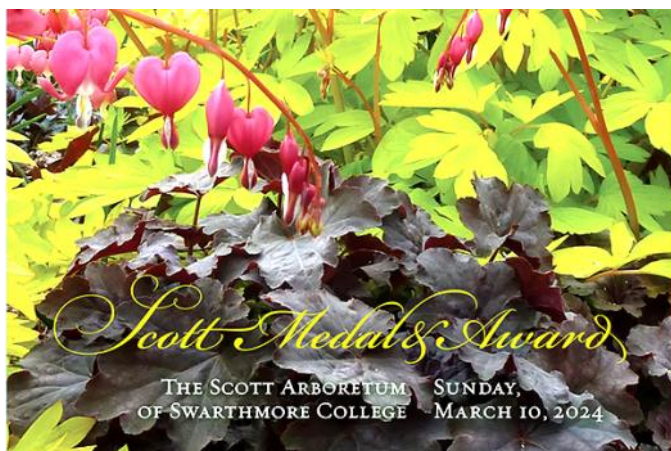
In addition to offering plant-related wellness tips, personal stories of her own garden evolution, and advice on how tending plants can improve both physical and mental health, Perla offers clear step-by-step guidance on project creation. Some of the projects you’ll find inside include:

- Creating a container planting that appeals to a 13-year-old version of yourself
- Making a meditation garden or a private healing nook
- Planting a barefoot garden
- Performing a quick and easy garden makeover
- Compiling a garden-tainment kit
- Upcycling common discards to create a propagation station, a swinging planter, and a birdbath
- Organizing your garden legacy using a basic guide

Also included are alternative plant charts if you’re the kind of gardener who likes lots of plant choices, and section openers that offer a small glimpse of gardening life on the island of Puerto Rico.

Green-up your life to reduce stress and add joy with help from *¡Verdura!*

FREE VIRTUAL PRESENTATION— SCOTT MEDAL AWARD TO MARGARET ROACH



Margaret Roach – 2024 Award Recipient Sunday, March 10, 1:30 to 3 PM PST

Margaret Roach began her career in horticulture 35 years ago as garden editor at Newsday. Her columns attracted the attention of Martha Stewart, who hired her as the first garden editor of Martha Stewart Living magazine. As her role in the company expanded, she became Executive Vice President/Editorial Director of Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia's magazines, books, and internet. In 2008, Margaret walked away from her corporate publishing career to devote herself to gardening. With her 2.3-acre garden in rural New York State, her love of technology, and her unique brand of "horticultural how-to and woo-woo," she has become an inspiring and influential voice in the world of horticulture. Marco Polo Stufano, Director of Horticulture Emeritus at Wave Hill, describes her as "one of the country's most followed and respected communicators of information dealing both with the art and science of gardening and concerns facing the natural world."

Margaret inspires a vast audience through a remarkable mix of media. Her website awaytogarden.com, reflects her love of plants and has garnered extensive national praise. For 13 years she has hosted an award-winning public radio show and podcast, in which she interviews experts to promote a greater love of gardens and nature. Her column, "In the Garden," is published weekly throughout each growing season in The New York Times. She teaches a popular online series called "The Virtual Garden Club" with Ken Druse. And, she has authored three books: *And I Shall Have Some Peace There* (2011), *The Backyard Parables* (2013), and *A Way to Garden* (1998, updated in 2019).

To Margaret, gardening is a life practice – a window into larger questions of existence,

spirituality, and science. She describes her garden as her constant and ever-inspiring companion. Her unique perspectives resonate deeply with readers across the country, including *Eat, Pray, Love* author Liz Gilbert, who has called her writing "a blessing." She is well known for her ability to make complex subjects – such as biodiversity, sustainability, and climate change – more accessible to a wide audience. Yet, her writing is also a go-to resource for seasoned professionals. Darrel Morrison, Professor and Dean Emeritus at the College of Environment and Design at the University of Georgia and recipient of the 2021 Scott Medal, says, "Her writing is genuinely informative; it is also inspiring and entertaining."

In 2018, Margaret received the George Robert White Medal of Honor from the Massachusetts Horticultural Society for her contributions to excellence in horticulture for the public good, and in 2023 was honored by Wave Hill, the public garden in New York City. The Scott Arboretum of Swarthmore College proudly awards the 2024 Scott Medal and Award to Margaret Roach.



Preregistration required. Register at <https://support.scottarboretum.org/scott-medal-award-presentation-virtual/>

Planning Your Summer Food Garden March 13, 2024 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM

ONLINE ---> Register Here: <https://bit.ly/42OeRTr>

Dreaming of your summer garden on a dark and stormy day? Take this time to figure out what you're going to plant, when you need to plant it and how to lay out your vegetable garden in spring. We'll cover site selection, solar exposure, soil prep, crops and timing and crop rotation.

ONLINE CLASS

PLAN YOUR SUMMER FOOD GARDEN

Wednesday, March 13, 5-6:30
Free. Donations appreciated.



mbmg.ucanr.edu



The Gardeners' Club Membership

The time has come for membership renewal. Annual membership dues, are only \$15.00, due now. The membership year lasts through the end of December. 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.



membership is a gift nobody will want to return!

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

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. A gift

continue to give at least one additional scholarship, we are giving you the option of making an additional gift with your membership. Thank you! Renew now so you don't miss

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):

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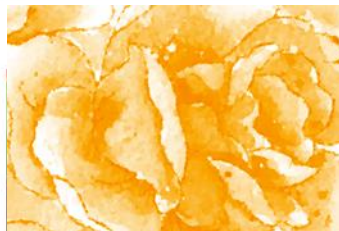
☐ Paper copy (B&W) via snail mail

Enclose check for \$15 per member, plus any additional contribution to our scholarship fund, made out to The Gardeners' Club. Mail to:

The Gardeners' Club % Suzanne Caron

P.O. Box 3025

Ben Lomond CA 95005



PLEASE CONSIDER AN ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTION FOR OUR SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM!

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



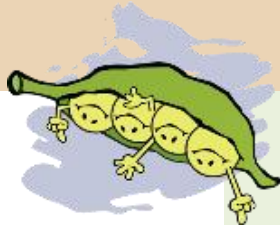
Daylight Savings Time begins on Sunday, March 10. Don't forget to turn your clocks ahead one hour.

Another reminder—don't let this be your last newsletter. Please pay your membership dues!



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.

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



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