

The Gardeners' Club

April 2010

Spring Plant Swap & Sale

Got plants ready to divide, or ones you are replacing? Been so enthusiastically sowing that you've got seedlings to share? Pots you don't need any more? Garden art that needs a new home? Looking for free or low-cost treasures for your garden?

Clean out your tool shed, thin your perennial beds, make space on your bookshelf, finish your garden crafts...and bring your goodies to our amazing annual spring event. Our members offer a limitless variety of bulbs, annuals, perennials, shrubs, seeds, small trees, tools, planters, knick-knacks and anything/everything garden. You'll find plants you've never heard of and plants you've always wanted to try. See the inside back cover for more information. If you don't have plants to trade, come to buy at bargain prices.

Don't miss out – see you there!

Thursday, April 8th

7:00 p.m.

Aptos Grange Hall

2555 Mar Vista Drive, Aptos

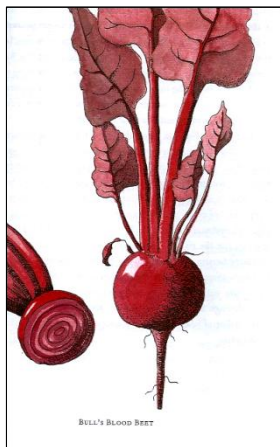




The Alluring Garden: Mixing Things Up



It's April, and my garden is already zinging with sexuality, full of birds and bugs with propagation and pollination priorities. Perhaps that influenced my purchases at the San Francisco Flower and Garden Show. They say that sex sells; I couldn't resist buying Jack Staub's Alluring Lettuces and Other Seductive Vegetables for Your Garden. The lusty illustrations are just too gorgeous; I want to cut them out of the book and frame them (I won't). But I do already have a few of these beauties in my garden already, like the Bull's Blood Beet.

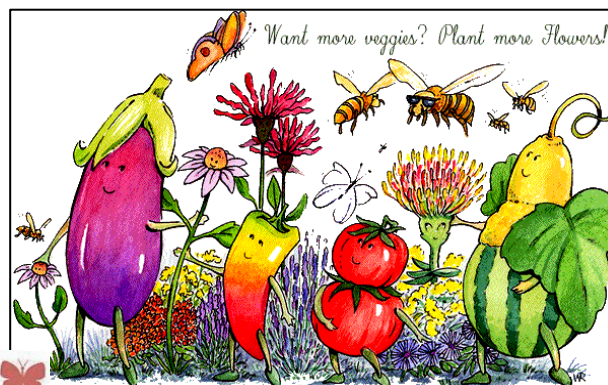


"I don't care that much for beets," says my husband. But, oh, the beauty of the dark red/burgundy foliage! And he doesn't complain at all when the mild red leaves join lettuce in a salad. My latest favorite color combination is dark red/burgundy/mahogany with yellow. Nasturtiums, calendulas and Russian yellow hollyhocks added to the beet bed will be stunning. A bright yellow pot planted with ruby-colored chard and mahogany nasturtiums has great potential. Vegetable and flower combinations are something to get passionate about.

But we're talking about more than aesthetics here. "Want more veggies? Plant more flowers!" said the March newsletter from High Country Gardens. Interplanting flowers with

vegetables has many benefits. Planting flowers with high nectar concentrations and / or in shades of blue, yellow or white will attract pollinators. Some choices are cosmos, larkspur, mint, sunflowers, jewel-toned yard long beans with sunflowers more

Flowers attract beneficial insects, like ladybugs, lacewings, parasitic wasps and ground beetles. Some flowers can act as trap plants for unwanted insects, confusing them; examples are using nasturtiums and nicotiana to draw aphids.



sweet peas and zinnias. Perhaps if I combine my beans will set than the paltry few last year.

Many seed companies are now providing flower mixes to plant in your vegetable garden. For instance, Seeds of Change offers a Garden Ecology Collection. They say, "The ecological garden is a productive garden. These varieties provide habitat for pollinators, butterflies, hummingbirds, and other beneficials, while confusing garden pests. Interplanted with your vegetable crops, these plants add beauty and diversity to the garden and help support the overall ecology." Their mix includes Borage, Butterfly Weed, White sweet Alyssum, Ammi Visnaga, Purple Coneflower Echinacea, and Texas Hummingbird Sage. Territorial Seed Company has a variety of mixes with entirely different flower combinations, such as Honeybee Flower Mix, Beneficial Bug Mix and my favorite, Bohemian Rhapsody. There are too many species to list here included in these mixes, and of course you don't have to use a mix: you can plant seeds or plants individually of such flowering treasures as gaillardia, flax, California poppies, larkspur, salvias, coreopsis, dill, thyme, wallflower, clarkia, fleabane daisy, zinnias, cosmos, forget-me-nots, agastache, echinacea, chrysanthemum, oregano – let your imagination go wild!

If you have plenty of space and need a little shade for your lettuce, spinach, cilantro or other cooler-season plants, consider planting a flowering tree on one side of your vegetable garden. A small dogwood would be lovely. If you grow a citrus tree, not only will you enjoy the flowers, but later their fruit. Of course, it's a two-fer if the flowers you plant are edible, too. Hollyhocks, dianthus, cornflower, lemon gem, bergamot, borage, violas and many others are possibilities. Read anything by Valerie Easton (her books, web site or blog) for more ideas and inspirations.

Do you hate cutting your flowers for bouquets because it ruins the look of your garden? One more bonus of interspersing flowers in the vegetable garden is being able to have a cutting garden that lets you cut avidly without ruining a formal design.

UCSC Arboretum Spring Sale

The UC Santa Cruz Arboretum will hold its annual Spring Plant Sale on Saturday, April 17, from 12 noon to 4 p.m. The sale will take place at the Arboretum's Eucalyptus Grove near the intersection of High Street and Western Drive. A wide variety of plants will be available at the sale, including California natives and exotic selections from Australia and South Africa. Knowledgeable Arboretum staff and volunteers will be on hand to answer questions. The Arboretum's sale is held in conjunction with the spring plant sale of the California Native Plant Society.

Both sales are open early (from 10 a.m. to 12 noon) to members of the Arboretum Associates and the California Native Plant Society, and to the general public from noon to 4 p.m. For more information about the sale, contact the UCSC Arboretum at (831) 427-2998

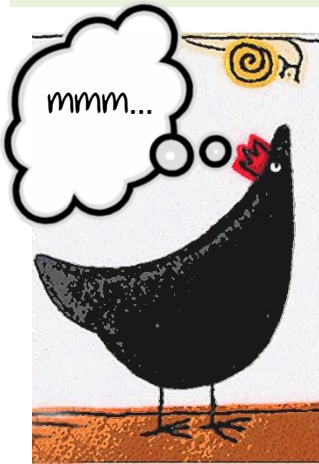


April Board Meeting

Sim and Bob Gilbert, who volunteer at BOTH the Arboretum and California Native Plant Society, are also active members of our club.

They will be hosting the next Board meeting on Monday, April 26th, at 6:00 p.m. As always, you don't need to be a Board member to come. If you've never visited their gardens, do join us – Bob's tree collections and Sim's mix of plants and art will knock your socks off. Address is 3999 Glen Haven Road in Soquel. Call 475-8162 for more information or directions.

Snails Wanted



No, that's not a typo. Bill Patterson wants them for his chickens. If you are handpicking or trapping yours and want to donate them to deserving poultry for their protein and calcium value, call or e-mail Bill (479-3729 or wilderwill@comcast.net).

What's All the Coop-ia About?



Suddenly all of your gardening friends have chickens and can't stop talking about them. There's got to be more to this than a good source of manure, right? Find out at the **Chicks in the City: Backyard Chicken Keeping** class on Sunday, April 11th, 1 p.m. at Dig Gardens at 420 Water Street. This fun and informative class about chicken keeping will be led by Candice McLaren, a Monterey Bay Master Gardener and chicken enthusiast. Dig just received their first clutch of baby chicks for the

spring. Find out what wonderful pets chickens make and all the different breeds you can choose from. Oh, and don't forget about the most tasty, fresh and nutritious eggs you've ever had, right from your own backyard! Cost is \$20; call to register at 466-3444.

Spring Garden Workshop: Crops, Bed Prep and Transplanting

Sunday, April 25, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m., come to the Louise Cain Gatehouse at the UCSC Farm to Join Orin Martin and Trish Hildinger. You'll learn how to choose appropriate varieties, improve and prepare the soil for spring planting, and transplant starts. Wear comfortable shoes and bring a snack. \$15 for Friends members; \$20 general public, payable the day of the workshop. No pre-registration necessary. Questions? Call 459-3240 or email casfs@ucsc.edu. *Part of the Friends' "Victory Garden" series on home food production.*

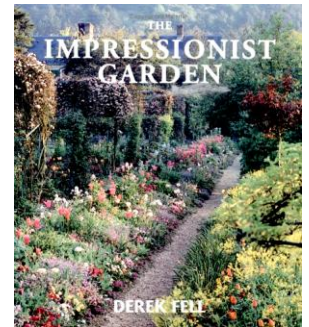
BOUQUETS TO *Art*

April 20–24, 2010
de Young



Art and gardens – the perfect marriage. The glorious annual flower festival “Bouquets to Art” exhibition returns to the de Young Museum in April, featuring 150 floral displays interpreting the Museum’s permanent collection. This year, the theme will be “French Impressions”, to celebrate two upcoming exhibits at the de Young: “Birth of Impressionism: Masterpieces from the Musée d’Orsay” (May 22-September 6) followed by “Van Gogh, Gauguin, Cézanne, and Beyond: Post-Impressionist Masterpieces from the Musée d’Orsay” (September 25-January 18). For more information about events or to purchase tickets for www.bouquetstoart.org or call (415) 750-3504.

Impressionism is one of the most original and recognizable of all artistic styles. To learn more about how it is expressed in gardens, you might want to explore some of the books of Derek Fell, photographer and writer. He’s the author of more than 50 books including The Impressionist Garden, Renoir's Garden, Secrets of Monet's Garden and Impressionist Bouquets. The Impressionist Garden explores the links between the paintings and gardens of the Impressionists and their influence on gardens today, using archive photographs and the paintings of Monet, Renoir and Pissarro. Twenty color planting plans show how to adapt their ideas for gardens.



British Tea Party in the Garden

We had a delightful March Board meeting at the home and gardens of Joanna Hall. Joanna is an ambitious and creative gardener – what a treat to see how much she’s accomplished. After we’d explored and ooh’d and ah’d, she fed us a scrumptious dinner using vegetables she’d grown herself. We were all inspired to grow more veggies. Joanna then shared with us an upcoming event that Club members will want to know about. She’s a member of the British Women’s International Group, a Santa Cruz County-based women’s group who share a common bond of British heritage, friendship and respect, and a commitment to help raise awareness and funds for critical women’s causes around the world. On Sunday, April 25th, from 2:00-5:00 p.m. they are having their annual afternoon Tea & Garden Party, a fundraiser for Global Fund for Women, at the private home and gardens of Sandy & Hernan Martinez in Aptos. Tucked away behind Aptos Village, this exquisite house and gardens is a magical discovery not to be missed. You are invited to tour the grounds and explore the meandering pathways and enticing nooks and crannies, each yielding its own unique treasure. Expect the unexpected—a shaded lily pond, an enchanting sculpture, a charming hand-painted table and chair in a secluded spot. Come prepared for a delightful, eclectic journey that will heighten your senses and provide a memorable montage of sights and scenery. For more information, contact Joanna at 831 662 8821 or jhavelock@sbcglobal.net.

Global Fund for Women is the largest foundation in the world that focuses exclusively on advancing women’s rights internationally. The organization raises funds from a variety of sources, and makes grants that promote the economic security, health, safety, education and leadership of women and girls. For more information, visit www.globalfundforwomen.org.



Six Ideas for celebrating Earth Day

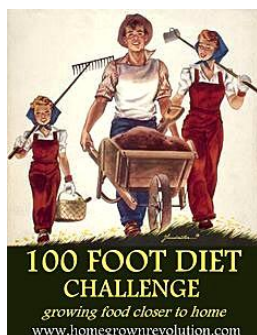
One

Mahatma Gandhi encouraged everyone to "be the change you want to see in the world," and this year his message is being used for Earth Day to emphasize that everything on earth is dependent on everything else, and the earth is one living organism. The 40th Annual Earth Day is officially April 22. Make a commitment to make EVERY day an Earth Day.



Two

Start the 100 Foot Diet Challenge. Prepare a meal at least once a week with only homegrown vegetables, fruit, herbs, eggs, dairy products or meat, using as few store bought ingredients as possible. The challenge is to make one meal once a week comprised of food grown on your property or garden plot (literally or figuratively within - 100 feet - of your front or back door). If non-homegrown ingredients are needed, then locally produced; if not locally produced, then organic; if not organic, then family farm or local business. For more ideas and inspirations, visit "Little Homestead in the City" at <http://urbanhomestead.org/journa/2008/01/06/100-foot-diet-challenge-launch>.



Three

Someone declared April 23rd International Earthworm Day. It really hasn't caught on, which is a shame. No matter; celebrate the earthworm earlier by taking a free worm composting class. There is one on Sat., April 10, 1-3 p.m., at the Grey Bears Recycling Center, 2710 Chanticleer Ave., Santa Cruz. You must preregister; call Santa Cruz County's Worm Doctor at 427-3452 or go to www.compostsantacruzcounty.org. A second free vermicomposting class is Sun., April 18th at 1 p.m. at Hidden Gardens Nursery, 7765 Soquel Dr., Aptos (688-7011). Learn the art of using worms to help you break down the organic waste you produce at home to create fertilizer for your garden. Worms produce both a liquid fertilizer, and worm castings. Worm castings are a solid, odor free byproduct of worm digestion. Use them as a soil addition, soil conditioner, or even light mulch. Preregistration information for Hidden Gardens workshop is the same as for the first workshop.

Four

Keep informed. Visit the Bay-Friendly Landscaping & Gardening web site for lot of information, ideas and resources to help be green and enjoy your garden (www.stopwaste.org/home/index.asp?page=8). While there you can download a free guide called "Bay-Friendly Landscaping Guide to Recycled Content and Salvaged Materials". Then you can...



Five

...Reuse something in a new way instead of throwing it out, or having it end up in the land fill. Learn about "urbanite", or recycled concrete, which you can find free on Craigslist and make into raised beds, benches, retaining walls, paths and decks. Go to the blog of our local Terra Nova Ecological Landscape to learn more and see some of the amazing things they've made with it. (<http://www.terranovalandscaping.com/blog/2007/02/07/90>)



Six

Make friends with the many green businesses in our community. Once again the County of Santa Cruz, the City of Santa Cruz, Ecology Action, Save Our Shores, local non-profits, and concerned citizens are working together to make Earth Day 2010 the premier environmental event for the greater Santa Cruz community, with educational information, activities for kids, live music and a focus on green businesses. Come to this fun-filled celebration! Earth Day 2010 will take place April 17th from on 11am to 4pm rain or shine in the San Lorenzo Park and Benchlands behind the County building.



save the date! Lose yourself in the Hidden Gardens of Bonny Doon!

How does Club Member Nancy Lambling manage to keep up her magnificent garden and still manage to organize a benefit garden tour for a struggling elementary school? Next month you can come to our Santa Cruz mountain neighborhood to explore and enjoy ten beautiful, unique, winsome and eclectic gardens, including the Bonny Doon elementary school students' Life Garden. The tour will be Saturday and Sunday, May 22-23, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. More information next month! Call to reserve tickets (\$20) – 469-0688 or 423-7728.

The Small Budget Gardener



Maureen Gilmer has published a new book for those of us who consider ourselves tightwad gardeners. Lots and lots and lots of tips. Like this homemade fertilize recipe from a California Master Gardener (for those of us who don't have compost or worm bins). Nontoxic and complete safe for food crops.

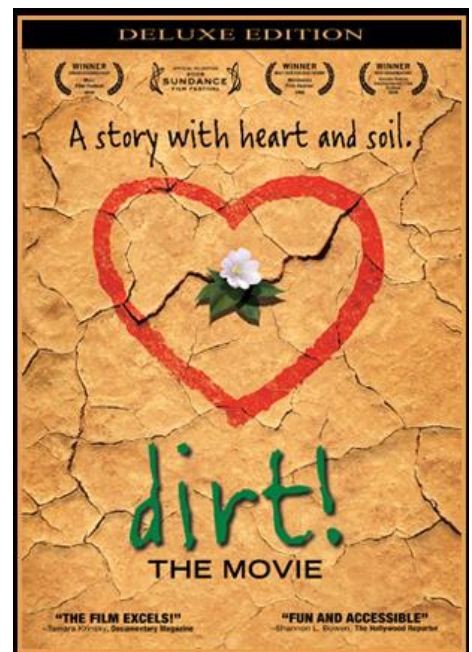
Combine in a gallon container:

- ¼ c. Epsom salts
- ¼ c. baking powder
- ¼ c. rubbing alcohol
- ¼ cup plain ammonia
- 1 8-oz. can of beer
- 6 aspirin

Add water to fill the container. Stir or shake to dissolve the aspirin. Spray leaves or drench soil around the plants.

Dirt! The Movie...

... is an insightful and timely film that tells the story of the glorious and unappreciated material beneath our feet. Inspired by William Bryant Logan's acclaimed book "Dirt! The Ecstatic Skin of the Earth", Dirt! The Movie takes a humorous and substantial look into the history and current state of the living organic matter that we come from and will later return to. Dirt! The Movie will make you want to get dirty! DVD purchase information and additional educational resources are available at <http://dirtthemovie.org>.



Tally Sheet and Instructions for Plant Swap and Sale

You can take plants home by either paying bargain prices in cash, or by bringing plants and other items for trade tickets to use instead of cash. Fill out this form before the meeting if you are going to trade.

You may bring plants, seeds, bulbs, harvest bounty, books, tools and any other miscellaneous items of use or interest to gardeners. This is what you'll get for what you bring:

2-4" pot: 1 ticket each

6" pot or 6-pack: 1.5 ticket each

1 gallon pot: 2 tickets each

2 gallon pot: 3 tickets each

Miscellaneous items are priced at the meeting.

Label your plants with their common or botanical names, and put your name on them in case purchasers have questions. Please don't bring loose, dirty plants that would make a mess, or plants you wouldn't be proud to put your name on.



We appreciate all of you who come early to help set up – it's a lot of work! And if you can, plan on staying to help with clean-up.

We'll start accepting plants at 6:40 p.m. The purchase prices are:

2-4" pot: 2 tickets or \$1 each

6" pot or 6-pack: 2 for 3 tickets, or \$1..50 each

1 gallon pot: 4 tickets or \$2.00 each

2 gallon pot: 6 ticket or \$3.00 each

When there are multiples of the same plant available, please take only one until other members have had a chance to buy one. If there are multiples left over, then you can grab them! Plants that don't get sold or given away go home with the person who brought them.

Important: Please complete this form at home and bring it with you to the meeting.

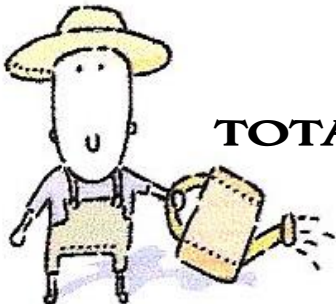
Number of 2-4" pots: _____ X 1 = _____ tickets

Number of 6" pots or 6-packs: _____ X 1.5 = _____ tickets (round up to whole number)

Number of 1-gal. pots: _____ X 2 = _____ tickets

Number of 2-gal. pots: _____ X 3 = _____ tickets

Miscellaneous items (to be priced at meeting): _____ tickets



TOTAL: _____

Have fun!



In late-Victorian France, the first day of April was celebrated with postcards which always snuck in a picture of a fish, which was believed to be good for memory. Floriography, the language of flowers, was fashionable. Flower were used to communicate feelings which otherwise were unspoken. This fish rests on a bed of forget-me-nots, which symbolized true love, and violets, which symbolized faithfulness.

The Gardeners' Club

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It's easy-peasy to join our club. Dues are \$12 per calendar year. Make check to "The Gardeners' Club" and mail to 270 Hames Road, #50, Corralitos, CA 95076. Meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. on the 2nd Thursday of each month at the Aptos Grange Hall, 255 Mar Vista Drive, Aptos. Printed on 100% recycled paper.

