

The Gardeners' Club

July 2010

LAUNDRY TO LANDSCAPE

How Your New Favorite Gardening Tool Just Might Be Your Washing Machine

We are pleased to welcome Golden Love, "Your Neighborhood Solar-Powered Gardener", back to our club to tell us about simple greywater systems for diverting greywater for landscape and garden irrigation. Greywater reuse, using water from sinks, showers and washing machines to irrigate plants, is a way to increase the productivity of sustainable backyard ecosystems that produce food, clean water, and shelter wildlife. Think of all the greywater that goes down your drain and taxes your sewer system. Golden will explain all facets of greywater, including the current regulations, and will focus on how people can install greywater systems in their homes.

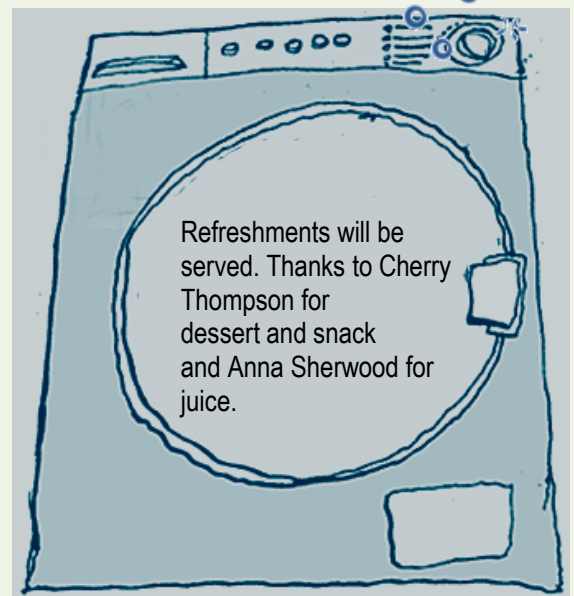
The easiest greywater system and least costly is the Laundry to Landscape Irrigation System, and he will be explaining that in detail. Due to recent changes in the California Plumbing code, homeowners can install a system allowing laundry waste water to bypass their septic/sewer and irrigate their landscape! Some of the benefits: no permits required; save water and your septic system; and a family of 4 can divert up to 20,000 gallons of water from washer to their landscape each year.

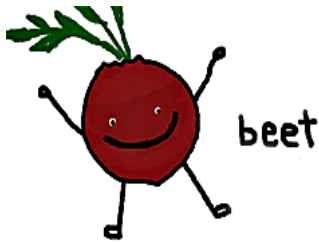
Golden is an engaging and enthusiastic speaker, with a wealth of experience and knowledge. Join us for an informative and inspiring evening! Don't forget to bring something for the Plant Table, or a bouquet for the Blossom Table to show us what's blooming in your garden. **For more information, check out Golden's web site at www.lovesgardens.com and Oasis Design at <http://oasisdesign.net>.**



**MONTHLY MEETING
JULY 8TH, 7 P.M.**

**APTOS GRANGE
255 MAR VISTA DRIVE**





Some people use beets in their cooking and throw away the greens. With me, it's almost the opposite. I've fallen so in love with beet greens (you can cook them, but I graze on them raw in the garden, or cut them for salads) that I've forgotten that the goal is to grow actual beets. I was rather surprised to find this month, beneath the greens, edible orbs. I'm going to use them in this recipe by Mark Bittman, from the NY Times website. You begin with oven roasting beets in foil.

Beets With Garlic-Walnut Sauce

2 pounds red beets, about 4 large or the equivalent
1/4 cup olive oil; 6 cloves garlic, peeled
1/2 cup walnuts
2 tablespoons to 1/4 cup freshly squeezed orange juice
Salt and black pepper to taste
1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley leaves or lemon basil

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Wash beets well. While still wet, wrap them in foil and place on a cookie sheet or roasting pan. Bake beets, undisturbed, for 60 to 90 minutes, until a thin-bladed knife pierces each with little resistance. (They'll cook at different rates according to size; remove each one when it is done.)
2. Meanwhile, put oil in a skillet over medium-low heat. When it is warm, add garlic and cook until fragrant and beginning to soften, about 6 minutes. Add walnuts and continue to cook until they begin to color, about another 4 minutes. Let mixture cool slightly and then put it in a small food processor; process until you have a relatively smooth paste. Add orange juice to taste and sprinkle with salt and lots of pepper.
3. After beets have cooled, peel off skins. (I don't bother; I *like* beet skins.) Slice beets into wedges or cubes and toss with dressing. Taste and adjust seasoning, garnish with parsley and serve. Or arrange beets on a bed of lettuce leaves, with a bit of lemon basil. Serves 4.



Summer Pruning Fruit Trees

If you want to keep your young deciduous fruit trees small and easily harvestable, summer pruning is essential. Now is the time. Most of us associate pruning apple and pear trees with the winter dormant season, when it's important to work on a tree's shape. But summer pruning has many benefits, too. For home gardeners with one or several apple or pear trees, it's quick and easy. The biggest benefit is a greater quantity of fruit relative to the size of the tree. Pruned trees channel more nutrients into fruit production, improving flavor by making more sugars available to the

developing fruit by slowing foliage growth. The fruit grows larger, blushed or red types develop better color and disease resistance is enhanced. Pruning opens up the tree and improves air circulation. Summer pruning has a dwarfing effect, too, saving space for those with small gardens and making harvesting easier. The best time to prune is when new growth is about the thickness of a pencil, the stem tip succulent and the base starting to become woody. There's a demonstration workshop by pruning experts Orin Martin and Matthew Sutton coming up on **Saturday, July 31, 10 am - 1 pm**, at the Louise Cain Gatehouse, UCSC Farm. Wear comfortable shoes and bring a snack. \$15 for Friends' members; \$20 general public, payable at the workshop. No pre-registration necessary. Questions? Call 831.459-3240 or email casfs@ucsc.edu.



Growing Power, Inc.

Bill Patterson said, "I'd like to direct your attention to one of the people in **Time 100: World's Most Influential People**, Time Magazine's annual list, under "Heroes": former basketball star Will Allen of Milwaukee's **Growing Power Inc.** When I Googled this site I found inspiration. They encompass so much more than just growing plants. Rather the complete farming cycle, dirt, worms, chickens, bees, fish - goats! Is our club up to supporting a Santa Cruz chapter of Growing Power? Perhaps we can find a speaker who can tell us more about it?"

Grow

Bloom

Thrive

What makes someone who promotes "urban farming" a hero? Allen was identified for his powerful advocacy for food security and food justice for all. Through his work promoting urban agriculture, Allen has called attention to the widespread existence of "food deserts" in cities across America, where whole



communities lack access to fresh, nutritious and affordable foods. The solutions Allen has proposed and argued for in the 18 years since he founded Growing Power, a non-profit urban farm and training center in Milwaukee, includes localized food systems and teaching communities where good food is unaffordable to grow it themselves. The creed of Growing power is "Grow,bloom, thrive", applied to people and community as well as plants. Rather than embracing the "back to the land" approach promoted by many within the sustainable agriculture movement, Allen's holistic farming model incorporates both cultivating foodstuffs and designing food distribution networks in an urban setting.

His is a unique synthesis of a variety of low-cost farming technologies – including use of raised beds, aquaculture, vermiculture and heating greenhouses through composting. His main 2-acre Community Food Center houses 20,000 plants and vegetables, thousands of fish (tilapia), plus chickens, goats, ducks, rabbits and bees. People come from around the world to to observe and learn.

In 2008, Allen won the prestigious "genius grant" from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. Over the last decade, Allen has expanded Growing Power's initiatives through partnerships with local organizations and activities such as the Farm-City Market Basket Program, which provides a weekly basket of fresh produce grown by members of the Rainbow Farmer's Cooperative to low-income urban residents at a reduced cost. The internships and workshops hosted by Growing Power engage teenagers and young adults, often minorities and immigrants, in producing healthy foods for their communities and provide intensive, hands-on training to those interested in establishing similar farming initiatives in other urban settings. Through these and other programs still in development, Allen is experimenting with new and creative ways to improve the diet and health of the urban poor.

Growing Power's Vision:
Inspiring communities to build sustainable food systems that are equitable and ecologically sound, creating a just world, one food-secure community at a time.
For more information, visit
www.growingpower.org.

The culture of Garden Clubs



First official meeting of the Woman's National Farm & Garden Association, Pennsylvania School of Horticulture for Women, May 1914

Bill asked if The Gardeners' Club might be interested in doing a project inspired by Growing Power. What a hard question to answer! Many of our members are very engaged in all sorts of community projects and volunteer at various horticulture and conservation groups - Cabrillo, the Arboretum, the California Native Plant Society, Master Gardeners, Life Lab, The Homeless Garden Project, etc. Many of us are increasingly overwhelmed by our own gardens and the thought of taking on one more project sends us over the edge. Yet many of our members are the first to volunteer when a workday is

planned to help a gardener who is has had a crisis, injury or loss. We have a culture of caring in our garden club.

If you look at gardening clubs all over the country and the world, the diversity is amazing. Many engage in community projects; some have an emphasis on teaching and learning; others are primarily social. We have a long history. Melita Israel has been a member of our club for 35 years! She has provided us with the early history of our club - here it is:

Memories...In 1975 I moved to Aptos and found the Aptos Garden Club meeting at the Aptos Junior High School (now middle school). The auditorium was filled to standing room only. When Proposition 13 was passed the school told the club it could no longer meet at the school. Rose Costa was able to secure the Aptos Grange Hall. At the same time interest groups broke away to form the Rose Society, the Rhodendron Society, the Native Plant Society, etc. The Aptos Garden Club membership dropped as these groups formed. The Aptos Garden Club could just as soon been the Fuschia Society for all of the great interest in fuschias at the time! The Club usually participated in the CountyFair with garden displays. Awards funded the Club treasury, so no dues were needed. Membership was conferred after someone attended meetings three times. The Club went through some rough times as old members clashed with younger people who wanted to try some new ideas. The older group resigned and new people carried on. To increase membership the club voted to change the name to The Gardeners' Club so people living outside of Aptos would feel welcome to attend.

And we're still here, and thriving! It's been a long while since we discussed what our current mission and purpose is. I think it is an important exercise for any organization to step back and look and where it has been and where it is going, don't you? What do YOU think is our mission and purpose today, this moment, this year, this decade?



Watsonia Leaves

It's midsummer, and the white, pink or red spires of the watsonias that grow prolifically in some of our gardens have shriveled, while the leaves are naturally drying. Did you know you can use watsonia leaves for more than your compost pile? They



are great weaving material for baskets, artistic wall hangings and wreaths. The interesting thing about watsonia leaves is that when you cut the green leaves off, they will dry to a green color. If you let them dry on the plant, they turn a tan, or even a rich mahogany color, and using the different colors in combinations has many possibilities. They need to be soaked before using. For more information, visit The Mad Gnome Strikes Again! (<http://madgnomes.blogspot.com/2009/12/lets-weave.html>).



Be Sharp

Don't go near a plant with blunt pruning shears – cuts must be crisp and clean, so you need a sharp blade. Here are some quick tips on keeping your pruning tools in peak condition:

- Carry a small sharpening stone in your pocket and you can sharpen regularly.
- Little and often are the watchwords.
- Draw the cutting edge of the blade firmly and slowly five or six times over the stone at an angle of about 30°, with the beveled edge of the blade downwards. Pass over the other side of the blade once to remove any fragments of metal.
- Get into the habit of doing it often and your pruners will stay sharp.

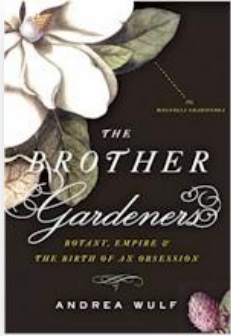
I'm going to add one more thing to carry in my pocket: these instructions, which were adapted from an article by John Hoyland on the fine and useful BBC Gardening website at www.bbc.co.uk/gardening.

Our Board

The last Board meeting generating some exciting new ideas, including the beginning of a new program, **"Show and Share"**. Would you enjoy sharing your garden (a work in progress, of course) with another Gardeners' Club member? Placing your name on a sign-up sheet passed around at each meeting will indicate your interest in hosting a member in exchange with that member inviting you to his or her garden. At your visit, you may just 'talk and walk', or perhaps do a more hands-on mutual 'garden puttering.' The intent is to encourage closer contact between our members and increase the sharing of our plant wisdom. The July Board meeting will be at the home of Patty Connoles in Felton. Come tour her garden at 6p.m., and stay for the business meeting at 6:30 p.m. Her address is 6510 Cooper Street, Felton. If you need directions, call 335-4134 or email pattyconnolesLTR@aol.com. All members are invited to attend.

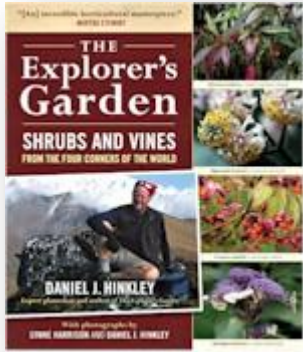
Book Recommendations

Four gardening books published in 2009 have been awarded the American Horticultural Society's annual Book Award. The winning books, listed below, were selected by Marty Ross, contributor for Better Homes & Gardens, Scott Calhoun, garden designer and author based in Tucson, Jane Glasby, associate librarian for the Helen Crocker Russell Library of Horticulture in San Francisco, garden writers Doug Green, of Ontario, Doreen Howard of Illinois, Irene Virag of New York and William Welch, a professor and Extension specialist at Texas A&M University and author of several garden books. The awards are based on qualities such as writing style, authority, accuracy, graphic design, and physical quality.



The Brother Gardeners by Andrea Wulf

“With a well-written and compelling narrative, Andrea Wulf sheds light on a band of 18th century plant-lovers—English and American—who changed the world of gardening,” says Virag. “This book is an important contribution to our horticultural heritage,” notes Welch. “Lest you fear the book is set in staid drawing rooms filled with rattling tea cups and powdered wigs, the text is peppered with tales of English playboys on high seas plant adventures, Tahitian orgies, and glimpses into Benjamin Franklin’s passion for horticulture,” says Calhoun.

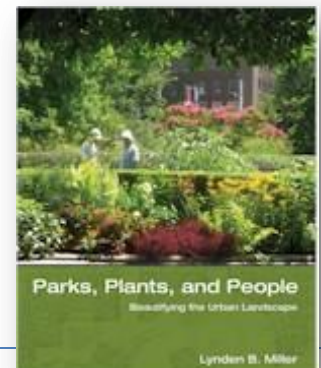


The Explorer's Garden by Daniel J. Hinkley

“This book is a wonderful education in the form of a book,” says Ross. “It offers an opportunity to learn about rare and interesting plants, see them beautifully photographed, and read the fascinating stories about collecting them,” says Welch. “I particularly liked the propagation and hardiness comments Hinkley provided with each plant, and I wound up with a way-too-large must-grow list after reading it,” says Green.

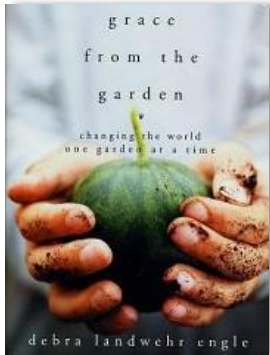
Parks, Plants, and People by Lynden B. Miller.

“In an age where public and common spaces are threatened by underfunding and privatization, Lynden Miller makes a clear case for their continued importance in our lives,” says Glasby. “Though this intriguing narrative about the demise and restoration of some of America’s best-known urban parks and gardens is New York-centered, the general principles apply anywhere,” says Calhoun. “The author offers a lot of great design and planting observations that worked in these public projects, but also would be beautiful in home gardens,” says Marty Ross.



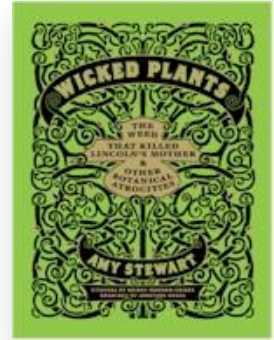
Wicked Plants by Amy Stewart.

"I love Stewart's criteria for inclusion of a plant in this book.....a body count! The histories of various "perps" are entertaining, educational, and spell-binding," notes Howard. "The book contains stories well told, and I love the illustrations, which are appropriately macabre," says Glasby. "Stewart has uncovered a treasure trove of great plant stories, and relates them with a sense of humor," says Virag.



One more recommendation, not on the AHS award list, but extremely inspiring and informative: Grace from the Garden: Changing the World One Garden at a Time

by Debra Landwehr Engle. With people profiles, ideas for sustainability, and great resources for people and the planet, it features 20 creative gardeners from across the country who use gardening as a tool for healing, education, and building community.



speaking of Books!

Our club has begun our own library of quality gardening books and DVDs for loan to our members. You will have an opportunity to peruse the collection at each meeting and check out any single item. Cost is one dollar for the Club treasury or a donation of a quality addition to the library giving you free access to the collection. We welcome your contributions and suggestions! Bill Patterson has "seeded" the library to begin the the collection by donating:

DVD's

"Dirt, The Movie"

"The Complete Gardener: Great Gardening Tips" with guide Steve Brookes

Books

California Gardener's Resource: All you Need to Know to Plan, Plant, and Maintain a California Garden by Bruce and Sharon Asakawa

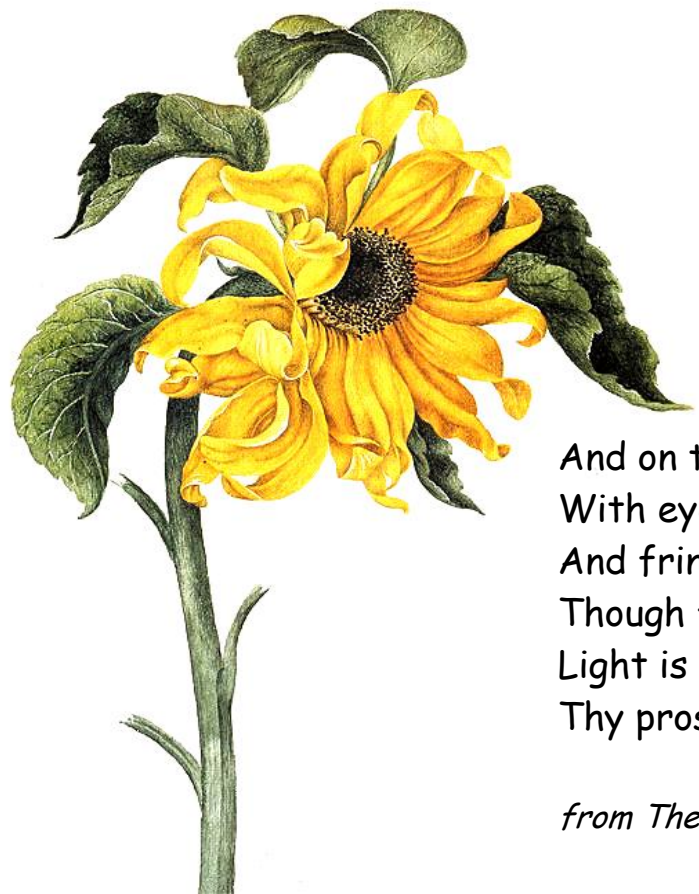
Dirt: The Ecstatic Skin of the Earth by William B. Logan

Forcing, etc. : indoor gardener's guide to bringing bulbs, branches and houseplants into bloom by Katherine Whiteside

Making More Plants: Science, Art, and Joy of Propagation by Ken Druse

Tasha Tudor's Garden by Martin Tovah . . her 19th century lifestyle .

Soil Science and Management, Horticulture Department of Cabrillo College
Horticulture 2 Class Syllabus



Eagle of flowers! I see thee stand,
And on the sun's noon-glory gaze:
With eye like his, thy lids expand
And fringe their disk with golden rays:
Though fix'd on earth in darkness rooted there,
Light is thine element, thy dwelling air,
Thy prospect heaven.

from The Sunflower by James Montgomery 1771-1854

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.

