

# The Gardeners' Club

September 2011—Part II

## Divide & ~~Conquer~~ SHARE



Division is the most common and easiest method of propagating many perennials. It's also a way of rejuvenating perennials that suffer from overcrowding. Most perennials need to be dug up from the ground and divided about every 3-5 years. For many perennials, as the plant spreads, the healthiest part is the outside edge. Roots may become so tightly intertwined they choke off growth. The plants begin to die out in the center, and the whole plant may degenerate from that point on. Dividing an overgrown clump will give you several smaller plants that bloom vigorously because they once again have room to grow. You will notice increased vigor in the original plants and the divisions.

More reasons to divide this month: to make more room in your garden for the plants you'll acquire next month at the Club's fall plant sale and trade, and at such events as the Arboretum/California Native Plant Society fall sale...and, to have more plants to share and trade!

To divide a perennial means to dig up a clump of plants, divide the clump into smaller sections with roots and upper growth intact, and then to replant the smaller sections (divisions). The exact method depends on the type of root system of the particular perennial. Rhizomous perennials such as iris and bergenia are easy to lift. Shake off the soil so that it's easy to see the vigorous new rhizomes growing on the outside of the clump. Cut away the old parent rhizome, and either replant the new rhizomes, or trade or give

them away. Shallow-rooted perennials such as primrose, and young, fibrous-rooted perennials such as black-eyed Susan and aster can be dug up and then divided by hand. Simply shake off the soil and pry them apart into several divisions.

Old, overcrowded perennials as well as some with very tightly intertwined root systems (daylilies, for instance) can be dug up and then separated using two spading forks back to back to pry apart the root mass. Perennials with woody crowns should be cut apart with a knife. Some old, overgrown perennials can only be divided by hacking them apart with a machete or spade.

Keep your divisions moist until you replant them. If you are putting them back in the ground, take advantage of this time to add compost, organic fertilizer and/or other amendments to the bed. After you have replanted, water and mulch. Your rejuvenated plants will have plenty of time in the fall and winter to settle in and establish roots, and will reward you next spring and summer with healthy new growth.

By the way, not all plants tolerate dividing. Attempting to divide columbine, hollyhock, baptisia and Oriental poppy will often kills them, or set them back severely. For hellebores, rather than dividing, scout around the edges of the plants for babies to dig up and replant.

Credit for these corrections goes to Blooms4All.com.

## Picture This...

Remember to keep photographing your garden for our November "virtual tour" slide show of members' gardens. People have been asking whether or not they can contribute printed photographs (you know, those old fashioned paper things we used to look at before digital images took over!) The answer is yes, of course; we'll scan them into our PowerPoint presentation.



# The Blogiverse

It's a dilemma—do you spend your days reading about gardening on the many outstanding blogs on the web, or do you actually go outside and garden? For those of you who use the internet, here are some blog highlights that might be of interest. For those of you who don't spend all of your time going where ever Google leads you, enjoy being in the dirt!



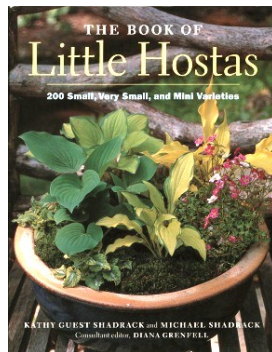
Would you believe that sometimes

more stress in your life can be a good thing? At Gardening Gone Wild ([www.gardeninggonewild.com/?p=17919](http://www.gardeninggonewild.com/?p=17919)), succulent maven Debra Lee Baldwin tells you how to stress

succulents to encourage intense coloration. Then you can link to her video ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=665\\_dhC9kyw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=665_dhC9kyw)), replete with gorgeous before and after photos, on the same subject. Debra assures us, "No plants were harmed during the making of this movie although a few were unhappy".



Over at [www.gardenrant.com](http://www.gardenrant.com), Elizabeth Licata blogs "They shrunk the hostas!" She writes about what's new in the world of tiny hostas (who knew?) and reviews *The Book of Little Hostas* by Kathy and Michael Shadrack.



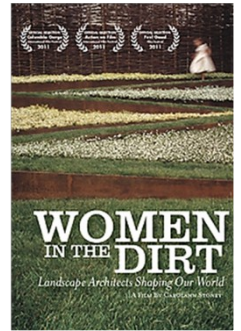
Conceived by Portland garden blogger Megan Hansen of Nestmaker ([www.nestmaker.com](http://www.nestmaker.com)), Plant Lust, which is new and still being developed, is basically an on-line resource for really interesting plants. It provides searchable information about the plants, a diversity of photos, and links to the nurseries where they can be found.

Explore Plant Lust at <http://plantlust.com>.

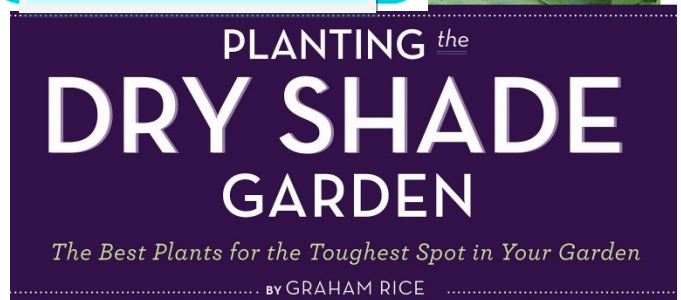


Over at Fresh Dirt, the Sunset Magazine blog (<http://freshdirt.sunset.com/>), learn about **Women in the Dirt**, a new documentary about the groundbreaking work of seven landscape architects. Their projects combine awareness of architectural and landscape

principles, concern with sustainability, safety and beauty. The scope of their work ranges from private homes to vast public projects. Through conversations with the landscape architects in their offices, or in the stunning spaces they've designed, the film explores each woman's personal aesthetics and approach to their discipline, showing how these "masters of the obvious" create the sublime.



We are so interested in this DVD, as well as one we've told you about previously, **Queen of the Sun: What are the bees telling us?**, that the Club is going to purchase both of them to add to our lending library.



Timber Press has published a new book by renown author/gardener Graham Rice. "Dry shade is that space under a tree, deck, or overhang where nothing grows. There's no sunshine, and no moisture. It's a space that strikes fear in the heart of the most intrepid gardener. Fortunately, by choosing the right plants, it's possible to turn that dead space into a lush landscape." And guess what? Heucheras are part of the solution! If you, like me, are an out-of-control Heuchera enthusiast, visit the eucheraholics website.







## You are Invited to a Succulent Extravaganza!

You are cordially invited to a **FREE** two-day event that will celebrate succulents in all their diversity and fabulousness. In the wild, in the garden, in containers, on the wall...succulents are everywhere! There will be a stellar lineup of speakers, and food, music, hands-on activities and prizes as well.

**Friday, September 30, 9:00 AM—5:00 PM**  
**Saturday October 1, 9:00 AM—4:00 PM**

**Succulent Gardens Nursery**  
**2133 Elkhorn Road, Castroville, CA 95012**  
**831-632-0482** [www.sgplants.com](http://www.sgplants.com)

### EVENT SCHEDULE

#### Both Days

**9a - 10a** Coffee, tea and local treats.

#### **9:30a - 11a** Habitat

Walk through the nursery led by Brian emble, curator of the Ruth Bancroft Garden.

**Hypertufa Demonstrations**  
 by David Jessup of Green Collar Guy Design, Boulder, Colorado.

#### Friday September 30

##### **11am - 12pm**

**Succulents and the Calif. Landscape.** Randy Baldwin , Grower & Gen. Manager, San Marcos Growers, Santa Barbara, California.

##### **1 pm—2 pm**

**Designing with Succulents in the California Landscape**  
 Debra Lee Baldwin ,author of *Designing with Succulents and Succulent Container Gardens*.

##### **2 pm - 3pm**

**Growing Aloe Polyphylla, the Spiral Aloe.** Alan Beverly owner of Ecoscapes brings a lifetime of experience growing A. polyphylla from seed.

##### **3p - 4p Echeveria in Habitat**

Brian Kemble presents his amazing collection of images showing many varieties of Echeveria in the wild.

##### **4 pm - 5pm A Grower's Tour of Succulent Gardens**

Robin Stockwell

#### Saturday October 1

##### **11 am- 12 p m. Designing with Succulents in the California Landscape**

Debra Lee Baldwin ,author of *Designing with Succulents and Succulent Container Gardens*.

##### **1 pm—2 pm. Landscaping with Succulents**

Jarrold Bauman of Zeterre Landscape Architecture and Davis Dalbok of Living Green discuss and demonstrate the bold and unique way they use succulents in their work.

##### **2-3 pm. Regionalism with an Emphasis on Succulents**

Jeffrey Gordon Smith, author and award-winning landscape architect.

##### **3-4 p.m. Vertical Gardening with Succulents**

Robin Stockwell.



The **September Board Meeting**, Sept. 26th, will be at Dee Weybright's astounding , unique Bonny Doon garden. Join us even if you aren't a Board member at 400 Towee Dr. at 6PM for a garden tour and 6:30 for the business meeting. Call 426-3028 for directions.



What's better than the annual fall UCSC Arboretum plant sale? **Free plants!** Mark your calendar and hold the date—Saturday, October 8th. **There will be free plants given away on the hour**, each hour from 11 to 3pm! More information in the next newsletter...

The next workday at the Glenwood House will be on October 8th from 10-12. Contact Monica Pielage for details 460-0215 or [mpielage@yahoo.com](mailto:mpielage@yahoo.com).

Ooh! Ooh! The Gardeners' Club Fall Plant Sale & Swap is only a month away (October 13th)! Have you been sowing, dividing, taking cuttings, repotting? Have you gone through your tool shed and doo-dad shelves to find things you don't need or want anymore? Plants, bulbs, pots, books, garden art, tools, hoses—our fall event is a medley of opportunity not to be missed!



## Fall 2011 Horticulture Lecture Series

Thursday Evenings, 7:00 to  
8:30 pm

**Cabrillo College Environmental  
Horticulture Center  
Room 5005, "Top of the Campus"**

The series of five lectures is \$40 when purchased as a series, or \$10 per lecture if attended individually. Friends of the Garden member entrance is half price, Cabrillo horticulture volunteers and current Horticulture students are free.

**September 22nd: Save the Flavor for Later!** Creative ways to enjoy garden bounty throughout the year, using basic food preservation. Speaker: Karla Hart DeLong (Mountain Feed & Farm Supply)

**October 6th: Perennial food plants for home landscapes.** Speaker: Ernie Wasson (Cabrillo Horticulture Dept.)

**October 20th: The resurgence of backyard food gardens and emerging trends in family and children's gardens.** Speaker: Kate Purcell (Kate's Kitchen Gardens)

**Nov 3rd: Citrus and blueberries for coastal gardens.** Speaker: Aaron Dillon (Four Winds Nursery)

**November 17th: Getting started with fruit trees: site/soil evaluation, recommended varieties of pome and stone fruits for SC area.** Speaker: Orin Martin -UCSC Farm & Garden.

Parking is free only in the limited designated spaces at the Horticulture facility. Overflow parking on lower campus is \$2 (quarters only). For more information about the Horticulture program and its facilities, please go to [www.cabrillo.edu/academics/](http://www.cabrillo.edu/academics/)

## Santa Cruz Reskilling Expo

Saturday, September 24  
10:00 to 4:00



Fire by Friction, Bird Language,  
Natural Plant Dyeing for Textiles,  
Poetry as a Community Resource

Museum of Art and History  
705 Front Street, Santa Cruz



The Resilient Garden, Hedgerow Design,  
Plant Propagation, Methods of Compost,  
Beekeeping: Top Bar Hives, Seed Saving,  
Chix in the City, Biodynamic Beekeeping,  
Santa Cruz Grows Seed Library Inaugural



The Medicine of Local Herbs, Fermentation:  
Saure Kraut, Pickles and Kefir, Canning and  
Food Preserving Basics, How To Make Goat  
Cheese, Canning Tomato Jam and Apple Butter

Business Startup Practice and Entrepreneurism,  
Solar Applications for the Home, Neighborhood  
Organizing for Earthquake Preparedness, Whole  
House Energy Conservation, Zero Waste At Home,  
Low-Tech, Inexpensive Solar Water Heating

Graywater: from Laundry to Landscape, Emergency  
To-Go Bins, Open Source for Work and Home, Time  
Banking, Computer Care and Maintenance, Bicycle  
Care and Maintenance, Tool Care and Maintenance

Admission by donation: \$0-\$25  
[reskillingexpo.org](http://reskillingexpo.org)



run from 10 to 4. The Expo will be open from 9 to 5 so you'll have time to start and finish conversations and peruse the Exhibits. Class sessions will be one hour and twenty minutes for in-depth learning.

For a complete schedule and the names of presenters, go to [reskillingexpo.org](http://reskillingexpo.org). Below are a few of the many workshops that might be of interest to our membership.

**10-00 a.m.:** Graywater—  
Laundry to Landscape; Bird  
Language: Tool Use and Care;  
The Medicine of Local Herbs;  
Saure Kraut, Pickles and Kefir;  
Chix in the City, Hens in the  
Hood; Solar Applications for  
the Home.

**11:30 a.m.:** The Resilient Garden;  
Intro to Bio-dynamic Beekeeping;  
Methods of Compost Making; Solar  
Water Heating.

**1:00 p.m.:** Hedgerow Design; Natural  
Plant Dyeing for Textiles; Plant  
Propagation.

**2:30 p.m.:** Seed Saving; Natural  
Beekeeping with Top Bar Hives; Zero  
Waste at Home; Canning and Food  
Preserving Basics; Natural Plant  
Dyeing for Textiles.

Another project of the SC Reskilling Expo is The Santa Cruz Grows Seed Library, which is happily joining a cadre of Seed Libraries nation-wide. One of the Collections will be open at the Museum of Art and History in downtown Santa Cruz beginning September 24. A second Collection will be established at the Live Oak Public Library in October.

The mission is to create a free urban seed project committed to increasing the capacity of our community to feed itself wholesome food by offering seeds and education. We imagine that the no-strings gift of garden seeds will encourage urban food production. The Seed Library celebrates biodiversity through the time-honored tradition of seed saving, nurtures locally-adapted plant varieties, and fosters community resilience, self-reliance and a culture of sharing.

It will operate on the honor system. You become a member when you withdraw seeds to plant. You are not required to return seed. Members are encouraged to learn basic seed saving techniques. Returned seed will allow us to keep the Library well-stocked. We've convened a Grow-Out Collective of experienced gardeners who will commit to growing certain varieties out for Library use. New members are always welcome.



## Fall Expo 2011

**Saturday, September 24th**  
**Museum of Art and History**  
**705 Front St., Santa Cruz**

Reskilling is a revival of old skills, a restorative and ecologically-based methodology. Shared community knowledge helps individuals learn to grow food, harvest rainwater and bring the production of food, water, energy and essential goods closer to home.

At the Fall Reskilling Expo, classes will



# Everything I Know About Pickles

by Lise Bixler



My first memory of a pickle is as a four-year old, fishing a crunchy, garlicky half-sour out of a barrel in New York. Despite the complete failure of my own pickling cucumber crop this year, pungent memories of the Kosher dill pickles my Jewish Ukrainian grandmother used to make each summer motivate me to try to make pickles like she used to.

Like many East European immigrants to the Lower East Side of New York, my Bubbe Frieda brought her recipes and food preferences with her. Did you know that today the Ukraine is the world's biggest exporter of cucumbers? My grandmother didn't grow the cucumbers she used, though, when we moved to California. She'd buy pickling cucumbers at the local market, tasting one to make sure they weren't bitter, and fresh dill and whole heads of fresh garlic.

She'd wash out large jars and lids she'd saved with hot soapy water. Then she'd wash the cucumbers and remove the blossom ends. For about 2 pounds of pickling cucumbers, about 14 of them, she'd throw a few big cloves of garlic, trimmed and peeled, into the bottom of the jar. Then she'd add a couple of fresh dill heads. She'd pack in some cucumbers tightly, then continue to fill each jar with cucumbers, lots of garlic and dill until the jar was full and she'd fit in as many cucumbers in as possible. I almost forgot; she'd also put in 1-3 bay leaves.

Then she'd mix up a pickle brine. You can adjust this recipe to make larger or smaller quantities. For a cup of water, she'd add one tablespoon of Kosher salt (never, never use plain table salt) and a generous tablespoon of pickling spice. You can make your own pickling spice, but it is easy to find it in grocery stores. My grandmother would pour this brine to the top of the jar and shake it around a bit. Then the pickles were ready to...pickle. I remember her putting them outside on a fence board in indirect light...my mother remembers her putting them in the service porch...you can also just keep them on your kitchen counter. Some people put them out with the lids already on but loosely screwed; some people put them out with cheesecloth or a plate on top; some people keep the pickles completely submerged using dried beans at the top until fermentation begins.

In about three or four days, the pickles will start changing color. Then they are ready for lids screwed down to go in the fridge.

Unlike regular dills, real deli-style Kosher pickles are made without vinegar. They get their bite from fermentation. Live



lactobacilli produce lactic acid which makes the old-fashioned pickle taste. The live lactobacilli in fermented vegetables also preserves health benefits that would be lost through heat processing.

Once pickled, these crunchy cucumbers must be kept in the fridge, otherwise the fermentation will continue unabated. The cold greatly slows down the fermentation, but it won't stop it completely. But long before then, you'll have eaten every pickle.

My grandmother also used to make these pickles with

green tomatoes. As a child, I was never brave enough to taste these, but hey, now with the annual what-to-do-with-all-these-green-tomatoes problem, I might just give them a try.

As I bite into a garlicky pickle, I give thanks to my Ashkenazi Jewish ancestors who shared their recipes, to the American public who loved sandwiches so much they decided a pickle spear was a necessary part of American life and to the ancient Chinese, because China is thought to be the birthplace of fermented vegetables.

## Roses in December: Late Summer Pruning

September 17th, 9-10 a.m.

Aptos Farmers Market

A "Dig It" Presentation by

Cynthia Jordan,

Monterey Bay Master Gardener

Roses in your holiday centerpiece? Absolutely! Living on the Monterey Bay means Decembers with some of the best daytime weather in the world. Learn how to take advantage of the extended growing season by extending the beauty of your garden roses. We will discuss late-summer pruning and fertilizing. We will practice turning rose cuttings into new rose bushes. The result is the warmth and beauty of roses at a time when the rest of the garden is preparing to sleep.



" 'I grow old, I grow old,' the garden says. It is nearly October. The bean leaves grow paler, now lime, no yellow, no leprous, dissolving before my eyes. The pods curl and do not grow, turn limp and blacken. The potato vines wither and the tubers huddle underground in their rough weather-proof jackets, waiting to be dug. The last tomatoes ripen and split on the vine; it takes days for them to turn fully now, and a few of the green ones are beginning to fall off."

- Robert Finch

**Happy first day of Autumn!**  
**On September 23rd, days & nights are of equal length.**

## The Gardeners' Club

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Joe Thompson

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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 1633 Quail Hollow Rd., Ben Lomond, CA 95005. Meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. on the 2nd Thursday of each month at the Aptos Grange Hall, 2555 Mar Vista Dr., Aptos.

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