

The Gardeners' Club

Santa Cruz County, California

August 2012

Writer/Editor: Lise Bixler
lisebixler@sbcglobal.net

Water conservation: challenges and solutions

Our August meeting will feature water conservation professionals from the City of Santa Cruz Water Department and the Soquel Creek Water District who will talk about our area's water supply, current short and long-term water shortage challenges and solutions, including tools and programs available to help local gardeners conserve water. They will also discuss the value of gardening to our community's economy and quality of life, and the role that our local water supply plays in supporting the important relationship between plants and people. Discussion, questions and exchange of ideas will be

encouraged!

The three persons coming to our meeting to give their talk and PowerPoint presentation are Leigh Ann Gessner, Conservation Outreach Coordinator, Soquel Creek Water District; Ron Duncan, Conservation and Customer Service Field Manager, Soquel Creek Water District; and Toby Goddard, Water Conservation Manager, City of Santa Cruz Water Department.

Bring your questions and suggestions, and be prepared to learn a lot about resources and strategies for gardeners.

Thursday, August 9th, 7:00 p.m.
Aptos Grange, 2555 Mar Vista Drive
Refreshments will be served. Thanks to Brenda Schmida for snack, Marcia Meyer for dessert and Ellen Treen for juice.



Here at the Bixler homestead, much is awry. Seeing that husband Cliff was unable to defend the house due to a broken shoulder, a field mouse chewed through a wall and a water pipe and caused a major house flood. When in a stressful situation like this, where best to turn but to the garden for grounding and peace? You'll see me for sure at this author event at the Capitola Book Café.

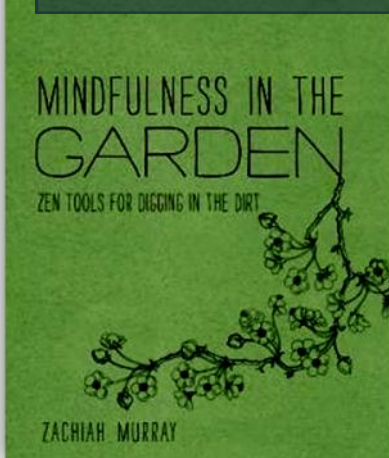
Mindfulness in the Garden: Zen Tools for Digging in the Dirt **ZACHIAH LAURANN MURRAY**

What is mindfulness? It is an awareness of what is around us and within us in the moment so that we can see deeply without being caught in the past or the future. Gardening encourages mindfulness because it requires our

immediate attention and the attention of all our senses. Local author Zachiah Murray likens cultivating a garden to spiritual practice and inspires each person to accept themselves and start where they are, weeds and all. Through the practice of mindful gardening, we invite not only the thriving of the natural world but also the flowering and beauty of the pure land of our true self to emerge.

"Mindfulness poems, also called gathas, help us to dwell in the present moment and to be deeply aware of the action we are doing so that we can perform it with understanding and love." —Thich Nhat Hanh

Tuesday, August 7 at 7:30pm
Capitola Book Café
1475 41st Ave, Capitola CA 95010
(831) 462-4415
capitolabookcafe.com





*A comprehensive course
in organic gardening*

Garden Cruz: Organic Matters

Home gardeners, school garden teachers, urban agriculture leaders, take note: a comprehensive organic gardening course is being offered this summer and fall by the Friends of the UCSC Farm & Garden at the historic Alan Chadwick Garden and UCSC Farm on the UC Santa Cruz campus.

Designed to accommodate busy work-week schedules, the "Garden Cruz: Organic Matters" course begins Wednesday, August 29 and takes place on eight consecutive Saturdays from 8:30 am–4 pm and five Wednesday evenings from 6:30–8:30 pm, with the last class meeting on Saturday, October 27.

The course is taught by staff and graduates of the renowned UCSC Farm & Garden Apprenticeship Program, along with invited experts. The series of classes provide a solid foundation to further your lifelong study, enjoyment, and practice of organic gardening and is timed to take advantage of the late summer and fall gardening season. Through lectures and hand-on practice in the gardens, orchards, and greenhouses of the Chadwick Garden and UCSC Farm, this intensive organic gardening course will immerse you in the basic skills and knowledge you need to develop your own organic garden

"from the ground up."

Topics will range from compost preparation, soil analysis, bed preparation and planting, to sexual and asexual propagation, irrigation, pest and disease control, and fruit tree care, and will include workshops on individual crops, backyard chicken and duck raising, bee keeping, and more. Please see <http://casfs.ucsc.edu/gardencruz> for additional information.

Garden Cruz is ideal for community members and students involved in campus and community gardens, or looking to enhance their ability to grow food and flowers at home and develop their urban homesteading skills.

Cost of the course is \$1,200, with a \$100 discount for Friends of the Farm & Garden members. Sign up by August 10 and receive an additional \$50 "early bird" discount. Enrollment is limited to ensure a high quality learning experience.

To register, please contact Amy Bolton at 831.459-3240 or casfs@ucsc.edu. A \$300 deposit is required to hold your place in the class, with the balance due by August 24. Please send deposit checks **made payable to UC Regents** to: UCSC Farm & Garden, 1156 High Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95064, Attn: Amy Bolton.

Editing the Garden in Summer

Author Ann Lovejoy has a nice blog at Log House Plants (www.loghouseplants.com/blogs/greengardening) you might enjoy.

In a recent entry, "Getting the Gold from Overgrown Gardens" she says, "After the slow, wet spring, the gardens are lush and full, packed with foliage and bursting with blooms". She comments that the roses are outrageous, and dozens of plants are twice their usual size. But she also notes that many

of us are facing too much of too many good things. We optimistic gardeners over-plant, which works when all is small, but as plants mature...well, you know what happens. Spacing problems develop. Some are easily resolved; we can thin trees for more light and air, and, if there somewhere for them to go, we can move shrubs and perennials.

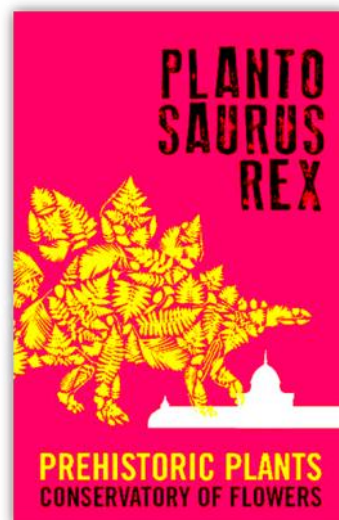
Ann says, "High summer is a terrific time to make editing decisions about which plants (or branches) could or should go to allow room for the proper development of others. However, decision time is not action time. If we want transplants to survive and thrive, it's far better to wait until autumn for their big move".

What to do with the plants we have too many of or don't want or need anymore? We can share them at The Gardeners' Club, of course. But we can also look around at our community for other opportunities to share garden beauty – perhaps schools, libraries, nursing homes, Habitat for Humanity, churches, community projects, parks. You can give plants away by posting on Craig's List or Freecycle, too – sometimes people will even come and dig them up to take them away.

I'm enjoying the editing process. It makes me really slow down and think and notice and reflect. Since I'm definitely an overplanter, never quite sure if a plant will "make it" when I plant it, I do have many areas where plants have run amok, others that are overly-crowded and others for which I've just lost enthusiasm. I look forward to ongoing editing and revising – it is change and evolution that makes gardening such an exciting venture.



Plantosaurus Rex is open Tuesdays-Sundays from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. and is included with admission to the Conservatory. Admission



Plantosaurus Rex Prehistoric Plants at the Conservatory of Flowers

Recent issues of this newsletter have given you tidbits of garden history. You now have the opportunity to learn about garden PREHISTORY at the Conservatory of Flowers in Golden Gate Park at the exhibit, Plantosaurus Rex.

The exhibit will take visitors on a journey along the timeline of plant evolution during the Mesozoic Era (approximately 250-65 million years ago) and how dinosaurs both evolved with plant life and survived after the breakup of the barren supercontinent Panagea.

The exhibit features replica dinosaurs, including a giant Tyrannosaurus rex with its head bursting out of the roof of the building.

Each of the three periods during the Mesozoic Era will be explained: the Triassic Period, which was marked by major extinction events as animals clung to the sparse vegetation that was available. The Jurassic Period, also known as the "Age of Reptiles," was the heyday for dinosaurs and plants made it possible for them not only to survive, but thrive. The final section looks at the Cretaceous Period, where dinosaurs continued to evolve, especially due to the emergence of angiosperms or flowering plants.

for San Francisco residents is \$5 general, \$3 for youth 12-17, seniors and students with ID, \$1.50 for children 5-11 and free for children 4 and under. Admission for non-residents is \$7 general, \$5 youth 12-17, seniors and students with ID, \$2 children 5-11 and free for children 4 and under.



There are also guided tours available on most days. The exhibit runs through October 21. More information at <http://www.conservatoryofflowers.org/special-events/plantosaurus-rex-prehistoric-plants-conservatory-flowers> , or call 415-831-2090 .

Photo Credits: Conservatory of Flowers



Fairy Garden Workshop

Saturday August 4th, 10:00-12:00
at The Garden Company

2218 Mission Street • Santa Cruz, CA 95060
(831) 429 8424



The information below is from The Garden Company July Newsletter. To subscribe, visit their website at <http://www.thegardenco.com/>

Every now and then a new garden trend comes along that catches me totally off guard. Fairy Gardening is one of those. A couple of years ago when Maria and Amanda returned from the Atlanta Gift Show with Fairy Garden kits I viewed the new product with a great deal of skepticism. Well, as it turns out, they were on to something big. A Fairy Garden is a miniature landscape that is usually created in a container although they could be incorporated into your garden in a manner similar to a miniature railroad garden. Think of it as dollhouse landscaping.

Combinations of dwarf, low growing or slow growing plants are used to simulate shrubs, lawns and groundcovers. Hardscapes such as patios, walkways, stepping stones and

decks are created with sand, gravel, flat stones, small tiles and even Popsicle sticks. One of our staff members named Bethany is so creative that she has carved her own incredibly detailed features out of clay. The level of detail is limited only by your imagination.

The popularity of this activity has grown so much that there are now manufacturers of various Fairy Garden accessories. We are currently stocking picket fences, Adirondack chairs, arbors, wheelbarrows, bird baths, benches, watering cans, flower pot stands, bistro sets, garden tools, stepping stones and more.



Any kind of container can be used, from a clay pot to a wood box or even an old sink or wheelbarrow. Just make sure that there is at least one drainage hole to allow excess water to drain off.

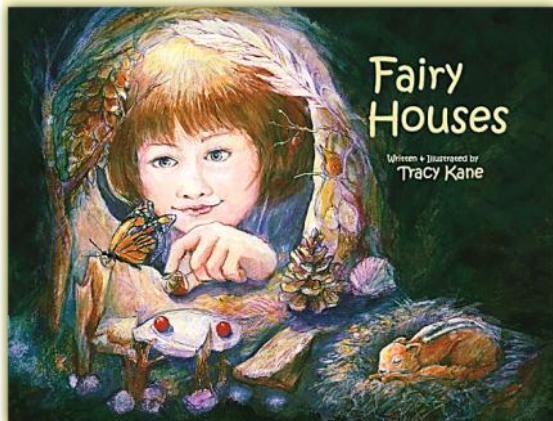
One of the best things about Fairy Gardens is that just about everyone has enough space to grow one on a patio, deck or apartment balcony.

It's a great Zen activity for

adults and a fun craft project to do with kids. And best of all, Fairy Gardens are exempt from drought restrictions.

We sell finished Fairy Gardens at the nursery but if you are interested in building your own, you should reserve a space for our **Fairy Garden Workshop on Saturday August 4th, from 10:00 to 12:00.** We will provide the clay bowl, soil, plants, gravel, furniture, and fairy dust, along with hands-on instruction from Bethany, to help you create your very own basic Fairy Garden. Additional plants and accessories will be available for purchase. There is no per-person fee, just \$40.00 for each garden created, so bring a friend, kids or grandkids to share the fun and creativity. Attendance is limited so we must require pre-payment to reserve a space.

Want to learn more about fairy houses? Go to <http://www.fairyhouses.com> for information, books, ideas and even an opportunity to join a fairy house club. Here's a review taken from that site of the children's book pictured at left:



Fairy House by Tracy Kane (Hardcover 11x 8.5 in. 40 pages / Ages 3 and up)
Kristen sets out to build her own Fairy House in the woods. Little does she realize that Nature wants to get in on the act – with her own cast of characters! Each time, as Kristen checks on her fairy house, there is an unexpected visitor! Irresistible illustrations enhance the anticipation of what will happen next, right up to the surprise ending. Does Kristen really see the fairies? Or is it the influence of a particular place at a special moment? This enchanting story reveals how nature inspires children's imaginations and captures their hearts. It encourages them to cherish and respect wildlife and their habitats, and to create their own fairy houses...anywhere! Includes a guide on how to build your own fairy house!

Cynthia Armstrong is a gifted artist who gives workshops on drawing and painting from nature. She holds a graduate degree from UC Santa Cruz in Science Illustration and a Master's in Education from Stanford University. She has been a freelance illustrator and artist for over 15 years, and a teacher for the past 10 years. If you go to her web site (<http://www.cynthiaarmstrongart.com>) and click on her garden journal, you'll be SO inspired. Here are a couple of her upcoming workshops:

Drawing from Nature: Field Sketching & the Illustrated Journal. August 18; 10am - 2 pm.

Offered by the Santa Cruz Mountain Arts Center.

\$40.00 member/ \$50 non-member per session. Registration/more info: www.mountainartcenter.org/classes.htm#Drawing_from_Nature

Field Sketching and the Illustrated Journal

August 11/12, 2012 9:00am - 3:30 pm

At the UC Santa Cruz Arboretum
Offered by The Santa Cruz Art League.

Journaling helps us to slow down to really see and appreciate the world around us. This course is designed for those who love being in nature and wish to record their experiences in the form of an illustrated journal. The basic elements of watercolor, color pencil, pen and ink wash will be covered as well as the fundamentals of layout and design to create a pleasing page. Drawing theory from Frederick Franck's "Zen of Seeing," and Betty Edward's "Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain," will be presented to encourage us to turn down

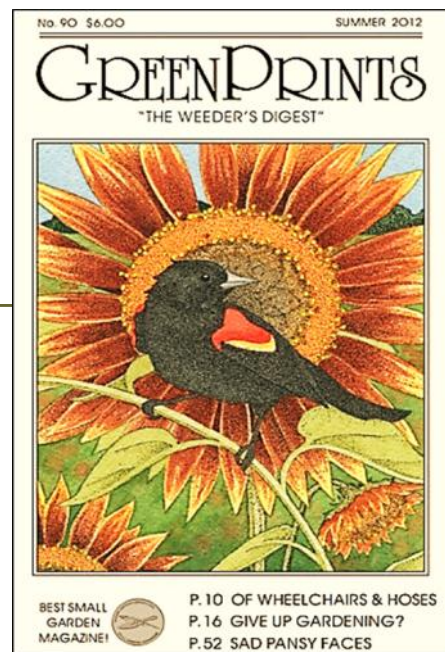
internal critic, free up creativity, and enjoy both the process and the product as we journal our experiences. We will meet at the UC Arboretum to enjoy the glorious weather and views. Bring a sack lunch! Levels: All Time: 9 - 3:30, please bring lunch Fee: \$150 / \$130-Members . Registration: <http://www.prestoregister.com/cgi-bin/order.pl?ref=scartleagu&fm=1>



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Tomato Cuttings

Here we are at the time of the growing season when it is too late to start tomatoes from seed. But maybe a neighbor has an heirloom plant thriving and you want it desperately? Take a stem cutting, and you can have the same tomato growing in your garden in a few weeks. This is called cloning, and it is easy because the cells in the stems turn into roots. Don't forget to save the seeds from your new plant and grow them again next year. The easiest way is to take a sucker, the stem that grows from the point where a fruit producing stem joins with the main stem. The cutting should be 6 inches long and from a newer growth for best results. Dip the cutting in rooting hormone (optional), then stick into well-moistened (damp but not soaking wet) perlite, vermiculite, sand or seed starting mix. Keep moist and in 10-14 days you should have a rooted plant that you can put in the ground. Remember to keep it well watered in the August heat.



A Healthier Barbeque

From <http://www.thewelldaily.com>

There was a time when the very thought of grilling conjured up images of slabs of meat and thick sauces, but times are changing. Here are some healthier substitutions.

- **Greens:** Though they may seem too delicate to grill, heartier lettuce and greens with broad leaves like romaine, kale, Swiss chard and collards make great grill fare. *Brush with olive oil and season with salt, then grill a few minutes on each side until crispy.*
- **Fruit:** Sweet fruit, like stone fruit and pineapple, offer an unexpected twist to the grill. *Cut in half and remove pits/cut pineapple into rings. Brush with olive oil and place on the grill, turning once when grill lines form and the fruit softens.* Grilling brings out the natural sugars in fruit. Serve as a dessert on its own or with a dollop of plain yogurt or vanilla ice cream.
- **Vegetables:** Asparagus, peppers, summer squash, mushrooms and onions are ideal for grilling. *Cut them in uniform chunks—no more than 1" thick—and soak them in cold water for 30 minutes before throwing them on the grill (so they don't dry out).* Skewer them to make kebabs or use a grill basket and season with herbs and spices for an easy, flavorful side dish.



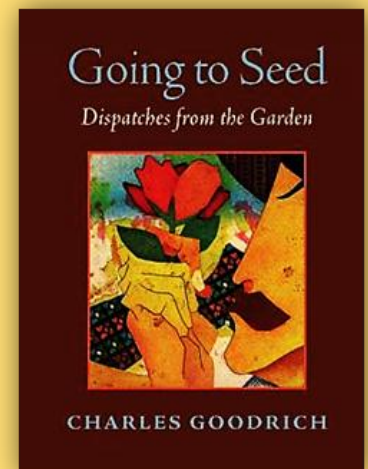
Garden Noir

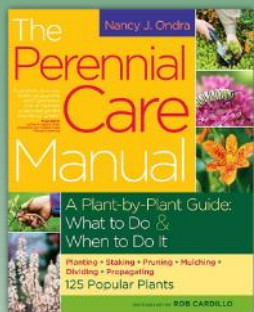
A poem by Charles Goodrich, author of a new collection of prose poems called Going to Seed: Dispatches from the Garden.

Damn. The squashes have crossed again. This one is supposed to be an acorn squash, but it looks like a billy club with warts. How far apart do I have to keep these plants? Some vegetables have no shame.

And look at this: tell-tale spots on the tomato leaves. Under my pocket magnifier, pretty yellow rings with dead tissue in the center. Necrosis, caused by who knows what—a virus, a fungus, a mutant pathogen. Probably infectious. Better rip up the whole lot before it spreads to the peppers.

Listen, you've got to be tough to grow vegetables. Tough, smart, and a little bit mean. Because plants are headstrong and narcissistic, prey to all the sins of the flesh. They'll strangle each other when you aren't looking. Make no mistake—in the quest for food, beauty, and truth, a lot of creatures are going to get hurt.





The best-laid perennial garden designs result in gorgeous beds that bring color and texture to home landscapes. But no matter how perfect the garden, how glorious the color, how eye-catching the combinations, no perennial garden stays beautiful by itself. The plants need tender care - watering, pruning, deadheading, and dividing. With Nancy Ondra's detailed plant-by-plant guide to tending perennials, maintenance is a breeze. Ondra has grown hundreds of today's most popular perennials in her own gardens and has kept detailed notes on how each plant looks through the seasons and what the plants' needs, quirks, and preferences are. All this valuable information is gathered in 125 plant profiles, arranged alphabetically by genus. Each entry features gorgeous, instructive photography by award-winning garden photographer Rob Cardillo, as well as advice on preferred light and soil conditions and complete care and maintenance instructions. What to do and when to do it are as simple as looking up the plant and following an expert gardener's advice. Complementing the plant-by-plant section, Ondra offers in-depth coverage of basic techniques for the perennial gardener. From planning a stunning but easy-to-care-for garden to fertilizing, mulching, propagating, and much more, the home gardener will find every answer to that one big gardening question: How do I keep my perennial beds looking their best - fresh, beautiful, and healthy - season after season?



Upcoming Free Talks

ProBuild Garden Center
235 River St., Santa Cruz 423-0223
(<http://www.facebook.com/ProBuildGardenCenter>)

Second Season Planting with Renee Shepherd

Sat., August 11th, 10 am-12 pm

Expand your gardening season beyond the usual spring and summer! Renee Shepherd, owner of Renee's Garden Seeds, will talk about starting vegetables and flowers from seed NOW for fall planting. Learn how and what to grow for a successful fall harvest.

Bonsai 101

Sat., August 18th 1 pm-3 pm

Learn the basics of Bonsai! Ron Anderson, President of the SantaCruz Bonsai Kai, will dispel the myths in a questions and answer session. Unlock the mysteries of this ancient art form!



Nicotiana Love

Keep your eyes open for an old-fashioned cottage garden favorite, Nicotiana, also known as flowering tobacco, at the Plant Table or at nurseries you visit. They are carefree plants that provide color



Nicotiana glutinosa



Nicotiana - Dwarf Lime Green

and fragrance all summer long.

The genus Nicotiana consists of more than 60 species. They have uniquely beautiful flowers, wonderful fragrance, and graceful appearance in the garden. They are also deer-resistant, and are highly attractive to hummingbirds and butterflies! The trumpet-like, star- or bell-shaped flowers



bloom throughout the season and come in a range of colors and bi-colors, from pure white to shades of pink, red and purple, and even true green. Nicotianas grow best in full sun (8+ hours per day), but will tolerate partial sun or dappled shade. They appreciate fertile, well-drained soil and regular watering.

Daisies

It is possible, I suppose that sometime we will learn everything there is to learn: what the world is, for example, and what it means. I think this as I am crossing from one field to another, in summer, and the mockingbird is mocking me, as one who either knows enough already or knows enough to be perfectly content not knowing. Song being born of quest he knows this: he must turn silent were he suddenly assaulted with answers. Instead

oh hear his wild, caustic, tender warbling ceaselessly unanswered. At my feet the white-petalled daisies

display the small suns of their center piece, their -- if you don't mind my saying so -- their hearts. Of course I could be wrong, perhaps their hearts are pale and narrow and hidden in the roots. What do I know?

But this: it is heaven itself to take what is given, to see what is plain; what the sun lights up willingly; for example -- I think this as I reach down, not to pick but merely to touch -- the suitability of the field for the daisies, and the daisies for the field.

Mary Oliver
(*Why I Wake Early*)



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Plant Table

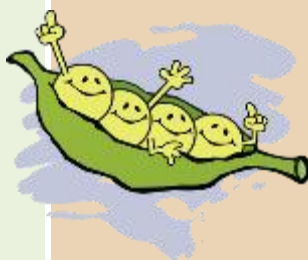
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3rd position - vacant

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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 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 Hall, 2555 Mar Vista Dr., Aptos.

Printed on 100% recycled paper



www.thegardenersclub.org