

# The Gardeners' Club

Santa Cruz Co.unty

December 2014

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## Annual Holiday Potluck & White Elephant Silent Auction

December 11th, 7:00 pm, Aptos Grange, 2555 Mar Vista Drive, Aptos



It's that time of year when we gather, not to trade plants or hear a speaker, but instead to celebrate our gardening friendships. And, bonus time—December is when the White Elephants visit. I've been saving up treasures all year for some of you to take home and give a new home. What special something will YOU bring that one of us MUST have?

First we'll have sumptuous potluck dinner. Bring a dish to share, labeled for the benefit of our vegetarian/vegan members or those with dietary restrictions. Please bring a serving utensil, and if you have hot dish, have it already heated. We'll provide plates, utensils and beverages.

After good eats and grand conversation, the liveliest part of our meeting will start. We'll browse the silent auction tables and discover items we didn't know we needed, and find perfect gifts for family and friends (and maybe ourselves). In the past, we've had all kinds of marvelous things, including jewelry, special plants, clothing, gardening items, good things to eat, books, chotzkes, antiques, crafty things—every year there is something new! We'll have cards available for you to put with your items with a one-line description and minimum bid.

Brings your friends, especially those who might be interested in joining our club, and family or significant others. We won't have the plant sale or business meeting.

## Over-the-Fence Column

My over-the-fence advice this month is to go out-of-the-box about holiday giving. Here's an example: give to an international organization that works to fight hunger and improve sustainability. One such organization is Oxfam, and you can give a modest gift like this one that will really make a difference. They'll even give you a beautiful card to announce your gift to your giftee..

*Help start a farmers' market - \$25*



No tote bag required. Know someone who's a frequent farmers' market shopper? Give this "peas"-ful gift and celebrate the power of fresh, local produce. New farmers' markets in rural areas of Latin America and Africa help growers—especially women—cut out the middleman and earn a fair price.

This gift option and many more at [www.oxfam-americaunwrapped.com/gifts](http://www.oxfam-americaunwrapped.com/gifts).

Marcia Meyer shares this incredible photo taken by her 11-year old granddaughter Danielle Bennett. Can you believe Danielle took it with her I-Pad? She has quite the photographic eye—earlier this year she took a picture of a pumpkin that captured every bead of moisture on its



skin. This photo of a bee in a California poppy should inspire us all of us to notice what goes on in our gardens.

Here's a poem that's perfect compliment Danielle's photograph:

### *Virgil's Bees*

Bless air's gift of sweetness,  
honey  
from the bees, inspired  
by clover,  
marigold, eucalyptus,  
thyme,  
the hundred perfumes of the  
wind.

Bless the beekeeper  
who chooses for her hives  
a site near water, violet beds, no  
yew, no echo. Let the light lilt,  
leak, green  
or gold, pigment for queens,  
and joy be inexplicable but there  
in harmony of willowherb and  
stream,  
of summer heat and breeze,  
each bee's body  
at its brilliant flower, lover-  
stunned,  
strumming on fragrance,  
smitten.

For this, let gardens grow,  
where beelines end,  
sighing in roses, saffron blooms,  
buddleia;  
where bees pray on their knees,  
sing, praise  
in pear trees, plum trees; bees  
are the batteries of orchards,  
gardens, guard them.

"Virgil's Bees" by Carol Ann Duffy, from The Bees.

Rather than cutting down the native flowers in your garden, leave the seed heads and stalks standing until spring for birds to feast on. Set a winter table for wildlife. Seed-eating birds such as juncos and goldfinches flock to the dried flower heads of asters, coneflowers and other native plants at a time when other

food is scarce. Insects pass the winter in dead stalks. If you're fanatical about removing the stalks after the first frost, you'll not only be depriving birds of a source of winter sustenance but also disposing of some of next year's pollinators and other beneficial insects that fertilize native plants and food crops and help keep garden pests in check. Spent stalks, pods and dried flower heads provide structural interest and a stark simple beauty to winter gardens.



## Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History Garden Work Day

1305 East Cliff Dr.- Thursday, December 18th—9:30 am - 11:00 am

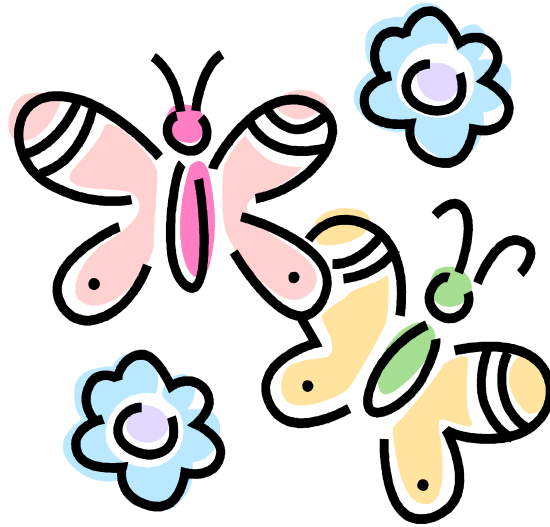
Interested in native California plants and gardening in general? Go on the 3rd Thursday of every month at 9:30 am to the Museum Garden Learning Center and Pollinator Garden! Work alongside experienced Museum garden volunteers to learn all about what can be found in our garden and the surrounding Pilkington Creek area.





# The Gardeners' Club Membership

The time has come for membership renewal. Annual membership dues, which include all benefits, are still only \$12.00, due by is January 1st. The membership year lasts through the end of December, 2015. 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.



Ours is a club celebrating the joys of gardening, friendship, community, learning, nature and growth. Renew your membership now so you won't miss a thing...you'll be glad you did.

And...with gift-giving season here, 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 membership is a gift nobody will want to return!

*Come grow with us!*

## Your 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: \_\_\_\_\_

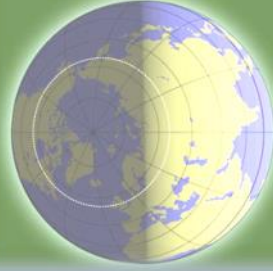
Newsletter Preference (check one): ☐ Full color PDF via e-mail ☐ Paper copy (B&W) via snail mail

Enclose check for \$12 per member made out to *The Gardeners' Club*. Mail to

The Gardeners' Club c/o Suzanne Mercado, P.O. Box 3025, Ben Lomond CA 95005

# happy Winter Solstice!

Longest Night  
December 22nd  
(Winter Solstice)



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## The Gardeners' Club

**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, 2555  
Mar Vista Dr., Aptos.

