

The Gardeners' Club

Santa Cruz County, California

February 2016

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Salvias: old world and New



Kathleen Navarez will be giving us a presentation on salvias at our next meeting. Kathe is Horticulture Instructor at Cabrillo College, which hosts a botanical garden holding one of the largest institutional collections of salvia in the world.

Salvia is the largest genus of plants in the mint family, Lamiaceae, with nearly 1000 species of shrubs, herbaceous perennials, and annuals. They are divided into two parts of the world: the Old World, salvias from Europe, Asia and Africa; and the New World, salvias from the Americas. These diverse groups offer a multitude of choices for gardeners interested in dramatic color, wildlife value (hummingbirds and bees), strong fragrance, drought tolerance, fall display and ornamental and textural foliage. Rumor has it that if you plant them under your roses they will serve as fungicides. They are deer resistant, floriferous, heat tolerant, easy to grow, well-suited to our Mediterranean climate and addictive to collectors—how many salvias can you squeeze in one garden? Kathe is a member of the California Native Plant Society, so she can highlight salvias native to our state.

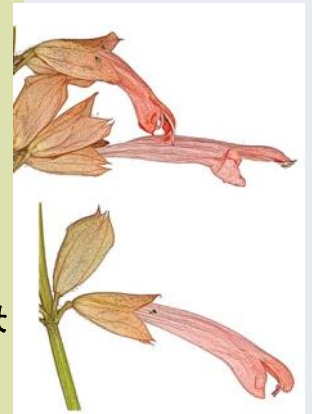
Salvia is named from the Latin verb *salus*, meaning health and prosperity. Kathe maintains a deep interest in the genus *Salvia*, and is very involved with collecting and growing sages from around the world. She is part of the committee actively planning *Salvia Summit III* which will be held at Tilden Regional Botanic Garden in October 2016.

We are sure to learn a lot from Kathe, and will marvel at the photos she'll share. Should be an exciting and informative meeting!



Thursday, February 11th
7:00 pm, Aptos Grange
2555 Mar Vista Dr., Aptos

Refreshments will be served. Thanks to Julie Pendergast for snack, Ilene Wilson for dessert and Carolyn Dobbins for beverages.



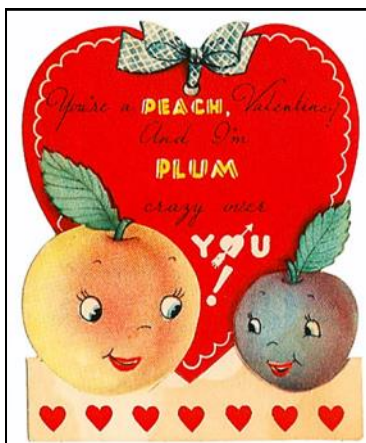
New Aprium



If you like apricots, this might be just what you need. Within the last several years, a new fruit type hit the market called an Aprium® which is a complex interspecific hybrid, predominantly of apricot and plum lineage. Apriums®, like that of apricots, have scant fuzz and resemble an apricot in the expression of its parentage. An Aprium® has the attributes of both a plum in growth and an apricot in fruit appearance and expression. Aprium® is a registered trademark by Zaiger Genetics, which has developed hybrids of different fruits for the past 40 years and are known for such popular and tasty creations as the Pluot®, Dwarf Almonds, and White Nectarines.

The newest variety of Aprium® is called Leah Cot Aprium® Interspecific Apricot. It is just like a regular Apricot but bigger and sweeter. Being self-fruitful, Leah Cot Aprium® requires less than 500 hours of chilling below 45 degrees F.

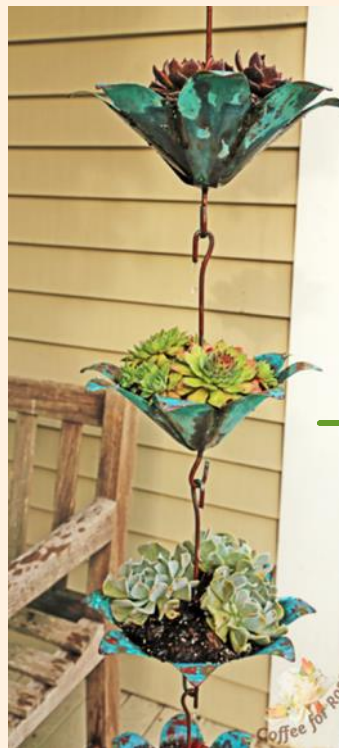
Despite being an early midseason fruit, June 5 to June 15 approximate for central California, Leah Cot is a reliable producer, has rich apricot-like flavor, firm texture, deep orange flesh, and smooth golden orange skin. Having a fruit that is the size of a fist (which is double to triple the size of a traditional apricot), Leah Cot's intense and unique flavor, which is much like a blend of fruit juices, is an improvement over any of the separate ingredients. It is an extremely sweet fruit that tastes like candy. If you need another Aprium® to be harvested after the widely popular Flavor Delight Aprium®, then this is your answer: you'll have Apriums the whole month of June.



Check out This Blog

I stumbled upon a great blog that I think you'll enjoy. Coffee for Roses (<http://coffeeforroses.com/>) "is for busy

people who want to add more beauty, fun, health, creativity and meaning into their lives. For us, all of these connect in the garden and the kitchen. " You'll find information and inspiration here about plants, gardening, cooking and nature crafts. Author C.L. Fornari's goal is to "spark splendor in your day", and she chose the title because we think of coffee for jump-starting and roses for adding beauty to our lives.



I particularly enjoyed two of her posts. One shows her process for making a succulent planter out of a rain chain. In the other, "Welcoming A New Dog to the Garden", she writes about , after her old dog dies, how she introduces a new rescue dog to her life and her garden.

"Getting a new dog is like planning a new garden: you take a leap of faith, some know-ledge and hope, and then discover where the process takes you."



UC Master Gardeners of Monterey Bay shared Benton Mckibben's photo

Earwigs: Surprisingly Human

"You may shudder when you spot an earwig in the garden, but they have their good side, too. They feed on aphids, mites, and insect larvae; they provide food for birds, toads, and other creatures; and – believe it or not – they care for their eggs and young."

"After mating in the fall, the male and female earwig spend the winter together in a shallow burrow in debris or soil. In early spring the female lays her eggs and then tends them for a week or so until they hatch, continuously cleaning them to prevent the growth of fungi and protecting them from predators. When they hatch, the nymphs cluster under their mother like baby chicks and she feeds them by regurgitating, just like birds do." —Old House Gardens, <https://www.oldhousegardens.com/news/Aug15>.



You can mix ¼ teaspoon dish washing soap to 3 cups of water in a spray bottle. Squirt the earwigs with the mixture when you find them hiding in damp places and under rocks.

You can make an earwig trap using empty margarine tubs or pop cans. Half-fill the margarine tub or soft drink can with used, soapy dishwater. Turn it on its side and bury the trap halfway in a shady spot in your garden or around the yard. Use flat beer instead and your traps will also catch slugs. After a couple of days empty and refill the trap with used dishwater or beer.



Okay, so maybe they have some good points, but what to do if they are chewing up your plants? Mulch and garden debris are where they hide at night, so you might want to clear the area at the base of your favorite plants.

You can try using a floating row cover to keep your plants safe underneath. Lay it early in the season before earwigs start to get out and roam.

Another trap can be made by filling an empty tuna can with a half-inch of vegetable oil. Empty and refill when you need to. Stuff a power towel tube with straw or weeds and lay it on the ground near plants as a trap.

If you have a severe problem with earwigs try this non-chemical method. Put a damp, rolled up newspaper in the garden each night. This will attract hundreds of earwigs in a heavily infested area. In the morning, dump the newspaper into a large bucket of hot, soapy water to kill the earwigs. Dispose of the wet newspaper in your compost pile.

Good luck!

(Credit: <http://www.typodermic.com/garden/earwig.html>)

Spud Love

Time to plant for future French fries or sautéed new potatoes or potato salad or mashed with garlic or...or...or...

Renee's Garden is now offering organic seed potatoes! Order them at <http://www.reneesgarden.com/seeds/seeds-hm/potato.htm>. Another good source with many unusual varieties is High Mowing Seeds, <http://www.highmowingseeds.com/organic-non-gmo-potatoes.html>.

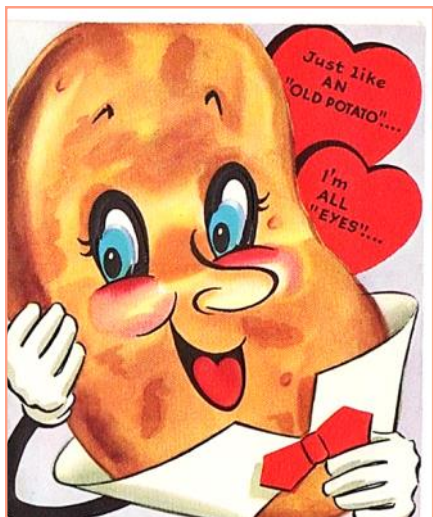




Photo by Pete Vellieux, East Bay Wilds

California's New Front Yard: Creating a Low-Water Landscape

Transform your thirsty lawn into a beautiful, water-saving, wildlife-friendly landscape featuring drought-tolerant trees, native grasses, flowers, perennials, and shrubs. Morning talks are followed by instructor-led activities and arboretum tours. This workshop is suitable for homeowners and landscape professionals alike, so all are welcome!

Advance registration required. [Register on-line at www.cnga.org](http://www.cnga.org).



Thursday, February 11, 2016

8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. 8:00 a.m. Coffee and networking

UC Santa Cruz Arboretum, Horticulture II Meeting Hall

Workshop fee: \$25 CNGA members/\$30 non-members

Course fee includes morning refreshments, lunch, and course materials



Expert instructors will present step-by-step methods of design, plant selection, lawn removal, rainwater harvesting and irrigation best practices to make the most out of every drop!



Speakers include:

- Andrew Fulks, Assistant Director, UC Davis Arboretum
- Martin Quigley, Director, University of Santa Cruz Arboretum
- Brett Hall, California Native Plant Program Director, UCSC Arboretum
- Jon Laslett, Senior Project Manager & Ecologist, Ecological Concerns
- Dakotah Bertsch, Landscape Designer & Project Manager, Ecological Concerns



Registration Form for California's New Front Yard Workshop February 11, 2016
University of Santa Cruz Arboretum, 1156 High Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95064

Mail to: CNGA, P.O. Box 72405 Davis, CA 95617

Register online via PayPal at: www.cnga.org

Registration Fees: ☐ \$ 25 CNGA Members

☐ \$30 non-members

Participant's name (print or type, please) _____

Participant's organization or agency _____

Mailing address: Street _____ **City** _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____

Preferred phone _____ **Preferred email** _____

☐ Payment by check made payable to *California Native Grasslands Association*

☐ Payment by credit card (please check type) ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ American Express

Card number _____ **Exp. Date:** _____

Name on card: _____

For more information please email the California Native Grasslands Association at admin@cnga.org

Garlic for Chicken Health: An Excerpt from The Chicken Health Handbook

Garlic fights cold and flu in humans, and it can give backyard chickens an immune system boost, too.

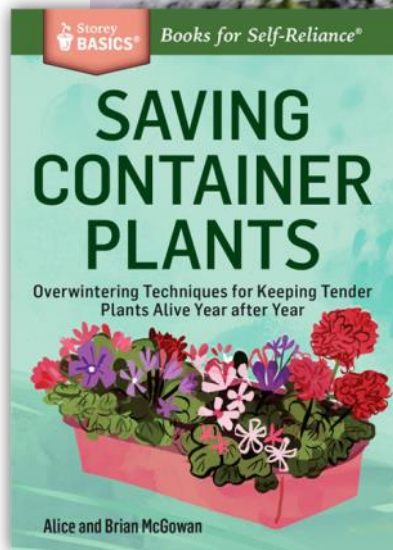


"If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is" does not entirely apply to garlic, which has so many beneficial properties that researchers haven't yet discovered them all. On a basic level garlic contains oligosaccharides — prebiotics that stimulate the growth of beneficial bacteria in the large intestine, thus stimulating immunity. Small amounts of crushed raw garlic fed to baby chicks twice a week not only help their immune systems develop but also get them used to the flavor so they will be more likely to accept it later in life.

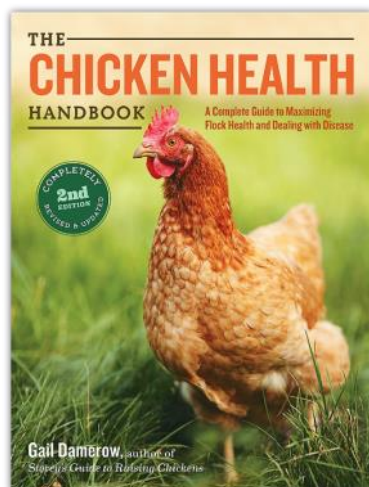
Raw garlic may be used to boost the immune system of a droopy mature chicken by serving as an appetite stimulant. Add crushed garlic to the drinking water at the rate of four cloves per gallon, providing fresh garlic water daily.

Text excerpted from The Chicken Health Handbook, 2nd Edition ©1994, 2015 by Gail Damerow. For more of the excerpt and ordering information, go to <http://blog.storey.com/2015/12/garlic-for-chicken-health-excerpt-from.html>.

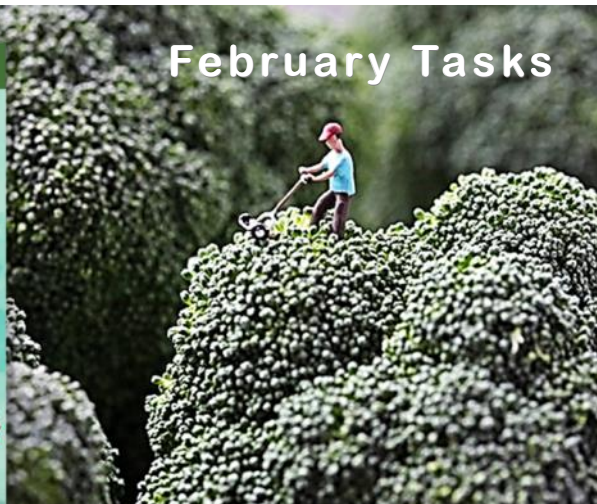
Another great resource from Storey Publishing is Saving Container



Plants. Enjoy your favorite container plants year after year! From geraniums to fuchsia and beyond, many container plants can be overwintered and enjoyed again the next season. Alice and Brian McGowan offer simple techniques for overwintering a variety of common tender perennial plants, based on what kind of dormancy the plants go through in their native environment. You can easily overwinter most plants with few to no pest problems, simply by giving them the dormancy conditions they need. Includes a plant-by-plant guide for quick reference.



February Tasks



Buy tomato seeds and start them indoors.

Tomatomania's Scott Diagre says for our coastal climate to look for short season tomatoes; those that ripen in less than 70 days. (Look for DTM or Days to Maturity on the label) These will reliably flower and fruit in more temperate situations. Stupice, Early Girl, Fourth of July, Siberian, Jaune Flamme, Golden Mama, Gardener's Delight and many others fit the bill. You can also start seeds of eggplant and peppers.

Add organic matter. Top dress soil with a thick layer of mulch, compost or aged manure for dramatically healthier plants in the spring.

For spring bloom, plant perennials such as alstroemeria, bleeding heart, campanula, catmint, columbine, coral bells, delphinium, dianthus, diascia, foxglove, linaria, marguerites, scabiosa and violets. Set out roots of artichokes and asparagus and seedlings of broccoli, cauliflower, green onions and lettuce.

Spray for peach leaf curl when buds are beginning to swell but before they open.

Wait to prune frost-damaged plants for at least another month.

Take a class in growing fruit trees at the UCSC Farm. Feb. 20: Fruit Trees "101": Bare Root Fruit Tree Planting and Basic Care Feb. 27: Home Grown: Citrus Workshop for the Home Gardener and Small-Scale Farmer. More information: <http://casfs.ucsc.edu/news-events/events/index.html>.



Prune your roses!

The Perfect Gift for Your Valentine!
(or for yourself, because taking care of yourself is really important)



The Roo Garden Apron

 **The Roo**
It's not a garment, it's a tool.

An apron that allows you to multitask. Weed, harvest, pick-up items, carry tools and... keep your hands free. Once it's full, easily dump its contents from the bottom chute. Done and done!

<http://www.rooapron.com/>



Have You Renewed Your Membership?

Don't dilly dally—if you haven't renewed, this will be your last newsletter. Write a check for \$12 made out to The Gardeners' Club c/o Suzanne Mercado, P.O Box 3025, Ben Lomond, CA 95005.

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Newsletter Preference (check one):

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Black History Month: Honoring Edna Lewis

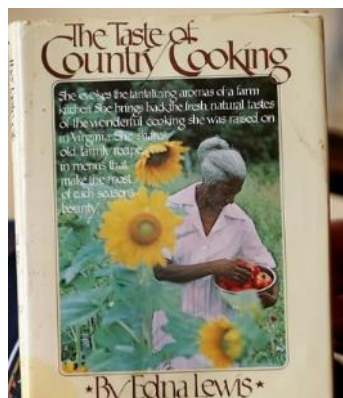
Black History Month, or National African American History Month, is an annual celebration of achievements by black Americans and a time for recognizing the central role of African Americans in U.S. history. This year in our newsletter we feature Edna Lewis, "The Queen of Southern Cuisine".



Lewis was born in the small farming settlement of Freetown, Orange County, Virginia, the granddaughter of an emancipated slave who helped start the community. Early in her life she dreamed of being a botanist, but abandoned that dream after the death of parents. When she moved to New York she worked as a talented seamstress. She was also an activist, worked for the communist newspaper *The Daily Worker*, was involved in political demonstrations, and campaigned for Franklin D. Roosevelt. But she is best known for her career as an extremely famous chef in the best restaurants, her cookbooks and her influence on culinary history.

The New York Times summarized her legendary status in an article last year:

"The Taste of Country Cooking," published in 1976, is revered for the way it shows the simple beauty of food honestly made in the rhythm of the seasons — the now common but at the time nearly forgotten ethos of eating farm-to-table — and for the way it gave a view of Southern food that was refined and nuanced, going beyond grease, greens and grits.... Her small stories in "The Taste of Country Cooking" gently urge the reader toward a life of mindfulness, a life of learning to see the details." —(<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/01/magazine/edna-lewis-and-the-black-roots-of-american-cooking.html>)



Long before it was popular, Ms. Lewis was calling for attention to the seasonal, at the same time showing us the rich history and influences that African-American cooks had on American food. In 2014, three years after a group of black chefs vowed to create a culinary foundation to

preserve the memory and genius of the famed chef, the U.S. Postal Service issued a commemorative stamp to honor her legend. The honorific stamp recognized how she turned Southern cooking into a nearly distinct culinary art form, relying on nothing more than the freshest ingredients, resourcefulness and mindfulness to produce food that was both

soothing and delicious.

"Edna Lewis clearly was to Southern food what Julia Child was to French food," says Joe Randall, chef and Lewis confidante. "She was an inspiration and though she did not like to have her food referred to as 'soul food,' she relished the fact that Southern cuisine is rooted in African-American cooking traditions

Below is a recipe for her "Busy-Day Cake" and rhubarb compote from The Taste of Country Cooking. Here's the story she told about how the cake was made: "The preparation of a meal on a busy summer day, of which there were many, began before breakfast. The salad greens, vegetables, and berries were gathered while the dew was still on them ... A busy-day cake, or sweet bread, as it was really called, was regular cake batter, measured out and stirred in a hurry while the vegetables cooked on one end of the old wood stove and canning was carried out on the firebox end. The batter would be poured into a large biscuit pan and set into the oven to bake."

Busy-Day Cake

Serves 4 to 5 (with leftovers)

8 TABLESPOONS (1 STICK) BUTTER, AT ROOM TEMPERATURE
1 1/3 CUPS SUGAR
3 EGGS
2 TEASPOONS VANILLA
2 CUPS SIFTED FLOUR
2 1/2 TEASPOONS BAKING POWDER
1/4 TEASPOON SALT
1 LIGHT GRATING OF NUTMEG
1/2 CUP WHOLE MILK, AT ROOM TEMPERATURE

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F. Butter and flour a 10-inch square and 2-inch deep cake pan.

In a large bowl, blend the butter and sugar by hand until it is light and fluffy. Add the eggs, one by one, beating the batter with a wooden spoon after each addition. Stir in the vanilla.

In a medium bowl, sift together the flour, baking powder, salt and nutmeg. Alternate adding the flour mixture and the milk, starting with 1/2 cup of flour and 1/3 of the milk, and ending with the remaining flour. Stir well after each addition.

Spoon the batter into the cake pan, and smooth the top with a spatula. Bake about 30 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the cake comes out clean. Serve warm with fresh-cooked fruit and a glass of cold milk.

Rhubarb Compote

Take about 2 cups of sliced fresh rhubarb and stir in about 1/4 cup of sugar. Let it sit in its own juices for a few hours or overnight. Cook briefly in a wide pan,





Waiting

*Winter is shorter when you know a garden
and can still pull beets in early December.
Even after everything's turned under
long nights are hours of rest, not death,
earned sleep after the land's labor*

*When kitchen table bear seed packets,
almanacs, sketches,
when conversation
conjures up a tangled trellis of peas
before the first one plumps in a furrow.*

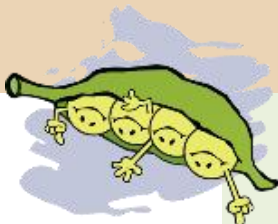
*That day apple twigs are already
knobbier,
crocus tips slice old mulch,
February
is already spring.*

Robins watch the hoe.

-Jody Aliesan

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

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