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# Newsletter

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## Announcements

Master Gardener Board Meeting will be held on Monday, Oct. 5 – 1:00 p.m. at the UCCE Office.

Master Gardener General Meeting will be held on Tuesday Oct. 6 – 6:00 p.m. at the Tuolumne County Senior Center, 540 Greenley Rd.

Eric and Christine Taylor of Outer Aisle Foods (a small local farm) will speak at the next meeting. I have asked them to cover topics such as: sustainable growing practices, creating secure food systems, CSA, local fair trade and other related topics of their choosing. For everyone who grows their own fruits and vegetables this should be a very informative and interesting presentation. Master Gardeners are encouraged to invite friends and neighbors to the speaker’s portion of the meeting.



## President’s Message

Another place we hit during our travels this summer was the Livestock Auction yard in San Angelo, Texas. If you’re ever going thru on a Tuesday, you have to stop and check it out. We went over on Monday afternoon just to see what they had. At that time there were probably a couple thousand head of sheep and goats. Tuesday morning when the sale started they had close to 8,000 head to sell that day, and they did it! They run that many through every week!

The best part of the sale is watching the "Lead Goats" bring the animals through the ring. Without them it would never run that smoothly. The sale ring is made up of two pens, gate in the middle, gates on both ends. The lead goat stands on their side of the ring and either brings more goats and sheep into the ring or takes them out, never crossing over to the other side, just waiting for the next group to come through. There are about a dozen of these goats that they switch when they get tired. It's the craziest thing to watch, they couldn't run that many animals through in a day without them. You can also go outside on the catwalk and look at the animals before they run through the sale, just in case you might want to buy a few!

## Toots



## Calendar

### OCTOBER

- 3-Open Garden Day-10:00 a.m.  
(Cassina Demonstration Garden)
- 5-Board Meeting-1:00 p.m.  
(UCCE Office)

- 6-School Gardeners Mtg-5:00 p.m.  
(Senior Center)
- 6-General Meeting-6:00 p.m.  
(Senior Center)
- 13-Writers' Meeting-11:30 a.m.  
(UCCE Office)
- 14-Team Leaders' Meeting-9:00 a.m.  
(Cassina Garden)
- 17-CNPS Fall Sale-9:00 a.m.  
(Jamestown-Rocha Park)

**NOVEMBER**

- 2-Board Meeting-1:00 p.m.  
(UCCE Office)
- 3-School Gardeners Mtg-5:00 p.m.  
(Senior Center)
- 3-General Meeting-6:00 p.m.  
(Senior Center)
- 7-Open Garden Day-10:00 a.m.  
(Cassina Demo Garden)
- 11-Veterans' Day – UCCE Office closed
- 18-Team Leader Mtg-9:00 a.m.  
(UCCE Office)

**DECEMBER**

- 5-Open Garden Day-10:00 a.m.  
(Cassina Demo Garden)



**Library Update**

**GARDENING BOOKS NEEDED  
DECEMBER BOOK SALE**

At our December meeting, the Library Committee will again be sponsoring a used book sale. When you do your fall cleaning, if you need to make more room, look through your book shelves for gardening books needing a new, loving home. Bag them up and bring them to the next meeting so that the library committee has a chance to look at them before the December sale.

**Marlyns Bell**

**GRASSES  
VERSATILE PARTNERS FOR  
UNCOMMON GARDEN DESIGNS  
BY NANCY J. ONDRA  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY SAXON HOLT  
Storey Publishing, 2002**

“Rushes are round. Sedges have edges.” So goes the common rhyme that is so helpful when doing plant ID, though it does little to help us in planning our gardens. *Grasses*, by Nancy J. Ondra, does something that none of the other books on grasses do – it shows the utilization of grasses in an average size garden. Until now, most books emphasized huge mass plantings of one or two species.

Referring to the planting of a very small garden, Nancy writes, “Forget the old rule about planting in groups of three or more; when space is at a premium, it’s far more rewarding to grow six different grasses than to have six that are identical.” A woman after my own heart!

After a few brief general sections on grasses, the book is divided into four-page sections covering all kinds of garden contingencies, with grasses a key part of each design. “Beds and Borders,” “Front Yard Gardens,” “Paths and Walkways,” “Rose Companions,” and “Ponds” are just a few of the sections. In each section, there is a two page general write-up, a glorious full page photo illustrating the concept, and descriptions of five appropriate grasses along with small photos of three of them. The end of the book contains a chart for each situation, listing additional plants. Because not all species have photos included, it would be helpful to have one of the dictionary type grass books on hand while reading *Grasses*.

This beautiful book will open your eyes to the versatile world of grasses and how they can be incorporated in any garden, no matter the size. Visit your Master Gardener library and check it out!

**Val Myrick, Member  
Library Committee**

## Demonstration Garden Update

It was a stormy morning...rain, thunder and lightning were threatening. And yet, in spite of these dire predictions, 40 brave souls came to the garden to watch and listen to talks and demonstrations given by the intrepid Food Production Master Gardeners.

The Open Garden Day on September 12<sup>th</sup> turned out to be another well attended event. Katy and Dona had a rapt audience for their discussion of herbs, Gary had the group following him around the raised beds like the Pied Piper, and Jack had the rain to deal with as he gave his presentation. It appears that more and more folks are interested in vegetable gardening and we always have a great group of visitors when those demonstrations are held. Job well-done, Food Production team!!

The October Garden Day on the 3<sup>rd</sup> will have some fun activities for the kids as well as adults. Jack will be back in the raised beds transplanting winter veggies, hopefully without rain. Toots will demonstrate how to divide perennials and Carolee will be working some magic with the kids making home and garden fall décor. It's always entertaining when the kids are in the garden, so stop by and share some time with us.

See you on the 3<sup>rd</sup>.

### The Garden Reporter



### On the Road

Hey, I think it's safe to say that most of us in this group enjoy camping. After all, the Latin word for garden is *jardinarium* (No??) which translated means...eeeeeeew, dirt! And who amongst us doesn't like to play in the dirt all day? I know I do.

When I think back to the campgrounds I've enjoyed the very most, I can't help thinking about a favorite spot in LA. Noooo, not THAT one. LA=Louisiana. That would be Lake Fausse Point State Park! What a great find. It's off the beaten path, in fact about 23 miles off the main highway.

We had to go back there again this year and it was only one of three places we repeated from our travels last year.

It's a beautiful park with something for everyone. After all, what says camping more than bayous, alligators, armadillos, and poisonous snakes? Let the good times roll. Light the bar-b-cue, listen to Zydeco music, watch the fireflies and Cajun up sumpthin on the grill. You might want to keep the ol' flashlight handy because you can't be sure what might come out at night. By the way....what goes patter, patter, crunch, crunch?....A slow armadillo in alligator country!....yeah, that's bad.

But fact is, we knew what to ask for in a campsite this time around. There are bayous and rivers throughout the park and select sites have their own dock. We HAD to have one on this go round and were lucky enough to get one. We are, after all, card and scrabble fanatics. We get brutal. There's nothing better than sitting on your own dock, playing a favorite game and watching the wildlife go by.

Then, of course, I feel compelled to warn you. Our "next door neighbors" had several boats tied up to their dock. Seen the air boats that scoot through the everglades? Yeah, they had one of those. If you haven't been up close and personal, they sound like jet engines and when they spin around to take off from their dock, well, AIRboat + card game, you do the math. I think there's still an ace up in the tree somewhere.

\* \* \*

Now, being the adventurous types, we had to go out on the hiking trails to check out the flora and fauna (and no, I found fauna is not a baby deer). They have trails they named "A," "B," and "C." I guess #1, #2, and #3 were taken...how original. Anyway, all are of varying lengths, depending on how long you want to be lost (kidding). They are well marked and have educational placards along the route to learn about the plants and critters there. You can learn about the various types of mangrove trees, bald cypress or the famous what-nots.

We were walking up to read about the elusive beaver when Gator ( hubby's nick-name, not the swamp creatures), screamed like a little school girl and launched about six feet in the air. I froze in place to evaluate the occurrence. A VERY

venomous snake, a cottonmouth, slithered in front of me at warp speed. Gator had scared the poor thing. We both had to catch our breath over the next half hour or so....Gator, because he has a deathly fear of snakes and me because I was laughing my as#@\$&\* off. O.K., I'm not a nice person, I think we've established that.

\* \* \*

Alright, we survived the hiking, what can we do now? Rent a canoe! Yeah, that will be great fun! I'll say it now...we are not a paddling people. We looked like a couple idiots, but hey, that's never stopped us before. Yeah, turtles, birds, various wildlife and ALLIGATORS!...bait in a boat...good idea, Scooter! Anyone with a video camera could have made some money on one of those funniest video shows. I'll just say it, one person steer at a time.... Oh, brother....can you say circles? Well, we survived it without getting too lost or falling out of the boat. And we gave our other "neighbor" a good laugh in the process as we paddled by his dock as he was fishing, showing off our obvious expertise.....

\* \* \*

The park has so many cool things we love. We got a personal tour of the nature center. I think the nature guy (I'm pretty sure that was the title on his badge) felt sorry for us when we not-so-eloquently escaped the canoe. It's got everything critter you can imagine. We also learned some stuff. Did you know that armadillos always have four babies and that they are always the same sex? Weird, but true. That one of the most common things found in alligator stomachs is dog tags? Very sad, but true. You can also see the wildlife by taking a boat to some of its boat-in only sites or backpack in. They also have a number of really great cabins you can rent that are right over the water.

\* \* \*

So, next time you get itchy feet (well, if Absorbine doesn't clear it up), you're probably jonesin' for a road trip. I say, take a walk on the wild side and head to LA. Lace up the ol' hiking boots and make sure you have fresh batteries in your camera. Walk at night, have a good flashlight and listen to the wondrous sounds of...wait..shhhh...what was that?....patter..patter..patter...CRUNCH,CRUNCH.

**Next Month's  
Newsletter**

**Editor:**

**Stella Sauls**

**Deadline for  
submissions:**

The University of California prohibits discrimination or harassment of any person. Inquiries regarding the University's nondiscrimination policies may be directed to the Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Director, University of California, Agriculture and Natural Resources.

# Tuolumne County Stream Team

## Training Session

Saturday, October 31, 9:30-noon

Columbia College, Toyon 2

Join this fun group of local volunteer water quality monitors. Learn water quality testing procedures, gain understanding of local environmental issues, and help your community collect scientific information that will be used to improve and protect surface water quality.

Team members work in groups to sample water quality at sites throughout the county each month. New volunteers can join teams sampling at existing sites or create a new sampling location at a stream or river of your choice. All equipment is provided and no special skills are required.

At the training session on October 31 you will learn the Stream Team water quality sampling protocol, which has been approved by the State Water Resources Control Board.

**Water quality is monitored by measuring:**

- Temperature
- pH
- Electrical Conductivity
- Dissolved Oxygen
- Flow
- Turbidity
- Bacteria

Halloween costumes are welcome at the training. Hope to see you there!



## **Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District *Ailanthus* Eradication and Revegetation Project**

**What:** The TCRCD has been awarded an Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation grant from Caltrans to remove a large patch of *Ailanthus altissima* (aka “Tree of Heaven”) near the corner of Forest Rd. and Stockton St./SR 49. The area will later be replanted with Valley Oaks, Chinese Pistache (the official tree of Sonora), and native grasses.

**Why:** This plant may be called “Tree of Heaven” but the name couldn’t be less appropriate. This species was originally planted as an ornamental tree in California during the mid-1800s. Because it’s fast growing and reproduces rapidly through prolific seed production and vegetative sprouting, it is now spreading throughout Tuolumne County, especially in disturbed areas. Tree of Heaven and other invasive plants are problematic because they displace native plants and wildlife, increase wildfire and flood danger, consume valuable water, degrade recreational opportunities, and reduce productivity on rangeland. The TCRCD plans to continue working with other organizations and individuals to help combat invasive plants in Tuolumne County.

**When:** Work will begin on September 28<sup>th</sup> and should take 2-3 days. The initial removal will be done by inmates from Baseline Conservation Camp (if all crews end up being needed at a wildfire on scheduled date, we will reschedule for mid-October). Replanting will be done by volunteers on Saturday November 14.

**Who:** This is a joint effort by the Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District, the City of Sonora, and Caltrans. Partners and supporters of this project include UC Cooperative Extension, Central Sierra Partnership Against Weeds, the Tuolumne County Agricultural Commissioner, Sonora Regional Medical Center, and the Sierra Foothills Chapter of the Native Plant Society.

**Where:** Project area is near the corner of Forest Rd. and Stockton St./SR 49 near downtown Sonora, right by Woods Creek Rotary Park. There may be some minor traffic delays in this area on the morning of September 28.

**For more information or to get involved as a volunteer in the re-planting effort,  
please contact Corinne Munger at 533-8866, [corinne@tcrd.org](mailto:corinne@tcrd.org),  
or visit our website at [www.tcrd.org](http://www.tcrd.org)**