



THE YOLO GARDENER

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Pest Notes *The Bible for Controlling Pests in the Home Garden*

Jim Fowler, Yolo County Master Gardener

What kind of cockroach am I dealing with? What kind of damage can aphids do to my trees? Are there really any Brown Recluse spiders in California? How can I rid myself of those pesky earwigs? These questions and more are answered by “Pest Notes,” one of the most valuable, interesting, and sometimes fascinating sets of documents published by the University of California for home gardeners.

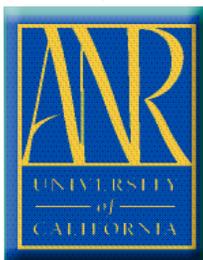
Pest Notes, produced by UC’s Integrated Pest Management Program (IPM), are publications about specific pests or pest management topics written and reviewed by scientists. They have been carefully edited to be readable, informative, concise, and very interesting. The index to the *Pest Notes* can be found at <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PDF/PESTNOTES/index.html> and can be viewed either as web (HTML) versions or as PDF versions. Web versions include color photographs and links to other pages while PDF versions, designed specifically for printing in black and white, usually have line drawings instead of color photographs. Although the two versions look different, the text is identical in both. The complete list of available *Pest Notes* may be found at the end of this newsletter.

Each of the *Pest Notes* is normally broken down into four basic sections: damage or problems caused, identification or misidentification, lifecycle, and management.

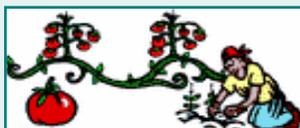
The damage caused by an insect is not only instructive in helping to identify it but also to aide in assessing its potential danger to the long-term health of plants or to threats posed to human health. For example, from the *Pest Note* on aphids we learn that “...Low to moderate numbers of leaf-feeding aphids are usually not damaging in gardens or on trees. However, large populations cause curling, yellowing, and distortion of leaves and stunting of shoots;...” But they also produce honeydew, and some varieties of aphids can transmit viruses in vegetable crops. From the *Pest Note* on cockroaches: “They contaminate food and eating utensils, destroy fabric and paper products, and impart stains and unpleasant odors to surfaces they contact.”

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Proper identification is also critical. Misidentification can lead to harmful infestations or to destruction of beneficial insects. One example comes from the *Pest Note* on the brown recluse spider. In it the authors point out that there are no known populations of brown recluse spiders in California. Over a period of several decades only twenty specimens have been positively identified. While there are numerous apocryphal stories about persons bitten by these spiders, the authors assert that the spiders most likely have been misidentified by those bitten and by the physicians who treated them. As evidence they cite a five-year study in which people were asked to submit spiders they thought were brown recluses. Six hundred did so in California. Only one of those proved to be a brown recluse, and it was found in a home of someone who had recently moved from Missouri. The result of misidentification is that fearful homeowners have eliminated untold numbers of beneficial spiders.



Photo by Richard S. Vetter
Brown Recluse Spider

Pest Notes also discuss the life cycles of insects. This is important because many pests are most subject to control efforts at particular stages of their development. For instance, the *Pest Note* on scale points out that scale is most active in the nymph or crawler stage, emerging from their hard shell armor only to migrate to other parts of the plant or to be carried by the wind to other plants. This is when scale is most susceptible to control. When they are in their hard shell there is little that can harm them.



Photo by Jack Kent Clark
Twig infested with Scale

Finally each *Pest Note* discusses management of the pest. Each normally begins by pointing to the least toxic and most natural forms of control involving cultural practices and biological controls. For example the *Pest Note* on scale says: "Provide plants with good growing conditions and proper cultural care; especially appropriate irrigation. . . Prune off heavily infested twigs and branches to eliminate scales when infestations are on limited parts of the plant. . . Scales are often controlled by small parasitic wasps and predators including beetles." If chemical treatment cannot be avoided, then the least toxic method is recommended first. For example in the *Pest Note* on spider mites the authors say: "If a treatment for mites is necessary, use selective materials, preferably insecticidal soap or insecticidal oil." The authors also note: "Spider

mites frequently become a problem after the application of insecticides. Such outbreaks are commonly a result of the insecticide killing off the natural enemies of the mites, . . ."

Many of the *Pest Notes* also discuss the use of more toxic pesticides. But each of them carefully discusses the specific kind to use. They contain warnings about the importance of reading labels, observations of proper application rates, use of necessary protective clothing, and the proper disposal of excess chemicals and of their containers.

Each of these *Pest Notes* is valuable on its own, but the encyclopedic nature of the collection should prove to make it the "Bible" for the home gardener interested in safe, effective pest control. ✨

“Down Under” Plants: Lessons Learned

Willa Pettygrove, Yolo County Master Gardener



Newly planted *Eucalyptus*,
Spinning Gum

My initial resistance to plants of Australia, to “freeway bushes” like bottle brush and successful invaders such as the *Eucalyptus*, was readily conquered as the UC Davis Arboretum began to develop its Australian and New Zealand plantings, and when my spouse and I had the trip of a lifetime to Australia. For now, let me simplify my observations to a few conclusions and photos.

- The Australian and New Zealand collections in the Arboretum (still in development, but already impressive) should be a go-to place for anyone wanting to incorporate plants from this region in a home landscape. It helps to see how the plants perform in our soil and climate and how they can be used with natives and plants from other regions. You also have the benefit of the Arboretum’s All-Star program, and careful plant labeling

- Australia is a continent, not an island (it includes the island of Tasmania), and as such has many different climatic regions. Much of the population lives in Mediterranean or subtropical climates. For example, wine grape growing and olive oil production are common agricultural activities. The archipelago of New Zealand, in contrast, has a cooler and moister climate.

- Originally, this part of the world was settled by people who made important economic use of many native plants. More recent immigrants have only begun to appreciate and discover these native plants for food, medicine, and fiber. Of course immigrants (including many from England) brought their own interests, tastes, and plant preferences for gardening. The result is a diverse mix of English gardens (formal and cottage), dramatic contemporary landscape designs, and even an outstanding example of a Chinese Classical Garden in Sydney. The UC Davis Arboretum’s collection includes plants that have been collected from Australian gardens, apparently adapted from native varieties.



Melaleuca in Arboretum plantings



Amber Kangaroo Paw (*Anigozanthos*)

What are some plants you might try? Many varieties are becoming common in California nurseries; some will be more adaptable than others. Of course, *Acacias* (the Australians call them Wattles) and *Eucalypts* are well known in California. Another important genus is *Melaleuca* (in the family Myrtaceae), which includes tree and shrub types, showy and inconspicuous flowers, and blooms that range from white and pale pink to bright red. These three groups of plants are typically very tolerant of heat, wind, poor soil, and lack of water. *Correa* is another genus featured in the Arboretum that offers a diverse range of blossom colors and growth habits.

If you want a “tropical” look in your garden, there are many options. Kangaroo Paw (*Anigozanthos*) includes several species with interesting blossoms that are attractive to hummingbirds (the blossoms do look like paws, and the stamens are like little “toes”). *Banksia* is a group of shrubs and trees from the Protea family with impressive, long-lasting, conelike flower heads. My personal favorites are

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Variegated Flax Lily
Dianella tasmanica
(Liliaceae, garden origin)



Desert Cassia (Pea family)
All photos by Stuart Pettygrove

the *Dianella* varieties. These look like tall grasses, but in fact are lilies that have clouds of tiny flowers followed by red berries.

What about New Zealand's plants? My own experience with plants of the *Hebe* genus have not been so rewarding, although there are several tempting specimens in the New Zealand collection at the Arboretum. Most *Hebes* seem better adapted to climates such as those found in Seattle or San Francisco.

As you introduce these new plants to your garden, proceed slowly. Consult a good garden reference (such as Sunset's Western Garden book) or a California grower with a good track record for our climate. For example, Callistemon also produces bottlebrush-like flowers, but requires more water. Another perennial pea relative, *Hardenbergia* (Lilac Vine or Happy Wanderer) is more sensitive to freezing and needs some time and care to get established. The Arboretum collection has another very interesting pea relative, a desert Cassia. Most plants need extra watering at least for the first season, and your Australian specimens in particular may need well-drained soil. ✨

Invasion of the Exotics

Laura Cameron, Yolo County Master Gardener

Invasive species are introduced species that spread widely or quickly, and cause harm economically, environmentally and/or ecologically. While introduced species are the ones most likely to become invasive, a native plant may turn invasive if its normal environmental conditions are changed.

California has nearly 5000 native plant species and about 1300 non-native species. About 200 to 300 of the non native species are weeds of agricultural crops, turf, or gardens. The remaining 1000 or so are naturalized plants of wild lands or disturbed non-crop areas.

Across California, invasive plants damage wild lands, displace native plants and wildlife, increase wild-fire and flood danger, consume valuable water, degrade recreational opportunities and destroy productive range and timber lands. More than \$85 million annually goes to fighting invasive plants and animals in California. The economic impact nationally of invasive species is about

\$120 billion a year, California's share of that impact is well above \$2 billion annually.

A weed is often thought of as a native plant that is out of place, a corn stalk in a rose garden for example. Invasive plants are generally non-natives that infest natural ecosystems, including wild lands, rangelands, and pastures. Table 1 on the following page shows the differences between weeds and invasive plants.

The important difference between garden weeds and invasive plants is the ability of invasive plants to disperse, establish, and spread without human assistance or disturbance. Species of plants become invasive because they are brought from around the world and may not have any natural predators or environmental conditions that keep them under control. In California about 3% of the plant species growing in the wild are considered invasive though they cover a much greater area.

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Table 1. Comparison of common weedy plants and invasive plants

	Agricultural or Garden Weeds	Invasive Plants
Introduction	Usually accidental by people, animals, equipment, or seed contamination.	Can be accidental, but more often the original intention was for ornamental or aquarium use, or for forage, food, fiber, medicinal, or soil stabilization purposes.
Disturbance	Require human disturbance to establish and persist.	Benefit from human disturbance, but disturbance not required.
Persistence	Will not persist without human disturbance, usually soil tillage or irrigation.	Once introduced, plants survive and spread on their own without further human assistance.
Life form	Primarily terrestrial annuals or herbaceous perennial species.	All growth forms, including aquatic, climbing vines, parasitic, herbaceous, or woody plants. Can have annual, biennial, or perennial life cycles.

The worst invasive species, such as salt cedar or yellow star thistle, have caused substantial changes to the nature of the invaded habitat. In scientific literature these species are sometimes referred to as landscape transformers and have created lifelong careers for scientists devoted to eradication and control. To see a comprehensive list of Invasive Plants go to <http://www.cal-ipc.org/ip/inventory/index.php>

Of the species in the inventory, about 37% were accidentally introduced as hitchhikers. The remaining 63% were intentionally introduced. The majority of these came through the nursery industry as ornamental landscape species.

DON'T PLANT - INVASIVE

- English ivy or Algerian ivy
- Periwinkle Vinca major

INSTEAD PLANT

- Asian jasmine or ivory star jasmine
- Pachysandra
- Taiwan raspberry
- Giant alumroot or coral bells
- Bergenia or winter saxifrage
- Coast purple sage
- Evergreen current
- California wild lilac
- Common yarrow

DON'T PLANT - INVASIVE

- Jubatagrass or Pampasgrass
- Green Fountain Grass

INSTEAD PLANT

- Lavendar
- Giant Wild Rye
- Deer grass or other Muhlenbergia species
- Lindheimer's muhly grass
- New Zealand flax
- Bigelow's bear grass
- Bamboo (clumping species only)

DON'T PLANT - INVASIVE

- Bridal broom, French broom, Portuguese broom, Scotch broom or Spanish broom
- Scarlet wisteria

New to California, spreading along the American River in central California. Also found in the Delta and in northern California. Grows and spreads rapidly along river and stream corridors, pushing out native vegetation and wildlife. Seeds are moved by washing downstream or are carried by birds.

INSTEAD PLANT

- Bush poppy or Island bush poppy
- Cleveland sage
- Coffeeberry
- Christmas berry, Holly Berry or Toyon
- Jerusalem Sage
- St. Catherine's Lace
- Japanese Kerria
- Forsythia
- Golden Currant

DON'T PLANT - INVASIVE

- Tree of heaven -A single tree can produce up to a million seeds per year.
- Blue Gum Eucalyptus
- Russian Olive

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Saltcedar
Black Locust
Chinese tallow tree

Mayten - Mayten has been found escaping in Davis in the Sacramento Valley. More information is being gathered about potential ecological damage.

Edible fig

INSTEAD PLANT

Hybrid Crape Myrtle
Eastern Redbud
Tupelo
Southern Live Oak
Fern Pine
Valley Oak

Keep It in the Garden and Don't Plant a Pest <http://www.cal-ipc.org/landscaping/dpp/brochures.php> are good sources of what not to plant and options that are similar and a much better choice.*

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Brace for Jack Frost

David Studer, Yolo County Master Gardener

As boys growing up in Buffalo, N. Y., my brothers and I cherished the arrival of Jack Frost as an exciting harbinger of winter. His crystalline doodles, sparkling from our storm windows, foretold the coming of snowmen, ice skating on the pond, sledding, and many other delights of the season. I was young. My father was the gardener.

Today, I'm the gardener, this is Yolo County, California, and I view frost from a slightly different perspective. It's not all fun and games when it comes to frost-sensitive plants.

On cold, clear nights in winter, ground heat radiates up into the atmosphere. Moisture condenses out of the cooler air onto any convenient solid surface—like plant leaves—in the form of dew. If the temperature continues to drop further, the dew freezes and damages the plant.

The easiest way to avoid frost damage is to select and grow only frost-tolerant plants in your yard. The USDA maintains and produces a "USDA Plant Hardiness

Zone Map". This guide divides the U. S. into zones that have similar average lowest temperatures as recorded between 1974 and 1986. Most of Yolo County is in Zone 9a (low temperatures between 25°F and 30°F) with a small portion in the northeastern corner in Zone 9b (low temperatures between 20°F and 25°F). Sunset's Western Garden Book expands on this idea with maps based on a variety of additional factors to define a plant's climatic needs including latitude, elevation, ocean influence, continental air influence, and microclimates created by the local terrain. All plants in the USDA database and Sunset's Western Garden Book include a hardiness zone designation in their descriptions.

The U. C. Davis Arboretum provides another good resource through its Arboretum All-Stars program. These plants are selected by the horticultural staff at the UC Davis Arboretum for their ability to flourish in our climate. Of course, there are a lot of other benefits to an Arboretum All-Star. So, these recommendations are

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well worth your consideration for many reasons. You can find a list at the Arboretum Website.

If avoidance is your strategy, you're done. You need do no more than cultivate plants that tolerate frost and thrive in your particular climate zone. The end, or is it?

Who isn't at least tempted by the beauty of bougainvillea splashing across the back fence in the heat of summer or the sunny face of blooming verbena? How many of you want to enjoy the sweet, juicy orange picked straight from the tree? Can we really resist not making lemonade from our own lemons or putting our own limes into a gin and tonic? Hah! I knew it!

So you know you have planted a frost-sensitive plant, and that frost is likely in your garden at some point during the winter. How can you protect your precious wards from that terrible old Jack Frost?

Well, if you must plant frost-sensitive plants, at least pay attention to plant placement. Cold air sinks, so avoid the lower areas of the garden that experience the coldest temperatures. Place sensitive plants near heat reservoirs like patios, walls, or large rocks that keep the surrounding temps just a little warmer. South- and west-facing walls and areas generally receive the most sunshine and will retain some warmth through the long, cold night.

Continue to monitor and care for your plants. Be sure that they receive an adequate amount of irrigation. Frost dehydrates plants and damage will occur more quickly on already drought-stressed plants. I'm not saying that you should leave your irrigation system on all winter, BUT if there is an extended period of dry cold weather, maintaining an even amount of irrigation will help your plants cope with frost.

Potted plants can be moved in under a patio cover. Wrap the pot on those that are too big to move. This brings us to the next level of protection, the "cover-up." You can use a blanket or cloth, or you can purchase a frost cloth at the local nursery/garden center. A frost cloth can stay draped over your plants for an extended period of time while blankets and sheets should be removed during the day to allow light and moisture into the foliage of the plant. Frost cloths may also provide

slightly more insulation depending on the type of fabric and weave. Optimally, a frame should be built over frost-sensitive plants that will keep the draped cloth from touching the foliage. The drape should reach the ground out to the plant's drip line.

Plastic will also work to trap radiating heat against sensitive foliage, but it offers much less insulation and can "cook" your plant during the day if you forget to undrape it.

Do not gather the drape under the plant and around the trunk. This defeats the purpose of trapping ground heat in the foliage. If you feel the need, you can loosely wrap the trunk from the ground up to the first branches with a separate cloth.

If severe frost is forecast or you are still concerned about your plants, add heat by placing a 100-watt light (designed for outdoor use) into the foliage—under the drape—to reduce frost damage. Using a string of outdoor holiday lights—the inefficient big bulbs—serves as an attractive option.

So, you did all that you could do and some plants were still frost damaged. CURSE YOU JACK FROST! Don't despair, and don't prune out the frost-damaged plant material just yet. Wait until spring. All things look better in spring. Often frost-damaged plants will recover from the root system and put out new growth just below the damaged area.

A final bit of advice—Do what you can do now while it is still warm in the garden. I know from experience that it is not pleasant trying to build a frost protection frame around a plant on a cold, dark winter night.



Wouldn't you rather spend this time sharing the magic of Jack Frost with your kids? ✨

Great Looking Seasonal Wreaths

Jan Bower, Yolo County Master Gardener



Some people might associate wreaths only with Christmas, but for those who like to do crafts, any season lights a creative fire. Autumn and early winter are particularly good times to make wreaths because there is an abundance of grapevines and grasses to form into circles. In addition, berries from sumac, holly, pyracantha and toyon, miniature crabapples, cranberries and rosehips, plus colorful leaves in burgundy and gold, are available for adornment.

How to make a wreath

The easiest style of wreath to make is a grapevine base, covered with appealing foliage and flowers. To make this kind of wreath, you don't even need glue or wire. Simply form a circle with the grapevines and wrap several three-foot garlands around the base, shoving the ends between the crevices in the grapevine. Cut the stems of other materials you want to use down to four to six inches and insert firmly into the remaining crevices, moving always in one direction around the wreath. When nearly finished, hold it up to inspect for any empty areas or places that might need a spot of color. It is easier to see where you need to add leaves, flowers, ribbons, etc.

when you are face-to-face with your wreath. To make a hanger, slip a floral wire around a few branches in the back at the top of the wreath, wrap it around a few times and twist the ends of the wire to make the loop secure.

Another method for making a wreath is to form a rounded base using two wire coat hangers. Wire the hangers and the two handles together for added strength and cover with floral tape. Then use lightweight floral wire to secure 8- to 10-inch long branches of greenery to the wreath base, overlapping the stems until the wreath base is fully covered. Decorations can be secured with floral wire or hot glue. Once the final touches are completed, use the wrapped handle to hang the wreath on a nail on your door.

Wreath rings can also be made from bundles of long grass, raffia, straw or other supple material. If the grass is too dry to shape into a circle, wet it down before shaping and binding it with fishing line, twine or floral wire. Styrofoam and wired forms can also be purchased for wreath bases and are popular with florists.

How to decorate a wreath

Whatever method or materials you use for making a wreath, the same wreath base can be used for several years, replacing its accessories as each new season rolls around. For example, branches of greenery (redwood, pine, douglas fir or cedar) with silver bells, holly, pine cones and a red ribbon with a bow make a nice Christmas wreath. Colorful autumn leaves with small pumpkins or gourds, dried flower heads and bunches of Indian corn are perfect for Thanksgiving. Add a few realistic looking spiders poking out of the leaves and you have a Halloween wreath. For Easter, try ivy, white lilies and bunches of yellow daffodils on your wreath base. Fresh flowers on a wreath, such as gardenias, sunflowers or roses, can be used to celebrate a birthday, a graduation, Mother's Day or other special occasion.

To make a more dramatic presentation, insert silk flowers, feathers, miniaturized gold or silver ornaments and real fruits at regular intervals around the wreath. Add fragrance with lavender, eucalyptus and bayberry leaves and perfume the air around it. The possibilities for using your creativity are endless! ✨

Low Water Use Turf Choices

Laura Cameron, Yolo County Master Gardener

For some, a beautiful green lawn is an invitation for a variety of activities: kids playing, picnics, wicked game of croquet, lovely garden parties. For others it is merely a placeholder, a seemingly easy way to have a yard, an essential part of having that traditional look. For non-lawn lovers, it means neighbors awakened by loud lawn mowers, fretting over the weeds, watering, and fertilizing, a huge time and water waster.

A NASA-funded study found that, including golf courses, lawns in the United States cover nearly fifty thousand square miles—an area roughly the size of New York State. In order to keep all the lawns in the country well irrigated, the author of the study concluded it would take two hundred gallons of water per person, per day. The Environmental Protection Agency estimates nearly a third of all residential water use in the United States currently goes toward landscaping. 95% of American lawns consist of thirsty bluegrass.

If you are interested in reducing your water usage and having a lawn, you can make turf and design choices that will help. Some of the turf choices will provide a thick thatch that will also help keep weeds at bay. As with any new plantings, until the turf is established it will need regular watering. After the turf is established the watering needs are less.

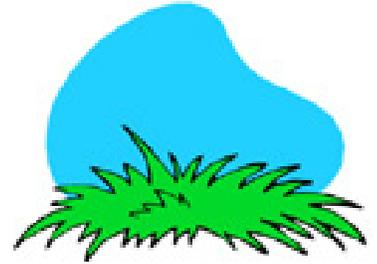
This chart compares various characteristics of *Turf species best adapted to most California Conditions*, and can be found at this link <http://anrcatalog.ucdavis.edu/pdf/8035.pdf>. Hopefully it contain information that will help you in making your decision.

Turf species best adapted to most California conditions								
Turf species	Tolerance						Temperature adaptation	Planting method
	Heat	Cold	Drought	Shade	Salinity	Wear/Traffic		
Bermudagrass	High	Low	High	Low	High	High	Warm-season	Seed, sod, stolons, sprigs, plug
Kentucky bluegrass	Low	High	Low	Mod	Low	Mod	Cool-season	Seed, sod
Perennial ryegrass	Low	High	Low	Low	Mod	High	Cool-season	Seed, sod
Red fescue	Low	High	Mod	High	Low	Mod	Cool-season	Seed, sod
St. Augustinegrass	High	Low	Mod	High	High	Mod	Warm-season	Sod, stolon
Tall fescue	Mod-high	Mod	Mod	Mod	Mod	Mod-high	Cool-season	Seed, sod

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As with all design ideas concerning your yard, it is important to determine how you want to use the area and what you want it to look like. Design choices include reducing the amount of lawn needed by creating beds around the lawn area, and not limiting yourself to only one kind of turf. You might plant one kind of turf for the play area, another for a lightly trafficked highlight zone and third for the deep shade. Also, a very quick way to reduce your watering to nearly zero is by using synthetic or artificial turf. Today there are many companies creating beautiful synthetic turf, some out of recycled material that are soft, smooth and easy on the eye. Or think about a different type of low growing ground cover, step-able thyme or an ornamental grass that needs little to no shearing.



If you choose to plant turf grasses, you have two basic choices: warm and cool season grasses. In our area, cool season grasses are green year round while warm season grasses go dormant in the fall when temperatures fall below 55 degrees. Then they turn brown. Warm season grasses aren't as desirable because of their dormancy; however maintenance costs and water usage are reduced due to the shorter growing season.

Fescues are low maintenance and are the most drought tolerant of the cool season grasses. They use 75% less water than other grasses. Tall turf type fescues are drought tolerant due to the deep root system which allows them to pull water from greater depths in the soil. Many varieties of all these grasses, including fescues and blends are on the market today.

Kinds of Turf	<i>Drought Tolerance High to Low</i>
*Hybrid Bermuda Grass	a high level of management is needed
*Zoysia Grass	well-adapted to only the warmest areas of California
*Common Bermuda Grass	ordinary management
*St. Augustine Grass	excellent shade tolerance
*Kikuyu grass	weedy grass, tolerant of low fertility, drought and frequent close mowing
*Tall Fescue	least maintenance, tolerant of heat and drought
*Red Fescue	does not do well in hot climates except in shady, dry conditions

*warm season grasses * cool season grasses

Alternatives to changing your lawn to save water include learning to irrigate more efficiently. Deep watering is always best for lawns. Lawn roots should extend six or more inches and each watering should be long enough to wet soil to the bottom of the root zone. Be careful though, deep watering does not mean over-watering. Learn what your lawn needs, and water in the early morning hours. For guidelines, see <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/TOOLS/TURF/MAINTAIN/irrigate.html>

Re-thinking your lawn and changing your irrigation methods to save water will cause some work at the outset, but in the long run it will save you money without diminishing the beauty of your yard. *

Landscape with watering in mind



WINTER GARDENING TIPS

Linda Parsons, Yolo County Master Gardener

Winter officially begins on December 21st. For some gardeners, this signals the time to cease gardening. Many gardeners believe that winter gardens are drab and dormant. Fortunately, if you know what to plant, you will find that it is possible to have a beautiful and inviting garden throughout the year, including the winter.

Choose winter hardy grasses to provide interesting colors. Good choices include, Purple Fountain Grass, Northern Sea Oats, Miscanthus and Panicum virgatum. If you prefer plants that are evergreen or have berries, consider, Cotoneaster, Tea Viburnum, and Nandina. The Holly (Ilex) plant has both evergreen and deciduous plants with berries. The Helleborus or Lenten Rose plant produces showy flowers in hues and shades of pink, purple and white. The Sarcococca or Sweet Box has waxy dark green leaves and tiny, but powerfully fragrant white blossoms that bloom in the winter. This is a marvelous plant to have just outside your door!

WINTER CLEAN-UP

- Continue to remove fallen leaves, spent annuals and vegetable plants.
- Add disease free plants and leaves to your compost pile.
- Clean garden pots and store for future use. Turn all unused pots on end to prevent water collection and breeding areas for pests and diseases. Treat pots with a dilute solution of bleach.
- Sharpen, clean and oil garden tools.
- Lawnmowers need a yearly tune-up and blade sharpening. Now is a good time.



Purple Fountain Grass

WATER

- Watering can be eliminated once the rains begin. Until then, most lawns and plants do well with weekly watering. If it is very windy, the temperature drops significantly or there has been no rain in several weeks, check for signs of dehydration in your garden. Additional water may be necessary.
- Check the plants under tall evergreen and under eaves of the house to see that they have sufficient moisture.
- Potted plants need to be checked often. Too much water in the saucer can cause your plants or bulbs to rot.

PROTECTION

- Protect frost sensitive plants. Move potted plants to a more protected part of your garden or patio. Shelter them under the eaves of your home or place them under a table or a garden chair. This will help to minimize damage from the wind and cold.
- Cover sensitive, larger plants and small trees with sheets or burlap when the temperature approaches freezing at night. Adding strings of electric lights can also be helpful.
- Anti-transpirant sprays, such as Cloud Cover can also be used to reduce frost and freeze damage.
- Cover sensitive ground cover with layers of newsprint at night and remove in the morning.
- Plastic sheeting is not recommended to protect plants because it cannot breathe and collects moisture.

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PLANT

December is the last month to plant spring blooming bulbs such as daffodil, tulip, anemone and crocus. Plant bulbs three times deeper, than their greatest diameter. Use bulb fertilizer.

What to plant now:

- cool season annuals : pansies, violas, snapdragons, calendulas and Iceland poppies.
- cool season perennials: Helleborus, Daphne and Iberis.
- annual vegetables: peas, spinach, kale, loose leaf lettuce, radish, carrot, and broccoli.
- winter herbs: cilantro, flat and curly parsley
- bare-root fruits and vegetables: strawberries, berries, rhubarb, grapes, fruit trees, artichokes, asparagus, horseradish onions and garlic.
- Use row covers to protect seedlings, if plants are bothered by pests or cold nights.
- Extend your harvest time by planting vegetables every two weeks through December.
- Late winter is the best time to plant or transplant most any garden shrub or tree. Both deciduous and evergreen shrubs can be planted or transplanted including roses. Your local nursery will be stocked with many varieties of potted and bare-root trees and plants.
- After you have discarded your summer vegetable plants, turn the soil over before it becomes too wet. This will help to disturb the over-wintering tomato worm larvae that live in your garden soil.
- Sow seeds in early February for your summer garden. Favorite selections include tomatoes, squash, eggplant, peppers and herbs. Seedlings can be transplanted in your garden after the soil temperature reaches 50° F. Begin planting spring annuals: alstroemeria, dianthus and alyssum. Summer bulbs, such as callas, dahlias, cannas, tuberous begonias, and lilies are now available at your local nursery.

FERTILIZE

- Mid to late February is the time to fertilize trees, shrubs and evergreens. Use an acid-loving plant fertilizer to feed evergreens like junipers, conifers, broadleaf evergreens, azaleas and camellias. Use a rose or all-purpose garden type fertilizer to feed roses, fruit and flowering trees, plus other deciduous trees and shrubs. If you use granular fertilizer, keep it off the foliage and water it in thoroughly.
- Extra nutrients for roses can encourage healthier growth. Try using 1 ounce (2 Tbl.) of Epsom salt (MgSO₄) and 8 ounces (1 cup) of plain alfalfa pellets for each plant. Sprinkle around the drip line of each rose. The Epsom salt helps improve chlorophyll production and alfalfa contains the growth stimulant triacontanol, which encourages basal breaks.



DISEASE, PEST, AND WEED PREVENTION

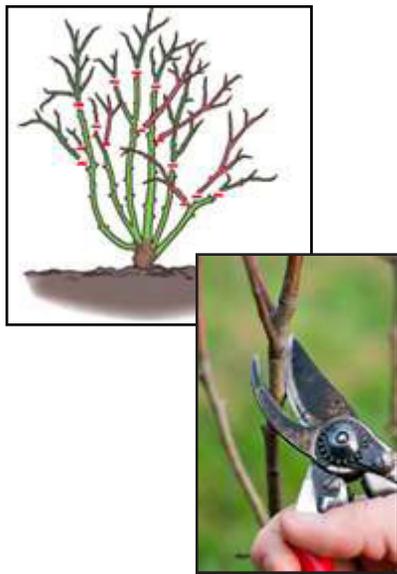
- Early winter is a good time to make an application of dormant oil spray on your roses, fruit and deciduous trees and shrubs. It is best to prune these before you apply this spray. Dormant oil spray helps prevent over-wintering of insects and diseases in your garden.
- Peaches and nectarines need to be sprayed with lime-sulfur or copper sulfate to prevent leaf curl and blight. An easy way to remember this schedule is to spray on or near Thanksgiving, New Year's and Valentine's Day. The spray should be applied when the temperature is above 45° F and there will be dry weather for at least twenty-four hours. Complete spraying before buds begin to open.

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- Snails, slugs and earwigs need periodic checking. Handpick, bait or trap if they become a nuisance.
- Mulch your garden. This is the easiest way to prevent new weeds. Place several layers of newspaper under a thick layer of mulch to provide superior weed control. Pull weeds while still small for easiest control.

PRUNING



- Roses can be pruned in late December through early February. Prune according to the type of rose (e.g. floribunda, hybrid tea, climbing, etc.)
- Deciduous fruit trees and ornamental shrubs and trees need pruning. Winter pruning stimulates more growth. Fruit trees pruned in early summer will require less winter pruning.
- Wait until February to prune woody plants, such as buddelia, artemisia, and Mexican sage. Prune ornamental grasses. Cut these fast growing plants close to the ground.
- Late winter or early spring blooming shrubs like, quince, forsythia, and spirea should be pruned after they complete blooming.
- Garden shrubs and hedges, such as boxwood and viburnum should be pruned before they put out their new spring growth.
- Basic pruning is done to remove dead, decaying and dying branches, as well as to remove unwanted growth such as sprouts, suckers and crossed branches. Pruning can improve the shape, vigor and appearance of plants and trees.
- Lawns will need little or no mowing until early March. Mowing on soggy soil will ruin your lawn.

FAVORITE THINGS

My favorite inspirational winter book is, *The Winter Garden* by Jane Sterndale-Bennett. This is a gorgeous and practical book for those of us who love to garden during the winter months. It has gorgeous photos and proves that it is possible to enjoy flowers (yes flowers!) and beautiful winter color.

Sydney Eddison has written many garden books, but her most recent book is one that seasoned gardeners will particularly enjoy. *Gardening for a Lifetime: How to Garden Wiser As You Grow Older* is a wonderful read for the gardener who wants to garden their way into Heaven! Sydney offers many practical ways to simplify and prioritize garden chores. “Pick Your Battles” and “Accept Imperfection” help aging gardeners continue to enjoy gardening by implementing Sydney’s seasoned solutions.

She also has a wonderful book on *The Unsung Season: Gardens and Gardeners in Winter*, in which she inspires the reader to embrace winter as a season to enjoy gardening indoors and outdoors. Being a four season gardener is possible and surprisingly easy, if you adopt some of her tips and ideas.

In addition, I found several fun children's books. What is more natural than introducing your love of gardening to the kids in your life? These also would make great gifts. *Looking Closely Inside the Garden*, by Frank Serafini is a marvelous way to introduce a child to the exquisite intricacies of plants and insects. Frank’s close up photos of a plant and insect parts allow the child to be a garden detective.

If you are looking for a fun way to while away a winter day, Ruth Soffer’s *The Flower Garden Coloring Book* is perfect. Ruth has created 30 full pages of realistic flowers and fauna to color or paint to your heart’s content

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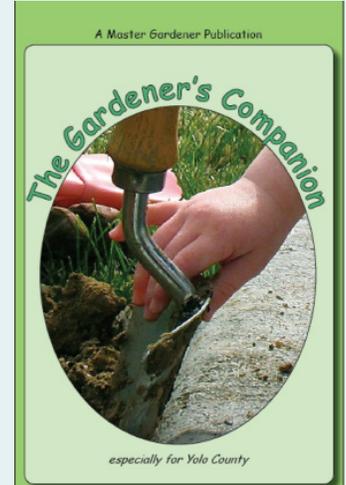
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RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OVERCOMING THE WINTER DOLDRUMS

- Get out and explore our larger backyard or learn about gardening in our area. One of my favorite places to visit, especially in the quiet of winter, is the Effie Yaew Nature Center in Ancil Hoffman Park (sacnaturecenter.net). It is a peaceful sanctuary to visit and explore on your own, or check out the lectures, classes and self-guided tours.
- Learn more about local gardening and garden events: On Sunday Mornings if you aren't in the garden try listening to our local garden gurus; Farmer Fred (Fred Hoffman) hosts KFBK (1530am) Garden Show from 8:30 a.m-10:00 a.m. or Get Growing on KSTE(650 am) from 10:-noon.Bob Tanem hosts In the Garden on KSFO (560am) from 7-10:00a.m.
- Enjoy a Master Gardener Class at Davis Central Park Gardens (<http://www.centralparkgardens.org/>).
 - January 8, 2011 9:30 a.m. Dormant Pruning
 - 11:00 a.m. Rose Pruning
- Explore the UC Davis Arboretum
 - December 4, 2010 11 a.m. California Native Plants: Guided Tour
 - Meet at The Beuhler Alumni and Visitor Center
 - December 8, 2010 12 p.m. Walk with Warren
 - Explore the pleasures of the winter garden
 - Meet at the Gazebo

Perhaps one of the best New Year's resolutions is to spend more time in the garden, especially in the winter months. The time and care we put in now will reward us with a beautiful and healthy garden through the coming seasons. Expand your horizons, visit parks, gardens, arboretums and nature preserves in our area. Winter has its own amazing and often-missed beauty. *

Now in its second printing!



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Our message centers will take your questions and information. Please leave your name, address, phone number and a description of your problem. A Master Gardener will research your problem and return your call.

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FREE Pest Notes



for Home and Landscape from the University of California

Birds, Mammals, and Reptiles

- Bats
- Birds on Tree Fruits and Vines
- Cliff Swallows
- Coyote
- Deer
- Ground Squirrel
- House Mouse
- Lizards
- Moles
- Opossum
- Pocket Gophers
- Rabbits
- Raccoons
- Rats
- Rattlesnakes
- Skunks
- Tree Squirrels
- Voles (Meadow Mice)
- Woodpeckers



Insects, Mites, Mollusks, and Nematodes

- Ants
- Aphids
- Avocado Lace Bug
- Bark Beetles
- Bed Bugs
- Bee and Wasp Stings
- Black Widow and Other Widow Spiders
- Boxelder Bug
- Brown Recluse and Other Recluse Spiders
- California Oakworm
- Carpenter Ants
- Carpenter Bees
- Carpenterworm

- Carpet Beetles
- Citrus Leafminer
- Clearwing Moths
- Clothes Moths
- Cockroaches
- Codling Moth
- Conenose Bugs
- Cottony Cushion Scale
- Drywood Termites
- Earwigs
- Elm Leaf Beetle
- Eucalyptus Longhorned Borers
- Eucalyptus Redgum Lerp Psyllid
- Eucalyptus Tortoise Beetles
- False Chinch Bug
- Fleas
- Flies
- Fungus Gnats, Shore Flies, Moth Flies, and March Flies
- Giant Whitefly
- Glassy-winged Sharpshooter
- Grasshoppers
- Hackberry Woolly Aphid
- Head Lice
- Hobo Spider
- Hoplia Beetle
- Horsehair Worms
- Lace Bugs
- Lawn Insects
- Leafrollers on Ornamental and Fruit Trees
- Millipedes and Centipedes
- Mosquitoes



- Nematodes
- Oak Pit Scales
- Olive Fruit Fly
- Pantry Pests
- Psyllids
- Red Imported Fire Ant
- Redhumped Caterpillar
- Roses: Insect and Mite Pests and Beneficials
- Scales
- Scorpions
- Sequoia Pitch Moth
- Silverfish and Firebrats
- Sixspotted Spider Mite on Plumeria
- Snails and Slugs
- Spider Mites
- Spiders
- Springtails
- Squash Bugs
- Sycamore Scale
- Termites
- Thrips
- Ticks (Lyme Disease in California)
- Walnut Husk Fly
- Whiteflies
- Windscorpion
- Wood-boring Beetles in Homes
- Wood Wasps and Horntails
- Yellowjackets and Other Social Wasps
- Zoropsis Spinimana*, A Mediterranean Spider in California



October 2010

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Plant Diseases

- Anthracnose
- Apple and Pear Scab
- Damping-off Diseases in the Garden
- Fire Blight
- Lawn Diseases: Prevention and Management
- Mushrooms and Other Nuisance Fungi in Lawns
- Oleander Leaf Scorch
- Palm Diseases in the Landscape
- Peach Leaf Curl
- Phytophthora Root and Crown Rot in the Garden
- Pitch Canker
- Powdery Mildew on Fruits and Berries
- Powdery Mildew on Ornamentals
- Powdery Mildew on Vegetables
- Roses: Diseases and Abiotic Disorders
- Sooty Mold
- Sudden Oak Death
- Wood Decay Fungi in Landscape Trees

Weeds

- Annual Bluegrass
- Bermudagrass
- Brooms
- Burning & Stinging Nettle
- Catchweed Bedstraw
- Chickweeds
- Clovers
- Common Groundsel
- Common Knotweed
- Common Purslane
- Crabgrass

- Creeping Woodsorrel and Bermuda Buttercup
- Dallisgrass
- Dandelions
- Dodder
- Field Bindweed
- Green Kyllinga
- Invasive Plants
- Kikuyugrass
- Mallows
- Mistletoe
- Nutsedge
- Perennial Pepperweed
- Plantains
- Poison Oak
- Puncturevine
- Roses: Cultural Practices and Weed Control
- Russian Thistle
- Spotted Spurge
- Weed Management in Landscapes
- Weed Management in Lawns
- Wild Blackberries
- Woody Weed Invaders
- Yellow Starthistle

Management Methods Including Pesticides and Biological Control

- Biological Control & Natural Enemies
- Bordeaux Mixture
- Hiring a Pest Control Company
- Pesticides: Safe and Effective Use in the Home and Landscape
- Soil Solarization for Gardens and Landscapes

Miscellaneous

- Delusory Parasitosis



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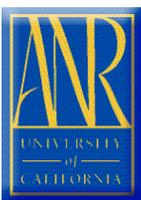
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October 2010

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