



THE YOLO GARDENER

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A Weed or a Beneficial Plant?

Laura Stuber Cameron, Yolo County Master Gardener

A weed is a plant out of place. For example, in a meadow or naturalized landscape crabgrass will provide a banquet for birds in fall and winter; yet in a formal landscape, crabgrass will be the bane of your garden. "Weed" is just a term we've designated for a plant that is growing where we don't want it. Simply put, a plant may be a weed in some situations but not in others.



Crabgrass: Weed or Beneficial?

Qualities of plants that increase the likelihood of it becoming a weed are its competitiveness with other plants and its ability to reproduce in massive quantities. Weeds have many of the following characteristics:

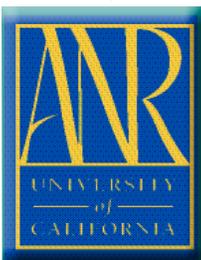
- Longevity Germinate in a range of conditions (barren; water less; excess heat or cold...)
- Germination Delay or spread out the germination process to prevent all seeds from sprouting at the same time
- Disperse Widely dispersed: Efficient methods including wind, bird and other creatures
- Chemicals Release chemicals into the soil surrounding the roots to inhibit the growth of other plants around them
- Resistance Greater disease resistance than other plants

Adaptability is a hallmark of weeds. For example, dandelions and thistles are known across the nation. Many plants become weeds when they are introduced into environments where they don't have natural enemies (e.g., an insect or disease) to keep them in check. Some tenacious weeds are beneficial to other creatures we may find pleasing. For example, the Monarch butterfly will lay its eggs only in milkweed.

Like all plants, weeds have a distinct life cycle: they may be annuals (ragweed), ephemerals (chickweed), biennials (mullein) or perennials (dandelion). An ephemeral is an annual that acts like it is on steroids. It completes

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several life cycles in one year. Often the most difficult-to-control weeds are those with a perennial life cycle because in addition to reproducing by seed, they also reproduce vegetatively from underground root structures.

Some common plants that have desirable features but can also be thought of as weeds, depending on the situation, are:

PURSLANE

Purslane is an annual with culinary uses. It can be munched fresh in the garden (be sure no chemicals have been sprayed!), tossed in a salad, or steamed as you would spinach. Instead of garlic in your mashed potatoes, substitute steamed purslane. This “weed” is showing up in grocery stores and has been popular in Europe, China, India, and Mexico for many centuries. Purslane grows low-to-the-ground, spreads, and has plump moist leaves. Its seeds hold their germination power for up to 30 years. Butterflies like the flowers, and songbirds as well as other small animals seek out the seeds. Birds will nibble the leaves for moisture during dry spells.

SPURGE

Not all spurges are weeds. Many gardens boast Euphorbia species that are lovely garden plants. For example, poinsettia is a spurge. Spotted spurge, however, is an annual weed that exists in most of the world. When planted as an ornamental, Euphorbia plants may become invasive, although they are easy to pull up. (People with sensitive skin or latex allergies should wear long sleeves and impenetrable gloves to protect themselves when handling these plants from the white sticky sap.) Many spurges spread rapidly via underground stems or roots, and broken pieces of these underground structures will quickly sprout to form new plants.

CRABGRASS

Crabgrass is an annual that disperses by seed as well as vegetatively in that broken sections of stem can re-root at joints. Crabgrass can be considered as a lawn

alternative because it stands up to drought without losing any of its lush green look. Although it turns brown in winter, it provides a banquet for birds when planted as a meadow.



DANDELION

Dandelion is a perennial that disperses by seed. Brimming with iron, potassium, vitamin A, and other healthy compounds, this “spring tonic” is traditionally used for liver ailments as well as a strong diuretic.

Tea made from the leaves is said to combat insomnia and soothe indigestion. Young leaves are mild while older leaves may be bitter. It can be cut into bite-size pieces and added to salad or tossed in with boiled potatoes. Fancy some dandelion in your soup or in a side dish with ham? Dandelion wine can also be made from the fresh flowers.

MORNINGGLORIES

Morningglory is an annual that is living testimony to the concept that a weed is just a plant growing in the wrong place. Morningglories have beautiful, wide blossoms that come in many colors. This beauty can climb to 15 feet and disperses by seed. The drawback is when this plant keeps growing and starts to take over the garden. Hand pull these plants to keep their numbers down. They can also be hoed off or buried under mulch. Morningglories wind themselves around anything, are leggy, fast growing, and easy to control--if you catch them in time.

A weed can be a beneficial plant in the right environment. To control weeds catch them early and often, and you'll have a headstart on the following weed-pulling season.



Lupines - A Native and a Wildflower

Jan Bower, Yolo County Master Gardener



green valleys. This is beautifully portrayed by William F. Jackson's popular oil on canvas landscape paintings of purple lupines and golden poppies – countryside views near Mount Tamalpais, by the Bay, in Yosemite Valley, and on a Coast Range meadow. These paintings can be seen in the permanent art collection of the Crocker Art Museum in Sacramento, where Jackson was curator for 50 years (1885-1935).

Characteristics

Lupines belong to the Family Leguminosae, which is the Pea Family with origins in Mexico. The genus is *Lupinus*. Its family name is appropriate because the plant has long spikes of pealike flowers, similar to those of the sweet pea, which is also a member of this family. The stems can grow up to four feet high and spring from mounds of palmated compound leaves with each segment coming from a common center, like a cartwheel. They often occur in sweeping masses and grow best in zones 4-9

Lupines appear in a broad range of colors -- purple, blue, red, pink, orange, yellow, white, and even bicolor. They can grow as perennials or annuals, depending upon the conditions under which they exist or are cultivated. Ideal conditions for their growth include full sun; light, well-drained, and moist soil of good fertility; and a pH around 6.5. Too much water and restricted air circulation can cause mildew on their stems and foliage. In a wild state, the plants tend to move around and reseed themselves in the landscape; however, when they are planted, they are less transient and relatively short lived -- about three to five years – so new specimens need to be sown every few years.

Propagation

Since mature, well-established lupines have deep tap roots, transplanting them is difficult and risky. They also resent handling. The best way to grow lupines is from seeds planted directly into the soil in autumn. The new seedlings will then come up in early spring and can be divided while they are still small. The seeds can be found in the conspicuous pods of the flowers after they have wilted. These may be gathered when ripe, shelled, dried, and stored until planting time. Most of the seeds will germinate without pretreatment. Well-rotted manure or rich compost should be added to the plants once they have started to grow. This will provide additional nutrients

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and conserve moisture. And damage from freeze-thaw in winter can be prevented by mulching. Common diseases and pests that infect lupines are powdery mildew, rust, and aphids.

Value

Lupines form an attractive backdrop to smaller and lower plants in cottage garden flower beds and borders. Their tall, upright shapes create stunning accents in the garden. They also make good cutting flowers, attract butterflies, and are excellent companions to grasses, poppies, Shasta daisies, peonies and phlox.

Varieties

Eighty-two species of *Lupinus* are native to California. Over thirty of them are annuals and about fifty are perennials. Favorite annuals are the Valley Lupine (*L. subvexus*) and the pretty dwarf Douglas' Lupine (*L. nanus*). Russell Hybrid (*L. polyphyllus*) is the most common perennial and grows best on the coast and at higher mountain elevations. The Sundial Lupine (*L. Pe-*

rennis) is the wild lupine that we see the most in California. It is very invasive, but beautiful when it changes color from blue to pink in the late spring. One of the best places to see this type of lupine is at Loafer Creek State Park on Lake Oroville in Butte County. The Silver Dune Lupine (*L. chamissonis*) is native to San Francisco. It is a shrub with blue or lavender flowers and grows in the coastal area because it likes clay soils. Unlike many of the other lupine varieties, it blooms from summer to fall rather than just in the spring. 🌱

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Saving Seeds for Next Year

Laura Stuber Cameron, Yolo County Master Gardener

A hot summer day... a ripe tomato waiting...juice dripping down your chin...just the best...from Great Grandpa's garden, grown with seeds brought over from the home country. In order to continue the tradition and savor the flavor of your favorite vegetables, saving the seeds from these plants will enable you to flashback to a favorite memory, a delicious flavor or just allow you save you the cost of new seed packets every year.

Heirloom vegetables, produced from seeds brought over from many lands by our ancestors, are still being grown today. My great grandparent's vegetable garden was grown with their own saved seeds year after year. They and many of their siblings chose a city life without a garden, no more seeds. This story is repeated thousands of times over with the loss of untold numbers of old time varieties each year. But take heart: there is a resurgence of several seed saving exchanges, including stores and catalogs at which heirloom varieties are being saved. But be aware, you probably can't save the seeds from that wonderfully sweet carrot grown from a package purchased from the local home store because it is hybridized. It is simply not capable of reproducing the carrots I enjoyed.



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On the other hand, plants that are pollinated by insects or the wind may have cross pollinated with plants from another variety and will also not grow true. To save seeds from these plants requires a bit more care. To maintain varietal purity will take a bit of work and generally a bit more land than many front or back yard gardeners have. In order to maintain varietal purity options such as caging, bagging, hand pollination and isolation (a distance large enough to prevent contamination from insect pollination or windblown pollen) may need to be used.

Open Pollinated or heirloom, self-pollinated plants are the only varieties that will grow true from seed, that is the seedlings will be exactly like the parents. Self-pollinated plants are the easiest to save and include: Beans, chicory, endive, lettuce, peas, and tomatoes. Save seeds from a variety of healthy plants, not just the biggest and best. You can also save many heirloom flower seeds such as: cleome, foxgloves, hollyhock, nasturtium, sweet pea, and zinnia.

Seed cleaning methods are basically dry or wet processing. Dry processing is for seeds harvested from pods or husks that have usually dried in place on the plant such as corn, radish, beans or lettuce. Wet processing is used for any seeds that are embedded in damp flesh such as berries, fruits, tomatoes and cucumbers.

Saving those heirloom tomatoes' delicious seeds can be accomplished as follows:

Remove the seeds from the fruit

- Pick and wash fully ripe tomato
- Cut across the middle
- Squeeze the seeds and surrounding gel into a bowl or bucket
- Set aside to ferment for one to three days (outside)
- Stop the fermentation process when the layer of mold completely covers the surface

Wash

- Add enough water to double the mixture, stir vigorously
- Good seeds will settle to the bottom, pour off the mold, debris and hollow seeds
- Repeat until only clean seeds remain
- Thoroughly clean and sterilize with a ten percent bleach solution before using again for food preparation



Unfermented Tomato Seeds

Dry processing the seeds of non-legumes can be done as follows:

Dump the seeds on glass or ceramic to dry

- Do not dry on paper, cloth or non rigid plastic as they stick
- Ensure even drying by stirring twice a day
- Thoroughly clean and sterilize with a ten percent bleach solution before using again for food preparation
 - No oven, no direct sunlight, keep seeds under 95 degrees
 - In humid weather, a fan will help speed the process

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Saving legume seeds such as peas or beans may be done as follows:

Dry in the garden (on the plant) whenever possible

Harvest dry pods individually

- If the entire plant is pulled, hang in garage or shed to dry

Thresh

- Breaks the seeds free from their coverings
- Rub, beat or flail
- Place in feed sack or pillow case and flail
- Mash between two boards (smaller seeds)

Winnow

- Separate the debris and chaff from the seeds
 - Wind
 - Old hair dryers, no heating element
 - Small high speed computer fans, household fans
 - Tossing seeds in the air
- Cover the area with a sheet or plastic for complete recovery of all seeds

Storing Saved Seed

- Make sure the seed is completely dry, or it will rot or mold in storage
 - 6-8% moisture for peas, beans or corns
 - 4-5% moisture for small, soft seeds
- Place seeds into an air tight container, such as a canning jar
- Label each container with name and date
- Can be in envelopes placed in air tight containers
- Self Seal T-bags, Seal a Meal bag, zip lock bags, small drawstring muslim bags also work
- Lightweight plastic bags are not moisture proof and make poor storage containers
- Store in a cool, dark, dry place
- Stored seed is best used the following year
- The very best storage for the airtight containers in a freezer
- Second best is refrigerator or
- Any cool area where the temperature fluctuates as little as possible
- Defrost or bring to room temperature before opening the jar



Wind Winnowing

For more information regarding saving and using heirloom seeds as well as purchasing:

Seed to Seed: Seed Saving and Growing Techniques for Vegetable Gardeners by Suzanne Ashworth 🌱

Seed Savers Exchange – www.seedsavers.org <<http://www.seedsavers.org/>>

The Flower and Herb Exchange – www.seedsavers.org <<http://www.seedsavers.org/>>

Native Seeds/SEARCH – www.nativeseeds.org <<http://www.nativeseeds.org/>>



Postman's Park

David Studer, Yolo County Master Gardener



England's many gardens—from the fabulous Kew Gardens to Eastern Cornwall's quirky and futuristic Eden Project biomes are fascinating, beautiful and a pleasure to visit. But, not all gardens are about the vegetation and therein lies our tale of Postman's Park's unique and special beauty.

Postman's Park hides in a small green alcove tucked between several buildings that shelter its visitors from the noise and the hustle and bustle of the nearby streets of London. It was named for the postmen who used to work in the former Post Office headquarters nearby.

Inside what was once the old walled City of London a short walk from St James Cathedral, the shady trees and inviting benches of Postman's Park provide a calm place for lunch or to pause on a walk through London.

The park contains lovely flower beds of astilbe and canna lilies, a fountain and pond filled with koi, water lilies and water hawthorne, lush grassy areas under shady trees, several tree ferns and a variety of azaleas, rhododendrons, Japanese maples, and other plants. Again, it's not about the vegetation. This is what it's about... George Frederick Watts, one of the foremost painters of late 19th Century London, believed that there should be a memorial that celebrated "heroic self-sacrifice"—those that selflessly sacrificed their own lives in order to save a fellow human being.

"The material prosperity of a nation is not an abiding possession; the deeds of its people are."—G. F. Watts

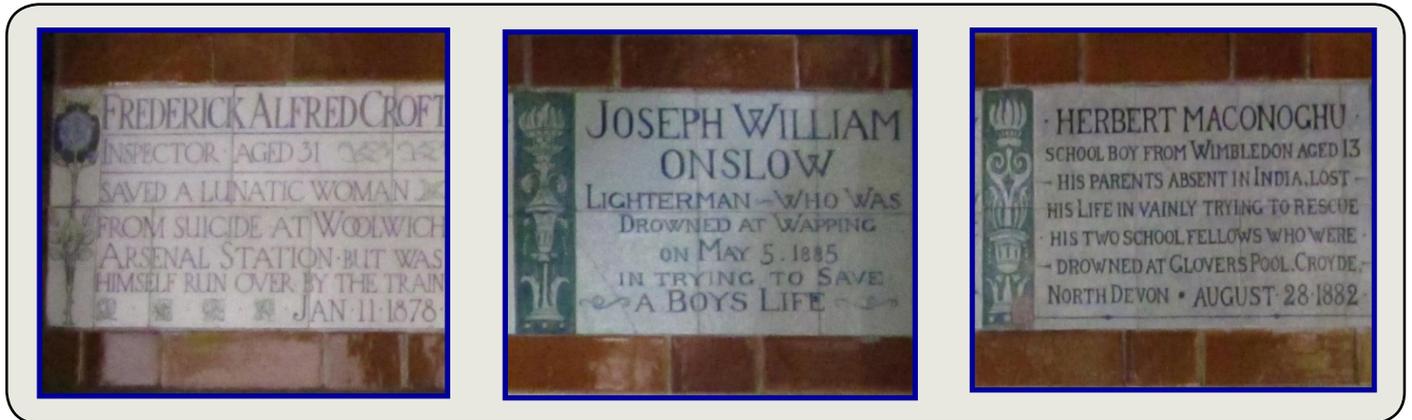
This inspiration culminated in arbor sheltering tile plaques on one wall of Postman's Park that briefly and beautifully tell the poignant tales of ordinary English men and women who became extraordinary in death as they are remembered for giving up their own lives in order to save the life of another.

Reading the plaques tugs at one's heart and transports the reader to another time with poetic descriptions of heroism, the saviors and the saved.



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The wall of tribute tiles contains over 50 memorials dating from the late 19th and early 20th Century with one lone exception. Leigh Pitt's fiancée and friends lobbied the Diocese of London to have a plaque installed in his honor in June 2009—the first in over 80 years.



An interest in gardening can open all kinds of doors into ideas and places otherwise unknown. Postman's Park and the "Memorials to Self Sacrifice" really touched my heart.

In addition to the memorial plaques and the tranquil green sanctuary, the Park is also home to Brookfield Bug Buddies designed by Brookfield Europe. This interesting sculpture serves the dual purpose of looking attractive and providing a home for stag beetles, solitary bees, butterflies, spiders, lace wings and ladybirds (bugs). Apparently, California is not the only place that is running out of native pollinators. The British Land and City of London Corporation sponsored a competition to design "five-star hotels"

for bugs to celebrate the international year of biodiversity. You can actually take a walking tour through London of all five finalists by downloading the leaflet of the Beyond the Hive "Insect Hotel Crawl." Click on this link: http://library.the-group.net/britishland/client_upload/file/Beyond_the_Hive/BTH_Insect_Hotel_Crawl_leaflet.pdf Happy Gardening! 🌱

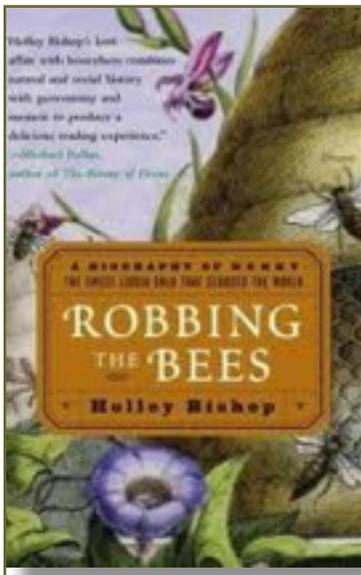
What do Beekeepers Read?

Willa Bowman Pettygrove, Yolo County Master Gardener

Mom was a beekeeper, and we have the books to prove it. It was the experience of beekeeping and ideas about the work that mattered to her. (Though there were a few towels, aprons, pot holders, wind chimes, and other bee minutiae in her house.)

This article will review just three books from a very extensive collection¹. None of these are books that Mom acquired herself, so they probably weren't her go-to sources to answer questions in her very successful efforts at beekeeping. But they are books that other readers might find and enjoy as a first look at a possible hobby or life work, one that could do much for our troubled planet.

Robbing the Bees by Holley Bishop. This book is written as a survey of beekeepers from the perspective of



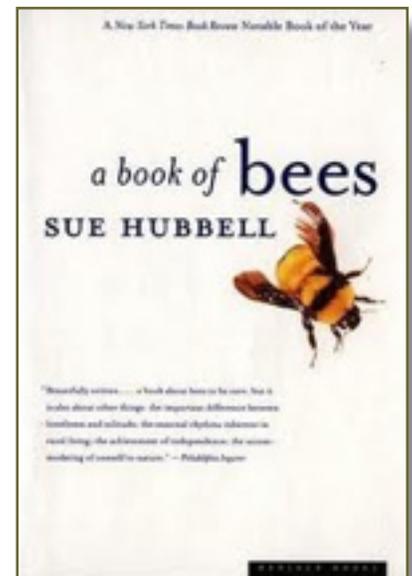
one would-be author and beekeeper who travels from New England to production of tupelo honey in Florida. The style of the book is whimsical or opportunistic, depending on one's patience for the author's tendency to imitate

John McPhee's style in following one eccentric person or idea at length. The range of places and eras covered

is literally encyclopedic, resulting in some head spinning and head scratching as the reader transitions from rock paintings of honey hunting in India (5,500 years ago) to a beekeeper named Smiley who works the tupelo woods with his bees. Readers who wish to explore this book might want to begin with the chapter "Robbing the Bees", which covers interesting and little known facts

about the interdependence of human societies and bees over all time.

The Book of Bees by Sue Hubbell. Sue Hubbell is a beekeeper who also has a talent for writing. I was struck by how this book is simultaneously eloquent and practical. Unlike Smiley and Holley Bishop, Sue's beekeeping year has very clear seasons because she works in the Ozarks. (Beekeepers in the subtropics don't have to contend with keeping bees alive in cold seasons.) The book follows the seasons, and as such has interesting and useful information about the ecology of bees in relation to wild and cultivated forage plants, birds, and other organisms. One can learn a lot about bee practice, and also about the lifestyle of a beekeeper. Intense activity in some periods is followed by more relaxed times when tending the bees is also a time just to be in nature and eat one's lunch in the sun.

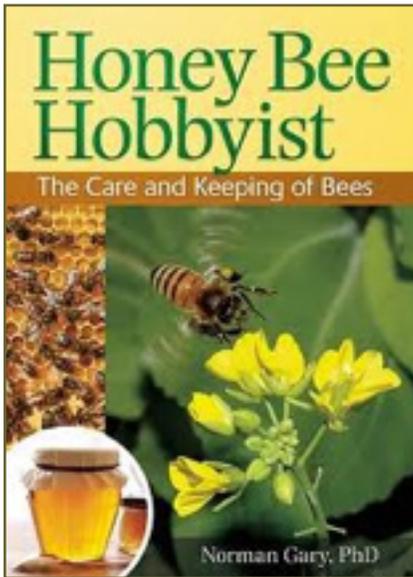


In one instance, she introduces a child to a bee, first putting a drop of honey on her own arm. When the child expresses interest she gets a drop of honey too. "...soon we each had a bee feeding on [the drop of honey on] our arms. When the drop of honey was gone, the bee began to investigate the rest of the girl's arm, carefully... 'I can feel its little feet,' she said. 'They tickle, but I like it.'" (p. 48)

Honey Bee Hobbyist: The Care and Keeping of Bees by Norman Gary. This title shows exceptional modesty in understating both the book's comprehensive content and its author's lengthy and distinguished career. Most hobbyists probably would not start their exploration with artificial insemination of queen bees (photo, p. 56), but the many clear and colorful photographs invite

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the hobbyist to find specialties that will suit their interests. This is a very practical book that follows a temporal logic from preparing the hive (purchase your first), through getting bees (purchased, from a friend, or captured as a swarm), through bee nutrition and long-term management.

Perhaps issues such as the disease called Colony Collapse Disorder that is devastating bee colonies throughout the country are too cutting-edge to be addressed in a book. One of the problems with a very good book (such as Sue Hubbell's) is that it probably doesn't get the revisions it deserves. Despite that, I recommend each of these books, in all or in part, for your reading pleasure. 🐝

Holley Bishop. *Robbing the Bees: A Biography of Honey*. Simon & Schuster, 2005.

Norman Gary. *Honey Bee Hobbyist: The Care and Keeping of Bees*. Hobby Farm Press (Bow Tie Press), 2010.

Sue Hubbell. *A Book of Bees*. Ballentine, 1988.

Pumpkins to Grow, Harvest, Carve, and Cook

Linda Parsons, Yolo County Master Gardener

There is nothing like a pumpkin to conjure up thoughts of autumn: pumpkin pie and soup, scarecrows and crows, and trick and treat! Pumpkin time is harvest time and the season that unwinds summer and welcomes winter.

Pumpkins are autumn's most traditional fruit. Pumpkins and squash are thought to have been first cultivated in the ancient Americas. Early pumpkins were not the traditional round orange upright Jack-O-Lantern fruit we think of today. They were a crookneck variety, which stored well. Archeologists have described how pumpkins and squash were cultivated along river and creek banks along with beans and sunflowers. After maize(corn) was introduced, ancient farmers learned to grow squash with maize(corn) and beans using the "Three Sisters" method. The Three Sisters are squash, corn and beans, which grow and thrive together. Corn serves as a natural trellis for the beans. The bean's roots set nitrogen in the soil to nourish the corn. The squash plants shelter the shallow roots of the corn and shade the ground to discourage weeds and preserve moisture. The early Native American farmers were practicing an early form of sustainable agriculture.



Pumpkin Vine

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It is believed that Christopher Columbus introduced the first pumpkins and squash to Europe. Native American Indians introduced pumpkins and squash to the Pilgrims. Pumpkins were an important food source. They were roasted, baked, parched, boiled and dried and thus were a food source that could be used throughout the year

The origin of the Thanksgiving pumpkin pie comes from early Pilgrims who baked pumpkins in the hot ashes of a fire. They cut the top off of a pumpkin, scooped out the seeds, and filled the cavity with cream, honey, eggs and spices. When the pumpkin was finished cooking, it was lifted from the ground. They scooped the contents out along with the cooked flesh of the shell like custard. The Pilgrims also made pumpkin beer by fermenting a combination of persimmon, hops, maple sugar and pumpkin. The Jack-O-Lantern tradition comes from early lanterns that were carved from pumpkins and gourds and lit with lumps of coal. These early recipes and traditions have become synonymous with autumn and the harvest celebrations of Halloween and Thanksgiving.

There are countless varieties of pumpkins. They are members of the Cucurbits family, which includes, cucumbers, muskmelons, watermelons, summer squash, winter squash and gourds. Today, these are among the most popular garden vegetables. Cucurbit crops are similar in their appearance and requirements for growth. They are warm season crops. They require full sun and well drained, neutral or slightly alkaline soil. They require low nitrogen and high potassium and phosphorous for good fruit development. A fertilizer such as 4-8-5 or 6-10-10 composition is ideal. They prefer a deep soaking once a week to a depth of 6-8 inches. Reduce water later in the season to improve fruit production and sweetness. Traditionally, pumpkins need a large area to grow, but pumpkins can be grown on a trellis. Also, there are newer, dwarf varieties that are suited to smaller gardens.

Pumpkins are available in several sizes: small (4-6 pounds) for cooking and pies; medium (8-15pounds) and large (15-25 pounds), for cooking and jack-o-lanterns;

and jumbo (50-100 pounds), for showing at fairs and pumpkin exhibits.

If you want small pumpkins for baking consider the Small Sugar Pumpkin. Good choices for small decorative pumpkins are Spooktacular and Baby Pam. Harvest Moon is a good all purpose medium size pumpkin. Aspen, Ghost Rider, Howden Field, Jackpot, Jumping Jack and Buckskin are good all around, large pumpkins.

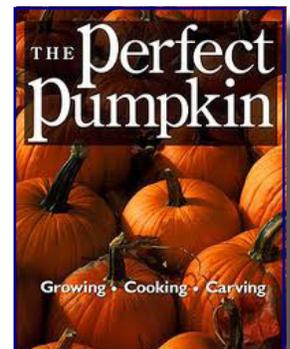


Burpee Big Max

If you wish to try your luck at cultivating a giant pumpkin try Atlantic Giant, Big Max or Prizewinner. Keep in mind that while you need to have pumpkins with the genetics to produce a jumbo pumpkin, there are also cultivation methods that must be used to produce a giant. This includes growing only one pumpkin per vine. Baby Boo is a tiny white pumpkin and Lumina is a medium sized white pumpkin for carving and decoration.

Soon many of these pumpkins will appear in our local grocery stores and farmer's markets. If you enjoy picking your own special pumpkins for eating and carving, visit one of the many pumpkin farms in Yolo County. These include Cool Patch (www.coolpatchpumpkins.com) and Impossible Acres (www.impossibleacres.com) in Davis, and Dave's Pumpkin Patch (www.davespumpkinpatch.com) in West Sacramento.

As our fall evenings begin to turn chilly, curl up in a chair with a cup of pumpkin spice tea and read *The Perfect Pumpkin: Growing, Cooking and Carving* by Gail Damerow. This will surely help you enjoy pumpkin time and our bountiful harvest season here in Yolo County.



Autumn Gardening Tips

Linda Parsons, Yolo County Master Gardener

We have been blessed with mild temperatures this past summer. This came as a mixed blessing. Many of us have experienced slower and less productive fruit and vegetable crops. Harvesting will be later, provided we do not have an unusually early autumn. The days are shorter and soon the cool temperatures will arrive. It is time for harvesting, cleaning and preparing your garden for fall and winter plants.

While it may seem like the emphasis is on garden maintenance, this is also a wonderful time of renewal. Now is the perfect time to introduce a new tree, shrub, perennial or type of bulb into your garden. Think of the possibilities and anticipate the added beauty you will enjoy in the New Year and the years to come. Visit local nurseries, public gardens, the UC Arboretum or stroll through several new neighborhoods. You will surely find a plant or tree that will add interest and beauty to your garden.



Summer is slipping away. It is time for fall gardening.

Fall Cleanup

- Remove fallen fruits, vegetables, leaves, spent flowers, and weeds.
- Pinch back plants to allow tomatoes, melons, squash, enough time to mature before frost sets in.
- Remove unproductive plants.
- Take down pea trellises, beanpoles, and tomato supports
- Clean gardens supports and stakes with a diluted solution of bleach before storing them for future use.
- Pick tomatoes when daytime temperatures no longer rise above 65* F. Wrap them in newspaper and let them ripen indoors.
- Maintain your compost pile by adding clean garden waste and leaves. Continue to regularly turn the pile.
- Control earwigs, snails, and slugs.
- Apply liquid copper to citrus to prevent brown rot.
- Apply the first dormant spray to fruit trees and in November.
- Apply liquid copper to nectarines, peaches, and apricots in November and follow up with an application in December and February.

Feed and Amend

- Feed and amend your garden soil. Add manure and compost to improve soil structure and fertility.
- Apply a layer of leaves, straw or newspaper to your soil surface to reduce weeds next spring and improve soil structure.
- Amend your soil and add a complete fertilizer if you plant winter crops, flowers, bulbs or seeds.
- Apply a final application of fertilizer to citrus plants.

Lawn care

- Renovate a poorly performing lawn by de-thatching, aerating, fertilizing and over seeding it with either an annual or perennial rye or fescue mix, to keep it green through the winter.
- Feed lawns in early fall with a pre-emergent and a complete fertilizer (one that contains nitrogen, phospho

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rus and potassium).

- Feed in late fall with a slow-release complete fertilizer, such as one labeled “winterizer.”
- Adjust the watering cycle on your lawn. It will require less water in the fall and little or none in the winter.
- Continue to mow weekly and check your sprinkler system. Be sure it is properly adjusted and that all the nozzles are working.
- Lower the height of your mower blade.
- Remove dead leaves from your lawn regularly to prevent your lawn from expiring from lack of sunlight or contracting fungus infections.
- Fall is the best time to put in a new lawn with either seed or sod.



Annuals and Perennials

- Continue deadheading and removing unsightly leaves.
- Divide and transplant bulbs, tubers, and corms.
- If your oriental poppies, bearded iris, peonies, agapanthus and daylilies are becoming less vigorous and unattractive, fall is the season to divide and replant them.
- Share extra bulbs, corms, and tubers with a friend.
- Enjoy the fall color of perennials. Wait until spring to trim or cut them back.
- Evergreen perennials should not be cut back in the fall. These include rock cress, creeping sedum, creeping phlox, and hens and chickens.
- Roses should keep producing flowers into December, but don't fertilize after September. Deadhead as needed unless you prefer colorful rose hips to develop and provide winter interest.
- Plant fall flowers, such as calendulas, chrysanthemums, bachelor buttons, dianthus, forget-me-knots, sweet peas, primroses, and violas. Many of these will over-winter and provide lush color in the spring.
- Spring blooming perennials, such as foxglove, columbine, salvia, and daylilies can be planted now. Combine these with daffodils, freesias, tulips, and other spring bulbs, and plant no later than the end of October.
- Fall is the best time to introduce perennials to your garden.
- Plant winter vegetables, such as broccoli, lettuce, endive, parsley, garlic, and onion sets now.
- Take cuttings of your favorite annuals. Favorite choices are geraniums, coleus, begonias, and impatiens. Gradually move plants to shadier places so they adjust to the lower light levels when moved them indoors.
- Prune cane berries and grapes.



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Cercis occidentalis

Trees and Shrubs

- Fall is the best time to plant trees and shrubs. The cooler air and still warm soil provide ideal conditions for new plant roots to take hold.
- For autumn colors of red, gold or yellow, choose these trees: Chinese pistache (*Pistacia chinensis*), ginkgo (*Ginkgo biloba*), tupelo (*Nyssa sylvatica*), scarlet oak (*Quercus coccinea*), red oak (*Quercus rubra*), chanticleer pear (*Pyrus calleryana* “chanticleer”), or red maple (*Acer rubrum*).
- Plant drought tolerant trees such as valley oak (*Quercus lobata*), blue oak (*Quercus douglasii*), or a Japanese pagoda tree (*Sophora japonica*).

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- Plant easy care and drought tolerant shrubs such as crape myrtle (*lagerstroemia*), California lilac (*Ceanothus* hybrids), heavenly bamboo (*Nandina domestica*), tobira (*Pittosporum tobira*), and western redbud (*Cercis occidentalis*).
- Deep water trees as they enter dormancy.
- Prune and shape trees in late fall.

Garden Keeping

- Sharpen spades, loppers, pruners, and your lawn mower blade. You can use a file or take your tools to professional sharpener
- Take your lawn mower to a professional for an annual tune-up.
- Clean, disinfect, and oil your tools, so they will be ready for pruning roses, trees and shrubs from late fall to early spring.
- Keep birdbaths and feeders clean and full for migrating birds.
- Check out your local farmer's market or pumpkin patch for a colorful selection of fall decorations, including pumpkins, gourds, dried corn, and fall flowers.
- Keep a journal. Record your watering cycle information, pruning, spraying, and planting information. Make a list of garden improvements and fun ideas.
- Collect seeds from your garden. Store seeds in junk mail (window) envelopes or tea bag wrappers.
- Check out your favorite garden catalogs. It is time to think about ordering next spring's seeds, bare root roses, and garden tools.

- For more information on vegetables, ornamental, fruit trees or lawn care, visit www.ipm.ucdavis.edu

Garden Fun

- Collect pumpkins, gourds, and squash for fall carving and decorations.
- Make a scarecrow or a fall home decoration.
- Swap plants and seeds with friends.
- Take a garden tour or rose propagation class on September 11th at the Old City Cemetery in Sacramento.

Fun Things to Do

Have you noticed that the early harvest apples are beginning to be found at the farmer's markets and in our local grocery produce departments? Yum!

My thoughts turn to apple pie, crisp, bread, muffins and the sinful caramel apple.

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U.C.C.E. Office
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Woodland, CA 95695



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One of our families favorite fall adventures is spending a day at Apple Hill. There are many farms that sell apples, and allow you to pick your apples. In addition, there are many fall activities from September through November.

For more information visit www.applehill.com

Garden Books

Do you want to plant your own apple tree or transform your garden in an ever-changing palate of edible treats? Here are several books that will help you on your adventure.

The Apple Book by Rosie Sanders. Rosie’s book looks like an art book with its beautiful illustrations, however, it comes complete with scientific and historical information on over 100 apple varieties.

The Illustrated World Encyclopedia of Apples: A Comprehensive Identification Guide to Over 400 Varieties and 60 Scrumptious Recipes by Andrew Mikolaiski will be released in December 2011. The preliminary information and photos makes this a candidate for my Christmas list.

Eat Your Yard: Edible Trees, Shrubs, Vines, Herbs and Flowers for your Landscape by Nan Chase. Read this through the fall and winter, with the goal of creating your own Garden of Eden in 2012.

Free Garden Classes

Fall Plant Sale, Tomato Tasting, and Gardening Workshops

Saturday, Sep. 17th, Woodland Community College, 2300 E. Gibson Rd, Woodland

9 a.m. to noon – Ornamental landscape and house plants will be for sale as well as rooted cuttings of 12 varieties of grapes. Also, come and taste and score 10 varieties of our later ripening heirloom and hybrid tomatoes at a free tomato tasting.

9 to 10 a.m. - Starting a Home Vineyard

10 to noon - Composting, Worm Composting, and Compost Tea

\$2.00 College parking fee.

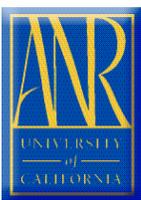
*Questions about your garden?
We’d love to help!*

Master Gardener Hotline..... (530) 666-8737

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.

E-Mail..... mgyolo@ucdavis.edu

**Drop In..... Tuesday & Friday, 9-11 a.m.
70 Cottonwood St., Woodland**



U.C. Cooperative Extension
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**The Yolo
 Gardener
 Fall 2011**

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