



# Garden Notes

## Spring 2023



**Have a Gardening Question? Ask Us!**



### **Become a Master Gardener!**

Have you always wanted to learn more about gardening? Would you like to have more of a science-based knowledge of gardening? Are you interested in meeting new people that have a similar interest while make a difference in the community? The San Joaquin UC Master Gardener Program might be right for you. The UC Master Gardener Program of San Joaquin County offers the opportunity to use your enthusiasm, knowledge and skills to serve the community as a volunteer. We are now accepting applications for our 2024 training class. **Find out more information, including our application, on our website. [Click here.](#)**

~ Happy Gardening ~  
Marcy Sousa, Program Coordinator



## Water, Water Everywhere but Is That Good for Your Garden?

Spring is around the corner and gardeners with rakes, spades, pruners and shovels are anxiously looking forward to gardening in the moisture rich soil. But before we all venture outdoors, getting started in our gardening frenzy, there are a few things gardeners need know about the down side to our gardens after all the rain and what we can do to ensure our gardens thrive in spite of all the rain.



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## Color in the Garden

Our perennials are finally emerging from their winter slumber and the trees are showing their tender new spring leaves! But what about color in this year's garden? Should we do what we always do with the same color combinations or what about branching out this year with something different? You can even create moods for different areas of your garden if you would like such as calming, pastel colors for a space where you want to create a quiet spot and loud, hot colors to enliven a more active area such as around a pool or areas where your children play. Everyone has their own favorites so color is never wrong but keeping in mind the color wheel will reward you with an even more beautiful garden than ever!



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Spring is an excellent time of the year to take inventory of the things needed to prepare the garden for the growing season ahead. These chores may include evaluating the hardscape, thoroughly cleaning the yard, tuning-up tools, testing and feeding the soil, pruning shrubs, preparing new beds, fertilizing, and checking irrigation. Yes, it sounds like a lot, but if these chores are tackled a bit at the time, gardeners may find these activities to be fun, and the

rewards will be nothing less than a sensory stimulation of color, smells, touch, sound, and taste in the upcoming months

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## The "Mosquito Eater" Myth

Lately you may have seen some large, leggy insects bumbling around on your home, bouncing off walls and ceilings.

What are these?

While many people call them "mosquito eaters" or "mosquito hawks," they are actually crane flies. And unfortunately, they do not eat mosquitoes. Many reports claim that they bite or sting, and this is also false. The adults are harmless and many species don't even have mouthparts to feed at all! However, their larvae can be pests of lawns and turfgrass.

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## Preparing Home Landscapes for Wildfire

California Wildfire Preparedness Week 2023 (May 1-8), serves as a crucial reminder of the importance of preparing home landscapes to help mitigate wildfire risks. With the increasing threat of wildfires in California, adopting preventive measures and adapting landscapes can significantly reduce the vulnerability of homes and communities. By working together, we can foster wildfire preparedness and resilience, ensuring the safety of our communities in the face of increasing wildfire threats!

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### Spring Garden Chores

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### Plants of the Season

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### Pests of the Season

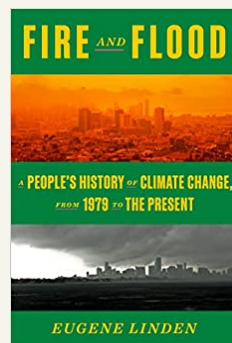
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### Gifts From the Garden

Preserving spring and summer flowers, foliage, seed heads, and bracts is a delightfully simple way to accumulate a collection of colorful plant materials from your garden to enjoy throughout the year. Many flowers, seed heads, and some leaves can be preserved by air-drying, often just hung in bunches in a warm, airy room. Leaves gathered when the sap is still rising in the plant, as well as some bracts, can be preserved in a desiccant solution like water and glycerin or silica crystals.

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### Growing Knowledge

#### Fire and Flood: a People's History of Climate Change

From a writer and expert who has been at the center of the fight for more than thirty years, a brilliant, big-picture reckoning with our shocking failure to address climate change. Fire and Flood focuses on the malign power of key business interests, arguing that those same interests could flip the story very quickly—if they can get ahead of a looming economic catastrophe.

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## Community Connections Local Resources for Gardeners

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## Horticultural Terms "PTYXIS"

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## A Taste of the Season Recipes from the Garden

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### Help Desk Great Gardening Help!

Just as plants spread their roots to take in "information" necessary for a healthy result, gardeners reach out to nourish their curiosity through horticultural study and experimentation. But what if you just need that little bit of extra help to get to the results you desire? One option available to you is to contact the Master Gardeners Helpline active in your county.

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### Herb Study Vanilla

Vanilla is the fruit of an orchid flower. It is a long, dark brown seed pod, which contains thousands of tiny black seeds. The Mayans are credited with being the first to intentionally grow an epiphytic, vine-like, orchidaceous plant that produced edible fruit pods. The vanilla plant is native to Central America and the Mayans used the fruit to soften the bitter taste of their chocolate beverages.

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### From the Master Food Preservers There's More to Butter Than Just Peanuts

What is your favorite spread to go along with peanut butter. Typically we choose a jelly or a jam or marmalade or some fruit topping made with fruit, sugar and pectin. We have many recipes for many different fruits and fruit combinations for our jellies and jams. But have you ever tried a fruit butter?

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## Find us on Social Media!

The San Joaquin County UC Master Gardeners have several social media pages. Find us on our [Facebook page](#), Instagram @sj\_mastergardeners, [Pinterest](#), Twitter @UCsanjoaquinMgs and our [YouTube page](#).

**Have a Gardening Question? Ask Us!**

Master Gardener Helpline: 209-953-6112  
E-mail: [anrmgsanjoaquin@ucanr.edu](mailto:anrmgsanjoaquin@ucanr.edu)  
Website: [ucanr.edu.sjmg](http://ucanr.edu.sjmg)

The helpline office is open Tuesday-Thursday from  
9:00 am - 12:00 pm.

Find past editions of our newsletter here.

