



# THE YOLO GARDENER



University of California  
Agriculture and Natural Resources

Summer 2013

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION BY THE U.C.C.E. YOLO COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS

## Gardening with Limited Water

California is in the midst of a severe drought. In response, many communities are beginning to implement conservation methods, including increasing water rates and water rationing. UCCE's Master Gardeners have identified a number of resources to help you become better at conserving water. These resources are detailed in an article appearing on the UCCE Yolo County Master Gardener website at <http://ucanr.edu/sites/YCMG/>. The material presented there is reprinted below.

Most of the water used at home is used outdoors, so even small steps to save water can yield big savings. Little things (like fixing broken sprinklers or making sure that you are running them in the cool of the early morning rather than the afternoon) can save lots of water. You can conserve even more by shrinking the amount of lawn you have, planting water-efficient plants, installing a drip irrigation system, or adding a weather-based smart controller.



Saving water is not hard. We simply need to be smart about using what we have. Low-water-use landscapes can be beautiful while using minimal amounts of water. We will continue to add resources for learning more about saving water, so check back often.

### TEN TIPS FOR SAVING WATER IN THE HOME LANDSCAPE:

**1. Prioritize your plants.** Determine which plants are most susceptible to water stress. High on the list should be plants that are valuable in terms of replacement cost, prominence in the landscape, and enjoyment.

- **High priority:** Trees and shrubs (especially those that are young and are planted in an exposed site). Large, mature shade trees and shrubs can be left alone unless the drought is severe and the trees begin to wilt, or the



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root systems have been recently disturbed.

- **Medium to high priority:** Perennials, fruit and nut trees, small fruits and vegetables, turf that is less than one year old.
- **Low priority:** Annual flowers and herbs, ornamental grasses, established turf. These are usually less expensive and more easily replaced.

**2. Irrigate early:** Less water loss occurs from evaporation and wind drift in the early morning hours because temperatures are cooler and there is less wind early in the day.

**3. Know your soil:** The type of soil in your landscape largely determines how often you should water. Clay soils retain more water than sandier ones, so they can go longer between waterings.

**4. Mulch:** Apply two to four inches of mulch around plants to keep weeds down, conserve soil moisture, and moderate soil temperatures. Mulching minimizes water evaporation from the soil surface, reducing the need to irrigate. Keep mulch three to four inches away from the trunk or stem of the plant to prevent rot.

**5. Control weeds:** Weeds can out-compete cultivated garden plants for water and nutrients.

**6. Add organic matter:** When possible, add organic matter (compost) to your soil. This will improve the water-holding capacity during dry weather and promote good drainage during wet weather.

**7. Don't fertilize:** Or apply a low-nitrogen fertilizer. Fertilizing stimulates growth, which increases water needs.

**8. Avoid runoff and puddling:** This is accomplished by cycling irrigations. Let sprinklers run for ten minutes, then shut them off for ten minutes, allowing the water to absorb into the ground.

**9. Use a broom to clean driveways, sidewalks and steps:** Using a hose can waste hundreds of gallons of water.

**10. Select water-efficient plants:** When buying new plants, use some of the resources below to choose low water users that are adapted to our climate. Keep in mind that all plants require regular watering to become established, including California natives.

## RESOURCES

The resources below provide more information about how to create a water-efficient landscape, and how to deal with drought conditions in your garden.

### Landscapes

- Information from the UC Center for Landscape & Urban Horticulture about landscape water management includes questions and answers regarding water conservation and dealing with drought in the landscape. [http://ucanr.edu/sites/UrbanHort/Water\\_Use\\_of\\_Turfgrass\\_and\\_Landscape\\_Plant\\_Materials/](http://ucanr.edu/sites/UrbanHort/Water_Use_of_Turfgrass_and_Landscape_Plant_Materials/)
- *Water Conservation Tips for the Home Lawn and Garden* is a UC ANR publication that describes how to reduce water use and at the same time have a lovely and enjoyable garden. (PDF 93kb) <http://anrcatalog.ucdavis.edu/pdf/8036.pdf>
- This chapter from the California Master Gardener Handbook discusses how to keep various plantings alive under drought conditions or water restrictions. (PDF 93kb) <http://ucanr.edu/sites/sacmg/files/183342.pdf>
- UC Davis Arboretum staff suggests actions to take for landscape survival during drought. <http://publicgarden.ucdavis.edu/public-garden/7-tips-for-landscape-survival-during-drought>
- UC environmental horticulturists offer tips on how to save water in the garden and landscape. (PDF 11kb) <http://ucanr.edu/sites/sacmg/files/183395.pdf>
- Watering tips for drought conditions from the University of Maryland offers suggestions for prioritizing the water needs of typical landscape plants, as well as watering and cultural tips for dealing with drought. (PDF



247kb) <http://ucanr.edu/sites/sacmg/files/183230.pdf>

- This Colorado State University information about landscape management during drought also applies to our California drought conditions (PDF 19kb). <http://ucanr.edu/sites/sacmg/files/183231.pdf>
- Help protect the health of your landscape trees with these tips for pruning drought-stressed shade trees. (PDF 19kb) <http://ucanr.edu/sites/sacmg/files/183437.pdf>
- The Sacramento Tree Foundation offers tips on caring for mature trees during a drought and caring for young trees during a drought. Also see their website in the helpful sites listed below. <http://www.sactree.com/mature> and <http://www.sactree.com/pages/492>
- *Rules of Thumb for Water-Wise Gardening* is a booklet produced by the Regional Water Authority that offers suggestions for planning, planting, and maintaining a water-efficient landscape. (PDF) <http://www.rwah2o.org/rwa/files/ToolKit/For%20the%20Garden/Rules%20of%20Thumb%20for%20Water%20Wise%20Gardening.pdf>
- From the California Department of Natural Resources, this colorful brochure describes six simple steps to a water-wise garden. [http://www.saveourh2o.org/sites/default/files/page\\_files/6%20Simple%20Steps%20to%20a%20Water-Wise%20Garden.pdf](http://www.saveourh2o.org/sites/default/files/page_files/6%20Simple%20Steps%20to%20a%20Water-Wise%20Garden.pdf)
- *Water-Smart Landscapes* from the US EPA describes how to have a beautiful, healthy yard while using less water. (PDF) [http://www.epa.gov/WaterSense/docs/water-efficient\\_landscaping\\_508.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/WaterSense/docs/water-efficient_landscaping_508.pdf)
- California's statewide program "Save Our Water" and the editors of *Sunset* magazine produced a helpful and beautifully illustrated 32-page booklet that offers many ways to save water in your landscape. (PDF) [http://www.saveourh2o.org/sites/default/files/page\\_files/GWW0611\\_Waterwise.pdf](http://www.saveourh2o.org/sites/default/files/page_files/GWW0611_Waterwise.pdf)

### Water-efficient plants

- A seven-page document, the WEL garden plant list (PDF 106kb) documents the plants growing in the Water Efficient Landscape Demonstration Garden at the Fair Oaks Horticulture Center. <http://ucanr.edu/sites/sacmg/files/117288.pdf>
- This is a list of the California native plants growing in the Water Efficient Landscape at the Fair Oaks Horticulture Center (PDF 120kb). With minimal supplemental water these plants can be kept attractive all year. <http://ucanr.edu/sites/sacmg/files/138184.pdf>
- The Arboretum All-Stars are 100 easy-to-grow, water-efficient plants selected by the UC Davis Arboretum horticultural staff and tested in our region. [http://www.arboretum.ucdavis.edu/arboretum\\_all\\_stars.aspx](http://www.arboretum.ucdavis.edu/arboretum_all_stars.aspx)

### Vegetable gardens

- Suggestions for home vegetable garden management during a drought include valuable information on critical watering periods for numerous vegetable crops. (PDF 20kb) <http://ucanr.edu/sites/sacmg/files/183393.pdf>
- Some vegetables require less water than others; this article describes which ones to consider for your vegetable garden when water use is limited. (PDF 8kb) <http://ucanr.edu/sites/sacmg/files/183430.pdf>

### Fruit trees

- This document describes the best ways to care for fruit trees in a drought, with valuable tips on when and how to water and thin fruit (PDF 95kb) <http://ucanr.edu/sites/sacmg/files/183723.pdf>
- The UC Drought Management website is written for commercial growers, but the information on drought strategies for peaches, plums, and nectarines is valuable for trees in home orchards as well. <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/QT/lawnwateringcard.html>



## Lawns

- This guide to irrigating established lawns from UC IPM Online describes how, when, and how often to water your turfgrass. <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/TOOLS/TURF/MAINTAIN/irrigate.html>
- Lawn watering quick tips from UC IPM Online, the UC Statewide Integrated Pest Management Program. <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/QT/lawnwateringcard.html>
- *Managing Turfgrasses During Drought* is a comprehensive and detailed UC publication that addresses situations such as the ones we are currently facing. (PDF 421kb) <http://ucanr.edu/sites/sacmg/files/182387.pdf>

## Graywater

- This chapter from the *California Master Gardener Handbook* discusses graywater use in urban California landscapes, including the benefits and risks of graywater systems. (PDF 67kb) <http://ucanr.edu/sites/sacmg/files/182486.pdf>

## Irrigation

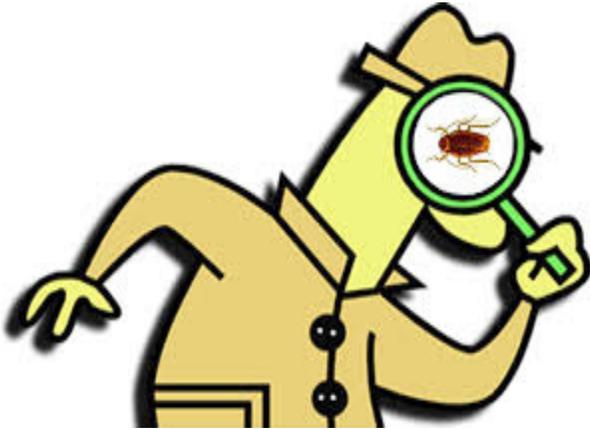
- Irrigation scheduling information for turfgrass from the UC Guide to Healthy Lawns tells how to determine the amount of water needed and how long to irrigate a lawn. <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/TOOLS/TURF/MAINTAIN/irrsched.html>
- *UC Guide to Healthy Lawns* instruction on irrigating established lawns describes how to ensure that your lawn will thrive. <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/TOOLS/TURF/MAINTAIN/irrigate.html>
- *Plan your Irrigation System* from UC IPM Online describes things to consider when planning a watering scheme. <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/TOOLS/TURF/SITEPREP/planirr.html>

## Helpful websites

- *UC Guide to Healthy Lawns* provides extensive information about growing a healthy lawn. From UC IPM Online, the UC Statewide Integrated Pest Management Program. <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/TOOLS/TURF/index.html>
- The Sacramento Tree Foundation offers excellent in-depth tree planting and watering guidance for our area. <http://www.sactree.com/pages/1>
- River-Friendly Landscaping is an environmentally friendly way of gardening. RFL practices conserve water, reduce yard waste, and prevent pollution of air and local rivers. Use the River Friendly benefits calculator to see how much water, time, and money can be saved by creating a river-friendly landscape. <http://www.msa.saccounty.net/sactostormwater/RFL/default.asp> and <http://www.msa.saccounty.net/sactostormwater/RFL/conservewater.asp> and <http://www.riverfriendly.com/>
- *Water-Wise Gardening in the Gold Country Region* from the Regional Water Authority offers extensive information about garden design, plant selection, watering tips, and tours of gardens in the Sacramento area, including the Water Efficient Landscape gardens at the Fair Oaks Horticulture Center. <http://www.rwa.watersavingplants.com/> and <http://www.rwa.watersavingplants.com/GWImage.php?index=29&source=gt&page=5>
- Regional Water Authority provides comprehensive advice about water-smart gardening. Find your water provider by locating your property on their map, or simply enter your address and zip code. <http://www.bewatersmart.info/resources-events/water-provider/>
- EcoLandscape California has just released eco-friendly landscape design plans for the New California Landscape. Downloadable landscape and irrigation plans and documents are included, as are suggestions for plants that are low-water-users and climate-appropriate. In-depth plant profiles and photographs show how each plant looks during all four seasons. <http://www.ecolandscapenew-ca/> 

## Shudder: Cockroaches!

Jan Bower, Yolo County U.C.C.E. Master Gardener



When I think about cockroaches, I envision a filthy and cluttered environment. I see a homemaker that is slovenly, practicing poor sanitary techniques—someone who is not particular about the handling of food and storage—someone who lives in a mess. I feel threatened by the possibility of disease or food poisoning. The very idea of a cockroach in a living and eating area is intimidating. But there it was one day—in my tidy, clean kitchen—a cockroach! My first, but sad to say, one of many. What to do?

I turned to my Master Gardener literature on cockroaches. *Pest Notes* (Publication 7467, published by the University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources, May 2007) states: “There are six species of cockroaches in California that can become pests.” The first thing I must do is to identify my species. Since cockroaches are nocturnal scavengers, I got up at midnight to start my watch and catch. After a little sleuthing, and as luck would have it, there it came—a big, black, and ugly bug, scurrying across my kitchen floor.



*A Fast Runner, but I got it!*

I grabbed for a piece of paper toweling and chased it until I caught it with screams of both terror and delight. It looked like a black beetle, only not so harmless.

The identifying features of my cockroach are long antennae, four legs, shield-shaped and flattened body with wings, and black to dark-reddish-brown in color. From the illustrations in the *Pest Notes* publication, I determined it to be a German cockroach, *Blattella germanica*, which I am told is the most common indoor species in Davis. *Pest Notes* further states: “This species reproduces the fastest of the common pest cockroaches. A single female and her offspring can produce over 30,000 individuals in a year, but many succumb to cannibalism and other population pressures.” They are the cockroaches spotlighted in cockroach reproduction horror stories.

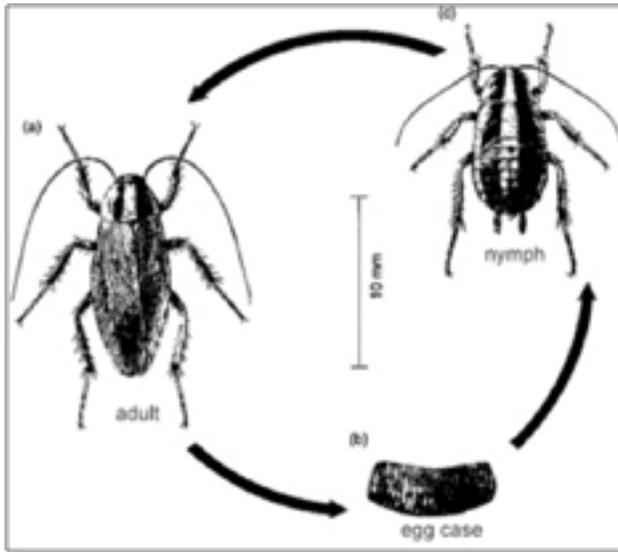


*A close-up of my German cockroach*

This is really scary! This offensive creature could start wandering and propagating all over my house. I might have to move out. The next morning I quickly got out the vacuum and vigorously cleaned every floor, carpet, cabinet, drawer, and corner. Then off to the hardware store for some help and good advice. A seasoned clerk suggested I place several roach traps in strategic locations, *e.g.*, under the refrigerator and sink, along the walls, and behind the stove. The curious cockroaches enter the traps, get stuck on the adhesive, and die. The so-called *Roach Motels* are safe to use in kitchens, bathrooms, basements, and garages, where cockroaches are most likely to hang out because they prefer dark, warm, and moist areas. The roach traps contain no pesticides and no pesticide fumes or odors.

I am trying these traps, and they are working! But I will need to continue trapping to maintain control. What is good about the traps is that you don't need to look at the roaches while they are slowly dying, and it makes cleaning easy. You just throw the traps in the

trash when they are full. The traps are also very inexpensive, compared to hiring an exterminator. Boric acid powder, mixed with flour and sugar and sprinkled around the house in cracks and crevices, is also very effective. The powder clings to the body of the cockroach, is ingested while grooming, and results in death. Roaches also hate the smell of naphthalene balls, which can be placed in corners around the house.



***The Life Cycle of the German Cockroach***

Two other domestic species found in Davis are the American cockroach (*Periplaneta Americana*) and the Oriental cockroach (*Blatte orientalis*). The American is larger than the German cockroach, and has a distinctive splotch on its pronotum, or back. It is equipped with two pairs of leathery wings, which it rarely uses, and three pairs of legs, which propel the roach at speeds of up to 3.4 miles per hour. This is estimated to be the fastest proportional land speed of any organism: fifty body lengths each second. The Oriental cockroach is sometimes referred to as a water bug. It lives in dark, damp places like drains, water meter boxes, woodpiles, basements, garages, trash cans, and damp areas under houses. It is also common in ivy, ground cover, and outside locations where people feed pets.

Cockroaches have three stages of development: egg, nymph, and adult. They have a well-developed sensory system, an array of defensive mechanisms (including a toxic chemical secretion and a hissing sound), and can adapt to a wide range of environments. Their droppings are tiny brown slimy stains or pellets.

Love them or hate them, cockroaches have long been a part of our world, and will probably continue to thrive. Although some people abhor the very sight of these insects, like me, others are intrigued by them and have immortalized them in folklore, art, and culture.

#### How to prevent an infestation of cockroaches

- Keep the kitchen clean
- Keep food in sealed containers
- Don't leave dirty dishes overnight
- Empty trash regularly
- Fix dripping faucets or leaks
- Seal cracks in walls and cabinets 

## True Bugs to Watch For

Chuck Ingels, Yolo County U.C.C.E. Master Gardener Advisor

Keep an eye out for true bugs that can cause damage to your fruits and/or vegetables, including brown marmorated stink bugs (BMSB), leaffooted bugs (LFB), Bagrada and harlequin bugs.

At least one brown marmorated stink bug (BMSB) has been found in over a dozen counties, and is well established in Sacramento, Sutter, and Los Angeles counties. I received grants from the pear and grape industries to monitor BMSB populations and timing of generations, and to follow its spread southward. We are monitoring with pheromone traps, foliage searches, and beating tray sampling. We first found adults in traps in mid-March, and except for one find in Elk Grove, none have been found south of the Pocket area. No eggs have yet been found.



*Brown marmorated stink bug*



*Leaffooted bug*

Leaffooted bugs feed on seeds and fruits, and their biggest concern for gardeners are tomatoes and pomegranates. In the late summer of 2013 there was a major outbreak in many parts of the greater Sacramento area, when entire tomato crops were lost. The first LFB find of 2014 was reported to the Cooperative Extension on the same day we found the first BMSB in mid-March. Both have multiple generations, so their populations increase exponentially through the season. No monitoring is being done for LFB, and there are currently no traps available for monitoring. Traps for BMSB are not an effective control strategy, and using them in gardens invites increased damage as BMSB lingers around traps.



*Bagrada bug*

Two other serious true bug pests are the harlequin bug, which can be found in large numbers in many gardens, and the Bagrada bug, which is a new pest from Africa that was first found in Southern California in 2008 and has become established as far north as Fresno County. Bagrada bugs are much smaller than most common true bugs. Both pests feed in large numbers on a variety of vegetable crops, but the damage is worst on plants in the mustard family, including brassicas such as cabbage and broccoli.



*Harlequin bug*

### Resources:

Further information on BMSB, including maps of finds and trap placements, can be

found at <http://cesacramento.ucanr.edu>.

For complete identification and management information: Brown marmorated stink bug, UC Pest Notes 74169, <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn74169.html>

Bagrada bugs, UC Pest Notes 74166, <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn74166.html>

Harlequin bugs, UC IPM website,

<http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/GARDEN/VEGES/PESTS/harlequinbug.html>

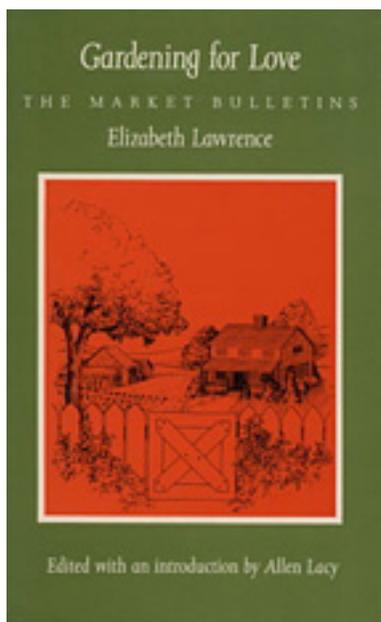


## Promoting Gardening for “Common Folk”

Willa Bowman Pettygrove, Yolo County U.C.C.E. Master Gardener

“Progress was all right once, but it’s gone on too long.” Anonymous

Through the work of two twentieth-century garden writers, Katharine White of the *New Yorker* and Elizabeth Lawrence of the *Charlotte Observer*, one can learn much about how people used to connect via the mail, catalogs, and letters in their pursuit of horticultural interests. It is easy to oversimplify what garden writing was before digital media. The fact is, gardeners still depend on the kindness of strangers when they order plants or just request advice about a gardening problem. Master Gardeners are among those regularly challenged to research new ideas, correct popular misconceptions, and deliver reliable public information, even when it contradicts “common sense” or corporate interests. One of the attractions of the web site for Dave’s Garden ([davesgarden.com](http://davesgarden.com)) is its gentle and genteel approach to horticultural education. Each week, there is a Latin term of the week (“*Dracaena*” for May 12, 2014), plant of the week, and diverse contributions from gardening experts and hobbyists. The blossom of the day for May 12, 2014 was the showy milkweed, *Aesclepias speciosa* ‘*Davis*.’



Although one can make a lot of contrasts between the two authors (North versus South, highbrow versus low, urban versus rural) in fact they shared a point of view in trying to keep gardening as something for “ordinary” people to enjoy in their own way. They were both well-educated, good writers. Specifically, Elizabeth’s book *Gardening for Love* is a survey of market bulletins, a southern rural phenomenon that promoted a retail trade among home-grown plant collectors. (Elizabeth learned about the bulletins through a personal contact with the author Eudora Welty.) Both women also collected and wrote about more commercial plant catalogs. Katharine published fourteen of her *New Yorker* columns in book form, with the title *Onward and Upward in the Garden*. Technically, each article is a review of one or more catalogs. Of course, it is much more, with appropriate literary references, horticultural history, and natural history of plants. (Katharine’s husband E.B. White wrote *Charlotte’s Web*, *Stuart Little*, and *The Elements of Style*, but he wasn’t much help in the garden.)

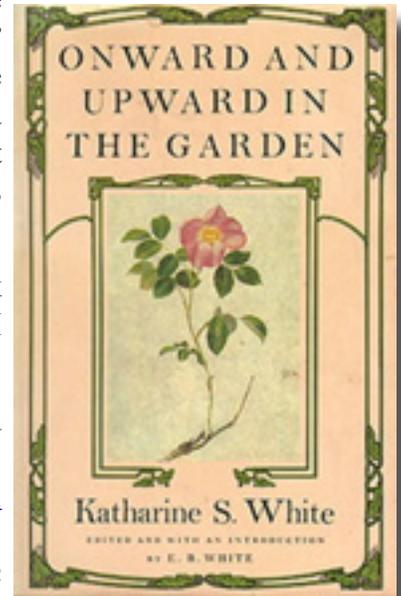
How do gardeners categorize plants? Gardeners and others with horticultural interests have been struggling with Latin and Greek names; it seems it always has been so, or at least since Linnaeus in the eighteenth century. The practice of many market bulletin readers was a much simpler one: yard plants (to be planted in the yard), houseplants and the subcategory windowsill plants, and box plants (that can grow in a box, on the porch). These categories worked for women who had no spare time for gardening, and a very practical approach to everything they had

to do. The cultural and even religious significance of the plants might also be more accurately reflected in their traditional (common) names: “Job’s Tears,” mountain lettuce, rabbit tobacco, and rain lily. Incidentally, contributors to the market bulletins often *did* know the formal (scientific) names for the plants, and Elizabeth Lawrence kept a detailed correspondence with some to get correct names. The back of *Gardening for Love* contains a list of common plant names with their scientific equivalents.

I first read *Onward and Upward in the Garden* in 1979. I want to go back and see which of the plant suppliers from those days are still in business now. I won’t send away for catalogs, but I will look on the web.

If you’d like to read more of these writings, here are the references. You may have to “Google” the titles to find copies, but they are still available.

- Elizabeth Lawrence. *Gardening for Love: The Market Bulletins*. [www.dukeupress.edu](http://www.dukeupress.edu), 1987.
- Katharine S. White and Elizabeth Lawrence. *Two Gardeners, A Friendship in Letters*. Ed. by Emily Herring Wilson, [www.beacon.org](http://www.beacon.org), 2002.
- Katharine S. White. *Onward and Upward in the Garden*, [www.beacon.org](http://www.beacon.org), 2002. 🍅



## Plant Labeling

*Sherri Sagan, Yolo County U.C.C.E. Master Gardener*

**H**ave you ever experienced plant amnesia and wished you had taken the time to label your plants or your fruit and vegetables? I think we have all been there at least once. Does it seem too expensive to get all those little labels, or too tedious a task? Or maybe you just think, why bother?

The reasons for labeling plants can be as personal as the way you choose to label them. Maybe you are the frugal but functional type, or you prefer the artsy look, or maybe you are the super-organized type and you prefer everything to look identical. Do you label to keep from forgetting whether you planted bean or melon seeds? To remember which variety of vegetable you prefer? Or do you label so you’ll have the answer when a neighbor asks, “what is that beautiful plant?” or to keep yourself from planting too close to a perennial that has yet to poke its head out?

Whatever your reasons for labeling, there are so many ways to label that you’ll never have to buy the pre-made ones again. You will be able to recycle and use your creativity all at once! You can make it as easy or detailed as you want. And rest assured there is a style for every personality. On most surfaces you can use permanent marker (best sealed with clear spray varnish or clear nail polish), but I have found that wax or grease pencils from an art supply store stay on longer and come in many colors so you can be more creative with them.

If you are super organized you can draw out a plan of your yard and write in the names of what is growing and where. If you change things around often, you can go to a number system. All you have to do is use a little number marker (the plastic bread closures work well for this – you can just hang the marker on a branch or limb), and put your plant information in a binder. If a plant dies, move the tag to the replacement, and pull out that page and put the new information in its place.

If you are not one of those nifty planners and prefer to do things on the fly, there are many items you can use to label each plant name right near the plant. When visiting the hardware store, ask for some of the scrap from mini blinds or vertical blinds. You can write on them and just stick them in the ground. You can write on popsicle

sticks and seal them with clear nail polish to make them last longer. You can also write on the end of a wooden clothespin and attach it to the wire of a tomato cage so you don't have to bend down to see the variety.

If you have kids and want to get them involved, or you like the artsy look, you can paint on old ceramic tile, leaving the lower half undecorated to stick in the ground. Get your kids involved by painting rocks, then write the name of the plant on the colored rock and place it in the garden. You can also have your kids draw pictures of vegetables or fruit that you have planted and print them out. Cover them with clear contact paper or packaging tape to make them waterproof, then tape them to a stick and pop it in the ground. You can do the same with a seed packet if you want more info than just the plant name at hand. Just cover the packet to make it waterproof, tape it to a stick, and pop it in the ground! If you are the type that craves uniformity, just paint all your rocks the same color and stencil, rather than freehand, your writing.



Are you the computer or camera lover in your family? You can write on old CDs and hang them from trees, which also helps keep the birds at bay, or stick the CD right in the ground. Snap a picture of the plant tag or seed packet to keep a digital record, or print them out and waterproof them before sticking them in the ground on a stick.

While reusing material that would otherwise go to the dumpster is commendable, it is a good idea to remember that many plastics release toxins when they are exposed to sunlight and heat, so use caution when reusing plastic items as labels. Whatever your reason, creating labels can be a great outlet to help you get through the pre-planting months, letting you work with the garden even when you can't work in the garden. 🍅

## What did I Plant There?

Laura Cameron, Yolo County U.C.C.E. Master Gardener

The topic of knowing what is in the garden and where it is raises the question, why does it matter? While some gardeners may prefer the wildness of planting and not knowing later what is planted where, in the main there are any number of reasons for record-keeping in managing your garden. Some examples follow.

**Water Needs:** In these days of drought and unknown water fees, many gardens are being renovated while others are attempting to manage watering in a more scientific manner. There are water monitoring systems that will determine when and how much you need to water. What is really helpful is knowing the watering needs of all your plants. Positioning plants with similar needs in the same area is a helpful tool when managing watering needs. Maintaining good records can help you group your plants efficiently.

**Replacement:** Love that flower. . . what was it? Not only would it make a wonderful present, but five more in that corner would be perfect! But what was it?

**Never Again:** Knowing what plants will require you pulling up babies all over the yard can help you warn others. Notifying others of control methods that would actually help is also another factor. Borage is one example of an out-of-control plant that reseeds happily. Let go in the early spring, first flowers for bees, but note in your records that you will be constantly pulling up babies so something other than borage can grow in the garden.

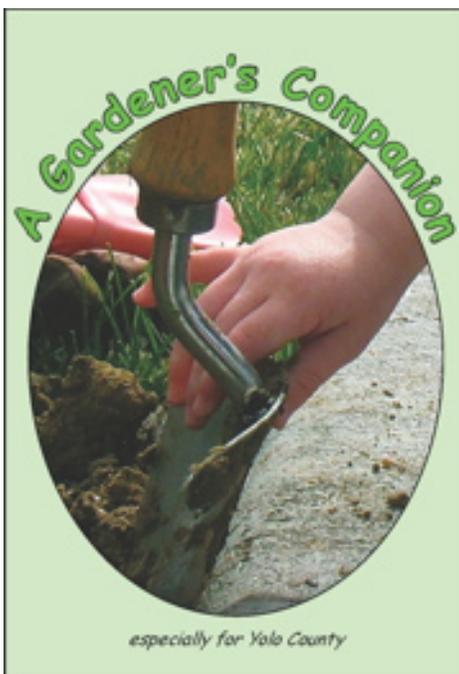
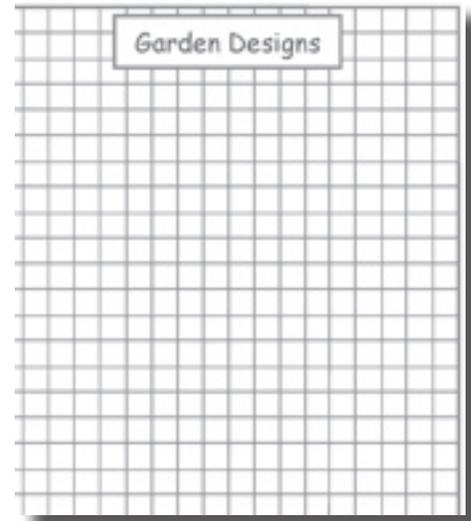
**Benefits and Uses:** Many people like to use medicinal herbs. Identification markers in this case may be critical.

**Poisonous:** Many people do not like to plant poisonous plants in the yard, although there are a lot of gorgeous ones. But if you choose to do so, know what the potential problems are if ingested, and knowing where the plant is located can be a helpful tool.

**Light Needs:** All gardens have their own microclimates that include light zones. Each plant has light needs; combine the two factors to plant appropriately.

**Botanical and Common names:** Drawing up a plot plan with an all-purple garden is tough if you don't know the plant names. Describing a plants as having fuzzy dark purple flowers, lavender cone-like flowers, or false rose in medium purple-while fun-isn't helpful at all in managing your garden.

**Soil needs:** Plants have soil needs: some like it loose, others can tolerate clay, while others may need loamy soil. A yard may have various soil types as well, depending on how much work has been done to amend the soil. Knowing your soil zones can help determine planting sites, or how much amending and attention a particular plant may need.



**Companion plants:** There are plants that love to be together. They provide aid and benefit to each other, and the converse is also true. Making note of such in a complicated garden can be helpful and a good reminder when the next planting season comes around.

**Double seed:** If you are planting a formalized vegetable garden with staggered planting times, it is good to know where you planted last week. More and more vegetables are being planted in and amongst other garden plants. It's a good idea to know what you have planted where, and when. Beware of birds "moving" your seeds and replanting them elsewhere. I know I did not plant carrots near my baby bottlebrush!

**Plant Management:** The Butterfly bush likes to be cut back in January or February, the apricot tree should not be cut back when rain is expected, and the salvia should not be touched until all danger of freezing nights are over. Knowing and marking down various plant requirements is extremely helpful. No need to scratch the brain each month trying to remember what needs to happen.

A helpful tool in garden mapping and management is the Yolo

County Master Gardener *Gardening Companion*, available at Farmers' Markets and at the U.C.C.E. office in Woodland. Use whatever method works best for you, be it marking a calendar at the beginning of the year noting each month the work that needs to be done, or creating a map of the garden. A map can run from scratch marks on a piece of paper to a formal plot plan to printed photographs of the yard with notes all over. We each have our own style and need to figure out what makes our gardening life easier for us. 🍅

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download at:

<http://ucanr.edu/sites/YCMG/>.

## Summer Gardening Tips

*Linda Parsons, Yolo County U.C.C.E. Master Gardener*

Summer is on its way and already we have had above-normal temperatures. This follows on the heels of a very erratic spring with an early warm trend, followed by cold, windy, and rainy weather. This made for a confusing time for the bees and spring blooms. You may find that some of your fruit trees, especially stone fruits, were not adequately pollinated. Our cherry and peach trees have a lighter crop of fruit, while our grapes and berries are on target. The late spring rain also helped to produce unusually lush foliage, along with some pesky mildew and rust on roses and other susceptible, tender plants.

Now that you are spending more time in the garden, take a few moments to protect yourself by putting on a broad-brimmed hat, sunglasses, and sunscreen. I am amazed at the variety of new hats, gloves, and tools that find their way to garden shops and websites every year! Garden gloves are a must for protection. For ease of cleaning, slather your hands with hand cream and dig your fingernails into a bar of ivory soap. Unless you wish to drink out of what might be an unpotable water hose, take along a large glass of ice water. Also, assemble the tools and supplies you plan to use. This will save countless trips to the garage or tool shed.



Be sure to take time to enjoy your garden and explore local gardens and garden festivals this summer.

### Water

Become familiar with the water requirements of your plants. Many gardeners are including more drought-tolerant plants in their gardens. Remember to place plants with similar water requirements together in your garden to maximize water efficiency. For a comprehensive list of water efficient plants, visit the Master Gardener Free Handout List at <http://ucanr.edu/sites/YCMG/> Day Lily (*Hemerocallis*), lavender (*Lavandula*), yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*), and many varieties of Rudebeckia, Verbena, Echinacea, Aster, Coreopsis, Heuchera and Salvia add months of colorful blooms and nectar for beneficial insects.

Additional ways to conserve water and keep your plants happy are to keep the weeds to a minimum and add mulch to your garden. At least two inches of mulch will inhibit weeds, conserve water, and keep your plant's feet cooler. Also, if you are not using drip irrigation, consider this for some areas of your garden. For more information, visit [www.centralparkgardens.org](http://www.centralparkgardens.org) or the Master Gardener website at <http://ucanr.edu/sites/YCMG/> and see the lead article in this newsletter.

## Pests and Diseases

Prevention is the easiest way to minimize plant damage. Stroll through your garden several times a week and scout out potential problems. Regularly check the leaves and flowers for evidence of pests and diseases. Typically, the summer months present more pest problems.

Whitefly and spider mites enjoy feasting on many kinds of plants. Thrips and horntail wasps disfigure roses, and leaf miners and hornworms chew tomatoes. Blasts of water and handpicking (hornworms) deter most infestations. Next, use a homemade or commercial soap or oil spray. Doing this once a week in the morning usually keeps the pests under control. If this fails, consult the Integrated Pest Management site at [www.ipm.ucdavis.edu](http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu) for control guidance.

If the erratic spring weather has caused an increase in powdery mildew and rust fungus on susceptible plants, it is usually not necessary to treat with fungicides. The warmer temperatures will help reduce this problem. Warmer temperatures will also jump-start infestations of aphids, spider mites, and katydid. Carefully examine your plants now, before these problems overwhelm you and your plants. If necessary, use a hand lens to check the underside of the leaf. This is where these problems are often first detected.

To help identify the pest or disease your plant may have, consult [www.ipm.ucdavis.edu](http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu) for an extensive



list of articles and photos featuring pests and diseases that are common in the garden.

Continue to watch for slugs, snails, and earwigs. They are still lurking about in your garden, especially in damp and dense foliage areas. Slugs and snails can be controlled by commercially available iron phosphate, which is both effective and non-toxic. Copper tape is also available at your garden center to use in repelling slugs and snails.

To help control unwanted pests, consider incorporating plants that attract beneficial insects. Some good choices are yarrow, cosmos, feverfew, thyme, lavender and parsley.

## Weeds

The late rain and warm spring days were just the perfect combination to fill our gardens with an unusually large quantity of weeds. I have commiserated with many gardeners this past month about the early and abundant variety of weeds, including spotted spurge, purslane, gallium, dandelions, and at least a dozen more! Do you hand pull, dig them out, spray them, or throw up your hands? Most of us do a bit of each!

## Lawns

The lovely, lush green lawn of springtime is giving way to the more troubled summer lawn. As with all your garden plants and trees, lawn watering needs to be monitored and adjusted according to the weather. Each time you water your lawn, the root zone (five to six inches deep) should be moist. Once you determine the time it takes to achieve this, you can set your watering timer or schedule. Two inches a week is best to keep your lawn thriving. Overwatering may cause root rot and lawn fungus. Keep a garden journal and devise several watering schedules, depending on the season. I consult mine regularly to keep track of watering and planting schedules.

If one area of your lawn receives more sun or has faster drainage, you may need to increase watering in this section. During the summer months you will need to water two or three times a week depending on your drainage and sun exposure. If the temperature rises above 100° F, you will need an extra watering day. Fertilize your cool season grasses (Kentucky blue grass, perennial rye grass, tall fescue) now and be sure to water it in to prevent fertilizer burn.

Other ways to keep your lawn healthy are to be sure your sprinklers are clean and working properly, and to allow the grass to grow a bit taller by raising the blade on your mower. You should never remove more than one third of the grass blade during mowing. Another benefit of growing your lawn a bit higher is that it crowds out weeds.

If you see irregular brown patches in your lawn,

you may have sod web worm. These worms feed at night and can destroy a lawn in a few days, if it is heavily infested (15 or more grubs per square yard of turf). To detect this pest, visit your garden at twilight and see if small (three quarter inch) moths are flying over your turf. You can also pull up damaged turf and discover whether there are pinkish-grey to yellowish-brown grubs feeding on the roots of your grass.

If you want additional information on watering your lawn, consult <http://ucanr.edu/sites/YCMG/> and select the article on *Lawn Irrigation*.

### Fruit

If you haven't thinned your fruit trees and vines, they can still benefit. Thin fruit trees (apple, peach, cherry, apricot, and grapes) so that there are six inches between each fruit or cluster. This may seem drastic, but your fruit will be larger, more flavorful, and it will greatly reduce the risk of broken limbs and branches. Mature fruit trees need a deep soaking every three to four days during crop production. Grapes do best with deep water to a depth of 18 inches, and then allow them to dry to a depth of six inches between watering. Birds can be deterred by using netting and by placing shiny objects in the canopy. Specific help for thinning fruit trees and growing better table grapes can be found at <http://ucanr.edu/sites/YCMG/>.

The Spotted Wing Drosophila (*Drosophila suzukii*) has invaded home cherry crops for the past several summers. The maggots are not discovered until the cherries are ready to harvest. There are several methods of reducing or eliminating this pest. The most environmentally friendly method is to use Spinosad with four to six tablespoons of molasses per gallon of water. For a complete discussion of this pest problem, visit <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn74158.html>



*Drosophila suzukii*

### Vegetables and Herbs

The most popular vegetable (technically a fruit) is the tomato. It usually grows effortlessly and is happiest when it is deep-watered (eight inches) twice a week. This helps reduce cracking, ridging, and blossom end rot. Many of our local nurseries are offering more unusual tomato varieties, including Green Zebra, Brandywine, Costoluto Genoveseor, Carmeleto, Red or Purple Cherokee, and my favorite cluster tomato, Sungold. For a longer harvesting season, select indeterminate tomato varieties or plant additional veggies two to three weeks after your first planting.

To keep vegetable crops continually blooming, harvest regularly, and continue inspecting for pests. In August, pinch back the plants to help the existing fruit to ripen before the cooler weather arrives. Harvest herbs just as the flowers begin to form for the most intense flavor. If your harvest is bountiful, dry your herbs by hanging them upside down in bunches for future use.

Now is the time to begin thinking about your fall vegetable harvest. Fall vegetables such as broccoli, cabbage, snap peas, beets, carrots, and winter squash need to be seeded in July or transplanted in August for your fall vegetable garden.

### Flowers

Flowers need to be deadheaded to encourage repeat blooming. Continue to fertilize your flowers, especially heavyfeeding roses, every six weeks through October. For a full October bloom, prune your roses back by one third in August. If you prefer the beauty of rose hips, then refrain from pruning your roses in August.

Potted plants and hanging baskets need a weekly feeding of liquid fertilizer (15-30-15). They also require more frequent watering.

Herbaceous plants such as cosmos, delphiniums, foxglove, and peonies need to be staked or supported.

Continue to keep your garden free of weeds.

Prune spring-blooming shrubs (camellias, azaleas, and bridal wreath spirea) after the blossoms drop. Spring-blooming vines such as lavender trumpet vine and clematis should be pruned after the blooms have faded. Fertilize after pruning to encourage bud set for next spring.

It is not too late to plant quick-blooming summer seeds such as nasturtiums, sunflowers, and cosmos. You can also plant summer-blooming bulbs, such as dahlias and cannas.

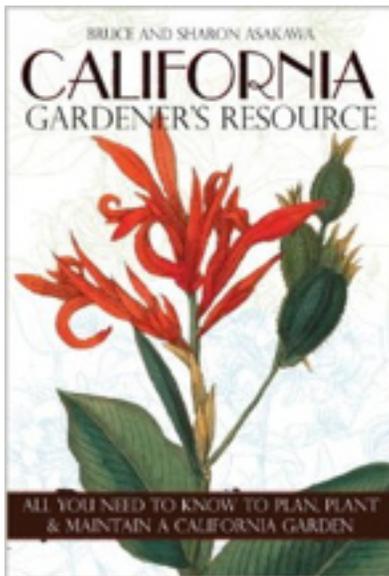
Continue to harvest your vegetable and herb crops on a regular basis to promote and prolong summer's bounty.

Summer gardens bring enjoyable surprises and anticipation. Try planning some new flowers, herbs, and vegetable varieties. You may discover that you have a new favorite to add to your tried-and-true plantings.

Tend your summer garden like the good friend it is; it will provide a season of bountiful rewards and be a welcoming summer retreat.

### Garden Books

Looking among my garden library, I paused to consider my favorite garden books. This took some pondering. I looked through a number of books and noted that about half of my library consists of books on every aspect of the rose. While I do love roses, I love, even more, the variety of plants that I can grow. The books that most reflect this are:



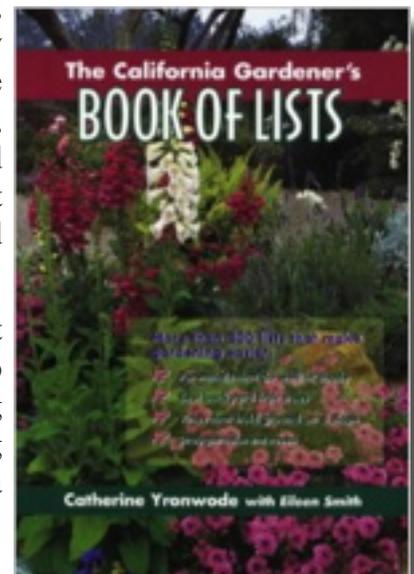
*California Gardener's Resource: All You Need to Know To Plan, Plant & Maintain A California Garden* by Bruce and Sharon Asakawa is wonderfully organized, illustrated, and complete. It is equally for a beginner or a veteran California gardener! It comes complete with month-by-month garden guides, lists, garden tips, and is lavishly illustrated with California's best plants.

This and the *Sunset Western Garden Book* are truly the quintessential references for a happy and successful gardener.

*The California Gardener's Book Of Lists* by Catherine Yronwode and Eileen Smith. You can find a list for Trees with Colorful Foliage, Trees with Inconvenient Litter, Trees with Perfect Form, Trees with Showy Bark, and ever so many more tree lists! Other list groups include ground covers, perennials, annuals, shrubs, vines, ferns, drought-tolerant plants, and roses. There is a resource list of nurseries at the back of the book. I wish I had discovered

this book as a new gardener. I would have avoided a few gardening mistakes!

*The Country Diary of An Edwardian Lady* by Edith Holden is simply the most beautiful book I own. My mother-in-law gave it to me when we moved to Davis so many decades ago! The entries for each month, and the accompanying watercolors are pure inspiration. I never tire of revisiting this book and pondering the thought of creating my own illustrated garden diary. Edith Holden is a gardener that we would all enjoy knowing.



Summer Outings

Yolo Wildlife Area

Bat Talk and Walks: June – August

Yolo Wildlife Area Tours: Resume October-April 9 a.m. – Noon

Up Your Beer IQ with Charlie Bamforth: June 14 at 7 p.m.

Hawks of Summer with Jim Estep: June 21 at 7 a.m.

[www.yolobasin.org](http://www.yolobasin.org)

10<sup>th</sup> Annual Cache Creek Lavender Festival: June 7-8 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

[www.cachecreeklavender.com](http://www.cachecreeklavender.com)

Fair Oaks Horticulture Center: Summer Fruit Tree Pruning; Training Grape Vines; and Growing Herbs in Containers: June 14 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

[http://ucanr.edu/sites/sacmg/Fair\\_Oaks\\_Horticulture\\_Center/](http://ucanr.edu/sites/sacmg/Fair_Oaks_Horticulture_Center/)

Sacramento Old City Cemetery Weekly Summer Programs

<http://www.oldcitycemetery.com/calendar.htm>

Fair Oaks Horticulture Center Harvest Day: August 2 8 a.m. – 2 p.m.

[http://ucanr.edu/sites/sacmg/Harvest\\_Day/](http://ucanr.edu/sites/sacmg/Harvest_Day/)

7<sup>th</sup> Annual Tomato Festival: Heritage Park (2<sup>nd</sup> St. and Main St.) Woodland, CA, August 9 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.

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

Yolo County Fair: Woodland, CA, August 13 – 17

<http://www.yolocountyfair.net/> 

*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](mailto:mgyolo@ucdavis.edu)

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

Web Site ..... <http://ucanr.edu/sites/YCMG/>



U.C. Cooperative Extension  
 Yolo County Master Gardeners  
 70 Cottonwood Street  
 Woodland, CA 95695

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Yolo County UCCE  
 70 Cottonwood St.  
 Woodland, CA 95695

**STAFF**

Jim Fowler, Managing Editor  
 Willa Pettygrove, Editor  
 Celia Chang, Editor  
 Judy McClure, Editor  
 Karen Wiesner, Layout

**WRITERS**

Laura Cameron, Chuck Ingels,  
 Linda Parsons, Willa Bowman  
 Pettygrove, Sherri Sagan

**PRODUCTION**

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*Judy*

Judy McClure, Master Gardener Coordinator

*Rachael*

Rachael Long, Yolo County Director