

University of California
Agriculture and Natural Resources

Making a Difference for California



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Whether it's a vegetable garden, house plants or a landscape...

A Garden Runs Through It

In This Issue:

February 2013

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OFFICE HOURS:

Tuesday,
9am—12pm
1pm—4pm
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458-0570

Have a question?
Email us at
mgcolusa@ucanr.edu

Information Booth Locations:

Check out our new and improved website at

cecolusa.ucdavis.edu

Did you know you can access the website on your smart phone or tablet?

You can also ask us a gardening question on the website.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION

Dear Master Gardeners,
I have frost damage. What do I do now?
Your Neighbor

Dear Neighbor,

Don't overreact to plant damage

Plants can be remarkably resilient. If you see signs of frost damage, do not prune off the affected parts or dig up the plant immediately. This is especially true for palms. Wait until the weather warms up in March to see whether new leaves sprout. You may see healthy new growth at the base of the plant, at which point you can prune out the damaged parts. If no regrowth is noted, remove the dead specimen and replace it with a more cold-tolerant species.

If your plant experiences frost damage, be patient and resist any impulse to immediately prune the plant. It may take several days, weeks, or even months, before the full extent of frost damage becomes apparent. A plant that is pruned early will recover more slowly than a plant pruned later in the season. Leaving the damaged foliage on the plant also may afford some protection to undamaged foliage against subsequent frosts. You should wait at least until the danger of frost has passed and there is new growth on the plant before assessing the extent of the frost damage. You may then determine which parts of the plant are healthy and prune the plant accordingly.



Happy Gardening,
Your Master Gardener

Dear Master Gardener,
Do you have a website that I can go to if I have questions?

Your neighbor

Dear Neighbor,

Yes, we have a website cecolusa.ucdavis.edu and it has lot of good information. If you are in your garden and have a question you can go directly to our website and ask the question. You can even upload a picture.

Happy Gardening,
Your Master Gardener

Gerry's Comments

Should I water my lawn?

The answer is maybe. You need to take into account many different factors.

*When was the last time it rained?

*Is it going to rain soon?

*Has there been a lot of dew? Dew runs down the grass and waters the soil.

*Is the lawn in mainly sun or shade?

*Does the soil look dry?

*When I walk across the lawn, can I see my footprints (except when dewy)? If you can see your footprints then you need to water.

If you water the lawn just give it a "shot" of water. Don't run it for 20 minutes.

Thursday and Friday I saw someone watering their lawn. First the lawn is mainly shade all day and may not need water. The other thing the water was on for quite a while and was running down the gutter.

Remember it's February. The grass loses very little water this time of the year.

Don't waste money by over watering your lawn!

Book of the Month

Mojave Desert Wildflowers

by

Jon Mark Stewart

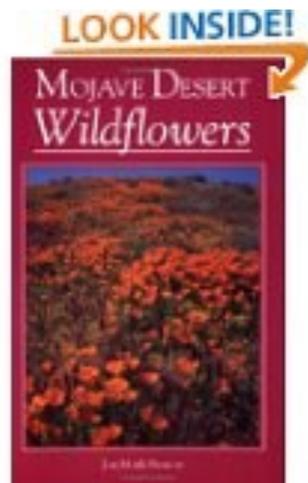
This makes a great field book. Each plant is featured on a single page with a photo that is more than adequate for identification of most plants. The short description that follows the photo describes the physical characteristics of the plant, location where the plant is often found and uses (if any).

Penny and I had this book on our last trip to Death Valley and it was indispensable in identifying the scattering of plants we found in the high desert and in the valley itself.

The photos are truly outstanding.

ISBN 0-9634909-1-5

\$14.66 at Amazon



David and Penny Dennis

Ornamental Plant of the Month

Signs for Pruning Rose Bushes

More than 100 species of the popular rose exist. These roses include miniatures, climbers, shrubs, bushes and other cultivars. Roses have thorny stems, but produce beautiful, fragrant blooms that are attractive to gardeners. They do well in a variety of growing zones and are relatively easy to grow but they do need to be pruned to remain healthy and produce blossoms.

Overcrowded Bushes

The best time to prune overcrowded bushes is in the early spring when the buds begin to swell. Prune canes that cross through the center of the bush, because if left, they will block air to the plant. If canes are rubbing against one another, prune the smaller ones. The stronger canes will get healthier and more robust.

Diseased, Damaged, or Dead Canes

Cut back canes that have been damaged by frost to just above the nearest healthy bud. The fall is a good time to prune stems that have been infected by disease or are dying or dead. If you live in a warm area, prune your roses in the cooler months so they have time to regain energy before it is time to bloom.

Thin, Straggly Canes

Canes that are straggly and thin won't produce blooms and will suck energy from the whole plant. Winter wind and ice will do less damage to shorter stems. If you live in an area with harsh winters, you should cut them back in the fall. If you live in a mild area, wait until spring to prune.

Older, Less Vigorous Bush

If your rose bush is older, producing fewer blooms, and it's no longer balanced and rounded, you should prune it extensively. The new growth that will result from your pruning should give you more blooms.

Pruning Climbing

Climbing roses add height and texture to the garden.

Climbing roses are actually trained to grow up a trellis or other support system -- they don't climb on their own. They have one or more main canes and lateral shoots growing from the canes that produce the flowers. There are two types of climbing roses: those that bloom once each season, and repeat bloomers that bloom in flushes all season long. Prune those that bloom once a year after they finish blooming. Cut back repeat bloomers in late winter or early spring. Make all pruning cuts 1/4 inch above an outward-facing bud

Instructions

1. Water the climbing rose the day before you prune.
2. Cut all damaged and dead wood back to a main cane or a bud.
3. Remove growth that has strayed away from the support system and any canes that protrude from the rest of the plant.
4. Cut lateral shoots -- those that grow from the main cane -- back to four buds.
5. Prune the climbing rose's main canes only if they become overgrown. After pruning these canes, cut the lateral shoots to 3 inches.

During the recent rose pruning workshop at the Colusa Fair Grounds, we observed canes which had been attacked by a rose cane borer. Below are a few different kinds that you may find in your rose garden when pruning.

GARDEN BAD GUYS - CANE BORERS

by Nanette Londeree, Consulting Rosarian

A common site to anyone growing roses is that succulent new cane tip that suddenly wilts and dies. Discouraging to say the least! This symptom may have many causes, but one of the common culprits is a cane borer. There are a number of types of borers – they are generally the larvae of a beetle or moth that bore into canes, feed and eventually cause the cane to wilt and die. The telltale sign of a borer is an entry hole usually found along the dead cane. Here are some of the more common boring pests of roses:

Raspberry horntail (*Hartigia cressini*); the larvae are white, segmented caterpillars up to 1' long. Adults are wasplike, black or black and yellow. This insect is not really a horntail wasp but a primitive wasp in the stem sawfly family. In the photo on the left, you can see the girdling damage the insect causes.

Stem boring sawfly (*Hartigia trimaculata*); the larvae tunnel into a stem often girdling it. Adults are approximately one half inch long and appear as a black and yellow wasp. They emerge in late April, early May, and insert their eggs under bark at the tips of current season canes. When the eggs hatch, the larvae enter stems to feed on pith, eventually forming a small chamber in upper part of the stem where they pupate and a second season of adults gnaw their way out and emerge in late summer. This second generation lay eggs that hatch into larvae and tunnel downward, passing the winter near the base of the plant.

Rose stem girdler / bronze cane borer (*Agrilus aurichalceus*); the larvae carves out meandering tunnels under the bark of roses, raspberries and currants. A characteristic slightly swollen area develops around the wounded area of the stem. Canes die back or break at wounded sites, sometimes several weeks after tunneling. They overwinter as partially developed borers under the bark of canes. In spring, they resume feeding and pupate within the plant. Adults are bronze colored beetles, approximately 3/8 inch long that emerge in mid to late May. You may see them sunning on leaves. Females lay eggs in cracks on stem or base of leaves. Within a week, eggs hatch and larvae burrow into canes. Fortunately, there is only one generation per year.

Flathead borers (family Buprestidae) may kill canes or an entire plant. The larvae are up to one inch long with enlarged heads. Adults do not significantly damage roses. Eggs tend to be laid on stressed roses, especially on bark wounds caused by sunburn or disease.

What can you do if you have damaged canes from the borers? Cut each cane below the wilted portion and examine the pith – continue to make short cuts until the pith is white. Destroy any damaged or dead canes.

While it may be a bit extreme, you can chase a small wire down the cane to kill larvae then plug hole with white glue. No natural controls or realistic non-chemical control methods are presently known for controlling the adult stem sawflies before they lay their eggs on succulent rose growth. Parasitic wasps attack and kill full-grown sawfly larvae as they prepare to pupate.

Your best bet is to keep plants healthy, and inspect canes in spring (mid-April – mid June) for egg laying incisions or swelling. If you observe any, remove and destroy infested canes.

Edible Garden of the Month

John and Diane Vafis

Peach, Plum, Apricot or Pear?

Most of us love the idea of picking juicy fruit off our own tree. Now is the time to act on making that a possibility.

Bare-root fruit trees are in the nurseries right now. Select a tree with a trunk diameter of about ½ inch. If not planted immediately, heel in the roots by covering them with damp sawdust or compost to keep them from drying out.

Fruit trees should be planted where they will have full sun for 6 hours or more per day during the growing season. The trees should be planted in well-drained soil that has been cultivated deeply to enable the roots to penetrate. Do not add soil amendments or fertilizer directly to the planting hole. The hole should be at least twice as wide as the spread to the roots, but no deeper than the depth of the root ball. Leave the bottom of the hole undisturbed to prevent the tree from settling below the root crown.

Cut off any roots that are broken or kinked. Place the tree in the hole with the graft union at least two to four inches above the soil surface. The protruding notch of the union should be oriented toward the northeast to reduce the chance of sunburn. The soil line on the tree should be an inch or so above the bed, so that the soil can be sloped away from the trunk. Partially fill the hole with the same soil that was removed and firm gently to eliminate air pockets. Finish filling the hole and gently firm the soil into place.



Water thoroughly to settle the soil around the roots. If your soil is clay loam, take care not to overwater. Drip irrigation will eliminate the need for a watering basin around the tree. Be sure that there are no weeds or other plants within three feet of the trunk to avoid competition for water and nutrients. Mulch the area around the tree 3 to 6 inches deep, keeping it several inches from the trunk.

The tree should now be cut in half!! To keep it short, the tree should be cut at about knee height (18-24") . This will force branching at a lower height. Remove all side branches as well. Your tree should look like a stick in the ground.

The tree should be protected from sunburn by applying a coat of indoor latex paint diluted to half strength with water. Apply the paint to the entire trunk including the buds.

During the summer the tree will need 5 to 10 gallons of water a week. The amount of water depends on the effectiveness of the mulch and the drainage of the soil. Monitor the irrigation so that the soil in the root zone is moist at all times yet well drained. Check by digging down 4 to 6 inches and examine the soil. Adjust the watering as needed.

Go to <http://anrcatalog.ucdavis.edu> to download publication number 8057 for information of training and pruning deciduous trees.



Weed of the Month

Weedy Mallow plants are found growing widely in California. All are from the family Malvaceae, which includes a number of desirable plants, most notably cotton, hibiscus, and okra. One species of this family (*Althaea officinalis*) is actually the original ingredient to make marshmallows. That species is not found in California and although some of the wild mallow species can be eaten, mallows are less than desirable when found growing in crop fields, orchards, lawns, gardens, and landscapes.

These annuals begin growing with the first rains in the fall and quickly develop a deep taproot that becomes woody and makes the plant very difficult to remove by hand or even with tools. Fruit is sometimes described as looking like a tiny wheel of cheese, giving it the common name of cheeseweed. The most widespread of the weedy mallows in California are *Malva neglecta* (common mallow or cheeseweed), and *M. parviflora* (little mallow, which is also called cheeseweed).

MANAGEMENT

Mallow control in home gardens and landscapes is best accomplished by pulling out young plants. Because of the rapid development of the long tap root, this is best accomplished when the plant has four or fewer true leaves. The taproot gets woody as it matures and is very difficult to cut or pull out. Removing plants before they seed will help reduce the impact of the plant in coming years.

Mechanical Control

Mallows are best controlled mechanically by hoeing or pulling out young plants. Young mallow can also be killed by cutting them off at the crown, but older plants may resprout from the crown. If there are a large number of plants, shallow mechanical cultivation may be used when the plants are young. The cultivator should be set so that the blades or tines will pull the plants from the ground or cut the tap root below the soil level. Mowing is not an effective method of control because the plants have viable buds on the stems below the height of the mower blade. Common mallow tends to have a more prostrate growth habit so that species is even less affected by mowing.

Solarization is not effective for mallow control, nor is flaming.

Cultural Control

Cultural control can be done by planting competitive desirable plants in areas where mallow is a problem. The shade provided by these plants will reduce germination and growth of mallow seedlings. Mulches can also be effective. At least 3 inches of organic mulch, such as bark or wood chips, will make it physically difficult for the seedling to emerge and will screen out the amount of light that mallow requires to effectively sprout. However, the mulch must be maintained to ensure that it remains at the needed depth. Otherwise, the seedling can push through the mulch and become established.

Chemical Control

Home Use

There are no chemical controls available for home use that are effective for controlling mallows.

Landscape Use

Products containing 2,4-D provide limited control when applied to young plants. Limit use of 2,4-D to turf because it will injure any broadleaf plant it contacts.

Mallow is one of the few weeds that glyphosate is ineffective in controlling.



For more information [click here](#)

Recipe of the Month

Barbara Scheimer and Cynthia Peterson

MANGO and BELL PEPPER SALAD

This easy to prepare side salad is cool and refreshing, a perfect pairing with spicy barbeque, jerk pork or chicken. Makes 6 servings or 5 cups. Takes 20 minutes to put together.

COMBINE:

3 cups chopped fresh or jarred mangoes (about 3 peeled and pitted fresh)

½ red onion, thinly sliced

½ cup each diced orange, red, and green bell pepper

¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro

STIR IN;

3 Tbsp. orange juice

2 Tbsp. fresh lime juice

Salt and black pepper to taste

Combine first four ingredients and pour juices over all.

Recipe from the February 2011 issue of Cuisine at Home



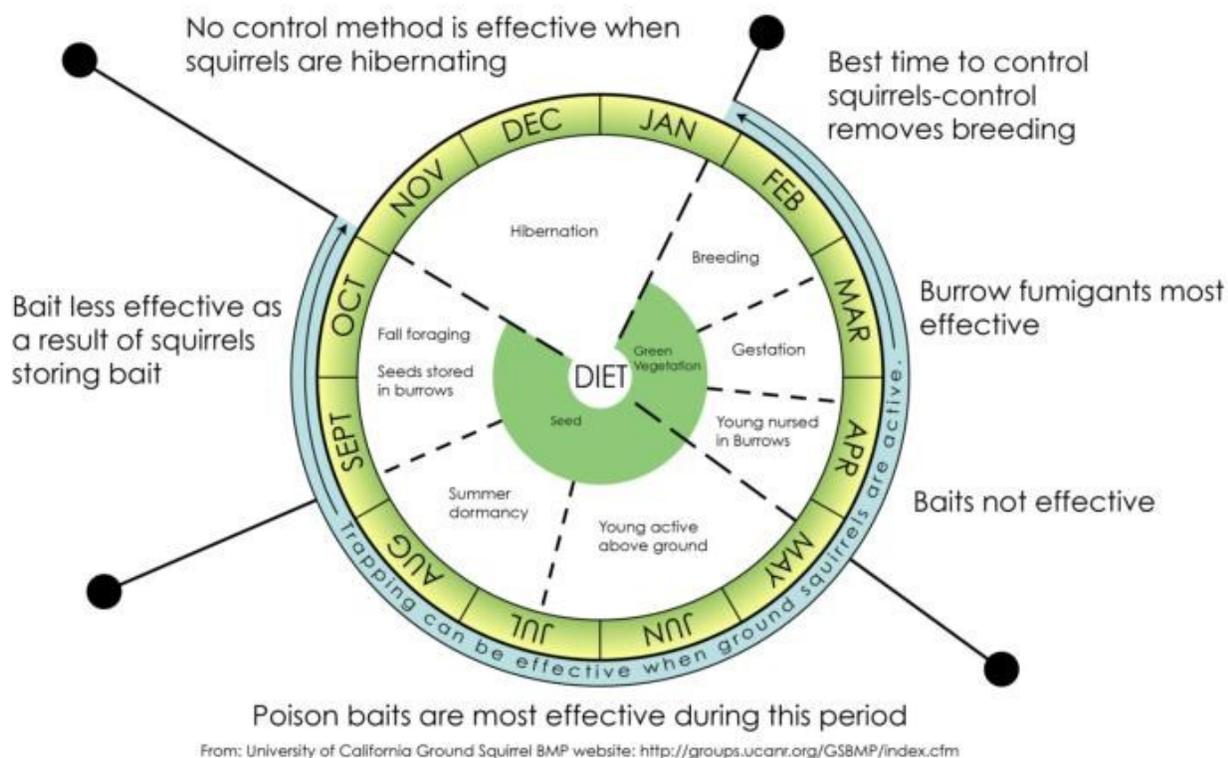
Pest of the Month

Best Management Practices for California Ground Squirrel Control

What are Best Management Practices? They are the most effective, most cost efficient and environmentally friendly management methods to date to deal with California ground squirrels.

This site has been created to educate growers and others in the best management practices (BMP) for control of California ground squirrels. Recommendations are made based on research conducted at the University of California, Davis, and other research found in a literature review. You can skip straight to the control methods section of this site, but we recommend becoming familiar with the other sections because they will greatly aid you in understanding and practicing the best control efforts possible for your particular situation.

California Ground Squirrel - Calendar of Management



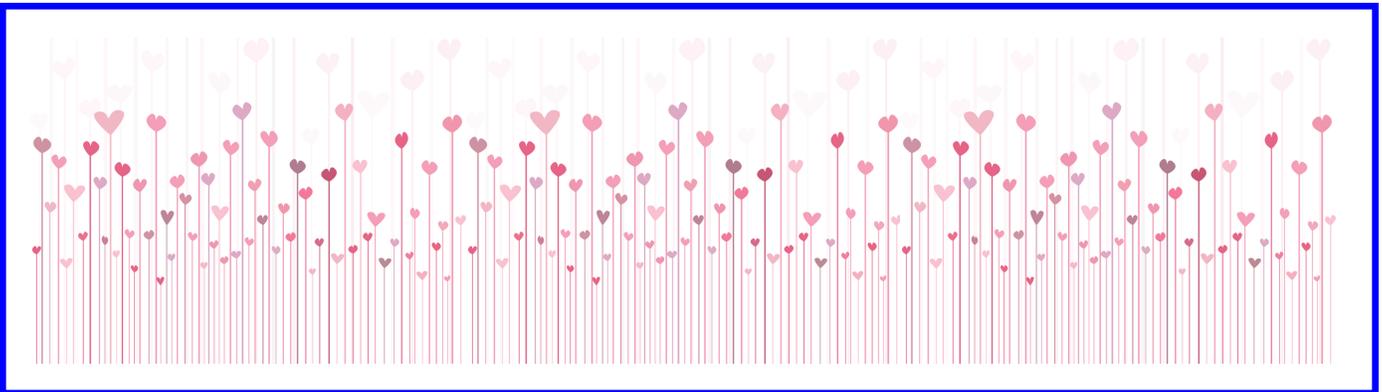
Calendar dates are merely an estimation of time; actual time frames may vary according to the weather.

*Always make sure to read all pesticide labels. The information contained in this website is not a substitute for the pesticide label, but rather a guide to interpreting them.

For more information [click here](#)

February in the Garden:

- This is the season for selecting and planting bare-root roses and fruit trees. It is also the season for pruning roses and fruit trees (except apricots).
- Valentine's Day is the date for spraying copper fungicide on peaches and nectarines to prevent peach leaf curl.
- You can still apply dormant oil spray on fruit trees and roses to kill overwintering pests.
- In the flower garden you can also transplant pansies, violas, snapdragons, and primroses, as well as larkspur, Shasta daisies, and Heuchers (coral bells.)
- In the vegetable garden you can bare-root grapes, rhubarb, asparagus, strawberries and cane berries. Also, peas, radishes, beets, chard, lettuce and spinach can be direct seeded in the garden. It also the time to start seeds of tomatoes, peppers, and eggplant indoors.
- CAUTION: Be sure the soil is not water-logged. It needs to be workable, but not soggy wet. Drainage is critical for soil and plant health.



Science word of the Month....

Cross-pollination—The transfer of pollen from the anther of one plant to the stigma of another plant. Many crops in Colusa County are cross-pollinated. The most obvious is the Almond.



Additional Links

Integrated Pest Management www.ipm.ucdavis.edu

UC Davis Arboretum www.arboretum.ucdavis.edu

McConnell Arboretum and Botanical Gardens turtlebay.org

Invasive Plants www.cal-ipc.org

Plant Right www.plantright.org

PG&E www.pge.com

Save Our Water www.water.ca.gov

The Colusa County Master Gardener Volunteer Program is a partnership among the University of California, USDA, Colusa County and the Colusa County Farm Bureau. Master Gardener volunteers extend horticultural information and offer educational programs and garden-related demonstrations in Colusa County.

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To simply information, trade names of products have been used. No endorsement of named products is intended, nor is criticism implied of similar products which are not mentioned.

**University of California, United States Department of Agriculture, Colusa County Cooperating.
For special assistance regarding our programs, please contact us.**

