

# A Garden Runs Through It

University of California  
Agriculture and Natural Resources

UCCE Master Gardener Program



Colusa County

Whether it's a vegetable garden, houseplants or a landscape...

February 2020

UC Cooperative Extension,  
Colusa County

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- **Ornamental Plant of the Month**— Black Lace Elderberry
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- **Garden Guide**
- **Safety Notes**
- **Meet Your Master Gardener**

## Upcoming events

[Click here to read our blog.](#)



### February

#### **Colusa Farm Show**

February 4, 5, 6

Colusa County Fairgrounds

#### **Second Saturday at the Library**

February 8, 10 am to noon

Topic: Propagation

Colusa County Library, Colusa

#### **Garden Chat**

February 25, 1 pm

Arbuckle Library

### March

#### **Landscape Tree Workshop**

Details to come

#### **Second Saturday at the Library**

March 14, 10 am to noon

Topic: Pest ID & Management

Colusa County Library, Colusa

#### **Garden Chat**

March 31, 1 pm

Arbuckle Library

## Advice to Grow by ... Ask Us!





# Second Saturday at the Library

Presented by

UCCE Master Gardener Program Colusa County

Colusa County Free Library

**When: Second Saturday every month**

**10 am to noon**

**Where: Colusa County Free Library**

**Colusa**

- **February 8 – Propagation**
- **March 14 – Pest Management**
- **April 11 – Roses**
- **May 9 - Salvia and Agastache for Hummingbirds!**



**University of California**  
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Colusa County

## Book of the Month

### *Emily Dickinson's Gardening Life*

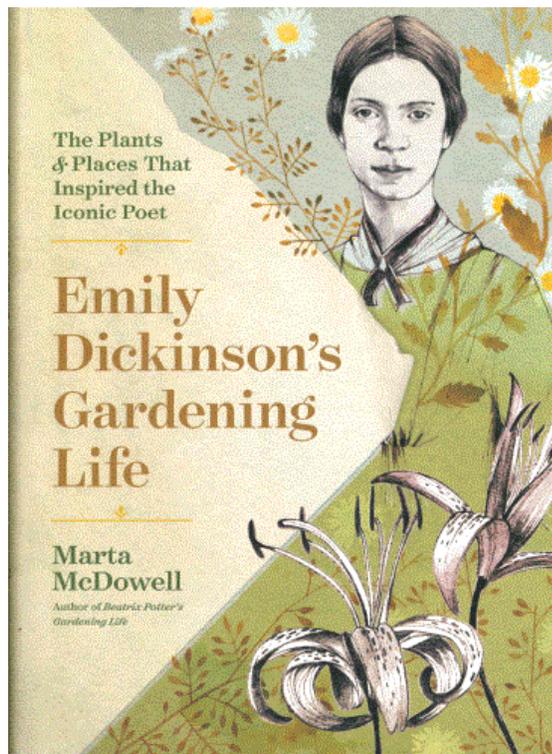
The Plants & Places That Inspired the Iconic Poet

Marta McDowell

Emily Dickinson was a keen observer of the natural world, but less well known is the fact that she was also an avid gardener—sending fresh bouquets to friends, including pressed flowers in her letters, and studying botany at Amherst Academy and Mount Holyoke. At her family home, she tended both a small glass conservatory and a flower garden.

In *Emily Dickinson's Gardening Life*, award-winning author Marta McDowell explores Dickinson's deep passion for plants and how it inspired and informed her writing. Tracing a year in the garden, the book reveals details few know about Dickinson and adds to our collective understanding of who she was as a person.

As a past Gardener-in-Residence at the Emily Dickinson Museum, McDowell knows her subject well. By weaving together Dickinson's poems, excerpts from letters, contemporary and historical photography, and botanical art, she offers an enchanting new perspective on one of America's most celebrated but enigmatic literary figures.



Submitted by Peggy Townzen



# GARDEN CHAT

**Garden Chat with the UC Master Gardeners of Colusa County**

*Where: Arbuckle Library, 610 King Street*

*When: Tuesdays, 1 – 2 pm*

**February 25, March 31, April 28, May 26,  
June 30, July 28, August 25, September 29,  
October 27, November 24, December 29**

Calling all garden lovers! Garden Chat is a roundtable chat about gardening. It's a place to share your gardening stories, successes, challenges and learn from your neighbors. See what happens when you unplug, slow down, enjoy, and meet with fellow gardeners.



**University of California**  
Agriculture and Natural Resources

UCCE Master Gardener Program  
Colusa County

**This is a  
roundtable chat  
about gardening!**

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**Share your  
experiences.**

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**This is a good  
place to ask  
questions.**

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**Garden Chat is  
open to the  
public!**

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**At the  
Arbuckle Library**

**UC MASTER  
GARDENER PROGRAM  
OF COLUSA COUNTY**

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## Ornamental Plant of the Month

### Black Lace Elderberry

I grew up in Chico across the street from Sandy Gulch Creek. Elderberries climbed prolifically along the creek banks and even helped produce a gorgeous jelly if you had enough sugar. I wasn't prepared when I saw my first black lace elderberry. I was enjoying myself at the Garden Gleanings Nursery and saw this beauty in partial shade next to Geneva's home. When she told me what it was I was stunned. The dark purplish green leaves were as shiny as anything you could want and the blossoms were tiny pink flowers.

The black lace elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* 'Eva') lives happily in our area and grows up 4-8 feet tall and wide – so give it plenty of space. Dry winds and air just make the plant shine even more. It serves as a lovely dark backdrop for perennials. It is deciduous so giving it a haircut in the winter is fairly simple. Just keep it to the size you need and enjoy the depth of the leaf color.

It likes a bit of shade and doesn't want to have wet feet. It is native to northern Arica and southwestern Asia. This may be exactly what your garden needs!! Geneva normally has specimen for sale so check with her.



Submitted by Cynthia White

## Edible Plant of the Month

### Rhubarb

Rhubarb plants easily grow 3 feet tall and 6 feet wide and develop very large roots. Leafstalks have a delicious tart flavor and are typically used like fruit in sauces, and pies.

The plant needs some winter chill for thick stems and good color. Rhubarb is deciduous, so in all but the mildest areas, plants will die back completely in winter.

Rhubarb foliage is showy enough to qualify this plant for a display spot in the garden: huge crinkled leaves with an elongated heart shape are held on thick, typically red-tinted stalks.

#### How to Grow it

**Best site**—full sun in mild climates, partial shade where summers are hot.

**Planting**—set our plant divisions containing at least one bud in late winter or early spring.

**Water**—like most plants with large leaves, rhubarb needs regular water.

**Fertilizer**—after harvest, feed and water freely.

**Harvest**—let plants grow for two full seasons before harvesting. In the third season, you can pull of leafstalks for 4 or 5 weeks in spring; older, huskier plants can take up to 8 weeks of pulling. To harvest leafstalks, grasp them near the base and ppull sideways and outward (do not cut with a knife). Never remove all the leaves from a single plant; stop harvesting when slender leafstalks appear. Cut out any blossom stalks that appear.

**IMPORTANT:** Rhubarb leaves contain poisonous substances, including oxalic acid, which is a nephrotoxin in many plants. Humans have been poisoned after ingesting the leaves, so be sure to cut the leaves off completely!



Submitted by Gerry Hernandez

*Sunset Western Garden Book of Edibles*

## Recipe of the Month

### Lamb and Sweet Pepper Ragu

2 Tablespoons olive oil  
1 lb. ground American lamb  
3 bay leaves  
3 cloves garlic, grated on a micro plane  
1 medium onion, finely chopped  
1/2 teaspoon chopped rosemary (optional)  
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste  
1/2 cup dry red or white wine  
1 1/2 cups chicken or beef stock  
1 (15 oz.) can whole peeled tomatoes, crushed by hand  
2 large red bell peppers, stemmed, seeded, and sliced 1/4" thick  
1 large yellow bell pepper, stemmed, seeded, and sliced 1/4" thick  
1 lb. thick spaghetti, rigatoni, or linguini pasta  
Grated pecorino Romano, or parmesan cheese for garnish

Heat oil in a 6-qt. saucepan over medium-high.

Cook lamb, stirring and breaking up meat into small pieces, until browned, 6–8 minutes.

Add bay leaves, garlic, onions, rosemary (if using); cook 2–3 minutes.

Stir in wine, stock, tomatoes, salt, and pepper to taste, and bring to a simmer.

Reduce heat to medium-low; cook, stirring occasionally, until sauce is slightly thickened, 35–40 minutes.

You could also put the pot in a 325-degree oven, covered, for about 45 minutes, stirring occasionally

Stir in peppers; cook until peppers are tender, about 10-15 minutes. Discard bay leaves.

About the time you put in peppers, bring a large pot of salted water to a boil.

Cook pasta until al dente, about 1-2 minutes less than the package time.

This allows for the pasta to continue cooking and better absorb the sauce without getting over cooked.

Drain pasta, reserving a little pasta water, and transfer to the pan with sauce.

Taste for salt and pepper and, using tongs, toss pasta in sauce.

Add a little pasta water, but only if needed, to blend pasta and sauce.

Divide pasta between bowls; garnish with grated cheese.

NOTE: This would also be good with cannellini beans simmered in the sauce with the peppers, skipping the spaghetti entirely.

If you are a real fan of rosemary, you could put a little more on top with the grated cheese.

Submitted by Penny Walgenbach

# Celebrating 10 Years of Service!

## Celebrating 'advice to grow by'

SUSAN MEEKER  
[susan@colusacountynews.com](mailto:susan@colusacountynews.com)

It's been 10 years since a group of individuals throughout Colusa County first went through extensive training in order to offer budding green thumbs information about home horticulture and pest management.

Now, a decade later, the Colusa County Board of Supervisors have recognized the milestone by issuing a proclamation on Nov. 19, honoring the group's 10th anniversary.

The Colusa County Master Gardener Program, a volunteer public service and outreach program under the University of California Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources, was created in 2009 to promote gardening through researched-based information.

"The 10th anniversary is an appropriate time to offer a special tribute to a proud and dedicated community of volunteers," said Board of Supervisors Chairman, Kent Boes.

The local master gardeners are administered locally by the Colusa County UC Cooperative Extension office.

Under the leadership of Colusa County Master Gardener Program Coordinator, Gerry Hernandez, the volunteers, who went through an extensive 16-week training course, have donated



SUSAN MEEKER / PIONEER REVIEW

Colusa County Master Gardeners Coordinator, Gerry Hernandez, center, flanked by members of the group, accepts a proclamation from Kent Boes, chairman of the Board of Supervisors, honoring the 10th anniversary of the program.

6,475 hours and made 12,154 face-to-face contacts over the course of the past decade, officials said.

Former Colusa County UC Cooperative Extension Director Mike Murray and Colusa County Farm Bureau Manager Melodie Johnson started the local program. The group began with 15 members and has grown to 23, with most attending the anniversary recognition at the Colusa County Courthouse.

In addition to gardening advice, the group hosts special workshops, garden chats at the library, and provides a variety of printed material related to a variety of gardening topics.

As a result, Colusa County has seen an 85 percent increase in pollinator-friendly gardening, a 75 percent increase in proper plant selection, and a 65 percent increase in water conservation, officials said. ■



# MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM

## THINKING SAFE AND GREEN

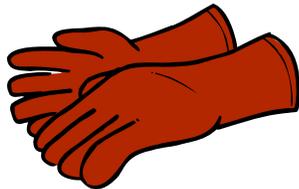


**AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY**

**#4**

### **PESTICIDE GLOVE USE**

*Information given here is intended for use by program representatives, master gardeners, and those they train.*



More than 200,000 recordable hand and finger injuries occur each year in the United States. Hand injuries cost an average of \$1,700 per incident. Many of these injuries could be prevented through the proper selection and use of gloves.

Hand protection is recommended when work involves unusual and excessive exposure of hands to cuts, burns, harmful physical or chemical agents or radioactive materials which are encountered and capable of causing impairments or injuries. Accordingly, it is a prudent safety practice to use chemically-resistant gloves when handling pesticides or entering areas where pesticides have been applied.

#### **Glove Selection**

- Always review pesticide labels or material safety data sheets (MSDSs) to determine whether chemically-resistant gloves must be used and if so, what type of chemically resistant gloves should be worn.
- Suitable resistant materials for liquid pesticide concentrates include butyl, fluorocarbon, nitrile, or barrier laminate.
- Suitable materials for water-based pesticides, wettable powders, and granules include natural rubber, neoprene, polyvinyl chloride, polyvinyl alcohol, polyethylene, and the above-described resistant materials.
- If the glove material is not resistant to the pesticide you are using, glove damage should become quickly recognizable. If this is the case, immediately discard the damaged gloves and try a different material.

#### **Glove Safety Precautions**

- Be aware that all gloves are permeable and no glove provides 100% protection.
- Prior to use, check gloves for holes, tears, deformation, or other defects.
- Wash gloves with soap and water and rinse gloves with running water prior to removal.
- Peel one glove off by grasping the cuff, then peel the second glove off similarly so that you end up with both gloves reversed with the contaminated surfaces to the inside.
- Never pull gloves off with your teeth.
- Thoroughly wash your hands with soap and water after removing gloves.
- Signs that reusable gloves need replacement include punctures, tears, staining, color change, softening, swelling, bubbling, stiffening, cracking, dissolving, and/or leaking.
- Dry washed gloves in a decontaminated area, place dry gloves in a sealed plastic bag, and store gloves away from possible contamination.
- Routine glove replacement should occur when there is direct glove contact with highly toxic pesticides for a short time or repeated contact with pesticides over a longer period of time.

# Gardening Guide

## UC Master Gardener Program of Colusa County

Zones 8 and 9



	February	March	April
<b>P L A N T I N G</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plant rhubarb, strawberries, and cane berries. Plant seeds for broccoli, cabbage, parsley, turnips, peas, radishes, lettuce, and spinach.</li> <li>This is the time to plant bare root roses, trees, artichoke crowns, grapevines, and other vines.</li> <li>You can still plant pansies, violas, snapdragons, and fairy primroses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You can plant canna, gladiolus, and crocosmia for summer blooms. Early in the month you can still plant bare-root trees and shrubs if the garden center still has any.</li> <li>Don't be tempted by the plants in the garden centers unless you have a way to warm up the soil. It is early for tomatoes, eggplant and peppers. Nights should be above 55°.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In a shady spot early in the month you can still plant pansies, violas, and primroses.</li> <li>You can plant dahlia tubers and transplant most perennials.</li> <li>As temperatures warm (nights consistently over 55 degrees) you can transplant tomatoes, eggplants and peppers.</li> <li>You can still plant seeds of cilantro, radishes, beets and chard.</li> </ul>
<b>M A I N T E N A N C E</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roses, fruit trees and other perennials can be pruned this month.</li> <li>Do not prune spring flowering shrubs until after they bloom.</li> <li>Prune berry canes that bore fruit last year to the ground.</li> <li>Prune grapevines back, leaving 2 to 3 buds per side shoot.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Check your irrigation system and do necessary maintenance.</li> <li>Fertilize roses, annuals flowers, and berries with slow-release fertilizer when spring growth begins.</li> <li>Fertilize citrus and deciduous fruit trees.</li> <li>Watch for aphids on new growth on the roses; spray with a strong spray of water, or use insecticidal soap or horticultural oil spray.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fertilize shrubs and trees once this spring.</li> <li>Watch azaleas and camellias for yellowing between the veins in the leaves. If the leaf is yellowish, apply chelated iron to the plants.</li> <li>Trim the dead flowers but not the leaves from spring bulbs. The leaves restore the bulb; so wait to remove them until they turn yellow. Fertilize the bulbs after the bloom is finished with bone meal.</li> </ul>
<b>P R E V E N T I O N</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spray horticultural oil on pruned fruit trees to control scale, mites and aphids. Thorough coverage will kill over-wintering eggs.</li> <li>Later in the month, spray neem oil on roses to control mildew, rust, and black spot. Do not apply oils unless there will be 24 hours of dry weather following application.</li> <li>Be sure to clean up debris (leaves and twigs) around roses and fruit trees to help prevent disease.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep on the weed patrol; pull them while they are small.</li> <li>Use iron phosphate bait for slugs and snails or go on a night hunt and kill them up when you find them.</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apply organic mulch to all beds to keep the soil cool and enrich the soil.</li> <li>Keep on the weed patrol; pull them while they are small.</li> <li>Use iron phosphate bait for slugs and snails or go on a night hunt and kill them up when you find them.</li> </ul>

# Seasonal IPM Checklist

The list below reflects possible landscape activities to do during the selected month(s) in your region. You can use the checklist as a guide for IPM activities in your own landscape or provide it to your clients.

## February

- Abiotic Disorders - Prevent or manage damage, such as that caused by aeration deficit, frost, hail, herbicides, wind, and too much or little water.
- [Ants](#) - Manage around landscape and building foundations, such as using insecticide baits and trunk barriers.
- [Asian citrus psyllid](#) - Look for it and if found where not known to occur report it and other new or [exotic pests](#) to your local county agricultural commissioner.
- [Carpenter bees](#) - Paint or varnish and seal wood in which they nest. If intolerable, treat tunnels during fall or early spring.
- [Compost](#) - Turn and keep it moist. Cover during rainy weather if needed to avoid sogginess.
- Continue [rainy-season prevention of diseases](#), [earwigs](#), [snails and slugs](#), and [weeds](#).
- Deter borers in fruit and nut trees e.g., [paint trunk and scaffolds with white](#) interior latex paint diluted with an equal amount of water.
- [Fire blight](#) - Look for oozing and dead limbs on pome plants such as apple, crabapple, pear, and pyracantha. If a problem in the past, apply blossom sprays to prevent new infections.
- [Frost](#) - Protect sensitive plants from cold injury when freezing or frost are predicted.
- [Grape diseases](#) - Monitor for powdery mildew, Eutypa dieback, Phomopsis cane and leaf spot, and others. Prune, remove, or treat as appropriate.
- Implement [disease and insect control](#) for apple, pear, stone fruits, nut trees, and deciduous landscape trees and shrubs such as roses.
- [Irrigation](#) - Adjust watering schedules according to the weather and plants' changing need for water. Reduce irrigation frequency or turn off systems if rainfall is adequate. Irrigate deeply but infrequently if the winter is dry.
- [Mosquitoes](#) - Eliminate standing water e.g., in gutters, drain pipes, and flowerpots. Place *Bacillus thuringiensis* subspecies *israelensis* in birdbaths and ponds to selectively kill mosquito larvae.
- [Mulch](#) - Apply organic mulch where thin or soil is bare beneath trees and shrubs.
- [Oak pit scale](#) - Spray terminals with oil or apply another insecticide if scales are causing tree decline.
- [Olive knot](#) and [oleander gall, or knot](#) - Avoid pruning olive and oleander during wet weather if stem galls are a problem.
- [Peach leaf curl](#) - Apply preventive spray once or more during late fall through bud break if leaf curl has been a problem on nectarine or peach.
- [Petal blight of azalea, rhododendron](#), and [camellia](#) - Remove and discard old flowers. Apply fresh organic mulch beneath plants.
- [Plant](#) bare root deciduous trees, shrubs, and vines e.g., caneberries, fruit and nuts, grapes, and roses. Plant seedlings of cedar, fir, pine, and spruce. Select species and cultivars well-adapted to the local site.

# Seasonal IPM Checklist

- [Prune](#) deciduous trees and shrubs that need pruning such as apple, crape myrtle, pear, rose, spirea, and stone fruits. Make cuts properly to encourage good form and structure. Remove dead, diseased, and borer-infested wood. Certain pests (e.g. shothole borer) and host plants such as apricot and cherry warrant summer pruning.
- [Root rot](#) - Favored by excessive water and poor drainage. Avoid overirrigation and waterlogged soil.
- [Sycamore scale](#) - Check for presence of pest. Difficult or impractical to control on large trees.
- [Yellowjackets](#) - Place out and maintain lure traps or water traps.

## Master Gardener activities!



In today's fast paced, social media way of life, fake news has become normal.  
This includes fake gardening advice.  
UC Master Gardeners use cutting edge, research-based information to help you garden better.  
We are practical, connected and trusted.  
*Advice to Grow By ... Ask Us!*

Tomorrow's activities are created by today's dreamers—you can make sure that the UC Master Gardener Program of Colusa County is still working to help future generations through your support.

[Click here to support us.](#)

### Science Word of the Month

**Virulence**—A strong capacity to produce disease.

If you attended one of your workshops, you will receive an email from [mgevaluation@ucanr.edu](mailto:mgevaluation@ucanr.edu). Your input gives us the tools we need to grow and improve our program. *Thank you!*

PRACTICAL | CONNECTED | TRUSTED

## Garden Club of Colusa County activities

February 24, 6:30  
St. Stephens Church  
642 Fifth St., Colusa

## Did a friend send you this newsletter?

- You can get your own newsletter sent directly to your inbox by [clicking here](#).



## Additional Links

- Integrated Pest Management [ipm.ucanr.edu](http://ipm.ucanr.edu)
- UC Davis Arboretum [arboretum.ucdavis.edu](http://arboretum.ucdavis.edu)
- Invasive Plants [www.cal-ipc.org](http://www.cal-ipc.org)
- Plant Right [www.plantright.org](http://www.plantright.org)
- Save Our Water [saveourwater.com](http://saveourwater.com)
- California Garden Web [cagardenweb.ucanr.edu](http://cagardenweb.ucanr.edu)
- McConnell Arboretum and Botanical Gardens [turtlebay.org](http://turtlebay.org)
- UCANR Colusa County [cecolusa.ucanr.edu](http://cecolusa.ucanr.edu)
- UC Master Gardener Program (statewide) [mg.ucanr.edu](http://mg.ucanr.edu)
- California Backyard Orchard [homeorchard.ucanr.edu](http://homeorchard.ucanr.edu)
- ANR publications [anrcatalog.ucanr.edu](http://anrcatalog.ucanr.edu)

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