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Announcements

Master Gardener Board Meeting will be held on Monday, October 1, 1:00 p.m. at the UCCE Office, 52 N. Washington St., Sonora.

Master Gardener General Meeting will be held on Tuesday October 2, 6:00 p.m. at the Tuolumne County Senior Center, 540 Greenley Rd. **Educational Topic: “Integrated Pest Management.”**

Mark your calendars for September 24-26, 2008 for the 4th *Statewide Master Gardener Conference* at Asilomar, near Monterey, CA. The planning committee is preparing a dynamic and educational program focused on sustainable landscape practices.

The next *International Master Gardener Conference* will be held in Las Vegas, March 22-26, 2009. If you’d like to see what an international conference might look like, go to <http://mg2007.uaex.edu/> to view the 2007 international conference held in Little Rock, AR.

President’s Message

The leaves may be falling and the temperatures dropping but autumn is a season brimming with opportunities for Master Gardeners. Before I discuss them, I want to thank all of you who contributed your time and expertise in September. Thank you, Val Myrick, for an excellent hands-on plant propagation program at our last meeting. Hopefully, everyone’s cuttings are taking root and can be transplanted soon. We had a successful Grand Opening of the Demo Garden thanks to all the hard work of the team leaders and MG volunteers. I heard many positive comments from attendees. We also had info booths at three new community events: Foothill Farmlands Arts Festival (Fahey Cabin), Family Preparedness Fair, and the Apple Festival. Thanks to all of you who helped staff those exhibits. I also want to acknowledge Sherrin Grout and crew for keeping the Fairgrounds Triangle beautifully maintained throughout the year.

Our new training class will continue in October on Thursday evenings from 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. at the Senior Center. A field class will be held one Saturday each month. (For a schedule, see the Coordinator’s Corner.) All Master Gardeners are welcome to audit the classes for review and continuing education credit.

The next Open Garden Day is October 6th. Be sure to come out and help if you can. It is a fun way to earn hours while meeting the public, sharing your knowledge or learning something new.

If you are looking for native plants to buy, the Native Plant Society is having their fall sale on October 13th.

Another event we will be involved in for the first time is the Wild and Scenic Environmental Film Festival on October 20th. We

will have an information booth at the Dogwood Forum at Columbia College from 2:00 – 9:00 p.m. This should be an interesting event to cover as you can probably catch a few of the films while you're there!

Debbie

Calendar

October

- 1- Board Meeting - 1pm
(UCCE Office)
- 2- General Meeting - 6pm
(Senior Center)
- 4- MG Training Class- 6-9pm
(Senior Center-every Thurs.)
- 6- Open Garden Day- 10am
- 9- Fair Triangle- 9am
- 13- Native Plant Sale- 9am
(WestAmerica Bank)
- 20- MG Training Field Seminar- 8-12Noon
- 20- Wild & Scenic Film Fest- 2-9pm
(Columbia College)

November

- 1- MG Training Class- 6-9pm
(Senior Center-every Thurs.)
- 3- Open Garden Day- 10am
- 5- Board Meeting - 1pm
(UCCE Office)
- 6- General Meeting - 6pm
(Senior Center)
- 13- Fair Triangle - 9am
- 17- MG Training Field Seminar- 8-12Noon

Sierra Rock Garden Society Meeting

Sierra Rock Garden Society's Fall Speaker:

Janis Ruksans
Rare and Unusual Bulb Expert,
Plant Explorer, Author

6:00 pm, Thursday, October 18, Willow Springs Club House

Please join fellow plant enthusiasts for a

wonderful and free evening featuring Janis Ruksans of Latvia. His book, [Buried Treasures: Finding and Growing the World's Choicest Bulbs](#), has just been published and will be available for purchase.

Starting at 6 pm, the local rock garden society members will treat you to tasty finger foods, beverages, conversation, and a chance to meet Janis. Books and plants will be offered for purchase. Janis will give his power point presentation at 7 pm.

Call Val Myrick, 533-3193, for information.

Bug of the Month:

PRAYING MANTIS: Alien of the Insect World

The Praying Mantis, also called Praying Mantids or Praying Mantises, are large carnivorous insects that belong to the Mantidae family and Mantodea Order. There are about 2,000 species of mantids widely distributed throughout the tropical, subtropical, and warm temperate areas of the world. The biggest praying mantises are the *Tenodera* and the *Archimantis*, which can be six inches long. The smallest praying mantis is the *Bolbe pygmaea*, which is only 2/5 of an inch long. The California mantid is *Stagmomantis californica*.

Strangely, scientists and entomologists agree that the mantis is closely related to the cockroach. Like their relatives the cockroaches, mantids undergo simple or incomplete metamorphosis. There is no caterpillar or maggot stage. The young go through several nymphal stages in which they resemble miniature wingless adults. Mantis species from Europe and China were introduced to the Northeastern United States about 75 years ago for use as garden predators in the hopes that they would overtake the native pest population. Because they have so many enemies, such as birds, Praying Mantis must use their natural camouflage and blend in with their habitat to avoid being eaten.

Praying mantids are among the few insects which can rotate their heads so they can literally

look over their shoulders, making them extremely effective predators. This is very creepy for some people. The Praying Mantis is a carnivorous insect that takes up a deceptively humble posture when searching for food. Mantids grab their prey with their raptorial front legs which quickly shoot out and grasp their victim. Mantis almost always start eating the insect while it is still alive and they almost always start eating their victim's neck so that their struggle won't last long.

Praying mantises eat insects and other invertebrates, such as other mantises, beetles, butterflies, crickets, grasshoppers, and even spiders. Praying mantises also eat vertebrates such as small tree frogs, lizards, mice, hummingbirds, and other nesting birds. Praying Mantises make terrific pest exterminators. They keep down the populations of bugs that threaten farms making them highly useful to agriculture.

Courtship and mating is a hazardous undertaking for male Praying Mantises. The female is likely to grab the male and eat him from the head end even before the mating process is over!

The expected life span of a praying mantis depends on the species, but the maximum is about a year for the entire life cycle. However, most will only live as adults for about 6 months (less for some species of praying mantis).

You can have a pet mantid! Mantids should be housed individually. However, a praying mantis needs only a small tank. Generally a tank should be at least twice as wide and three times as tall as the mantid, but not much larger than that. If the tank is too large the mantid will have a hard time finding its prey. One cubic foot is a good size for most praying mantises. The height of the tank is important to provide space for molting.

A mesh top for your mantis tank is preferred, and mesh openings on the side are good, if possible. A substrate of an inch or two of soil, peat, peat or soil mixed with sand, or vermiculite can be used in the bottom of the tank to help retain moisture. Several twigs should be provided and should reach almost to the top of the tank, as the mantid will need space to hang from a twig for molting.

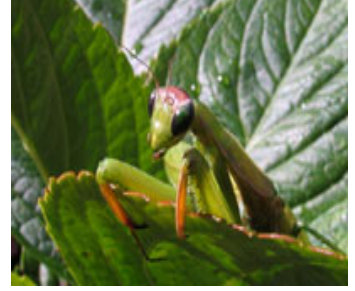
Live potted or artificial plants can be used too, but make sure not to overcrowd the tank.

Your praying mantis will need space to move about, hunt, and molt. Then you can put them in the garden next spring.

Egg case



Adult



Demonstration Garden Update

Balloons were flying, hot dogs roasting, drinks cooling and Master Gardeners on hand to welcome, inform, inspire and share a beautiful Mother Lode Day with many members of our community.

We are so happy to report that the Grand Opening Day turned out to be a huge success! Over 100 visitors stopping by throughout the day to partake of good food, (thank you Ron for delicious hotdogs), listen to great demonstrations, (thanks to Al, Dona, Fran, and Kami), and to be informed by Master Gardeners (Toots, Debbie, Becky, Gary, Carolee, Katy, Dona, and Val) who manned informational tables located throughout the garden. A Sonora City Councilman and three County Supervisors attended and commented on how outstanding the garden looked. We were also joined by Dario Cassina, for whom the campus is named. It was also nice to see several Master Gardeners in attendance that had not been to the garden in sometime.

Our guests asked questions, took notes and stated that they were motivated to implement many ideas that they had seen or learned while wandering through the garden.

A huge thank you goes to Skip who brought chairs, tables and a canopy, to Ron who brought a trailer full of needed gear (not least of which was his beautiful 'Binford 5000') and a

helium tank with which to blow up the balloons. Ron thoroughly enjoyed watching the four Master Gardeners, (who shall remain nameless) blow-up, knot and tie string to the colorful red, white and blue balloons!!! Also, we thank all the Master Gardeners who brought books and literature to share as well as help set up and take down the canopies, tables, signs and everything else that was needed for this Grand Opening Day. A job very well done, everyone!!!!

The next Open Garden Day will be October 6th, with demonstrations on Winter Crops, Useful Garden Décor and Composting. Hope to see you there.

The Garden Reporter



Coordinator's Corner

The new out-of-sequence, pilot-project **Master Gardener Training Class** has begun. For all of you wishing to join us to review topics (a good source of continuing education hours), here's the schedule. All classes meet at **6:00 p.m. Thursdays** at the **Tuolumne County Senior Center**, except for **Field Classes which meet at 8:00 on specific Saturday mornings** (see following schedule).

**09/20/07 Welcome & Introductions
U.C./Master Gardener Policies
Volunteer Responsibilities**

09/27/07 Introduction to Horticulture
Scott Oneto, County Director/Natural Resources Advisor, UCCE Tuolumne

**09/29/07: Saturday Field Class
Soil Principles, Properties &
Fertility; Soil Testing**
Ben Smith, Soils Scientist, U.S. Forest Service, Retired
Note: *Meet at Senior Center at 8:00 a.m. to carpool to various sites*

10/04/07 Oaks
Ken Churches, County Director/Farm Advisor, UCCE Calaveras County
**Oak Identification (hands on)
Living with Fire: Making the
Landscape Fire Safe**

10/11/07 Basics of Entomology
Karen Robb, County Director/Farm Advisor, UCCE Mariposa County

10/18/07 Bulbs
Janis Ruksans, rare and unusual bulb expert, plant explorer, author
Note: *Meet at Willow Springs Clubhouse for Sierra Rock Garden Society's Speaker*

10/20/07 Fruit Production (field class)
Gary Fowler, University of Michigan, Professor Emeritus
Note: *Meet at Gary Fowler's hoe at 8:00 a.m.: directions/map will be provided*

10/25/07 Safe Pesticide Use/IPM
Marian Chambers, Tuolumne County. Deputy Agricultural Commissioner

11/01/07 Plant Pathology
Dr. Robert Raabe, U.C. Berkeley, Professor Emeritus

**11/08/07 Water:
Water Issues in Tuolumne
County**

Pete Kampa, General Manager, Tuolumne
Utilities District

**Catch Can Test (hands on)
Home Sprinkler Systems**

11/15/07 Plant Propagation

Val Myrick, Tuolumne County Master Gardener

11/17/07 Home Vegetable Gardening

Gary Fowler, University of Michigan, Professor
Emeritus

Note: *Meet at Gary Fowler's home at 8:00 a.m.*

11/22/07 Thanksgiving Holiday – No Class

**11/29/07 Growing a Turf Lawn in the
Foothills**

Pam Geisel, UC State Master Gardener
Coordinator

12/06/07 Plant Identification

Scott Oneto, Tuolumne County Director/Farm
Advisor

12/08/07 Landscape Design

Marlys Bell, Author, Tuolumne County Master
Gardener

Note: *Meet at Marlys Bell's home at 8:00 a.m.*

12/13/07 Composting

Becky Miller-Cripps, Master Gardener Program
Coordinator, UCCE Tuolumne County

**12/20/07 Integrated Pest Management/
Vertebrate Pest Control**

A FINAL THOUGHT:

We can either complain that rose bushes have
thorns – or rejoice that thorn bushes have
roses....



And on that note....Rosemary Sawyer invites us to
come and meander along the paths of Tuolumne
County's largest rose garden, "Rosemary's
Roses." Open for viewing from October 13 – 21.
Call 536-9415 for information and reservations.

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