

**University of California**  
Agriculture and Natural Resources

*Making a Difference for California*



Cooperative Extension, Colusa County  
P.O. Box 180, 100 Sunrise Blvd., Suite E  
Colusa, Ca 95932  
530-485-0570 530-458-4625 fax  
[cecolusa.ucanr.edu](mailto:cecolusa.ucanr.edu)  
[mgcolusa@ucanr.edu](mailto:mgcolusa@ucanr.edu)

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

# A Garden Runs Through It

This newsletter is  
produced by:

**Gerry Hernandez**  
Master Gardener  
Coordinator

**Luis Espino**  
Advisor

**Chris Greer**  
County Director

## OFFICE HOURS:

Tuesday,  
9am—12pm  
1pm—4pm  
UCCE office,  
100 Sunrise Blvd,  
Colusa  
458-0570

Have a question?  
Email us at  
[mgcolusa@ucanr.edu](mailto:mgcolusa@ucanr.edu)

## In This Issue:

August 2013

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## Information Booth Locations:

### Arbuckle Farmers Market

Wednesday August 7

### Colusa Farmers Market

Monday August 5  
Monday August 19



## Frequently Asked Question

Dear Master Gardener,

My landscape trees are dropping a lot of leaves. What is going on and are we going to have an early fall?

Your Neighbor

Dear Neighbor,

I don't know if we are going to have an early fall. The leaf drop is called leaf scorch and is caused by excessive heat. In July we had official temperatures of 115 degrees and you know the top of your trees was hotter than that.

Here is the technical analysis: Leaf scorch is caused by excessive evaporation of moisture from the leaves. In hot or windy weather, water evaporates rapidly from the leaves. If roots cannot absorb and convey water fast enough to replenish this loss, the leaves turn brown and wither. This usually occurs in dry soil, **but** leaves can also scorch when the soil is moist and temperatures are near 100 degrees for extended periods.

Your Master Gardener



# Book of the Month

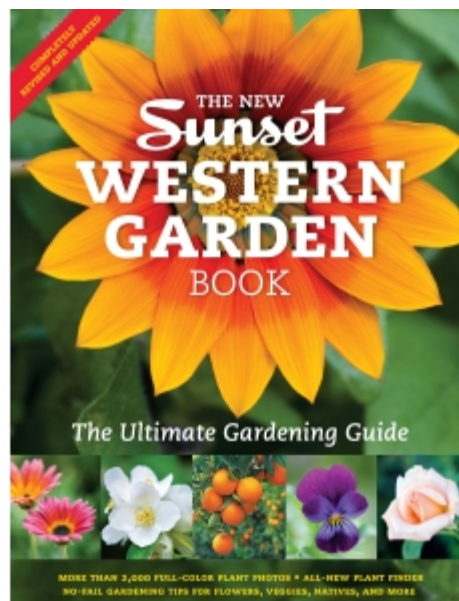
## The New Western Garden Book

### The Ultimate Gardening Guide

As surely as gardens change with the seasons, gardening is ever changing. New plants, techniques, materials, and lifestyles are constantly broadening the choices readers have and reshaping the way they garden in the West. In response to this natural evolution, the editors of *Sunset*—the West's most trusted source of gardening information for more than 80 years—have completely redesigned and updated *The Western Garden Book* in this 2012 Ninth Edition. Following the best-selling success of the previous editions of *The Western Garden Book*, this edition includes a fresh new look, thousands of color photographs, fresh illustrations, and an easy-to-follow format. Written by experts for gardeners in the West, this book is an indispensable reference for beginning and expert gardeners alike.

*The New Western Garden Book* features include:

- A photo gallery shows the West's most innovative gardens, from all-edibles front yards to stylish water-wise and fire-wise gardens to living walls and green roofs—all with ideas readers can use.
- Climate Zone Maps and growing-season graphs for all regions of the West, including Alaska and Hawaii.
- A new Plant Finder section helps readers choose plants for their garden's problem areas or for special effects
- A to Z Plant Encyclopedia lists some 8000 plants that thrive in the West, including more than 500 new ones. Gorgeous color photographs illustrate all plant entries—for the first time ever in *The Western Garden Book*.
- Gardening From Start to Finish is a new visual guide that leads readers through all steps of making a garden, from soil prep through planting, growing and care, with special sections on natives, veggies, grasses and more.





## Ornamental Plant of the Month

### Canna Lillies for Tropical Texture and Durability

If you are looking for a bold feature in your yard that gets plenty of sun and thumbs its nose at most pests and diseases. You can go for the old “tall” varieties that will never ask you to stake them up or need anything but moisture and sun in order to look good all summer. Or you can go for the shortest cannas that stays around 2 feet tall or can head into the striped foliage of Tropicanna that stays less than 3 feet tall. In our zone the cannas is a perennial and after a few years you have more than enough to share with your friends. You can find ones with dark green foliage like “Australia”, colorful foliage as on the Tropicanna, and a fairly new variety called “Tropical Rose” that has lighter green leaves with dramatic white stripes that look great in containers and top out around 30 inches tall by late summer.

The canna will start to show off in our area around late June or early July the color range goes from the softest of pink through fiery red and orange and into the speckled yellow flower of “Picasso.” We can count on their flowers until cold weather or frost stops them here as long as they are dead headed just below the dying blossoms. If you cut to low you will lose future flowers.

If you have a pond or water feature you can look for the aquatic cannas to add another dimension to your garden. Just make sure that the rhizomes are no more than 5-6 inches below the surface of the water. Too deep and they can't get enough oxygen and will suffocate and die. Most water cannas grow about 3-6 feet tall in a wide range of colors and mostly with blue-green leaves.

Cannas are water lovers so if you have an area that drains poorly the cannas will be happy as can be. When it's time to divide the rhizomes simply dig the clump and pull the roots apart. They are brittle and break at natural division spots. Just make sure each piece has at least one node, or bud, where new leaves will grow next year. If one of the pieces has lots of root but no node visible just toss it – you will still have plenty to plant. The node is essential for the plant to be robust when you replant it. Sometimes the little stems growing right next to the major stem may look like a node but the plant will take longer to rebound.

If you find the occasional grasshopper, caterpillar or leafroller enjoying free lunch just pick them off and drop them into soapy water. The tough plants only have one serious problem – “Yellow mottle virus”. If you spot leaves streaked with yellow, the plant may be infected. Sometimes the leaves are puckered, twister or stunted. Even the flowers might show pale streaks. There is no chemical control so you must dig the cannas out and put them in the trash – not the compost pile. As you trim the stem be sure to dip your clippers in a 1:10 bleach solution to prevent spreading this disease. Most of us will never see “Yellow mottle virus” so just enjoy the cannas all summer long.



**Submitted by Cynthia White**

## ***Edible Garden of the Month***

### **CARE FOR YOUR GARDEN & ENJOY THE HARVEST**

- During these hot days water early (before 8 am) allowing it to soak in. Container plants dry out easily and may well need daily water.
- Mulching saves water and the plants. Try putting down a few sheets of newspaper and covering with an inch of compost or bark.
- Be on the lookout for pests. If possible pick them off or knock off with a hard spray of water.
- Feed vegetable plants with bone meal or a fertilizer high in phosphate to encourage more bloom and fruit, but be sure to water well first.
- Pinch blooms from basil so more leaves grow.
- HARVEST your tomatoes, eggplant, peppers and squash! Avoid baseball bat sized zucchini. Pick all your vegetables when young and tender and they will be encouraged to keep producing.
- Pick corn and try the following recipe. I always thought you couldn't beat plain old corn on the cob with butter and salt, but I have been converted. This has brought nothing but raves.

#### **Roasted Corn with Manchego & Lime**

by Jean-Georges Vongerichten and Dan Kluger

Makes 8 servings

##### **Ingredients**

6 ears of sweet yellow corn, unhusked  
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil  
2 tablespoons (1/4 stick) unsalted butter  
Kosher salt  
freshly ground black pepper  
1 jalapeño, seeded, finely diced  
1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes  
1 lime, cut into 4 wedges  
1 cup finely grated Manchego cheese  
1/4 cup thinly sliced chives  
2 teaspoons finely grated lime zest



##### **Preparation**

Preheat oven to 450°. Roast unhusked corn on a baking sheet, turning occasionally, until heated through and crisp-tender, about 15 minutes. Let cool. Shuck corn and cut kernels from cobs.

Heat oil in a large skillet over high heat. Add corn kernels and sauté until heated through and light-golden in spots, 3–5 minutes. Add butter; stir until melted.

Season to taste with salt and pepper. Transfer corn to a large wide bowl or deep platter; sprinkle jalapeño and crushed red pepper flakes over. Squeeze lime wedges over; sprinkle with cheese, chives, and lime zest.

Bon Appétit | August 2011

**John and Diane Vafis**

# Problem of the Month

Tomatoes—Blossom end rot, fruit cracks and verticillium wilt

## Blossom end rot



Plants with blossom end rot show small, light brown spots at the blossom end of immature fruit. The affected area gradually expands into a sunken, leathery, brown or black lesion as the fruit ripens. Hard, brown areas may develop inside the fruit, either with or without external symptoms. The disease is not associated with soil contact or with damage to other plant parts.

## Solutions

Blossom end rot results from a low level of calcium in the fruit and water balance in the plant. It is aggravated by high soil salt content or low soil moisture and is more common on sandier soils. To reduce rot, monitor soil moisture to make sure that the root zone neither dries out nor remains saturated. Follow recommended rates for fertilizers. Some varieties are more affected than others. The disease is not caused by a pathogen; there are no pesticide solutions.

## Fruit cracks



Fruit may crack in a radial pattern or in concentric circles. Radial cracking, the more common of the two, occurs during rainy periods, when rains follow long dry periods. Fruit exposed to the sun may also develop cracks.

## Solutions

Maintain a uniform water supply through the use of irrigation or mulches. A full leaf canopy will also help protect fruit from the sun and reduce cracking.

There may be some resistant varieties in your area.

## Verticillium wilt—*Verticillium dahliae*



Verticillium wilt often starts as a yellowing between the major veins of the leaves. The fungus moves throughout the plant and eventually whole leaves and stems wither and die.

## Solutions

Verticillium wilt of tomatoes can be avoided in many cases by planting resistant varieties, which are labeled V. If you wish to grow susceptible varieties, problems can sometimes be minimized by removing all residue, including roots that may be susceptible, and using soil solarization before you plant. (picture of stem)

## Recipe of the Month

Barbara Scheimer and Cynthia Peterson

### *Henderson Peach Smoothies*

4 soft Henderson Peaches

5 cups fat free frozen yogurt or ice cream (peach or vanilla flavored)

¼ to 1 cup 1% or whole milk (depending on your consistency preference)

1 banana

1 t honey (if desired)

Mix all ingredients in a blender, serve cold. Be creative by adding strawberries, blueberries etc.

*Thank you to the Henderson Family for this recipe. More peach recipes are available at <http://hendersonpeaches.com>*



# Smart Gardening Practices

This will be a new series on how to lessen your gardening footprint on Mother Earth and save money.

## Four Easy Ways to Get Started with Smart Gardening!

### 1. Check your irrigation system

- A. Look for broken or out of adjustment heads.
- B. Set your controller properly for the season.



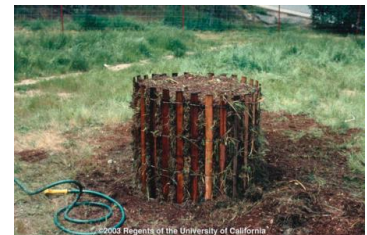
### 2. Use mulch in flower, vegetable and shrub beds

- A. Mulch prevents water loss, and keeps weeds down.
- B. Mulch materials can be bark, ground tree trimmings and fallen leaves.
- C. Apply 3 inches of mulch.



### 3. Use compost to improve soil health and fertility

- A. Compost reduces fertilizer needs.
- B. Improves water use efficiency.
- C. Incorporate compost when planting or apply to shrubs. Remember to “space the base” (put compost a few inches from the base of the plant).



### 4. Grasscycle when mowing lawns

- A. Grasscycling allows grass clippings and their nutrients to be recycled into the lawn and soil, reducing the need for fertilizers. In addition, there is less waste to the landfill. Use a mulching mower or one with a mulching attachment.





## August in the Garden:

### Things to plant:

- You can plant directly in the garden seeds of carrots, beets, lettuce, spinach and turnips. Indoors you can start seeds for broccoli, cabbage, kale, bunching onions, and radicchio.

### Things to do:

- Be sure to monitor your watering system. Check for coverage and watch for plugged or blocked sprinklers.
- Deeply water fruit trees, grapes, and ornamental trees.
- Continue to weed. Be especially sure to get weeds before they flower and set seeds.
- Check the mulch you have spread around and be sure it is thick enough to suppress weeds. (3 to 4 inches)
- Cut off spent flowers of perennials and annuals for continued bloom. Cut lavender severely after it has finished blooming. Petunias and coreopsis should be sheared back to promote another crop of blossoms.



## Science word of the Month....

**Vernalization**—The inducement or promotion of flowering by exposure to low temperature, as in some bulbs and biennial plants.

## Garden Club of Colusa County activities

- Next meeting Monday August 26th, 6:30pm
- 642 Fifth St. (St. Stephen's Episcopal Church)
- Speaker - I don't know who it is but I'm sure they will be fabulous. By the next news-letter I will have a list of speakers and their bios.

## Additional Links

Integrated Pest Management [www.ipm.ucdavis.edu](http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu)

UC Davis Arboretum [www.arboretum.ucdavis.edu](http://www.arboretum.ucdavis.edu)

McConnell Arboretum and Botanical Gardens [turtlebay.org](http://turtlebay.org)

Invasive Plants [www.cal-ipc.org](http://www.cal-ipc.org)

Plant Right [www.plantright.org](http://www.plantright.org)

PG&E [www.pge.com](http://www.pge.com)

Save Our Water [www.water.ca.gov](http://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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