Spring Gardening Tips
Seasonal Classes & Events
Ms. Smarty-Plants™ Turns 10!

SPRING 2018
OUR MISSION
To inspire positive change in the living environment through the conservation of water and other natural resources.

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In Bloom Production
In Bloom is published quarterly by The Water Conservation Garden and mailed as a benefit to members. Content and photos by Garden staff, docents, and volunteers unless otherwise noted.

Get Social With Us!
Keep up with the latest on news, events and more!
PRUNING!
Now is a good time to reduce shrubs that are growing larger than intended. Many plants will grow back in quickly as the root systems have plenty of stored energy. Look at the entire landscape area and consider what each plant will grow into this season. It is unfortunate and harder to prune later when the flowers come into the picture!

MULCHING!
Nothing freshens up a yard like dark, rich mulch between plants. Apply 2-3" of fresh mulch to keep in the moisture for healthier plants. Either purchase bags of wood chips or shredded bark from your local home improvement store, or ask your local nursery or gravel company if they will deliver mulch to your home if needed. Incorporating mulch will revitalize any yard, increase organic matter into the soil as it breaks down, and reduce the amount of weeds that will be germinating in the spring.

FERTILIZING AND TOP DRESSING!
Feeding plants as they get ready to grow will reward you considerably. Most any type of fertilizer will do the trick, however using an organic fertilizer is highly recommended. Adding compost or well-seasoned manure when planting will give new plants a great start. If possible, avoid disturbing established areas deeply as complex soil ecosystems are important to sustain a healthy soil profile. The organics will work their way down into the soil naturally.

Article by Paul Redeker
Photo by Harold Bailey
Tomatomania®
Saturday & Sunday, March 10-11, 9am – 4pm
Scott Daigre's Tomatomania® returns with his famous weekend-long sale with a bounty of heirloom and hybrid tomato seedlings of every size, shape, color, and taste profile. Scott and his staff provide expert advice and tools of the trade will be available for purchase. Planting tomatoes marks the beginning of spring for gardeners and who can't resist the fresh taste of a garden tomato? Admission to Tomatomania® is free! Attendees can dig deeper with Scott’s informative presentations, offered at 11am each day ($5 for members, $10 for non-members). Plants, gear, and tomato-themed refreshments will be available for purchase and free, docent-led tours of The Garden will begin at 10am each day.
Seating is limited for presentations; attendees are encouraged to pre-register at https://thegarden.org/tomatomania2018

Expert Forum – Capturing Rainwater: The Barrel and Beyond in Landscape Design
Sunday, March 18, 2 - 4pm
Rainfall is a scarce commodity in San Diego. Meet the experts in collecting this precious resource. Topics will include retrofitting landscape design to include attractive swales and other features, improving drainage, incorporating the latest in collection and storage devices, and effectively distributing saved water to well-chosen plantings. Light refreshments will be served and a tour of the rainwater harvesting features in The Garden will follow.
Admission: $5 members, $10 non-members; students with current ID free.
For more information and to register please visit https://thegarden.org/rainwater/

Water-Wise Home Garden Tour
Saturday, March 24, 9am - 3pm
The Garden Docents invite the public to the 3rd annual Water-Wise Home Garden Tour. The tour will highlight five distinct gardens located in Mt. Helix and El Cajon featuring a wide variety of colorful and low water-use plants. The gardens emphasize plants from semi-arid regions around the world, including Africa, Australia, Mediterranean, New Zealand, and Southwestern US. Each year we have been proud to have one of our tour gardens featured in San Diego Home Garden Magazine.
Attendees will have the opportunity to ask questions of the homeowner, Garden staff, and skilled Docents. Birdhouses and garden art handmade by Garden volunteers will be available to purchase; all proceeds of this fundraiser will benefit the conservation efforts of The Garden.
Tickets: $25 in advance, $30 at the door
For more information and to purchase tickets in advance please visit https://thegarden.org/gardentour2018/
Spring Garden & Butterfly Festival
Saturday, April 28, 9am – 3pm
The Water Conservation Garden, Cuyamaca College and the Heritage of the Americas Museum present the 25th annual Spring Garden Festival! Join us for the ultimate celebration of the season’s bounty. Featured activities at the college include plant sales at the Ornamental Horticulture Nursery, viticulture demonstrations with wine tastings, food and craft vendors, and college department information booths on the grand lawn. Garden activities include butterfly releases, Butterfly Habitat and Pavilion tours, children’s crafts, Story Time with Miss Metamorphosis, and a Ms. Smarty Plants TM Pollinator Party at 11am (dress as your favorite pollinator!). Museum activities include scheduled presentations and drawings. There will be something for everyone!
FREE admission and FREE parking
For detailed information, visit www.springgardenfestival.com
Photo by James Flanagan

Water Agency Customer Appreciation Day
Saturday, May 19, 9am – 1pm
The Garden is pleased to once again host a special “appreciation day” for ratepayers of the City of San Diego, Helix, Otay, and Sweetwater Authority Water Districts. Ratepayers can enjoy local food trucks, kids activities and butterfly habitat experiences while discovering different varieties of drought-tolerant plants, learning how to “toss the turf”, and getting inspiration for water-smart gardening. Water agency representatives will answer questions and provide advice on sustainable water-use methods and technology. More information available here: www.thegarden.org/agencyday

Wags & Wine
Tuesdays, May 22 and June 19, 5 - 7pm
A special evening stroll just for you and your furry friend, well wine not? The Garden will be open late for you to enjoy a walk amongst our interesting plants and trees with your pooch, while sipping a glass of wine. Cool treats and activities are a must for your canine companion!
Tickets are $8 per person and can be purchased at www.thegarden.org/events/wagsandwine.
**SPRING CLASSES 2018**

Pre-registration is REQUIRED for all classes at www.theGarden.org or by calling 619-660-0614 x10

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### MARCH

**3 Hillside Planting**
Saturday, March 3 | 10am – 12pm
Ever wonder what to do with that slope/hillside you have? Renowned Landscape Designer, Connie Beck, the Holistic Gardener, will amaze you with beautiful solutions for hard to plant spaces. Class made possible by the San Diego County Watershed Protection Program.
**Free**

**16 Plant Paparazzi: iPhone Pics!**
Friday, March 16 | 9 – 11am
Are you interested in taking better photos with your smart phone? Docent Instructor, Sally Long, will show the fundamentals of shooting effectively along with awesome tricks to get the very best shots. Learn how to properly frame your shot, quickly access camera apps, master essential in-camera features, and much more.
**Members Free, Non-Members $10**

**18 Garden Art: Mosaic Bee Bath**
Sunday, March 18 | 10am – 12pm
Welcome bees to your garden! Bee baths are smaller, shallower versions of birdbaths, with stones so bees can land and drink safely. Once you've designed your bee bath, Amber Pierce of Amber's Artistry, will take your creation and grout pieces for you to pick up at your convenience. Class is held outdoors in the Habitat Garden for inspiration. All materials included.
**Members $30, Non-Member $35**

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### APRIL

**7 How to Catch, Store and Use Rainwater**
Saturday, April 7 | 10 – 11:30am
The biggest mistake in rainwater collection is not doing it! Candace Vanderhoff, local pioneer of rain harvesting, and founder of RainThanks & Greywater, shares how to collect rainwater for your garden. Learn Do-it-Yourself tips for collecting and storing rainwater. Class made possible by Integrated Regional Water Management.
**Free**

**Garden Docent Training**
Sunday, April 8 | 12 – 4pm
Sunday, April 15 | 12 – 4pm
Have fun in The Garden and meet wonderful, like-minded people. Garden Docents help our plants and programs grow! There are many ways to be involved. Register with Pam Meisner, Director of Operations and Programs, pam@thegarden.org or 619-660-0614 x13.
**Free**

**14 Roses for the Southern California Landscape**
Saturday, April 14 | 10am – 11:30am
Rose connoisseur, Sherri Snider of Kniffing's Nursery, shares her favorite heat-resistant roses for a water-wise garden. Rose Plant Sale open to all following class. Attendees, you get first pick! Partial proceeds go to The Garden.
**Members $5, Non-Members $12**

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**ONGOING PROGRAMS**

**FREE First Saturday Tours**
Docent-led Garden Tour at 10am

**FREE Special Access Tour**
Advanced reservation required, call 619-660-0614 x16

**Professional Landscape Design Consultations**
Call 619-660-0614 x10 for appointment availability, designer information and reservations. Members $60, Non-members $75

Ms. Smarty Plants

**School Tours and Assembly Program**
To book an educational program for your class, visit www.mssmartyplants.org

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*Photo by Sally Long*
Irrigation 101
Saturday, May 5 | 10am – 12pm
Landscape Designer, Jan Tubiolo, discusses how to manage the water you give your plants, through the proper setup and maintenance of your irrigation system, and appropriate timing for your sprinklers. Class made possible by the San Diego County Watershed Protection Program.
Free

FREE Backyard Composting Workshop
Saturday, May 12 | 10am – 12pm
Learn the basics of backyard composting and composting with worms. Expert Educators teach all you need to know to get started with a bin that fits your lifestyle. Class made possible by the County of San Diego, presented by Solana Center for Environmental Innovation. Register at www.solanacenter.org/thegarden.
Free

Dance & Exercise NewVo Fitness
Saturday, May 12 | 11am – 12pm
Perfect for Mother’s Day Weekend! Bring mom, sister, or a good friend, to this fun class for all fitness and dance levels, with no experience needed. NewVo Instructor, Keilani Love, takes you on an exercise journey of the world’s dance styles. Wear close-toed, light-weight footwear, and bring a hip scarf or sarong if you have one. Class is in the Outdoor Amphitheater and geared towards adults.
Members Free, Non-Members $10

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Free

Butterfly Release
Friday, May 18 | 9 – 10am
Experience butterflies up close! Release a butterfly and guide it to nectar on flowering pavilion plants. Learn about local butterfly species inhabiting the Dorcas E. Utter Butterfly Pavilion. Space is limited, so the butterflies can spread their wings! All ages welcome if accompanied by an adult.
Members $10, Non-Members $15

The Buzz About Native Bees
Saturday, May 19 | 10am – 12pm
Help save native bees by giving them a home in your garden. Air bee-n-bee! Candace Vanderhoff, Founder of SoloBee, shares the magic of these beautiful, non-stinging, and prolific pollinators. SoloBee shelters available for purchase in The Garden Shoppe.
Members $5, Non-Members $12

FREE Unlocking the Power of Grey Water
Wednesday, May 23 | 5:30 – 7pm
Join Scott Isaksen, of Nexus eWater, in his fascinating talk on the benefits, installation process, and newest innovations in grey water reuse. Class is geared towards those with technical skills, i.e. contractors, plumbers, landscape architects. Class made possible by Integrated Regional Water Management.
Free

UPCOMING EVENTS
Tomatomania
March 10-11, 9am – 4pm
Expert Forum
March 18, 2 – 4pm
Water-Wise Home Garden Tour
March 24, 9am -3pm
Spring Garden and Butterfly Festival
April 28, 9am – 3pm
Members-Only Butterfly Pavilion Preview
April 21, 9 – 11am
Water Agency Customer Appreciation Day
May 19, 9am -1pm

Visit www.theGarden.org for more information about these programs.
Ms. Smarty-Plants™

Play is often talked about as if it were a relief from serious learning. But for children, play is serious learning.

— Mr. Rogers

When Pam Meisner graduated from Penn State University, she took an internship with Mr. Rogers. This experience shaped her style as an educator who puts love, passion and fun first, teaching children in the way they learn best. The Water Conservation Garden thanks Pam for many ‘beautiful days in the neighborhood’...

TEN YEARS to be exact!

Making Conservation Count...

2008
The Ms. Smarty-Plants™ Program began at The Garden

1,200
Number of Earth Heroes educated in first year

86,019
Number of Earth Heroes educated in 2017

10
Signature Ms. Smarty-Plants™ hats in her collection

3
Sisters in the Ms. Smarty-Plants™ family

For more information about Ms. Smarty Plants™ or to donate to The Garden’s education programs, visit theGarden.org/learn/ms-smarty-plants.
ON A SPRING DAY IN THE GARDEN, the Horticulture and Facilities Manager, Mannah Gbeh, spotted a wild bee swarm inside a birdhouse. As an experienced beekeeper, Mannah would normally leave the bees alone, as they are unlikely to sting unless disturbed. As a veteran farmer and a father to two young boys and a new baby girl, Mannah knows firsthand how curious children can be in a garden. Plans were made for The Garden hive to join four thriving hives at Bee Valley Farms, Mannah’s garlic and honey homestead in Jamul.

Before moving the bees, the hive was inspected to ensure they were not Africanized honey bees, which are less predictable and more defensive. Once Mannah determined the hive was friendly and healthy, he began the relocation process. Working at night so as not to risk losing any of the foragers, Mannah suited up in the traditional bee suit, gathered his tools and lit his smoker. The smoke calms bees when beekeepers need close access to their hives. After lulling the bees, The Garden’s birdhouse was placed into a hive box, and then left alone to settle for twenty four hours to ease their journey. While re-locating the bees, Mannah gathered a small batch of delicious honey comb and shared it with all who would try it at The Garden! Now that these bees have found a new home in Jamul, Mannah’s family will bee enjoying the true rewards of the bees’ hard work (aka. Honey!) next year.

Article written by Hannah Gbeh, Mannah’s wife, mother to their three beautiful children, and long-time Garden fan.

SPRING RECIPE

Honey & Feta

Looks can be deceiving. This dish may be a little messy, but such a tasty vehicle for our favorite bee by-product. Use pita bread, or even better, grab a cracker that has character. Have a simple picnic with yourself and listen to the spring bees buzzing.

- 1 T honey
- 1 - 6 oz piece of Greek Feta
- 2 T olive oil
- Freshly ground black pepper
- Your best crackers and/or triangles of toasted Greek pita bread

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Place feta in a small casserole a little larger than the cheese and cover with the oil. Bake about 8 minutes or until the cheese is soft to the touch.

Preheat broiler. Heat honey in a small pan until melted and brush over the top of the cheese. Place under the broiler until the top of the cheese is brown and has begun to bubble. Season with freshly ground black pepper. Serve immediately with crackers and/or pita.

Recipe credit: Eye Of The Day Garden Design Center

Sweet Endings
Welcome New Board Member Leah McIvor!

WE ARE THRILLED for our Board of Directors to grow with the addition of its newest Board Member. Leah McIvor brings with her a wealth of experience serving her community in multiple ways: with service on the volunteer boards of canine rescue groups in the National Capital Region, as campaign manager for the Grossmont-Cuyamaca District’s successful Proposition V ballot measure in 2012, and as a member of the East County Chamber of Commerce’s Board of Directors since 2010, serving a term as Board Chair and this year’s Chair Emeritus. Leah’s professional life is centered on her work as a residential agent and relocation specialist with Coldwell Banker, affiliated with the Mt Helix office.

Join us in welcoming Leah to The Water Conservation Garden!

BECOME A GARDEN MEMBER FOR GREAT BENEFITS!

Membership at The Garden comes with a host of benefits including free classes, free admission to national and international botanical gardens and discounts in The Garden’s Water Drop Garden Shoppe and at partner nurseries and garden shops. To become a member, call 619-660-0614 x 17 or visit www.theGarden.org/member.

garden partner Spotlight

Hunter’s Nursery in Lemon Grove is the oldest continuously family-owned and operated nursery in San Diego since 1919.

Patriarch Howard Hunter, working part-time in a lemon-packing house, decided to open a citrus orchard and nursery in Lemon Grove. Today the enterprise still carries his moniker and is operated by his descendants. Having retired in 1950, the business was turned over to Howard’s son Laurence and then to his son, Guy. His daughter, Kindahl, wants to continue running the business when he retires. In addition, Betty Hunter, the heart and soul of the business for over 70 years, has been involved in all aspects of the business, now 101 years young.

The nursery is 3.5 acres and is a haven for water-wise drought tolerant plants, including an assortment of plants from Australia and New Zealand. Understanding that more people want to grow their own food, they have also continued to expand the edibles in the nursery. If you are a rose lover, Hunter’s has over 150 varieties.

If you have a question about a particular plant, it’s water, sun and soil requirements, look for Gustavo Flores, the man with the answers for the past 39 years at the nursery.

The next time you need a butterfly bush, citrus tree, crape myrtle, veggie or any plant, think of our friends at Hunter’s Nursery. Remember to show your membership card for your 10% discount!!!!
Affiliate & Corporate Partners

The Water Conservation Garden would like to thank our Corporate Partners and Non-Profit Affiliates. The Garden appreciates all that these organizations do to keep The Garden a beautiful place!

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City of San Diego
County of San Diego

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SOLAR

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www.theGarden.org

Current members can find their membership expiration date above their name in the address listed above.