

OVF NEWS



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Melody Girard, Editor



Children's Garden Coordinator Judith Morris welcomes P.S. 1 kindergardeners to OVF for a tour and educational activities. To arrange a tour for your child's class, please have the teacher contact Melody Girard, Education Chair educationchair@ocean-viewfarms.net or leave a note in the education chair's mailbox in the wheelbarrow shed.

OVF Notebook

February 27, 2010

Grubbing on a Winter's Day

I love this time of year at OVF. Wild winds, black clouds, sparkling grasses, no people, wet dirt. Everything leaping forth. I had to get some air so I drove to the garden in a driving rain and waited it out listening to Mozart's 39th as the drops drummed down on my convertible top. A very relaxing way to spend 20 minutes.

The clouds broke and Gholam Fatemi, who had been sitting in his car as well, crawled out and began making his way slowly across the parking lot. I bearded him about stories I'd heard that he'd "trained" a hawk to eat those fat, white Mexican fig beetle grubs that mutate into the shimmering green, flying dumbos that so bedevil us in June. He took me to a tall skinny perch near his plot. Underneath it, a red plastic dish was nailed to a post. Taped to the dish was a typed story of our OVF kestrel, and its proclivity for beetle grubs.

Fatemi digs them up when he's overturning his soil and puts them into a container with dirt to save them for later. Then, when the kestrel is in residence, he places the wrigglers into the feeding dish and the hawk zooms down and gorges itself. Once sated, it bursts upwards and performs aerial loop-de-loops like a crop duster at a state fair.

"He snaps the heads off and takes them to that thicket of overgrown beans to save them to eat later," Fatemi told me. "But when I don't have any more he gets mad. I can't keep digging up my vegetables to supply him dinner!"

Relief is at hand. Other gardeners are now bringing their grubs to the feeding station. The kestrel fast food stand is the brainchild of Maurice Vickers, who has also posted a hand-drilled board on the hawk's post encouraging native bees to settle down and snuggle into a new hive.

All hail OVF wildlife! Migrating monarchs and swallowtail butterflies. Bees, hawks, squirrels, sparrows and the occasional, off-loaded pet rabbit or chicken, and any sly urban critters who snuck in under the fence. Gophers and moles... well, that's another story. For grub donations and gopher terminations, please check in with Fatemi, Ph 2, F39-41.

— Susan Dworski, guest editor

Look inside for... **Special Tomato-bration Supplement**



What's in this issue...

- Preventing Garden Injuries
- Tomato Tips and Tricks
- The Lowdown on Lock Up
- News and Special Events

Garden Master's Report

Events & News

IF IT LOOKS LIKE AN ABANDONED PLOT...

...it may or may not be. Do not enter any plot, or take any plants, produce, property or cuttings from a plot that may “look” abandoned. Do not plant seeds or plants in a plot other than your own, regardless of its appearance. This is a serious offense and could result in membership termination. Only the Phase Reps can determine if a plot is abandoned, and only they are authorized to remove personal property from it.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Ocean View Farms welcomes all new members to our garden community. We hope that you will enjoy gardening with us. I encourage new members to take a tour of the garden and note the various plants and growing methods. If you would like to know more about what you see, leave a note in the plot holder's mailbox to arrange a meeting to discuss plants or techniques. There is a vast wealth of knowledge at OVF that can be learned from the experienced gardeners.

TO IDENTIFY PLOT LOCATIONS, USE ROW LETTERS, TOO!

All too often, members omit the row letter when they write their plot numbers on repair requests and sign-in sheets. You must write down the phase, row letter and plot number. For example, L Ph. 2, B-22 can easily be located. Think of the letter on each row as a street name and the plot number as the house number. Keep in mind that there many other plots with the same number in your phase and the only way to tell them apart is with the letter assigned to the row the plot is located in.

MEET THE NEW PLUMBER

I also want to welcome Maurice Haber to the plumbing crew. I am sure you will see him carrying the plumber's repair bag around the garden from time to time. Maurice gardens at PH2U plot F36. Please fill out the work order repair forms properly so the plumbers can find the problem site. Put your name and the location of the problem.

BRING US YOUR SURPLUS PIPES

The supply of salvage pipe that we use to rebuild walls is dwindling. If you have any pipe that you can spare, please leave it in the area under the lumber cage. We have a pipe cutter, so even long pipes can be used.

KUDOS TO THE NATIVE GARDEN CREATORS

Judith Morris and Maurice Vickers have been working and supervising the construction of the Native Garden along the north side of the driveway. They have spent many hours on this project and we owe them many thanks for all their hard work. Thank you both.

SATURDAY, APRIL 17, 10 am -12 pm / OVF WORKSHOP Biointensive Gardening: How to Get Maximum Results with Minimum Resources

Discover how biointensive gardening methods can help your reap more vegetables with less water, land, labor and money. Open to the public, this event will cover French Intensive, Biodynamic, Grow-Biointensive and Square Foot Gardening approaches. Founder of Gardenerd.com, speaker Christy Wilhelmi has 16 years of experience in studying and applying bio-intensive methods. As Lower Phase 4 Rep, she has served on the OVF board for 12 years.

SATURDAY, JUNE 5, 9:30 am - 11:00 am / OVF SEMINAR Smart Gardening Compost Seminar - Open to the Public

Smart Gardening will give an in-depth seminar on composting with green and brown waste and with worms. Bins for both kinds of composting will be for sale at prices below cost. Cash only.

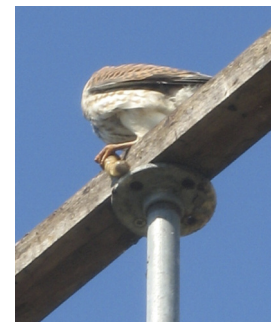
SUNDAY, JULY 25, 2:00 pm - 4:30 pm / OVF EVENT Third Annual Taste of Summer Tomato Tasting

Bring your tastiest whole tomatoes grown at OVF only. You can taste about 50 different tomato varieties and have a chance to win a prize.

Living Mulch: An unusual Tomato planting tip

I planted my tomato bed with a mix of leafy greens, such as rabe, chard, puntarelle, spinach in March. I let it go strong, then planted 12 tomato plants in total (4 each of 3 varieties) right into the bed without turning it, only removing plants to make a hole for tomatoes. Frequently, I take cuttings of the greens and let them grow back. As the tomatoes grew so did the greens, choking out weeds. As I cut the greens to eat they allowed sun back to the tomato; the tomato grew and in turn shaded the greens. This system also helps keep water from splashing soil-borne diseases.

One of our OVF hawks on his/her perch hungrily awaiting the next meal. The reward: a fat, tasty Mexican fig beetle grub in claw.



Photos: Dean Cleaverdon

HELPING BIRDS OF PREY COME HOME TO ROOST

Many years ago, OVF installed hawk perches in strategic locations throughout the garden to encourage them to catch gophers. You may occasionally see a bird sitting on one of these very tall “perches” while devouring a gopher. Both the very large red tail hawk and and kestrels visit OVF.

— Ed Mosman, Garden Master

Preventing Garden Injuries

by Dr. Eileen Hearn

Ah, spring arrives, and our thoughts turn to...gardening!

Whether your plot rested or hosted a booming winter garden, a lot of prep work awaits you. Sudden bouts of weeding, planting, and working compost into the soil can be a recipe for pain that short-circuits spring plans. With a few simple guidelines, you can maximize garden pleasure and minimize side-effects.

DO

✦ **PLAN AND PARCEL** You know the euphoric flush when that first burst of weeding is done, and you look around and say, “Hey, I can finish all this today!” Well, IGNORE IT. Go have lunch or catch a movie instead. Very soon that adrenalin rush will fade and sore muscle fatigue sets in. Had you kept going, chances of a garden injury are high—and that could keep you out of the garden for weeks.

✦ **BE REALISTIC** Weeding a 15' x 15' plot is at least four days' work. Not four entire days—four realistic days. Break up intensive work like weeding into one or two hour chunks, pausing every ten minutes for light restorative motions (see below). Remember you will empty a wheelbarrow, sort rocks and devil weed roots from the soil, and other “incidentals” as part of weeding—so allow enough time.

✦ **USE THE LIGHTEST, SMALLEST, SMARTEST TOOL POSSIBLE** Choose wisely. A smaller spade, a longer claw tool. They prevent over-lifting and over-reaching, which are common causes of aches and pains.

✦ **BEND YOUR KNEES, NOT YOUR BACK** Leg muscles are much stronger than back muscles! Bending at the knee also keeps the low back from flattening out, sparing discs and vertebral joints during shoveling, raking and weeding.

✦ **KEEP ARMS CLOSE, ELBOWS CLOSER TO THE BODY** This increases leverage and protects the arms, shoulders and neck.

✦ **KNEEL** Especially on one knee. Kneeling allows more freedom of movement while protecting the low back during planting and other low work.

✦ **HYDRATE** Yes we're surrounded by hoses, but if you're not thrilled at the idea of drinking from one, bring your own water—six ounces for every hour in the garden.

✦ **ICE PACKS** You've seen professional athletes apply ice packs to sore spots. It's common practice for active people to ease aches and pains with ice.

DON'T

✗ **TAKE HUGE SHOVELFULS** It doesn't even save time.

✗ **OVERLOAD THE WHEELBARROW** It can strain your arms, neck, shoulders, or back.

✗ **BEND TOO FAR,** reach too far, or twist too far.



RESTORATIVE MOTIONS

Every ten minutes, pause and do one of the movements below. It's energizing! Be sure to breathe deeply as you...

✦ Raise arms overhead, clasp together, and gently lean a few inches to each side.

✦ Knees gently bent, let your arms swing side to side, with a slight turn at the waist.

✦ Clasp hands behind your back; slowly and gently raise them up.

✦ Bring your right arm straight across your chest, and use your left hand to press the right elbow toward your chest. Hold 20-30 seconds. Now do the other side.

✦ Stand tall, bend left knee and bring heel towards buttock. Keeping the knee behind the body, grasp your left ankle and hold it close to buttock for 20 to 30 seconds. Now do the right.

✦ Stand tall, place one foot on a bench or low wall. If your balance is good, clasp hands behind back. Gently bend the knee of your standing leg, without bending forward.

Disclaimer This article is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, treatment, or medical exam, nor does it replace the need for services provided by a medical professional.



OVF Members attend CLCA Industry Show

Once again, the California Landscape Contractors' Association Landscape 2010 Industry Show lured OVF's Garden Master Ed Mosman and OVF colleagues to the L.A. Convention Center on February 3-4. Large, high-powered mulching and cutting equipment was the big draw for Warren Miyashiro, Bob Gallion, Ed Mosman, Richard Nortman and Jack Schoenwetter. "We powered some up, but didn't buy any—at this time," said Ed Mosman.

The Lowdown on Lock Up at OVF

by Orna Walters, Gate Closing Monitor

Locking up the garden is one of the most important jobs at OVF. As the Gate Closing Monitor, I would like to spell out a few tips for gardeners who tend to stay late in the garden, and for those who are locking up the garden to obtain community work hours. It all comes down to expectations and communication.

It is the job of the Gate Closer to walk the property and inform all members who are present that it's closing time. The Gate Closer must stay until everyone has left the garden. That is the incontestable rule of the job.

If you are in the garden at closing time, please immediately finish up your gardening, put away any wheelbarrows or tools you may have from the shed and leave as quickly as possible.

It is not OK for gardeners to stay in the garden after sunset. Please do not ask for more time in the garden. Arguing with the Gate Closer could result in loss of membership, so please respect the gate closer's job.

For their part, Gate Closers should not have the expectation of showing up at sunset to an empty garden and simply locking up. Gardeners are allowed to work in their plots until the Gate Closer notifies them. If you are closing, please respect those who may be working on their plots until you inform them that you are locking up.

Communication is important. If the Gate Closer has just begun walking through the garden to lock up, he or she might say, "I'm closing up in 10 minutes, please finish up your gardening."

Locking up the garden keeps us safe from vandals and protects our property. Let's all work together to communicate politely and have mutual respect for one another.

Know Your Rules & Regs

How Much Fruit Can You Take From The Orchard?

by Frank Harris, President, Ocean View Farms Community Gardens

"Orchard Fruit: From the orchard at the center of the garden (below the meeting area) a gardener may take as much fruit as fits into his/her two cupped hands per day (about four peaches for example.)" Excerpted from page 4, Ocean View Farms Rules and Regulations, 2009. www.oceanviewfarms.net/docs/OVFRulesandRegs.pdf

Orchard fruit is for the entire OVF community. Carrying away orchard fruit in bag, bucket, or otherwise taking more than you can carry in two cupped hands, is picking more than your share; it can result in termination of membership. Pick only fully ripe fruit that comes off the tree easily with a light twist or gentle pull. Tugging forcefully can damage the tree, making it susceptible to diseases.

WORKDAY SCHEDULE

Second quarter - 2010

APRIL

10 Sat 9-12 Work
12 Potluck
1 General Mtg.

25 Sun 1-4 Work

MAY

8 Sat 9-12 Work
15 Sat 9:30 Board Mtg.
30 Sun 1-4 Work

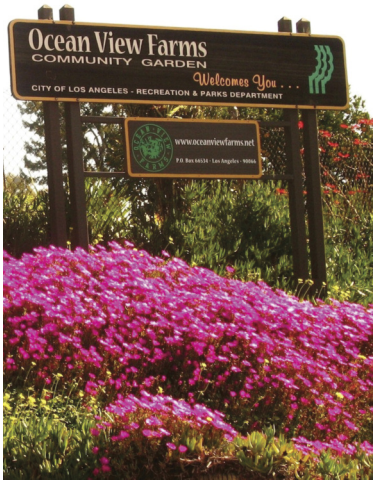
JUNE

12 Sat 9-12 Work
12 Potluck
1 General Mtg.

27 Sun 1-4 Work

Visit our Web site
for the complete calendar
[www/oceanviewfarms.com](http://www.oceanviewfarms.com)

*Longevity
Contemplate in the morning.
Pull weeds in the afternoon.
The joys and labor
of a single day
Are part of a whole journey.*





Hungry for Garden Knowledge and Heirloom Tomatoes, People Flock to OVF's 6th Annual Tomato-bration

*"Only two things that money can't buy
that's true love and home-grown tomatoes"*

"Homegrown tomatoes," lyrics by Guy Clark.

Gardeners listen attentively to guest speaker, Barbara Spencer, during her fascinating lecture on tomato culture.

On March 21, Ocean View Farms' 6th Annual Tomato-bration was one of the earliest sales of the season. More than 100 people attended the seminar, including the general public, who learned about the event for the first time through local newspapers and Internet calendars. Although there was high attendance compared with OVF's usual events, parking was sufficient and most people found seats. Thanks to OVF volunteers' guiding presence and diligent sign-making no one got lost in the garden, or mistook the tool room for the outhouse (at least not yet).

Speaker Barbara Spencer's knowledge, humor and reassuring presence demystified the growing process. Barbara and her husband Bill own Windrose Farm in Paso



The group begins choosing under the sunshade, while Erik Magnus takes his time pondering the hundreds of varieties Barbara brought.



Robles, which supplies gourmet produce to premier chefs—and the tomatoes sold every year at OVF's Tomato-bration.

After the seminar, people milled around the rustic pool tables and buffet counter to scoop up heirloom tomato seedlings, which sold for \$3 each—about 25 percent less than at other sales.

Long lines snaked around the meeting area as people queued up to purchase armloads of tomato plants and seek advice from Barbara. In a little more than two hours, about 800 tomatoes were sold—and about eight plants left to load on the truck for the trip home.

"Great day! Great people," Barbara Spencer summed up.

Yes it was.

Now let's go out there and get those tomatoes growing.

10 MOST-ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT GROWING TOMATOES

Windrose Farm's Barbara Spencer kindly emailed us the answers to key questions that were asked on March 21.

1. How often should you fertilize tomatoes? Dry fertilizers, every 3 weeks for plants in the ground, and every two weeks for potted plants.

2. What chief ingredients do you use to fertilize your tomatoes? Fish meal, kelp meal, azomite, and greensand and humate.

3. a) What are some good premixed organic fertilizers and amendments? b) Where can you buy them?

a) Dr. Earth, especially high phosphorus mixes such as Organic 5™ Tomato, Vegetable & Herb Fertilizer 5-7-3. Also, Garden and Bloom Organic Compost is a good buy at about \$8 per 3 cubic feet. Seaweed/fish emulsion combinations are also good.

b) Anawalt, Armstrong, and your local independent nursery.

4. When should we foliar feed our plants, what products should we use, and how often should we foliar feed? Early morning or late afternoon, many times a season. Use a 50/50 fish to liquid seaweed solution as the base, then fine tune as needed. Add more kelp for disease control and blossom push. Increase proportions of fish to boost foliage and stem growth.

5. How should we support plants? GOOD Cages. Texas tomato cages are expensive but worth it as they fold up. When doing more than a few, staking/trellising can be good; it is what most farmers do.

6. What staking method do you recommend and how do you do it? Weave and tie, spacing every two plants, tie at 1 foot, then every two feet up. You will need good heavy staking at ends to support the plants as their weight increases.

7. What do you suggest to prevent disease, including late blight, in heirloom tomatoes? Feed well, space a bit farther apart. Good clean up of plants and foliar feeding throughout the season will slow the disease progress. Worm castings can help, too.

8. When should tomatoes plants be pruned and how? When plant goes in if tall, or in the first few weeks. In hot areas just thin in the beginning. In coastal areas, pruning can be done through out the season

9. How well do those hanging tomato bags work? Not well at all. Tomato vines eventually turn upwards, and shortly thereafter break off. Water and soil flow from the bag's topsy turvy bottom onto the ground below.

10. Can you share a recipe for treating Powdery Mildew?



Try Baking Soda for Powdery Mildew

Being alert to conditions conducive to disease development is the first line of defense in controlling Powdery Mildew, or PM.

Moderate temperatures (60° to 80°F), shade and high relative humidity encourage the disease at any time. PM fungi ride the wind to new host plants, and infection can develop in the absence of free water. Many experts insist that bicarbonate solutions work best if applied before symptoms appear.

Burkhard Nurseries' online tip page provides a typical baking soda recipe for gardeners to spray on roses and other "afflicted plants." Mix the following ingredients diluted in one gallon of water:

1 - 1/2 tablespoon of baking soda

1 - 1/2 tablespoon of canola oil

1 - tablespoon of vinegar

1 - tablespoon mild dishwashing detergent without ammonia

Mary Louise Flint, Director of UC Integrated Pest Management Education at UC Davis, shares a simpler recipe on the Santa Clara County UCD IPM Web page (www.mastergardeners.org/publications/powderyMildew.html): Mix 2-1/2 tablespoons of horticultural oil and 4 teaspoons baking soda in a gallon of water.

Studies at Cornell University found that either sodium or potassium bicarbonate solutions in water with horticultural oil can be an effective against some species of fungi that attack some plants, if used in the correct amount and if the disease has not progressed too far. Researchers found potassium bicarbonate was more effective than sodium in many cases. Studies using bicarbonates as fungicide have varying results, perhaps because many different species of fungi cause PM, and each has its favorite plant species. Before treating a plant, check the guidelines for the targeted plant at:

http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn74_06.html.

One result was consistent: none of the bicarbonate treatments worked without adding horticultural oil into the mix.