



# Garden Notes

"Creating edible and ornamental gardens"

[www.claremontgardenclub.org](http://www.claremontgardenclub.org)

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## Welcome to the SC Garden Club newsletter!

 Please send us questions about gardening



### Camellias

Now is a good time to buy camellias for those shady spots in your garden. You can see lots of varieties at local shows:

Huntington Library and Gardens (Feb 10/11), Descanso Gardens (February 17/18, and February 24/25).

### Favorite Quote (courtesy of Sharron Neyer)

*"When you have only two pennies left in the world, buy a loaf of bread with one, and a lily with the other."* Chinese Proverb

### Garden Art and Decoration



The Board is putting together a presentation for next year on this topic and we'd love to include ideas from members' gardens! If you have any beautiful or fun items in your garden that might interest or inspire other gardeners, please send us a photo.

### Garden Design Magazine

This [magazine](#) has given us some copies to use as door prizes at our next couple of meetings, and if any

Garden Club members decide to subscribe, they will donate part of the cost to the club. It's not inexpensive, but you might want to take a look at a copy at the next meeting to see if it is of interest to you.

### Ornamental of the Month

*Hibiscus rosa-sinensis*



Hibiscus flowers are large and may be red, pink, white, yellow, or orange. Evergreen, but frost-tender, with large, thin leaves. Can grow to 15 ft tall by 10 ft wide, but easy to keep smaller, and does well in pots. Sun with some afternoon shade when hot. Low water in winter, more when in bloom. Appreciates some fertilizer when in bloom.

### Edible of the Month

*Amaranthus spp*



Edible amaranth is one of the more unusual annual food plants you can grow, and it looks good in flower beds too. Use leaves in salads or cooked like spinach, and the flowers are stunning. The plants tolerate heat well and do best with moderate water. Many varieties.

<https://www.rareseeds.com/store/vegetables/amaranth/>

<http://www.tropicalpermaculture.com/amaranth-plant.html>



## Volunteers—the botanic kind

“Volunteers” appear in our gardens without being deliberately planted, from seed released by plants we did intentionally introduce, blown in by the wind, spread in compost, buried by squirrels, or dropped by one or the other ends of birds.

On the plus side, these are free plants and ones that are likely to do well in your garden conditions; they might not be ones you had considered planting and they can create

interesting combinations in your garden beds that you may not have thought of. They also provide you with gifts for friends! The crape myrtle pictured at left appeared in my garden 25 years ago and now provides lovely pink flowers, good autumn color, and interesting bark so I’m happy to have it. I also have several mature Japanese maples, the offspring of a neighbor’s tree. I must admit to being a fan of serendipity in the garden, so I generally wait until I know what something is before I pull it up.

What about the downsides? I’m happy with the Lunaria, cosmos, and evening primroses that pop up every spring, but am going to have to be brutal to the sweet alyssum seedlings I just noticed as they are threatening to create a carpet that will compete with other plants. If you grew hybrids and want more of the same, then don’t let them seed. Hybrids exhibit traits different from their true-breeding parents, but their offspring will exhibit a mix of traits, so if you want all the new ones to look like the originals you planted, you’ll need to buy new hybrids. On the other hand, if you’re OK with variety, let them go to seed and see what you get.

If you want to discourage volunteers, be diligent about removing flowers before they go to seed, keep a thick layer of mulch around plants to make it more likely that seeds won’t reach the soil, and remove any volunteers that do show up early on to prevent them from ever reaching the seeding stage. But consider the fun of surprises before you pull them all up!

### Upcoming events and more

**Feb 5: Sustainability Dialog talk, 7pm - “Tips on Pruning Fruit Trees”**

**Feb 11: Wild Mushroom Fair, LA Arboretum, 11am to 4pm**

**Feb 14: Garden Club** – 6:30-8:30 pm, talk at 7pm, Napier Center, 660 Avery Rd, Claremont. **“February Gardening Tips and Tasks”**

**Mar 23/24: Flower Show**—details at [www.claremontgardenclub.org](http://www.claremontgardenclub.org)

**Apr 15: Garden Tour**- details at [www.claremontgardenclub.org](http://www.claremontgardenclub.org)

**Smart Gardening Workshops:** 9:30-11 am, free. For dates and locations, see [http://dpw.lacounty.gov/epd/sg/wk\\_scheds.cfm](http://dpw.lacounty.gov/epd/sg/wk_scheds.cfm)

**Chino Basin Water District:** classes on waterwise landscaping, irrigation; mulch giveaways: <http://www.cbwcd.org/150/Workshop-Descriptions>

**Armstrong classes:** <http://www.armstronggarden.com/pages/classes>

**Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden:** [www.rsabg.org/upcoming-events](http://www.rsabg.org/upcoming-events)

**Huntington Library:** Free talks, plant sales [www.huntington.org/](http://www.huntington.org/)

## Did you know?

**Botanical Latin:** “Rosa-sinensis” means “rose of China”; “amaranthus” means “unfading”, referring to the flowers.

**Plant miscellanea:** Lobes or leaflets? Lobed leaves are simple ones in which the edges are more or less deeply scalloped/pointed without reaching the midrib, as in deciduous oaks or maples. Leaflets occur in compound leaves and branch off from the midrib, as in jacarandas or chestnuts.

## Things to do in February

### General

- ✓ **Instant ‘compost’:** Puree vegetable and fruit scraps with unsoftened water, pour into hole in ground, cover with soil. Or just bury chopped up scraps directly—they will eventually decompose
- ✓ Start vegetable and flower seeds in trays or pots to transplant later

### Pest/disease management

- ✓ Wash both sides of citrus leaves with spray of water to reduce pests
- ✓ Remove citrus branches that touch the ground and apply Tanglefoot to fabric wrapped around the trunk to foil ants which ‘farm’ aphids, scale

### Edibles

- ✓ Fertilize avocados; mulch heavily and don’t dig or plant under them; water regularly but avoid constant wetness
- ✓ Wait til March to fertilize citrus
- ✓ Fertilize, water deciduous fruit trees

### Ornamentals

- ✓ Buy deciduous magnolias in bloom
- ✓ Buy clivia in bloom
- ✓ Fertilize roses, then water
- ✓ Cut back fuschias and cane begonias
- ✓ Cut back woody shrubs like Mexican sage when new growth is 6" tall
- ✓ When perennials start into growth, it is usually safe to divide them

**Please send photos and info about plants you’ve grown, gardens to visit, gardening lore, questions.** Sue Schenk, editor

The Metropolitan Water District is not currently offering rebates for turf removal. <http://socalwatersmart.com/index.php/>

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