



# Garden Notes

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March 2018

## Welcome to the SC Garden Club newsletter!

 Please send us questions or ideas for the newsletter

### Flower Show and Garden Tour

Our Second Annual Flower Show will take place March 23 and 24. It's free, open to everyone, and all you need to know about entering or visiting can be found on our [website](#). Tickets are now [available online](#) for the April 15 Garden Tour.



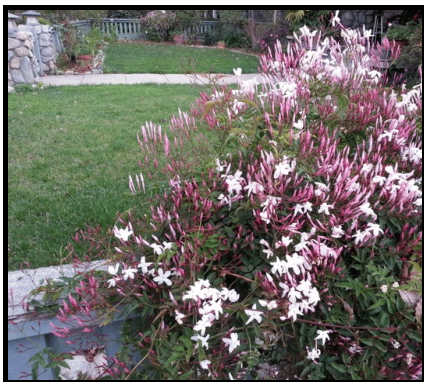
#### *Iresine herbstii*

Commonly called "bloodleaf", this native of Brazil can be grown indoors or out. It adds a lot of zing to garden beds or patio pots but I had never seen it in bloom til last month at the LA Arboretum. Sun/part shade, medium water, 2-3ft tall and wide, half-hardy sub-shrub; cut back if it gets leggy.

**New Board member:** We are delighted to welcome Kathy Mason of La Verne to the Board! (And we are still looking for more members, so let us know if you are interested.)

#### *Jasminum polyanthum*: Gardener beware!

This is a beautiful, fast-growing vine with heavily scented flowers, and readily available at most nurseries. However, it can easily become a garden thug. The stems can grow to 20ft long and climb up trees and smother shrubs. Any stem growing along the ground will root, and even small rooted pieces left will become new plants. I pulled mine out fifteen years ago and still find occasional invaders. If you want this in your garden, put it where you will be able to control its excessively exuberant growth, like the open, low fence pictured at left.



### Ornamental of the Month

*Hadroanthus impetiginosis*



Pink trumpet trees used to be in the genus *Tabebuia* so you are likely to still find them under this name in nurseries. They are deciduous and bloom in March and April while leafless. Palmately-compound leaves appear after the flowers which are followed by seedpods resembling long, brown broad beans. Trees can grow to 25' high and wide; medium/low water needs.

### Edible of the Month

*Eriobotrya japonica*



Loquats can grow to 30ft tall but are easy to keep much smaller. The 6-8" long, dark, evergreen leaves are pale and fuzzy underneath. Fragrant white flowers appear in winter followed by yellow, 2" fruit with large seeds. Good fresh, poached in syrup, or in preserves. Volunteer plants often not as tasty as named varieties. Low water. You can get some [recipes](#) here.

**Favorite Quote:** *Courtesy of Sharron Neyer*

***"My green thumb came only as a result of the mistakes I made while learning to see things from the plant's point of view."***

H. Fred Dale

### **How soon should you garden after it rains?**

Like all other plant parts, roots need oxygen in order to survive, so the best garden soil has lots of air spaces in it. Keeping the soil aerated is one of the benefits that adding organic material provides—as it decays, small pockets for air are created. And of course, soil critters like earthworms also help keep an open texture. When the soil is reasonably dry, walking on it generally doesn't have any bad effect, but if it is wet, then walking on it can compress the soil, eliminating the air spaces. This reduces access to the oxygen the roots need for their health and makes it physically harder for them to grow through the soil, so it's best to wait a while before walking on a wet garden. Once a soil loses its air spaces, it is a lot of work to recreate them.

How long you should wait before walking around after it rains or you've watered will depend on how good the drainage is in your garden—a few hours may be enough if you have a very sandy soil; several days may be needed if you garden on clay. Is there any way around this waiting period? Well, for digging you really need to possess yourself of patience, but you can actually do some light weeding and pruning if you can stay on your normal paths to do it. If you are really eager to get into vegetable or flower beds to do some maintenance, then you could try putting down a board (roughly 1"x 6" x 5') to walk on, which would help to distribute your weight and reduce the chance of compacting the soil. A hundred odd pounds pressing down on a foot-shaped spot can do a lot of damage. When I lived in England, where it rains quite a lot, this was a common way to minimize damage and still get some of the garden chores done.

### **Upcoming events and more**

**Mar 14: Garden Club** – 6:30-8:30 pm, talk at 7pm, Napier Center, 660 Avery Rd, Claremont. **"Growing Great Tomatoes Easily!"**

**March 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:** "Iresine" comes from the Greek word "eiresione", a reference to the woolly flowers; "herbstii" refers to Hermann Carl Gottlieb Herbst, director of the Rio de Janeiro Botanic Gardens in the mid 1800s.

**Plant miscellanea:** Palmately-compound leaves have a number of leaflets radiating from a single point, like a hand and fingers; pinnately-compound leaves have the leaflets arranged along an extended midrib like a bird's feather.

### **Things to do in March**

#### **General**

- ✓ Wait til all danger of frost is past to remove frost damaged leaves
- ✓ Fertilize plants that need it
- ✓ Root herbaceous cuttings (softwood)

#### **Pest/disease management**

- ✓ Protect bean and corn sprouts from birds with inverted berry baskets
- ✓ Place upside down flowerpots in beds check daily for slugs and snails
- ✓ If giant whitefly appears on leaf undersides of citrus, aralia, hibiscus, ginger, mulberry, knock off with strong jets of water each week

#### **Edibles**

- ✓ Plant citrus, avocados, macadamias
- ✓ Plant summer vegetables, herbs; wait on eggplant, melon, peppers
- ✓ Plant a last set of cool-season veggies

#### **Ornamentals**

- ✓ Don't plant cool-season flowers such as calendulas, pansies, primroses, stock, snapdragons
- ✓ Sow warm-season flowers such as yarrow, ageratum, celosia, coleus, hollyhock, lobelia, marigold, alyssum
- ✓ Plant tigridias, dahlias, tuberous begonias
- ✓ Prune camellias

**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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