



Garden Notes

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Welcome to the Claremont Garden Club newsletter!

🐞 Please send us questions, photos, ideas about gardening

Balboa Park in San Diego

The lily pond in front of the glasshouse and the Alcazar perennial garden.



Aloes and Agaves

Although the fleshy rosette looks similar for aloes and agaves, there are [several clear differences](#).

Except for *Agave attenuata*, agaves have a sharp point on the end of each leaf and aloes do not. (Native Americans often used these sharp tips with attached fibers from the leaves as needles for sewing.) Aloe leaves are gel-filled and agave leaves are fibrous.

More importantly, once an agave rosette is mature enough to bloom, it does so and then dies-- note the old flowering stalks and dead rosettes in the lower picture. Before it dies, each plant will produce offsets and these will eventually bloom and die after forming their own offsets.

The upper photo shows an aloe rosette which will live many years and bloom during each of them. Many aloes also form offsets, but some do not.



Ornamental of the Month

Clematis lasiantha



[Chaparral clematis](#), or pipestem clematis, is one of our local native vines. It's fairly fast growing to 15 ft, deciduous, likes sun or part shade, low water when established. It blooms in the spring and summer and the small, fragrant flowers are followed by large, fluffy, plumed seedheads. Attracts pollinators, butterfly nectar plant. Works as groundcover under oaks. (This and photo below taken at the [Bernard Field Station](#)).

Edible of the Month

Ribes aureum gracillimum



[Golden Currant](#) takes full sun or light shade and very little water once established. A local native shrub, up to 6ft tall and wide, it is semi-deciduous. Groups of small, yellow, trumpet-shaped flowers in winter followed by bright gold/orange berries. Attracts pollinators and birds. Fruit tastes like a tart grape, and makes good jam.



Mountain Mahogany ([Cercocarpus betuloides](#))

An evergreen California native chaparral shrub or small tree. Full sun, low water. The tiny, yellowish flowers produce small, dark seeds with long, feathery, curved tails as in the photo. The plant fixes nitrogen so it's good for the soil.

Favorite Quote

"Hope never dies within a true gardener's heart." author unknown



Epiphytes

The leaf bases left on this palm trunk have become home to several cacti that don't need to root in the soil. Instead, they get their moisture from the air or water that collects in the crevices, and their nutrition from organic matter that decays there. Most epiphytes don't hurt the host plant (an exception is the [strangler fig](#)). Many epiphyllums, ferns, orchids, mosses, and bromeliads are [epiphytes](#).

Upcoming events and more

Oct 9: Garden Club — 6:30-8:30 pm, talk at 7pm, Napier Center, 660 Avery Rd, Claremont. **"May I Introduce You to Some Birds of Prey?"**

Oct 19: UCR Botanic Garden [plant sale](#)

Nov 2: Fullerton Arboretum native [plant sale](#)

Smart Gardening Workshops: 9:30-11 am, free. For dates and locations, see 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

Huntington Library: Free talks, plant sales www.huntington.org/

LA Arboretum: Plant shows and sales <https://www.arboretum.org>

Did you know?

Botanical Latin: "betuloides" means "like a birch"; "gracillimum" means "slenderest"

Plant miscellanea: Plants need nitrogen to form proteins. Although the atmosphere is mostly nitrogen gas, plants can't use that. Some roots are symbiotic with bacteria that can change nitrogen ("fix" it) into a form that the plant can use. Peas, beans, clover, etc, form root nodules in which the bacteria do this. As roots decompose, these help fertilize the soil.

Things to do in October

General

- ✓ Water less often but enough to reach the extent of roots, eg 12" for beets and lettuce, 3ft for most trees
- ✓ Note that glass covers transmit more light than do plastic ones

Pest/disease management

- ✓ Watch out for snails and slugs
- ✓ Heat birdseed on sheet in 300 degree oven 5 min to stop dropped seeds from sprouting under feeder

Edibles

- ✓ Plant cole crop seedlings up to first leaves to prevent weak growth
- ✓ Try broccoli "Romanesco"
- ✓ Harvest squash and gourds when vines are dry and rinds are hard
- ✓ Feed citrus but omit nitrogen
- ✓ Plant garlic

Ornamentals

- ✓ Plant coral bells, violas
- ✓ Sow honesty, cosmos, poppies, sweet peas, calendula, coreopsis
- ✓ Divide, replant crowded perennials
- ✓ Do not compost or burn oleander trimmings as they are toxic
- ✓ Sow short annuals over beds planted with bulbs to help camouflage dying leaves later

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

The Metropolitan Water District usually offers rebates for turf removal:
<http://socalwatersmart.com/index.php/>

Facebook: Claremont Garden Club
Instagram: Claremont_Garden_Club