



Garden Notes

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September 2019

Welcome to the Claremont Garden Club newsletter!

➤ Please send us questions, photos, ideas about gardening



Our 2019 Donation

Each year the Garden Club makes a contribution to a local organization whose work is related to our goals. This year, that is [Uncommon Good](#), a Claremont-based group which farms organically and has developed a program to feed the hungry, provide community education, and supply the local community with high-quality fruits and vegetables.



Orb Weavers in the Summer Garden

Mottled pinkish-brown, with a body about 1/2" long, these late summer residents sit in the middle of a classic web (with legs drawn up to present less of a target for predators). Common orb weavers (*Neoscana oxacensis*) will rush to the edge of the web to get away if you disturb them. They could bite if you provoke them and don't let them retreat, but they are not dangerous like black widows. Most eat the web each day and spin a new one so the webs usually are pretty debris-free. These, like all spiders, help to keep down the number of insect pests and, since they are only present in the garden from late summer to fall, I usually leave them alone if at all possible and just walk around them.

Mystery fungus: Spotted in a pot of succulents. Caps somewhat pentagonal and stalks seem to come from the same place—anyone know what it is?



Ground-level Maze: Seen at the Wilbur May Arboretum in Reno. About 40 ft wide and surrounded by shrubs, flowers, and arbors.



Ornamental of the Month

Rudbeckia hirta, *R. maxima*



[Coneflowers](#) are cheerful plants and come in yellows and oranges with a dark brown center. Black-eyed Susan (*R. hirta*) does well here as a 2ft tall annual (large photo). However, large coneflower (*R. maxima*) is tougher. This 5-7 ft tall perennial has 3" flowers with a central cone up to 6" tall (inset) in June and July. All like full sun and regular water and attract bees and butterflies, as well as goldfinches if you let them go to seed.

Edible of the Month

Brassica flowers



Next year, when summer heat causes your broccoli, kale, collard greens, radishes, cabbage, kohlrabi, and other brassicas to bolt, despair not--the flowers are pretty in the garden and also in salads, and are [tasty as a garnish](#) for other dishes (just be sure they haven't been sprayed with pesticide).



Manzanita Leaf Galls

These bright red crescent-shaped growths on the leaves of this low-growing manzanita are caused by an [aphid](#). Unless there are a lot, they aren't likely to affect the health of the plant, but still, the best plan is to cut out any [galls](#) that appear as soon as you see them.

Starting to Think About Re-doing Your Front Garden?

If so, you might wonder if there are any rules you need to follow, and of course there are. Here is one of Claremont's:

"All yard areas visible from the street, except surfaces of driveways, parking spaces, and pedestrian paths, shall be covered with vegetative material, or permeable materials such as mulch, decomposed granite, similar permeable materials, incorporated into an overall landscaped design. Such materials should allow the ground to absorb rainwater, provide drainage to trees on the site, and reduce runoff. Use of native planting or compatible species of drought-tolerant plants is encouraged as much as possible to reduce water demand. Use of permeable surfaces such as gravel or bricks are also encouraged for paths and walkways to allow absorption of rainwater."

Note: *Making sure there is a lot of permeable surface will help maintain the health of the trees in your front garden if you are removing lawn. And it's important that trees don't suffer from a sudden decrease in the amount of water they get—for most, a deep watering twice a month will suffice. Our website has [more info](#) about taking care of your trees.*

Favorite Quote

"An addiction to gardening is not bad when you consider all the other choices in life."

Cora Lee Bell

Upcoming events and more

Sept 11: Garden Club — 6:30-8:30 pm, talk at 7pm, Napier Center, 660 Avery Rd, Claremont. **"A Primer on Growing Rare Fruits"**

Huntington Library, Rothenberg Hall, free—Sept 12, 2:30pm "Protea: The Magic and the Mystery"; Sept 26 7:30pm "Gardens as Ecological Theatre: An 18th Century Story"

Sept 28: Tour of Ontario [Museum garden](#); free but reservations needed (909) 395-2510

Smart Gardening Workshops: free. For dates, times, and locations, see http://dpw.lacounty.gov/epd/sg/wk_schds.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/

Did you know?

Botanical Latin: "Maxima" means "big"; "hirta" means "hairy"

Plant miscellanea: The California plants with the greatest variety of galls are oaks. [Follow this link](#) to learn more about what galls are and what causes them.

Things to do in September

General

- ✓ Peruse catalogs for seeds and bulbs
- ✓ Start fall cleanup of perennials
- ✓ Keep watering; check drought-resistant plants for stress—some may need a bit of water now
- ✓ Balance soil of acid-lovers like azaleas and blueberries

Pest/disease management

- ✓ Watch for [brown rot](#) on citrus fruit
- ✓ If whiteflies are a problem in vegetable beds, clear out the whole area and wait a couple of weeks before replanting

Edibles

- ✓ **Keep citrus evenly watered**
- ✓ Plant peas in north-south rows, interplant with lettuce
- ✓ Start planting winter vegetables
- ✓ **Continue picking Valencia oranges**

Ornamentals

- ✓ Start buying bulbs mid-month before the bins are picked over: choose the largest, fattest ones
- ✓ Buy and plant drought-resistant bulbs such as baboon flower, sparaxis, chasmanthe, oxalis, crocosmia, montbretia, watsonia
- ✓ Divide crowded iris
- ✓ Check out fall-blooming tropical trees such as koelreuteria, chorisia, and bauhinia
- ✓ Fertilize cymbidiums (10-30-10) and move to bright light

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/>

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