



Finding the Right Tree Specialist

Robin Stanley, El Dorado County Master Gardener

Master Gardeners are often asked for the name for a good arborist, especially in the fall and winter when smart home owners prepare for winter storms and next summer's fire season. Because University of California Cooperative Extension regulations prohibit Master Gardeners from recommending specific products or services, here are some general guidelines so you can find the right person/business for your job.

Each property is different, and these differences are a big factor in the kind of help you need. Often, you can prune branches overhanging roofs and chimneys without



removing the whole tree. This is particularly true for parcels with mature oaks, for which proper pruning is crucial. Be aware that there is an oak ordinance in El Dorado County that regulates the removal of large oaks, but these rules generally do not apply within the 100' defensive space clearance area mandated by state law. Regulations for removal of conifers from your property may require a permit and/or services of a Registered Professional Forester (RPF). Check with CAL FIRE at 530-644-1631 for details on these requirements.

Two national oversight groups that certify individuals and businesses dealing with landscape trees are the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA - www.isa-arbor.com) and the Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA - www.treecareindustry.org). Both groups have features

on their websites to help you find local specialists who are certified. The following definitions come from the websites of these two groups:

Arborists - According to the ISA, a Certified Arborist must have "three or more years of full-time, eligible, practical work experience in arboriculture and/or a degree in the field of arboriculture, horticulture, landscape architecture, or forestry from a regionally accredited educational institute," and have passed an ISA exam.

Tree care companies - TCIA-accredited companies are inspected and qualified based on:

- Adherence to the TCIA Code of Ethics and best business practices
- Employing formally trained, skilled personnel
- Meeting industry standards for quality performance and safety
- Providing industry-standard written estimates
- Customer satisfaction, including following a dispute resolution process
- Carrying sufficient insurance coverage
- Employing Certified Arborists

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Master Gardeners

Advice to grow by ...

Amador County

209-223-6838

Office hours: 10 am—Noon

Tuesday—Thursday

mgamador@ucdavis.edu

El Dorado County

530-621-5512

Office hours: 9 am—Noon

Tuesday—Friday

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Finding the Right Tree Specialist, *Continued from Page 1*

Some arborists may assess the property and perform the physical acts of cutting needed branches and trees, others provide advice and oversee workers doing the cutting, and some only make recommendations and leave it to the homeowner to select a tree service. Not all tree services employ an arborist, but experts recommend that you hire a tree service that does.

The Better Business Bureau, in their pamphlet entitled *How to Choose a Tree Care Company* (http://www.treecareindustry.org/PDFs/BBBtipsBrochure8_05.pdf), offers good advice on selecting the right business:

- Homeowners should verify the business carries liability and worker's comp insurance, as well as required licenses.
- Get a written estimate from more than one company.
- Require that the estimate (and contract) provide specifics about what work will be done and what cleanup work will be completed.
- Request (and check out) references. It can also be good to ask friends and neighbors for suggestions.
- Verify that the arborist who gives you the bid will actually be overseeing the job.

Here are some additional points to consider for firewise projects:

- Determine how experienced the business is with firewise tree work.
- Get a feeling for the person's knowledge by how they discuss your specific situation.
- Ask if any permits are necessary.

It's important to realize that the money you spend can allow you to maximize both the beauty of your trees and the safety of your property. Having large trees removed or pruned can seem like a daunting proposition. But honestly, many people report that once the work is completed, their property "looks like a park" and they really do have more peace of mind. Sometimes the hardest step is the first one. Hopefully, this article can help you take

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Win Free Worms, Worm Bin or Worm Compost!

Composting is a fantastic way to recycle your yard and kitchen waste into healthy, natural fertilizer. If you've been curious about composting in your yard or experimenting with a worm bin, here's your chance to get a head start with free supplies.

At the Saturday, November 12 Amador County Master Gardener class in Jackson, you will receive a raffle ticket for a drawing for exciting gardening supplies:

- Small Starter Worm Bin
- Coupon for a free pound of composting worms
- Several bags of finished worm compost



Join Amador County Master Gardeners Penny Smith and Ted Langlet as they teach several methods to make compost from yard waste and clippings, then how and when to apply it to your garden.



You don't need a large yard with a lot of green waste to compost—your fruit and vegetable waste is worm food that can produce great compost for your plants. Penny will demonstrate the step-by-step process to make a simple starter worm bin that can be used in an apartment or house. One lucky attendee will take this bin home.

No reservations required for this free class; join us at 12200-B Airport Road in Jackson. *

My Garden - November Tasks



We asked several Amador County Master Gardeners: “What are you doing in your garden during November?”

Jackie
2000' Elevation

A few days ago I gave up on my tomatoes. I cut the main stem, leaving the roots in the ground (barrels) and cut off the leaves and branches without tomatoes. I hung some in my kitchen and some on the screen porch. I had to set the really large ones on the counter as they were so heavy they would cause the stems to detach if hung. Some will ripen; the paste and cherry tomatoes are doing the best. I had a lot of splitting from the rain so some of those won't make it, but it's worth a try.



I topped off my 55 gallon drums with fresh soil and planted my winter crop. One barrel of 4 inch bok choy, one barrel of mixed lettuce, one barrel with spinach and kale, one barrel of swiss chard, one of carrots and radishes, one of beets, a small pot of bulb fennel and some red scallions.



Now I'm emptying containers on my deck and repotting. I have lots of pots so it could take a while! I bought some new variety violas and flowering kale for my window boxes off my north deck. Good to have some winter color from the living room window.

I also brought in all my houseplants that have been vacationing out on the shady deck and took some cuttings along the way to start plants for the spring plant sale. Speaking of the sale, Master Gardeners, it's time to start dividing perennials and potting for the Spring Expo.

My next effort will be to turn out my smart pots of potatoes and sweet potatoes and plant some perennials and bulbs. Then mulch it all for winter.

Robin

1. Planting some bulbs to round out my landscape
2. Digging up hardy transplants to put in other places
3. Pruning back woody plants in anticipation of SNOW--so as not to break in inconvenient places (i.e., spirea, salvias, etc.)
4. Transplanting things that didn't work where they were planted the first (or second) time....
5. Pulling out the almost-finished tomatoes...
6. Pulling out perennial weeds while it's still wet but not too mucky
7. Rotating the composter and dumping any finished material into my next-year veggie garden
8. Saving annual seeds of cosmos, hollyhock, digitalis, etc., and throwing some around bare spots for an earlier show
9. ENJOYING the great weather!



Donna

I live at 3200 feet and we usually get snow. Last year we got a lot of very heavy snow that stayed on the plants/trees/shrubs for quite a while. Last fall I didn't get around to cutting things back and many plants were damaged and some didn't survive.

Everything from lavenders to crepe myrtle shrubs were broken and damaged by the snow. My butterfly bush didn't

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survive at all. I usually would cut it back to within a foot or two from the ground but it was at least 5 feet tall and was not only "broken" but I eventually gave up on it and realized it was just plain dead. So far I'm cutting back my asters which are all over the garden as they are prolific volunteers. They have bloomed out and are setting seed so I'm just cutting them back to about a foot tall. I am going to do the same with the crepe myrtles and my roses too, because the roses were severely damaged last winter but most survived.



I also have a lot of potted plants on my deck and will move the smaller ones up near the walls of the house and under the eaves to protect them. I've had good luck with this method even during the terrible winter last year. I also advise taking hanging plants down and putting them in a warmer spot. I had two hanging plants suspended from iron Shepard's hooks screwed into the deck railings which broke last year. (I think it was the weight of the snow that piled on the pots and finally that weight and the cold temperatures stressed and broke the Shepard's hooks.)



Another thing that was destroyed last winter that had survived other winters was a small fountain in the courtyard made of terra cotta pots. The terra cotta broke in several spots and the fountain that lasted through 10+ years of winters was ruined. I managed to find similar pots and my husband rebuilt the fountain from the original plans from Sunset magazine. This year we're going to drain the fountain and protect it during the winter months. We also have one of those pre-formed ponds that's in the ground in the garden but other than unplugging the spitter when it ices over, it's come through all the cold/ice/snow all right for

many years.

That's about it for what I'm either doing or plan to do to winterize our plants and garden areas. I think that even if we never have snow like we did last year it's a good idea to keep the shrubs and plants pruned before winter so that the danger of breakage is lessened. It took many months for some of the plants to even look somewhat normal this year. Although the common wisdom is to prune either later in the winter or early spring for me pruning now may save some plants. I'll let you know if this works for me.

Judy

In October I participated in an advanced Master Gardener Compost Class and enjoyed it so much. When I saw the worms I knew I just HAD to try it. The next day I bought tote boxes and drilled the air holes. Two weeks later I made another trip to buy worms. For the first time I'll be using the castings when I plant my onions. My worms are thriving – only the best garbage for them!!!

I have my raised beds ready to plant with vetch. This, too, will be a new adventure.

I've already started to use my cold frames. Yes, even in this warm weather! My test crops are 4 varieties of lettuce. So far they're looking good.



Now that the sun is lower in the sky this time of year my garden is getting limited exposure. I have some beds that will get the required sunlight so I'm not too worried but I don't have any plans to plant much of anything but the onions.

When the time comes I'll move my 8 rose bushes that are in containers into the greenhouse. 2010 was the first time I had the containers and the roses did extremely well.

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Public Education Classes & Events for Amador and El Dorado Counties – Free!!



Most classes are from 9 am – Noon. Please call ahead to confirm locations.

Amador County

Unless otherwise noted, location for all Amador classes: GSA Building, 12200-B Airport Road, Jackson.

November

12: Composting & Worm Composting

Learn how to use your kitchen, yard and garden scraps to make compost, one of the best organic fertilizers possible. Compost piles and worm bins both produce excellent compost. Find out how to start and maintain each system. If you've already started composting and have questions, come and get answers.

Added bonus: Raffle drawings for starter worm bin, composing worms, and fresh worm compost.

January 2012

14: Erosion - Causes, Controls & Plantings

Come and learn how to control erosion and keep your precious topsoil in place. In addition we will present methods for planting on slopes.

El Dorado County

Unless otherwise noted, location for all El Dorado classes: Veterans Memorial Building, 130 Placerville Drive, Placerville.

November

5: Roses: Selection & Planting

Bare-root roses are abundant at nurseries now and the time is right for planting. Plan to attend this class presented by Master Gardener Julianne Melchor to learn the types and varieties of roses, and how to care for them.

19: Berries

Strawberries, blueberries, boysenberries and raspberries are a welcome addition to menus, and they can be grown successfully in El Dorado County. Join Master Gardener Suzanne Wisowaty to hear her presentation on berry selection, planting, care and harvesting.



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Scat and Scratches

Kathy Pearson, El Dorado Master Gardener

My husband didn't believe me when I found the first pile of scat recently....then I spotted the second one. After receiving an email from another Master Gardener showing scratches on an apple tree made by a bear, we looked around and we had them too!



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What's That Bug?

Kathy Keatley Garvey, UC ANR Communication Specialist

If you don't know what it is, don't kill it. That insect in your garden could very well be a beneficial insect.

If you operate on the "shoot-first-ask-questions later" or "the only good bug is a dead bug," there's no telling how many insects--and generations--you'll be destroying.

Butterfly expert Art Shapiro, professor of evolution and ecology at UC Davis, tells this story that's worth remembering.

"Last week I was walking across Capitol Park in Sacramento when I observed a smartly dressed young woman in her 20s stomp a praying mantis and grind it into the sidewalk. She exclaimed to her phenotypically similar friend: 'Did you ever see such an ugly, icky bug?'"

And, many years ago, Shapiro encountered a man in College Park, Davis, in the act of stomping a Tiger Swallowtail. Shapiro asked him why he was doing this. The man replied: "This is the bug that has the big green caterpillar that eats my tomato plants!" When Shapiro told him it wasn't, the man told him to check his information, and that "I'm right and you're wrong."



Praying mantis with remnants of a meal.

There is indeed a lot of misinformation and misidentification out there.



This is an immature ladybug (aka lady beetle).

Tabatha Yang of the [Bohart Museum of Entomology](#) at UC Davis relates the story about an avid gardener who absolutely loved ladybugs (aka lady beetles) because of their voracious appetites for aphids. But when our avid gardener came across "some weird black and orange bugs," she promptly killed them. Little did she know that she was killing immature ladybugs.

Then there's the story about a UC Master Gardener who encountered a "green-eyed golden bumblebee-like" insect that frightened her because it buzzed so loudly around her flower beds. So, she killed it. Turns out it was a pollinator, a [male Valley carpenter bee](#), also known as a "teddy bear."



Jerusalem cricket is often mistaken for a pest.

And, can you imagine what goes through people's minds when they meet up with a [Jerusalem cricket](#) in the mud after a rain? Whoa! Bug-o-mania!

Here's where the Bohart Museum, 1124 Academic Surge on California Drive, UC Davis campus, can help. If you live in California and see an insect and wonder if it's beneficial insect or a pest--or just want

to know what it is--take a photo of it and email it to the Bohart. Lynn Kimsey, director of the Bohart Museum (home of more than seven million specimens) and professor of entomology at UC Davis, identifies insects in between research, teaching, administering the Bohart Museum, and other duties. Her email address: lskimsey@ucdavis.edu.

In fact, if you go to the [UC Davis Department of Entomology](#) home page and scroll down to the bottom you'll see: "Do you have an insect question? [Ask It Here!](#)"

Maybe, just maybe, this will save a few praying mantids, ladybugs, Valley carpenter bees and Jerusalem crickets.



The male Valley carpenter bee is a pollinator, not a pest. Female Valley carpenter bees are black.

Your Basic Bee Book

Kathy Keatley Garvey, UC ANR Communication Specialist

Not all bees are honey bees. Not all floral visitors are bees.

That's why we're glad to see the publication of *Bee Basics: An Introduction to Our Native Bees*. It will introduce folks to such native bees as leafcutter bees, sweat bees and bumble bees.

It's co-authored by retired biologist Beatriz Moisset of Willow Grove, Pa., and entomologist Stephen Buchmann, international coordinator of the [Pollinator Partnership](#), based in San Francisco. The illustrations, based on Buchmann's photos, are by Steve Buchanan of Wingsted, Conn., known for creating the U.S. Postal Service's pollinator stamps that were issued June 29, 2007. Buchmann and Moisset describe native bees as "hidden treasures."

"From forests to farms, from cities to wildlands, there are 4000 native bee species in the United States, from the tiny *Perdita minima* to large carpenter bees," they wrote.

"The honey bee, remarkable as it is, does not know how to pollinate tomato or eggplant flowers. It does very poorly compared to native bees when pollinating many native plants, such as pumpkins, cherries, blueberries, and cranberries."

The book includes descriptions and illustrations of bees from such families as Apidae, Andrenidae, Halictidae, Megachilidae and Colletidae.

They wrote: "The members of the five most common families, Apidae, Halictidae, Andrenidae, Megachilidae and Colletidae, can be found throughout the North American continent from Canada and Alaska to warm and sunny Florida and Mexico; from forests to deserts; from remote wildernesses to gardens and backyards; even the National Mall in the heart of our nation's capital sports a native bee fauna. Perhaps the only places where bees are absent are the high mountains."

"There is even a hardy little bee, the arctic bumble bee, which lives within the Arctic Circle."

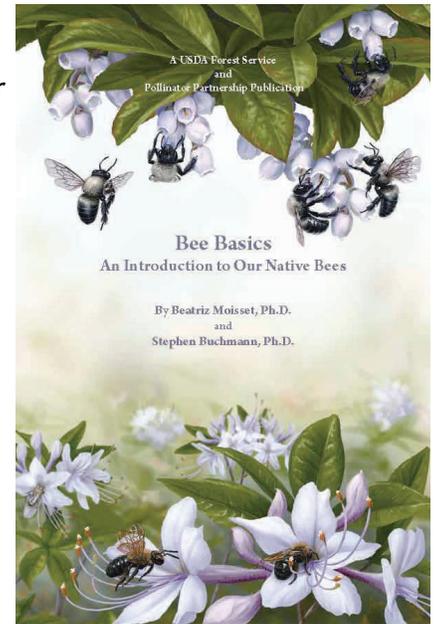
The booklet also offers tips on how to attract pollinators. A great resource!

Steve Buchmann, of Tucson, Ariz., received his doctorate in entomology from the University of California, Davis with major professor Robbin Thorp. Now an adjunct faculty member in the entomology and EEB (Ecology and Evolutionary Biology) departments at the University of Arizona, Buchmann is the author of 150 scientific publications and 12 books, including *The Forgotten Pollinators*.

Beatriz Moisset, born in Argentina and a resident of the United States for more than 40 years, obtained her doctorate in biology from the University of Cordoba, Argentina. She completed her postdoctoral work at the Jackson Laboratories, Bar Harbor, Maine studying neurochemistry and behavior. A multitasking person (she's an artist, photographer, author and public speaker), she has displayed her pastels and oil paintings at many art shows and contributes her insect photography to the online resource [BugGuide.Net](#).

"I became interested in pollinators after my retirement, combining photography and painting with field observations," Moisset said.

The book, a USDA Forest Service and Pollinator Partnership Publication, can be ordered from the [Pollinator Partnership website](#) for a small donation.



Hot off the ANR Press

UC Ag and Natural Resources recently announced several new publications. To order online, click on the title.

[Cover Cropping for Vegetable Production](#)

A Grower's Handbook

Richard Smith, Robert Bugg, Mark Gaskell, Oleg Daugovish, Mark Van Horn, Technical Editors

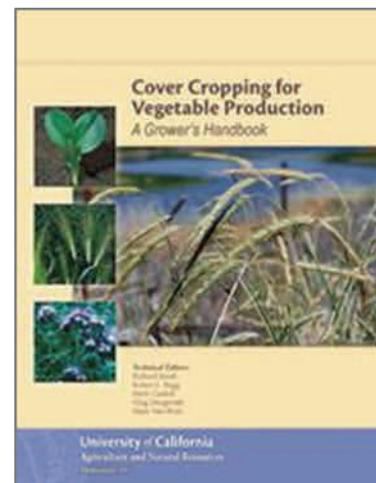
Cover crops are an important tool for vegetable growers to reduce soil erosion, filter water, enhance soil fertility and break the life cycles of plant pathogens and pests. Any grower who relies on cover crops -- and anyone who is interested in learning more about them -- will quickly learn to rely on this handbook's information.

Rich with 17 detailed tables and 68 color photos, *Cover Cropping for Vegetable Production* is perhaps the most comprehensive, science-based book on cover cropping available to growers.

In addition to assisting with crop selection, this 90-page handbook addresses the effects of cover cropping on water management, pest management and farm economics. For California growers, the handbook also discusses differences in cover crop use for the Central Valley, Desert and Coastal regions.

Price: ~~\$25.00~~ **\$20.00—special price, for a limited time**

ANR Publication # 3517



[Organic Vegetable Production Manual](#)

Milton McGiffin, Technical Editor

The *Organic Vegetable Production Manual* provides detailed information for growers on how to farm vegetables organically, addressing the essential topics for success in this highly competitive marketplace.

This book is a valuable resource for established organic growers, and a must-read for growers considering organic practices.

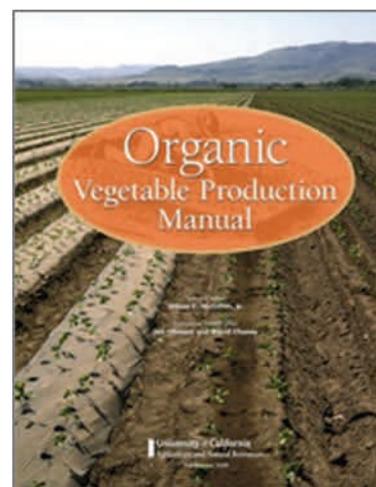
Chapters cover a range of topics for the organic vegetable farmer:

- Business and marketing plans
- Economic performance
- Soil fertility management
- Managing diseases
- Weed management
- Postharvest handling
- Organic certification and registration in California

This publication includes substantially revised information from a seven-part series of shorter publications from 2000. The revisions address changing needs of organic growers and access to new information.

This 86-page manual is illustrated with 35 color photographs and 21 tables, and has a comprehensive index.

Price: : ~~\$25.00~~ **\$20.00—special price, for a limited time**

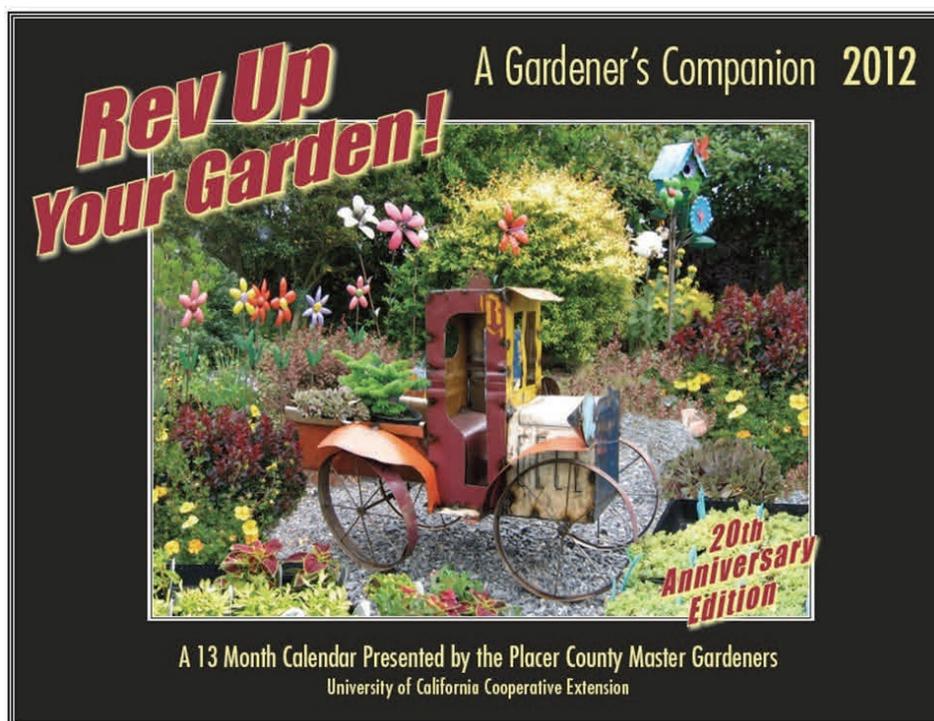


2012 Master Gardener Calendars Available!

Perfect as a gift to yourself or a fellow gardener, Placer County Master Gardeners' 2012 Gardener's Companion 13 Month Calendars are for sale at the Amador and El Dorado UC Cooperative Extension office for \$10. Calendars in Amador are available Monday through Thursday from 9-1. In El Dorado they are available Monday through Friday from 8-5.

Each month features an informative article with tips and ideas; beautiful color photographs; lists of what to plant for our region; garden chore reminders; fun facts, and recommendations on where to get more information about the topics presented.

Pay by cash or check at the UCCE office (make checks payable to "The University of California, Regents" or at an upcoming Master Gardener class, while supplies last. You can also purchase calendars online with a credit card at http://ucanr.org/sites/ucmgplacer/2012_Calendar.



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2012 Master Gardener Training



UC Cooperative Extension is conducting training in both El Dorado and Tuolumne Counties in 2012. Applications for the El Dorado County Master Gardener program are no longer being accepted. Amador County residents who are accepted into the program will train in Placerville but volunteer their time in Amador County. If you reside in Amador County and want to apply, please contact Robin Cleveland at 530-621-5528 for an application.

Calaveras and Tuolumne counties are accepting applications through November 17. For more information about the Tuolumne County training, go to http://ucanr.org/sites/Tuolumne_County_Master_Gardeners/Training.

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