



UCCE Master Gardeners of Lake Tahoe

Lake Tahoe Horticulture News

July 2016

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Coordinator's Corner:

Greetings!

Summer is finally here and planting is in full swing. Thank you to the countless people who came out to LTCC on Saturday, June 11th for our 3rd Annual June Day Jamboree and Plant Sale. Again, we apologize for the long cashier lines from 9:30 to 11:30 am. We didn't expect to have such wonderful success and ensure that next year we will find a solution to the lines.

In the July edition of our newsletter we have a few articles on how to deal with pests in your yard. Articles range from invasive plants, to bugs and/or the unwanted critter. For further information on how to deal with other "unwanted plants/critters" we encourage you to visit UC's Integrated Pest Management website at: <http://ipm.ucanr.edu/>.

As always stop by and see us at the Farmers Market in South Lake Tahoe every other Tuesday. We will have a specific topic to share with you but you are always free to bring your gardening questions. On Tuesday, July 5th we will focus on *strawberries galore* and on Tuesday, July 19th we will be talking about *composting*. Additionally, scroll to the end of the newsletter to find out about additional workshops, events and how to register for any of the upcoming garden tours.

Finally, we hope that you consider joining us in becoming a UCCE Master Gardener of Lake Tahoe. We are currently accepting applications for new volunteers. The training session will be held this fall from mid September through December at the Lake Tahoe Community College. Read below for further details. *Come grow with us...*

Sincerely,
Megan Suarez-Brand

Learn it, Grow It, Teach it!

Join us! Become a UCCE Master Gardener of Lake Tahoe

UCCE Master Gardeners of Lake Tahoe are recruiting for new volunteers this summer! We will be holding our next 12 week training this fall. The training session will be held on Thursdays from 10 am to 2:30 pm at the Lake Tahoe Community College.

Training session dates will be held from mid-September to early December:

Thursdays (10 am - 2:30 pm):

September 15, 22, 29

October 6, 13, 20, 27

November 3, 10, 17

December 1, 8

Saturday: November 5th



The University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) invites adults interested in helping others learn about gardening and landscaping to apply to train as a Master Gardener volunteer. UCCE Master Gardener volunteers learn University-based scientific information and then share that knowledge with the gardening community. Master Gardener volunteers are people of all ages and from all walks of life with a common desire to help others learn about gardening and landscaping.

Who Can Apply?

- Any resident of the Lake Tahoe Basin for the 20 available openings in the training program.
- Applicants need internet access. Most communication will be through email and websites.



How to Apply:

- On-line application will open on Wednesday, June 1, 2016. On-line application at <http://ucanr.edu/uccemqit-training>
- Application period closes on Monday, July 11, 2016 at 6:00 pm.
- In-person interviews scheduled for: Tuesday, July 19th; Thursday, July 21st and Friday, July 22nd

(NATIVE) Tahoe Trees & Plants:

Sulfur Flower, Buckwheat

Sulfur Flower, Buckwheat- *Eriogonum umbellatum*

Sulfur flower, Buckwheat is a low-growing woody perennial, commonly found on hot dry sunny exposures on rocky slopes and ridges throughout the west. It is native to western mountainous regions at elevations of 2,500 to 10,000 feet. Sulfur flower, Buckwheat requires well-drained, sandy or gravelly soils with low fertility, and will not tolerate saturated soils.



The plant forms low, broad mats, with individual clumps reaching one foot height to two feet across. Leaves are one inch long, shiny green on top and woolly underneath. Flower stems 3 inches to 16 inches tall are topped by clusters of tiny sulfur-yellow flower heads. Flowers range from yellow to orange or reddish, both in bloom and in mature seed heads. Flower displays can color entire slopes starting in June at lower elevations and continue into August at higher elevations.

The common name of buckwheat comes from the Dutch word boekweit or the German buckweizen. Both mean "beech wheat," so called because sulfur flower's 3 sided seed resembles the beech nut, a seed used to make buckwheat flour. [Continue reading....](#)

(INVASIVE) Tahoe Trees & Plants:

Woolly Mullein

Woolly Mullein--*Verbascum thapsus*

The Wooley or Common Mullein is one of those plants that looks like it belongs here in the Tahoe Basin but is in reality not a native plant, originating in Eurasia. It is considered a noxious weed in some states and an invasive weed having a limited environmental impact statewide in California. The plant is fairly common in disturbed areas, especially dry gravelly areas next to water channels and soil benches of braided streams. Mullein is also found along roadsides and in reclamation areas. The Common Mullein is a member of the figwort family (Scrophulariaceae) that also includes our many types of native Indian paintbrush (*Castilleja* spp.) and the non-native garden snapdragon (*Antirrhinum majus*).

The plant is an annual, biennial or short lived perennial (depending on environmental conditions) that during the first year (or 2nd) maintains a compact basal rosette of woolly, grey green oblong-obovate leaves, that may be up to 10 inches in length. During the second (occasionally 3rd) year a central flower stalk forms with leaves of decreasing size along the lower portion of the flower stalk. Under favorable conditions the flower stock may reach 5 feet or more in height. Cold and numerous freeze thaw cycles have little effect on the appearance of the leaved basal rosette, which is one of the

first plants to emerge from winter dormancy. The flower stalk may remain erect, though dry and dead for a season or more.

The many small yellow flowers are tightly packed along the inflorescence and tight to the flower stalk. Calyx and petals are 5 lobed. Numerous seeds are contained in each of two capsules per flower. The plant dies after flowering. Reproduction is sexual with flowers capable of self-pollinating. A large plant can produce thousands of seeds. Seed dispersal is relatively close to the parent plant. Seeds are long lived, being viable for over 50 years, if below the soil surface. [Continue reading....](#)

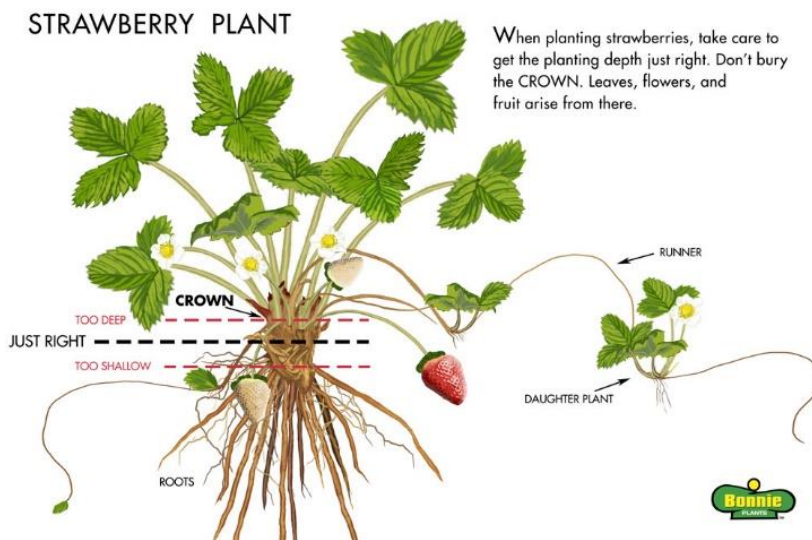
Comparative Phenology Study: Strawberries- -*Fragaria* spp.

By: Dave Long, UCCE Master Gardener of Lake Tahoe

This is another addition in a comparative phenology study in the Tahoe/Truckee area. For this study the spotlight is on fruit with a focus on strawberries.

Strawberries - *Fragaria* spp.

Well we finally decided to spotlight a fruit that a Tahoe/Truckee gardener might consider growing - so why not start with strawberries! Strawberries seem to be everyone's favorite, either direct to the mouth, with cream, or in a pie. Strawberries really announce spring has arrived - except in Tahoe/Truckee where homegrown strawberries come into their own in summer, still something to look forward to. There is a lot to explain about with strawberries, and a bit more work to do in the garden to have a good crop each year, which we hope to address.



Strawberries are in the rose family (Rosaceae) of plants. There are about 11 "wild" species world-wide, and thousands of varieties, hybrids, intermediates and cultivars derived from these wild stocks. The modern strawberry that we are familiar with involves a series of artificial crosses primarily between two new world species, *F. virginiana* from North America and *F. chiloensis* from the west coasts of South and North America. In the Tahoe basin our native strawberries are possibly *F. virginiana* the mountain strawberry found in moist open areas along forest edges and meadows here and there throughout the

mountains and *F. vesca* the wood strawberry. Typically wild berries are few and far between, however in recently disturbed or recently planted areas berries may be abundant. There also may be commercial cultivar (*F. x ananassa*) escapees from gardens, as propagation of strawberries is effective both vegetatively and through pollination and seed development with subsequent dispersal, especially by birds.

Tahoe native strawberries

The wild strawberries found in the Tahoe basin are either *F. vesca*, the wood strawberry (alpine strawberry) or *F. virginiana*, the mountain strawberry. There is also undoubtedly a number of escaped cultivars of our commercial berries (*F. x ananassa*) which are essentially impossible to field differentiate from *F.*

virginiana. Field identification between *F. vesca* and *F. virginiana* can be problematic, as

distinguishing characteristics overlap. For field identification the main differences are in leaf characteristic. *F. vesca* leaves are slightly more serrated (12-21 above and below the middle) and the leaf petiole is shorter to the individual leaflets. *F. virginiana* has fewer serrations above the middle of the leaf (7-13), and a slightly longer petiole to the individual leaflets. Please see the section on genetics to better understand the differentiation in species.

[Continue reading...](#)



Queen of the Valley (*F. vesca*) photo by Michael Wellick

Regulations, Agencies & Interested Parties

... Q&A: Trapping vertebrate pests (in Nevada)

Question: I live in Stateline, Nevada and my yard backs up to the National Forest. Consequently I have all kinds of critters trying to get my fruit and vegetables. I have installed a 7 foot plastic mesh deer fence which works well. I also put 3 ft. chicken wire fencing around many of my plots to keep rabbits out. Mice, squirrels, chipmunks and the occasional raccoon either go through the fences, or climb over or go under. I've started using snap type rat traps for the mice, which also handles the squirrels, ground squirrels, and chipmunks, and seems to deter the raccoons after a snap or two. I occasionally get small rabbits, stellar jays in the trap and juncos, even when the traps are partially covered. My neighbor said she'd lend me two of her live traps and offered to relocate the critters out of the neighborhood. A landscape friend from California told me that relocating animals is not allowed, but I may need a permit to use the traps in my yard. I'm confused but do not want to give up my garden. What are the rules?

(MG Note: The snap trap style rat trap is essentially designed for use in an interior situation, in a house, attic, basement, crawl space, barn, or shed to lethally trap mice, woodrats and Norway rats. It is baited and set when used. There are no known regulations, requirements or reporting needed when used in this manner. While also effective in lethally trapping small rodents in the garden, once placed outdoors the traps fall under the jurisdiction of the Department of Wildlife - in Nevada.)

Answer Provided by: Jessica Heitt, Conservation Aid III, Urban Wildlife Coordinator, Nevada Department of Wildlife

There are a couple of regulatory aspects with regard to this inquiry. Let me break them into component parts to simplify the Department's response.

1) The use of fences and methods of excluding animals from gaining access to the garden is highly recommended as it requires no Department oversight, is nonlethal, and is not too difficult to maintain once installed. Since trapping can be difficult, I would suggest fencing the area and burying a portion of the fence underground about 8 inches and making it an L shape away from the garden so even if something attempts to dig underneath it will not be able to. Another option is to completely close in the area. Below are pictures of a couple different options for the resident. [Continue reading....](#)

BUGS: The good, the bad, & the ugly... **(the bad): Aphid**

By: UCCE Master Gardener Bonnie Turnbull

This is the second article in a series on integrated pest management. [Click here to read the entire series.](#)

The BAD (pest): Aphid

Here's a scary thought. Almost every plant in your yard has an aphid species which feeds on it! Even prickly pine needles can serve up "smoothies" for these soft-bodied insects that suck plant juices from through their tiny "straws".

So, as you might expect, aphids vary. They range in colors (from green to red), sizes (though all tiny), lifecycle stages (from winged to wingless) and textures (wooly to smooth).



UC Statewide IPM Project
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However, they are not too hard to identify with a hand lens. Look closely. (This is The Ugly part.) They are all soft-bodied and somewhat pear-shaped. They tend to feed in huddles which can make them easy to spot. But what always proves it's an aphid are the pair of tiny tube-like protrusions from their hind ends, cornicles, which make them look something like a Volkswagen Beetle

with two, over-long tailpipes. They are the only insects with them.

Start checking around and you may be surprised to find them in small numbers on many of your plants living very much in balance with your yard ecosystem. You never noticed them before because they do some damage.

However, given the perfect environment, they are marvels of reproduction.

They can give birth to 80 live babies a week. And the babies are born pregnant! Yup you read that right. And as you've realized, this adds up very

quickly. They only lay eggs for overwintering. It's the population booms which produce the damage you will notice.

Aphids cause leaves to curl or turn yellow. New shoots are stunted. Most obvious may be the "honeydew" aphids produce, a shiny, sticky substance that glints in the sun when the leaves flutter.

But here is The Good part. Though the damage can be unsightly, aphids seldom kill a healthy, mature plant. Even better, ladybugs, lacewings, soldier beetles, parasitic wasps, and syrphid flies will eat vast numbers of those tiny, sugar-filled aphids for you.

Instead, try these strategies until predator populations build up:

1. Prevention: Look closely at any plant before purchase. Somehow, I thought that nurseries were magically immune to pests until one day I bought a shrub at a local nursery and by the time I arrived home, little green aphids peppered the car rug. *Continue reading...*

Integrated Pest Management: Earwigs

Earwigs are a common, recognizable insect found in many Tahoe gardens. The nocturnal feeding earwig, a member of the order Dermaptera, is a non-native omnivore eating many types of leafy plants, soft fruits as well as aphids, other insect eggs and larva. While considered a soil dwelling insect, adult earwigs can fly and can be attracted to porchlights during summer months. Usually earwig populations do not cause extensive problems in the garden, and since they do help control other problem insects are not generally targeted by many gardeners. Problems occur if extensive areas of suitable habitat are created in conjunction to growing favored plants. Examples of suitable habitat include pots, planters (especially the self-watering types), raised beds and moist mulched areas - anywhere there is moisture and places or crevices to hide. Favored Tahoe garden plants are strawberries, lettuce, raspberries, and corn (especially corn silks).



Control using contact chemical insecticides are problematic at best due to the nocturnal nature of the insect, and ability to hide in crevices, leaf axials, and beneath mulches - places difficult to apply insecticides. Making it more difficult to control earwig populations is the concern in using insecticides on fruit and vegetable plantings. Trapping is more often the best control strategy. Various types of traps can be employed that fall into two categories. 1. Traps that are baited; and 2. Traps that replicate hiding areas.

Baited traps use an attractant such as cooking oil, canned cat food, fish oil or some combination. Small amounts of the bait are placed in a shallow container partially filled with water or vegetable oil and buried to the top edge of the container. The earwigs fall into the container trying to get to the bait and drown or otherwise cannot escape. Tuna cans, cat food containers, and anchovy cans are examples of these containers. A variation is to use deeper containers such as butter or yogurt containers with a series of holes placed about one inch from the bottom. The container is baited and buried to the level of the holes with water or oil added. It helps to place a rock or weight on top of the container to avoid it blowing over in a high wind or being

disturbed by cats, dogs, mice, skunks or raccoons. The earwigs enter fall into the liquid and drown. It is important to check traps regularly and rebait as needed after emptying any dead earwigs.

Traps that replicate hiding places can include short sections of garden or soaker hoses, or moistened rolled newspapers. The earwigs hide during the day in these materials. Shaking out the hose sections into a bucket of soapy water where they drown or just throwing out the wet paper into a sealed garbage container can be an effective control strategy.

There are several internet articles or You Tube videos that show details of trap construction:

Earwigs <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn74102.html>

How to trap Earwigs <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=42yz-hV0sSI>

How to make an earwig trap chemical free
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5gJNZd4mp4Y>

How to trap earwigs <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tlgpfCT0wYo>

Spotlight on a Lake Tahoe Public Garden: *Lake Tahoe Community College Demonstration Garden*

Celebrating 25 Years - A Taste of Gold



The Lake Tahoe Community College Demonstration Garden celebrates its 25th anniversary this July. The Garden for the last few years has been the location for Touch of Gold, the College Foundation's premier fundraising event, which includes tastings from local restaurants, and California wineries.

The College Demonstration Garden almost did not happen. The guiding force for establishing a local garden to demonstrate erosion control methods and water wise landscaping was Rick Hydrick of the South Tahoe Public Utility

District, who brought together various agencies and interested parties to site, fund and build a garden. The original site selected in 1984 was off Highway 50, just east of Fire Station 3 towards the 'Y.' Negotiations for that property fell through as the property were sold for expected future development. The college was subsequently approached to host the garden at its new campus. Discussions with the college was an on again/off again affair, that lasted a few years. Finally with the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency agreeing that the College could offset mitigation fees from campus building construction by hosting the garden and maintaining it (in conjunction with project supporters) for a period of not less than 20 years all parties agreed that the college would be the location for the Demonstration Garden.

The College campus property represents 164 acres acquired from Shell Oil Company in 1979. The property extends from Al Tahoe Blvd across Trout Creek, and from the City Playing Fields almost to Highway 50. The college property includes the Tahoe Basin US Forest Service offices. The location selected for the Demonstration Garden was 7 acres that had been used as a soil borrow site for local road and construction projects. More recently the area had been used as an unofficial off-road course. The area was far from being undisturbed native vegetation. There was also a drainage problem from the College's access road. The site was not ideal for a garden. Brent Thram was the landscape architect selected for the project design and had been involved with the garden site evaluation process early on. [Continue reading...](#)

Lake Tahoe Basin: Summer 2016 Garden-based Workshops & Events

July 16th: Tallac Historic Site: Champagne Garden Tour, 10 am, (Free tour/\$ for Champagne). Garden Tour in partnership with Tallac Association & Tahoe Garden Club. Reservations required. Please contact Laurie Brazil at the Tahoe Garden Club at: laurelle27@sbcglobal.net.

July 19th: Composting & Vermicomposting at the South Lake Tahoe Farmers Market, 9 am to 12 pm, American Legion. (Free) Sponsored by UCCE Master Gardeners of Lake Tahoe.

July 30th: Lake of the Sky Garden Club: North Shore Garden Tour-- (<http://californiagardenclubs.com/content/lake-sky-garden-club>) (\$25) Tickets for the Lake of the Sky Garden Tour can be purchased by contacting Judy Carter at 916-837-3432 or dird@sbcglobal.net.

July 30th: Tahoe Plants = Tasty Teas! Join UC Davis TERC to learn which natives can be turned into a howe brew. Tahoe City Demo Garden, 10:30 am to 12 pm. (Bring a container or jar to take home samples.) (Free)

August 2nd: Plant Propagation: educational booth at the South Lake Tahoe Farmers Market, 9 am to 12 pm, American Legion (Free) Sponsored by UCCE Master Gardeners of Lake Tahoe.

August 3rd: Tahoe Plants = Tasty Teas! Join UC Davis TERC to learn which natives can be turned into a home brew. 5:30 to 7 pm at the Truckee Demonstration Garden, Truckee Regional Park. (Bring a container or jar to take home samples.) (Free) Sponsored by the Lake of the Sky Garden Club. <http://terc.ucdavis.edu/events>

August 6th: Tahoe Arnica Uses In & Out of the Garden: Join UC Davis TERC to discover how to create usable Arica products. At the Tahoe City Demo Garden at Lake Forest Rd, 10:30 am to 12 pm. (Bring a container or jar to take home samples) (Free) Sponsored by the Lake of the Sky Garden Club. <http://terc.ucdavis.edu/event>

August 10th: Tahoe Arnica Uses In & Out of the Garden: Join UC Davis TERC to discover how to create usable Arnica products. 5:30 pm to 7 pm at the Truckee Demonstration Garden, Truckee Regional Park. (Bring a container or jar to take home samples.) (Free) Sponsored by the Lake of the Sky Garden Club. <http://terc.ucdavis.edu/events>

August 13th: Dandelions: Weed or Feed? Join UC Davis TERC to discover the hidden values to dandelions. At the Tahoe City Demo Garden at Lake Forest Rd, 10:30 am to 12 pm. (Bring a container or jar to take home samples) (Free) Sponsored by the Lake of the Sky Garden Club. <http://terc.ucdavis.edu/event>

August 13: Truckee Demonstration Garden & Annual Edible Garden Tour, 9 am to 2 pm, Truckee. Contact Slow Food Lake Tahoe at info@slowfoodlaketahoe.org (\$5 donation)

August 16th: Educational booth at the South Lake Tahoe Farmers Market, 9 am to 12 pm, American Legion. (Free) Sponsored by UCCE Master Gardeners of Lake Tahoe.

August 17th: Dandelions: Weed or Feed? Join UC Davis TERC to discover the hidden values to dandelions. 5:30 pm to 7 pm at the Truckee Demonstration Garden, Truckee Regional Park. (Bring a container or jar to take home samples) (Free) Sponsored by the Lake of the Sky Garden Club. <http://terc.ucdavis.edu/events>

August 30th: Thunderbird Lodge Garden & Architectural Tour, 9 am. Reservations required. 25 Participants max and limited to Master Gardeners and their guests. To register: Dave Long davidmlong@earthlink.net (\$39)

August 30th: Water-wise Landscaping Presentation by UCCE Master Gardener Bonnie Turnbull, Truckee Donner PUD Board Room. (Free)

September 13th: Planting Fall bulbs: educational booth at the South Lake Tahoe Farmers Market, 9 am to 12 pm, American Legion. (Free) Sponsored by UCCE Master Gardeners of Lake Tahoe.

September 13th: Phenology workshop "Eating What We've Grown," 5:00 pm at Truckee Demonstration Garden, Truckee Regional Park. Bring a bib and more info to follow! (Free) Sponsored by UCCE Master Gardeners of Lake Tahoe, Tahoe FoodHub & UC Davis TERC.

North Shore Garden Tour Saturday, August 30th

There won't be a Tahoe in Bloom Garden Tour this summer but we hope you plan on joining our friends on the North Shore...

Lake of the sky Garden Club will host their 28th. annual garden tour on the North Shore of Lake Tahoe, with artists this year. The gardens are located from Kings Beach to Tahoe City, California, on Saturday August 30, 2016,

from 10AM to 4 PM. Tickets are \$25, and can be purchased after June 15 at local Tahoe/Truckee Nurseries. Alternately, they may be purchased by contacting Judy Carter at (916) 837-3432 or at dird@sbcglobal.net. Supplies are limited and may not be available on Tour day, so be sure to get your Ticket early. For more information, visit www.lake-of-the-sky.org.

Come view eight gardens that will also have local established artists displaying their art. This year we will also have representatives from the South Lake Tahoe Master Gardeners, including David Long to answer questions about plants and high altitude gardening problems. Also present will be Kris Vickers from the Tahoe City PUD to address water conservation and potential sprinkler options. Steve Nooren with Rain Bird will discuss water conservation and potential sprinkler options. Eric Laurseen, From the Village Nursery in Truckee will be available to help identify what plants do well in high altitude. To top it all off, Eben Swain from the Truckee Water Shed Council will attend to discuss the projects that they are involved with including public participation science projects.

Lake of the Sky Garden Club is a non-profit organization and a member of National Garden Clubs Inc., and the California Garden Clubs, Inc., Golden Foothills District. The club's goals are to promote an interest in gardening, with particular emphasis on the problems at high altitude, to support charitable, educational, and scientific work, as well as to initiate and participate in beautification and development gardening projects in the North Lake Tahoe and Truckee region. Each year the proceeds from the tour fund one or two \$1000scholarships to encourage study in landscaping, horticulture, forestry or environmental science and up to \$6000 in grants to local community projects such as Thunderbird Lodge, Tahoe City Historical Society, the Watson Cabin, Gatekeeper's Museum, The Truckee Jail, as well as local schools and libraries.

Sincerely,

Megan Suarez-Brand, Program Coordinator & UCCE Master Gardener of Lake Tahoe Contributors: Dave Long and Bonnie Turnbull

The UCCE Master Gardeners of Lake Tahoe strive to meet the horticulture needs of the Lake Tahoe Basin Community, we are pleased to extend research-based information to fellow gardeners on home horticulture. Our Master Gardener volunteers receive training and certification from the University of California Cooperative Extension and provide practical scientific gardening information.

The University of California working in cooperation with County Government and the United States Department of Agriculture.

It is the policy of the University of California (UC) and the UC Division of Agriculture & Natural Resources not to engage in discrimination against or harassment of any person in any of its programs or activities (Complete nondiscrimination policy statement can be found at <http://ucanr.edu/sites/anrstaff/files/215244.pdf>) Inquiries regarding ANR's nondiscrimination policies may be directed to John I. Sims, Affirmative Action Compliance Officer/Title IX Officer, University of California, Agriculture and Natural Resources, 2801 Second Street, Davis, CA 95618, (530) 750- 1397.