



UCCE Master Gardeners of Lake Tahoe

Lake Tahoe Horticulture News

February, 2019

In This Issue

[Plant Communication Research](#)

[Enjoy Gesneriads!](#)

[Select Vegetable Seeds](#)

[New Year, New Tahoe Living with Fire Website](#)

[Garden Tools 101](#)

[A Gardener is Only as Sharp As His Tools](#)

Quick Links

[Lake Tahoe Gardening Resources](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)

[LT Master Gardeners website](#)

[Like us on Facebook!](#)

[Join Our List](#)

[Join Our Mailing List](#)

Coordinator's Corner:

Greetings Lake Tahoe Gardeners,

We are still a few months out before we can spend any real quality time in our beloved gardens. What can we do to keep ourselves busy? Well, there are always garden chores to be done. Have you thought about which seeds or bulbs that you plan to plant?

If you didn't collect them for your garden last year, where do you plan or ordering them from?

Are you thinking about converting to a more efficient irrigation system? Now is the time to read as much as you can. Are there any new design features that you have been thinking about? Maybe you are thinking about converting your woody mulch to low lying ground-covers. We might not be able to get our hands dirty right now but there is still plenty of work we can be doing.

UCCE Master Gardeners of Lake Tahoe continue to keep busy by planning out our spring and summer gardening workshops. We hope to have a complete list of events to you within the next month or two. In the meantime, let's hope for some white fluffy snow to cover our precious gardens.

Sincerely,

Megan Suarez-Brand

Plant Communication Research

Author: Kathy Keatley Garvey

It's not outlandish now, if it ever were.

A recent article in Science headlined "Once Considered Outlandish, the Idea that Plants Help their Relatives Is Taking Root," and dealing with how plants communicate, is drawing widespread attention.

Wrote Elizabeth Pennisi: "For people, and many other animals, family matters. Consider how many jobs go to relatives. Or how an ant will ruthlessly attack intruder ants but rescue injured, closely related nestmates. There are good evolutionary reasons to aid relatives, after all. Now, it seems, family feelings may stir in plants as well." [Continue reading...](#)

Enjoy Gesneriads!

Author: Lynne Brosch, UCCE Master Gardener of Lake Tahoe



In the cold, dark days of winter it's so enjoyable to see your blooming African violet (saintpaulia) against the backdrop of a winter blizzard outside the window.

African violets are Gesneriads that are relatively easy to grow indoors. The main key to success usually seems to be the amount of light. They prefer north or east facing windows. Do not put plants close to the window or on a window sill. This will be too much light and a cold draft will come through the window in winter. In summer it will be too hot and bright and burn the plant. The best location is a table a foot or two away from the windows. Other than

that I have usually found them not to be terribly fussy. Of course they need the house temperature at a moderate level and would enjoy some humidity. [Continue reading...](#)

Select Vegetable Seeds: Check Days to Maturity

Author: Bonnie Turnbull, UCCE Master Gardener of Lake Tahoe



Outside everything thing is white, but you are dreaming of your summer garden. So you find the website of a national seed seller or open a glossy catalog. So many delicious, nutritious vegetables to grow! They all hold such promise.

You check out the carrots. 22 kinds? All so beautiful. It takes a while to click through each description, but you narrow it down to 2 choices.

Carrot, Kaleidoscope Blend: Our exclusive blend of wild colors!

We've combined five distinct colors of carrots in one special blend for a pretty rainbow effect that is sure to be noticed at the dinner table, even by the kids. After testing hundreds of carrot varieties, we developed this easy-to-grow mix of five crispy carrots: Atomic Red, Bambino, Cosmic Purple, Lunar White and Solar Yellow. [Continue reading...](#)

New Year, New Tahoe Living With Fire Website



By: The Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team

The Tahoe Resource Conservation District (Tahoe RCD) and the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension collaboratively redesigned and updated the Tahoe Living With Fire website to improve the user experience and information accessibility. <http://tahoe.livingwithfire.info/>

A particularly useful feature of the new site is an updated version of the Lake Tahoe Prescribed Fire Map

<http://tahoe.livingwithfire.info/get-informed/>.

The interactive map identifies current prescribed fires in the Lake Tahoe area and the responsible agency, contact information, type of burn, acreage, and anticipated smoke impacts for each.

Tahoe Living With Fire is not just a website, it is also on Facebook and Twitter! Like and follow Tahoe Living With Fire on Facebook and Twitter @TahoeLWF to stay up-to-date on wildfire preparation and prevention at Lake Tahoe.

Garden Tools 101



Well, it is winter in Tahoe so not a lot of outside gardening going on. Now is a good time to take stock of your current garden tools and see what needs maintenance, updating, and/or maybe what you need to purchase for this upcoming season.

Our friends at the UC Master Gardener Program of Santa Clara County have put together a really great guide on tool quality and considerations. It is very detailed with a lot of useful information and pictures. I find it to be a great go to.

Check it out for yourself at: <http://mgsantaclara.ucanr.edu/files/271975.pdf>

A Gardener is Only as Sharp As His Tools

By: Carolyn Meiers, UCCE Master Gardeners of Lake Tahoe



Yard work is hard enough. Don't let dull tools make it any more difficult. Hedge trimmers, scissors, grass clippers, mowers, knives, chain saws, hand saws, loppers, and pruning shears are just a few of the gardening tools that work better with a sharp edge. A professional can do the job or you may decide to do it yourself. The cost of sharpening most hand tools is less than \$5, and once a year is quite adequate, depending on usage.

The best time of the year is late fall, after the gardening is done. The tools won't lose their edge, and they'll be ready for the first jobs of spring. Missed the fall? Jump in and get it done any time of year! [Continue reading...](#)

Sincerely,

Megan Suarez-Brand, Program Coordinator

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.

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 UCANR, Affirmative Action Compliance & Title IX Officer, University of California, Agriculture and Natural Resources, 2801 Second Street, Davis, CA 95618, (530) 750-1397.