



North Lake Tahoe DEMONSTRATION GARDEN



The North Lake Tahoe Demonstration Garden is an educational community garden which promotes lake-friendly landscaping to help preserve our unique and fragile alpine environment

GREEN THUMB THURSDAYS

Free Landscaping and Gardening Classes in the Garden for 2011



June 2nd 5:30–6:30

Fire-safe Landscaping for Tahoe

Join us during Wildfire Awareness Week to learn about potential fire hazards in your yard, how to identify and prune high fire risk shrubs, and good plant choices for Tahoe. Presented by Lesley Higgins and Forest Schafer.

June 23rd 5:30–6:30

Container Gardening

Master Gardener Mimi Komito will give a hands-on demonstration on container planting. Bring your own container and Mimi will supply free plants.

June 30th 5:30–6:30

Building Raised Beds and Growing Vegetables

George LeBard is the Executive Director of a local non-profit that supports locally grown food. He will explain how to build container beds and get results from your vegetable garden.

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From the President's Plot by Margaret Solomon

Our wonderful president and master gardener Mimi Komito has moved from Incline. We will miss her greatly. We do need a president and since no one was clamoring to take over the job we decided to have co-presidents. None of those who are already on the Board are here in Tahoe all the time and we needed some continuity so Cass Maller and I agreed to share the position. One duty of the president is to write a piece for the newsletter. Here goes.



Installation of plantable walkway in 2010

First a thank you to the dedicated garden helpers we had last season. We will have some new and old projects for you to work on this year. During the winter while the garden is dormant the Board works on lining up speakers for the Green Thumb Thursdays and planning future projects. We will be offering classes this year beginning on June 2nd with a Fire Safe Landscaping class. Projects will include more ground cover examples along with more fire safe plants across from the shed. We also need more individual plant signs and will be putting those out as we get them.

We on the Board all look forward to seeing our garden visitors. We also hope to see you at our Green Thumb Thursdays and our garden workdays on Tuesday afternoons. If you find that you enjoy and learn from visiting the garden we hope you will consider joining our group. We welcome donors and helpers. There is always ongoing maintenance. We have a small cadre of dedicated garden volunteers who enjoy working together in the garden. Perhaps there are others who would like to join us.

Please go to our website at demogarden.org where there is more information and you will have the opportunity to join our group.

Margaret





(Green Thumb Thursdays cont.)

July 7th 5:30-6:30

Integrated Landscaping and Best Management Practices (BMPs)

John Cobourn with UNR Cooperative Extension will explain how to install BMPs while creating an attractive and fire-safe landscape. John will recommend specific groundcovers that control erosion.

July 14th 5:30-6:30

Preparing and Amending Soil for Tahoe Plants

Master Gardener M. J. Cross will instruct on how to prepare and amend Tahoe soils, as well as mulching and adding topsoil.

July 21st 5:30-6:30

Going Native

Master Gardener Mimi Komito will give tips on how to grow a beautiful garden in Tahoe using the Sierra's native and adapted species.

July 28th 5:30-6:30

Pruning and Cutting Back for Beautiful Blooms

Dick Post with UNR Cooperative Extension will demonstrate how to prune a variety of plants to achieve the best blooms.



Meet us for classes in the Gazebo

PRUNING FOR PLANT HEALTH AND FLOWERS

by Jan Steinmann

Tahoe/Truckee gardeners generally prune less than our counterparts whose plants enjoy a more predictable growing season. In the mountains, we are less willing to chop off healthy branches that our shrub or tree has valiantly extended after a long, arduous winter. Our reaction is to cheer the plant for its vigor.

For this reason, I'm not concerned with pruning for SIZE: if a plant grows too large for its space, you need to kick the gardener for not placing it in

the properly-sized area to "do its thing". If you plan to battle a fir or aspen to control its growth, the plant will win.

Pruning for HEALTH and BLOSSOMS/FOLIAGE is a different matter and not about control but cooperation. Your plant thrives when you cut back its dead and weak branches, allow more sun and air for its foliage, and encourage flowering. Doesn't hurt that the shrub or tree looks much more attractive as a result!

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SPECIAL EVENTS IN THE GARDEN FOR 2011

**Best Management Practices (BMP) Contractors Workshop
"How to install BMPs for single-family residences"**

April 28

This all day workshop teaches contractors, landscapers, and do-it-yourselfers how to install BMPs to control erosion and sediment runoff from private properties at Lake Tahoe. The BMP demonstrations in the garden will be center stage for the outdoor segment of this educational event. Topics will include: infiltration systems, driveways, soil restoration, re-vegetation, and defensible space/BMP integration. Log on to www.unce.unr/adhoc/bmpworkshop for more information.

Fire-safe Landscaping for Tahoe

June 2

Tahoe Wildfire Awareness Week is May 28-June 5 this year. We will be teaching a class to learn about potential fire hazards in your yard, how to identify and prune high fire risk shrubs, and what are good plant choices for Tahoe. We will also have a pruning demonstration for those do-it-yourselfers (it's not that hard!). For other WAW events and this year's Wildfire Summit, log on to www.livingwithfire.info/tahoe/?click=nevadafireweek.



(Pruning cont.)

Pruning methods resulting in healthier plants with more attractive flowers and foliage include thinning out for maximum sunlight and growth possibilities, as well as eliminating vigor-draining suckers.

THINNING OUT: A large tangle of small, weak branches, some dead and dying, keeps sunlight and water from reaching the stronger and newer branches. You can also create a more attractive shape by cutting crossed branches and those loners who want to go their own way. Cut these out as close to the main trunks as possible so new growth doesn't start.



Lilac ©2007 John O'Neill

BLOSSOMS/FOLIAGE:

Each spring, we welcome the early young green leaves and pretty blossoms of serviceberry and lilac. Pruning can encourage this growth but it is very important not to prune the spring flower buds, formed in autumn on last season's branches. These flowering shrubs and trees need to be pruned after their show of blossoms; in addition, the spent flowers must be removed if the plant doesn't naturally

shed them, so the tree won't spend energy creating seeds instead of growing shoots and branches. On the other hand, if a plant flowers on new growth, an early spring pruning can encourage healthy leaves and blooms. In Tahoe, it can be difficult to determine how early to prune for new growth since extended frost in May can zap the tender sprouts. It's best to hold off for later, rather than earlier pruning if one can restrain oneself—not always easy after a bout of beautiful warm weather in late spring.

Extensive pruning isn't generally necessary for the hardy plants that survive in our climate. Light pruning can help plants grow and thrive, plus a more natural, open shape fits our mountain landscapes better than a severe, formal look. The very dense, angular blocks of forsythia and spirea that we often see in Reno and other places are the result of heavy pruning. This practice may sometimes produce more flowers but the appearance is not attractive in our larger, more open spaces.

Below is a list of the best time to prune flowering and foliage plants either native or adapted to our climate:

SPRING PRUNING

- Barberry
- Butterfly bush
- Cinquefoil (potentilla)
- Currants (for foliage, not for fruit)
- Elderberry (for foliage, not for flowers)
- Ninebark (you will lose most of the flowers)
- Red twig dogwood (cornus osier)
- Smokebush (for foliage, but after flowering if you want the "smoke")
- Wild rose (woodsii) (can also prune and remove spent flowers all season)



Woods' (wild) Rose ©2008 Peter King

AFTER-FLOWER PRUNING

- Crabapple
- Flowering plum and cherry
- Hydrangea
- Lilac (remove as many spent blossoms as possible)
- Golden chain (laburnum) (remove as many spent blossoms as possible)
- Serviceberry
- Spirea (most varieties)
- Wild rose (woodsii)



Western Serviceberry ©2008 Peter King





BARE ROOTS, PIPS, BULBS AND RHIZOMES FOR TAHOE SPRING PLANTING

by Mimi Komito



Geranium (cranesbill)
© 2009 Ramin Nakisa

Most of us think of bulbs and their relatives as fall planting and spring flowering plants. There are, however, numerous plants which can be planted bare root in the spring for a spectacular summer and fall flower show. One of the advantages to planting bare root is the price. Bare root

plants are almost always much cheaper than potted plants. In most cases you can get 3 (or more) roots for the price of 1 potted plant. The reason for this is cheaper shipping and handling costs.

The other big advantage is a much larger variety of bare root plants than potted. Some garden centers carry bare root plants in early spring, but the most cost effective way to buy them is on-line from catalogs (also larger variety from catalogs). Some of my favorite sites are www.dutchgardens.com, www.springhillnursery.com and www.waysidegardens.com. There are many more; just Google "plant catalogs" and you'll get a long list of suppliers.

I can think of only one down side to planting bare root; shrubs and trees usually take a full growing season to get established and bloom. But with a little patience you can get more for your money, especially with roses and peonies.

The first list of some of my favorites do not overwinter in the ground in Tahoe, but most of them are so cheap that they can be treated as an annual. They can also be planted in pots which can be moved to the garage to overwinter. So much more exciting than the usual Petunia and zonal Geranium.



Crocosmia © Mbz1 at en.wikipedia

Begonia (tuberous) – great for hanging under the eaves in the shade

Crocosmia - fall bloomers, Hummingbird magnets

Freesia - yellow and white are the most fragrant

Dahlia – small flowering do best in Tahoe

Gladiolus - great cut flowers – plant lots

The following plants all do well in Tahoe and overwinter without too much fuss. Also remember that many of these can be planted in large pots to add interest to decks and front steps. Dicentra, Hosta and Peony have done very well for me.

Clematis - remember to plant where the roots have some shade from plants in front of the vine

Convallaria – heavenly fragrant, great cut flowers

Crab Apple – many varieties, beautiful spring bloom

Dicentra (Bleeding Heart) – don't forget the white ones and the fern leaf often re-bloom in late summer

Hardy Geranium – great ground cover and looks good spilling down a rock wall

Hemerocallis (Daylily) – try some of the newer dwarf varieties, can be used in the front of the border

Hosta – look for variegated leaves they brighten up the shade

Iris – many bearded varieties as well as Siberian for water gardens

Liatris – spiky accents in the border

Lily (Oriental) – wonderful fragrance, plant near a deck where you sit in the evenings

Peony – don't plant too deep, they will not bloom then. They take at least 1 season to bloom.

Rose – choose shrub types (floribunda) or rugosa types (almost wild)



Clematis
© 2005 Andrew Dunn



Hosta (Patriot) with Heuchera and Lamium
© Mimi Komito



Peony © 2006 Fanghong

