



# How Does Your Garden Grow?



## News from UCCE Master Gardeners of Calaveras County

**September 2016**

### From The Editor

This edition of the newsletter features two of every gardener's favorite pollinators, Monarch butterflies and bees. It also includes advice on jobs to do in the garden this month, as well as information about upcoming events.

Happy Gardening!  
Odile Morrison  
Newsletter Editor

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### Magnificent Monarchs

*by Bev Eckland, UCCE Master Gardener of Calaveras County*

A few years ago I visited the wintering site for Monarch butterflies in Pacific Grove. Thousands of butterflies were hanging in the eucalyptus trees. They looked like colored leaves except when there was a flutter or two. This visit stimulated my interest in the Monarchs, and after doing some research I learned the population of these extraordinary creatures is in a downward spiral.



Many people are not aware that the adult female monarch will only lay her eggs on milkweed plants, and that plant is the only thing the caterpillar will eat. These milkweeds contain toxic alkaloids, and as a result of eating these plants the caterpillar and adult contain these alkaloids which are toxic to warm blooded predators. So when a bird eats the Monarch it suffers "Monarch Montezuma's Revenge".

The bad news for the Monarchs is the loss of milkweed due to agricultural activities, drought, pesticide use, and other human interventions. I am leading a campaign to try to get people more aware of this problem, and to help by planting milkweed. This has led to a very exciting and entertaining adventure for me, and I would like to share this story. [Read more](#)

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### September Tasks

Tips on what to do in the garden this month.

[More information](#)

### Next Open Garden

24 September, 2016  
10am to 2pm  
Plant Sale 10am to noon

**Bonsai Society  
Annual Show**

## Bee Friendly Gardening

If you are thinking about planting a new area on your property with natives and drought tolerant plants; consider planting a bee friendly garden. Very often natives and drought tolerant plants are exactly what our native

bees and pollinators thrive on. Bees are the world's major pollinators of food crops, many crops are bee dependent, and as we know, there has been a big



drop in the bee population because of pesticide use and other factors. It is very important to help increase the bee population. Although the European honey bee is the most familiar pollinator to most people, California is the home to more than 1600 species of native bees. Most of these bees are solitary and do not produce honey, but they are by far much more efficient pollinators than European bee.

If you want a bee friendly garden, it is important that you plant a large variety of nectar and pollen producing plants that bloom at various times throughout the year. Plant large patches of one plant so the bees do not have to expend energy looking for other sources of food. Native bees like native plants and are most active in late spring and early summer, non-native bees prefer late summer and early fall. It is important to have plants that have a diversity of bloom times for more information on varieties and bloom times, go to [www.helpabee.org](http://www.helpabee.org), click on Gardening for bees then go to Best bee plants for California. This site is full of great information and is a U.C. Berkley Urban Bee site.

Many bee friendly plants are natives that grow well in our area, such as Coffeeberry, Buckeye, California Poppy, Manzanita, Toyon, California Fuschia and Ceonothus. Bees need pollen for protein and nectar for energy, these and other plants provide for most of their nutritional needs. Most bees are not aggressive and will not sting unless provoked so do not be too concerned about having bees in your garden. Planting a bee friendly garden and by using less pesticides will help increase the bee population. They in turn will help us by pollinating our crops.

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## September To Do List

*By Teresa Spence, University of California Cooperative Extension Master Gardener Of Calaveras County*

- Check around your property for fallen branches, dead brush, plants and pine needles near your house. Clear them away so that they do not become a fire hazard, September is the peak of our fire season.
- Continue adding spent vegetable plants, vegetable discards from your kitchen and brown matter such as dried leaves and dried grass, to your compost pile. Make sure to keep the compost pile moist but not soggy, turn it often.
- Pick up all fallen fruit, inspect it and if it doesn't have any pests in it, put it in the compost pile, otherwise dispose of it in the trash.
- As the nights get cooler, cut back of watering if at all possible, we are still in a drought.



## Open Garden 24th September Features Bonsai Annual Show

*Each month Maggi Blood sends a press release to the local newspapers. This is the one for September.*

The UCCE Master Gardeners of Calaveras County will open the Demonstration Garden on Saturday, September 24 from 10AM – 2PM. **Plant sale from 10AM – 12PM.** The Demonstration Garden is located at the County Government Center, 891 Mountain Ranch Road, San Andreas.

Mother Lode Bonsai Club will host its annual show in conjunction with the Master Gardeners open garden. Along with dozens of miniature trees on display, a public demonstration will be presented by club *Sensei* (teacher) Frank Garcia on the design and care of your bonsai. Members will also be available to provide information and print material to attendees on this ancient living art.

**... Magnificent Monarchs**

## Celebration of Life of Michael Kriletich September 24

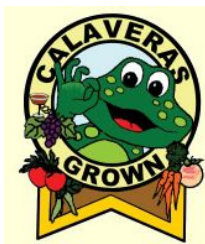
All whom he touched are welcome to celebrate Michael's life on Saturday, September 24th at the Mokelumne Hill Town Hall. Slideshow to begin at 4:30 p.m. followed by memorial services and dinner. Please share your memories of Michael's extraordinary life by sending them in written form to:



info@palomapollinators.org or by calling 209.498.8081. Donations to continue his inspirational community work can be made to CalaverasGrown.org in his name.

## CalaverasGROWN Certified Farmers Market Season Ends

The second season of the CalaverasGROWN Certified Farmers Market ended with the final market on September 14.



It featured Calaveras-grown products including fresh vegetables & herbs, olive oil, jams, eggs, baked goods, fresh flowers, as well as ornamental vegetable and herb plants.

Shoppers were treated to the music of members of the Calaveras band playing jazz, swing and Dixieland.

Thanks to all the wonderful vendors and supporters who made the market a great success.

Our next season resumes in May 2017. This event is sponsored by Mark Twain Medical Center.

### Master Gardener Coordinator

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In my garden and raised beds, I am raising over 150 milkweed plants. These are *Asclepias speciosa* (Showy Milkweed) and *Asclepias fascicularis* (Narrow leaf Milkweed) which are native in our area.



Because I have so many milkweed plants growing here, I find Monarch caterpillars everyday. At first, I let Mother Nature do her thing – leaving the caterpillars outside. Each day, however, when I checked the plants many of the

caterpillars had disappeared. Consequently, I began bringing the caterpillars inside to raise into adult Monarch butterflies.

I am not a very disciplined scientist so did not document the number of caterpillars I saw each day, but I am sure it is well over a hundred.

Since bringing them inside I have raised and released over 50 adult Monarchs and have a least that many more caterpillars in various sizes plus finding a few more each day. I am seeing my "babies" flying all around my garden as well as on plants growing beside the road. Only this year have Monarchs visited these roadside plants, and I have collected caterpillars from them also.

Raising these beautiful butterflies is truly an awesome experience. There are lots of pictures of the "Life Cycle" of the Monarch, but seeing it first hand is truly magical!



I am a Calaveras Master Gardener, and we will have milkweed plants for sale at our regular scheduled plant sales at the Demonstration Garden near the Government Center on the fourth Saturdays of Sept., Oct., and Nov. These are perennial plants that die back in the winter and then reappear in the Spring. Fall is the best time to plant them so come along and get some into your gardens to help save the Monarch butterflies.