

Into the Garden

Newsletter of The
Gardeners' Club,
Santa Cruz County,
California

August 2017
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HOW TO GROW A STRAW BALE GARDEN

Want to learn the secrets about how to grow fabulous veggies in your garden? Nadine Frush, a local frequent farmers market shopper and gardener extraordinaire, calls herself the Straw Bale Wizard. At our August meeting, she will tell us how to grow a high-yielding garden with great results using straw bales.

Since 2012, Nadine has been mad for straw bale gardening. For her, it got rid of many of the past problems she had, achieving a guaranteed successful harvest, water control, pest control, weed control and composting. Before she tried straw bale gardens, her harvest would be irregular – poor tomatoes, little or no beans, forget the cucumbers and peas. Now her gardens are verdant delights and sometimes out of control. And she says it works even if all you have is a cement slab.

Straw bale gardening is a popular form of container gardening that uses bales of straw as the “containers”. According to Nadine, “Straw bale gardening allows people to get a maximum return on their home garden production and say goodbye to hours of soil preparation, weeding, over-watering, bending, and garden-chomping critters! You don’t have to worry about having great soil. You can also set up the bales in your backyard or on your deck — or



Preparing a straw bale garden requires conditioning the bales for a few weeks before bales can be planted. This essential step is accomplished, in part, by adding nitrogen that accelerates decomposition of the bale. Nadine says, “The conditioning process creates an optimum, nutrient-rich rooting environment that is moist and warm for seedlings. This is the perfect time of year to start your fall straw bale garden.”

Ms. Frush resides in Soquel with her husband, Warren, her daughter Christie (soon to attend Davis) and her beloved cat and dog. If she is not in the backyard with her straw bale garden, she is working on a children’s book about straw bale gardening.



even on a cement patio. And, there’s no additional expense to buy large containers. The bales are the container and the soil.”

Thursday, August 10th, 7 p.m.

Aptos Grange, 2555 Mar Vista Dr.

Refreshments will be served. Thanks to Dottie Lechtenberg for snack, April Barclay for dessert and Pat McVeigh for beverages.

Summer

fruit tree care



AUGUST 5 @ UCSC Farm
from 9:30 Am - 12:00 pm

Join **Matthew Sutton** of **Orchard Keepers**, for a workshop on summer care of deciduous fruit trees (apples, pears, peaches, apricots, plums, etc).

Topics to be covered include **summer pruning, fertility, irrigation, best pest control practices** for summer into fall, and **preparation for new plantings**.

Register online at: summerprune2017.bpt.me

or pre-register by check, payable to "UC Regents" and send to:
CASFS | 1156 High St. | Santa Cruz, CA 95064

Attn: Heidi Harris; Workshop (Please include contact phone & email)

For more info, call **831.459-3240** or email casfs@ucsc.edu

Directions: <http://casfs.ucsc.edu/about/directions.html>

Cost: \$30 General (\$40 at the door)
\$20 FF&G Members (\$30 at the door)
\$15 UCSC students/limited income
(\$20 at the door)

uc santa cruz
center for agroecology & sustainable food systems
sponsored by the friends of the ucsc Farm & Garden

Pruning and Care of ROSES



Learn how to select, grow, prune, and care for heritage and hybrid roses. In this hands-on workshop, garden manager **Orin Martin** will share which species are best suited for the Central Coast, and take you through the beautiful plantings in the historic Alan Chadwick Garden at UC Santa Cruz for an experience that will delight your senses. Topics will also include fertility, irrigation, and preparation for new plantings.

COST: \$30 General Admission (\$40/door)
\$20 FF&G members (\$30/door)
\$15 UCSC Students/limited income
(\$20/door)

Register online at: roses2017.bpt.me

or pre-register by check, payable to "UC Regents" and send to:

Heidi Harris | CASFS | 1156 High St. | Santa Cruz, CA 95064

Attn: Workshop (Please include phone and email)

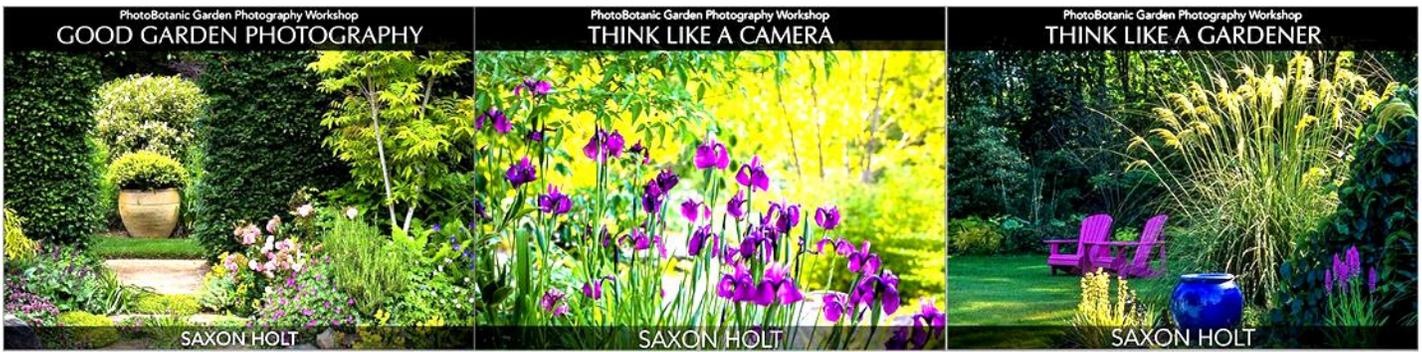
Directions online at: <http://casfs.ucsc.edu/about/directions-2>

Saturday, August 19, 2017

9:30am-12:00pm @ Chadwick Garden

For more information, contact:

831.459-3240 or email: casfs@ucsc.edu



Saxon Holt: Photobotanic

We'll continue the theme started last month about garden photography, if you haven't heard of Saxon Holt and you are serious about improving your photos, check out what he offers when you can.

Saxon is a well-known and extraordinarily talented landscape photographer and photojournalist who lives in Northern California. He is a Fellow of The Garden Writers Association (GWA) and Board member of Pacific Horticulture Society. You've probably seen his work in books such as The American Meadow Garden with John Greenlee and Hardy Succulents with Gwen Kelaidis

You can see his photos at the web site he has created, PhotoBotanic.com where he also teaches garden photography and contributes to a Learning Center on the art of garden photography. There he has e-books and really excellent and free on-line garden photography workshops, with detailed information and instructions.

The photos at the top of this page show a few of his workshops. Good Gardening Photography is the first, and it lays the foundation for his approach to photographing gardens, along with specific tips. Here is his introduction:

"Hunting for photos is one of the great joys of garden photography, involving the distillation of a grand garden experience down to images that tell a story of how the garden makes you, the photographer, feel. When your photos tell stories, when they reveal not just the garden but what you have to say about it, they are 'good' photos..."

...A good photo is easy to look at and tells a story—a story the photographer wants to tell. It is made with intention, directing your viewer to see what you, the photographer, saw. It is not a snapshot; it is about illustrating,

informing, and inspiring others with what you saw and felt. "

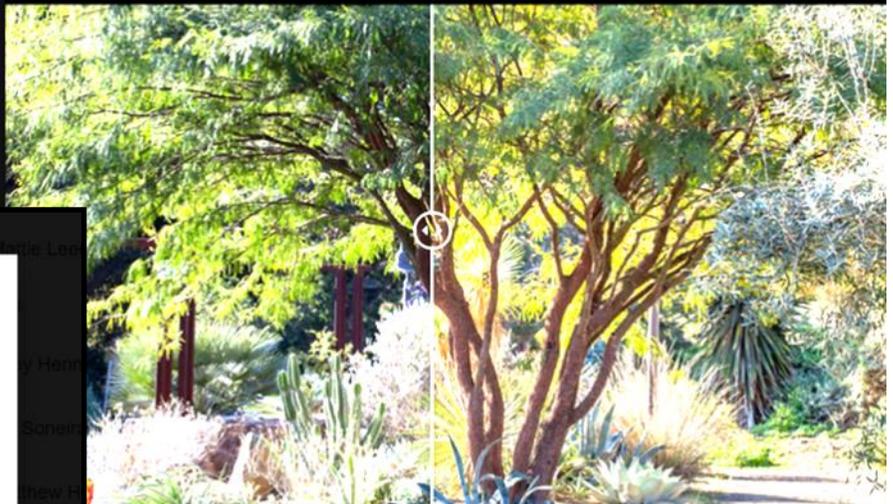
I subscribe to Saxon's monthly newsletter, receiving regular blog posting. Many times they take the form of "Tip of the Month", and link to a longer article on the topic. You can also find these tips and links to his blog on his Facebook page,



<https://www.facebook.com/PhotoBotanic/>

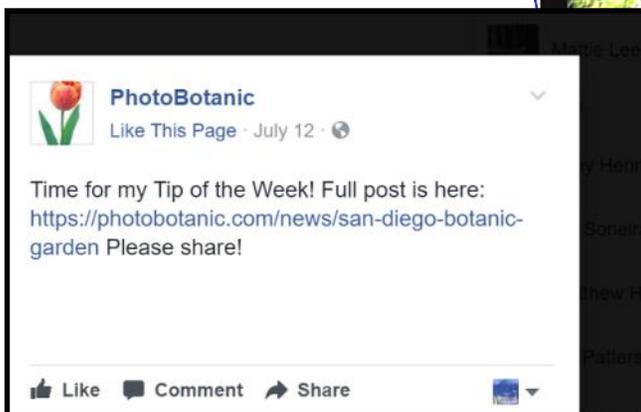
HOW TO SHOOT IN THE SUN

Digital photography has made it possible to take garden photos in the sun! Expose for the shadows and create a bright photo. By opening the shadows and bringing in more detail in post production, as well as warming the temperature, I salvaged a shot I once would never have taken. Of course in California the sun is bright as soon as it rises and these photos were taken about one hour after sunup before the shadows got too deep.



PhotoBotanic
Garden Library of Saxon Holt

TIP OF THE WEEK



Remember to share your garden photographs! Everyone who sends one to the Editor will be entered in a December drawing to win the book [The Garden Photography Workshop: Tips and Techniques for Capturing Your Garden.](#)

Here's a photo contributed by Bill Patterson.



Spring Harvest in Wisteria

Here's one from Marcia Meyer—succulents in a clay sculpture from Oaxaca. Marcia recently took a Cabrillo Extension class on cell phone photography, a class she really recommends. Among other things, she learned the correct way to take a panorama photo (click on the panorama icon, keep your arm straight and just move your hand to rotate the camera). She also learned about the advantages of using the HDR mode. HDR is a setting for High Dynamic Range, meaning your phone camera will process photos slightly differently than normal in order to capture greater detail from bright and dark areas in your photo.



Happy Senorita



"Plants Are the Mulch"

Margaret Roach at her Away to Garden blog (<http://awaytogarden.com/plants-mulch-nature-based-design-wisdoms-claudia-west/>) recently interviewed Claudia West, who co-authored the 2015 book [Planting in a Post-Wild World](#) with Thomas Rainer. The ideas in this book keep resonating with me, especially the ideas to mulch with plants like Mother Nature does. We are always told how important using mulch is to successful gardening. Of course, mulching *IS* helpful in helping plants get established in our gardens. Claudia's co-author Tom says, "Traditional garden design often isolates plants, setting them apart in a sea of mulch". Claudia encourages us to think of plants as communities, to work around this concept that plants cover soil. She reminds us that nature abhors a vacuum. Instead of mulching with wood, we can work with plants like they are designed in evolutionary terms to grow. This is beneficial in many different ways. Creating lush, dense plantings mimics how plants arrange themselves in the wild to provide more habitat for wildlife and to soak up rain like a sponge.

As part of the endeavor to create more of a sustainable herbaceous layer in my garden, I went for a walkabout to see what already works as a no-maintenance or low-maintenance ground cover in my garden. I looked particularly for plants that are self-propagating. The most successful of these plants in my garden are: wild oregano, with lavender-colored blossoms, and wild strawberry. I also find layers of Lamb's Ear, California Pipevine, horehound, hardy geranium, small varieties of iceplant like *Delosperma cooperi*, some sedums, euphorbias, Creeping Jenny, Dead Nettle, smallish salvias, Clematis 'My Angel' and low-growing manzanitas such as *Arctostaphylos 'Emerald Carpet'* or 'Big Sur'. Many of these I got from our club's plant sales. What will **YOU** bring to a plant sale to help us make plants serve as mulch in our landscapes and gardens?

How to Make Your Own Garden Videos

Creating a video of your garden, your favorite plants or a how-to topic that's useful and watchable is probably easier than you think. Plus, it can be free or very inexpensive. Here are tips for beginner and DIY videographers.

<https://goodgardeningvideos.org/how-to-make-videos-yourself/>

I came across this recipe in the June edition of Costco Connections, and made it for company last month. It was a big hit! I left out the serrano peppers, and next time I would leave out the tomatoes, probably, because they were lost in the salad. And the peaches at Costco weren't ripe, so the farmers' market provided the fruit. This was so delicious and unusual—try it!



I.M. RIPE PEACH AND GRILLED CORN SALAD

Mountain View Fruits Sales

Sweet grilled corn and I.M. Ripe Peaches come together to make the perfect summertime salad. Enjoy this salad all on its own or use it to top grilled chicken or fish.

- 4 ears yellow corn, shucked
- 3 I.M. Ripe yellow peaches, pitted and diced
- 3 Roma tomatoes, diced
- 3-4 green onions, trimmed and thinly sliced
- 1-2 serrano peppers, stemmed and minced
- 2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons seasoned rice vinegar
- 2 avocados, pitted and diced
- Salt and pepper to taste

Preheat grill to medium high. Grill corn until char marks are visible on all sides, about 10-15 minutes. Let corn cool, then slice kernels off cob and transfer to a medium bowl. Stir in peaches, tomatoes, green onions, and serrano peppers. Drizzle on lemon juice and seasoned rice vinegar, and stir to combine. Add avocados and stir gently. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Makes 6 servings.

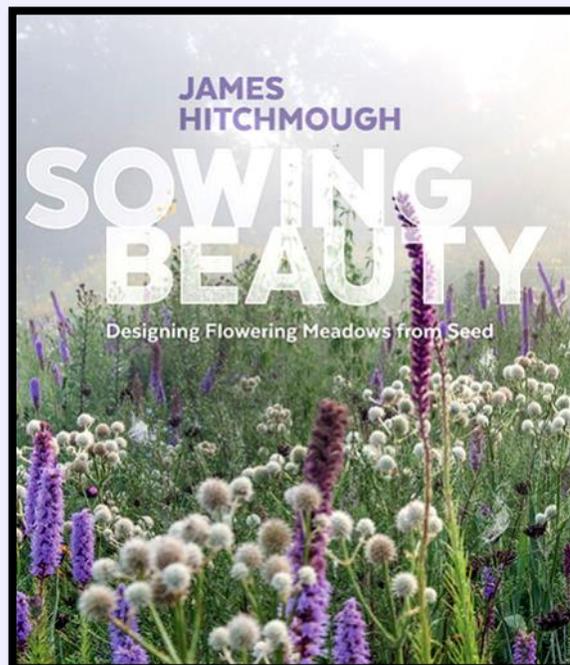


Drying Hydrangeas

The secret to perfectly dried hydrangeas is simple – don't rush it. Wait until they are ready before picking them. The timing is much more important than the method. Don't cut the blossoms at the height of their color; fresh, recently opened blooms rarely dry well in the open air. Hydrangeas do best when allowed to dry on the plant before picking them. Leave blooms on shrubs 'til late summer. Experiment with harvesting from August through October.

Toward the end of summer

(continued next page)



James Hitchmough is well-regarded in the design world for his exuberant, colorful, and flower-filled meadows. His signature style can be seen in prominent places like London's Olympic Park and the Botanic Garden at the University of Oxford. Using a distinct technique of sowing meadows from seed, he creates plant communities that mimic the dramatic beauty of natural meadows and offer a succession of blooms over many months—a technique that can be adapted to work in both large-scale public gardens and smaller residential gardens. Sowing Beauty shows you how to recreate Hitchmough's masterful, romantic style. You'll learn how to design and sow seed mixes that include a range of plants, both native and exotic, and how to maintain the sown spaces over time. Color photographs show not only the gorgeous finished gardens, but also all the steps along the way.

By the way, Timber Press is having a summer sale, 30% off of all books, including the one above. Free shipping for orders over \$50. "Weed tomorrow, read today." www.timberpress.com.



Making Fruit Wines - Free Class and Demonstration



Saturday, August 12 at 11 AM - 12 PM

Want to learn more about making fruit wines? Learn about making basic fruit wines from fruits like plums, peaches, and cactus fruits. This is a free class/demo held at Mountain Feed & Farm Supply, 9550 Highway 9, Ben Lomond. Demo lasts one hour. Please RSVP by emailing events@mountainfeed.com. Space is limited to 20 students.

August Board Meeting

Monday August 28 at 6 PM

Join us for a tour of Pat McVeigh's garden, good eats and a meeting to discuss The Gardeners' Club business, plans, ideas and events. You don't have to be a Board Member to attend. Pat's address is 2573 Parker Street in Soquel; her phone number, if you have questions, is 555-6553.

Get Ready for August Planting

Many edible plants intended for fall and winter harvest can be seeded into August. A wide range of greens can be planted now, and many, like kale, broccoli and cauliflower are less prone to pests when planted late in the season than those planted in spring. Chinese cabbage, escarole, endive, chard, spinach and lettuces can be seeded throughout August. Cooler weather typically starts to arrive by the end of the month, making seeds and new seedlings easier to keep moist than in July. Quick crops like radishes and turnip greens can go in now, too. Do succession seeding every few weeks to ensure a longer harvest season.

For best results, plant iris rhizomes in July, August or September. This is also the best time (plants are normally dormant during the heat of July and August) to divide and replant iris that have become overcrowded,

Monterey Bay Iris Society

2017 IRIS SALES



Sat., Aug. 5, 2017 10 am – noon or sell out

Deer Park Shopping Center, courtyard in front of the Red Apple Café

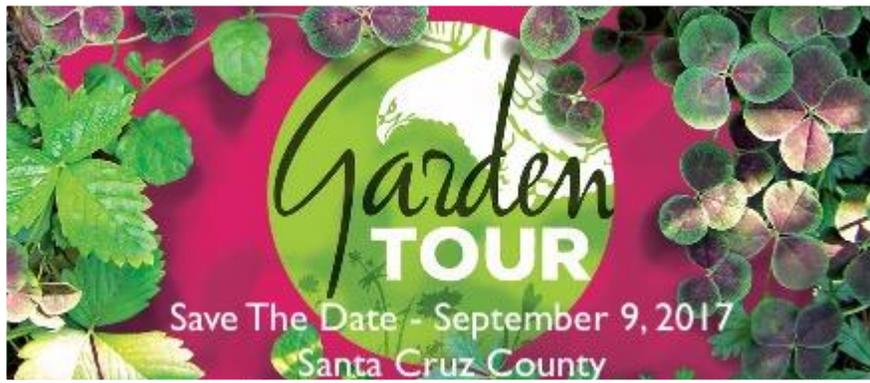
Sat., Aug. 12, 2017 9 am – noon or sell out

Aptos Farmers' Market, Cabrillo College

Drying Hydrangeas—Continued from Page 5

the petals will begin to age to a vintage look. If left while longer, many blooms pick up interesting shades of burgundy and pink. Cut the blooms with a 12-18" stem, strip off the leaves, arrange them in a vase, with or without water, and leave them to dry for a few weeks. If you use water, fill the vase 1/2 full but don't refill it as it evaporates.

If you want to use your dried hydrangeas for a wreath or other projects, submerge flower heads in water for 15 minutes to rehydrate, making them supple enough for crafting. If you want more intense colors, you can cut blooms when fresh and use silica gel or a cornmeal-borax mixture. For more information on this method, go to hydrangeashydrangeas.com. This website has information about all things hydrangea.



SAVE THE DATE!

The UC Master Gardeners of Monterey and Santa Cruz Counties will hold their annual Garden Tour in Santa Cruz on Saturday September 9th, 2017. Eight distinctively stunning gardens from east to west Santa Cruz will be featured. The gardens range from lovely urban oases, to a school's Life Lab Garden, to estates on the edge of town that blend seamlessly into wild areas. Redwood forests to fruit tree orchards, native plants to palm trees, these gardens incorporate gardening techniques focused on wise use of water and encouraging native wildlife. Don't miss this opportunity to take a peek at, and be inspired by, some uniquely California gardens! You'll also want to make time that day to visit the tour headquarters at the Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History near Seabright Beach for gardening presentations, a plant sale and a silent auction.

Additional tour information, including how to buy tickets, will be available on the Master Gardeners website later this month (mbmg.ucanr.edu/).

HOW TO MAKE A KEYHOLE GARDEN WORKSHOP — MONTEREY BAY MASTER GARDENERS

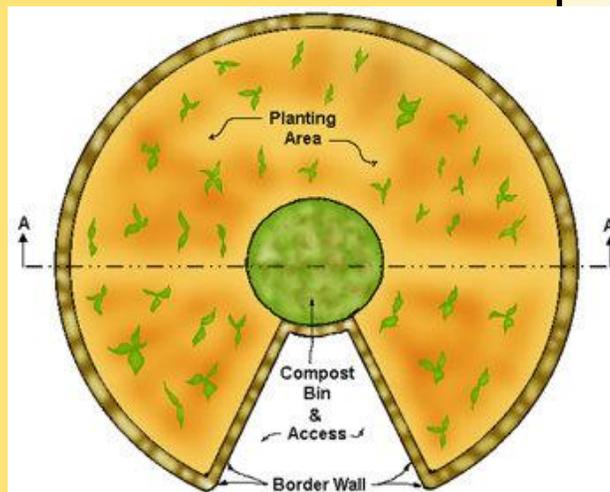
August 26th - 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Contact: Tina Heitzman, tina.heizman@gmail.com

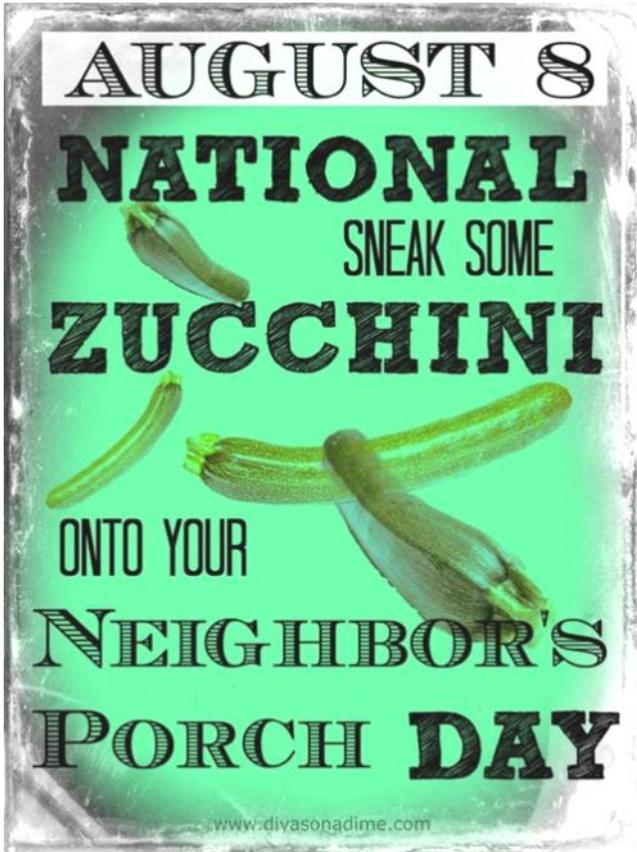
Location: UC Master Gardeners of Monterey Bay- Demonstration Garden

Learn from UC Master Gardener Otis Johnson, how to make a keyhole Garden. Keyhole gardens are circular raised bed gardens. Crops are planted in the larger outer circles and the center portion of these gardens are active composting baskets. Small aisles are built to access the compost baskets. Keyhole gardens get their name from the bird's eye view of these features.

The composting basket is center to the success of keyhole gardens. Kitchen scraps and grey water are added daily to the compost basket for continuous replenishment of the soil. The soil for keyhole gardens is specially layered to boost its ability to maintain moisture and nourishment. This class is FREE.



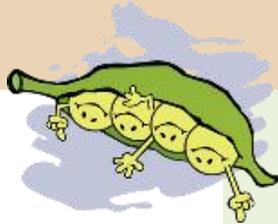
Keyhole Garden Plan View



If your neighbors complain, let them know that a zucchini has more potassium than a banana.

Our front page logo is graciously shared with us by artist Lisa Zador. Order a print or see more of her work at her Etsy shop www.etsy.com/shop/curiousprintpattern.

It's easy-peasy to join our club! Dues are \$12 per calendar year. Make check to "The Gardeners' Club" and mail to P.O. Box 3025, Ben Lomond, CA 95005. Meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. on the 2nd Thursday of each month at the Aptos Grange, 2555 Mar Vista Dr., Aptos



The Gardeners' Club

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