



COOS COUNTY MASTER GARDENER™ ASSOCIATION

GARDEN THYMES

Sweet Preservation

We are Living and Gardening in Interesting Times

By Tina Powers

Our world was turned upside down in March. We were all faced with serious challenges to our families, our health, our nation and our world. Here in Coos County and elsewhere on the Southern Oregon coast, the impact was felt immediately. Meetings and classes cancelled. Jobs lost, income lost, a tectonic change for our society. It brought to mind the years just after Pearl Harbor and WW2. I watched a show about how England dealt with the panics and rationing of that time, called "Wartime Farm". The similarities brought to mind that the panic or out of control feelings then, as now, were brought under control by the resolve of the citizens. They went from a nation importing the bulk of their food to one that became self sufficient. It reminded me that WE gardeners can get back some control in our lives by gardening, WE can bring healthy immunity building foods to our tables, and JOY to our lives by growing, harvesting, preserving and sharing the fruits of our labor with our families and friends. Gardening has not stopped. Kindness and generosity has flourished. I know that many gardeners that had planned to grow plants for the cancelled Tomato-Rama sale donated hundreds of plants to community gardens, friends, families, and many others so that the growing spirit has remained. Many of our gardeners are donating food to the food banks and spreading a bit of calm in this turbulent world. June, July, August and September gives us an abundance of produce with the mind set of rotating those crops and getting ready for fall planting. With the drought situation, it seems that the late rains have increased the growth spurts in my own gardens. The garlic is huge this year, and my potatoes are off the charts. Keep in mind that even though the seed companies were overrun with new growers and seed stocks wiped out, they are getting their footing back and with our great Oregon coastal climate, we can continue to grow bountiful harvests in Summer, Fall and Winter. So HAVE FAITH! We will eventually be able to see our friends up close, give those hugs to our families and enjoy communal meals with our home grown bounty.

**Mark this on your calendar!!
June is National Pollinator
Month.**

**June 22 to 28th marks National
Pollinator Week. Use June as the
time to grow those plants that
encourage our bee and bird
friends to visit our healthy gar-
dens and sites of beauty. Plant
native non-invasive pollen and
nectar producing plants for a
healthy environment.**

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Master Gardener



Master Food Preservers



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Newsletter Editor

Tina Powers

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Published three times a year in February, June and October, in cooperation with Oregon State University Extension Service, Coos County Master Gardener and Coos County Master Food Preserver programs.

Accommodation requests related to a disability should be made at least one week prior to a workshop or event. Publications will be made available in an accessible alternative format upon request.

Please contact program coordinator Samantha Clayburn, 541-572-5263, ext. 25299 or Samantha.clayburn@oregonstate.edu

Coordinator's Message

Our normal as we knew it changed mid-March and it still isn't back to normal. But with all the unknown, fear and hopelessness surrounding many of us, I have also seen bright spots, acts of kindness and sharing, and a return to simpler times and connecting with others more meaningfully. Our busy schedules suddenly got not so busy!

Back in March, I had to stop all of our in person programming such as the MG plant clinics and the Master Food Preserver volunteer training and weekend canning workshops. We had to cancel our popular and highly anticipated Tomato-Rama plant sale as well as the annual Fertilize Your Mind garden seminar. But we were not alone, across the state and nation, events were cancelled and people were told to stay home. I suddenly became a work from home mother with two teenagers that were now homeschooled. While I will admit it took a couple weeks to figure out the new daily schedule, I always knew what I needed to do and that was be there for the volunteers I work with and the communities that relies on Extension to get their questions answered.

OSU empowered and supported Extension faculty and staff to continue to serve our communities and look for innovative ways we could deliver our programming while following executive orders. There has been amazing webinars, Facebook Live videos, Zoom meetings, etc that we have been able to share with our communities to keep delivering the quality education and expertise we have. A key example of that is the OSU Master Gardener program made it's short course on vegetable gardening available online for free and over 40 THOUSAND people signed up to take it from around the world. COVID-19 did not stop us from gardening, if anything, it encouraged more people to grow a garden this year. Seed companies were so inundated with orders they had to scramble to get orders filled and secure more seeds. And with all the new gardens comes produce that will need to be preserved somehow! I find myself answering quite a few questions daily from community members about gardening as well as canning because of this. Both the Master Gardener and Master Food Preserver volunteers are itching to get back to being able to staff plant clinics, community garden demo beds, community event booths and hold preservation workshops again! We are working on making that happen while making the safety and welfare of our staff, volunteers, and community members our number one priority! So in the meantime, continue to reach out to us via email, phone or check out our Facebook pages until we can meet face to face again.

I want to say in closing, I miss the volunteers so much and appreciate all the questions they've answered, knowledge they've shared, and plants they've donated to our communities throughout this pandemic.

<https://extension.oregonstate.edu/coos>
<https://www.facebook.com/CoosCountyMasterFoodPreservers/>
<https://www.facebook.com/CoosCountyMasterGardeners/>
<https://www.facebook.com/CoosCountyExtensionService/>

Samantha Clayburn

Volunteer Coordinator



Some Thoughts on Gardening with Children (Young and Old)

By Donna Leveridge-Campbell

(Originally for Children, but Donna's article is especially appropriate for everyone in today's world.)

"Look, Grandma!" Whenever I see or think about snap peas I remember my grandson's pleasure as he created little edible bouquets. He would stick those tiny sweet broccoli flowers that were still appearing on the previous year's broccoli plants, into the ends of just-picked snap peas, and munch them down. This was a few years after this photo



was taken of him with the basket of veggies he helped harvest. (Sadly he didn't live close enough to help with growing the garden.)

The early years are a perfect time to help children establish healthy eating habits and a love of nature and gardening.

Young children, (e.g. 3-6 year-olds) learn most easily through their senses and active play, following their curiosity, interacting with their environment, and from imitating adults and peers. They are often eager to garden with adults. This is a great way for young children (and children of all ages) to develop a strong connection with the natural world, learn where our food comes from, and begin to understand some basic principles of ecology and plant growth. Gardening can be so rewarding as children see the results of their efforts produce real fruits and veggies that they can eat (and produce pretty flowers, too). Although young children typically are reluctant to try and like new foods, when they have an opportunity to grow them themselves, they are much more likely to taste and enjoy these healthy foods.

And being able to go out in the garden and snack on snap peas, for example, can be a real delight for the young ones.

It's a good idea to have a place set aside in or near the garden where they can just "mess around" and play in the dirt and/or mud. They might pretend to plant a garden, which can be the first step in wanting to grow a real garden.

It can also be very helpful to keep young children's attention while you are working in your garden. And have such a place without so many do's and don'ts.

The goal of growing healthy plants to harvest can be a low-stress, relaxing experience for all.

Caring for a garden helps children develop a multitude of skills, knowledge, and a sense of responsibility. Planting seeds and then watching the plants make their own seeds, helps develop an understanding of the circle of life; as does making compost with plant "waste". Talking about their experiences in the garden will deepen their understanding while improving verbal skills. Parents and other caring adults can foster this kind of learning by doing such things as sharing their passion for gardening, modeling respect for the plants, showing how to use tools, nurturing children's sense of wonder and curiosity, and supporting their cognitive development.

Some of my favorite concepts are explained in *Living Sunlight: How Plants Bring the Earth to Life*, by Molly Bang and Penny Chisholm. "Without plants, you would have no oxygen. Without plants, you would have no food. Without plants you could not live. Without plants there would be no life on earth." "... you breathe out carbon dioxide and the plants all breathe it in." "You share life with everything alive." This book provides some big ideas that can be shared with children in ways they can understand.

Read and discuss age-appropriate books about gardening and the natural world. (See some suggestion below.) Learn together about plant parts and how they grow. Observe earthworms, ladybugs, and so much more. Do fun creative plant-related activities with your children. There are lots of books and online resources with ideas. *(continued on next page)*

Some Thoughts on Gardening with Children (Young and Old) continued

As children engage in these kinds of activities, there are many opportunities for developing language and cognitive skills (including problem-solving and decision-making), eye-hand coordination and what is often referred to as “fine motor skills”. Young children typically love to count things like seeds, picked veggies, etc. They are also strengthening and developing coordination of their large muscles and improving their balance. And they are learning social-emotional skills as well, such as persistence and patience, sharing, cooperation, and following directions.

For varying reasons, some favorite plants for gardening with young children are: Snap Peas, Snow Peas, Carrots, Radishes, Sunflowers, Cherry Tomatoes, Broccoli, Kale, Potatoes, Bell Peppers (including Red!), Nasturtiums, Raspberries, Green Beans, Corn, Butternut Squash, Pumpkins (and Gourds).

Some basics to get you started:

- Use your judgement regarding what to plant, considering your preferences, abilities, available space, micro climate(s), etc. Select some seeds and plants that you expect would grow successfully and easily (and some quickly) at your site and engage children in deciding what to grow. Do they have favorites that might work?
- You could set aside a small plot just for their personal garden. This also helps them feel more committed to the garden and a sense of pride develops in their accomplishments. But this wouldn't replace the messing-around dirt-play area.
- Raised beds (not too wide as to be unreachable), half barrels, and other containers may be used. These make weeding easier and help children focus on the plants and know where to walk without damaging soil or plants. If you garden directly in the soil on the ground, you can provide some indicators such as pavers or a mulched path to walk on.

- Set a few clear, realistic, expectations at the beginning and explain in simple terms why they are important.
- Remind children to: “Pay attention to the plants, and to what you are doing.”
- Provide real tools (small ones, if possible) rather than toy tools which break easily and don't work as well. Demonstrate their safe and effective use. Include a magnifier.
- Show children how to water the soil when needed, not the plant, itself.
- Be aware of opportunities to engage the senses and to follow children's interests.
- Show young children how to gently touch plants (first using one finger so as not to hurt the tender plants, and to encourage respect). Then show them how to handle them carefully, as needed to provide care, to explore, and to pick without damaging the plants.
- Adjust the way and amount you help a child with their own plants and/or plot, according to the child's age, temperament, skills, requests, etc. Keep it positive.
- Model thankfulness for/to the plants who provide for us.
- Avoid asking a lot of one-right-answer questions. Instead, ask age-appropriate open-ended questions that help them think and verbalize their observations, feelings, etc., for example, “What changes do you see in the pea plants today?”
- Teach children to look for signs that a fruit or vegetable is ripe. Help them learn to restrain their possible impulses to pick everything before it is ready to eat. (A tiny taste of a cute white unripe strawberry dissuaded another of my grandsons from picking more of those.)
- Talk with the children about their experiences in the garden.
- Engage children in preparing the food to eat.
- Celebrate the harvest.

And remember to have FUN (and patience) and to share your enthusiasm and sense of wonder!

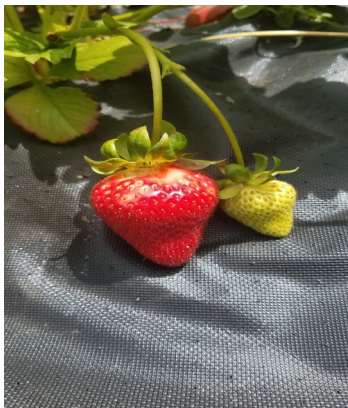
There are lots of wonderful online resources available, including music such as “Dirt Made My Lunch” by the Banana Slug String Band: <https://youtu.be/ySzSVu1eERo>.

See next page for list of recommend garden related reading for families.

Here are a few of the many wonderful picture books for the family related to gardens, plants, farms, nature, etc.:

- * *Eddie's Garden and How to Make Things Grow* – Sarah Garland
- * *Flower Garden* – Eve Bunting; illus. Kathryn Hewitt
- * *Pumpkin Circle: The Story of a Garden* – George Levenson
- * *Plant a Little Seed* – Bonnie Christensen
- * *The Carrot Seed* – Ruth Kraus; illus. Crockett Johnson
- * *From Seed to Plant* – Gail Gibbons
- * *I Will Never, Not Ever, Eat a Tomato* – Lauren Child
- * *Compost Stew: An A to Z Recipe for the Earth* – Mary McKenna Sidals; illus. Ashley Wolf
- * *Compost Critters* – Bianca Lavies
- * *I Am a Part of Nature* – Bobbie Kalman & Janine Schaub
- * *Eating the Alphabet* – Lois Ehlert
- * *Farmer's Market / Dia de Mercado* – Carmen Parks; illus. Edward Martinez
- * *Before We Eat: From Farm to Table* – Pat Brisson; illus. Mary Azarian
- * *In the Garden (Look Once, Look Again Science Series)* – David Schwartz
- * *A Gardener's Alphabet* – Mary Azarian
- * *Living Sunlight: How Plants Bring the Earth to Life* – Molly Bang & Penny Chisholm

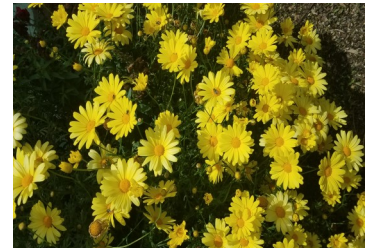
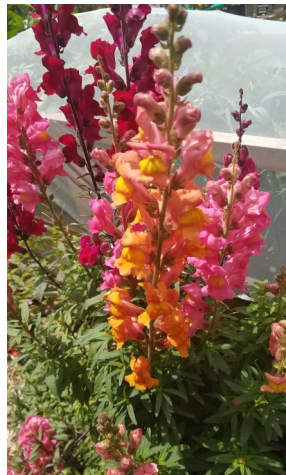
Enjoy!



**What's growing in your garden?
Photos courtesy of Coos Master
Gardeners to cheer you up during
these challenging times.**



Lovely blooms to brighten days.



Spotlight on Food Preservation : **Preserving the Summer Bounty Safely**

By Samantha Clayburn

As we enter the last few days of Spring and welcome the Summer season, food preservers everywhere are gearing up for their busy preserving season. Those gardens they so lovingly planted a few months back are now returning the love and providing a bounty of produce to nourish and sustain their families. Or if you are like me and don't have a knack for keeping plants alive, you head out to the produce stands, farmers markets or u-pick farms and gather your produce to can, freeze, or dehydrate.

I did not grow up canning, so when I decided to start once I had my own family, I was confused on where to start and where to go to get canning advice. This was prior to me working at OSU Extension and becoming the Master Gardener/Master Food Preserver Coordinator. I started off small with making freezer jam and that was a hit, having two little boys that loved PB and J sandwiches, it really helped reduce the jam budget! Then I decided to can salsa, this is where I made some mistakes. First off, I thought I could just get any old recipe off of the Internet and it would be safe, boy was I wrong! Hindsight really is 20/20 and I am so thankful that I didn't make myself or my family sick with those early jars of salsa. While teaching MFP workshops, both myself and the MFP volunteers hear time and time again "Well I haven't died yet" when trying to explain to someone that their recipe could be dangerous and put them at risk for foodborne illnesses or worse yet, death. My go to response to that statement is now "Well true but it only takes once and when it does happen you won't be able to come tell me."

Food preservation has changed so much over the years and much of that is because of increased knowledge as well as changes in pH levels in foods, soils and environments and even our own immune systems. Also if you look back in history, cases of death by Botulism (a serious health concern in improperly canned foods) were much higher than they are today and that is because of increased safety in home preservation over the past century. So as each Summer rolls around, I am reminded of the importance of sharing safe reliable canning information with our communities. Here are some tips and resources for you to make sure you have the proper tools to safely preserve all of that Summer goodness you grow (or purchase) this year.

- ♦ Low acid foods such as Vegetables, Meats and Seafood need to be processed in a pressure canner. Do not use electric pressure canners as they have not been tested for safety with pressure canning foods. If you are usually a dial gauge pressure canner, make sure to have the gauge tested yearly or sooner if it has been dropped or damaged. Dial gauges can be off so you want to make sure it is tested and you are processing at the correct pressure. Also always check for updated recipes, processing times have changed over the years and one of the biggest changes I still hear people unaware of is for tuna canning. It is 100 minutes for processing but some people are still only processing for 90 minutes or even worse 60 minutes!
- ♦ Jams and Jellies need to be processed in a boiling water canner. Old ways of preserving jams and jellies such as using paraffin wax or simply putting the hot product in the jar and putting the lid on and inverting the jar to "seal" it are not safe and can allow mycotoxins to grow in the preserves and cause illness.
- ♦ Make sure to use reliable, tested recipes when canning pickles and salsas. Since you are using a low-acid food (vegetables) you need to raise the acidity of the product by adding vinegar or lemon or lime juice and this must be done in the correct ratios to make it safe to process in a boiling water canner. This is where we see a lot of rogue recipes and people trying to can unapproved and potentially unsafe product. Just last year at fair, we had to disqualify quite a few jars of salsa because the recipes were unapproved and downright unsafe (a few weren't even canning recipes they were for a fresh salsa that the person just threw in a jar and canned for 10 minutes).
- ♦ Great places to get safe tested recipes are from Extension websites (<https://impact.extension.org/search/>), Ball's website ([Freshpreserving.com](https://www.freshpreserving.com)), and the National Center for Home Food Preservation (<https://nchfp.uga.edu/>). A quick safety note about Ball's website though, make sure to do the recipe as it is written by Ball- do not make changes even though some of the comments will say they swapped out this or that, those are not approved changes and could potentially make it unsafe. We have reached out to Ball to see if they can fix that and head off potential unsafe "suggestions".
- ♦ Our summer Food Safety and Preservation Hotline is another great resource and will be available starting July 13th. (see next page for more information and where to call)



Summer Garden Checklist

Summertime abundance. The beds are FULL and almost overwhelming with product. With the late spring rains, it is jungle like. Time to tame the beast. Harvesting, watering, weeding and processing is the name of the Summer game. Here are some of our tips for your Summer checklist.

- ◆ Harvest time for greens, peas, early potatoes, carrots, beets, garlic, fava beans, artichokes, beans, strawberries, lettuces, and a huge list of tasty veggies and fruits.
- ◆ Keep up with weeding. Weeds can take away from the vitality of your vegetables and bulbs.
- ◆ Time for mulching in the hot summer months and shade cloths where appropriate.
- ◆ Harvest blueberries, raspberries and other cane berries.
- ◆ Keep planting progressive crops such as warm weather lettuce, radishes, snow and snap peas.
- ◆ Harvest apricots, peaches and later on, nectarines and apples
- ◆ Plant seed flats of cole crops (cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, and Brussels sprouts) in August for fall planting.
- ◆ Beets, bush beans, carrots, cauliflower, broccoli, lettuce, kale and peas planted in midsummer provide fall and winter crops.
- ◆ Dig spring bulbs when tops have died down; divide and store or replant.
- ◆ First planting of Chinese cabbage, kohlrabi, and rutabagas.
- ◆ Cure garlic in July and onions and shallots in August for longer storage.
- ◆ Keep an eye out for powdery mildew in August as it is a common problem for the squash family, grapes, roses and other ornamentals.
- ◆ To reduce evaporation, water vegetable and flower gardens in the early morning. Water the soil rather than leaves to reduce disease. Water deeply and infrequently to encourage root growth.
- ◆ Pay careful attention to watering and feeding hanging baskets of flowers or vegetable plantings during extended periods of hot weather.
- ◆ Harvest tomatoes, tomatillos, melons, peppers and corn in late summer early fall.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CHECK OUT THE FOLLOWING WEB PAGE.

Source: <https://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening/techniques/monthly-garden-calendars>



Safe, Healthy Food Preservation

Food preservation recipes and instructions

<https://extension.oregonstate.edu/mfp/publications>

Food Safety and Preservation Hotline

July 13 to October 9, 2020 9 am – 4 pm

1-800-354-7319



Canning Timer and Checklist app

Download Free

<https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/pnw689>

Contact your local Extension office for pressure canner gauge tests and classes

<https://extension.oregonstate.edu/find-us>



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Planting Time-Vegetables

Summer is upon us and yes it is that time to plan for your Fall planting.

Outdoor planting for June and July

- Amaranth greens
- Beets
- Carrots
- Corn
- Lambs quarters
- Orach
- Cilantro
- Asian greens
- Scallions and Chives
- Beans, Bush and Pole
- Cucumbers
- Summer squash
- Lettuce
- Kale
- Swiss Chard

Outdoor planting for August (for Fall)

- Beets
- Spinach
- Brassicas such as Broccoli Raab, Asian greens, Collards
- Cress
- Endive and escarole, Raddicchio
- Lettuce
- Radishes
- Miner's lettuce
- Onions
- Scallions
- Chinese Cabbage
- Cilantro
- Shungiku

Outdoors planting for September

- Beets
- Spinach
- Chard
- Carrots
- Fava Beans
- Corn Salad
- Arugula
- Asian Greens
- Mustard
- Cabbage
- Turnips (for greens)

Planting Time-Flowers

Crazy blooms for the summer and deep colors for the Fall.

Outdoor planting for June and July (there is still time for some blooms. Optimum time to sow perennials for next Spring and Summer.

- Borage
- Nigella
- Spider Flower
- Nasturtiums
- Butterfly Flower
- Sunflowers
- Zinnia
- Perennial Buckwheat
- Angelica
- Lovage
- Evening Primrose
- Snapdragons
- Hollyhock
- Lobelia
- Carnations
- Dianthus
- Baby's Breath
- Cottage Pinks
- Rose Campio
- Sweet William
- Salad Burnet
- Coneflowers
- Chrysanthemum
- Shasta Daisy
- Yarrow
- Viola

Outdoors planting for August

- Lacey phacelia
- Love in the Mist Nigella
- Saffron Crocus
- Mallow
- California Poppy

Outdoors planting for Early September

- Borage
- Bluebells
- Farewell to Spring
- Limnanthaceae
- Alyssum Lobularia maritima
- Annual Lupines
- Mountain Phlox
- Rose Angel Pink
- Flanders, California, Breadseed, Peony, & Shirley Poppy varieties
- California Poppy
- Ranunculaceae
- Larkspur



South Coast Community Gardens Update

BANDON

Good Earth's garden beds are filling out as warm weather (sort of) begins to show up. Five of our beds are exclusively growing food for the local food bank and Meals on Wheels. One of our board members is closely involved with these organizations and has made it her mission to see as much donated produce as possible get to those in need.

The E.A.T program which we used to donate to has been cancelled for the time being due to physical distancing concerns. We are also looking into adding a third row of cinder blocks to eight beds to make them more height accessible for our gardeners. We've established some guidelines for keeping all safe during COVID-19.

These include:

- ◆ No more than 2 people working on their bed at any time
- ◆ - Kids are to stay with parents at their bed when others are in the garden
- ◆ - Gloves are strongly encouraged when touching hose spigots and gates.
- ◆ -The shed is closed (to prevent communal tool usage) and members are expected to bring their own tools.
- ◆ We also have set up a hand washing station.

Our Board meetings are currently being held outdoors at the community garden on the 2nd Monday at 5 pm. We wear masks and sit at least 6' apart.

Judy Jackson



COOS BAY

Lady Bug Landing is moving along well. People are following the Covid-19 protocols we have put in place. We asked the public to please respect that and not come into the garden, but with Oregon going to Phase 2 we are lifting that. Gardeners have been busy getting their gardens planted and we have had a few plots given up that we are now planning on planting for the Food Bank if no one wants to apply. The demo beds are mostly weeded and planted with lettuce, strawberries, kohlrabi, potatoes, fennel, various brassicas, tomatoes, onions, leeks and shallots, summer squash, cucumbers and beans. Also more flowers have been planted in the flower and herb beds, and more brassicas will be planted in the future. So far 70 pounds of lettuce have been donated to the Food Bank. Two gardeners have been helping Renee this season with the demo beds and Mary Robertson has started watering these areas twice a week, which is a big help.

Happy Gardening

Renee Blom

COQUILLE

We had our plant sale on Saturday, May 23. Considering the restrictions, and the minimal publicity we did, it was pretty successful. We were very clear in our publicity that everyone must wear a mask and gloves to shop in the garden. Almost everyone who came was prepared but we provided non-latex gloves and masks for those who weren't prepared. We restricted to ten the number of people in the garden at one time. We also kept a contact list of everyone entering the garden.

We were lucky to have so many wonderful plants grown for us by Mary Dixon, Dottie Tucker, Claudia Turner, Jim Rice, Bonita Clarke and others. We really appreciated all the gardeners who grew plants for our sale.

The garden is growing well and looks lush and beautiful, even with the weird on and off weather.

Everyone be safe. Stay healthy.

Sandra Stafford

President and Garden Coordinator

The SOUTH COAST COMMUNITY GARDEN ASSOCIATION welcomes new members. Their monthly meetings are open to the public. The SCCGA meets on the third Tuesday of every month at 5:30pm in the Cedar Room at the Coos Bay Library.



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To receive this newsletter by email (and reduce our mailing costs), please contact Samantha Clayburn at samantha.clayburn@oregonstate.edu or call 541-572-5263, ext. 25299 Thank you!

OSU Extension Service provides a wide variety of free gardening advice and information including a number of online articles and downloadable brochures?

For example, the Growing Your Own downloadable Publication contains advice on composting, container gardens, fertilizing, pests, plants diseases and many other topics. Check it out at: <http://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/em9027>

**DID YOU
KNOW**



Or that you can take a Master Gardener Short Course Series on-line? The eleven courses are based on the OSU Master Gardener curriculum and allow you to learn specific fundamentals of gardening. While the courses do not allow you to receive OSU Master Gardener certification, they will certainly provide you with a wealth of useful information. They are self-paced and can be taken anytime because they are not taught by an instructor. Topics include: Oregon Master Gardener Program, Basic Botany, Soils and Compost, Vegetable Gardening, Introduction to Entomology, Plant Pathology, Pesticide Safety, Herbaceous Ornamental Plants, Sustainable Landscape Design, Sustainable Landscape Management, and Integrated Pest Management.

All courses are \$45 per course.

Get more information at: <https://pace.oregonstate.edu/catalog/master-gardener-short-course-series>

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