

Is there *platzgeist* in your garden? This condition is naturally occurring in any well-designed California native garden. The term refers to the 'spirit of a place' and its presence can be felt - even in the silence or storms of winter. As this year expires and the sun starts on its path back into the Northern Hemisphere, old becomes new again and the natural cycle continues. Spring will be here soon. "A stitch in time saves nine" certainly applies to this optimum time of the year to pull young weed shoots or other unwanted new starts. Excessive poppies come to mind. Christopher Robin had it right when he said, "Let it rain! Who cares?" Cheers to you and your - animal or vegetable - loved ones in this holiday season and the New Year 2011!



What are all those brown things? It's the look of love! The blue flax and yarrow have set seed and are ready to create new life. The seeds that have not been harvested by critters may have dropped to the ground and might also sprout in springtime. If you haven't done so already, you can cut back all stems to their base before the rains have soaked them to sogginess.



Oh shoot!!! Although winter is believed to be a 'dead' time, there is much activity underground in the root zone. And young CA Poppy shoots are coming up now. The crop is easy to thin or remove from unwanted places (like in between stones) by pulling out while soils are moist. Or you might leave them alone for a mass of bloom in spring.

Garden Tips for Winter

Ah, winter! With a little work in the cold now, you can set your garden on the path to a fabulous spring. Specifically:

- Cut back and compost spent flowers, seed heads, and old woody stems.
- Weed now, or wait, watch, and learn what a new seedling turns into before passing judgment as friend or foe.
- Divide plants such as irises and Juncus, making sure sections have healthy roots, stolons, or rhizomes before replanting.
- Use re-potted divisions as gifts for neighbors and friends.
- Transplant remaining divisions, plant new additions, and sow seed sooner than later.
- Continue to take advantage of good planting weather and any winter plant sales at native nurseries.
- Get to know your new plants by making note of their botanical and common names in your own garden journal and placing weather proof name tags nearby when planting.
- Have patience with your new plantings - there is much good activity underground.
- Learn how to turn your irrigation system 'off' or to 'rain delay' for the season, but be sure to keep new plantings and seeds moist if rains do not cooperate.
- Replenish mulch where needed, making sure to keep it away from woody shrubs' bases, tree trunks, and seeded areas.
- Check gardening tools and supplies for any needed repairs or replenishment. Regularly check the [weather forecast](#) for possible freezing temperatures and cover frost-tender plants as necessary.



What's living in the bark of this Monterey pine and making so many holes? This is the granary of our acorn woodpecker. Read about how they save food for the winter and future generations on Wikipedia.



In mid-October this year, Peigi traveled to the island of Crete for the Mediterranean Garden Society's Annual General Meeting. Feel free to peruse photos of the beautiful gardens and countryside. You'll need the password 'crete2010' to see all.

Write To Us!

This newsletter is for you, and we'd love to hear what you'd like to see in future issues. Joan is available to answer your administrative or horticultural questions, and to schedule garden check-ups or consultations. Email Joan at info@indigdesign.com.

Save the Date! Talks being given by Peigi:

March 12, 2011 in Redwood City: [Sustainable Landscaping with California Native Plants](#) and **April 30, 2011** in San Bruno: [Using California Native Plants as an Alternative to Lawn](#) hosted by Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Agency. To reserve your space and for more information call 650-349-3000 or visit [the BAWSCA web site](#). A PDF of the BAWSCA 2011 schedule will be available soon.

March 26, 2011: Landscaping with Waterwise Native Plants hosted by the Unitarian Universalist Church of Palo Alto located at 505 Eastern Charleston Road.

Other Events:

Feb 19, 2011: California Gardens: Beauty and Sustainability With Native Plants - a one-day symposium at Foothill College presented by the Santa Clara Valley chapter of the California Native Plants Society.

April 17, 2011: [Going Native Garden Tour](#) - view native gardens in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties, or consider submitting your own garden for inclusion on the tour. The tour is free, but pre-registration is required. Garden submission deadline is January 15.

May 1, 2011: [Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour](#) - a free tour of showcase native plant gardens in the East Bay.

May 15, 2011: Bay-Friendly Garden Tour - The Bay-Friendly Coalition is offering a self-guided tour of gardens that demonstrate gardening techniques appropriate for local conditions. Gardens in Palo Alto and San Jose are participating for the first time.

Out and About



Mariposa time is November through March! Some populations of the beautiful monarch butterfly overwinter in Pacific Grove and Santa Cruz before starting out again in spring to migrate and reproduce. Read all about them [on Wikipedia](#) and then go experience them in Pacific Grove.

And did you know there is a total lunar eclipse just after midnight on December 20th followed by

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the winter solstice and full moon on December 21st?

This is a seasonal journal in which we endeavor to inspire, inform, and encourage you, the fortunate native garden owner, to find the greatest possible enjoyment from your California native garden.

"Life is a garden. Dig it!" L. McDaniel