

"Let it rain—who cares?" Our clocks have sprung forward, it's the Year of the Hare, and we've hopped past the Spring Equinox already. From new life in the garden to tours, plant sales, and wildflower walks, this primavera promises to be perfect. There is much fun afoot, let's go!



Early spring bloom of western redbud, *Cercis occidentalis*



What's Special Here? This Chaparral Currant, *Ribes malvaceum*, was planted 6 years ago but bloomed profusely only just this year. Why? (a) it is a straight species, not a clone, and more or less a free spirit (b) it finally decided it likes it's new home (c) both a and b. Answer: (c)!

Garden Tips for Spring

- Get out weeds! While the ground is still soft and roots are small, this is the best time to reduce the seed 'bank'. Plus, for whatever reason, it can be extremely therapeutic.
- Plant out new additions to your garden, including wildflowers, during this last best chance while days remain cool and moist.
- Tip-prune *Ceanothus sp.* if needed after the bloom is spent as if you were a grazing deer. This beautiful shrub does not sprout from bare wood.
- Begin to or further train vines up your trellis or fence as they sprout new life and begin to leaf out.
- Serve your slugs and snails... beer. The cheapest kind is fine, pour it in unused pot saucers placed strategically throughout your garden and they will join the party. The morning after, having drunk their 'spirits', what's the nicest way to say this, their 'spirits' will have flown and what remains can be worked into your soil as amendment.
- Watch out for dry spells throughout the spring. We've had a relatively wet winter but if the rain lets up for longer than two weeks, check the moisture of your soil and supplement if needed.
- Make sure you or your garden care professional checks and flushes your drip irrigation system before it's turned on for regular use again.
- Replenish mulch to at least 3" deep in planted areas as rains begin to subside in late spring to help retain the rained-in moisture.



Native Health food Miner's lettuce, *Claytonia perfoliata*, was widely eaten during the California Gold Rush by miners needing good leafy greens in their otherwise limited diet while out in the wild lands. It's delicious and you can grow it yourself from seed (Larner's Seeds). It's considered an annual wild flower and re-seeds itself before completely dying back each year. Although it will probably pop up next year in many new corners of your garden, leave a marker where it was so you know where you might expect to see it next spring.



Got Habitat? A healthy habitat garden requires three components: food, water, and shelter. In this photo, food is provided from the nectar and seeds of plants as well as grubs in the soil, water from the fountain, and

Learning Opportunities Talks being given by Peigi:

CA Natives as an Alternative to Lawn: Enjoy the beauty and benefits these water-wise plants offer!
April 20, 2011 · Burlingame · 6:30 - 8 pm
April 30, 2011 · San Bruno · 9 am - 12 pm

Kid-Friendly Water Wise Gardening: Create a water-efficient space for outdoor learning and play
May 5, 2011 · Portola Valley · 7 - 9 pm
May 25, 2011 · Burlingame · 6:30 - 8 pm
Talks are hosted by Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Agency. To reserve your space and for more information, call 650-349-3000. The schedule is available at the BAWSCA web site.

Stanford Continuing Studies Summer 2011

Designing Your California Native Plant Garden
Summer is a perfect time to plan a California native plant garden. Peigi is teaching a 6 week course starting June 21 at Stanford Continuing Studies. After the completion of course, you will be well on your way to welcoming Fall, the best season to shop for and install native plants.



Spring Garden Tours and Events:

April 16, 2011 Native Plant Sale organized by California Native Plant Society (Santa Clara Valley Chapter) at Hidden Villa Dana Center

April 17, 2011: Going Native Garden Tour* - view native gardens in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties. The tour is free, but pre-registration is required.

April 23-24, 2011 Spring Wildflower Show organized by California Native Plant Society (Santa Clara Valley Chapter) at Mission College Campus Center

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.

June 12, 2011: California Native Garden Tour - A tour of private sustainable native gardens in Santa Cruz County

shelter from the evergreen shrubs. Plants include *Ceanothus* 'Weeler Canyon', California Buckwheat *Eriogonum fasciculatum*, and Douglas Iris, *Iris douglasiana*. If your garden is a healthy habitat, you can get it certified and further support wildlife by applying through the National Wildlife Federation.



Early spring bloom of pink-flowering current, *Ribes sanguineum* and *Ceanothus impressus*

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.

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June 18, 2011: Educational Garden Tour* organized by Master Gardeners of San Mateo & San Francisco Counties - view seven stunning water-wise gardens from Burlingame through Redwood City.

* Gardens designed by Peigi are shown at these tours. Please come and view the gardens!

Out and About



Early spring bloom of silk tassel bush, *Garrya elliptica*(near) with spent berries on toyon, *Heteromeles arbutifolia*(in background)

Who needs Facebook, Twitter, whatever, when you can meet and hang out with friends new and old by joining, volunteering for, or visiting wonderful organizations, biological preserves, and botanic gardens as listed here!

- California Native Plant Society:
www.cnps.org
- Friends of Edgewood Natural Preserve:
www.friendsofedgeswood.org
- Gardening With Natives:
www.gardeningwithnatives.com
- Regional Parks Botanic Garden at Tilden:
www.nativeplants.org
- UC Botanical Garden at Berkeley:
botanicalgarden.berkeley.edu
- UC Santa Cruz Arboretum:
arboretum.ucsc.edu

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.