

OVVF NEWS



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Melody Girard, Editor

Photo: Paul Zelman



Christy Wilhelmi (L4 Phase Rep) spoke to about 50 people, including many members of the community, at her June 26 Seed Starting and Garden Planning workshop.

TASTE OF SUMMER: 4TH ANNUAL TOMATO TASTING SATURDAY, AUGUST 27

Get ready for OVF's 4th Annual Tomato Tasting Competition on August 27. Win prizes, meet people, earn lots of hours and have fun! To enter, bring lots of whole, OVF-grown tomatoes, separated and identified by variety, to the meeting area between 10 a.m. and 12 p.m., or make advance arrangements if you cannot be present. Members and their guests may taste and rate dozens of tomato varieties from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Please contact event coordinator, Amanda Goodpaster at: amanda30@mac.com or leave your contact information in the Education Chair's mailbox in the wheelbarrow shed.

What's in this issue...

- ATTRACTING OUR BEST FRIENDS: BEES
- SLUGGING IT OUT: ORGANIC MOLLUSK MANAGEMENT THAT REALLY WORKS
- DE-MYSTIFYING BIODYNAMIC GARDENING
- WHAT'S ORMI® AND HOW CAN IT HELP YOU?

Letter from the Editor

Way to go OVF Community! With the networking and votes of OVF members, friends, relatives and the gung-ho spirit of the Mar Vista community, we garnered enough votes to be one of five gardens eligible to for the Deloach Organic Community Gardens grant of \$4,000 "to improve the communities they serve."

OVF's continuing commitment to improving the community is evident in the ongoing projects and many events presented throughout the year. These include annually diverting 240 tons of stable and green waste from landfills, drought tolerant landscaping of Grand View Parkway, and offering an average of eight garden-related workshops yearly—attended by the community at large and OVF members. A nonprofit corporation, OVF operates without funds for staff, publicity or honorariums. Volunteers maintain OVF's infrastructure, recycle waste into compost, and staff the educational workshops.

Funds from the Deloach contest will bring OVF closer to realizing our goals of building a greenhouse for plants crucial to the Monarch butterfly, and to encouraging local grade school teachers to use OVF as a place where they can bring their students to discover our impact on nature, and its impact on us.

By offering a place to observe nature, perhaps we can inspire in children the sense of awe that Rachel Carson identified as crucial to caring about the environment. Author of *Silent Spring*, the groundbreaking 1962 expose of pesticide's destruction of nature, Carson championed having children observe the natural world, not with a goal of learning facts, but to instill in them "a feeling of love, sympathy and awe" for the earth.

"The more clearly we can focus our attention on the wonders...of the universe about us, the less taste we shall have for [its] destruction," Carson said in her book *The Sense of Wonder*.

By providing a place where children can get their hands in the soil, observe the lives of butterflies, and learn why organic gardening is important, we will have helped them to acquire an appreciation of nature, and we will have improved our community a bit more. And perhaps, ultimately, even helped the planet.

— *Melody Girard, editor*

Garden Master's Report

BUGS IN THE GARDEN

Over the years, we have all encountered many insects that we sometimes consider our enemies. I have grown more tolerant of insects, and I just try to co-exist with them.

CORN BORERS usually attack about about 75 percent of the ears I grow every year. I just cut off the end with the borers, and eat the rest. There are some wicked pesticides out there that would keep that borer out of my corn, but I do not want to eat the residue.

APHIDS Wash aphids away with a blast of water. As you know, **LADY BUGS** dine on aphids, so treat them like royalty.



WHITE FLY I have found my organic magic bullet for insect control: fish emulsion. A spray on the leaves kill insects, plus it feeds the plant via its leaves. Roses love fish emulsion. The smell dissipates in a couple of days.

SLUGS AND SNAILS are mollusks, and I am at war with those guys this year. Three times I have sown lima beans, and each time snails devoured the seedlings. They went right over the pine needles that I placed as a barrier. But there are other methods, as discussed in greater detail in this newsletter.

MEXICAN FIG BEETLES You may find some large, white, fat worms in your compost. These are Mexican Fig Beetle larvae. They are ugly looking, but will do little harm to plants except roses, which they like dive into and munch. In their adult form, these beautiful, green-blue, iridescent beetles fly around the the garden. They will eat stone fruit like peaches, but they all zero in on one piece and chew on it.



If you're lucky enough to have a resident **LIZARD** in your garden welcome him because all he eats is bugs. And you just might see an **OPOSSUM** at dusk. This nocturnal marsupial *loves* snails. Another reason to avoid all snail baits that could harm him!

NO POISONS PERMITTED IN THE GARDEN

It is a citable offense to use any non-organic pest control or fertilizer. Occasionally, I've seen pesticide containers in the trash. Miracle Grow® is NOT organic. OVF is an organic garden and I think that is what draws members into it.

— Ed Mosman, Garden Master

OVF In The Community

Upcoming Events Open to the Public & OVF Members

SEPTEMBER 3, 10:00 - 11:00 AM

Preserving Summer's Bounty

Master Food Preserver Rachael Narins, from Chicks with Knives, will reveal the best and safest ways to dry herbs, fruits, vegetables, using simple tools and household equipment.

OCTOBER 30, 10:00 AM

Understanding Biodynamic Gardening

Denise de Garmo-Ritchie of Malibu talks about Biodynamic Compost.

Recent Events

Special Thanks
to Christy Wilhelmi for her
very informative Seed Starting and
Garden Planning workshop on June 26.

EFFECTIVE, ORGANIC SNAIL BAITS ELIMINATE POISONING RISK

Thanks to OMRI® listed iron phosphate-based snail and slug baits, sold under trade names such as Sluggo®, organic gardeners have highly effective alternatives to poisonous metaldehyde.

Metaldehyde bait—sweetened cereal mixed with the deadly chemical—attracts all species, including human children. Veterinarians see many dogs who unwittingly fall victim to this type of poisoning (Merck Veterinary Handbook and ASPCA.) Death from respiratory failure occurs within a few hours of exposure.

Sadly, wildlife species who eat snails, such as opossums, raccoons, crows and other birds of prey, and some ground-dwelling beetles, all too often become the unintended victims of metaldehyde.

Read the small print on the snail bait package before buying or applying any bait in your plots.

SLUGGING IT OUT: Organic Mollusk Management That Really Works

Mollusk infestations can be dismaying, but with persistence and effort you can get the problem under control using the organic measures below.

- 1. Remove the “welcome mat.”** UC Davis experts stress that: “Management requires a vigilant and integrated approach that includes eliminating moisture and hiding spots.” These measures will not be effective without first eliminating as much of their habitat as possible. Mollusks seek moist, shady areas, grass, weeds, ground cover, ice plant, ivy and other vegetation and objects that provide daytime hiding places. After cleaning up, you can integrate any combination of measures described below.
- 2. Hand pick mollusks at night** or in the very early morning to catch them when they are active.
- 3. Planks.** Place boards where snails and slugs like to hang. After they attach, scrape them off the underside of the board into a bucket.
- 4. Iron them out.** Iron phosphate-based bait sold under many names, including Sluggo®, will cause mollusks that consume even small amounts of it to quit eating. Follow instructions for best results; unlike toxic baits, manufacturers tell you to

apply iron phosphate baits directly on damp soil, and to water dry soil before applying it. Place bait where mollusks will unavoidably encounter it: around plants and anywhere that they infest or hide. Reapply every two weeks or as mollusks consume it—more often for severe infestations.

5. Stop them in their tracks with copper. After removing mollusks and eggs from the soil around the plants, surround each plant with a ring made of copper flashing, or a bottomless 2-liter plastic bottle to which you have applied copper tape. Mollusks may be able to cross tarnished or dirty copper, so keep it clean.

Snails and slugs will remain at manageable levels as long as hiding places and unnecessary moisture are kept down. I do see snails, of course, where I cannot reach the weeds, and where objects still shade them. Occasionally, snails crawl into our storage trunk, where I spilled Sluggo®, and where, with some satisfaction, I find their desiccated remains.

Source: University of California at Davis IPM pest notes 7427 online at (<http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PEST-NOTES/pn7427.html>) and author's experiences with these slimy [bleep] [bleep] creatures.

Bees: Humans' Best Friends



by Nina Rumely

We cannot have bee hives in the garden, because of the risk it may pose to gardeners. OVF members can, however, plant annuals, perennials and shrubs to provide pollen and nectar for bees.

Bees of all sorts are the main pollinator for crops. Interestingly, tomatoes, eggplant, peppers, beans and peas are self-fertile. Squash, melons, corn, cucumbers and raspberries need to be pollinated for the best yields.

Bees appear after the sun has warmed the garden, around late morning. They visit all flowers, but they prefer yellow, white, blue and purple blossoms. Plant a mix of annuals, perennials and shrubs that bloom at different times of the year. While summer crops in particular require pollinating, bees need nectar and pollen year-round, so grow plants that bloom in other seasons, too. Large clumps of blooming plants will help bees find their way to your garden.

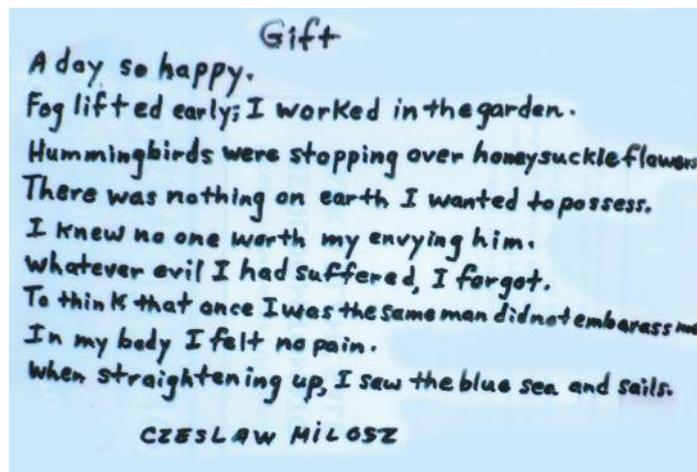
Finally, don't use sprays; even organic ones can be harmful to bees. Rose lovers, don't panic when you see round circles in the rose leaves. These are made by leaf-cutter bees that use the leaves to make their ground nests.

New OVF Bylaws and Rules Now Available Online

On June 11, members attending the general meeting voted to accept OVF's revised Bylaws. OVF's Rules and Regulations have been revised to comply with the Bylaws. Both the documents are posted at: <http://www.oceanviewfarms.net/documents.html>, and in hardcopy form in the wheelbarrow shed.



Yarrow is a graceful, effective bee-attractor.



Poem by Czeslaw Milosz posted in the garden of Gohlem Fatemi.

Gardening with the Heart, Soul and Soil: Divining Biodynamics

by Sarah Spitz

When I asked my friend Oscar Carmona, of the biodynamic nursery Healing Grounds, in Goleta, to give me a simple overview of biodynamics, he said, "It starts with the heart." Why? "Because biodynamics was founded on the principle of healing the soil and helping nature do its best job, and by applying those principles, heart, soul and soil come together."

Biodynamics takes organics to an entirely new plane. It has been defined as "a recognition that the whole earth is a single, self-regulating, multi-dimensional ecosystem. Biodynamic farmers seek to create ecosystems to bring health to the land...." (www.biodynamics.com).

Scientist-philosopher Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925) wrote about geology, mineralogy and metaphysics. His 1924 series of lectures in response to the crop decline that German farmers suffered became the seed for a farming approach that Steiner called "biodynamics."

Steiner was ahead of his time in predicting that synthetic pesticides and fertilizers would create unforeseen pest and disease problems. His predictions are coming sadly true in the case of honeybees. Sustainable farming methods, he asserted, would restore nature's balance. Steiner also believed that

the moon impacts plants as well as the tides.

Biodynamics's renowned "preparations" for field spraying and compost-making aim to boost soil microbial activity, root growth, humus formation and metabolism (see: the Josephine Porter Institute, <http://www.jpibiodynamics.org/>.)

One of the most successful certified (by the Demeter Association) biodynamic wineries in California is Benzinger Winery, which I visited this past May. A research and teaching center as well as a winery, Benzinger applies biodynamics to every aspect of the vineyard, from avoiding monocropping, to the insectary, a natural filtration wetland pond and other features.

Then there's Marian Farms in Fresno, where Malibu Biodynamic Compost is made, as well as a line of biodynamic brandies.

So if we don't have a farm or a vineyard, but a community garden plot or a backyard vegetable bed, how can we apply any of this biodynamic growing locally? That's the question that Denise de Garmo-Ritchie of Malibu Biodynamic Compost will address when she speaks at Ocean View Farms on October 30, at 10 a.m. Denise will bring samples of "Bu's Blend Compost" to share with some lucky people in the audience. Don't miss it!

ORGANIC ONLY! OVF'S Cardinal Rule

Ocean View Farms was founded as an organic garden. Members may NOT use synthetic or chemical fertilizers, any pesticides, herbicides or amendments containing synthetic or poisonous chemicals. Products that do not meet standards for USDA's Organic approved substances may not be used at OVF. Look for the OMRI® Listed Seal on labels. OMRI reviews products against about 2100 substances on the USDA National Organic Program Rule list.

If you use only products with USDA approval or the OMRI® listed seal, you can be assured that you're complying with the organic rule of OVF.



Get Your OVF Tote Bag!

Just in time for Santa Monica's ban on free grocery bags, effective September 1. Donate \$5 to OVF and get a waterproof, recyclable tote bag, with reinforced handles and bottom board. Your purchase helps fund OVF's education programs.

WORKDAY SCHEDULE

Second Quarter - 2011

AUGUST

13 Sat 9-12 Work
12 Potluck
1 General Mtg

SATURDAY, AUG 27 1:00 - 3:00 PM
TOMATO TASTING
Bring a guest!

28 Sun 1-4 Work

SEPTEMBER

10 Sat 9-12 Work
17 Sat 9:30 Board Mtg.
25 Sun 1-4 Work

OCTOBER

8 Sat 9-12 Work
12 Potluck
1 General Mtg
30 Sun 1-4 Work

Visit our website
for the complete calendar

www.oceanviewfarms.net/calendar.html

WANTED

GREENHOUSE MAVENS NEEDED

To assist in planning, engineering and construction of new greenhouse to be funded by the recent Deloach grant. Seeking members with experience building, working in, and maintaining healthy greenhouses. Please leave note in Gardenmaster's mailbox or contact educationchair@oceanviewfarms.net.

EDUCATION VOLUNTEERS

School Tour Docents Set up and coordinate with teachers. Fingerprints required.

Education Group Forming Be part of the education event-planning group and coordinate a workshop.

For all education jobs, inquire at: educationchair@oceanviewfarms.net or leave contact information in the Education Chair's mailbox in the wheelbarrow shed.