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Mountain Greenery Newsletter

Idyllwild Garden Club

June 2020

Editor: Toni Berthelotte, tonestar@verizon.net, 659-2907



A message from your president:

I hope everyone is healthy and staying safe. It has been a long lockdown, but for those 65 and older it is SO important to social distance and wear your mask. This is unfortunately not over yet.

I am sad to report that we are once again canceling our meeting. We are so close to reopening the churches, but it won't be happening soon enough for this month.

Our board met this week, and we nominated two board members to head our nomination committee for next year's board. I know this seems ridiculously early, but it is how our bylaws tell us to do things. We are now in need of three general members to join Toni and Wendy to fill our five person requirement. If you are interested in helping us fill our board for 2021, please let me know. wread@hemetusd.org. Your job would be to make phone calls and see if you can find people to fill positions. We have 100 members, so you would only have 20 names to call. We have around 25 positions in all. Hope you can help us out.

We are all dealing with this lockdown in different ways. I have a high school senior who lost Prom, Morp, her soccer banquet, Grad Night and Graduation! And she had a European summer all planned and booked that had to be canceled. So try and find the good in this; for me it is more time with family, family dinners, having time to finish my daughters memory quilt, way more time to garden, playing cards with my mom, and of course the dogs are THRILLED with the daily walks. It's beautiful up here in Idyllwild; I hope you can find some positives as well.

I MISS YOU
Wendy Read, President.

JUNE MEETING CANCELLED

We are canceling our June meeting. Churches can reopen but the Community Church has not yet had their board meeting to figure out what the new rules are. But I think we will be good to go after this month. Just a reminder that we will be adding a November meeting to our schedule this year to try to make up for the missed ones. Keep your fingers crossed that we will meet in July.

OTHER UPDATES FOR US AND THE COMMUNITY

The 4th of July Parade is canceled due to not being able to get a street closure from the county.

The Historical Society just announced that they have had to cancel the very popular Home Tour this year.

Our Garden Tour is still in the works, but we will need make a final decision in August if we are going to cancel.

The Farmers Market is starting back up on Sundays at Town Hall's back yard, from 9-2.

The Art Alliance's Art in the Park started up this weekend across the street from the Idyllwild Community Center site.

Idyllwild Gardens Nursery is still offering us a 10% discount, so be sure to mention your membership.

OUR MEMBER BUSINESS DIRECTORY

Don't forget to check out the back pages for our Member's Business Directory. Let's support each other by checking to see if one of our members offers a service we need.

These listings will be in our newsletter and on the public and private portions of our website. If you want to be added you'll be in the future newsletters and website. So, if you, or a family member, have a business, and/or provide services, you can be listed. Send your information to Toni Berthelotte, (tonestar@verizon.net, 659-2907)

Give her any information you would normally include on a business card and a brief

explanation of services. To support the additional work and time, we are only asking for \$25, which will cover the full year of the listing. Send your payment and information to IGC, at P.O. Box 681, Idyllwild, CA 92561.

IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR

As Wendy clarified in her letter, on page one, it may seem early, but this is the time of year your board starts offering opportunities for our members to help us as board members for the next year. The first thing we need are a few extra people to make a few phone calls, Easy-peasy. Please let Wendy know if you have questions, or can help. wread@hemetusd.org. Look in your yearbook to see what Officers are part of the board. Those running and elected will have plenty of help and guidance by the outgoing board, so don't be concerned about stepping forward to help your club.

HUMMINGBIRD GARDENING

March 7, 2017 (Thanks to the UC MasterGardener's website)

By Arvind Kumar

The world's smallest bird, the only bird that can fly backwards, the animal with the highest heart rate (up to 1,260 beats per minute) – the hummingbird is one of the true wonders of the New World. While most are found in Central and South America, about 25 species of hummingbirds are seen in the United States. East of the Mississippi, hummingbirds are not as common a sight as they are here in California, a rest stop for migratory species like Allen's, Rufous, and Black-Chinned Hummingbirds. The species that Californians see most commonly is the one that lives here year-round: Anna's Hummingbird (*Calypte anna*).

Focus on increasing the "carrying capacity" of your garden – its ability to attract and support hummingbirds sustainably without additional human input.



Hummingbird with **purple sage** (*Salvia leucophylla*) Photo: Tony Tubbs

It is easy to attract these winged wonders to your garden. Red plastic feeders filled with sugar water provide instant gratification. If you are using a feeder, the responsible wildlife gardener will also keep it filled, clean it regularly and protect it from ants, bees, and other uninvited visitors.

It is wise to focus on increasing the “carrying capacity” of your garden – its ability to attract and support hummingbirds sustainably without additional human input. Do this by planting the nectar-rich native plants that the hummingbirds have evolved with. As they feed, the birds also perform a vital function for some native plants that depend on hummingbirds for pollination. Why do hummingbirds have a preference for red flowers? It turns out that the competition (i.e., insects) can’t see the red flowers as well as they can other flowers. In the hummer’s experience, more nectar is available at the red flowers than at the other flowers, hence its preference for red. Hummingbirds will in fact feed on flowers of any color, but will go to red ones first where available.

Here is a list of hummingbird-friendly plants, in order by time of bloom in winter.



Male Anna’s hummingbird feeding on **fuchsia-flowered gooseberry** (*Ribes speciosum*) at Lake Cunningham Park. Photo: Stephen Rosenthal. Hummingbirds love to feed on the

upside-down urn-like flowers of **manzanitas** (*Arctostaphylos* sp). I have the **bigberry manzanita** (*A. glauca*), a 6’ tall shrub

after 10 years, and **franciscan manzanita** (*A. franciscana*), a 1’ tall mounding groundcover. Many other species and cultivars are available, most with a preference for sun.

Chaparral currant (*Ribes malvaceum*) is a small shrub with fragrant foliage that has beautiful pale pink hanging flowers. Summer deciduous in the wild, it will retain its leaves longer in partial shade with occasional watering. If you see the **fuchsia-flowered gooseberry** (*Ribes speciosum*) at the peak of its bloom in February, you will understand why early botanists regarded it as one of the most beautiful of California native plants. Hummers love its hanging red flowers. Plant in partial shade. Watch out for thorns.

Spring

Pink-flowering currant (*Ribes sanguineum glutinosum*) is an 8’ tall shrub with fragrant leaves and pendulous pink flowers adored by hummers. Plant in partial shade. Winter deciduous. Amenable to pruning.

Black sage (*Salvia mellifera*) has intensely fragrant leaves and spikes of white flowers. Plant in full sun. Water sparingly once established, or not at all.



Sticky monkeyflower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*) Photo: Calscape **Sticky monkeyflower** (*Mimulus*

aurantiacus) is a small shrub to 2.5’ with yellow-orange tubular flowers. Plant in partial shade, prune by 1/3 each winter. Short lived in clay soil, but easily propagated from cuttings. In the shade of a tree, plant **hummingbird sage** (*Salvia spathacea*), an herbaceous perennial that spreads by underground rhizomes. Hummers love its whorled scarlet flowers. Cut down to just above lowest bud in winter.

Doing well in moist shady spots is **western columbine** (*Aquilegia formosa*), well suited for small gardens. Flower stalks rise above the

foliage with dramatic red lantern flowers. Self seeds vigorously.

Liveforever (*Dudleya sp.*) is a genus of native succulents that bloom in spring with small yellow or red flowers loved by hummingbirds. They do particularly well in pots. Put some outside the kitchen window and enjoy spring feeding action up close. Use the Paul Heiple potting mix: 4 parts sharp sand, 2 part potting soil, and 1 part ¼” granite chips.



Late spring
Black-chinned Hummingbird (Archilochus alexandri) Scarlet Bugler (Penstemon centranthifolius)
Photo: Steve Berardi

Coyote mint (*Monardella villosa*) is a 1’ compact subshrub covered with purple flowers in May-June. Fragrant minty foliage. Place in full sun. Summer dormant in nature, it looks better with light summer watering.

Scarlet bugler (*Penstemon centranthifolius*) has gray, fleshy, basal leaves topped by a striking 3’ tall flowering stalk in late spring. Plant in a sunny location in well-draining soil.

Summer

Found in nature along seeps, **scarlet monkeyflower** (*Mimulus cardinalis*) does well in the garden with regular summer watering. The bright green leaves contrast well with the red flowers.

The red tubular flowers of **California fuchsia** (*Epilobium canum*) are a hummingbird favorite. The plant loves full sun, and thrives on neglect. Cut to the ground during winter dormancy.

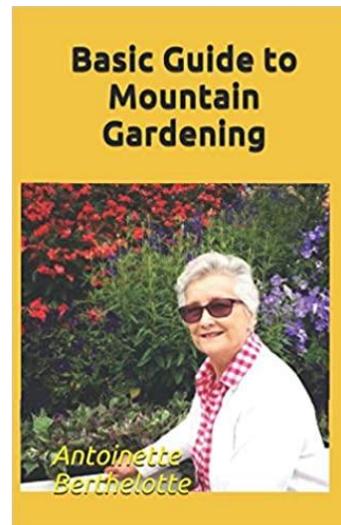
Habitat needs

All birds, including hummers, need access to fresh water year round, so be sure to include a bird bath or water feature in the garden. Tall shrubs and vines make for good perches. Small trees provide nesting sites.

Hummingbirds use spider silk to bind the nesting material to itself and to attach the nest to the branch. A useful property of the silk is that it allows the nest to expand as the chicks grow. So spiders and their webs play a vital role in hummingbird ecology.

Flower nectar provides hummingbirds with energy, but a sizeable portion of their diet also consists of insects, especially during nesting season. So it is important to maintain a healthy insect population as well.

SPECIAL PRICE AND FREE DELIVERY



This might be a good time for you to get this book since you’ll have time to read it and use it to plan your gardens. You can go to Amazon.com to check the reviews and order it on-line at, or directly from Toni, for \$7.

If you order from Toni, she will ship it for free, while her personal supply lasts. Send a \$7 check/cash to Toni Berthelotte, 35061 Barbara Lee Dr, Mt. Center Ca 92561. Questions, 951-659-2907

WHAT IS MULCH AND WHAT DOES IT DO?

Mulch—material made up of bark, leaves, or compost and used to cover soil—isn’t only about making your yard look neat and attractive. “One of its big benefits is that it helps conserve moisture in the soil by acting as a barrier to evaporation,” says John Esslinger, horticulture educator at Penn State Extension. “It also reduces the number of weeds and improves

organic matter in soil, making your beds more productive over time.”

So, where should you mulch? Everywhere! Beds of annual or perennial plants, flowering shrubs, veggie gardens, and even containers benefit from mulch, which keeps the roots of new plantings moist as they’re getting established. And mulch protects tree trunks from string trimmers or mowers; just don’t mound it up directly against the trunk into a “mulch volcano.” That invites moisture and decay. “The organisms that break down mulch start working on the bark, too,” says Esslinger.

How Much Mulch Do I Need?

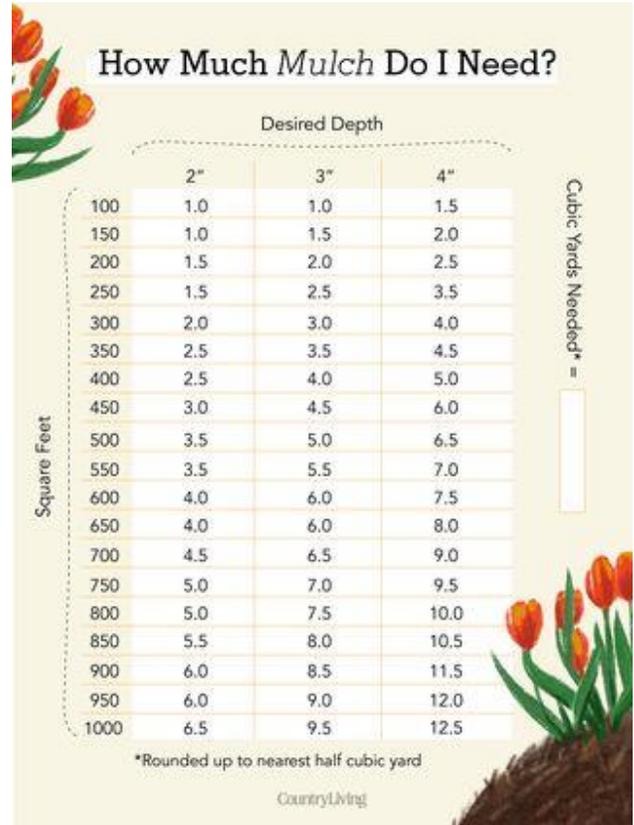
A 2" depth of organic mulch is ideal to retain moisture and keep down weeds, says Esslinger. But don’t go overboard: This is one time when more is not necessarily better. Plant roots need air to survive, and too deep a layer can suffocate roots and cause water to shed off the top of mulch instead of filtering through and soaking into the soil below.

The maximum depth you should apply depends on the type: Finely textured mulch, like shredded hardwood, shouldn’t be more than 3" deep. Coarse textures, such as pine bark nuggets, allow more air movement so you can go up to 4" deep.

First, figure out the square footage of your bed. Multiply width by length for square or rectangular beds—or for round beds, multiply the radius (distance from the middle to the edge of the bed) by itself, and then multiple that total by 3.14.

Keep in mind that mulch is sold by the cubic yard. One cubic yard of the material covers a 324-square-foot area an inch deep. So, to determine your total, multiply your square footage by the depth in inches desired, then divide by 324.

Here's your formula: Square footage x desired depth / 324 = cubic yards needed.



THE BIRTHDAY CLUB:



(Please let Toni know if you have been left out, or if your information is wrong!)

5/3 Carol Scanny, 5/11 Thomas Higgins,

5/12 Bev McCullough,

5/15 Karen Chemlir Miller,

5/21 Don Roy

6/1 Bill Laverty, 6/2 Becky Ray,

6/10 Sandi Austin, 6/17 Pamela Mayfield,

6/17 Cal McIntosh, 6/21 Lisa Medeiros,

6/23 Molly Cozens, 6/26 Deborah Geisinger,

6/26 Leslie Mouriquand

SUNSHINE COMMITTEE

If you are aware of any GC member who needs some cheering up, or just an indication of our concern, please contact Patti Morgan (760-636-2567) our Sunshine Chair.

BUSINESSES & SERVICES provided by our members:

Please contact Toni at tonestar@verizon.net, or call 951-659-2907 if you wish to list a business, or service, you or your family provides.

APPAREL/CLOTHING:

JULIE ROY: Alpaca Fiber Products
Alpaca Dryer Balls, Hats, Socks, Gloves, Scarves, Teddy Bears & Yarn, 858-361-6321, AlpacaFiberArt.com
Visit by appointment in Pine Cove
julie@alpacasnextdoor.com

ART & CRAFTS

MOUNTAIN POTTERY STUDIO & GALLERY:
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Memberships, 54716 N Circle, rear unit. 951-659-7117
MountainPotteryIdy.com / Helen Hixon

ATTORNEY

CAL MCINTOSH: Specializing in Estate Planning, Trusts, Wills and Probate. 30+ years of experience in these fields. 760-346-0634, Cell 760-218- 2476
caltosh@yahoo.com, 73401 Terraza Dr., Palm Desert CA 92260 & 54760 Idyllmont Rd., Idyllwild CA 92549

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Fiona of Kinsale: Historical Romance \$15
Basic Mountain Gardening \$10

GARDENS/NURSERIES

ALPENGLow LILAC GARDENS:
Garden Tours and Lilac plants for sale
Garden Open April and May, Wed-Sun, 9-4

25025 Fern Vly Rd, Idyllwild CA 92549
garyparton@yahoo.com

LANDSCAPE

APRIL PALMER Landscape Design:
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