



Blue Ribbon Certified
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January 2020 Newsletter

President	Paula Elias
Co-Vice President	Pat Fidler
Co-Vice President	Gloria Martinez
Treasurer	Beverly Ensley
Secretary	Lorna Powell
Parliamentarian	Pam Dias



President’s Message

by Paula Elias



Happy New Year Manteca Garden Club!

Welcome to 2020! We can’t wait to see you all at our January 20th club meeting and kick off the new year!

The garden club season is moving so quickly.

Thanks again to Gloria and the holiday lunch committee who made the Christmas luncheon so nice. It was especially nice to hear Cynthia’s Christmas poem and fun to play the left right game with Linda leading us. Cindy brought us beautiful art work from the senior center and we selected our May 9, garden tour art work and door prize.

The fun will continue on Tuesday February 11 with our hosting of the Valley Lode District meeting. All members are invited to attend the full day, 8:30 sign in with the meeting to start at 9:30 and usually ends by 1:30. We have set up an excellent guest speaker, Julie Morehouse, co-owner of In Season Market and Nursery. She will be talking about growing a healthy garden. Sign up will be at the next meeting and pay \$30 to Bev. The fee includes morning goodies, lunch, dessert, beverage and tip as well as the speaker. We will also have a raffle where our club earns 50% of the proceeds. The other part goes to VLD. Come out for a fun, informative time. Thanks to the board and key members who have raised their hand to help with the event.

Finally, we still have open sign-ups for our Rose teams! The list will be at the meeting.

I wish you all an enjoyable, peaceful 2020!

Paula

Key Dates

Meeting

Monday, January 20	Manteca Garden Club, Manteca Library 12:30-1:00pm refreshments; 1:00 meeting Speaker: Barry Boulton, Topic: Birds in the Garden
Saturday, February 1	Rose Pruning with Hank will be on February 1, beginning at 9:00 am. In the case of rain, pruning will take place on Saturday, February 8
Tuesday, February 11	Host Valley Lode District Meeting at Chez Shari: 8:30am sign-in, 9:30am meeting

Gardener's Corner for January

by Cate White, Master Gardener

People have been growing plants for millennia. Over time, a great deal of lore about gardening practices has developed. But which practices are based on scientific knowledge? Here I will discuss some traditional lore contrasted with scientifically sound gardening practices.

Many people believe that adding coffee grounds to the soil will acidify it, benefiting acid loving plants such as camellias or azaleas. In truth, coffee grounds use nitrogen as they decompose, making the nitrogen less available to plants, thereby inhibiting their growth. Coffee grounds are best added to the compost bin, where they can break down along with other ingredients, making rich compost. The proven way to acidify soil is to use soil sulfur, following the package directions.

In the past, it was believed that putting a layer of pebbles in the bottom of pots before adding soil provides good drainage. What this practice actually does is create standing water in the bottom of the pot, which can cause root rot. The best practice is to cover the drainage hole of the pot with screening material to help hold the soil in and keep slugs and other undesirable creatures out, then fill the pot with good quality potting soil that is porous enough to drain well.

A common belief is that water droplets left on leaves in mid-day will magnify the sunlight and burn them. This is simply untrue. Watering is best done in the morning since the afternoon heat can evaporate the water too quickly, depriving your plants of needed hydration. Watering too late in the day can lead to problems such as fungus or mildew. However, if necessary, watering in the middle of the day will not harm your plants.

Another traditional practice is to apply fertilizer to a plant that seems sickly. In fact, a plant that is under stress may be further stressed when fertilized. A sickly plant may be suffering from too much or too little water, heat stress, compacted soil, being planted in the wrong location, or even a hard to detect bug infestation. All these factors should be ruled out before fertilizing an ailing plant. Fertilization can force the plant to use up energy on rapid growth rather than strengthening its root system or fighting off insects and disease.

The old saying "the only good bug is a dead bug" is another common fallacy. Scientists have discovered that there are many insect predators that attack plant pests and keep them in check. We are familiar with the ladybug and praying mantis, but there are many more. Using strong broad-spectrum insecticides will often kill off the predators, leading to a surge in the population of insect pests. The best practice is to start with the least toxic method or product available, following label directions, moving on to stronger products only when necessary. Learning to tolerate some bugs will encourage a thriving, healthy ecosystem in your garden.
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January Garden Checklist

- Plant bare-root shrubs, trees and roses.
- Apply a second dose of fungicide to peaches and nectarines to control leaf curl. (The first dose should be around Christmas or New Year's Day.)
- Prune deciduous trees and shrubs (such as apple, pear, crepe myrtle, roses and stone fruits), encouraging good form and structure. Remove dead, diseased and borer infested wood, then spray with horticultural oil (found in most nurseries) to discourage over-wintering pests and diseases.
- Continue monitoring and baiting for snails, slugs and ants. Snail bait that is iron-based is safer around pets.
- Adjust watering schedules according to weather. Remember not to water within 48 hours of measurable rain. If you have plants growing under eaves and in entryways where they do not get rain, water occasionally by hand.
- Protect sensitive plants from frost with covers or by bringing under shelter.

Gardener's Corner for January (continued from page 2)



Photo by Cate White

Refreshments

The following members have volunteered to bring refreshments to the January 20, 2020 Garden Club Meeting. Refreshments start at 12:30pm.

Patsy Baker
Patti Dowling
Sandie Harris
Sandy Looney

Linda Raetz
Jan Spence
Joy Whitcomb



January Birthdays

3 Duane Becker
7 Pat Nelson
12 Pat Fidler
14 Joan Cannon



2020 Garden Tour Artwork

There were many wonderful submissions from the Senior Center for the Manteca Garden Tour Artwork poster, ticket and door prize. We are pleased to announce that artist Anne Russell is the winner! Thank you to Cindy Coble for chairing the art contest and framing for the door prize. On December 18 Anne was presented with the \$150 prize along with \$50 for the art instructor.

