

Sacramento Garden Notes

July 2014

Written & Published
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Volume 17 Number 7



Several of the Luna Series of dwarf Hardy Hibiscus have started blooming. We're growing a number seedlings of them in pots, so we can see what colors they are and choose what colors we want to put in the yard. Those we don't use in the yard will be marked with color and donated to The Perennial Plant Clubs Fall sale at The Sheppard Garden and Arts Center.

Crazy Plant Behavior:

The up and down temperatures this year have many plants behaving strangely. Some examples:

My deciduous Magnolia which bloomed normally before it put out leaves, is now in bloom AGAIN with over a dozen blooms. An occasional bloom has happened in prior years, but never an all over bloom like this.

Several pots of Ipheion, a winter grower, which are normally dormant until late August or September, are already rooting and sending up leaves.

They probably wouldn't be if they had been kept bone dry, but since they get water from the sprinklers, the sudden dips from 90-100 to overcast and upper 60's recently seems to have convinced them it's fall.

It will be interesting to see how they do.

My large Dahlias are all in bloom, without the suppression of buds that our normal summer heat causes. I think the recent cool spells in between heat spells allow them enough "recovery" time. They all started blooming MUCH earlier than normal this year. Of course, it's still too early to predict if this pattern of hot/cool/hot/cool will continue or if we'll get our "normal" (if there is such nowadays) long spell of July/August heat.

July Garden Notes –

While we can dream of cooler weather, July generally is a warm to hot month with temperatures from the mid 90's to low 100's not unusual.

While it is hot, dry and watering is a constant chore, there are things that need doing to get things shaped up for later on towards fall.

Spiderworts or Tradescantia that have ended their spring bloom often look lanky and ratty, they should be cut to within an inch or two of the ground, and will resprout new foliage and a new bloom cycle for late summer color.

Hostas which are bug eaten, or burnt (except H. 'Krossa Regal') can be cut back and will produce new clean foliage for late summer and fall.

Some items that have gotten too tall can be cut back now and will still grow and bloom for late summer and fall. Included here are Penstemon, Perennial Sunflowers, Asters and Chrysanthemums.

July is the time to trim foliage on, divide and reset overgrown Iris. They will establish and grow a bit this fall.

Items NOT to trim after mid-July include Rhododendron, Camellia, deciduous Magnolias and Dogwood. These plants start setting next years buds late July and early August.



Centranthus ruber White Form – this white flowered form of this easy to grow plant for sun or part shade really does show off, even in the evening and moonlight nights when the red and pink forms fade into the darkness. White is essential both for night garden viewing and to contrast other colors.

Fruit trees that have put on excessive growth can be thinned or cut back in July (this is European syle pruning). This makes it easier to see what your doing, slows over abundant growth, and will cause more branching within reach .

Other plants that can benefit from a July haircut (pruning) include Veronica that has finished blooming (will often rebloom after trimming), items that may have burned in our recent 100 plus degree temps and fall bloomers such as Pineapple and Mexican Sages to keep them smaller and more compact.

With all the watering the heat makes necessary, potted plants especially will

benefit from a feeding, as will many yard plants. Remember less more often is a great rule on feeding!!

Time to Relax and take some time for myself:

Now that the Benefit Plant Sales are closed, we plan on taking some time to relax, work on our personal plants, the yard and once we get the suit and counter suit of Cynthia behind us after the July 8th court date, put the whole stressful mess behind us.

This newsletter is much shorter than normal, because I am rushing to get it done and out before I take off for a few days wandering the north coast with Gizmo (my little fluff ball) to relax, which I despretately need.

I still plan on helping Sunburst with the Adopt a Child Holiday Program publicity, and to propagate some plants to donate to various groups sales such as The Perennial Plant Club.

Thank you all for your support over the years!

Funds to the kids at Sunburst – Here are the final results for the plant sales. The Clearance sale went well, with the biggest "boost" coming from the article in the Sacramento Bee and the last 5 days sales.

The months clearance brought in \$3,872.54 for the kids, with \$2,420.40 coming in the last 5 days after the Bee article.

Date	Amount	YTD Total
5/27	\$138.75	\$ 2,706.32
6/3	\$236.40	\$ 2,947.72
6/9	\$820.74	\$ 3,763.46
6/26	\$395.00	\$4,158.46
6/26	\$2,420.40	\$6,578.86
Final Total		\$6,578.88