

October 2021



Photo by Janet Dart

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**Board members 2021**

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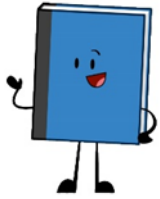
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## President's message



Lately, the COMGA board has been using a word that as a gardener, you've heard pretty often:

Hybrid, noun: A plant or animal produced from two different types of plant or animal, especially to get better

characteristics (Cambridge Dictionary)

Hybrid synonyms: amalgam, composite, blend

We live in a country that is a wonderful mixture of many cultures, resulting in the American Culture, a hybrid. What makes us so unique? Maybe it's that hybrid vein of outside-the-box thinking, our eagerness to consider new ideas and a willingness to experience other cultures and traditions.

In Central Oregon, we're all modern pioneers from distant places. One of the best features of our hybrid culture is the community of people who have arrived here with many varied experiences and stories. We share our tall tales and small victories. We commiserate with the occasional failures, the ill-conceived experiments while celebrating the milestones and the grand successes. Tears, laughter and the occasional banana bread make us a community of friends.

LeAnn Locher, The OSU Master Gardener Outreach Coordinator feels the same way and heads the Master Gardener Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Taskforce: 30+ Master Gardener volunteers from 15 Oregon counties working with seven Master Gardener program staff.

Their mission: "Gardens and gardening connect us in many ways: to where we've been and to who we are. To grow a plant that is inherent to our identity is a joyful and self-affirming art, whether it's a food to eat or a flower to use in tradition and celebration.



" We are collecting the stories of people all around us, past and present, who do just that: the voices of gardeners growing plants to connect with their heritage, culture and identity. Do you have a story of connection to your culture and identity through gardening? We'd love to hear from you." #CultureofGardening

The Taskforce has posted stories of diversity, equity and inclusion on the website:  
<https://blogs.oregonstate.edu/cultureofgardening/>.  
 You're encouraged to visit, be inspired and celebrate the different ways we all come to garden.

Nancy Glick

## ***COMGA Calendar*** ***for contact persons go to [gocomga.com](http://gocomga.com)***

### **October**

- 5 OSU & AAS Garden workday, 9:00am
- 5 KPOV radio, 88.9 FM, 9-9:30am, Gear Up the Garden for Cold Weather
- 7 Board meeting, via zoom, 10:00am
- 9 Blog: Gardening in Central Oregon
- 16 Hollinshead Community Garden closes
- 17 Hollinshead Community Garden closes
- 17 Discovery Park Community Garden closes
- 19 OSU & AAS Garden workday, 9:00am
- 19 KPOV radio, 88.9 FM, 9-9:30am, Sustainability in Your Garden
- 23 Blog: Gardening in Central Oregon

### **November**

- 2 KPOV radio, 88.9 FM, 9-9:30am, Five Easy House Plants
- 4 Board meeting, via zoom, 10:00am
- 13 Blog: Gardening in Central Oregon
- 16 KPOV radio, 88.9 FM, 9-9:30am, The Winter Landscape Garden
- 27 Blog: Gardening in Central Oregon

### **December**

- 2 Board meeting, via zoom, 10:00am
- 7 KPOV radio, 88.9 FM, 9-9:30am,
- 11 Blog: Gardening in Central Oregon
- 21 KPOV radio, 88.9 FM, 9-9:30am,
- 25 Blog: Gardening in Central Oregon



**Newsletter Notes: Deadline for submission of material to the HoeDown is 1st Friday after the board meeting. All articles, notices and other journalistic efforts are welcome and appreciated.** All information provided by the "HoeDown" is believed to be accurate but readers must assume all responsibility for their own actions based on this information.

Occasionally a product or company may be named in an article but this does not necessarily constitute an endorsement of said product.

**Published by : COMGA** Send ideas & articles to:  
**HoeDown** Rocky Bessette, 8200 NW Yucca Ave., Redmond, OR 97756 or [rockyb820@gmail.com](mailto:rockyb820@gmail.com)

## COMGA Board for 2022

President: Nancy Glick  
 VP - MG Education: Janet Dart  
 VP - Community Education: Jan Even  
 Secretary: Marilyn Clark  
 Treasurer: Tim Schindele  
 OMGA State Rep: Jan Barron  
 Alternate OMGA State Rep: Evie Cox  
 Historian: Mimi Thomas  
 Positions appointed by the president are:  
 Membership Coordinator: Jolene Dodge  
 Communications Liaison: Rocky Bessette.

## HOW TO CUT BACK PERENNIALS IN FALL

### PREPARING PERENNIAL PLANTS FOR WINTER

by Robin Sweetser

We no longer cut down every perennial plant in fall. As in nature, many perennials find that their dying leaves protect them from the cold and provide natural fertilizer. Let's talk about which perennials to tackle, which to leave, as well as when and how to cut back perennials properly.

#### WHEN TO CUT BACK PERENNIALS

It's obvious when it's time to pull out annual flowers; they're one-hit wonders and turn black and die after the first frost.

When it comes to perennials, don't be in a rush to cut things down; hold off until after a several hard frosts. Even if the flowers or leaves are dead, the roots are reclaiming energy from the dying plant for healthy growth in the spring.

Technically, very few plants MUST be cut down in the fall. We enjoy leaving as many flower seedheads standing as possible to add both winter interest as well as feed the birds in cold weather. If you follow nature's lead, the decomposing leaves not only insulate the plant during the winter freezes and thaws but also decompose to provide excellent (and free) fertilizer, saving you time and money in the spring.

However, there are cultivated plants which are more susceptible to problems if the old foliage and dying stems are left to rot. Diseases can overwinter in dead foliage, as can slugs and other pests. Old stems can also get battered about by fall and winter winds, which will damage the plant's crown and roots.

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## *Darlingtonia californica*

Was that a cobra I saw in Oregon? Well yes and no. It was not the snake but the cobra lily, *Darlingtonia californica*. If you ever visit the coastal town of Florence, OR, visiting the *Darlingtonia* State Natural Site should be a must on every master gardeners list. It is the only preserve dedicated to the protection of a single plant species. The park developers have made easy sighting of the plant by providing a boardwalk to the fen where it resides. *Darlingtonia* is a monotypic genus in the family Sarraceniaceae and only found in areas of Oregon and California in wet nutrient poor soils. The plant supplements its nitrogen requirements by carnivory. The prey are attracted to nectar inside the pitcher which holds water containing bacteria and protozoa which aid in breaking down the captured insects. Along with proteolytic enzymes released by the plant, the resulting nutrients, mainly nitrogen, are absorbed by the plant for needed nutrition. Unlike other American pitcher plants, it does not trap rainwater but regulates water physiologically by pumping it up from the roots embedded in the wet soil. The nutrient absorbing cells inside the pitcher are identical to those on the roots that take up soil nutrients. Once inside the pitcher, downward pointing hairs lining the wall of the pitcher prevent exiting out the way it came in and the insect eventually tires of trying to escape and falls into the trap. The specific pollinator that is involved is unknown but believed to be a fly or a nocturnal insect attracted to the flowers unpleasant smell.

The common name, cobra lily or cobra plant, comes from the leaves which resemble a rearing cobra complete with a forked leaf resembling fangs. Discovered at Mount Shasta by William Brackenridge in 1841, it was subsequently described by John Torrey in 1853 who named it after the Philadelphia botanist, William Darlingtonia. It survives fire by regenerating from the roots.



By Judy Shearer

Photograph by Samantha Shearer

#### References:

Fagan, D. 2019. *Wildflowers of Oregon*. Falcon Guides, Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, Lanham, MD.  
 Turner, M., and P. Gustafson. 2006. *Wildflowers of the Pacific Northwest*. Timber Press Field Guide. Portland, OR.  
 Oregon Wildflower APP

## Aphids

by Toni Stephan

In Plant Clinic we get many calls asking how to control aphids, a bane of all gardeners. But aphids are not all bad, actually they are necessary. They are food in at least one life stage of many beneficial insects. Let me tell you the story about aphid mummies as one example.

An adult aphid gives birth to live immature aphids. Along comes a female beneficial wasp, known as a braconid wasp, which lays one single egg inside the aphid nymph. Within a few days the wasp egg hatches and the larva starts to feed on the aphid from the inside. In about 7-10 days the aphid dies, actually ballooning up and hardening into what is known as an aphid mummy. The wasp larva will now pupate changing from larva to adult within the mummified aphid. Once it is mature it will cut a small, circular hole in the side of the mummified aphid and exit to start the cycle over again.

The braconid wasps that attack aphids all belong to a group or genus called Aphidius. There are quite a few types of braconid wasps, each attacking different types of aphids. But no worries, humans don't have to worry about being stung as these wasps have no stinger, instead they have what is called an ovipositor which pierces the aphid to deposit the egg inside. If you think about the size of an aphid you might think these wasps are quite small and you would be right. Most are only 2-3mm, about the length of an adult aphid but only one-half the width. You probably wouldn't even notice a braconid wasp flying past you except as a slight movement in front of your eyes. These tiny wasps can do a marvelous job of cleaning out an aphid population if their numbers are allowed to buildup. A female braconid wasp can lay between 50-350 eggs in her short life span of 4-7 days, depending on the variety of wasp.

I remember earlier this summer the two Shasta daisies I have by my back gate. In April or May I noticed the number of aphids on the plants was building up quite heavily. I thought about spraying them to get rid of the aphids but knowing that these aphids would soon attract beneficial insects, I waited. The plants didn't look great up close but from far away they looked fine. So, I waited some more. Each evening I would inspect the plants. Within a couple of weeks, I started seeing hoverfly eggs and then larvae. Then one night, hand lens in hand, I was looking closely at a cluster of aphids and much to my excitement a small, stout-bodied wasp landed in the group of aphids. It looked exactly like the pictures of braconid wasps I had seen many times before. I jumped up with joy and did a little happy dance as I had just seen my first live and up-close braconid wasp and I knew good things were about to happen on my plants. Within days I started seeing aphid mummies. It took a while but eventually all the aphids were gone and they did not return to the Shasta daisies for the rest of the summer. My plants are still aphid free and I did nothing except let the braconid wasps and other beneficial insects take care of the aphids for me.

The moral of this story is that nature will usually take care of itself if we allow it to happen. When we try to intervene with chemicals, we usually kill off good guys along with the bad guys. Unfortunately, the bad guys come back way faster and in higher quantities than the good insects so we end up spraying again and again. It's quite fascinating how nature works; we just have to have a little patience and tolerance.

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### Cut Back Perennials continued:

Also: Always cut back any infected or diseased plants! Badly damaged or infested foliage should be cut back and removed from infected plants.

#### WHICH PERENNIALS TO CUT BACK

There are a few perennials which we recommend cutting back, namely:

Bee balm and phlox which are prone to powdery mildew, so cut them all back once the flowers finish.

Peonies to keep fungal diseases from spreading. Gather a handful of stems and cut them off 2 to 3 inches above the soil.

Hosta foliage after a hard frost, including any leaves on the ground, as they may harbor slug eggs and prevent new spring growth. Don't cut the leaves all the way to the ground, though. Instead, leave about 2 to 3 inches of each stem standing to protect the crown during winter.

Bearded iris need a clean garden bed to stay disease free. The iris borers' eggs overwinter on leaves and stems of the mother plant; by cutting the leaves back and destroying them, you can help reduce or even eliminate borers from your garden. Wait until after the first frost because the iris borer moth remains active until then.

If it bothers you to keep the dead and dying perennials standing in your garden bed, see this list of perennials that can be cut down in the autumn. Basically, most plants that flower in early spring or summer can be cut down in the fall.

Artemisia, Bearded iris, Bee balm, Campanula, Catmint,, Clematis, Columbine, Coreopsis, Delphinium,, Daylily, Hardy geranium, Peony, Phlox, Salvia, Shasta Daisy, Sunflower, Veronica, Yarrow

#### HOW TO CUT BACK PERENNIALS

After several hard frosts, remove spent flowers and stems by cutting stems off near the base of the plant, allowing the crown (base of plant) to remain. Bypass pruners are preferred because they make a clean cut through the stem of the plant, whereas anvil pruners crush the stem, leaving more damage behind.

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Cut back Perennials continued:

I usually leave 6-inch stubs so I can find the plants next spring. Don't go any lower than 2-inch stubs; you don't want to accidentally dig into plants that emerge late, like butterfly weed, rose mallow, and balloon flower. You will be less likely to dig into them accidentally before they appear in spring if you can see a portion of their stalks.

Note: Some late summer or fall perennials and biennials may have already started to form leaves for next year at the base of the plant. Examples include yarrow, foxglove, Shasta daisy, and globe thistle. When cutting back, be sure to leave these rosettes of green. Cut off the stalks without disturbing this new growth.

After cutting back your plants, apply a light mulch. Then, wait to feed until the spring for healthy growth.

**DON'T BE AFRAID TO LEAVE SOME WINTER INTEREST!**

Again, try leaving some seedheads standing for winter interest or to feed the birds. Here are some favorites:

The blackberry lily (*Belamcanda*) looks great until heavy wet snow finally knocks it down.

Ornamental grasses add movement and sound to the landscape.

I let the agastaches, coneflowers, and rudbeckia stand through winter for the birds to enjoy. See plants with seedheads to feed the birds.

Native sedum, Joe Pye weed, and oxeye sunflower (*Heliopsis helianthoides*) can all wait until spring to be cut back, when new growth arrives. In addition to the birds, butterflies and beneficial insects shelter in these native plants and their leaf litter.

If you simply don't want certain plants to reseed, snip spent flowers back just below the mound of foliage for a tidy look. Perennials that will self-seed include:

Purple coneflower (*Echinacea*), Black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia*), Blanket flower (*Gaillardia*), Globe thistle (*Echinops ritro*), Solomon's seal (*Polygonatum*)

**PERENNIALS NOT TO CUT BACK**

Some perennials, including evergreen perennials such as epimediums, hellebores, heucheras, hardy geraniums, dianthus, moss phlox, and euphorbias, should be left alone. Candytuft, primulas, dianthus, hens & chicks, heaths, and heathers are also considered evergreen and should not be cut back in the fall. Tidy them in the spring as needed.

Also, do not cut back hardy perennials like garden mums (*Chrysanthemum* spp.), anise hyssop (*Agastache foeniculum*), red-hot poker (*Kniphofia uvaria*), and Montauk daisy (*Nipponanthemum nipponicum*). Leave the foliage. It's important to protect the root crowns over winter.

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## Hollinshead Community Garden

by JoAnne Abbott

It's October which means it's almost closing time for Hollinshead Community Garden (HHCG).

By Sunday, October 17, 1:00 p.m., the garden will be a sea of brown, yet again.

Many gardeners are already thinking about what to plant next year, and how to rotate their crops. I for one, will be trying a new plant in my garden. It's a Kalette, called "Autumn Star". They're a cross between Kale and Brussel Sprouts. They are bite-sized, loose heads of frilly kale lined up on Brussel sprout-type stalks. The mini kale florets are a beautiful green and purple bi-color with a mild, yet complex, nutty flavor. It's a long shot as the maturity date is 110 days! But experiment I must!



Good news for the garden...plots #4 and #16 will be returned to the lottery in the spring. The plots were prolific this season, with beans, potatoes, tomatoes, carrots, kale and squash being taken home by mentors, friends or donated to a local food bank.

We want to thank our #1 leader, Kirsten Hinton, for leading the charge for HHCG this year. As the coordinator, she brought garden/gardener communication further into the 21st century. It wasn't all a bed of roses for Kirsten this year, but she led us with compassion and interest.

There was a good compliment of garden mentor's and assistants this year. We all learned a lot about gardening and about our 9 patch gardeners. Thanks go out to mentor's Jim Salber, Elizabeth Weide, Sharon Buell, Nathalie Smith, Nancy Crosson and Evie Cox. The assistants we're thankful for: Alice Spencer, Carroll Minium, Lisa Nakadate and Kelli Crowsight for their dedication to the garden this season. We hope to see all of you again next year, with some added new faces too! (Fingers crossed!)

As a parting note.... it's not only the gardeners at HHCG that are able to find food for their table....on a recent visit I noted this yellow jacket dining on a grub in one of the plots at HHCG.

Happy winter season all!



## LOWDOWN FROM THE BOARD

BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
October 7, 2021 Via Zoom Online

MEMBERS PRESENT: Nancy Glick (President), Jan Even (Past-President), Liz Anderson (VP-MG Education), Vickie Minor (Secretary), Tim Schindele (Treasurer), Mimi Thomas (Historian), Janet Dart (OMGA State Representative), Evie Cox (Alternate State Representative), Rocky Bessette (Communications Liaison), Jolene Dodge (Membership Coordinator), Carroll Minium, Marilyn Clark, Jan Barron, Liz Douville, Judy Shearer, Kirsten Hinton, Chris Miao, Toni Stephan, and Amy Jo Detweiler.

The meeting started at 10:01 AM and adjourned at 11:53 AM. The board discussed the following items:

### Approval of minutes of previous meeting

Motion to approve the minutes made by Janet Dart, seconded by Mimi Thomas, and approved by the board without objection.

### OSU Report

Toni reported that she is in the process of moving the plant clinic office back to the old building and the original space. She is taking the PC calls right now and if she needs help, she will reach out to those who are comfortable with remote PC. PC this summer went very well and we made many people happy by offering our services again in person. A brief discussion followed about how people volunteered to keep plant clinic going during the pandemic closures and how helpful ECCO was for information on problems that had been addressed. Toni reported that more than 180 pounds of vegetables were harvested from the garden this week and she will get total numbers to us by the end of the month. Interviews are ongoing to replace Carrie. Amy Jo has been working diligently on getting the planting done around the new building – Toni reports that it is very attractive even with the new plantings being small right now.

Amy Jo reported that she is getting the MG applications ready to go for the next class and she is working on advertising. She reminded people to post their volunteer hours, for the state reporting, and she is working on getting the 2020 trainees certified, hopefully sometime in October.

### BOARD REPORTS:

#### Treasurer's Report

To summarize income, we received a donation from Pat Kolling in the amount of \$500. Pat taught Vegetable Gardening classes for COCC Continuing Education this spring and she has donated her compensation for teaching the classes to COMGA. Gary Weber purchased a COMGA hat for \$8 and paid for it with a \$20 bill. He requested that the remaining \$12 be a donation to COMGA. Five bags of row cover were sold at the Extension Office during September for \$50. The credit union CDs paid interest of \$15.15. There were no expenses paid in September. We rolled over our First Interstate Bank CD on September 1 to a new 6-month CD which matures on March 1, 2022.

Tim also reported on the proposed 2022 budget, which was circulated to the board prior to the meeting.

He updated the column for actual income and expenses for 2021 so it is current through September. He also relabeled the expense item "Donation to Amy Jo" to the budget item we correctly call "Donation to Horticulture Program." Amy Jo had inquired about MG scholarships, which are not funded in 2022. Tim researched the budgets and could not find any entries in QuickBooks for the previous five years, where we had provided scholarships or tuition for MG trainees. Tim advised Amy Jo that this was the reason there was no proposed line item for scholarships. If asked, Tim does not think it will be a problem for the board to approve funding requests for this – we just have not been asked to do so. Discussion followed on some of the income categories, including memberships and sales of soil thermometers. The consensus was that this is just a proposed budget with appropriate projections for income and expenses. Tim thanked his committee, Rocky Bessette and Bruce Dart, for helping with the work. As noted last month, the only reductions were in the community education and the State Rep budget proposals. State Rep costs are uncertain because OMGA has not determined how they will conduct meetings next year. They are discussing a hybrid so people will not have to drive long distances to attend in-person meetings. Liz Douville reported that she just received a bill for \$72 from the Redmond Roundup for a color ad, run four different times, that we placed in the spring for the plant sale. She will send the bill to Tim. After a full discussion, a motion to approve the proposed 2022 budget was made by Vickie Minor, seconded by Janet Dart, and approved by the board without objection. The budget proposal will be sent via SurveyMonkey to the general membership to approve.

### Membership Report

There was an extensive discussion on how to reach out to all recertifying MGs to encourage them to join COMGA. Historically, the membership drive has started before the end of the current calendar year for the next year. When people pay immediately, it causes hiccups in the financial records, so it will be helpful to move this to the beginning of the membership and calendar year. The consensus was to include the membership form in the January HoeDown, and send it to all MGs even if they are not currently members of the association. A follow-up email with the form could be sent in February and all dues paid would be in the proper calendar and financial year. Jolene will talk with Amy Jo ahead of time to get her approval and to work out the logistics since the emails would be going to some MGs who are not members of COMGA. Jolene reported that there only 8-12 people certified who are not members, so the number of people not in the COMGA list is quite small. Jolene will try to talk with Amy Jo about it this month so Jolene can report at the November meeting and we can develop a plan for next year.

### OMGA Rep Report

Janet reported that the meeting last month was very productive. For 2022 awards, Gail L. suggests putting this on the OMGA board agenda in January or February, so a decision can be made in March, with submissions in April. While these are not due until May 15th, it is helpful to Gail to get nominations early. 2022 MG Gardener Training will most likely be hybrid combining in-person with virtual training. There is a new Gardener's Pen editor. She hopes to have a newsletter

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**LOWDOWN FROM THE BOARD** continued

out in the fall which will be shorter, electronic only, and will have hyperlinks to further information. Mini college had 236 participants and netted income of \$1,469 (they usually break-even). The production company they hired gave a 50% discount this year, which helped the bottom line. They also used closed-captioning for ADA requirements. This might be something we may want to consider for our Zoom classes. OMGA is hoping to have an in-person mini college next year. The OMGA treasurer retired due to medical issues; there is a serious need for a new treasurer as the current president is filling both roles. Finally, OMGA has a new task force of MG members to examine OMGA's role in supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion. Multnomah County has a diversity checklist they use for events, which we might want to consider using. The next meeting is in November, with a retreat in December and Janet hopes the topic of dues for 2022 will be resolved by then.

**Community Education**

Janet reported that the October 6 webinar, Putting Your Garden to Bed, went very well. JoAnne Abbott and Pat Kolling were the main presenters and along with Chris Miao, they responded to questions at the end. Approximately 170 people signed up and 95 people joined, with 45 staying until the end. The session was recorded and Janet will send out email with all the links that were referenced. All ads were through FB posts and Amy Jo sent a blast email to her mailing list. Speakers answered close to 45 questions and the format of short presentations with longer Q&A after seemed to work very well. Participants received a survey afterwards so we hope to get information on what other classes we could be doing.

**2022 Board Election**

Elections were performed through SurveyMonkey and the results were: President: Nancy Glick; VP - MG Education: Janet Dart; VP - Community Education: Jan Even; Treasurer: Tim Schindele; Secretary: Marilyn Clark; OMGA State Rep: Jan Barron; Alternate OMGA State Rep: Evie Cox; Historian: Mimi Thomas. Positions appointed by the president are: Membership Coordinator: Jolene Dodge; Communications Liaison: Rocky Bessette. The first official meeting of the new board will be January 6, 2022 at 10:00 AM.

**ACTION ITEMS:****Chapter Inventory**

We have not done an inventory in 2021 because most of the property was not used during the pandemic-related shutdown. Nancy reviewed the inventory procedures. Nathalie Smith, Julie Hill, and Karen Simonet are the current inventory team; Nancy will be in touch with them and let them coordinate the actual process with the project coordinators.

**G-Suite/Workspace P&P**

Vickie and Janet have been working on a document retention and destruction policy, as well as training materials to help people learn how to store documents we need to keep. Vickie noted that the objective was to craft a policy that would work for the future, as technology evolves. There will be a user manual and training videos, but they are currently under construction and not quite

ready for use. Vickie stressed that we will provide training for anyone who needs it, for as many times as needed. Training will be on-going and will be documented. The current timeline is to get this active in time for new board in January. Nancy noted that she is using Google Workspace to store the KPOV recordings and Vickie has uploaded the secretary documents she has created. There was a brief discussion about training and some elements of the policy. More will be coming on this in the next few months.

**Board Retreat**

Nancy has held a retreat each year that she has been president but because of the pandemic, it is doubtful that a meeting could be held in person. She opened this up for discussion on how it could be accomplished. Some topics she would like to discuss include redefining board positions, developing a plan for how we manage our social media, how to get more of our membership involved in the chapter, how to coordinate education across all venues, and identifying who we serve. Discussion followed, with most people liking the option of an in-person meeting, but recognizing that some people may need to participate virtually. The group consensus was that hybrid meetings are going to be part of our future so we need to give thought to how we can use technology to our advantage. Nancy will work on this; she will shoot for having a hybrid meeting and will get something to the board.

**PROJECT STATUS REPORTS:****Water-wise Garden**

Chris Miao reported that things are quiet, they have been holding regular work days, although a few were canceled because of smoke. There is no specific closing date for the garden but they will be getting it ready for winter weather.

**OSU Demo Garden**

Vicky was not able to attend but sent a message that the last scheduled workday at the garden is October 19. Anyone interested in working should use the electronic spreadsheet to sign up. The link is: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/136UN9EGFVBjXkSPITSwVdBTMQb5fRRQ/view>.

**Hollinshead Garden**

Kirsten reported that the closing dates for the garden are October 16-17. She noted it has been a good season, people seem happy and she is not hearing a lot of complaints.

**Discovery Park Garden**

Gary was unable to attend and there was no report this month.

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**LOWDOWN FROM THE BOARD** continued**Open Forum**

Nancy reported that the new OMGA historian, Linda Coakley, is updating missing information in the OMGA archives and she has asked for help from the chapters. Nancy will get the details to Mimi.

Vickie read a thank you note from Carrie to COMGA for her gift card.

Janet Dart met with Lizzy Anderson and there was a transfer of all the VP supplies. Janet does not have room in her house to store things, which prompted a general discussion on the need for centralized storage for COMGA supplies and property. Tim also reported that he has boxes of treasurer records in his garage that he would like to store elsewhere. Lizzy reported that we stopped storing supplies in the COMGA shed because of a mouse problem. Janet will talk with Vicky Kemp about storage options in the COMGA shed and what type of containers should be used. Nancy asked that this be raised again next month so we know where things stand.

Rocky asked that all submissions be sent to her by Saturday, for the HoeDown.

No other business was discussed and the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Vickie Minor, Secretary

**PLANT OF THE MONTH**

by Lisa Nakadate and Julie Hill

**Featured Plant - Globe Thistle**

*Echinops ritro*

Height: 2 - 3'

Spread: 2 - 3'

Flower: Pale purplish-blue

Bloom time: July - August

**Why Should I Plant Globe Thistle in My Garden?**

- \* • The deep blue globe-like flowers are held high above the attractive thistle-like foliage.
- Spherical seed heads are attractive.
- It is one of the best flowers for attracting bees and butterflies to your garden.
- They are water-wise and once established by the end of the second growing season do well with infrequent, deep watering.

**Fun Facts**

- \* Native to Europe and Western Asia.
- To keep the deep blue color in dried arrangements, cut flowers when young and place in a warm, dry room.
- The name in Greek means "like a hedgehog" referring to the spiny flower bracts.

**Information Sources**

Water-wise Gardening in Central Oregon: <https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/em9136>

North Carolina State Extension: <https://www.ces.ncsu.edu>

High Country Gardens: <https://www.highcountrygardens.com/catalogsearch/result?q=globe+thistle>

[www.highcountrygardens.com/catalogsearch/result?q=globe+thistle](https://www.highcountrygardens.com/catalogsearch/result?q=globe+thistle)





## 5 TIPS FOR PICKING THE PERFECT PUMPKIN

by Catherine Boeckmann

One of many traditions is to pick pumpkins for Halloween! Here are 5 tips on how to pick the perfect pumpkin for carving.

### PICKING A PUMPKIN FOR CARVING

Whether you're visiting the pumpkin patch or perusing the produce section, it's always fun to find that "perfect" pumpkin. Here are 5 easy tips for selecting a winner!

Look for a pumpkin that has a deep orange color.

Knock on the pumpkin to check that it is hollow (and therefore ripe).

Make sure the bottom of the pumpkin isn't soft and mushy! Also, the bottom should be flat so it doesn't roll.

Check that the stem is firm and secure. Never pick a pumpkin up from the stem! It may break, which leads to faster decay.

Avoid bruised pumpkins and look for a smooth surface if you're carving. It will be much easier!

### HARVESTING YOUR OWN PUMPKIN

Growing your own pumpkins this year? Know how and when to harvest them correctly:

Your best bet is to harvest pumpkins when they are mature. They will keep best this way. Do not pick pumpkins off the vine because they have reached your desired size. If you want small pumpkins, grow a small variety.

If you are harvesting your own pumpkin, harvest on a dry day after the plants have died back and the skins are hard.

To slow decay, leave an inch or two of stem on pumpkins and winter squash when harvesting them.

### CARVING THE PUMPKIN

We like to pick a large pumpkin for easy carving, but also pick some small pumpkins for decorating your outside door or bringing inside the home as accents!

For those smaller pumpkins, look for some character—bumps, wart, and funny shapes!



### Cut Back Perennials continued:

Cutting back the plants severely will simulate late new growth, which will be very susceptible to winter kill. Pulmonaria and penstemons should also be left in place until spring.

### CLEAN UP GARDEN DEBRIS

As with the vegetable garden, any diseased or bug infested plant material needs to go—far away! Don't put it in the compost pile. Debris from things like rusty hollyhocks, peonies with powdery mildew, leaf-spotted delphiniums, and other fungal-infected flowers should be removed from the garden.

### DON'T FERTILIZE IN THE FALL

Fertilizing in autumn encourages new growth that will just get killed when cold weather hits. Compost is not considered a fertilizer; it is a soil conditioner, so feel free to add that in the fall. If your soil test indicates that you need lime, it can be applied in the fall also.

### WEED BEFORE THE FREEZE

Before the ground freezes, do a final weeding. The more weeds you can get out now, especially those that have seeds, the fewer weeds you'll have to deal with in the spring. Edge your beds for one last time and you'll start the year with a neat and tidy look.

### TO MULCH OR NOT TO MULCH?

If you are growing plants that are hardy in your zone and live where snow cover is plentiful each winter, you probably don't have to worry about mulching your garden, though it's always insurance to give them some extra protection. It's newly planted perennials that are the exception. Definitely tuck some mulch around them for their first winter.

The purpose of a winter mulch is to keep the soil temperature even and prevent heaving of roots due to alternate freezing and thawing of the ground. Waiting until the ground is frozen before mulching is not only best for your plants but also discourages rodents from making a cozy home there. Use a mulch that does not pack down and smother your plants. Shredded leaves, pine needles, straw, or evergreen boughs are good choices. Snow provides the best insulating mulch, it goes down gradually and melts gradually.

Learn more about mulching your garden.

### WATERING THE GARDEN

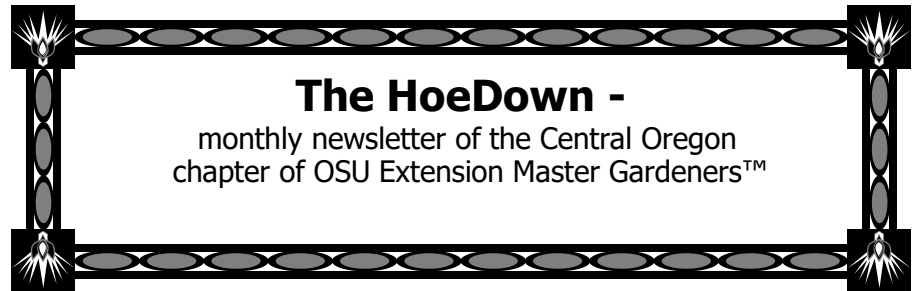
If you live where it has been dry this growing season, keep watering your garden until the ground freezes. Usually there is plentiful moisture in the fall, but many areas have experienced drought conditions in recent summers and the ground is dry. Plants that are water stressed will have a tough time surviving the winter.

The more work you do in your perennial garden this fall, the less you'll have to do next spring!

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