

March 30, 2016



Arboretum All-Stars
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Are you looking to take out your lawn, change out plants that use a lot of water, or encourage birds and bees to your yard? And, you want the new replacements to be low maintenance? This is possible with the Arboretum All-Star plants.

The Arboretum All-Stars are a list of one hundred plants that were selected by a joint project that included the UC Davis Arboretum and the California Center for Urban Horticulture along with other partners. Plants that made the list had to be tough, reliable plants with few diseases or pest problems for the California garden. Other criteria, during these trial tests, included the following properties: low maintenance, attractive for most of the year, and medium to low water use. All-Stars are a combination of plants that are suited to California's Mediterranean climate including some of California's native species. Luckily for us a majority of these plants survive in our *Sunset Western Garden Book* foothills, Zones 7 and 9.

The All-Star list includes ground covers, grasses, bulbs, perennials, vines, shrubs, and a few trees. You'll find plants frequently used in a garden like crepe myrtles, deer grass, and some roses. There are also rare plants like *Sprekelia formosissima* (Aztec Lily) that looks like an orchid, and *Zephyranthes candida* (Argentine Rain Lily) that acts as a ground cover with white flowers. The *Daphne odora* 'Aureomarginata' (Winter Daphne) made the list with its variegated leaves and intensely fragrant flowers in the winter, along with the *Ribes aureum* (Golden Currant), a California native that attracts butterflies and beneficial insects. There are plants for every gardener on this list.

The environmental benefits of using All-Stars in your garden look like a "how to guide" for creating a "green" yard. Because of a reduced need for water, there is less green waste to recycle. That also reduces carbon emissions from power equipment such as lawn mowers to fewer trash pick-ups or burn piles. All-Stars need no fertilizers and very few pesticides so there is reduced chemical run off into our streams. And, many of these plants support our native birds and pollinators. The diversity of plants within this list, when planted in our gardens, encourages diversity within our gardens that makes for healthy bird and insect populations.

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UCCE Master Gardener of El Dorado County's Sherwood Demonstration Garden has a newly planted All-Star Garden. It has been planted to feature plants that will thrive in our Zones 7 and 9. As there is no shade in that garden at this time, it won't include some of the shade-loving All-Stars that also thrive here. This garden is being irrigated using an inline drip system so that we may accurately calculate the amount of water these plants use for public information, and for homeowners to see the benefits of using this style of irrigation. There will be two zones as some plants will be very low water use and the other group low water use.

Come see the newly planted All-Star Garden and the other beautiful gardens at the Sherwood Demonstration Garden starting Friday, April 1st. The Garden is free and will be open Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and is located behind Folsom Lake College – El Dorado Center, 6699 Campus Drive in Placerville. Folsom Lake College charges \$2.00 for parking on weekdays.

See you at the garden...

Be sure to come out to the Sherwood Demonstration Garden on April 23, 2016 for the annual Master Gardener Plant Sale from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The sale features plants tenderly grown by your Master Gardeners at great prices. Summer veggies and many special varieties of tomatoes will be available, as well as perennials, low-water plants and more. All proceeds support the Sherwood Demonstration Garden; cash or checks only, please.

Saturday, April 2 a free public education class "Making Worms Work for You" will be offered from 9:00 a.m. to noon at the Veterans Memorial Building, 130 Placerville Drive in Placerville. Master Gardeners Merry Campbell, Gail Fulbeck, and Cindy Young will show how worms rapidly break down kitchen waste to make worm compost, one of the best organic fertilizers possible. Covered also will be the types of worms needed, how to harvest the compost and how to set up your own worm bin.

Master Gardeners are available to answer home gardening questions Tuesday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to noon, by calling (530) 621-5512. Walk-ins are welcome at our office, located at 311 Fair Lane in Placerville. For more information about our public education classes and activities, go to our UCCE Master Gardeners of El Dorado County website at <http://mgeldorado.ucanr.edu>. Sign up to receive our online notices and e-newsletter at <http://mgeldorado.ucanr.edu/mgenews/>. You can also find us on Facebook.