

The Sherwood Demonstration Garden
By Merry Campbell

UCCE Master Gardeners of El Dorado County

We invite you to visit the Sherwood Demonstration Garden, affectionally called the SDG by its caretakers, the UCCE Master Gardeners of El Dorado County. The SDG is open to one and all every Friday and Saturday from the first Friday in March and until the last Saturday in November. Open from 9:00 AM to noon, the garden is just waking up in all its spring glory. Be sure to plan a visit and learn about gardening in any one of the 16 themed gardens.

The themed gardens include: vegetable, orchard, natives, roses, Mediterranean, cottage, shade, perennials, U.C. Davis All-Stars, succulents, rock, children's, ornamental grasses, butterfly, marsh, and Japanese.

The UCCE Master Gardener program's mission is to provide education to the home gardener. As the name illustrates, the Sherwood Demonstration Garden has been developed with that mission in mind. Our new Education Pergola is the outdoor classroom for our free public education classes, held several times per month, safety guidelines withstanding.

If you're rethinking your summer water-usage, you may want to check out the rock, succulent, Mediterranean, and natives' gardens. If you are interested in developing a pollinator garden, visit the cottage, butterfly, natives, as well as the vegetable and orchard gardens.

In touching on just a few of the SDG's themed gardens, you may have a desire to visit a beautiful Japanese Garden, complete with a tea house, pond, and musical waterfall, but travel to Japan isn't in your future. Our Japanese Garden gives the visitor a shaded spot to sit and rest in the shade of the Tea House and listen to the soothing sounds of falling water while viewing typical plantings such as Japanese Forest Grass *Hakonechloa macra*, Japanese Maple *Acer palmatum*, Plantain Lily *Hosta hybrid*, to name just a few.

Another garden loved by many is the fragrant Rose Garden. Here you will find roses of different colors planted in quadrants around the centrally located Rose Garden Gazebo. Brick pathways outline the quadrants, with an arbor of climbing roses at the end of each pathway. Love red roses, especially the Mr. Lincoln? Look no further than the red quadrant. What about white roses, yellow roses, and pink roses? All these colors and more can be found in the Rose Garden.

Next to the Rose Garden is the Cottage Garden, abundant with vibrant flowering plants that cover every inch of ground. The origin of the Cottage Garden dates to the 1400's when hardworking laborers were finally able to have their own gardens outside the walls of a castle. The gardens were designed for practicality and mostly contained edible, herbal, and medicinal plants. By the end of the 18th century, members of the gentry began creating their own cottage gardens, evolving into a mixture of edible and ornamental plants. Flowers brought bees, butterflies, and insects and the garden became a beautiful natural garden. As the seeds sprouted and more flowering plants grew, the close spacing reduced the amount of weeding necessary and shifted to more aesthetically pleasing gardens, rather than utilitarian. The SDG Cottage Garden is

predominantly flowers, but if you look closely, you may see an herbal or vegetable plant here and there.

Adjacent to both the Rose Garden and the Cottage Garden, is the Butterfly Garden. The declining Monarch butterfly population is helped by the inclusion of three varieties of Milkweed *Asclepias species*. Milkweed is the host plant for the Monarch caterpillar, and we encourage our visitors to look at the milkweed varieties growing in the Butterfly Garden. There are also several varieties of Butterfly Bush, *Buddleia species*, offering flowers from white, pink, lavender, to deep purple. Depending on the time of year, you may see caterpillars, cocoons, or the Monarch butterfly itself which is incredibly beautiful.

The Mediterranean Garden features plants that grow well in the world's Mediterranean climate zones, including our region of Northern California. Plants growing in the Mediterranean region, thrive on wet winters and hot, dry summers. Olive trees, citrus trees, ground covers, lavenders, and other hardy ornamentals are examples of great choices for our foothill gardens. Check out the solar powered water fountain and the hand-painted Mediterranean steppingstones.

The gardens included above are just a small part of what can be seen at the SDG. After all, there are a total of 16 themed gardens. Be sure to visit at any time of the year and be prepared to learn about various aspects of gardening and be awed by the beauty of all.

For more information about the Sherwood Demonstration Garden, including plant lists and color photos of the many specimens, check the UCCE Master Gardeners of El Dorado County Sherwood Demonstration website at:

https://mgeldorado.ucanr.edu/Demonstration_Garden/Individual_Gardens_Gateway/

Master Gardener classes are offered monthly throughout the county. You can find our class schedule at: https://ucanr.edu/sites/EDC_Master_Gardeners/Calendar/ and recorded classes on many gardening topics here: http://mgeldorado.ucanr.edu/Public_Education/Classes/.

Have a gardening question? Master Gardeners are working hard to answer your questions. Leave a message on our office telephone: 530-621-5512, or use the "Ask a Master Gardener" option on our website: mgeldorado.ucanr.edu. We'll get back to you! Master Gardeners are also on Facebook, Instagram, and Pinterest.

For more information on the UCCE Master Gardeners of El Dorado County, see our website at <http://mgeldorado.ucanr.edu>. To sign up for notices and newsletters, see https://ucanr.edu/sites/MG_of_CS/Publications/Newsletters_-_Updates/.