



San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden

Our Mission is to honor and preserve our connection with nature

Upcoming Events

www.slobg.org/events-classes

Saturday, June 14
Invasive Plants & Insects
1 PM to 3 PM

Saturday, June 21
Nesting Boxes &
Hummingbirds
1 PM to 3 PM

Mon - Fri, June 23-27
Kids' Summer Camp
10 AM - 3 PM

Fri - Sun, July 11-13
Seven Sisters Music Fest
Garden is CLOSED

Saturday, August 9
WHERE are Bears?
1 PM to 3 PM

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Photo by Peggy Greb

Attack of the Invasive Species - with Deputy Agricultural Commissioner, Marc Lea Saturday at the Garden - June 14, 1 PM to 3 PM

Numerous common plants, animals, and insects are invading native ecosystems, resulting in serious problems.

Learn how to identify some of the most prevalent and damaging invasive plants and insects in the County, and discover how you can help stop the spread of these trouble-makers. Marc Lea of the SLO County Department of Agriculture will discuss types of invasive species, their impacts, what's being done in the county, and what you can do at home to help preserve the beautiful and unique ecology of SLO County.

Marc graduated from Cal Poly in 1993 with a degree in Ecological Biology. Marc joined the San Luis Obispo County Department of Agriculture in 1998, and worked as an Agricultural Biologist. As the Deputy Ag Commissioner, Marc coordinates many different program areas, including Pest Exclusion, Pest Management and Noxious Weeds, and Land Use Planning. Recently, Marc supervised the eradication of the glassy-winged sharpshooter from a SLO neighborhood.

Presentation is \$5 for members/\$10 non-members. Followed at 2 PM by a free docent-led tour of the Garden. For more info visit www.slobg.org/invasive.

Weekends and holidays April through September County Parks Charges a \$3 parking fee.

Cool Kids in the Garden: Adventure Camp! Kids Explore the Outdoors - June 23-27, 10 AM to 3 PM

Play, Explore and Investigate the Natural World!
Enjoy the outdoors and explore the natural environment through hikes, gardening, art, music, science experiments, live animals and other hands-on activities. Campers will discover the relationship between plants and people. Snacks provided. Please bring a bagged lunch. For kids grade 2-6. Extended day drop off and pick up is available.

Cost: \$150 for 5 days, Garden Members save 10%. Scholarships and extended day available. Visit www.slobg.org/summer-camp or email education@slobg.org for more information.

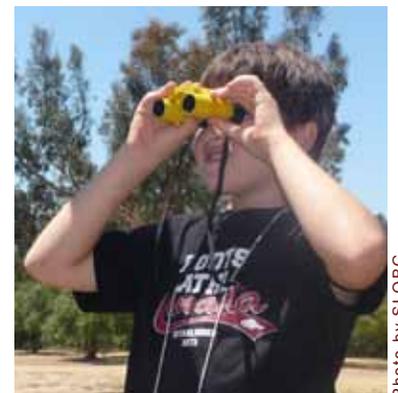


Photo by SLOBG

Garden Wish List: 1-gallon plastic pots (black), gravel, half wine barrels, laser printer paper & glossy cardstock, plastic terrarium, kids' gardening tools & red bricks!

Growing *Ceanothus* from Seed

by Phil Tillman, *Volunteer*

Ceanothus species are among the most beautiful and functional California natives. They are tough, undemanding and drought tolerant. With evergreen foliage and seasonal flower bursts they provide the foundation of a native landscape, while attracting wildlife to your garden.

Why use seeds to propagate *Ceanothus* rather than cuttings? When one propagates from a cutting, each cutting is a clone – it's genetically identical to the parent from which the cutting was taken. Sometimes this is an advantage, particularly if you wish to grow a named horticultural variety (like "Dark Star"). Every Dark Star is genetically identical to every other Dark Star. But with a true wild species, like *Ceanothus impressus* var *nipomensis*, each plant is a unique individual. By using seeds, you help sustain the biodiversity of the species.

There are only two tricks to growing a *Ceanothus* from seed; the first is collecting the seeds at the right time, and the second is treating the seeds prior to planting.

Ceanothus flowers are born in clusters, each flower producing a small fruit, each fruit producing three tiny seeds. Our local *Ceanothus* species tend to bloom in the spring and bear their seeds in early summer. The fruit, when unripe, is very bitter and sticky. As the fruit matures, it dries and pops open, dispersing the seeds. The trick to collecting the seeds is to watch the clusters frequently, and wait until the first few fruits have "popped" before you pick your seeds. You'll see that the fruits on the older end of the flower are open and empty, while the more recent fruits are nearly dry and still closed. At this time you can pick a few of the fruits that have not yet opened. Roll the dry fruits around between your thumb and forefinger and the seeds will pop out easily.

The ripe *Ceanothus* seeds are hard, nearly spherical, and



Photo by Phil Tillman

This *Ceanothus* sp. (left) was grown from a seed obtained from a *Ceanothus* "Dark Star". It's no longer a "Dark Star", but it's a lovely plant that bloomed in its second year. Below the coin are cleaned seeds of *Ceanothus impressus* var *nipomensis*. Above the coin are two well-dried fruits of the same plant. Simply roll the fruits between your fingers and the seeds will pop out – three seeds per fruit.

very smooth and shiny. To enable the seeds to germinate you'll need to score or scratch the hard seed coat to allow the seed to accept water. One method is to roll a few seeds around between two sheets of very fine sandpaper. Be sure you don't abrade the embryo itself; you're just trying to thin the seed coat. Your goal is to go just deeply enough to cause the seed coat to lose its shine.

After you've abraded your seeds, soak them in water overnight. The next morning you'll be able to tell which ones you've abraded adequately. These seeds will have swollen overnight; the other ones will be unchanged.

Plant your soaked seeds in your favorite quick draining seed starter mix. Keep it a bit on the dry side to avoid damping off. With most of our coastal species, your seeds will have sprouted in a week or two, perhaps as long as a month. Species native mountainous or inland areas might have to be stratified for a couple of months, but this is not necessary for most coastal species.

Once your seeds have sprouted, try to prick them out and transfer them to one gallon containers. In a few weeks your young plants will be on their way.

Plant of the Season The Showy Monkey Flower

by Ron Kindig, *Volunteer*

The Sticky Monkey flower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*) grows all over California. It can be found blooming in late spring and summer, but will bloom most of the year with a little water. Use it as a colorful accent and near oak trees. It attracts hummingbirds and butterflies, but resists deer.

The native plant produces the buff orange flowers shown, but many cultivars have been bred with an extensive variety of colors. Although found in various shapes, it typically grows 3 to 4 feet high and wide. It survives north SLO county heat, is hardy to 15°F and is fire resistive.



Photos by Ron Kindig

Specimens of *Mimulus aurantiacus* are available in Eve's Garden Shop.

Mimulus aurantiacus was chosen for the Garden's 128 of Our Best 2014, which includes plant photos, descriptions, and uses of 128 of the Garden's best plants for the landscape. This book is available in Eve's Garden Shop. Find out more about our plants at our website at www.slobg.org/what-we-grow.

Join the Evergreen Club: Just as home gardens need year-round tending to thrive, your SLO Botanical Garden requires financial support throughout the year to grow and serve the community. A stable cash flow each month will allow the Garden to confidently plan long term and continue the programs you enjoy. Look for more information about the **Evergreen Club** in our Summer Appeal Letter.