



# COMMON GROUND

## ORGANIC GARDEN SUPPLY AND EDUCATION CENTER

FALL / WINTER 2011 NEWSLETTER

### Product Highlights



#### Clarrington Forge Spades and Forks

Made by English craftsmen in Wigan, England, since 1780, these solid-forged garden spades and forks have heads made from a single piece of forged steel. This is then securely riveted to an ash shaft, the end of which has been steamed to form a D-shaped handle. These tools are exceptionally strong and are backed by a lifetime guarantee.

**“Sharing the Harvest, a Citizen’s Guide to Community Supported Agriculture”** by Elizabeth Henderson with Robyn Van En. “If we want to keep farmers in business, it’s time for all of us, ordinary citizens and policy makers alike, to begin learning how that might be done. *Sharing the Harvest* is a great place to start.” – Joan Dye Gussow, from the Foreword.

#### “Attracting Native Pollinators, Protecting North America’s Bees and Butterflies” the Xerces Society Guide.

North America’s native pollinators face multiple threats to their health and habitat. Ensure pollination in your garden, orchard, or farm. Provide host plants and nesting sites for bees and butterflies. The Xerces Society offers a complete action plan for protecting these industrious beings.

#### Zubat Pruning Saws

The Zubat, one of our most popular hand saws, is also available as a pole saw. It features strong one-piece construction, a curved 13”-long blade with 6.5 teeth per inch. The Zubat cuts fast and leaves a smooth edge. A custom sheath is included. The Zubat pole saw has the same curved blade as the Zubat hand saw. The pole has a comfortable sponge rubber grip. The extension pole has both a lever lock and spring-loaded pins at the end of each length. The aluminum alloy extension pole’s oval cross section gives precise control to the direction of the saw blade (especially important for high cutting) and strength and rigidity to the pole, reducing bending to the minimum. These saws are very lightweight and easy to maneuver.

**“The Edible Front Yard, the Mow-less, Grow-more Plan for a Beautiful, Bountiful Garden”** by Ivette Soler. This book helps you combine the loveliest and tastiest edibles and ornamentals in a garden that is a year-round feast for the eyes. Ms. Soler teaches all the tricks, from laying out the design and choosing the best front yard plants, to clear instructions for a bounty of exciting projects.

#### The VermiHut Worm Bin

Here is a composter that works with worms to transform the organic waste from your kitchen into fertilizer for your garden. Easy to use! The worms do the work. It is odorless since worms eliminate odor in the process of waste digesting or composting. The VermiHut worm composting bin can work indoors or outdoors. Order your red wiggler worms at Common Ground and they will be mailed directly to your home.

#### “Homegrown Herbs, a Complete Guide to Growing, Using, and Enjoying More than 100 Herbs” by Tammi Hartung.

Infuse your yard with the flavor, fragrance, beauty, and healing power of organic herbs. “You’ll find not only practical advice and endless tips on growing herbs, but a wise, deep, friendly voice.” – Rosemary Gladstar, from the Foreword.



559 COLLEGE AVE.  
PALO ALTO, CA 94306  
650.493.6072  
WEBSITE  
[commongroundinpaloalto.org](http://commongroundinpaloalto.org)

OPEN: Monday - Friday, 10:00 - 5:30; Saturday and Sunday, 10:00 - 5:00

# FALL / WINTER 2011-2012 CLASSES

Register by calling Common Ground at 650.493.6072 or at [www.commongroundinpaloalto.org](http://www.commongroundinpaloalto.org). Seniors and low-income persons may request a \$4 discount.



## YOGA FOR GARDENERS

Patricia Becker  
10:30 – 12:30  
Saturday, September 3  
\$31

Take care of your body and your back the same way you care for your garden. You will practice gentle poses to strengthen your core. Learn how to best use your legs as the foundation when bending and lifting. Learn how to prepare your muscles before beginning, proper stretches for during, and how to harvest the benefits of your connection to yourself and your garden. All levels welcome. *Patricia is a certified Anusara-Inspired Yoga Teacher and Center Manager at Common Ground Garden Supply and Education Center. "If you can breathe, you can feel better NOW!"*

## START YOUR FALL GARDEN

Drew Harwell  
10:30 – 1:00  
Saturday, September 10  
\$35

Celebrate the season and plant a vegetable garden! Bring beautiful diversity to your garden with a variety of vegetables. Learn how to grow vegetables in containers and in your yard. Special attention will be paid to planning for a year-round harvest, coordinating the garden with your kitchen, finding the easiest crops to grow, including those that will produce in the shade. *Drew is an edible-garden consultant, the manager of Jesse Cool's Seeds of Change Garden and the former Common Ground Garden Manager.*

## INTRODUCTION TO GROW BIOINTENSIVE

Mark House  
10:30 – 12:30  
Saturday, September 17  
\$31

How can you grow all of your own food in the smallest possible space while simultaneously building up soil fertility? GROW BIOINTENSIVE is a whole-system approach to sustainable gardening and farming. Learn the principles of deep soil preparation, composting and soil-building, intensive planting, companion planting, carbon farming (the use of compost crops), calorie farming and the use of open-pollinated seeds. *Mark House is the Assistant Garden Manager at the Ecology Action headquarters located in Willits, CA.*

## COMPOSTING

Mark House  
1:30 – 3:30  
Saturday, September 17  
\$31

Composting with the GROW BIOINTENSIVE method is the basis for growing the healthiest, most nutritious, and most pest- and disease-resistant plants; however, not all compost piles are qualitatively and quantitatively equal. Learn the easiest and most effective way to compost, including how to effectively recycle your kitchen scraps and how to maximize carbon and nitrogen in your pile. Bring a five-gallon bucket of "green material" (grass clippings, weeds, and/or non-meat kitchen scraps). This ever-popular class includes a hands-on demonstration at the Common Ground Garden. *Mark House is the Assistant Garden Manager at the Ecology Action headquarters, located in Willits, CA.*



## TOP TEN HERBS TO GROW

Darren Huckle  
10:30 – 1:30  
Saturday, September 24  
\$42

You can do a lot with just a few herbs. This class will discuss how to use 10 immensely useful plants, many of which are probably already growing in your gardens. You will learn how to plant, prepare, harvest and use these plants for common maladies and for health preservation. Darren makes students comfortable and confident using herbs from their gardens to support health and vitality. He loves to share his knowledge and experience of herbal medicine with students. *He has been in clinical practice as an herbalist/acupuncturist for 10 years and an avid herbal gardener for 15 years.*

## COMPLETE-DIET MINI-FARMING

John Jeavons  
10:30 – 12:30

Saturday, October 1  
\$31

People often wonder how they can grow all their own food. Are a few fruits and veggies enough? How do you plan to grow a complete diet? This class will show you how to plan a highly productive and ecologically sustainable garden or mini-farm that will produce healthy, nutritious food in the smallest space possible. *John Jeavons is the Executive Director of Ecology Action and author of How to Grow More Vegetables, now in its 7th edition and used in over 140 countries around the world.*

## DOUBLE-DIGGING AND BED PREPARATION

John Jeavons  
1:30 – 3:30

Saturday, October 1  
\$31

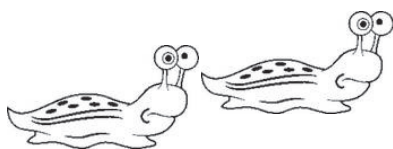
Bed preparation is the first step in a GROW BIO-INTENSIVE garden. It can improve the long-term sustainability and ecology of your soil, potentially making the difference between good and poor soil structure and between high and low crop yields. In well-prepared beds, plants will grow better and need less water, and weeds will come out easily. Learn how easy, fun and productive this approach can be. This ever-popular class includes a hands-on demonstration at the Common Ground Garden. *John Jeavons is the Executive Director of Ecology Action and author of How to Grow More Vegetables, now in its 7th edition and used in over 140 countries around the world.*

## 'HERBS AND GREENS' WORKSHOP

Jody Main  
10:30 – 1:00

Saturday, October 8  
\$38 + \$7 supplies fee

It's time to fill our gardens with plantings of 'herbs and greens' for bountiful harvests this autumn, winter and spring! Herbs and greens have more in common than one might think. Both are easy to grow and loaded with nutrition and vitality. They are handy to have in our backyard gardens, and complement each other with a variety of textures and fragrance. In the kitchen, they complement each other with an endless variety of flavors. Learn to grow, harvest and cook up herbs and greens for a delicious Asian dish or a savory Italian dish. Tasty samples, plant lists and recipes are included, and everyone will plant herbs and greens to take home. *Jody is an organic food and garden writer, educator, and consultant. Her specialty is designing vegetable, herb and berry gardens.*



## HOW TO SAVE YOUR OWN SEEDS

Carol Cox  
10:30 – 12:30

Saturday, October 15  
\$31

With just a little more time and effort, you can have the satisfaction of saving seeds from your own garden and planting them next year. This is not difficult, but it is important to understand a few basic principles. We will discuss these principles and how they apply to crops commonly grown in backyard gardens. Please bring your copy of the 7th edition of *How to Grow More Vegetables*. *Carol managed the Research Garden at Ecology Action for nearly twenty years! Now she and her neighbors in the middle of Willits are collaborating on a community garden in the empty lot next door.*

## PLANNING YOUR GARDEN WITH MASTER CHARTS

Carol Cox  
2:00 – 4:00

Saturday, October 15  
\$31

The Master Charts in *How to Grow More Vegetables* may look intimidating, but they contain a lot of information that can help you use your garden space and grow your food more efficiently. This class will show you how to calculate the amount of seed to sow for the space you designate, the number of flats you will need, when to sow and transplant, and more. You will need the 7th edition of *How to Grow More Vegetables*, a calculator and a pencil. *Carol managed the Research Garden at Ecology Action for nearly twenty years! Now she and her neighbors in the middle of Willits are collaborating on a community garden in the empty lot next door.*

## CONTROLLING GOPHERS, MOLES, VOLES & OTHER GARDEN PESTS WITHOUT POISONS

Thomas Wittman  
10:30 – 12:30

Saturday, October 22  
\$31

This seminar will cover the basic steps one can take to minimize or eliminate the damage to a garden, farm or landscape from burrowing pest animals such as gophers, voles, moles and ground squirrels, as well as other larger animals such as rabbits, raccoons, opossum, skunks and deer. An interactive lecture with slides and videos of solutions such as sprays, drenches, noise makers and other non-violent methods, plus a focus on live and lethal gopher trapping is designed to empower participants to do their own pest control. *Thomas, owner of Gophers Limited, has been an organic farmer and pest control operator for over thirty years, with vast experience in nontoxic methods. He has worked with farmers, ranchers, municipalities, landscapers and the general public with great success. Gophers Limited is the first pest control company to be certified green by the Monterey Bay Area Green Business Program.*

## HARVEST AND HOLIDAY WREATH MAKING

Dru Rivers  
2:00 – 4:00

Saturday, November 5  
\$30 + \$20 materials fee

You will have fun learning how to make a beautiful wreath with all organic plant materials. Bring holiday cheer home with a wonderful wreath made by YOU! Decorate and transform your garden abundance into gifts for yourself and your friends. *Dru is part owner and founder of Full Belly Farm, a 200-acre certified organic farm which began in 1985 and is located in the beautiful Capay Valley of Northern California. Dru has been teaching wreath making for decades.*

## GRAYWATER FOR A GREEN GARDEN

Sherri Osaka  
10:30 – 12:30

Saturday, November 12  
\$31

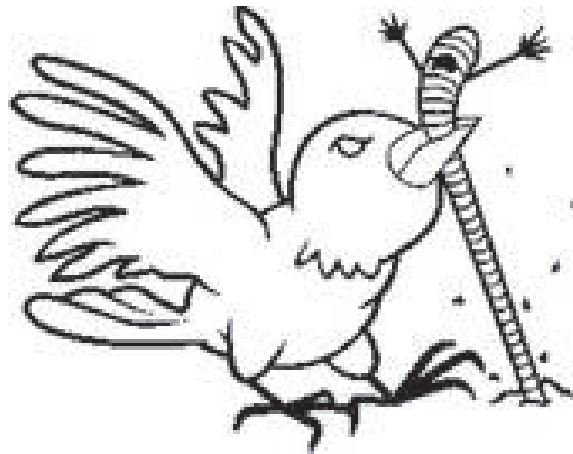
On January 12, 2010, state lawmakers enacted new codes that allow more flexibility in irrigating your garden with graywater. Learn about the new codes, how you can assemble and maintain an inexpensive system and what not to put down your drain. The class will also cover what's happening with local ordinances in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties so we can all keep this inexpensive and easily available resource. *Sherri is the owner of Sustainable Landscape Designs, a licensed landscape architect, and a Bay-Friendly Qualified Designer. She is the co-founder of the Sustainable Landscape Roundtable, an organization that encourages Bay Area landscape professionals to adopt ecological practices. She is also director of the local chapter of the California Native Plant Society. Sherri has been implementing and speaking about ecological landscaping techniques since 1997.*

## SOIL FOODWEB

Theresa Lyngso  
10:30 – 12:30

Saturday, November 19  
\$31

Learn how to greatly boost your garden's health through increasing biological life. There is a whole universe of living organisms under your feet. Soil contains essential life you can either support or undo through your gardening practices. Learn how to increase and nurture the aerobic organisms that make fertile soil. When you have a healthy soil foodweb the plants in your garden will be much healthier and the food more nutritious for you and your family. *Theresa grew up in the family business, Lyngso Garden Materials, Inc., and was President for 20 years. She has come to understand that life in the soil may hold the answers and solutions to current challenging situations. Theresa has been brewing and applying Actively Aerated Compost Tea for 7 years.*



---

## Not-so Common ... Beans by Patricia Larenas, [urbanartichoke.blogspot.com](http://urbanartichoke.blogspot.com)



Hidatsa Shield

You are probably familiar with pinto, navy, and kidney beans, but there are also scores of amazing unique bean varieties that you may have never heard of. Unless you specifically sought them out, you wouldn't be familiar with the not-so-common beans as you won't find them on your grocery store shelf. These are heirloom beans that have been preserved and passed down for generations, such as Scarlet Runner, Good Mother Stallard, and Christmas Lima.

Can you think of a more useful plant for your edible garden that is easier to grow than the bean? It can be eaten as a tender green pod, or as a freshly-shelled bean, then stored dry for hearty eating later in the

year, it can also be used as seed stock for replanting in the next season.

Beans are also an excellent source of protein and many other nutrients. It is empowering that you can supply balanced meals completely out of your suburban kitchen garden – protein and all.

The choices we have for what we eat are vast and far outnumber what is commonly offered in the supermarket. You can join in and be a part of the effort to preserve our agricultural heritage: grow and eat heirloom vegetables and fruit, then save and share the seeds with your neighbors!

Learn "How to Save Your Own Seeds" with Carol Cox on Saturday, October 15, 10:30 to 12:30. Select from Common Ground's wide variety of open-pollinated heirloom bean, vegetable, grain, herb and flower seeds and get started.

## News from Friends of Common Ground

### Planning & Planting Your Fall Garden by Juli Idleman

Summer is the perfect time to begin your fall garden. As we head into August you'll want to plant seeds for beets, carrots, parsnips, peas, spinach, brussel sprouts, celery, leeks, lettuce, onions, California poppy, nasturtiums, sweet peas and alyssum. But where are you going to find room with all the warm-weather crops just coming into full swing?

What I like to do is grab some wooden flat kits, and add some Happy Frog and Ocean Forest Potting Mix to keep the garden as productive as possible year round. Sure, I might be able to pick up seed starting supplies a little bit cheaper at a Big Box store or over the Internet, but making a purchase at Common Ground does so much more than support a wonderful local gardening resource. Every sale contributes to the mission of this very special non-profit to educate our community in producing our own food, increasing local food security and taking good care of the ecology of our area.

What I appreciate most about buying at Common Ground is they have already done the research and eval-

uated the best gardening products for me so I can save time and don't have to waste my efforts trying this or trying that. If Common Ground already carries it, I know it's a proven, sustainable solution that's safe for my garden of food or flowers.

And if the season gets away from me, that's not a problem either. If I don't have time or space to start seedlings, I know there will be healthy, organic starts available at Common Ground to keep me growing my cool-season crops. I prefer to purchase transplants for most of the herbs I grow to allow me to keep my flats in continual vegetable production.

If you are a first-time fall gardener, you might want to start your whole plot with seedlings this year so you can see how they do and get a feel for cool-season growing. Understanding the timing for various types of cauliflower has been especially tricky for me. That's one vegetable I'll certainly be transplanting from Common Ground starts this year!



### Joe De Maio



After retiring from Aerospace I started to volunteer at Common Ground. Before long I was on the staff. I love working here. The customers and other staff are great. We share many things, like interest in a plant-based diet and yoga practice. I really like that Common Ground is about nurturing people and the earth. I have bought a

house. I am putting what I learn at Common Ground to work at my house. My front yard is a mix of California natives and low-water herbs. Something is blooming almost all year round. My backyard is devoted to edibles. Most of the plants came from our store. I am really blessed to be able to help Common Ground help people to walk more lightly on the earth.

### Social Networking

Social networking with your favorite non-profit organic garden supply and education center helps you stay current and connected to Common Ground's tip-top news. Visit our **Facebook** page and share your garden photos, short stories, wisdom, and gardening anecdotes. Follow us on **Twitter** for hot deals and treats!

Do you know about the **Shop Palo Alto** website? A great way to shop locally! Thanks for caring and sharing.



## Common Ground Organic Garden Supply and Education Center

... offers:



- Hands-on classes and events in organic gardening and sustainable lifestyles
- Seeds and plant starts – hundreds of edible, medicinal, native and ornamental varieties
- Organic composts, fertilizers and mulches – a broad selection
- Tools – the highest quality
- Natural disease- and pest-control products
- Books, magazines, cards and gift items
- Volunteer opportunities

Common Ground is a community-supported 501(c)(3) non-profit project of Ecology Action. Please make your **tax-deductible donation** when you visit our center or with secure on-line donating at:

**[www.commongroundinpaloalto.org](http://www.commongroundinpaloalto.org)**

Many thanks for the illustration by Jennifer Hewitson above.  
Design and layout by Glenda Jones.

---

**Common Ground Garden Supply and Education Center**  
559 College Ave.  
Palo Alto, CA 94306  
650.493.6072



**Please share this newsletter with a friend!**