

# THE TILLAMOOK THYMES

The Tillamook Master Gardener Association  
September 2018



*The President's Corner*  
*September 2018*  
*Karen Sarnaker*



Most of us have been busy harvesting our abundant vegetables, making jam and jelly, canning peaches and preparing for the approaching autumn in our gardens. I have enjoyed making marionberry jam and an old English favorite: strawberry and gooseberry jam.

Although the board traditionally does not meet in August, the various committees that require funding met to prepare their budgets for 2019 and the volunteers from the Garden Tour also met for a very productive debriefing.

July and August were busy months for our members with the Garden Tour and the Fair. The enthusiasm and commitment of forty-eight volunteers involved with the Garden Tour was hugely uplifting. During months of preparation volunteers heftily worked to help our home owners prepare for the tour and then greeted our guests on the the tour day. I was also delighted to see how many of our Master Gardeners volunteered as scribes for 4-H before the Fair and those who submitted award winning bonsai, vegetables, flowers, jams, paintings and knitting or volunteered in our beautiful Learning Garden. We were well represented!

## CONTENTS

P 2 – Karen's Korner  
P 3 – TCMGA Picnic  
P 4 – A Wrinkle in Thyme  
P 6 – Neal's Compost Pile  
P 8 – Marcille Ansoorge  
P 10 – Favorite Recipe  
P 11 – Garden Hints  
P 13 – Executive Board  
P 14 – Calendar of Events

On my home front, the landscaping is progressing. It won't be too long before we start planting our upper garden with trees, shrubs and conifers. We can hardly wait. My dream is to have an herbaceous garden on our side lot that also incorporates raised beds for vegetables and a memorial garden for our two dogs Roya and Jade and my mother's two kitties. I think I may have to have a discussion with the local deer population and have them sign an agreement that they will not eat my herbaceous plants. I wonder if that will work or if it is a pipe dream! Better bet: use Karen Keltz's ideas for deer control.

Please remember the upcoming TCMGA Picnic/Potluck, September 8<sup>th</sup> in the Learning Garden. This is a great opportunity to meet our apprentices if you haven't already done so and to visit with one another and enjoy what we do so well, dare I say it – eating good food!

*"The love of gardening is a seed once sown that never dies." ~ Gertrude Jekyll*



*Karen's Korner*

by

Karen Keltz

*Our Beautiful Bloomers!*

My friend from Southeastern Oregon wrote telling me about the marvelous blooms of the stargazer lilies in her garden and she wondered what was blooming in ours. This is the best time of year for our garden, which is a gold mine of beautiful blooms.

First, the hydrangeas have gone full force all summer with no signs of stopping, and that's without even being pruned when they were supposed to be. We have all kinds of hydrangeas, white ones with blooms big as dinner plates, modest fist-sized white ones, and cone-shaped white ones. We also have violet-blue ones, regular blue ones, and royal blue lace caps. We are hydrangea rich!



By the hydrangea hedge are the coreopsis blooming sunny yellow, the sunflowers, and the rudebeckia, all gold and red. There are coral, black, yellow, red and pink dahlias, all heights and bloom sizes.

The glads are up and falling over if I haven't gotten to them to tie them up yet. This is the summer of "I haven't gotten to's." The gladiolas have all been glorious and I have placed them all over, instead of in one big stand, so they are tall surprises in their beds. My favorites are the yellow ones or the deep purple ones or the red ones or the yellow with pink tips ones. Oh heck, I love them all!



The Chilean potato vine on the trellis is becoming a tree and blooms all summer and up into November. Neal didn't get it all pruned this spring before he got super busy, so it's up in the air 20 feet high, waving in the breeze. I'm sure we should be appalled and embarrassed at this laxity of gardenership, but Neal says he rather likes this display of abundance.

Other all-season bloomers have been the red geraniums which adorn many of our pots wherever they reside, and the pink petunias I planted right after the tulips died off, in order to cover their fading leaves and stems. Those petunias have been impressive. The most beautiful blooms on the back deck are the blazing orange and salmon-colored tuberous begonias that Neal babies all year long.



You have to wait and wait and wait for it, and then the blooms, when they arrive, knock your socks off.

Golden Rod is blooming and taking over the herb bed and I forget why I planted it, what medicinal quality it's purported to have. I'll look that up if I have time. It's under the hawthorne tree that has medicinal qualities, too. The fennel is blooming its little flowers before turning into seeds. I keep it there even though I don't care for the licorice taste of fennel because the butterfly caterpillars love it and I love them. My brother likes fennel seeds, which are purported to ease digestion if you chew them after a meal, so I send all of my seeds to him. The oregano that has gone rogue in the herb bed is full of bees and it needs picked and dried, as does the catnip. My friend Maria tells me the oregano is not only an herb to flavor Italian food but it is also used in her culture as an

oil to calm coughs and ease congestion. The catnip is good for making cats happy and I've used it infused into a spray for keeping mosquitos away as effectively as Deet.

Speaking of bees, the pink-flowered hebe, so luscious this year, is full of bees, as is the Joe Pye weed over in the East bed. Those two plants are so full of bees, in fact, that they look like they're blooming bees!!! Someone with hives around here is going to have splendid honey soon.



The rugosa roses in the hedge bordering our deck are in the stage where they are both blooming and turning blooms into big, fat, red hips. If I were more industrious, I'd be drying those hips and turning them into tea and jelly. I fear, though, that this will be yet another year where I just enjoy looking at them. They are gigantic wonders.

Multi-colored Echinaceas next to the garage up the front walk are blooming and the Autumn Joy sedums on the other side are starting to turn reddish-pink in time for their autumnal appearance. Some sweet peas are still going as well as hollyhocks, but both have mostly turned into seed pods. I pick some of those pods and plant them in various other beds and am thrilled when they come up in the spring. I love when they re-seed themselves. I do the same thing with Spring's lupines and columbines.

And a final delight, the skies have been blooming hummingbirds all summer, so many more than we've ever had here, and we've had the joy of watching them as they whiz about feeding and flying low to tease the cat who has to stay inside.

Now you've had a peek at our bloomers. What's blooming in your garden?

**TCMGA PICNIC**  
**Saturday, September 8<sup>th</sup>**  
**11:00AM**  
**Learning Garden**

### A Wrinkle In Thyme

by  
Cris Roberts

Most of my life, it seems I've been aware of the saying, "things aren't always what they appear to be". Take peas, for instance. How can a pea taste so extraordinarily delicious when freshly snapped off a vine in the early summer garden, yet when eaten canned....ugh.



Then there's an adult with whom I work at OYA who has so many visible tatoos that I began to form judgments upon first meeting him about the type of person who would even want that many tatoos. Guess what.... He has one of the most caring, soft hearts in our facility.

Last month, one of our Tree Farm workers brought in an insect that appeared to be a menace to his crew. After all, it had a HUGE "stinger", bold black-and-yellow markings and it kept buzzing around them in the woods. Some of you are smiling now as you've probably also seen this insect.



It is a common California Horntail (*Urocerus californicus*) and the wicked stinger is actually an ovipositor, used to deposit eggs inside decaying wood. Poor gal has a bum rap for she does not sting.



What must someone *have* been thinking when they first bit into *these* thistles, and how did they discover that the base was not only edible but delectable? And would you guess that behind the masked hat below lies the strong, keen, eager-to-learn heart of a male youth at OYA just bursting with the energy to grow and change? Unsuspecting truth; things not always what they appear to be.

Recently, I was picking some corn with the youth. As we pulled the corn off the stalk we noticed a plant-problem diagnosis situation.

Our corn tassels had short, whitish bars all over them. They seemed to be the droppings of some adventurous, hungry, busy insect leaving behind his tell-tale frass signature. It was, instead, evidence of corn pollination. Pretty fun to see. The male pollen had shaken down effectively onto the female silk and, as a result, we had corn.



These wonderful surprises of life often leave me realizing I still have much to learn and much to be excited about; some of the joys of life at OYA.

*Neal's Compost Pile*

by  
Neal Lemery

*Kicking a Challenging Area With Kinnikinnick*

Kinnikinnick, also known as bearberry, is one of my favorite natives and serves as a low maintenance ground cover in both sunny and partially shaded areas of my garden. Its botanical name is *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*.

When I was a kid, our yard had a large sloping bank that had its topsoil removed, and we attempted to find a suitable landscaping scheme. We tried the then-popular and ubiquitous junipers, and also planted some kinnikinnick we had found at the beach. While the junipers took over, the kinnikinnick held in there. Years later, when we had to cut out the overgrown and dying junipers, the kinnikinnick remained, and provided an attractive groundcover.

One of my summer gardening challenges this year is to improve the landscaping at the edge of the parking lot of the Fairview Grange. My goal is very low maintenance, and to find plants that will survive the hot, arid, and windswept summers in the parking lot. Kinnikinnick fits the bill and seems to like its new home there.

Its flowers attract pollinators, and its red berries attract the birds. The dark green leaves provide a nice contrast to the bark mulch, and the plants are doing well in a slightly amended clay and gravel soil where even the weeds do poorly.

“Kinnikinnick is a prostrate, evergreen woody plant with long, trailing branches, 6-8” tall. It has leathery leaves and white or pink urn-shaped flowers followed by reddish-brown berries. Kinnikinnick is one of the finest groundcovers for full sun. It forms creeping mats and is best in well-drained soil. It will tolerate sterile soils, but too much moisture and/or shade can foster fungal diseases.

“Bearberry serves a dual role on sandy soils, as both a beautification plant as well as a critical area stabilizer. The thick, prostrate, vegetative mat and evergreen character are what make bearberry a very popular ground cover. It is often planted around home sites, sand dunes, sandy banks, and commercial sites. The fruit it produces is eaten by a few species of songbirds and game animals. Deer will sometimes browse the foliage lightly.”

<https://archive.extension.oregonstate.edu/yamhill/sites/default/files/documents/Kinnikinnick.pdf>



“Bearberry’s native range is from Labrador to Alaska, south to Virginia, Illinois, Nebraska, and in the mountains from New Mexico north through California to Alaska. This long-lived, low growing shrub is very cold tolerant. This plant prefers coarse well to excessively drained soils of forests, sand dunes, bald or barren areas. It does not tolerate moist or off-drained sites. Although bearberry is often found growing in the open on sand dunes, it grows well under partial shade of forest canopies.

“Pure stands of bearberry can be extremely dense, with heights rarely taller than 6 inches. Erect branching twigs emerge from long flexible prostrate stems, which are produced by single roots. The trailing stems will layer, sending out small roots periodically. The finely textured velvety branches are initially white to pale green, becoming smooth and red-brown with maturity. The small solitary three scaled buds are dark brown.

“The simple leaves of this broadleaf evergreen are alternately arranged on branches. Each leaf is held by a twisted leaf stalk, vertically. The leathery dark green leaves are an inch long and have rounded tips tapering back to the base. In fall, the leaves begin changing from a dark green to a reddish-green to purple.

“Terminal clusters of small urn-shaped flowers bloom from May to June. The perfect flowers are white to pink, and bear round, fleshy or mealy, bright red to pink fruits called drupes. This smooth, glossy skinned fruit will range from 1/4 to 1/2 inch in diameter. The fruit will persist on the plant into early winter. Each drupe contains 1 to 5 hard seeds, which need to be scarified and stratified prior to germination to reduce the seed coat and break embryo dormancy. There is an average of 40,900 cleaned seeds per pound.”

---(USDA)

[https://webarchive.library.unt.edu/eot2008/20080917144120/http://plants.usda.gov/factsheet/pdf/fs\\_aruv.pdf](https://webarchive.library.unt.edu/eot2008/20080917144120/http://plants.usda.gov/factsheet/pdf/fs_aruv.pdf)

Native Americans and herbalists use the leaves for a medicinal tea.



## **Just Add Organic Matter! Right?**

by  
Marcille Ansorge

At Growing Gardeners in July, one of the presentations was by Mykl Nelson, a research assistant for Gail Langellotto, professor at Oregon State University and State Coordinator for OMGA. Mykl received his M.S. in June 2018, doing research related to studying soils of gardens in urban settings, in reality anyone's home garden. The following is a summary of his research and was written by Gail for the Hardy Plant Society quarterly magazine. She posted this on her blog, Garden Ecology Lab, where she discusses OSU research done related to bees, native plants, urban soils and more. This may be found at <http://blogs.oregonstate.edu/gardenecologylab/> and should be of interest to all gardeners.

### ***Gardening is Not Farming: An Explanation of Urban Garden Soils***

Despite the popularity of urban agriculture, we know virtually nothing about urban agricultural soils, including residential vegetable gardens. We thus studied urban garden soils to get a sense of the characteristics of residential-scale, urban agricultural soils in western Oregon. Last year, we took soil samples from 27 vegetable gardens in Corvallis and Portland and tested for differences between garden sites based upon bed-type (e.g. raised beds versus in-ground beds). All gardens were managed by certified Extension Master Gardeners.

If you have taken a Master Gardener soils class, perhaps you have heard the soil management mantra 'just add organic matter!' This mantra comes from the idea that adding more organic matter (OM) can improve soil tilth and nutrition. However, this mantra was derived from research in large-scale farming systems, where farmers often struggle to raise their soil OM by even 1%, across tens or hundreds of acres of crop production.

We found that nearly every garden that we sampled had an excess of OM (Table 1). Soil management guidelines suggest that farmers should aim for 3-6% soil OM. Across all of our garden study sites, vegetable garden soils were on average 13% OM, by volume. Raised beds were significantly over-enriched in organic matter (15% OM, on average), compared to in-ground beds (10% OM, on average). To put it another way, Master Gardener-tended vegetable gardens were over-enriched in OM by 2-5 times the recommended level!

This excess in organic matter likely contributed to excessive levels of other soil parameters. For example, most garden study sites were above recommended levels for electrical conductivity (a measure of soil 'salts'). All gardens were above recommended levels for sulfur (S), phosphorus (P), calcium (Ca), and magnesium (Mg) (Table 1). Only nitrogen (N), potassium (K), and boron (B) were generally within recommended levels (Table 1).

The excessive organic matter in residential-scale garden soils makes sense, when considered in the context of garden size. In small garden plots, gardeners can easily over-apply products which have been recommended for successful, large-scale, agricultural production. It is easy to imagine that the over-abundance of organic matter in soils results from large amounts of compost added to a relatively small area.

Our results point to the importance of conducting periodic soil tests in garden soils. Instead of 'just adding organic matter', gardeners need to understand where they are starting from, before adding amendments and fertilizers to their soil. Apply focused applications of specific nutrients (such as boron or nitrogen) to correct nutrient deficiencies, as needed, while avoiding additions of nutrients that are at relatively high levels. For example, nitrogen is extremely mobile in soils, while phosphorus tends to build up over time. Adding focused applications of synthetic (15-0-0) or organic nitrogen (in the form of feather meal) can help meet crop needs without providing excessive amounts of phosphorus, over time. Gardeners who annually apply organic matter to their soils, without the benefit of a soil test, may be unintentionally adding too much phosphorus to their soils.

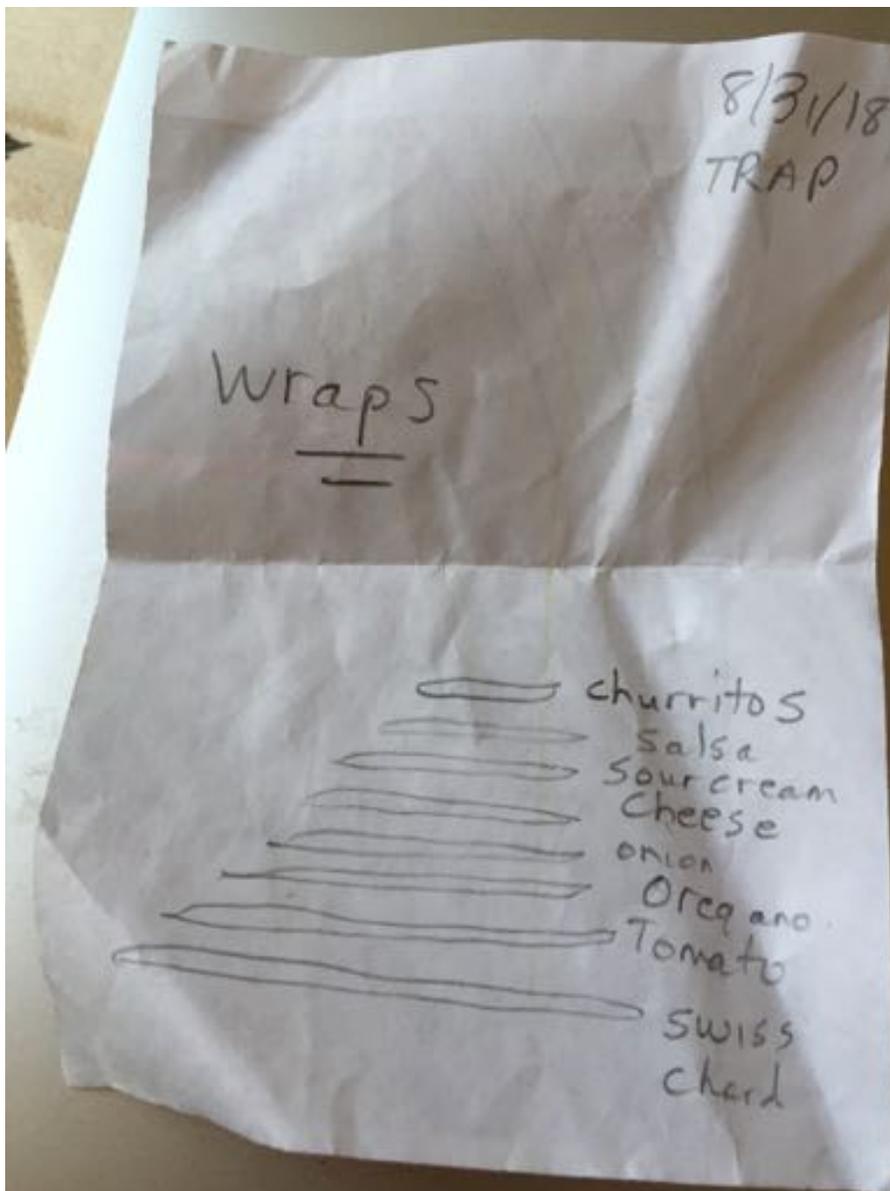
Soils with excessive micronutrients may hinder plant growth. Soils with excessive phosphorus might contribute to water quality issues in their watershed. Excessive phosphorus also harms or kill beneficial mycorrhizal fungi.

*Table 1. Percent of garden study sites that were within, above, and below recommended ranges for various soil parameters. OM: organic matter. EC: electrical conductivity. N: nitrogen. S: sulfur. P: phosphorus. K: potassium. Ca: calcium. Mg: magnesium. B: boron.*

Soil Parameter	Percent of Garden Study Sites		
	Within Recommended Range	Above Recommended range	Below Recommended Range
OM	6%	94%	0%
EC	18%	82%	0%
N	70%	30%	0%
S	0%	100%	0%
P	0%	100%	0%
K	73%	24%	3%
Ca	0%	100%	0%
Mg	0%	100%	0%
B	42%	3%	55%

**OUR FAVORITE RECIPES**

presented  
by  
Cris Roberts



Recipe by Cris Roberts and made by Evelyn VonFelt

To the Swiss Chard  
Chop the tomatoes add to taste  
Grate the cheese and add to taste  
Add chopped Cucumber, if desired.  
Add chopped onions to taste  
Add a dollop of Salsa and Sour Cream  
Add chopped up churritos

Roll up and eat. Yummy!

**SEPTEMBER**

***GARDEN HINTS FROM YOUR OSU EXTENSION FACULTY  
for  
Western Oregon***

“The Oregon State University Extension Service encourages sustainable gardening practices.”

Preventative pest management is emphasized over reactive pest control. Always identify and monitor problems before acting and opt for the least toxic approach that will remedy the problem. The conservation of biological control agents (predators, parasitoids) should be favored over chemical controls.

Use chemical controls only when necessary and only after thoroughly reading the pesticide label. First consider cultural, then physical and biological controls. Choose the least-toxic options (insecticidal soaps, horticultural oils, botanical insecticides, and organic and synthetic pesticides — when used judiciously). Recommendations in this calendar are not necessarily applicable to all areas of Oregon. For more information, contact our local Extension office at <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/tillamook/>.

**Maintenance and Clean Up**

- Harvest winter squash when the "ground spot" changes from white to a cream or gold color.
- Pick and store winter squash; mulch carrot, parsnip, and beets for winter harvesting.
- Protect tomatoes and/or pick green tomatoes and ripen indoors if frost threatens.
- Reduce water on trees, shrubs, and vines east of Cascades to harden them for winter.
- Stake tall flowers to keep them from blowing over in fall winds.
- Dig, clean, and store tuberous begonias if frost threatens.
- Harvest potatoes when the tops die down. Store them in a dark location.
- Optimal time for establishing a new lawn is August through mid-September.
- Aerate lawns.
- **Early-September:** Apply 1 pound nitrogen per 1,000 square feet to lawns. Reduce risks of run-off into local waterways by not fertilizing just prior to rain, and not over-irrigating so that water runs off of lawn and onto sidewalk or street.

**Planting/Propagation**

- Divide peonies and iris.
- Plant or transplant woody ornamentals and mature herbaceous perennials. Fall planting of trees, shrubs and perennials can encourage healthy root growth over the winter.
- Plant daffodils, tulips, and crocus for spring bloom. Work calcium and phosphorus into the soil below the bulbs at planting time. Remember when purchasing bulbs, the size of the bulb is directly correlated to the size of the flower yet to come in spring.
- Plant winter cover of annual rye or winter peas in vegetable garden.

### **Pest Monitoring and Management**

- Apply parasitic nematodes to moist soil beneath rhododendrons and azaleas that show root weevil damage (notched leaves).
- Control slugs as necessary. Least toxic management options for slugs include barriers and traps. Baits are also available for slug control; use caution around pets. Read and follow all label directions prior to using baits, or any other chemical control.
- Monitor trailing berries for leaf and cane spot. Treat if necessary.
- As necessary, apply copper spray for peach and cherry trees.
- Spray for juniper twig blight, as necessary, after pruning away dead and infected twigs.
- Continue monitoring late-season soft fruits and berries for Spotted Wing Drosophila (SWD). If SWD are present, use an integrated and least toxic approach to manage the pests. Learn [how to monitor for SWD flies and larval](#) infestations in fruit.
- Spray susceptible varieties of potatoes and tomatoes for early and late blight.

### **Houseplants and Indoor Gardening**

- Clean houseplants, check for insects, and repot and fertilize if necessary; then bring them indoors.



**TCMGA EXECUTIVE BOARD**

**Elected:**

President: Karen Sarnaker  
Past President: Neal Lemery  
Vice President: Sarah Ostermiller  
Treasurer: Larry Goss  
Recording Secretary:  
    Cammy Hickman  
Corresponding Secretary:  
    Betty Lyons  
Historian: Jake Lyons  
OMGA Representative:  
    Linda Stephenson  
OMGA Alternative:  
    LeRoy Satter  
Class Representatives:  
    2016: Arla Ayers  
    2017: Jerilee Henderson  
Extension Agent: Joy Jones

**Appointed Committee Chairs**

Audit: Cammy Hickman  
    Terri Southwick  
Awards: Karen Sarnaker  
Banquet: Cammy Hickman  
Budget: Larry Goss  
    Karen Sarnaker  
    Sarah Ostermiller  
Communication/WebMaster/  
Grants Committee:  
    Neal Lemery  
    Deb Lincoln  
    Nika Van Tilburg  
Publicity: Cammy Hickman  
    Neal Lemery  
    Tabitha Bettencourt  
Community Pruning Day:  
    Barb Casteel  
    Evelynn VonFelt  
2018 Garden Tour:  
    Karen Sarnaker  
    Betty Lyons  
Hospitality: to be filled  
Membership: Sarah Ostermiller  
    Jerilee Henderson  
Mentors: Linda Stephenson  
Nominating Committee:  
    Neal Lemery  
    Karen Sarnaker  
Picnic: Linda Stephenson

Plant Clinics:

Tillamook Farmer Market:  
    Marilyn Perl  
North County Plant Clinics:  
    Mark Kuestner  
South County Plant Clinics:  
    Tim and Pam Burke  
Plant Sale: Jodi Derrick  
Projects: Sarah Ostermiller  
    Neal Lemery  
Scholarship: Neal Lemery  
Volunteer Coordinator:  
    Sarah Ostermiller

**Standing Committees**

Learning Garden:  
    Linda Stephenson  
*Thymes* Newsletter Editor:  
    Karen Sarnaker  
*The Tiller* Newsletter Editor:  
    Laura Swanson  
(Editor appointed by the Agent)

**Special Projects**

Gardening Day Camp: Joy Jones  
O.Y.A.: Evelynn VonFelt  
Native Plant Garden Coordinator:  
    Marilyn Perl

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

**SEPTEMBER 2018**

- SEPTEMBER 6** LEARNING GARDEN, 9AM -12PM
- SEPTEMBER 7** MANZANITA FARMERS MARKET, 4-7PM
- SEPTEMBER 8** TCMGA PICNIC, 11AM  
LEARNING GARDEN
- SEPTEMBER 9** PACIFIC CITY FARMERS MARKET
- SEPTEMBER 11** TCMGA BOARD AND CHAPTER MEETING, 10-12N  
OSU Extension Office
- SEPTEMBER 13** LEARNING GARDEN, 9AM -12PM
- SEPTEMBER 15** TILLAMOOK FARMERS MARKET, 9AM – 2PM
- SEPTEMBER 19** BONSAI CLUB, TPUD MEETING ROOM, 6PM – 9PM
- SEPTEMBER 20** LEARNING GARDEN, 9AM -12PM  
THMYES DEADLINE

