



USING SUCCULENTS IN YOUR GARDEN

Sally Livingston, U.C. Master Gardener, Solano County

Succulents are beautiful, yet forgiving, plants for pots with their colorful leaves, various shapes and simple care. If you are time stressed, travel frequently, or have limited mobility, succulents help you garden at a relaxed pace. Because most succulents come from regions with harsh growing conditions, succulents need trimming, repotting, watering and fertilizing less often than other typical container plants.

What is a succulent? It is any plant that stores water in the leaves to survive a drought. These plants are perfect for our Mediterranean climate in Solano County. Cactus plants are succulents as well as many other plants. There are a wide variety of succulents in many shapes, colors, texture, and flowers to choose in making your pot interesting and colorful.

Here are some tips for growing succulents in pots:

What kind of sun exposure do succulents need? Generally, succulents do not need more than three or four hours of direct sunlight daily. Protect the plants from the hot, scorching sun. Very few succulents thrive in full shade. Ideal conditions include several hours of early morning or late afternoon sun and filtered sun or bright shade during the hottest part of the day. When growing, succulents need as much light as possible, short of burning. During their rest period, they need much less sunlight. In the winter, make sure plants are protected from the frost by either covering them, move to a sheltered space, or take inside.

How to plant succulents? Most succulents tend to be shallow rooted so it is easy to use a shallow pot. Clean your pot thoroughly. Before filling the pot with soil, cover the drain holed with a piece of screen material or paper towel so the soil does not wash out. Gently remove the plant from the current pot. Check to see if roots are healthy and free of pests, such as mealybugs, slugs, and sowbugs. Fill the new pot half full of fresh soil and place the succulent in the middle of the pot with its roots spread out. Add more soil, pressing with your hands to anchor the plant.

What kind of soil do you use? Succulents do best in a well-aerated potting mix that allows water to penetrate easily and

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Pork & Beans (*Sedum robotinctum*) photo by Jennifer Baumbach

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SPICY SUMMER SEASONINGS: THE STINKING ROSE

Pearl Eddy, U.C. Master Gardener and U.C. Master Food Preserver, Solano County

It is not known why garlic has been called the “stinking rose,” but its flavor and odor is very important in the cooking of various cultures. The botanical name of most garlic that we buy in the markets is *Allium sativum*. There is also elephant garlic (*Allium ampeloprasum*), which is a very large variety with a much milder flavor. The average garlic consumption in the US in 1999 was three pounds per person, but I'll bet it has increased since then, especially in areas where it is a very important culinary addition.

Garlic is usually purchased by the “bulb” which may have from 8 to 20 “cloves.” Some of us have become a little lazy and buy jars of fresh cloves, either whole or minced or crushed. I like to reach into a jar and grab out a handful of cloves without having to remove the paper-like skin from each clove. I also use a lot of powdered or granulated dried garlic that I purchase in large jars.

Garlic is easy to grow, and we usually plant it here in late fall or early winter. When the garlic tops dry up, usually in early summer, it's time to harvest. Carefully dig the bulbs out of the soil and spread them out and dry the bulbs in a warm, shady area for a couple of weeks. Bulbs may then be stored in mesh bags, or even pantyhose, by hanging in a cool,

dry, well-ventilated area away from direct sunlight. Bulbs or individual cloves may be placed in plastic bags or containers in the freezer, with or without oil.

Botulism is probably the most serious risk associated with garlic. Its sulphurous nature makes it a prime breeding ground for botulism (*Clostridium botulinum*). Botulism is a nasty toxin that can result in major stomach illness sometimes leading to death. The worst danger from botulism comes if raw garlic is stored in oil at room temperature—or even for too long in the refrigerator. Never store raw garlic in oil at room temperature.

Garlic is a very powerful herb that is generally lauded as beneficial and health-giving. Be aware that a few people may be allergic to or intolerant of garlic, which could result in digestive tract irritation or skin irritation. Garlic may also cause potentially dangerous side effects when combined with certain drugs.

Using garlic in recipes is always an adventure, often resulting in pleasant surprises. Have you ever tasted garlic ice cream? I haven't yet but plan to when we attend the Gilroy Garlic Festival, which is held this year on July 29, 30 and 31. Gilroy has had these festivals since 1979. ☀

FORTY CLOVE CHICKEN

1 frying chicken, cut in pieces	2 tsp. (or more) dry basil (use fresh herbs if desired)
40 cloves garlic, peeled (cut extra large pieces into smaller pieces)	1 pinch (or more) crushed red pepper
3/4 cup dry white wine	6 sprigs (or more) fresh parsley, minced
1/4 cup olive oil	1 lemon, cut in half
4 stalks celery, sliced crosswise	salt and pepper to taste
1 tsp. (or more) dry oregano (use fresh herbs if desired)	

Place chicken in shallow baking pan, skin side up. Sprinkle ingredients, except lemon, evenly over chicken. Squeeze juice from lemon over top. Cut remaining lemon rind into pieces and arrange throughout chicken pieces. Cover with foil and bake at 400 degrees F for 40 minutes (or more, to reach 180 degrees F). Serve garlic cloves with chicken or smash cloves and spread on French bread. Serves 4.

ASK HOTTIE!

Lauren Peters, U.C. Master Gardener, Solano County

Dear Hottie:

Our neighbors have a redwood tree and a camphor tree that overhang my garden plot. The roots are terrible resulting in little productivity of my garden. I've purchased some 18" deep root barriers but I notice even at 18" in my clay soil, still some roots exist. Do I need deeper barriers or will these sufficiently cut down the mass of roots that impact my plot? Most roots are in the top foot. Do you have any stats on the effectiveness of root barriers over time?

Thanks,

Wes

Hi Wes,

It's unfortunate that your neighbor chose these trees for your border. Redwoods rob much of the surrounding soil of its nutrients in order to grow 5-6 feet per year. Both redwood and camphor trees drop a great deal of bark, leaves, and seeds making it a messy place to clean up. The redwood can drop a third of its branchlets in one year! This mess also changes the chemistry of your soil. Redwood needles cause your soil to become acidic, which is great if you want camellias or azaleas growing there. Ferns also grow nicely in the shade of a redwood tree. Camphor tree droppings leave the camphor chemical behind in the soil. Growing anything near this tree is difficult.

As you remarked, the root system for most trees is in the top foot or so of the soil, where nutrients are found.

Therefore, putting a deeper root barrier will not be helpful in ridding roots from your garden. Also, the problem with root barriers is that it leaves one side of the tree's stability system vulnerable. The root system eventually will not be able to hold the tree up in a strong wind.

The redwood and camphor trees are survivors. The camphor, in some areas, is considered an invasive species. Even a root barrier can't keep all of the roots out.

I did find a research paper written about root barriers. Most studies seem to look at keeping roots from braking sidewalks and foundations. The paper can be found here: http://ucrurf.ucr.edu/publications/Field%20Day%20Procs/1999%20Proceedings/L01_effects_root_barriers_growth.pdf

In summary, root barriers will limit the amount of large roots coming into your garden at the expense of an unstable tree. You will not be able to eliminate all roots coming into your property. Try planting acid-loving plants in the affect area or consider a container garden in that area.

Good luck!

Lauren

U.C. Master Gardener 

ENTICING HUMMINGBIRDS INTO YOUR YARD

Betsy Lunde, U.C. Master Gardener, Solano County

Are you envious of your neighbors who are always remarking about the colorful and delightful hummingbirds that populate their yards and give hours of pleasure with their swooping and zipping antics? Want to brag about the hummers in **your** yard? Here is a list of plants whose flowers are guaranteed to please both you and the hummers. All of the flowers on this list are nectar-rich, rather easy to grow, and are definitely hummingbird magnets! Plus the flowers will punch up color in your yard.

Cleome hasslerana or spider flower is a delightful annual that grows in all Sunset zones and can be used as informal summer hedge. Growing 4-6 feet tall and 4-5 feet wide, it likes the sun. Colors include red, pink, white and purple. The airy florets attract not only the hummers, but butterflies and bees too. A lovely display if your garden has the room!

Antirrhinum majus or the "ordinary" snapdragon is a popular and familiar plant in the garden. However, the new colors are **not** ordinary! If you can find them, the hummers and you will find them quite tasty. Look for 'Twinny Peach,' a blend of peach, yellow, and light-orange that can be spotted from afar or just take a 6-pack from the nursery of your choice and be amazed when they start to bloom. You can't go wrong with snapdragons!

Zinnias (*Zinnia elegans*) are another treat for you and the hummers! Try the 'Magellan' series, which produce masses of clear, bright-colored blooms. My favorite is the 'Magellan coral,' which produces double coral blooms on busy plants; the best part is that after the first bloom is over, you'll be treated to a round of blooms so that the

color last all season long. This strain of zinnia has a total of 6 colors available at this time.

Are you a salvia fan? Go beyond the usual 'pineapple' or 'purple' sages and give the following a try. *Salvia farinacea* 'Evolution' is a beauty with its darkish lilac blooms; pair it with varieties 'Lady in Red' or "Summer Jewel" and you'll be beating off the hummingbirds with the proverbial stick!

Are you a petunia person? *Petunia x hybrida* 'Purple Wave' with its abundance of iridescent purple blossoms (the grower's description) will have both hummingbirds

and bees flocking into your yard with threats to stay until the season is over. This plant can be used as both a ground cover or as a hanging basket stand-out. A suggestion is to hang it out of direct winds or your blossoms may last only a day or so (I live in Suisun). This petunia has been improved, meaning it has an earlier bloom time and larger flowers.



Rufous hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus*) feeding on *Salvia* 'Lipstick'
photo by Jennifer Baumbach

Marigolds (*Tagetes erecta*)!! Just say the name and you smile thinking of these bright denizens of the garden. 'Moonsong' is a variety that is not only fade-resistant but is such a bright, true orange that others look pale in comparison. The best part is that the old blooms will be covered by new, bright green foliage so that the plants look fresh throughout the growing season.

Have a shady spot that needs some color (and hummingbirds)? There's a begonia to fill that void. *Begonia x tuberhybrida* 'Pin Up Flame' is a real shade brightener! Each plant produces just loads of 4- to 5-inch single blossoms in an eye-popping combination of deep

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A CROWN I WOULDN'T WEAR

Darrell g.h. Schramm, U.C. Master Gardener, Solano County

Some roses really have the gall! Take, for instance, my erstwhile rose 'Aloha.' Such a beauty! The flowers of this rose are large, cupped, and very full, offering the nosey admirer a strong, sweet, fruity fragrance. Its color is two-toned, more or less, but so complex that I leave it to the American Rose Society's *Encyclopedia of Roses* to describe it: "The inner petals are red and fade to pale crimson with a hint of terracotta or salmon, while the outer petals start pink and pass to rose pink. All the petals have pale edges, darker backs, and darker bases." No other rose is quite like it.

I grew this rose for almost ten years. It is billed as a low climber—perhaps eight feet high—and some sources also acknowledge that it is a slow grower. They can say that again. All right: slow grower. After the first spurt of growth, my 'Aloha' grew very, very, very slowly. In fact, it never reached four feet. In addition, after the first several years, it became stingy with its lovely repeat blooms. In its last springtime it offered maybe five flowers; in its final fall, only three. I mentioned to a friend in the rose society that I was about to shovel-prune this lazy skinflint, regardless of its ravishing beauty. My friend asked if she could switch places with the yardwaste bin. I consented and gave her the rose.

Several days later she called. She had decided to wash off all the soil clinging to the rose, and, to her surprise, found at the base of the plant a gall. A yardwaste bin welcomed it after all. Ah, beauty, you were sick, and I never knew.

'Aloha's' sickness was crown gall, the common name for *Agrobacterium tumefaciens*. Crown gall derives its name from the woody tumor or gall usually formed at the root crown of a plant at or near ground level. Sometimes these galls also grow on roots and even limbs and trunks of certain woody plants. In addition to roses, galls can form on almond, apple, apricot, beet, blackberry, carnation, chestnut, euonymus, grape, hop, peach, plum, prune, raspberry, tobacco, tomato, willow, and a number of other plants. Unfortunately, like the majority of the human species, they have no health benefits.

Crown gall has been mentioned in the literature for over 150 years, but its cause was not discovered until 1907.

While the crown gall pathogen occurs nearly worldwide, it was not mentioned in the United States until 1892. We now know that the bacteria cause the plant to grow disorganized tissue beginning in the cambium and appearing on the bark (or sometimes the root) as a large bumpy knob. Its coloring is the same as the normal wood, so it may be at first overlooked. While it can be smooth, the gall is usually rough. Cutting into it reveals it has no annual growth rings typical of woody plants.

Generally crown gall does not harm established woody plants unless it grows on the root crown of *young* plants. When that occurs, the young plant becomes stunted and grows poorly, producing fewer and fewer leaves and fruit. My 'Aloha' seemed to stop growing after the second or third year. Gradually it put forth fewer and fewer leaves and became more and more prone to stress and fungal disease. The doctor (me) was always in. I nursed it, fertilizing, watering, mulching, plucking off each diseased leaf. You see, health benefits would not have helped anyway. If the gall grows particularly large, it can kill the plant.

What to do? Dig up the young plant and rid yourself of it. In addition, rid yourself of the soil in which the rose or other plant grew. When galls become wet or when older galls begin to disintegrate, they release their bacteria into the soil. And, horror of horticultural horrors, *Agrobacterium tumefaciens* can survive in the soil for two years or more. Seedlings grown in the area can become infected, as can established growth that has been injured by pruning, breakage, or freeze. However, the good news is that certain species are resistant to the bacteria and can be planted where crown gall was problematic, species such as birch, cedar, magnolia, pine, redwood, or tulip tree. The bad news for rosarians is that planting a tree where a rose had been may be a poor choice. Too much shade in a rose garden may also cause poor or slow growth. Another solution is to solarize the



Crown gall on rose, photo by Rich Affleck

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HARVESTING NEW MASTER GARDENERS

Congratulations to a new crop of Master Gardeners (MGs)! The class of 2011 graduated in May during a celebration at the Buck Mansion in Vacaville. The veteran Master Gardeners prepared a potluck feast, the decorations, and other details for the graduation. These are a few pictures from the event.

The new Master Gardeners graduates of 2011:

John Anderson, Leyla Bilge, Patricia Brantley, Mary Carruth, Francisco Cortes, Cynthia Crutchfield, Mary Delaney, Steve Etter, Christina Gabrione, David Harper, Mollie Jarrett, Bonita Knuckles, Marsha Lucas, Georgia Luiz, Teresa McLeod, Jesus Molinar, Karen Norton, Elizabeth Reeves, Emily Rued, Sterling Smith, Janet Snyder, Edward Walbolt and Linda Watson.

The addition of these new MGs brings the total of the Solano County membership to 101 volunteers!☀





(Continued from page 1-Using Succulents in Your Garden)

drain rapidly. Do not use your garden soil when planting succulents. You may want to buy bagged "cactus mix." However, you can make your own soil mix by amending any quality potting soil so that your final mixture consists of one-third to one-half crushed volcanic rock or pumice, coarse-grained sand, and/or perlite. This ratio can vary widely and many succulent gardeners develop their own soil mixture. Poultry grit, available at farm supply stores, and builder's sand, from home improvement stores, also works well. Do not use beach sand as it is too fine and salty.

Do succulents need fertilizers? Yes, but not very often. When planting or repotting, add 1 tablespoon of slow-release granular fertilizer per gallon of soil mix. At the beginning of each growing season, generally in the spring, apply an all purpose, low-nitrogen (N number less than 12) liquid fertilizer diluted to half strength to moist soil. No fertilizer is needed if no growth is desired. Avoid over fertilizing as too much nitrogen can cause softening of

tissues and make the plants susceptible to rot.

How much and often do I water the succulents?

Succulents are very forgiving when it comes to water. Actively growing succulents should be watered anywhere from once a week to once a month, depending on the type of plant, the size of the container/pot, type of pot, and the weather. For the plumpest and healthiest plants, especially during active growth, keep the soil about as moist as a wrung out sponge. It is best to water succulents with a drip system or by hand with a watering can. Avoid spraying water on the plants - focus on watering the soil only. The larger the plant and the fatter its leaves, the longer it can and should go without water. If you forget to water them, the succulents will adjust. And if you give them too much water, they will generally be fine unless waterlogged. A good rule for water is "when in doubt, don't."☀

(Continued from page 4 Enticing Hummingbirds to Your Yard)

yellow with scarlet and orange edges. It's a prolific bloomer with good weather tolerance and durability. As with all hanging begonias, however, this plant will probably do better out of our direct west winds. By itself, it will provide a focal point to brighten up that shady area in the yard or in a patio container in a spot with little sun.

The last I want to suggest is the verbenas 'Quartz

Burgundy' (*Verbena x hybrida*). This plant has an intense wine-colored bloom that attracts hummers first with its color and then the nectar. This improved variety has resistance to mildew, which means that it will be flowering much longer than most verbenas.

I've got to go now and watch **my** hummers flit around outside the window. What attracts them to my yard? They like my Japanese maple 'Bloodgood,' go figure!☀

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ground during the hot, dry season before planting again; this remedy seems to reduce the likelihood of the crown gall pathogen in the soil.

After removing my rose, something I should have done years ago had I but known, I dug the hole especially wide and deep, got rid of that soil, allowed the hole to sit empty for several months, and filled the hole with clean, new loam. Saying goodbye to the old soil, I've said *aloha* to a young rose I've planted there, an obscure hybrid tea

named 'Mrs. E. J. Hudson.' Surely she wouldn't have the gall to have gall! In mid-March my new rose offered her first bud. I'm betting on her health and survival.

Sources

"Crown Gall." Integrated Pest Management. U.C. Davis. Web.
Massey, Dr. M. L. "Crown Gall." *American Rose Annual*, 1950. 145-153.

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Summer Gardening Guide

“A perfect summer day is when the sun is shining, the breeze is blowing, the birds are singing, and the lawn mower is broken.”
 -James Dent

	<i>July</i>	<i>August</i>	<i>September</i>
Planting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Summer-to-fall color, choose ageratum, celosia, coleus, marigolds, and zinnias. ❑ Continue planting warm-season vegetables until midmonth. Beans, corn and tomatoes. ❑ Start perennials from cuttings-dianthus, geraniums, verbena. ❑ Sow seeds of columbine, coreopsis, forget-me-nots and foxglove. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Start seeds of cool-season crops-broccoli, cabbage, and lettuce-to set out in August. ❑ Direct-sow edibles: carrots, onions, peas, and radishes. ❑ Start sowing seeds of cool-weather bedding flowering in flats now: calendula, candytuft, pansies, snapdragons, and stock. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Seed: try a selection of colorful salad greens, which are easy to grow at home. ❑ Time to start thinking of what tree to buy. Consider fall color and shop when leaves color up. ❑ Shop for bulbs now to get the best selection. ❑ After midmonth, sow seed of California poppy and clarkia.
Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Control weeds-pull or hoe them as soon as they appear. ❑ Deadhead (remove old flowers) from dahlia, rudbeckia, rose and other perennials. ❑ Fruit trees-brace limbs that are sagging with fruit. Clean up any fallen fruit. ❑ Continue to irrigate plants, especially when hot and windy weather is forecast. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Deep water trees. Use a soaker hose and place at drip line of tree. ❑ Fertilize warm-season annuals. ❑ Deadhead spent blooms. ❑ Refresh hanging baskets with new transplants. Succulents work well. ❑ Continue to harvest vegetables for maximum production. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Get flowering annuals and perennials as well as fall-planted vegetable off to a strong start by incorporating a high-nitrogen fertilizer into the soil before planting. Fertilize again 2-4 weeks or follow label instructions. ❑ Later this month is one of the best times to rejuvenate bluegrass, fescue, and rye grass lawns. Rake and reseed. Be sure to irrigate and keep moist.
Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Budworms-inspect plants for holes in buds and black droppings. Use Bt's to control. ❑ Deep water trees. Midsummer heat can cause drought stress. Deep water citrus, fruit and flowering trees once every week or two. Water less-thirsty trees once a month. ❑ When foliage dries completely, dig up spring-flowering bulbs and tubers. If daffodils and Dutch iris appear crowded, dig them up too. Store bulbs and tubers in a cool, dry place until fall planting. ❑ Dig and divide overcrowded bearded iris clumps. Share with friends and neighbors! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Continue to deep water all plants to avoid sunburn and other damage from hot weather. ❑ Continue garden clean up. Remove fallen fruit and garden debris. ❑ Inspect plants for signs of spider mites. Apply a blast of water spray to undersides and tops of leaves to dislodge dust and mites. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Use a selective, pre-emergent herbicide on lawn to keep winter weeds under control. ❑ Clean up fallen fruit and leaves to keep diseases at bay. ❑ Clean up old vegetables to prevent over-wintering of insects and disease.

Master Gardeners in Your Community

Monthly Vacaville Library Series

July 21 at 7:00 pm

Designing with Succulents

Learn how to create interest in your home and garden using succulents.

Vacaville Public Library
1020 Ulatis Road

Music in the Park

August 6

10:00 am until 1:00 pm

Master Gardeners will have an information booth at the event. They will answer your home gardening questions. The public is encouraged to bring plant/insect/disease samples from their home gardens for diagnosis.

The 4-H Program will man this booth after 1:00 pm.

Hall Park in Suisun
(E. Wigeon & Pintail Drive)

DANGER PELIGRO
PESTICIDES PESTICIDAS

Loma Vista presents
Less-Toxic Pesticides
July 23
10am to 12 pm

Master Gardeners will be on hand to present information about using least toxic methods to controlling garden disease and insect problems.

Loma Vista Farm
56 Rainier
Vallejo

KEEP OUT NO ENTRE

Stump the Master Gardener

Vacaville Public Library

August 18

7:00 pm

This will be a round table where the public asks questions of the Master Gardeners. We invite one and all to bring from your garden your questions. We encourage the public to bring in insect (in a bag), plant disease, and weeds for identification. We will also be able to identify plants.

1020 Ulatis Drive, Vacaville

Master Gardeners are also found this time of year at local Farmers Markets & one other location:

Benicia, Thursday from 4:00-8:00 pm, in front of Kinders

Dixon, every other Saturday from 8:00 am until 12:00 pm, Women's Improvement Park downtown Dixon, next to the Dixon Library

Green Valley, Saturdays from 9:00 am until 2:00 pm, Green Valley Rd. and Vintage Ln.

OSH-Fairfield, Every other Saturday from 10:00 am until 2:00 pm, 1500 Oliver Road

Vacaville, Saturdays from 8:00 am until noon, Main Street

Vallejo, Saturdays 8:30 am to 1:00 pm, Southeast corner of Georgia and Marin Streets

Master Gardener Plant Exchange

Everyone knows the Master Gardeners love to propagate plants at home. They do this mainly to share with other Master Gardeners and friends. So each year, the Master Gardeners (MGs) try to hold their Plant Exchange. It's an event where the MGs bring in their plants to share with the public. The public is also encouraged to bring in plants they have propagated or have to share and exchange them with the MGs. This event is a totally FREE event and everyone is welcome.

There are a few rules however, please, no plants larger than 5 gallon pot size. We also ask that plants are labeled with information like plant name, sun/shade and watering requirements.

Suggested plants/plant material to bring: seeds, cuttings, divisions (like iris or other bulbs), plants, succulents/cacti, and other plants.

Saturday, September 24, 2011
From 9:00 am until 1:00 pm

UC Cooperative Extension office
501 Texas Street, 1st Floor conference room
Fairfield, CA

***Seeds For Thought* is produced by
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It is available through the internet for free download:

<http://cesolano.ucdavis.edu/newsletterfiles/newsletter130.htm>

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Baumbach".

Jennifer M. Baumbach

Master Gardener Program Coordinator



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