

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Updates on Two December Community Outreach Events

Habitat Restoration on Dec 3, 2023. Native Pollinator Planting project along Carmel Mountain Road trail hit a major milestone for Friends of Del Mar Mesa! With the incredible teamwork of 14 volunteers, we successfully planted 80 Del Mar Mesa natives near the picnic bench across from Alta Del Mar. A huge shout out to Yu Linda and everyone who contributed to this success! Phase 3 in Mar 2024! Includes: installation of a Dog Tag Memory Pole, Plant ID tags, and an Interpretive sign. Stay tuned for more updates on our

journey to create a vibrant and sustainable habitat!



Holiday Swag Workshop on Dec 14, 2023. It was heartwarming fun, where Yulinda Song, Michelle ODonald, Chris Ross, Mary Balo, Jennifer Schaffer and Shital Parikh joyfully assisted a dozen seniors at SD Housing Commission residents at Belden, creating a festive atmosphere, with music, food and festive greens.



[Renew Membership at \\$30/year](#)

Donations Received in Dec 2023

Thanks to Sea Breeze Properties, Gary Levitt for their generous donation of \$10,000 to Friends of Del Mar Mesa, for trails and habitat restoration.

Thanks to Nina Etedali for donating \$290 worth of wood vegetable signs and paints for Community Outreach workshops at Belden SD Housing Commission.

WELCOME NEW AND RETURNING MEMBERS

We have 33 members as of today for 2024. A BIG THANK YOU!



December Library Bouquet: Thank you to Shital Parikh for the arrangement. [SIGN UP](#) to bring home grown flowers or a potted plant for display at the library desk and attend the monthly meeting.. The vase/ potted plant is returned at the end of the month.



Free Gift with Membership: *New members* get a gift choice of root veg grow bag and Sweet Potato plant cuttings. *Renewing members* get garden club tote. As long as supplies last.

DMMGC Save the dates for 2024

[SIGN UP](#) for 2024 monthly meetings

Wednesday January 3rd @ Carmel Valley Library

Topic: New Year's Garden Resolutions & Pine Cone Bird Feeder Wrkshp. What plans do you dream of for your garden in 2024? This will be a time to write down and share your ideas.

Workshop: Led by our very own Master Gardener Shital Parikh.



Wednesday February 7th @ Carmel Valley Library

Topic: Native Plants & Wildlife

How planting natives can help entire ecosystems.

Guest Speaker: Speaker from San Diego Audubon Society



Wednesday March 6th @ Carmel Valley Library

Topic: Happy Houseplants

Guest Speaker: Linda Stewart, Master Gardener



Wednesday April 3rd @ Carmel Valley Library

Topic: Backyard Birdwatching

Guest Speaker: Ernie Cowan, Photographer, Writer, Former Mayor of Escondido, and Bird Enthusiast



Wednesday May 1st, 2024

Topic: Tips for Improving (or Starting) Your Rose Garden

Guest Speaker: Beth Van Boxtel from the San Diego Rose Society is San Diego native, a certified Consulting Rosarian, and a UCCE Master Gardener



Wednesday June 5th 2024 Topic: Garden Activity TBD

January Garden To-Do List

January is an excellent month for preparing your landscape for spring and summer.

1. Watch weather reports. Accordingly, protect your plants from frost and other weather conditions. Cover them when necessary and adjust watering both for cooler temperatures and for seasonal rains.
2. Don't forget about your houseplants. Make sure to keep your houseplants watered, as they tend to dry out from indoor heating during the winter months.
3. Clear plants and debris. Clean out soggy leaves, broken branches and dead plants. Maintain unranked patches (if desired) and old rose canes for overwintering insects. Don't forget to pull out weeds.
4. Pruning Tools: Keep your garden tools sharp and clean. Avoid rust and dullness and prepare for the pruning that takes place in January and February.

5. Pruning: Prune dead or damaged branches. Since January is the dormant season, it is the ideal time to prune. Prune your fruit trees while avoiding apricot and cherry trees. For more instructions on how to prune, check out this pruning guide.
6. Start your vegetable garden indoors. Expand your growing season and start seeds, you can plant cabbage, chard, broccoli, cauliflower, and spring lettuce, to name a few. You can also start them in a cold frame or greenhouse.
7. Plant flower bulbs. Get a jump start on planting flower bulbs this month, which can lead to a longer spring bloom!
8. Plan your spring and summer vegetable garden. Design a garden plan now to prepare for spring planting. A great first step is to draw a map of your garden on grid paper and consider which seeds you want to plant and where.

January is a time of new beginnings, including in your garden. By preparing now, you can expect fantastic results in the spring and summer months.

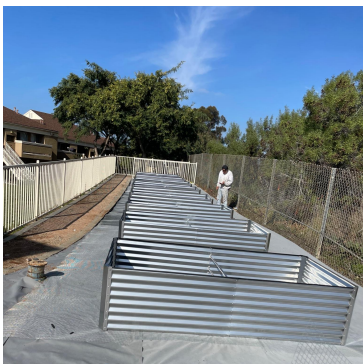
Growing Potatoes: Potatoes can be planted now- January - February, but, should be bought ordered now. **Growing Potatoes in containers, buckets or grow bags**

Pre Planting Prep: Get seed potatoes or organic potatoes that are not sprayed so, they sprout. Put the potatoes in a dark place a week or more so, they start to sprout eyes. Cut the seed potatoes into pieces with at least 2 eyes each. Store pieces at room temperature for 1 to 2 days before planting to allow the cuts to form a callus. If you are using a bucket or another container make sure there is adequate drainage. Grow bags have drainage. **Soil:** Loose soil, a little acidic soil is preferred but, not necessary. **Soil amendment:** Add 2 cups of vermicompost to each of the planting bags **Planting:** Put about 6 inches of soil in grow bag. Water the soil. Place the potato pieces about 6 inches apart. Eyes pointing up. Cover w/3" inch soil. Add 2 tbsp of liquid fish fertilizer to the large watering can. Water after first planting. Place in a sunny place to grow. **Watering Schedule:** If not raining, water twice a week. **Mounding:** As the leafy part of the potato grows to 5-6 inches add straw or shredded paper or even some soil around the stems. **Harvesting:** Some harvesting can be done 2 weeks after blooms/ flowers appear. Potatoes are ready to harvest when the vines die back. Usually 100-120 days. Do not wash after harvest. Store in a cool dry place. Don't allow the sacks to become too hot, as the plants will stop producing tubers if the roots overheat. (Farmers Almanac). Source: <https://ucanr.edu/blogs/blogcore/postdetail.cfm?postnum=26291#...text=In%20your%20bucket%20or%20grow.on%20my%20regular%20drip%20system>.

Perfect Gift For Garden Enthusiasts: Customized GIFT CARD



It's not just a present, it's a promise of delightful moments throughout the year for and with your loved ones. Membership has never been so thoughtful and convenient. Thank you, Michelle for purchasing a gift card.



Belden Community Project Update: 9 Metal Raised beds size 8x4 feet, were installed on Dec 29. Thank you to Member Rashmi Urval for landscape design and informing and applying and for turf rebate.

