

Diggin' in the Dirt: Winter Water for the Birds

By Chip Bubl
Oregon State University
Extension Service - Columbia County

Master Gardener™ class signups being taken

The OSU Extension office in Columbia County will be offering the Master Gardener™ training again in St. Helens this spring. The classes will be held on Mondays from 9 am – 4 pm for 11 weeks starting on January 7th, 2013. Cost of the program is \$75.00 which includes a large resource book. Master Gardeners are responsible for providing volunteer gardening education to the community as partial payback for the training. If interested in the program, call the Extension office at 503 397-3462 for an information packet. This could still be a holiday gift.

Winter water for the birds

A lot of us feed birds in the winter. Yet how many of us think to provide those birds with water? As easy sources of water freeze in cold weather, birds may have trouble finding the water they need. Birds use the water not only for drinking and bathing, but as a source of water-borne foods such as insects and

algae.

Bird lovers can help by providing shallow puddles or bird baths. The containers should be from one to three inches deep, preferably with gentle sloping sides. The surface of the bath should be rough so the birds can get sure footing.

Place flat rocks at water's edge to allow birds a place to rest or drink from. Make sure cats cannot reach the watering area.

Keep water unfrozen by adding warm water as needed. There are even some birdbath heaters available at specialty stores.

Adapted from an article by Dan Edge, Department Chair, OSU Fish and Wildlife

Many Extension publications available free online

Are you putting up salsa, saving seeds, or thinking about planting kiwis? OSU has a large number of its publications available for free download. Just go to <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog/> click on publications and start exploring. If there was an older OSU publication that you remember but can't find, if you know its exact name or

a reasonable facsimile thereof, you can type the name into Google and then add "+Oregon State University" and you will find that publication in our archive.

Another website you should know is our plant disease web site <http://pnwhandbooks.org/plantdisease/>. This can give you pictures and insights into all manner of plant problems to be thankful you don't have and good information/advice on those that do show up in your garden. Also linked at the bottom is our insect management handbook where you can look at apple maggots, bedbugs or flea beetles from a safe distance.

Odds and ends.....

• Peach leaf curl finds its way into the buds on your peach tree (if you dare to grow such a thing in Vernonia!) this month and in January and February. Reduce the problem by spraying completely and often with lime sulfur or copper (considered organic). Four separate sprays are ideal. Temperatures should be well above freezing when you spray. Two to three hours of drying time is ideal. With copper fungicides, use a spreader-sticker if the label calls for one. While you're at it, spray your apples, cherries, blueberries, and boysen/marionberries to help manage some of their disease issues.

in the winter, those that do are richly appreciated. You might search out nurseries for their Hellebore, Witch hazel, and Sarcococca varieties.

• Shrubs and other plants under eaves may dry out during the winter. When that happens, they may either perish directly from lack of moisture or may be more susceptible to damage from cold weather.

The Extension Service offers its programs and materials equally to all people.

Free newsletter

The Oregon State University Extension office in Columbia County publishes a monthly newsletter on gardening and farming topics (called County Living) written/edited by yours truly. All you need to do is ask for it and it will be mailed to you. Call 503 397-3462 to be put on the list. Alternatively, you can find it on the web at <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/columbia/> and click on newsletters.

Contact information for the Extension office

Oregon State University Extension Service – Columbia County
505 N. Columbia River Highway (across from the Legacy clinic)
St. Helens, OR 97051
503 397-3462
Email: chip.bubl@oregonstate.edu

“Fathering for the Future” Workshop

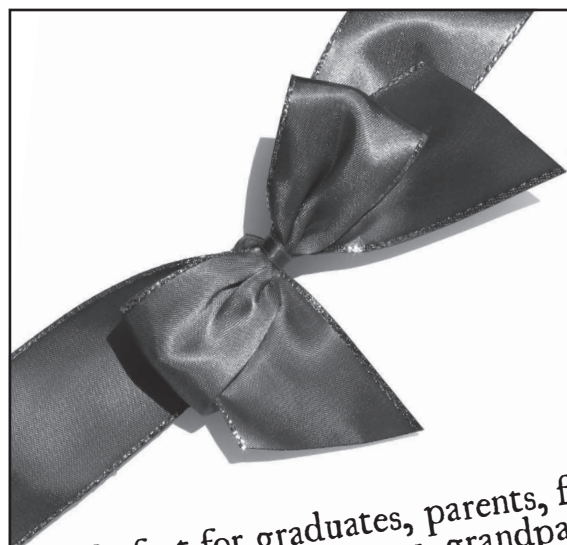
North Coast Parenting is pleased to present a full day workshop on fatherhood and relationships presented by the Northwest Marriage Institute of Vancouver, Washington. The event is scheduled for Saturday, January 26th from 8:30 AM -5:00 PM at the Holiday Inn Express in Astoria. This event is free - breakfast and lunch will be provided.

Topics include: Seven stages of a healthy relationship, Skills for healthy communication and conflict resolution, Building successful parenting skills, Men as role models and mentors and

Increasing personal value in the workplace.

This program is designed specifically for men who are parenting at any age, single or married. The purpose is to help men become better fathers, relationship partners and family men. Women are encouraged to attend. All participating males will receive a \$40 gift card.

Registration is required-call (503) 325-8673 ext 4 or visit the Northwest Marriage Institute to register online.
<http://www.northwestmarriage.org/>



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Boosters Buzz



Vernonia Youth Basketball is preparing for their “Kick Off the Season” youth tournament n Saturday January 5, 2013. Vernonia hosts this annual tournament each year for 5th/6th grade boys and girls. The tournament will be held at the new school campus. Make sure to stop by and support your local youth and cheer them on!

Thank you to all who helped with the Boosters concessions at the “Christmas in the Country Bazaar.” You all know who you are, but a big thank you goes out to you anyway! We couldn't do it without all our volunteers!



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All listings and rentals are available for viewing at www.arkrealestate.org
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