

# BETTER ENVIRONMENTS

You'll Value our Views!



August 2009

## BENEFICIAL INSECT PREDATORS

Insects are the most diverse groups of animals on Earth, with over a million described species and estimates of undescribed species of up to 30 million. At times, it may seem that most of those insects are in your backyard, feasting on your plants and trees.

Insects like butterflies and honeybees enjoy a favorable reputation, but what about the other insects. Many insects benefit humans by pollinating crops. There are "beneficial insects" that prey on pest insects to help control them in your garden before they do too much damage.

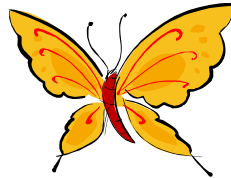
In recent years, there has been increased interest in reducing the use of pesticides in the

garden. Most insecticides are rather broad in spectrum, killing the beneficial insects as well as the target pest. It is important to recognize the beneficial insects so they can be appreciated and conserved.

When you abandon the use of chemicals, you may experience an increase in pests, and it may take awhile for the beneficial insect population to expand. In the meantime, you can create a habitat to encourage them to come to your yard and say there.

Transform your garden into an "insectary;" a habitat where beneficials will feel at home. Many beneficial insect predators can be attracted by simply growing the

plants they prefer. As pest populations shrink or swell as different flowers come into bloom, they can use pollen or nectar for food. It's also good to leave some weeds growing in patches to provide a natural hiding place. Providing a water source will also keep them close in your backyard.



Listed below are some beneficial insect predators that you can attract and the types of plants that will encourage them.

Please call our office at ext. 102 for more information. (South Coast Botanic Garden)

<b>Beneficial Predator</b>	<b>Prey</b>
Aphid Parasite Wasp (Aphidius)	Aphids
Aphid Parasite Midge (Aphidoletes)	Aphids
Beneficial mites	Thrips, spider mite, fungus gnats
Damsel bug (Nabidae)	Eggs of many pest insects
Whitefly Predatory (Dicyphus)	Whiteflies, aphids, thrips, spider mites
Ground Beetles (Carabidae)	Slugs, small caterpillars and grubs
Hoverflies (Syrphidae)	Aphids, mealy bugs and others
Lacewings (Chrysopidae)	Scale, aphids, mites, soft bodies insects
Ladybugs (Coccinellidae)	Aphids, mites
Pirate Bugs (Anthocoridae)	Thrips, aphids, mites, scale, whiteflies
Tachinid Flies (Tachinidae)	Caterpillars, beetle and fly larvae
Parasite Wasps (Braconidae)	Whiteflies, moth, beetle and fly larvae
<b>Insectaria Plants</b>	
Aphid Parasite Wasp (Aphidius)	Lupine, Sunflower
Beneficial Mites	Sunflower, Shasta Daisy
Whitefly Predatory Bug (Dicyphus)	Foxglove, Verbascum
Ground Beetles (Carabidae)	Amaranthus
Hoverflies (Syrphidae)	Alyssum, Morning Glory
Lacewings (Chrysopidae)	Cosmos, Fennel, Queen Anne's Lace
Ladybugs (Coccinellidae)	Dill, Fennel, Tansy, Yarrow
Parasitic Wasps (Braconidae)	Sunflower
Pirate Bugs (Anthocoridae)	Sunflower, Shasta Daisy

### Need Pool Service?

Rancho Pool Service, Inc. has been in business over 25 years serving the pool and spa needs of residential pool owners and homeowner associations in the South Bay area. They are located at 26359 S. Western Avenue in Lomita. Their telephone number is 310-530-8278.

They provide everything from pool and spa maintenance and repairs, to installations and complete renovations.

Rancho Pool Service is a licensed, insured and California State Licensed Contractor. Therefore, they are able to leave you with a sense of security knowing that you are dealing with a true professional pool and spa company.

Rancho Pool Service, Inc. is affiliated with Discount Pool Supply, which operates a full-service pool supply store stocked with thousands of different parts and supplies for pools and spas. Due to this unique partnership, they are able to repair or replace your broken or leaky equipment more quickly and efficiently.

They are a leader in "green" technology, selling and installing various brands of variable speed pumps, energy efficient heaters, L.E.D. pool lights, and pool covers, which cut down on evaporation and provide free heat.

Their goal is to provide you with the best service possible, and they look forward to meeting all of your pool and spa service needs. Take advantage of this special offer:

**\$25 OFF FILTER CLEANING (Offer expires 9/30/09)**

The following are the steps to build your own garden pond:

1. Before digging, make sure there are no power lines or pipes located in the area where you will be working.
2. Dig a hole to the desired size for the pond.
3. Lay a plastic liner inside the hole, extending it up and around the sides as well as the surrounding area. This will make sure the water will stay in the pond and not seep into the ground.
4. Lay flagstone or other type of rock over the liner that surrounds the hole, then cover the bottom of the hole and any exposed liner. If any liner is left exposed, trim away to remove.
5. Now it's time to get creative by arranging the stones surrounding the pond or perhaps you may want to add a water fountain feature. Stack the stone into a sloping mound at one end of the pond and run tubing underneath. Place the pump inside the pond and attach the tubing. Adding a fountain to keep the water moving helps keep the pond clean and fresh longer.
6. Once everything is in place, try to fill any remaining gaps with small stones and then fill with water.
7. Add more stones around the inside wall of the pond, again with the goal of completely hiding the plastic liner.
8. Dress up the pond by adding aquatic plants for a tropical oasis. For a shimmering effect, add tumbled blue glass rocks to the bottom.

(www.hgtv.com)

## DROUGHT TOLERANT PLANTS

With water restrictions here to stay and getting stricter, maybe it's time to take another look at the plants in your yard. Tough plants are required for these tough times. These heat and drought tolerant varieties include trees, shrubs, groundcovers, perennials, annuals and even some fruiting plants.

Granted, in periods of extended drought like we are experiencing, the plants will not look as lush as during normal rainfall periods and production of flowers and fruit will be diminished. However, with liberal use of mulch and infrequent but deep irrigation, you should be able

to create and sustain quality landscapes using the following trees, shrubs and plants:

- Live Oak
- Red Cedar
- Crape Myrtle
- Jacaranda
- Podocarpus
- Camphor
- Chinese Elm Gum
- King Sago
- Chinese Fountain Grass
- Firebush
- Texas Sage
- Dwarf Natal Plum
- Gazania
- Natal Plum (Carissa)
- African Iris
- Plumbago
- Juniper
- Ornamental Pepper
- Salvia
- Cosmos
- Verbena (www.swfwmd.state)

### South Coast Botanical Garden Activities for August

- 2: Summer Kids Concerts—Zak Morgan. After hours event. \$5 for children, \$8 for adults, in advance. Call 310-531-5819 to order tickets or go to bubblerock.com. 4:30 p.m. Garden opens for picnicking, 5-6 p.m. Concert. Closes at 7 p.m.
- 6 & 8: Children's Discovery Garden. Butterfly Day. 10 a.m. to noon.
- 15 & 16: Dahlia Show & Sale. Sponsored by the South Coast Dahlia Society. Saturday, noon to 4 p.m., Sunday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- 23: Begonia Show & Sale, Sponsored by the American Bogonia Society—P.V. Branch. 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- 30: Summer Kids Concerts—Charlotte Diamond. After hours event. \$5 for children, \$8 for adults, in advance. The same times and contact information as above apply.

### Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy Activities for August

- 1st: Bird Walk at George F. Canyon at 9 a.m. Meet Naturalist Loretta Rose at the Nature Center. We supply binoculars. Nature Hike at George F. Canyon 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Night Hike at George F. Canyon. Time to be arranged. This hike will bring you to the top of the canyon for a fantastic view of the city lights below. Limited to 20 people. Call 310-547-0682 for reservations.
- 8: New Nature Walk at Miraleste Canyon. 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. First visit to beautiful canyons on the east side of the Peninsula overlooking the harbor. Strenuous, due to some steep and rocky trails. For more information and reservations, please call Christen Kitner at 310-541-7613 ext. 201.

### Plan on Treating Grubs this Fall

You might be tempted to treat grubs in the spring when you see last fall's damage, but wait. The grubs have already damaged your lawn and are fairly resistant to insecticides at this time. Furthermore, even if you could eradicate them, summer will bring a new batch of beetles to your lawn.

Look for grubs in the late summer. If you decide to treat, do now or in early fall. This is the time in their life stage when the grubs are susceptible to both biological and chemical insecticides, and they have not had a chance to cause severe damage. Treat only the areas where grub populations exceed the suggested thresholds, in areas of your lawn that are aesthetically important. (www.nysipm.cornell.edu)

Please call our office for a treatment.