

## Meetings and Announcements

### Annual Winter Pruning Demonstrations

We plan to hold our annual winter pruning demonstrations for deciduous fruit trees and grapes in January. The dates are Tuesday and Wednesday, January 7 and 8, 2025. The location, as usual, will be the UC Cooperative Extension office orchard, 1031 S. Mt. Vernon Ave. Time: noon to 1:30 pm each day. Rain or shine. No charge and no pre-registration. Come one, come all.

### Master Gardener Program

Our new Master Gardener Coordinator is Jonathan Moody. He brings extensive background in teaching and in the citrus industry. We plan to offer classes in spring 2025, likely beginning in March. If you are interested in becoming a Master Gardener, you may call our office, 661 868-6200, or speak to Jonathan directly at 661 868-6238. Or you may email him at [jmoody@ucanr.edu](mailto:jmoody@ucanr.edu), and ask to be put on the list for contact when the MG classes begin. We have a list of people interested.

### Longwood Gardens Expansion

These gardens, near Philadelphia, PA, are one of our nation's premier botanical gardens, about 1200 acres in size including woodlands. The gardens are a legacy of Pierre DuPont, the industrialist, and were opened to the public in the early 1900s. The gardens have continued to expand. An article in the Wall Street Journal, Dec. 8, 2024, pA11, discusses a \$250 million expansion with 17 acres of new gardens, a new conservatory, and restaurants. I have visited once (for several days) for a rose meeting, and I'd recommend a visit, which would need a full day to appreciate what's there.

### Next Horticultural Tour—Spain and Portugal, May, 2025

In cooperation with Travel Gallery of Pasadena, I offer an upcoming educational opportunity, a horticultural tour to northern Spain and northern Portugal. The dates are May 11 – May 23, 2025. This will be the twelfth horticultural tour in our series.

This tour is about 7/8 full in reaching our operating number; at this writing, it looks like a go. Therefore, please do sign up if you're interested.

For a detailed itinerary, please use the link to connect with Travel Gallery at <https://www.travelgallery.com/horticulture-spain-2025>

The itinerary features at least two nights in all hotels, and much less driving with more free time than our previous hort tour to the UK. The tour begins at Madrid Barajas

airport, moves to the north, moves to the west to the famous pilgrimage site of Santiago de Compostela, and then turns south to northern Portugal.

We envision the southern California group traveling together from LAX to Madrid, leaving Sunday, May 11, with arrival early afternoon Monday, May 12.

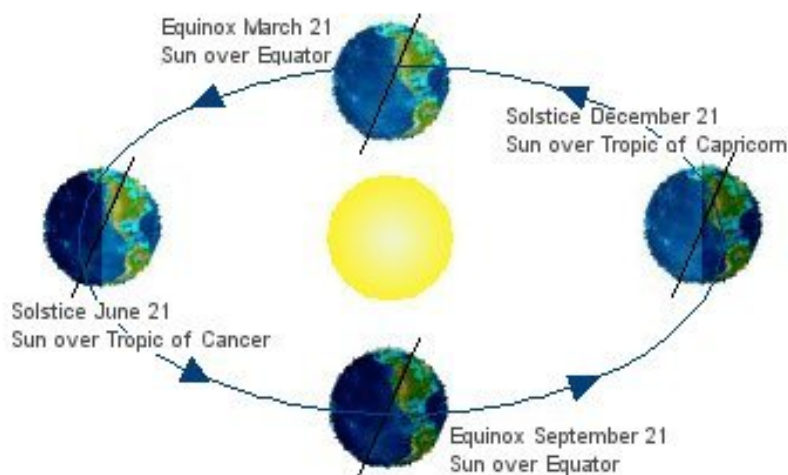
Expect good food.

Expect interesting plants and design. As we found in our previous hort tour to Spain, I know of no other country that handles large public spaces, e.g., squares and boulevards, as well as the Spanish. And we always learn something about plant selection, often applicable to our own landscapes.

If questions, please contact me via email, [jfkarlik@ucanr.edu](mailto:jfkarlik@ucanr.edu)

## Sun and Shadow

We're nearing the winter solstice when day length in the northern hemisphere is shortest. After the solstice, days begin to get longer. The change will be gradual at first.



## Winter Pruning of Outdoor Roses—It's Time

In December to early January on the valley floor of Kern County, annual winter pruning will be needed for hybrid teas and grandifloras. The time of pruning can be delayed in mountain areas until the coldest weather has passed, but before bud swell occurs.

Rose pruning in home gardens and landscapes can be a simple matter requiring little time. As for other woody plants, pruning is used for roses to invigorate the plant and direct its growth, but the amount of pruning depends on rose type and purpose in the landscape.

Broadly speaking, most roses grown outdoors can be divided into two groups. Roses grown for cut flowers include hybrid teas and grandifloras, for example, the classic varieties 'Peace,' 'Oklahoma,' 'Mister Lincoln,' and 'Chrysler Imperial.' The shrub- or landscape-type roses are grown as floriferous shrubs, for example, the varieties 'Pink Simplicity,' 'Knock Out,' and 'Flutterbye.'

For hybrid tea and similar roses, we remove dead, diseased and damaged wood as well as older canes showing poor vigor. Canes severely affected by scale insects can also be removed. The rose plant can be thinned, removing central canes to favor 3-5 canes growing toward the outside. Although a standard recommendation is to make cuts at a 45° angle just above an outward-facing bud, it is not necessary for plant health to be so precise, since roses have many dormant buds and can form new buds readily. For hybrid teas and grandifloras, about 10-15 minutes per plant should be enough time for pruning. In other words, don't worry too much about exactly how and where cuts are made. An exception to that statement would be pruning for show roses and, of course, we are not talking about greenhouse flower production where pruning is specific per variety.

The function of the rose plant in the landscape should influence the amount of pruning. Roses used for screens or accent plantings can be lightly pruned so as to retain their size, removing perhaps 1/3 of the height. Pruning a rose to shorter canes does result in longer flower stems, if that is important to you.

Shrub- or landscape-type roses should be treated as floriferous shrubs, and should not be pruned back to a few short canes as hybrid teas can be. Dead wood should be removed. Older canes can be removed, and (gasp) a hedge trimmer can be used for speed to shorten long canes and make the plant smaller in size. Use of a hedge trimmer, however, does not imply that plants should be formed into little globes or boxes, diminishing their aesthetic value and defeating their purpose in the landscape. Shrub / landscape roses are typically (and should be) only lightly pruned, since they function as colorful shrubs, so upright varieties can be left to 5-8 feet.

A peer-reviewed study conducted by Dr. Jim Downer of the University of California Cooperative Extension showed that it is variety rather than pruning that has the most influence on flower number and growth of landscape-type outdoor roses (Downer et al., 2015, *Acta Horticulturae* 1064: 253-258). There were few differences in plant quality between intermediate pruning treatments (36 or 18 inches height). Severe pruning (6 inches) resulted in significantly fewer flowers in most varieties during the four-year study period. Plants pruned lightly had the greatest number of flowers. Variety selection had the most influence on plant characteristics over four years.

The University of California has three free publications that describe the care of outdoor roses including insect and disease management. These can be read and downloaded from the UCIPM website, <http://ipm.ucanr.edu/>.

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*Environmental Horticulture/Environmental Science*

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