



Solana Center Quarterly Newsletter Winter 2013

IN THIS ISSUE

[A Gift for Our Gardens](#)

[Master Composters](#)

[ROTLINE: Pill Bugs](#)

[Volunteer Spotlight](#)

[A Rottin' Little Quiz](#)

FEATURED ARTICLE

Learn about the secret lives of the crustaceans roaming around in your compost bin and garden. Wait a minute...crustaceans?

[Read on...](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

January 18
Composting Workshop
San Diego Botanic Gardens
Encinitas

January 26

A Gift for Our Gardens: Holiday Composting Tips



The holiday season is once again upon us! The leaves are changing, and so is the weather. One benefit to San Diego's reasonably warm winters? We can compost comfortably year-round! While cold temperatures slow the activity of the large and small decomposers munching away in your compost pile, our regional climate allows for efficient decomposition even during the shortest days of the year.

Fruit Tree Pruning Workshop
Solana Center for Environmental
Innovation
Encinitas

February 1 - March 1
Encinitas Master Composter Course
San Diego Botanic Gardens
Encinitas

February 1
Composting Workshop
Water Conservation Garden
Rancho San Diego

February 8
Composting Workshop
Crestridge Ecological Reserve
El Cajon

March 15 - April 4
Gardening 101 Course
Solana Center for Environmental
Innovation
Encinitas

Click [here](#) to view our upcoming events page and to register!

Fruit Tree Pruning Workshop
Sunday, January 26
10 am - 12 pm



It's the time of year to snip your fruit trees into shape! Join us for this hands-on, interactive workshop where you'll not only learn how to maintain healthy, and productive fruit trees, but you'll also get a

The holiday season provides a bounty of compostables, whether bundles of carbon-rich fallen leaves and dried up plants, or heaps of nitrogen-rich food scraps leftover from the festivities. These festivities can produce an outsized quantity of waste, granting us an opportunity to give a special gift to our gardens and local environments: the gift of nutrient cycling! Rather than condemning your floral centerpieces and newsprint-turned-wrapping paper to a life in the landfill, fill up your compost bin with an assortment of seasonal delights. Perhaps in this pile, the familiar aromas of coffee and citrus will be replaced with cinnamon and pine!

Here at Solana Center, we've created a list of holiday-specific scraps to **ADD**, **BEWARE** of and **AVOID** in your compost bins. After all, our hard working worms (and their decomposer friends) deserve a present too!

Click the link below to see our list:

[Read on...](#)

Food Education and Community Building: Lasagna-style



Farm to Table movements are gaining visibility. In addition to supporting sustainable agriculture and food justice, the production and consumption of food on a local level is increasingly recognized as an opportunity for experiential education. One such garden learning lab

chance to do the pruning on one of our many fruit trees here at the Solana Center. We are excited to have Ari Tenenbaum joining us as a guest instructor. Ari holds a Bachelor of Science in Plant Design, and is a licensed landscape contractor with [Revolution Landscape](#). Cost per registrant is \$25. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

Become a Master Composter!

Feb 1 - March 1
Saturdays, 9am -12pm



Illustration by Christian Lindemann (2019)

Ready to become a composting ambassador? Then join us for our next Master Composter course! This 5 week course is a unique opportunity to gain a more in-depth understanding of the composting process in order to share this knowledge and passion with others. Priority will be given to residents of the City of Encinitas. Non-residents will be placed on a wait list and added as space become available. Cost per registrant is \$50. Click [here](#) for more information and to register!

Learn How to Grow Your Own Organic Produce in Gardening 101!

March 15 - April 5
Saturdays, 9am - 12pm

can be found at Canyon Crest Academy (CCA) in the San Dieguito Union High School District. Under the guidance of CCA teacher and garden leader, Jeannie Chufo, over 20 students and community members gathered at the school garden, tasked with its reinvigoration. Volunteers enjoyed a sunny, November Saturday building lasagna gardens in the eight raised beds on site.

So, just what is a lasagna garden? For the plants and the decomposers living in one, it's just as tasty as the name suggests. Lasagna gardening (also known as lasagna composting) is a process that involves neither digging nor tilling, but layering carbon-rich 'brown' organic material and nitrogen rich 'green' organic material to build a sort of layer-cake of growing media. And a long-lasting treat it is: because of the sustained interaction of layers of greens and browns the garden produces its own compost, providing a continual supply of nutrients to both its' rooted and wriggly inhabitants (not to mention providing a little break for the busy gardener). In addition to being nutritionally self-sustaining, lasagna gardens are fun and accessible projects, especially if you have a group of friends helping out!

The CCA lasagna gardens were compiled using cardboard, juice pulp, alfalfa, straw, seaweed, and stale bread sourced from the school cafeteria. (Although any compostable materials do the trick, the greater the variety of materials used, the greater variety of nutrients released in the decomposition process). Using tools provided by Solana Center's Tool Lending Library, the volunteers were able to breathe new life into these materials and into the CCA school garden beds...

Click the link below to learn more about CCA's food education vision, and how gardening helps us grow.

[Read on...](#)

ROTLINE: Do Roly Polies Pose a Threat to Plants?



Get ready to have fun and grow delicious, healthy fruits and vegetables! We are now accepting registrations for our 4 week Gardening 101 course this Spring. We'll be covering everything from garden design, soil type, seed starting, weed & pest control, as well as harvesting. Priority will be given to residents of the City of Encinitas. All others will be placed on a waitlist and contacted as space becomes available. Cost is \$40. Click [here](#) for more information and to register!



THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR VOLUNTEERS & INTERNS!

We would like to specifically acknowledge the following volunteers & interns for their support:

Jim Beyster
Joshua Blore
Dawn Burcham
Brenton Du
Whitney Dueñez
Pia Elbe
Tim Fleming
Nancee Foglesong



By Nancee Foglesong, Volunteer Master Composter

Did you know that Roly Polies are not insects, but crustaceans?

These creatures formally known as pill bugs (*Armadillidiidae*) have a tendency to roam into our compost bins. Many composters are concerned about transferring these little creatures from their cured compost into their garden. Do pill bugs pose a threat to plants?

THE QUICK ANSWER

Pill bugs do not normally eat live plant material. Like earthworms, pill bugs seek out moist, dark habitats-making a compost bin an ideal home. Their diet in the compost pile is identical to their diet in natural surroundings, consisting largely of rotting wood and decomposing plant and animal matter. (Occasionally, they may eat a fellow live pill bug, if other food sources are scarce.) Unlike worms, pill bugs have mandibles consisting of 2 jaws to chew up their food. The food passes through their digestive system, releasing some moisture and nutrients before exiting through the anus as droppings. The droppings now have more easily digestible nutrients, and are often consumed by the pill bug. Like the beloved earthworm, pill bugs are also recyclers that create nutrient-rich soil, and do not technically need to be removed from finished compost before it is used in the garden. However, like other creatures, opportunistic pill bugs may eat live plants. Ultimately, if pill bugs are found in a compost pile or worm bin, it is a sign of a healthy compost environment.

Click the link below to go beyond 'The Quick Answer'!

[Read on...](#)

This excerpt is from Nancee's new column, "A Curious Garden", which can be found on the Solana Center blog.

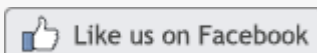
Carole Gagnon
Cindy Greene
Marycie Hagerty
Laura Malter
Syed (Danish) Mansoor
Beverly Marshall
Gloria Ngjyulu
Barbara Perez
Anne Peterson
Maya Que
Xuchu Que
Jean Samuels
Joshua Saunders
Livvy Stanforth
Hank Stelzl
Erin Stone
Camthao Thi Hu
Tom Waldron

Composting questions or concerns?

Call the ROTLINE, our composting hotline, where our composting experts will answer your questions.

(760) 436-7986 ext. 222

Our educators are very busy and not always near the phone. Leave us a message, and we'll get back to you within 48 hours.



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: Nancee Foglesong



Nancee Foglesong is one of the new volunteers at the Solana Center for Environmental Innovation. After attending one of SCEI's composting workshops and purchasing a vermicompost bin, she was looking to learn more about composting. In June, she completed the Master Composter course: *"The certificate of completion for Master Composter was nice, but I wanted that Master Composter badge!"* In order to qualify for the badge, she needed to volunteer 30 hours of community service to help local composting efforts in some capacity, but she had no idea how she could fulfill this part of the badge requirements: *"To be honest, I am not able to do a lot of things required of a composter. I have multiple medical disabilities that make turning a composting pile difficult."*

She contacted the Solana Center to see if she could volunteer in a way that would allow her to work from home. Nancee now helps research and write for the composting blog and the quarterly newsletters. She is currently working on a ROTLINE quick reference guide, researching ways to make composting handicap accessible, and reviewing children's and adult literature on worms and composting subjects for possible future lists. *"I love the process of research almost more than the resulting paper or answer,"* Nancee notes, *"but I also love the more creative projects."* She has cleaned and restored the two demonstration worms (Stephano and Gloria) that are used in school and community presentations. She is also working on both a worm puppet that covers the entire arm (*"so the presenter's*

Visit our blog

Find us on Yelp 

Solana Center
137 N. El Camino Real
Encinitas, California 92024
760-436-7986 ext.222
compost@solanacenter.org
www.solanacenter.org

*This newsletter is made possible with the support of the **Cities of San Diego, Carlsbad, and Encinitas, and the County of San Diego***



presence is a bit more removed") and a five foot stuffed worm that opens down the center, allowing the internal organs to be seen. Nancee says she hasn't quite worked out all the details of that project yet, but that's part of the creative fun (adding a 'thank you' to Shelley Grossman for use of the basic pattern). Nancee also shares the photos she takes of anything related to worms and composting.

She explains, "I really enjoy just helping the staff out. If they need a list of resources, or resource links checked, they can email me and I can do some of the detail work for them. I learn a lot this way." And, the work has given her the 30 hours of volunteer time required to earn her coveted Master Composter badge: "I have it pinned up on my board. I like seeing that despite my physical limitations, I was able to earn this title, and be of help to the staff at the Center."

A Rottin' Little Quiz



Before you get on with your holiday to-do lists, pour yourself a cup of tea (compost that tea bag) and put your composting knowledge to the test!

1. Composting is nothing new! Which of the following texts/authors makes reference to its utility?

- (A) Clay tablets from the Akkadian Empire
- (B) Holy books, including The Bible and The Talmud
- (C) Texts from the Greek and Roman Empires
- (D) William Shakespeare
- (E) All of the Above

2. Americans recycled and composted how much of their 'trash' in 2010?(Source: EPA)

- (A) 13%
- (B) 22%
- (C) 34%
- (D) 46%

3. A red wiggler egg sac can hold up to 20 eggs, but how many worms will actually emerge from one egg sac?

- (A) 1 - 2
- (B) 3 - 4
- (C) 6 - 8
- (D) 12 - 15

4. Just because we don't want it around doesn't render it useless! Which of the following items are compostable?

- (A) Pet and human hair
- (B) Nail clippings
- (C) Dryer lint
- (D) Vacuum cleaner 'dust'
- (E) All of the above

5. Decomposers are a strange bunch. Which of the following is NOT a creature that can be found living in your compost bin?

- (A) Lemon Shark
- (B) Moss Piglet
- (C) Springtail
- (D) Pseudoscorpion

ANSWERS:

1. E 2. C 3. B 4. E 5. A