

September 2019 Hilltop Highlights OCEANA GARDEN CLUB

“Gardening requires a lot of water— most of it in the form of perspiration. Lou Erickson

What common weeds have to offer the organic gardener and how to keep them from taking over

Don't pull weeds?

This seems counterintuitive, but pulling weeds disturbs the soil. Sometimes, though, a weed just needs to be pulled, so do what you have to do. Amy from Tenth Acre Farm suggests cutting weeds back once a month or so, minimizing flowering periods and the number of seeds produced. By doing this, you avoid disturbing the soil. Leave the cut debris in the garden to decay, which will supply the soil with nutrients. Before you do this, make sure the debris isn't harboring any sort of disease or insect pest. There are ways to allow weeds to grow alongside your edibles. Some weeds are edible themselves! Here are a few common ones you may want to allow to grow in your garden.

Read the full article at;

<https://greenerpatches.com/2016/08/03/what-common-weeds-have-to-offer-the-organic-gardener-and-how-to-keep-them-from-taking-over/>

How Dirt Makes You Happy

Prozac may not be the only way to get rid of your serious blues. Soil microbes have been found to have similar effects on the brain and are without side effects and chemical dependency potential.

Soil microbes and human health now have a positive link which has been studied and found to be verifiable.

Mycobacterium vaccae has been found to mirror the effect on neurons that drugs like Prozac provide. The bacterium is found in soil and may stimulate serotonin production, which makes you relaxed and happier. Most avid gardeners will tell you that their landscape is their “happy place” and the actual physical act of gardening is a stress reducer and mood lifter. Antidepressant microbes in soil cause cytokine levels to rise, which results in the production of higher levels of serotonin. The natural effects of the soil bacteria antidepressant can be felt for up to 3 weeks if the experiments with rats are any indication. So, get out and play in the dirt and improve your mood and your life.

Read more at Gardening Know How: Antidepressant Microbes In Soil: How Dirt Makes You Happy

<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/garden-how-to/soil-fertilizers/antidepressant-microbes-soil.htm>

THE ADVENTURE OF WILDLIFE IN THE OCEANA GARDENS

Submitted by Frank Danczyk

Gardening can be fun, but sometimes even dangerous! We encounter some expected and sometimes very unexpected, predators, both large and small in our gardens. Here is a short list, though maybe not complete, of some of the animals and predators that we come across while we do our gardening. This is the 2nd of 3 articles, in last month's article we discussed the BIRDS, we enjoy in our gardens, in the remaining article next month we will deal with all the PESTS and INSECTS that we encounter. So, here are the PREDATORS - large and small

Cougars— very rare, Coyotes— very common, Lizards—everywhere, Snakes—recent rattlesnake, Possums—very rare, Rabbits— often, Raccoons— occasional, Rats— too common, Ground Squirrels and Voles.

Submitted by Stephen Ashworth, OGC secretary.