

Lamorinda

OUR HOMES

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Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

Let the sunshine in



Wild cherry plum trees are magnificent in bloom.

Photo Cynthia Brian

By Cynthia Brian

"The sun does not shine for a few trees and flowers, but for the wide world's joy" – Henry Ward Beecher

It's been at least seven years since we've enjoyed a warm, sun-filled February. Being accustomed to cold, dreary, gray days in the

months of Aquarius and Pisces, this year buoyed my spirits immensely even though I know that we need rain. I admit I thoroughly lapped up those 70-plus degree days spending hours in the garden weeding, pruning and planting with a break to Bodega Bay to ride a bike on the beach, inhale the salt air, and watch the glorious sunset. If winter is going to be mild and bright, why

not enjoy it?

The tulip magnolias, peach, plum and pear trees are in full bloom. The bees are busy buzzing their business in the blossoms. Sweet scents of narcissi, stock, and freesia fill the air. Oxalis, also known as shamrock, carpets vineyards, trails and roadsides. Wisteria and lilac are budded, ready to burst any day. Early spring erupted in mid-February, a full month ahead of schedule. In many Northern California areas, temperatures have been in the mid-80s. If it wasn't for water shortages and the rising trajectory of global warming, we could all be rejoicing. Instead, we may need to chant and dance for rainfall to ward off another summer drought.

Compost will be your most important gardening ingredient this season. By turning organic waste into humus, you will be feeding your plants in the same manner that Mother Nature has been nurturing the planet since the beginning of time. Compost will help your plants retain moisture, curtail erosion, maintain a constant temperature, and it will enrich your soil. It's so simple to make that everyone can easily do it.

Recipe for Compost

In an open pile or composting bin, add both green and dry plant matter plus eggshells, coffee grinds, tea leaves, and fish bones. Green matter includes grass clippings, vegetables, weeds without seeds, peelings, and green leaves. Dry matter includes paper, straw, twigs, fall leaves, and dried stalks. Don't add any animal feces, diseased plants, or meat products. Moisten everything without soaking it and turn with a pitchfork at least weekly.

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