

Lamorinda

OUR HOMES

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Making sense of expiration dates ... read on Page OH10

Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

Coming in HOT!

By Cynthia Brian



The hillside wildflowers were gorgeous and abundant in June.

May the sun bring you new energy by day. May the moon softly restore you by night." Apache Blessing

Baby, it's hot outside! Cuts and bruises from gardening in my preferred wardrobe of my bathing suit are a small price to pay to remain cooler. Our water bills are bound to be bigger this next cycle because of the recent heat wave that sent most of us craving the cooling restoration of the moon. We have buckets in the showers and sinks to collect every extra drop of H₂O. We save all gray water for our plants.

Last month I showcased my spectacular hillside wildflower garden after I had completed the hand-weeding. With the 100-degree-plus temperatures that lasted over ten days, that beauty is gone, replaced by dried plants that will be cut before this article is published. (See the before and after photos)

Not many blooms can withstand this heat. Fortunately, my trusty and drought-friendly natives, roses, clematis, agapanthus, pink bower vine, seafoam statice, lavender, potato vine, oleander, hollyhocks, and acanthus brighten the landscape with their flowers. The sea of bumble bee-loving blue nigella blossoms that last month blanketed the orchard has metamor-



The hillside wildflowers died in the heat.

Photos Cynthia Brian

phosed into seedpods. I am collecting them to give to attendees of the forthcoming September 28th Pear and Wine Festival who will visit our Be the Star You Are!® booth where our volunteers will be celebrating our 25th anniversary with the public. (For info, visit <https://www.bethestaryouare.org/events-2>)

Although my family were "dry farmers" meaning that we didn't irrigate the orchard or vines, allowing the winter rains to do their job, when heat waves arrived, we had our orders. Our dad had purchased a 1940s fire truck with a huge water tank and retrofitted it as our irrigation truck. Beginning when I was age 8, my job was to slowly drive the fire truck through the narrow rows, moving from vine to vine and tree to tree while my younger sister opened the spigots. When the tanks were empty, I drove to the well to refill. In this way, we protected our harvest when the thermometer skyrocketed into triple digits.

We don't have vintage fire trucks with water tanks to irrigate our gardens. How can we protect our precious gardens during extremely scorching weeks?

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