



# VISTA MATTERS

- November Edition -

## The Rich Story of Compost



Have you ever wondered how the dirt we use in our raised beds gets transformed into healthy soil? Here's the long story ... just kidding! Simply put, the soil recipe ingredients are decaying plants and animals, rock particles, and organic material, and takes millions of years to completely break down to make the soil

as we know it. Long time, right? Thank goodness we don't have to wait that long with plenty of soil available for our use.

Why do we add compost to our gardens? Because adding compost...

[Read More](#)

## Come Get Your Black Gold!

Gardeners are again eligible to take another yellow bucket of cured compost--one full bucket per 4x16 bed; one half bucket for 4x8 plots. November is the perfect time to side dress your veggies with VISTA's Black Gold. The recommended method is to draw a dinner-plate sized circle around each plant and mix compost on and outside the circle, where it will "time-release" to enrich the soil. Compost can be too rich to place directly against tender plant roots and stems.





## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Yoga in Garden

*Bring a mat or towel and drink. Donations gratefully accepted.*

Sat, Nov 12 and 26, 9:30 a.m.

### Birds of Vista Gardens - A Vista Gardens Kids Event

*Bird-related crafts, story time, learning and snacks.*

Sat, Nov 19, 9:30 a.m

### Native Plant Landscaping Lectures - USF Botanical Gardens

Sat, Nov 26, 1:00 p.m.

## EDIBLES TO PLANT IN *November*



	North	Central	South
 <b>EASY TO TRANSPLANT</b>	Arugula, Beets, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Chinese Cabbage, Collards, Kale, Kohlrabi, Sugarcane, Swiss Chard	Arugula, Beets, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Chinese Cabbage, Collards, Endive, Kale, Kohlrabi, Lettuce, Sugarcane, Swiss Chard	Arugula, Beets, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Chinese Cabbage, Collards, Eggplant, Endive, Kale, Kohlrabi, Lettuce, Peppers, Strawberry, Sugarcane, Swiss Chard, Tomatillo, Tomatoes, Tropical Spinaches
 <b>TRANSPLANT WITH CARE</b>	Celery, Mustard, Spinach	Celery, Mustard, Pineapple, Potatoes, Spinach	Amaranth, Calabaza, Celery, Long Squashes, Luffa, Mustard, Pineapple, Potatoes, Seminole Pumpkin, Spinach
 <b>USE SEEDS</b>	Carrots, Onions (bunching), Radish, Turnips	Carrots, Onions (bunching), Peas (English), Radish, Turnips	Beans (bush, lima, pole), Carrots, Corn, Cucumbers, Onions (bunching), Peas (English, southern), Radish, Squashes, Turnips

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by Janet Stanko

Have you noticed that the pond area is looking better than it did last year? We added more native plants, planted trees and planted ground cover. The Hammock Twinflower ground cover is an experiment to see if we can reduce mulch migration into the pond and thus reduce algae. We use natural seaweed extract and pond coloring to reduce algae, but we still get some algae growth.

Pond wildlife includes mosquito fish, gold fish, snails, and turtles, and we plan further upgrades to make the pond area more sustainable.

Our pond committee-Barbara Kane and myself-- could use some help. The main tasks are dipping algae out of the pond, watering plants and pulling weeds. All these tasks can be done on a flexible time schedule, so contact **Janet Stanko** if you want to join our committee. In addition, if you have expertise in pond management, we are open to ideas.

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## LEAVES LEAVES LEAVES!!!

Please bring your bagged leaves  
to the Compost Canopy.

We have a very short window to collect  
enough leaves to last an entire year.

Tell your neighbors and friends.

Thank you

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## Powdery and Downy Mildew Has Arrived!



And no, this is NOT a good thing. You may be seeing powdery and downy mildew, especially on your tomato, pepper, squash, and cucumber plants.

Fortunately, Roberta Owens recently discussed this with JoAnn Hoffman, program assistant at IFAS. JoAnn recommends prophylactically spraying in order to achieve veggie/fruit production in Florida and suggested we treat

our plants now, especially when the mildew is thriving. She has experienced success with a Southern AG product, [Garden Friendly Fungicide](#).

Your Board has approved the purchase of this fungicide and will soon be spraying our beds so that we can limit the spread of this terrible mildew.

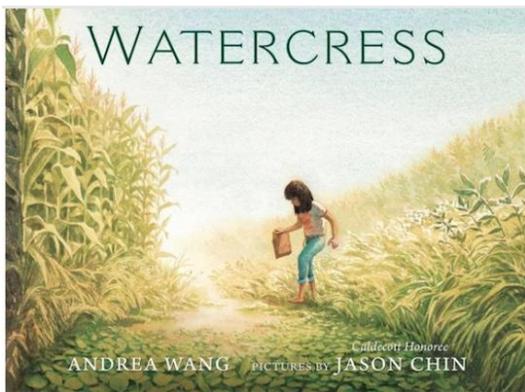
### What can you do to help?

One way to control downy mildew is to eliminate moisture and humidity around the impacted plants by watering from below, such as with a drip system. It's always better to water the soil, not the plants. Irrigate earlier in the day giving time for sunlight to dry out your soil and plants. And with this mildew, it is critical for you to not splash water on the foliage of your plants. It's important to keep the leaves as dry as possible.

In addition you can prevent this mildew by improving air circulation through selective pruning. You should be able to see through your plants, and the air should be able to move freely through the leaves.

If you already have this mildew on your plants, trim or prune by removing the affected leaves, stems, buds, fruit or vegetables from the plant and taking them home to your own trash can. Do **NOT** place them in our compost or anywhere else at VISTA Gardens.

Lastly, always sanitize the tools you use (on the plant and in the surrounding soil) to stop the spread of mildew. Let's hope we can contain this nasty mildew and have lots of tomatoes to enjoy!



### In the Little Free Library

Andrea Wang's "Watercress" received both a Newbery Honor for Wang's writing and the 2022 Caldecott Award for Jason Chin's illustrations. It is the story of a family stopping their car when they spot watercress growing by the side of the road and collecting watercress for a meal and an experience that evokes memories of the mother's childhood in China.

Both VISTA and our community appreciate **Forever Friends** for the grant to purchase books for the Little Free Library.

[Book Info](#)

## Hosting a Lady



Vista gardeners enjoyed a lovely site as our sweet everlasting wildflowers played host to American lady butterflies, who found these plants to be the perfect spot to engage in nature's metamorphosis.



A member of the *Asteraceae* family, this herbaceous annual reaches 24-36 inches mid-to-late summer with alternate, narrow leaves that are green above and nearly white below. Its botanical name is *Pseudognaphalium obtusifolium*, and its common name "sweet everlasting" relates to a light pleasant scent and the durability of fresh dried cuttings. It thrives in most soils except those that stay routinely wet, and as a bonus, it is a host plant for the American Lady butterfly.

Propagation is best done with seeds and bare soil is required for it to reseed.

Vista gardeners enjoyed a lovely site as our sweet everlasting played host to American Lady butterflies; read the adjoining article to learn more.



*Vanessa virginiensis* has been known by a number of common names, including American lady, American painted lady, painted beauty, and Hunter's butterfly.

The Checklist of North American Butterflies Occurring North of Mexico (NABA 2004) refers to this butterfly as the American lady, which seems like a good moniker to those of us at Vista.

Although the adult American lady is an attractive butterfly, it is probably best known among naturalists for the characteristic nests made by its caterpillars. In May, Vista gardeners were excited to see these telltale signs among the sweet everlasting wildflowers--and were delighted to watch the bright orange butterflies emerge.





## Charlie Brown and Friends Celebrate the Environment

Charlie Brown has had a bit of a frustrating relationship with the Earth. There's that aggravating tree that always eats his kite. And one time his friends turned his beloved baseball field into a garden. Through the years in the comic strip and...

[Read more](#)

[www.treehugger.com](http://www.treehugger.com)

Each year, the Great Pumpkin rises out of the pumpkin patch that he thinks is the most sincere. He's gotta pick this one. He's got to. I don't see how a pumpkin patch can be more sincere than this one. You can look around and there's not a sign of hypocrisy. Nothing but sincerity as far as the eye can see.

— Linus, "It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown"  
written by Charles M. Schulz

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Connect with us

