



# OSU County Master Gardener Extension Classes

Feeling impatient? Need to scratch your gardening itch? Relax. Help is on the way! Just when you feel like you can't possibly wait another day, along comes the annual ...

**Jackson County Master Gardener Spring Fair**  
**Saturday, May 5, 9 am to 5 pm**  
**Sunday, May 6, 10 am to 4 pm**  
**Jackson County Expo Center**

Now in its 33rd year, the Spring Fair is the largest event of its kind between San Francisco and Portland. You'll discover an astonishing array of healthy plants, quality products and priceless expertise. You'll also feel the buzz as thousands of like-minded gardeners, families and friends converge for two full days of education, information and celebration.

Hosted by the Jackson County Master Gardener Association, the Annual Spring Fair is the only place in southern Oregon where you can experience hundreds of growers, vendors and garden experts—all under one roof. Food is available, admission is \$3.00 and parking is free.

For information, call 541-776-7371 or visit <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/sorec/>.

Also this spring, the Jackson County Master Gardener Association will host a series of informative Saturday and evening classes at the OSU Extension Auditorium, 569 Hanley Road (between Jacksonville and Central Point). This season's topics include:

**Summer Care of Grape Vines**  
**Saturday, May 12, 9 am – noon**

This class will teach you how to manage your backyard vines after pruning. Topics include shoot thinning, controlling head suckering, training for growth and controlling crop load. Dress appropriately for outdoor demonstrations.

**Choose and Grow**  
**Rock Garden Plants**  
**Tuesday, May 15, 7 – 9 pm**

Learn how to make the most of a rocky growing site...or how to create one. This inspirational class introduces the basics of rock gardening, including suitable plants, soils, containers—and the

best rocks to use. Features a photographic tour of several local rock gardens.

**Growing Vegetables and Herbs in Containers**  
**Wednesday, May 30, 7 – 9 pm**

Find out how to grow fresh, delicious treats—even when your time and space are limited. This helpful class teaches about containers and soils—and explains which herbs and vegetables grow well together. Ideal for renters, or anyone who'd like to make their vegetable garden more carefree and accessible.

**Don't Be Afraid of Perennials**  
**Thursday, June 14, 7 – 9 pm**

Tailored to southern Oregon's weather and growing seasons, this class takes you beyond the ordinary perennial choices and teaches how—with a little planning—you can enjoy great-looking, long-lasting blooms in your garden every month of the year.

**Introduction to Permaculture: The Self-Sustaining Garden**  
**Thursday, June 28, 7 – 9 pm**

Join the movement of concerned

home gardeners who successfully reduce their "carbon footprint" through permaculture. You'll learn principles and techniques that can increase your garden's vitality, while managing weeds and pests in an environmentally sustainable way.

**Growing Ferns in the Rogue Valley**  
**Monday, July 9, 7 – 9 pm**

The botany of ferns, including their differences from other plants, will be explained. Ferns native to the Rogue Valley will be explored. Also included: How to choose an appropriate fern for your location and how to prepare the soil.

**Winter Veggie Gardens**  
**Thursday, July 26, 7 – 9 pm**

What can grow outdoors in winter months? Garden maintenance, seed starting, frost protection, varieties of vegetables and herbs that will grow all winter in our region will be covered. Ornamentals will also be addressed.

Admission to these classes is \$5; free to Master Gardeners. For information, call 541-776-7371.

# Elegant tarweed

BY SUZIE SAVOIE

Long before fields in the Applegate were covered in nonnative and invasive star thistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*), they were covered with the dainty, yellow, daisy-like flowers of the native elegant tarweed (*Madia elegans*).

Tarweed (see photo at right) is an annual wildflower in the sunflower family. It occurs in grasslands and open forest below 11,000 feet in elevation. It flowers in summer and early autumn, and grows from northern Oregon through California and the Great Basin, south to Baja, California. The flowers curl up during the daytime and open only in the late afternoon and early morning. The foliage exudes fragrant oil, and the plants are sticky, hence the

common name tarweed. It is an often-overlooked native plant that deserves more respect.

The seeds of tarweed are eaten by many birds and small mammals, such as mourning doves, quail, blackbirds, finches, Oregon juncos, California horned larks, western meadowlarks, American pipits, sparrows, towhees, mice, ground squirrels and chipmunks.

Tarweed seeds were historically used as food by tribes such as the Dakubetede, Takelma, Latgawa, Dagelma and Shasta that inhabited the Applegate and Rogue Valleys before European settlement. The use of tarweed seeds by Applegate tribes was recorded by early ethnographer John

Harrington. Examples of how tarweed seeds were historically used include:

- Seeds parched and pounded into flour.
- Seeds roasted with hot coals, pounded or rolled into flour.
- Pulverized seeds eaten as a dry meal.
- Seeds used to make pinoles. Seeds roasted and eaten alone or mixed with manzanita berries, acorns and pine nuts.
- Ground tarweed mixed with ground hazelnuts and camas.

Many people are familiar with the use of camas and acorns for food; however, small seed crops, such as wild grass and tarweed, were also vitally important to the indigenous

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*This Summer Join the Fun at the*  
**Williams Farmers Market**  
*Handmade and Homegrown in the Williams Valley*

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*Mondays 4-6:30 June-October*  
*at the Williams Grange*

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*What You'll Find:*

- Organic Produce
- Beef & Wine
- Goat Cheese
- Fresh Bread
- Baked Goods
- Honey and more!



*For Information Call Sarah: 541-846-0776*



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