

Five recent publications from OSU

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Back in 1862 when land grant universities were first established in the US, no one could have imagined the wealth of information that would one day be available to us, instantaneously, at our fingertips. Land grant universities were meant to establish bases of agricultural learning and research: in 1914, the Extension service was developed to help deliver the fruits of that agricultural research to the broader public. Even now, when information from all over the world is readily available, land grant universities and Extension play a very important role: providing site specific information relevant to the climate and conditions of that state.

Historically, much of Oregon State University's horticultural and agricultural information has been more relevant to western parts of the state. In recent years, significant effort has been made to focus on Oregon's eastern two-thirds, where growing conditions are quite different. In addition to the recent publications featured below, detailed manuals for growing strawberries, blackberries, raspberries, and blueberries are in final pre-publication stages. OSU's Extension publications continue to be free for download, and the entire catalog can be found here: <https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/>. These newer publications have particular relevance on the eastern side of the state. Pro tip: putting "OSU" and the publication number (below, after each title in parentheses) in the search bar of your browser usually pulls them right up with minimal typing.

Wildlife Habitat: Nurturing a Diverse Mix of Flora and Fauna (EM9250). This guide helps landowners identify their wildlife habitat goals, assess and inventory the resources already present on their land, and make management decisions toward reaching those goals. Exploring food, shelter, water, space, and other elements necessary to provide for a diverse range of wildlife, the guide includes two worksheets to help homeowners in the process, and a generous list of video and print references for further study.

A Guide to Hedgerows: Plantings that Enhance Biodiversity, Sustainability and Functionality (EM 8721). Klamath homeowners are often interested in hedgerows as windbreaks, but they can serve many other functions: weed and water management, food for humans and wildlife, noise reduction, and erosion reduction. In addition to exploring these functions, this guide provides insight in to design, plant selection, and management. Several pages are dedicated to plant selection, with plants grouped according to their cultural needs and functions.

Managing Diseases and Insects in Home Orchards (EC631). This updated guide covers all the most common pests of fruit trees in Oregon. Especially helpful is a table explaining many of the pesticide products available to homeowners, both organic and conventional, with their intended uses and cautionary notes. A section on cultural controls outlines the methods used to combat pests without pesticides. The remainder of the publication is a handy reference chart for each fruit type, with specifics on when and what to use for specific pests. This is valuable information for those trying to grow multiple kinds of fruit and manage their care in an organized way. Lastly, a chart picturing the different developmental stages of the fruit trees should be hugely valuable: with many pests, timing of an application is of critical importance. This guide should help home orchardists deliver treatments during the time they are most likely to be successful.

Water-wise Gardening in Central Oregon (EM9136). The June 2020 revision of this 56 page guide includes a phone app, making shopping for appropriate plants easier than ever before. Multiple tactics for water management are introduced, along with plant suggestions for trees, shrubs, groundcovers, natives, and more. More than just “lists,” the plant selection portion contains pictures and detailed information like seasonal color, mature size, sun needs, and other cultural information that increases the likelihood of choosing the “right plant, right place”.

The Home Ignition Zone: Protecting Your Property from Wildfire (EM9247). There’s smoke in the air, a reminder to assess our own surroundings and the hazards around us: fire season is here. The approach recommended in this guide is dividing property into immediate, intermediate, and extended zones, each with specific actions to take for safeguarding the home. Packed with tips for vegetation management and removal, fuel breaks, and appropriate pruning, this timely publication is particularly useful for those in suburban or rural areas.

OSU’s Extension Service is still here for you, online and with modified office services. Suggestions for upcoming publications are welcome: additional ones in the works include a revision of “Short season vegetable gardening” and “Season Extension for the home garden”. Remember that horticulture questions can easily be submitted via “Ask an Expert” : <https://ask.extension.org/>. Questions are automatically routed to the expert in your subject matter and geographic area.