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# OVF NEWS

## September 2025

## President's Message

Hello OVF members,

Here we are in September and I hope the harvest from your garden was more than expected. Generally, I heard around the garden that the tomatoes and cukes came in better than last year.

We all enjoy roaming the garden to witness the variety of techniques used to grow, trellis and "save" our plants. Persons who tour OVF always share how much they learn and appreciate the opportunity to visit. Thanks for your hard work – it shows.

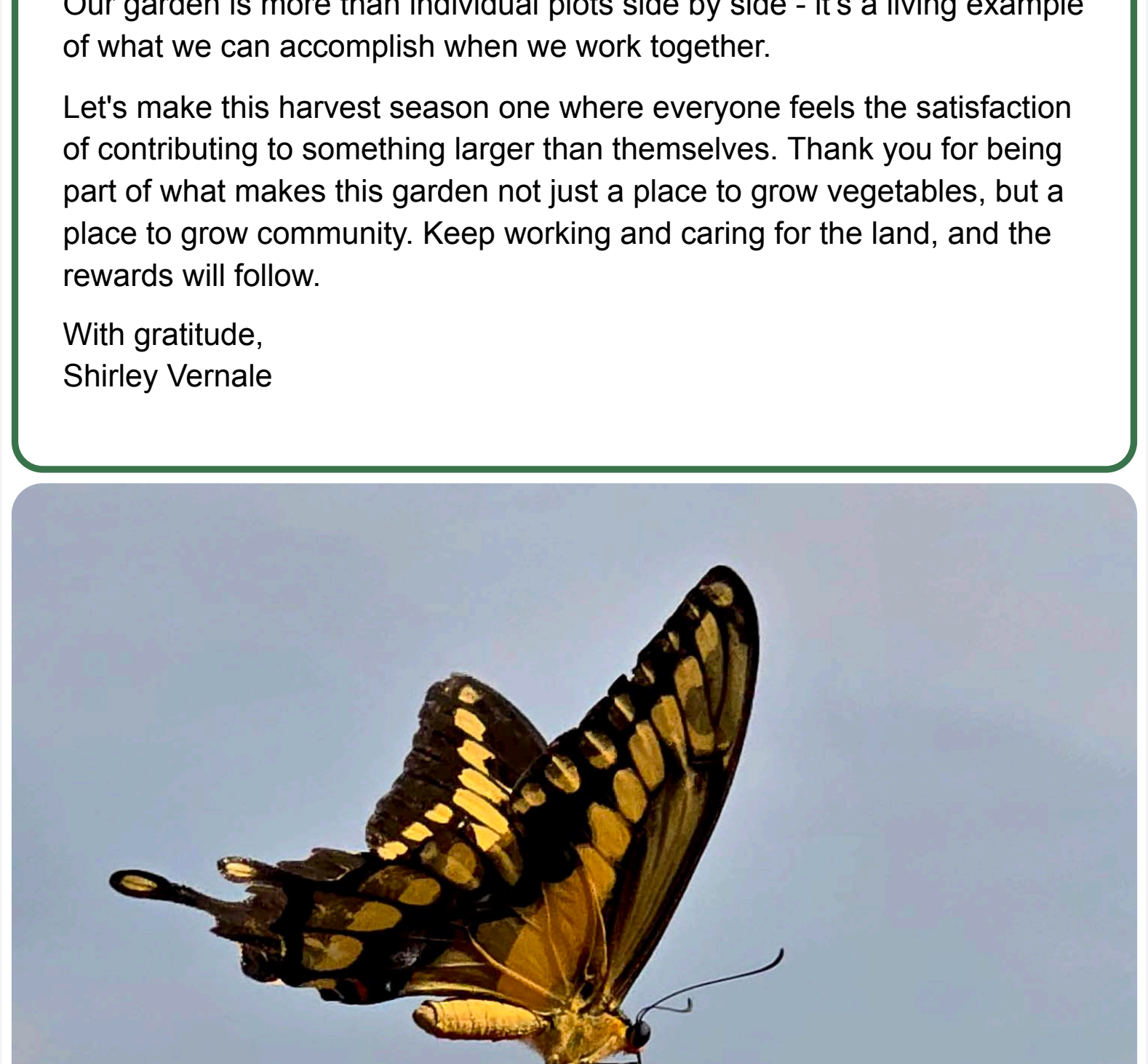
This garden exists because a group of individuals, almost 50 years ago, dedicated themselves to this space and saw the value in coming together to grow something meaningful. They built together not only a shared garden but a community. They planted, had endless meetings, and shared and sorted out challenges. Most of it without cell phones or computers. Now we have the privilege and gift of being in this amazing space. But privilege comes with responsibility.

Our garden thrives when we all participate – not just in the planting and harvesting, but in the administration of OVF. Every hour you contribute, whether it's tending your plot, helping with common areas, serving on the board or as a work group leader, or sharing knowledge with newer gardeners, strengthens our entire community.

This September, I encourage you to look for ways to deepen your involvement. Offer help to the Garden Master, your Phase Rep, or workgroup leaders. Consider joining every work day, which can be fun and fulfilling as you complete a project with others. Ask questions of long-time members, mentor someone new to gardening, or simply spend a few extra minutes chatting with fellow gardeners. Reach out to new members and give a smile or hello to anyone and everyone you see on our paths. Our garden is more than individual plots side by side - it's a living example of what we can accomplish when we work together.

Let's make this harvest season one where everyone feels the satisfaction of contributing to something larger than themselves. Thank you for being part of what makes this garden not just a place to grow vegetables, but a place to grow community. Keep working and caring for the land, and the rewards will follow.

With gratitude,
Shirley Vernale



## Garden Master's Message

Hi all,

After OVF members elected me Garden Master five months ago, I created a new gmail address for Garden Master matters - and since then have received over 800 emails. If you've emailed me, I will get back to you, but it may take a minute.

You can always talk to me in person at one of my Garden Master Office Hours. I've done over 25 so far and will continue to schedule them. In October, I'll be in Phase 3 and Phase 4, so come see me if you'd like to chat. I have found that misinformation about what is going on in the garden is as common as nutsedge in the garden, so please come speak with me if you'd like to clear up any confusion or misunderstandings.

This month's newsletter focuses on where the plants go after we've pulled them out of our plots - and where they shouldn't go. Also addressed are the banned plants. The garden operates a very efficient green recycling program, which at the end of the process gives us the compost available to all members. But there are things that should not be introduced into the recycling stream. To keep the compost clean, please read below what doesn't go into the recycling (shredding) pile.

See you in the garden,

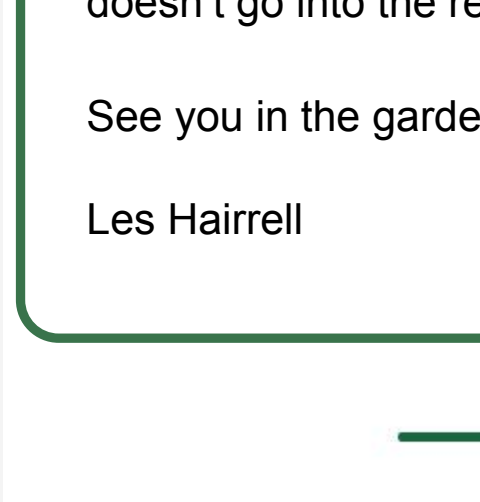
Les Hairrell

## OVF Calendar

**Work Days**
*Saturday 9am-Noon*
October 11
*Sunday 1pm-4pm*
October 26

**General Meeting**
October 11
1:00pm
(Pot Luck at Noon)

**New Member Meetup**
October 18
11:00am-2:30pm



Full Calendar

## Upcoming Events at OVF

*(All events are held at the main OVF meeting area unless otherwise stated.)*

| | |
|---|---|
| **Oct. 4, 10am** | Greenhouse Fundraiser |
| **Oct. 5, 1pm** | OVF Native Plant Club Get-Together |
| **Oct. 18, 11am** | OVF New Member Meet Up |
| **Oct. 18, 2pm** | Garden Master office hour at Phase 3L new meeting area (lower left corner of the phase) |
| **Oct. 21, 10am** | Garden Master office hour at Phase 4U meeting area |
| **Oct. 25, 10am** | Garden Master office hour at Phase 3U rose meeting area (upper east corner of phase) |
| **Oct. 26, 4:30pm** | Garden Master office hour at Phase 4U meeting area |
| **Oct. 28, 10am** | Garden Master office hour OVF office |

## Workgroup Profile

### The ABCs of Shredding

Ocean View Farms is a rare community garden that makes its own compost for the use of all its members. The process is a highly refined and integrated system that developed over time. It involves three work groups, two of which have already been covered in prior newsletters.

The first, vital step to creating compost is shredding, covered in this article. This is where members' green waste is broken down by the shredding workgroup into a useable form for the composting workgroup. To read more about composting, visit the article in the May 2025 issue here. On Tuesday, two work crews meet. The gourmet compost work group was covered in the June 2025 issue; you can read it here.

The second work group that meets Tuesday morning is shredding, likely the only OVF workgroup that ends with a convivial breakfast. On September 9, the crew was small – but so was the pile of leaves, vegetables and other green matter awaiting the shredder. The first to show up were Steve Ballantine, Mike Manaugh, Athena Alexander, and James Redmond, who donned gloves and masks to prepare for the dusty job, while Carrie Manaugh prepared the post-work breakfast (including her homemade soup).

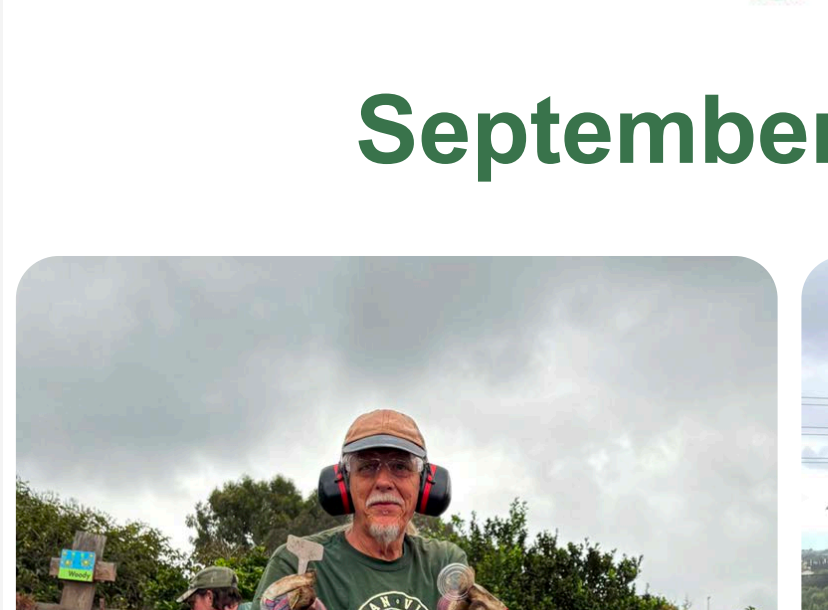
On this morning, two workers positioned the shredder just below the end of the long narrow table where the green material is to be shredded is placed and sorted. On the level of the pile to be shredded, workers use pitchforks to consolidate the pile and place it on the table, where it's quickly sorted before being fed into the shredder.

Down below, as shredded material pours out of the shredder, another member pitchforks it into a pile and, using a hose attached to a recycled water system, waters the pile three or four times to tamp down dust and encourage the decomposition process. That shredded material is the raw material of what will become OVF's precious compost. The toughest job, says Steve, who started shredding in 2012, is building the piles with pitchforks. But with teamwork, the entire pile is usually shredded within an hour.

If you've noticed the "woody" pile, next to the black plastic fence, Steve defines it as "small branches and thick woody vines," whereas the main shredding pile is the collection point for "soft vegetative material," including sunflower stalks. The crew shreds the woody pile "every four weeks of so" and that material is saved as woody mulch for members to take. Putting your plant material in the correct pile, notes Steve, "helps out the crew a lot."

After the shredding team takes care of the pile, it's time for breakfast and conversation. For old-timers who've been with the crew for decades and newcomers, it's a lively, warm social group. An ideal shredding crew needs eight to 10 people – the crew on September 9 only had six. Newcomers are always welcome and, says Steve, can quickly "learn by doing." And there's always a hot breakfast waiting for you when you're finished.

## September Articles



### Don't Shred This!

It's easy to think that anything in the garden can eventually go into the shredding pile, but there is a list of plants and items that should never go into the pile. Shredders know to look for unwelcome items, but the material goes by quickly and it takes a keen eye to keep up. *Thanks to Phase Representative Dean Cleverdon and Garden Master Les Hairrell for context and information.*

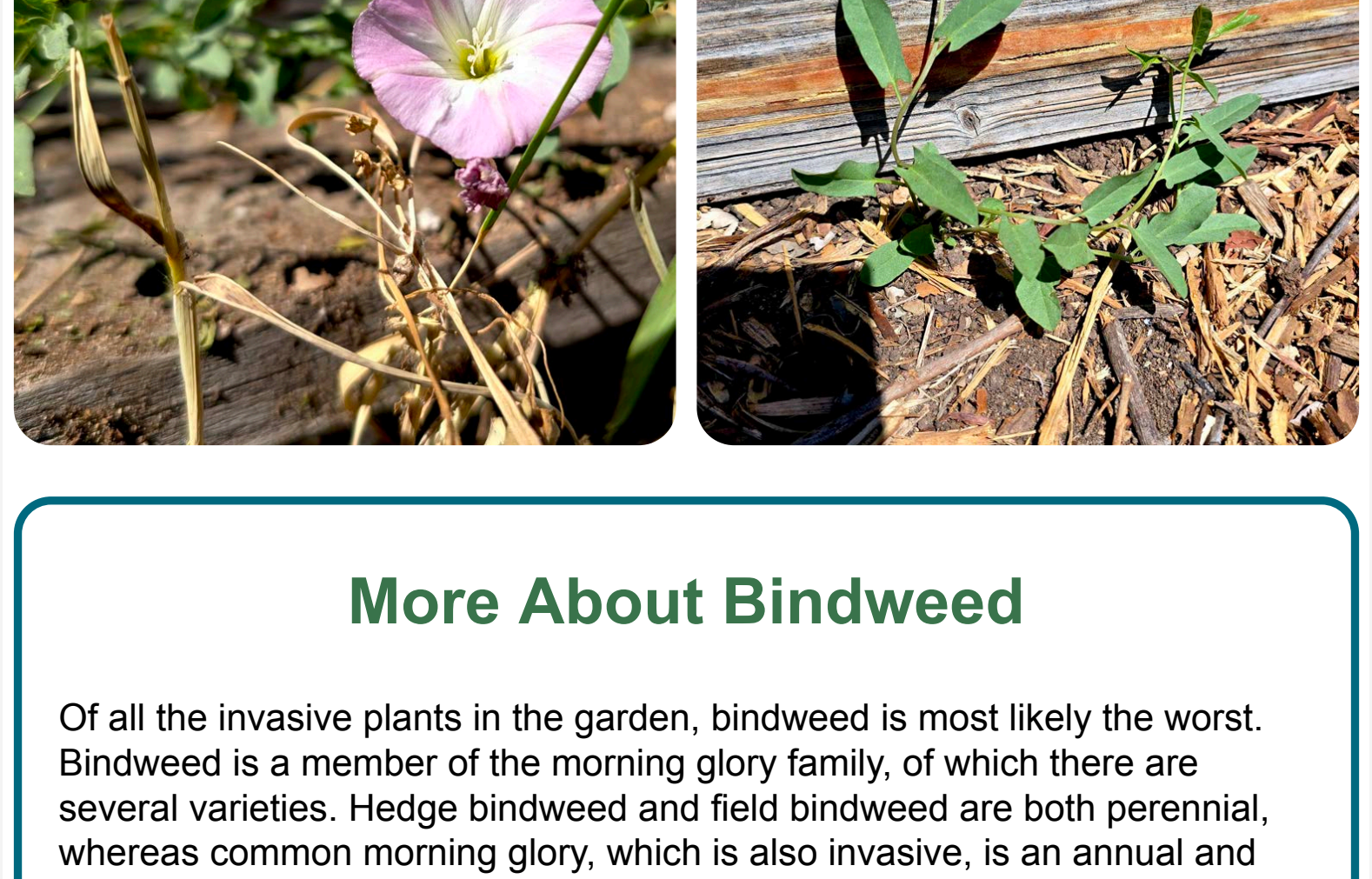
First, no tomato plants. Here's the history: Dean recounts how OVF learned through experience that tomato blight – an airborne disease spread by millions of spores – can quickly take over the garden. One of the problems, he notes, is that most gardeners cannot recognize late blight. "When run through the shredder by the shredding crew, those spores were blown up into the air, carried into the garden by ocean breezes, and infected any plants downwind." OVF suffered late blight problems every year until the practice of shredding tomato plants was stopped, he adds. Do your part and do not put your tomato plants on the shred pile.

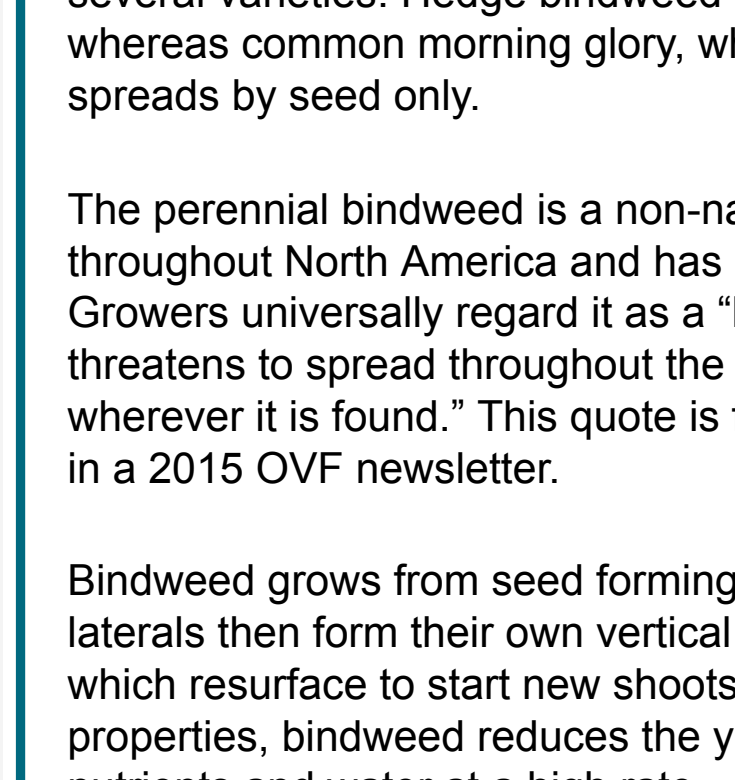
No garbage please. Shredders find Kleenex, empty bottles and cans as well as string, netting and other non-plant items that the shredder can't shred and that you probably don't want to spread on your plot.

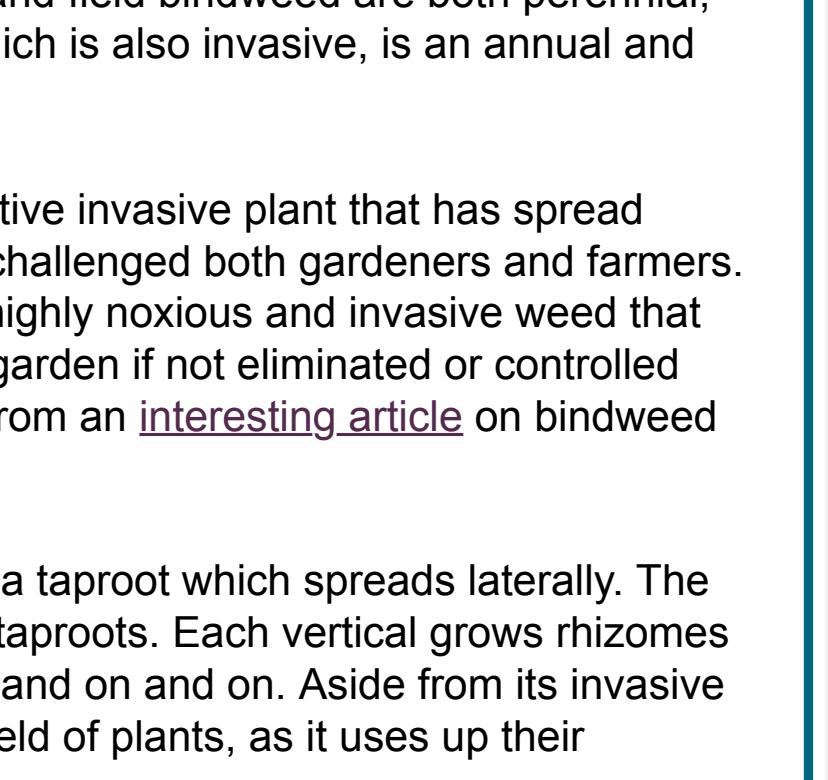
In that category, please be careful to not put metal or plastic material in the shred pile, as it can clog up the shredder and be dangerous for the shredders.

In addition to tomatoes, OVF Rule III(11) lists the other plants that should not go in the shredder: False Garlic, Nutsedge, Bindweed, Horsetail, Common Morning Glory and 4 O'Clocks. If they make it into the compost, they will bloom in your garden.

Read below a deep dive into bindweed, by Vice President Judith Morris, and a description of other invasive plants not permitted at the garden.







### More About Bindweed

Of all the invasive plants in the garden, bindweed is most likely the worst. Bindweed is a member of the morning glory family, of which there are several varieties. Hedge bindweed and field bindweed are both perennial, whereas common morning glory, which is also invasive, is an annual and spreads by seed only.

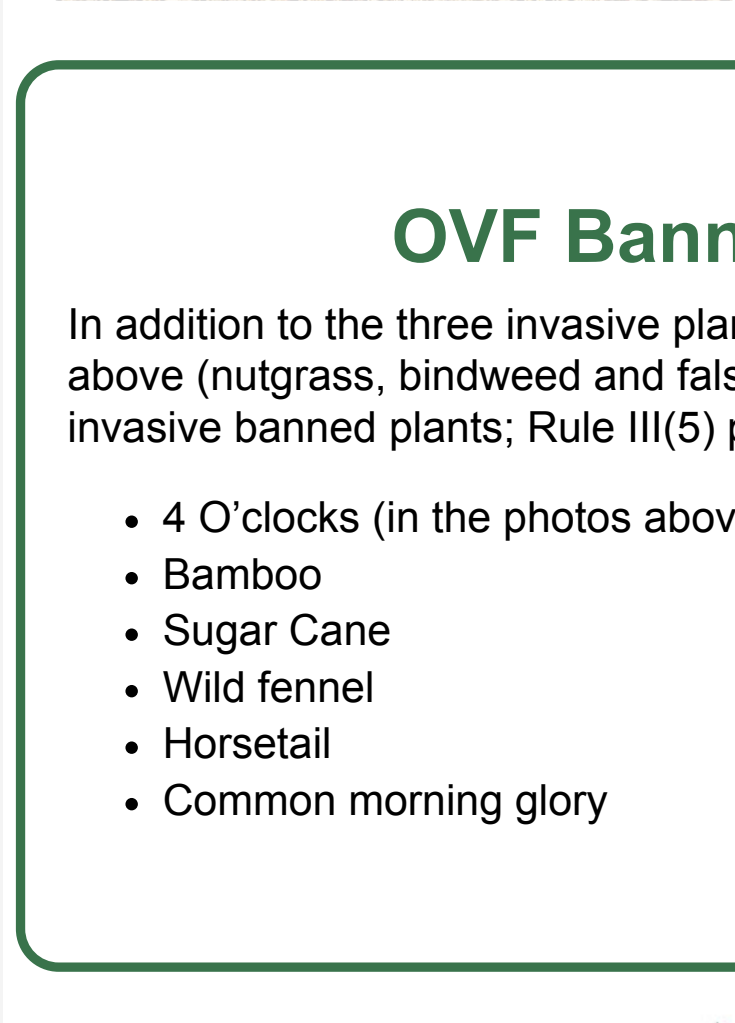
The perennial bindweed is a non-native invasive plant that has spread throughout North America and has challenged both gardeners and farmers. Growers universally regard it as a "highly noxious and invasive weed that threatens to spread throughout the garden if not eliminated or controlled wherever it is found." This quote is from an interesting article on bindweed in a 2015 OVF newsletter.

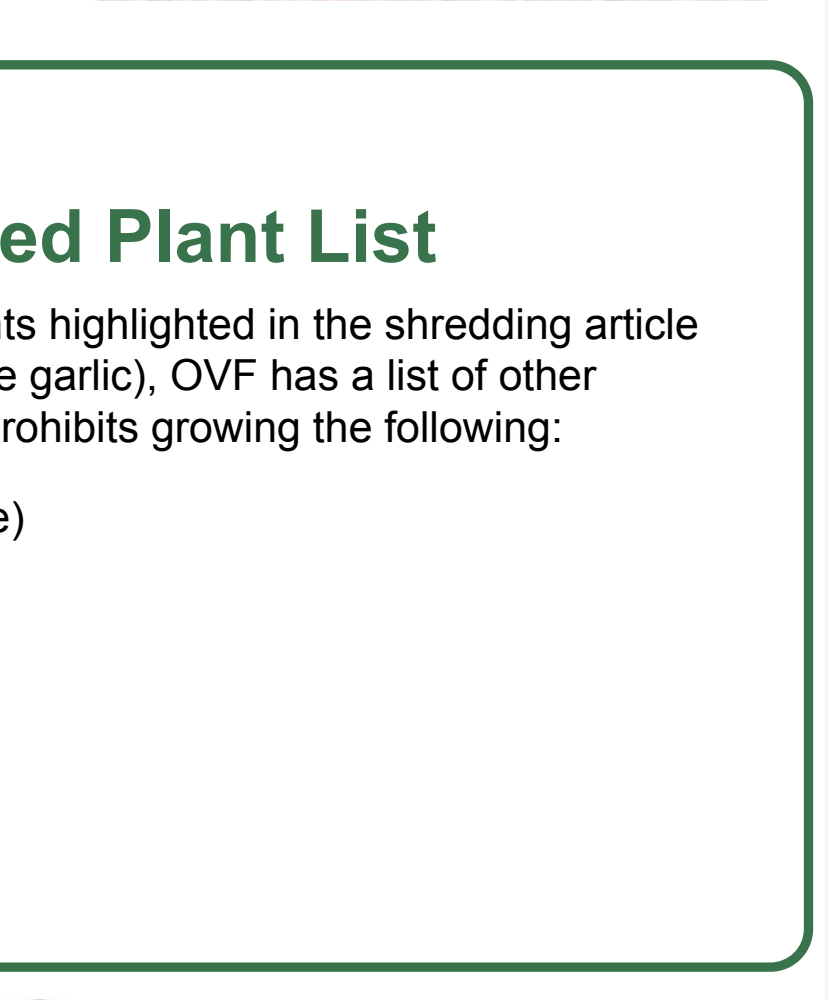
Bindweed grows from seed forming a taproot which spreads laterally. The laterals then form their own vertical taproots. Each vertical grows rhizomes which resurface to start new shoots and on and on. Aside from its invasive properties, bindweed reduces the yield of plants, as it uses up their nutrients and water at a high rate.

Short of using glyphosate (Roundup), which is a toxic solution and prohibited from use at OVF, the recommendation is to dig out the root, with care not to break off small pieces which will propagate new plants. The main goal is to disallow any leaves to emerge. This will eventually starve the plant. This process, however, takes two to five years of persistent digging on a weekly basis. It is especially important not to let it flower as the seeds can spread and stay viable as long as 20 to 50 years.

Happy weeding!

*This article is by Judith Morris, OVF vice president. Any gardener wishing help identifying this plant is welcome to ask their phase rep or to contact Judith at judith.elizabeth.morris@gmail.com*

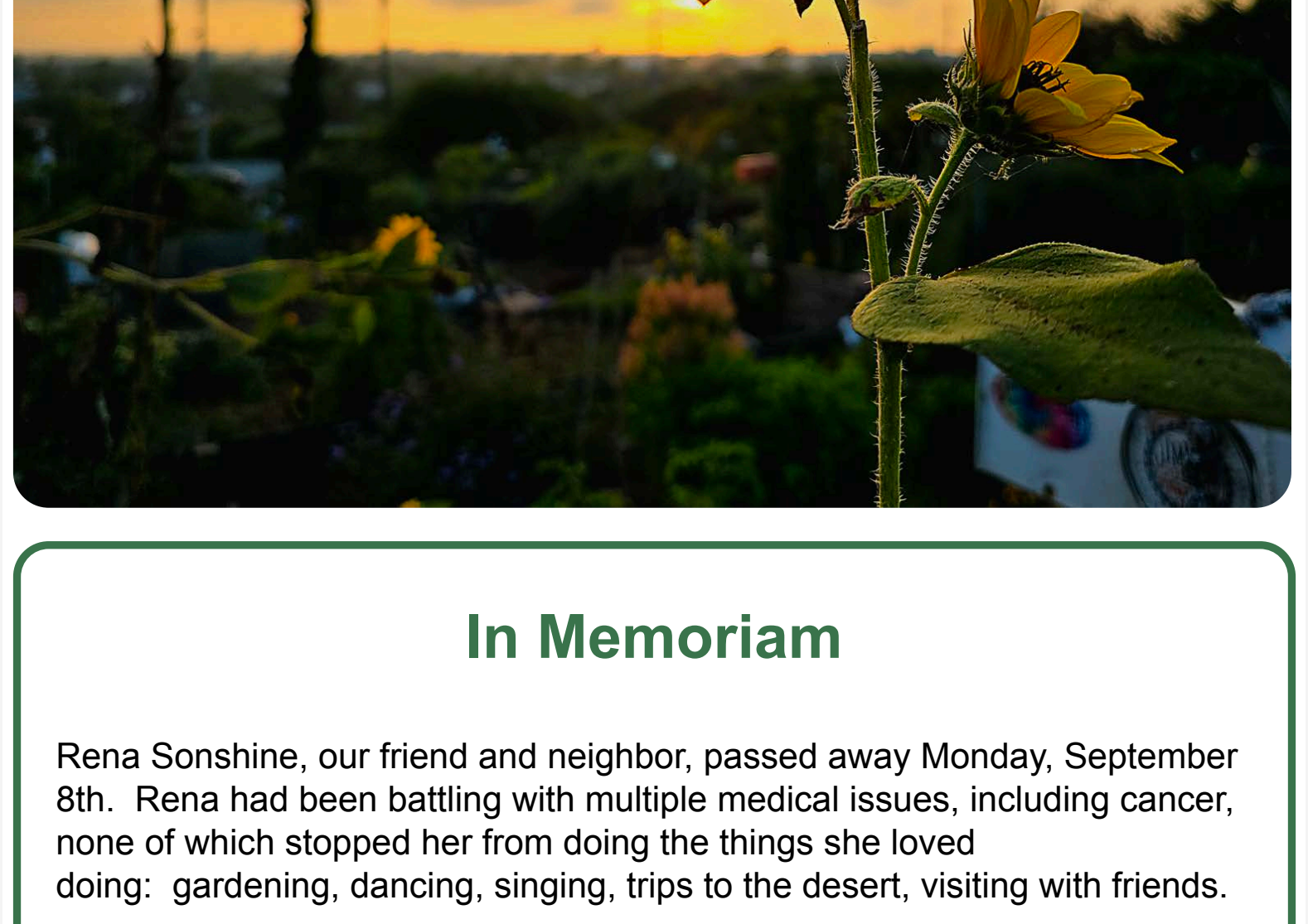




### OVF Banned Plant List

In addition to the three invasive plants highlighted in the shredding article above (nutgrass, bindweed and false garlic), OVF has a list of other invasive banned plants; Rule III(5) prohibits growing the following:

- 4 O'clocks (in the photos above)
- Bamboo
- Sugar Cane
- Wild fennel
- Horsetail
- Common morning glory



### In Memoriam

Rena Sonshine, our friend and neighbor, passed away Monday, September 8th. Rena had been battling with multiple medical issues, including cancer, none of which stopped her from doing the things she loved doing: gardening, dancing, singing, trips to the desert, visiting with friends.

According to a friend of Rena's, she was having a normal busy day up until the moment she passed. Rena was flown to New Jersey where she has been buried with her parents.

Rena became a garden member in December 1986 and was an Associate before that. Rena was the recording secretary for the OVF Board, giving decades of service to the OVF community. She will be greatly missed.

*Thanks to Dean Cleverdon for permission to print this email in the OVF newsletter*

## Recipes from the Garden

*Here's a recipe contributed by OVF gardener Rachel E. Judd. Have a recipe using garden ingredients you'd like to share? Email it to ovfdeb@gmail.com*

**Pumpkin-Apple Tagine**

Tagine is a Moroccan style of stew which incorporates fruit and spices for delicious results. Traditional tagine is made in a unique style of ceramic pot, but I've made mine in a lidded high-sided aluminum or cast iron pot and had it turn out perfect. This dish has become a staple Thanksgiving side in my household. In the words of one reviewer, "It tastes like fall!"

*Ingredients*:

1 Tbsp olive oil
1 small pie or sugar pumpkin, about 3-4 lbs
1 yellow onion
2 garlic cloves
1 Tbsp fresh ginger, grated
1 tsp turmeric
1 tsp ground cinnamon
1/2 tsp cayenne pepper
2 large tart apples (Granny Smith ideal)
2 cups vegetable stock
1/2 cup dried cranberries
2 Tbsp honey
1 Tbsp fresh lemon juice
1/2 cup almonds, slivered and toasted

*Process*:

Peel the pumpkin and cut off the stem. Cut in half and scrape out the seeds and gooey bits (the seeds can be rinsed, dried, and toasted with your favorite seasoning as a tasty snack). Cut into 1-inch cubes. Core and cube the apples (peeling unnecessary). Dress apples with lemon juice to prevent browning. Chop the onion and mince the garlic.

Heat the olive oil in a pan, and sauté the onion until soft and translucent. Add garlic and saute for 1 minute.

Stir in the ginger, turmeric, cinnamon, and cayenne. Add the pumpkin and stir to coat.

Add stock, apple with lemon juice, cranberries, and honey. Bring to a boil and then simmer, covered, until the pumpkin is fork-tender (about 15 minutes).

Garnish with the almonds. Serve warm with saffron rice.

Optional: I make this recipe vegetarian, but you can use chicken stock and add in 2 diced and cooked chicken breasts when you add in the pumpkin, if you like.

## The 11/30 Workday is Cancelled

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THE NOVEMBER 30 WORKDAY HAS BEEN CANCELLED FOR THE THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY**.
Please enjoy Thanksgiving weekend with your friends and family. The November 30 workday has been cancelled to allow all OVF members the time to spend the holiday with their loved ones.

## Member Feedback / Submissions

If you have any feedback or comments on the newsletter, please contact the OVF Education Chair Debra Kaufman at ovfdeb@gmail.com.

## Land Acknowledgement

Ocean View Farms recognizes that we garden on land originally and currently inhabited by the Chumash, Kizh, Tongva, and Serrano peoples. We respect them as the first caretakers of this land, with gratitude for their wisdom and skills.

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