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D the G -- November 2013

It used to be that a pie tin hanging, flashing in the sun, was used in a fruit tree and was discovered to be a deterrent to birds taking fruit. As time progressed new levels of trash brought forth the idea of using old CD's for the same purpose. As a garden designer, these two approaches didn't appeal to me. Several years ago, while shopping for holiday decorations, I spotted mini disco balls. My eye sees them as being less tacky looking and actually somewhat festive. The birds stay away and, at times, I am seen dancing in the garden to the sound track of "Saturday Night Fever". This year I found these mini disco balls in various colors like amber, blue, pink, in addition to the standard. (See picture below.)

Crows were becoming a problem in the garden. With good reason; a gathering of crows is called a 'murder of crows.' I never became a fan of their droppings, raucous voices, or their insistence on dining on the baby birds in the tall trees, etc. I found that a hand-held mirror reflecting sunlight into their faces caused them to leave. After a very few repeats of light in their faces, they stopped visiting my garden.

Spring has sprung. Plant lettuces, broccoli, pak choi, dill, pansies, snapdragons, and all of the other cool season flowers, vegetables and herbs now for a long season. Last year the lettuces that we planted in November were still being harvested in May. When you grow it at home, you know that it's clean. I always recommend organics for any food plant. My preference is organics throughout the garden. I have six years experience as an insurance agent. Other than my insistence of lessening my impact, the insurance liability exposure is a concern. Let's say that a 'conventional spray' is used on shrubs, etc. What if the family pet runs through the garden and get's this substance on its fur? And what if the two year old kid gives the pet a nice hug? I haven't used conventional products in about 40 years. I did see the rash caused by a child's exposure to conventional products. Whatever foods or combatants you choose to use in the garden, the strongly recommended advice is to 'read and follow' the directions on the package.

Bare root season will be here by the end of December. This time of year offers the very best selection of bare root roses, bare root stone fruits, and berries. All of these are related to roses and are in the family rosacea. Roses are available in what is called a "two'fer." This is two roses grafted onto one rose tree. By the same token, closely related specimens can be grafted onto one trunk. I have a four-graft apple, a four-graft peach, and a fruit salad tree that has a plum, apricot, nectarine and a peach. Three trees with twelve varieties means that each type fruits at a different time of the year. We had apples in May and the last variety is giving fruit now.

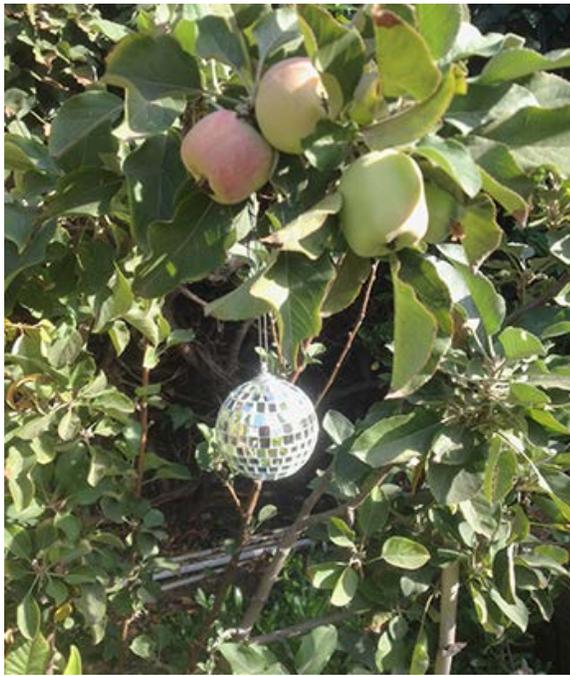
Have a look at the photo with the disco ball and the photo of the fruit salad tree that I photographed at Green Thumb Nursery.

Rose Observation

I witnessed Sunset
carefully tucking
Rose away,
Preparing Sunrise to
paint yet another
day--,
Placing Rose's beauty
on display.

-- Russell A. Baum

[D the G Archives](#)



Bird Deterrent



Fruit Salad Tree

The very best selection of roses will be available at the beginning of January. Both bare root, potted, and mail order specimens have advantages and disadvantages. Bare root are available in three forms: 1) In a paper wrapper, 2) In a plastic wrapper, 3) Field grown. Paper wrapped are the trend as paper will decompose. Plastic, by the end of bare season, tends to have an odor as the water they contain gets a bit old. Field grown are my preference. They must be hydrated and planted fairly quickly.

Give the new rose a good start. Prepare the planting hole in advance; about 24" x 24". Hydrate the hole by filling with water and check how long it takes the water to be absorbed. Use a good planting compost and starter fertilizer.

Rose selection is not difficult. Check with members of our society for roses that do well in the San Fernando Valley, that are disease resistant, and that repeat bloom quickly. And also, roses that are exhibition form and fragrant are a plus. I prefer fragrant roses like Sugar Moon, Twilight Zone, Lasting Love, and Double Delight -- and they are only four of my favorite fragrant roses.

Best to you, Happy Gardening,

D the G
[Dave's Greenscapes](#)