

News from the Tea Garden

At Camellia Forest

Greetings and welcome to the first Tea Garden newsletter. We are excited to start these seasonal communications, in which we will share news about what's happening here at the garden, plans for events, classes, and workshops in the coming months, tips for tea gardening, and more!

Whether you are new to tea gardening or a seasoned grower, take our [survey](#), and let us know us more about your interests and experiences, and what you'd like to hear more about in future newsletters and classes.

First Flush Fest – May 30, 10-4

Come enjoy tours of the garden, learn about locally grown tea, visit the shady grove, and sip fresh tea. We'll have signed copies of the book for sale. Help us keep this event sustainable by donating – anything helps, for example \$10 per adult or \$5 for students. Walk-ins welcome or [let us know](#) you will be joining us for tea in the shady grove!

What's been happening in the garden?

After finishing pruning in late winter, we've been busy cleaning up under the plants, fertilizing, and mulching. We are ready for first flush! We are also potting up seedlings and planting seeds that we collected last fall from the garden. For more stories and pictures from the garden and tips for growers see page 3.

Spring, 2021



WORKSHOPS

INTRO TO THE TEA
GARDEN SATURDAYS, 2-4

June 12, 26 & July 10, 24

HARVEST AND PROCESS

SUNDAYS, 10-3

June 13, 27 & July 11, 25

[Go here for more info or to register](#)

PICK YOUR OWN

(with completion of harvest/processing
workshop or prior experience)

[By appointment](#)

Meet our newest intern!

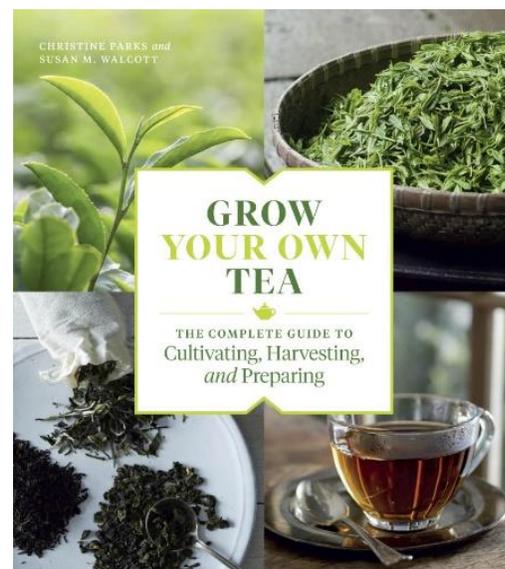
At Camellia Forest Tea Garden we have a passion for teaching. This year we were lucky to find Sandy Straw, who has years of experience in farming, leading tours, and teaching all ages. In addition to learning about growing and making tea, Sandy also has been planting for tea blends and cut flowers, and starting a raspberry patch. We are excited to have her join us leading garden tours and teaching classes. Sandy will be giving an “Intro to Tea” class at the Durham Garden Center, April 24th. Here she is with a volunteer tea plant she found in the woods below the garden.



Many thanks to the student teams who competed in the “Crash Campaign” at the *UNC Hussmann School of Media and Journalism* on behalf of Camellia Forest Tea Garden! We were inspired by their ideas, and logo modeled on a tea gathering basket!



GROW YOUR OWN TEA



After 5 years of planning, research, and writing we’re still celebrating! Published this past September, we are honored that booklist named it “the guide of guides to growing tea.” Available at [Camellia Forest](#) (signed copies by request/at in person events).

SPEAKING OF TEA

We’ve been giving zoom webinars coast to coast, for example meeting future tea gardeners at the Corvallis Garden Club (OR). This month we’re having a discussion with the New York Tea Society. We also give private tea tastings and tours. [Contact us](#) to book your event - times fill up quickly!

Fun Fact

The tea plant, *Camellia sinensis* var. *sinensis* has a very large genome, enriched for flavonoid, terpenoid (important in tea aromas), and caffeine biosynthesis. Ornamental Camellias have much lower levels of these compounds, so they aren’t very good for making tea. (Nerd alert, for more info - <https://www.pnas.org/content/115/18/E4151>).



Nature
Does
Not
Hurry
Yet
Everything
Is
Accomplished
-Lao Tzu

What's happening to my plant?

Out with the old and in with the new: In March tea plants are full of potential. Mature leaves may show damage from winter exposures, and some are aging, and will eventually drop-off. Don't worry - just wait!



Who's making all those holes - Moles or Voles?

Cleaning under the plants, we found a few 1 to 2-inch holes. They were made by voles, who tunnel near the surface, hidden by leaf litter and mulch under the plants. Voles love to nibble on roots. Moles make mounds and bigger tunnels, but leave plants alone. Prevention is easier than trying to get rid of voles - take away their shelter! Clean under plants and remove low hanging branches.



Camellia Forest Nursery & Tea Garden is located at:

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