



# LINDA J. NOVY & ASSOCIATES

Sustainable Landscape Management  
Horticultural Consulting for Residential and Commercial Properties



LANDSCAPE NEWS FROM LINDA ~ WINTER 2012

## Dear Customers and Friends,

There are many signs of winter on my Fairfax property, Cascade Farms: valley oaks (*Quercus lobata*) shedding leaves and acorns like snowfall; rains mixing leaves and soil in an earthy alchemy; and tomatoes slowly ripening on my kitchen table. I have been collecting and planting acorns, harvesting willow poles to refurbish creek banks, sowing cover crops, wildflowers and grasses in my landscape and at clients' properties. I find deep satisfaction knowing that my efforts now enrich and restore the land, and give hope to the next year's spring. Every season is equally busy – here are some fall highlights!



Ripening tomatoes with pomegranates, acorns.



L TO R: Bill Van Horbek, Greg Paige, (Linda), Mike Greene of Bartlett Tree Experts, and Max Pinedo, Stanford University.



Cascade Farms—Coast live oak, madrone and valley oak forest.



Convergent lady beetles – day 12. What's the secret? See [video clip](#).

Video/web support-heatherjoymorris@yahoo.com; graphics-normanovy@comcast.net; photos Linda Novy; Bartlett Research Lab Photo by Juan Carrasco, Bartlett Tree Experts, San Francisco

**FIELD DAYS TRIP TO CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA.** At the R. A. Bartlett Tree Research Laboratories and Arboretum, I attended a Field Day in September as a guest of Mike Greene, Marin County Branch Manager of Bartlett Tree Experts. Along with 50 other landscape and horticultural professionals, we learned about their Research Laboratory's field trials and scientific research. Of most interest to me were the use of the air spade to restore the soil to a condition like the "forest floor," field trials demonstrating how best to reduce root girdling, the use of **biochar** as an effective plant amendment, and the richness of the layered plantings at the Arboretum – the grounds were alive with butterflies and other garden allies.

**LANDSCAPE ENHANCEMENT TO A REDWOOD FOREST.** I provided consulting to a client with a one-acre plus property located on the edge of a coastal redwood forest. We enriched the existing landscape using appropriate native plants such as huckleberry, hazelnut, thimbleberry, and some non-natives such as Philodendron, Queen's Tears bromeliad (*Bilbergia*), and Siberian *Iris* that fit various micro-niches on the property. My specialists and I made changes to the lighting and irrigation systems to be more resource efficient. I reviewed existing soil practices and submitted soil samples for analysis which resulted in a shift from chemical fertilizers to a combination of Actively Aerated Compost Tea (AACT) and vermi-compost, on-site leaf composting, and a prescription organic fertilizer. This garden is now tucked in for the winter season, and we'll monitor its health, new plantings and maintenance schedule into the new year.



**CASCADE FARMS—ECOLOGICAL SUCCESS.** Recently, my sister, Norma, and I presented a talk to Marin Master Gardeners on best management practices for the landscape and vegetable garden. One of the case studies was my own Cascade Farms which was "disturbed" over 30 years ago when the prior owner imported many cubic yards of clay fill, laden with Italian thistle seeds. How I helped turn this into an ecological success story is told on the [video clip](#), which also highlights a tip from Bartlett Research Labs on releasing convergent lady beetles.



Soil is part of the earth's natural capital—it can easily be disturbed, but can be restored through patience, sound practices and a trust in natural processes. As I look back over the last 30 years, I'm grateful that I could play a small part in the regeneration of this woodland forest.

*With gratitude and best wishes to you this holiday season,*

P.O. Box 969, Fairfax, CA 94978 • [lindanovy.com](http://lindanovy.com) • [lindanovy@comcast.net](mailto:lindanovy@comcast.net) • 415-45-PLANT (415-457-5268)