



# OUR WATER – OUR WORLD

## Marin County Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program Our Water Our World Retail Partners Final Report

July 2021- June 2022

Contract #32100741 for Plant Harmony, prepared by Suzanne Bontempo

### Program overview:

The 'Our Water Our World' (OWOW) program is a public outreach program designed to reduce the use of pesticides by using a point of purchase program that educates and encourages retail nurseries, hardware stores, and home improvement stores that sell pesticides, to provide less-toxic, eco-friendly products for their customers. In addition, the OWOW program provides Integrated Pest Management (IPM) educational Fact Sheets for the public. The reduction of pesticide usage or the use of less toxic products around the home can lead to a reduction of pollutants in our local creeks, as well as a healthier environment for the public.

MCSTOPPP currently sponsors the Our Water Our World retail partnership program in 16 retail businesses throughout Marin County. Summer Winds Nursery is the newest retailer to join the partnership, joining in March 2022.

1) Building Supply	Point Reyes Station
2) Chase Ace	San Rafael
3) CNL Nursery	Mill Valley
4) Fairfax Lumber	Fairfax
5) Fairfax Backyard Farmer	Fairfax
6) Goodman's Building Supply	Mill Valley
7) The Home Depot	San Rafael
8) Jackson's Hardware	San Rafael
9) Marin Ace	San Rafael
10) Pini Hardware	Novato
11) Sloat Garden Center	E. Blithdale, Mill Valley
12) Sloat Garden Center	Kentfield
13) Sloat Garden Center	Miller Ave, Mill Valley
14) Sloat Garden Center	Novato
15) Summer Winds Nursery	Novato
16) Toby's Feed Barn	Point Reyes Station



**New Store Added:**  
Exciting to have Summer Winds in Novato join the OWOW partnership



New shelf tags at the Home Depot

### Store Set-up:

Each retailer received new shelf talker tags to identify the eco-pesticides available for consumers to purchase. The Home Depot Stores physically remerchandise their products each winter. As for the other retailers, they might remerchandise and/or add new eco-products to the retail shelves for sale.

CNL nursery, Toby's, Fairfax Ace and the Fairfax Backyard Farmer do not have shelftalker tags. CNL, Toby's and Fairfax Farmer only sells eco-pesticide, and have requested no tags, the shelves at Fairfax Ace are problematic. I am still working on a good solution for the Fairfax Ace.

## **Retail Store Mentoring and Maintenance Visits:**

**A total number of 72 program store mentoring and maintenance visits were provided for the year.**

- Building Supply: 3 visits
- Chase Ace: 5 visits
- CNL Nursery: 4 visits
- Fairfax Lumber: 4 visits
- Fairfax Backyard Farmer: 2 visits
- Goodman's Building Supply: 7 visits
- The Home Depot: 7 visits
- Jackson's Hardware: 5 visits
- Marin Ace: 5 visits
- Pini Hardware: 5 visits
- Sloat, E. Blithdale: 5 visits
- Sloat, Kentfield: 5 visits
- Sloat, Miller Ave: 5 visits
- Sloat, Novato: 4 visits
- Summer Winds: 3 visits
- Toby's Feed Barn: 3 visits

## **Store mentoring and maintenance activities throughout the year:**

- Replenish fact sheets
- Update shelf talkers on new products
- Ask associates if they are hearing of any new or unusual pest problems from their customers
- Focus on the pest of the month calendar
- Bring the quarterly UCIPM Retail Newsletter to each retailer
- Remind associates about the resource on the OWOW & UCIPM website
- Demonstrate how to use the UCIPM website for pest problem assistance
- Demonstrate how to access fact sheets through the QR code poster
- Guide customers to less-toxic solutions in the aisle
- Mentor buyer and manager at each retailer about new eco-friendly product on the market
- Mentor associates about the current pest problems and IPM strategies for the pests
- Mentor associates on how less toxic active ingredients work
- Follow up with emails and phone calls on pest questions from associates, as well as customers

All the retail partners have witnessed an increase in sales with the eco-friendly alternative pesticides. Gardening is trending heavily, and we see that people are looking for alternative to the toxic pesticides. Many of the retailers have increased the number of eco-pesticides as they replace problem pesticides with these alternatives. A few, such as CNL & Toby's do not sell anything other than eco-friendly products and others have removed the problem pesticides that they once sold, such as Sloat Garden Center, only to sell less-toxic alternatives.

I continue to work with the Home Depot corporate to keep them up to date on store activities and events. We discussed additional ways to expand our partnership. The sale of eco-friendly products still remains strong. The Home Depot stores continue to see a growth in the sale of alternatives to problem pesticides. This reflects consumer demand, that eco-friendly pesticides are more popular than ever.

An in the aisle 'wing stack' display at the Home Depot store is highlighting the Bio-Advance eco-pesticide that is a new product for the 2022 year. (see photo to the right)



Throughout the year, I provided each store with support around assorted seasonal pest, such as aphids, earwigs, and cucumber beetle, along with leaf and plant diseases, especially powdery mildew, due to the dry conditions. Yellowjackets, gophers, rats & mice were also highlighted with many customers coming in the stores with these pests.

With California faced with another year of drought conditions, I also provided each retailer with more resources for keeping plants healthy through times of drought, how to efficiently water plants that reduces water usage, and the benefits of planting regionally appropriate plant material.

**Extra educational materials:**

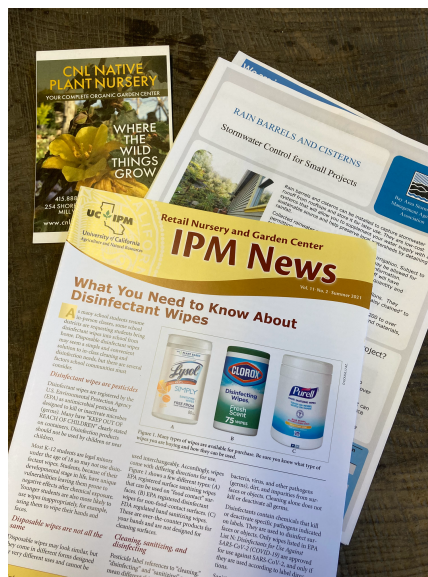
In the fall I provided each retailer with the BASMAA handouts for keeping rainwater on sight. In the spring I provided each with how to keep gardens healthy through times of drought. I also provided each with the CA Pest Alert 'Keep the Spotted Lanternfly out of CA' to post, & the quarterly UC IPM Retailer Newsletter.

Extra handouts include:

- BASMAA's Rain Barrel & Cisterns
- BASMAA's Rain Garden Guide
- Bay Friendly Sustainable Gardening Guide
- The Bay Friendly 'Guide to Mulch',
- Bay Friendly 'Grass-cycling Guide'
- Bay Nature 'Gardening for Wildlife'



Angela at the Marin Ace excited to receive helpful resources



Rain catchment & UC IPM Newsletter for CNL



Shelly at Chase Ace excited to receive helpful resources.

**New for the 2021-22 contract year:**

**QR Code for fact sheets:**

With the intention of keeping the OWOW program relevant, we developed trackable QR code posters of the fact sheets. This has been extremely well received by each retailer.



Mary, manager at CNL, likes the ease of the new QR code poster. 'It saves paper'



Showing Elijah at Goodman's, how to access fact sheets via the QR codes



Mike, assistant manager at Sloat E Blithdale, He thinks the new QR Code posters are 'pretty cool!'

**OWOW Retail Newsletter:**

With the significant challenges of the retail environment with labor shortages, frequent new hires, and key associates out due to covid, I have several requests for more OWOW information, educational materials, and support for the teams. With this I creates a monthly newsletter that is emailed at the beginning of each month. This newsletter contains the information on seasonal pest problems & eco-management solutions that I shared with stores for that month. This assists with ensuring that all the key associates, including managers are receiving the information. Many of the managers print the OWOW newsletter out and post it for all associates to review.

The newsletter lists the upcoming events that IPM Advocates are participating in, such as in-person tabling events or on-line webinars. Retailers have then posted the relevant events onto their newsletters that are sent out to their customers. This is HUGE! The newsletter also includes upcoming professional trainings, such as the QWEL trainings.

**OWOW IPM Retailer Trainings**

**OWOW retailer trainings:**

I conducted 9 training events were provided throughout the contract year.

Date	Store	Number Trained
9/25/21	Sloat, Novato	3
10/1/21	Sloat, Miller Ace	5
10/2/21	Sloat Kentfield	5
10/26/21	Chase Ace	12
11/13/21	Marin Ace	5
2/24/22	The Home Depot	5
4/26/22	Building Supply Ace	4

5/12/22	CNL	5
5/20/22	Goodman's	4
<b>Total associates trained:</b>		<b>48</b>

### Topics covered in the training:

- An OWOW partnership program overview
- Pesticides that are water pollutants of concern
- Where to dispose of local HHW
- 'How less-toxic products' work
- How to read a pesticide label
- IPM principles & techniques
- Beneficial Insect Identification
- Water Conservation
- Benefits of Compost
- Benefits of Mulch
- Water-wise plant choices for our area
- Pests highlighted: Aphids, ants, powdery mildew, citrus leaf miner, earwigs, fleas, gophers, rats & mice, snails & slugs, spider mites, whitefly, fungal diseases, codling moth, rose care without problem pesticides and how to address the many customer habits, such as how over fertilizing can increase pest populations. Also, the importance of adding compost to the soil and protecting the soil with a layer of mulch.
- Invasive pests: Asian Citrus Psyllid
- OWOW website, UC Davis IPM website, BIRC website
- The UC IPM You Tube informational channel
- How to use the OWOW materials, including how to access fact sheets by using the QR code.



Training associates at the Chase Ace, San Rafael

### Resources provided to each OWOW training attendee includes:

- The Mac's Field Guide Good Garden Bugs of California
- Monthly Pest Calendar
- How to Apply Beneficial Nematode
- 'How Less Toxic Products Work' handout
- Home Depot less toxic product list for the Home Depot Store training
- List of websites, books, and catalogs on a resource sheet
- Sheet Mulching instructions
- The CA DPR's 'How to read a pesticide label' handout
- Information on pest problem solving for the following pests: spider mites, lifecycle of grubs, whiteflies, spider mites, citrus leaf miner, codling moth, keeping rodent out of the home and reducing their activity in the garden, Asian Citrus Psyllid, and the UCIPM Quick tips for Mealybugs & Powdery Mildew
- '10 Most Wanted Bugs for Your Garden' brochure
- OWOW pocket guides
- Marin-Sonoma Vector Control Program
- A one sheet informational handout on 'Protecting Landscapes in a Drought' and '10 Tips for Water-wise Gardening'

### Compilation of Training Feedback 2021-22 contract year

I am surprised that I didn't have more associates trained throughout the year. With the assistance of the retail management teams, I certainly tried. Each retailer was requesting the class as they had many new hires & values the education I provide. Scheduling associate trainings for the retailer partners was still

challenging, not from covid restrictions but from labor shortages and associates calling out due to covid. Because of this, I had to reschedule quite a few trainings, and/or work with the few associates that were on staff for the day. Like last year, I worked with associates in smaller groups of multiple training sessions back-to-back.

The training classes are well received by the associates, as they see the value and appreciate the up-to-date IPM education I provide to them. With the continued increase of new gardeners, I continued to focus my attention on how to guide their customers, these new gardeners, through the importance of keeping rainwater on site, adding compost to the soil, feeding plants organically, protecting the soil with mulch, and how to water to grow healthy plants, because when we grow healthy plants, they are more resilient and less likely to be affected by pest issues.

The more recent interests have been on how to protect gardens in times of drought. Here I share resources and information about how to be very strategic with water, ways to recycle water such as easy to install laundry to landscape greywater systems, and products on the market to protect the plants with anti-transpirants and water retaining soil polymers.

For this contract year, we created a new list of survey questions. Each of the IPM Advocates had shared frustrations with how covid has impacted the time & space we have to work with associates. The intention of this new survey is for it to be a training piece.

What we discovered with this new survey is that most associates understand that urban run-off flows directly to a waterway without going through a filtration process. However most didn't realize that the problem pesticides are not removed at the wastewater treatment facility. For those in unincorporated areas of the county that commonly have septic systems, helping the associates understand how that relates to the property and ground water was new for them.



Training associates at the Home Depot Store and at the Sloat, Kentfield

## Summary of Pre-Training Survey

A total of 48 associates trained and 39 post-training surveys were returned.  
Here are the results of those surveys.

<b>1) Are you familiar with the OWOW program?</b>
a) <b>Yes: 37%</b> b) No: 63%
<b>2) When does urban runoff occur?</b>
a) When a sprinkler is broken & excess water is running into the street: 3% b) During & after a rain event: 0 c) From watering or irrigation overflows: 0 d) <b>All of the above: 97%</b>
<b>3) Which of these pollutants can be carried into the waterways with urban runoff?</b>
a) Motor oil & solvents: 3% b) Pet waste, debris & litter: 4% c) Pesticides & synthetic fertilizers: 3% d) Household cleaning agents: 3% e) <b>All of the above: 87%</b>
<b>4) Storm drains, including the storm drains in parking lots &amp; loading docks, flow directly to:</b>
a) The sanitary sewer that goes to the wastewater treatment facility: 34% b) <b>The nearest creek, river, bay, or ocean: 66%</b>
<b>5) Are pesticides removed at the wastewater treatment facility?</b>
a) Yes: 18% b) <b>No: 34%</b> c) I'm not sure: 48%
<b>6) What is the best way to dispose of unused household hazardous waste, including pesticides &amp; fertilizers?</b>
a) Bury them in the garden: 0 b) Dump them into the trash: 3% c) Pour them down the sink or flush down toilet: 0 d) <b>Take them to the local HHW facility: 97%</b>
<b>7) Do you know where your local HHW facility is located?</b>
a) They do not know: 54% b) <b>Yes, they do know: 36%</b> c) Gave a good guess: 10%
<b>8) Do your customers ask for eco-friendly solutions &amp; less-toxic products that are safer for the environment?</b>
a) Yes: 72% b) No: 13% c) Sometimes: 15%
<b>9) What is the highly effective, science-based strategy for controlling pests in the home/garden that also helps to protect our waterways from toxic pesticide pollutants?</b>
a) Synthetic pesticide program: 10% b) Homemade, D.I.Y. remedies & cures: 10% c) <b>IPM (Integrated Pest Management) Principles: 80%</b>

**Summary of Store Training  
Post-Training Surveys**

<b>1) Are you familiar with the OWOW program</b>
a) <b>Yes: 100%</b> b) No:
<b>2) When does urban runoff occur?</b>
a) When a sprinkler is broken & excess water is running into the street: b) During & after a rain event: c) From watering or irrigation overflows: d) <b>All of the above: 100%</b>
<b>3) Which of these pollutants can be carried into the waterways with urban runoff?</b>
a) Motor oil & solvents: b) Pest waste, debris & litter: c) Pesticides & synthetic fertilizers: d) Household cleaning agents: e) <b>All of the above: 100%</b>
<b>4) Storm drains, including the storm drains in parking lots &amp; loading docks, flow directly to:</b>
a) The sanitary sewer that goes to the wastewater treatment facility: b) <b>The nearest creek, river, bay, or ocean: 100%</b>
<b>5) Are pesticides removed at the wastewater treatment facility?</b>
a) Yes: b) <b>No: 100%</b> c) I'm not sure:
<b>6) What is the best way to dispose of unused household hazardous waste, including pesticides &amp; fertilizers?</b>
a) Bury them in the garden: b) Dump them into the trash: c) Pour them down the sink or flush down toilet: d) <b>Take them to the local HHW facility: 100%</b>
<b>7) Do you know where your local HHW facility is located?</b>
a) Do not know: 3% b) <b>Yes, knew: 97%</b> c) Gave a good guess:
<b>8) How can you identify products that are less toxic for pest management in your store?</b>
a) The OWOW shelf labels that identify eco-friendly products: 8% b) The OWOW pest management fact sheets c) The OWOW website at <a href="http://www.ourwaterourworld.org">www.ourwaterourworld.org</a> d) Talking with an OWOW IPM Advocate: e) <b>All of the above: 92%</b>
<b>9) What is the highly effective, science-based strategy for controlling pests in the home/garden that also helps to protect our waterways from toxic pesticide pollutants?</b>
a) Synthetic pesticide program: b) Homemade, D.I.Y. remedies & cures: c) <b>IPM (Integrated Pest Management) Principles: 100%</b>



## Summary of End of Training Evaluation Form

1) You feel comfortable using the OWOW resources available in this store?
a) Yes: 100%
b) No:
2) You understand a less toxic solution for at least one pest problem discussed today.
a) Yes: 100%
b) No:
3) What type of support can the OWOW IPM Advocate provide you more of?
a) More print & online resources for less toxic pest management: 24%
<b>b) More information about seasonal pest problems and how to manage less toxically: 49%</b>
c) More OWOW training & product knowledge classes: 27%

Would you like to sign up to receive emails providing information about seasonal pest updates and educational event?

19 associates agreed to sign up to receive more information throughout the year – this is **49%** of those who attended the training and submitted their survey

### Additional comments:

*'I like the class'*

*'It (the class) was very helpful'*

*'It was an informative class'*

*'Thank you!'*

### Summary of the OWOW Outreach Events for the 2021-22 contract year

Throughout the year, I provided 9 outreach events: 7 virtual, 2 in-person, and participated in the 'Bee Audacious' event at the Dominican College, reaching a total of 913 people with the OWOW IPM message.


#### Virtual events for the public:

Throughout the year, I provided 9 outreach events, reaching a total of at least 913 people with the OWOW IPM message. The virtual education for the public continued to be a success. The invitation to partner with the Marin Master Gardeners, Yard Smart Marin and the Sloat Garden Center group has been a huge boost to the OWOW program exposure & recognition. I can't thank them enough for inviting OWOW to join their programming. It continues to be incredible to have this opportunity to deliver the OWOW message to such a broad reach.

#### Webinars provided throughout the year:

- **9/18: 'Fall is for Planting' – 149 attended**, this webinar was in partnership with Sloat Garden Center
- **1/12: 'Bring in the Pollinators' – 65 attended**, this webinar was in partnership with Yard Smart Marin & the UC Marin Master Gardeners
- **2/2: 'Eco-friendly Rose Care' – 85 attended**, this webinar was in partnership with Sloat Garden Center
- **3/2: 'Eco-friendly Management of Gophers, Moles & Voles' – 135 attended**, this webinar was in partnership with Sloat Garden Center
- **3/16: 'Organic Houseplant Care' – 112 attended**, this webinar was in partnership with Sloat Garden Center



Each registrant received an email from me that included a program outline, and a 'Helpful Gardening Resource' page. This was created to help the guest with writing notes and help them pay attention without needing to scramble to note each website references throughout the program. Here is the 'Helpful Resources' I created for the webinars in partnership with the Marin Master Gardeners and Yard Smart Marin.



**OUR WATER — OUR WORLD**  
Resources for Gardening for Marin County

**HELPFUL ORGANIZATIONS**

- **UC Master Gardeners, Marin:** [marinmg.ucanr.edu](http://marinmg.ucanr.edu)  
*Mission:* To extend research-based knowledge and information on home horticulture, pest management, and sustainable landscape practices to the residents of Marin County.  
*About:* A trained group of 300+ volunteers who share their knowledge and skills with home gardeners and community organizations. Through educational outreach and community service, they work as non-paid staff members of the University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE), answering inquiries and providing research-based information on all areas of plant health and gardening practices to the public.
- **Yard Smart Marin:** [www.gardensmartmarin.org](http://www.gardensmartmarin.org)  
*Mission:* Empowering people to reduce / eliminate pesticide use through awareness and education about safer, effective alternatives.  
*About:* Started in 2016 as a public-private coalition for outreach and education through the County of Marin, the coalition included individuals representing a wide range of organizations and perspectives from around Marin.
- **Our Water Our World:** [www.ourwaterourworld.org](http://www.ourwaterourworld.org)  
Pest fact sheets, updated lists of less-toxic products, and the retail store locator  
*Mission:* To raise awareness of the connection between pesticide use and water quality and provide information to consumers at the point-of-purchase about integrated pest management (IPM) and less-toxic alternatives that are not causing water quality problems.  
*About:* OWOW is a program of the Bay Area Stormwater Management Agencies Association (BAMAAA), a consortium of nine San Francisco Bay Area municipal stormwater programs and operates in Marin under the Marin County Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program (MCSTOPPP).
- **MCSTOPPP:** [marincounty.org/depts/pw/divisions/creeks-bay-and-flood/mcstoppp](http://marincounty.org/depts/pw/divisions/creeks-bay-and-flood/mcstoppp)  
Information on protecting watersheds and reducing runoff, managing common pests, hiring eco-certified pest controllers and local events.
- **UC Statewide IPM Program:** [www.ipm.ucdavis.edu](http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu)  
Identification of pests, insects, diseases and weeds; detailed descriptions of pests and management methods.  
o **Bee precaution pesticide rating:** [www2.ipm.ucar.edu/bee/precaution](http://www2.ipm.ucar.edu/bee/precaution)
- **Marin Gardening Resources:** [marinwater.org/gardening-resources](http://marinwater.org/gardening-resources)
- **Plant Harmony:** [plantharmony.org](http://plantharmony.org) or [suzanne@plantharmony.org](mailto:suzanne@plantharmony.org)  
Visit this organic gardening site to contact our speaker with questions and to sign up for weekly gardening tips.
- **The Xerces Society:** [xerces.org](http://xerces.org)  
The Xerces Society is a science-based nonprofit organization that protects wildlife through the conservation of invertebrates and their habitats.

- **Sonoma Marin Water Saving Partnership:** [www.waterpartnership.org](http://www.waterpartnership.org)  
Information on low water use plants, garden design templates, water saving rebates and more
- **Rincon-Vitova Insectaries, Inc:** [www.rinconvitova.com](http://www.rinconvitova.com)  
Locally produces and distributes insects and other organisms, supplies and tools for biological controls of pests. RW are pioneers in the use of natural enemies in ecologically based pest management.
- **National Pesticide Information Center:** [npic.orst.edu](http://npic.orst.edu)  
NPIC provides objective, science-based information pesticides and pest related topics to enable people to make informed decisions. Find the Natural Enemies Quick List at this website.

**BOOKS**


- **Common Sense Pest Control Quarterly:** Vol XXXI, Number 1-4, special issue, Dec. 2018, B.I.R.C. 'Alternatives to Glyphosate', an integrated pest management approach to weed management.
- **Gardener's Guide to Common Sense Pest Control:** Okrowki, Dean, Steve Ash, Tamron Press, 2013. A practical guide that offers effective pest management strategies with the least risk to people and the environment.
- **Golden Gate Gardening:** Pam Peirce, Sasquatch Books, 2010. The complete guide to year-round food gardening in the San Francisco Bay Area and Coastal California.
- **Landscape Pests Identification Cards:** Publication 3513, Larry Strand & Jack Kelly Clark, ANR Communication Services, 2011. Order from ANR catalog: 1-800-994-8849. Pocket-sized, laminated cards are a handy reference to insect pests and diseases and management strategies for landscape plants.
- **Plants and Landscapes for Summer Dry Climates:** EBMUD, 2004. A perfect resource for choosing plants for the Bay Area and designing a healthy garden that attracts beneficials.
- **Pests of the Small Garden and Farm:** Third Edition, Mary Louise Flint, UC Press, 2018 and **Pests of Landscape Trees and Shrubs:** Third Edition, Steve Drenth, UC Press, 2016. 1-800-994-8849 (ANR Catalog). Extensive color plates for identifying pests and diseases, detailed text on less-toxic management techniques.

**PESTICIDE DISPOSAL**

Household Hazardous Waste Collection Sites:  
- Marin County: 565 Jacoby Street, San Rafael, 415-485-6806 [marinhhw.com](http://marinhhw.com)

Our Water Our World helps consumers find eco-friendly products for use in their homes and gardens and provides information on managing common garden and household pests.  
[www.ourwaterourworld.org](http://www.ourwaterourworld.org)

Debi Tisd, [dragonfly2010@hotmail.com](mailto:dragonfly2010@hotmail.com) Tisd/20  
S. Bontempo, [suzanne@plantharmony.org](mailto:suzanne@plantharmony.org) Bontempo/21



### Additional webinars provided that reached a Marin County audience:

- **10/16: 'Healthy Soils' – 91 attended**, this webinar was in partnership with Sloat Garden Center
- **1/12: 'Eco-friendly Disease Management' – 26 attended**, this webinar was in partnership with Sloat Garden Center

These two programs, in partnership with Sloat, were billed to other agencies Charlotte contracts with since she was the lead on them.

### Webinars from the 2020-21 fy are still receiving views:

- **1/9/21: 'Winter Garden Essentials' – 170 views**
  - o 345 attended, this webinar was in partnership with Sloat Garden Center
- **1/16/21: 'Compost & Soil Health Basics' – 259 views**
  - o 190 attended, this webinar was in partnership with Sloat Garden Center
- **2/6/21: 'Fertilizing Basics' – 218 views**
  - o 135 attended, this webinar was in partnership with Sloat Garden Center
- **2/13/21: 'Keeping Rats & Mice Out' – 435 views**
  - o 168 attended, this webinar was in partnership with Yard Smart Marin & the UC Marin Master Gardeners
- **2/27: 'How to Manage Weeds Safely & Effectively' – 174 views**
  - o 80 attended, this webinar was in partnership with Yard Smart Marin & the UC Marin Master Gardeners
- **3/6/21: 'Waterwise Gardening 101' – 134 views**
  - o 155 attended, this webinar was in partnership with Sloat Garden Center
- **3/13/21: 'Bring in the Beneficials' – 173 views**

- 82 attended, this webinar was in partnership with Yard Smart Marin & the UC Marin Master Gardeners
- **3/20/21: ‘Grow Your Own Organic Veggies’ – 89 views**
  - 126 attended, this webinar was in partnership with Sloat Garden Center
- **4/17/21: ‘Learn to Identify Beneficial Insects’ – 126 views**
  - 114 attended, this webinar was in partnership with Sloat Garden Center
- **5/1/21: ‘Eco-friendly Pest & Disease Management’ – 84 views**
  - 149 attended, this webinar was in partnership with Sloat Garden Center
- **6/2/21: ‘Protecting the Garden During Drought’ – 122 views**
  - 194 attended, this webinar was in partnership with Sloat Garden Center

The recorded webinars continue to receive views. As of June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022, these webinars have received a total of 1984 views.

### In-person tabling:

I did provide an in-person tabling at Goodman’s per their request, for their June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022, Business to Business event. It was busier than anticipated. I assisted 27 people with their pest questions, including rodents, rose care, scale insects on creeping fig, flies, mosquitoes, yellowjackets, and many general gardening questions.



October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021, OWOW participated in the ‘Bee Audacious’ lecture event at the Dominican College with over 250 attendees. Each attendee received a ‘10 Most Wanted’ brochure and a ‘Healthy Gardens’ fact sheet. The OWOW program was introduced as a partner sponsor at the start of this lecture event.

### Social media posts:

Bilingual ‘OWOW IPM Tips’ content for a post was provided to post on the MCSTOPPP Facebook page and Instagram feed.

- ‘Fall is for Planting; - posted on Facebook, September 2021
- ‘How to Manage Weeds’ – posted on Facebook & Instagram, 2/7/22
- ‘Preventing Yellowjackets’ – posted on Facebook, 2/9/22
- ‘Growing Healthy Roses’ – posted on Facebook & Instagram, 3/7/22
- ‘Compost’ - posted on Facebook & Instagram, 3/9/22
- ‘Organic Fertilizers’ - posted on Facebook & Instagram, 3/11/22
- ‘Gopher Management’- posted on Facebook & Instagram, 5/20/22
- ‘Benefits of Mulch’ – posted on Facebook & Instagram, 5/22/21
- ‘Drip Irrigation’ – posted on Facebook & Instagram, 5/27/21
- ‘Attract Beneficial Insects’ – posted on Facebook & Instagram, 6/3/22
- ‘Mosquitoes’ - posted on Facebook & Instagram, 6/10/22
- ‘Powdery Mildew’ - posted on Facebook & Instagram, 6/17/22

### Industry Trade Shows:

I attended the virtual L&L Distributor Trade Show in October of 2021. I look forward to hopefully attending this trade show in person this next fall.

**Overall challenge for the year:**

The main challenge of this contract year was staff shortages & call outs due to covid. This was the main delay with completing trainings for the associates at each retailer. As a result, I had to work with fewer associates, or reschedule the class all together – in some cases several times. I am still trying to reschedule a training for Sloat E Blithdale and at the Sloat Novato. I look forward to scheduling in the coming months.

**Closing comments:**

All of the retailers in the partnership have been great to work with. All the associates I met at these stores are in full support of the OWOW program, happy to learn about the program & receive support. They are very open to learning about the new eco-products their retailer sells, tips for less toxic pest management, and how to better support their customers. Each year the ecofriendly product interest seems to increase, with more awareness for less toxic choices requested by the consumer.

The associates see the value with the OWOW partnership support more than ever before, recognizing that this program provides them with education on the new products, how they work, and for the buyers what product they should bring in as an alternative to the problem pesticides. In addition to mentoring retail associates, each store appreciates the assistance when helping their customers in the aisle. This support of guiding the customers to choose a product that is less-toxic, also includes other IPM tools that the retailer may sell when a pesticide isn't necessarily the best solution, such as the importance of adding compost and organic fertilizer to your soil to increase plant health, choosing water-wise plants for longer term success, and the importance of mulch for water retention and optimum soil health.

Many of the managers requested additional OWOW training for their associates, suggesting a fall and a spring class to address seasonally relevant pest issues. I will do what I can to accommodate this request when staffing allows and while working within the means of the annual program budget.

Moving forward I hope to join more public events now that the OWOW program is beginning to have stronger recognition in the public eye. I do still see the value of continuing to provide OWOW education to the public, but perhaps as addition to in person events. I am open to all ways of getting the message to the greater audience.

The Marin Master Gardeners invited me, as a volunteer, to provide 2 programs at the Marin County Fair on July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2022. I was happy to accept this invitation. Per their request, I provided a program on 'Keeping Rats Out', which attracted a modest crowd of about 20 guests. My second program was 'Bring in the Beneficial Insects', which attracted about 25 guests, including children & families. Both had a lot of interests and were great. Unfortunately, I couldn't take any photos as the speaker.

My greatest highlight for this contract year was receiving the Marin Co IPM Achievement Award. This was a gigantic honor that I appreciate very much. Thank you so much for all your flexibility during the ebbs and flows of covid, our current drought, and the retail landscape. I very much appreciate the opportunity to lead the OWOW contract and work with the retailers throughout Marin County.

Thank you so much,

Suzanne Bontempo

