

It Feels Like Spring...

While members of my family living "back east" are reporting dire conditions - snow, sleet, hail, thunder, and more snow - we have experienced a sudden burst of spring. (Darl, Lou, Linda, Ellen, Lizzie, Jacob, and all significant others, please don't be mad at me for this post - if you see it - I'm not gloating, really I'm not.) Highs in the upper 70s and no rain since January 3rd, the native plants are budding up, some are even in bloom. So when my husband asks, Don't you miss the snow just a little?, I can honestly reply, not really.

Here's what's happening in the garden. Gooseberries and currants are the early bloomers, though not as early as the [manzanitas](#). The fuchsia-flowering gooseberry (*Ribes speciosum*) is in full bloom. The Claremont currant (*Ribes sanguineum* var. *glutinosum* 'Claremont') is just starting, as is the golden currant (*Ribes aureum*). It is worth it to stop and bend down for a close look at the soft, mauve flowers on the low-growing evergreen currant (*Ribes viburnifolium*).

fuchsia-flowering gooseberry (*Ribes speciosum*)



Claremont currant (*Ribes sanguineum* var. *glutinosum* 'Claremont')



golden currant (*Ribes aureum*)



evergreen currant (*Ribes viburnifolium*)



The woodland garden is at its best right now. Currants and gooseberries (*Ribes*) bloom while the snowberries (*Symphoricarpos* spp.) are leafing out and the toyons berries (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*) are hanging on.

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And this is why we put up with traffic jams, air pollution, and the occasional triple digit summer temps.