

Let's Talk Plants!

Newsletter of the San Diego Horticultural Society

December 2016, Number 267

Special Event at the Safari Park PAGE 1

Safari Park Discount Coupon – page 3

Earthly Pleasures – page 4

Twenty Years of Editing – page 8

What's in a Tree Name? – page 9

Strine Outback Bush Walk – page 10

SPECIAL EVENT: HORTICULTURAL DAY AT THE SAN DIEGO ZOO'S SAFARI PARK

Saturday, December 3

9 am to 1pm

15500 San Pasqual Valley Road, Escondido

Registration Opens November 1:

sdhort.org



HIGHLIGHTS of the event:

- FREE to Zoo members, 20% off tickets for non-Zoo members*
(*Registration required to get discount coupon via email.)
- Safari Park Horticulture Behind the Scenes Tours
- Baja and Old World Succulent Gardens
- Bonsai Pavilion Tours & Demos

FULL DETAILS & REGISTRATION AT SDHORT.ORG

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sdhs





HORTICULTURE

SPRING 2017
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To receive a spring course schedule with complete details and enrollment information, call **760.795.6615**. For more information about MiraCosta College's Horticulture Program, call **Claire Ehrlinger** at **760.795.6704**.

Spring classes at MiraCosta College start January 23

Community colleges are still California's best buy in higher education. Enroll now!
See back for courses offered this spring.

Horticulture Department Open House

Thursday, January 5, 2017, 5-7 PM

MiraCosta College Horticulture Building, Room 7051
Parking available in lots 7A and 4C, no permit required.

Join us for our Open House and find out how our program can get your life moving in a new direction. Come meet our professors; tour our facility; and learn about career, internship and scholarship opportunities. Everyone is welcome, including prospective and current students!

For more information contact **Carolyn Kinnon**,
760.757.2121, x6533 or **ckinnon@miracosta.edu**



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Horticulture Department & Plant Sales Nursery

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MiraCosta College Credit Courses / Spring 2017

Class #	Days	Time	Instructor	Units	Room #
HORTICULTURE					
HORT 110 Introduction to Sustainable Horticulture					
OCEANSIDE CAMPUS					
1991	T	9 am–1:50 pm	ALLISON M	3.0	OC 7053
HORT 115 Soil Science					
OCEANSIDE CAMPUS					
1993	Th	9 am–1:50 pm	ALLISON M	3.0	OC 7053
HORT 116 Plant Science					
OCEANSIDE CAMPUS					
1995	MW	12:30 pm–3:30 pm	KINNON C	4.0	OC 7053
1997	ONL		EHRLINGER C	4.0	ONLINE
	&W	5 pm–7:50 pm			OC 7053
		+3 hours weekly online.			
HORT 117 Plant Identification: Trees, Shrubs, and Vines					
OCEANSIDE CAMPUS					
1999	ONL		EHRLINGER C	3.0	ONLINE
	&F	1 pm–4 pm			OC 7051
		+2 hours weekly online.			
HORT 121 Sustainable Landscape and Turf Management					
OCEANSIDE CAMPUS					
2994	Th	5 pm–9:50 pm	ALLISON M	3.0	OC 7051
HORT 127 Landscape Design					
OCEANSIDE CAMPUS					
2001	T	5 pm–9:50 pm	ALLISON M	3.0	OC 7051
HORT 134 Integrated Pest Management					
OCEANSIDE CAMPUS					
2003	T	5 pm–9:50 pm	KINNON C	3.0	OC 7053
HORT 140 Subtropical Fruit and Plant Production					
OCEANSIDE CAMPUS					
2005	M	5 pm–7 pm	BENDER G	3.0	OC 7053
	&S	8 am–11 am			OC 7053
HORT 149 Vineyard Production and Management					
OCEANSIDE CAMPUS					
2007	W	6 pm–7:50 pm	STEHLY A	3.0	OC 7051
	&S				OC 7051
		Students meet 6 hours every other Saturday from 8 am–1:50 pm beginning 2/4/17.			
HORT 299 Occupational Cooperative Work Experience					
2131	ARRANGED		STAFF	3.0	
		Go to miracosta.edu/dataform or call 760.795.6772 for more information. LATE-START CLASS, (02/06–05/26).			



"Choosing to attend the MiraCosta College Horticulture Program was the best decision I've ever made and has led me to a career I thoroughly enjoy! One of my favorite experiences is the internship offered by the Horticulture Department as the greenhouse manager of the annual poinsettia crop. The internship provided an exceptionally valuable experience, which led to my employment at a succulent nursery prior to graduation. Today, I own a rapidly growing business designing succulent container arrangements and drought tolerant landscapes."

—Megan Boone, MiraCosta College graduate & owner of Nature Containers

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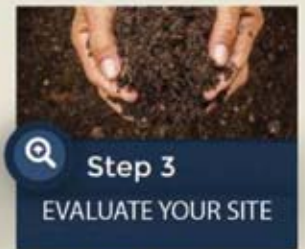
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Step 2
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Step 3
EVALUATE YOUR SITE



Step 4
DESIGN YOUR WATER-
SMART LANDSCAPE



Step 5
IMPLEMENT YOUR PLAN



Step 6
CARE FOR YOUR WATER-
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IN THIS ISSUE...

- 2 Volunteers Needed
- 3 From the Board
- 4 The Real Dirt On . . . William Bartram
- 4 Book Review
- 5 Love Your Yard and Eat It, Too!
- 6 Going Wild With Natives
- 7 SDHS Volunteers Enjoy a Party in the Park
- 7 To Learn More . . .
- 8 Twenty Years of Editing
- 9 Trees, Please
- 10 My Life with Plants
- 11 Welcome New Members!
- 11 Discounts for Members
- 11 What's Up At San Diego Botanic Garden?
- 14 Sharing Secrets
- 16 November 2016 Plant Display
- 19 November Meeting Report
- 20 Pacific Horticulture Tours

INSERTS:

MiraCosta College
Calendar/Resources/Ongoing Events

SAN DIEGO HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

OUR MISSION is to inspire and educate the people of San Diego County to grow and enjoy plants, and to create beautiful, environmentally responsible gardens and landscapes.



MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Renewal information is at www.sdhort.org.

For questions contact membership@sdhort.org or call Cindy Benoit at 760-473-4244.

MEETING SCHEDULE

5:30 – 6:45 Vendor sales, plant display

6:45 – 8:30 Announcements, door prizes, speaker

MEETINGS & EVENTS

2017

January 9 Jo O'Connell, Australian Native Plant Nursery, on Down Under Wonders

February 13 Panayoti Kelaidis, Senior Curator and Director of Outreach, Denver Botanic Garden



www.sdhort.org

COVER IMAGE: These lovely acacia flowers are just the tip of the horticultural iceberg at the Safari Park. Join us at a special date and time for special tours. Details below and at www.sdhort.org.

HORTICULTURAL DAY AT SAN DIEGO ZOO SAFARI PARK: DECEMBER 3, 2016, 9AM – 1PM

In lieu of our regular monthly meeting, join us at the Safari Park
Register ASAP at <https://sdhort.wildapricot.org/event-2348539>

Free to Zoo members and with a Zoo guest pass. SDHS members receive a 20% discount on Safari Park entry with advanced registration.

THIS EVENT REPLACES THE DECEMBER MEETING:

San Diego Zoo Safari Park, 15500 San Pasqual Valley Road, Escondido 92027. Parking fee is \$12/vehicle and is not included with entry fee; some Zoo memberships include free parking.

On Saturday, December 3, the Safari Park will be celebrating Horticultural Day and we have been given a special invitation to participate in the day's activities. The San Diego Zoo and Safari Park, both world famous for their animals and for their plant collections and gardens, are also celebrating the Zoo's 100th anniversary.

Included in the registration fee, SDHS members can select one of two tours. When you arrive, check-in at the SDHS tour desk located near the entrance of the park to receive a pass to either the Hort Behind the Scenes Tour or the Botanical Tour of the plants in the Park's newest exhibit: Tull Family Tiger Trail. Spaces on the tours are allocated on a first come first served basis. Additional activities include informal tours and demonstrations at the Bonsai Pavilion and the opportunity to speak with volunteers at the Baja and Old World Succulent Gardens and the California Nativescapes Garden.

For SDHS member 20% discount registration voucher, please see page 3. Guests are welcome, but space is limited and SDHS members will receive priority for tours. **Our event is 9am - 1 pm, but you are invited to enjoy the park until closing at 5pm.** 🌿



SAN DIEGO HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Established September 1994

BOARD MEMBERS

Cindy Benoit – Membership Chair
Patty Berg – Volunteer Coordinator
Jeff Biletznikoff – Meeting Room Coordinator
Jim Bishop – President
B.J. Boland – Corresponding Secretary
Marilyn Guidroz – Secretary
Mary James – Program Committee Chair
Anne Murphy – Member at Large
Lisa Robinson – Member at Large
Sam Seat – Treasurer
Ari Tenenbaum – Member at Large
Susi Torre-Bueno – Newsletter Editor,
Past President
Roy Wilburn – Outreach Coordinator

Let's Talk Plants!, the SDHS newsletter, is published the fourth Monday of every month.

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Advertising: Bob Clark;
advertising@sdhort.org

Calendar: Send details by the 10th of the month before event to Barbara Patterson at calendar@sdhort.org.

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New Email? New Street Address?

Please send all changes (so you will continue to receive the newsletter and important notices) to membership@sdhort.org or SDHS, Attn: Membership, PO Box 231869, Encinitas, CA 92023-1869. We NEVER share your email or address with anyone!

BECOME A SPONSOR!

Do you own a garden-related business?

SDHS sponsorships have high recognition and valuable benefits, including a link to your website, discounts on memberships for your employees, and free admission to SDHS events. This is a wonderful way to show your support for the SDHS. Sponsors help pay for our monthly meetings, annual college scholarships, and other important programs. Sponsorships start at just \$100/year; contact Jim Bishop at sponsor@sdhort.org. Sponsors are listed on page 11; look for "SDHS Sponsor" above their ads. We thank them for their support.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Fair Exhibit Committee

The SDHS has participated in the San Diego County Fair's Flower & Garden Show for over 20 years. It's a big opportunity to inform the public about our organization while sharing our knowledge and expertise in gardening. We are asking members to bring their various talents to form a Fair Exhibit Committee to design and install a SDHS Fair Garden Exhibit.

Susanna Pagan, one of our previous Fair Garden Exhibit designers, said, "This was one of the most rewarding experiences in my career as a landscape designer. Designing the SDHS Fair display garden gave me great exposure and experience to add to my resume, expanding my business tenfold! Photos of the completed exhibit were featured in *San Diego Home/Garden Lifestyles* magazine, as well as on Houzz.com articles!"

Additionally, if we enter a Fair Garden Exhibit, the Fair has offered to continue hosting our annual Night at the Fair, providing free and private access to the Flower & Garden Show Gardens.

This is your chance to step up – please think about how you can help be a part of the wonderful experience creating a 2017 Fair Garden Exhibit. I am collecting names of potential volunteers now, so please email or call me right away with your talents and questions: Cindy Benoit, Membership Chair; membership@sdhort.org, 760-473-4244.



Kim Alexander

Membership Chair - An opportunity to give back to this wonderful organization!

Chances are you've contacted our Membership Chair at some point, and now you have the opportunity to step up and fill this position and help other members, just as you were once helped. Duties include providing supplies for membership tables at monthly meetings; setting up a membership table at the Spring & Fall Home/Garden Shows and other outreach possibilities, and coordinating with the Volunteer Chair to staff these events; giving any monies received along with membership forms to the Treasurer for processing; responding to questions and emails received about membership; organizing Spring and Fall New Member Orientations. To learn more or to volunteer, please email or call Cindy Benoit, Membership Chair, at membership@sdhort.org or 760-473-4244.

Looking for Volunteers to Organize the Spring Garden Tour

Our Spring Garden Tour is one of our largest and most successful events. In October we will begin planning for next year's tour, scheduled for Saturday, April 8, 2017. We look for exceptional gardens that are located a few minutes from each other in the same general geographic location. We try to highlight a diverse style of garden designs, with a major emphasis on plants. If you know of an area or have a garden that would be appropriate for the tour, please let us know.

The tour committee consists of a garden writer, garden photographer, volunteer coordinator (this responsibility could be shared by 2 people), vendor coordinator, garden artist coordinator, signage coordinator, online ticket sales manager, and a parking/traffic coordinator. Garden selection is in the fall, and many of the other tasks occur in late winter. Several previous tour committee volunteers mentioned above will likely be returning this year. However, we can always use more help. If you have ideas for a garden and/or are interested in helping plan or organize the tour, please email Jim Bishop at sdhsresident@gmail.com. 🌿



FROM THE BOARD

By Jim Bishop

Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast Party

Thanks to Patty Berg, Volunteer Coordinator, for planning and organizing our annual volunteer appreciation breakfast. Our volunteers met on a beautiful fall morning in San Dieguito County Park in Solana Beach for a fun morning of games, prizes, breakfast, and, best of all, a fun time with fellow volunteers. The breakfast and door prizes were great, as always, with the added fun of games and a plant exchange. Thanks also to the other volunteers who helped out and to Jason Chen for creating the beautiful fresh floral arrangements and organizing the plant exchange. But most of all, thanks to the many volunteers that help make everything that SDHS does possible. See page 7 for more information about the event.

New President?

And speaking of volunteers, this is my sixth and final year as SDHS president. I've greatly enjoyed serving and will continue to be involved in the organization. During my term, we have worked tirelessly to improve the membership and volunteer experience. We've implemented many changes to help make managing the organization easier, added activities, and involved the local community. I've met some wonderful and talented people and I am very proud to have served on the board.

With more than 1,100 SDHS members, there must be several people eagerly awaiting the chance to serve as our next president. So, now is the time to announce your desire to lead this dynamic organization. Or maybe you have someone in mind that just needs a little nudge and some reassurance that they can do it. It is a wonderful opportunity to play a major role in the San Diego horticultural community. The most important qualifications are a passion for our mission and a desire to work with like-minded people eager to move our organization forward. You do not need to be a plant expert, although some knowledge doesn't hurt. Please contact me ASAP with your intention to serve or questions at sdhspresident@gmail.com.

Spring Garden Tour

A few weekends ago, Ocean Beach resident (and also Master Gardener and SDHS member) Lynlee Austell led Scott Borden and me on a tour in Point Loma and Ocean Beach of potential gardens for our garden tour next spring. As you probably know, this area has many beautiful neighborhoods with ocean and city views and, of course, gardens. We are currently in the process of contacting homeowners to determine the list of gardens for the tour. There will be numerous exceptional gardens on next year's tour and you won't want to miss it! Online ticket sales will begin a few months before the tour. Many thanks to Lynlee for her assistance.

Come spring, we will be looking for volunteers to staff the event. However, if you'd like to get in on the ground floor, now is the time to volunteer to be part of the planning team. This is a great opportunity for new and old members alike. Team members will help select gardens, prepare publicity, coordinate vendors and volunteers, and organize the event. The Spring Garden Tour, scheduled for Saturday, April 8, 2017, is our biggest fundraiser of the year. Proceeds go towards funding college scholarships for local horticulture students, as well as for our programs



20% off 1-DAY PASS

**For use online and day of December 3, 2016
event at the San Diego Zoo Safari Park only.**

sdzsafaripark.org/tickets

PROMO CODE: 18111

Present this coupon at any San Diego Zoo Safari Park ticket window and receive 20% OFF the 1-Day Pass. Not valid in conjunction with any other offer, discounts, special ticketed events/attractions, pass programs, advance sale tickets, online tickets, or San Diego Zoo Global Membership. No duplications or facsimiles. Not for distribution or resale. Purchased coupons are not valid. Online redemptions subject to limitations. Prices and hours subject to change without notice. Right of final interpretation resides with the San Diego Zoo. Limit (6) six people per coupon. Valid for use online 11/28/2016 through 12/4/2016 or redeem at any Safari Park ticket window on 12/3/2016 at the San Diego Zoo Safari Park only.



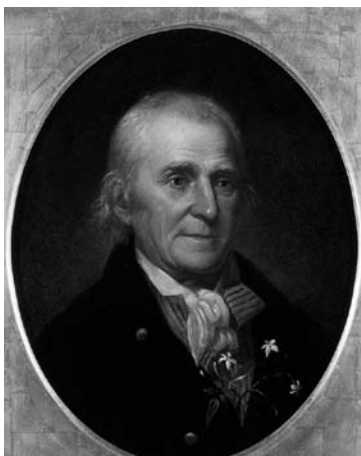
that promote the enjoyment and knowledge of horticulture in the San Diego area. So if you can give a few hours per month between now and April to make our event a success, it will be time well spent. And what could be more fun than viewing gardens? If you have the interest and/or skills to generate publicity, take photographs, organize, create signage, or coordinate vendors, we'd love to have your help. Please contact Jim Bishop at sdhspresident@sdhort.org to join the team. 🌿

THE REAL DIRT ON . . .

William Bartram

By Carol Buckley

Naturalist William Bartram, born on his parents' farm four miles from Philadelphia in 1739, grew up with privileges his father, botanist John Bartram (profiled here two months ago), did not have. His home attracted visitors such as Linnaeus's former student and noted botanist Peter Kalm, and William studied Greek, Latin, and the sciences at the Academy of Philadelphia. As a teenager, William accompanied his father on explorations of the Catskills and Connecticut, and, at age 26, on an expedition to Florida at the behest of King George III.



William Bartram, from the portrait painted by Charles Wilson Peale.

William was an expert on fauna as well as flora and a gifted artist. His father encouraged him, remarking that botany and drawing were William's "darling delight." For a livelihood, William apprenticed as a merchant and owned a trading post in Cape Fear, North Carolina in his early 20s; the business failed and he returned home. After the 1765 expedition to Florida, he decided to settle there to grow rice and indigo. This was another unsuccessful venture, and once again he returned home.

An expedition in his mid-30s allowed William to use his gifts and make his mark. Commissioned by English botanist John Fothergill to collect specimens—and their seeds—previously undiscovered by settlers and to make botanical drawings, he traveled the Carolinas, Georgia, and Florida, beginning in 1773. Despite developing a painful eye disorder, he made it all the way to Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and returned to Pennsylvania in 1777. He identified over 300 species—more than 150 of them, new—and made a record of soil types. Along the way, he befriended native tribes, including the Seminole, who called him Puc Puggy, or Flower Hunter. He wrote about them in thoughtful detail in his expeditionary journal with such a long title it's commonly shortened to *Travels*.

Published in Philadelphia in 1791, *Travels* was so popular that editions were printed in Great Britain and translated into German and French. Extremely articulate and evocative, it is easy to imagine why *Travels* was inspirational to Romantic poets William Wordsworth and Samuel Coleridge, who owned copies of his book.

After the Revolutionary War, William restored his father's esteemed botanical garden, which in 1787, during the Constitutional Convention, was visited by George Washington, Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and other delegates.

In 1797, a visitor to the garden described William as follows:

An old man, who with a rake in his hands, was breaking the clods of earth in a tulip bed . . . ceased his work, and entered into conversation with the ease and politeness of nature's noblemen. His countenance was expressive of benignity and happiness. This was the botanist, traveller, and philosopher we had come to see. William died in 1823. 🌿

BOOK REVIEW

Earthly Pleasures: Tales from a Biologist's Garden

By Roger B. Swain

Reviewed by Caroline McCullagh

A trip down memory lane: I came to my first Horticultural Society meeting in May 2001, drawn by the speaker, Roger B. Swain. If you're old enough, you'll remember him. He spoke about garden tools, a simple subject that he made fascinating.

You might also remember what Swain looked like. He's known as "the man with the red suspenders." Dressed in his work clothes with his (then sandy, now white) beard, he looks like an archetypal farmer. In fact, he has a PhD from Harvard in biology. His mentor was Edward O. Wilson, probably one of the greatest living American scientists.

After Swain earned his PhD, his interests shifted from myrmecology (the study of ants) to gardening. He became the science editor of *Horticulture Magazine* and, at the time he came to us, the third host of PBS's show, *Victory Garden*. He served in that position from 1991 to 2002.

He wrote five books during those years: *Field Days* (1983), *Saving Graces* (1991), *Groundwork* (1994), *Earthly Pleasures* (1994), and *Practical Gardener* (1998). Pay attention to those titles. If you read one, you'll definitely want to read the other four. This man is a good writer.

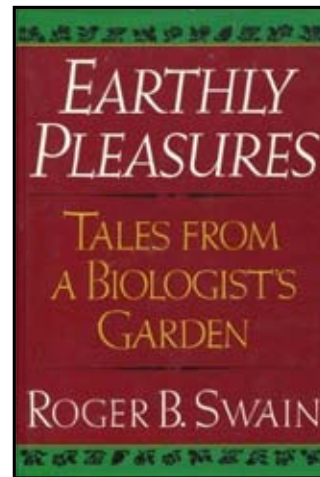
In the last chapter of *Earthly Pleasures*, Swain discusses the subjects he chooses to write about:

I find that I am writing about what I call the science of the familiar, which concerns common objects, everyday events, things too ordinary to elicit any special comment. . . . Why emphasize the familiar? . . . By closely examining familiar events, daily life is enriched. Knowing how honeybees perceive a flower or how tomatoes ripen means that whenever we encounter bees or tomatoes we are reminded of the information, and both the bees and the tomatoes are suddenly much more interesting.

The 21 essays in *Earthly Pleasures* were previously published in *Horticulture Magazine*. The subjects are wide-ranging. Swain opens with the story of his thoughts as he watches maple sap boil down to syrup, an all-day project. His next essay is on the growing and eating of parsnips. He even gives us an interesting story about ants planting and growing vines, *Codonanthe crassifolia*, on palm trees in Costa Rica—the first example of ants dispersing seeds to be scientifically described.

Swain seems to find beauty, interest, and hope in almost everything he sees around him. The final essay of *Earthly Pleasures*, written on the eve of his marriage to his late wife, Elizabeth, was about a fifteenth-century Italian prince who was often away on business. He corresponded in writing with his wife as many as four times a day, and what did they write about to each other? Gardening. That gave him hope for his own marriage and for the future.

Don't miss this book. 🌿



LOVE YOUR YARD AND EAT IT, Too!

Edible Highlight: Fuji Apple

By Ari Tenenbaum

Many people think good apples can only be produced in colder climates like the Pacific Northwest or the local mountains of Julian, but many great varieties can also be grown in coastal southern California. Fuji apples are sweet and crisp with cream-colored flesh and they are a great addition to any San Diego garden or landscape. Like most deciduous fruit trees, Fuji apples require a certain amount of "chill hours" to be productive. Chill hours are generally defined as the number of winter hours between 32-45 degrees Fahrenheit. Most parts of San Diego average 250-500 chill hours per year. Fortunately for us, Fuji apples need less than 500 hours of chill to be productive, making them well suited for most parts of San Diego County.

Fuji apples grow successfully throughout the County, including the communities of University City, Solana Beach, and Encinitas. If you are right up along the coast, you may not get quite enough chill hours to grow Fuji apples and you may want to go with a Dorsett Golden, which can be productive with only 150 chill hours or less. Be aware that although some apple trees may never go fully dormant in our warm winter climate, they can still be highly productive. Many varieties grown in San Diego will hold on to their leaves straight through the winter months with no adverse effects. So no need to go out and pull the leaves off manually if you notice they are not fully senescing.

Apples can make an excellent addition to almost any edible landscape or backyard orchard. Most varieties form fruit on long-lived spurs, so their size can be easily controlled by annually pruning excess vegetative growth back to the fruiting spurs. This feature makes apples an excellent choice for espalier and other less conventional training systems. Most local nurseries carry apples on semi-dwarf rootstock. Semi-dwarf rootstocks produce slower growing trees that tend to bear fruit at a younger age than standard varieties. While a standard apple tree could easily reach 20 or more feet, one grown on a semi-dwarf rootstock will be slow growing and reach about 12 feet. For most applications, semi-dwarf is the way to go.

The season for Fuji apples runs from September to November in San Diego, but you can get an occasional early spring harvest as well. Although Fuji season is over for now, bare root plants should be available soon at

local nurseries, so now is a great time to prepare for planting. Be sure to select a planting site that will get full sun. Newly planted trees will generally do well with a deep watering two times per week, but established trees may do fine with one per week or less. So if you're looking for a good apple for your home orchard or edible landscape, look no further than the Fuji. 🍏



Rachel Cobb

GOING WILD WITH NATIVES

The Crowning Touch

By Pat Pawlowski

Plants? Yes, of course! But some of us need more. For instance, what could be the “icing on the cake” or the “crowning touch” to your garden?

It's a bird, of course. Namely, the White-crowned Sparrow, and you can encourage its royal presence by including the right kind of ambiance (think seed-bearing plants, a birdbath, and maybe some shrubs to perch in).

This six- to seven-inch bird, called the aristocrat of sparrows, has a striking black-and-white striped head; the head of the female may be a bit more subdued. Just to make things interesting, the juveniles of both sexes have brown and buff striped heads, with adult plumage soon to follow. The head can look distinctly peaked or flat, depending on the bird's attitude. Bills can be pink, orange, or yellow. The White-crowned Sparrows' under parts are grayish, and upper parts are brownish or grayish. But it's the head (the head!) that grabs your eye.

According to my favorite bird book, *The Birds of San Diego County* by Philip Unitt, White-crowned Sparrows arrive in mid-September and stick around until mid-April. In his book, Unitt mentions that there are three subspecies. Adults of all subspecies have that distinctive black-and-white headgear.

What should you do to attract these desirables? We know that White-crowned Sparrows forage for seed and insects in open areas and then fly into shrubbery if they feel threatened. So, near the open areas in your yard, you'll need seed-bearing shrubs, perennials, and annuals. Beneficial insects will surely show up to complete the White-crowned Sparrow menu. Let some of the plants go to seed. But don't panic! You can intersperse “seedy” looking plants with evergreen shrubbery to soften the otherwise “rustic” look. Of course, you can also offer black oil sunflower seeds, cracked corn, and/or millet in low platform feeders. Or, if you don't want to bother with a feeder, you could plant:

Seed-bearing shrubs: Quail bush (*Atriplex breweri*), Ceanothus (*Ceanothus* spp.), Salvias (*Salvia* spp.), Native sunflowers (*Encelia* spp.), Lemonadeberry (*Rhus integrifolia*), Coffeeberry (*Rhamnus californica*), Toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), and Buckwheat (*Eriogonum* spp.)



White-crowned Sparrows have distinctive black-and-white striped heads.

Stan Shebs



Closeup of checkerbloom flower.

User:Oabif34Q



A lemonade berry plant in Ruffin Canyon, San Diego, with multiple berries.

Wolfgang Wandler

Seed-bearing annuals and perennials: California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*), Goldenrod (*Solidago* spp.), Checkerbloom (*Sidalcea malviflora*), Lupines (*Lupinus* spp.), Asters (*Aster* spp.), and Yarrow (*Achillea* spp.)

Visit laspilitas.com/bird.htm for a more thorough list of bird-friendly plants.

Also, install a nice birdbath. Include some comfy chairs for you and a friend, a side table for drinks and snacks, and prepare to bird watch.

Remember, your eye is on the sparrow.

Member Pat Pawlowski is a writer/lecturer/garden consultant who, if so inclined, might ruffle a few feathers now and then. 🐦

SDHS VOLUNTEERS ENJOY A PARTY IN THE PARK

By Patty Berg

This year's Volunteer Appreciation Party was held in a new venue - at least new for us. San Dieguito County Park in Solana Beach was familiar to many invitees and a fun discovery for many others. Nestled in wooded hills between Solana Beach and Rancho Santa Fe, the park offers beautiful vistas, nice walking trails, and a big pavilion where we enjoyed great company and a delicious breakfast. The morning was sunny and warm and so were the folks in attendance.

As with all our events, it took a concerted effort from a few dedicated volunteers. Committee members included Deb Polich, Jane Morton, and Jason Chen, along with yours truly. Besides organizing and providing decorations, posters, and props, Jane and Deb were part of the cooking crew who produced a variety of tasty egg casseroles. Peggy Poorman and Linda Jones were the other chefs du jour and the hungry crowd gave them all four stars!

A fun mixer had each member holding a single playing card in quest of joining four others to assemble the best poker hand. With a royal flush in spades, Cindy Benoit and her team took the top prize.

Following breakfast, President Jim Bishop thanked everyone for their service with special kudos to BJ Boland and Donna Tierney. BJ and Donna put in countless hours as they led the transition to our new meeting space in La Jolla.

After awarding some very special door prizes, the plant and cuttings exchange was underway. Many volunteers headed home with new plants and new friends - what a great start to a lovely fall Saturday!

We send out sincere thanks to everyone who made it a wonderful morning. Generous donors of door prizes include Sunshine Care, AgriService, Granettos, Jane Morton, JC Botanicals, and Ray Brooks.



Al Myrick and Ray Brooks enjoy a friendly game of cornhole.



Jason Chen's gorgeous and creative arrangements were among the door prizes for some lucky volunteers.



The plant swap table had lots of good choices.

TO LEARN MORE

San Diego Safari Park Gardens

By Ava Torre-Bueno

The beautiful Safari Park (formerly the Wild Animal Park) has half a dozen different gardens to enjoy.

Together, the Baja Garden and Old World Succulent Garden have over 200 species of cacti and succulents. In the Baja Garden, you'll find the largest collection of boojums outside of their native habitat in Mexico:

sdzsafaripark.org/wildlife/baja-garden-old-world-succulent-garden
sdnhm.org/oceanoasis/fieldguide/fouq-col.html

The Safari Park's Nativescapes Garden is the place to see what California natives you want to put in your own garden. There are 1,500 plants from 500 species in a four-acre garden:

sdzsafaripark.org/nativescapes-garden

There's a Conifer Arboretum: sdzsafaripark.org/conifer-arboretum and a Bonsai Pavilion: sdzsafaripark.org/world-gardens as well as an Herb Garden: sdzsafaripark.org/herb-garden and the dark and bug-filled Hidden Jungle: sdzsafaripark.org/hidden-jungle

The Epiphyllum House, open during the spring/summer season, has over 600 species of these beautiful tropical cacti: sdzsafaripark.org/wildlife/epiphyllum-house

And here are some baby cheetahs, just because: youtube.com/watch?v=ZfGfDclMvUg

TWENTY YEARS OF EDITING

By Susi Torre-Bueno

This month marks the end of my twenty years as the editor of our newsletter, so I'd like to reflect on the changes and milestones the past two decades have seen. Since our founding in 1994, the newsletter has been a source of information and inspiration for members. Here's a recap of the history of this important member benefit, in which we promote useful resources and provide news relevant to local gardening concerns.

In September 1994, at the request of our founder and first president, Don Walker, Diana Goforth produced our first newsletter. This was a formidable task that she accomplished single-handedly with great skill. It grew quickly from four pages to six, covering primarily our monthly meetings. Three months later, we got our first ad (from Buena Creek Gardens, thanks to then-owner Steve Brigham, another founder). In February 1995, Diana added a useful calendar of events covering the entire county.

When I became the editor in September 1996, the newsletter had grown to ten pages and was covering SDHS activities in addition to our meetings. The very next month, my husband Jose and I sold our house in San Diego, stored almost everything we owned, and moved into a construction trailer while we were the general contractor for a house we built in Encinitas. For 18 months, the preparation of the newsletter took place in a makeshift office in the middle of a construction site. In April 1997, after a membership-wide name search, we named the newsletter **Hortico pia**. It was now 16 pages and included book reviews, information about garden-related activities in San Diego, and ten ads for local garden businesses.

It was a cut-and-paste job in those ancient times, and each month, I'd print out and glue together the articles, trying to minimize the telltale glue signs with massive amounts of liquid paper. It was printed at Kinko's, back when that was merely a copy center. I'd drive the pages over to Don and Dorothy Walker's house (Dorothy was another founder, and our treasurer), and we'd sit around their dining room table collating the pages, talking about plants, and planning future SDHS events. Don would fold the collated newsletters in half and use a steel ruler to give them a sharp crease before we applied scotch tape, mailing labels, and – until we got a bulk mail permit in late 1997 – an old-style postage stamp we had to lick!

In August 2000, we adopted the name **Botanically Correct** and began using the SDHS leaf logo. By now, the newsletter was 20 pages, included monthly columns by several members, and had 28 ads. In January 2002, we increased the size to what it is today: 24 pages, plus the calendar, and other occasional inserts.

The newsletter began having color covers in February 2003, and for the next five years, each cover featured a different image from our book, *Ornamental Trees for Mediterranean Climates*. Don Walker took the photos; the book's text is by Steve Brigham. At that time, we also began using the current name for the publication, **Let's Talk Plants!**, which is the motto that SDHS adopted in late 2002. This was also when we first printed directly from a computer file versus a pasted-up printout. The result was crisper text, better images, and a little less formatting work for me to do.

In August 2005, SDHS hired the indomitable Rachel Cobb to do all the newsletter graphics, and she's always made us look our best (thanks, Rachel!). In January 2008, we started using images on the front cover related to the monthly lectures, and we also started making the newsletter available to members on our website. If you haven't tried the on-line newsletter, I urge you to do so. All the images are in color and all the links are live. Also, you can print out just the pages you want to keep and not have to bother with storing back issues.

Today, we're proud to have ten regular monthly columns written by twenty-two members, the popular *Sharing Secrets* column with contributions each month by many members, and special articles on a wide range of topics. The days when I created 100% of the newsletter are long gone. We have a calendar editor, a *Sharing Secrets* editor, an advertising manager, a copy editor, and a proofreader. Having so many members involved means we all benefit from their unique perspectives and in-depth knowledge. In addition, about 6-10 members get together each month to prepare the newsletter for mailing and deliver it to the post office. Many thanks to all those who share their knowledge (and time!) with the rest of us. We've been told repeatedly that our newsletter is one of the best that people have seen, and we're constantly making changes to keep it relevant.

There are two other important resources we count on to bring you the best possible newsletter. The ads are an essential revenue source, and we appreciate the on-going support of our advertisers – and the discounts so many of them give to our members. Also, AlphaGraphics in San Marcos (us554.alphagraphics.com) deserves recognition for providing rapid, first-rate printing at an excellent price.

As I think about all the changes the past twenty years have brought to the newsletter, to the SDHS, and to me personally, I know I've been extraordinarily fortunate. I've had tremendous support from my husband, exceptional volunteers to work with, the opportunity to meet and talk to a great many members of the local horticultural community, and the luxury of doing it all for an organization I'm passionate about. My garden has benefitted from advice that has appeared in these pages, and my horticultural horizons have expanded. I look forward to

Continued on page 12



TREES, PLEASE

What's in a Tree Name? More Than You Know...

By Robin Rivet

Walk into most nurseries and ask for a fruit called *Lycopersicon esculentum* and quizzical staff will probably call a manager, largely because this plant is usually referred to by its common name. If you didn't know, *Lycopersicon* is the Latin genus for tomato fruit. Annual flowers like pansies, snapdragons, and petunias are also typically referred to by their common names, although colors may be ascribed.



The edible fruit of the *Eugenia uniflora* is a botanical berry than can be sweet or sour depending on the cultivar and the level of ripeness.

Trees are different. Trouble looms when referring to trees by common name. Don't ask for a myrtle if you want Crape myrtle (*Lagerstroemia indica*). And "desert willow" (*Chilopsis linearis*) is definitely not in the willow family. Asking for a "silk" tree might procure a mulberry (*Morus alba*) because silkworms dine on its foliage. We commonly grow silk oaks (*Grevillea robusta*), mimosa silk (*Albizia julibrissin*), and floss silk trees (*Ceiba speciosa*, aka *Chorisia speciosa*) – all unrelated.

Cultivar names are equally critical. Floss silk trees have many distinct cultivars blooming at different times of year, with variably-hued inflorescence. *Ceiba speciosa* 'Monsa' has a thornless trunk; a



At a roadside near São Paulo, this showy *Ceiba speciosa* fills with pink blooms in late April.

significant difference, if that's the one you prefer. No matter what species you seek, always specify a cultivar or variety name. If none is listed, it may not be what you think.

Did you ever wonder why "purple" grocery plums in June may taste so different than "purple" plums in July? Stores calling plums "purple", "red", and "green" is really meaningless. Every month, different fruit varieties are harvested and they are frequently sorted by color or size. Think "large" vs. "small" avocados, "white" peaches or "brown" figs. Don't be misled; more often than not, market produce labeled solely by color or size are typically different cultivars with distinctive genetic traits.

To complicate matters in San Diego, a "cherry" tree isn't always a low-chill, deciduous, sweet cherry like *Prunus avium* 'Royal Lee'. It might be the semi-evergreen, sub-tropical capulin cherry (*Prunus salicifolia*) or our native Catalina cherry (*Prunus illicifolia* spp. *lyonii*). We boast success with Mediterranean-adapted acerola cherries (*Malpighia punicifolia*); Surinam cherries (*Eugenia uniflora*); or the grumichama cherry (*Eugenia brasiliensis*). The fig-like Brazilian cherry (*Muntingia calabura*) is also called a "strawberry tree", which is a common name that implies *Arbutus unedo* – a totally different animal.

Then there are rootstocks. Trees are frequently grafted. Knowing the genus, species, and cultivar of trees is vital, but investigate any rootstocks, too. The word "dwarf" is vague. Read the fine print. If not grafted, is it cutting-grown or a seedling? Each drastically affects the character, mature size, shape, vigor, and disease resistance of trees.

Buyers beware. And study your Latin!

Cross reference common and scientific tree names here: ufei.calpoly.edu

YouTube video by the LA Arboretum about floss silk cultivars: [youtube.com/watch?v=xmJNyWDUSPw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xmJNyWDUSPw)

California plums: berkeleywellness.com/healthy-eating/food/article/types-plums

Member Robin Rivet is an ISA Certified Arborist, UC Master Gardener, City of La Mesa Environmental Commissioner - treetutor@gmail.com

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MY LIFE WITH PLANTS

By Jim Bishop

This is part one of a series about a September 2016 trip to view the wildflowers and scenery of Southwestern Australia. Please note: you can learn more about Australian plants at our January 2017 meeting with native Australian Jo O'Connell, owner of Australian Native Plants Nursery in Santa Barbara County.

Strine Outback Bush Walk, Part 1: The Adventure Begins in Perth

At the end of September, after attending a Pacific Horticulture tour of tropical gardens in Singapore and Bali, I met up with Scott Borden for a tour of Western Australia...or as they might say in the land down under, a Strine (read: Australian) outback bush walk. We didn't pick up much Aussie slang, but we did see an incredible number of blooming plants. With over 12,000 species of wildflowers in Western Australia, it is the largest floristic kingdom on the planet. We were also fortunate to arrive in the middle of the peak blooming season following one of the wettest winters Australia has experienced in decades. Almost everything was in bloom. We recognized many of the common plants, or their relatives, that we grow in California (such as eucalypts, myrtles, proteas, and acacias), but there were many, many more that we had never seen.

We started the trip after a short flight from Bali, flying over the vast deserted sienna and terracotta colored plains of Northwestern Australia. As we got closer to Perth, hills, wheat fields, and denser vegetation began to appear. Just before landing, there were many bush fires below, which we assumed were controlled burns to prevent some of Australia's all-too-frequent megafires. Upon arrival in Perth, we headed straight for Kings Park and Botanic Garden. The Park, located above the Swan and Canning Rivers, boasts a display of over 3,000 species of unique Western Australia flora.

We entered the park on foot from the undeveloped side and almost immediately noticed the bright and unusual blooms of a fuzzy red and bright green kangaroo paw, *Anigozanthos manglesii*. We would soon learn that this unique plant is endemic to Western Australia and is the floral symbol for state. It only got better from there. Small terrestrial orchids appeared, followed by much larger banksias, callistemons



Stunning examples of native terrestrial orchids are commonly seen in southwest Australia.



Scott Borden takes in the view near an Australian baobab (*Adansonia gregorii*) tree at King's Park.

(bottlebrushes), hakeas, and grevilleas, all in bloom. In the central area of the park, large flower beds showcased an overwhelming display of native plants. We spent several hours exploring the plants and their names, many of which were new to us, as well as the large, colorful, and sometimes loud birds – mostly parrots, cockatoos, and magpies.

The next morning, we drove through the hills east of Perth to start our exploration of some of the many national parks in Western Australia. In just a little over one week, we would cover 1,200 miles on freeways and roads that use mostly native shrubs and trees for landscaping. Entire roadside banks were covered with waxflowers (*Chamelauicum*), acacias, and other native bush in full bloom. As we headed east, we entered hills covered with eucalyptus forests, which gave way to sheep farms and eventually wheat and canola fields that we had seen from the air flying in. Perhaps most notable, though, was how green the landscape was and that everything was in bloom at once. A quick look at average annual rainfall totals showed that various areas in and around Perth receive between 20 to 40 inches and 2016 has been a very wet year. In fact, even the driest places we visited still had more than San Diego's average 10 inches. Consequently, there were large ponds and shallow lakes in many areas.

At first, we had some difficulty finding native plants. Like much of the Great Plains, large tracts of land had been plowed for farming, most notably wheat and canola. We didn't see much irrigation, so most of it appears to be dryland farming dependent on the annual rainfall. I would also later learn that the original settlers had difficulty growing anything at all due to the lack of nutrients in the soil. In fact, some soils in Western Australia have only trace amounts of phosphorus. However, once farmers learned to add nitrogen and phosphorus to the soil, they found that farming was possible. Unfortunately, this practice is fatal to many of the native plants that evolved over millions of years in soils without phosphorus. Further east, where the landscape was soon dominated almost entirely by native plants, we visited several preserves and national parks.

Next month's column will be "The Outback and the Deserted Coast," Part 2 of the western Australia tour. 🌿

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

We encourage our 1200+ members to be active participants and share in the fun; to volunteer see page 2. A warm hello to these new members:

Nancy Bailey	Mary Mitchell
Alice M. Cooper	Georgana Winters
Lee Lichter	

HORT BUCKS ARE GREAT!

Kudos to these members whose friends joined in 2016; they earned Hort Bucks worth \$5 towards name badges, garden tours, dues and more! To get your Hort Bucks ask your friends to give your name when they join.

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Gail Bakker (1)	Dave Ericson (2)	Princess Norman (1)	Tere Trout (1)
Debra Lee Baldwin (2)	Lois Friske (2)	Joan Oliver (1)	Marcia Van Loy (1)
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Norm Applebaum & Barbara Roper	*Edgar Engert (2000)	*Kathy Puhlava (2015)	& Jose Torre-Bueno
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(see ads for more discounts)

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Get a 10% discount at San Diego Botanic Garden on Family/Dual or Individual memberships. Just state you are a current member of SDHS on your membership form. It cannot be done online, so mail it in or bring it to the Garden. Info: Josh Pinpin, jpinpin@SDBGarden.org.

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Join in the fun and wind through several of the Gardens' four miles of enchanting trails on a horse-drawn wagon ride. And there's much more to enjoy: nightly entertainment; fresh, hot personal pizzas served up by Red Oven Artisanal Pizza; marshmallow roasting; hot mulled wine (on select evenings); and snow (also on select evenings). The holidays wouldn't be complete without a visit with Santa, who makes a special guest appearance at the Garden again this year. Garden of Lights is presented by the County of San Diego.

For more information, visit the Garden's website at SDBGarden.org/lights.htm. ☺



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enjoying the newsletters when Susan Starr becomes the editor with the next issue, and I'm sure she'll continue to improve it.

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SHARING SECRETS

Edited by Dayle Cheever

This column is written by you, our members! Each month, we'll ask a question and print your responses the following month. You can find copies of previous Sharing Secrets on our website at sdhort.wildapricot.org/SharingSecrets?eid=1093874. Also, you can continue the discussion by adding new replies online to Sharing Secrets topics.

The question for December was: **What do you do to maintain or augment your soil health? Do you have any 'family secret' soil treatments?**

Terry Chamberlin: Fortunately, living in Lakeside, I garden on decomposed granite, which has excellent drainage and retains moisture for a long period of time. However, soil fertility is another matter, which I address by pre-planting with mycorrhizal soil and worm casting amendments and pelleted chicken manure, and then I top dress with a thick layer of bark mulch. For a special soil treat, I buy a bag of earthworms from Anderson and liberally sprinkle them in my planting beds. Now, if I could just keep the rabbits from dining on my flowers!!

Farmer Roy Wilburn: When we refurbish rows in our organic gardens for the next plantings we always add EZ Green (composted chicken manure), Worm Gold Plus (worm castings), compost and Bioflora 6-6-5 with 8% calcium (pre-plant fertilizer). The veggies flourish and yields are amazing.

Steve Zolezzi: As we change plantings to include more drought tolerant varieties, using a balanced fertilizer can kill some. Plus, many others will not need as much help as did plants that were popular in the past. So, first is grouping plants with shared needs. Then, wanting to stick with organic options where appropriate, I am leaving more leaf litter to provide nourishment and moisture retention. A-I Soil Compost, my chickens, and several organic fertilizers for fall and spring application, round out the rest. Bon Appetite!

Linda Chisari: Compost, compost, compost... kitchen waste, plant waste, shredded paper, all go into our bins. Every fall, we add an inch or so of this compost as mulch to all our beds.

Robin Whiffen: Everyone should have a compost pile and use the compost in and around the garden. I add in my coffee grounds and crushed (very small) egg shells.



Rachel Cobb

Susi Torre-Bueno: Great question, and so important to the overall health of the garden. I compost virtually everything I can and periodically add it to the soil, especially the soil in my veggie garden's raised beds. I also do 'lasagna composting' which means that when I prune anything, I let the pruned material stay on the soil below (or

near) the plant it came from. Over time this decomposes and builds a richer soil. I also use purchased compost or an organic mulch as a top dressing for soil, and this also slowly breaks down and enriches the soil. Occasionally, I'll add worm castings to the soil, especially in the veggie garden.

Viv Black: I've been a great believer in worm tea and I've been using it for the last 20 years.

Lisa Schneider: I have just started adding a bit of chicken manure and EB Stone Rose mix to my containers and existing soil, but only at new plantings. A fellow employee swears by it and it has really made a difference. It really seems to add a boost to my veggie plants at the beginning. My fall tomato (Oregon Spring) has been in a pot since October 10 as a seedling and it is now 4 feet tall and has 6 tomatoes and about 30 flowers on it. I'm amazed.

Mary Lee: Coffee grounds, #4 perlite, smashed/ground egg shells and Epsom salt, Epsom salt, Epsom salt! Importance, not in that order! Look at the plants for problems to determine more or less of these.

Peggy Geyer: Sheep manure.

Connie Beck: My soil eats compost with great enthusiasm! I buy it in bulk from Al Hanson (3/8" screened Lifelike) to mix into my potting soil and to topdress my veggie beds. Bags of EcoScraps from Home Depot are the "special treat" that my favorite plants get when they are first potted up or planted out. That stuff is so rich and dark and lovely that it is tempting to taste it myself.

Lucy Warren: Use good quality mulch and let nature take its course.

Tynan Wyatt: My secret is to put as much back onto the soil as I take away, or more. By that I mean mulching everything possible. Five years ago, I bought a portable wood chipper and it has been invaluable in minimizing my use of the green waste barrels and improving my soil's health. The best evidence isn't yet in stronger growth of the plants, but occurred when I was prepping an area that is alluvial clay, where I am laying a pathway. Half of the pathway is well mulched from the wood chipper for three years, the other half is bare. Both receive equal amounts of water and/or any other attention (which is to say none, other than rainfall and walking). Once I raked away the mulch, I used a pick-axe to get to the depth needed for the sand base of the path. The soil under the mulch was visually porous and easy to work through, while the mulch-free soil was solid and exhausting to hack away at. It was fun to think of the worms doing so much of the work for me and how the trees must appreciate the increased rain infiltration.

Linda Bresler: I think if you use a good organic mulch, then that is enough for many of our drought tolerant plants. As the mulch decomposes, it adds organic matter into the soil. There is no need to fertilize native plants, as well as those from Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa.

Lisa Bellora: I add worm castings and/or compost. After the soil has been amended, I mulch with shredded, partially composted plant material. I make sure to keep a good 2-3" layer on the soil at all times. As it breaks down, it creates more good, rich soil. I typically refresh my mulch once per year, unless there are available leaves falling from trees to do the job for me.

Al Myrick: Mulch!

Cindy Sparks: I have just finished "renewing" my front yard, left in chaos after construction. First, a good layer of rabbit manure; then, a

good layer of compost from the Miramar Greenery; and last, a super good layer of mulch, the chunky kind I prefer, also from the Greenery. The soil was totally dead, not a shred of living matter in it. Now it has worms and grubs and skunks digging in it again; and all it took was three backbreaking loads of stuff. It is all about organic matter!


Lisa Marun: Is it ok to share someone else's secret? Several years ago, I was volunteering for a garden tour and the house that I was stationed at had a collection of amazing roses that received much admiration from visitors. I found the homeowner very friendly and was able to have some snippets of conversation with her throughout the day. At one point, she confessed to me that although she was happy to share her rose care regime with visitors who asked for it, she always omitted what she felt made all the difference in the health of her roses. Like any true gardener willing to go great lengths to improve the soil of the plants they love, she regularly squatted and urinated in the soil around them(!!!). We had a good laugh and I went home that day wondering how safe it would be for me to stealthily venture between my rose bushes in the dark of night (to avoid prying eyes) with all those thorns around me. Yikes!

Giana Crispell: I am a huge believer in using organic mulch and composting. When we moved to Mt. Helix almost three years ago, our soil was depleted and awful. Now it is rich and loamy. We can grow almost anything here now.

Sandra Knowles: Every year, or every other year, I order Agri-Service's high quality compost. For our 1/2-acre space, I order five yards. I spread it throughout the yard and add worm castings. The annual tree trimming (expertly done by Mariposa Tree Service team) is shredded and spread throughout and on pathways. This, in addition to specialty plants' fertilizer needs, keeps plants pretty happy. ♻️

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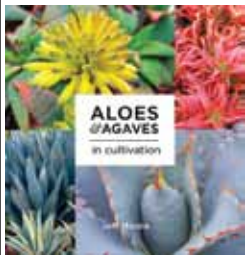
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NOVEMBER 2016 PLANT DISPLAY — PART 1

By Ken Blackford, Steve Brigham, Jason Chen and Susi Torre-Bueno

What is the Plant Display?

Each month members bring in plants, cuttings or flowers and put them in blue bottles on our display tables. What a great way to see what plants grow well in our area. EVERYONE is invited to participate. All plants are welcome. Write descriptions similar to those below, and put them with your plant(s).

Join the fun and bring something to the next meeting. We thank those people who brought in plants to show to other members.

Available FREE on our website – all 22 years worth of plant descriptions! Go to tinyurl.com/Plant-Descriptions.

Eriobotrya deflexa BRONZE LOQUAT (Rosaceae) Taiwan
From our book, *Ornamental Trees for Mediterranean Climates*:

The Bronze Loquat is a popular small evergreen tree that is tougher than it looks. Its lush foliage makes it look tender, but is actually one of the cold-hardest tropical-looking evergreen trees of all, making it useful in all climate zones of San Diego County from desert to mountain to seacoast. The most popular feature of the Bronze Loquat is its dense, showy foliage, which is composed of 10" long and 2" wide shiny leaves. These leaves emerge a bright coppery-red color and hold that color a long time before turning dark green. In spring, the Bronze Loquat is also shown in bloom, with clusters of creamy-white flowers that look like garlands on the tree. The Bronze Loquat appreciates a well-drained soil in full sun to partial shade and is easy to grow. Because of its shrubby growth habit, it is sometimes grown as a large shrub or even as an espalier on a fence or trellis, and it also grows well in large containers. With just a little training, it makes a handsome single or multi-trunked tree to 15-20' tall. The Bronze Loquat needs only moderate watering and is cold hardy to around 10°F. (Susi Torre-Bueno, Vista, 11/16) – S.B.

Kalanchoe luciae PADDLE PLANT, FLAPJACK PLANT
(Crassulaceae) South Africa

This evergreen succulent grows 1-2' tall and 2-3' wide, forming a basal rosette of rounded fleshy green leaves with reddish edges, especially colorful during the cooler months. The bloom spike seen on the specimen displayed first appeared in early October 2016, about six weeks before being brought to the meeting. Grow in full sun (as this specimen was) or part shade, and give very little water. Easy to propagate by separating baby plants from the base of the original plant and/or by rooting the plantlets that appear along the flowering stem after the blooms fade. Bait for snails. Hardy to 27° F to 32° F. For a longer description visit the website for San Marcos Growers, www.smgrowers.com. As they note, "In another bit of horticultural confusion, the plant long grown in the California succulent trade under the name of *Kalanchoe thyrsiflora* is actually the closely related *Kalanchoe luciae*," and the red-tinged foliage is one clue that you have the latter plant. Debra Lee Baldwin's website has very good information about this plant: <http://debraleebaldwin.com/debras-garden/should-you-let-your-flapjack-plants-bloom/>. (Susi Torre-Bueno, Vista, 11/16) – S.T.B.

***Leptospermum petersonii* LEMON-SCENTED TEA TREE**

(Myrtaceae) Eastern Australia

From our book, *Ornamental Trees for Mediterranean Climates*:

The Lemon-Scented Tea Tree is a graceful, willowy evergreen that can be most effective when trained as a small weeping tree. Growing to just 10-15' tall, it is useful even in smaller gardens where space is at a premium, and as a bonus it has a pleasant lemony scent to its leaves. The tree has weeping, see-through foliage of 1" long, narrow dark green leaves. New leaves and branchlets are an attractive reddish-bronze, and as trees mature they develop handsome trunks with a flaking grayish-brown bark. Flowering occurs in summer, with many ½" white flowers dotting the trees. The tree is very drought-tolerant, but it also accepts regular watering as long as drainage is good, and can even be grown in a large container as a patio tree. It is very adaptable to the immediate seashore as well as sites farther inland which do not get heavy frost, and is cold-hardy to around 27°F. The leaves and stems are used in making scented soaps, candles, perfumes, and the dried leaves are used in potpourri. Fresh leaves may be used as a tea substitute, or try adding a few fresh leaves to a pot of brewing tea for a pleasant lemony flavor. (Susi Torre-Bueno, Vista, 11/16) – S.B.

***Farfugium japonicum* 'Argenteum', syn. *Ligularia tussilaginea* 'Argentea'**
VARIEGATED LEOPARD PLANT (Asteraceae) Horticultural Hybrid

A member of the Aster family, this is the perfect plant for a shady/sunny coastal garden needing bold foliage. This evergreen perennial is naturally found streamside, so it is not drought tolerant and will wilt when thirsty. The white margined leaves get up to a good foot across, and in the fall it will be covered by 3-foot spikes of 1" yellow daisies. These butterscotch scented flowers are often cut off since it can be detracting from the boldness of the leaves. It also makes a good long-term container plant! Other similar varieties are: 'Giganteum' (18" leaves on 4-5 foot clumps), 'Aureomaculatum' (foliage spotted with yellow), and 'Crispatum' (crinkled edged leaves). (Jason Chen, Del Mar, 11/16) – J.C.

Another Bulb Cultivar For Our San Diego Climate

***Ismene* hybrid PERUVIAN DAFFODIL**

(Ken Blackford, San Diego, 11/16)

By Ken Blackford

At the November meeting I brought in a pot of a sweetly fragrant, somewhat daffodil-like flowering bulbs with crème to very pale-yellow colored petals displaying 6 prominent green stripes in the inner cup. I indicated I thought that it was an *Ismene* hybrid, sometimes referred to as Peruvian Daffodil.

Like the common holiday amaryllis these are often sold in supermarkets, as indoor/windowsill plants, but at various times of the year and not just the December holiday period. This leads me to believe they can be easily forced into bloom. In fact, a neighbor offered me the original single bulb of this plant as a rescue, perhaps 10+ years ago. It had flowered in her home and the foliage subsequently dried up. She did not know its identity, but indicated she purchased it at Von's or Ralph's. From her description, I speculated it was probably *Ismene* 'Sulphur Queen', and plunked it in the ground off my kitchen patio.

Most documentation indicates that *Ismene* are summer-growing semi-tropical plants from Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador. I initially watered my rescue during our dry summer season; it grew new foliage and

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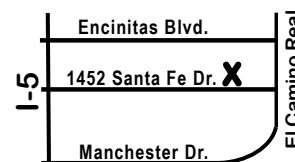
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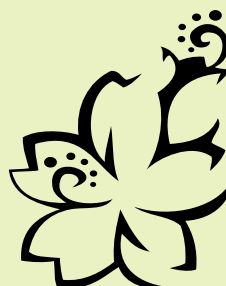
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Ken Blackford

Ken's hybrid Ismene, photographed in his garden

flowered. However, with increasing drought awareness, I decided that area of my garden would only receive natural rain irrigation, and specimens there would have to somehow survive. Well, this bulb adjusted just fine to the new regimen, going summer dormant and deciding to push its new foliage and flowers usually after the first autumn rains. During last year's unusual summer thunderstorms and rain, it produced an additional flush of foliage and flowers!

Because of an impending home addition/remodel, I dug and potted up the bulb last year, discovering it had multiplied to 8 or 9 bulbs. I sent two to a Facebook bulb friend in Italy and split the remaining into 2 pots. Both were left dry through this summer and went dormant. After our first late September rain this year (about 1/2 inch for me) the foliage magically reappeared. I provided intermittent water in the following dry weeks since, and both pots presented their fragrant flowers last week.

The flowers of this bulb are fairly close to *Ismene* 'Sulphur Queen' but do not display as much yellow coloration as that cultivar. This might be due to minor nutrient deficiencies or perhaps some minor genetic differences; thus, I just refer to it as an Ismene hybrid. Ismene are also sometimes referred to as *Hymenocallis*, but since the 1990s have been segregated into their own genus. Full to part sun seems about right.

In addition to the plants described above, the plants listed below were displayed; all have been previously described.

What's that in front of the plant name? Plants marked **3** are fully described in the SDHS *Plant Forum Compilation*, available online for FREE at tinyurl.com/Plant-Descriptions.

Can you spot the phony plant this month? The phony plant in the November newsletter was *Callicraps* sp. or cv. UGLYBERRY.

Aloe 'Safari Sunrise' (Jason Chen, Del Mar, 11/16)

Camellia 'Senritsu-Ko' (Jason Chen, Del Mar, 11/16)

Dodonaea viscosa 'Purpurea' PURPLE HOP BUSH
(Susi Torre-Bueno, Vista, 11/16)

Euphorbia milii CROWN OF THORNS
(Sheila Busch, Escondido, 11/16)

Euphorbia millipedes CROWN OF LEGS
(Plant Fanatic, Escondido, 11/16)

3 *Narcissus tazetta* ssp. *papyraceus* PAPER WHITE NARCISSUS
(Sue Fouquette, El Cajon, 11/16)

Nerine angulata x *Brunsvigia josephinae*
(Ken Blackford, San Diego, 11/16)

Pseuderanthemum atropurpureum 'Texas Tri Star'
(Marie Smith, San Diego, 11/16)

Rhynchospora laetifolia Pamela Hetherington
(Charley Fouquette, El Cajon, 11/16)

Salvia leucantha 'Velour Pink' MEXICAN BUSH SAGE
(Jason Chen, Del Mar, 11/16)

3 *Salvia madrensis* YELLOW SAGE, FORSYTHIA SAGE
(Susi Torre-Bueno, Vista, 11/16)

Senecio anteuphorbium CANDLE PLANT
(Susi Torre-Bueno, Vista, 11/16)

3 *Tagetes lemmonii* 'Compacta' COPPER CANYON DAISY
(Susi Torre-Bueno, Vista, 11/16) ☞



Jason Chen showing Susi Torre-Bueno and Sherrill Leist the *Salvia leucantha* 'Pink Velour' he brought to the meeting. Foreground plants: *Salvia madrensis* (left) and *Tagetes lemmonii* 'Compacta' (right).

NOVEMBER MEETING REPORT

By Susi Torre-Bueno

It's always special when our speakers are SDHS members who have a proven track record of interesting talks, and our November speakers certainly fit that bill. We enjoyed a lively presentation by co-authors Greg Rubin and Lucy Warren, who shared interesting details and beautiful photos from their second book on landscaping with California natives, *The Drought-Defying California Garden*.

Greg and Lucy noted that with appropriate selection, planting, and care, California native plants are among the easiest and most drought-tolerant plants for local landscapes. These plants are not only well adapted to our climate, but they also provide an important sense of place. Sure, we can grow plants from just about anywhere, especially anywhere with a Mediterranean climate like ours. However, growing California natives can mean less garden chores and more garden fun. In addition, they provide an important ecology for local wildlife, encouraging beneficial insects, birds, and other animals to share your garden.

As with any kind of landscaping, it is important to begin by knowing your soil, preparing the planting site (including adding irrigation), and considering what genre you're trying to achieve. California native plants can be used to create virtually any kind of garden, and one of the photos we saw was of an award-winning Japanese style garden that Greg designed for the San Diego Botanic Garden's installation at the 2013 San Diego County Fair Flower and Garden Show. We gave it our Most Outstanding Exhibit award, and it was a tremendous success. Native plants can be used in formal designs, contemporary landscapes, casual retreats, and for just about anything else.

With natives, however, unlike with most other plants, one important consideration is that you need to think in terms of a plant *community*. You can't just plunk down one or two natives in a mixed bed with other plants and expect them to thrive. They need their own space, and when they have it, they will reward you in many ways. They need the mycorrhizae in the soil to form a living colony, which nurtures the plants in unique ways.

One important design consideration that Lucy mentioned was to have at least 75% of your plants be evergreen to ensure that the landscape isn't bare when nothing is blooming, especially in the summer when flowers are scarce. When designing your garden, plan for the trees first, then the shrubs, and then the perennials. Annual flowers can be great for quick color, but if you're using a seed mix, avoid any that include alyssum (a non-native often included in "native" seed mixes), which can quickly become a thug.

Planting natives is also slightly different than how we plant many other plants in that natives don't want an amended soil. They do need to be planted properly, watered very well, and also well-mulched. Greg and Lucy recommend shredded redwood bark, often called "gorilla hair." Many natives also benefit from having a rock placed directly above the roots. Detailed instructions are in their book, which also includes very complete information about 230 native plants.

Thanks to Greg and Lucy for a very interesting and inspiring look at the whys and hows of native plants. You can find lots of inspiring photos and information on Greg's website, calown.com. In addition to their new book, I also recommend their first book, *The California Native Landscape*. I wouldn't consider planting a native garden without them. 🌿



Greg Rubin and Lucy Warren signing book at the November meeting (see page 19).



San Diego Botanic Garden 2013 Fair exhibit designed by Greg Rubin using California native plants.

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Kalanchoe luciae (large leaves in center of pot) was one of the plants brought in to our November meeting - see page 16.

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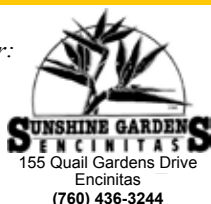
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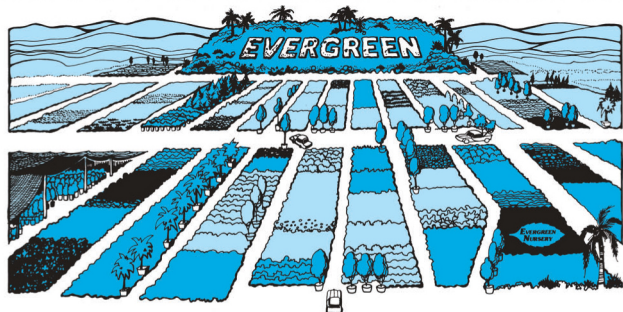
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What's Happening? for DECEMBER 2016

The SDHS is happy to publicize items of horticultural interest. See other side for resources & ongoing events.
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TBA – check their website calendar.

❖ **San Diego Botanic Garden** Contact info on other side
December 3-23 and 26-30, 5-9pm, Garden of Lights - The Garden Becomes A Winter Wonderland Illuminated by more than 125,000 Sparkling Lights: Family activities, food, holiday crafts, marshmallow roasting and nightly entertainment. Admission and activities charges vary. See website for details.

December 6, 9am-3pm, Succulent Wreath: Take home a beautiful succulent wreath that you make. Taught by the SDBG wreath team. Members \$65, Non-Members \$78. Materials included. Register by December 2.

December 10, 10am-2pm, Holiday Wreath Making: Build a beautiful, full sized, mixed greens wreath for the holidays; learning techniques that can be used for items in the garden as well. Instructor: Diana Burke. Members \$50, non-members \$60; plus \$50 materials fee paid directly to instructor at beginning of class. Register by December 2.

❖ The Water Conservation Garden

Contact info on other side. For ALL events below, register online or at (619) 660-0614.

December 3, 9am-4pm, Holiday Garden Shoppe Open House: Choose from many unique, garden-inspired gifts you won't find anywhere else. Special day-of event discounts, product samples and holiday treats! Door prizes and drawings for gift baskets.

Events Hosted by SDHS Sponsors

Please thank them for supporting SDHS!

◆ Barrels & Branches Classes & Workshops

Dec. 3, 10am to Noon. All About Worms Composting Workshop, 1452 Santa Fe Dr., Encinitas. Fee: \$15 Encinitas residents, \$20 Non-residents. Children over eight years of age may accompany a paid adult and will enjoy a kid-friendly worm activity. Registration required: www.solanacenter.org or call: 760-436-7986 Info: www.barrelsandbranches.com. See ad on page 17.

◆ **City Farmers Nursery** – see www.cityfarmersnursery.com

◆ **Evergreen Nursery: FREE Seminar** Details in left column

◆ **Sunshine Care FREE Seminar Each Month**
www.sunshinecare.com. No seminar in December. See ad pg 13.

◆ Walter Andersen Nursery FREE Saturday Classes

Details at www.walterandersen.com; address in ad on page 16.

Point Loma, 9am

Poway, 9:30am

See website for details. There may be no classes in December

Next SDHS Meeting

**Saturday, December 3:
Special Event at the San Diego
Zoo's Safari Park**

**Details & Registration at
sdhort.org**

More garden-related events on other side.

Other Garden-Related Events:

Check with hosts to confirm dates & details

Nov. 14 – Dec. 22, 9am to 4pm, Monday, Wednesday and Friday (closed college holidays), MiraCosta College: Annual Poinsettia Sale. Premium quality poinsettias grown by the Horticulture Department. 1 Barnard Drive, Oceanside. Check or credit/debit card only.

<http://miracosta.edu/instruction/horticulture/plantsales.html> or call 760-757-2121, Ext. 6994.

Dec. 2, Noon to 2:30pm: Vista Garden Club: Dennis Pillen, speaker, will discuss the Future of the World and Our Role in It. Visitors are welcome to attend and share in a fingertip luncheon. Gloria McClellan Senior Center, 1400 Vale Terrace Ct., Vista 92084. Contact: (858) 344-2696.

Dec. 2, 3pm to 11pm, Dec 3 Noon to 11pm, San Diego Floral Association: Festival of Trees is a gift to the community. Enjoy floral designs & decorated trees. Gingerbread cookies and protea flowers for sale. Free event. Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, Info: <http://sdfloal.org>

Dec. 3, 8am to Noon, Dos Valles Garden Club: Annual Poinsettia, Wreath & Plant Sales Plus Ornament Swap. Six-inch pots, foil wrapped and sleeved: \$9.50 each. And more! Beautiful planted bowls, evergreen and succulent wreaths, and an array of outdoor and patio plants. Martin Gang Ranch, 28933 Cole Grade Road, Valley Center.

Dec. 3, 10am to Noon, Solana Center for Environmental Innovation: All About Worms Composting Workshop at Barrels and Branches, 1452 Santa Fe Drive, Encinitas 92024. Fee: \$15 Encinitas residents, \$20 Non-residents. Children over eight years of age may accompany a paid adult and will enjoy a kid-friendly worm activity. Registration required. www.solanacenter.org or call: 760-436-7986

Dec. 14, 10am to Noon, Point Loma Garden Club: Annual Tea and Bazaar. Your chance to find the perfect holiday decorations and gifts! Portuguese Hall, 2818 Avenida de Portugal, San Diego. Info: www.plgc.org

For an extensive list of garden club meetings and events, visit www.sdfloal.org/calendar.htm

Resources & Ongoing Events:

ALTA VISTA BOTANIC GARDENS: Open Monday-Friday 7:00-5:00; 10:00-5:00 on weekends. Fee: members/free; non-members/\$5. 1270 Vale Terrace Drive, Vista. Info: www.avgardens.org or (760) 945-3954.

SAN DIEGO BOTANIC GARDEN: (formerly QUAIL BOTANICAL GARDENS): Open daily 9-5 (closed Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's Day); 230 Quail Gardens Dr., Encinitas. Fee: \$14/adults, \$10/seniors, \$8/kids 3-12; parking \$2. Free to members and on the first Tuesday of every month. (760) 436-3036; www.SDBGarden.org.

THE WATER CONSERVATION GARDEN: Open 9-4 daily, FREE. Docent-led tours every Saturday at 10:00am. 12122 Cuyamaca College Drive West, El Cajon, (619) 660-0614 or www.thegarden.org.

MISSION TRAILS REGIONAL PARK: Guided hikes Wed., Sat. & Sun. Visitor Center open 9-5, off Mission Gorge Rd., San Carlos, (858) 668-3275.

MASTER GARDENER HOTLINE: Gardening questions answered by trained volunteers Mon.-Fri., 9-3, (858) 822-6910, www.mastergardenerssandiego.org.

SAN ELIJO LAGOON CONSERVANCY: Free 90-minute public nature walk 2nd Saturday of each month start at 9:00 am. Call (760) 436-3944 for details.

DESERT WILDFLOWER HOTLINE: Anza-Borrego Desert State Park: (760) 767-4684. Info re: events, road conditions, etc.: (760) 767-5311 or www.desertusa.com/wildflo/wildupdates.html.

WILDFLOWER HOTLINE: March to May call the Theodore Payne Foundation hotline: (818) 768-3533 for info. on blooms in Southern California and elsewhere; visit www.theodorepayne.org.

BALBOA PARK:

Offshoot Tours: FREE 1-hr walking tour in Balboa Park every Sat., 10am. Meet at Visitors Center; canceled if rain or less than 4 people. (619) 235-1122.

Botanical Building is one of the world's largest lath structures, with 1200+ plants and lavish seasonal displays. FREE. Open Friday–Wednesday, 10am to 4pm.

Botanical Library: Room 105, Casa del Prado, Mon.-Fri. and first Sat., 10am-3pm, FREE. Info: (619) 232-5762.

Japanese Friendship Garden: Tues. to Sun., 10-4. Fees: free 3rd Tuesday; \$5/family; \$2/adult, \$1/seniors/students; (619) 232-2721, www.niwa.org.

Canyoneer Walks: FREE guided nature walks Saturday & Sunday. (619) 232-3821 X203 or www.sdnhm.org

Balboa Park Ranger Tours: FREE guided tours of architecture/horticulture, Tuesdays & Sundays, 1pm, from Visitors Center. Info: (619) 235-1122.

San Diego Natural History Museum: Exhibits, classes, lectures, etc. (619) 232-3821; www.sdnhm.org.

S.D. Zoo: Garden day 3rd Friday of every month from 10am. Pick up schedule at entry. Info: (619) 231-1515, ext 4306; www.sandiegozoo.org.

Garden Radio Show:

Garden America Radio Show (local). Saturday 8–9am on KPRZ 1210AM radio. Hosts Bryan Main, John Bagnasco and Tiger Palafox. Call-in questions to toll-free number (855) 424-9825. Each show also features an industry “expert”. Podcast and live stream are available through “Biz Talk Radio”. Archived shows are posted on the “Biz Talk Radio” website: www.biztalkradio.com.

San Diego County Farmers Markets

www.sdfarmbureau.org/BuyLocal/Farmers-Markets.php

Happy

Holidays!

Do you belong to a club or organization whose events aren't listed above?

For a FREE listing (space permitting) send details by the 10th of the month BEFORE the event to Barbara Patterson calendar@sdhort.org.