

Let's Talk Plants!

Newsletter of the San Diego Horticultural Society

April 2008, Number 163

Going on a Water Diet

SEE PAGE 11

GARDEN TOURS

PAGE 6 & 10

ASPARAGUS SEASON

PAGE 7

LESTER ROWNTREE

PAGE 12

HEAR KEN DRUSE

INSERT



SAN DIEGO
HORTICULTURAL
SOCIETY

On the Cover: *Camelina sativa*

THE SAN DIEGO HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY PRESENTS

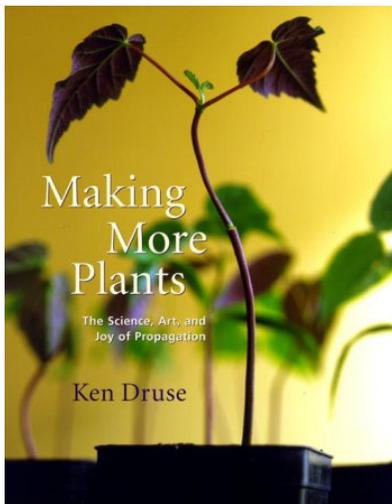
A Special Evening with Ken Druse

Making More Plants – Adventures in Horticulture!

Monday, May 12, 7:00PM

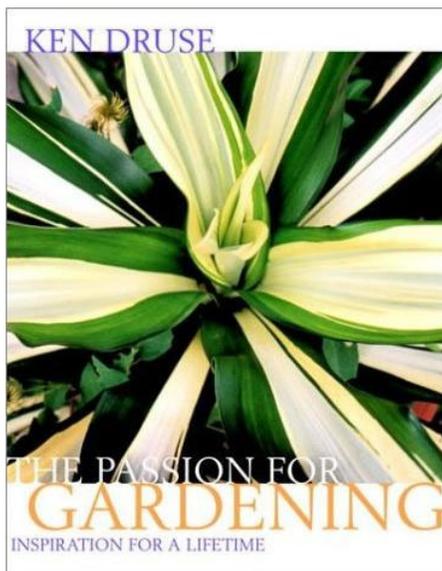
Ken Druse is the author of 16 books on gardening including bestsellers and award winning titles like *The Natural Shade Garden*, *The Natural Habitat Garden*, and *The Passion for Gardening*. His next book will be out this fall. Ken is a contributor to the *New York Times*, nearly every shelter and gardening magazine, and his own weekly podcast: Ken Druse REAL DIRT (www.realdirtradio.com). He is a Fellow of the Garden Writers of America, and received the Sarah Chapman Francis medal for lifetime achievement from the Garden Club of America. For more information on Ken visit <http://www.kendruse.com>.

About Ken's Books:



Making More Plants: The Science, Art and Joy of Propagation: Based on years of personal research, *Making More Plants* is a practical manual as well as a beautiful garden book, presenting propagation procedures Ken has tested and adapted throughout his 30-year career, and photographed step by step. In clear, inspirational language Ken takes the mystery out of seemingly complex practices such as seed conditioning, bulb division, leaf and stem cutting, grafting, and more. Whether focusing on techniques as easy as creating multiple plants from a single perennial using a common kitchen knife or on more complicated practices such as air layering, Ken's advice will inspire both novice and experienced gardeners to turn their homes and gardens into personal nurseries.

Supplementing the text is a comprehensive appendix charting methods for propagating more than 700 different plants, an invaluable resource unmatched by even the most thorough of propagation manuals. Straightforward advice, gorgeous photographs, and Ken's own engaging voice all combine to make *Making More Plants* an indispensable guide for every passionate gardener and plant lover.



The Passion for Gardening: As the world around us grows more chaotic each day, Druse, in rich and thoughtful prose, reminds us to slow down, put a trowel to the earth, and consider the wonders and healing powers of tending a garden. Gardening, he tell us, is an antidote for today's hectic pace. In *The Passion for Gardening*, Druse meditates on issues close to heart of all gardeners: the notions of giving back and of conservation, of taking risks and the creative process of collaborating with nature and one's community. Along the way, he introduces us to a variety of extraordinary gardeners and their gardens, revealing how they have cultivated their natural spaces and, in turn, have themselves been transformed in the process. Druse visits ten remarkable gardens, including a West Coast garden inspired by "the Japanese aesthetic," and Chanticleer, a delightful public estate on Philadelphia's Main Line that Druse dubs "a paradise in progress." Of particular note is a special section on Druse's own garden, including an unprecedented view of nature's contribution through the seasons that provides us with a deeper understanding of how gardens truly live.

With more than 250 dazzling color photographs, as well as practical advice on replanting shrubs and trees, creating garden paths and sculptures, and controlling pests naturally, *The Passion for Gardening* is an inspirational and intimate look at gardening for a lifetime.

MARCH MEETING PHOTOS

Photos: Cheryl Leedom



Bulbinella species



Euphorbia obesa



Sedum nussbaumerianum



Ceanothus 'Dark Star'



Hakea franciscana



Hippeastrum papilio 'Butterfly'



Kalanchoe waldheimii

SPRING HOME/GARDEN SHOW PHOTOS



Shabby Chic Goes Green - Naomi Stein & Brad Gore, EcoGreenScapes/M&W Landscaping Inc. Photo by <http://www.Resolusean.com>



Neptune's Garden by Jeff Moore, Solana Succulents Photo by Cheryl Leedom



Stone and Steel - Shellene Mueller, Designs by Shellene Photo by <http://www.Resolusean.com>



Modern Mastery - Ryan Prange, Falling Waters Photo by <http://www.Resolusean.com>

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Calendar/Resources Ongoing Events

Cover Image: This field of *Camelina sativa* was photographed east of Moscow, Idaho and supplied by Dr. Stephen Guy, Extension Crop Management Specialist at the University of Idaho. Learn more from our April speaker (below).

The San Diego Horticultural Society

MEETINGS

The San Diego Horticultural Society meets the 2nd Monday of every month (except June) from 6:00pm to 9:00pm at the Surfside Race Place, Del Mar Fairgrounds, 2260 Jimmy Durante Blvd. Admission is free and all are welcome. We encourage you to join the organization to receive the monthly newsletter and numerous other benefits. We are a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

MEETING SCHEDULE

5:00 – 6:00 Meeting room setup
6:00 – 6:45 Vendor sales, opportunity drawing ticket sales, lending library
6:45 – 8:00 Announcements, speaker, drawing for three plants
8:00 – 8:15 Break for vendor sales, opportunity drawing ticket sales, lending library
8:15 – 9:00 Plant forum and opportunity drawing. Vendor sales continue to 9:15.
9:00 – 9:15 Final vendor sales, lending library

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

To join, send your check to: San Diego Horticultural Society, Attn: Membership, P.O. Box 231869, Encinitas, CA 92023-1869. Individual/one year—\$25, two years—\$45, five years—\$100; Family/one year—\$30, two years—\$55, five years—\$120; Group or Business/one year—\$30; Students/\$16 (w/proof of enrollment); Contributing/\$75 or more; Life/\$600. For membership questions contact membership@sdhortsoc.org or Sheldon Lisker at (951) 244-3502.

FUTURE MEETINGS & EVENTS IN 2008

May 12 SPECIAL EVENING – Ken Druse, *Making More Plants, Adventures in Horticulture* (see insert).

June 2-8 Philadelphia Garden Tour (see page 8 for details)

NO JUNE MEETING

June 14 – July 6 SDHS Display Garden and Horticulturists of the Day at the San Diego County Fair

July 14 Robert Herald, Philadelphia's Best Public & Private Gardens

August 11 Pat Welsh, Growing and Harvesting Winter Crops

September 8 Renee Shepherd, Renee's Garden Seeds

October 13 Bob Dimattia, Bamboo

November 10 TBA

December 8 TBA

www.sdhortsoc.org

Website sponsored by **ALL.EA Web Design & Horticultural Photography**, www.alllea.com

Next Meeting: April 14, 2008, 6:00 – 9:00 PM

Topic: DUANE JOHNSON ON "DEVELOPING BIOENERGY FROM CAMELINA, A 'NEW' CROP FOR THE U.S."

Admission and parking are both free and all are welcome.

**Meeting Place: Del Mar Fairgrounds, Surfside Race Place, Del Mar
Info: (760) 295-7089**

Can an herb related to mustard, cauliflower and nasturtium replace fossil fuel? Dr. Duane Johnson thinks so, and you'll want to hear why! The plant kingdom has long provided us with not only beauty but practical service as food, medicine and fiber. Plant uses have expanded to industry and energy, and rediscovering forgotten crops has opened doors to new products which can replace petroleum as a raw material. Camelina (*Camelina sativa*) was eaten by Neolithic peoples, used to light Bronze Age lamps, and as massage oil by ancient Romans. Today, this long-neglected plant could help solve the energy crisis.

Dr. Johnson has led development of new crops in Arizona, Colorado and Montana since 1979. He was Director of the Institute for Biobased Products at Montana State University and Director of the Montana Agricultural Innovation Center. He now works with Great Plains Oil to develop one crop – camelina – for manufacture of biodiesel and jet fuels, high omega-3 livestock feed, and new lubricants. Camelina's low production costs mean it can reduce the cost of biodiesel by as much as 45%.

To learn more visit www.camelinacompany.com. ☞



The Mission of the San Diego Horticultural Society

is to promote the enjoyment, art, knowledge and public awareness of horticulture in the San Diego area, while providing the opportunity for education and research.

ESTABLISHED SEPTEMBER 1994

SDHS BOARD MEMBERS

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Lucy Warren – Secretary, Liaison to H&G Shows

Let's Talk Plants!, the newsletter of the San Diego Horticultural Society, is published the first Monday of every month.

Editor/Advertising: Susi Torre-Bueno; 1941 Vista Grande Dr., Vista, CA 92084; voice (760) 295-7089, fax (760) 295-7119, newsletter@sdhortsoc.org.

Calendar: Send details by the 10th of the month before event to calendar@sdhortsoc.org.

Sponsorship Info: Susi Torre-Bueno (above).

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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 free meetings, annual college scholarships, and other important programs. Sponsorships start at just \$100/year; contact info@sdhortsoc.org or (760) 295-7089.

Sponsors are listed on page 9; those with ads in the newsletter have the words **SDHS Sponsor** above their ads.

We thank them for their extra support!

Important Member Information

THANKS, VOLUNTEERS!

The Feb. 16th tour of "green" gardens in Kearny Mesa was a great success, and we thank organizer Pamela Homfelt and her volunteers for a wonderful day of fascinating gardens in commercial settings. Many thanks to Paul DiMartini, Vickie Driver, Sue Kelly-Cochrane, Nancy Knight, Michelle Ventura, and Darlene Villanueva.

Our Feb. 28th Preview Garden Party was a big hit, and many volunteers were involved in that special evening: The Spring Home/Garden Show, Feb. 29 – March 2, was lots of fun, and we signed up new members, answered lots of questions, and sold some wonderful plants. Organizer Bill Teague was everywhere all weekend, and we thank him for his always-cheerful efforts on our behalf. The committee members and other volunteers for these two events were: Nikki Alexander, Diane Bailey, Jeff Biletnikoff, Sue Fouquette, Charlotte Gresham, Pat Hammer, Julie Hasl, Fran Hinostro, Ken Krieger, Sharon Lee, Sheldon Lisker, Sandi Lord, Jackie McGee, Eric Mendez, Susan Morse, John Noble, Dale Rekus, Victoria Schaffer, Linda Scott, Laura & Don Starr, Cathy Tylka, Ramona Valencia, Grace Veltman, Darlene Villanueva, Melissa & Christopher Worton, and George Yackey.

ANNUAL SPECIAL SPEAKER

Each spring we bring an exceptional speaker to San Diego for a special evening that replaces our regular meeting. It is usually someone who hasn't spoken here before and who is nationally known. On May 12th we are delighted to present **A Special Evening with Ken Druse**, the award-winning author of sixteen garden books and a passionate hands-on gardener. Tickets are \$15 (members) and \$20 (non-members), and may be ordered (along with copies of Ken's books) using the enclosed insert or at our website. **Seating is limited, so order your tickets now.** No tickets will be mailed – your name will be at the door. This event will take place at the Scottish Rite Event Center in Mission Valley. **Order on-line at www.sdhortsoc.org.**



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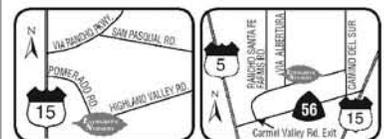
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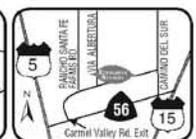
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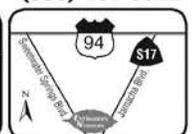
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SPRING/SUMMER HOURS
 Monday-Thursday..7:30am-5:00pm
 Friday & Saturday..7:30am-6:00pm
 Sunday.....9:00am-6:00pm

Spring Home/Garden Show Award Winners

Best of Show: First Place

Modern Mastery - Ryan Prange, Falling Waters (AM, PN)

Best of Show: Second Place

Stone and Steel - Shellene Mueller, Designs by Shellene (AM)

Best of Show: Third Place

Shabby Chic Goes Green - Naomi Stein & Brad Gore, EcoGreenscapes/
M&W Landscaping Inc. (AM, PN))

Massachusetts Horticultural Society Medal for Design Excellence

Stone and Steel - Shellene Mueller, Designs by Shellene (AM)

Pacific Horticulture Award for Horticultural Excellence

Tropical Oasis for Desert Southwest - Mark Collins, Evergreen Nursery (AM)

Judges' Choice

Modern Mastery - Ryan Prange, Falling Waters (AM, PN))

Most Educational

Modern Mastery - Ryan Prange, Falling Waters (AM, PN))

Most Dramatic

Come On In - Jesus Rodriguez, Paradise Landscape with Josh Soto,
Dreamscapes (AM, PN)

Most Appealing to Children

Neptune's Garden - Jeff Moore, Solana Succulents (AM)

Best Specialty Garden

La Tequilera Antigua – The Tequila Highlands - Phillip Soto Mares &
Yvette Anderson, El Duende Tequila, Inc (AM)

Best Interpretation of Theme

Living Lush in a Thirsty Land - Tom Jesch, Designed II/Daylily Hill (AM, PN)

Best Compatibility of Plant Materials

Back to Nature - Gigi Hurst, Habitat West (AM, PN))

Best Combinations of Plant Materials

Hang In There - Jonathan Bosch, Suncoast Natural Waterfeatures (PN)

Best Home Landscape

Modern Mastery - Ryan Prange, Falling Waters (AM, PN))

Best San Diego Adapted Garden

Modern Mastery - Ryan Prange, Falling Waters (AM, PN)

Most Creative Use of Space

Come On In - Jesus Rodriguez, Paradise Landscape with Josh Soto,
Dreamscapes (AM, PN)

Best Intimate Garden

A Quiet Space – Rebecca Herrera, Down To Earth Landscape (AM)

Best Outdoor Living

Creative Places - Mary Jo Martin, Landscape Design with Brandon Bullard,
Desert Theater (AM)

Best Water Feature

Stone and Steel - Shellene Mueller, Designs by Shellene (AM)

Best Hardscape Feature

Stone and Steel - Shellene Mueller, Designs by Shellene (AM)

Best Interpretive Signage

Back to Nature - Gigi Hurst, Habitat West (AM, PN))

Best Naturalistic Environment

Spring Thaw - Calvin Briers, Advanced Waterscape (AM)

Most Colorful

The Forgotten Garden - Ryan Doughty, Weidners' Nursery (AM)

Perfection in Nomenclature (Also given to the gardens identified above with a PN after the company name)

Beyond the Ordinary! - Emma Almendarez & Linda Fox, Glorious Gardens

Bolder and Boulder - Eric Breceda, Breceda Landscape

Creative Places - Mary Jo Martin, Landscape Design with Brandon Bullard,
Desert Theater

Award of Merit (Also given to the gardens identified above with an AM after the company name)

California Dreaming - Tony George, Point Loma Landscape

Hang in There - Jonathan Bosch, Suncoast Natural Waterfeatures

Backyard Tropics - John Ross, Keoni Landscapes

Beyond the Ordinary! - Emma Almendarez & Linda Fox, Glorious Gardens

Bolder and Boulder - Eric Breceda, Breceda Landscape

From The Board

By Susi Torre-Bueno

MAKING PROGRESS

Last month I wrote about changes we're making to reduce our costs and generate more income. Some changes have already been implemented (combining our two storage spaces into one and selling our tree book at more events). A silent auction and opportunity drawing at the Preview Garden Party brought in some funds, too.

I'm working on making this newsletter available in digital format for those who would like to receive it as an e-mail attachment. The benefits to this include (1) immediate receipt of the newsletter (one week ahead of mailed copies), (2) store back issues on your computer, (3) all images are in full color, (4) live links to websites, (5) enlarge the print as much as you like for easy reading. By getting the newsletter in an electronic format you'll save over \$2.50 per copy. In the future we hope to put the newsletter on our website.

To reap all these benefits send an e-mail to newsletter@sdhortsoc.org and let me know you want the newsletter e-mailed instead of in your snail mail box.

We welcome your input and suggestions on ways we can further improve our financial situation. Contact me at info@sdhortsoc.org with your ideas.

SIGN UP YOUR SWEETIE

Starting in July we will charge non-members \$5 to attend our regular meetings. We hope it'll encourage people who attend frequently, including spouses and partners of members, to join. If one name is on your mailing label, that person is the only member. You can add your sweetie by sending in \$5 any time before July 1. Mail a check with your significant other's name on a note, to San Diego Horticultural Society, Attn: Membership, P.O. Box 231869, Encinitas, CA 92023-1869.

FAREWELL, LIZ

In March Liz Youngflesh resigned from the board, and we want to thank her for her years of service. Liz wrote, "My business has been growing by leaps and bounds and I find myself torn between managing the nursery and providing volunteer services. I have enjoyed the camaraderie and have gained an appreciation for the hard working volunteers that make up the San Diego Horticultural Society. Although I will not be able to function as a Board Member, be assured that I will continue to support and promote the SDHS as time permits." We're pleased her nursery is doing so well and wish her every success. 🌿

SDHS SPONSOR ↓



**Saturday
April 26
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

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Upcoming Garden Tours

ENCINITAS GARDEN FESTIVAL

A vineyard, a California Friendly garden, a garden with old-fashioned farm tools and more than a dozen other private gardens will be open on May 3rd for the third annual Encinitas Garden Festival. After being frozen out last year, this year's Festival is better than ever. The 2008 tour neighborhood is in Olivenhain, a community on the eastern edge of Encinitas that backs on to Escondido Creek and the San Elijo Lagoon. The San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy will be on hand to talk about the lagoon, its inhabitants, and gardening at the perimeter of a natural habitat.

Meanwhile, the Gardener's Marketplace at Olivenhain's Town Hall will feature boutique nurseries, Mary the Snail Lady, and a host of educational opportunities for those interested in organic gardening, conserving water in the garden, and so on. The Marketplace is free and open to the public. Tickets for the garden tour are available online at www.EncintiasGardenFestival.org, or at Anderson's La Costa Nursery, 400 La Costa Ave., Encinitas, CA 92024.

Parking is at Mira Costa College San Elijo Campus. Double decker busses run all day between the parking lot and the Festival Marketplace where the tour begins. To volunteer for the event (and get free admission to the gardens), be a vendor, or for more information, visit www.EncintiasGardenFestival.org, email info@EncinitasGardenFestival.org, or leave a message on the Garden Festival Hotline, (760) 753-8615.

ELFIN FOREST GARDEN FESTIVAL

The Elfin Forest Garden Festival, with the theme *Entertaining Edens*, is April 26 from 10AM to 4PM. This is a very special treat, since most of this year's five unique waterwise gardens have never previously been open to the public. One of them is the first "green" house in the county; another features an outdoor entertainment pavilion which accommodates 24 for dinner! Noted naturalist and author Richard Halsey will give a presentation, lead a wildflower walk, and sign his latest book, *Fire, Chaparral and Survival in Southern California*. The garden festival celebrates the opportunities of gardening on a grand scale. Besides the garden tour, horticulture experts will be on site for free consultations, and food vendors will offer lunches and snacks for sale. The garden festival benefits the Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Town Council. A limited number of tickets are available. Advance tickets are \$20 at www.elfinforestgardens.info. Day of event tickets are \$25. Tickets and maps to the gardens can be picked up on the day of the event at the Elfin Valley Nursery, 20110 Elfin Forest Lane, Elfin Forest. Preview the gardens and learn more at www.elfinforestgardens.info.



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Plants That Produce

BEEN NUTS, GONE BANANAS

By Richard Frost

Lately there have been some stories in the media about the eminent demise of the banana fruit we buy at the grocery store. This is true: poor propagation techniques and over-planting of this variety has led to the development of a killer fungal infection which severely impacts the common commercial banana. This is probably a good thing. There are other varieties of bananas that we could be receiving that are both superior in flavor and disease hardiness – including cooking bananas, which for many people in the U.S. is a treat they've been missing. Even better yet, you don't have to wait a half decade or so for better tasting bananas to arrive at the stores. You can grow them right here in San Diego!

What most people think of as a banana tree is actually a pseudo-stem, with some leaves on the end, which eventually flowers and fruits. The growth center of the plant is underground in a tuber called a corm. It is not too far off to characterize the banana plant as a bulb that sends up leaves and a huge flower. There are hundreds of varieties ranging from under 4 feet to over 40 feet in height.

Most edible fruiting bananas come from the genus *Musa*, and there are also a few from the genus *Eumusa*. They are all thought to have originated in the present-day areas of Burma and Thailand, then taken to India, and then from there on to many regions of the world. The seedless bananas we eat are all hybrids, some naturally occurring and others bred by humans. Because all edible banana plants are seedless, they are obtained either as a bare corm or a potted corm with a pseudo-stem sticking out.

The extensive travels of the banana plant have led to many exotic names from far-flung cultures. The names Kluay, Mai'a, and Pisang translate to "Banana" in Thai, Hawaiian, and Malay. Hok and Pendek mean short or dwarf, while Hom and Raja translate to fragrant and royal. Some banana names also indicate place of origin. For example, Kluay Namwa is a banana variety from the Namwa region of Burma.

Edible bananas come in many fruit sizes, many flavors, many ranges of cold hardiness, and several variations in disease hardiness. Some cultivars to try here in San Diego are: Dwarf Brazilian, Dwarf Orinoco, Golden Rhinohorn, Pisang Raja, and 1000 Fingers. You should also try a cooking banana like Ebon Musak or FHIA-21 – they are the "potatoes" of the tropics!

Now it turns out that one of the leading world experts in backyard banana culture is our own SDHS member Jon Verdick. At his web site (www.webebananas.com) you will find information on easy steps to growing bananas, what varieties he has in stock, and enough detailed information on bananas to keep you busy until this time next year. Another web site to consider visiting is www.bananas.org. It is a forum for banana growers and gardening enthusiasts from all over the world and the best online gardening community web site I have found to date.

SDHS member Richard Frost is also member of the California Rare Fruit Growers. For more information, see www.frostconcepts.com/horticulture. To see many kinds of bananas thriving in San Diego visit the Subtropical Fruit Garden at Quail Botanical Gardens and walk along "Banana Boulevard." 🌿

Garden Gourmet

NOT SEASONLESS IN SAN DIEGO

By Alice Lowe

Daylight savings time and asparagus at \$1 a pound – what else can it be but Springtime?!

What is it about asparagus as the harbinger of Spring? In *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle*, Barbara Kingsolver relates how her family determined that their experiment in living off the land, eating only local food for a year, would begin with the first asparagus. Nigel Slater, introducing his *Kitchen Diaries*, states his belief that no one would want to eat watermelon on a cold March evening or asparagus in January.

In San Diego County, our seasonal variations are subtle, but most of our garden produce does follow a growth pattern that adheres to the strength of the sun and the length of the days. However, we, and people in more severe climates as well, can buy most fresh produce at any time of year, and many take advantage of it. If we don't, it may be because of an increasing ecological awareness of the desirability (including taste and cost) of eating what's grown locally in season.

But now's the time, according to the California Asparagus Commission and the San Diego Farm Bureau's Harvest Calendar. Enjoy it with impunity, and with grilled meat or fish, over pasta, in a fresh salad, or just by itself. Grill it, roast it, sauté it, steam it – then, for the ultimate treat, make

ASPARAGUS VINAIGRETTE

A delicious and elegant company dish, it's best made ahead of time so that it can sit at room temperature and absorb the flavors of the dressing. The basic vinaigrette recipe for ½ cup of dressing is:

2-3 tablespoons vinegar	1-2 cloves minced garlic
1-2 teaspoons Dijon mustard	Salt and pepper
6 tablespoons olive oil	

Here are some variations that enhance the flavor of the asparagus – try them all and then come up with some of your own.

1. Use balsamic vinegar, a finely minced shallot or two in place of (or in addition to) the garlic, and add some orange zest & a squeeze of orange juice. The mustard is optional.
2. Sherry vinegar and freshly chopped tarragon and chives.
3. Peanut oil and rice vinegar, with fresh ginger and green onion, and a dash of sesame oil, soy sauce, and mirin (sweet cooking sake).
4. Lemon or grapefruit juice and zest, mixed with a little honey or with a sweeter honey mustard in place of the Dijon, chopped white onion and fresh or dried dill.

Pour the vinaigrette over the asparagus and let it stand for at least an hour, turning it once or twice. For a visual flair and even more distinctive taste, add one or more complementary garnishes: crumbled blue or feta cheese, capers, kalamata olives, slivered almonds or pistachio bits, chopped strawberries (also in season), fresh mint and/or parsley.

Member Alice Lowe loves to garden, cook and eat, not necessarily in that order. 🌿

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- ❖ Escorted by Pat Hammer and Robert Herald
- ❖ Longwood Gardens with dinner, concert and fountain show
- ❖ Entrances to Chanticleer, Winterthur, Mt. Cuba, Meadowbrook Farms, Bartram's Garden, Morris Arboretum, more!
- ❖ Private gardens recommended by Bill Thomas
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Chanticleer...a pleasure garden

Medicinal Plants

By Carl Price and Ellen Reardon

A few months ago, we wrote an essay on "Plants that Heal." Although both this and the earlier narrative issue from ideas formed at the same meeting, our hope is that this story will highlight California plants, and how to use them medicinally to remedy which particular symptoms.

It was certainly a shock to learn at that meeting, from casual conversations with graduate students proud to be presenting their research, that the younger generation was no longer interested in identifying plants specific for troublesome ailments. People no longer knew which plant, let alone which part of the plant— roots, leaves, berries, etc.— was useful. Should the plants be gathered during the daytime or night? Is phase of the moon important? Should the plant segments be steeped, used as a poultice or rubbed on? And the students certainly wanted to earn more than their grandmothers' approximate wage of 19 cents/hour. The Waterford Press guide to *Medicinal Plants* by James Kavanaugh is an invaluable addition to our libraries, especially when fortified by the *Sunset Western Garden Book*.

Let's begin with the ubiquitous dandelion, *Taraxacum officinale*; tea from the leaves is a remedy for upset stomach, whereas tea from the roots is a diuretic. Many people make wine from the leaves too. Personally, I think it tastes terrible!

Although the lovely coneflower, *Echinacea* spp., gained notoriety some years back as a preventative of the common cold, a status that has not held up to scientific scrutiny, tea from its root or leaves is highly antiseptic and is used to clean sores and insect bites. Butterfly gardeners are aware that milkweed, *Asclepias* spp., brings droves of the winged darlings to their yards, but may not know that the milky sap helps to heal sores and removes corns and warts. Rubbing on skin of crushed stems and leaves of jewelweed, *Impatiens capensis*, relieves the sting of poison ivy and also of boils.

There are still some areas in San Diego County where prickly pear cactus, *Opuntia* spp., can grow and produce stunning yellow or orange flowers in early spring. But in a pinch (pun intended!) the peeled paddles can serve as a poultice.

The mighty oak tree that grew from a tiny acorn begets many more acorns, which when boiled produce an astringent wash with a styptic effect that stops bleeding.

Sunflower, *Helianthus* spp.; oxeye daisy, *Leucanthemum vulgare*; speedwell, *Veronica* spp.; and black mustard, *Brassica niger* (why is it yellow?) are each used as a tea to alleviate colds, coughs, fevers and bronchitis. From just looking out the car window at our local meadows, there seems to be enough mustard to eliminate colds for years to come.

In addition to sparking up Mediterranean food, the aggressive peppermint, *Mentha piperita*, is useful as a soothing tea to treat anxiety, insomnia and coughs. As a child, I remember my mother administering mint to relieve nausea. So before you rip any more of that encroaching peppermint from your garden, save enough to sit back and relax with peppermint tea in hand.

Members Ellen Reardon and Carl Price are retired from Rutgers University, where they conducted research on the molecular biology of plastids and served as editors of journals in their field.





We now have over 1200 members! Hope to see all of you at upcoming meetings. We encourage you to become active participants and share in the fun; to volunteer see page 4 and below. A warm hello to the following folks who have joined recently:

We welcome Barrels & Branches as our newest Sponsor – see their ad on page 20.

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NEW ADVERTISERS:
The Flower Fields, PAGE 13
The Plant Man, PAGE 22
Lake Hodges Native Plant Club Garden Tour, PAGE 16
Morning Glory Brunch, BACK COVER
Quail Botanical Gardens, INSERTS
Spring Garden Festival, INSERT

HORT BUCKS ARE GREAT!

Kudos to the members below who brought in new members and therefore received Hort Bucks worth \$5 towards raffle tickets, name-tags, *Plant Forum* CDs or dues. To get **your** Hort Bucks just ask your friends to give your name when they join. The number after the person's name indicates how many members they recruited in 2008:

- | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
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What's Up at Quail Botanical Gardens?

THE GENUS BEAUCARNEA

By Jeremy Spath

Also known as Elephant Foot Tree, Bottle Palm, and Pony Tail Palm, *Beaucarneas* are not palms at all but a genus of 10 species of xerophytic tree-like plants from Mexico and Guatemala. They are an oddity in the succulent world with their flared base and long, linear, grass-like leaves, appearing like plants taken from the illustrations of a Dr. Seuss children's book. Because they have such an unusual shape children are immediately drawn to *Beaucarneas*, and in adults they provoke a child-like fascination.

The plants are typically found on steep rocky slopes in deciduous rainforests, but they also grow among agaves and yuccas in more arid habitats. In these dry and inland habitats *Beaucarneas* develop a very wide woody caudex, or base, whereas the species growing closer to the coast and in moister environments develop a narrower caudex. Male and female flowers occur on separate plants and large inflorescences bear thousands of tiny white flowers. In some species the fruit is red and can add a beautiful display atop these curious plants.

Of the 10 species, *Beaucarnea recurvata* is by far the most common. It is found in most nurseries and even in the grocery store, where it is sold as a popular houseplant. It also makes an excellent bonsai specimen. This species grows well in our climate, and although it is relatively common in the landscape, few people can pass one by without noticing its strange but attractive appearance making a dramatic architectural statement in any garden.

As recently as the 1990s, a new species of *Beaucarnea* was described: *Beaucarnea hiriartae*. This tree was found in a botanically well-documented area in Mexico. The discovery added to the richness of the known flora of Mexico, the dominant home of *Beaucarnea*.

Quail Botanical Gardens has a number of mature *Beaucarnea recurvata*, including an uncommon variegated specimen, as well as the equally beautiful *B. guatemalensis* and *B. gracilis*. These plants add an inimitable touch to QBG's plant collection, reminding ourselves and our visitors of the wonder and boundless possibility of the natural world of which we are all a part.

Quail Botanical Gardens is looking for donations of *Beaucarnea* and other species for its new Children's Garden in the expansion project. Please see insert. ☘

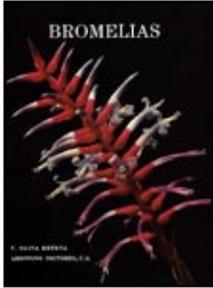
Book Review

BROMELIADS

By Francisco Oliva-Esteve

Reviewed by Caroline McCullagh

Often, when I talk to people about bromeliads, they don't know what I mean. However, if I say that they include Spanish moss, pineapples, those "air plants" you see for sale in the drug store, and those spectacular green and red leathery-leaved plants you often see in the entry to Trader Joe's, smiles of recognition come over their faces.



Except for one species in South Africa, bromeliads are indigenous to North, Central, and South America. If you've traveled in the American South or anyplace south of that, you've seen them. They grow anyplace: deserts, rainforests, sheer cliffs, on other plants, on the faces of buildings, on

bridge abutments, and even on telephone wires. They're easy to grow, difficult to kill, and beautiful. They come in all sizes, from smaller than your little finger to one species (a *Puya*) that is almost tree-like when it puts out its inflorescence. Although their flowers are relatively short-lived, their inflorescences, which are usually more spectacular than the flowers, can last for months.

I probably wouldn't have seen this book if I hadn't been a member of the San Diego Bromeliad Society. It's one of those big spectacular coffee table books that aren't sold in the average bookstore. The author lives in Venezuela. This is the second of three books he has done on bromeliads. Besides this one, published in 2000, they include *Bromeliaceae of Venezuela* (1987) and *Bromeliaceae III* (2002).

The book is large—one bookseller says that it weighs seven and a half pounds—and long—460 pages. It covers 406 species in 47 genera, primarily *Aechmea*, *Guzmania*, *Pitcarnia*, and *Tillandsia*. This is a book you would buy primarily for the photos. It includes 980 in color, mostly of bromeliads, but as a bonus, you get photos of the Venezuelan countryside where the plants are found. The author gives credit to 11 collaborators including Harry Luther, Werner Ruah, and other world-recognized experts in the field.

Bromeliads (ISBN 980-216-178-0) is available by mail order from the Bromeliad Society International (www.bsi.org), Rainbow Gardens Book Shop in Tucson (www.rainbowgardensbookshop.com), and from Tropiflora Nursery in Florida (www.tropiflora.com). You can also get it from the publisher in Venezuela, Armitano Editores. I did a little shopping on line and found out that I can also order it from Russia, Japan, and Germany! Prices range between \$125-150 plus shipping, so it would probably pay to shop around, and you may find a second-hand copy in good condition.

Author Francisco Oliva-Esteve will be in San Diego on Saturday, April 19, speaking and signing books. He'll be at Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park at 10 a.m. His talk is sponsored by the San Diego Bromeliad Society. It's free to the public. 🌿

Community Outreach

FLOWERS AND THEIR SPIRITUAL MESSAGES

Melding of Eastern and Western philosophy and tradition, Merry Street uses her beliefs, and artistic and design talents to create unique floral designs. Hear her at a free meeting of the San Diego Floral Association on April 15 at 7pm in room 101 of Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. Prior to her presentation she will be creating a Community Flower Mandala to honor the people of San Diego. Everyone who comes is encouraged to bring one or more flowers to help create the mandala. Community Mandalas teach unity, peace, cooperation, tolerance, support and compassion. This mandala will honor of those who are going through rights-of-passage, or who need help during a challenging time. As we lay the flowers down, we'll concentrate on their betterment.

She will demonstrate flower designs that interpret a spiritual journey with flowers. Some designs will be complete while others will be completed on stage. There will be a drawing for these beautiful arrangements at the end of the program. Prior to the meeting, an optional catered dinner is available for \$12/members and \$15/non-members by paid reservation, made prior to April 14. Info: (619) 232-5762.

Upcoming Garden Tours

(continued from page 6)

LAKE HODGES GARDEN CLUB TOUR

Friday, April 25th will be the 20th annual Lake Hodges Garden Club garden tour. The theme is *Favorite Gardens from 20 Years*. They were the first club to have a tour, and this year they feature 6 gardens which have all been published in various garden magazines. Gardens are open from 10AM to 3:30PM; this tour is self-guided with short driving distances in Poway and Rancho Bernardo. Tickets are \$15 dollars and are available by mail with a check enclosed to LHNPC – send a SASE (before April 18) to Donna Zimmer, 1428 Via Valente, Escondido, CA 92029. Tickets also available on April 19 in front of (not inside) Vons Market, Plaza Center, Rancho Bernardo from 10AM to 1PM and April 25 from 8:30 to 11:00. Other places to get tickets are Escondido Historical Society, Grape Day Park, and Walter Andersen Nursery (12755 Danielson Court, Poway). More info: call Jo Casterline at (858) 487-6661.

Funds raised support the maintenance of the Nativescapes garden at the Wild Animal Park, which is cared for by members of the club. New workers are welcome. Do you have no knowledge of California natives? Not to worry, it is a great way to learn these plants. Work is done on Wednesday and Saturday mornings; call club president Vernon Bluhm if interested at (760) 745-4008. 🌿



Steve Brigham's Wide World of Plants

GOING ON A WATER DIET – THE 30% SOLUTION (PART 3)

What if you had to cut back your water usage this year by 30%? With everything from big droughts to little fish limiting our water supplies these days, it may soon happen – and it already has for some of us! Would your garden survive on a water diet? In this three-part series, we'll take a look at some serious water-saving techniques, as we explore "The 30% Solution."

GARDENING TIPS TO SAVE WATER

As an agricultural water customer, I am being required in 2008 to cut my water use by a whopping 30% over last year, with big penalties in store if I don't! And it's not like I was wasting lots of water before! So my garden is definitely on a water diet this year – but that doesn't mean I'm going to let my plants suffer. What I am going to do is pull out every trick I know of to save every little bit of water I can!

The first two installments in this series dealt with water management, which is obviously the most important way to save water in the garden. But are there even more ways to save? Well, yes there are! Not just how you water, but how you *garden* can save you lots of water, and make your plants even healthier in the process.

HEALTHY SOIL MEANS HAPPIER PLANTS

All the watering in the world won't make up for unhealthy soil – and I've seen plenty of gardens where the plants look crummy no matter how much water you give them. Our soils in San Diego County can be quite challenging to work with, especially if you've got the type of "non-soil" that results when an area has been bulldozed. But if you take the time to amend your soil before you plant, your plants will get off to a quick start, and be well-rooted in a hurry. Not only will they look better, but they'll be much more drought tolerant as well.

Although we don't ever see it, the root system of any plant is its most important feature. Unhealthy roots simply can't absorb enough water (no matter how wet the soil is), but healthy roots can do their job well even when the soil dries out a bit. Healthy roots need healthy soil – and that means soil that has both good texture and composition.

SOFTEN YOUR SOIL

Apart from watering, the first question I ask folks when they say that their plants won't grow is if their soil is hard. And that's often the problem. Very few plants have roots that are capable of breaking through hard soil – and so the plants just never make enough roots. This is why it's important to break up your soil as much as possible before you plant, and also do the right things to keep that soil from getting hard again. Whether you use a rototiller, a jackhammer, or just a plain old shovel, first get the soil wet as deep as you can, then wait until it dries out enough so it is workable (sandy soil will be workable almost immediately, whereas heavy clay may take a few to several days before you can work it).

But the work doesn't stop there. Because our soils and irrigation water are so alkaline, it's not enough to simply break

up the soil. Your soil will just compact and get hard again unless you mix in some organic material such as compost or aged wood shavings, and especially in clay soils, agricultural gypsum. These materials will also quickly get your soil to the neutral or slightly acid level, which is essential for the proper growth of most garden plants. Gypsum in particular can be most effective in keeping your soil soft for at least six months, at which point the organic material is composted enough to do a similar job – and both compost and gypsum can be mixed lightly into the soil on an annual basis to keep your soil healthy (used in moderation, magnesium sulfate and iron-rich fertilizers can help, too). For more information, a very good and thorough "how to" on amending soils in our climate can be found in the back "Guide To Gardening" section of your *Sunset Western Garden Book*.

MULCH, MULCH, MULCH!

How important is mulch? Well in our dry climate, you can do everything right when you plant, but if you don't mulch, you're just wasting your time. Sure, wheelbarrowing around loads of mulch can seem a daunting job, especially if you've got a big area to cover. But you'll just love the "finished" look that it gives your garden, and how it makes every plant really show off. Even more, you'll love the weed-free life that mulch can give you. Most importantly, a properly maintained mulch in your garden can cut your water use *in half* compared to no mulch at all!

By shading the soil, mulch keeps roots cool, which is so important in our hot climate. And most importantly, it stops the sun from drying out the soil, saving you tons of water in the process. Water is a precious commodity in San Diego, and we should use our water only to give the plants what they need. Why waste that water by letting it all evaporate into thin air before your plants can use it?

Mulch can come in many forms, but I prefer organic mulches. Nice, black, ground-up wood compost that's similar to your soil amendment is probably the best overall, since it enriches the soil quite effectively and also looks fantastic. But this decays fairly quickly, and often must be replenished a couple of times a year. I have big garden areas, and so it's more practical for me to use a coarse mulch such as the wood chips I get for free from my local tree service. This still keeps the soil healthy, but it breaks down slowly, and only needs to be replenished every two years or so.

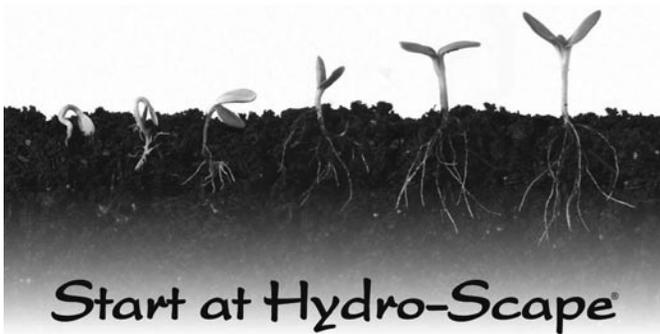
Not all mulches are organic. You can also use any of the many types of screened decomposed granite or fine gravel mulches available, which can be much preferable in desert-plant landscapes and also wildfire-prone areas. Although they aren't as effective in retaining moisture and keeping out weeds, and don't enrich the soil, these inorganic mulches can be quite elegant in appearance, and of course are non-flammable. (Just don't use coarse, brightly-colored gravels, or we'll have to send the landscape police after you!)

Whichever type of mulch you use, remember to use enough to solidly cover the ground. I use around 3" of wood chips, since anything less won't do the proper job of keeping down weeds

Continued on page 22

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The Real Dirt On...

LESTER ROWNTREE

By Christy Powell

Lester Rowntree was best known for her diligent study of California native plants and her passion to protect this natural beauty. She built a house on a hillside south of Carmel, California, overlooking Pt Lobos and the Pacific Ocean. However, in her 18 years of fieldwork she lived there only a few months of the year; the rest of the year she spent trekking up and down the state of California. She spent months living on beans and rice collecting seeds, herbarium specimens, and photographs of the vast number of species native to the deserts, mountains, and forests.

"I inhabit my hillside only from November to February, while the winter storms are blowing and the winter rains pouring. In March and April I have long shining days on the desert, in May happy weeks in the foothills, where a chorus of robins wakes me and my morning bath is in a rushing stream of just-melted snow. In June I am in the northern counties scented with new-mown hay and wild strawberries. In July in the higher mountains, and in August and September up in the alpine zone with mule or burro." (Lone Hunter, *The Atlantic Monthly*, June 1939)

Rowntree was born on February 13, 1879 in England. Her given name was Gertrude Ellen Lester. She came to prefer her last name, and after she married Bernard Rowntree in 1908 she went by the name Gertrude Lester Rowntree. When she and Bernard divorced in 1931, she took on the name Lester Rowntree, the name that she is known by in her writings and fieldwork. Her name change also aided in masking her gender since most botanists and fieldworkers at the time were males.

Lester's father was a gardener and botanist and moved the family to Kansas when Lester was 10. She and her family moved to different parts of the country, including Missouri, California, and Pennsylvania, where she attended Westtown School, a Quaker boarding school. In 1908 she married Bernard Rowntree, an engineer working in Manhattan. Lester enjoyed creating a beautiful garden in her yard in New Jersey. Her neighbors were shocked to see her gardening in pants! She and Bernard had one son and when Lester was 52, she and Bernard divorced. She then moved to California and spent the next 48 years fulfilling her yearning to discover and intimately research the native flora here.

"Intelligent collecting is a conservation measure; indeed the work is legitimate only when done with knowledge and forethought, and when the motive is the preservation of the plants themselves." (*Hardy Californians*, 1936. Macmillan)

In her lifetime, Lester Rowntree wrote two reference books, *Hardy Californians* (1936) and *Flowering Shrubs of California* (1939), several children's books, and over 700 articles. She concentrated her writings on her extensive fieldwork, the history of native flora, and how these native plants could be used in backyard gardens. One example of her influence in the nursery trade is *Arctostaphylos* 'Lester Rowntree'. This manzanita is a hybrid of *A. pajaroensis* grown at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden from seed supplied by Lester. Other accomplishments in her life include an appointment of honorary president of the California Native Plant Society in 1965 and a like award given by the California Horticultural Society in 1974. Lester Rowntree died in Carmel, California in 1979, three days after her 100th birthday.

Member Christy Powell is a Plant Propagator at the San Diego Zoo and proud mom of a new baby boy. 🌱

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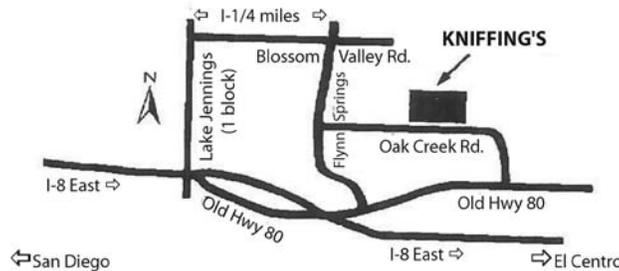
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SHARING SECRETS

This column is written by you, our members! Each month we'll ask a question, and print your responses the following month.

The question for this month was: Do you keep track of what plants are in your garden and if so, how?

Walter Andersen told us, "I don't have a list or keep track of the plants in my yard. If I find something I like I try to find room, someplace. If it grows and flourishes fine. If it dies, I usually do not worry about it much. I have removed a couple of trees that I planted that grew too large, I just keep track of that in my head, the stumps left are also reminders of my past mistakes."

Louise Anderson reported that, "I used to try to keep track with a list. I was going to do a grid and a list from that. Never got it finished so it made sense. Now that www.TheMulch.com is up and running (see ad on page 12) I have listed most of my plants there. I can, at some time in the future, print the entire list out and then do the grid so I know where stuff is supposed to be. TheMulch.com has been a great help, not only with the list but information about plants, too. In the garden I use plastic knives, with names written with a paint pen so I actually know what it is that I'm looking at. Common names on one side, Latin on the other. You can get a huge box (about 500) of these for under \$10 at Costco."

Irina Gronborg responded with, "Resolving this problem of keeping records changed my life! I wanted to keep track of new plants as we added them to our garden. I tried to keep notes in a journal, and then on 3x5 cards, but I just kept forgetting to write things down. I wanted some sort of history, so I began to sketch each of our new plants and that was so much fun that I left abstract painting behind and became a botanical illustrator."

Lorie Johansen has an interesting method: "I am really eager to read the answers to this question as I want a better system. What I am doing now is: Cutting up old metal blinds to 6" and writing the name of the plant on the tag with cultural requirements and origins of plant. After the plant is in the ground. I bury the tag (to preserve the handwriting) and place a stake near it so I know where to dig up if I forget the name of the plant."

Ellen McGrath-Thorpe wrote, "I have an album/journal with pictures and lists for each of the different gardens on my property.....great idea, now the problem is keeping it current"

Susan Morse uses metal labels: "My approach to keeping track of plants is varied and inconsistent. I've made Excel spread sheets with great details, notes on envelopes in pencil that fade, have written on seed packet in a Sharpie pen, only to find the information deteriorates in the sun. Susi introduced me to the Paw Paw Everlast metal plant tags that I have used with great success. My processes for keeping track boil down to how lazy or compulsive I am at any one moment. I'll be looking forward to read what works well for other folks."

Sandy Shapiro replied, "For my home garden I list on my computer database the name and location of all significant new plants as well as cultural info that is new for me. For plantings I do at Quail Botanical Gardens I make an aluminum acquisition tag, and for each and list it on the computer database with location. If a significant plant I also etch a 3 or 4 line informational sign."

Cindy Sparks had three interesting methods: "I'm a retired engineer and I've kept some of my old organizational habits. First, I keep a computer-generated line drawing of my yard, which has a lot of concrete walkways, paths, and retaining walls. I made the drawing when we first moved in, to be sure I understood the scale of the planting spaces. I have added the permanent plantings to that drawing, showing trees, shrubs and natives whose ultimate size I wanted to plan for. It also shows sprinklers, and now that I'm utilizing hydro-zoning, I find that helpful in matching planting to watering needs (or deciding how to re-work the sprinkler system, which happens more often). Second, I keep a running computer log, ordered by date. I use the FIND feature to go back to old references about a particular plant. For a few troublesome or maintenance-prone specimens, like my potted fig or my pair of dwarf avocados, I have a special section at the bottom of the log with key entries for those, notably FIG pruning, repotting schedule, and AVOCADO feeding schedules. I used to keep plant lists, but I find that my tastes and the plants change too often. The log allows me to remember when I planted something or when I messed with it, and that seems to be sufficient for problem diagnosis. Plus it makes interesting reading. Third, I also keep many plants labeled, using pencil-on-snip-of-mini-blind. That is permanent enough to generally last the life of the (herbaceous) plant."

Susi Torre-Bueno said, "Gardening brings out my compulsion for record-keeping, and I've got a CAD plan of my garden with every plant shown. I also have a spreadsheet of all the plants with info on Latin and common names, size at maturity, flower color and bloom season, comments, and more. There are photos of almost every plant, too, which I downloaded from the internet. I used to keep a notebook with all this info, but doing it in a spreadsheet is so much faster, neater and easier. I have a lot of visitors to my garden, and my memory is worse than a slug's, so every plant also has a metal label in the ground in front of it. I could probably build a car with the metal from all the labels of plants that have died. (sigh)"

Cathy Tylka told us, "My dear friend, Susan Morse, put me on to metal labels from Paw Paw Everlast Label Company, and I try to put these near the plant at the time of planting. They last and you can get 300 at a time. Another method I tried was to draw a picture of my yard on graphic paper and try to label my plants. But, then I moved them. My husband keeps the tags from the trees we purchase in a notebook, so we'll remember what they are. He is so organized."

Steve Zolezzi said, "Do I keep track of the plants in my garden and how? You bet your sweet petunia I do! I plant them, nurture them along, water & fertilize them, move them if necessary and if I am lucky they are still living take the time to enjoy them. I even

Continued on page 16

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know the names of some of them and on occasion propagate willing subjects to plant in another part of the garden or best of all give them away to another willing plant person. My plants keep track of me, too! If I do not attend them in the style they have become accustomed to they turn horrid colors, weep, droop, wither and if need be die. Got to get back to the garden now—heard a snap-crack-pop!!!” ☘

The question for next month is:

Is there a ground cover you use instead of grass which tolerates foot traffic and is water thrifty and low maintenance?

Please send your e-mail reply by April 10 to info@sdhortsoc.org.

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March Plant Forum

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By Steve Brigham and Susi Torre-Bueno

What is the Plant Forum?

Each month members bring in plants, cuttings or flowers and one of our horticulturists talks about them. What a great way to learn how these plants perform. All plants are welcome – EVERYONE is invited to participate. We encourage you to write descriptions similar to those below, and put them with the plant on the Plant Forum tables. Any questions, call Susi at (760) 295-7089.

Aeonium arboreum 'Zwartkop' BLACK AEONIUM
(Crassulaceae) Canary Islands

This evergreen shrubby succulent is very distinctive, due to its large, shiny rosettes of thick glossy black leaves that top its stout succulent stems. It gradually develops into a 3' by 3' clump, with average watering best. Although this plant will grow in partial shade, full sun is best for maintaining its rich black foliage color. In spring and summer, mature plants produce showy spikes of yellow flowers that provide spectacular contrast. Great for containers, and will take some drought. Hardy to 25° F. (Buena Creek Gardens, San Marcos, 3/08) – S.B.

Artemisia pycnocephala 'David's Choice' SANDHILL SAGE (Asteraceae) Coastal Central and Northern California

The Sandhill Sage has the most silvery and feathery foliage of any artemisia. Since it is native to the immediate coast, it withstands beach sand, wind, and salt spray with ease. This low-growing selection grows quickly to just a foot tall and around 3' wide, and is at its best in sandy soil in full sun. It is recommended to cut off its silvery flowering spikes before they bloom in order to keep plants from getting leggy. Typically just a 3-4 year plant here, but extremely showy with its beautiful silver foliage. (Buena Creek Gardens, San Marcos, 3/08) – S.B.

Centradenia inaequalateralis 'Cascade' SPANISH SHAWL (Melastomataceae) Mexico

Growing quickly to 2' by 2' in full to partial shade (it will take quite a bit of sun near the coast), this plant has a cascading growth habit that makes it perfect for hanging baskets or low walls. Its 2" rounded leaves densely clothe its stems, with the whole plant developing a reddish-green cast in the cool of winter. Its January through April bloom is very showy, with many clusters of 2" bright magenta-pink flowers all along its arching stems. This is a larger-sized version of the related but much smaller plant (*Heterocentron elegans*) that is also known as Spanish Shawl. Like it, it prefers rich, slightly acid soil, average watering, and protection from hard frosts – but this plant is much more tolerant of our soil and water conditions than most of its relatives in the "princess flower" family, and seems to be quite long-lived here. (Buena Creek Gardens, San Marcos, 3/08) – S.B.

Chamelaucium 'Esperance Pearl' WHITE WAXFLOWER (Myrtaceae) Western Australia

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March Plant Forum

Chamelaucium megalopetalum. 'Esperance Pearl' is one of the best of these new hybrids, with large 1" waxy flowers in great profusion on a compact 4-5' tall shrub. It grows easily in full sun in well-drained soil (it can be short-lived in clay), and benefits greatly from pruning or shearing after its winter-spring bloom. This is a very choice drought-tolerant evergreen garden shrub that is excellent for providing both cut-flowers and cut-foilage for bouquets. Cold-hardy to 25° F. (Buena Creek Gardens, San Marcos, 3/08) – S.B.

Cotula lineariloba BRASS BUTTONS (Asteraceae)
South Africa

This low ground cover is distinctive because of its soft, silvery green, feathery foliage. It spreads quickly with regular watering to cover a 5' by 5' area, likes full sun to partial shade, and forms a compact mat to just 6" tall. In winter and spring, it has a spectacular bloom of 1" round bright-yellow balls perched atop thin, 6" tall stems. This is an excellent coastal plant that also does well inland. It will tolerate some drought, but does much better with regular watering. Hardy to at least 25° F. (Buena Creek Gardens, San Marcos, 3/08) – S.B.

Euphorbia characias 'Tasmanian Tiger' TASMANIAN TIGER EUPHORBIA (Euphorbiaceae)
Mediterranean Sea Region (Horticultural Selection)

This is one of the finest new variegated plants on the market today. It's a small shrub, to about 3' by 3', which is well-adapted to our sunny skies and alkaline water – but it has wonderful white and green striped foliage which never varies. Plus, it has interesting spikes of similarly variegated flower bracts in winter and spring. Although this plant does fine as a garden plant here in full sun to light shade, it practically demands center-stage in a combination container planting with black and chartreuse plants, and is useful in many other combinations. Average watering, and hardy to 20° F. (Buena Creek Gardens, San Marcos, 3/08) – S.B.

Gaura lindheimeri 'Passionate Rainbow'
RAINBOW GAURA (Onagraceae) Horticultural Hybrid

Gaura lindheimeri is a drought-tolerant perennial native to Texas and Louisiana, with delicate white (aging to pink) butterfly-shaped flowers blooming at the ends of long wands. This long-blooming plant will enliven the garden spring through fall, and a number of worthwhile cultivars are available. The one displayed, 'Passionate Rainbow', is distinguished by having variegated foliage which has quite a bit of dark pink in it. The pink flowers are very attractive, and the plant has proven pest-free in my garden. It grows to about 30" tall and about 24" wide. I cut mine almost to the ground when it finally quit blooming, and it has come back fuller than ever. Does best with very good drainage in full sun. (Buena Creek Gardens, San Marcos, 2/08) – S.T.B.

Salvia discolor ANDEAN SAGE (Lamiaceae (Labiatae)) Peru

If there ever was a plant sure to make a kid say, "Ewww," this is it! *Salvia discolor* is notable for it's mid-green leaves with a felty-white underside; if you can plant it where it can be viewed from below, that would be swell. This evergreen perennial is easily distinguished by it's shiny, sticky stems, and I've often seen small

March Plant Forum

insects stuck to them. The flowers are also curious – such a dark violet they're almost black, and held inside a pale green calyx. Betsy Clebsh's excellent book, *The New Book of Salvias*, notes that this species can reach up to 3' tall and wide in the Rivas, but in my Encinitas garden it rarely exceeded 2' tall. It has a scandant habit, winding through other plants or spreading slowly without climbing upwards. It doesn't need a full day of sun, though it will certainly accept that. Not hardy to frost, so if you live in a cold area you should bring it indoors for the winter. (Buena Creek Gardens, San Marcos, 2/08) – S.T-B.

Thanks to everyone who brought plants to the meeting; they were discussed by **Steve Brigham**. In addition to those described above, the plants listed below were also displayed.

What's that in front of the plant name? Plants marked 3 are fully described in the *Plant Forum Compilation* (see page 20). Plants marked O were part of the Opportunity Drawing. Can you spot the phony plant this month? The phony plant in the March newsletter was *Sedum rupestre* 'Brangelina' PAPARAZZI SEDUM.

- O *Alstroemeria* 'Evelyn' YELLOW PERUVIAN LILY (Buena Creek Gardens, San Marcos, 2/08)
- O *Alstroemeria* 'Purple Passion' PURPLE PERUVIAN LILY (Buena Creek Gardens, San Marcos, 2/08)
- O *Alstroemeria* 'Rose Red' ROSE RED PERUVIAN LILY (Buena Creek Gardens, San Marcos, 2/08)
- Bulbinella cauda-felis* (Sheldon Lisker, Temecula, 3/08)
- Bulbinella latifolia* var. *doleritica* (Sheldon Lisker, Temecula, 3/08)
- Bulbinella nutans* (Sheldon Lisker, Temecula, 3/08)
- Ceanothus* 'Dark Star' SMALL LEAF MOUNTAIN LILAC (Arlene Palmer, Crest, 3/08)
- Clivia* 'Smallest Most Precious' (Lucy Warren, San Diego, 3/08)
- 3 *Dendrobium speciosum* ROCK LILY (Charley & Sue Fouquette, El Cajon, 3/08)
- Erica* sp. or cv. HEATHER (Ann Mendez, San Diego, 3/08)
- Euphorbia obesa* BASEBALL PLANT, SEA URCHIN (Louise Anderson, San Marcos, 3/08)
- Euphorbia ovoidii* FOOTBALL PLANT, SEA URCHIN (Line Backer, San Marcos, 3/08)
- O *Euphorbia* 'Tasmanian Tiger' TASMANIAN TIGER EUPHORBIA (Buena Creek Gardens, San Marcos, 2/08)
- Hakea franciscana* (Sheldon Lisker, Temecula, 3/08)
- Hardenbergia violacea* 'Happy Wanderer' PURPLE LILAC VINE (Cathy Tylka, Escondido, 3/08)
- Hippeastrum papilio* 'Butterfly' BUTTERFLY AMARYLLIS (Lucy Warren, San Diego, 3/08)
- O *Juncus effusus* 'Unicorn' BAD HAIR PLANT (Buena Creek Gardens, San Marcos, 3/08)
- Kalanchoe waldheimii* (Sue Fouquette, El Cajon, 3/08)

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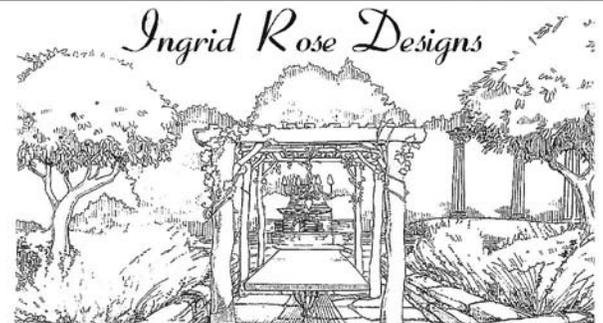
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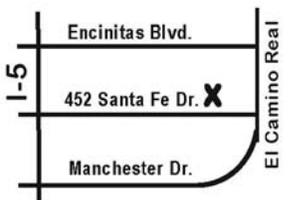
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March Plant Forum

Muscari armeniacum 'Dark Eyes' GRAPE HYACINTH
 (Sue Fouquette, El Cajon, 3/08)

○ 3 *Pelargonium cordifolium* HEART-LEAF PELARGONIUM
 (Buena Creek Gardens, San Marcos, 308)

Pelargonium cotyledonis (Ann Mendez, San Diego, 3/08)

Pelargonium filicifolium (perhaps *P. carnosum*?)
 (Arlene Palmer, Crest, 3/08)

○ *Pelargonium ionidiflorum* PINK FAIRY CASCADE
 (Buena Creek Gardens, San Marcos, 3/08)

○ *Penstemon heterophyllus* 'Margarita BOP' FOOTHILL
 PENSTEMON (Buena Creek Gardens, San Marcos, 3/08)

○ *Phormium* 'Platt's Black' BLACK NEW ZEALAND FLAX
 (Buena Creek Gardens, San Marcos, 3/08)

○ *Polygala myrtifolia* var. *grandiflora* SWEET PEA BUSH
 (Buena Creek Gardens, San Marcos, 3/08)

○ *Polygala virgata* PURPLE BROOM
 (Buena Creek Gardens, San Marcos, 3/08)

○ *Prostanthera ovalifolia* (UCSC purple selection) PURPLE
 MINTBUSH (Buena Creek Gardens, San Marcos, 3/08)

Psilotum sp. or cv. (?) (Ellary Branden, El Cajon, 3/08)

○ *Salvia fruticosa* GREEK SAGE
 (Buena Creek Gardens, San Marcos, 308)

Scabiosa farinosa (Dwarf Pincushion Bush)
 (Phil Tacktil, Solana Beach, 3/08)

Sedum humifusum(?) (Phil Tacktil, Solana Beach, 3/08)

Sedum nussbaumerianum (Sue Fouquette, El Cajon, 3/08)

Watsonia sp. or cv. BUGLE LILY (Sue Fouquette, El Cajon, 3/08)

How to read the entries above.

① *Pastryus dulcis*. ② 'Cheerio' ③ DONUT PLANT ④ Pastryaceae ⑤ 7-Eleven to Vons
 ⑥ This fast-growing annual produces copious quantities of distinctive edible fruit
 that is circular in shape with a central hole. The fruit resembles a donut, from which the
 common name derives. Provide ample moisture. ⑦ Betty Crocker, San Diego, 5/96—⑧ K.M.

① Latin name [*Pastryus dulcis*]; bold names indicate plants with full descriptions.

② Cultivar ['Cheerio']

③ Common Name [DONUT PLANT]

④ Family [Pastryaceae]

⑤ Distribution [7-Eleven to Vons]

⑥ Description, comments, cultural directions [This fast-growing...]

⑦ Name & city of member; date plant displayed [Betty Crocker, San Diego, 5/96]

⑧ Initials of person who wrote description [K.M.]

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March Meeting Report

By Cindy Sparks

When I heard the title of Marcia Donahue's talk, "Planting Sculpture, Sculpting Plants," I was curious to see how such a thing could be done. When I listened to Marcia and saw slides of her beautiful garden, I began to understand how she blends the two worlds. The on-going collaboration between Marcia and her garden, creators both, produces an ever-changing and beautiful work. She referred to "the kinetic sculpture of gardening." While the images were motionless slides, they gave us views of a world in motion: blowing in gentle breezes, growing, ever-changing, and reaching out for interplay and interpretation from the human visitors whom she generously hosts each Sunday afternoon.

Marcia shared with us an enthusiasm for creativity and emotional expression. She urged us to "Be as playful as you care or dare to be." She sees a garden as a place for experiment as well as experience, a place for ongoing improvisation. Her love of sculpture, whether ceramic or stone, glowed from every corner. Faces smiling serenely from the bottom of a pool, gazing enigmatically from a forest structure, or peering from the transient figure of a favorite Goddess Flora all bid welcome to the viewer. She cautioned us that every piece of sculpture should look like it was planted there, as if by seed. Green moss softened the faces. In some places, the sculpture actively embraced the surrounding plants. In others, it was the plants. Curious about *Bambusa ceramica*? You won't find that in your Hortus volumes, better to check your kiln. It wasn't until the Q&A session that she revealed her secrets for the beautiful and colorful *Bambusa* specimens she had so thoughtfully presented in their various garden settings. Colors blazed like no bamboo I have ever seen, and yet they made me smile. Humor was everywhere, from the bowling balls in the acanthus thicket to the cairn path markers ("You're not lost. You are here."). Marcia opened up her garden with seriously vertical shapes. Those made of plants promptly grew upward and totally changed the light on the now-forest floor. Those made of stone found themselves enveloped in welcoming green arms.

"Feel that contentment for a moment," she urged, "but not too long; there's work to be done." I silently applauded her good-humored choice to "add a piece of nuttiness to an otherwise seriously perfect garden." Perhaps I should borrow a couple of her stone pillows, left for the voyager's repose. The stone will ensure I don't get too comfy. I'll also add a Wish Fulfilling Stone and perhaps an altar to Divine Decay (the compost bins). Even the bacteria get to "nestle in for a bit of garden contentment." Thank you, Marcia, for sharing such a rich fabric of plant, stone and sculpture.

Steve Brigham from Buena Creek Gardens led the Plant Forum discussion, and brought in an excellent selection of plants for the Opportunity Drawing. Thanks for doing an outstanding job, Steve. 🌿

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Take 10% off membership fees at **Quail Botanical Gardens**.

SEE THESE ADS FOR MORE DISCOUNTS: **Barrels & Branches, Cedros Gardens, IGS, Kniffing's Discount Nurseries, Pacific Horticulture, The Plant Man** and **Solana Succulents**.

Ask for your member discount when you go to **Daniel's Specialty Nursery**.

Lecturers Needed for a National Garden Clubs, Inc. four day landscape design study program in Temecula on Sept. 2-5, 2008. Eleven chapters from the textbook "Stewards of the Land, A Survey of Landscape Architecture and Design in America," by Marilyn K. Alaimo, et al. are open. Lecturer's fee and gasoline reimbursement will be provided.

For more information contact Pat Claves, California Garden Clubs, Inc. Landscape Design Study Program Chairman, at patclaves@aol.com or 909-337-6911.

See also: www.geocities.com/LDSPTemecula, www.CaliforniaGardenClubs.org, and www.GardenClub.org.



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Going on a Water Diet Continued from page 11

and shading the soil. Even if you're tired, don't skimp – you'll be glad you put that extra bit down!

DESIGN FOR YOUR CLIMATE

Let's all stop pretending that we live in a rainy climate! We're nearly a desert in terms of rainfall, so why grow so many plants and lawns in our gardens that need tons of precious water to survive? It may go without saying, but if you grow plants that naturally come from dry climates, you won't have to water them as much. Fortunately for us, these include some of the most beautiful plants and flowers in the world (including many of the world's best hummingbird plants), and so many gardeners around the world would love to be able to grow them like we can! In addition, they all just look so much more appropriate under our sunny San Diego skies!

Shrubby plants and succulents from such regions as our desert Southwest (including northern Mexico), central and south coastal California, southern and western Australia, South Africa, and the Mediterranean Sea are all well-adapted to our climate once they are established, and will need far less watering than water-loving annuals and wet-climate perennials and shrubs. Just remember to water your drought-tolerant plants regularly their first full year in the ground, since they won't be drought-tolerant at all until they have developed a big root system. But once they have (and you have them well-mulched), they can go a really long time between waterings.

DESIGN FOR YOUR SITE

One final, and perhaps rather obvious tip – and that is to know your garden's microclimates. Most of us have drier places and wetter places in our gardens just because of their relative exposure to sun and wind. Hot, south-facing slopes, for example, can dry out really quickly no matter what you do, whereas those cool, shady areas under trees or near the house don't dry out nearly as quickly. Why not just plant really drought-tolerant plants in the naturally drier areas, and leave the cooler zones for plants that need a little more water? Then you won't be fighting your climate, but actually working with it!

TELL YOUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS!

A full half of our precious imported water in San Diego County is used to irrigate our landscapes? Well, that's what they say. If everyone that lives here read this series and actually did the things I've been writing about, how much water could we all save? The answer is – a lot! But most people simply don't know – or don't care.

You can help! Tell your friends, and tell your neighbors, that saving water outdoors is possible and easy, if they do the right things. Help them with their gardens, and make your own neighborhood more beautiful and responsible in the process! If there's one thing we know for sure, it's that we'll always have long, dry summers. And we may be in for more water-cutbacks in the future. But we'll never have to stop enjoying our gardens, as long as we follow "The 30% Solution!"

Member Steve Brigham is a founding board member of SDHS and owner of Buena Creek Gardens (see ads pages 17 and 20). He's also the author of our book, *Ornamental Trees for Mediterranean Climates*. ☞

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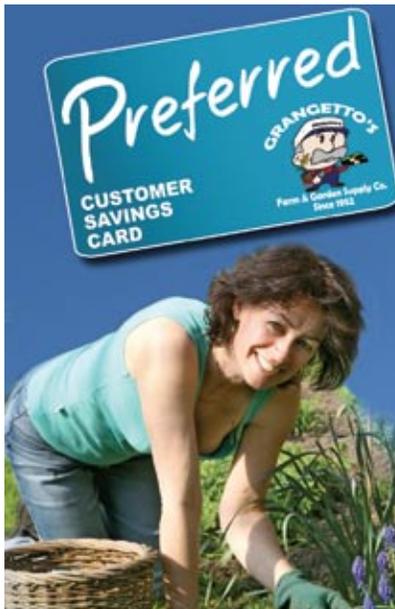
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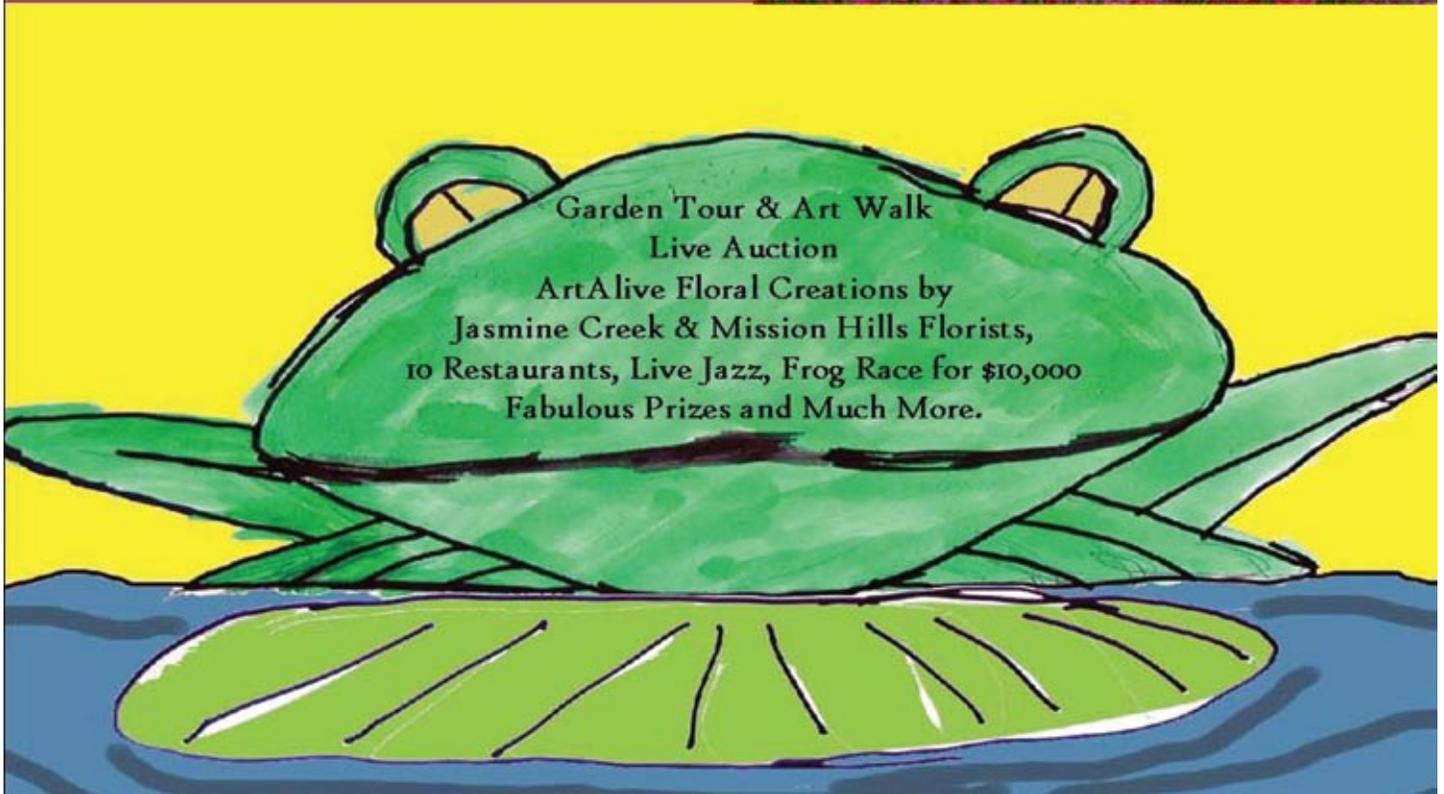
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What's Happening? for April 2008

The SDHS is happy to publicize items of horticultural interest. See other side for resources & ongoing events.
Send calendar listings by the 10th of the month before the event to calendar@sdhortsoc.org.

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www.AndersonsLacostaNursery.com

Hello to all and welcome to April – also known as National Gardening Month. It is just fantastic outside as I am working on the newsletter – made prettier by all the great blooms, scents and colors outside the office. Now that we are “officially” into spring I intend to enjoy every minute of it. More plants will be in bloom this month than any other time of the year & we will try to have *all* of them.

We'd like to invite you all join us each Saturday morning on our weekly radio show "In the Garden" on AM 1000 KCEO radio. It airs each Saturday at 8:00 AM on AM 1000 radio. Tune in and try to win gift certificates by answering our weekly trivia questions during the show or to ask us your pressing garden questions. Now – let's head out and see.....

What's new at the nursery:

- Bougainvilleas making a strong appearance including Camarillo Festival and Rosenka.
- Japanese Maples (Acer Palmatum) – some in 24" box size – specimens over 10 ft. tall.
- Wisteria sinensis in full bloom (purple & white). Wonderful scent – deciduous in winter. Try planting with a companion vine like Pyrostygia (Flame Vine) for year round interest. Pyrostygia blooms in winter when not much else is in bloom.
- Lots of flowering vines arriving including Clematis (the evergreen 'Avalanche'), Passion Flower, Thunbergia (orange, lemon/yellow), Solanum jasminoides (Potato Vine), Lavender Trumpet Vine, Senicio.
- The Hydrangeas have arrived – pink, white & blue including the popular 'Endless Summer' variety.
- The Clivia are really fabulous – orange, peach & yellow.
- Lots of bedding perennials and annuals – too many to even begin to list but some that will catch your eye as you come in: Marigolds, Columbine (Rose/White & Yellow), Nemesia (huge blooms), Petunias (the Lilac ones are my favorite – also have the Red, White & Blue six packs), Anemone Poppies, Argyranthemum (Marguerite Daisy), Cosmos, Zinnia.
- Instant fabulous color in hanging baskets – Lotus, Petunia combos, Scaevola, Diaschia & Superbells combo, Osteospermum (Yellow & Orange).
- Some beautiful indoor Hydrangeas in our greenhouse in 4, 6 & 8" sizes. Great color for your Spring decorating.
- 6" Mums – pretty pastels – long lasting.
- Spring Cactus in 2", 4" and 8" hanging. The 2" make great table decorations.
- Red Leaf palms in 5 gallon.
- Baby Queen palms – 12-15' tall, trunks resemble Bamboo. A great palm and not too tall.
- Lots of Fuchsias in 4, 6 & 8" sizes (upright, hanging AND Patio Trees) – heavily budded.

The Water Conservation Garden (contact info on other side)

- Apr. 4, 10am - noon, Saving Water and Money for Your HOA:** Free to HOA Managers, Board Members, associated Landscape Personnel. Please pre-register.
- Apr. 5, 10am - noon, Designing with Native Plants:** Proper care/placement of natives. \$10/members, \$15/non-members. Pre-registration required.
- Apr. 12, 10am - noon, Home Compost Workshop:** Learn the basics of composting. Free. Call the Solana Center at (760) 436-7986 x-225.
- Apr. 16, 6 - 8pm, Hillside Gardening NEW!** Erosion control, plant choices, terracing, more! Pre-registration required; \$20/members, \$25/non-members.
- Apr. 19, 9:30am - 12:30pm, Xeriscape: Beautiful Landscape on a Low-Water Budget:** Please pre-register. \$20/members, \$30/non-members.
- Apr. 26, 9am - 3pm, 15th Annual Spring Garden Festival:** SEE INSERT.

Mar 30, 11am - 4pm, North County Earth Day Celebration: Including sale of organically-grown plants, 10am organic garden tour, vendors, much more! Mission San Luis Rey, 4050 Mission Ave., Oceanside. www.sanluisrey.org.

Apr. 1, 7:30pm, San Diego County Orchid Society: Novice class 6:30pm room 104, General meeting (program TBA) 7:30pm room 101. You do not need to be a member to attend. FREE. Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. www.sdorchids.com.

Apr. 2, 6:30pm, Palomar Orchid Society: Class for beginners - 6:30pm, meeting begins at 7. FREE, open to everyone. Carlsbad Women's Club, 3320 Monroe St. Carlsbad. www.palomarorchid.org.

Apr. 2, 7pm, San Diego Herb Club: Bill Tall of City Farmers Nursery speaks on herbs for San Diego County. Raffle Ticket sales/Refreshments until 7:30pm Plant raffle at end of program. Free, Visitors welcome. Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park.

Apr. 4, 1:30pm, Vista Garden Club: Bob Dimattia on the wonders of bamboo. Gloria McClellan Senior Center, 1400 Vale Terrace Dr. Bldg. A, Vista. (760) 630-0383 or vistagardenclub.org.

Apr. 4, 4 - 9pm, Apr. 5, 9am - 6pm, Apr. 6, 9am - 4pm, San Diego County Orchid Society 62nd Annual Show and Sale: Scottish Rite Center, 1895 Camino del Rio, San Diego. Info: Steve (619) 405-0412 or www.sdorchids.com.

Apr. 5, 9am, Gloves On Learning Workshop: California Coastal Rose Society, topic: spraying roses and pest control. At Magee Garden, located on the corner of Beech Ave. and Garfield St., Carlsbad. (760) 804-0875.

Apr. 5, Walter Andersen Nursery Classes: 9:00am, Water Gardens, (San Diego: 3642 Enterprise Street, (619) 224-8271); **9:30am, Vegetables: Spring & Summer** (Poway, 12755 Danielson Court, (858) 513-4900) www.walterandersen.com.

Apr. 5, 9am - 2pm, Hike Garnet Peak: Anza-Borrego Desert Natural History Association; call for reservations and meeting place. \$15/Members, \$18/non-members, \$13/volunteers. (760) 767-3098 or www.abdnha.org.

Apr. 5 & 6, 10am - 4pm, So. California Plumeria Society Cutting Sale & Show: Free, cash/checks only. Rm 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. www.socalplumeriasociety.com.

Apr. 7, 12:30pm, Floral Design Forum: Mary Poythress shares her years of designing; \$8/session. The Woman's Club of Carlsbad, 3320 Monroe St., Carlsbad, (760) 749-4976.

Apr. 7, 6:30pm, San Diego Mycological Society: Program TBA. Bring in mushrooms to identify, share recipes, food. Room 101, Casa del Prado Balboa Park. www.sdmyco.org

Apr. 8, noon, Dos Valles Garden Club: "Get Ready for the Flower Show." St. Stephen Catholic Church, 31020 Cole Grade Rd., Valley Center. www.dosvallesgardenclub.org.

Apr. 8, 7pm, San Diego Geranium Society: Learn about geraniums and pelargoniums. Room 101, Casa de Prado, Balboa Park. www.sdgeranium.org.

Apr. 9, 9am, Poway Valley Garden Club: Jayna Wittevrongel discusses the Del Mar Flower & Garden Show. Templar Hall, Old Poway Park; 14134 Midland Rd., Poway. home.san.r.com/pvgc.

Apr. 9, Bonita Valley Garden Club: Bonita Valley Public Library, 4375 Bonita Road, Bonita. (858) 451-6764.

Apr. 9, 10am, Point Loma Garden Club: Program TBA. Guests welcome. Portuguese Hall, 2818 Avenida de Portugal, San Diego. www.plgc.org.

Apr. 9, noon, Ramona Garden Club: Jim Bathgate about rare fruit to grow in Ramona. All welcome. Women's Club, 524 Main St., Ramona. www.ramonagadenclub.com.

Apr. 9, 7:30pm, San Diego Epiphyllum Society: Cutting party at 6pm. General program TBA. Room 101, casa del Prado, Balboa Park. www.epiphyllum.com.

Quail Botanical Gardens - see insert for classes & events

- Apr. 10, 9am - 2pm, Succulent Wreath Class:
- Apr. 20, 2-4pm, Floral Design with David Root:
- Apr. 22, 29, May 6, 13, 20 & 27, 9:30 - 11:30am, Ikebana-Japanese Flower Arranging:

Apr. 11 - 13, 9am - 6pm, San Diego Museum of Art - Art Alive: A floral extravaganza featuring a number of floral events. (619) 696-1999 or www.sdmart/artalive.html.

Apr. 12, Walter Andersen Nursery: 9:00am, Herbs (San Diego, see Apr. 5) **9:30am, Rose Care** (Poway; see Apr. 5).

Apr. 12, 1pm, San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society: Program TBA. Admission free; everyone welcome. Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. www.sdcss.com.

Apr. 13, 1pm, Southern California Plumeria Society: Program TBA. War Memorial Building, Balboa Park. www.socalplumeriasociety.com.

Apr. 13, 1:30pm Mabel Corwin Branch American Begonia Society: Ed Bates on species begonias. Bring begonias or companion plants to show. (760) 230-1073.

Apr. 13, 1:30 - 4pm, Apr. 14 & 15, 9am - 5pm, San Diequito Garden Club Flower Show: Free w/admission to Quail Gardens. (858) 755-3284. sdgclmmicro.com

April 14, 6:00PM - Details on Page 3 Developing Bioenergy from Camelina

Apr. 15, 6:15pm, California Coastal Rose Society: Pre-meeting at 6:15pm 7pm general meeting. Heritage Hall at Magee Park, 2650 Garfield Street, Carlsbad. www.californiacoastalrose.com.

Apr. 15, 7pm, Calif. Native Plant Society: Encouraging birds/butterflies with a native plant garden. Open to the public - free. Room 104, Casa del Prado, Balboa. www.cnpsd.org.

Apr. 16, 7pm, San Diego Cymbidium Society: Non-members welcome. Women's Club of Carlsbad, 3320 Monroe St., Carlsbad. (818) 782-9562.

Apr. 17, 7:30pm, San Diego Fern Society: Guests welcome. Rm 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. www.sdfem.com.

Apr. 19, Walter Andersen Nursery: 9:00am. Azaleas. (San Diego; see Apr. 5) **9:30am.** Flowers for Spring & Summer. (Poway; see Apr. 5).

Apr. 19, 10am, San Diego Bromeliad Society: Bromeliads of Venezuela by noted author Francisco Oliva-Esteve. Free; visitors welcome. Also, book signing and sale. Special meeting in Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. (858) 453-6486 or www.bsi.org/webpages/san_diego.html.

Apr. 19, 1:30 – 5:30pm, Apr. 20, 11am – 4pm, Dos Valles Garden Club Flower Show: St. Stephen Catholic Church, 31020 Cole Grade Rd. Valley Center. www.dosvallesgardenclub.org.

Apr. 19 & 20, Coronado Flower Show: Plant sale the 19th, 8am – noon. Flower Show and Marketplace opens 1pm the 19th, 10am the 20th. \$3/person. www.coronadoflowershow.com

Apr. 19 & 20, 10am – 4pm, Fullerton Arboretum Green Scene Plant Sale and Garden Show: 100 vendors selling plants, garden accessories, much more! \$6 per person, children under 12 free. 1900 Associated Road at Yorba Linda Blvd., Fullerton. (714) 278-3579 or www.arboretum.fullerton.edu.

Apr. 21, 7:30pm, San Diego Rose Society Meeting and Show: Free. Visitors welcome. Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. www.sdrosesociety.org.

Apr. 23, 10am, Ikebana International: Japanese floral arrangement. Rm 104, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, (858) 759-2640.

Apr. 23, 6pm, California Rare Fruit Growers San Diego Chapter: How to select and plant rare fruit trees. Room 104, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. www.crfgsandiego.org.

Apr. 23, 6pm, Mission Hills Garden Club: Create you own succulent garden with cuttings from your yard. \$10/guests. United Church of Christ, 4070 Jackdaw St.; www.missionhillsgardenclub.org.

April 24, 10:30am, "Exclamation, Accentuation, Punctuation": Dan Hinkley, one of the world's most influential horticulturists, on using good design principles to create beautiful gardens. Village Garden Club of La Jolla. \$15/guests. Torrey Pines Christian Church Auditorium, 8320 La Jolla Scenic Dr. N., La Jolla. Info: 858 587-9840. www.villagegardenclubofajolla.com

Apr. 26, Walter Andersen Nursery: 9:00am, Epiphyllum (Orchid Cactus) (San Diego; see Apr. 5); **9:30am** Preparing Roses for a Show (Poway; see Apr. 5).

Apr. 26, 10am – 4pm, Point Loma Garden Club Plant Sale: In conjunction with the Garden Walk (see garden tours Apr. 26) and tickets to the Walk are not required for the plant sale. 3215 Tennyson Street. San Diego. www.plgc.org.

Apr. 26, 2 – 6pm, Apr. 27, 10am – 4pm, Fallbrook Garden Club Flower Show: Free. Fallbrook Community Center, 341 Heald Ln., Fallbrook. www.geocities.com/fallbrookgardenclub.

Apr. 28, 2pm, Lake Hodges Native Plant Club: Rancho Bernardo Public Library, 17110 Bernardo Center Drive, San Diego. www.lhncp.org.

Garden Tours

Apr. 5, 9am – 3pm, Fallbrook Garden Tour: Some of Fallbrook's finest private gardens; some vintage cars will be displayed. Tickets/maps can be purchased the day of the tour for \$20/each or two for \$35. Fallbrook Historical Society, 260 Rockycrest Rd., Fallbrook.

Apr. 12, 10am, Buena Creek garden Tour: Steve Brigham will present the tour, over 5,000 outstanding varieties can be viewed. 418 Buena Creek Rd., San Marcos, (760) 744-2810 or www.buenacreekgardens.com.

Apr. 20, 10am – 3pm, Bernardo Gardeners Club Garden Tour: Five gardens; purchase tickets day of the tour at any location. \$15/tickets may be purchased by mailing a check to Bernardo Gardeners Club – must be received by Apr. 10. Send to Adele Kelly, PO Box 27179, San Diego, CA 92198-1179. (858) 673-8728 or bernardogardeners.org.

Apr. 25, 10am – 3pm, Lake Hodges Native Plant Club Garden Tour – SEE PAGE 10

Apr. 26, 9am, American Association of University Women Garden Tour: Five fabulous North County Gardens will feature Mediterranean, tropical, succulent, bonsai plantings and garden art. Ticket orders must be received no later than April 19. \$25. Del Mar-Leucadia. Tickets: (858) 947-5167, Information: (858) 509-9822.

Apr. 26, 9am – 3pm, Ramona Garden Tour: Visit several unique inland county gardens. Tickets (\$15) can be purchased in advance by sending a check to the Ramona Garden Club Attn: Garden Tour, PO Box 1412, Ramona CA 92065 (760) 518-8890.

Apr. 26, 10am – 4pm, Point Loma Garden walk: Over a dozen Point Loma gardens. \$15/advance, \$20/day of event. www.pointlomagardenwalk.com.

Apr. 26, 10am – 4pm, Elfin Forest Garden Festival – SEE PAGE 6.

Apr. 27, 2 – 6pm, San Diego Rose Society Open Garden: Dick & Sue Streeper's Open Garden 1333 Wenatchee Ave., El Cajon. All are welcome. Info: streeper@cox.net

Resources & Ongoing Events

QUAIL BOTANICAL GARDENS: Open daily 9-5 (closed Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's Day); 230 Quail Gardens Dr., Encinitas. Fee: \$10/adults, \$7/seniors, \$5/kids; parking \$1. Free to members and on the first Tuesday of every month. (760) 436-3036; www.qbgardens.org

WATER CONSERVATION GARDEN: Open 9-4 daily, free. Docent-led tours every Saturday at 10:30am & Sunday at 1:30pm. 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) 694-2860, 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. For information, events, road conditions, etc. call (760) 767-5311 or visit <http://desertusa.com/wildflo/wildupdates.html>.

WILDFLOWER HOTLINE: March to May call the Theodore Payne Foundation hotline: (818) 768-3533 for info. on blooms in So. California and elsewhere; visit <http://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. Open Friday–Wednesday, 10am to 4pm.

Botanical Library. Room 105, Casa del Prado, Mon.-Fri. and first Sat., 10am-3pm, (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

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

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

S.D. 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 TV and Radio Shows

Anderson's La Costa Nursery Radio Show: Saturdays 8:00 – 9:00 am on KCEO Radio AM 1000. Timely garden tips, caller questions, guests.

Garden Compass Radio Show. Sat. and Sun., 8–9am. KPOP 1360, hosts Bruce and Sharon Asakawa, John Bagnasco. Call-in questions: (619) 570-1360 or (800) 660-4769.

And now we head on out to get going...

April in the garden means warmer weather and longer days with no fear of frost. Does it get any better?

Fertilize: Plants grow at a phenomenal rate in the spring. Feed lawns, roses, shrubs and trees (just about everything) with a balanced fertilizer. Use an acid fertilizer on azaleas, gardenias and camellias after they flower.

Pinch/Prune: Pinch annuals and perennials for dense growth and more bloom. Prune spring-flowering shrubs when they finish blooming.

Hedges and shrubs start growing quickly now. Shrubs that have a growth to over 6 feet need frequent pruning during the warm months to keep as a shrub. For flowering shrubs – prune after flowering rather than before.

Azaleas: April is the best month to plant azaleas. Most are in bloom now which means their roots are dormant and therefore the safest time to disturb the roots in planting. Plant azaleas in tubs or the ground in partial shade and keep evenly moist.

Bulbs: Do not cut off the leaves of your finished spring flowering bulbs until the leaves are completely yellow – fertilize as they die back with Bone Meal or Bulb Food. Plant around them and look forward to seeing them again next early spring.

Water. Check and program your irrigation system. Fix clogs and broken sprinklers; adjust spray heads. Begin watering as weather warms. Apply a fresh layer of organic mulch to conserve moisture.

Controlling Spring Weeds: Weeds always seem to get an early jump on you in spring. Before you know it they're competing with desirable plants robbing them of light, water and nutrients. They also look terrible!! Here is my favorite way to control weeds - Add Mulch - a thick layer of organic mulch will smother weed seeds preventing young weeds from reaching the surface and weeds that do get through will be easier to pull.

Spring Feeding: For plants spring is a time of vigorous growth and renewal but if the proper nutrients are not available in the soil all plants can get off to a slow start and grow poorly through the rest of the year.

Thin fruit on young trees: Deciduous fruit trees will often produce a heavy crop the second and third years after planting. Fruit should be thinned while the trees are young as this will produce larger fruit, promote foliage growth and generally strengthen the tree.

Feed and Water Roses: To keep roses blooming and healthy over a long period after each cycle of blooming occurs cut the spent flowers, fertilize and water thoroughly.

Prune Shrubs: Check shrubs and ground covers this month to see if they need pruning. Hedges in particular make rapid growth this month and should be sheared back before they get out of control. Azaleas can be cut back when they are finished blooming.

Pest control: Spray for caterpillars - they are now becoming wide awake and hungry - BT (a product from Safer) will affect caterpillars but no other insects. Spider mites are most active in the warmer weather. Spraying with chemical sprays can make your problem worse as this will also kill the beneficial pests that help keep the ones you do not want under control. Insecticidal soaps are the least harmful.

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Quail Botanical Gardens



is looking for plants suitable for our new Children's Garden, which will be built on the four acres of land acquired from the City of Encinitas adjacent to the Gardens along Quail Gardens Drive.

At this time, we are looking for the following:

- Mature specimens of fruitless olive trees like the Swan Hill Olive.
- Large Aloes.
- Specimens of *Beaucarnia* species: *B. stricta*, *B. gracillis*, *B. guatemalensis* with a caudex the size of a basketball or larger.
- Epiphytes that like full sun.

If you have any of the plants listed above and would like to donate them, please call Dave Ehrlinger, Director of Horticulture at 760/ 436-3036 x211 or you can email him at derlhinger@qbgardens.org

Thank you!



Flowers in Wonderland

19th Annual Standard Flower Show at Quail Botanical Gardens



April 11, 1:30 – 4 pm

April 12, 10 am – 4 pm

April 13, 10 am – 4 pm

The San Dieguito Garden Club of Encinitas is presenting their annual flower show featuring “Flowers in Wonderland.” See the White Rabbit and Alice as they journey down the rabbit hole into a spectacular fantasy of flower designs.

On Saturday, from 12 noon - 2 pm, there will be some children’s activities including a treasure hunt and flower arranging.

Entries are open to non-professional horticulture and floral design exhibitors. Judging will be by accredited judges from the National Garden Clubs, Inc. Flower Show entry forms are available at the Gardens.

For more information call Event Chair Geri Thirloway at 858/ 755-3284

Cost: Free with admission to the Gardens

*Quail Botanical Gardens
230 Quail Gardens Drive, Encinitas
760/ 436-3036 x206
www.qbgardens.org*



Certification Classes

Quail Botanical Gardens is offering certification classes where students can learn about plants in depth. Upon attendance of all sessions offered in a class, students will receive a Certificate of Accomplishment from Quail Botanical Gardens.

The Study of Propagation **Thursdays, April 10, 17, and 24, 7 – 9 pm** **Saturday, April 26, 9 am – 12 noon**

Learn how to start plants from seed, cuttings, and division from master propagator Mary McBride and QBG horticulturist Liz Rozycki. On Saturday, you will have hands-on experience in QBG's propagation nursery.

Cost: Members \$80, non-members \$100

Advance registration required. Please call 760/ 436-3036 x206



The Study of Bromeliads **Thursdays, May 15, 22, and 29, 7 – 9 pm** **Saturday, May 31, 9 am – 12 noon**



This class will begin with a general introduction to bromeliads by Robert Kopfstein of the San Diego Bromeliad Society. Then, Pamela Hyatt of Bird Rock Tropicals will focus on tillandsias and Jeffrey Kent of Kent's Bromeliads will talk about terrestrials and epiphytic tank type bromeliads. On Saturday there will be a tour of the bromeliads at Quail Botanical Gardens followed by a session on propagation by Robert Kopfstein and Jeremy Spath.

Cost: Members \$80, non-members \$100

Advance registration required. Please call 760/ 436-3036 x206

South African Plants for a California Garden **Thursdays, June 12, 19, and 26, 7 – 9 pm** **Saturday, June 28, 9 am – 12 Noon**

South Africa offers a wide variety of plants suitable for a "California Friendly" garden. During the evening classes, Jason Kubrock will teach you how to identify and care for these plants that demand little water and, yet, can look extremely lush in the landscape. On Saturday there will be a tour of the South African plants at Quail Botanical Gardens by Jeremy Spath.

Cost: Members \$80, non-members \$100

Advance registration required. Please call 760/ 436-3036 x206

