

Let's Talk Plants!

Newsletter of the San Diego Horticultural Society

February 2016, Number 257

Think Outside the Box

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Auxins – page 5

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On the Cover: Tropical look for the garden

SPECIAL EVENT: Chinese Garden Bus Trip

Huntington Botanical Gardens on **Wednesday, April 20**

Join SDHS members on a *docent-led tour* of the stunning Chinese Garden, among the largest Chinese-style gardens outside China. Designed to promote the rich traditions of Chinese culture, the garden is truly a cross-cultural effort.

After the tour we'll have about four hours to see other areas of the Botanical Gardens, including the new California Garden. The bus leaves San Diego at 7am and returns around 7:30pm. All fees & tip included; lunch at the Gardens is on your own.

Members-\$89, Guests-\$99

Space is limited - register ASAP

Details & registration at:

sdhort.org



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sdhs



The San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society presents:

Winter Cactus and Succulent Show and Sale

Saturday, February 13th, 2016

10:00 am - 4:00 pm

"Members Only" shopping from 9:00 - 10:00 am

Room 101 and Adjacent Patio area

Casa del Prado, Balboa Park

**Strange and Exotic plants from
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Small plants & Specimen plants

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For additional information visit: www.sdcss.net

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Plant Display Beauties - see page 17



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**WHEN IN
DROUGHT**

Save every day, every way.

This is **Serious** Water Conservation is Mandatory

Mandatory conservation measures include:

- Limiting outdoor watering days and times
- Watering only during the late evening or early morning hours
- Eliminating runoff from irrigation systems
- Repairing all leaks within 72 hours
- Using hoses with shut-off valves for washing cars (or use commercial car washes that re-circulate water)

Local rules vary. Find restrictions in effect in your community at whenindrought.org.



San Diego County
Water Authority

2016 Spring Garden Tour

Saturday, April 2nd, 9 AM to 4 PM



Showcasing the wonderfully diverse private gardens in Carmel Valley & Del Mar

Online ticket sales only:

Sdhort.org



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SAN DIEGO HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

OUR MISSION 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.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Renewal information is on page 20 and at www.sdhort.org.
For questions contact membership@sdhort.org
or Jim Bishop at (619) 296-9215.



MEETING SCHEDULE

6:00 – 6:45 Vendor sales, lending library, plant display, silent auction
6:45 – 8:30 Announcements, door prizes, speaker

MEETINGS & EVENTS

(FW = Free workshop; FG = Featured Garden; register at www.sdhort.org)

- March 4-6 Spring Home/Garden Show, Del Mar Fairgrounds
- March 13-18 SDHS Tour: Gardens of Puerto Vallarta, Mexico – see sterlingtoursltd.com
- March 14 Stephanie Shigematsu, Danny Simpson & Michael Letzring on Botanical Collection at the San Diego Zoo
- April 2 SDHS SPRING GARDEN TOUR – see pages 3 & 8
- April 11 David Fross on Perspective, Forty Years Among the Natives
- April 20 SDHS Day at The Huntington Bus Tour - see page 8
- May 9 Dennis Cathart on Bromeliads



www.sdhort.org

COVER IMAGE: These tropical looking plants thrive in our Mediterranean climate. Learn more from Dave Ericson, the man who created this delightful garden, at the February meeting.

NEXT MEETING: FEBRUARY 8, 2016, 6:00 – 8:30 PM

Speaker: Dave Ericson on *Think Outside the Box: Thirty Design and Horticultural Techniques for Creating Perfect Pairing, Focal Points and More*

Meeting is open and everyone is welcome. Admission: Members/free, Non-Members/\$15.

Parking is free.

Meeting Place: Del Mar Fairgrounds, Surfside Race Place, Del Mar; Info: (619) 296-9215



We welcome Dave Ericson, horticulturist, landscape designer and mentor who has been designing creative landscapes throughout Southern California for over 40 years. Thinking outside the box will be the primary focus of his presentation. Drawing from his lifelong experience in landscaping and gardening, Dave will present thirty different design and horticultural techniques, covering topics ranging from irrigation and drainage design to advanced design and maintenance techniques.

Dave attended Cal Poly Pomona where he studied Ornamental Horticulture. He has been self-employed in gardening and landscaping since the age of 10, from Santa Barbara to San Diego, and says, "My hobby is gardening, my future is gardening, and I expect to die in the garden where my ashes will be spread." His mentor was Chuck Kline, former Director of Horticulture at SeaWorld, where he and Dave spent many days walking the gardens. Dave feels one of his greatest contributions to horticulture is, in turn, mentoring many others in the business. He recently shared his knowledge in a popular San Diego Horticultural Society workshop. For the past two years, gardens he designed have been included in the Garden of the Year issue published by *San Diego Home/Garden Lifestyles* magazine.

For more information see page 6. 🌿

SAN DIEGO HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Established September 1994

BOARD MEMBERS

Lisa Bellora - Member-at-Large
Cindy Benoit - Membership Chair
Patty Berg - Volunteer Coordinator
Jeff Biletznikoff - Meeting Room Coordinator
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Susi Torre-Bueno - Newsletter Editor, Past President
Roy Wilburn - Outreach Coordinator

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

Editor: Susi Torre-Bueno;
(760) 295-2173; newsletter@sdhort.org

Advertising: Ellie Knight;
advertising@sdhort.org

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

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New Email? New Street Address?

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

BECOME A SPONSOR!

**Do you own a
garden-related business?**

SDHS sponsorships have high recognition and valuable benefits, including a link to your website, discounts on memberships for your employees, and free admission to SDHS events. This is a wonderful way to show your support for the SDHS. Sponsors help pay for our monthly meetings, annual college scholarships, and other important programs. Sponsorships start at just \$100/year; contact Jim Bishop at sponsor@sdhort.org. Sponsors are listed on page 10; look for "SDHS Sponsor" above their ads. We thank them for their support.

FREE WORKSHOP

Tomatoes – The King of the Spring Garden
Saturday, February 27, 10:30 am

SDHS board member Roy Wilburn, Horticulture Manager at Sunshine Care in Poway, will teach our February 27th workshop on Tomatoes. Roy will give you his take on all aspects of tomato production from seeding to harvest. You will get tips on varietal selection, soil preparation, fertilization, pest /disease control and cultural practices. He will touch on heirlooms, cherry tomatoes, Roma tomatoes and of course those delicious red vine-ripened tomatoes. Also, you will learn how to graft your own tomato seedlings for increased vigor and production.

This workshop will be held at Sunshine Care, a sponsor of SDHS (see ad page 13). Additional details and registration are at sdhort.org.

If you'd like to volunteer for the workshop committee contact Bruce Cobbledick at workshop@sdhort.org. ☞



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED (also see page 3)

Spring Home/Garden Show

Help us grow at the 2016 Spring Home/Garden Show. We will have an information table at this year's Expo and it promises to be a wonderful show. Held at the Del Mar fairgrounds, the show runs Friday, March 4 through Sunday, March 6. Volunteer for a 4-hour shift and spend the day before or after enjoying 17 award-winning indoor landscape designs, a garden marketplace, and everything imaginable for your home and garden on display. Free admission, and parking will be reimbursed. Watch the SDHS website for the sign up. Have fun and introduce new members to all the benefits of SDHS.

Spring Garden Tour

Help wanted! The 2016 Spring Garden Tour is just around the corner (see pages 3 and 8). This year we present the best of Del Mar and Carmel Valley. Have fun as a volunteer and enjoy the Tour before or after your shift as our guest. No special plant knowledge required. The ideal candidate is outgoing, dependable, and able to handle steps and hills. Watch for the sign up on the website. Questions? Contact Patty Berg, Volunteer Chair, at pattyjberg@gmail.com.

Tech Support Help at Meetings:

Do you have video and tech support skills, and also love to garden? We need a tech-savvy volunteer to help load speaker presentations onto a laptop prior to our monthly meeting, and to assist the speaker. Also, we are looking for an individual who can load past presentations onto the internet. Contact Jim Bishop: president@sdhort.org.

EMAIL OR ADDRESS CHANGES?

We know that you want to be informed about SDHS events and activities, such as the free Featured Gardens and upcoming tours, and to receive your newsletter in a timely manner. Please help us keep our membership info up to date by sending us your new email when you change it, and your new mailing address and phone number if you move. Send this info to membership@sdhort.org. ☞



FROM THE BOARD

By Jim Bishop

New Year's Resolutions

Did you make a New Year's resolution to make new friends, get more involved in gardening, learn more, or volunteer more? Or maybe you made no resolutions at all, but have some free time and like working with people. Well, whatever your situation, the San Diego Horticultural Society is the place for you!

We have a special need right now for help setting up before the meeting. This includes coordinating the vendors and helping arrange tables for plant display and handouts. The staff at the Fair does most of the setup, but sometimes tables need to be rearranged. Please contact Patty Berg at volunteer@sdhort.org if you can help.

Some of the upcoming events and activities in 2016 that we'll need volunteers for are: helping with setup and cleanup before and after monthly meetings, greeting new members at meetings, staffing information booths at gardening events (like the Spring and Fall Home/Garden Shows), the annual Garden Tour on April 2, and staffing our exhibit at the San Diego County Fair. If committee work is more to your liking, many of our committees need assistance scheduling and planning meetings, events, updating the website, writing articles for newsletter and communications. And we are always looking for people to host a Featured Garden or Workshop in their garden. Or, if you want to get even more involved, a number of board positions will be available next fall. If you would like to volunteer, please see page 2 and also contact Patty Berg at volunteer@sdhort.org. You can also contact board members directly by clicking on the email links at sdhort.org/contact.

Our monthly Featured Garden events are very popular. If you have or know of a garden that SDHS members would be interested in viewing, please contact Jim Bishop at president@sdhort.org. We are looking for gardens for the months March through December.

Puerto Vallarta, Mexico Garden Tour – Last Chance

At the time of this article there are still a few spots left on the San Diego Horticultural Society tour of Puerto Vallarta, Mexico from March 13 to 18. Our tour guide is Robert Kopfstein, president of the San Diego Bromeliad Society. This is your last chance to join us to visit one of the most beautiful garden spots in the world.

The tour visits the Vallarta Botanic Gardens, the old mining town of San Sebastian de Oeste, Cabo Corrientes, the southernmost point of the Bahia de Banderas (Bay of Flags) on the Pacific coast of the Mexican state of Jalisco, and several other gardens and locations. This is a small tour and is sure to sell out. To find out more and reserve your spot, go to sterlingtoursltd.com/PuertoVallarta2016fin.html.

Spring Garden Tour

Online tickets for the Spring Garden Tour on April 2 are now on sale at sdhort.org/tickets! To make sure that everyone has an enjoyable experience and gardens don't become too crowded, we've capped tickets sales at just a little more than half the number of tickets sold in 2015. This means that to be sure you get to attend, purchase your ticket online soon. If you prefer to pay by cash or check, tickets can be purchased at the February and March meetings. Once our sales goal is reached, no more tickets will be available. SDHS members save

Continued on page 12

APRIL 2 SPRING GARDEN TOUR:

Don't Miss Out

By Karen Dorney and Susan Starr,
Chair, Spring Garden Tour

Now is the time to buy tickets for this year's Spring Garden Tour. Winter rains promise to make this an especially beautiful tour, with plants at their finest. Ticket sales are limited this year and there will be no day of tour ticket sales. We expect to sell out, so buy your tickets now at sdhort.org.

Last month we featured three of our nine gardens. Here are another three to tempt you. And go to page 8 to read about some of the special plants you'll see.

Torrey Pines View

Perched on a hill overlooking the ocean, this is a garden with eight different themes. A collection of pots largely made by local artists and containing specimen succulents is displayed on the home's large front ocean view balcony. Around the back, tour goers will find a rock wall planted with a tapestry of succulents. From there, you can follow the path to an English garden of pastel flowers, then to a beautiful collection of rose bushes, a memory garden planted to honor past cat friends, an Asian-inspired garden guarded by a giant Chinese warrior, and a fragrant garden with jasmines and gardenias.

Check out the two-dozen varieties of cycads, and be sure to stop and feel the cardboard cycad. It feels — like cardboard! *Melaleuca*, such as *Melaleuca densa*, *Melaleuca incana prostrata*, and *Melaleuca diosmifolia*, is one of the homeowner's favorite plants; you are certain to find some varieties that are new to you. Other special plantings include an orange candle bush, numerous bromeliads and proteas, and several native oaks. Torrey pines frame the view from the garden over Torrey Pines Reserve and out to the sea.

The owner has lived on this property for many years. With the help of landscape consultant Howard Vieweg, the garden has grown and it continually evolves and matures under their direction.

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Susan Starr

THE REAL DIRT ON...

Asa Gray

By Carol Buckley

Asa Gray (November 18, 1810 – January 30, 1888), the most influential American botanist of his era, was known for his skills in taxonomy, scientific writing, and international botanical cooperation. Son of a tanner-turned-farmer, he began collecting specimens in his native New York while still a student at Fairfield Academy. After studying medicine, he turned his full attention to botany and, in 1834, he befriended botanist John Torrey (for whom the pine is named), also medically trained.



Asa Gray (1867)

Gray was the first American to whom Charles Darwin revealed his ideas for *The Origin of Species*. Gray favorably reviewed the book in the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1860, stating that the theory did not conflict with his staunch Presbyterian beliefs. Evolution mirrored natural classification, based on heredity, not appearance, proposed by Swiss botanist Augustin Pyramus de Candolle in opposition to the Linnaean taxonomy, dependent on apparent similarities.

A career in botany was not lucrative, and Gray spent a few years as a medical assistant (to Torrey), teacher, curator, and librarian. When he became a professor at the fledgling University of Michigan, his larger contribution to the science world began. He was sent by the university to Europe to collect a library of botany books, to study herbariums, and to meet the leading botanists of the day, such as Scotsman William Hooker, who became a benefactor and named a species of amaranth after Asa.

Gray witnessed the relatively rapid changes of the 19th century. He went from traveling by clipper ship to Europe to intercontinental train travel to Mexico and the western United States, including Colorado, where Grays Peak was named for him. He became the first Fisher Professor of Natural Science at Harvard in 1842, and was one of 50 scientists asked by Congress to found the National Academy of Sciences in 1863.

Not known for his skills as a lecturer, Gray encouraged his students to do fieldwork. His *The Elements of Botany* (1836) was the textbook of the era, but his major feat was the two-volume *Flora of North America* (cowritten with Torrey). *Gray's Manual* (formally titled *Manual of the Botany of the Northern United States, from New England to Wisconsin and South to Ohio and Pennsylvania Inclusive*) gathered the scientific knowledge of American plant specimens in one publication, and is still in print.

Gray married Jane Loring in 1834, and his wife journeyed with him on his expeditions. One of Gray's contributions to our western gardens is the naming of Cleveland sage in 1874 for plant collector Daniel Cleveland. Gray's memory lives on in plant names, place names, such as the Asa Gray House and Gray Herbarium at Harvard, and awards, such as the Asa Gray Award created in 1984. 🌿

BOOK REVIEW

Stonescaping Idea Book

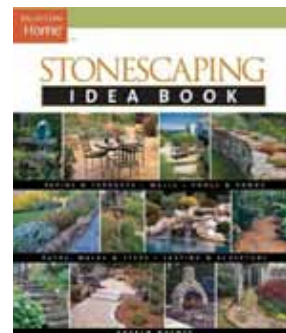
By Andrew Wormer

Stone Work

By John Jerome

Reviewed by Caroline McCullagh

I have in my front yard a one-foot high dry stone retaining wall and three (small) boulders, artfully arranged. I spent a really interesting day watching a highly-skilled workman place the boulders with a small mobile crane that could move each stone three inches or three feet in any direction and then rotate it to show the side my designer wanted. It was fascinating, as was the trip to the stone yard to select those boulders.

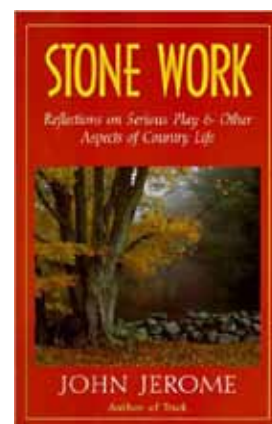


If you haven't been to a stone yard, I urge you to include one or more on your itinerary when you go nursery hopping this spring. There are a number in San Diego County that have stones from all over the world for sale. The variety of sizes, colors, and textures is almost overwhelming.

Wormer's book (subtitled *Patios & Terraces, Walls, Pools and Ponds, Paths, Walks & Steps, Seating and Sculpture*) will give you many ideas about things to do with those wonderful stones. It's 138 pages, mostly of photographs, displaying a range of possibilities. Wormer gives us enough definitions, descriptions, and drawings that a person with some experience in construction (and who has a strong back) could make most of these, but this is definitely not a how-to book for novices.

The author, a carpenter and writer, has a finely tuned appreciation of good stonework. Many of the stairways, stone "streams," and rambling paths wouldn't work in my flat open yard, but it's fun to dream.

Which is a good segue to my second book this month, *Stone Work: Reflections on Serious Play & Other Aspects of Country Life* by John Jerome. Jerome bought a former farmhouse set amid open fields and a wood lot. The fields are too open for his taste. He thinks a nice stone wall would be just the thing. The wood lot is divided by multiple old stone walls, long abandoned and falling down. He decides to shift those stones and build a new dry stone wall near the house – definitely easier said than done.



He tells us that when building a wall, after the first few minutes of paying attention and getting in the rhythm of the work, your mind is free to roam as you repeat the tasks for as long as your back will allow. His mind wanders to a contemplation of the meaning of work, man's place in nature, seasonal changes, and other things that sound dry in description, but in fact are like walking along with a friend having a good conversation.

Jerome wrote twelve books. Possibly the best known is *Truck: On Rebuilding a Worn-Out Pickup and Other Post-Technological Adventures*. If you're like me, you'll definitely want to read the others because you'll want to spend more time with your friend. 🌿

TREES, PLEASE

Auxins

By Tim Clancy

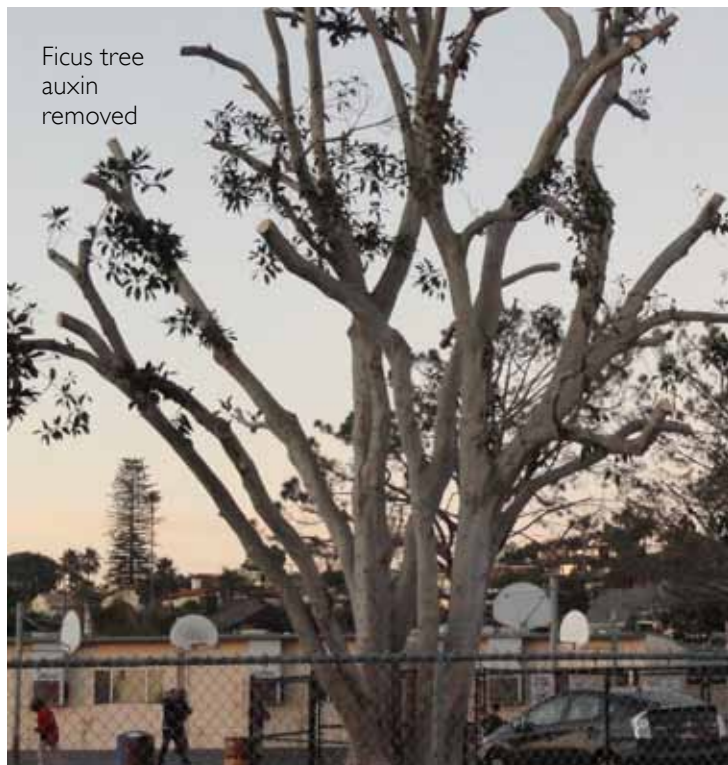
Trees respond to pruning. What that response is depends on many variables. One important class of chemical compounds in trees is the auxins. They are one of the chemicals in trees (and other plants) that regulate growth. Auxins were one of the first growth regulators to be discovered and understood. There are many uses of auxins in trees, and even those will change under differing conditions within the tree. Some of these are the amount of auxins in the plant, the time of year, and the presence of other growth regulating chemicals.

Auxins are plant hormones. A plant hormone is an organic compound synthesized in one part of the plant and translocated to another, where, in very low concentrations, it causes a physiological response (Moore 1984; Salisbury and Ross 1992).

Auxins are produced in the growing tips of shoots in addition to other fast-growing plant tissues, such as leaves. The compounds then move through the plant and do their work. This includes controlling the development of dormant buds. The growth of these buds is normally depressed by the auxins. When we prune a tree we affect the way the tree grows (responds). If we remove the auxin producing tissue, normally dormant buds will begin to grow in what is now an unregulated manner. There can be numerous shoots growing as a result. Many gardeners know that by pinching growth a bushier plant will develop. This is directly related to the removal of auxin-producing tips. Eventually the new tips will produce auxins again and things will tend to normalize.

Even the simple act of staking a tree can have an impact on the amount of auxins produced. Many young trees will be observed growing away from the stake. They will grow in this manner because auxins are sensitive to light levels. The stake sometimes shades a part of the trunk that will then accumulate more of the compounds, thus inhibiting growth on that side. Knowing this allows us to determine

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VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Organizational Wiz Takes the Lead

By Patty Berg, Volunteer Coordinator

Long known as the first and best garden tour of the year, the SDHS Spring Garden Tour will explore Del Mar and Carmel Valley this year on April 2nd. Given its myriad details and if/then scenarios, planning a garden tour is not for the faint-hearted. So it's understandable that **Susan Starr** confesses to having been "more than a little nervous" when asked to take on the historic 2015 tour:



"I was fairly confident I could handle the event planning part of it," Susan says. In her career managing academic libraries, Susan had planned all kinds of events including open houses, technology fairs, retreats, seminars, and conferences. Juggling many projects at once was her everyday normal. **And** if there is a gene for great organization, it's prominent in Susan's DNA. She reports that all the women in her family are extremely organized. In fact, she describes them all, herself included, as "spreadsheet junkies."

"In some respects, all events are kind of the same," Susan says. "There are timelines to create, people to remind, logistics to plan, sites to set up, parking problems, etc. But I had zero experience with organizing a garden tour."

Susan admits she didn't have the faintest idea how to find gardens. Fortunately, President Jim Bishop promised to help find the gardens, so she figured she could probably manage. "Jim was a wonderful tutor," Susan says. And who would argue that point? Last year's tour broke all previous records with tickets sales close to 1500.

Not one to let all that experience go to waste, Susan graciously agreed to continue as Tour Chair this year. She finds motivation in the fact that everyone seems to enjoy the tour experience. Homeowners love showing off their gardens, the tour-goers love seeing them, and the volunteers enjoy participating.

As ambitious as the 2015 Balboa Park area tour was, Susan says this year's edition comes with a fresh set of challenges. "I really wanted us to be there [in Del Mar], as the setting is so charming, but the winding streets and lack of parking are daunting." Beyond that, she says the biggest undertaking is putting together a string of diverse gardens that intrigue the tour-goers.

With the hardest part behind her, Susan acknowledges, "I won't know if I've succeeded until tour day!" 🌿

GOING WILD WITH NATIVES

Early Spring Bloomers

By Bobbie Stephenson

We like to plan our gardens so that we can enjoy flowers throughout the year; and with our Mediterranean climate our blooming season can begin in winter and early spring. Two genera of California natives are staples in California gardens and have species that bloom from late winter into spring, as well as others that bloom later: California lilac (*Ceanothus* spp.) in the buckthorn family (Rhamnaceae) and manzanita (*Arctostaphylos* spp.) in the heath family (Ericaceae). With planning, you can have a mountain lilac or manzanita blooming at almost any time of the year!

Here is a list of some of the earliest blooming mountain lilac species, their flower colors, when they begin to bloom and their growth habit:

- Catalina ceanothus (*C. arboreus*) – pale blue, late Feb, large shrub/ small tree.
- Buck brush (*C. cuneatus*) – white, early Feb, large shrub.
- Holly leaf mountain lilac (*C. 'Blue Jeans'* cultivar) – dark blue, Mar, medium shrub.
- Big pod California lilac (*C. megacarpus* X Tranquil Margarita) – pure white, early Feb, medium shrub.
- Otay Mountain ceanothus (*C. otayensis*) – white-pale blue, early Feb, medium shrub.
- C. 'Ray Hartman' cultivar – medium blue, late winter, large shrub/ small tree.
- Wart-stemmed ceanothus (*C. verrucosus*) – white, early Feb, medium shrub.

An important extra that comes from growing *Ceanothus* species is that they fix nitrogen; that is, they convert nitrogen from a form plants cannot use into a form they can use through a mutualistic symbiotic relationship with a bacterial partner, where each partner

gives and receives something in return. The bacteria live in small nodes on the roots of the nitrogen fixing plants. Legumes are well-known nitrogen fixers, but several California native non-legume species also fix nitrogen, including all the *Ceanothus* species.

Another genus with early bloomers is manzanita (*Arctostaphylos*):

- Refugio Manzanita (*A. refugioensis*) – one of the earliest to bloom; pearly white flowers; new growth tinged with red.
- *A. densiflora* 'Howard McMinn' – blooms late winter through spring.
- *A. 'Emerald Carpet'* – low growing, compact has light pink flowers in mid-winter through spring.

Continued on page 16



TO LEARN MORE...

Outside the Box Garden Design

By Ava Torre-Bueno

More and more, it's clear that we need to re-design the parts of nature we are responsible for with our bird, bug and mammal friends in mind. This starts with managing water in a way that keeps it in our gardens. Here's a good video about Tucson, but the principles are applicable here:

youtube.com/watch?v=4aQrZtG-LVg

For more on water read Rainwater Harvesting for Drylands:
harvestingrainwater.com

Permaculture gardening, for both food and ornamentals, changes everything about how we husband the land for the better. This site has a video with lovely English accents (think Downton Abbey):
theecologist.org/green_green_living/gardening/451581/a_beginners_guide_to_permaculture_gardening.html

Here's another permaculture site:

deepgreenpermaculture.com/diy-instructions/starting-your-permaculture-garden

and a book: tobyhemmenway.com/book/gaias-garden

Inviting pollinators into your (just) wet (enough), dense garden is easy:
fs.fed.us/wildflowers/pollinators/gardening.shtml

This article has a section towards the end about making a "bee bath!" Who knew?!

davidsuzuki.org/what-you-can-do/food-and-our-planet/create-a-bee-friendly-garden 🐝



Texture and Tapestry

This Laura Eubanks designed garden provides a stunning example of how living art can be created through landscape design. The front yard is covered with drifts and mounds of jewel-box succulent tapestries. Ribbons of decorative rocks and pebbles in various colors and textures serve as topdressing, replacing what had been a standard suburban grass lawn with a study in color contrast. Occasional placements of hand-selected boulders and colorful clay pots add interest. Plants in a wide variety of colors and textures invite the garden's guests to study and savor combinations of intricate plant shapes.

The water wise garden, installed in August, 2015, already looks mature and ready to be enjoyed. The new plants are compatible with our climate, requiring a fraction of the water and care that the previous landscape required. Vegetables are grown in raised beds in the side yard.

The back landscape has a reduced grass area, additional succulent tapestries, and rear deck shaded by a mature podocarpus tree. The backyard's colorful borders now combine existing plantings, such as pittosporum and black-eyed Susan, with newly-installed, more drought tolerant species, like a hedge of pedilanthus. Truly this is an eye-opening example of how we can rethink our San Diego landscapes.

Laura Eubanks/Designs for Serenity.

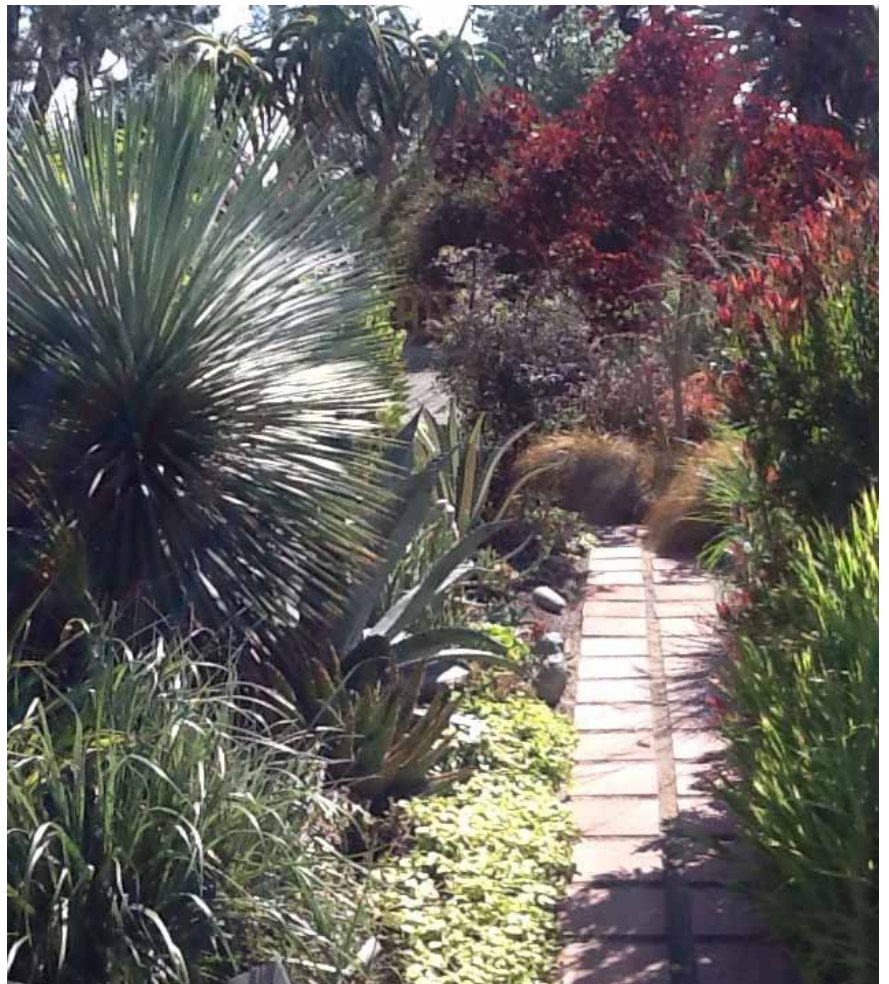


Horticultural Fantasy

Expect surprises in this Certified Earth Friendly garden; this strikingly modern home has been enhanced by a garden filled with a wide variety of plants from countries of the southern hemisphere. Viewed from the street, one sees plants gradually becoming more familiar to San Diego gardeners, such as grevillea, westringia and vitex, which charm those viewing the home from the sidewalk. Entering the garden provides an eye-catching tour of what the southern hemisphere has to offer, including hakea, euphorbias, and adenanthos.

The artist's eye of the owner, who once made and sold handcrafted jewelry, is evident in the carefully constructed palette that unifies the diverse plant collection. The color scheme of rusty reds, oranges, and, of course, green, is echoed in the plants, pots, and even in the bright orange wall of the upper deck.

The pleasure the owners take in this garden is evident in its unique features. In particular, a custom staircase leading to the deck is underplanted with succulents; the steps lift up and out, allowing the plants to be watered. On a trip to the Chelsea Garden Show the owners saw something similar featuring water plants; they returned home inspired and created this succulent version, more suited to the San Diego climate. Similarly, a striking bridge, lushly covered with Dutchman's pipe, was built by the current owners to create an inviting second floor entrance. It also serves as a vantage point from which to view the diverse plant selection in the garden below. 🌿



APRIL 2 SPRING GARDEN TOUR:

Plants of Interest

By Joan Herskowitz and Susan Starr,
Chair, Spring Garden Tour

Are you looking for a new plant to add to your garden? Or perhaps last summer's heat has left you with a vacant space you need to fill? The SDHS Spring Garden tour is the perfect opportunity to find special plants that grow well in San Diego. To help you identify them, we have assembled a **Plants of Interest** webpage that describes one or two plants of particular interest from each of the nine gardens on the tour: <https://sdhort.wildapricot.org/SDHSNews/3741276> Plants included are not commonly planted in San Diego gardens and/or have been used in unusual ways by our homeowners. Be sure to check out the page before you go on the tour. Some of our favorites:

Aristolochia gigantea DUTCHMAN'S PIPE (Aristolochiaceae) Origin: Brazil



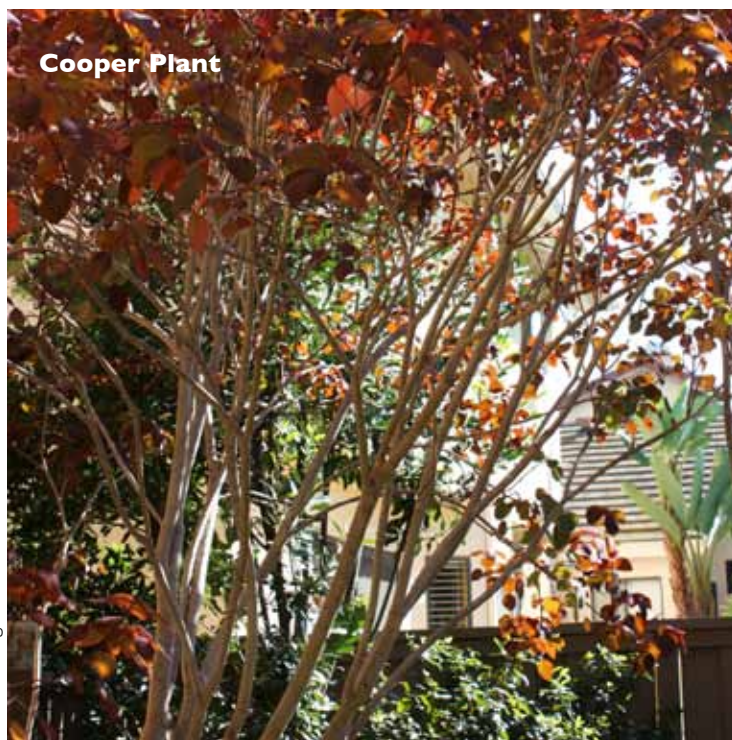
Rachel Cobb

This vigorous evergreen twining vine has stems that can grow 15-20 feet long. It may be seen in the Horticultural Fantasy garden, draping down over the railings of the bridge leading to the house. The large triangular- to heart-shaped dark green leaves form a mat that can be useful as a screening device. From summer to early winter, curiously shaped flowers resembling curved pipes with flared bowls up to 1 foot long are formed on the plant.

The flowers are burgundy with white netting and a yellow throat, and their unusual form is a definite conversation piece. The plant is hardy to 30-32 degrees F and does best in a well-drained soil.

Euphorbia cotinifolia CARIBBEAN COPPER PLANT (Euphorbiaceae) Origin: Mexico

This striking coppery-red leaved deciduous plant can be grown as a shrub or pruned to become a tree with a height up to 18 feet. Small white flowers with creamy bracts bloom at the ends of the branches in summer with new growth. However, it is the bold foliage that makes it an excellent accent or foundation plant in coastal California and other frost-free areas. It prefers a well-drained soil and full sun. The purplish stems, when broken, yield a milky sap that is an irritant and can be poisonous if ingested, so care should be taken when working around the plant. You'll see it in two of our tour gardens: Horticultural Fantasy and Nature's Garden.



Barbara Berg

Cupressus cashmeriana KASHMIR CYPRESS (Cupressaceae) Origin: Bhutan and India

One of the most attractive conifers for the home garden, this cypress is distinguished by its distinctive pyramidal shape formed by upright main branches and weeping foliage. The flattened branchlets support aromatic scale-like blue-green foliage. The tree grows slowly up to a height of 30-40 feet and does best in sunny exposures with regular moisture. It does not do well with extreme heat or drought stress, and benefits from some shade in warmer inland areas. The tree is well suited as a focal point in a woodland or Asian style garden due to its beautiful form and color. You'll see it by the pool in Palm Paradise.



Barbara Berg

Kashmir Cypress

Join us on April 2nd to see these and other plants. Tickets are available at sdhort.org.

THE DIRT ON WATER BLOG

El Niño Garden Realities

By Jeanne Meadow

El Niño's effects on the weather changes can be felt around the world. With or without an El Niño, we have to come to terms with the future that some experts say will be our new reality. NASA experts are calling this a "Godzilla El Niño" that will do as much harm as help to the California drought, and will have little impact on the depleted aquifers that farmers have been over pumping during the drought. This "Godzilla" is expected to be the largest on record.

The upcoming weather patterns will be as unpredictable as they will be challenging. We can expect droughts (and sometimes even too much water at once), along with extreme temperature changes. In San Diego we went from 105 degrees with drought conditions and water restrictions to mid 30's and 40's with flood conditions in just a month. I guess we do have seasons.

So what are we to do? One thing is for certain: we are not likely to be able to use unlimited potable (drinkable) water to make our gardens grow as in the past.

Think about some big changes, and maybe even a few costly changes.

Start by making water a daily topic of conversation. How much are we using? How can we be more efficient? The burden is on your local water district, so get involved: go to a meeting and make recommendations. Let officials know they should be increasing storage and investing in recycled water facilities. Every voice counts. I attend our two local water board district meetings and often I am the only one there! Considering how much everyone is talking about water, this always surprises me.

As for the garden, careful plant selection and placement is critical when dealing with changing weather patterns. Pay close attention to the drought temperature tolerance. Look at planting guidelines for high success rates, like planting on a mound or slightly tilted so that water can run out of your plants.

You surely know all the common things to start with such as good irrigation systems, leak detections, drainage, mulching, rain capture and recycling. But what about your own garden, specifically? Do you have a patio or canopy that can protect plants that need it? Maybe moving some plants is all you need.

El Niño isn't likely to change the new water realities here in southern California. So for now, take the rain and use it as best as you can and plan to make more changes so that you can keep your personal paradise a place to relax and enjoy nature.

Visit my blog at Thedirttonwater.com to read my latest rants. 🌿

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MY LIFE WITH PLANTS

By Jim Bishop

This is a continuing series of articles that chronicle Jim Bishop's experiences with plants and the effect they have had on his life.

South Africa – Part 3

The last two months I've written about the Northern Cape of South Africa and Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden. Originally we had planned to drive the Garden Route from Port Elizabeth to Cape Town. However, we changed our plans to be able to visit the bulbs and wildflowers of the Western Cape at the peak of their bloom. We were still able to do a day trip to the Cape of Good Hope and a quick four-day road trip on part of the Garden Route.

The drive to the Cape of Good Hope includes some of the most beautiful ocean and mountain scenery in the world. The hills are covered with large proteas, leucadendrons, restios, and countless other indigenous plants. Add in baboons, ostriches, penguins, and a lot of marine life and it is a bit like visiting a giant outdoor zoo and botanic garden. We stopped at several places along the way just to walk around in the unusual plants.

After Scott returned home, I flew to Port Elizabeth and set out on a driving tour back to Cape Town along the garden route. The road is slightly misnamed, since much of it was once forested but was mostly cut down years ago. What remains are large lumber plantations of non-native pines and many farms. The first stop on the drive was Storms River. Here the mountains drop off sharply into the Indian Ocean. Many small rivers have cut steep canyons into the mountains before dumping into the ocean. The large mountains dropping into the ocean with huge surf reminded me much of Big Sur in California. This is a relatively wet area of South Africa and there were a few remaining large trees and lots of ferns (including tree ferns), mosses, and lichens. I took a short side trip to see one of the largest, at 120 feet tall, remaining *Podocarpus falcatus* trees, locally known as Tsitsikamma. Impressive, but still small by comparison to our native redwood trees.

From Storms River I continued along the coast westward. I was amazed at all the large bays and estuaries that dotted the coast. Some were so large that they took more than an hour just to drive around. Most were loaded with all types of exotic birds. Just past the town of



Winelands
Botanical Garden

George, I turned northward into the mountains, heading to a much drier climate and towards the town of Oudtshoorn, located in the Klein Karoo region. The drive and plants were spectacular, but there were almost no pullouts on the road to stop, explore and take in the scenery. Just before Oudtshoorn are many large ostrich farms. In fact, Oudtshoorn still has many "feather palaces" that were built by fortunes made during the early part of the 20th century when ostrich feather hats were the style of the day. I ate dinner at small restaurant and sampled many of the chef's specialty dishes made with ostrich. To my surprise, it has more the taste and texture of lean beef than chicken.

The next day, I drove through a large valley and then off-road for over an hour to reach one of the newer wild game preserves, Sanbona. This preserve was still being repopulated by native South African wildlife after having been three very large sheep ranches for over 300 years. Luckily, most of the native plants had survived. This area was desert-like and had a many aloes and succulents. Fortunately, our guide was more interested in plants than animals, but I'm sure I still drove her crazy asking the name of everything and often getting a common name response in Afrikaans. I got quite excited when I saw *Crassula rupestris* that looked exactly like the ones growing in my front garden. *Rupestris* means "living among the rocks," and sure enough, they were growing right on top of rocks. Besides the plants, I saw white lions, elephants, giraffes, rhinos, zebras, baboons, oryx and many other animals.

Back on the road and headed to my last night accommodation in South Africa, there were whole hillsides of *Aloe ferox*. Also impressive



Cape of Good Hope

and in bloom was a cliff aloe that sprawled down several feet on the cliff rock faces. I stayed in Worcester so that I could visit the Karoo Desert National Botanical Garden. It was a somewhat cool and drizzly weekday and I pretty much had all 380 acres to myself. The lower 27 acres comprise a cultivated garden and contain 3000 species of plants, mostly succulents. Most notable were the aloes, many of which were still in bloom. The hills above the garden are home to 400 plant species that are naturally indigenous to the garden's environs. The hills are uplifted sheets of red sandstone, and reminded me of desert hills you might

Continued on page 12

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

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

We welcome Redfin San Diego as our newest Sponsor; visit their website at redfin.com/city/16904/CA/San-Diego.

We welcome Deeter Buckner Design Group as our newest Life Member.

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HORT BUCKS ARE GREAT!

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

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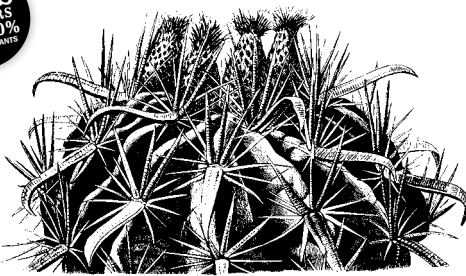
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■ **From the Board** Continued from page 3

\$10 per ticket off the general admission price. If you purchase online, you will receive the tour map in email by Friday, April 1 and can check in at any of the gardens on the tour. You can learn more about this year's tour on our website and on page 8. Also, be sure and let your garden friends and people at other organizations know about the tour. This is one of the best garden tours in the county and you don't want to miss it. You can purchase tickets, learn more about the tour gardens and featured plants in the gardens online at sdhort.org. Garden Tour links are at the top of the home page.

Huntington Garden Bus Trip

Join SDHS members on a docent-led tour of the Huntington Chinese Garden. The garden is now several years old and has fully matured. It is one of the largest Chinese-styled gardens outside of China. You'll also have time to have lunch and visit the other gardens and museums, including the new entrance garden. This is a full day bus tour with pickup and drop off locations at Old Town and LaCosta. Details and registration is online at sdhort.org/Huntington. 🌿

■ **My Life with Plants** Continued from page 10

see in Arizona, only instead of cacti they were covered with succulents, bulbs and flowering shrubs.

As I was getting nearer the winelands area of South Africa, I was starting to see fruit orchards in bloom. Most appeared to be either plums or apricots. They were grown along tall fences and trimmed to only grow a couple of feet across. I assumed this was to make them easier to harvest. My flight out of Cape Town was early evening and I took one last side trip to visit two of the most famous winelands towns, Franschhoek and Stellenbosch. The white colonial Dutch buildings and vineyards made me think Savannah, Georgia meets the Napa Valley. However, both towns were set against a backdrop of steep and rugged mountains. I explored the relatively small but well-maintained University of Stellenbosch Botanical Garden, which featured a large collection of native Oxalis and Pelargoniums and a surprising bonsai collection.

My final stop was the Babylonstoren Vineyard, a perfect way to end a trip to South Africa. It had beautiful white colonial Dutch architecture set in the middle of a vineyard with a backdrop of rugged mountains. A natural stream ran through the property and had been diverted to water the garden and create interesting water features. The highlight, however, was the eight acres of cultivated fruit and vegetables gardens. In 2007 the plan for the garden was created by French architect Patrice Taravella. It comprises 15 clusters spanning vegetable areas, stone and pome fruits, nuts, citrus, berries, bees, herbs, roses, ducks, donkeys, chickens, and turkeys, as well as a prickly pear maze. Gravity feeds water from a stream by rills into the garden, flowing through ponds planted with edible lotus, nymphaea lilies and native water onion. There are over 300 edible plants. The natural stream on the far side of the property explodes with 7000 clivia lilies.

A short 30-minute drive to the airport and a brief 33 hours of travel time and I was back in San Diego!

~~~~~

Jim Bishop is President of the San Diego Horticultural Society and a garden designer. 🌿

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## SHARING SECRETS

Edited by Dayle Cheever

This column is written by you, our members! Each month we'll ask a question, and print your responses the following month. You can find copies of previous Sharing Secrets on our website at <https://sdhort.wildapricot.org/SharingSecrets?eid=1093874>. Also, you can continue the discussion by adding new replies online to Sharing Secrets topics. Here's your chance to comment on how the plants you mentioned two years ago are doing today, or to suggest another way to do something in the garden.

**The question for February was: Is there a horticultural question you would like to ask our members?**

**Marilyn Wilson:** Who would be interested in forming a special interest group of people growing plants from Australia and New Zealand (and South Africa) to email questions, suggestions, plant lists, and suppliers? We could meet each other face to face occasionally for 15 minutes, before Hort meetings, just to identify who is on the other end of the emails.

**Stella Ramos:** I have tried to grow basil in my garden and in a pot, and just can't seem to keep it alive. The only one that has survived so far is some Thai basil that is in my garden. Which varieties are best to grow?

**Linda Chisari:** Tell us about your way of capturing rain water and getting it delivered to your garden? Which native plants have been most successful in your garden? Please use specific variety names (i.e., *Archostaphylos* 'Pacific Mist') as all varieties don't perform equally well. Also, let us know which zone you garden in and whether a specific plant is successful in sun or shade.

**Candace Kohl:** What are some good sources for rare plants?

**Roy Wilburn:** Why is horticulture important?

**Greg Hunter:** What is the best recommended red tomato variety for San Diego's coastal climate? Please assume appropriate care, water, soil composition, nutrition, and maximum sunlight.

**Steve Brigham:** I'd like to hear if anyone has or knows of any big, blooming Royal Poinciana (*Delonix regia*) in San Diego County? It's probably the most famous, showy flowering tree in the world, but 10 years ago we never put it in the SDHS Tree Book because we couldn't find a big, public specimen. There are some good bloomers on streets in Anaheim, among other places in Southern California and I'll bet by now that there are some good specimens somewhere in San Diego County (mainly because a lot of people were planting them around 10-15 years ago). Last winter and spring should have been the ideal weather for Royal Poinciana to bloom well in San Diego, but of course they have to be a certain mature age before they start blooming.

**Lorie:** How has the drought affected your garden? What have you decided to do differently from here on in because of the 4-year drought? What trees have you lost due to drought? Do you have an increase in aloe mite in the last few years?

**Ken Selzer:** A guide to identify what types of pests attack citrus trees in San Diego. Hopefully it would include photos/descriptions and treatment.

**Susi Torre-Bueno:** What do you feed your fruit trees and when? Do you use dormant spray on any of your fruit trees?

**Christina Ivany:** I would like to know if anyone has found a truly kink-free hose that they would recommend and where they bought it. I've bought some that were advertised as such, but after a few years I find myself fighting them as they always kink at the most annoying times.

**Cheryl Hedgpeth Nichols:** I would be interested to know the favorite garden our members have visited and why they liked it?



### HERE ARE THE TOPICS SUGGESTED ABOVE THAT HAVE BEEN PREVIOUSLY COVERED IN SOME FORM OR ANOTHER:

Rainwater - February 2015

Drought - Sept. and Nov. 2009 and May 2014

Favorite Garden - Dec. 2009, June 2011, May 2014 and February 2015



***Aloe tenuior***

**See Plant Display on page 17**

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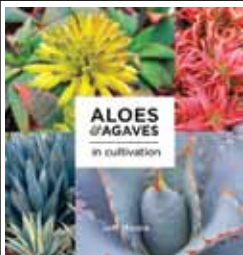
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■ Natives Continued from page 6



The early blooming mountain lilacs and manzanitas provide important nectar sources for hummingbirds and bees. Both of these genera form their flowers on the new growth of the previous year. So, they are said to bloom on old wood. Prune just after flowering before new growth begins to form or you will remove dormant buds.

A couple of other species come to mind as early bloomers. Bladderpod (*Peritoma arborea* = *Isomeris arborea*) blooms from November through June. It is an evergreen shrub about 4 feet high, and a hearty shrub for harsh areas. Bladderpod has yellow flowers, gray-green leaves, and green bladders that hold the seeds.

Hummingbird sage (*Salvia spathacea*), an herbaceous creeping perennial, begins blooming in late winter and sporadically on into the summer. Bright magenta/ruby red flowers that grow on one to three foot high stalks above the leaves attract hummingbirds. It spreads by underground rhizomes, but is not generally invasive.

Mexican marigold (*Tagetes lemmonii*), though not a California native, is native nearby to southern Arizona and the states of Sonora and Sinaloa in northwestern Mexico. Golden composite flowers cover the shrub from fall through spring and the plant can sometimes bloom for up to 10 months. It's blooming profusely now (early January) in my garden. A very drought tolerant shrub, Mexican marigold thrives in our Mediterranean climate. 🌻



# JANUARY 2016 PLANT DISPLAY

By Steve Brigham, Joan Herskowitz and Susi Torre-Bueno

## What is the Plant Display?

Each month members bring in plants, cuttings or flowers and put them in blue bottles on our display tables. What a great way to see what plants grow well in our area. EVERYONE is invited to participate. All plants are welcome. Write descriptions similar to those below, and put them with your plant(s). We thank the folks who brought in plants to show to other members. **Join the fun and bring something to the next meeting.**

**FREE on our website for members and non-members: all 21 years worth of plant descriptions!**  
Go to [tinyurl.com/Plant-Descriptions](http://tinyurl.com/Plant-Descriptions).

### *Aloe 'David Verity'* (Aloeaceae) Horticultural Hybrid

This robust aloe grows 4-6' tall and at least as wide; there seems to be more than one clone/form available. Tall branching spikes tower over bold silver blue-green leaves. The flower heads are pink at first becoming red and then yellow with age. The bottom of the spike ages first, so a head will have several colors. Drought-tolerant, grow it in full sun with good drainage. For an excellent description of the history and characteristics of this attractive plant, visit the website for San Marcos Growers ([smgrowers.com](http://smgrowers.com)). (Susi Torre-Bueno, Vista, 1/16) – S.T-B.

### *Aloe 'Moonglow'* (Aloeaceae) Horticultural Hybrid

The specimen displayed was planted in 2013 from a small plug and started blooming in December 2015 when the plant was about 16" tall x 12" wide. The compact pale yellow flowers are a nice contrast to the commoner orange-hued flowers on the majority of aloes. San Marcos Growers ([smgrowers.com](http://smgrowers.com)) states: "A medium-sized singled-stemmed succulent to 32 inches tall by almost 2 feet wide with rosettes of fairly narrow gray-green leaves that arch strongly upwards with yellow teeth along the margins and some horizontal banding on the upper surface of the leaf. Starting in late fall, with peak bloom in midwinter, there appears an abundance of pale yellow flowers on branching inflorescences that rise well above the foliage... This aloe comes from the breeding program of Leo Thamm of Sunbird Aloes in Johannesburg, South Africa and was introduced to the US nursery trade in 2012 by The Plug Collection." Another source noted: "Once mature, this variety produces more flowers on a plant than any we've seen." Best in full sun with some summer water. (Susi Torre-Bueno, Vista, 1/16) – S.T-B.

### *Aloe tenuior* FENCE ALOE (Aloeaceae) South Africa

Give this rambling, long-stemmed aloe plenty of room to spread out. The small yellow flowers appear on and off all year, with the peak of bloom in winter. San Marcos Growers ([smgrowers.com](http://smgrowers.com)) states: "A shrub forming plant rising from a near tuberous base to 3 feet tall, or taller with support, by 5-6 feet wide with irregularly-branched, semi-woody long stems tipped with open rosettes of narrow pale blue-green 4-6 inch long by 1/2 to 3/4 inch wide leaves with tiny white teeth along the margins. With a peak from fall to late winter, but seemingly nearly any time of year except mid-summer, appear the terminal, usually unbranched, spikes of lemon yellow flowers. Plant in full sun to light shade (tolerates deep shade but does not seem to bloom) in a relatively well-drained soil and irrigate occasionally to infrequently. Not known to be particularly hardy to frost but our

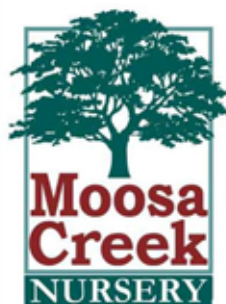
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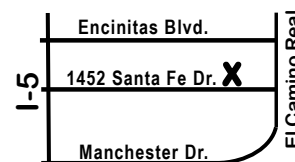
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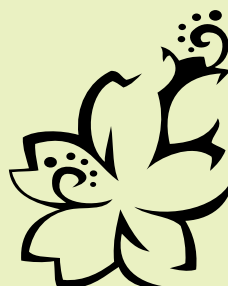
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plants weathered the 1990 (<20 °F), 2007 (25°F) freezes without damage when only covered with frost cloth and went through the January 2013 freeze down to 27°F unprotected so is hardier than thought. This is a nice landscape plant that can form a large shrub-like mass topped with fine-textured foliage and an abundance of delicate yellow flowers." (Susi Torre-Bueno, Vista, 1/16) – S.T-B.

***Amaranthus caudatus* LOVE-LIES-BLEEDING (Amaranthaceae)**

Africa, India, Peru

A sturdy, annual branching plant that can grow to 3-8 feet and has distinctive, ornamental, blood red flowers that hang in long tassel-like clusters. The light green leaves contrast well with the hanging flowers. The leaves and seeds are edible and the plant is used as a grain crop in South America and India. It is the most important Andean species of *Amaranthus*, known locally as "Kiwicha." The plant grows best in full sun and with moderate water in well-drained soil. It is easily grown from seed, which can be sown in the garden in early summer or started indoors and planted out after the last frost. The plant is attractive in hanging baskets, in beds or borders, and as edging along walkways. (Marilyn Wilson, Vista, 1/16) – J.H.

***Asarina lophospermum* 'Lofos™ Wine Red' CREEPING GLOXINIA (Plantaginaceae) Mexico**

An attractive vine with blue-green, toothed, grape-like leaves and 3-inch long rich purple-red tubular flowers that occur along the stem and bloom from mid-Spring to mid-Fall. The plant can be grown so as to cascade over a hanging basket or window box, or can be trained up a trellis or threaded through a fence. It can be grown in full sun or partial shade, and is tolerant of excessive heat, although the soil should be kept moist but not soggy. In colder areas, it is grown as an annual, but mature plants can be maintained over winter if protected from temperatures below 41°F. At these temperatures plants may lose their leaves, and need to be watered sparingly until growth commences in the Spring. The flowers are attractive to butterflies and hummingbirds. (Marilyn Wilson, Vista, 1/16) – J.H.

***Laurus nobilis* BAY LAUREL, SWEET BAY, GRECIAN LAUREL**

(Lauraceae) Mediterranean Sea Region

From our book, *Ornamental Trees for Mediterranean Climates*: Also called Sweet Bay and Grecian Laurel, the Bay Laurel is the source of bay leaves used in cooking and also the tree whose leaves were used by the ancient Greeks to make the "crown of laurel" which honors notable human achievement. Such modern-day terms as "poet laureate," "baccalaureate," and even "resting on your laurels" may have come about as a result of the significance of this plant. In the landscape, the Bay Laurel is often clipped as a shrub, but can easily be trained as a small tree. The Bay Laurel grows slowly to an eventual maximum of 20-30' tall and 15-20' wide, but may easily be kept smaller with occasional pruning. Its dense, rounded crown of foliage is composed of 2-4" long dark green leathery oval leaves that are pleasantly fragrant and are even used in aromatherapy. Clusters of small light-yellow spring flowers are followed by dark purple or black ½-1" fruits. The Bay Laurel tolerates a wide range of soils as long as drainage is good, and is hardy to at least 20°F. Its dense foliage takes well to topiary pruning if desired. An improved selection called 'Saratoga' has broader leaves, a more erect growth habit, and is more resistant to an insect pest called laurel psyllid. (Sue Fouquette, El Cajon, 1/16) – S.B.

***Senecio angulatus* CREEPING GROUNDSEL, CLIMBING GROUNDSEL, CAPE IVY (Asteraceae) South Africa**

A climbing perennial plant that forms a dense tangle of thick, glossy, angular leaves with numerous yellow flower clusters at the stem ends. It can climb to a height of 20 feet on supporting trees, shrubs, and fences, and forms a hanging mat that could be used to block objectionable views, or cover chain link fences. However, if allowed to grow unpruned, it could alter the light on surrounding plantings and suppress regeneration of native plants in the immediate vicinity. Because it is fast growing once established, it is considered invasive in Australia. The flower heads composed of 10-15 florets bloom throughout the year. The plant requires little or no irrigation and can be grown in sun or partial shade. (Joan Herskowitz, Encinitas, 1/16) – J.H.

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

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

Can you spot the phony plant this month? The phony plant in the January newsletter was *Capsicum chinense* 'Trinidad Sonofagun'.

*Aloe* 'Safari Rose' (Marie Smith, Clairemont, 1/16)

*Anthurium* cv. (Sue Fouquette, El Cajon, 1/16)

3 *Malvaviscus arboreus* var. *mexicanus* TURK'S CAP (Marie Smith, Clairemont, 1/16)

3 *Narcissus* 'Grand Soleil D'Or' (Susi Torre-Bueno, Vista, 1/16)

*Phalaenopsis* cv. MOTH ORCHID (Sue Fouquette, El Cajon, 1/16)

*Rhipsalis tonduzii* (probably) (Marilyn Wilson, Vista, 1/16)

*Rhipsalis whatadoozy* (improbably) (Plant Nutt, Vista, 10/16)

*Rosmarinus officinalis* ROSEMARY (Sue Fouquette, El Cajon, 1/16)

3 *Sansevieria suffruticosa* SILVER SPIRES (Barb Whelan, Bonita, 1/16)

3 *Verbena lilacina* 'De La Mina' BAJA BUTTERFLY FLOWER, CEDROS ISLAND VERBENA, BAJA VERBENA (Susi Torre-Bueno, Vista, 1/16) 🌿



Donna Tierney

## JANUARY MEETING REPORT

### Landscaping With Succulents

By Ellie Knight

Michael Buckner, well-known landscape designer and naturalist for 30 years, presented designs applicable to both arid and coastal regions in Southern California, focusing on the qualities and considerations specific to the diverse climates of its canyons, beaches, and its interior desert landscapes, including native rocks and soils, changing elevations, and the plants and wildlife that thrive in these areas. Michael shared his tremendous knowledge and expertise in the processes he employs that are integral to designing and executing a successful, expressive, site specific, and sustainable landscape from concept to completion. We welcome Michael and Jenise Deeter, of Deeter Buckner Design Group, as our newest Life Members.

Michael showed his design principles through a series of illustrative slides. These principles include exciting, expressive, and successful compositions, using dynamic color combinations, strong vertical accents, and interesting shapes. Close attention should be paid to form, repetition, and play of light and color. His examples of these included *Yucca aloifolia* for sinuous movement, and *Agave desmetiana* 'Joe Hoak' for amazing color. Color echo is also effective, and Michael recommended planting in drifts rather than ribbons, to emulate natural desert seed patterns.

Dynamic and iconic forms, such as *Kalanchoe beharensis*, are very effective focal points. It is important to also consider shape, texture, and color in selecting plants. High and low elements of gardens may also be effective, using bromeliads and orchids up in trees and interestingly grouped. This is all part of creating depth of field through the push and pull of composition elements in the garden, like varying heights and levels, changes in color and texture: coarse vs. fine. Another interesting design is the creation of a monochromatic theme.

Directing the view into the garden using strong leaning compositional lines (such as trees planted at an angle) is a technique to direct the visitor and viewer in the direction of the garden focus. This can impart a sense of age and time.

Switching over from "Plant Man" to "Rock Man," Michael shared his design ideas on the use of hardscape and rocks. The three elements he considers are Materials, Movement, and Mounds. He often uses representational rocks, such as a masculine "protector" rock and a feminine "partner" rock, which represent the owners of the garden. He also uses lava bowls as entry focal points, and flagstones or beach cobbles to represent flowing, moving water and as a touch of whimsy.

Sharing his concept plan, Michael took us from concept to installation through progressive photos. He uses planting mounds as islands, shaping them and placing rocks before planting, with vertical accents planted first. To improve the islands' soil he adds gypsum, sulphur, ironite and pumice. One of his favorite means of covering the resulting negative space around the islands is the use of compacted decomposed granite, which allows for percolation to conserve water resources. Another technique he often uses is the "garden announcement," using urns or other features on either side of the garden or home entrance.

Michael's gardens are site specific. He seeks to understand the micro and macro views and tries to incorporate "borrowed" views. For example, he may shape mounds like the view of distant hills as an echo. He always tries to include a destination spot with garden art – a place to seek out and relax. And he often places an "art gift" at the street to hold water enjoyed by passing pets.

Michael's favorite quote is "Work is love made visible," and as hands-on gardeners we know how true this is.

## THANK YOU DOOR PRIZE DONORS

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### *Amaranthus caudatus* from the Plant Display - see page 18



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Mark your calendar for Bali & Singapore in September 2016. Visits include Gardens by the Bay and Singapore Botanic Gardens. Our Balinese adventure includes private gardens, villas, music, dance, and visual arts, with stays in the village of Ubud and the beach-side town of Sanur.

Or join us next October in San Miguel de Allende. With its narrow cobblestone streets, leafy courtyards, fine architectural details and sumptuous interiors, San Miguel de Allende is arguably the prettiest town in Mexico. Dia de Muertos weekend includes the Festival de la Calaca Mojigangas (human puppets unique to San Miguel).



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### ■ Trees, Please Continued from page 5

that the best side to stake a tree (if a stake is necessary) is on the south side in the southern hemisphere and the north side in the northern hemisphere. This way the stake has the least effect on the biology of the tree.

Being the clever beings we are, uses for auxins have been developed. The use of synthetic auxins for commercial purposes has been a regular practice in the world of horticulture for many years. To speed up root development, the shoot tips of many plants, when treated with auxins, will develop more roots faster than those left untreated. Additionally, there are herbicides that take advantage of auxins and when introduced to plants in a higher than natural concentration will cause abnormal growth and, ultimately, death. It is even possible to produce seedless (parthenocarpic) fruit with the aid of auxins.

Next time you prune your trees consider the auxin effect and how it can help you attain the desired result.

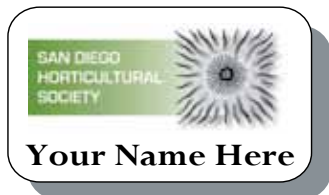


Ash tree auxin removed

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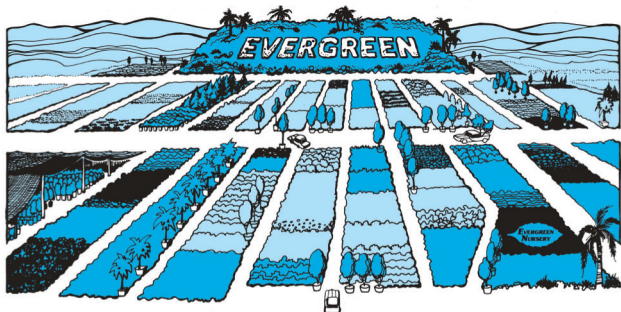
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## What's Happening? for FEBRUARY 2016

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 Neal King at [calendar@sdhort.org](mailto:calendar@sdhort.org).

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## Events at Public Gardens

❖ **Alta Vista Gardens** Contact info on other side  
See [www.avgardens.org](http://www.avgardens.org) for events & classes

❖ **San Diego Botanic Garden** Contact info on other side  
**February 2, 9am-12pm, Succulent Turtle:** Take home a  
charming succulent turtle that you make yourself. Members  
\$35, Non-Members \$42. Register by January 29.  
**February 6, 1-3pm, Kokedama, Japanese Living Art:**  
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moss is used as a container for a plant. In this hands-on  
workshop, you'll learn how to make your own living art piece  
by creating two kokedamas in two hours. Students will learn  
soil preparation, plant selection and use of indoor plants.  
Members \$22, Non-Members \$26. Register by January 29.  
**February 20, 9am-1pm, Build Your Own Hydroponic  
Spring Garden:** Learn the principles of the hydroponic wick  
method by building your own sustainable garden. Members  
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### ❖ The Water Conservation Garden

Contact info on other side. For ALL events below, register online  
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**February 20, 10am- noon, How to Hire a Landscape  
Contractor and Save:** Fun and informative class addresses  
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**February 21, 10-11am, Free Special Access Tour:** Have  
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reservations required. Call 619-660-0614 x16.

**February 27, 10am-noon, After the Lawn Finding Better  
Solutions:** Your lawn is dead or looks like it, ideas and  
solutions to turn those areas into beautiful, inviting outdoor  
spaces. Pre-registration for this class is required. Members  
Free, Non-Members \$10.

## Events Hosted by SDHS Sponsors

Please thank them for supporting SDHS!

### ◆ Barrels & Branches Classes & Workshops

Info: [www.barrelsandbranches.com](http://www.barrelsandbranches.com). See ad on page 17.

◆ **City Farmers Nursery** – see [www.cityfarmersnursery.com](http://www.cityfarmersnursery.com)

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

◆ **Sunshine Care FREE Seminar Each Month**

**February 20, 10:30am-noon: More Winter Veggies, But  
Spring is Here:** Tips on soil preparation, varietal selection,  
pest/disease control, cultural practice, and harvesting.  
RSVP: (858) 472-6059 or [roy@sunshinecare.com](mailto:roy@sunshinecare.com).  
[www.sunshinecare.com](http://www.sunshinecare.com). See ad on page 13.

### ◆ Walter Andersen Nursery FREE Saturday Classes

Details at [www.walterandersen.com](http://www.walterandersen.com); address in ad on page 16.

| Point Loma, 9am                        | Poway, 9:30am         |
|----------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Feb. 6 Bare Root Selections            | Bare root fruit trees |
| Feb. 13 Winter Veggie Garden           | Sustainable gardening |
| Feb. 20 Bare Root: Berries & Grapes    | Strawberry baskets    |
| Feb. 27 Winter Color Fades into Spring | Xeriscape             |

### ◆ Weidners' Gardens classes & workshops

See [www.weidners.com](http://www.weidners.com) or call (760) 436-2194.

## Next SDHS Meeting

**February 8:**

**Think outside the box**

See page 1 & website for details

## More garden-related events on other side

## Other Garden-Related Events:

Check with hosts to confirm dates & details

### Free Workshop: See page 2

Saturday, February 27, 10:30 AM

## Tomatoes – The King of the Spring Garden

To register go to [www.sdhort.org](http://www.sdhort.org) and click on the workshop link.

**February 1, 12:30-2:30pm, Palomar District's Floral Design Forum:** Pauline Sechi, Creative Designer. 7170 Miramar Road. NGC/CGCI members \$12, non-members \$15. Info: [www.bernardogardeners.org](http://www.bernardogardeners.org).

**Feb. 1, 6:30pm, San Diego Mycological Society:** Greg Rubin, guru of California Native Plants, will speak on mycorrhizal fungi (which "extend" plant roots). FREE. Balboa Park, Casa del Prado, room 101. Info: [www.sdmyco.org](http://www.sdmyco.org).

**February 6, 10am-noon, Anstine-Audubon Nature Preserve How to Propagate California Native Plants:** Hands-on workshop and show you step by step how to propagate California native plants using cuttings. 2437 Hutchison St., Vista. Free. Info: and to pre-register, go to [www.anstine.eventbrite.com](http://www.anstine.eventbrite.com).

**February 6, 10am-1pm, California Native Plant Society Gonzales Canyon Hike:** Learn to tell Nuttall's scrub oak from others, since other species cohabit with it. We'll also see other rare shrubs. Meet in the parking lot at Torrey Highlands Park, on Lansdale, north of Del Mar Heights Rd. Info: [www.cnpssd.org](http://www.cnpssd.org).

**February 6 & 7, 1-4:30pm, Camellia Society Show:** Casa Del Prado, Balboa Park, room 101. Info: [www.socalcamelliasociety.org](http://www.socalcamelliasociety.org).

**February 10, 9am, Poway Valley Garden Club:** Grafting techniques for fruit trees and tomatoes. Templars Hall in Old Poway Park, 14134 Midland Rd., Poway. Info: [www.powayvalleygardenclub.org](http://www.powayvalleygardenclub.org) or (858) 204-9070.

**February 9, 10am, Dos Valles Garden Club:** Care and Culture of Alstroemeria. 31020 Cole Grade Road, Valley Center. Info: [www.dosvallesgardenclub.org](http://www.dosvallesgardenclub.org).

**February 10, 10am-noon, Point Loma Garden Club:** Valentine Floral Design Show. Nonmembers \$20. 2818 Avenida de Portugal. Info: [www.plgc.org](http://www.plgc.org).

**February 13, 10am-4pm, San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society Winter Show & Sale:** Huge number of plants for sale, other activities. FREE. See insert. Balboa Park, Room 101, San Diego. Info: [www.sdcss.net](http://www.sdcss.net) or 858-382-1797.

**February 17, 2pm, San Diego Floral Association:** "Tablescaping" with natural materials. Room 101 of Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. Info: [www.sdfloal.org](http://www.sdfloal.org) or (619) 232-5762.

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

For a FREE listing (space permitting) send details by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month BEFORE the event to Neal King at [calendar@sdhort.org](mailto:calendar@sdhort.org).

For an extensive list of garden club meetings and events, visit [sdfloal.org/calendar.htm](http://sdfloal.org/calendar.htm)

## Resources & Ongoing Events:

**ALTA VISTA BOTANIC GARDENS:** Open Monday-Friday 7:00-5:00; 10:00-5:00 on weekends. Fee: members/free; non-members/\$2. 1270 Vale Terrace Drive, Vista. Info: [www.avgardens.org](http://www.avgardens.org) or (760) 945-3954.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### BALBOA PARK:

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

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

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

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

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

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

**San Diego Natural History Museum:** Exhibits, classes, lectures, etc. (619) 232-3821; [www.sdnhm.org](http://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](http://www.sandiegozoo.org).

### Garden Radio Shows:

**Garden Compass Radio Show (local).** Saturday 9-10am. XEPE 1700AM radio, hosts Bruce and Sharon Asakawa, John Bagnasco. Call-in questions: (619) 570-1360 or (800) 660-4769.

**GardenLife Radio Show (national).** Saturday 8-9am and Sunday 8-10am. KCEO 1000AM radio, hosts Bruce and Sharon Asakawa, John Bagnasco. Call-in questions: 866-606-TALK. Hear it streaming live on [lifestyletalkradio.com](http://lifestyletalkradio.com). GardenLife shows are also archived at [www.lifestyletalkradio.com](http://www.lifestyletalkradio.com).

### San Diego County Farmers Markets

[www.sdfarmbureau.org/BuyLocal/Farmers-Markets.php](http://www.sdfarmbureau.org/BuyLocal/Farmers-Markets.php)