

Let's Talk Plants!

Newsletter of the San Diego Horticultural Society

November 2016, Number 266

The Drought-Defying California Garden

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On the Cover: A beautiful garden of native plants

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

Saturday, December 3
9 am to 1pm

15500 San Pasqual Valley Road, Escondido

Registration Opens November 1:

sdhort.org



HIGHLIGHTS of the event:

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

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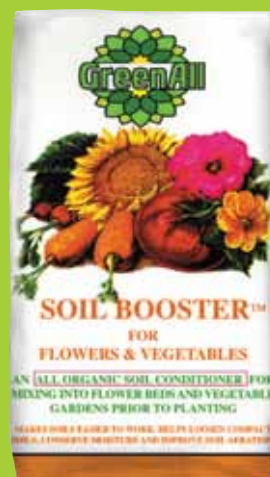
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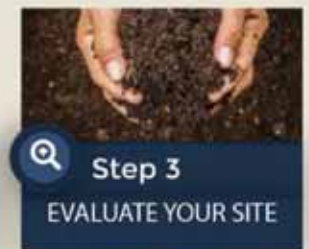
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SEEN AT OUR OCTOBER MEETING



Read about this Brunsvigia hybrid, whose over 1' wide dead stalk is shown here, on page 16.



Liz Youngflesh, of Garden Glories, sold gorgeous plants.



New vendor Artistic Glassworks had lovely glass for sale.



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SAN DIEGO HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

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



MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Renewal information is at www.sdhort.org.

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

MEETING SCHEDULE

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

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

MEETINGS & EVENTS

December 3 SDHS Special Event at the San Diego Zoo's Safari Park – see sdhort.org for details & registration

2017

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

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



www.sdhort.org

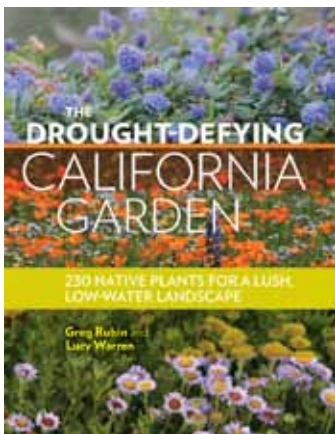
COVER IMAGE: The cover photo of a local garden featuring California native plants is just one of many showcasing water thrifty plants. Learn more at our November meeting at our NEW meeting place. Details below and at www.sdhort.org.

NEXT MEETING: NOVEMBER 14, 2016, 5:30 – 8:30 PM

Speakers: Greg Rubin and Lucy Warren on their new book, *The Drought-Defying California Garden*.

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

NEW MEETING PLACE: Congregation Beth Israel, 9001 Towne Centre Drive, San Diego 92122 (across the street from the Westfield UTC mall). Parking is free – validate your parking ticket at check-in desk.



On Monday, November 14, we welcome co-authors Greg Rubin and Lucy Warren, who promise to share some secrets from their comprehensive guide to landscaping with California natives, *The Drought-Defying California Garden*. California native plants are among the easiest and most drought-tolerant plants for local landscapes—if they are handled correctly. Following up on the success of their first best seller, *The California Native Landscape*, Greg and Lucy unearth the key elements to the design and maintenance of low water, lush, and colorful gardens that are also wildlife-friendly.

Greg Rubin is owner of California's Own Native Landscape Design. After years of transforming the landscapes of his friends and family, Greg launched his business in 1993 and he has stayed busy since, designing over 600 native landscapes in San Diego to date. Lucy Warren owns a market research consulting firm and is an active contributor to all things related to gardens and horticulture in San Diego. She was former editor of *California Garden* magazine

and she wrote a column about edible plants for the *San Diego Union Tribune*. She has also been assistant coordinator of the Flower and Garden Show at the San Diego County Fair and the Spring Home/Garden Show.

The authors will be selling and signing their books before and after the meeting. To learn more, visit www.calown.com/ and see page 7. ☞



SAN DIEGO HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Established September 1994

BOARD MEMBERS

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Roy Wilburn – Outreach Coordinator

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

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New Email? New Street Address?

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

BECOME A SPONSOR!

Do you own a garden-related business?

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

DID YOU LOSE YOUR CAP AT THE OCTOBER MEETING?

We found a black cap at the October meeting. If it's yours, you can pick it up at the November meeting from Evey Torre-Bueno where the name tags are sold.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

**Do more than belong: participate.
Do more than care: help. Do more than
believe: practice. Do more than be fair:
be kind. Do more than forgive: forget.
Do more than dream: work.**
(William Arthur Ward)



Patty Berg

Members mingle at the August meeting

Newsletter Advertising Manager Needed

Here's a fun opportunity for members who like to work with local garden businesses and clubs: we need a detail-oriented person to be our newsletter advertising manager. This takes only 1-2 hours per month, and you'll be working with current advertisers, plus potential advertisers. For details contact Susi Torre-Bueno at 760-295-2173 or storrebueno@cox.net.

Looking for Volunteers to Organize the Spring Garden Tour

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



Sherrill Leist

One of the gardens from the
2016 tour

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

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 President?

As you read this, the United States presidential election should be drawing to a close, which clears the stage for a much less dramatic event - choosing the next president of our Horticultural Society. This is my sixth and final year as SDHS President. I've greatly enjoyed serving and will continue to be involved in the organization. During my term, we have worked tirelessly to improve the membership and volunteer experience. We've implemented many changes to help make managing the organization easier, added activities, and involved many local people. I've met some wonderful and talented people and I am very proud to have served on the board.

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

Spring Garden Tour

Although it's only November, we've already started working on our Spring Garden Tour, tentatively scheduled for Saturday, April 8, 2017. If you've attend our tour in past years, you know we try to present a wide variety of charming landscapes that feature climate-appropriate plants and showcase gardens in a different area of San Diego County each year. The first and most important part of planning the tour is finding the gardens themselves. This year, we are featuring gardens in the Point Loma and Ocean Beach areas. We encourage members to share their gardens, but the owners do not have to be a member to participate.

Scott and I have opened our garden many times over the last 15 years and we've always found it to be a pleasant and rewarding experience. We've never had a major problem; rather, we've met many wonderful, gracious people. We've always been impressed by how friendly, courteous, and respectful tour goers are.

If you're considering sharing your garden on the tour, don't worry about large groups in your garden. The total number of tour participants is capped so as not to overcrowd the gardens. A supplemental insurance policy is taken out for each garden on the tour. Additionally, garden owners receive a one-year membership in the San Diego Horticultural Society, as well as several other gifts, but the best part is the admiration and praise of fellow gardeners. If you have or know of a garden in either the 92106 or 92017 zip codes that might be suitable for the tour, please email me at sdhspresident@gmail.com with the contact information for the garden owner.

Come spring, we will be looking for volunteers to staff the event. However, if you'd like to get in on the ground floor, now is the time to volunteer to be part of the planning team. This is a great opportunity for new and old members alike. Team members will help select

gardens, prepare publicity, coordinate vendors and volunteers, and organize the event. The Spring Garden Tour is our biggest fundraiser of the year; proceeds go towards funding both college scholarships for local horticulture students and our programs for promoting the enjoyment and knowledge of horticulture in the San Diego area. So if you can give a few hours each month between now and April to make our event a success, it will be time well spent. And what could be more fun than viewing gardens? If you have publicity, photography, or organizational skills, or if you enjoy doing signage or coordinating vendors, we'd love to have your help. Please contact Jim Bishop at sdhspresident@sdhort.org to join the team. ☘



Patty Berg

Pat Welsh painting at one of the Del Mar gardens on our 2016 tour.

FALL GARDEN PARTY NOVEMBER 5

At Waterwise Botanicals, Bonsall

Our sponsor Waterwise Botanicals is hosting their 4th Annual Fall Garden Party on Saturday, November 5, 2016 from 9:00am - 3:00pm. They will have workshops, demonstrations, great food, and many activities going on throughout the day, and they'd love our members to attend. The workshops (you need to pre-register online) include one on succulent planters using driftwood and another on repurposing funky junk into a succulent planter. The demos include one about creating bonsai, holiday centerpieces, and a third on container gardening.

More details are available at thefallgardenparty.com. The event will be at 32151 Old Hwy 395, Bonsall, 92003. The nursery has a wide range of plants for sale, several excellent display gardens, and is a fine location for this fun event. ☘

WATERWISE BOTANICALS

THE REAL DIRT ON...

Howard McMinn (of *Arctostaphylos* Fame)

By Susan Krzywicki

Professor Howard E. McMinn is a favorite landscape hero of mine. My personal connection to him is that I attended Mills College where he was a long-time professor - albeit after the professor's extended 39-year tenure. I also happen to just love the garden star, *Arctostaphylos densiflora* 'Howard McMinn', named in his honor:



Susan Krzywicki

Manzanita in bloom

Mills College: Oasis in the West

Mills College was the first women's college west of the Rockies, founded in 1852. It was established by a group of New England transplants who wanted to bring culture and education to young women. Daughters of the 49er gold miners were sent there. The Pacific Rim influence was also felt at the College (Moto Uwanto, one of very few Japanese female diplomats, was a Mills 1939 alumnae). Julia Morgan, Bernard Maybeck, Walter Ratcliff, and Howard Gilkey were some of the architects of the campus.

Also, Howard McMinn (1891-1963), an Indiana-born professor of botany and author of *An Illustrated Manual of Pacific Coast Trees* (1935), as well as *A Manual of Trees, Shrubs, and Vines of Mills College* (1919), was the professor whose tenure has been called the "Golden Age of Horticulture" on campus. McMinn collected locally for decades, including woody plants from Santa Cruz Island. As chair of the botany department, he was responsible for the plotting of 2,500 native trees representing 41 species, many of which still persist on campus today. His legacy has been getting a polishing up recently due to a grant to survey the campus, create a native garden, and other efforts to draw attention to his contributions to California's heritage.

A Garden Stand-Out - McMinn Manzanita

The eponymous manzanita is a hyper-local that the professor collected from around the Sebastopol area of Sonoma County. The seeds were from a wild stand of Vine Hill Manzanita (*Arctostaphylos densiflora*) and he successfully cultivated them on the Mills College campus. In 1955, the Saratoga Horticultural Foundation started distributing the plant, which then entered the horticultural trade as a reliable, beautiful staple.

Of all the manzanita varieties, 'Howard McMinn' is among the most tolerant of diverse garden conditions. It withstands drought as well as scheduled irrigation. So, if necessary, it could be planted adjacent to lawn sprinklers, either in full sun or dappled shade. Manzanita 'Howard McMinn' does best in well-drained soil, but it does not mind sandy or heavy clay soils, as long as you don't over- or under-water. Avoid any urge to fertilize this plant, and when it is happy, it can reach 10 feet tall. Professor McMinn's vision and his energetic efforts created a botanical boom period that reflects itself in the cool, green oasis that is the Mills Campus of today, and in our beautiful, useful shrub.

Susan Krzywicki is a native plant landscape designer in San Diego. She has been the first Horticulture Program Director for the California Native Plant Society, as well as chair of the San Diego Surfrider Foundation Ocean Friendly Gardens Committee and is on the Port of San Diego BCDC for the Chula Vista Bayfront. ♻️

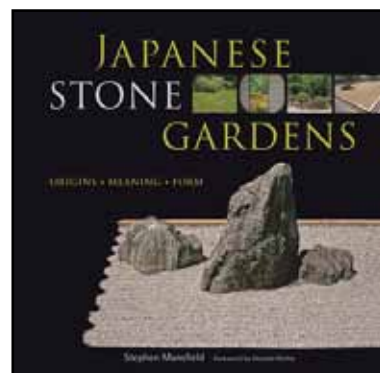
BOOK REVIEW

Japanese Stone Gardens: Origins, Meaning, Form

By Stephen Mansfield

Reviewed by Caroline McCullagh

One of my college professors told a story about attending a Christmas party with a Japanese anthropologist. The young woman, a specialist in Western culture, proceeded to tell the guests the symbolic meaning of each of the ornaments on the Christmas tree. My professor was amazed. It had never occurred to him to wonder about the meanings embedded in those decorations.



I tell this story because it's relevant to this month's book. A lot of the text has to do with the Buddhist and Shinto symbolism embedded in Japanese stone gardens. If you're interested in understanding a broader picture of Japanese culture, it's good to know about that, but it's okay to just be interested in the gardens for their beauty and nothing more.

And beautiful they are. They're not just raked gravel. Their beauty ranges from gardens that are simple and austere to those that are lush and tropical.

Stone gardens were originally built as parts of temple complexes where people could go to meditate and be at peace. First built in the 1500s, they include dry land gardens and "wet" gardens, which include water features. Some cover many acres. Others are tiny pocket gardens.

As is often the case, there are designers who swear by the traditional designs and rules and those who want to expand what they can use and do. The traditional rules are based on the idea that the gods are accessible through special natural forms, particularly rocks. The rocks are not gods, but where they touch the earth, they provide a conduit of communication.

Contemporary gardens are still built in temples, but now also appear in private homes and commercial buildings. Where traditional gardens include only things in their natural forms (i.e. no "adjusting" by humans), newer gardens include stone carved into such things as water basins and lamps and materials such as concrete, plastic, steel, and other metals.

The book is divided into two sections. The first is an introduction to the history, philosophy, and design of the gardens. The second covers 15 gardens you can visit from Tokyo in the north to one of the Ryukyu Islands in the south.

Of the 15, the one I found most interesting was one built at the Canadian Embassy in Tokyo. It's designed to bring to mind the Canadian geologic landscape as formed by glaciation. It even includes an inukshuk, a stacked stone figure built by the Inuit of Northern Canada.

In addition to learning more about Japan, I recommend this book to you for another reason. I think the stone landscape garden concepts are easily adaptable to California. As drought becomes more of a problem, we are exhorted to get rid of our water-hungry gardens. These Japanese ideas might be just what we need. ♻️

LOVE YOUR YARD AND EAT IT, Too!

Get Ready for Bare Root Season

By Ari Tenenbaum

November is the perfect time to prepare for planting bare root fruit trees since they typically become available in San Diego in early January. Dormant deciduous trees grown in the field are dug in winter and then shipped to nurseries without any soil (hence the term “bare root”). Compared to trees sold in soil, trees planted from bare root tend to acclimate to new sites more quickly and generally perform better throughout their lifespan. Peaches, plums, pomegranates, figs, persimmons, and apples are just a few of the typically available bare root trees. They are only sold for a few months every year (usually January-March) and it's easy to miss out if you don't have your site prepped ahead of time. Here are a few tips to help you select and prepare your site for new trees:

Light: Most fruit trees require full sun to thrive and produce high quality fruit, so before you get too far along, verify that your location receives at least 6 hours of full sun. Remember that sun exposure can change dramatically with each season. For example, the north side of your house may receive full sun at the height of the summer and be in full shade for most other times of the year. It may be helpful to search your address using Google Maps to better understand how much sun exposure different areas of your property are receiving. While you can always add more water or fertilizer, you cannot provide more sun to trees planted in shade.

Water: No irrigation system is perfect, but to set yourself up for success, it's worth thinking about your trees' watering needs both prior to and after planting. It's ideal to have all your deciduous fruit trees on a single valve so that you can control their irrigation without affecting

other portions of your landscape. Most fruit trees can do well with a drip system, but be sure to test your system prior to planting to make sure it is functioning correctly. How often and how long you water will ultimately depend on your soil type and the precipitation rate of your irrigation system. It is especially important to carefully monitor watering the first summer because the roots will still be developing and young trees can dry out easily in hot weather.

Soil Amendments: Talk to 10 different fruit tree experts and you are bound to get 10 (or more) different opinions regarding how to amend soils for planting new trees. Although many plant tags will direct you to amend backfill with anywhere from one-third to two-thirds planting soil or compost, amending soils with too much organic matter creates a container-like situation for trees and does not promote healthy root growth out into the native soil. In a perfect world, you might amend the entire planting space by tilling in compost and other organic amendments throughout the whole planting area where your tree will eventually be sending its roots. If large-scale soil amendment is not a feasible option, the next best thing is to apply a heavy, three-inch or four-inch layer of compost and/or mulch on top of your soil to activate the soil ecology. Covering the soil with this organic material will protect it from erosion during winter rains and it will also start improving the structure and biological activity so that when you do plant, your soil will have lots of beneficial microbes to help support your new tree.

When planting time comes, I often incorporate some organic fertilizer and/or worm castings with the backfill. Avoid adding too much organic material like compost because as it decomposes, it will cause the tree to settle and that can lead to other problems down the road. Also, in general, I stay away from synthetic fertilizers since they can spur rapid, tender spring growth that is susceptible to sucking insects like aphids and other pests. 🌿



Bare root Desert Delight nectarines thrive in San Diego's temperate climate and are generally available in January.

GOING WILD WITH NATIVES

Three California Native Irises

By Bobbie Stephenson

The plant family Iridaceae was named by Swedish botanist Carl Linnaeus after the Greek goddess of the rainbow, Iris, who carried messages from Olympus to earth along a rainbow. This is a fitting name given the wide range of colors seen in the flowers of this family's species. Iridaceae are monocots with one embryonic leaf, or cotyledon, and have three petals, three sepals, and sword-like equitant leaves that overlap at the base to form a flat, fanlike arrangement in two ranks.

This article focuses on three native California Iridaceae species: western blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*), California golden-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium californicum*), and Douglas iris (*Iris douglasiana*). These three species all grow from compact rhizomes and can usually be found at native plant nurseries. The distinguishing characteristic between *Sisyrinchium* and *Iris* genera is that *Sisyrinchium* petals and sepals (collectively referred to as tepals) look the same, whereas the petals and sepals in *Iris* flowers differ.

Although the common names of the two *Sisyrinchium* species include the name "grass," this misrepresents the fact that they have showy petals and sepals. However, they are thin-leaved and often grow in grasslands, which is probably why they are commonly called grasses. The western blue-eyed grass, otherwise known as the California blue-eyed grass, grows to about one foot tall and has one-inch flowers ranging from blue-purple to violet to pale blue and occasionally to white. It can be seen along the California coast and up to about 7,000 feet in elevation west of the Sierra Nevada from southern Oregon down to Baja California. In San Diego County, it's found in native and non-native grasslands, coastal sage scrub and wildflower fields. In the garden, it prefers full sun and regular water, but can become very drought tolerant. It blooms from March through May.

California golden-eyed grass is similar to western blue-eyed grass, but shorter (about eight inches tall), and has light to bright yellow flowers. It prefers moist areas, but can become drought tolerant in a



Golden-eyed grass

garden. Its native habitat is freshwater wetlands and marshes along the coast below 700 feet ranging from British Columbia to central California. Preferring sun or part shade, California golden-eyed grass blooms from spring to late summer.

The Douglas iris, which looks a lot like the ornamental irises, was named for the Scotsman David Douglas who botanized in the Pacific Northwest and south into California in the 1820s and 1830s. Douglas irises are native to the coastal regions from southern Oregon to Santa Barbara. Although generally found growing below 350 feet, the species can be found at elevations up to 3,300 feet. It is a beardless iris with leaves less than one inch wide and it forms evergreen clumps one to two feet high and two to four feet wide. It flowers from April to June and in its native habitat, the flowers can be light to dark lavender; deep red-purple, or a pale cream veined with purple; in the horticultural trade, a wide variety of purplish and yellow colors, and near white, are available. Douglas irises prefer richer soils, such as clay, with organic matter: 🌱



Western blue-eyed grass growing at the California Native Plant Society's Native Plant Landscape in Old Town.



Douglas iris growing in a native plant garden in the Rolando area of San Diego.

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION PARTY

Thank you to all our Volunteers!

Many thanks to our volunteers for doing their part during the past twelve months. Let's continue to make SDHS the friendliest and most dynamic regional gardening group!

This year's Volunteer Appreciation event was a Breakfast in the Park Party at San Dieguito County Park in Solana Beach on October 29. As we go to press this party is still a few days off, but we know it'll be as much fun as in many previous years and, we hope that cooler weather will prevail. There will be a delicious breakfast, lots of good door prizes and good company, guaranteed.

We will serve breakfast, give away prizes, and have some fun and games too. To add to the fun, we are asking attendees to bring a plant or cutting to exchange with other members.

The December newsletter will include photos and a full report of the festivities. 🌿



Above: Some of the volunteers at our 2013 party, seated under shade canopies in Susan & Frank Oddo's garden.

Left: Not all our volunteers can walk on water, but we think that Scott Borden is one of the very best!

Below: Susan Morse and Jeff Biletnikoff at our 2013 party.



TO LEARN MORE...

A (Nearly) Drought-Defying Local Plant

By Ava Torre-Bueno

Octopus Agave, *Agave vilmoriniana*, is a wonderful plant for the drought-defying garden. It is almost native to this area (endemic in parts of Mexico, including nearby Sonora) and it has many qualities that make it suitable for your garden.

Unlike Tequila Agave, *Agave tequilana*, which is a noxious invasive weed, Octopus Agave has no runners to spread throughout your garden and the leaves are not serrated on the edges with vicious, bone-penetrating spines at the end. Additionally, they have lovely, slightly twisting leaves that make them look a bit more tropical than other agaves. And of course, they are very drought-tolerant.

This first article discusses how to situate Octopus Agave in the garden and the second is an example of how gardeners come to love these plants, and the sense of loss they feel when the plant finally blooms and dies after eight to twelve years:

www.houzz.com/ideabooks/44808753/list/great-design-plant-agave-vilmoriniana

<http://lazarlandscape.com/2012/10/05/goodbye-to-my-agave-vilmoriniana/>

Here's a page about propagating the thousands of bulbils that can be harvested from a plant that's bloomed, though I've found that propagation just takes sticking them in any old dirt and walking away: <http://homeguides.sfgate.com/propagate-octopus-agave-24574.html>

People like to take pictures of their Octopus Agave as it blooms! These are some slideshows set to music.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6tulj1jgl-s> (Beethoven)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SkoEu7Z5N9M> (Quiet birdsong)

NOTE: Susi Torre-Bueno has hundreds and hundreds of little baby plants to give away from a plant of hers that bloomed last spring. If you'd like to get some contact her BEFORE the November meeting at storrebueno@cox.net. 🌿



**Flowering Octopus Agave
FREE baby plants available
- see note at end of article.**

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT PROPAGATION WORKSHOP

November 5 in Vista

"How to Propagate California Native Plants" is a free, guided workshop offered by the Anstine-Audubon Nature Preserve in Vista on Saturday, November 5, from 10AM to noon. Anstine volunteer, SDHS board member, and Certified Master Gardener Anne Murphy will lead this popular class.

In this fun, step-by-step propagation class, you'll learn how to prepare pots and potting soil; take cuttings from parent plants; pot and care for cuttings; and what to do with established plants. Pots and soil will be provided, as well as cuttings. Cutting choices will likely include various salvias, Manzanita, Toyon, Coyote Brush, and Bush Mallow. Refreshments will also be served.

Pre-registration is required and early registration is suggested as this class fills quickly. Please register at [Propagate.eventbrite.com](https://www.propagate.eventbrite.com). As we go to press we've just learned that this workshop is already full, but people who are interested should go to register and put their name on the wait list; it is possible a 2nd session will be added if there is enough demand.

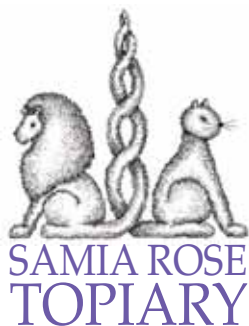
The Anstine-Audubon Nature Preserve is located at 2437 Hutchison Street in Vista and is open Saturdays from 8AM to noon from October through June. Learn more at: sandiegoaudubon.org/our-work/sanctuaries/anstine-nature-preserve. 🌿



SUCCULENT TOPIARY OPEN HOUSE

November 13, 1pm – 4pm,
San Marcos

Samia Rose Topiary has announced their first Open House for Sunday, November 13, from 1-4pm. Everyone welcome! See what Samia Rose is doing with succulent topiary, wreaths and plants. The address is 119 Valpreda Road, San Marcos. Info: www.srtopriary.com 🌿



THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS!

We Appreciate your Support

Every month in our newsletter we list our sponsors on page 11, and they also appear on the Sponsor page on our website (sdhort.org), along with a short description of what each one does and a link to their home page. We hope you'll patronize them and thank them for their support.

This month of Thanksgiving we're especially thankful for our two top-level sponsors, who have each contributed \$1000/year for their support. This exceptional generosity helps fund our programs, and we're very grateful to them for helping us promote good horticultural practices and share solid information with the gardening public.

Evergreen Nursery (see ad on the calendar page 1) was founded over 30 years ago, and now has three locations and over 400 acres. Their website (evergreennursery.com) has a list of available plants, plus useful information for gardeners. For

example, you can look up shrubs by size to see what choices that grow up to 3' tall would work best in your garden. There's even a month-by-month guide to caring for roses. Owner Mark Collins was a SDHS board member for a number of years, and you can see the interesting gardens designed by Wally Kearns at the Spring Home/Garden Show. They host a free seminar the first Saturday of each month at two of their locations – see their website for details.



The San Diego County Water Authority (see ad on inside back cover) has sponsored our display gardens at the San Diego County Fair for a number of years, and their generosity has allowed us to bring some excellent examples of home gardening possibilities to a million visitors each

year. They have many downloadable materials available on their website (sdcwa.org), and especially at WaterSmart.org, to help home owners and businesses use water responsibly. They represent many agencies, and their website notes that "The San Diego County Water Authority sustains a \$222 billion regional economy and the quality of life for 3.3 million residents through a multi-decade water supply diversification plan, major infrastructure investments and forward-thinking policies that promote fiscal and environmental responsibility. A public agency created in 1944, the Water Authority delivers a safe and reliable wholesale water supply at an affordable cost to 24 retail water agencies, including cities, special districts and a military base." Check out WaterSmartSD.org for information, including videos, about their programs, what you can do to conserve water, and upcoming events. See page 12 for details on their FREE November 19 Landscape Design for Homeowners Workshop. 🌿



TREES, PLEASE

Too Many Leaves

By Tim Clancy

Ah...the simple act of pruning. It's cathartic to some and unbelievably confusing to others. What exactly is pruning anyway? According to the Tree Care Industry Association Dictionary of Standard Definitions for the green industry, pruning is "the selective removal of plant parts to meet specific goals and objectives" (ANSI A300 (Part 1) - 2008 Pruning).

Goals and objectives are the key words in that definition and are the words that guide my decision about what to prune and when. In the case of trees, the goals and objectives are typically straightforward. I want to reduce/eliminate tree branches that are blocking signs, streetlights, or anything we need to see for informational purposes. The next question is, "How long should the pruning last?" In other words, when would you expect to return and see tree growth blocking the corner stop sign? I use the clearance standards developed by the San Diego Regional Forests Council as my guide.

Most of the pruning I recommend is for clearance purposes. I tend to stay away from crown thinning for many reasons, including the way the tree responds to wind events. We used to think that the removal of branches would allow wind to pass through the canopy and the tree was better for it. However, trees have evolved with the ability to withstand the normal wind events in their native lands. They do this by deflecting wind in what is called "damping." This occurs as the leaves diminish the wind's ability to damage trees by moving chaotically which, in turn, slows the wind's speed.

Another thing to keep in mind in terms of your pruning objectives



Tree pruned in July



Many more leaves in October

is that trees store energy for use throughout the year since this will affect both when and how much you prune. Even when trees are dormant, there is still plenty going on that requires energy. I recently visited a home where the homeowner had a tree completely denuded of foliage in July. In the photo taken three months later, you can see that the tree responded to the pruning by quickly growing "replacement branches" for the ones that were removed. I am not entirely sure what all of the pruning objectives were, but I learned that this response growth defeated at least one of the pruning objectives. The tree owner mentioned to me that the tree was dropping leaves and was very messy (which, of course, is subjective), causing the owner to clean more frequently than desired.

In this case, the pruning occurred at exactly the wrong time if the reason was to diminish the total number of leaves. The pruning dosage (amount pruned off) was also too much. As you can see, the tree responded by growing a prolific amount of leaves that will, of course, fall off and need to be cleaned up. The correct diagnosis for this situation would have been to reduce the tree (crown) by about 20% at the end of spring growth. This treatment plan could be instituted over two or three years and then you would have a relatively well-behaved tree. ☺

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Let's Talk Plants! November 2016, No. 266

San Diego Horticultural Society 9



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. Below is a continuation of last month's article "The Adoration", Part I about growing agaves.

Agavaceae, Part 2: The Aggravation

Agaves are great garden plants since most are low water; need little maintenance, and can add a strong accent to gardens. However, these plants do have their drawbacks and challenges.

The obvious problem with growing agaves is that many of them have sharp leaves. Also, some pup frequently, resulting in the need for continual maintenance to remove the pups...with the upside of having free plants to share with others. Since agaves are monocarpic, resulting in their death post-bloom, there is also the difficulty of removing a very large plant from the garden after it blooms.

We had a large four-foot wide *Agave americana variegata* in our garden part way down the hill next to the dry creek bed. One day, I noticed that area of the garden looked different, and I realized that the agave was gone! A gopher had eaten the roots away and the plant had rolled down the hill about 30 feet. It was so large that I left it there for several months. Eventually, I dragged it to an open spot on the hill and replanted it in a slight depression I had dug to keep it from rolling back down the hill. It took a few years for the plant to regrow roots and show much leaf growth, but it is now bigger than ever. Like most of the other plants in our garden, all agaves are planted in a chicken wire cage to deter gophers. Agaves that send out large pups seem to be the gophers' favorites, while those with wiry roots and stiff leaves, as well as the soft-leaved varieties, have not been attacked by gophers.

The past two summers, I noticed unusual looking black beetles on some Mexican Fencepost Cacti, *Pachycereus marginatus*, in the garden and they had done significant damage to the growing tips. I disposed of the bugs, but a couple of days later, I saw an article on Facebook about agaves in San Diego being attacked by the agave snout weevil (*Scyphophorus acupunctatus*). The bugs in my garden looked exactly like the ones shown online. Could the same beetle also attack cacti? After doing some research, it turns out the weevil will attack several species of columnar cacti. The weevil uses its snout to cut a hole at the base of the plant and lay eggs. The larva also injects the plant with bacteria that dissolves the plant's tissue and turns the core of the plant into mush. Eventually, the center of the plant falls out. I removed the Mexican Fencepost Cacti and, unfortunately, also removed an infested *Cereus peruvianus* 'Monstrosus' cactus.

I recently checked many agaves in the garden and I haven't found any signs of the weevil. However, that doesn't mean they aren't there. As a preventive measure, I'll be treating all of the agaves with a liquid systemic pesticide made for trees. I hate to use any pesticides in the garden unless absolutely necessary, but with over 100 agaves, a weevil infestation could kill most of them in a few years. I'll also treat all the *Yuccas*, *Beschorniera*, *Furcraea* and other members of the Agavoideae family since many of them are also susceptible to the weevil. Fortunately, I've learned from my research online that many of the agave species in our garden don't seem to attract the weevil.

And in case what I've written about the weevil has you feeling hesitant about planting agaves, there are a few things you can do to prevent introducing the weevil into your garden. First, when planting



Snout-nose agave weevil



Agave post gopher

pups from other agaves, always remove all of the soil and check the bases for weevil scars. Then, grow agaves in pots and treat them with a systemic pesticide. After several months or years, transplant them into the garden and retreat them with the pesticide. You can also do some research online to help you choose agaves that are immune from weevil attacks, and be sure to ask the nursery where you plan to purchase your agaves if they have ever had problems with the agave weevil in their stock plants. 🌱

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:

| | | | |
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| Rebecca Adams | Jeff & Rene Freeland | Teresa & Gary | Christine Scordino |
| Carol Benton | Pamela Gade | McCune | Elizabeth Shopes |
| Rick Bjorklund | Len Geiger | Kay Rideout | Jeff & Carol Skiljan |
| Beth Button | Constance Gonczy | Gabriela Rivello & | Lesley Stern |
| Terry Chamberlin | Fred Heigold | Simon Waters | Jane Strong |
| John Clements | Candice Hirschmann | Barbara Ruys | Barbara Wergey |
| Catherine Eaton | Nick Malich | Lisa Schneider | Julie Willard |

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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| Karen Baccei (1) | Brett Eckler (1) | Toni Muncell (2) | Susi Torre-Bueno (1) |
| Gail Bakker (1) | Dave Ericson (2) | Princess Norman (1) | Tere Trout (1) |
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LIFE MEMBERS *Horticulturist of the Year

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*Walter Andersen (2002)

Norm Applebaum &

Barbara Roper

*Bruce & Sharon

Asakawa (2010)

Gladys T. Baird

Debra Lee Baldwin

*Steve Brigham (2009)

Laurie Connable

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*Julian Duval (2014) & Leslie Duval

*Edgar Engert (2000)

Jim Farley

Sue & Charles Fouquette

Caroline James

Joyce James

Debbie & Richard Johnson

*Vince Lazaneo (2004)

*Brad Monroe (2013)

*Bill Nelson (2007)

Deborah & Jack Pate

*Kathy Puplava (2015)

Tina & Andy Rathbone

*Jon Rebman (2011)

Mary Rodriguez

Peggy Ruzich

*San Diego Zoo Horticultural

Staff (2016)

Gerald D. Stewart

*Susi Torre-Bueno (2012)

& Jose Torre-Bueno

Dorothy Walker

Lucy Warren

*Evelyn Weidner (2001)

*Pat Welsh (2003)

Betty Wheeler

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(see ads for more discounts)

Get a 15% discount at Briggs Tree Co. (www.briggstree.com; tell them to look up the "San Diego Hort Society Member" account).

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

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HDR Photography Effects: Learn how to shoot HDR from photo tipster Bob Bretell. You'll want to mount these lovely images on your walls! Saturday, November 5, 9am-1pm.

Living Wall/Vertical Garden: Learn the basics of planting a living succulent wall by making your own 10" by 20" wall planter. This is one of the Garden's most popular classes! REGISTER TODAY. This class fills up quickly! Saturday, November 5, 9am-noon.

Using Soul Collage to Discover Your Hidden Creativity: Discover how the poetry of images can activate key areas in your brain, allowing you to find creative solutions you didn't know that you knew! Sunday, November 6, 9:30am-4pm.

Succulent Frog Class: Make your own unique succulent frog for your garden or table. Tuesday, November 8, 9am-noon.

Introduction to Zentangle: This easy to learn method is a relaxing, fun way to create beautiful images by drawing structured patterns. Saturday, November 12, 1pm-3pm.

Succulent Turtle Class: Make your own unique succulent turtle for your garden or table. Thursday, November 17, 9 am-noon.

Block Prints & Watercolor: Learn how to design and carve block print images with little effort on soft rubber material to make lines for stunning watercolor prints. Sunday, November 20, 9am-4pm. ☺



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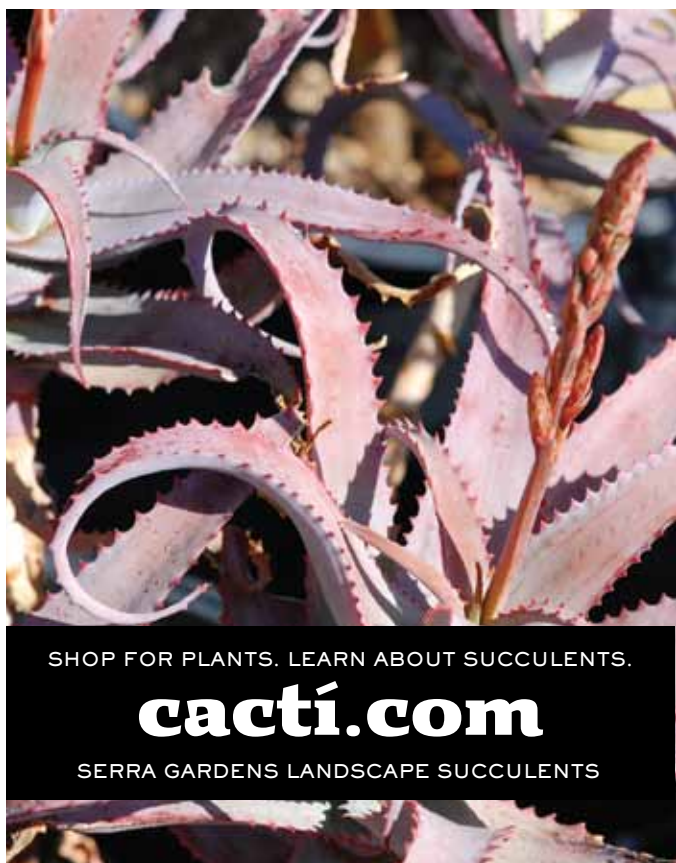
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On Saturday, November 19, from 9:00 am to noon, the City of Oceanside is sponsoring a FREE workshop in WaterSmart Landscape Design for homeowners, to be held at the El Corazon Senior Center. The workshop is free, but registration is required (see below).

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To register online go to <http://tinyurl.com/watersmart-workshop>.



This giant reed (*Arundo donax* 'Variegata') was displayed at the October meeting, plant descriptions begin on page 16.



Julia Chimento

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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 November was: Are you planning anything different for your fall garden, or rethinking any of your usual garden plans this year?

Cielo Foth: The drought has had a significant impact in the garden, and rain harvesting has helped a lot to supplement the city water. But I want to do more. For the last few years now, I have been eliminating underperforming and redundant fruit trees and also grafting deciduous fruit trees. I will be multi-grafting more onto existing fruit trees so I can then further remove more. I donate or find homes for those I have displaced. As much as I love our garden, I don't want to be slaving myself for her. Sadly, as I type this, I'm about to take out an underperforming kumquat.

Al Myrick: Dora and I have already installed two (count 'em: two) new secret garden areas ahead of the winter season. They are little, cozy, and under trees with hanging garden plants of Spanish mosses, donkey tail, ferns, begonias, orchids, and epidendrum orchids. They're in two secluded spots, just large enough to have a bistro table and chairs. Nice! So many places to hide in or retreat to.



Joe Mabel

Donkey Tail

Charlotte Getz: I am converting all the irrigation to Netafim drip throughout the yard and am doing an inventory of plants that are doing well with low water and those that need more are coming out. Also, I am leaving a few rabbit favorites for them to munch on: gazania (they love the tender stems and flowers) and lobelia (they eat it to the ground overnight). I am adding more succulent groupings to the yard as well.

Connie Gonczy: Revamping the whole yard - no more grass!

Viv Black: I have already severely cut my thornless blackberry plants, only to find that they are already bearing new berries. That's our San Diego weather.

Susi Torre-Bueno: We usually plant daffodils in the fall; this year I'm going to plant some parsley starts, as ground cover over the bulbs, plus perhaps other low-growing herbs. For daffodils we have in pots, I'm going to add a low-growing succulent ground cover so the pots look great all year long. Also, to avoid losing new, not well-established plants to summer heat, I have stopped planting anything between June and October. This fall and winter I'm going to concentrate on adding more succulents and very, very drought tolerant plants, and replacing my low-water plants that aren't doing well with plants that are even more water-thrifty. I'm also going to improve the soil more before planting. I thought our DG soil would be fine for most low-water plants, but some that should be thriving aren't and I think it is because our soil is too lean. So, I'll be mixing in some good potting soil and/or compost to see if that helps. I'm planning on improving the water-holding capacity of our basically DG soil by digging out some low spots, and filling them in with rocks and gravel so they're almost level. I'll mix that excavated DG soil with potting soil to make it more absorbent and make some low, broad mounds next to these gravel-filled areas to improved drainage (for plants planted in the mounds) and to make for a more interesting landscape. Rainwater will be directed to the low spots, where it will slowly sink into the soil.

Mollie Allan: I plan to remove some dead trees and mulch, mulch, mulch!

Giana Crispell: We like to plant different kinds of onions and have been quite successful in our endeavors. We've shared our bounty with our entire neighborhood. However, our neighborhood, which is Mt. Helix, includes lots of critters, who this summer liked to nibble on our pumpkins and melons. So for the fall, we thought we'd try planting onions in an accessible location and see if the bunnies, rats, skunks, squirrels, voles, and gophers will dine on them.

Stephen Zolezzi: No; if it ain't broke, no fixing is needed. I need time to let all the previous changes sink in, take root and see if all the effort and expense bears fruit! Literally - fruit.

Jan Thomas: I'm getting ready to replant several of my (currently) potted succulents into the ground in my side yard later on this month. I'm preparing two separate round raised mounds (approximately 12'-15' in diameter), using bricks to complete the outer circle area of each raised mound. A pathway between and around each mound will be filled in using a combination of river rock and white quartz rock.

Sue Fouquette: Our arugula has spread all over our vegetable garden like a weed. There is way too much to eat. It has finished flowering and will come up again. I'll put it in our compost barrel. 🌱



Matt Wade

Gazania comes in many other color forms

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OCTOBER 2016 PLANT DISPLAY

By Ken Blackford, 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).

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

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

Aloe hemmingii (Aloaceae) Somalia

This charming small aloe forms rosettes to about 6" to 12" wide, and is said to be common in cultivation. The plant displayed was grown in full sun and the leaves were very brown/red. In part shade they would be green. Each leaf is marked on top and bottom with elongated white streaks. *Aloe hemmingii* is unusual in that it has 1"-long pink flowers, a color not often seen in aloes. The flower stalk, to about 2' tall, are unbranched, and the flowers point upwards when young and gradually point downwards as they prepare to open. It does best in well-drained soil in sun to part shade, and can bloom on and off throughout the year. This species has sharp brown spines, so handle carefully. For an interesting article on spotted aloes, see davesgarden.com/guides/articles/view/1217/. (Susi Torre-Bueno, Vista, 10/16) – S.T-B.

Bauhinia tomentosa YELLOW BAUHINIA (Fabaceae) Ethiopia, India, Kenya, Mozambique, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Zambia, Zimbabwe

This evergreen South African shrub can grow 4' to 9' tall and as wide in a sunny location with moderate to low water. With more water it will grow somewhat taller, to about 12'-15' tall, and makes a nice large shrub or small tree. The specimen displayed is grown in an area that gets full sun about ¾ of the day and very little water once a week. The soft yellow bell-shaped flowers (with a black blotch on the inside of one petal) appear in summer in our climate (but in winter in its native habitat), and fade to violet/maroon by the second day. The two-lobed light green leaves are similar in form and color to those of others in this genus, and they're slightly rough. One source noted that the roots are not aggressive. (Susi Torre-Bueno, Vista, 10/16) – S.T-B.

Brunsvigia hybrid (*B. litoralis* x *B. josephinae*) CANDELABRA LILY (Amaryllidaceae) South Africa

An unusual bulb for our San Diego climate! Some people saw and others asked about the rather strange looking dry botanical structure, somewhat resembling a sparkler or single fireworks explosion, that was part of the plant display at the October 2016 meeting. The answer: a dry infructescence of one of my hybrid bulbs, in this case, between *Brunsvigia litoralis* and *Brunsvigia josephinae*, both species native to South Africa.

The hybrid is similar to both parents, and generally produces spectacular large, red, blooming umbels of lily-like florets (20-30 inches in height and diameter) in the late August to early October timeframe.



Ken Blackford (3)

Pea-like seeds of *Brunsvigia* hybrid



Closeup of an individual *Brunsvigia* hybrid floret



Group of three flowering bulbs showing the huge flower heads on this *Brunsvigia* hybrid

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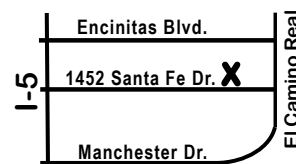
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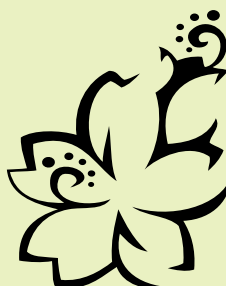
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The blooms bolt up “naked,” after sleeping in dormancy through our dry Summer. Sure to be a show-stopper in the late Summer garden! Following the blooms, interesting foliage is produced which lasts through the Winter and early Spring and contrasts nicely with finer foliated plants. Thus, it has a growth pattern not unlike the familiar Naked Ladies (*Amaryllis belladonna*, to which it is related.) However, this *Brunsvigia* has a different flower structure than *A. belladonna*, and more interesting, wider-leafed, blue-green foliage. The benefit of the hybrid is it generally begins blooming annually in 4-6 years, like its seed parent, *B. litoralis*, whereas the pollen parent, *B. josephinae*, can take 10-15 years to bloom from seed. The hybrids frequently produce two scapes, and the flowers are attractive to hummingbirds.

Culture requirements are similar to those of Naked Ladies, needing full sun and good drainage, but otherwise tolerant of most soils. Good Autumn bloom of mature bulbs is usually insured by a mid-August drenching of water, but they otherwise accept our long Summer drought. Well-drained bulbs will also accept moderate additional Summer water if irrigating other nearby plants. Roots are perennial, so the bulb dislikes root disturbance, which may set back bloom a year or two. Like Naked Ladies, the bulb tip should be positioned right at surface level and not buried. (Ken Blackford, San Diego, 10/16) – K.BI.

***Eucalyptus erythrocorys* RED-CAP GUM (Myrtaceae)**

Western Australia

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

The colorful Red-Cap Gum gets both its common and botanical names because of its striking bright red bud caps, which are unique among eucalypts. These contrast beautifully with its bright yellow flowers, which are produced in big, showy clusters. A native of the west coast of Australia, the Red-Cap Gum is a small evergreen tree that grows quickly with multiple trunks to 12-25' tall and 10-20' wide in full sun. It has smooth gray or light yellow-brown bark, which sheds to reveal bright white trunks. Its mature leaves are thick and bright green, and are 5-10" long and 1-2" wide. Although some flowering may occur at any season, the Red-Cap Gum is showiest in winters, when it blooms heavily with its large clusters of 2" bright yellow flowers. The Red-Cap Gum is best in sun, appreciates good drainages, and is cold-hardy to 25° F. It is drought-tolerant but will take regular watering as long as drainage is good. It benefits from regular pruning, and may be made more dense by heading back the main stems. Because it grows from an underground crown called a lignotuber, mature plants may be renewed by cutting all the way to the ground, after which they will resprout from the base. (Tom Biggart, El Cajon, 10/16) – S.B.

***Plectranthus amboinicus* SPANISH THYME, CUBAN OREGANO, MEXICAN MINT (Lamiaceae) Southern & Eastern Africa**

This distinctively-scented perennial in the mint family has a host of common names, and is grown in South Africa, India, the Caribbean, South America, and elsewhere. With many culinary uses, it has a taste and scent similar to oregano. The small leaves are softly hairy, and it can be a nice ground cover in full sun to very light shade with low water. It has small lavender flowers, but it's really the foliage you grow this plant for, and variegated varieties are available. Cuttings root easily. Don't give it too much water or it will quickly take over an area (the specimen displayed was grown in full sun with very little water). (Susi Torre-Bueno, Vista, 10/16) – S.T-B.

***Russelia equisetiformis* 'Aurea' YELLOW CORAL PLANT**

(Scrophulariaceae) Horticultural Hybrid

This is a sprawling multi-branched evergreen shrub from Mexico with 4-5 foot long arching green stems and very small scale-like leaves. Pale yellow (some sources call them white) tubular flowers are formed at the stem tips in spring and summer, but in our climate it may bloom at other times of the year as well. It grows best in medium to well-drained soils with regular moisture and sunny exposures (one source reports it does well in sun to deep shade), and a generally frost-free microclimate, although it will resprout after a freeze. The plant displayed is grown in ½-day of sun with poor soil and low water, and blooms virtually all year. This yellow flowered form is less commonly seen than cultivars with more attractive coral and red flowers. (Susi-Torre Bueno, Vista, 10/16) – J.H. & S.T-B.

***Russelia equisetiformis* 'St. Elmo's Fire™' CORAL PLANT,**

CORAL FOUNTAIN, FIRECRACKER PLANT

(Scrophulariaceae) Horticultural Hybrid

The website for Mountain States Wholesale Nursery (www.msw.n.com) notes that: “Although similar to *Russelia equisetiformis* [the wild species], this hybrid has deeper red flowers and a more open, airy growth habit. Also, the stems are lined with tiny round green leaves, while the species is essentially leafless. This plant performs best in full sun exposures and requires moderate irrigation. The foliage may be damaged after heavy frost, but will quickly recover in the spring. Hummingbirds are attracted to the tubular flowers.” This sprawling multi-branched evergreen shrub (the species is from Mexico south to Guatemala) has 4-5 foot long arching green stems (the clump can get to 6' to 8' wide) and very small scale-like leaves. Attractive deep red tubular flowers are formed at the stem tips in spring and summer, but in our climate it may bloom at other times of the year as well. It grows best in medium to well-drained soils with moderate moisture and full sun to part shade exposures. (The plant displayed is grown in sun with some very light shade, with low water and blooms virtually all year.) (Susi-Torre Bueno, Vista, 10/16) – J.H. & S.T-B.

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

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

Can you spot the phony plant this month? The phony plant in the October newsletter was *Ampelopsis brevipeculiara* HUCKLEBERRY CLIMBER, CERAMMIC VINE

3 *Arundo donax* 'Variegata' VARIEGATED GIANT REED

(Susi Torre-Bueno, Vista, 10/16)

***Callicarpa* sp. or cv. BEAUTYBERRY**

(Sheila Busch, Escondido, 10/16)

***Callicarpa* sp. or cv. UGLYBERRY (Plant Fanatic, Escondido, 10/16)**

3 *Hibiscus schizopetalus* FRINGED HIBISCUS, JAPANESE LANTERN

(Sue Fouquette, El Cajon, 10/16)

3 *Homalocladium platycladum* TAPEWORM PLANT, CENTIPEDE

PLANT, RIBBON BUSH (Sue Fouquette, El Cajon, 10/16)

3 *Justicia fulvicoma* MEXICAN PLUME

(Susi Torre-Bueno, Vista, 10/16)

Protea cv. or sp. PROTEA (Joyce Berry, San Diego, 10/16)

OCTOBER MEETING REPORT

By Jeannine Romero

Gardeners familiar with two notable gardens in the Bay Area spoke to members of SDHS at the October 10, 2016 meeting. Brian Kemble, curator of the Ruth Bancroft garden in Walnut Creek, California, presented a before and after photo history of Bancroft's public succulent garden. Also, Johanna Silver, author and professional gardener in San Francisco, wrote the book, *The Bold, Dry Garden: Lessons From the Ruth Bancroft Garden*, which was just published October 5, 2016. Silver spoke about the new *Sunset* magazine test gardens where she works.

Kemble, who started working in the Bancroft Garden in 1980, noted that his passion is planting from seed. He said it is "intensely mystical" to watch plants mature in their habitat. Ruth Bancroft, now 108 years old, has had an enduring devotion to succulents—long before succulents began trending in the past several years. According to Kemble, Ms. Bancroft is "just amazing to work with," and "fearless." He said she's had a passion for irises since childhood, and the public garden also features rose and herb gardens.

The Walnut Creek land started as a walnut and pear tree orchard. The Bancroft family purchased 11 acres from the walnut farm and took the last of the walnut trees out. Ms. Bancroft began designing the succulent garden in 1971, and planting started in 1972. Kemble noted that every bed is compositional and not separated by plant type. The garden maintains a considerable collection of aloes, both outdoors and inside the greenhouse, despite a few severe frosts that have damaged the plants over the years, including one in 1972 just after plants were installed. He noted, "Ruth is not one to give up."

Kemble said that Walnut Creek has winters with temperatures as low as 20 degrees and up to 23" of rain, which had pressured Ms. Bancroft to cover many tender plants in her collection with plastic box structures. The worst freeze was in 1990, when the garden stayed frozen for three days and temperatures dipped to 19 degrees. He said the garden lost "two tons of aloes alone." He noted that after only a brief moment of hesitation, Ms. Bancroft quickly decided to plant the aloes again.

While waiting for agaves and aloes to grow and bloom, Ms. Bancroft planted ice plant to provide a big splash of color in spring. Blooming agaves are a recurring theme in the garden, he said, noting that it takes years for agaves to bloom. But when they do, some flower spikes are as "tall as a telephone pole." Over the years, rocks were added to replicate the landscape where many succulents normally grow, and to visually tie the garden together. Her dry, bold garden also includes the California natives opuntia ("iconic" but "unfriendly") and Mexican blue palm.

Author Johanna Silver briefly described the work she has done with *Sunset*'s relocation of their corporate offices to Oakland after 70 years in Menlo Park. Also, the test garden has been moved to Sonoma. She described the major move as "devastating" and "scary," but in the end, she noted, "It's been okay." She said the current owners of Cornerstone Sonoma, home to a collection of retail stores, restaurants, boutique wine rooms, gardens, and galleries, offered *Sunset* space for the new home of the test garden. Silver said, "It is delightful to be in a more visited area."

The *Sunset* gardens feature a greenhouse, a small alleé of moon garden trellises, a backyard orchard planted with 24 fruit trees, an outdoor gathering space, and a cocktail garden with hops and other plants grown and used in cocktails.



Julia Chimento

Bauhinia seen at the meeting - see page 16.



Stan Shebs

Aloe hemmingii has interesting markings and pink flowers; see page 16.

Thanks to both speakers for an especially interesting presentation. Our members were fortunate to visit the Bancroft garden on two Bay Area tours, in 1999 and again in 2012. ☘

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Visit magical Santa Fe, New Mexico's capital (shown here). Located in the Sangre de Cristo foothills, it is renowned for its Pueblo-style architecture, and as a creative hotbed for the arts. In October 2017, we will visit private gardens, sample the sumptuous world-renowned cuisine, and discover colorful markets.

The Hardy Plant Society of Oregon would like to invite SDHS members to join them for Both Sides of the Bay: Gardens of San Francisco & the East Bay (June 4-10, 2017). Join Lucy Hardiman and Bob Hyland for a tour of many of the Bay Area's finest. Contact sterlingtoursLtd.com for information.

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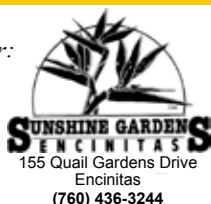
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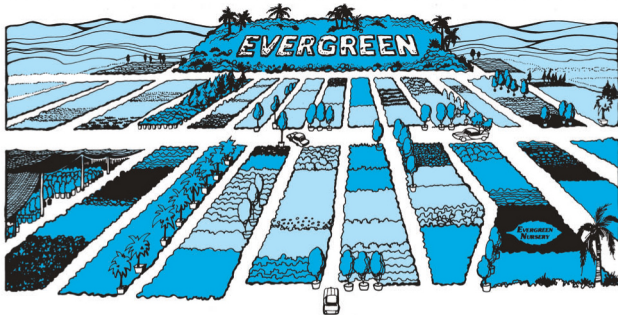
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What's Happening? for NOVEMBER 2016

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 Barbara Patterson at calendar@sdhort.org.

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November 5: Waterwise Landscaping with Succulents & Natives

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Events at Public Gardens

❖ **Alta Vista Gardens** Contact info on other side
TBA – check their website calendar.

❖ **San Diego Botanic Garden** Contact info on other side
November 5, 9am-12pm, Living Wall/Vertical Garden: Learn the basics of planting a living wall with instructor Mary Lou Morgan. A 10"x20" wall of succulent varieties will be planted. Members \$30, non-members \$36, plus \$75 per student materials fee paid directly to the instructor at the class.

November 8, 9am-12pm, Succulent Frog: Take home a charming succulent frog that you make in a class taught by the SDBG Succulent Wreath Team. Members \$50, Non-Members \$60. Materials included. Register by November 4.

November 17, 9am-12pm Succulent Turtle: Take home an adorable succulent turtle that you make in this class taught by the SDBG Succulent Wreath Team. Members \$45, Non-Members \$54. Materials included. Register by November 11.

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

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

❖ The Water Conservation Garden

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

November 5, 10am-2pm, Fall Plantstravaganza! Member preview 9am to 10am. Plant sales, gardening workshops, 'Ask the Designer' landscape consultations, and advice from water agencies. Reservations for design consultations are recommended; call 619-660-0614, Ext.10. Members and Kids 12 and under FREE; General Admission \$3; Free Parking.

November 12, 10am-12pm, Succulent Centerpiece Making: The Garden's Docent Succulent Team will provide everything you need to make a beautiful piece for your Thanksgiving table or next dinner party. Limited space available. Cost: \$30 for materials. Register online.

Events Hosted by SDHS Sponsors

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◆ Barrels & Branches Classes & Workshops

Info: www.barrelsandbranches.com. See ad on page 17.

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

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

◆ **Sunshine Care FREE Seminar Each Month**

Nov. 19, 10:30am-noon: "Easy to Do" Holiday Succulent Arrangements. Speaker is Jeanne Meadow, avid succulent grower & arranger. www.sunshinecare.com. See ad pg 13.

◆ **Walter Andersen Nursery FREE Saturday Classes**

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

Point Loma, 9am

Poway, 9:30am

| | |
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| 11/2 | Special class: Citrus with David Ross in Rancho Bernardo |
| 11/5 | Fruit Tree Maintenance |
| 11/12 | Winter Tomatoes |
| 11/19 | Azalea Care & Culture |
| 11/26 | No Class |
| | Fall Rose Care |
| | Composting |
| | Fruit Tree Pruning & Spraying |
| | No class |

◆ **Waterwise Botanicals' 4th Annual Fall Garden Party –**

Nov. 5, 9:00am-3pm: Workshops, food & fun! Details at: www.waterwisebotanicals.com

Next SDHS Meeting

November 14:

Greg Rubin & Lucy Warren

**The Drought-Defying
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More garden-related events on other side.

Other Garden-Related Events:

Check with hosts to confirm dates & details

Nov. 1, 6:30pm, San Diego County Orchid Society: Orchid culture class for beginners at 6:30pm, followed by 7:30pm General Meeting. Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, Info: www.sdorchids.com

Nov. 9, 9am, Poway Valley Garden Club: Cynthia Pardoe will address how to grow, propagate, care for and love Geraniums/Pelargoniums. Templars Hall in Old Poway Park, 14134 Midland Rd., Poway. Info: www.powayvalleygardenclub.org or (858) 231-7899.

Nov. 9, 10am, Point Loma Garden Club: Thanksgiving holiday design show. Workshop: Creating Decorative Bows. Portuguese Hall, 2818 Avenida de Portugal, San Diego. Info: www.plgc.org

Nov. 12, 10am, Solana Center for Environmental Innovation: Learn to compost in a 2-hour presentation that includes vermicomposting. Sunshine Gardens, 155 Quail Gardens Dr., Encinitas. Fee: \$10 Encinitas residents; \$15 non-residents. www.solanacenter.org

Nov. 12, 1pm to 4pm, San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society Meeting: New member orientation at 12:30pm. Meeting begins at 1pm and includes: Topic of the Month presentation, photo sharing by members, a Brag Table, and guest speaker at 2:30pm, ending at about 3:30pm. Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. Info: www.sdcss.net

Nov. 13, 1pm-4pm, Samia Rose Topiary: Open House. Everyone welcome! See what Samia Rose is doing with succulent topiary, wreaths and plants. 119 Valpreda Road, San Marcos. Info: www.srtopiary.com

Nov. 15, 7pm, San Diego Chapter of the California Native Plant Society Meeting: "Natives for Novices" at 7pm precedes general meeting which starts at 7:30pm. Sales table, plant identification and more. Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. Info: www.cnpssd.org

Nov. 17, Bernardo Gardeners Club: Enjoy a presentation by local flower designer, celebrity George Spears demonstrating holiday floral artistry. Rancho Bernardo Swim & Tennis Club, Castille Room, 16955 Bernardo Oaks Drive, San Diego. See website for parking instructions. Info: www.bernardogardeners.org

Nov. 19, 11:30am to 3pm, Palomar Cactus and Succulent Society Meeting: Plants for sale, free (exchange) plants, and a Brag Table where members share their special plants. Speaker at approx. 1:15pm will be Brian Kemble, Curator of the Ruth Bancroft Garden with a presentation on Gasterias. Park Avenue Community Center, 210 E. Park Ave., Escondido. Info: www.palomarcactus.org

Nov. 19, 9am-12pm, San Diego County Water Authority, Watersmart: Water-saving landscape design workshop for homeowners. Free event. El Corazon Senior Center, 3302 Senior Center Dr., Oceanside. Info: <http://www.watersmartsd.org/events/landscape-design-homeowners-workshop-oceanside-0>

Nov. 21, 7pm, San Diego Rose Society Chapter Meeting: "Round Table Discussion!" Early meeting (7pm) Rose Care Program with Q & A. Room 101, Casa Del Prado, Balboa Park. Info: www.sdrosesociety.org

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

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

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

Resources & Ongoing Events:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

BALBOA PARK:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Garden Radio Show:

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

San Diego County Farmers Markets

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