

# Let's Talk Plants!

Newsletter of the San Diego Horticultural Society

December 2010, Number 195

## The Dangers of Being a Honey Bee

SEE PAGES 3 & 5

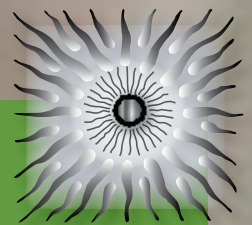
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On the Cover: A busy bee



SAN DIEGO  
HORTICULTURAL  
SOCIETY



OCTOBER 30 • PERSIMMON & POMEGRANATE  
FRUIT PICKING AT BORDEN RANCH

Photo: Pat Crowl

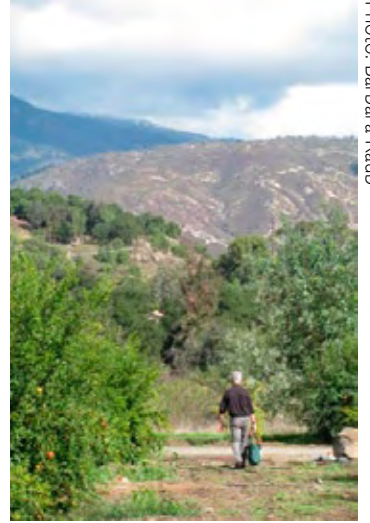


Barbara & Gary Raub

Photo: Pat Crowl



Borden Ranch



Borden Ranch overview

Photo: Barbara Raub

Photo: Barbara Raub



Borden Ranch Persimmons

Photo: Pat Crowl



Scott Borden



Heavy with persimmons

Photo: Pat Crowl

Photo: Barbara Raub



Borden Ranch pomegranates



Scott Borden

Photo: Jim Bishop



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**COVER IMAGE:** This bee is busy gathering pollen (from *Callistemon* 'Pink Stiletto'), but will it have a healthy life or is disaster lurking? Learn more at our December meeting. Photo: Rachel Cobb

## The San Diego Horticultural Society

### MEETINGS

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

### MEETING SCHEDULE

5:00 – 6:00 Meeting room setup  
6:00 – 6:45 Vendor sales, opportunity drawing ticket sales, lending library  
6:45 – 8:15 Announcements, speaker, opportunity drawing  
8:15 – 8:30 Break for vendor sales, lending library  
8:30 – 9:00 Plant forum; vendor sales, lending library

### MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

To join, send your check to: San Diego Horticultural Society, Attn: Membership, P.O. Box 231869, Encinitas, CA 92023-1869. Individual/one year—\$30, two years—\$50, five years—\$120; Family/one year—\$35, two years—\$60, five years—\$140; Group or Business/one year—\$50; Students/\$16 (w/proof of enrollment); Contributing/\$90 or more; Life/\$700. For membership questions contact membership@sdhortsoc.org or or Jim Bishop at (619) 293-0166.

### FUTURE MEETINGS & EVENTS IN 2010 & 2011

- December 12** Coffee in the Garden, The Water Conservation Garden, Escondido (watch for an e-mail invitation)
- January 10** Greg Corman on *FUNctional Garden Art*
- February 14** Aenne Carver on *New Water-wise Look with Old-fashioned Favorites*
- March 4-6** Spring Home/Garden Show
- March 14** Jim Mumford on *Green Roofs and Living Walls*

[www.SanDiegoHorticulturalSociety.org](http://www.SanDiegoHorticulturalSociety.org)

## Next Meeting: December 13, 2010, 6:00 – 9:00 PM

### Topic: JAMES NIEH ON "THE DANGERS OF BEING A HONEY BEE: PREDATORS, PESTICIDES AND COLONY COLLAPSE"



**Meeting is open and everyone is welcome. Admission: Members/free, Non-Members/\$10. Parking is free.**  
**Meeting Place: Del Mar Fairgrounds, Surfside Race Place, Del Mar; Info: (760) 295-7089**

Honey bees have a difficult life these days, and Dr. James Nieh will talk to us about the significant problems they are encountering. These bees face multiple natural and man-made dangers in their environment. Ironically, bees are highly successful because of their use in modern agriculture, yet are suffering because modern agriculture imposes stresses from pesticides, diseases, parasites, and management practices such as mobile beekeeping. The research in Dr. Nieh's laboratory at UCSD explores natural threats and, recently, the effects of pesticides on honey bee foraging. Learn more about the amazing solutions that bees have evolved to natural perils and how our use of pesticides may be contributing to their decline.

James Nieh was born in Taiwan and grew up in Valencia, California. He earned a B.A. with honors in 1991 from Harvard University and entered the Ph. D. program at Cornell University in the Section of Neurobiology and Behavior, where his advisor was Tom Seeley. In 1997, he received his Ph. D. and was a NSF-NATO postdoctoral fellow in Germany at the University of Wuerzburg with Dr. Juergen Tautz. He then received the prestigious Harvard Junior Fellowship. In 2000, he joined the Biology faculty at UCSD, where he is currently a professor in the Section of Ecology, Behavior, and Evolution.

To learn more visit page 5. 🌿

## The Mission of the San Diego Horticultural Society

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

ESTABLISHED SEPTEMBER 1994

### SDHS BOARD MEMBERS

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

**Editor/Advertising:** Susi Torre-Bueno; (760) 295-7089; newsletter@sdhortsoc.org

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

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## BECOME A SPONSOR!

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

SDHS sponsorships have high recognition and valuable benefits, including a link to your website, discounts on memberships for your employees, and free admission to SDHS events. This is a wonderful way to show your support for the SDHS. Sponsors help pay for our monthly meetings, annual college scholarships, and other important programs. Sponsorships start at just \$100/year; contact Jim Bishop at sponsor@sdhortsoc.org. Sponsors are listed on page 9; those with ads in the newsletter have the words **SDHS Sponsor** above their ads. We thank them for their extra support!

## Important Member Information

### VOLUNTEER NEEDS:

#### EVENTS & OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Share your passion for plants! We are seeking a committee chair and also volunteers to help plan and participate in exciting events. Help us promote horticulture and the society at the San Diego County Fair, Spring Home/Garden Show, and elsewhere. There are rewarding opportunities for gardeners of all skills and interest levels. Please call Susi Torre-Bueno ASAP at (760) 295-7089 and let's talk!

#### MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Express your outgoing nature, or overcome your shyness, by meeting new people in a very friendly setting! Volunteer about ONE to THREE HOURS A MONTH as a greeter at meetings, visit nurseries and provide membership brochures for their customers, or help with community outreach programs. Please contact Jim Bishop at jimbishopsd@gmail.com or (619) 293-0166.

#### PROGRAM COMMITTEE

The Program Committee is looking for members to help with a variety of interesting activities involved in recruiting and organizing our monthly speakers. The committee meets about three times a year. Please contact Judy Bradley at (619) 792-6715.

### THANKS SO MUCH!

Thanks to Scott Borden for hosting our October Persimmon & Pomegranate Picking at his family ranch. Despite a rainy morning (which cleared up by lunchtime) about 100 bags of fruit were picked. Some photos are on page 2. Many thanks to Dannie McLaughlin for hosting our Nov. 20 Coffee-in-the-Garden; we hope to have photos in the next newsletter. ☺

See page 13 to order your SDHS nametag

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### Fall/Winter HOURS

Monday-Saturday... 7:30am-4:30pm  
 Sunday..... 9:00am-4:30pm

## To Learn More...

### HONEY BEES AND COLONY COLLAPSE DISORDER

By Ava Torre-Bueno

This month's topic, honey bees and colony collapse disorder, is quite disturbing. For a very mellow and informative video on the honey bee life cycle when it's going well, go to:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sSk\\_evIeZec](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sSk_evIeZec)

This month's speaker is UCSD Professor Dr. James Nieh. Here he is on KPBS radio. You can read the article or listen to it at:

<http://www.kpbs.org/news/2010/jul/26/ucsd-scientists-researching-vanishing-honey-bees/>

Dr. Nieh's UCSD page is at:

<http://biology.ucsd.edu/faculty/nieh.html>

Here's a page with lots of information on honey bee health and colony collapse disorder:

<http://www.organicconsumers.org/bees.cfm>

Richard Attenborough, who will go anywhere and do anything in the natural world, takes us up a very big tree in this video of Malaysian honey bees doing "the wave."

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vl\\_2xH\\_SQY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vl_2xH_SQY)

My favorite beekeeper, bee remover, and purveyor of honey is Pete Holtzen at Honey Bee Rescue. South of Highway 8 he delivers honey to your door like the milkman used to deliver milk!

[www.honeybeerescue.com](http://www.honeybeerescue.com)

If you're thinking of getting into keeping bees, there's a MeetUp group of beekeepers in San Diego:

<http://www.meetup.com/The-San-Diego-Beekeeping-Meetup-Group/>

If you DO become a beekeeper, go to City Farmer's (all organic) Nursery for beekeeping supplies:

<http://www.cityfarmersnursery.com/>

As always, Wikipedia has lots of information:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Honey\\_bee](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Honey_bee)

But it's complicated:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/25/opinion/25harder.html>

Member Ava Torre-Bueno is a psychotherapist in private practice and the organizer of Gardeners 4 Peace. This group of volunteers is helping to create a peaceful, organic, permaculture garden at the San Diego Friends Center. To learn more contact Ava at [gardeners4peace@hotmail.com](mailto:gardeners4peace@hotmail.com) and visit <http://www.sandiegofriendscenter.org/volunteers.htm>. ☞



Photo: Rachel Cobb

## From The Board

By Susi Torre-Bueno

### NEW MEETING PLACE IN 2011

I sent an e-mail in early November to say we needed to find a new meeting place as our current room would not be available in 2011. It is with a sigh of relief that I can tell you that we'll be meeting in the same building, on the same 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of the month, just on the first floor instead of the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. Thanks to the 22<sup>nd</sup> Agricultural Association for making this new space available for us at a low cost. We had previously used this space for several years before moving upstairs.

A big thank you to those members who checked into other possibilities for meeting spaces. We appreciate your efforts, and I have compiled a list of places and costs, should we want to try another location, perhaps for a special meeting or workshop.

### NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION

You can make a difference in 2011 by volunteering for one of the activities listed on page 4. Please consider how you can share your enthusiasm and expertise with SDHS in the coming year, especially if you haven't volunteered for a while.

### A NEW BOARD MEMBER

We welcome Neal King, who has just agreed to join the board as a Member-At-Large for 1 year. You may know Neal from one of the many events he has volunteered for; he also is our calendar editor. He writes, "I was born and raised in southern New York State. With an acre set aside for the family garden, I was exposed to gardening at an early age. Without a green thumb, I pursued this passion for mathematics and science by joining the Navy. While working on nuclear prototypes I switched to the advanced electronics field, which took me to Hawaii, where a passion for scuba diving grew. In 1985, after leaving the Navy, I came to San Diego to pursue a career in electronics and to continue to dive. I joined several dive clubs and the San Diego Council of Divers, and could be found at the beach more times than not. It did not take me long to discover I could kill plants even faster in San Diego, and it was not until joining the SDHS that I found out some the reasons why, the first being that late spring plantings will have a hard time. Now I and my wife, Hilda (who does have a green thumb), have a garden where the critters get as much as they do." Neal brings good problem solving and computer skills to the board, and we look forward to working with him. ☞





# The Real Dirt On...

**JOSEPH DALTON HOOKER**

By Joan Herskowitz



Joseph Dalton Hooker (1817 – 1911) was an important British botanist and one of the great plant explorers of the nineteenth century. He was one of Charles Darwin's closest friends and eventually became director of Britain's Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew.

Hooker was born into a family of scientists in Suffolk, England. His grandfather published various works on mosses and ferns of Ireland and England, and his father, William Jackson Hooker, was a professor of botany at Glasgow University before becoming director of Kew. From age seven, Hooker attended his father's lectures and formed an early interest in plant distribution and voyages of explorers like Captain James Cook. In 1839, he graduated in medicine from Glasgow University, but as his principal interest was botany, he eagerly accepted the appointment of assistant surgeon and naturalist on a four-year expedition to the Antarctic, visiting Tasmania, New Zealand and South America, under the famous explorer James Clark Ross. A large collection of plants was sent home from the trip, and his plant observations resulted in publication of a six-volume flora.

Darwin and Hooker developed a life-long friendship based on their exchange of information and observations on plant distribution, and beginning in 1844 Darwin confided in Hooker regarding his theory of evolution by natural selection. This communication later proved important in establishing Darwin's precedence when his theory, together with Alfred Russel Wallace's similar conclusions, was presented by Hooker and George Lyell at the famous Linnaean Society meeting of July 1858.

In 1847, Hooker left England for a three-year Himalayan expedition. He would be the first European to collect plants in the Himalayas. Accounts of the expedition with details of the endemic orchids are recounted in his *Himalayan Journals* published in 1854. He collected plants from as high as 19,300 feet, the highest that anyone had collected at that time. Because he ignored local authorities, he was imprisoned for several weeks for crossing into Tibet. Hooker collected 7,000 species for Kew on this trip, including brilliant Sikkim rhododendrons, which were introduced into cultivation in the botanic gardens, as were a variety of impatiens, orchids, ferns and mosses. His observations were subsequently published in his *Flora of British India* and *A Handbook to the Flora of Ceylon*.

Later collecting trips took him to Syria and Morocco, and in the U.S. to the Rocky Mountains, Sierra Nevadas and California, accompanied by American botanist Asa Gray. In 1865, he succeeded his father as director of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew until his retirement in 1885.

Joseph Hooker's main contributions to botany were his writings, culminating in the co-authorship (with George Bentham) of *Genera Plantarum*, a world flora describing 7,569 genera and 97,000 species, considered the outstanding botanical work of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In his 20 years as head of Kew he made many improvements, adding greenhouses, herbarium capacity, new gardens, laboratories and an art gallery. His efforts established Kew as an international center for botanical research. Hooker's name is perpetuated in the orchid genera *Josephia* and *Sirhookera*, as well as the species *Oncidium hookeri*, *Paphopedelum hookerae*, *Vanda hookeriana*, and many others.

Member Joan Herskowitz worked as a Biologist for many years, including time spent on staff at the County of San Diego Department of Planning and Land Use. Now retired, she is a docent at the San Elijo Lagoon and at San Diego Botanic Garden. ☞

# Alta Vista Gardens Making Great Progress

By Bryan Morse

Hi, my name is Bryan Morse and I am the president of Alta Vista Gardens. The Garden is a work in progress situated on the top of a hill with fourteen acres of ocean view property. We are surrounded on all sides by Brengle Terrace Park in the city of Vista. Our mission is "Bringing Together People, Nature and Art." In so many ways, that defines our vision of how we want our botanical garden to evolve. After starting out slowly, our Garden and our organization has been experiencing a period of accelerated growth. We have begun to reach a critical mass where progress begins to become self-sustaining.



Over the past year we have opened the Jeffrey Stein Children's Music Garden. It includes a variety of percussion instruments placed around an area nestled under a large tree. In the center; and perhaps the most fun, is a "Pebble Chime" built by artist Robert Rochin. Children, and the child in all of us, just love to push rocks through the holes to experience the different tones of this fine tuned instrument.

In the past weeks we have been bringing our five-ring classic labyrinth closer to completion. The labyrinth is centered on a granite sculpture named the 'Broken Link'; it is almost fifteen feet tall and was created by Tony Imatto. The paths and the mounds have been completed and soon will be planted with perennials. The day before I wrote this, in mid-November, three women out walking their dogs were the first visitors to experience the serenity of this new addition to our Garden.

As I mentioned above, art is part of our mission and we welcome artists to bring their sculptures to be placed in our landscape. We value our art and strive to find the perfect home for every piece, giving them the proper background and planted accents that will help them shine. Some of the art has been donated to us and is on permanent display. Others are for sale on consignment, with no limit placed on how long they will be shown. Visitors have expressed enthusiasm for the placement of the collection in the Garden. To date, we have thirteen sculptures or other pieces of art at AVG.

Since we are a growing garden we are also growing our plant collection. You can help us educate our community by sharing with us, and donating any rare or unusual plants you can spare.

We also encourage you to come visit us. Our hours are 8:00am to 2:00pm on Monday-Friday and 10:00am to 5:00pm on weekends. We can be found on the web at [www.altavistagardens.org](http://www.altavistagardens.org). Please visit to find out about upcoming classes and special events, including our first docent class, which begins on January 8. ☞



Labyrinth

# Plants that Produce

## IS IT DECEMBER AGAIN ALREADY?

By Richard Frost

I'm writing this in early November for you to read in December. So in some sense I have to time-travel a month forward while working on the column. One thing I noticed while looking at the date: this is the 4<sup>th</sup> December column I've written, marking the completion of 3 years writing. Wow, it has been a lot of fun!

It was a year of very mild temperatures here in San Diego. Spring-like weather persisted into July in most places. About nine months into the year we had 2½ weeks of summer temperatures, then a cool spell followed by some Santa Ana winds, and now – it's December.

If you gave your tomatoes too much nitrogen (e.g., too much compost) and not enough potassium in this quirky weather then you probably had a poor crop. If last fall (2009) you did not feed your deciduous fruit trees a winterizing formula then you might have had lackluster performance there also. Regardless, I'm sure your crop was delayed like mine. Many growers found that near-tropical fruits such as avocado and mango did not get enough warmth to ripen properly this year.

My 'Frederick' passion fruit vine is currently loaded with fruit. In a warmer year it bears two crops – one about June and another in August-September, but this year I am thankful for this single late crop. At the moment there are about three bushels of unripe green fruit hiding just under the leaves of the plant. Maybe they will be ripe by the time you read this!

I have an espaliered male-female pair of Kei Apple (*Dovyalis caffra*) that is also loaded with fruit and presently ripe. Normally



Kei Apple

Continued on page 18

## Trees, Please

### TREES ON FIRE

By Robin Rivet

Autumn is a tree stunner, and sunset colors are breathtaking almost everywhere, *EXCEPT in San Diego*. Do you yearn for glorious foliar color on your street, but are terrified of our reliably colorful *Liquidambar styraciflua*? To set the record straight, this species frequently does have aggressive surface roots, especially in San Diego lawns.

Face it folks, *planting trees in lawns is a concept best recommended for deep soils and wetter climates*. If you read that a tree will do well in a lawn here, it frequently means that it will "tolerate" shallow watering, and thrive by creating masses of shallow roots that drink ill-advised frequent, but traditionally brief sprinkler spurts, maybe even harmfully wetting the trunk. To be fair, wise gardeners should recognize that nearly all tree roots predominate in the top 36" of soil, and the majority are usually in the top 18" to 24". In case you are measuring, this is not very deep. Any tree you plant should receive deep and infrequent watering to encourage health and the deepest possible root zone.

Be fearless. With wiser watering, scarlet, burgundy, amber and golden hues can still grace your fall landscape. First, consider the aforementioned troublemaker, as it really is a spectacular tree.

Commonly available cultivars developed for Southern California include 'Palo Alto', my favorite, and often the brightest orange-red; 'Festival', which tends to be columnar, with a range of yellow, salmon, rust and peach tones; and 'Burgundy'; which is "wine-colored." If you insist on growing *Liquidambar* as a lawn tree, try the fruitless 'Rotundiloba'. Although, it may lack some of the species natural, strong branching habit, it will not produce spiky seedpods to trip on, or clog your mower.

Quite unusual, the smaller-scaled Smoke Tree, *Cotinus coggygria*, not only produces fall splendor it has foliar color all year! Check out 'Royal Purple' or 'Golden Spirit', whose names say it all. Another modest-sized tree with fantastic year-round color is the Eastern Redbud, *Cercis canadensis* 'Forest Pansy', whose heart-shaped leaves range from purplish-red in spring to purplish-green in autumn. Both these trees have incredibly striking flowers!

No discussion about small trees can ignore the overused but tough Crape Myrtles. *Lagerstroemia faurei* x *indica* is a hybrid designed to resist mildew. There are too many to cite, but seek out named cultivars, as fall color varies as much as size and flower hue; plus,

Continued on page 18

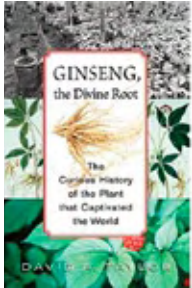


## Book Review

### **GINSENG, THE DIVINE ROOT THE CURIOUS HISTORY OF THE PLANT THAT CAPTIVATED THE WORLD**

By David A. Taylor

Reviewed by Caroline McCullagh



Taylor, in his interesting book, traces the history and contemporary culture built around the gathering, sale, and use of ginseng. Because ginseng is so difficult to find, secret knowledge of locations of patches is handed down from generation to generation. And because of the secrecy around it, gatherers are difficult to interview, but Taylor was tenacious. He finally put together the entire interesting story. He gives us a good

description of the subculture arranged around ginseng.

You can go into your local health food store and buy ginseng in a hundred different tonics and other concoctions, some possibly effective, many probably not. Ginseng has a long history in the medical heritage of America and Asia. There are a number of kinds including American ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*) and Asian ginseng (*Panax ginseng*). They all like shady, damp ground in forests. In America, they grow only in the eastern half, from Quebec to the Gulf of Mexico, so it's not something you're likely to be growing in your garden. In Asia, they grow in China and Korea. Recently, ginseng cultivation has started in other places, including Australia.

For much of its history as a medicinal herb, ginseng roots have been gathered from the wild. More recently, cultivated ginseng and simulated-wild ginseng have appeared in the markets of the world. Simulated-wild ginseng grows from seeds distributed by ginseng gatherers as they walk through forests. Once abundant, wild ginseng has been gathered in American since 1715, when Father Joseph-François Lafitau, a Jesuit priest, recognized the American plant as similar to the Chinese ginseng he saw described in a scientific paper.

Now relatively rare, there is still enough ginseng to be gathered to maintain a system of independent gatherers and buyers who ultimately collect enough that it can be exported to China, among other places. There, American roots are considered yin while Asian roots are yang. That's why there's a market for American ginseng in Asia, and because of that complimentary yin and yang, they are used in different formulations for different medicinal purposes.

Ginseng is not showy. It is notoriously hard to find and has a reputation for hiding and even moving to avoid being "captured." It may lie dormant for up to ten years before putting out a few small stalks, flowers, and, finally, red berries. Because of that, 'sang gathering is of more interest to hunters and trappers than it is to gardeners and farmers.

This isn't a scientific monograph. It's really a travel book. Taylor takes you with him as he meet interesting people who help him understand the intricacies of 'sang gathering.

*Ginseng* (ISBN 13: 978-1-56512-401-1) is 308 pages long in hardbound. It includes an index and a bibliography. Taylor even includes an appendix with recipes (for food, not medicines), even though he has told us repeatedly that it doesn't taste very good. Order *Ginseng* at your local bookstore for \$23.95. ☞

## Community Outreach

### **CELEBRATE THE HOLIDAYS WITH GARDEN EVENTS**

By Linda Johnson

Photo: Rachel Cobb



**Fallbrook Garden Club** – Learn to make beautiful Christmas floral arrangements with Leslie Sill at the December 14 meeting, 1:00 p.m. at the Fallbrook Community Center, 341 Heald Lane, Fallbrook. ([www.fallbrookgardenclub.org](http://www.fallbrookgardenclub.org))

**Ikebana International Chapter Meeting** – See a demonstration of holiday arrangements by teachers of the various forms of Japanese floral design. Also join in for the Holiday Potluck Luncheon, and for a drawing to win the centerpiece

arrangements. December 15 from 10am-2pm in Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego. Contact: Keiko Schneider, 858-759-2640. ([www.ikebanasandiego.org](http://www.ikebanasandiego.org))

**San Diego Botanic Garden** – Enjoy a dazzling winter wonderland in the "Garden of Lights", featuring over 100,000 sparkling lights! This magical holiday experience is from 5pm-9pm on December 9-23 and December 26-30. Also featured is the "Poinsettia Garden," festively decorated with many varieties of poinsettias. Plus music, wagon rides, refreshments, and children's activities/crafts. Enjoy hot mulled wine in the Poinsettia Garden, hot coffee and cocoa in The Coffee Hut, and healthy Mexican fare from El Pollo Loco. Admission: members \$6, non-members \$12; seniors, military & students \$8; children 3-12 \$4. San Diego Botanic Garden (SDBG) is located at 230 Quail Gardens Drive, Encinitas. ([www.sdbgarden.org](http://www.sdbgarden.org))

**San Diego Floral Association** – During December Nights in Balboa Park, features the annual "Festival of Trees". This year's theme is "Anything Goes" - beautiful Christmas trees showcasing intricate and extravagant decorations. December 3, 5pm-10pm and December 4, Noon-10pm, in Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. (Visit [www.balboapark.org/decemberevenings](http://www.balboapark.org/decemberevenings) for full schedule of events). Also visit the Botanical Building for the 24th Annual Poinsettia display. Open 10am-4pm (closed during evening hours of the festival).

**South Bay Botanic Garden** – Visit the "Holiday of Lights in the Garden" to see the garden decorated with a wonderful display of holiday lights! Also enjoy seasonal music and refreshments; bring the family and support this great community resource. Friday and Saturday, December 10-11, from 6pm-8pm. Admission: \$1/person or \$5 per family of five or more. South Bay Botanic Garden is located at Southwestern College, 900 Otay Lakes Road, Chula Vista. ([www.southbaybotanicgarden.org](http://www.southbaybotanicgarden.org))

**The Water Conservation Garden** – Experience the garden in a different light at "Holiday in the Garden," the annual Holiday Festival. Enjoy music, children's activities, fresh tamales and... beautiful lights! Friday December 3, 5:30-8:30pm. Admission: \$3 adult, children 12 and under free (some children's activities are \$1). The Water Conservation Garden is located at Cuyamaca College, 12122 Cuyamaca College Drive West, El Cajon. ([www.thegarden.org](http://www.thegarden.org)) ☞



## Welcome New Members!

We now have over 1300 members! Hope to see all of you at upcoming meetings. We encourage you to become active participants and share in the fun; to volunteer see page 4. A warm hello to the following folks who have joined recently:

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# More Drought-Tolerant Plants

By Marsha Bode

[Editor's Note: In the November newsletter the Sharing Secrets column question was: What low-water or drought-tolerant plant are you growing now that you think should be more widely grown by other gardeners? Here's a thoughtful reply that was too long to include last month.]

In answer to the question above, it is not exactly correct to say "now growing" in referring to my garden, as I did not plant anything I currently have. I seem to be strongly attracted to foreclosed properties, mostly because they are in need of rescue. Ten years ago I bought two and one-half acres in Vista, with no house on the property, that had gone three years with the water turned off. Then, just under a year ago, I bought another foreclosed property two blocks from the first that has a ranch house on one and one-half acres. This property went almost a year with no water, since the tenants or the bank weed abatement people broke every single sprinkler off at the risers. I therefore consider myself to be somewhat of an expert on what will survive in our area with no water.

The six main non-native plants that not only survived, but are thriving, are California pepper (*Schinus molle*), Brazilian pepper (*S. terebinthifolius*), Cape Plumbago (*Plumbago auriculata*), Bougainvillea, and lime trees. I do not like Brazilian pepper because it gets too big and throws millions of seeds, all of which seem to grow. Also, I am not fond of Cape Plumbago; its flowers are pretty enough, but the bush is too blobby and every time I trim it I end up with the sticky blossoms on my hair and clothes. The California pepper is getting bad press lately because it burns easily, but it has a beautiful form with its long hanging branches. Last week when it got up to 100 degrees outside and 96 degrees in my non-air

conditioned house I was happy to have a giant old pepper tree with a bench under it where I sat and read all afternoon. The lime trees are wonderful and survived where oranges were either in distress or dead.

So, to answer the above question I will have to draw on my experiences in my former house in Laguna Beach and on my time as the manager of the Hortense Miller Garden before I moved to Vista. One of my favorite drought tolerant plants is Coffeeberry (*Rhamnus californica*), medium sized and shapely after twenty years with no pruning and growing in partial shade. I also like *Eriogonum cinereum*, Ashy Leaf Buckwheat and *E. arborescens*, Santa Cruz Island Buchwheat. Both stay neat and low-growing and are not as much of a fire danger as our local Buckwheat.

Camellias are surprisingly drought tolerant after being established and are a great choice for shady spots. The Sasanquas seem to fit in better with current taste in more open, informal looking plants. And lastly, a sentimental favorite is the Naked Lady (*Amaryllis belladonna*). It needs no water, its area can be mowed in May for weed abatement, and it brings beauty in late August, when we need it most.

California natives in general are popular now as people tear up their front lawns. Magazine articles show lovely examples that are two or three years old, but often maintenance of these gardens becomes somewhat more demanding than people expected. Salvias and grasses need cutting back, the ceanothus unexpectedly dies for no reason, and the coyote bush threatens to take over half the space. All these challenges do not mean we should not plant natives in the front, just that every garden still needs its gardener. ❧

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## Two Excellent New Library Books

The SDHS library has recently acquired two exciting new books that we encourage you to check out soon, especially since both authors will be speaking to us in 2011. You can reserve these books by contacting our librarian – see the library page on our website for details. Both authors will be selling copies at the meeting they speak at, and I'm sure many members will want to purchase books for their home libraries.

Jeffrey Bale has gardened since his childhood in Eugene, Oregon, and has a degree in Landscape Architecture from the University of Oregon. After a trip to Spain and Portugal, where he was introduced to pebble mosaics, he developed a technique for constructing them. "It is a wonderful medium with unlimited expression, and I have become known for the many beautiful works adventurous clients have commissioned over the years." Addicted to travel, Jeffrey has spent winters exploring Southeast Asia, India and Central Asia, and much of South America. His gardens and mosaics have appeared in numerous magazines and the New York Times. Bale will be speaking to SDHS on April 11; his website is [www.jeffreygardens.com](http://www.jeffreygardens.com).



**The Gardens of Jeffrey Bale** is a volume of stunning images of some of the gardens and pebble mosaics he has created. There are mosaics that look like prayer rugs, stepping stone mosaics that create entrancing paths through the garden, and other mosaics swirling with

movement. Stone fountains and basins created by the author seem centuries old, and the rock stairways incorporating other materials make anyone want to climb them to explore further. Many of Bale's designs feature spiral, and the intricacy of his work is sure to slow down all who trod these paved byways. The complexity and variety of his work is marvelous, and this book is a good introduction to the images we'll be seeing when he lectures in April.

On May 9 we will have Bob Perry as our speaker for our annual Special Evening, and we're confident it'll be an exceptional evening. Bob is Professor Emeritus of Landscape Architecture at Cal Poly Pomona. His academic career began in 1972 and he has taught in the UCLA Extension Program in Landscape Architecture, Landscape Architecture Studies at USC, and at Cal Poly University Pomona. His career has been focused on the study of plants and water conservation. Bob has written two previous books on landscape plants and water conservation: *Trees and Shrubs for Dry California Landscapes*, 1980, and *Landscape Plants for Western Regions*, 1992.



Perry's widely-acclaimed newest book, **Landscape Plants for California Gardens**, published this year, is an outstanding resource. It has 650 pages filled with all the information you need to make well-informed choices about plants to add to your garden. A massive tome (it weighs over seven pounds), it provides over 3000 color

photos of over 2000 plants. Bob has generously made it possible for you to download the first 150 pages for FREE – go to [www.landdesignpublishing.com/index.html](http://www.landdesignpublishing.com/index.html). Don't let the size of the book scare you off – there are subsections for plants that need reduced summer water and a section on Plant Functions and Aesthetics, for example. Handy detailed charts let you know very easily which plants would work best for you. ☘



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## SHARING SECRETS

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

### The question for December was:

What do you plan to do differently in your garden in 2011, and why?

**John Bagnasco** will try more frost-tender plants, "Like many other San Diego gardeners, I'm always pushing the envelope with marginally hardy plants. I have now been successful with plants that have previously not survived winters for me by spraying once a month, from November to February, with FreezePruf. This product was developed by Dr. David Francko from the University of Alabama. It combines an anti-transpirant with a systemic 'anti-freeze' that prevents the interior of cells from freezing. Dr. Francko says that it adds 2 to 9 degrees of extra protection, depending on the species of plants that are sprayed. I was finally able to get the Red Jade Vine, *Mucuna bennettii*, to survive the winter. This year I'm spraying a baobab and am really going to press my luck with *Philodendron giganteum*. I ordered mine online from [www.liquidfence.com/FreezePruf.html](http://www.liquidfence.com/FreezePruf.html), but I'm sure that it can be bought locally; it is distributed by Excel Garden Products."

**Karen Cassimatis** is, "planning now for next year's garden. With the October rains bringing up all those grass seeds I didn't get to last year, I'm tackling the grass problem (wild grass that the city requires we cut by July), by getting to it right now while it's young and tender. Also brought in a pile of chicken manure (next time, horse) that's sitting by for adding soon to the raised bed vegetable gardens."

**Nancy Fournier** will tackle three projects: "Remove more grass and plant California natives. Plant more vegetables in my three raised beds. Collect rainwater."

**Joann Dossett** plans, "to increase my use of bromeliads. As they require very little water as well as no fertilizer, it will save me time and money. Except for the occasional snail, bromeliads are practically pest free... more saving of time and money."

**Wayne Julien** intends to add native plants: "My plan is to remove part of my garden and plant native plants. Native plants have been planted in parts of my garden and this will be an extension of that. I find native plants exciting since they are drought tolerant, provide a more natural look, tend to look good most of the year, are easy maintenance and food for various butterflies and birds. Planting native plants is doing my part to restore a little bit of the original San Diego landscape. I wonder what the San Diego landscape looked like when Juan Cabrillo saw it for the first time in 1542? It must have been a site to behold with everything in balance for the animals and plants. The resident Indians kept things in balance and took only what they needed."

**Sylvia Keating** is planting a neighbor's garden for 2011: "What I plan to do differently this year – I have already started. I'm taking cuttings of as many of my succulents as I can, and planting them in my across the street neighbor's yard and old concrete fountain and bird baths that leak and are unusable. Why? Because I believe so strongly that succulents are the way to garden in California, and because my house is at the bottom of a big slope and my back yard cannot handle succulents in the ground because of the intense heat in Poway, and the cold during the winter. I've lost painstakingly planted succulents because of frost. So, by having my neighbors agree to be the repositories of my largesse, I get to enjoy seeing the succulents thrive at my neighbors where the conditions are really good. And, they are wonderful neighbors. Interestingly, my neighbors have told

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#### ORNAMENTAL TREES FOR MEDITERRANEAN CLIMATES

the trees of san diego



Photography by Don Walker  
Text by Steve Brigham

Continued on page 14

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Secrets Continued from page 13

me that several of our 'walk-by' neighbors have told them, 'how great the succulents look.' I'm very pleased."

**Patti Keyes** will do some cactus wrangling: "In the upcoming year I'm planning to finally remove some mature cactus and succulents from large, rustic terra cotta pots that were here on the property when we bought the place four years ago. I'll put them in the ground in our succulent gardens and on the hillside, then clean the pots and fill them with fun plants for the outdoor living room. (Any ideas on how to keep the pots from cracking and breaking during the process?) WHY? We are striving to re-use, re-plant and re-purpose what we already have around the property - which is really a lot of pretty cool stuff! - including many found objects like the green bowling ball I discovered half-buried in the Eucalyptus glen - my favorite find!"

**Ellen McGrath-Thorpe** tells us, "Once I get permission from my HOA, I'm adding berms to one part of my garden. As I learn more and gain more confidence, I am refining my garden, one part at a time."

**Rachele Melious** plans some interesting changes: "I am going to remove the overgrown plants from my too small yard and replace them with only dwarf and low pollen plants. It simply takes too much money, work and waste to keep bigger plants in check and there's enough pollen out there, I don't need it coming in my front and back door!"

**Robin Rivet** needs to save time in 2011 due to a new job: "In 2011, I may be opening a lemonade stand, desperately trying to enjoy my neglected garden lemons. Seriously thwarting my free time for home gardening, I've assumed a full-time job for the CA Center for Sustainable Energy as their lead Urban Forester. Appropriately, I will be developing and managing an Advice and Technical Assistance Center for sustainable landscape and tree education, and boy, will I ever need time-saving gardening advice. Other than hearty vegetables, the only thing I may grow in 2011 from seed could be opportunistic weeds. I will forfeit any time to dead-head perennials (did I ever do that anyway?), and those weeds will probably grow everywhere that I do not make time to plop down sufficient mulch. However, the National Wildlife Federation will love me for all the happy butterflies. Red Admiral butterflies can soon camp out on fields of stinging nettle that I won't have time to cut back. Monarchs will adore the assorted milkweeds that self-sow in odd spaces. Flocks of Skippers will descend on the soon-to-be rampant six-foot cheeseweeds. Sadly, invasive non-native fennel will pop up everywhere, and the Native Plant Society will again be looking for my phone number... Fortunately, Anise Swallowtails love that stuff, and since I do try to grow the bulbing variety, I'll compete with those beauties to consume it. It is great on the grill.

Speeding along at 50+feet/year, our 'Frederick' Passion Vine will irritate two more neighbors' fences. However, the Gulf Fritillary butterflies will be in heaven as the adjacent Passion Vine 'Incense' continues to attack my giant Sapote tree, while humans will wonder about those exotic violet flowers high in the tree where those humungous Rue-loving Giant Swallowtails like to chrysalis, disguised as twigs. Deer weed eruptions will bring swarms of Acmon Blue and Funereal Duskywings, and as the Monkeyflower takes over my raised bed (again), Buckeyes may peer into my kitchen window. Get a job. At least it may improve your wildlife habitat!"

**Diane Scharar** will make her way through the garden more smoothly: "In 2011 I plan to make pathways in the garden that do not require me to do pirouettes to get back out of the space. Loops are what I plan, so you can exit with out turning around and taking a chance on losing your balance. Have to try to garden smarter as I get older."



**Cindy Sparks** made changes in 2010 that mean more changes in 2011: "I took out a huge grapefruit tree, which had been threatening to take over the entire back garden and which tried to grab my husband each time he walked to his garage. It pained me to do it, but it was it or us, and us won. As a result, I now have sun in the back. Not just that quadrant is sunny, but it had also blocked sun to the west side of the yard, and also to nearby beds where I regularly grew winter greens all year long. Now I'll have to totally re-think that half of the back yard. I have already enlarged my square-foot veggie plot to take over some area that the grapefruit's extensive roots had rendered inhospitable. I need to do a little bit of terracing and re-route sprinkler lines, but then I can actually plant things that need sun. This is so radical, I have to sit down every time I think about it."

**Susi Torre-Bueno** plans, "to add even more very low water plants. I learned so much this year and want to be even stricter than I have been in the past few years, adding almost exclusively plants that will get by with winter rain and water only twice a month (or less) in summer. I'm also replacing the water-hungry herbs in my labyrinth with succulents and drought-tolerant bulbs."

**Katrin Utt** wrote: "I plan to PLAN better! No more impulse buying. To often I come home from a nursery with plants that I don't have room for in my small garden. They end up in pots or I give them away. But the nurseries love me!"

**Tynan Wyatt** shared two things he wants to do: "I plan on using timers for my drip system. There have been one too many times that I turned on the drip and forgot to go back out and turn it off until the next morning. I also want to start recording the bloom time and ripening time for my various fruit trees and berries. This should not only be interesting for its own sake but also help me to figure out what times of the year I don't have anything ripening so I can find a cultivar that fills that time spot."

**The TWO related questions for next month are:**

What special plant combination do you find works and why? What plant or combination of two or three plants struck you as particularly beautiful or gave you an idea for your own garden when you saw them in a public garden? (Thanks to Marilyn Guidroz and Marcia Bode for suggesting these questions.)

Send your reply by December 5 to [info@sdHORTSoc.org](mailto:info@sdHORTSoc.org).

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## Thanks from the Editor

By Susi Torre-Bueno



Many members have told me that the monthly newsletter is one of the biggest benefits of their membership, and some folks join just to get the newsletter and never even come to meetings! Our volunteers who help with the newsletter make it possible to bring you such a high quality publication each month, and each December it's my great pleasure to be able to thank them here. The members below contributed articles, plant descriptions, photos, or monthly columns. Some help with preparing your newsletter for the mail.

I'd like to especially thank the following contributors with ongoing columns in 2010: Linda Bresler and Joan Herskowitz (The Real Dirt On...), Richard Frost (Plants that Produce), Linda Johnson (Community Outreach), Neal King (calendar), Caroline McCullagh (book reviews), Robin Rived (Trees, Please), Trudy Thompson (proofreading), and Ava Torre-Bueno (To Learn More...). Special thanks to Janine Free for taking photos at our meetings. Many thanks as well to all the folks who supplied comments for the Sharing Secrets and Plant Forum columns.

On the fourth Tuesday morning of each month six to twelve folks from our faithful mailing crew come to my home to prepare the newsletter for mailing. Catherine and John Swan haul over 700 copies of the newsletter to the post office each month – a hefty feat indeed! We were saddened this year by the death of one long-time mailing crew member, Marianne Light.

I couldn't do the newsletter without Rachel Cobb, our graphics editor, who takes my raw material and works her magic each month to produce a beautiful issue.

My most sincere thanks and a big hug to each of you. I've enjoyed working with you and look forward to your continued participation!

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# Plants for Honeybees

The Melissa Garden ([www.themelissagarden.com](http://www.themelissagarden.com)) is a honeybee, native pollinator and habitat garden sanctuary in Healdsburg, California. Four gardens planted with many exuberant flowers for nectar and pollen forage are situated in the center of a pristine 40-acre ranch that is lush with native vegetation. This project began in 2007 with the goal of providing honeybees, native bees and other pollinators with an almost year-round source of floral resources free from pesticides. It is also a center that furthers a wide spectrum of honeybee-centric educational and cultural activities. They have given us permission to include this list of plants for honeybees.

## Annuals

- Bidens ferulifolia*. Bidens
- Borago officinalis*. Borage
- Cleome hasslerana*. Spider flower
- Cosmos bipinnatus*. Cosmos
- Cosmos sulphureus*. Cosmos, sulphur
- Eschscholzia californica*. California poppy
- Helianthus annuus*. Sunflower
- Hemizonia congesta ssp.* Tarweed
- Madia elegans*. Tarweed
- Phacelia tanacetifolia*. Phacelia
- Phacelia bolanderi*. Phacelia
- Papaver rhoeas*. Shirley poppy
- Papaver ssp.* Greek poppy

## Biennials

- Angelica stricta purpurea*. Angelica
- Echium wildpretii*. Tower of Jewels

## Perennials

- Achillea filipendula*
- Achillea* 'Sonoma Coast'. Yarrow
- Agastache aurantiaca* 'Apricot Sunrise'
- Agastache foeniculum*. Licorice mint
- Agastache* 'Tutti Frutti'
- Agastache rupestris*
- Angelica hendersonii*. Angelica
- Asclepias fascicularis*. Narrow leaf milkweed
- Aster lateriflorus* 'Prince'
- Aster lateriflorus* 'Lady In Black'
- Aster* Little Carlow
- Ballota pseudodictamnus* 'All Hallows Green'
- Calametha nepetoides*
- Caryopteris incana*. Bluebeard
- Centaurea gymnocarpa*. Velvet centaurea
- Echinops bannaticus* 'Blue Glow'. Globe Thistle
- Epilobiu*. California fuchsia selections and cultivars 'Catalina,' 'Chaparral Silver,' 'Schieffelins Choice,' many other good ones
- Eriogonum fascicularis*. California buckwheat
- Eriogonum grande rubescens*. California buckwheat
- Eriogonum giganteum*. California buckwheat
- Eryngium tripartitum*. Blue sea holly
- Grindelia camporum*. Gum Plant
- Helenium puberulum*. Helenium
- Helenium autumnale*. Sneezeweed
- Helianthus hirsutus*. Hairy sunflower



Photo: Rachel Cobb

Bee on Cosmos Flower

Continued on page 19

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these ripen by October. The apricot-colored fruits are very juicy and have just about every flavor you can imagine packed into them. We are harvesting and eating them as fast as we can.

Bananas will flower when they've had enough accumulated warmth to mature. This might be in April, July, or ... December! Last year my Dwarf Orinoco put out a nice bunch on November 2<sup>nd</sup>, and we waited until June to bring it inside to finish ripening. In a show of one-upmanship, my Dwarf Brazilian put out a huge bud on Nov. 4<sup>th</sup> this year, so it will be another year of over-wintering bananas on the plant.

In my yard and all over town there are apple, pear, plum, and other pit fruits which bloomed in October-November heat and are now bearing tiny unripe fruits. With the exception of some multi-cropping varieties like 'Anna' and 'Dorset' apples, I recommend you remove all the little fruits now so the tree has enough energy to bear a regular crop next year.

For some subtropicals, November-December is the normal time of year to bloom. Loquats and Silverberries (*Elaeagnus x ebbingei*) are a great example. Don't get carried away removing fruit from those plants that managed to crop at the right time in this year of unusual weather.

SDHS member Richard Frost is a certified edible gardening nut. For copies of past articles and more information, please see [www.PlantsThatProduce.com](http://www.PlantsThatProduce.com). 🌿



*Pistacia chinensis*

many sport colorful bark.

If a significant shade tree is your preference, the Chinese Pistache, *Pistacia chinensis*, could be your hands-down choice. Pest-free, it turns a fiery deep orange as weather cools, even in balmy San Diego. Lesser-known species are the rarer Chinese Tallow, *Sapium sebiferum* and *Zelcova serrata* 'Autumn Glow', which is related to the elm. Both have possibility for rusty-red autumn effect. If yellow or gold is your preference, think Ginkgo, Honey Locust or Cottonwood.

Can you imagine showy fall inflorescence or ruby-colored fruit? What Easterner would not be envious of our *Koelreuteria* species? These bold trees hold their colorful fruit capsules well into autumn, and almost look like a giant coral bougainvillea dropped on top. Better yet, consider consuming your dramatic landscape. Hearty, conspicuous, red and orange fall bearing Pomegranates, Persimmons and Apple trees will decorate your property and your table, contributing to beautiful and sustainable fall landscapes.

Some useful websites include the following:

[www.fairyring.ca/besttreesinlawns.html](http://www.fairyring.ca/besttreesinlawns.html)

[www.sdearthtimes.com/et1202/et1202s6.html](http://www.sdearthtimes.com/et1202/et1202s6.html)

[www.hort.purdue.edu/ext/treeroots.html](http://www.hort.purdue.edu/ext/treeroots.html)

[www.beachcalifornia.com/california/fall-foliage-california.html](http://www.beachcalifornia.com/california/fall-foliage-california.html)

Member Robin Rivet is an ISA Certified Arborist, California Rare Fruit Grower, UCCE Master Gardener. She serves on the San Diego Community Forest Advisory Board, La Mesa Environmental/Sustainability Commission, and the San Diego Regional Urban Forests Council. She welcomes public inquiries or rebuttals. 🌿

## THANK YOU

to these November speakers

for donating items for the

Opportunity Drawing at the

November meeting.

Please visit their websites:

**Mary Matava, Agri Service,**  
[www.agriserviceinc.com](http://www.agriserviceinc.com)

**Mark Collins, Evergreen Nursery,**  
[www.evergreennursery.com](http://www.evergreennursery.com)

**Irv McDaniel,**  
**Kellogg Garden Products,**  
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**John Keeler, California Mycorrhiza,**  
[www.californiamycorrhiza.com](http://www.californiamycorrhiza.com)



- Helianthus giganteus*. Giant Sunflower  
*Gaillardia* 'Oranges and Lemons'. Blanket flower  
*Gaura lindheimeri*. Gaura  
*Lantana camara* 'Radiation'  
*Lavandula* 'Goodwin Creek Gray,' 'Grosso'. Lavender  
*Lavandula stoechas*. Spanish lavender  
*Linaria purpurea*  
*Marrubium cylemeum*. Horehound  
*Melissa officinalis*. Lemon balm  
*Mimulus hybrids*. Sticky monkey flower  
*Monardella villosa* 'Russian River'. Coyote Mint  
*Nepeta faassini*. Catmint  
*Origanum* 'Betty Rollins', 'Herenhausen', 'Kent Beauty'. Oregano  
*Origanum heraclitoticum*. Greek oregano  
*Pentstemon heterophyllus* 'Margarita BOP'  
*Papaver atlanticum*. Morocco poppy  
*Perovskia atriplicifolia*. Russian sage  
*Rosemarinus officinalis*. Rosemary  
*Rudbeckia* 'Goldstrum'. Rudbeckia  
*Salvia apiana*. White Sage  
*Savia brandegei*. Brandegee Sage  
*Salvia clevelandi* 'Alan Chickering'  
*Salvia clevelandi* 'Winifred Gilman'  
*Salvia* 'Indigo Spires'  
*Salvia mellifera*. Black sage  
*Salvia mellisodora*. Grape scented sage  
*Salvia* 'Purple Rain'  
*Salvia sonomensis*. Sonoma Sage  
*Salvia uliginosa*. Bog sage  
*Scabiosa ochroleuca*  
*Sedum telephium* 'Autumn Joy'. Sedum  
*Solidago californica*. California goldenrod  
*Solidago rugosa* 'Fireworks'. Eastern goldenrod  
*Scutullaia suffretescens*. Pink Texas skullcap  
*Teucrium chamaedrys*. Germander  
*Teucrium cussoni* 'Majoricum'  
*Thymus vulgaris* 'Dot Wells'. Common thyme  
*Thymus serpyllum* 'Red Creeping'. Red thyme  
*Verbena bonariensis*  
*Verbascum*



Photo: Rachel Cobb

White Sage

**Shrubs**

- Arbutus unedo*. Strawberry tree  
*Arctostaphylos*. Manzanita  
*Ceanothus arboreus*  
*Ceanothus* 'Glorie de Versailles'  
*Ceanothus gloriosus* 'Anchor Bay'  
*Ceanothus hearstiorum*.  
 Hearst ceanothus  
*Cercis occidentalis*. Western redbud  
*Euonymus fortunei*. Euonymus  
*Heteromeles arbutifolia*. Toyon  
*Mahonia aquifolium* 'Compacta'  
*Rhamnus californica*. Coffeeberry  
*Rhus ovata*. Sugar bush  
*Philadelphus lewesii*. Mock orange  
*Vitex agnus-castus*. Chaste tree



Photo: Rachel Cobb

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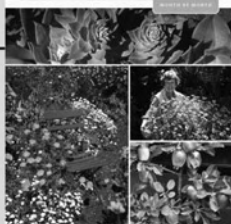
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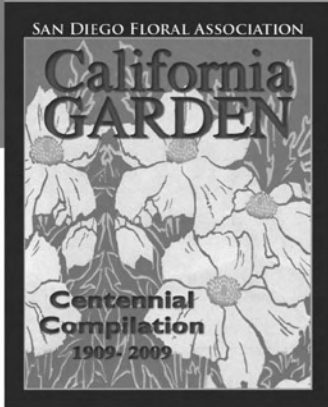
Makes: 36 small squares or bars

Preheat oven to 350 degrees

1. Cream together until light and fluffy in a large bowl:  
1/2 cup butter  
1/2 cup sugar  
1/2 cup honey
2. Add egg and blend:  
1 egg, well beaten
3. Add these dry ingredients and mix well:  
2/3 cup whole wheat pastry flour  
1/2 teaspoon baking soda  
1/2 teaspoon baking powder  
1/4 teaspoon salt
4. Stir in:  
1 cup quick cooking rolled oats  
1 cup flaked coconut  
1 teaspoon vanilla  
1 cup chopped walnuts  
1 cup chocolate chips

Spread in large oiled baking pan, such as a 9" x 13" rectangle,  
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Cool, and then cut into bars or small squares.

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# November Meeting Report

For several years we've had a special meeting in the Fall where five experts talk about one topic from different perspectives. This year, our November meeting featured an excellent group of presenters about a topic important to every gardener: Improving Your Soil. In addition to their excellent brief presentations, each speaker also brought some handouts and/or samples, and was on hand both before and after their talk to answer questions from an eager crowd of members.

Mary Matava, an agronomist and agricultural research specialist, and founder of Agri Service, Inc. (see page 16) was the first to address our group. Her topic was "Building healthy soils: a step-by-step approach to identifying the nutritional status of your soil and amending it for optimal plant growth." She told us that, "the lack of organic matter in soil is the biggest single factor in limiting plant production in San Diego," and stressed the importance of soil testing, especially in new gardens. A soil test will tell you what kind of soil you have; the amendments you need to use will depend on your plant palette. Three places that Mary recommends for soil testing are Fruit Growers Lab ([www.fginc.com](http://www.fginc.com)), Wallace Labs ([www.bettersoils.com](http://www.bettersoils.com)), and Soil and Plant Lab ([www.soilandplantlaboratory.com](http://www.soilandplantlaboratory.com)).

When adding organic amendments it is important to simulate rainfall, and in some situations you can simply add amendments on top of the soil rather than digging it in. It is important to identify problems with soil drainage because we don't have a "well-developed soil profile here," unlike in parts of the country with plenty of topsoil, so drainage problems can be much worse here. "Soil building takes time," Mary reminded us, and it is important to use amendments that have been processed with heat to kill weed seeds. More information is available on the Agri Service website, [www.agriverserviceinc.com](http://www.agriverserviceinc.com).

Tiger Palafox grew up in the Mission Hills Nursery owned by his family, and is now the nursery manager and marketing director. He spoke about the benefits of vermiculture (worm composting). Tiger said his dad told him to, "plant a \$20 plant in a \$100 hole," meaning that it was important to prepare the planting area to get a plant off to a good start. One vermiculture system he showed was the Worm Café, a multi-tiered plastic structure that you can set up indoors or outside in a shady location that doesn't get too hot or too cold. Feed your worms with garden waste, food scraps (not meat or dairy), and shredded paper. The benefits of using earthworm "castings" (= worm poop) include boosting plant immunity. Castings also add microminerals and nutrients to the soil. Earthworms are like "a vitamixer for soil," breaking nutrients down and concentrating them. He urged us to use organic fertilizers and also less harsh pesticides in order to avoid dead soil. Noting that worms need moisture to thrive, Tiger said that in a very low-water garden earthworms will not thrive, but they'll do very well outdoors in shady, well-mulched areas. Using worm castings is not an instant fix in the garden, but they will make for long-term improvements in soil and plant health.

Our third speaker was SDHS board member Mark Collins, who owns Evergreen Nursery (see page 4). Mark explained that mushroom compost is one of nature's keys that can open the door to garden success. Reinforcing what Mary Matava had said, he noted that we have terrible soil here in large part because modern construction techniques have moved the good topsoil elsewhere, and also in part because most of the region is "ocean uplift with salty soil." The total dissolved solids in our soil (a measure of saltiness) is 650-850 parts

per million (ppm), which didn't sound too bad until we heard that the water in Portland, OR has only 40 ppm. These dissolved minerals in our water make it hard for native plants in summer; but, fortunately, our winter rains flush these salts out of the soil.

Mark said that while "lots of plants can tough it out," it is important to put plants in the right microclimate on your property. Using organic material is an excellent way to add air and nutrients to the soil, and mushrooms are able to "fix" nitrogen and make it available to plants. Most mushrooms in Southern California are grown on stable hay that is high in salts. However, the mushroom compost he uses comes from a San Marcos facility where they use distilled water and all-organic growth medium. Evergreen will start selling this mushroom compost in bags in the spring; in the meantime, if you won one of the four bags of mushroom compost that Mark provided for the Opportunity Drawing, please let him have your feedback on how it works. You can leave a message for him at one of his three nurseries (see page 4).

Irv McDaniel, from Kellogg Garden Products (see page 14), spoke next about the proper use of fertilizers to improve plant health and soils. Kellogg has manufactured a wide range of products for 85 years, and Irv reminded us of the importance of good soils: "Don't fertilize your plants, fertilize your soil." In organic products the numbers are not as important, in general, as in chemical fertilizers, which are much stronger. There are "many ways to take dirt and turn it into soil," but the long-term use of chemical fertilizers causes problems in the garden and the environment. One important note: organic fertilizers have use-by dates of about two years from date of manufacture; they'll be less effective after that date, but will still work well for a long time.

Our last speaker was member John Keeler, who operates California Mycorrhiza, a Vista-based family-owned business. John shared lots of information about the importance of mycorrhiza, a soil organism that is a natural partner for gardening and crop production. Mycorrhiza is a beneficial fungus found in nature that establishes symbiotic relationships with plants. He showed slides of microscopic hyphae (the branching growth structures of mycorrhiza) growing on roots and in soil. The mycelium is a mass of the branching, thread-like hyphae, and it "frees soil nutrients for plants and also stores water and helps the plants to store water." Mycorrhiza helps hold the soil together and prevents soil erosion – it is used in hydroseeding for slopes, along with plant seeds. There are different strains of mycorrhiza, and only a tiny bit is needed to beneficially "colonize" a plant.

Mycorrhiza help plants to get more water and nutrients, help them withstand stress, and make healthier plants better able to defend themselves against pests. In time, mycorrhiza will form a vast underground network that communicates and shares nutrients. Once a plant is inoculated with mycorrhizae it is "set for life," and the mycorrhiza will remain in the soil even after the plant is removed. These benefits develop over time, and are not a quick fix for problems. You can add mycorrhiza to your existing garden by poking holes near the plant roots and sprinkling in a small amount (details are on the package).

We extend many thanks to all these fine speakers for a fascinating evening about a crucial topic. See page 18 for the names of those who generously donated products to our Opportunity Drawing and also for their websites, which have more information. ☺

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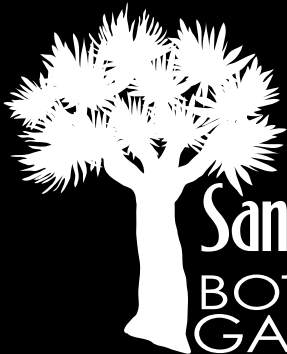
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# SPRING 2011



**MiraCosta College, Oceanside Campus**  
1 Barnard Drive, Oceanside, CA 92056

**MiraCosta College, San Elijo Campus**  
3333 Manchester Avenue, Cardiff, CA 92056

## MiraCosta College **Horticulture Associate Degree or Certificate Program**

Effective Spring 2011

At MiraCosta, you can earn an associate degree or a certificate in a variety of programs including agri-business management, arboriculture, floriculture, irrigation technology, landscape architecture, landscape management, nursery production, wine technology and more. Some certificates take as little as two semesters to complete!

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

### **Classes at MiraCosta start January 24**

Community colleges are still California's best buy in higher education. Enroll now!

See back for courses offered this spring.

## **Horticulture Department Plant Sales**

**Every Monday, Wednesday & Friday 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.**  
**Closed School Holidays.**

MiraCosta College, 1 Barnard Drive, Oceanside  
Parking available in lot 7A, no permit required.

### **Offering quality plants for the California Garden!**

Our nursery is stocked with a diverse selection of ornamental and edible plants, including drought tolerant & California friendly plants for your gardening needs!

Let our knowledgeable staff assist you in selecting the appropriate plants for your garden. Our unique plant selection is continually changing; so come by to see what's growing and support your local community college Horticulture program!

**For more information contact the nursery staff at**  
**hortmail@miracosta.edu or 760.757.2121, ext. 6994**

**[www.miracosta.edu/hort](http://www.miracosta.edu/hort)**



# MiraCosta College Credit Courses • Spring 2011

Class #	Days	Time	Instructor	Units	Room #	Class #	Days	Time	Instructor	Units	Room #
<b>HORT 110 Basic Horticulture</b> Covers seed production, propagation of plants from seeds and cuttings, potting and planting media, bedding plants, greenhouses, and aspects of vegetable crop production. CSU											
<b>OCEANSIDE CAMPUS</b>											
2697	T	5:00pm-9:45pm	FAIRLEIGH M	3.0	OC7003						
<b>HORT 115 Soil Science</b> Problem solving techniques that apply to Southern California soils are emphasized, including fertility, salinity, pH, calcium, and specific toxicities. CSU; UC											
<b>OCEANSIDE CAMPUS</b>											
2816	TH	10:00am-2:45pm	FAIRLEIGH M	3.0	OC7053						
<b>HORT 116 Plant Science</b> This course covers the basic principles of plant science pertaining to food and ornamental plants and addresses plant taxonomy and nomenclature. Students are required to attend field labs and field trips. CSU; UC											
<b>OCEANSIDE CAMPUS</b>											
1645	MW	12:30pm-3:15pm	KINNON C	4.0	OC7003						
1647	TTH	12:30pm-3:15pm	MESSINA J	4.0	OC7003						
1649	MW	5:00pm-7:45pm	BENDER G	4.0	OC7003						
<b>HORT 117 Plant Identification: Trees, Shrubs, and Vines</b> This course covers the identification, growth habits, culture, and ornamental use of plants found in Southern California landscapes. It emphasizes botanical and common names, plant family relationships, and environmental adaptations. Students are required to attend field trips both on and off campus. CSU; UC											
<b>OCEANSIDE CAMPUS</b>											
1651	F	1:00pm-3:45pm	EHRLINGER C	3.0	OC7051						
&ONL +2 hours weekly online.											
<b>HORT 121 Landscape Management</b> Covers soil preparation, fertilization, irrigation, cultivation, variety selection, growth control, and pest management. CSU											
<b>OCEANSIDE CAMPUS</b>											
1657	W	5:00pm-9:45pm	STAFF/FAIRLEIGH	3.0	OC7053						
<b>HORT 126 Landscape Irrigation</b> Covers site analysis, design, engineering, installation, and maintenance of landscape sprinkler and drip systems. CSU											
<b>OCEANSIDE CAMPUS</b>											
1659	T	5:00pm-9:45pm	EHRLINGER C	3.0	OC7051						
<b>HORT 127 Landscape Design</b> Principles of design for residential projects. Students will prepare a site analysis, plot plan, presentation drawings, and budget for a typical residential site. CSU											
<b>OCEANSIDE CAMPUS</b>											
1661	M	5:00pm-9:45pm	FAIRLEIGH M	3.0	OC7051						
<b>HORT 129 Beginning Computer-Aided Landscape Design</b> Students use software to develop landscape designs, perspective/elevation drawings, and cost estimating on personal computers. CSU											
<b>SAN ELIJO CAMPUS IN CARDIFF</b>											
1663	W	5:00pm-9:45pm	STONE/LINDNER	3.0	SAN112						
<b>HORT 130 Advanced Irrigation Design</b> Students will design and manage sprinkler systems for larger settings such as athletic fields, golf courses, parks, or other commercial/public areas. Hydrostatic problems for large-scale systems as well as drip irrigation design will be addressed. CSU PREREQUISITE: HORT 126.											
<b>OCEANSIDE CAMPUS</b>											
2699	TH	5:00pm-9:45pm	CONGER D	3.0	OC7051						
<b>HORT 131 Computer-Aided Irrigation Design</b> Introduction to the application of computer-aided drafting (CAD) for the landscape irrigation student or professional. CSU ADVISORY: HORT 126.											
<b>SAN ELIJO CAMPUS IN CARDIFF</b>											
2818	W	5:00pm-9:45pm	STONE/LINDNER	3.0	SAN112						
<b>HORT 134 Plant Pest Control*</b> Studies common pests found in ornamental plantings in Southern California including weeds, invertebrate pests, and plant diseases. Students diagnose problems and design solutions. CSU											
<b>OCEANSIDE CAMPUS</b>											
1665	TH	5:00pm-9:45pm	KINNON C	3.0	OC7053						
<b>HORT 143 Wines of the World</b> (Material Fee: \$85.00) Introduction to the world's wine-producing regions, including history, viticultural practice, and wine-making styles. Lab fee for wine tasting required. Must be 21 years of age to enroll. CSU											
<b>SAN ELIJO CAMPUS IN CARDIFF</b>											
2696	F	6:30pm-9:15pm	COLANGELO D	3.0	SAN406						
<b>HORT 145 Introduction to Enology</b> (Material Fee: \$85.00) Students will be presented with an overview of the history and development of winemaking, detailing the grape varieties produced in the major wine-producing regions. Students must be 21 years old to enroll. CSU; UC											
<b>SAN ELIJO CAMPUS IN CARDIFF</b>											
+1669	W	6:30pm-9:15pm	COLANGELO D	3.0	SAN406						
<b>HORT 149 Vineyard Production and Management</b> Production and management decisions for wine and table grapes. CSU											
<b>OCEANSIDE CAMPUS</b>											
2820	M	6:30pm-8:15pm	STAFF	3.0	OC7053						
&S 9:00am-11:45am											
<b>HORT 170 Plant Identification: Floral Crops</b> Covers the crops utilized in the floral design and retail industry, botanical and common names, and quality indicators.											
<b>OCEANSIDE CAMPUS</b>											
1673	W	6:30pm-9:15pm	PATTERSON DE	3.0	OC7001						
<b>HORT 172 Floral Design II</b> (Materials Fee: \$200.00) Practical skills and theory of special occasion, contemporary, and large event floral design; floral shop management; and customer service. CSU ADVISORY: HORT 171 or prior floral design experience.											
<b>LATE-START/OCEANSIDE CAMPUS</b>											
1674	TH	5:30pm-9:40pm	PATTERSON DE	2.0	OC7001						
THIS IS A LATE-START CLASS, (02/10-05/26).											
<b>HORT 299P(3.0) Coop Work Exp—Occupational</b> For students whose work is related to their declared major. CSU COREQUISITES: Students must be employed in a position directly related to their declared major and must complete 75 hours of paid work or 60 hours of non-paid work per unit of credit.											
2620	ARR		STAFF	3.0							
NOTE: To receive instructor consent and permission number, students must submit employer contact information. Go to <a href="http://www.miracosta.edu/dataform">www.miracosta.edu/dataform</a> or the Career Center in Building 3700, Oceanside campus, to complete the form. Questions? Call 760.795.6772. THIS IS A LATE-START CLASS, (02/07-05/27).											

\*Application pending for Continuing Education for California DPR Pesticide Licenses and Certificates.

## What's Happening? for December 2010

The SDHS is happy to publicize items of horticultural interest. See other side for resources & ongoing events.  
Send calendar listings by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month before the event to [calendar@sdhortsoc.org](mailto:calendar@sdhortsoc.org).

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.....Expect the Unusual



[www.AndersonsLacostaNursery.com](http://www.AndersonsLacostaNursery.com)

### Hello to all and welcome to our December garden tips and update:

December marks the beginning of winter here in Southern California. The days grow cooler and shorter. Normally December fulfills its winter role with cold and rain although it can sometimes bring a heat wave that makes you swear that August has returned. So if the weather brings hot drying winds, be prepared to hand-water your plants.

#### New at the Nursery:

❖ As our gift to you - come by and get a **free 4" Poinsettia with any purchase** - while stock lasts.  
Also check out our monthly online newsletter for different specials every couple of weeks - you can sign on online at [andersonslacostanursery.com](http://andersonslacostanursery.com).

Some great gifts and décor ideas throughout the nursery and of course in our gift shop:

- ❖ Lots of holiday themed gifts and some gifts just plain elegant.
- ❖ Plenty of gift ideas...Patrick has done a fantastic job this holiday season.
- ❖ Consider a perfect indoor plant in the perfect pot as a gift from the sweetest 2" African Violet to a fabulous Star Pine.
- ❖ Fresh Garland and Wreaths are arriving weekly. Create an elegant, fragrant statement on your door, fireplace, table or stairway with fresh greens.
- ❖ We have some fabulous succulent wreaths - says festive and California all in one package.

Poinsettias of course are perfect for December cheer.

- ❖ --2" with or without self-watering containers so cute & in all colors (even Winter Rose).
- ❖ --4" reds, whites, pinks all very full and many new colors this year.
- ❖ --6" and 8" reds, whites, pinks, 'Marblestar', bright pink, burgundy, 'Country Quilt', 'DaVinci', 'Cinammon Star' plus 'Monet' & 'Jingle Bells' & Winter Rose trees.
- ❖ --Hanging baskets in reds, whites, salmon and 'Jingle Bells'.
- ❖ --Big (10", 12" & 14") patio tubs such a big and festive statement HUGE!!



We're on Facebook now! "Like" us for info and news as it happens. You'll find us under Andersons La Costa Nursery.

Continued on other side

### The Water Conservation Garden (see other side for address)

**Dec. 3 & 4, 5:30-8:00pm, Holiday in the Garden:** Visit the Garden as it glows with holiday lights! FEES: \$3/adults, 12 and under FREE. Kids activities \$1 each.

**Saturdays, 10:30am, Garden Tour:** Docent led tour of the Water Conservation Garden. Meet at the main gate at the Garden entrance. No reservations required.

### San Diego Botanic Garden (see other side for address)

**Dec. 9-23 & 26-30, 5-9pm, Garden of Lights:** After the sun goes down, the Garden is transformed into a dazzling winter wonderland with over 100,000 sparkling lights. Member/\$6; non-member/\$12; Seniors, Military & Students \$8; Children 3-12/\$4.

### Walter Andersen Nursery FREE Saturday Classes:

**9:00am Point Loma Nursery:** **9:30am Poway Nursery:**  
Dec. 4., Poinsettia Care Winter Color  
Dec. 11, Pruning Peaches, Nectarine Rose Pruning with David Ross  
Dec. 18, Bare-Root Roses Fruit Tree Pruning with Richard Wright  
Details at [www.walterandersen.com](http://www.walterandersen.com); addresses in ad on page 17

### Evergreen Nursery Seminars (see page 4)

13650 Carmel Valley Road, San Diego/Carmel Valley  
3231 Oceanside Blvd, Oceanside  
12460 Highland Valley Rd, Escondido  
**December 4, 10am, How to Choose & Care for your Christmas Tree:**  
Learn about the different varieties of trees and their care, plus the benefits of a real tree over an artificial tree.  
Details at [www.evergreennursery.com/seminar-schedule-2010](http://www.evergreennursery.com/seminar-schedule-2010)

### Cedros Gardens Saturday 10am classes:

Details at [www.cedrosgardens.com](http://www.cedrosgardens.com); address in ad on page 19.

**Dec. 3, 10:00am, Point Loma Garden Club:** Annual Tea and Holiday Bazaar. Fresh and dried decorations, crafts. Portugese Hall, 2818 Avenida de Portugal, San Diego. FREE. See [www.plgc.org](http://www.plgc.org) or call (619-223-2051).

**Dec. 3-5, 10am-4pm, Orange County Cactus & Succulent Society Winter Show and Sale:** This show promises to offer collectors, shoppers and interested visitors everything they could ever expect. Free. Fullerton Arboretum, 1900 Associated Rd., Fullerton. See [OCCSS.org](http://OCCSS.org) [fullertonarboretum.org](http://fullertonarboretum.org) or call (657) 278-4010.

**Dec. 3-4, San Diego Floral Assoc., December Nights in Balboa Park:** Friday 5-10 pm, Saturday Noon-10 pm, Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. Info: [www.sdfloal.org](http://www.sdfloal.org) and [www.balboapark.org/decemberevents](http://www.balboapark.org/decemberevents)

**Dec. 8, 1:30pm, Vista Garden Club:** Richard Wright, from Edible Eden, will present a program on the easy way to landscape with edible plants and herbs. FREE. 1400 Vale Terrace, Vista. See [vistagardenclub.org](http://vistagardenclub.org).

**Dec. 10 & 11, 6-8pm, Holiday of Lights:** At South Bay Botanic Garden n- a superb showing of holiday lights. \$1/person or \$5/family of 5 or more. Visit [www.southbaybotanicgarden.org](http://www.southbaybotanicgarden.org)

**Dec. 11, 10:30am, Sunshine Gardens Talk:** Fruit trees - Citrus and Bare-Root. FREE. 662 Encinitas Blvd., See [sunshinegardensinc.com](http://sunshinegardensinc.com).

**Dec. 12, 1:30pm, American Begonia Society:** Annual begonia quiz program with rewards for correct answers. Bring treats to share. FREE. Olivenhain Meeting Hall, 423 Rancho Santa Fe Rd., Encinitas. (760) 815-7914.

**December 13, 6:00pm**  
**The Dangers of**  
**Being a Honey Bee**  
**See page 3**

**Dec. 15, 10am, Ikebana International Meeting:** A demonstration of holiday arrangements by teachers of the various forms of Japanese floral design. FREE. Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. (858) 759-2640.

**Editor's Note:** Our events listing is much shorter than usual this month. Some garden groups have members-only events this month, and some groups don't meet in December.



## Resources & Ongoing Events

**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: \$12/adults, \$8/seniors, \$6/kids; parking \$2. Free to members and on the first Tuesday of every month. (760) 436-3036; [www.SDBGarden.org](http://www.SDBGarden.org).

**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) 694-2860, [www.mastergardenerssandiego.org](http://www.mastergardenerssandiego.org)

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

**DESERT WILDFLOWER HOTLINE:** Anza-Borrego Desert State Park: (760) 767-4684. For information, events, road conditions, etc. call (760) 767-5311 or visit <http://desertusa.com/wildflo/wildupdates.html>.

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

### BALBOA PARK:

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

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

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

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

**Canyonner 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, (619) 235-1122.

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

**S.D. Zoo:** Garden day 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 TV and Radio Shows

**GardenLife Radio Show (national).** Saturday from 8-9am and Sunday from 8-10am. KCEO 1000AM radio, hosts Bruce and Sharon Asakawa, John Bagnasco. Call-in questions: 866-606-TALK. **If your local station does not carry GardenLife, hear it streaming live on [lifestyletalkradio.com](http://lifestyletalkradio.com).** GardenLife shows are also archived at [lifestyletalkradio.com](http://lifestyletalkradio.com)

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

Happy  
Holidays!

❖For that shady spot the **Cyclamen** are unbeatable & a great holiday color addition. They will bloom through April, go dormant through the summer and rebloom in Fall.

❖**Outdoor Bonsai trees:** We have starters, "plant your own" and ready planted (in ceramic Bonsai pots including mini-statuary). Many to choose from.

❖**Lots of Azaleas and Camellias.** Great time now to select and plant as many are in bloom or about to bloom. When in bloom these plants roots are fully dormant so it is the least stressful time to transplant.

❖Looking for a quick (i.e., time saver) small gift idea? Try planted **Paperwhites.** We have many planted that are soon to bloom.

❖The **Orchids** are simply outstanding. The Cymbidiums are here in "full spike" and in many colors yellows, pinks, creams and many more.

❖**Christmas Cactus** (always a favorite) in 2, 4, 6, and 8" sizes AND sporting some new color choices this year.

## December in the Garden:

For those of us in **frost prone areas** (like Valley Center – and even semi-coastal valleys like the Elfin Forest) you can consider using strings of Christmas lighting strung around sensitive plantings (even your in-ground succulents) to provide a source of warmth. It can also give a festive look to lower growing plants

If you're too busy to give the garden much attention this month, you're in luck: most plants will do quite well with little help from you. However if you can find the time, working in the garden this month is wonderful.

**Cool-Season Vegetables:** Between harvests you can still plant most cool-season vegetables such as broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, celery, kale, kohlrabi, mustard, lettuce and other greens, and root crops like beets, carrots, radishes, and turnips.

Some **cymbidiums** start to bloom in December although most bloom between February and March. Continue to feed the plants for bloom (low nitrogen fertilizer) until the buds open.

**Native Plants:** This is the growing season for California Natives so if the weather is really dry - water these plants. Native plants can also be pruned now

**Peaches:** If your peach or nectarine had leaf curl (puckered, yellow and red leaves) this year spray it with lime sulfur at full leaf fall (do not use this spray on apricot trees – select copper instead).

**Start pruning now:** The plants are as dormant as they will get here in California. Most all deciduous plants (those that lose their leaves in winter) get pruned in the winter.

**Fruit Trees:** Dormant spray deciduous fruit trees. Dormant sprays such as horticultural oils or lime-sulfur are applied after a deciduous plant has gone dormant and dropped its leaves.

Don't fertilize or water roses this month, as they need to harden off for winter.

Stimulate wisteria by cutting it back now.

If you've over-seeded your lawn and there are bare spots feel free to scatter a bit more seed to fill.

Feed shrubs and trees that will bloom in January and February.

Prune conifers and broad-leafed evergreens to shape them and provide trimmings for holiday decorations.

Living plants for indoor color include African violets, azaleas, begonias, Christmas cactus, cyclamen, and kalanchoe, as well as the ever-dependable chrysanthemum and poinsettia.

Don't worry that your houseplants don't seem too perky now--they're going dormant just like plants outdoors. Plants need this rest so stop feeding them and water them less frequently.

Continue to water your over-wintering outdoor plants unless the rains keep the soil moist. Irrigation should be reduced - not stopped, as plant photosynthesis slows down and cold weather dries plants out