

Let's Talk Plants!

Newsletter of the San Diego Horticultural Society

March 2010, Number 186

March Garden Tour

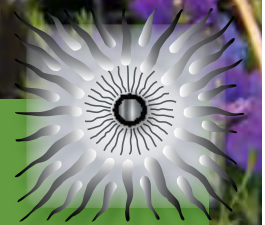
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SPRING HOME/GARDEN SHOW
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TREES, PLEASE!
PAGE 7

AVOIDING RAINSTORM PROBLEMS
PAGES 13 & 14



**SAN DIEGO
HORTICULTURAL
SOCIETY**

On the Cover: Grow great food in your garden!

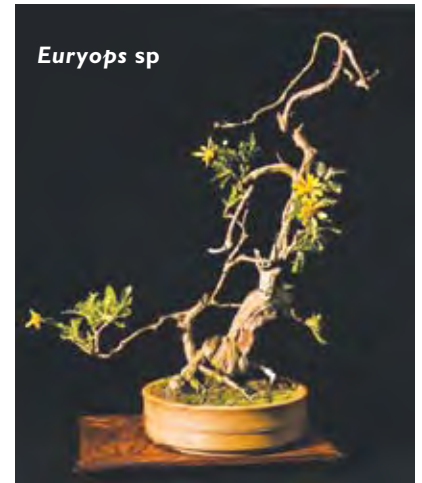
FEBRUARY MEETING PHOTOS BY JANINE FREE



Abutilon cultivars



Chasmanthe Chasmanthe floribunda var. duckittii.



Euryops sp



Camellia cultivars



Camellia

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Hours: Friday, March 5, 11am – 6pm, Saturday, March 6, 10am – 6pm, Sunday, March 7, 10am – 5pm Tickets: Adults \$8 Under 12 free • SPECIAL: After 3 PM only \$5 • Friday only Seniors \$1 • One coupon per Person. Not Valid with any other offers. NOT for resale or distribution on the fairgrounds. Save time and money, purchase e-tickets on line at www.springhomegardenshow.com/SDHS/ A Great Value ~ Brought to you by Westward Expos

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Water Conservation Garden – INSERT

COVER IMAGE: The delicious beets on the front cover were grown from seed purchased from Renee's Garden, a sponsor of the SDHS. Visit www.reneesgarden.com and find out about the all of the 380 varieties of seeds they sell. The always-informative Pat Welsh will tell you how to grow great veggies at our March meeting (see meeting notice below).

The San Diego Horticultural Society

MEETINGS

The San Diego Horticultural Society meets the 2nd Monday of every month (except June) from 6:00pm to 9:00pm at the Surfside Race Place, Del Mar Fairgrounds, 2260 Jimmy Durante Blvd. 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 Sheldon Lisker at (951) 244-3502.

FUTURE MEETINGS & EVENTS IN 2009

- March 5-7** Spring Home/Garden Show (see pages 2, 4, 5 & 8)
- March 13** SDHS GARDEN TOUR (see page 8)
- March 21** Coffee in the Garden (Clairemont)
- April 10** New Member Orientation Gathering
- April 12** Joe Walker on *Australian Perennials: Water-Wise Beauties for Landscape and Cut Arrangements*
- April 25** Coffee in the Garden (Fallbrook)
- May 10** A Special Evening with Brad Lancaster on *Water Harvesting: Turning Drains into Sponges and Water Scarcity into Water Abundance*
- June 11 to July 5** Visit our Display Garden at the San Diego County Fair
- June 13** Volunteer Appreciation Party (save the date!)
- July 6-11** SDHS Garden Tour to Portland (see page 6)
- July 12** Debra Lee Baldwin on *Succulent Container Gardening*

www.SanDiegoHorticulturalSociety.org

Next Meeting: March 8, 2010, 6:00 – 9:00 PM

Topic: PAT WELSH ON “Growing Summer Vegetables the Organic Way: How to Plant, Feed, Water, Harvest, and Control Pests and Diseases Without Synthetic Fertilizers or Poisonous Sprays”

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

We welcome back one of our favorite speakers, Pat Welsh, who will be debuting her new book, *Pat Welsh's Southern California Organic Gardening, Month-by-Month*. Despite the economic downturn and water cutbacks, you too can have fun growing a bountiful harvest of summer vegetables in Southern California. Pat's spectacular slides will demonstrate how to grow all the best and most popular summer vegetables organically in raised beds or the ground, how to use garden timing to avoid problems, and how to save money with free fertilizers. This talk is loaded with tips and hints to give you success with specific warm-season crops including tomatoes, green beans, corn, cucumbers, squash, peppers, eggplants, carrots, beets, lettuce, herbs, and more. Includes discussion of little-known products, modern advances, new techniques, and old-time secrets culled from interviews with experts and from a lifetime of growing edible crops.

Pat is the well-known author of *Pat Welsh's Southern California Gardening: A Month-by-Month Guide*, often called “the gardener's bible.” In 1989 she became the first Garden Editor of *San Diego Home/Garden Lifestyles Magazine* and later was longtime host of a news segment called “Newscenter 39's Resident Gardener” in San Diego, the first news segment of its kind nationwide. Among her other books are: *The American Horticultural Society's Southwest SMART GARDEN™ Regional Guide*, *All My Edens: A Gardener's Memoir*, and *The Magic Mural and How It Got Built*. Welsh is a lifelong amateur painter. Her professional art projects include design and building a 90-foot-long, multi-media mural in front of the Del Mar Public Library. Among her many awards are: The San Diego Area Emmy Award for Performance, The San Diego Press Club Award, The National Quill and Trowel Award, The Lifetime Achievement Award from Quail Botanical Gardens, Cuyamaca College Horticulturist of the Year, San Diego Horticultural Society's Horticulturist of the Year (2003), and Honorary Master Gardener of San Diego. Pat's books will be available for sale.

To learn more, visit www.patwelsh.com and see 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

- Jim Bishop** – Member at Large
- Judy Bradley** – First Vice President, Co-Chair-Program Committee
- Mark Collins** – Finance/Budget Committee
- Julian Duval** – San Diego Botanic Garden representative
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- Paula Verstraete** – Volunteer Coordinator
- Don Walker** – Past President
- Lucy Warren** – Secretary, Liaison to H&G Shows

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

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

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

Sponsorship Info: Susan Morse, sponsor@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 Susan Morse 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

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

1: Spring Home/Garden Show

The Spring Home/Garden Show will be March 5-7 at the Del Mar Fairgrounds (see page 5). You can be part of this exciting event by volunteering – all volunteers will get their parking fees reimbursed **and** get FREE entry into the show! If you can volunteer for a few hours please contact Volunteer Coordinator Paula Verstraete at volunteer@sdhortsoc.org.

2. SDHS Garden Tour

Our Spring Garden Tour will be on Saturday, March 13 (see page 8). We'll need volunteers in each exceptional garden to take tickets, show people where to park, etc. To volunteer please contact Volunteer Coordinator Paula Verstraete at volunteer@sdhortsoc.org.

3: Membership Committee

Express your outgoing nature, or overcome your shyness, by meeting new people in a very friendly setting! The membership committee welcomes more members to increase our hospitality toward new members and in attracting new members. Be a greeter at meetings, visit nurseries and provide membership brochures for their customers, or help with community outreach programs. Contact Susan Morse, (760) 599-0550.

THANKS, RENEE

Many thanks to new member, Renee Garza, and her husband, Jorge, for opening their lovely garden and fascinating home for our February New Member Orientation gathering. They lost their home and part of their garden in the 2007 wildfires and Renee has created a fine low-maintenance garden around their new home, which was designed by Jorge, who is an architect. The next New Member Orientation will be on Saturday, April 10. If you have joined in the last six months or so we'll e-mail you an invitation. If you don't get an invitation it means we don't have your e-mail address; if you'd like to attend please contact Susan Morse at (760) 599-0550.

NEW MEMBER BENEFIT

Jim Bishop and his partner, Scott Borden, were very gracious hosts for our first Coffee in the Garden, held at their stunning succulent-filled Mission Hills garden on February 21. (More info about this new member benefit is on page 5.) It was a great way to kick off this fun activity, and we thank them for offering us this fascinating venue.

We will send an e-mail soon inviting members to the March Coffee in the Garden. If you'd like to offer your garden for one of these events, please e-mail Susi Torre-Bueno at info@sdhortsoc.org.

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Fall/Winter HOURS
Monday-Saturday...7:30am-4:30pm
Sunday.....9:00am-4:30pm

To Learn More...

GROWING ORGANICALLY

By Ava Torre-Bueno

The speaker for March is our own Pat Welsh. She'll be talking about Growing Summer Vegetables the Organic Way. She has a lush and full web site at: <http://www.patwelsh.com/>

For more on gardening organically, see Organic Gardening Magazine's site at: <http://www.organicgardening.com/>

Here's a group in New England that was instrumental in encouraging the White House to put in an organic garden called Kitchen Gardeners International: <http://www.kitchengardeners.org/>

This is a video of the White House organic kitchen garden (we should each have so many gardeners!). Some of the seeds for this garden come from Thomas Jefferson's garden at Monticello!: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aVpEr3kfWjc>

Here are collected bits of wisdom about why organic is best: <http://www.plantea.com/organic-fertilizer.htm>

And finally, it's time to get started composting if you aren't already: <http://www.howtocompost.org/>

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 and visit <http://www.sandiegofriendscenter.org/volunteers.htm>.

FREE Mini-Seminars!

SPRING HOME/GARDEN SHOW MARCH 5-7, DEL MAR FAIRGROUNDS

If you love plants, great garden design, and want to learn more about gardening, don't miss the Spring Home/Garden Show on Friday, March 5 to Sunday, March 7 at the Del Mar Fairgrounds. As an SDHS member, you get the best discount for admission – see page 2 for a discount coupon.

The San Diego Horticultural Society is proud to sponsor the seminar series at the Spring Home/Garden Show. We have a great lineup of leading experts who will be speaking near our booth inside the Bing Crosby Building amid the Garden Master's display gardens. Come support your society and learn from the experts.

Friday March 5

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Noon | <i>Designing Low Water Use Gardens</i>
Shellene Mueller, Designs by Shellene |
| 1:00 p.m. | <i>Warm Weather Vegetables</i>
Pat Welsh, Author |
| 2:00 p.m. | <i>Landscapes for Our Climate</i>
Jan Tubiolo, Water Conservation Garden |
| 3:00 p.m. | <i>Growing Edible Fruits that Use Less Water</i>
Tom del Hotal, Fantasia Gardens |

Saturday, March 6

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 11:00 a.m. | <i>Fruit Trees: Selection, Care & Pruning</i>
John Marsh, UCCE Master Gardener |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

From The Board

By Susi Torre-Bueno

SEE GREAT GARDENS IN MARCH!

March brings *three* opportunities to be inspired by exceptional gardens. Now is also one of the best times to plant, too!

For ten years SDHS has been proud to partner with Westward Expos in bringing excellent local garden resources to the Spring Home/Garden Show. On March 5th through 7th go see twenty beautiful and harmonious gardens at the Show's indoor Garden Masters display. Page 2 has a coupon for \$4 off your admission.

On Saturday, March 13, we're doing a tour of four exceptional gardens in Encinitas. Details are on page 8 and at www.SDHortSoc.org. You'll also enjoy discounts that day at eight local nurseries and garden businesses! Meet the gardeners who created these outstanding home landscapes and take your time exploring their fascinating plant choices and hardscape details. You can also buy your ticket at the March meeting; get a ticket for a friend, too!

See below for info about our newest member benefit – a monthly opportunity to spend the morning in a very special garden.

FREE MINI-WORKSHOPS

Board members Jason Kubrock and Lucy Warren have organized series of FREE mini-seminars, workshops and demonstrations for the Spring Home/Garden Show, and we hope you'll come! They will be held inside Bing Crosby building and will last about 30 minutes; a schedule is at the left and continues on page 8.

COFFEE IN THE GARDEN



We're delighted to offer you a new MEMBER BENEFIT - start your day with a cup of coffee, a self-paced garden tour, and socializing with other society members. About once a month one garden will be open for viewing. Due to space constraints, a limited number of members will be able to attend. This FREE event is open to SDHS members only, and advance reservations are required. No pets, please.

Invitations will be e-mailed to members a few weeks in advance. The invitation might be combined with other member info, so be on the lookout and respond promptly. We hope that many members will take advantage of this chance to spend time with your friends – and make new friends – in a marvelous garden.

If you'd like to offer your garden for one of these events, please e-mail Susi Torre-Bueno at info@sdhortsoc.org.

SDHS & Sterling Tours Present

PORTLAND'S EXTRAORDINARY GARDENS, JULY 6 - 11



San Diego Horticultural Society members and friends are invited to join us on a fabulous garden tour to Portland, Oregon, July 6 – 11, 2010. We'll visit 11 private gardens featuring the creative use of plant materials and garden art. Public gardens include the Classical Chinese Garden and the Japanese Garden. We will also visit two specialty nurseries. Mike Darcy, Portland garden radio show host, will escort the tour.

Tuesday, July 6

Travel independently to Portland; check into the Inn at Northrup Station for five nights. The all-suite hotel, located on the streetcar stop, is surrounded by restaurants & boutiques. 6:00 PM wine and cheese reception at the hotel.

Wednesday, July 7

We will be greeted by the curator of the Portland Japanese Garden, Sadafumi Uchiyama, and enjoy entrance to the gardens before they open to the public. This is considered the finest Japanese garden in the U.S., and we'll have a private, guided tour with the curator and head gardener. • Next we visit Lucy Hardiman, one of Portland's best-known designers. • After this we tour Nancy Goldman's Nancyland, where plants and art mingle. The front garden includes two unique pebble mosaics by Jeffrey Bale. The garden has been seen in numerous publications and on Canadian TV's *Weird Homes*. • Our day ends with the fabulous garden of Jeffrey Bale, featured in many books and magazines. Jeff was originally trained as a landscape architect, and his fabulous pebble and stone mosaics grace some of the most fascinating gardens you are likely to see.

Thursday, July 8

We start at garden designer Susan La Tourette's garden, featured in *Sunset* magazine in June 2009. • Next, our escort, Mike Darcy, will give us a personal tour of his garden, where he tries out new plants and pushes the zone. • After lunch we will enjoy a visit to Bob and Mignon Ervin's urban farm on a hillside overlooking Lake Oswego and Mount Hood. Their sustainable garden is dedicated to organic food production, with ducks, chickens, honeybees, and a family vineyard. • Next we will tour Susan Bates' garden, formerly belonging to Lord and Lady McDonald. • Later we visit the English-style Elk Rock Garden of the Bishop's Close, designed by Olmstead and Son (who also designed Central Park in New York City).

Friday, July 9

We first visit Tom Vetter, known as "Portland's Picasso of Plant Combinations," whose garden is beautifully planted to shine in every season. • We continue to designer Bee Smith's very large and personal garden. Bee has wonderful stories to share about all of the great aspects of her garden that shows her love of rust and the color blue. • Next we visit Luscher Farm, which houses a Clematis display garden surrounding a century-old farmhouse. • Our day concludes at Terra Nova Nursery, owned by cutting edge plant genius Dan Heims, who is responsible for the huge popularity of the many new *Heuchera* varieties. The nursery is where they do their breeding and tissue culture. There are no plants for sale here.

Saturday, July 10

We start with visits to two small private gardens. One, belonging to Fe Neely, will amuse us with a "blast of color" from brilliant annuals, perennials and roses. • Our next visit is to Carolyn Guinther's woodland garden with log gazebo, perennials, rock garden, evergreens, waterfall and pond, all conceived as a natural coast range landscape by a gardener who does all her own work. • Our last stop is to the beautiful display gardens Joy Creek Nursery. Plant collections include clematis, hydrangeas, penstemon, and hosta, with many choice plants for sale. • Tonight we will enjoy a very special farewell dinner in the garden at Meriwether's Restaurant, which was featured on a television show directed by Mike Snyder, one of our hosts.

Sunday, July 11

Today features a private docent-led tour of Lan Su Chinese Garden, an authentically built cultural heritage garden and living museum of Chinese trees and flora. Within this scholar's garden serpentine mosaic pathways lead to harmonious landscapes of plants, water, stones, pavilions, and poetry. The collection includes hundreds of native Chinese plant species and forms.

After our visit we will proceed to the airport.

Tour Land Cost per guest:
Based on 35-42 guests: \$918;
Single supplement: \$398

Costs Include:

- 5 nights accommodations, all suite rooms with kitchen or wet bar
- All hotel taxes and service charges
- 5 breakfasts, 4 lunches, 1 special dinner
- Deluxe private coaches
- Escorted by radio garden guru Mike Darcy, and Cheryl Hedgpeth
- All sightseeing and entrances as per the itinerary
- Gifts to the private garden owners
- Portfolio of documents
- Donation of \$100 to San Diego Horticultural Society

Costs do not include:

Airfare or Travel insurance

Prices quoted are based on a minimum number of guests. In the event of lower numbers, Sterling Tours reserves the right to adjust rates accordingly.

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Plants that Produce

THINKING HYDROPONICALLY

By Richard Frost

Hydroponics is a method for growing plants in a liquid solution, with or without the use of inert media for physical support of the plant and roots.¹ The phrase “inert media” refers to aggregates that are not biologically active, including quartz pebbles, perlite, rock wool, and so on. A vendor who is selling a “hydroponics in soil” system is really just selling drip irrigation. There is nothing wrong with drip irrigation – but be aware that the fertilizers used in real hydroponics must be “urea nitrogen free,” whereas in a soil system it is desirable to have a portion of the nitrogen in urea form.

The first known use of hydroponics was the growing of off-season cucumbers for the Roman Emperor Tiberius during the 1st century AD.¹ It then became a lost art in the western world, but was restarted in Europe about 1700. Today, many melons, squash, and tomatoes sold in supermarkets are grown hydroponically.

Think about it: when was the last time you saw a speck of dirt on a supermarket melon?

A rule of thumb in commercial agriculture is that compared to a conventional method, hydroponics is not economically viable unless your system is larger than 1,000 linear feet of troughs. So if you see a small outdoor hydroponics system for sale, just leave it. You are better off gardening outdoors in pots or in the ground.

Some people, however, must garden indoors, and for that situation hydroponics is the most productive method available. Motivations for growing indoors include a total lack of outdoor space, inclement weather, or the less respectable enterprise of growing cannabis. Growing herbs, fruits, and vegetables indoors is not cheap. On a small scale it can be a fun hobby, with tasty treats as a reward several times a year. Shop around for fertilizer – there is no need to pay

Continued on page 13

Trees, Please

By Robin Rivet

We're very pleased to introduce a new feature this month. *Trees Please* will be an informational column about Urban Forestry. Topics may cover tree relationships to real-estate values, energy savings, mental and physical human health, architectural and engineering applications, edible/sustainable quality, wildlife habitat, air pollution reduction, water savings, insect pests, hazards, care, fragrance, selection and their extremely diverse natural beauty.

SNAP, CRACKLE, DROP!

If that sight or sound is familiar and it wasn't your breakfast cereal, keep reading. Trees frequently get maligned as troublesome during extreme weather events, and several trees in my neighborhood sustained damage during the January storm. If broken limbs or fallen trees occurred at your home, you should probably do an evaluation of their species and age, your staking and watering practices, as well as the soil type or even your initial planting procedures. Properly grown trees are incredibly strong. When they fail, humans are most often at the root of the problem.

A common assumption is that tree wounds, no matter what causes them, heal over and regenerate much like damaged animal tissue. When I sliced my finger chopping garden chard, the tissue reluctantly but persistently grew back, aided by a plethora of band-aids and daubs of antibiotic ointment. Unlike us, trees *do not* like topical wound dressings, nor can they replace the small (1/8 inch or less) live cambium tissue once it is removed or damaged. Instead, trees secrete their own chemical barriers, preferring to manage decay by isolating healthy tissue from any spreading infection. Imagine a castle where the invaders are cornered by doors that keep shutting down, until the intruder has nowhere to turn.

My experience suggests improper pruning is the single most common reason for branch or root failures. Troubled nursery specimens also account for many tree-rearing deformities. Buyer beware! Container-grown nursery trees frequently suffer from top-heavy leggy growth, girdled container roots, and the all too common trunk topping. By the time many an unsuspecting homeowner purchases a tree, it may already need corrective pruning. Without

it, development of a healthy branching structure might never occur. What's worse, many trees later suffer from being incorrectly planted in holes dug too deep, with overly amended soil, or, are left to grow with the nursery stake wrapped tightly to the central leader. *As a result, I recommend paying for professional tree care advice during the first three – not the last three – years of life.* Sound like any doctor you know???

As the years pass, many folks who poorly chose a species (or a specimen), also unwisely acquire an opinion that their trees are getting “too big,” and might be less hazardous if they were “shortened.” Variety is indicative of ultimate height, and most trees are better allowed to navigate to whatever stature nature intended. Once a heading cut is made, lion-tailing often results and the potential for limb failure increases. Previously headed, stumped, overly dense, thinned, or root damaged trees tend to be most hazardous in storms, *not tall trees.*

Finally, when encountering a torn branch or one growing in an undesired direction, it shouldn't be hedge-pruned just for convenience. Severing too close to the trunk, or leaving prominent stubs, can also encourage an unhappy early retirement for your tree. Once decay from a cut spreads back into the live tissue of an adjacent limb, or especially into the main trunk, it becomes highly susceptible to disease and death.

So... how did *your* trees survive the storm? Maybe okay, but now what? Improve nursery standards by demanding and purchasing only well-formed saplings. Your trees are valuable assets, prune them wisely. Perhaps plant an acorn, but please plant more trees – Arbor Day is coming!

Member Robin Rivet is an ISA Certified Arborist and serves on the Environmental/Sustainability Commission for the City of La Mesa. She was the former Program Manager of the Cool Communities Shade Tree Program at the California Center for Sustainable Energy. Robin advocates growing sustainable home orchards and welcomes public inquiries and rebuttals. A good website for additional information about tree hazards is <http://www.treesaregood.org/treecare/hazards.aspx>. 🌿

Saturday, March 6 continued

- Noon** *Beautiful Native Landscapes Save Water and Effort*
Greg Rubin, California's Own Native Landscape Design
- 1:00 p.m.** *How to Make Compost*
Rose Crawford, UCCE Master Gardener
- 2:00 p.m.** *Australian Plants for Our Mediterranean Climate*
Mo Price
- 3:00 p.m.** *Starting Your Own Vegetable Garden*
Karan Cooper, UCCE Master Gardener
- 4:00 p.m.** *All About Heirloom Tomatoes – from Seed to Salsa*
Karan Cooper, UCCE Master Gardener

Sunday, March 7

- 11:00 a.m.** *Propagating Staghorn Ferns*
Charles Robinson, UCCE Master Gardener
- Noon** *The Best Bulbs for Southern California*
Mary McBride
- 1:00 p.m.** *Bromeliad Propagation & Care*
Robert Kopfstein
- 2:00 p.m.** *Bonsai Made Easy*
Philip Tacktil
- 3:00 p.m.** *Designing Low Water Use Gardens*
Shellene Mueller, Designs by Shellene



NAN STERMAN

THE SAN DIEGO HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY PRESENTS

An Encinitas Garden Tour

Saturday, March 13, 9:00AM to 4:00PM

Join us for a tour of four very special and diverse gardens in the Encinitas neighborhoods

of Olivenhain and Leucadia. Visit some of the most original gardens around! The tour will be held rain or shine. Eight local nurseries and businesses will be offering special discounts to attendees – details will be on your tour map.

One gardening couple describes their garden designed by Scott Spencer as one that, “brings privacy and enjoyment to its owners and many visitors. The plant-filled beds repeat a circular theme and are lushly planted with a wide variety of shrubs, trees, perennials, and bulbs from all over the world. There is always something flowering, and the huge variety of foliage, with its many textures and seasonal colors, are a wonderful feature.”

Another gardener describes her 2-acre project as a 10-year odyssey, beginning with planting the traditional family apricot tree, fruit orchard, vegetable and rose gardens. The front yard xeriscape features succulents, palo verde trees, and Mexican blue palms. Around and behind the home the landscape turns tropical with water fountains, bamboo, and ferns. Garden art (by the

homeowner) is everywhere, and there is a flower-covered lath house, fish pond, and aviary amid the many pathways to explore.

From the simplistic beauty of the rugged Mediterranean streetscape to the sizzle of the tropical copper leaf, *Acalypha* ‘Inferno’, the third garden offers something for everyone’s plant palette and collection of garden ideas. Beyond the pergola, outside fireplace, fountains, waterfall, and well-sculpted garden room areas, the garden has an array of unusual plant material and a collection of beautifully laced out mature tree and shrub specimens. Since June 2003 garden designer Ruth E. Wolfe has worked to edit and refurbish the garden with “off the beaten track” specimens that are well-suited to a water wise garden.

The fourth garden (pictured here in a photo by Nan Stermann) features a stunning streetside planting of mixed Mediterranean-climate specimens providing a riot of texture and color from foliage and flowers. The half-acre garden is low impact in terms of resource use and incorporates recycled materials, low water plants, compost, vermicompost, and more. This eclectic paradise includes different planting zones: Mediterranean, subtropical, vegetable garden, etc.

Buy your tickets at the March meeting!

Reserve your space now – space is limited!

QUESTIONS? Contact Ida Rigby at califsage@gmail.com or (858) 748-9189

Reserve online by March 10 at www.sdhortsoc.org/orders
Tickets: \$15/members, \$20/non-members

Day of tour tickets may be purchased for \$23 at
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Thanks to Grangetto's for giving "preferred card" privileges and a discount card to all participants!

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:

Welcome to our newest Sponsors:
Green Thumb Nursery (San Marcos)
Multiflora Enterprises (see ad page 20)

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Charlotte Hart	Kerry Roland	Joanne Woodard

NEW ADVERTISERS:

SAN DIEGO COUNTY FAIR – INSERT
SPRING HOME/GARDEN SHOW - PAGE 2
MORNING GLORY BRUNCH - INSERT
MULTIFLORA ENTERPRISES - PAGE 20
PLANT SALE - PAGE 14
WATER CONSERVATION GARDEN – INSERT

HORT BUCKS ARE GREAT!

Kudos to the members below who brought in new members and therefore received Hort Bucks worth \$5 towards raffle tickets, name-tags, *Plant Forum* CDs or dues. To get **your** Hort Bucks just ask your friends to give your name when they join. The number after the person's name indicates how many members they recruited in 2010:

Ken Blackford (1)	Susan Marchetti (1)	Jan Spooner (1)
Lorie Johansen (1)	Susan Oddo (1)	Susi Torre-Bueno (1)
Tami Joplin (1)	Diane Scharar (1)	

Discounts For Members

Pick up a Grangetto's Preferred Customer Savings Card at any Grangetto's location (see ad page 23). Get a 15% discount at Briggs Tree Co. & Wholesale Nursery in Vista (tell them to look up the "San Diego Hort Society Member" account).

Show your membership card and take 10% off any non-sale item at **Mission Hills Nursery** and **Moose Creek Nursery**.

Take 10% off membership fees at **San Diego Botanic Garden** (formerly **Quail Botanical Gardens**).

SEE THESE ADS FOR MORE DISCOUNTS:

Aristocrat Landscape, Barrels & Branches, Botanical Partners, Buena Creek Gardens, Cedros Gardens, Courtyard Pottery, IGS, Pacific Horticulture, The Plant Man and Solana Succulents.

New E-Mail? New Street Address?

Please send all changes (so you will continue to receive the newsletter and important notices) to membership@sdhortsoc.org or **SDHS, Attn: Membership, PO Box 231869, Encinitas, CA 92023-1869.**

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Chuck Ades* (2008)	Penelope Hlavac
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Gladys T. Baird	Jane Minshall* (2006)
Debra Lee Baldwin	Bill Nelson* (2007)
Steve Brigham* (2009)	Tina & Andy Rathbone
Wayne Carlson	Peggy Ruzich
Laurie Connable	Susi & Jose Torre-Bueno
Julian & Leslie Duval	Don Walker* (2005) & Dorothy Walker
Edgar Engert* (2000)	Lucy Warren
Jim Farley	Evelyn Weidner* (2001)
Sue & Charles Fouquette	Pat Welsh* (2003)
	Betty Wheeler

CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS

Alta Vista Gardens
Philip Tackill & Janet Wanerka
René van Rems
Village Garden Club of La Jolla

What's Up at San Diego Botanic Garden?

March at SDBG is the month for the Herb Festival, Spring Plant Sale, and Tomatomania®, one of our favorite and most well-attended events.

For this year's event, scheduled on March 20 and 21, we have invited Dr. James Duke, the author of *The Green Pharmacy Guide to Healing Foods* (one of some 20 books) to be our honored guest. Dr. Duke is an amazing person. Born in Birmingham, Alabama in 1929, he is a Phi Beta Kappa Ph.D. (Botany, 1961) graduate of the University of North Carolina. Following military service, he undertook postdoctoral activities at Washington University and Missouri Botanical Garden. There he began studies of neotropical ethnobotany, his overriding interest to this day. From 1963 to 1965, he was ecologist with the USDA and then joined Battelle Columbus Laboratories (1965-71) for ecological and ethnobotanical studies in Panama and Colombia. During this formative period, he lived with various ethnic groups, closely observing their deep dependence on forest products. Rejoining the USDA in 1971, he had assignments relating to crop diversification, medicinal plants, and energy plant studies in developing countries.



Dr. Duke grows hundreds of interesting plants on his six-acre farmette, the Green Pharmacy Garden, with his wife and illustrator, Peggy. (We just learned that the garden has been listed as a Botanical Sanctuary of the United

Plant Savers.) In 1995, he retired after some 30 years with the USDA. Before retiring, he brought his renowned ethnobotanical and phytochemical database online at USDA (<http://www.ars-grin.gov/duke>). It is now one of the most frequently-consulted areas of the USDA website.

Because of Dr. Duke's impressive scientific background and that of several of our distinguished speakers, the Herb Festival is an official event of the San Diego Science Festival 2010. Dr. Duke will speak both days at 1:00 pm on *Spices and Other Medicinal Foods*. ☞

For complete listing of speakers and other information visit <http://www.sdbgarden.org/herbfest.htm>. Also, see ad on back cover.

Book Review

PLANTS OF THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA KUMEYAAY: A COLORING BOOK

By Atanielle Anyn Rowland Noel
and

MY ANCESTOR'S VILLAGE

By Roberta Labastida

Reviewed by Caroline McCullagh

If a coloring book seems like a strange thing to review, bear with me. It may be the first step on an interesting new road for you. The least it can be is a nice and educational gift for a child you know.

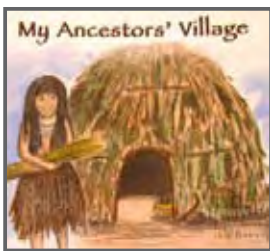
I grew up in Coronado. I won't say my education was lacking, but I was an adult before I knew there were Indians in San Diego County. I really wasn't aware until the various tribes started building casinos.

In fact, San Diego County is rich in Indians. There are 18 reservations. Thirteen of those reservations are part of the Kumeyaay Nation. More Kumeyaay live in Baja California as far down as southern Ensenada.

Traditionally, these people were hunter-gatherers, and what they gathered were the native plants of San Diego. Since native plants are growing in popularity for local gardeners, this book provides a simple introduction to plants of historical interest.

Plants of the Southern California Kumeyaay is small (28 pages) but packed with interesting information. Twenty four pages have illustrations of 40 plants to color. Common, Latin, and Diegueno (or 'lipay) names are included in an appendix in the back, as well as short descriptions of how those plants were traditionally used as food, fuel, and medicine, and in basket making, pottery making, and woodworking. The descriptions include suggested colors for the pictures. The book also has a short bibliography and a pronunciation guide for the Diegueno names.

You can purchase the book on line (www.baronamuseum.org), or you might have fun going to the Barona Cultural Center and Museum, where you'll find it and other books on the Kumeyaay, both for children and adults.



If you're getting this for a gift, you might also like to consider adding *My Ancestor's Village* (ISBN 0-932653-61-8) by Roberta Labastida (\$9.95). Its text and pleasing black and white illustrations of Kumeyaay children using plants in traditional activities illustrate and complement much of the information in

the coloring book, and they can be colored, too.

The Barona Cultural Center and Museum at 1095 Barona Road, Lakeside, is open Tuesday through Friday (noon to 5 p.m.) and Saturday (10 a.m. to 4 p.m.). The museum will be offering a class in willow basket making on March 20 and on uses for yucca on April 17.

A quick glance at the SDHS's *Plant Forum Compilation* (something else you'll find interesting and useful if you don't have it already) seems to indicate that not many members are growing these traditional plants. That makes them even more worthwhile to investigate. [You may order the *Compilation* through the Shop page on our website, www.SanDiegoHorticulturalSociety.org.] ☘

Community Outreach

Plan Ahead for Garden Tours and Events

The following April garden tours and events are featured this month to provide time to register and take advantage of early-bird ticket prices. Please support these community-sponsored tours and events!

Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Garden Tour and Festival ~ April 3

"Gardens Within Gardens," the annual Elfin Forest Garden Festival, is on Saturday April 3rd from 10am-4pm. Five outstanding gardens are featured, including these highlights: a French culinary garden, spacious vistas, fantastic whimsy, metal sculptures, topiary, California native plants, Zen water elements...and even a planted, green roof! Proceeds benefit community groups supported by the Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Town Council, a non-profit organization. Contact: Bonnie Baumgartner at bonnie@doubleb-ranch.com or visit elfinforestgardens.info to preview the gardens, learn more about the tour, and purchase tickets (\$20).

St. Madeleine Sophie's Center Morning Glory Jazz Brunch ~ April 10

This popular event showcases the beautiful organic gardens of this great non-profit community organization, while raising funds to support programs for their adult developmentally disabled students. See flyer insert for more information, visit www.stsmc.org, or contact Nora Boswell at 619-442-5129. Sponsors and exhibitors are also welcome to inquire about the event.

Bernardo Gardeners Annual Garden Tour ~ April 15

Five local gardens are part of this tour on April 15th from 10:00am-3:00pm. Experience member/community gardens from large estate gardens to smaller patio gardens, with emphasis on a variety of landscapes, native plants, roses, succulents, tropicals, plant propagation and garden decor. For ticket info and tour details, visit: www.bernardogardeners.org

Encinitas Garden Tour and Festival ~ April 17

South Leucadia, a little neighborhood with some of the most amazing places, is the site of this year's tour, from 10am-4pm on Saturday, April 17. See lovely gardens, clever features, hidden greenhouses...and a variety of plants from ancient cycads to elaborate orchids. A low water landscape is also featured, at the new Encinitas fire station. And, an extra bonus: the Monarch butterfly vivarium will be open for tour day, showcasing butterflies and the plants that love them! Call 760-753-8615 or visit www.encinitasgardenfestival.org.

North County Garden Tour and Plant Sale ~ April 24

Including beautiful San Diego North County gardens and exclusive admission to the Ecke Ranch for the famous plant sale, this tour's proceeds all support the non-profit Community Resource Center. Held on Saturday, April 24, from 9am-4pm, tickets are \$25 and include five residential gardens selected by Weidners' Gardens or supporting landscape experts in North County. Visit www.crcncc.org or contact Suzie Colby at 760-230-6305 or scolby@crcncc.org. ☘



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The Real Dirt On...

MARIANNE NORTH

By Linda Bresler



Marianne North was born in 1830 in Hastings, England, to Frederick North, a wealthy landowner who was also a Member of Parliament, and his wife. She grew up in a wealthy, cultured environment where she was exposed to well-known artists and botanists. Although she had little formal education, Marianne showed a talent for singing and painting. In 1847, during a three-year trip through Europe with her family, Marianne studied flower painting, botany, and music.

When Marianne was 25, her mother died and she became the mistress of the family's homes in Hastings and London. In the 19th century, wealthy women were not expected to work. After her voice gave out, she took up flower painting, which was an acceptable hobby for her. She also expressed an interest in botany, and, through her father, met Sir Joseph Hooker, director of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew.

Every summer after Parliament closed its session, Marianne, her father and her younger sister traveled to Europe. Marianne carried a diary and sketchbook to describe her travels, as was the custom of the time. She first attempted landscape painting using watercolors during a trip to Spain.

In 1864, Marianne's sister got married. After her father lost his seat in Parliament the following year, he and Marianne spent even more time traveling. They visited Europe, Egypt, and Syria. Marianne searched out plants and painted everywhere she went. She learned to paint with oil paints and found that she much preferred them.

In 1869, Marianne's father died. She was quite devastated, as she and her father did everything together. Painting helped Marianne to deal with her grief. Since she had quite a large inheritance, she decided to resume her travels. She dreamed of traveling all over the world, searching out unusual plants and flowers and painting them in their native habitats.

At age 41, Marianne sold her Hastings home, and undertook her first great trip, visiting North America, Jamaica, and Brazil. Over the next 14 years, she travelled over six continents and produced over 1,000 oil paintings.

Marianne underwent numerous hardships in her travels. Often, she traipsed through unknown territory with paid guides to reach new and unusual plants of which she had heard. She lived in a primitive hut in Brazil, and endured, "scorching sun, drenching rain, fearful road conditions, travel sickness, leeches and giant spiders,



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Continued on page 13

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Thinking Hydroponically Continued from page 7

exorbitant prices for products with a trendy label. A good source of how to information here in San Diego is available from the folks at Innovative Growing Solutions, <http://www.igshydro.com/> (see their ad on page 13).

Locally, we have large-scale hydroponics being used outdoors in flower production, ornamental plant propagation, and in food production. Most of the structures that contain them have partially transparent roofs so that lighting is not an issue. We have a lot of conventional agriculture in these structures as well. Outside of our area, some farmers with a hydro-electric or geothermal power source on their property have found it more profitable to use their hen houses to grow crops hydroponically instead of raising chickens. Those of you with lots of solar power to spare could well consider becoming a closet tomato addict!

¹*Hydroponics*. Merle H. Jensen, University of Arizona. <http://ag.arizona.edu/PLS/faculty/MERLE.html> SDHS member Richard Frost is a certified edible gardening nut. For copies of past articles and more information, please see www.PlantsThatProduce.com. ☞

Real Dirt Continued from page 12

and unsalubrious accommodations." She traveled by bullock cart and canoe, and often had to traverse jungles and swamps and scale cliffs and mountains. Throughout all of her travels, Marianne continued to paint the flora and fauna around her.

Marianne's paintings stood out because of their vivid colors. She used her brush as people today would use a camera. Since many of the plants that she painted were barely known at the time, her work became an important part of the botanical record. Also, most of the plants in her paintings are depicted in their native environment. Marianne's paintings gave a glimpse of distant lands not easily accessible in her day.

Needing a gallery to display her paintings, Marianne asked Sir Joseph Hooker if he would allow her to build a gallery (at her expense) at Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew. She chose a location within the gardens, and arranged the paintings herself within the gallery. She also designed and painted the friezes and other architectural elements throughout the two rooms of the gallery.

Five plants were named in Marianne North's honor. The largest known carnivorous pitcher plant, *Nepenthes northiana*, was discovered by her in Sarawak. Other plants named after her are *Northea seychellana*, a previously unreported tree in the Seychelles; *Crinum northianum*, an amaryllis; *Areca northiana*, a feather palm; and *Kniphofia northiana*, an African torch lily.

The last four years of Marianne's life were spent in retirement in Gloucestershire. She enjoyed entertaining guests and transforming her home's grounds into a showcase garden filled with rare botanical treasures. Her health had been failing the past few years due to the hardships of her travels. She died at the age of 59 in 1890.

Member Linda Bresler is a Landscape Designer living in Poway. She specializes in drought-tolerant, low maintenance designs that provide four season beauty. ☞

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Protecting Your Garden from Storm Damage

By Nick Stavros

The heavy rains in January caused a minimal amount of damage in our very wooded garden. To me, there are two basic problems with the heavy rains: excess water and plant damage. Excess water can cause erosion and flooding. The best way to prevent erosion is to use extensive terracing and then to use the planting materials and water absorbing and soil stabilizing mulches. Terracing is a tricky task: too much and with the wrong materials and your garden can look more like an industrial site; too little, and you can look like you are holding on for dear life (figuratively and literally)!

We use natural local stone to do our terracing. Sometimes there are very distinct rock walls, usually no more than two and half feet tall. Other times, our terraces are natural-looking rockeries. We also don't want to lose all that very valuable water through runoff. So, the flat surfaces that provide a bit of back slope can act as small basins that allow the water to slowly percolate into the soil.

Yes, we are very fortunate to have excellent textured soil that does have a fairly rapid percolation rate. In addition, we use natural, loosely fitting pavers and cobblestones underlaid with sand so that all walk ways and patios help absorb water. Lately we have combined our need to save water into our rock walls and rockeries by using succulents and grass and grass-like plants. This provides us with vegetative interest as well as excellent slope stabilization.

Plant damage is often caused by too little pruning, especially in the fall. Many trees and their leaves become desiccated during the long, hot, dry fall. Often, the trees look just fine, but they have lost a phenomenal amount of water. So, when the first heavy dews come in the fall they start making up for lost time, and the crown that was acceptable in the summer becomes top-heavy in the fall.

The problem is only exacerbated with rain. This causes branches to self prune, and trees with inadequate root balls to fall over. Add onto the increased weight of the crown the fact that the increased rain reverses the illuviation* and calcification** of the soil, making it soft and friable and consequently a poor foundation for the existing trees.

The benefits of proper pruning are generally healthier plants and also a reduced fire risk. So, dead and low ground-hugging branches that trap leaves and trash are the first to go. Next, a good thinning of most of the trees and bushes is called for. This includes the obvious trees such as eucalyptus, pepper trees and acacias, but also our more bushes and shrubs such as roses, Rhamphiolepis (Indian hawthorne), Buddleia (butterfly bush), Arctostaphylos (manzanita), and Ligustrum (Texas privet).

One last major preparation before the heavy rains besides mulching, pruning and terracing... feeding your plants. This is when we use bone meal on bulbs, blood meal on nitrogen lovers, coffee grounds in lots of places and some strategic fertilizers for citrus, camellias and roses. However, make sure all such compounds, organic or not, are mixed into the soil and preferably watered in. Algae in the streams don't care if the nitrogen and phosphorous that they receive is organic or not... they grow!! So, keep the growth in the garden, not in the water!

* *Illuviation* is the movement of soil material from one horizon to another in the soil profile.

** *Calcification* is a soil process where the surface soil is combined with calcium by the decomposition of plants.

Member Nick Stavros says, "Fiona and I have a house in an oak forest in Poway and spend many hours working to maintain, improve and enhance our woodland garden. We enjoy putting soil, plants and rocks together in combinations Mother Nature never dreamed about and like seeing her blush with color!" 🌿

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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 severity of January's rain storm caused me to change the question for the March newsletter. The new question is: The heavy rains in January surely caused many problems. What happened in your garden and what steps will you take to reduce this problem from future rains?

Chuck Ades had many positive results: "Living on the top of a hill, with rain water draining in three directions from my garden, I only had positive reactions from the rain. I had been running my garden on a schedule of much reduced watering; with the rains I haven't had to water at all, even though I had to water several times during the last few winters. The rains have also leached the salts out of my soil, salts that had been accumulating over the last three years from using imported, salt-filled water. I am sure that my garden will benefit greatly from this leaching. The only thing that I had to watch was removing saucers and other water-conserving items from under my many potted plants. This allows the soil to dry out, allowing the necessary oxygen to enter the soil. I have also experienced a mental exhilaration, knowing that it appears that we are going to have adequate rain and snow this year to alleviate or at least reduce the shortage that we have been experiencing the last three years."

Jim Bishop had some damage: "Well, it started more with the December rains here in Mission Hills. After waiting for months to see how the new rain gutters and water catchment system would work, it was filled immediately with the first heavy rain and has remained totally full. A lot of large potted plants blew over in the heavy winds. I repotted some of the plants in larger heavier pots before the January rains. In the January rains, we noticed that the corrugated drain line that takes water from the front patio under the house was clogged. I spent three days trying to unclog it and only managed to destabilize part of the very wet hillside. Four years of only light rain have left it hopelessly clogged with silt. I finally gave up and ran a temporary line down the hill. I plan on replacing it with a dry creek bed, which will probably look a lot more interesting...especially when it rains. The drain line also connects to a new gray water system, so it will have occasional water during the dry season. There is a little bit of hail damage on some of the more tender succulents. Everything else did surprisingly well and everything looks great with all the rain...no downed trees, and no rotted succulent plants (yet)."

Ken Blackford is, "in the process of re-landscaping my smallish front yard, having removed all the grass and forming raised mounds of succulents and aloes around the perimeter. The heavy rains of January week resulted in a Niagara Falls from my roof into the new basin created by the raised succulent beds, forming a lake (well, OK... just a pond!). Obviously, I hadn't planned for appropriate drainage and will need to do so. On the other hand... maybe I've created somewhat of a natural bioswale!?! The water did soak into the ground after a few days, which is perhaps more beneficial than running out to sea."

Linda Chisari had a power failure and, "discovered that, even though I had proactively set my sprinkler clock to 'rain,' when we had a prolonged power outage the clock re-set to the default program after the power was restored...and, of course, to the wrong time. It took four days before I noticed that the sprinklers that I thought were off, were, in fact, watering at 1pm! Lesson learned...in the event of a power outage, be sure to check the settings on your sprinkler clock after the power is restored!"

Suzanne Dalla Betta replied, "My husband and I removed the grass from the parkway and replanted with a drought tolerant ground cover called *Chamomile nobile* 'Treneague'. We upgraded the irrigation as well. During the rains our neighbors' water came down their driveway and into our parkway, washing out the good native

Continued on page 16

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Secrets Continued from page 15

earth over the irrigation lines. Next time we will use the straw wattles to provide some protection from the erosion. This was the only issue we had during the rains - we prepared as best as we could."

Vickie Driver told us, "Water was a bit slow to drain despite drains, but did drain when the rain finally stopped. Wished I had more rain barrels. Plants loved the leaching and sprang to life!"

Linda Espino did not have a problem: "We catch rain from the rain gutters in old hot water tanks. Only problem was we don't have enough of them. They filled up early. I hated knowing that we could have filled many more rain barrels."

Connie Forest had, "no problems, and I take no credit for that fact. I am on a sloping lot and I have done nothing to prevent erosion. I didn't have to. The Live Oaks that surround my home did it for me. Moral: Plant more trees."

Cielo Foth harvested some rain, "The rains we had filled my rain harvesting tanks and overflow containers to full capacity. I watched in sadness as the rest of the rain went down the drain. The rain always brings out the best in the garden because it tests how well the terracing, landscaping walls and paths can hold up to it. The wind did more damage: ripped down bamboo screens against the chain link fence and toppled down potted plants. I've fixed the bamboo screens since then, but if there's more big wind, then I'll have to get something better. Too bad we can't put a hold on the rain until June or July."

John Gilruth said, "The heavy rains were wonderful for my garden and grove - no damage. The damage was from the strong winds. About 400 pounds of avocados fell. The top of one of our pine trees broke - and fortunately fell on an unplanted area - missing the house and the avocado grove. As a result, we have trimmed many branches of three huge pine trees, and cut out the trumpet vine that had grown to the top of a tree. This was beautiful to see, but added a lot of weight to the branches and was very dangerous in case of future storms. Bring on more rain, but slow down on the wind!"

Charlotte Gresham had drainage problems: "In a customer's yard in December I installed a Zen Garden. We took out all the plants and found drains off the back patio. I stuck a vacuum down each drain to vacuum up any loose dirt that had fallen in them, then covered the holes with weed cloth to prevent excess dirt from falling in. After we laid weed cloth, planted, etc., I placed a hose down each drain and ran water down them until clear water came out of the drain's exit in the street. We finished, the owners were happy and they gave me a final check. During the downpour, however, one drain didn't drain and the water approached their doors. My drain expert stated that one drain was completely clogged with roots and broken up, and said that I should have run the water down the drain longer. Yes, the drain did work, but it ran slowly, and to make it work 100% we would have to replace this drain. We decided to not take any action because (1) the problem was due to a rock mulch covering, (2) it was at the bottom of a concreted dry stream bed, and (3) it rains like this only every 15 years. However, in the future I will check drains (by running water through them for 10+ minutes) before installing irrigation and plantings or any concrete coverings."

Tim Lindsay lost, "one 50-year old Poplar tree; it uprooted and had to be removed as it fell into the rose garden. Minimal damage to roses. Most trees have been thinned by 20% to reduce wind load and this has helped."

Al Myrick saved the rain: "We are nearly on top of a very gently sloping hill that drains to our canyon. The entire front of the property is essentially covered in about 10 inches of semi-composted mulch. We had no storm or rain or wind problems with any of 2 million plants and trees. The roof gutter is plumbed to a fill-up, spill-over series of \$9 plastic trashcans (so far they have lasted more than 14 years), others hidden amongst the foliage, pumped in and out with two \$30 Little Giant pumps with garden hose fittings. Water flowing out from the

cans to the hose has the volume and velocity of the city water spigots, so one may water any area of the 3/4-acre yard as though it were from the city water supply ('cept it's free!). All of the plants and birds said that they were thankful for the natural water, but to please spread it out over a few more days a little more next time. We now have a rainwater collection total of about 2,500 gallons. Not much more space to collect any more for a while."

Susan Oddo had a tornado: "Of course we all know that well designed drainage is the key – SO critical and never more so than when faced with such deluges as came down in one week! All but one 20-foot spot on our three acres drained perfectly. But that one pesky stretch resulted in our guesthouse taking on water. The original contractor canted the driveway the wrong way, tipping the drain-way right toward the front door. We're now digging a 2-foot deep trench alongside the carport pad and installing a French drain that will take the water around to the back of the cottage and into a natural drain. On the rest of the property we can't say enough about the amazing drainage properties of the landscaper mix from Peirano Topsoils. Over the past 30 years we've tried a lot of different sources and the Peirano mix grows everything we put in it, rakes beautifully, hardly shows footprints, and is the undisputed drain king. Unfortunately, water was not our only trial. A twister came right over our house and snapped the tops off of three of our 60-foot pine trees. The tops landed away from the house (smile), but, once the tree company left, we could see that parts of our upper palm and succulent garden are quite the worse for wear."

Una Marie Pierce, "ate dandelion greens and lots of peas, arugula, and broccoli. I swept all my neighbor's leaves out of my drains. I put out even more containers to collect rainwater if it comes up again. I've started using some of the last rain collected in pots that are beginning to dry out and in my vegetable garden. I put all potted plants that were up on ledges down so they can't blow over again in the wind. I have not turned my irrigation timer."

Diane Scharar saves her rain water, "We have no rain gutters, so where the roof angles make a chute for the run-off lots of water comes down. I have arranged river rocks to break up the flow, and that works well for gentle rain. Wishing to keep as much water as possible in our own yard when we get a gully washer, I place one of the very big garbage cans used by the city to catch the water. When it fills up, and it filled up a lot, I put a 10-foot long piece of hose into the water. I placed snap-on attachments on the distal end of it and also on a 50 foot hose. A one-gallon milk jug was filled with water and poured into the short hose while it was held above the level of the full water catchment container. I then quickly lowered the hose and a siphon was started. You can clip the short hose with the quick connect fitting on to the longer hose and then move it around the yard and place the water where your plants most need it. The submerged end of the hose can be pushed through the handle of the milk bottle full of water and it will keep the hose end low in the water."

Dawn Standke wants gorilla hair: "My garden held up pretty well in the rain. My main issue is that a whole lot of weeds have taken advantage of the moisture. The well-mulched level areas are OK - but I need to add a lot more mulch to the slope. I'm going to try Gorilla Hair - shredded redwood bark - where it's too steep for other mulches."


Cathy Tylka was happy with the rain: "The January rains caused pooling of water in places, but some were areas that I was trying to get rid of old water-hogging plants. So, the moistened dirt allowed my husband, Richard, to dig up some way overgrown agapanthus. I haven't leveled the area yet, but that must be done and then some succulents will go into this area."

Katrin Utt told us, "I watch the forecasts and make sure all the drains and gutters are open and draining well. I run a hose through the drains and flush everything out. We have clay soil in Bernardo Heights and I learned this the hard way when we first moved here

Continued on page 18

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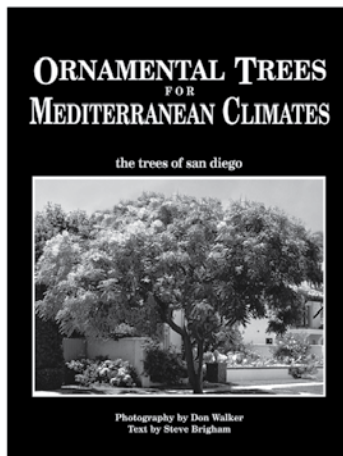
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Secrets Continued from page 17

in the early 90s. The water advanced across our patio and came into the house. Trying to unplug your drains during a downpour is a real experience."

Ron Vanderhoff appreciates gorilla hair: "A month earlier I had just completed installing a new California native plant garden at my home. The only amendment used was 17 yards of decomposed granite. Fortunately, I top-dressed with a thick 3-4 inch layer of shredded redwood – also called gorilla hair. I was afraid I would have a huge mess and dirt everywhere, but I had no problems whatsoever. I strongly recommend the shredded redwood – it holds everything in place. I hope gardeners did whatever they could to capture some of the abundant water, either in water harvesting tanks or in percolation areas in the garden. I have about a 400-500 sq. ft area that intentionally collects overflow rainwater, then allows it to slowly seep in and replenish underground reserves. What a waste if it was all simply diverted to the public storm drain."

Peter Walkowiak had mold problems: "I don't have a traditional yard, the backyard looks like a nursery. There are about 1,000 plants in my collection: palms, cycads, cacti, euphorbias and caudiciform succulents; I have not counted them for a couple of years. In addition to the plants in my collection, I have two hundred flats propagated from them. The wet, cool and damp weather caused an outbreak of boytritis (grey mold) on my Monedeniums and downy mildew on three seed flats of euphorbia seedlings. To control grey mold, remove all infected tissue and dispose of it outside in the trash, keep plant warm and dry, with good air movement. For downy mildew, Tinactin (used for athletes foot fungus; use the wet spray, not the powder) works very well to kill the infection. Three applications several days apart takes care of it; keep plants warm and dry. Both fungi require cool and damp conditions to thrive. I had about 6 inches of rain here in Poway."

Marilyn Wilson had problems: "Heavy rain forced the lower end of one rain gutter to disconnect, and one flower bed was EXTREMELY flooded, the chipped bark mulch floated away. I reconnected the downspout rather forcefully and swept the bark back into the garden. Then I tried clearing out the garden's drain, even using Liquid Plumb to dissolve mud I couldn't reach, but I fear I will have to depend on the gutter alone to protect the garden if future rains are as heavy. The gardens are delineated by brick miniwalls, and several of our gardens have drains. The back of the back yard is a steep hill (going up) and there are drains scattered about at the bottom. Perhaps the original owner of the home had a fear of high water. There are drains on the patio too. Small animals use the drains as personal tunnels - not good. Eventually it all ends up in the gutter and then on to Lake Hodges."

Tynan Wyatt said, "We had some minor flooding of the more poorly drained parts of our yard. It was only temporary since it was due to the high clay content of the yard, but it was enough that I'm going to dig a crater-type hole along the drainage line that leads away from the house, making it about 5 feet deep and 5 feet in diameter, and then back fill it with sand. This will hopefully act as a catch basin that will moderate the amount of overflow water that sits on the surface and prevent any rain water escaping from the yard as run-off. With luck this subterranean water bank should last into the hot, dry summer while preventing waterlogging of the roots of trees in the flood prone areas in the winter. This sandy area will also become part of a garden path."

The question for next month is:

What do you do when a plant that is thriving still isn't pleasing you for some reason, and why?

Send your e-mail reply by March 5 to info@sdhortsoc.org.

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@
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Scroll down to the
Sharing Secrets section
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February Plant Forum

By Michael & Joyce Buckner and Susi Torre-Bueno

What is the Plant Forum?

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

Aloe castanea CAT'S TAIL ALOE (Aloaceae) South Africa

The specific epithet *castanea* is the Latin name for the chestnut tree, and this aloe was named for the chestnut-brown nectar color. The inflorescences look like orange cattails. Good in the landscape, it makes a nice looking six-foot tree with a single stem and higher 3- to 4-foot branching. (Michael & Joyce Buckner, San Diego, 2/10) – M. & J. B.

Dalea greggii TRAILING INDIGO BUSH (Fabaceae)
Mexico, New Mexico, Texas

This drought-tolerant prostrate ground cover grows 1-2 feet tall and up to eight feet wide. It thrives in full sun and blooms from winter through summer (or longer). (Susi Torre-Bueno, Vista, 2/10) –S.T.B.

Dudleya edulis EDIBLE DUDLEYA (Crassulaceae)
San Diego to Baja, California

This beautiful and easy to grow succulent is commonly found growing on banks and cliffs along the coast, sometimes in pure sand. It has pencil-shaped chalky leaves which turns brilliant red in full sun and white flowers in mid- to late spring. A few populations have intragressed with *Dudleya viscida* and may have pink to reddish flowers, but this is uncommon. Native peoples used it as a water source. It should be hand-watered to keep the dusty, felty surface intact. Rare in cultivation, the specimen displayed had multiple branches on single stems. (Michael & Joyce Buckner, San Diego, 2/10) – M. & J. B.

Dudleya moranii MORAN'S DUDLEYA (Crassulaceae)
Baja, California

This species is endemic to Miller's Landing and Cedros and San Benito Islands. Rare in cultivation, it has pinkish flower stems with pure white flowers. Easy, but slow growing. [For a photo taken in habitat by Michael Buckner visit www.flickr.com/photos/texbuckner/3876339093/.] (Michael & Joyce Buckner, San Diego, 2/10) – M. & J. B.

Thanks to everyone who participated in last month's plant forum, especially to Michael Buckner, our excellent Plant Forum Host.

What's that in front of the plant name? Plants marked 3 are fully described in the *Plant Forum Compilation* (see www.SDHortSoc.org for details on how to order this valuable reference tool).

Can you spot the phony plant this month? The phony plant in the February newsletter was *Montanoa liftuppa* UPSYDAISY TREE.

3 *Abutilon* cvs. (Janet Wanerka, Solana Beach, 2/10)

Anemone coronaria 'Mauna Loa' HAWAIIAN WINDFLOWER,
POPPY ANEMONE (Awesome Gardener, El Cajon, 2/10)

Anemone coronaria 'Mona Lisa' GRECIAN WINDFLOWER,
POPPY ANEMONE (Sue Fouquette, El Cajon, 2/10)

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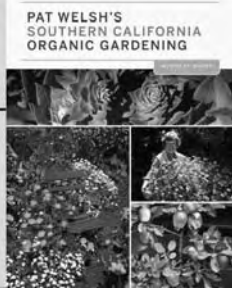
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February Plant Forum

Argyrodema patens BLUE PEBBLES or BLUE STONES
(Michael & Joyce Buckner, San Diego, 2/10)

3 *Bougainvillea* cv. (bonsai form) (Phil Tacktil, Solana Beach, 2/10)

3 *Camellia japonica* cultivars: Esao, High Fragrance, Kramer's
Supreme, Lucky Star, Margaret Davis, Mrs. D.W. Dan's Special,
Nuccio's Pink Lace, Onetia Holland, Scentsation, Spellbound, Spring
Daze, Tame Peacock (Sharon Lee, Solana Beach, 2/10)

3 *Chasmanthe floribunda* var. *duckittii* YELLOW CHASMANTHE
(Marie Smith, San Diego, 2/10)

3 *Crocasmia* sp. MONTBRETIA (Cathy Tylka, Escondido, 2/10)

Dudleya candida (Michael & Joyce Buckner, San Diego, 2/10)

Echeveria moranii (Michael & Joyce Buckner, San Diego, 2/10)

3 *Euryops* sp. (bonsai form) (Phil Tacktil, Solana Beach, 2/10)

Graptopetalum paraguayensis
(Michael & Joyce Buckner, San Diego, 2/10)

Hyacinthus orientalis HYACINTH (Sue Fouquette, El Cajon, 2/10)

3 *Leucojum aestivum* SUMMER SNOWFLAKE
(Sue Fouquette, El Cajon, 2/10)

Narcissus cv. DOUBLE DAFFODIL (Sue Fouquette, El Cajon, 2/10)

3 *Pelargonium alternans* (Michael & Joyce Buckner, San Diego, 2/10)

Pelargonium hirta (Michael & Joyce Buckner, San Diego, 2/10)

3 *Salvia xjamensis* (pink form) AUTUMN SAGE
(Susi Torre-Bueno, Vista, 2/10)

Viola cv. VIOLET (Phil Tacktil & Janet Wanerka, Solana Beach, 2/10)

HOW TO READ THE PLANT FORUM ENTRIES

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

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

[2] Cultivar ['Cheerio']

[3] Common Name [DONUT PLANT]

[4] Family [Pastryaceae]

[5] Distribution [7-Eleven to Vons]

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

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

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

Would You Like Your Garden On A Tour?

By Ida Rigby

Would you like to share your garden on SDHS garden tours – or can you recommend gardens we'd all enjoy seeing? Whether your garden is a hidden gem, personal oasis or well known, let me hear from you. Our SDHS tour committee would love to preview your garden. Just send me an e-mail at califsage@gmail.com with a description of your garden, your vision for it, special features, your gardening philosophy, whatever makes your garden (or a garden you recommend) unique and interesting to you. Photos would be welcome. If you do not do e-mail, then give me a call at (858) 748-9189. ✂

February Meeting Report

February speaker John Greenlee knew he wasn't going to have a hard time selling our members on replacing their lawns with lower-water alternatives: almost 400 people were eager to hear what he had to say and we sold out all his books and took orders for many more. He noted that, "Every day 22 TONS of air pollution is generated in Los Angeles by lawn mowers and blowers. *Every day!*" In addition, the runoff from pesticides and other chemicals people use to keep their lawns and gardens picture perfect are, "destroying our rivers and turning them into urinals." He spent a fast-paced hour explaining how to replace existing turf laws with plants to change that same area into a low-water, low-maintenance and wildlife-friendly meadow because, "Your lawn shouldn't trash my planet or pollute my water."

The good news is that, "The plants needed to make the change are now available in the nursery industry." We saw 140 slides (for a complete slide list see website) of thoughtfully-designed meadows, including portraits of the plants (both grasses and perennials) we could incorporate into our meadows. John reminded us that there are grasses to suit every garden because, "Grasses occur everywhere, from oceans to mountain tops." He takes his lessons from nature when he designs meadows, as he has done for clients from Hollywood celebs to residences in Morocco. What he especially likes to do is to use, "brushstrokes of non-grasses mixed in with the grass ecology," in part because, "the simplest meadow in nature is as complex as a perennial border."

Greenlee says, "A meadow is a natural lawn if you need to pick your feet up to walk through it." By contrast, "A lawn is only 4-6 inches high." He plants his meadows from plugs and fills in between the plugs (which might be spaced three feet apart) with what he terms, "meadow sweeteners," which are annual wildflowers and a wide array of bulbs and perennials. Bulbs are especially good in San Diego because we can grow bulbs to ensure flowers every day of the year! One thing to keep in mind is that here, "our cool-season grasses are dormant in summer," which means that many meadows might not be green at that time of year.

One of the grasses that gives, "the most green for the least water," is *Carex panza*, which is native from Baja to Alaska and only needs mowing four times a year. Some other exceptional grasses include two San Diego County natives: Blue Gamma Grass (*Boutelous gracilis*) and *Leymus triticoides* (this one only needs water twice a month in summer). Among his favorite of the "ground cover grasses [which] are sort of new," is Autumn Moor Grass (*Sesleria autumnalis*), which is very drought-tolerant once established.

When designing your meadow, Greenlee cautioned, "someone needs to know the difference between the good guys and the bad guys," another way of saying that you either need to do your homework (his book would be a huge help here!) or hire a truly

knowledgeable professional. Like much in the garden, it's important to find, "the right plant for the right place," which is what he calls, "plant-driven design."

Thanks, John, for showing us a host of great low-water grasses and companion plants to use instead of turf grass. Thanks to John for donating some great grasses and to **Sunshine Gardens** (see their ad on page 19) for donating a nice variety of beautiful plants for our Opportunity Drawing. 🍀

John Greenlee's slide list, naming all the plants he discussed, is on the Plant Lists section of the Water Conservation page.



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Details on page 6

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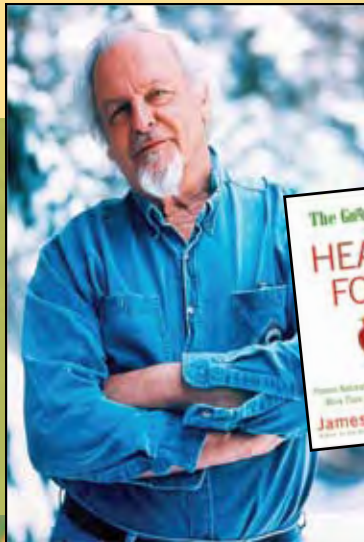
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Herb Festival, Spring Plant Sale, AND **Tomatomania**® March 20 and 21, 9 AM – 5 PM



Dr. James Duke, honored guest, will speak each day on Spices and Other Medicinal Foods. He will also sign copies of his book, *The Green Pharmacy® Guide to Healing Foods: Proven Natural Remedies to Treat and Prevent More than 80 Common Health Concerns*, published in 2009.

- **Guided Tours of the Herb Garden**
- **Speakers on Garden and Herb-related Topics**
- **Herbal Marketplace**
- **The A-Z of Herbs Information Booth**
- **Spring Plant Sale**
- **Tomatomania® with Plenty of Hybrid Tomato Seedlings**

Children's activities, both days, 11 AM - 2 PM. From dill pickles to love potions, children will explore Dill, the Herb of the Year.

Cost: Free with admission or membership



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New Division! Container Landscape Garden.

Entry fee and cash award of merit varies based on exhibit size. Gardens are eligible for numerous additional awards.

Professional Floral Design Competitions

Enter one class or as many as you like. Entry Fee \$25 per entry.

Cash Awards: 1st - \$150 2nd- \$125 3rd - \$100 4th - \$75

Amateur and Miniature Floral Design Competitions

Enter one class or as many as you like.

Amateur Floral Design: Entry Fee \$15 per entry

Cash Awards: 1st - \$100 2nd- \$50 3rd- \$40 4th- \$15

Miniature Floral Design: Entry Fee \$10 per entry

Cash Awards: 1st - \$30 2nd- \$20 3rd- \$15 4th- \$10

Specimen Blooms

Have a green thumb? We have categories for Roses, Dahlias, Gladiolus, Orchids and other Specimen Blooms.

Floral/Interior Design Vignette

Open to Professionals and Amateurs

A Vignette space is 10'X10' with walls provided by the Fair. Floral Design Vignette display features fresh flowers, live plants, and dried materials.

Interior Design Vignette is a creative display of indoor space featuring furnishings, live and or silk plants, and floral arrangements.

The entry fee is \$75, and there is a \$500 Award of Merit. You may qualify for additional awards.

Flower Show Stage Speakers and Demonstrators

Enjoy speaking and demonstrating techniques? Show off your expertise while interacting with the audience. The topic would be one of your choice; for example, you could demonstrate the making of a floral arrangement. Best of all, people have a personal interaction with you and get to know what you or your shop or business can do for them.

Contact Jim Bishop 858.792.4273 ext 2461 to reserve your speaker spot

NEW San Diego Floral Design Competition

San Diego Floral Design Competition

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Open to all Floral Designers. Entry Fee \$25.

Deadline for entry forms and fees Monday, June 7

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For more information about:

- Landscape Displays & Gardens
- Floral & Interior Design Vignettes
- Container Plants
- Floral Design Completion
- Specimen Blooms
- Bonsai & Tray Landscapes

"New in 2010"

- San Diego Floral Design Competition
- Container Landscape Garden
- Foliage Container Plant
- Bromeliad Container Plant
- Single Blooming Plant

Entry deadline - May 7, 2010

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Saturday, April 10, 2010



Frog King © David Walton 2009

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Spring WATER SMART PLANT FAIR

Saturday, March 20, 2010, 9am-3pm

Water Conservation Garden at Cuyamaca College



*Cistus 'Sunset' (Rockrose)
Photo courtesy of PlantSafari.com*

Highlights

Plant Sale

- Large selection of beautiful drought tolerant plants.

Ask the Experts

- Landscape Design Consultations, call 619-660-0614 x 10 to reserve. \$15 members / \$20 non-members.
- Water Smart Gardeners, Master Composters, Master Gardeners, Veggie Gardeners, and more.
- Expert presentations throughout the day.

Fun for Kids!

- Ms. Smarty Plants!
- Air Superiority Birds of Prey
- Face Painting
- Water Agency Activity Booth

Admission

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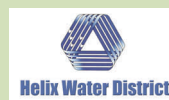


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What's Happening? for March 2010

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

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Hi and welcome to March in the Garden:

March is one of the best times of the year to plant most trees, shrubs, vines and groundcovers in your garden. Be certain to group plants according to their water needs, their sun/shade requirements and soil type needs. A thick layer of organic mulch, averaging about 2", should be maintained on top of the soil nearly year-round. This is an excellent month to add additional mulch as needed to maintain this level. This organic mulch layer will cool the root systems from the hot temperatures ahead, reduce irrigations, reduce weed problems, and improve both soil life and soil quality.

Lots of plants arrived for March – what a great planting month. Here's just a sampling of some great drought tolerant choices – this month focus on Ceanothus and Grevillea

Ceanothus:

- ❖ *Ceanothus maritimus* 'Valley Violet'. To 2' tall and 4' wide clusters of dark-violet flowers bloom in spring; attracts beneficial insects.
- ❖ *Ceanothus* 'Yankee Point'. Fast growing – 2' to 3' tall with a 10' spread.
- ❖ *Ceanothus* 'Ray Hartman' - Fast growing, mounding to 16' to 20' tall by about as wide. Large, rounded smooth dark green leaves and medium blue flowers in 6" long spikes.
- ❖ *Ceanothus* 'Centennial' - A mounding groundcover to about 1' tall by 5' to 6' wide. Small, shiny dark green leaves and round dark blue flower clusters.
- ❖ *Ceanothus griseus* 'Bamico': Mounding to 4' with a 6' spread. Similar to 'Yankee Point', but not as wide spreading and with larger leaves. Flower buds are dark with silvery highlights and open into clear blue flowers.
- ❖ *Ceanothus* 'Concha' - Arching branches to 8' tall by 10' spread. Small dark green leaves and deep blue flower clusters that emerge from reddish buds in spring.

Grevillea:

- ❖ *Grevillea* 'Ruby Clusters'. It grows at least 6' tall and broader than tall. The trunks are profusely branched, and narrow, pointed 3" leaves. Though seldom completely out of bloom, it gives its most lavish display in early spring, with large deep red, pendant flower clusters.
- ❖ *Grevillea lanigera* 'Coastal Gem' - A low spreading shrub that grows to 1' tall by 4'-5' across with crowded narrow grayish-green leaves on flat to slightly arching stems. Tight clusters of pinkish-red and cream spidery flowers. Great for attracting nectar feeding birds.
- ❖ *Grevillea thelemanniana* (Hummingbird Bush). Small, upright and graceful shrub to 5' tall with soft, fine gray green leaves that are slightly hairy and spidery clusters of red

The Water Conservation Garden, 12122 Cuyamaca College Drive West, El Cajon, (619) 660-0614 or www.thegarden.org

Mar 2, 10am-11am, Little Spouts: A guided play experience designed for toddlers, and social networking for their caregivers. Canceled if rain. \$5 per adult/child couple, (\$4 for additional person in the same family, children under age 1 - free). Minimum 10 parent/child couples required.

Mar 6, 9am-noon, A New California Garden: Water Smart landscape from the ground up. Members: \$20; Non-Members: \$30

Mar 7, 1:30-2:30pm, Ask The Horticulturist Tour: Enjoy an informative walk through the Garden. Free.

Mar 11, 6:30-8:30pm, Designing Landscapes With Native Plants: Learn the proper care and placement of drought-tolerant natives. Members: \$20; Non-Members: \$30.

Mar 21, 9:30- 10:30am, Special Access Tour: Tour for individuals who may have difficulty navigating the terrain of the Garden. Explore the Garden by shuttle. Free; reservations required: 619-660-6841.

Mar 30, 6:30-8:30pm, Hillside Landscaping: Topics include erosion control, proper plant choices, terracing, and retaining walls. \$25. Info. and registration, call 619-660-4350, or visit www.cuyamaca.edu/preview.

San Diego Botanic Garden (formerly Quail Botanical Gardens):

230 Quail Gardens Drive, Encinitas, (760) 436-3036 or www.SDBGarden.org

Mar 4, 11, 18 7pm-9pm, and Mar 13, 9am-noon, Garden-

Worthy Natives: 4-session course. Nathan Smith will teach you which natives do well in a garden setting and how to best care for them. He will also show you native plants in their natural habitat so you can better understand their requirements. Members: \$80, non-members: \$100. Pre-registration required

Mar 8 (part 1) 7pm-9pm, Mar 13 (part 2) 1-3pm, Bye Bye Grass: Part 1, learn how to eliminate your lawn. Part 2, Your lawn is gone. What do you do next? Cost per session: Members: \$45, non-members: \$50. Pre-registration required. Call Water Conservation Garden at 619-660-0614 x10.

Mar 13, 9am-noon, California Friendly Gardening Workshop: Landscape irrigation management. Topics include landscape design, WaterSmart plants, watering, irrigation systems. FREE. Register: 760-632-4236.

Mar 14, 2-4pm, Contemporary Floral Design: Create a floral design at this hands-on workshop. Bring floral knife, clippers, wire cutters, and scissors. Members: \$25, non-members: \$30 (plus \$30 materials fee). Pre-registration required by March 10.

Mar 20, 21, 9-5pm Herb Festival, Spring Plant Sale, and Tomatomania: Free with admission or membership.

Feb 13, 9am-1pm, Build a Sustainable Kitchen Garden Using Hydroponic Wick Method. Pre-registration required. Members: \$70, non-members: \$90.

Walter Andersen Nursery FREE Saturday Classes:

9:00am Point Loma Nursery classes:

- March 6 Spring Vegetables
- March 13 Trees for San Diego
- March 20 Containers & Hanging Baskets
- March 27 General Orchid Care

9:30am Poway Nursery classes:

- March 6 Xeriscape
- March 13 Spring Veggies
- March 20 Spring Color
- March 27 Garden Design Principles: Planning & Construction

Details at www.walterandersen.com; addresses in ad on page 17

Cedros Gardens Saturday 10am classes:

Details at www.cedrosgardens.com; address in ad on page 19.

Mar 5, 1:30pm, Vista Garden Club: Do It Yourself Creative Garden Art. Gloria McClellan Senior Center, 1400 Vale Terrace, Vista. www.vistagardenclub.org

March 8 SDHS Meeting Details on page 3 Growing Summer Vegetables the Organic Way

Mar 9, 7pm, San Diego Geranium Society: Grooming plants for Show and Sale. www.sdgeranium.org.

Mar 10, 9am, Poway Valley Garden Club: ABCs of floral design using readily available plant material found in most gardens. Lake Poway Pavillion, 14644 Lake Poway Road. Info: powayvalleygardenclub.org or 858-672-0459.

Mar 10, 10am, Point Loma Garden Club: How to save plants from slugs, snails, grasshoppers, and other obnoxious pests. Free, Portuguese Hall, 2818 Avenida de Portugal, San Diego. Info: tonimunsell@cox.net; (619) 223-2051 or www.plgc.org.

Mar 10, 10am, Ramona Garden Club: Vegetable Garden History. Womens Club, 524 Main St., Ramona. Info: 760- 787-0087 or www.RamonaGardenClub.com.

March 13 – SDHS Garden Tour

See page 8

Mar 13, 9am-4pm, Native Plant Society Annual Spring Plant Sale: Tree of Life Nursery, 33201 Ortega Highway, San Juan Capistrano. Info: 949-728-0685 or www.cnpssd.org.

Mar 13, 10-11:30am, Healthy Garden/Health Home IPM Workshop How to Manage Citrus Pests the Healthy Way: Fallbrook Community Center North, Room, 341 Heald Lane, Fallbrook. FREE GIFT for first 50 attendees!

Mar 14, 1:30pm, Mabel Corwin Branch American Begonia Society: Past president of The L. A. Fern Society will speak on ferns. Bring begonias or ferns to show. Olivenhain Meeting Hall, 423 Rancho Santa Fe Road, Encinitas. Info: Marla Keith, (760) 753-3977 or marybegonia@att.net.

Mar 15, 7:30pm, San Diego Rose Society: Tom Carreuth, world-famous rose hybridizer from Weeks Roses, speaks on roses of past, present and future. Visitors always welcome. Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. www.sdrosesociety.org

Mar 22, 2:00pm, Lake Hodges Native Plant Club: Kevin Barnard, former Executive Director of the Escondido Creek Conservancy, on The Escondido Creek Conservancy's Steelhead Rescue Hatchery Project. Rancho Bernardo Public Library, in the Community Room, 17110 Bernardo Center Drive; www.lhnpc.org.

Mar 24, 9:30am, San Dieguito Garden Club: Garden journaling. San Diego Botanic Garden, 230 Quail Gardens Dr., Encinitas.

GARDEN TOURS/EVENTS

See Page 10 for * listings

- * April 3 – Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Garden Tour and Festival
- * April 10 – St. Madeleine Sophie's Center Morning Glory Jazz Brunch
April 10 – Ramona Garden Club Tour & Plant Sale; www.RamonaGardenClub.com
- * April 15 – Bernardo Gardeners Annual Garden Tour
- * April 17 – Encinitas Garden Tour and Festival
April 23 – Lake Hodges Native Plant Club; www.lhnpc.org
- * April 24 – North County Garden Tour and Plant Sale
April 24 – Point Loma Garden Walk www.pointlomagardenwalk.com

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.

WATER CONSERVATION GARDEN: Open 9-4 daily, free. Docent-led tours every Saturday at 10:30am. 12122 Cuyamaca College Drive West, El Cajon, (619) 660-0614 or www.thegarden.org

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

MASTER GARDENER HOTLINE: Gardening questions answered by trained volunteers Mon.-Fri., 9-3, (858) 694-2860, www.mastergardenerssandiego.org

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

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

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

BALBOA PARK:

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

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

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

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

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, (619) 235-1122.

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

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

Garden TV and Radio Shows

Gary Walker's GreenTree World Radio Show. Saturdays, noon at KCEO AM 1000. Live call in line: (800) 292-5236. *Gardening, trees and a whole lot more!*

Down To Earth with Host Tom Piergrossi. Award-winning TV show on local gardening, daily at 12:30pm and 7:30pm. CTN (County Television Network, www.ctn.org). Tapes avail. from SDHS library.

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. GardenLife shows are also archived at 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.

flowers that form at the ends of the branches off and on throughout the year.

❖**Grevillea rosmarinifolia** (dwarf form). It is a compact shrub, under 4' tall and broader than tall. The stems are clothed in short, bright green needle-like leaves and covered from fall to early spring by dense clusters of pink and cream flowers.

❖**Grevillea lanigera** 'Jade Mound'. Small grey leaves, to 2' tall.

We are starting to carry more 4" and Quart size starter shrubs. For example:

❖**Lomandra longifolia** 'Breeze'. This evergreen perennial has narrow deep green leaves reaches to 2' to 3' tall and spreads to about the same. Its light green, thick, strap-like leaves are accented by spiny flower spikes with tiny creamy yellow flowers, lightly scented like sweet honey in the afternoon. It is tolerant of a wide range of conditions and requires little to no maintenance once established. Sun or shade. It is drought tolerant once established but can also handle regular irrigation or even wet soils.

❖**Hebe andersonii** 'Variegated Hebe' – wide margins of creamy/white foliage. Really stands out when planted with a dark foliage plant. Gets 3'-4' tall and wide.

❖**Euphorbia** 'Rudolph'. This great evergreen plant goes through radical seasonal color changes. Long-lasting, lime-green to acid-yellow flowers appear in mid-spring over the purple-mahogany foliage. This plant is an excellent groundcover for difficult, shady sites, is reliable and very easy to grow. Gets 3'-4' tall and wide.

Now to get you out in the garden:

General: March is a great time to plant shrubs and trees. Planting in early spring gives the plants a chance to get their roots established before the summer heat kicks in.

Hydrangeas: Hydrangeas should be waking up from the winter months. Apply a moderate feeding. Do not prune hydrangeas at all this time of the year. Hydrangeas bloom on one-year-old stems. Pruning now will eliminate most of the flowers.

Fertilize Most Plants: As the weather warms plants are raring to grow but rain may have leached much of the nitrogen they need from the soil. Give all your hard-working permanent plants a boost with a little granulated fertilizer high in nitrogen. Annual and perennial flowers, all types of turf grass, container plants, houseplants, and citrus and avocado trees will welcome food now.

Thin Fruit Trees: Begin thinning apples, pears, and stone fruits when they are about ½" in size. Space them 4" to 6" apart or leave one fruit per spur. Apply your first feeding this month as soon as you see the buds beginning to swell, but before the flowers open.

Avocados: Avocados are waking up now and new leaves are usually filling out on the tree as many of the older leaves from the previous year have already dropped. This is the first really good month for planting avocados.

Beware!! – Snails: Look for them hiding under strap-leaved plants like agapanthus and daylilies during daylight hours. An excellent slug & snail control option is "Sluggo," both pet and wildlife safe (unlike most snail baits, it is Iron Phosphate based).