

Let's Talk Plants!

Newsletter of the San Diego Horticultural Society

January 2009, Number 172

Enter YOUR Garden to Win!

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SAN DIEGO
HORTICULTURAL
SOCIETY

On the Cover: *Cyc. warszewiczii* 'SVO'

DECEMBER MEETING PHOTOS

Photos by Stacey Dore



Adenium obesum



Aeonium sedifolium



Othonna quercifolia



Tillandsia (with faux flowers)



Paphiopedelum hybrids



Dudleya brittonii



Argyrodermis patens



Aristolochia gigantea

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Cover Image: *Cynoches warscewiczii* 'SVO' is a fragrant orchid with large green flowers. This cultivar, and many others, is grown by our January speaker, who supplied this gorgeous cover image.

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

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

To join, send your check to: San Diego Horticultural Society, Attn: Membership, P.O. Box 231869, Encinitas, CA 92023-1869. Individual/one year—\$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

- February 9** Big Ideas for Water-Thrifty, Fire-Safe Landscapes: The California Casual Garden, by Dave Egbert (members free, non-members \$5)
- March 9** The Deep Psychology of Unsustainable Design – How Sustainable Practices Change Our Ideal Landscape, by Pamela Berstler (members free, non-members \$5)
- April 13** Engagement: How to be a Part of Your Native Plant Garden, by Mike Evans (members free, non-members \$5)
- May 11** Plant Nerd Night (members free, non-members \$5)
- June 8** Special Evening with George Little and David Lewis, Little and Lewis Sculpture Garden

www.sdhortsoc.org

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

Next Meeting: January 12, 2009, 6:00 – 9:00 PM

Topic: “ORCHID COLLECTING IN VENEZUELA” BY FRED CLARKE

Meeting is open and everyone is welcome. Admission: Members/free, Non-Members/\$5.

Parking is free. Meeting Place: Del Mar Fairgrounds, Surfside Race Place, Del Mar; Info: (760) 295-7089

Our new year starts with horticulturist Fred Clarke's presentation about his experiences as an orchid hunter in Venezuela. He'll include commentary about the people and politics involved. Venezuela's national flower is *Cattleya mossiae*, and you'll see this beauty in the wild, with amazing pictures of thousands of flowers covering the trees. Learn about the habitat and the perils of *C. mossiae*, once the most popular corsage for Mother's Day and now rarely seen.

Fred Clarke has been growing orchids for thirty years and has been hybridizing for twenty years. With decades as a professional grower and manager in the horticultural industry, Clarke applies these skills at his Vista orchid nursery; Sunset Valley Orchids. He is a passionate orchid grower whose curiosity in orchids is broad and varied. Although developing *Cattleya* hybrids has been his sustaining interest, he is also actively creating new *Bulbophyllum* and *Paphiopedilum* hybrids.

His pioneering work in *Catasetum* intergeneric hybrids led to the development of several notable hybrids, most recently the grex, Fredclarkeara After Dark, which produced "the blackest flower ever witnessed." This grex has received five FCC's and three AM's on the first flowers shown for judging! Clarke is an Accredited Judge in the Pacific South Judging Region. His plants have received hundreds of quality awards from the American Orchid Society.

To learn more visit the Sunset Valley Orchids website, www.SunsetValleyOrchids.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

- Judy Bradley** – First Vice President, Co-Chair-Program Committee
Mark Collins – Finance/Budget Committee
Julian Duval – Quail Botanical Gardens Representative
Pat Hammer – Events & Outreach Committee
Jason Kubrock – Second Vice President, Co-Chair-Events & Outreach Committee
Carol Ann Lewin – Co-Chair-Program Committee
Sheldon Lisker – Co-Chair Membership Committee
Jackie McGee – Treasurer, Chair-Budget & Finance Committee
Susan Morse – Co-Chair Membership Committee, Program Committee
Sally Sandler – Member at Large
Cindy Sparks – Chair-Publicity Committee
Bill Teague – Co-Chair-Events & Outreach Committee, Opportunity Drawing & Plant Raffle
Susi Torre-Bueno – President, Newsletter Editor
Don Walker – Past President
Lucy Warren – Secretary, Liaison to H&G Shows
Jim Wright – Member at Large

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

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

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

Sponsorship Info: Susi Torre-Bueno (above).

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BECOME A SPONSOR!

Do you own a garden-related business?

SDHS sponsorships have high recognition and valuable benefits, including a link to your website, discounts on memberships for your employees, and free admission to SDHS events. This is a wonderful way to show your support for the SDHS. Sponsors help pay for our free meetings, annual college scholarships, and other important programs. Sponsorships start at just \$100/year; contact info@sdhortsoc.org or (760) 295-7089.

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

We thank them for their extra support!

Important Member Information

WE'VE GONE "GREEN"

This month we are "going green" by sending out dues renewal notices via e-mail. It will save trees and also save us at least \$500/year in postage and printing. You can continue to mail in your dues checks or, if you prefer, you can renew on-line at our secure website, www.SDHortSoc.org. We accept all major credit cards. Also, if you renew for either 2 or 5 years you'll pay less money and save some green of your own!

If you do not get an e-mail from us regarding this it means we don't have your current address. Please help us by sending an e-mail today to membership@sdhortsoc.org and saying "I want to save trees – here's my e-mail address." We never share your e-mail address with anyone.

Members can save 36% on a subscription to the gorgeous and exciting *Pacific Horticulture* magazine, which focuses on gardening in our part of the country. You can subscribe for only \$18 for four quarterly issues (standard is \$28/year). To take advantage of this significant savings, just send an extra \$18 when you renew your membership. If you renew as a Contributing Member, to thank you for your extra support you will receive a FREE 1-year subscription.

GET YOUR HORT BUCKS!

If someone joins because you told them about us, and they give us your name when they send in their dues, we will mail you a "Hort Buck" worth \$5 towards raffle tickets, name tags, Plant Forum CDs or dues. A list of all the members who got Hort Bucks in 2008 is on page 9. To get your Hort Bucks just ask your friends to give us your name when they join SDHS. Even better – give your friends a membership as a gift and put your name down for the Hort Bucks!

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Express your outgoing nature, or overcome your shyness by meeting new people in a very friendly setting! The membership committee wants more members to join us 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 Co-chairs Sheldon Lisker, 951-244-3502 or Susan Morse, 760-599-0550. 🌿



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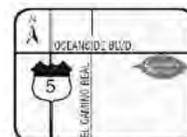
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FALL/WINTER HOURS

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

To Learn More...

ORCHID WEBSITES

By Ava Torre-Bueno

Orchids have impassioned admirers! Meet them at the web site of The American Orchid Society: <http://www.aos.org/> and then go to the San Diego County Orchid Society: <http://www.sdorchids.com/>

Read everything imaginable about orchids at Wikipedia <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orchid> and then to see even more pictures, check out this huge web site: <http://www.orchidworks.com/>

"Wonderful creatures, these orchids!" Orchids were among the many species that Charles Darwin studied deeply to support his theory of evolution: <http://www.amnh.org/exhibitions/darwin/work/orchids.php>

Orchids have even made the news recently. It seems that when you get an orchid lei draped around your neck on arrival in Hawaii, it really came from Thailand! Political unrest in that country that shut down Thai airports, stopped the lei trade to Hawaii: http://www.mercurynews.com/nationworld/ci_11119848

Member Ava Torre-Bueno is a psychotherapist in private practice and is 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>.



C Mark Jones 'SVO'
Photo: Fred Clarke,
Sunset Valley Orchids

Membership Questionnaire

Make your opinions known and help decide what the SDHS will be doing in the near future! Every few years we give our members a questionnaire to fill out about their participation in the SDHS and what additions/changes they'd like to see. We'll be handing these out at the January and February meetings, and when you turn your questionnaire in you'll get a free ticket for a special plant at our Opportunity Drawing. The questionnaire will also be included in our February newsletter, so if you can't make it to those two meetings you can still complete the form and give us your input so that we can plan events and activities to suit your interests. Thanks in advance for returning your form! 🌿

From The Board

By Susi Torre-Bueno

CHANGES IN BOARD STRUCTURE

It has been a great joy to have been your president for the last seven years, and I was honored in September to be elected to serve another term. Even the best job, however, needs a retirement plan, and our by-laws didn't have an exit scenario for the position of president. So, in order to have a smoother transition when the SDHS president is ready to leave office, the board approved a few important by-laws changes at our November meeting. These changes will also make it easier for people to take on the task of being president without feeling overwhelmed by the responsibilities.

First, the term of office for President shall be limited to three three-year terms. Second, we will have a First and a Second Vice President. The First VP will succeed the President upon the President's resignation. The Second Vice President will succeed the First Vice President. Also, to keep the wisdom and experience of previous presidents readily available to the board, the immediate Past President shall remain as a voting member for the term of the next President and shall be an *ex officio* non-voting member for life.

I'm delighted to announce that our First Vice President is Judy Bradley (who has been serving so well as our Program Co-Chair for the last several years. She will be your next president when my term ends in September, 2011, and I know she'll do a fabulous job.



Another very valuable board member, Jason Kubrock, will be our Second Vice President. Jason joined the board in 2007 as a Member at Large and was elected as a three-year member this past September. He's been working closely with Bill Teague as the Co-Chair of the Events and Outreach Committee, and brings great enthusiasm and energy to the organization.



You'll be seeing lots of Judy and Jason, plus the rest of the board members, at our meetings and other events. Please let them know your thoughts about the Society and offer to volunteer in some capacity to make our group even more effective in spreading ideas about horticulture that is appropriate for our climate.

YOU CAN SO TOTALLY DO THIS!!!

Please read the article on page 11 about how to enter your garden in the annual California Friendly Landscape Contest – then take some photos and enter your garden! A number of previous winners have been SDHS members, and I know that many of your gardens are both beautiful and water-thrifty. This is a terrific way to share your design ideas with other San Diegans and perhaps win some cash in the process! 🌿

New Beetle Killing Oaks

By Vincent Lazaneo
Urban Horticulture Advisor, UC Cooperative Extension



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Figure 1. Dorsal (A) and lateral (B) views of the GSOB adult. The six gold spots on the forewings (elytra) are diagnostic for this species.

As many as 70% of the oak trees in some areas are infested. Some campgrounds in the national forest have been closed and no permits are being issued to remove oak firewood.

The adult GSOB is a small, bullet-shaped beetle about 10mm (0.4 in. long) and has six golden yellow spots on its dark green forewings. It is active from summer to fall and may feed on foliage but is rarely seen. Eggs are probably laid in bark crevices and the larvae feed under the bark on the trunk and larger branches. Mature larvae are white, legless, slender and about 18mm (0.75 in. long). Larval feeding kills patches and strips of cambium tissue beneath the bark which causes dark staining and sap flow on the bark surface. Prolonged infestations causes limb die-back and eventual tree death. The larvae pupate in the outer bark and leave D-shaped exit holes about 1/8" wide when they emerge.

It is difficult to protect susceptible oaks from attack by GSOB. At this time it is not known if insecticides will help protect healthy oaks or save infested trees. Research is planned to evaluate the effectiveness of chemical sprays and systemic treatments. Before an insecticide product is used, always read and follow all label directions. For more information on GSOB visit www.fs.fed.us (in the search box enter CA under state and Cleveland under name).

How to keep GSOB from spreading?

- Do not transport oak firewood or logs to uninfested areas
- Remove heavily infested dying or dead oaks
- Place cut wood and logs in a sunny location, then cover with two layers of clear plastic and secure tarp edges with soil.
- Chip wood into 1" pieces and use as mulch ☞

IS A DISEASE-CARRYING INSECT KILLING YOUR CITRUS TREE?

We've written before about the Asian Citrus Psyllid, an invasive pest that could deliver a death sentence for California citrus trees. The quarantine area in San Diego County extends north to Highway 78. The insect, which can be a carrier of a fatal citrus tree disease, can be stopped with the appropriate treatments. Protect your citrus trees and the availability of California-grown fresh citrus by inspecting for the insect often. The best website for info on the Asian citrus psyllid is www.californiacitrusthreat.com You can register at the site for updates if you wish.

Plants That Produce

IT'S TIME TO PRUNE YOUR FRUIT TREES

By Richard Frost

Don't be afraid to prune your fruit trees! It is much easier than most people think, and when done correctly will result in healthier trees with much improved harvests.

Let's start with the simplest – white and brown figs such as Janice-Kadota, Panachee, Turkey (not Black or Mission). They bear the best fruit on current year wood. In January, cut the entire tree back to about a foot above the crotch so that 3 or 4 forks remain. One to three dozen flexible whips will then grow skyward in the spring, each one bearing loads of fruit in the summer or fall.

With the exception of citrus, most new fruit trees for home gardens (including bare root) should be immediately topped off at 32 inches – some experts recommend even shorter. This will force side branches to grow out during the spring. Keep only those between 16" and 32" up the main stalk. A year from now, select 3 to 4 of these that are equiangular and about 6 inches apart. Remove the others. That following summer, you will prune them so that from the trunk each one forks twice at approximately 8 inch intervals. If the tree fruits during this training period, you should remove all but maybe a few fruits. Each fruit equals about enough energy to grow one four-foot branch. You can also retrain old trees this way – with a chainsaw!

Summer pruning is straightforward. Measure the height from the ground up to your wrist when your arm is extended straight above your head. Now, after you have harvested all the fruit from a tree, trim it so that no branch extends above that height – a "crew cut." Note that summer pruning does not apply to most white and brown figs.

Winter pruning is concerned with both thinning the tree and controlling the height. It is performed when the trees are dormant, which in San Diego county is typically the second week of January. First, give the tree a "crew cut" as you did in the summer, but about 1 inch shorter to remove the nodes that formed there. Then, follow the specific directions for your tree in R. Sanford Martin's inexpensive (\$6) pamphlet: *How to Prune Fruit Trees*. It is simple and easy to read, with a drawing for every tree.

The general rule for citrus is not to train them by pruning. However, citrus do sprout lanky, spiny, flowerless suckers from just about anywhere on the plant. These need to be removed at the source. If you want your tree to grow to true size, also remove all fruit that forms in the first 3 years in at least the mid- and top-portion of the plant. Finally, citrus trees planted in the ground need skirting: prune any drooping branches so that there is a 12" to 18" clearance from the ground to prevent pests and mold from coming up the tree. If you *top* your citrus tree to control the height, be sure to cover the spot with 50% shade cloth until new leaves sprout to protect the inner bark from sunburn.

SDHS Member Richard Frost is also member of the California Rare Fruit Growers. For more information, please see <http://www.plantsthatproduce.com>. ☞

Garden Gourmet

OF CABBAGES AND KINGS

By Alice Lowe

If the walrus and the carpenter had been chatting about their sustainable winter gardens, the topic more likely would have been cabbages and kale! You probably have made your new year's resolutions and wish lists for your gardens, seeking ways to both economize and maximize while maintaining visual appeal. One of the ways to do this is to combine ornamentals with edibles in pots and window boxes, or to use edibles as ornamentals.

Those ubiquitous purple and white ornamental kales are popular for their dramatic flair. But you can find striking and showy edible kale to plant with other cool-weather crops and flowers, like violas, calendula, and fragrant spikes of stock. There are many varieties and colors to choose from, especially if you're planting from seed – a blue-green Winterbor and its sister Redbor, a red-purple, also a Dwarf Blue Curled variety, and Russian reds, whites and blacks. I've planted Black Tuscan in my sidewalk boxes with yellow and purple violas, and Renee's Garden (SDHS sponsor; www.reneesgarden.com) carries Lacinato, an heirloom with crinkly blue-green leaves. I checked my neighborhood nurseries, SDHS sponsors Mission Hills and Walter Anderson, and found several in both pony packs and more-established 4-inch pots as well as seeds, including a lovely Red Winter kale with oak-like leaves and beautiful purple veins, though you may need to order online or from seed catalogs for some of the more unusual ones.

Prepare kale as you would any other leafy greens. Tender young leaves are great in salads, adding a nicely pungent flavor and great color; when they're more mature, they're better cooked – steamed with butter or stir-fried in olive oil with garlic and a splash of vinegar. It makes a wonderful hearty soup with white beans and sausage or with potatoes and onions.

We're all more familiar with cabbage but don't necessarily think of those big green and purple globes as decorative or suited to containers. But there are many varieties, large and small, loose leaf or compact, in colors ranging from pale greens to blue-green (Dynamo) and red (Ruby Ball and Ruby Perfection). Bok choy (also called pak choy) is known as Flowering Chinese Cabbage for its yellow blooms; other Chinese cabbages include Savoy and the lacy-leaved Napa.

A fine cold-weather supper is a German fry of onions, cabbage and sausage braised in a little beer, and served with seedy brown mustard, boiled potatoes and rye bread. My mother used to steam cabbage and then simmer for a couple of minutes before serving with a little milk and nutmeg. Bok choy is delicious and versatile, but I like it best stir-fried in peanut oil with a splash of soy sauce, a fine side dish with fish.

We're so fortunate – winter gardening in San Diego can be fun and exhilarating, a great way to re-balance after the holidays. And your seasonal containers can express your artistic creativity as well as provide tasty and nutritious bounty for the table.

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

Sustainable Urban Landscape Conference

The Ornamental Horticulture Department at Cuyamaca College will host its first Sustainable Urban Landscape Conference on campus March 12 and 13, 2009. The conference will feature landscape professionals and bus tours of local sustainable landscape sites. Topics include:

- An overview of design and maintenance principles
- An update on ASLA's sustainable site initiative
- Firewise landscaping and brush-clearance guidelines
- A water agency panel discussion on the current water situation
- CLCA's water management certification program
- Sustainable maintenance practices



Bio-swale disguised as a dry stream bed at Briarcrest Park in La Mesa.

The idea of sustainable landscaping as a system is relatively new, although designers and gardeners have been practicing aspects of it for many years as a matter of common sense. As environmental awareness has grown, and as natural resources have become scarce, the idea of naming and grouping these concepts together made sense, and in fact has become quite trendy. The time was right for the Ornamental Horticulture Department to add a program to the seven that are currently available, and it will soon be offering a degree and certificate in Sustainable Urban Landscaping. The inaugural Sustainable Urban Landscape Conference will be a kickoff to the new program.

The conference will touch on many issues. Even the definition of sustainable landscaping itself is not well established. A quick, easy and broad definition of sustainable landscaping is "a landscape design and maintenance style that minimizes the inputs of resources and the outputs of negative environmental consequences." Of course, the details of that style are open to interpretation and vary with the issues facing different geographical regions. In San Diego County, there are two key issues – irrigation water conservation and stormwater pollution. What about other sustainable practices? Reduction in green waste, fire prevention, fertilizer and pesticide use, rain water and gray water collection, bio-swales, permeable hardscapes, green roofs, garden equipment air and noise pollution, and use of mulch are just some of the issues that landscape designers and maintenance personnel need to consider.

Although we don't expect to clarify all of these issues at our March conference, we hope to provide a forum for quality discussion. In one way or another, sustainable landscaping practices will replace some of our wasteful and entrenched routines. The Ornamental Horticulture Department expects to play an important role as Southern California faces this important and very challenging time in landscaping.

For conference registration information and details, go to the Cuyamaca College Ornamental Horticulture web site (www.cuyamaca.net/OHweb/) or call Don Schultz at (619) 660.4023. 🌿

Herbs And Spices: A Family Affair

By Carl Price and Ellen Reardon

Herbs and spices are popular in our gardens, but what makes them so attractive to us humans? They may or may not be visually attractive; they are not necessarily rich in nutrients; and they may or may not have medicinal value. A simple reason for their ubiquity in our kitchens is their flavor and/or aroma.

Classes of substances known as *secondary metabolites* are typically responsible for flavors and aromas in plants. The term refers to substances that are not part of essential, primary processes such as uptake of nutrients, photosynthesis, transpiration, etc. Whereas the machinery of these primary processes is highly conserved across the plant kingdom, secondary products vary enormously, and their chemical structures display evidence of plants being the most ingenious chemists in the world. Flavors and aromas are typically similar *within* genera and families but are rarely duplicated *among* families.

Let's look at some examples:

Black pepper (*Piper niger*)

The genus *Piper* contains over 1400 species, of which half a dozen are widely used in cooking. The most familiar to us is black pepper, *P. niger*. The spice comes as dried fruits (known as "peppercorns") of the plant, but note that we call it "black" only because that is the most common form. Depending on harvest time and processing, the dried fruits can also be white, green, pink, or red. The pungency of black pepper is due mainly to piperine, an analog of alkaloids, while monoterpenes, such as sabinene in pepper oil, are responsible for its aroma.

Chili pepper (*Capsicum spp.*)

The genus *Capsicum* includes about 30 species, of which half a dozen are cultivated; *C. annuum* is far and away the most abundant in the United States and Europe. Other species that are widely cultivated include *C. pubescens*, *C. baccatum*, *C. chinense*, and *C. frutescens*. There is a single set of compounds responsible for pungency in chili peppers: *capsaicin* and a small group of derivatives, *capsacinoids*. What's more, these substances are found *only* in the genus *Capsicum*. We should also note that there are many varieties of *C. annuum* that we call "sweet" or "bell" peppers. They are not pungent because they have little or no capsaicin. It turns out that capsaicin is encoded by a single gene, and sweet peppers contain an inactive, recessive version of this gene.

Other herbs and spices

If we had additional space, we could explore the distinctive properties of many more herbs and spices. Rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*), for example, is a popular herb in Mediterranean kitchens, but it's more than an herb or spice. Consider the pleasure of running one's hand up its stem! Chives (*Allium schoenoprasum*), another example, are very different from the two "peppers." A member of the *Allium* family, chives share a similar set of components with garlic and onion, which are other members of the family, but their flavor and odor are quite distinctive.

A remarkable reference

In trying to understand the essential elements of herbs and spices, we searched Google, which of course has an infinite array of references. One of the most remarkable is Gernot Katzer's *Spice*

Continued on page 20

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:

We welcome **Mariposa Tree Service** as our newest Sponsor (see ad page 17).

- Lee Coccoaro
- Imagine Energy Independence
- Nathan Smith Landscape Design
- Roxy Perez

NEW ADVERTISERS:

Imagine Energy Independence
(PAGE 18)

San Diego County Fair
(PAGE 22)

HORT BUCKS ARE GREAT!

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

- | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Lorraine Bolton (2) | Ginny Hawkins (1) | Anne Murphy (1) | Susi Torre-Bueno (2) |
| Linda Bresler (2) | Bobbi Hirschhoff (1) | Taylor Murphy (1) | Bonnie Varner (1) |
| Bonnie Daigh (1) | Miriam Kirk (2) | Samantha Owen (1) | Darlene Villaneuva (3) |
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See Page 22 for Details

What's Up at Quail Botanical Gardens?

THE ART OF BONSAI

Bonsai is the art of aesthetic miniaturization of trees and shrubs by growing them in containers. They can be created from nearly any tree or shrub species and remain small through pot confinement and pruning.

The word "Bonsai," is a Japanese pronunciation of the Chinese term "Penzai," which first appeared in writing in China during the Chin Dynasty (265 – 420 CE). But it wasn't until Japan's Kamakura Period (1185 – 1333) that bonsai was introduced into Japan and, as with many other mainland practices, the art was refined to an extent not yet approached in China.

It is not every day that you can learn from a master. In January, Phil Tackill will teach a course on bonsai at Quail Botanical Gardens. Phil has been growing, teaching, and loving the art of bonsai for over 50 years. He owned one of the first bonsai nurseries on the East Coast. His nursery was a center for learning for the Greater Metropolitan area of New York City, but its guest list included most of the major bonsai artists from all over the world. His articles and photos have appeared in Japanese bonsai publications and the U.S., such as *Book of Knowledge*, *The New York Times*, and the Brooklyn Botanic Garden's handbook, *Book on Indoor Bonsai*. He is a lecturer on bonsai and bonsai-related arts and has appeared on TV in that capacity as a featured guest. He has trees that he created in the National Bonsai Museum in Washington, DC, the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, and the Huntington's Bonsai Collection.

In "The Art of Bonsai: Simplified, Enjoyable, and Achievable," Phil will guide you through the basics to create your own bonsai. His tried and true methods give you a comprehensive overview of the mechanical, horticultural, and design aspects of creating bonsai for indoor and outdoor environments. This course is recommended for all levels of bonsai enthusiasts. 🌱

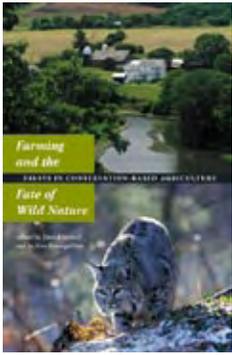
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Book Review

FARMING AND THE FATE OF WILD NATURE: ESSAYS IN CONSERVATION-BASED AGRICULTURE

Edited by Daniel Imhoff and Jo Ann Baumgartner

Reviewed by Caroline McCullagh



Don't let the title of this book put you off. I know you're probably not a farmer, but you eat, and probably you garden and vote. These twenty-three essays, some more interesting than others, will open your eyes to some of the recent ideas about organic farming and gardening that may revolutionize how food is grown and distributed in the United States and throughout the world.

You'll find familiar names in the list of essayists, including some people whose books I've reviewed before (Gary Paul Nabham and Michael Pollen), some writers you may have heard of in other contexts (Barbara Kingsolver and Aldo Leopold), and people you might not expect (a chef, Dan Barber, and a farmer, Wendell Berry). I mention these authors to give you a sense of the breadth of experience that went into forming the ideas in this book.

The essays are organized in four sections: Agriculture & Conservation, Core Issues, Biodiversity Challenge, and Biodiversity and Culture. The book's central idea is that the more we work in concert with nature rather than contrary to nature, the more successful we will be in achieving sustainability in our world.

There are a number of intriguing ways of working with nature. The book goes beyond the relatively simple ideas of organic gardening and looks at how farmers (and gardeners) can think and act in terms of ecosystem management. We've probably all heard over the years about the concept of "Spaceship Earth," a closed system which we may be exploiting beyond its limits. These writers have some ideas on how we can reset our course for a much better future.

The examples in this book are far ranging. Among others, authors look at the war between herding dogs and wolves in the Balkans, the plight of wild pollinators in central California, the conservation strategies of former slash-and-burn agriculturists in Southern Mexico, and the fatal plague among cloned blue agaves, the source of tequila.

A few of the articles are dry. I got stuck on a couple at the beginning, so I just started skipping around and found more and more of interest. It was published in 2006 by The Wild Farm Alliance, an organization that "promotes a healthy, viable agriculture that helps protect and restore wild nature" (p.254). If you're interested in knowing more about their ideas you can check them out at www.wildfarmalliance.org.

Farming and the Fate of Wild Nature (ISBN-13:978-0-9709500-3-1) is \$16.95 in paperback. Its 256 pages include an index, a selected bibliography and short biographies of the authors. I recommend it to you. 🌱

Community Outreach

NORTH, SOUTH, EAST AND WEST

By Linda Johnson

SENIOR GARDENING IN VISTA

North—The Vista Garden Club meets most first Fridays of each month from 11am-3pm at the Gloria E. McClellan Senior Activity Center. The Club features educational speakers, tours and workshops. The Center, located in beautiful Brengle Terrace Park in Vista (1400 Vale Terrace Drive), offers a wide range of programs and services to seniors, including gardening/landscaping classes. Contact: Lynn Paine at (760) 724-1127. The mission of the Center is to promote the physical, emotional and social well-being of seniors and to involve them in all aspects of community life: "It is never too late to be what you might have been."

KEEPING BONITA BEAUTIFUL

South—The Bonita Valley Garden Club strives to keep Bonita beautiful by protecting native plants and wildlife, stimulating interest in good gardening, and promoting garden club activities. Participation is open to everyone, and includes monthly meetings, an Annual Flower Show, and maintaining a local native plant garden. The Club meets the second Wednesday of each month at 9:30 a.m. at the Bonita-Sunnyside Library. Contact Darlene Montgomery at (619) 267-1585 or visit <http://www.sweetwatervalleyca.org/BVGC.html>

DAFFODILS IN DESCANSO



East—The Descanso Garden Club provides an opportunity for community members to come together to increase their knowledge and enjoyment of all aspects of gardening and horticulture. Monthly meetings are the second Thursday, providing presentations on a wide variety of gardening-related topics. The Club holds field trips

to nurseries, flower shows, greenhouses, and elsewhere. Volunteering for various projects (such as the daffodil planting program) make a positive contribution to the community. Club members share their gardening knowledge and expertise at meetings, helping to identify trees, shrubs, flowers and vegetables which are most compatible with local growing conditions. Contact: DGCpresident@descansogardenclub.org

HISTORIC GARDEN RESTORATION IN POINT LOMA

West—The Naval Training Center (NTC) Foundation continues fundraising to revive the historic gardens at the former NTC in Pt. Loma. The Center, including officer's quarters and the gardens, has hosted dignitaries from around the world and is on the National Register of Historic Places. The four acres of formal gardens will be restored to their former splendor by the landscaping firm Spurlock Poirier, and will be open to the public for the first time in history. Help support this horticultural effort with donations to: NTC Foundation, 2801 Rosecrans Street, San Diego, CA 92106, or call (619) 573-9260. 🌱

California-Friendly Landscape Contest in full bloom

Homeowners eligible to win over \$5,000 in prizes

Do you have a low-water use landscape? Have a neighbor with a beautiful water-wise landscape? The 6th annual San Diego County California-Friendly Landscape Contest is in full bloom and more than two million residents are eligible to enter their water-wise yards for over \$5,000 in prizes!

Drought conditions throughout the state have made water conservation more important than ever. Approximately 50-70% of household water in San Diego County is used outdoors, making it the best place to find savings. California-friendly plants use less water, often require less maintenance and many are fire resistant. Water-wise landscaping helps conserve San Diego's water supply, especially during dry conditions, and could lead to a lower water bill.

Now is a great time to consider making water-wise changes to your landscaping. The Water Conservation Garden in El Cajon is a great place to visit and provides many water-wise gardening ideas at its four-acre facility. You can also visit www.thegarden.org.

The deadline to apply is April 6, 2009. Residents interested in entering the contest can get more information or download

an application online at www.landscapecontest.com. Entries are accepted by participating water agencies throughout the County. Participating agencies can be found online or by contacting your local water agency.

Judges consider the following elements of water-wise landscaping: overall attractiveness, innovative design with water conservation and function in mind, use of California-Friendly plants, color and texture in the landscape, zoning techniques (grouping plants with similar water requirements), energy-efficient landscape design (proper tree placement), functional use of grass areas, creative use of hardscapes and the use of water-harvesting designs to reduce runoff.

The region's best do-it-yourself homeowner and best professionally landscaped yard will receive \$500 gift certificates to an area nursery. Each water agency will also have a best-in-district winner who will receive a \$250 gift certificate.

Prizes will total over \$5,000 this year and will be awarded in May at the Water Conservation Garden, located at 12122 Cuyamaca College Drive West in El Cajon. ☞



Richard and Jan Johnson show off their Del Mar yard, which won a "best-in-district" (City of San Diego) award in San Diego County's Annual California-Friendly Landscape Contest.

Photo by Sandy Small, www.smallshot.com

JOB OPENING

San Diego County Fair Flower & Garden Show

Position Title: Flower and Garden Show Assistant Coordinator

Job Description: Seasonal part time position assisting Flower and Garden Show Coordinator with all activities required for the San Diego County Fair Flower and Garden Show. Specific emphasis will be on coordinating the landscapes and garden displays.

Pay Rate: Salaried Position, \$10,000

QUALIFICATIONS:

Schedule Requirements: 1 Day per week in January, 2 days per weeks in Feb., 3 days per week in March and April, 3-4 days per week in May and June until Fair opening, 6-7 days per week during Fair and available for Fair wrap up duties until July 17.

Skill Requirements: Background and/or education in Horticulture. Experience exhibiting large landscape and garden displays. Ability to speak and present to small groups. Able to solicit display participation from Landscape and Garden companies. Ability to direct labor crews in display preparation, setup and teardown, and removal. Bilingual (English and Spanish) a plus. Basic computer skills, Word and Excel, drafting letters and maintaining contact lists.

E-mail your resume to jwittevrongel@sdfair.com Please include Assistant Coordinator in the subject line.

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~ All New glazed pottery selections arriving soon, check our website for updates

The Concert was a huge success! Lots of requests for more, so if you didn't make it this time keep watching our website for the next up and coming "Concert in the Garden" - it was magnificent!

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The Real Dirt On...

RACHEL CARSON

By Linda Bresler



Rachel Louise Carson has been called the mother of the modern environmental movement. She was born on May 27, 1907, on a small farm in Springdale, PA. The youngest of three children, her mother taught her and her siblings a lot about nature. As a young girl, she was also a prolific reader and gifted writer.

In 1925, Rachel entered Pennsylvania College for Women (now Chatham College). She began as a literature major, but later switched her major to biology. She graduated *magna cum laude* in 1929. After a summer course at the Marine Biological Laboratory, Rachel continued her studies at Johns Hopkins University, studying zoology and genetics. She finished her Master's Degree in zoology in 1932, and intended to continue for a doctorate. However, in 1934 she was forced to look for a full-time position because of her father's death and financial difficulties at home.

Rachel began work at the U.S. Bureau of Fisheries, writing radio copy for a series of weekly educational broadcasts entitled "Romance under the Waters." She later became a junior aquatic biologist. One of her responsibilities was to write brochures and other literature for the public, along with a steady stream of articles for *The Baltimore Sun* and other newspapers. An article that Rachel had written for the *Atlantic Monthly*, a vivid narrative of a journey along the ocean floor, was expanded into book form and published as *Under the Sea Wind* in 1941. It received excellent reviews, but sold poorly.

In mid-1945, Rachel first encountered the subject of DDT, a revolutionary new pesticide. It was just beginning to undergo tests for safety and ecological effects. She found the subject unappealing at the time, and published nothing on DDT until 1962.

Rachel rose within the Fish and Wildlife Service, and became chief editor of publications in 1949. She wrote a second book called *The Sea Around Us* in 1950. It was a huge success, and remained on the *New York Times* bestseller list for 86 weeks, winning the 1952 National Book Award, and the Burroughs Medal. Rachel was also awarded two honorary doctorates. The book's success led to the re-publication of *Under the Sea Wind*, which also became a best-seller. Rachel was finally able to give up her job in 1952 to concentrate on writing full time.

In early 1953, Rachel began researching the ecology and organisms of the Atlantic shore. She completed the third volume of her sea trilogy, *The Edge of the Sea*, which focused on the life in coastal ecosystems, particularly along the Eastern Seaboard. This book also received highly favorable reviews.

In 1957, Rachel adopted the five year old son of her niece who had died unexpectedly. She also continued to care for her aging mother. These responsibilities caused her to become stressed. She then moved from Maine to Silver Spring, MD with her small family.

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During this time, the United States Department of Agriculture began spraying fire ants with DDT and other pesticides (mixed with fuel oil). The landowners in Long Island, NY, protested the spraying of their land, but lost a court suit to have the spraying stopped.

The Washington, D.C. chapter of the Audubon Society also actively opposed such spraying programs. They recruited Rachel to help make public the government's exact spraying practices and the related research. Rachel began a four-year project leading to what would become *Silent Spring* by gathering examples of environmental damage attributed to DDT. Rachel found two scientific groups when it came to pesticides: those who dismissed the possible danger of pesticide spraying barring conclusive proof, and those who were open to the possibility of harm and willing to consider alternative methods, such as biological pest control.

In 1959, the USDA's Agricultural Research Service produced a public service film, *Fire Ants on Trial*. Rachel considered this to be flagrant propaganda that ignored the dangers that spraying pesticides posed to humans and wildlife. She wrote a letter to the *Washington Post* that attributed the recent declines in bird populations, "the silencing of the birds," to pesticide overuse. She also soon found evidence to support the pesticide-cancer connection.

By 1960, as Rachel was writing her latest book, *Silent Spring*, a lump was found in her breast which turned out to be malignant. Nine months later, it was discovered that the cancer had metastasized. Despite the setback in her health, Rachel finished *Silent Spring* in 1962. The book became widely read, and became a Book-of-the-Month Club selection. The academic community largely backed the book's scientific claims, and public opinion soon turned Rachel's way as well. Within a year or so of publication, attacks by the chemical companies and associated organizations had lost their momentum.

Weakened by her illness and radiation treatments, Rachel's health grew steadily worse in early 1964. She died on April 14, 1964, at the age of 56.

The overriding theme of *Silent Spring* is the powerful, and often negative, effect that humans have on the natural world. Rachel advised spraying with DDT as little as possible to limit the development of resistance to the insecticide. She basically called for a natural, biotic approach to pest control as an alternative to chemical pesticides. She posed this question to her readers: "One way to open your eyes is to ask yourself, 'What if I had never seen this before? What if I knew I would never see it again?'"

Rachel's work had a powerful impact on the nascent environmental movement. *Silent Spring*, in particular, was a rallying point for the fledgling ecological movement in the 1960's. Her most direct legacy in the environmental movement was the campaign to ban the use of DDT in the United States (and related efforts to ban or limit its use throughout the world). By 1972, the Environmental Defense Fund and other activist groups had succeeded in securing a phase-out of DDT use in the United States (except in emergency cases).

The creation of the Environmental Protection Agency in 1970 was also a result of Rachel's work. Much of the agency's early work, such as enforcement of the 1972 Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act, was directly related to what Rachel had accomplished.

Member Linda Bresler is a certified landscape designer living in Poway. She specializes in drought-tolerant, low maintenance designs that provide four-season beauty. ☘

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SHARING SECRETS

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

The question for this month was:

What is one thing you plan to add to your garden in 2009, and why?

Linda Addison is going back to basics: "My goal is to use less water and build up my soil. I plan to cover my garden with a big thick layer of mulch. In addition I will replace plants (as needed) with drought tolerant ones."

Jim Bishop is taking steps towards fire safety: "The fires in 2007 made us much more concerned about all the potential fuel in the lower part of our canyon, so we planned on adding a succulent firebreak between our house/garden and the canyon below. Well...we were trying to add it in 2008, but didn't get there (yet); so we'll try again in 2009. We plan to use as many different aloes as possible, but will add in other succulent plants. We cleared the chaparral and Eucalypts in 2008 and ran the debris through a new shredder. We saved a few of the toyons and one lemonade berry and trimmed them up into small trees. However, we didn't get much done this summer and the chaparral and Eucalypts started growing back, so we cut them down again and tried roundup on the new sprouts. I started lots of aloes in pots 2007, so now they are getting quite large. We still have to wrap the slope in chicken wire to keep out the gophers and add permanent irrigation. Since it is such a big area, we are going to use overhead irrigation...this will be the only part of the garden that won't be on drip irrigation. So we can have access, there will still be some paths and maybe retaining wall work to do, but we might not get that done until 2010."

Lynne Blackman is concerned about water usage: "We are adding more efficient irrigation. (Having cut our water use 40% we wonder if we'll be punished for having cut before we are required to?) I will also be dreaming up more whimsy - I can't predict what. Ideas arrive and we follow our inspiration. Gardens are meant to change. Why not have fun?"

Jo Lynn Campbell is trying 3 kinds of amaranth: "I read an article in *San Diego Home/Garden Lifestyles* by Debra Lee Baldwin titled 'Amazing Amaranth-Enjoy Its Beauty, Then Harvest Its Nutritious Seeds.' They grow into bushes with beautiful flowers and edible seeds and leaves. They are also drought tolerant, but more productive with adequate water. So I purchased Elephant Head seeds, which is an heirloom from Germany with a huge flower that takes on the appearance of an elephant's trunk; Opopeo, an heirloom from Mexico with large red, upright flower spikes and bronze-green foliage; and Love-Lies-Bleeding, which grows 3-4' tall with very long rope-like flowers with deep red color. If growing them is as easy as the article describes, it should be a fun experiment. That is if I can keep the rabbits and ground squirrels out!"

Pam Coffey is replacing lawn with crops: "I am adding a vegetable/herb garden to my back yard. I have removed all of the grass areas and am currently working on designing my raised beds at different focus points in the yard with sitting areas. With the cost of veggies at the store and the water prices going up this will allow me to enjoy the yard a minimal cost in watering and enjoy eating my favorite greens."

Jill Conger is adding trees: "I plan to add more fruit trees! Water rationing is most likely coming our way, so I want to use water to its best advantage. Home grown citrus and stone fruits are the tastiest and my family consumes more fruit if they are handy."

Nancy Donnell has big plans for her front yard: "I'm afraid my dilemma is I have absolutely no room to add anything to my backyard garden... hence in 09, I'm busting out to the front (shh, don't tell my husband). The first thing I plan to do is remove what was the biggest mistake of my life in terms of sticking something in the ground... About 20 years ago, I was killing a Savon drugstore *Ficus benjamina* as a houseplant, so out of desperation, I stuck it in the middle of my lawn...well, I shouldn't have done that! In 2009 I hope to save my retaining walls, liberate my sewer lines and replace that menace with a benignly beautiful pomegranate tree, and that's just the start."

Annie Forseth-Smith plans to add "SUCCULENTS! My husband and I spent the Thanksgiving holiday in Scottsdale, Arizona. While there, we visited the Desert Botanical Gardens. Amazing. Not only the variety of Cacti, Succulents, and drought tolerant plants, but the current display of Chihuly Glass, interacting with the plants. Staggering creativity. Just plain dumb luck that we happened to visit the garden, plus this amazing dance between succulents and glass. I'm ready to tear my garden apart and start over with a new, beautiful, lower water direction. The Chihuly Glass is at the Gardens until May 2009; just a 6 hour drive from San Diego. Take a friend and spend the day. You'll be thinking of a garden remodel, too."

Richard Frost has a special native plant to add: "The water-wise native San Diego Honeysuckle (*Lonicera subspicata* var. *denudata*) is loved by birds, butterflies, and is an excellent companion plant to many other natives – and it has edible berries! San Diego Honeysuckle prefers mid-day shade. In the wild it is often found at the drip-line of native oaks, spreading non-aggressively into the shade. A few studies have concluded that it is beneficial to California evergreen oaks when not overwatered."

John Gilruth is going after pests: "I plan to add a more aggressive attitude towards ridding my property of gophers next year. They have been a pain, killed some prize rose bushes, attacked the vegetable garden, and I am always just a little behind in their control."

Carrie Goode will add at least one fruit tree: "I plan to add a fig tree, and possibly a persimmon tree to my garden. Being from the Midwest, I had never eaten a fresh fig or persimmon in my life, and never planned to either (neither one seemed appetizing). This year, I was treated to tastes of fresh figs and fresh persimmons, and I cannot believe how absolutely scrumptious they are! Now I know I don't want to live without them."

Irina Gronborg has an intriguing idea: "I plan to add more *time* to our garden. More time than is required for the usual life or death issues. More time to clip, to sweep, to observe, to be like a Zen monk."

Lori Hamelehle is planting a special ground cover: "I plan to plant *Cotoneaster salicifolius* 'Gnom' on some of my bare banks at my nursery in Guatay. The mountain areas have additional challenges that this Cotoneaster grows great under: low water, freezing temperatures, blasting Santa Ana winds and fire. The Gnom Cotoneaster is

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Sharing Secrets Continued from page 15

a ground hugging ground cover that has rich green foliage, white flowers and red berries and takes temperatures down to 0 degrees. A great plant to try in all areas of San Diego."

Joan Herskowitz says: "I plan to expand the use of Salvias and other native plants in 2009. I already have a mixture of succulents and Salvias on one side of my house and get tremendous enjoyment observing hummingbirds feeding on the nectar provided by the flowers. There are a great variety of native Salvias and cultivars available at plant nurseries, with so many different colors and shapes. The added benefit of gardening with these plants for me is the knowledge that I am extending wildlife habitat from preserves and parkland into the suburban environment to support native insects and birds."

Christiane Holmquist wants to add "benches or better yet a swing for adults! I tend to forget to take a break once in a while and enjoy what I have created. A beautiful swing will hopefully remedy this."

Janice Johnson tells us she is "planning to plant native plants which I purchased a couple of weeks ago and was just waiting for the soil to cool down. The area where I want to plant them has no water except a hose and is in full sun along the Green Valley Creek. I want to screen out a neighbor."

Will Johnson says, "First, finally replacing the entire front lawn with a park-like garden of natives, Mediterranean & South African plants, accented with fruit & veggies, irrigated with subsurface drip & microsprays. Reasons? Water savings, added value, social responsibility, aesthetics, plus I don't want to be the "shoemaker with barefoot kids" [Will owns SECO Landscapes]. Others: Add a bench & tiny water feature to give the many neighborhood pedestrians a quiet place to rest & reflect, also, divert shower/bath greywater to quench a thirsty *Salix matsudana* (corkscrew willow) and a bed of roses."

Marilyn Guidroz is doing veggies and fruit: "This is a great time for everyone to add a raised vegetable garden and some dwarf fruit trees. With the current economic situation and the predicted shortage of food due to the water crisis cutbacks in agriculture this is the time for us to get back to basics."

Hilda King gardens with her grandkids: "I plan to add another 8' x 4' garden box so I can grow more vegetables with my granddaughters. We planted tomatoes on the edges of the one we had this summer and the other plants didn't do well because they were shaded by the huge tomato plants. Next year we'll plant the tomatoes in one box and the other veggies in another box."

Ted Kniffing (of Kniffing's Discount Nurseries) has tips for success if you will be planting bareroot roses and fruit trees. "Dip the roots into a plant success mycorrhizae gel for fast root growth, then plant with an organic rose planting mix 50% and mix with 50% of the soil you take out of the hole. Make a basin with the excess mix and topdress with 2" to 3" of organic compost. Give it a good deep watering."

Cheryl Leedom will add a place for airplanes: "This may be a bit unconventional, but next year I will be incorporating a landing strip into the landscape for my husband's radio-controlled model airplanes, much to the delight of our one-year old grandson, Kyle."

Lee Lichter is also thinking water-wise plants: "I plan to replace my 'thirsty' plants with drought tolerants and/or California natives."

Sue Marchetti is adding "more drought tolerant and native plants and especially grasses and low ground covers because I am ridding our back garden of most of the Bermuda lawn (not an easy task) to conserve more water, reduce use of nitrogen, and pollutants from gas mower."

Cathy McCaw is adding art! "I will soon be adding some mosaic art sculptures to my garden. I found the pieces on display at Quail Botanical Gardens to be so beautiful that it inspired me to take the mosaic class offered at MiraCosta College. Although my project is on a much smaller scale, it's going to be a nice addition to the garden."

Carol McCollum is going for water efficiency: "Some type of irrigation system to keep my plants happy & alive would be great! Maybe 2009 is the year I'll get to it! It would be such a big time saver... So I'd have more time to enjoy my garden!"

Janet Milliken has some construction planned: "I plan to add a large raised planter to break up a long space of 6 foot white fence in my front yard. It needs to be raised as there is a large spruce tree, and the roots don't allow for good planting in the ground."

Lenore Morines says: "I plan to add many succulents to a long narrow area next to our driveway instead of the lawn that is there. The succulent area will be adapted from many of the ideas in the book *Designing with Succulents*, by Debra Lee Baldwin. I hope to combine various textures, heights and colors to make it at least a tenth as attractive as the cover of her book."

John Rader is saving water and will add: "more Arctotis: low water use, unusual colors and colorful, great foliage, easy care, snail proof, unique. I have cut back irrigation significantly and these can take it. Next will be killing my lawn and planting a meadow. I also have started and will plant more Ptilotis for the same reasons as the Arctotis. Gardening with less water is a new adventure."

Karen Utt says, "The one thing I am going to add to my garden in 2009 is tons of worm castings. I have been using it on a limited basis so far and noticed that it really keeps the bugs under control where it has been applied generously. I have over 100 roses mingling with sages, perennials and annuals. I can sure use the help because I do not use insecticides or sprays."

Steve Zolezzi wants to go low-water in 2009: "Trying not to repeat past mistakes, in 2009 I will be focusing in on replacing/adding plants that are drought tolerant! Seems like this drought is here to stay, for a while at least. So it will not only be important to how my garden looks – using more native plants, succulents and the like will reduce the amount of water I will need, which will benefit us all."

The question for next month is:

What's the biggest mistake you made in your garden and what would you do differently?

Please send your e-mail reply by January 5 to info@sdhortsoc.org.

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December Plant Forum

By Michael Buckner, Tom Piergrossi 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.

Ammocharis tinneana (syn. *Crinum tinneanum*) (Amaryllidaceae)
Central-Suthern Africa

In nature bulbs are completely underground which allows them to survive veld fires. Usually bulbs that have above ground tunics are restricted to rocky areas that are unaffected by the infrequent, but recurring brush/grass fires. Bulbs produce up to eight sets of satiny leaves that lie flat on soil surface if bulb is not raised. Dark pink-petaled blooms on short stems appear at the end of growth period. This is usually, but not limited to, late fall through winter and early spring. (Michael & Joyce Buckner, The Plant Man, San Diego, 12/08) – M.B.

Argyroderma patens BLUE PEBBLES or BLUE STONES
(Aizoaceae) Cape Province, South Africa

This rock mimicry plant has rounded highly succulent hood-shaped paired leaves. In nature it is found in chipped quartz or limonite. Culture for these plants are easy ~ or easier. If you have failed with lithops, "Living Stones," try this one. It rarely requires summer water, but is far more forgiving of excess water and thrives with some light winter rains. And it is fun to stage with similar types of rocks in a low pot. Flowers occur in late autumn or winter. They are usually bright purple or magenta pink, but can be yellow or even rarely white (all forms from the same seed capsule). (Michael & Joyce Buckner, The Plant Man, San Diego, 12/08) – M.B.

Duranta stenostachya 'Bill Byron' COMPACT BRAZILIAN
SKYFLOWER (Verbenaceae) Horticultural Selection

Evergreen Brazilian shrubs with brilliant blue flowers in spring followed by golden berries in fall. Multi-trunked small tree, arching habit, somewhat gangly (should lace out to maintain attractive structure). Full sun. This species is more compact and has little to no spines. (Tom Piergrossi, Vista, 12/08) – T.P.

Fouquieria macdougalii (bonsai form) (Fouquieriaceae)
West Coast of Mainland Mexico

Maybe you do not recognize this genus, but the proverbial light bulb goes on when we say "Ocotillo," *Fouquieria splendens*. *F. macdougalii* is one of eleven recognized species in this genus, along with the "Boojum Tree" from Baja California, Mexico (*F. columnaris*). Since all species eventually attain large size, one rarely encounters a plant grown bonsai style. Nice red flowers. This specimen is fifteen years old grown from seed and is displayed in a handmade Tex Buckner pot. (Michael & Joyce Buckner, The Plant Man, San Diego, 12/08) – M.B.

***Gomphrena* sp. 'Teensy Weensy'** MINI BUDDY
(Amaranthaceae) Horticultural selection

A rare mini form of a common summer bedding plant (*Gomphrena globosa*, commonly known as globe amaranth.). The extra small purple thistle flowers float above the attractive green foliage in abundance. A perennial shrub, it will probably live over in a mild or

December Plant Forum

frost free location. Grows 2 around. Full sun, amended soil, regular water. (Tom Piergrossi, Vista, 12/08) – T.P.

***Mazus reptans compactus* 'Violet'** (Scrophulariaceae)

Horticultural selection

An excellent ground cover, from the Himalayas. The dark green leaves stay dense, with lavender violet flowers are produced all year. It is great in-between steppingstones. Sun or partial shade, good soil with regular water. It can be divided easily. A white form is also available. (Tom Piergrossi, Vista, 12/08) – T.P.

Massonia pustulata (Hyacinthaceae) Namib and Richtersveld, South Africa

A true geophyte growing from an underground bulb. The two leaves are opposite and basal, soft and succulent. These prostrate leaves lay right on the soil line. Unique clusters of flowers borne in a dense head out of the center of the cleave between the leaves appear at the same time as the leaves in the winter. Remarkable flowers with very long white stamens give off a very distinct fragrance which has been described as everything from a nasty stench to intoxicating pleasant aroma, depending on the sniffer. Scent, for me, is like an electrical short, or the ozone smell after a storm. In cultivation, plants are entirely dormant, leafless, and underground from June thru September. They must be kept dry during their dormancy period. (Michael & Joyce Buckner, San Diego, 12/08) – M.B.

Our December meeting included plants from all over the world, including some fascinating succulents and orchids – thanks to everyone who participated. Tom Piergrossi did an excellent job describing them all. In addition to the plants described above, those below were also displayed.

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

Can you spot the phony plant this month? The phony plant in the December newsletter was *Brighamia gundersonii* MATRIMONY TREE.

In the December newsletter the owner of one plant was incorrectly identified. It should be:

Pachypodium lealii ssp. *lealii* (John Gilruth, Rainbow, 11/08)

Abutilon cv. (yellow flower) FLOWERING MAPLE
(Louise Anderson, San Marcos, 12/08)

O *Acalypha wilkesiana* 'Marginata' (Tom Piergrossi, Vista, 12/08)

3 *Adenium obesum* DESERT ROSE, IMPALA LILY
(Julian Duval, Encinitas, 12/08)

Aeonium sedifolium (Michael & Joyce Buckner, National City, 4/00)

Albuca spiralis (Michael & Joyce Buckner, San Diego, 12/08)

3 *Aristolochia gigantea* (? , 12/08)

3 *Beta vulgaris* 'Bull's Blood' BEET (Tom Piergrossi, Vista, 12/08)

3 *Boophane guttata* CAPE POISON BULB
(Michael & Joyce Buckner, San Diego, 10/07)

Cleome isomeris BLADDERPOD (? , 12/08)

Dichorisandra thyrsiflora BLUE GINGER
(Gladys Baird, Encinitas, 12/08)

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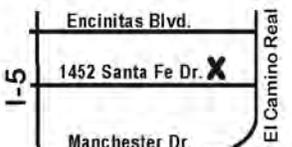
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December Plant Forum

- 3 *Dudleya brittonii* LIVE FOREVER (Julian Duval, Encinitas, 12/08)
Euphorbia milii (Cathy Tylka, Escondido, 12.08)
Euphorbia sp. "California Snow" (Mary McBride, Vista, 12/08)
 3 *Haemanthus albigiflos* PAINT BRUSH (Darlene Villanueva, El Cajon, 12/08)
 3 *Lochroma cyaneum* (Shelia Busch, Escondido, 12/08)
Kalanchoe marmorata (giant blue form) (Michael & Joyce Buckner, San Diego, 12/08)
Kalanchoe tomentosa TEDDY BEAR PLANT, PANDA PLANT (Vivian Blackstone, San Diego, 12/08)
Othonna quercifolia (Peter Walkowiak, Poway, 12/08)
Othonna retrofracta (Peter Walkowiak, Poway, 12/08)
Othonna sp. (from Clanwilliam, S.W. Africa) (Michael & Joyce Buckner, San Diego, 12/08)
 3 *Schefflera arboricola* (seed pod) SCHEFFLERA (Barbara Clark, San Diego, 12/08)
Senna bicapsularis 'Butter Creme', syn. *Cassia bicapsularis* 'Butter Creme' BUTTER CREME CASSIA (Tom Piergrossi, Vista, 12/08)
Senna bicapsularis 'Coconut Creme', syn. *Cassia bicapsularis* 'Coconut Creme' COCONUT CREME CASSIA (Cake Lover, Vista, 12/08)
Paphiopedilum hybrids LADY SLIPPER ORCHID (Charley Fouquette, El Cajon, 12/08)
 3 *Pycnostachys urticifolia* PORCUPINE SALVIA, WITCH'S HAT (Tom Piergrossi, Vista, 12/08)
Tillandsia (two unlabeled species) AIR PLANT (Tom Biggart, El Cajon, 12/08)
Tillandsia stricta AIR PLANT (Tom Biggart, El Cajon, 12/08)

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.]

Herbs and Spices Continued from page 8

Pages (<http://www.uni-graz.at/~katzer/engl/index.html>). Katzer presents detailed information on more than 100 herbs and spices, covering everything from the kitchen to the botany and chemistry labs. The English version, cited above, has some minor translation problems, but he is forgiven.

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

December Meeting Report

When speaker Pete Anderson talks to people who want to set up a backyard vineyard, he "spend[s] the first half hour trying to talk them out of it." Given all the problems these vines are prone to, he's wise to offer such counsel. Still, for many the lure of growing their own wine is undeniable, and in his fascinating talk he shared many aspects of local grape growing.

Pete, whose own vineyard is in Carlsbad, is the Grape Mentor for the San Diego Amateur Winemakers Society, and many members were in the audience. His vineyard was built "all the wrong way" from Home Depot materials, but he still has had some success with it. Some people get into vineyards for the "romantic associations" with castles and chateaux, while others are drawn to it for commercial reasons. For success, Pete noted, you need to do your homework and also hire a qualified landscaper.

In 1944 there were 4300 acres of grapes grown in San Diego County. That number fell to 55 acres in 1991, but is now up to about 375 acres, including about 50 acres in backyard vineyards. Galileo said that "Wine is sunlight held together with water," to which Pete adds, "if only it was that simple!" To get started you'll need a good soil analysis, must consider the range of both grape vines and rootstocks, and take into account the soil mycorrhizae. Pests include raccoons, birds, rats and ladybugs (they exude a chemical which can ruin the wine if a ladybug is mashed up with the grapes). There are a host of diseases which plague grapes, including powdery mildew (the most pervasive problem) and others carried by insects including the Asian Citrus Psillid (see page 6), Diaprepes Weevil, and Glassy-Winged Sharpshooters. This last pest can travel up to two miles a day, and wiped out 66% of Temecula vineyards.

It was really interesting to see Pete's photos of local backyard vineyards, and hear his comments, including cautionary tales about hiring experts. We saw several in Rancho Santa Fe (some more successful than others) and one in Ramona (which produced "an excellent Petit Verdot"). Wine from Juli and Lance Gillett's home in Olivenhain won Best of Show, and Peder Norby's Carlsbad vineyard produced 740 pounds of grapes in its second year (it's watered entirely with rainwater!). One set of photos showed board member Jason Kubrock and his staff (and students) at MiraCosta College replanting an old vineyard in terribly compacted soil under difficult conditions.

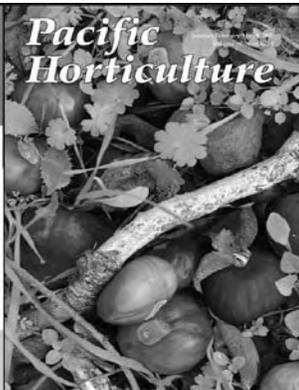
Thanks, Pete, for a look into a totally different kind of horticulture, and for providing a dozen bottles of your own Eusinus Vineyard wine for the Opportunity Drawing. More bottles were provided by Lum Eisenman, Juli & Lance Gillett, Bonnie & John Manion, and Mark & Terri Zimdars, and we thank all of them for their generosity! Tom Piergrossi provided plants for the Opportunity Drawing and was a most informative host for the Plant Forum tables. You can participate next month by just bringing a plant or cutting from your garden. ☺

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Spring 2009 Schedule of Courses

Landscape and Nursery Technology

Southwestern College

Classes begin January 14th

Landscape & Nursery Technology

LNT 70* Pruning Fruit Trees & Vines (6 weeks; 1/15 - 2/28) 1 unit (Lab: 1/17,1/24,1/31,2/7,2/21,2/28)	Del Hotal	Thursdays and Saturdays Thursday Lecture, 6:00 - 8:00 pm Saturday Lab, 3:30 - 5:30 pm
LNT 100 Plant and Horticultural Science (Lab: 1/17,1/31,2/21,3/7,3/21,4/4,4/25,5/9)	4 units Staff	Wednesdays and Various Saturdays Wednesday Lecture, 6:15 - 9:15 pm Saturday Lab, 8:00 am - 1:50 pm
LNT 119* Plant Identification: Xeriphytic Plants (1/24,2/7,2/28,3/14,3/28,4/18,5/2,5/16)	3 units Homyak	Alternate Saturdays, 8:00 am - 2:00 pm
LNT 120 Landscape Design I	4 units Staff	Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6:00 - 9:50 pm
LNT 123* Landscape Maintenance	3 units Homyak	Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4:00 - 8:00 pm
LNT 131* Landscape Contracting and Estimating	3 units Homyak	Mondays, 6:00 - 9:00 pm
LNT 136* Plant Pest and Disease	3 units Sinclair	Mondays, 5:30 - 8:30 pm
LNT 138* Floral Design I	3 units Sinclair	Tuesdays, 9:00 am - 2:00 pm
LNT 140* Floral Design II	3 units Sinclair	Thursdays, 9:00 am - 2:00 pm
LA 200* Introduction to Computer-Aided Landscape Design	3 units Homyak	Wednesdays, 5:00 - 10:00 pm

All classes with an asterisk* are offered as both college credit courses and as non-credit ROP classes. ROP classes may be taken tuition free. To enroll, visit the college website at www.swccd.edu. When enrolling online, be aware that two sections may be listed. The first section is for college credit and will result in a charge for tuition. The second section is the ROP tuition-free section.

Call (619) 421-6700 ext. 5371 for more information
(and to speak to a Landscape and Nursery Technology instructor)
or visit our website at www.lntswc.com

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What's Happening? for January 2009

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.

▼ SDHS Sponsor

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www.AndersonsLacostaNursery.com

January, 2009 – Welcome to the New Year:

New at the Nursery:

- Lots of bedding color (annuals & perennials) to keep your color bowl(s) and seasonal beds spruced up and bright – Snapdragons, Pansies and Iceland Poppies are particularly long lasting.
- Plenty of planted Paperwhites & Amaryllis coming up for their January bloom.
- Lots of Azaleas are in budded or blooming right now & of course the Sasanqua Camellias are blooming (or very nearly) – the Japonicas have set buds.
- The greenhouse has been just cleared of Poinsettias (for another year) but Marsha remains a huge believer in indoor decorating for the New Year. Many Orchids, Cymbidiums, Gloxinia, African Violet, Ficus (shrub, trees, braided, rubber, Fiddle-Leaf – we have them all). Blooming (yes – blooming) Hibiscus, Azaleas, Zebra Plant and more – brighten up the indoors this month.
- Mentioning Cymbidiums, this is a great time to buy now while they are in bloom. Feed any that have not bloomed yet with a high bloom formula fertilizer. Once the blooms open stop feeding.
- Many succulents, including cactus, bloom in winter and spring. Now is a good time to find some new specimens.

What to Do – January, 2009:

Ahhh – January – that month when avid gardeners here in Southern California adjust their calendars since as we all know Spring come on January 2nd (regardless of what the calendar thinks). So it's time to put 2008 behind us and get out in the garden.

New Plantings:

Azaleas & Camellias - plant azaleas and camellias this month. Camellias and azaleas are best planted while in bloom not only because you can see what colors you are adding to your garden but also because you can take advantage of the post-bloom growth spurt.

Citrus Trees. If you live near the coast start fertilizing your citrus late this month. If you live inland wait until March (to avoid frost damage). Mature citrus trees need about one pound of "actual" nitrogen per year. Split the fertilizer into equal portions and apply once a month (or every other month) until June. Citrus are doing very little, if any, growing this month. A few late bearing tangerines (also called mandarins) may be ready for harvest now.

The Water Conservation Garden (contact info on other side)

Jan. 4, 1:30pm, Free! Ask the Horticulturist Tour: Enjoy an informative walk through the Garden with one of our professional horticulture staff. Bring questions for this interesting tour. Tour takes 45 minutes to 1 hour.

Jan. 17, 24 & 31, 1 – 4pm, Saturday Afternoon WaterSmart 30-class Series: Class 1, Designing with California-Friendly Plants: Jan Tubiolo shows you how to create a water-wise design from scratch. Class 2, Irrigation Design for Water-Wise Gardens: Kathy Eagle discusses the essential design principles of integrating overhead sprinklers and drip irrigation into your garden. Class 3, Mulch, Compost, Fertilizer! Jan Tubiolo will discuss in detail the benefits of these three garden-enhancing essentials. Classes can be taken individually or as a series of 3. \$30/Member series of 3 classes, \$60/non-members series of 3 classes, \$15/Member single class, \$25/Non-member single class.

Jan. 17, 9:30am – 12:30pm, Plant Propagation Made Easy: Get your plants for free! Connie Beck will teach successful techniques for preparing, storing, and planting seeds. \$30/Members, \$40/Non-members.

Jan. 31, 10am – 1pm, Toss Your Turf, Less Water, Less Grass, More Fun: Join Vickie Driver for a short course in turf removal. Get tips for evaluating your soil, tuning up our irrigation system, and creative ideas for a beautiful low-water landscape in lieu of lawn. \$20/Members, \$30/Non-members.

Activities at Quail Botanical Gardens (contact info on other side)

Jan. 6, 13, 20 & 27, 10am – noon, Ikebana Session I: Learn Ikebana from Rumi Rice, a Sogetsu School teacher. Cost per session: \$80/Members; \$100/Non-members -- plus \$30 material fee.

Jan. 15, 22 & 29, 7 – 9pm, Jan. 31, 9am – noon, The Art of Bonsai: Simplified, Enjoyable, and Achievable: Phil Tackill will guide you through the basics to create your own bonsai. His methods give one a comprehensive overview of the mechanical, horticultural and design aspects of creating bonsai for indoor and outdoor environments. \$80/Members; \$100/Non-members.

Jan. 18, 2–4pm, Floral Design: With David Root. \$55/Members; \$60/Non-members.

Jan. 2, 1pm, Carlsbad Garden Club: Greg Rubin on "Landscaping Secrets for California Natives. Heritage Hall, Magee Park, 2650 Garfield St., Free. carlsbadgardenclub@hotmail.com or (760) 845-6339.

Jan. 2, 1:30pm, Vista Garden Club: Barbara Conrad will give a presentation on how to care for and propagate Africa Violets. Gloria McClellan Senior Center, 1400 Vale Terrace, Vista. www.vistagardenclub.org

Jan. 3, Walter Andersen Nursery: 9:00am Pruning Apple, Pears and figs. (San Diego, 3642 Enterprise St., (619) 224-8271); no class. (Poway, 12755 Danielson Court, (858) 513-4900). www.walterandersen.com

Jan. 3, 9:15am – noon, Annual Hands-On Rose Pruning Demonstration: Bring your pruners and gloves; you'll have the chance to improve your pruning skills on hybrid teas, floribundas and climbers. Inez Grant Parker Rose Garden on the east side of Park Boulevard. (619) 582-3794 or www.sdrosesociety.org

Jan. 4, noon– 5pm, Coastal Sage Gardening: Native Plant Sale & Open House. 3685 Voltaire St., San Diego. (619) 223-5229 or www.coastalsage.com

Jan. 5, 12:30 – 3pm, Floral Design Forum: Presenter will be JR of JR Flowers. \$8/per session, payable at the door – everyone welcome. Carlsbad Women's Club, 3320 Monroe St., Carlsbad.

Jan. 6, 6:30pm, San Diego County Orchid Society: Program TBA. Beginners Class at 6:30 is in room 104, the general meeting begins at 7:30pm in Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. Admission is free, everyone is welcome. www.sdorchids.com

Jan. 8, 7:30pm, Southern California Horticultural Society: "The re-imagined shed: design the ultimate garden hideaway" by Debra Prinzing. Debra shares stories and design tips for turning an ordinary shed into a dream destination. Friendship Auditorium, 3201 Riverside Dr., Los Angeles. (818) 567-1496 or www.socalhort.org

Jan. 10, Walter Andersen Nursery: 9:00am, Camellia planting and Care. (San Diego see Jan. 8) 9:30 am, Pruning Fruit Trees & Learning about Bare Root Fruit Trees. (Poway, see Jan. 3) www.walterandersen.com

Jan. 10, 10am, San Diego Bromeliad Society: Program TBA. Member to Member plant sale. Visitors welcome – free. Room 104, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. (858) 453-6486 www.bsi.org/webpages/san_diego.html

Jan. 10, 1 – 3pm, Gardeners 4 Peace: Please bring tools, water and a cheerful spirit for the work party. Following immediately will be a two hour fruit tree pruning class. If you plan on coming, please chop up your vegetable and fruit waste and freeze in a paper bag. Bring the frozen bags on the gardening day for the compost bins. For more information write Ava at gardeners4peace@hotmail.com

Jan. 10, 1pm, San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society: Program TBA. Admission is free and all are invited. Arrive as early as 9am to shop at the pre-meeting plant sale. Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. www.sdcss.com

Jan. 11, 9am, San Diego Bonsai Club: "Bonsai-themed" benefit drawing. Bonsai Classes are available to members only, check www.sandiegobonsaiclub.com for more information. Room 101 Casa del Prado, Balboa Park.

Jan. 11, 1pm, San Diego Iris Society: Following the meeting, there will be a roundtable discussion "Growing Iris". Free and open to the public. 9906 Maine Ave. Lakeside. (619) 840-2768.

Jan. 11, 1:30pm, Mabel Corwin Branch of the American Begonia Society: Michael Ludwig will present "Computers, Begonias and the Web". Bring begonias or companion plants to show. City of Encinitas Community Center, Room 118, 1140 Oakcrest Park Drive. Encinitas. (760) 753-3977.

**January 12, 6:00pm, details on page 3
Orchid Collecting in Venezuela**

Jan. 13, 7pm, San Diego Geranium Society: Plant raffle and refreshments at every meeting. Room 101 Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. (619) 447-8243 or www.sdgeranium.org

Jan. 14, 10am, Point Loma Garden Club: Noel Tribbey floral design. Free admission. Portuguese Hall, 2818 Avenida de Portugal, San Diego. (619) 564-7036 or www.plgc.org

Jan. 14, 10:30am, Poway Valley Garden Club: David Ross presents ways to rejuvenate soil and reverse damage by toxins. Old Poway Park, Templar Hall. (858) 748-1025 or www.home.san.rn.com/pvgc

Jan. 14, Noon, Ramona Garden Club: Tom Biggart on orchids, especially Australian Dendrobiums, well suited for San Diego. Ramona Woman's Club, 524 Main St., (760) 788-6709, www.ramonagardenclub.com

Jan. 14, 7:20pm, S.D. Epiphyllum Society: General Membership Meeting, Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, www.epiphyllum.com

Jan. 15, 1pm, Bernardo Gardeners Club: Dr. David Kellum discusses bees, butterflies and beneficial insects and what we can do to control exotic invasive insects. RB Swim & Tennis Club, 16955 Bernardo Oaks Drive, Rancho Bernardo. (858) 673-8728 or www.bernardogardeners.org

Jan. 15, 7:30pm, San Diego Fern Society: Guests welcome. Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. www.sdfem.com

Jan. 16, Plant Day & Orchid Odyssey: the San Diego Zoo is home to a world-class botanical garden. Self-guided walking tour maps will be available at the entrance. A botanical bus tour and orchid greenhouse open house is available -- meet at the bus unloading area at 2pm. The bus is free with admission. www.sandiegozoo.org

Jan. 17, Walter Andersen Nursery: 9:00am, Pruning Roses, (San Diego; see Jan. 8) 9:30am, Rose Pruning & Bare Root Roses, (Poway; see Jan. 3) www.walterandersen.com

Jan. 17, 10am, San Diego Garden Club: Jack Shoultz will present "Bare Root Roses and Rose Pruning Techniques." Learn how to prune your existing roses and how to plant and buy bare root roses. Malcolm X Library & Performing Arts Center, 5148 Market St., San Diego. (619) 269-6184 or www.sandiegogardenclub.org

Jan. 20, 7:00pm, California Native Plant Society: Program TBA. Room 104, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. www.cnpssd.org

Jan. 21, 7pm, San Diego County Cymbidium Society: Program TBA. Culture class begins at 6:30pm followed by the general meeting at 7pm. Woman's Club of Carlsbad, 3320 Monroe St., Carlsbad. (760) 732-0055.

Jan. 21, 7:30pm, San Diego Camellia Society: Program TBA. Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park.

Jan. 24, Walter Andersen Nursery: 9:00am, Spring Bulbs, (San Diego; see Jan. 8) 9:30am, Fruit Tree Pruning, (Poway; see Jan. 3) www.walterandersen.com

Jan. 24, 9am – 3pm, Rose Care Seminar: Learn To Grow Beautiful Roses: Cost \$20 which includes coffee, juice and coffee cake, seminar handouts, and a raffle ticket for vendor donated roses, fertilizers and other stuff. For information and pre-registration (760) 739-8342 or gossbulman@cox.net

Jan. 26, 2pm, Lake Hodges Native Plant Club: Program TBA. 17110 Bernardo Center Drive, San Diego. www.lhnpc.org

Jan. 26, 7:30pm, San Diego Rose Society: Jolene Adams will be speaking. Visitors always welcome. Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. www.sdrosesociety.org

Jan. 28, 6pm, Mission Hills Garden Club: Paul Maschka will present "Garden Like Your Grandparents" with less water and fewer chemicals. Have a beautiful garden and grow food. United Church of Christ, 4070 Jackdaw St., San Diego. (619) 93-3624 or www.missionhillsgardenclub.org

Jan. 28, 7pm, California Rare Fruit Growers, San Diego Chapter: Annual Scion Exchange. Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. www.crfgsandiego.org

Jan. 31, Walter Andersen Nursery: 9:00am, Composting to Improve Your Garden, (San Diego; see Jan. 8) 9:30am, Rose Pruning, (Poway; see Jan. 3) www.walterandersen.com

Jan. 31, 11am, San Diego County Cymbidium Society Annual Orchid Auction: Orchids will be previewed at 11am; auction begins at noon. Woman's Club of Carlsbad, 3320 Monroe St., Carlsbad. (760) 732-0055.

Resources & Ongoing Events

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

WATER CONSERVATION GARDEN: Open 9-4 daily, free. Docent-led tours every Saturday at 10:30am & Sunday at 1:30pm. 12122 Cuyamaca College Drive West, El Cajon, (619) 660-0614 or www.thegarden.org

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

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

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

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

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

BALBOA PARK:

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

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

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

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

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 and horticulture, Tuesdays & Sundays, 1pm, from Visitors Center, (619) 235-1122.

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

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

Garden TV and Radio Shows

How Does Your Garden Grow?: Saturday 7:30-8:00am; KPRZ 1210. Hosted by Kniffing's Discount Nurseries (page 13). Call-in questions: (866) 577-2473; Ted Kniffing and guest speakers.

Garden Compass Radio Show. Sat. and Sun., 8-10am. KPQP 1360, hosts Bruce and Sharon Asakawa, John Bagnasco. Call-in questions: (619) 570-1360 or (800) 660-4769.

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); Cox -north ch 19, Cox -south ch 24; Adelphia ch 66; Time Warner ch 22. Tapes avail. from SDHS library.

January is the most likely month for **frost damage** in some of our gardens although December, February and even March may produce frost days as well. **Frost protection strategies include:**

--Moving potted plants to protected areas

--Covering tender plants with old sheets or special "frost cloths".

--Stringing plants with miniature outdoor Christmas lights, which radiate heat.

--Wetting the foliage. Once the temperatures get to freezing, the water will freeze on the surface of the foliage and insulate the leaf.

--If frost does occur, do not prune it off right away. Leave the damaged foliage in place. When new growth begins in spring, trim the plant back to just above where new growth is beginning.

Deciduous Trees (fruit and ornamental): dormant-spray deciduous trees. Dormant sprays such as horticultural oils are applied after a deciduous plant has gone dormant and dropped its leaves. Dormant sprays are used to control over wintering mites and insects such as scale. Lime-sulfur spray is used to control certain fungal diseases such as peach leaf curl (see below). Note: Do not use lime-sulfur on apricot trees. If the tree requires pruning (whether for fruit production or growth control) it should be done now. We carry an extensive stock of Copper, Lime Sulphur & Oils for this purpose.

Peach Trees. Peaches infected with leaf-curl (a fungus that causes puckered, yellow and red leaves) need two applications of lime-sulfur. The first should be applied in November or December and the second in January before the buds swell. If you didn't spray in November or December apply lime-sulfur twice this month (once early in the month and again late in the month). Don't use this on apricot trees and don't spray when leaf or flower buds are opening.

Roses. Prune roses this month before new growth starts. Irrigate the day before you prune. For information about how to prune different types of roses check out the Sunset Pruning Handbook or your local rose society. After pruning, dormant-spray roses with lime-sulfur to control over-wintering insects and disease (Note: If there are any leaves left clinging on the plant, pull them off before spraying).

Lawns: Feed cool-season lawns (fescue/Marathon, bluegrass, ryegrass). These grasses are growing well now and will need regular feeding with a high quality slow release fertilizer. Cool-season lawns should be mowed about a half an inch lower in the winter than in the summer. Except along the immediate mild coast warm-season lawns (bermudagrass, St. Augustine, zoysia) are pretty much sleeping.

Ornamental Grasses – cut these back this month if you haven't already – when you see some new growth popping up amidst the old grass, then it's time to cut back, just cut it about two inches from the soil

If you have empty spots in your landscape or garden you can add **quick winter color** by planting the following bedding plants: Calendula, Cineraria, Dianthus, English Primrose, Cyclamen Pansies, Snapdragons, Stock and Violas. Note that Cineraria, Cyclamen and English Primrose require an area of light shade; the rest require a sunny location.

Well – happy New Year and Happy Gardening. We look forward to meeting even more new friends as 2009 unfolds and hope you will find your way in.