

# Let's Talk Plants!

Newsletter of the San Diego Horticultural Society

March 2009, Number 174

## Orchids For Everyone

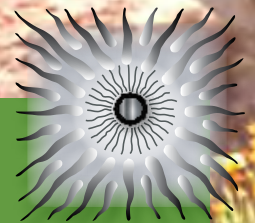
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**A MAN NAMED PEARL  
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PAGE 10**

**GERTRUDE JEKYLL  
PAGE 12**



**SAN DIEGO  
HORTICULTURAL  
SOCIETY**

On the Cover: Urban Wilderness garden



## FEBRUARY MEETING PHOTOS



*Echeveria 'Ghost Buster'*



*Lachenalia mutabilis*



*Tithonia diversifolia*



*Euryops*



*Satsuma Mandarin*



*Watsonia*



*Scabiosa*

Photos by Stacey Dore

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COVER IMAGE: A pond in this Urban Wilderness garden in an Anaheim Hills gated community attracted roadrunners and frogs within two days of completion.  
Photography by FLOWER to the PEOPLE, Inc.

## 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](mailto:membership@sdhortsoc.org) or Sheldon Lisker at (951) 244-3502.

### FUTURE MEETINGS & EVENTS IN 2009

- Feb. 27-March 1** Spring Home/Garden Show (see page 4)
- April 13** Engagement: How to be a Part of Your Native Plant Garden,  
by Mike Evans (members free, non-members \$5)
- May 11** From Garden to Table: Delicious Tips from the Experts  
(members free, non-members \$5)
- June 8** The Garden as Companion: A Very Special Evening with internationally  
celebrated artists and gardeners George Little and David Lewis.  
Location: Scottish Rite Event Center, Mission Valley.  
Tickets: \$15/members, \$20/non-members.
- June 12 – July 5** San Diego County Fair Display Garden
- July 13** Perennials, Trees and Shrubs for the Southwest, by Mary Irish  
(members free, non-members \$5)
- August 10** Special event to honor Steve Brigham as Horticulturist of the Year

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

**Next Meeting:** March 9, 2009, 6:00 – 9:00 PM

**Topic: PAMELA BERSTLER ON: "THE DEEP PSYCHOLOGY OF UNSUSTAINABLE DESIGN – HOW SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES CHANGE OUR IDEAL LANDSCAPE"**

**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**

Los Angeles landscape designer Pamela Berstler presents an eye-opening talk about sustainable gardening. Manufacturers of unsustainable landscape products, such as fossil-fuel-based chemical additives, gas-powered equipment, and water-guzzling plant material, advertise their products using images of garden "perfection." Berstler will discuss the deep psychology behind the current generally accepted ideal of a beautiful or luxurious garden, explore how we perpetuate this ideal to the detriment of the environment, and contemplate the future of gardens as natural and sustainable environments. Challenge your own preconceptions of man-made landscape beauty and whether or not the word "perfection" ever could be aptly applied to resource-depleting and climate-inappropriate gardens.

In 1997 Berstler founded FLOWER to the PEOPLE, Inc., an exterior design and outdoor lifestyle firm dedicated to promoting the principles of sustainable design. Her work focuses on creating natural outdoor living environments that embrace water and energy efficiencies, native habitat, organic maintenance protocols, recycled and local materials, and fair labor practices. She is a Founding Member of G3 LA (the Green Gardens Group, LA), a Los Angeles-based organization devoted to educating homeowners, design professionals, and the surrounding community in the latest eco-restorative landscape techniques and promoting the principles of low-impact development.

To learn more visit [www.FlowertothePeople.com](http://www.FlowertothePeople.com) and [www.G3LA.com](http://www.G3LA.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

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**Paula Verstraete** – Volunteer Coordinator  
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**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@sdhsoc.org

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

### SPRING HOME/GARDEN SHOW

The Spring Home/Garden Show is one of the most fun events all year, so go to the Fairgrounds on Feb. 27-March 1. There will be 22 indoor display gardens to rival those at the famous Philadelphia Flower Show, plus outdoor plant vendors, knowledgeable experts for various garden groups, fascinating lectures by local gardening gurus, and lots more. SDHS members get a discount when ordering tickets at [www.SpringHomeGardenShow.com](http://www.SpringHomeGardenShow.com) and using the code SDHS.

### MEMBERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE

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 gave these out at the January and February meetings and printed them in the February newsletter. Please take a few moments to fill yours out and mail it in by March 10. Thanks in advance!

### GET CREATIVE WITH US!

The SDHS needs an enthusiastic and energetic volunteer to lead our marketing efforts; this will be a tremendously fun and creative experience! Have you got some inspired ideas about how we can market our tree book, or ways to promote SDHS and increase attendance at events? Here's a perfect opportunity to flex your imagination muscle and put your energy to good use. Please call Susi at (760) 295-7089 and let's talk!

### YOU CAN SAVE A TREE!

Did you know? Our newsletter is available in digital format, and can be sent to you by e-mail. Getting the newsletter as an e-mail attachment saves over \$2.50 per copy, plus helps the environment by reducing our carbon footprint. Other benefits to getting your newsletter via e-mail include:

- (1) Immediate receipt of the newsletter (up to a week ahead of mailed copies).
- (2) Ability to store back issues on your computer; print out just the pages you want or search for topics of interest.
- (3) All images are in full color.
- (4) Live links to websites, just point and click!
- (5) You can enlarge the print as much as you like for easy reading.

To reap all these benefits just send Susi an e-mail at [info@sdhsoc.org](mailto:info@sdhsoc.org) and say YES. You'll save a tree (well, okay, part of a tree each month, but it does add up) and save SDHS money that could be used for other things. ☘

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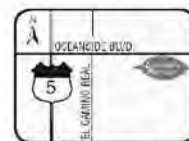
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**FALL/WINTER HOURS**  
 Monday-Saturday.. 7:30am-4:30pm  
 Sunday.....9:00am-4:30pm

## To Learn More...

### SUSTAINABLE GARDENING

By Ava Torre-Bueno

Sustainable gardening is all about living and gardening in harmony with our unique part of the Earth. Our speaker this month, Pamela Berstler, believes that creating a sustainable garden is perhaps the most powerful individual political statement of the 21st Century. See her web site at:

[www.flowertothepeople.com/pages/About/F2PAAboutStudio.html](http://www.flowertothepeople.com/pages/About/F2PAAboutStudio.html)

Sustainable gardening, as nature, is good for our mental health. This connection between our most basic wellness and the natural world around us is part of the burgeoning field in psychology called Eco-psychology which you can read about at this site:

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

And here's a little site about moving to organic, simple gardening:

[www.gardensimply.com/index.php](http://www.gardensimply.com/index.php)

Member Ava Torre-Bueno is a psychotherapist and organizer of Gardeners 4 Peace, creating a peaceful, organic, permaculture garden ([www.sandiegofriendscenter.org/volunteers.htm](http://www.sandiegofriendscenter.org/volunteers.htm))



## A Man Named Pearl

By Gayle Olson

After being on the Netflix waiting list for many months, *A Man Named Pearl* is finally available. Be prepared for a movie that exceeds the blurb describing it. This is not your Disneyland chicken wire topiary: Pearl Fryar's creations are so very much more.

As a former art major and commercial artist, Pearl's creations are sculpture at its finest. He uses form and function, negative and positive spaces, line and shape to create monumental sculpture. Although he had only one fifteen minute lesson in topiary, he sees shapes and forms in his mind's eye and admits that he never sketches his designs first. I had many an art professor who insisted that you sketch first; my work barely resembled any original sketches. I applaud Pearl for using his imagination as well as passion and going to it – he is a visionary visual force.

Pearl explains that he can see what a creation will look like five years in the future. When he changes one creation from round to a square, it takes years to modify his design. Pearl demonstrates the patience and perseverance to see it through. He has taken plants that topiary creators would not think of using and established fabulous designs with them, creating a sculpture museum on his property: the result is supreme eye candy.

The movie describes how Pearl, a laborer by day and the son of Southern sharecroppers, set out to prove bigots wrong and that blacks can keep up their property. What serendipitous timing for me to have watched this movie the week of the inauguration of our first African-American President.

Pearl does all of the topiary work himself, and I had goose bumps watching him climb to great heights to trim each piece perfectly. His wife explains that she insists on being home when he works and she only gets nervous when she hears silence. The neighbors even emulate him by adding topiary to their front yards.

The movie is a collection of interviews with Pearl interspersed with interviews of people who know him, such as his pastor and the Chamber of Commerce director. Pearl has rejuvenated the small rural southern town of Bishopville, SC and put an impoverished town on the map. As word has gotten out, busloads of visitors come to see his property, and his creations are beginning to line the main street.

When *A Man Named Pearl* arrives in your mail box and you are getting ready to view it, have a few tissues handy it's touching as well as inspirational.

[NOTE: Pearl will be at Quail Botanical Gardens on August 23 as part of "Garden Expressions," a new event at QBG. Check in the July newsletter for details.]

Member Gayle Olson just retired from public education after 37 years as a teacher of art and English, counselor, psychologist and administrator. Prior to that she was a commercial artist. Gayle is now an adjunct professor at USD working with fieldwork intern counselors, and also helps her husband, Oscar, with his *Platycerium* (staghorn fern) collection. 🌿

## From The Board

By Susi Torre-Bueno

### VOLUNTEER CO-CHAIRS

Last month we welcomed Paula Verstraete as our new Volunteer Coordinator, and here's her photo so you will recognize her at meetings and other



events. Her co-chair for the Volunteer Committee is Shari Matteson, owner of Buena Creek Gardens (see a picture of Shari at [www.BuenaCreekGardens.com](http://www.BuenaCreekGardens.com)). They'll be contacting members about helping with upcoming events, and

I hope you'll say YES! when asked to lend a hand.

### WE EACH OF US TEACH

Gardeners are famous for sharing: cuttings from a favorite scented geranium, extra daylilies, stacks of black plastic pots. We share advice and expertise, too, and we can do so much to teach our friends and neighbors about reducing their garden water use. Next time they walk by and tell you how nice your yard looks, take a moment to tell them what you're doing to cut down on water use this year. Invite your neighbors to come to our meetings and learn about good gardening practices for our low-water climate. And give them an easy-to-grow succulent and show them how to care for it. As we gradually reduce our water usage we can still have gorgeous gardens, and by setting an example in our own yards we will spread the word that low-water gardens can be vibrant, colorful and exciting.

But it's not all about gorgeous gardens: in a Mediterranean climate like ours we should be thinking beyond the merely decorative. Member Cielo Foth, in a recent e-mail to me, mentioned that "Some of us have real sustainable gardens that feed us! We grow fruit trees and vegetables, besides the typical drought tolerant plants... Water is a precious commodity, so I make sure it goes to the plants and trees that will put food on the table." She raises an excellent point, that too often we think only about the "pretties" in the garden and forget that the "practical" food plants are so important and a very wise use of our resources. 🌿





Have a **green** idea  
to share?

**2 DAYS**

**March 12th & 13th**

**1 THEME**

## Sustainable Urban Landscape Conference 2009

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## Successful Drought Tolerant Gardening

Edited by Cindy Sparks

### Evaluate Your Irrigation System

By Dave Shaw, UCCE Farm Advisor (as told to Cindy Sparks)

Irrigate Efficiently, it's one of the Seven Principles of Xeriscaping. Independent of garden design or plant choice, you can cut your outdoor water use in three steps:

- commit to sprinkler knowledge
- tune up your cultural practices
- improve your irrigation scheduling

#### Make a Commitment

Water is precious, so how do you want to spend it? Paraphrasing Warren Buffet: "Know what you're using and where you're using it, and why." You need to understand *first hand* where your water is going. Don't trust it to somebody else, whether it's stocks or water. If you currently use 200 hundred cubic feet (HCF) of water monthly, or 10 HCF, you need to understand where your water is going. (One HCF is 748 gallons.) Make a commitment. Don't leave it to the gardener; he doesn't pay your water bill.

#### Tune Up Your Cultural Practices

Analyze your landscape: identify which plants need watering at what frequency. You should identify a series of hydrazones, where the plants in each zone need similar watering frequency. Draw a map of your hydrazones and irrigation components within each zone. You'll use this again later in the design steps. Do your sprinkler zones match your hydrazones? Mismatch is opportunity for improvement.

Plants need consistent water delivery without ponding or runoff. Modern rotator heads and drip components deliver a consistent amount of water. Uniformity is important for groundcovers or grasses. On slopes, water less at the bottom because water flows downhill. Good runoff management (the June column will be about Rain Harvesting) can give you free water from rain. Mulch heavily (another principle of xeriscape). Then, check that you've

watered enough to wet through the mulch to the soil below and down 6". If you don't have a shovel or soil tube, buy one and use it.

#### Improve Scheduling

Sizeable savings come from monthly adjustment to your irrigation program, and disabling irrigation following rain.

**First, know how much water you really need:** Consult the online water calculator [www.berwaterwise.com](http://www.berwaterwise.com). You'll need to know your sprinklers' application rates. Better still, measure your actual delivery rates across each zone with tin cans. You can read your water meter to see how many cubic feet (and how many minutes) it takes to apply one inch of irrigation water by zone. The calculator gives your monthly full-target water times. Now cut those by 30%. Recent research indicates most plants won't show the difference.

**Tune your irrigation settings:** Adjust your irrigation times each month.

**Be Miserly:** Wet the soil to 6"-12", then wait until it's dry to that depth. That much moisture will last a week in average soil, longer in clay. Check each zone manually. Don't let the controller irrigate until the zone has dried to 6" deep. This will coax deeper rooting.

**Summary:** Commit to become water savvy, improve cultural practices by zone, and fine-tune your scheduling. Still not satisfied with your water use? If you start fresh in one sprinkler zone, it's the perfect opportunity to install high-efficiency sprinklers matched to low water plantings which, once established, only need water once or twice a month. Compare *that* water goal to your current usage.

Next in the series: Make a Plan.

Series editor Cindy Sparks is a member of the SDHS board and also an enthusiastic Master Gardener. 🌱



Photo: Cindy Sparks

# Plants That Produce

## POT CULTURE

By Richard Frost

One side effect of the "Victory Garden" trend is a renewed interest in growing fruits, herbs, and veggies in containers of various sorts. Part of the motivation is due to space limitations, but another interest lies in getting leafy vegetables up out of the reach of Peter Cottontail and his friends.

Remember that nearly all plants require drainage when planted in a container. This needs to be achieved by a moderate distribution of holes in the bottom of the pot and also by choosing a soil that percolates. Resist the temptation to place rocks at the bottom of a pot. This can adversely affect the soil pH, become a home for diseases, etc. If you are concerned about soil leaking out of the holes, use instead an appropriate size hardware cloth such as ¼ inch mesh. Also, be careful about placing flat-bottomed pots on a flat surface. Raise the pot so it will drain completely by placing it on a few masonry chips, pebbles, or the "pot feet" sold at local nurseries. This will also reduce staining on outdoor surfaces.

Of the brand-name soils, I recommend Kellogg Garden Patio Mix™ for a plant that will be potted less than five years either indoors or outdoors. For annual veggies and ornamentals you might also consider a mix of worm castings, horticultural sand, and perlite. For long-term container plantings you need a soil with drainage that will not break down into dense material over time. This is especially crucial with fruit trees and larger ornamentals. For this situation I like a mix of worm castings, ground peat, horticultural sand, and scoria (¼" horticultural pumice). The initial organic matter will break down and leach out over time. Keep a layer of ½" to 1" diameter mulch on top to provide continuous replacement.

Avoid watering the plants with a tray under the pot. You do not want that water full of leached salts and invading microbes being drawn back up into the pot over the next several days. In fact, avoid self-watering pots, with the exception of hydrophilic plants. Instead, water the plant(s) where the excess can drain off elsewhere – then put a tray underneath to catch the few remaining drops if you must.

Now... what to plant in the containers? Certainly the invasive herbs such as mints, oreganos, and thymes all belong in their own pots. For lettuces and salad greens, consider growing three or four individuals or clumps in a trough-shaped container. A scrap piece of 8" diameter drainage pipe cut in half the long way works great for this. I like growing tuberous vegetables in an 8" or 10" pot and then just dumping out the contents when I think they are ready. If not, back in the pot the tubers and soil go!

Many types of fruiting plants also do well in containers. Keep in mind that tomatoes will produce a crop to the extent that they have roots. Hence, a tub is recommended for most varieties. Blueberries and huckleberries do not like our native soil or water, so a container is actually the best place to grow them. Guavas and pomegranates are extremely tolerant of pots. Finally – if you have room for a 40 to 60-gallon tub in full sun, consider one of these container-tolerant fruit trees: Panache Tiger fig, dwarfed Anna apple, dwarfed Katy apricot, dwarfed Artic Star nectarine, dwarfed Eva's Pride peach, dwarfed Burgundy plum, dwarfed Oroblanco grapefruit, dwarfed Cara Cara navel orange, or the *standard* Gold Nugget mandarin.

SDHS member Richard Frost is also a member of the California Rare Fruit Growers. For copies of past articles and more information, please see [www.plantsthatproduce.com](http://www.plantsthatproduce.com). 🌱

# Garden Gourmet

## IS IT SOUP YET?

By Alice Lowe

Soup is a good cold-weather supper (but it's great mid-summer, too). Soup is a good quick meal (but sometimes you want to simmer it all day). Soup is a good way to use any garden produce that you have a lot of (or maybe not enough for anything else). You can grow it in a pot or a plot, because just about anything you grow can be made into a wholesome soup.

The nice thing about soup from the cook's point of view is that you can do whatever you want. Soups can be chunky or pureed, creamy or stock-based, vegetarian or chock full of meat or seafood. They can highlight a single vegetable, like butternut squash or early asparagus; or they can be a hodge-podge of everything in the house and garden. They can be bland and comforting or hot and spicy; they can be adapted to any ethnicity with the appropriate seasoning.

Some of you are lucky enough to have a variety of seasonal vegetables growing at all times. The rest of us fall back on farmers' markets or other produce providers. When I unload my CSA (Community-Supported Agriculture) deliveries, I take quick stock (no pun intended) of what's there and what I might do with it. During winter and early spring months, there are always things that immediately beg to be made into a hearty soup – those vitamin-rich greens, robust winter squash, leeks, carrots and cabbage.

Everyone who cooks is likely to have their favorite soup recipes; some of them are handed down in our families. They're plentiful in cookbooks, magazines, and the food sections of the newspapers. Google "soup" on [epicurious.com](http://epicurious.com), and you come up with 1,573 entries, from acorn squash to zucchini vichyssoise. So I'm not going to tell you how to make soup but merely want to put it on the front burner (!) for consideration.

When making soup, don't be afraid to improvise, to substitute – anything goes. Most soups start off with sautéing chopped onions and/or garlic in butter or olive oil, and call for the addition of stock, but the fact is you could get by with just water and seasonings. My favorite broccoli soup was an adaptation of a much-used mushroom soup recipe. To slim a recipe down, I use plain nonfat yogurt when cream is called for. If it's rich comfort food I'm after, I may add some grated cheese near the end of cooking or right before serving. I almost always add a splash of wine or sherry near the end and I squeeze in some lemon or lime, or add a little vinegar to enhance the flavors (as well as to lessen the need for added salt). For table appeal, sprinkle before serving with fresh herbs (parsley, mint, cilantro, scallions), nuts or seeds, croutons or chips, and finish with coarse ground pepper. Whatever you do, it's bound to be souper!

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

# Removing Concrete From The Garden... Or Not???

By Pamela Homfelt

Back in the day when everyone wanted to improve their property values and cost was not much of an issue, a lot of concrete, needless "seat" walls, pilasters and other costly masonry, usually veneered with faux stone, adorned homes from Vista to Eastlake. Aaaaaah, the good old days.



Concrete was the outdoor floor of choice in spite of the high cost of material and labor, but today we have many greener choices, the major one being interlocking pavers. Why the "green" status? Pavers are not a solid mass of material: the small spaces between each stone allow water to seep back into the ground to recharge natural ground water reservoirs.

Laid on a sand and gravel base, the pavers lock into each other without mortar. They are permeable and easily removed or reconfigured in the future. Another benefit: with a little research, willingness and muscle, laying pavers can be accomplished by the do it yourselfer. Pavers come in many colors and shapes, even a random flagstone shape, so any theme or architectural style can be created.

But what if a sea of unforgiving concrete renders the landscape harsh, hot and ecologically outmoded? You don't want to remove it and haul it to the landfill, since you paid a tidy sum to have that hardscape poured in the first place, so why not use it in a different way?

Depending on the original configuration, concrete can be reduced or reshaped by saw cutting at the expansion or score joints. The broken pieces, which perfectly match the now smaller, remaining patio, can be used to create stepping stones, dry stacked walls, steps, or secondary patios. You can put dry mortar between the stones, but gravel, decomposed granite, or a "steppable" plant groundcover is a much more charming option, especially if not subject to constant, heavy traffic.

Concrete is usually 4" thick, so the work is not easy, but the transformation will be well worth it. Keep the pieces as large as possible and lay them out before burying them level with grade. As always, but particularly with hardscape, this project should be drawn to scale, preferably by a designer. The actual work is best performed by a licensed mason, especially the saw cutting.

Slices of concrete can also be removed and replaced with ribbons of pavers (remember: permeable and movable), brick or flagstone in a carefully designed pattern. This can be an especially effective way to enhance the very obvious and intrusive driveways that dominate the front of most homes. Note of caution: if the concrete was reinforced with rebar it cannot be reused.

If this sounds too expensive or exhausting, how about a vine-covered pergola or fabric sails to create shade, maybe some layered outdoor carpets to soften? Although the permeability issue will remain, shading the home and creating a cool and sometimes more private space will justify the large concrete expanse to some degree. Do your research, however, on the new regulations prohibiting certain configurations and locations of wood structures in your community.

Member Pamela Homfelt has been designing low water use residential landscapes and gardens since the early nineties. Pamela's new partner and husband, a licensed landscape architect, forms a unique partnership. Their work as designer or project manager for three low water use demonstration gardens are the highlights of Pamela's and Randy's new endeavor, pH Exterior Design, [phdesign@cox.net](mailto:phdesign@cox.net). ☘

# Orchids Are For Everyone!

By Christopher Croom

With over 25,000 species, the Orchid Family Orchidaceae, is the largest family of flowering plants. Orchids are found on every continent except Antarctica, and the state flower of Minnesota is an orchid. California has over twenty native species of orchids, so they are far from the fussy, sweltering jungle, hothouse plants that many people believe them to be. Orchids have flower structures with more kinds of parts than any other flower, and their seeds are the size of grains of dust, so they can even travel on air currents across oceans. Moreover, their growth habits range from plants that look like little green shotgun shots on strings, to several strange succulents, to miniature bamboo, and some which even look like clusters of small palm trees that can weigh two tons or more.

Therefore, I never understand why anyone who likes any other kinds of plants doesn't absolutely love orchids. For instance, if you like ferns, some orchids like *Lepanthes* kind of resemble them (but with even better leaves) and grow just as wet. If you like bonsai, there are Japanese orchids that require no pruning, don't need to be watered twice a day, and are measured according to similar aesthetic standards (*Fuukiran*). If you like succulents, there are many succulent desert orchids that can be grown just like cactii or *Stapelia*. If you like fragrances, 85% of orchid species have smelly flowers, with scents ranging from Big Red chewing gum, to gardenias, to chocolate, and even to "new car interior." Their flowers range in size from about 1/32" to 9" across and come in wild shapes resembling stars, daisies, body parts, tiny people, umbrellas, wads of paper, swans, wasps, flies, tarantulas, women, tulips, buckets, and even Benedictine monks.



*Cattleya luddemanniana*  
Photo by Christopher Croom

All you need to embark on a flower odyssey of a lifetime is a little knowledge, a little willingness to learn, your first orchid, and the best growing climates in the world right here in California. Start with buying a *Cymbidium* or *Epidendrum*, and try growing these outdoors in sunny, frost-free areas. Water them a couple of times a week, and next year repot them in the same size of fir bark mix. Try a *Cattleya* hybrid – you know, the kind of orchid that you wore to prom. Grow this outdoors in warmer places or in very bright indoor conditions, and make sure it almost completely dries between waterings. Try a moth orchid, *Phalaenopsis*, and keep it in a bright room; let it bloom consecutively for up to a year and a half, and make sure it dries out a fair amount between waterings. If you start with easy kinds like these you'll quickly submit to orchid fever. ☘

One of the best places to get more information is at an orchid show. On March 13-15, at the Scottish Rite Center in Mission Valley, the San Diego County Orchid Society will host its 63rd annual Orchid Show and Sale. To learn more about this event which will include hundreds of thousands of orchids on display, go to [www.sdorchids.com](http://www.sdorchids.com).



## 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:

Emma Almendarez	Barbara Lounsbury
Manny Azurin	Ruth Ann Parker
Zephyr and Judy Carlyle	Kathleen Rubenson
Eileen Druber	John & Helen Seufert
Judy Fitzpatrick	

### NEW ADVERTISERS:

**Encinitas Garden Festival (INSERT)**  
**Flower & Garden Show (PAGE 21)**  
**Plant Sale – Water**  
**Conservation Garden (INSERT)**  
**California Friendly Landscape**  
**Contest (PAGE 2)**

### 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 2009:

Linda Bresler (1)  
 Susan Morse (1)  
 Darlene Villanueva (1)

## Discounts For Members

Pick up a Grangetto's Preferred Customer Savings Card at any Grangetto's location (see ad page 23). Get a **Hydro-Scape** Preferred Customer Cash Card at any of their 18 locations.

Get a 15% discount at Briggs Tree Co. & Wholesale Nursery in Vista (tell them to look up the "San Diego Hort Society Member" account).

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

Take 10% off membership fees at **Quail Botanical Gardens**.

SEE THESE ADS FOR MORE DISCOUNTS: **Barrels & Branches**, **Botanical Partners**, **Buena Creek Gardens**, **Cedros Gardens**, **Courtyard Pottery**, **IGS**, **Imagine Energy Independence**, **Kniffing's Discount Nurseries**, **Pacific Horticulture**, **The Plant Man** and **Solana Succulents**.

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	Westward Expos

## LIFE MEMBERS

\*Horticulturist of the Year

Chuck Ades* (2008)	Lois Kline
Walter Andersen* (2002)	Vince Lazaneo* (2004)
Norm Applebaum &	Jane Minshall* (2006)
Barbara Roper	Bill Nelson* (2007)
Gladys T. Baird	Tina & Andy Rathbone
Debra Lee Baldwin	Peggy Ruzich
Wayne Carlson	Susi & Jose Torre-Bueno
Laurie Connable	Don Walker* (2005) &
Julian & Leslie Duval	Dorothy Walker
Edgar Engert* (2000)	Lucy Warren
Jim Farley	Evelyn Weidner* (2001)
Sue & Charles Fouquette	Pat Welsh* (2003)
Penelope Hlavac	Betty Wheeler
Debbie & Richard Johnson	

## CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS

Doris Engberg  
 Philip Tackill & Janet Wanerka  
 René van Rems  
 Village Garden Club of La Jolla

## What's Up at Quail Botanical Gardens?

### BAY LAUREL: THE MYTH BEHIND THE MAGIC

Every herb has a tale to tell, a mysterious legend of other places, other people, and other times. One of these is the bay laurel tree (*Laurus nobilis*), celebrated in 2009 as the Herb of the Year not only for its versatility but also for the myth behind its magic.

Bay leaves are a natural favorite for flavoring soups, stews, fish and stocks. Laurel makes an excellent tea to improve digestion and stimulate the appetite, and an infusion in the bath relieves aching limbs. Leaves in your closet will even rid you of moths!

But laurel's noble reputation emanates from an ancient Greek myth which may seem quaintly charming to the modern reader. Returning from a hunt, Apollo, the god of poetry and healing, made the mistake of insulting Cupid, who shot him with a golden arrow, causing him to fall in love with the first person he saw. Cupid then shot the beautiful nymph Daphne with a lead-tipped arrow, making her impervious to love. Thus the stage was set for Daphne to be the first person Apollo encountered, and while he was smitten by her, she was blind to his affections.

In the hot pursuit that followed, Daphne screamed for help from her father, the river god Peneus, who immediately rose to the occasion and transformed her into a laurel tree.

Apollo lamented as he held her in his arms, "Oh, lovely tree, you will always be mine. I give you the gift of eternal life. Your leaves will always be green and victors will wear them as wreathes upon their brows." Thereafter his words became the subject of poems, and the winners of competitions in sports, music, and poetry were crowned with laurel leaves as a mark of excellence, wisdom and glory. ☞

You can find out much more about herbs and other wonderful spring things at our upcoming Herb Festival, Spring Plant Sale, Tomatomania® and EcoDesign Fair

**March 21 & 22, 9 am – 5 pm**

Quail Botanical Gardens

Please see ad on back cover for details. Notice the coupon for one free tomato!

### New E-Mail? New Street Address?

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

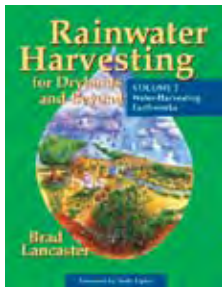
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## Book Review

### **RAINWATER HARVESTING FOR DRYLANDS AND BEYOND VOL. 2: WATER-HARVESTING EARTHWORKS**

Review by Ava Torre-Bueno

Here is a book full of inspiring stories and painstaking details about how to catch and use the thousands of gallons of water we have each been utterly wasting every time it rains. It is both a call to action and a detailed instruction manual, and in each category it is clearly written and compelling.



Being a fairly right-brained person, the stories from around the world about individuals and communities organizing to harvest rainwater and vastly improve their lives appealed to me the most. Descriptions of standing in the rain and watching the flow of water on your property made complete sense to me. I truly believe that you can read this book and intuit how to alter your landscape to harvest water and grow amazing plants without understanding the engineering behind it all.

On the other hand, if you are a left-brained, engineer-type, you too will love this book. It is extraordinarily well organized and includes everything you need to know to create small and large water-harvesting systems. There are pages of equations; there are lists and very clear descriptions of every tool you will need for every project. While none of this made any sense to me, I can see that it would be enormously helpful to many others.

Whether you live in the desert Southwest US or a rainforest, fresh water is becoming more scarce every day. This excellent book will help you harvest and husband this precious resource. For more info and book orders visit [www.harvestingrainwater.com](http://www.harvestingrainwater.com) ☞

## Briggs Virtual Tour

Our sponsor Briggs Tree Company, Inc. (see Discounts for Members, page 9), has launched an online virtual tour at [www.BriggsTree.com](http://www.BriggsTree.com), showcasing the Vista nursery's over 200 acres. The tour includes comprehensive shots of plants, making it conveniently possible to virtually view the nursery before visiting. The tour is a feature of the user-friendly Web site that includes updated pricing and availability references, lots of great resources on planting and answers to many frequently asked horticultural-related questions. Customers can also check both pricing and current availability of Briggs' entire inventory on the web before even entering the yard. Many resource guides on specific plants and planting in general are provided, as are answers to frequently asked questions, a frequently updated alphabetical plant pricing list and current availability list.

Founded in the early 1970s, Briggs is still family owned and operated supplying 4-inch annual and perennial color, groundcovers, shrubs, vines, succulents, water-efficient plants, and trees. Selling to not only the landscape contractor and architect, but also to the public, Briggs prides themselves in employing knowledgeable and experienced staff who will answer any questions regarding plant material. Briggs is located at 1111 Poinsettia Avenue, Vista, 92081 (see ad on page 11). ☞

## Community Outreach

### **COLLEGES OFFER MORE THAN DEGREES...VISIT THE GARDENS!**

By Linda Johnson

**The South Bay Botanic Garden (SBBG)**, at Southwestern College in Chula Vista, has recently been recognized as a registered botanic garden with the American Public Gardens Association. It has an amazing collection of plant materials from around the world and the students have constructed much of the garden. The four-acre horticultural facility offers a variety of *Walks and Talks* sessions on the campus; each Saturday session begins in room 1802 of the Landscape and Nursery Technology Department. Parking is available in lot E and the participation fee is \$5. All funds go to the continued development of the SBBG.

The March session features Birds of South Bay with Eddie Munguia on 3/28/09 at 3:00 pm. This is a walking tour of the garden that will focus on avian wildlife. Having worked at SBBG for 3 years, Eddie is well versed with bird homes and habits. Bring binoculars for an interesting look at this South Bay jewel. SBBG is also seeking volunteers and docents to promote and maintain the garden. Address: 900 Otay Lakes Road, Chula Vista. Contact Bill Homyak or Meredith Sinclair at (619) 421-6700 x5371 for more information and to learn of future sessions, or visit <http://63.64.44.128/index.pacq>.

**The Water Conservation Garden**, at Cuyamaca College in El Cajon, is holding an event that empowers and inspires people to save water. Attend the **Water Smart Plant Fair** (March 14, 9am-3pm) to gain insights and tools for living a greener lifestyle, especially with respect to home landscapes and saving water.



Insights gleaned at this event can reduce outdoor water use by up to 50%. During this event the Garden and many vendors will sell a diverse selection of beautiful, drought tolerant species. Children will enjoy activity booths with garden related activities, and water agencies will sign people up for the California-Friendly Landscape Contest and discuss financial incentive programs that support water smart landscape practices.

A lecture program at the Plant Fair will be held in the Garden's classroom and includes: "Plant Adaptations"—Jill Morganelli, Landscape Designer and Instructor; "How to Start a Water Saving Garden"—Connie Beck, Landscape Designer; "Plants for Water Smart Landscapes"—Nan Sterman, author of *California Gardener's Guide, Vol. 2*; and "What's Happening to Our Water Supplies"—San Diego County Water Authority. The Fair and parking are free to the public. Address: 12122 Cuyamaca College Drive West, El Cajon. To view the complete program and for more information visit [www.thegarden.org](http://www.thegarden.org) or contact Elizabeth Ramos at (619) 985-8337 or [elizabeth@thegarden.org](mailto:elizabeth@thegarden.org).

**Celebrate Arbor Day** during Arbor Week in California, March 7-14. This national celebration of trees began in 1872 to encourage civic groups and individuals to beautify their environment by planting trees. What are YOUR plans to celebrate Arbor Day? The S.D. Horticultural Society has a great resource to help you choose the right tree to plant with our book **Ornamental Trees for Mediterranean Climates**, featuring optimum trees for the San Diego area. This must-have beautiful book, designed for anyone who loves trees, showcases 260 of the best trees for our climate, and is available to members for a discounted price of \$34.95. Buy your copy at the monthly meetings or visit [www.sdhortsoc.org/treebook.htm](http://www.sdhortsoc.org/treebook.htm). ☞



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Email us your wish list for a **Concert in the Garden**, tell us what local performer you would like to see perform in the garden or if you would like to see Alex & Miguel again! Concerts in the Garden are in constant request. We have gotten through the holidays and we're planning on March for our next Concert in the Garden! Please stay posted to our web site for further updates and schedule.

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## The Real Dirt On...

### GERTRUDE JEKYLL

By Linda Bresler



Gertrude Jekyll was born on November 29, 1843, into an affluent, artistic family in London, England. She was the fifth of seven children. Gertrude's father, Captain Edward J.H. Jekyll, was an officer in the Grenadier Guards. Her younger brother, the Reverend Walter Jekyll, was a friend of Robert Louis Stevenson (who borrowed the family name for his famous story, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*).

Gertrude's parents allowed her to attend Henry Coles' School of Art in Kensington, London as a young girl, which was unusual for her time. She made many friends there in the world of arts and crafts. Early in her career she was a painter and had an interest in crafts.

As her eyesight worsened, Gertrude became more interested in gardening and garden design. She was one of the first of her profession to take into account the color and texture of plants in the garden. Her gardens were known for their meticulous attention to color detail. She emphasized gradations of tints and relationships between colors, and felt that flowers that bloom at the same time should be arranged together, rather than dotted around the garden. Throughout her lifetime she designed over 400 gardens in Great Britain, Europe, and even a few in North America.

Gertrude was also a fine photographer and a prolific writer. She wrote over fifteen books, ranging from *Wood and Garden*, and her most famous book, *Colour in the Flower Garden*, to memoirs of her youth. She also wrote over 1,000 articles for *Country Life*, *The Garden*, and other magazines.

When Gertrude was 46 years old, she met the aspiring young architect, Edwin Lutyens, who was then just 20 years old. They developed a profound respect for each other's work, and a deep friendship that would last for the rest of Gertrude's life. Together, they collaborated on a number of large English country houses and gardens together; a Lutyens home and a Jekyll garden were valued symbols of rural English life.

Gertrude lived for over forty years in a house designed by Lutyens. She ran a garden center there and bred many new plants. Known as the quintessential English cottage gardener, she was ahead of her time in her enthusiasm for gray-leaved Mediterranean plants, and in her emphasis on plant form. Gertrude never married, and died at the age of 89 on December 8, 1932.

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

## Narcissus Bulbs Are a Natural Green Solution to Deter Gophers

By Bonnie Manion

If gophers are a problem in your garden I recommend an organic solution you might not have tried: the beautiful narcissus bulb. Any type of narcissus bulb, including jonquils, paperwhites, and daffodils, will be a deterrent to gophers, rabbits, and deer in your garden and

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property. Generally these cold-hardy bulbs are planted in the fall and bloom in early winter.

Narcissus bulbs are a wonderful green solution to deterring gophers for many reasons. Once you plant your bulbs they bloom year after year. They are fragrant and beautiful to look at. Narcissus bulbs planted in the ground send out a year-round message to gophers by actually "advertising" their toxicity with odor or fragrance.

This natural toxicity has the ability to irritate (burn) the soft tissues of their mouths and cheeks. Gophers find it uncomfortable and stay clear of the bulbs. To some extent, by limiting their food source you are limiting their population, and they have to go elsewhere.

It is important to plant bulbs that are hardy for your climate. Once your bulbs are planted in the ground, you will notice gophers staying clear of the area near the bulbs. Try planting bulbs first in a few of problem areas, such as along side your chicken coop (as seen here) or the perimeter of your vegetable garden. With time and budget permitting, you can expand your bulb planting as you see your success.



Member Bonnie Manion, lives in coastal North San Diego County and writes the blog, [www.VintageGardenGal.com](http://www.VintageGardenGal.com), cultivating the best of gardening, garden antiques, growing your own food, and the vineyard lifestyle. Recently she was featured in *Country Gardens, Early Spring 2009*, with her vintage container designs using spring bulbs. 🌱

**San Diego County Orchid Society  
PRESENTS  
The 63<sup>rd</sup> Annual Show & Sale**

**Around the World with Orchids**

<b>Friday, March 13, 2009</b>	<b>4 pm to 8 pm</b>
<b>Saturday, March 14</b>	<b>9 am to 6 pm</b>
<b>Sunday, March 15</b>	<b>10 am to 4 pm</b>

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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.

Here's one more item that didn't fit in the February newsletter:

**Barbara Patterson** wrote: My garden is a wonderful place and I do love it but, if starting over, I'd definitely make two significant changes: 1. I'd have a much, much larger, south facing yard 2. I'd have more fruit trees - peaches, plums, apple, maybe even a 'fruit cocktail' tree - and a far, far larger veggie garden with a berry patch. Everything is so very much better fresh from the garden!

### The question for this month was:

How do you re-use or re-purpose common household items for garden use? (For example, writing plant names on plastic knives and using those as garden markers.)

### Walter Andersen explains why you shouldn't toss yellow containers:

"To reduce insects in your yard go to the garage and get a *used* bright yellow plastic one-gallon jug of Prestone Ani-freeze and a *used* can/bottle of the motor oil additive STP (I say *used* STP because you can't get it all to drain out). Wipe out the STP that did not drain out (it is very thick and sticky) and smear the STP on the *outside* of the Prestone jug. With the cap off of the Prestone jug place the jug *upside down* on a stake (through the hole) in your vegetable garden. When insects fly by they can't resist and land on the yellow jug and can't get off! It is the same as using sticky yellow boards, which you can also make or buy. After I told a customer this, he said 'thanks,' end of conversation. About three weeks later this same customer comes in with a jug so completely covered with dead bugs, you could hardly see any yellow at all! He was thrilled and I was, too.)"

**Marsha Bode** tells us, "Being a single woman of a certain age, I have many friends who are in the same position. What sets me apart is that I have a pick-up truck. This leads to the acquisition of many items when friends clean out their garages or gardens. I have used the staves from fallen-apart whiskey barrels as boards for staghorn ferns and tillandsias, for instance. For some reason a lot of people have bells of all kinds which end up in my truck: cow bells, musical bells, metal wind chimes and etc. These I have hung randomly in the branches of my lime grove, where they make sound from different spots according to the way the wind is blowing—they are not so close together that they compete with one another or drive me crazy with their constant noise. By far my favorite repurposing is the use of an old carving knife for an all-purpose weeding and digging tool. I have purchased many different tools over the years, but none of them are so handy in certain circumstances as a good long-bladed carving knife for getting the deep roots of tough grasses and for slicing through a whole area of weeds. An old paring knife is also better than clippers for cutting off the tired or snail-chewed leaves of agaves and aloes."

**Mary Borevitz** re-uses containers: "I cut the bottoms out of large cottage cheese and yogurt containers making a sleeve which I put around garden starts like broccoli or lettuce to keep away rabbits."

**Lynn Brown-Reynolds** wonders "if anyone has found a use for plastic fast food containers (like roasted chicken, cookie containers, pastry containers, etc.)? May be they can be used for waterproof storage of seed packets, bulbs or as seed starting beds...poke a few holes for drainage?"



**Diane Burch** wrote, "Do you have a small spot of yellow grass, or a hanging basket that just doesn't absorb water as you sprinkle? Empty your refrigeration icemaker on it; it works marvels and is so easy."

**Linda Chisari** says, "I buy inexpensive packs of chopsticks and use the sticks in several ways: I draw a line in the soil at the proper depth for sowing seeds; I poke holes with the end of the stick to the proper depth for planting peas/sweet peas; I use them as plant labels by writing on the stakes with a Sharpie marker; I use them as temporary stakes when transplanting small plants. The last time I bought these I paid 89 cents for a pack of 24...not a bad deal!"

**Barbara Clark** cleverly re-uses packing material: "I live in a townhouse and have many plants in containers. Instead of putting broken pottery or rocks in the bottom of the container to keep the drainage holes clear, I break up the white plastic packing that comes with new products such as televisions, computers, and glassware, and put a good layer of it in the bottom of the pot. This works very well for drainage and keeps the container light enough for easy relocation on my decks. Some roots will even go through a piece of packing and right out the other side."

**Karylee Feldman** puts broken items to good use: "I take broken dishes, etc. and stick them into slope sides so that they *appear* to be intact (or not). I then plant little plants 'inside' them (a bowl section, mug portion, part of a vase) and no one is the wiser... looks like they're 'buried in' (discovered in?, excavated from?, resting against?) the slope... quite the colorful little bit of whimsy ensues."

**Marla Keith** re-purposes "a common dinner fork that I buy at thrift stores is good for weeding, separating recent seedlings, and taking propagated cuttings from the pot of planting medium. I have one in various parts of the garden to use whenever I need one. Also, a seam ripper — I keep it close to bags I have to open. It is so easy to use and convenient."

**Miriam Kirk** says, "Used mini-blinds are easily cut into plant labels and are long lasting. I also thought plastic knives were great plant labels....until my little grandchildren came running in the house with their hands full of them, having discovered them out in the yard! Old stockings are great for cradling melons. Or cut them into strips to tie up tomato vines."

**Susan Morse** is good at re-purposing: "The old saying, 'Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery' holds true in my yard. The creative, artistic flair of Buena Creek Gardens has been an inspiration for years. I reuse old tea cups and saucers, tea pots, decorative mugs and chipped bowls, to mention a few items that have turned into small planters. From Susi Torre-Bueno, I have copied her idea of using empty cobalt blue water bottles as color highlights here and there. From Mo Price, I have copied her idea of putting old non prescription sunglasses on a cactus; this great array of staring eyes greet people as they enter our driveway. I use chop sticks as miniature plant stakes or when I am planting seeds, the chopstick makes a great hole to drop the seed into. After seeing the Fouquettes displaying their orchids staked up with hair clips, attaching the stem to the stake, I've retrieved these same type of butterfly shaped hair clips from my dressing table drawer. They are a great asset for vining plants to climb up a trellis. I admit without guilt, that I have picked up items from the side of the road that are being thrown out. These become plant holders or plant hangers."

Continued on page 16

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**Sharing Secrets** Continued from page 15

My husband brought home a decorative twin bed frame for my 'bed, flower bed.' He found that on the side of the road on a residential street in Encinitas. So, I have him on the look out, too. I love to reuse things and look forward to reading other comments from SDHS members, and start to flatter those folks with imitation."

**Mo Price** tells us, "When it's time to buy new dishes, I find the old dishes are useful in the garden. Drill a hole in a cup or bowl and place it on a saucer or plate. They make nice containers for starter plants."

**Cindy Sparks** uses "things from both the boat and the kitchen in my yard. I have a large staghorn fern mounted in a 3' wire basket. It's quite heavy, and the best way to hang it from an eave is with a little block and tackle which is really the rig for a dinghy sail. That lets me lower it when I need to work on it, or raise it when the gardener needs to service the sprinklers underneath it. You can get it at any marine store. While you're there, pick up some stainless cable in small sizes, say 1/16" diameter, along with the little crimp fittings used to attach it. I use that to hang permanent things in the garden: a rain gage, wind chime, or some of my hanging baskets. It far outlasts any fiber type of string or line, and it's stronger than mono filament fishing line. I plan to use different color mini-blinds cut into labels for my summer-dormant and winter-dormant succulents so I don't forget and water one at the wrong time."

**Katrin Utt** says, "Please don't laugh – I use aspirin on my roses. One uncoated tablet pushed into the soil of an ailing plant seems to work wonders. It does not work all the time, but it's worth a try." [For an interesting series of articles and comments on aspirin on plants go to [www.papillonsartpalace.com/aspirinforplants.htm](http://www.papillonsartpalace.com/aspirinforplants.htm).]

**Ramona Valencia** wrote, "I save those expandable net bags that garlic and tomatoes come in and use them to cover my more unique fruits when they are young to protect them from greedy birds. I purchased a pink pearl apple tree quite some time ago and finally had a few small apples appear. Low and behold, the diligent birds got all but two. I put the tomato bags tied with rubber bands top and bottom around those precious apples... it worked!"

**Marilyn Wilson** has several ideas: "Coffee filters over the drainage holes in a pot before you plant something in it. Chopsticks (tied to shoestrings) to help sweet peas make it to the bottom of the trellis. Kabob skewers with the handle-ends bent, to hold delicate blossoms up out of the mud. OJ plastic bottle carved up to make a soil scoop for potting bench. Pinching clothes pins to attach eye-level plant labels to the honeysuckle vine. One-foot PVC pipe buried vertically along with a lily or dahlia bulb; off-season it almost disappears, and when the lily gets tall, insert a stake inside the pipe to tie up the blooms – never blindly skewer another bulb again."

**The question for next month is:**

How do you deal with a steep slope? (thanks to So. Cal Hort.)  
Send your e-mail reply by March 5 to [info@sdhortsoc.org](mailto:info@sdhortsoc.org). ☺



## Make a Difference: Help Fund a School Garden

The Lakeside Union School District Preschool at Winter Gardens Elementary is seeking help in putting together a children's garden for the school. They write, "We want to educate the children on where our food comes from and promote our agriculture heritage. The recent budget cuts have limited the funds available for even the most basic items, and so we are reaching out to our community for help in the form of tax deductible donations, advice and suggestions. The donations can be monetary, material, services or gift certificates. Donations received will help us purchase gardening materials, books and plants. With your help we can provide them with the tools they need to start a great educational future. Any size donation monetary or material will be sincerely appreciated and is tax deductible. In return for your donation, you will not only receive the gratitude of over 100 aspiring children, we will list your business in our monthly newsletter which goes to over 125 households in your community." If you have any questions or need any information call Heather Warner at (619)-390-2685. The tax ID number is 95-6001809. Please send donations to Heather Gasner, LUSD Preschool Programs, 8501 Pueblo Road, Lakeside, CA 92040. 🌱

## February Plant Forum

By Jane C. Beer, Michael & Joyce Buckner  
and Susi Torre-Bueno

### What is the Plant Forum?

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

***Aloe cameronii*** (Aloaceae) Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia, Zimbabwe

A spectacular red aloe – probably the most desirable of all landscape aloes. Categorized as a small-to-medium-sized aloe, this species grows rapidly and offsets readily. Rosette heads reach about a two foot diameter; thick fleshy stems grow erect to about 3' with dried leaf remains, branching freely at the base and forming clumps and rapidly colonizing a garden area. A prolific bloomer – brilliant scarlet-red cylindrical flowers 2' to 3'. Entire plant turns a vivid copper red in winter; it also can get quite red during the summer. One plant should be mandatory in every southern California succulent landscape – the crowning jewel. Twenty plants in a landscape is absolutely spectacular – grand parade awesome! (Michael & Joyce Buckner, San Diego, 2/09) – Michael & Joyce Buckner

***Deuterocohnia brevifolia* 'New Guinea Gold Variegate'**  
(Bromeliaceae) Horticultural Hybrid

A new cultivated golden variegate of the 'Pin Cushion Bromeliad' (native to Northwestern Argentina and Bolivia), discovered by Bill Baker in his garden. *Abromeitiella chlorantha* is oldest name (1925), with *A. brevifolia* being even older. (Michael & Joyce Buckner, San Diego, 2/09) – Michael & Joyce Buckner

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## February Plant Forum

### **Dudleya candida** CHALK DUDLEYA (Crassulaceae)

Coronado Islands, Baja California, Mexico

This is Michael's favorite dudleya. Compact powdery white heads stay small to about 4"; textured stems normally branch forming a semi-globose base. Extraordinary blooms appear in late spring/early summer, marking the end of plant's growth period. Blooms are *not* noted for their small pale yellow flowers, but rather for their tall (up to 2' or 3') hot pink/fluorescent red flower stalks. When grown hard, that is with minimal water and maximum sunshine, the leaf tips, sometimes the entire plant will turn a bright pinkish red. (Michael & Joyce Buckner, San Diego, 2/09) – Michael & Joyce Buckner

**Echeveria 'Ghost Buster'** (Crassulaceae) Horticultural Hybrid  
 Hybrid of *Echeveria colorata* × *E. elegans*. Wonderful powder blue rosettes to 6" across. Extremely plump slightly cupped leaves. Full to partial sun. Hardy to the 20's. (Michael & Joyce Buckner, San Diego, 2/09) - Michael & Joyce Buckner

### **Iris germanica var. florentina** ORRIS ROOT, WHITE FLAG (Iridaceae) Mediterranean

Grown because the root is used in perfumery, this perennial is an interesting addition to my herb garden. The flower is very lightly scented, with an iridescent creamy white self in my variety. Some sources note, in typical iris nomenclature, that the standards are "iridescent blue-white, fading to cream-white. Falls same, yellowish on haft; veined olive. Beard yellow." There seem to be several forms of this iris. Grow it in full sun with good drainage. Needs moderate to low water to keep it happy. (Susi Torre-Bueno, Vista, 2/9/09) – S.T.B.

### **Kalanchoe daigremontiana** MOTHER OF THOUSANDS (Crassulaceae) Madagascar

Although native to Madagascar this species has naturalized in several tropical countries (e.g. India), as well as in most nurseries, growing grounds, and greenhouses in San Diego County. Succulent leaves grow sparsely on erect stems. The sharply toothed leaves range in color from dark green to pinkish purple and are marked with reddish-brown spots. Bulbines, tiny plantlets, sprout from the tips of each tooth at leaf's edge. These bulbines fall to the ground, creating new plants wherever they may land. 'Mother of Thousands' is not an exaggeration; over the course of a couple of years one plant can exponentially produce thousands of new plants. Sprays of red-orange tubular bell flowers appear on tall (2' to 3') stalks in winter. We have discovered that these stalks have a four to six week shelf-life as a cut flower. This species hybridizes easily with *K. delagoensis* (syn. *K. tubiflora*), *K. fedtschenkoi*, and *K. rosei*. Cuttings, flowers & plantlets offered at February meeting are no doubt hybrids of same. (Michael & Joyce Buckner, San Diego, 2/09) – Michael & Joyce Buckner

### **Kalanchoe marmorata 'Blue Scallops'** or 'Lavender Scallops' (Crassulaceae) East Africa

This highly decorative cultivar can grow rather large (3' to 4') in just one summer. Juvenile leaves often bear the dark markings of the 'Ink Wiper Kalanchoe' (*K. marmorata*); as the leaves grow larger (6" to 8") their spots fade away and they turn a very pleasant shade of glaucous lavender-blue. An abundance of large scallop-edged light-reflective leaves make this plant an excellent choice for an



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## February Plant Forum

evening garden. Large white flowers grow in clusters on tall stalks to 6'. Flowering stem dies back after blooming, but new growth has already begun at base. (Michael & Joyce Buckner, San Diego, 2/09) – Michael & Joyce Buckner

### ***Lachenalia mutabilis*** FAIRY LACHENALIA, CAPE COWSLIP (Liliaceae) South Africa

Gorgeous blooms come from this little corm from South Africa. The flowers change color over time, with violet, pink and yellow shades appearing at various stages. Early blooming (plant displayed began flowering in late January). Found on sandy and stony slopes in the north and southwestern Cape. There are many forms of this species. Plant with caution, as it can be invasive – maybe best left in a pot. Grows to about 12" tall in full sun with good drainage. Mine only gets water from November to April, totally dormant in summer and fall and should be kept dry. (Susi Torre-Bueno, Vista, 2/09) – S.T-B.

### ***Narcissus 'Avalanche'*** (Amaryllidaceae) Garden Hybrid

This tazetta type (multi-flowered) fragrant narcissus is great in the garden. The specimen displayed was from bulbs that have naturalized in West Los Angeles with no summer water. The website for Brent and Becky's Bulbs ([www.brentandbeckybulbs.com](http://www.brentandbeckybulbs.com)) notes that this cultivar was "called 'Seventeen Sisters' in the past because of its 15-20 white petaled and demitasse-shaped cupped, sweetly fragrant flowers per stem; show flower and great in the garden with other bright colored bulbs and perennials." It is an heirloom bulb dating to 1700. (Jane C. Beer, West Los Angeles, 2/09) – J.C.B. & S.T-B.

### ***Pelargonium graveolens*** 'Grey Lady Plymouth'

ROSE GERANIUM (Geraniaceae) Horticultural Hybrid

Pale green leaves margined in cream have a minty-rose scent. This is a sprawling shrubby plant with gorgeous foliage year 'round (everyone who sees it will want cuttings); flowers are insignificant. To 1' to 2' tall by 3' to 4' wide (prune often to keep in bounds). (Susi Torre-Bueno, Vista, 2/09) – S.T-B.

### ***Sedum multiceps*** MINIATURE JOSHUA TREE (Crassulaceae)

Mountainous region of N. Algeria

With proper grooming this tiny leafed sedum can be a marvelous bonsai-style container succulent, or a traditional bonsai companion plant. Freely branching woody stems rarely get over 6" tall, forming dense dark green heads of tiny linear succulent leaves. A winter grower, this species is prone to rot if over-watered or fertilized in the summer. A nice ground cover for small rocky, sloped, or hard-to-get-to areas. Five-pointed yellow star flowers appear in late spring/early summer and mark the end of their growth period. To maintain a miniature tree-like appearance cut back flowers and lace, shape & trim away unnecessary branches at that time, then allow plant to have a dormancy period by placing container in a partially shaded or bright filtered light area with minimal watering. It should stay in that area until weather cools off (about October). (Michael & Joyce Buckner, San Diego, 2/09) – Michael & Joyce Buckner

Our February meeting included a very large assortment of plants – thanks to everyone who participated. Michael Buckner was, as always, an informative and personable Plant Forum Host. In addition to the plants described above, those below were also displayed.

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# February Plant Forum

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

Can you spot the phony plant this month? The phony plant in the February newsletter was Aloe 'Malaria'.

- 3 *Aloe ciliaris* CLIMBING ALOE (Michael & Joyce Buckner, San Diego, 2/09)
- Acanthus mollis* 'Tasmanian Angel' TASMANIAN ANGEL BEAR'S BREACH, VARIEGATED ACANTHUS (Plant Play Nursery, Carlsbad, 2/09)
- Agastache mexicana* 'Sangria' MEXICAN GIANT HYSSOP (Susi Torre-Bueno, Vista, 2/09)
- Aloe arborescens* CANDELABRA PLANT (Buena Creek Gardens, San Marcos, 1/95)
- Chaenomeles* cv. or sp. FLOWERING QUINCE (John Gilruth, Rainbow, 2/09)
- Citrus reticulata* var. satsuma SATSUMA ORANGE (Cathy Tylka, Escondido, 2/09)
- 3 *Dudleya brittonii* LIVE FOREVER, BRITTON'S CHALK DUDLEYA (Cindy Sparks, Point Loma, 2/09)
- Euryops* sp. (Jane C. Beer, West Los Angeles, 2/09)
- Ficus triangularis* (Michael & Joyce Buckner, San Diego, 2/09)
- Iresine herbstii* 'Acuminata' PAINTED BLOODLEAF (John Gilruth, Rainbow, 2/09)
- Kalanchoe fedchenkoii* 'Variegata' LAVENDER SCALLOPS (Michael & Joyce Buckner, San Diego, 2/09)
- Kalanchoe rosea* hybrids (Michael & Joyce Buckner, San Diego, 2/09)
- 3 *Kalanchoe tubiflora* CHANDELIER PLANT (Michael & Joyce Buckner, San Diego, 2/09)
- 3 *Kalanchoe tubbywubbyflora* WALL SCONCE PLANT (Succulent Fanatic, San Diego, 2/09)
- 3 *Leucocymum aestivum* SUMMER SNOWFLAKE (Sue Fouquette, El Cajon, 2/09)
- Mammillaria bocasana* POWDER PUFF CACTUS (Cathy Tylka, Escondido, 2/09)
- Mammillaria hahniana* OLD LADY CACTUS (Cathy Tylka, Escondido, 2/09)
- Mammillaria spinosissima* RED-HEADED IRISHMAN (Peter Walkowiak, Poway, 2/09)
- Narcissus* sp. or cv. DAFFODIL (Sue Fouquette, El Cajon, 2/09)
- 3 *Pelargonium alternans* (Peter Walkowiak, Poway, 2/09)
- Pelargonium carnosum* FLESHY STALK PELARGONIUM (Peter Walkowiak, Poway, 2/09)
- Pelargonium citronellum* 'Mabel Grey' SCENTED GERANIUM (? , 2/09)
- Pelargonium klinghardtense* (Peter Walkowiak, Poway, 2/09)
- 3 *Salvia clevelandii* BLUE CLEVELAND SAGE (Mark Johnson, Escondido, 2/09)
- 3 *Salvia confertiflora* (Susi Torre-Bueno, Vista, 2/09)
- Scabiosa* cv. or sp. (bonsai form, displayed with suiseki [rock]) (Phil Tackill, Solana Beach, 2/09)
- Stenocactus multicostratus* WAVE CACTUS, BRAIN CACTUS (Peter Walkowiak, Poway, 2/09)
- 3 *Tithonia diversifolia* GIANT MEXICAN SUNFLOWER (Jane C. Beer, West Los Angeles, 2/09)
- Watsonia* cv. or sp. BUGLE LILY (Louise Anderson, San Marcos, 2/09)

## 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.]



# February Meeting Report

Vegetables and fruit trees can help save your home from wildfire – who knew?!? February speaker, Dave Egbert, is both a gardener and a firefighter, so he knows from personal experience which plants are less likely to burn and also which plants are hazardous to firefighters. His first advice: make your home easily defensible. Keep patios clear of excess furniture (use stone seating walls instead of wooden chairs) so firefighters have easy access all around your home. Avoid overgrown woody shrubs, especially near the house, because they carry a lot of dead wood as fuel, and select plants with low fuel volume (no woody, dry growth). Actively growing perennials, well-watered veggies, and well-mulched plants are tops for fire safety.

Perennials that are actively growing during the summer and fall wildfire season are great, especially if they're low-growing beneath trees so that they don't create a "fuel ladder" that allows fire to climb to the crowns of trees or to reach your home. Some plants Dave especially likes: roses, alstroemeria, agastache, fruit trees, hellebores, bulbs, aloes, sedums, and echeverias. Don't use spiny

succulents near the house as they're dangerous to firefighters. Prune shrubs and trees regularly to remove dead wood and open them up so sparks have no place to catch fire. The goal is to reduce anything that the fire could use as fuel, and veggies, with their have soft young leaves, are perfect since they won't burn.

Dave stressed that the key to reducing the risk of fire is to have a well-maintained garden. Mulch to improve the soil, conserve water, slow runoff, feed plants, reduce weeding, and regulate soil temperature. Also, because organic mulch is actively decomposing it won't burn as quickly as dry leaf litter would. Having patios and pathways around your house helps firefighters defend it because they can reach it more easily.

Thanks, Dave, for suggesting some excellent ways to reduce the peril of wildfire while still having veggies, perennials, and lot of other plants for a productive and attractive garden. And thanks for donating a copy of your beautiful book, *Big Ideas for Small Gardens*, for our library. ☺

## Paul Ecke, Jr. - Flower & Garden Show

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- New in 2009!! Interior Design Vignette**
- 2. Professional Floral Design Competitions**
- 3. Amateur and Miniature Floral Design Competitions**
- 4. Specimen Blooms**
- 5. Flower Show Stage Speakers and Demonstrators**

**Entry deadline, May 8, 2009  
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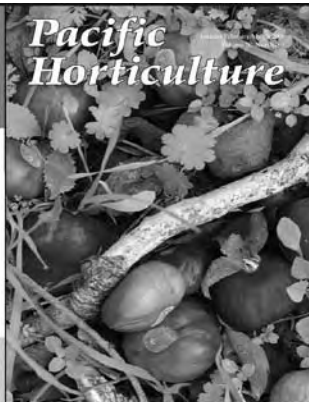
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*San Diego County Fair*

### Call For Bids

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We are soliciting proposals to design the featured landscape for the entrance to the Flower and Garden Show.

This display must strongly represent the Flower and Garden Show theme, Rhapsody in Bloom, which complements the Fair Theme, Music Mania. The display area is ~20' x 40'. Proposals should not exceed \$15,000.

Please contact the Flower and Garden Show Office at 858-755-1161 x2462 for details.

Proposals must be submitted by April 1  
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# Quail Botanical Gardens' 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Herb Festival, Spring Plant Sale, and Tomatomania®

**March 21 and 22, 9 AM – 5 PM**

- Featuring Jane Taylor, nationally known for her work with children's gardens and herbs, speaking on "Creating Magical Spaces" (Saturday) and "Fun Oohh - Aahh Plants!!" (Sunday) plus many other speakers
- Children's Activities Saturday 11 AM - 2 PM
- Ongoing music and delicious food

## EcoDesign Fair Premiers in the Gardens

New this year, the EcoDesign Fair brings together local designers creating eco-friendly products that showcase home decor, furnishings, accessories, clothing, and jewelry.

Jolee Pink



Admission: Adults \$10; Seniors, Students, and Active Military \$7; Children ages 3-12 \$5.  
Free for children 2 and under and for members of Quail Botanical Gardens. Parking is free.

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April 25, 2009 • 10 am to 4 pm



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Shop and learn at the FREE Gardeners’ Marketplace at Cardiff Elementary School

Park at Mira Costa College San Elijo Campus, 3333 Manchester Ave. Cardiff, CA 92007. Ride a double decker bus to the Gardener’s Marketplace

**Gardens of all sizes and styles**

**Talks about growing vegetables, saving water in the garden, composting and more**

**Boutique plant vendors, garden books, and garden art**



**Admission to the gardens is \$21 for adults and \$7 for children (up to age 10)**

## **Four ways to pay for the garden tour:**

1. **Download** a ticket order at [www.EncinitasGardenFestival.org](http://www.EncinitasGardenFestival.org) and return it with your payment by mail. *Must be postmarked by April 15, 2009.*
2. **Purchase** tickets in person at Anderson La Costa Nursery, 400 La Costa Ave., Encinitas, CA. 92024, (760) 753-3153 or Barrels and Branches Nursery, 1452 Santa Fe Drive, Encinitas, Ca 92024. (760) 753-2852
3. **Reserve** a spot using **PayPal** at [www.EncinitasGardenFestival.org](http://www.EncinitasGardenFestival.org). **Tickets will NOT be mailed to you.** Your name will go on the will-call list in the Gardener’s Marketplace at Cardiff Elementary School. Simply turn up on Festival day to claim your wristband and tour map.
4. **If space is still available to tour gardens on Festival day, prices will be \$25 for adults and \$10 for children. Garden Tour spots usually sell out ahead of time.**

For more information contact us at [www.EncinitasGardenFestival.org](http://www.EncinitasGardenFestival.org) or call 760 753-8615



# Water Smart Plant Fair



Free Admission,  
Parking, Activities

- Plant Sale
- Garden Lectures & Design Consultations
- Conservation Tips and Kids' Activities
- Compost Demonstration and Bin Sale

**Saturday, March 14, 9am-3pm**

Beautiful water smart plants on sale  
just in time for spring planting

**Water Conservation Garden at Cuyamaca College**

12122 Cuyamaca College Drive West, El Cajon, CA  
619-660-0614 ext.10

Joint Powers Authority:



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# Water Smart Plant Fair Program

**Saturday, March 14, 9am-3pm • 619-660-0614, x10**

## Plant Sales

A large selection of water smart perennials, shrubs, trees, grasses, cacti and succulents, and more, on sale from Southern California vendors at great prices!

## Workshops (in Garden classroom)

- 10:00AM**     **“Plant Adaptations”**  
Jill Morganelli, Landscape Designer
- 11:30AM**     **“How to Start a Water Conserving Garden”**  
Connie Beck, Landscape Designer
- 12:15PM**     **“What’s Happening to Our Water Supplies?”**  
Public Affairs, San Diego County Water Authority
- 1:00PM**     **“Water Smart Plants for Your Garden”, and Book Signing**  
Nan Serman, author of *California Gardener’s Guide, Volume 2*
- 2:00 PM**     **The Protea Species: Exotic Options for Drought Tolerant Gardens**  
Walter Parkola, Owner of Blossom Valley Protea

## Ask the Experts

**Ask the Designers**--Free, 20-minute landscape design consultations by professional landscape designers. **Call 619-660-0614 x 10 to reserve.**

**Ask the Water-Wise Gardeners**—Garden Docents provide tips on starting a water smart garden.

**Ask the Veggie Gardeners**—Garden Docents reveal their secrets for growing great veggies at the Water Conservation Garden!

**Ask the Master Composters**—Compost Q&A and bin sales throughout the day with Master Composters and The Solana Center for Environmental Innovation.

**Ask the Water Agencies**—Conservation tips for saving water in and outside the home, plus all you need to know about entering the California-Friendly Landscape Contest.

**Ask San Miguel Fire Department**—Get tips on fire-resistant landscaping and fire prevention!

## Kids’ Activities

Water Agency Children’s Activity Booth  
Face Painting

## Opportunity Drawing Pre-Sale

Drawing tickets on sale to win **Grand Prize Home Landscape Re-Design** and other fabulous prizes! Winners announced at Spring Garden Festival, April 25. Need not be present to win.

*Only service dogs are allowed within the Garden. Thank you for your cooperation.*



# What's Happening? for March 2009

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

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Hi and welcome to March in the Garden:

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

#### What's new at the nursery

Lots of plants arrived for March – what a great planting month. Here's just a sampling of some less common choices.

##### Ceanothus:

- White flowering *C. maritimus* 'Popcorn'. Hummingbirds and butterflies collect nectar from the flowers. Seed eaters will work the dried flowers. A tidy groundcover that requires little maintenance. Heavy bloomer. Compact, small leaves. Excellent on coastal bluffs, ridges, hills, slopes. Slow grower to 3' tall x 6' wide.

- *C. Yankee Point*. A fast growing groundcover growing 2' to 3' tall with a 10' spread.

- *C. Tilden Park*. One of the more shade tolerant *Ceanothus*, this mounding shrub has small glossy green leaves and indigo blue flowers in spring. A fast grower it does well in exposed locations near the coast, or in light shade inland.

- *C. impressus* 'Puget Blue'. A beautiful, arching selection of the Santa Barbara *Ceanothus*. Small, rough-textured leaves are virtually obscured by profuse lavender-blue flowers in spring. Can get up to 8' by 10', though it can be kept a bit smaller.

- *C. 'Dark Star'*. Grows to about 6' tall by 8' wide, small, rough-textured dark green leaves and dark cobalt-blue flower clusters that appear in Spring. This *Ceanothus* is one of the showiest of the California Lilacs. Thrives in coastal gardens but is not recommended for inland valleys

- *C. 'Joyce Coulter'*. Fast growing, mounding evergreen shrub with arching branches growing 2' to 3' tall by about 8' wide. It has small, medium dark green leaves and medium blue flower clusters that appear in late spring. This *Ceanothus* can tolerate regular irrigation and heavy soils.

**Descanso Lilacs** - tolerant of mild winters and can adapt well to Sunset zones 18 to 22.

- *Syringa vulgaris* 'Lavender Lady'. One of the best for warm winter areas. Spectacular clusters of single fragrant lavender flowers produced without winter chilling. Fast grower to 12' tall x 6' wide.

- *S. vulgaris* 'California Rose'. A very hardy variety that grows to 8'-10' tall and 6' wide. Elegant bouquet of fragrant, single rose pink flowers. Blooms earlier than most other varieties.

Some other more unusual specimens you might like:

- *Chaenomeles japonica contorta*, Contorted Quince; everything is contorted, including stems, thorns, flowers and fruit. Pink and white

#### The Water Conservation Garden (contact info on other side)

**Mar. 4, 11, & 18, 6:30 – 8:30pm, Wednesday Evening Water Smart Series:** Mar. 4, "Designing with Water Smart Plants"; Mar. 11, "Mulch, Compost and Fertilizer"; Mar. 18, "Irrigation Design for Water Smart Gardens." Each class: \$15/Members, \$25/Non-members. Series: \$30/Members, \$60 Non-members.

**Mar. 7, 10am – noon, Trees in the Water Conserving Landscape:** Arborist Leah Rottke will guide you through the basics; tree selection & planting, maintaining established trees, and tree species best adapted to our arid climate. \$15/Members, \$25/Non-members.

**Mar. 10, 5:30 – 8:30pm, Ask the Designer:** Connie Beck gives personalized 45-minute landscape design consultations. \$60/Members, \$75/Non-members.

**Mar. 14, Water Smart Plant Fair:** Vendors from Southern California selling drought tolerant plants. Visit "Ask the Experts" for all gardening questions.

**Mar. 21, 9am – noon, A New California Garden:** Landscape Designer Linda Whitney shares her process for creating her own award-winning water smart landscape. \$20/Members, \$30/Non-members.

**Mar. 24, 6:30 – 8:30pm, Water Smart Landscape: Beautiful Landscape on a Low Water Budget:** Connie Beck takes the mystery out of water smart landscaping. \$25; in partnership with Cuyamaca College, (619) 660-4350 or [www.cuyamaca.edu/preview](http://www.cuyamaca.edu/preview).

**Mar. 28, 9am – noon, Toss the Turf. Less Grass, More Fun! Water Conservation Garden:** Vickie Driver with a short course in turf removal, and creative ideas for a beautiful, low-water-use landscape. \$20/Members, \$30/Non-members.

#### Quail Botanical Gardens (contact info on other side)

**Mar. 10, 17, 24 and 31, 10am – noon, Ikebana Session:** Learn Ikebana from Rumi Rice. Per session: \$80/Members; \$100/Non-members. \$30 material fee.

**Mar. 5, 6:30 8:30pm, Part I, Mar. 8, 2 – 4pm, Part II Bye Bye Grass:** Nan Sterman will discuss extermination options of your lawn, and improving your irrigation system. \$45/Members, \$50/Non-members. Pre-register through Water Conservation Garden (619)660-0614 x-10.

**Mar. 12, 19 and 26, 7 – 9pm, Mar 28, 9am – noon, Save Water and Money: Incorporate Native Plants into your Landscape:** Nathan Smith, horticulturist and landscape designer, will teach you which native plants do well in the garden and how to care for them. \$80/Members, \$100/Non-members.

**Mar. 21, 22, 9am – 5pm, 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Herb Festival, Spring Plant Sale:** A-Z of Herbs information booth, Speakers all day, Guided Tours and more. \$10/Adults, \$7/Seniors, active Military and Students, \$5/Children 3-5.

**Mar. 1, Orchid Odyssey – San Diego Zoo:** The orchid greenhouse, with over 3,000 orchids, will be open to zoo visitors. Orchid experts will be on hand to answer questions during this open house. San Diego Zoo, [www.sandegozoo.org](http://www.sandegozoo.org).

**Mar. 2, 10:30am, Dos Valles and CGCI Palomar District Floral Design Forums:** Plan on seeing lots of color and interesting designs. The Woman's Club of Carlsbad, 3320 Monroe St. Carlsbad. \$8/session. (760) 729-4976 or [www.dosvallesgardenclub.org](http://www.dosvallesgardenclub.org).

**Mar. 2, 6:30pm, San Diego Mycological Society:** Program TBA. Room 101 Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. (760) 753-0273 or [www.sdmyco.org](http://www.sdmyco.org).

**Mar. 3, 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](http://www.sdorchids.com).

**Mar. 3, 6:30, San Diego County Plant Family Forum – Lamiaceae I the Mint Family:** Not recommended for beginners in botany. \$20/Members, \$25/Non-members. San Diego Natural History Museum, [www.sdnhm.org](http://www.sdnhm.org).

**Mar. 6, 1pm, Carlsbad Garden Club:** Richard Wright will speak about the edible landscape and growing your own vegetables. Heritage Hall, Magee Park, 2650 Garfield St. Free. (760) 845-6339 or [carlsbadgardenclub@hotmail.com](mailto:carlsbadgardenclub@hotmail.com).

**Mar. 6, 1:30pm, Vista Garden Club:** Gwen Tubach with some of the most intriguing plants of the Protea family and their related Australian Natives. Guests welcome. Gloria McClellan Senior Center, 1400 Vale Terrace, Vista. [www.vistagardenclub.org](http://www.vistagardenclub.org).

**Mar. 7, Walter Andersen Nursery:** 9:00am Spring Vegetables. (San Diego, 3642 Enterprise Street, (619) 224-8271); 9:30am, High Impact, Low Water Palm Spring Gardens. (Poway, 12755 Danielson Ct., (858) 513-4900). [www.walterandersen.com](http://www.walterandersen.com).

**Mar. 7, 9am, California Coastal Rose Society:** Joel Ross leads a discussion sharing his experience in soil enrichment and fertilizing strategies. At Magee Park, the corner of Beech Avenue and Garfield Street in Carlsbad. (760) 804-0875.

**Mar. 7, 9am – 4pm, California Native Plant Society Plant Sale:** At Tree of Life in San Juan Capistrano. CNPS members can give free native plant advice and help you choose plants. I am talk by Kay Stewart, designer responsible for restoring part of Old Town to the original native landscape. [www.treeoflifenuery.com](http://www.treeoflifenuery.com)

**Mar. 8, 10:30am, San Diego Bonsai Club:** Check [www.sandiegobonsaiclub.com](http://www.sandiegobonsaiclub.com) for more information. Room 101 Casa del Prado, Balboa Park.

**Mar. 8, 1pm, San Diego Iris Society:** Iris Roundtable Discussion. Old Community Church, Lakeside Historical Society, 9906 Maine Ave., Lakeside. (619) 840-2768.

**Mar. 8, 1pm, Southern California Plumeria Society:** Marion Stacey, on Rescue, Raise & Release of Hummingbirds. Everyone welcome! Free. War Memorial Building, 3325 Zoo Drive, Balboa Park. (619) 461-5942 or [www.socalplumeriasociety.com](http://www.socalplumeriasociety.com).

**Mar. 8, 1:30pm, Mabel Corwin Branch American Begonia Society:** Workshop on propagation of begonias. Community Center, Room 118, 1140 Oakcrest Park Dr., Encinitas. (760) 753-3977.

#### March 9, 6:00pm, details on page 3

#### How Sustainable Practices Change Our Ideal Landscape

**Mar. 10, Noon, Dos Valles Garden Club:** "Palms by Don Martin." Stephen Catholic Church, 31020 Cole Grade Rd., Valley Center. [www.dosvallesgardenclub.org](http://www.dosvallesgardenclub.org).

**Mar. 10, 7pm, San Diego Geranium Society:** Program TBA; everyone welcome. Room 101 Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. (619) 447-8243 or [www.sdgeranium.org](http://www.sdgeranium.org).

**Mar. 11, 10am, Point Loma Garden Club:** Pat Welsh shares hints and secrets to successful organic gardening. Portuguese Hall, 2818 Avenida de Portugal, San Diego. [www.plgc.org](http://www.plgc.org).

**Mar. 11, 10:30am, Poway Valley Garden Club:** Doug Kalal, Landscape Designer and Master Gardener will present 30 great drought tolerant plants and share the best ways o use them. Old Poway Park, Templar Hall. (858) 748-1025 or [home.roadrunner.com/~pvgc/](http://home.roadrunner.com/~pvgc/).

**Mar. 11, noon, Ramona Garden Club:** Tom Stephan on building and installing customized owl nest boxes as a means of natural rodent control. Ramona Woman's Club, 524 Main Street, Ramona, (760) 788-6709 or [ramonagardenclub.com](http://ramonagardenclub.com).

**Mar. 12, 7:30pm, Southern California Horticultural Society:** Martin Grantham will present "Deep Flora – A Few Gems from South Africa's Botanical Treasure Trove." Free. Friendship Auditorium, 3201 Riverside Drive, Los Angeles. (818) 567-1496 or [www.socalhort.org](http://www.socalhort.org).



**Mar. 13, 4 – 8pm, Mar. 14, 9am – 6m, Mar. 15, 10am – 4pm, San Diego County Orchid Society Show and Plant Sale:** This year will have over 25 vendors that will provide a wide range of unique and beautiful orchids for sale. \$6 at the door or \$5 with the SDCOS coupon – see ad on page 13 and [www.sdorchids.com](http://www.sdorchids.com). Scottish Rite Center, 1895 Camino del Rio South, San Diego.

**Mar. 14, Walter Andersen Nursery:** 9:00am, Ornamental Trees for San Diego. (San Diego see Mar. 7) 9:30 am, Ornamental Trees for San Diego. (Poway see Mar. 7). [www.walterandersen.com](http://www.walterandersen.com).

**Mar. 14, 9am - noon, Gardeners 4 Peace:** Pease bring tools, water and a cheerful spirit for the work party; chop up your vegetable and fruit waste and freeze in a paper bag and bring the frozen bags for the compost bins. Info: [gardeners4peace@hotmail.com](mailto:gardeners4peace@hotmail.com).

**Mar. 14, 10am, San Diego Bromeliad Society:** Presenters are Victoria Padilla, Werner Rauh and Ed Hummell. Visitors welcome – free. Room 104, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. (858) 453-6486, [www.bsi.org/webpages/san\\_diego.html](http://www.bsi.org/webpages/san_diego.html).

**Mar. 14, 1pm, San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society:** Program TBA. Admission free; everyone welcome. Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. [www.sdcss.com](http://www.sdcss.com).

**Mar. 16, 7:30, San Diego Rose Society:** Program TBA. Free, visitors welcome. Rm 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. [sdrosesociety.org](http://sdrosesociety.org)

**Mar. 17, 7pm, California Coastal Rose Society:** Jacques Ferare, Meilland Star Roses, on “Fragrance in Roses”. At 6:15pm Dr. Joel Ross on Integrated Pest management. Heritage Hall, 2650 Garfield, Carlsbad. [www.californiacoastalrose.com](http://www.californiacoastalrose.com).

**Mar. 17, 7pm, S. D. Calif. Naive Plant Society:** Rick Halsey on “Nature as the Enemy”: about proposals to destroy native plant communities for “fire safety.” Open to all, Free. Room 104, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. [cnpssd.org](http://cnpssd.org).

**Mar. 18, 7:30pm, San Diego Camellia Society:** Program TBA. Rm 101 Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. [www.socalcamellias.org/page4.html](http://www.socalcamellias.org/page4.html).

**Mar. 19 – 22, 10am – 4pm, Monster Tomato and Pepper Sale – Fullerton Arboretum:** The largest tomato & pepper plant sale in the west, over 180 tomatoes and 80 peppers. Free. 1900 Associated Rd., Fullerton, (714) 278-3579 or [www.fullertonaboretum.org](http://www.fullertonaboretum.org).

**Mar. 19, 1pm, Bernardo Gardeners Club:** Shari Matteson on choosing plants for a bird and butterfly garden. Swim & Tennis Club, 16955 Bernardo Oaks Dr., Rancho Bernardo. (858) 673-8728 or [www.bernardogardeners.org](http://www.bernardogardeners.org).

**Mar. 19, 7:30pm, S. D. Fern Society:** Guests welcome. Rm 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. [www.sdfern.com](http://www.sdfern.com).

**Mar. 21, 8:00am-noon, Volunteers Wanted:** for general garden and nursery work at Alta Vista Gardens, Vista. Details at [www.AltavistaGardens.org](http://www.AltavistaGardens.org) or e-mail [info@altavistagardens.org](mailto:info@altavistagardens.org) or call (760) 945-3954.

**Mar. 21, Walter Andersen Nursery:** 9:00am, Herbs – Care and Uses. (San Diego; see Mar. 7) 9:30am, Vegetable Gardening. (Poway; see Mar. 7). [www.walterandersen.com](http://www.walterandersen.com).

**Mar. 21, 10am, San Diego Garden Club:** Program TBA. Each month of 2009 will feature a winner of the Neighborhood Garden of the Month Contest. January 2010 will feature the winner of the year. Free and open to the public. Malcolm X Library & Performing Arts Center, 5148 Market St., San Diego. (619) 269-6184 or [www.sandiegogardenclub.com](http://www.sandiegogardenclub.com).

**Mar. 21, 1:30 – 2:30pm, Agri Service, Inc. Community Gardening Series:** Free monthly classes with Master Gardeners Diane Hollister and Pete Ash. “Building a garden bed – Size, Location and soil building.” El Corazon Compost Facility, 3210 Oceanside Blvd. Reserve space: (800) 262-4167 ext. 4.

**Mar. 23, 2pm, Lake Hodges Native Plant Club:** Program TBA. Rancho Bernardo Public Library, Community Room – 17110 Bernardo Center Drive. San Diego. [www.lhnpc.org](http://www.lhnpc.org).

**Mar. 25, 9:30am, San Dieguito Garden Club:** Designer Patrick fro Anderson La Costa Nursery will demonstrate how to plant garden containers that conserve water. The public is welcome. Quail Botanical Garden's Ecke building, 230 Quail Garden Drive, Encinitas.

**Mar. 25, 6pm, Mission Hills Garden Club:** Scott Sandel will discuss “Cool Season Vegetable Gardening”. United Church of Christ, 4070 Jackdaw St., San Diego. (619) 923-3624 or [www.missionhillsgardenclub.org](http://www.missionhillsgardenclub.org).

**Mar. 25, 7pm, California Rare Fruit Growers, San Diego Chapter:** Program TBD. Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. [www.crfgsandiego.org](http://www.crfgsandiego.org).

**Mar. 26, 7pm, Del Mar Rose Society:** Jim Horacek will present “Companion Planting & Carnivorous Plants. ”The public and guests are welcome. Powerhouse Community Center, 1658 Coast blvd., Del Mar. [ebreen@ucsd.edu](mailto:ebreen@ucsd.edu) or [kathyreed@adelphia.net](mailto:kathyreed@adelphia.net)

**Mar. 28, Walter Andersen Nursery:** 9:00am, Epiphyllum “Orchid Cactus”, (San Diego; see Mar. 7) 9:30am, Spring Flowers. (Poway; see Mar. 7) [www.walterandersen.com](http://www.walterandersen.com).

**Mar. 28 & 29, 10:30am – 4:30pm, Annual Bonsai Show:** The California Bonsai Society 52<sup>nd</sup> show, featuring over 100 beautiful specimens created by bonsai masters. Free. Friends' Hall, Huntington Library, 1151 Oxford Rd., San Marino. (624) 405-2100 or [www.huntington.org](http://www.huntington.org).

**Mar. 28, 12:30pm, Garden Design with Succulents:** Hosted by American Association of University Women. Michael Buckner, noted landscape designer, will present his garden designs and will have plants for sale. Presentation is free. Optional lunch at noon, \$10.25. Quail Botanical Garden, 230 Quail Garden Drive, Encinitas. (760) 603-9287 for lunch reservations and information.

**Garden Tours or Events with Early Reservations Required:**

**Mar. 28, 3pm, South Bay Botanic Garden:** Eddie Munguia leads a walking tour on avian wildlife; bring binoculars. \$5. Starts in room 1802 of the Landscape and Nursery Technology department. Park in Lot E, Southwestern College, 900 Otay Lakes Rd., Chula Vista. (619) 421-6700, X5371

**Mar. 29, 9:30pa – 4pm, ABDNHA 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Desert Garden Tour:** Sponsored by Anza-Borrego Desert Natural History Association. Tour four gardens in Borrego Springs. \$18/Non-members, Buy tickets by March 14 and save \$2 each. For tickets call or visit the Borrego Desert Nature Center 652 Palm Canyon Dr. Borrego Springs, (760) 767-3098, or [naturecenter@att.net](mailto:naturecenter@att.net).

**April 25, 8:35am – 3:10pm; Home Gardening Seminar:** Annual seminar by the Master Gardeners, select from a wide range of excellent classes. \$40/3 classes; register ASAP. [www.MasterGardenersSanDiego.org](http://www.MasterGardenersSanDiego.org).

**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](http://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](http://www.thegarden.org)

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

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

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

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

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

**BALBOA PARK:**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Garden 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. KPOP 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](http://www.ctn.org)). Tapes avail. from SDHS library.

peppermint striped blossoms. Slow grower to 3’ tall. Fabulous for flower arrangements.

- *Jasminium nudiflorum*. Also known as winter jasmine, or yellow jasmine. It is a shrub with slender stems, that can reach 12’ tall and sometimes more, provided it is trained on a trellis or a wall. Unlike most jasmines, its yellow flowers are not scented.

- *Banksia ericifolia compacta*. ‘Heath leaved Banksia’. This outstanding plant grows to 4’-6’ tall by 6’-8’ wide. Leaves are densely packed along the slender twigs. Perfect, cone-like spikes open to bottlebrush-like flower clusters to 10” tall, composed of hard, wiry, shiny orange red flower styles and dark golden anthers. The dried flower heads remain on the plant and are attractive for about a season after bloom. Several flowers will usually be pollinated in each spike, resulting in interesting swollen seeds which are retained for years.

- **Camellias & Azaleas** – many colors to choose (also many sizes) – in bloom now.

**Now to get you out in the garden:**

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

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

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

**Thin Fruit Trees:** Begin thinning apples, pears, and stone fruits when they are about 1/2” in size. Space them 4” to 6” apart or leave one fruit per spur. Apply your first feeding this month as soon as you see the buds beginning to swell, but before the flowers open.

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

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