

Let's Talk Plants!

Newsletter of the San Diego Horticultural Society

September 2012, Number 216

Ideal Plants for San Diego's Mediterranean Climate

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On the Cover: *Parkinsonia* 'Desert Museum'

Morocco & Andalucía: Islamic Gardens & Architecture

Co-sponsored by Pacific Horticulture Society
& San Diego Horticultural Society

April 4-15, 2013

Join us to discover the splendid Islamic gardens and architecture of Morocco and Andalucía. Our tour will take us from the Imperial Cities of Marrakech, Fez, and Meknes to Tangier and across the Straits of Gibraltar to the Moorish Kingdoms of Granada, Córdoba, and Seville. We'll explore ancient medinas and fabulous palaces that have enchanted travelers for centuries.

We have invitations to visit exceptional private homes and gardens. Enjoy regional cuisine in acclaimed restaurants and private homes while staying in traditional hotels in the heart of the old cities. Just a few spaces are open, so sign up now and join an amazing adventure!

Info: www.pacifichorticulture.org/tours
or (800) 976-9497



Jeffrey Bale



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SAN DIEGO HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Our Mission 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.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Details on membership are on page 20 and at www.sdhortsoc.org
For questions contact membership@sdhortsoc.org or Jim Bishop at (619) 296-9215.

MEETING SCHEDULE

5:00 – 6:00 Meeting room setup

6:00 – 6:45 Vendor sales, lending library, plant display

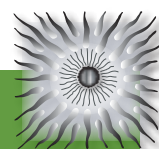
6:45 – 9:00 Announcements, Hot Hort Picks, door prizes, speaker

MEETINGS & EVENTS IN 2012

September 9	Monthly Featured Garden, Bonita
September 14-16	Fall Home/Garden Show, Del Mar Fairgrounds
October 8	Matt Ritter on A Californian's Guide to the Trees Among Us
October 14	Volunteer Appreciation Party
November 3	Borden Ranch Fruit Pick
November 12	Ivette Soler on Design Guidelines for Creating a Successful "Integrated" Edible Front Yard
December 10	Joseph Simox, Botanical Explorer and Global Food Plant Researcher

COVER IMAGE: *Parkinsonia* 'Desert Museum' used as a street tree to great effect.
Photo courtesy of Mountain States Wholesale Nursery (www.MSWN.com).

www.SanDiegoHorticulturalSociety.org



SAN DIEGO
HORTICULTURAL
SOCIETY

Next Meeting: SEPTEMBER 10, 2012, 6:00 – 9:00 PM

Topic: PANEL ON "WELCOME TO CLUB MED: IDEAL PLANTS FOR SAN DIEGO'S MEDITERRANEAN CLIMATE"

Meeting is open and everyone is welcome. Admission: Members/free, Non-Members/\$10.

Parking is free. Meeting Place: Del Mar Fairgrounds, Surfside Race Place, Del Mar; Info: (619) 296-9215

This month we welcome members Jason Kubrock, Mo Price, and Wendy Proud for a panel discussion of incredible plants from South Africa, Australia and the American Southwest suited for San Diego gardens. Each speaker will share proven plants as well as new introductions, and show how they integrate beautifully into landscapes.

Jason Kubrock, formerly senior horticulturist at San Diego Botanic Garden and now an instructor at MiraCosta College's horticulture program, will discuss *South African Plants for California Gardens*. Jason will introduce a variety of horticultural treasures from South Africa, including their culture and landscape uses. Some of this African flora is tried and true, while others are new or upcoming – perfect additions to our horticultural wish lists.

Mo Price, a Master Gardener, authority on Australian native plants, and San Diego Botanic Garden docent, will discuss *Australian Plants That Thrive in our Mediterranean Climate*. Based on her experience growing more than 75 varieties in her own garden, Mo will share practical advice on these plants' specific soil, water and fertilizer requirements that will help them thrive here. She will showcase some of her favorites as well as some 2012 Koala Blooms plant introductions coming to California nurseries.

Wendy Proud, California Sales representative for Mountain States Wholesale Nursery (www.mswn.com), will discuss the *Native Flora of the Sonoran Desert*. These unique native species adapt to our region and perform beautifully in combination with California natives and other plants from around the world. As water prices continue to increase, desert adapted plants are smart choices for area landscapes.

To learn more see page 3. 🌿



Jason Kubrock



Mo Price



Wendy Proud

SAN DIEGO HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Established September 1994

BOARD MEMBERS

Patty Berg – Volunteer Coordinator
Jeff Biletnikoff – Meeting Room Coordinator
Jim Bishop – President, Membership Chair
Linda Bresler – Member at Large
Mark Collins – Finance/Budget Committee
Julian Duval – San Diego Botanic Garden Representative
Mary James – Program Committee Chair
Dannie McLaughlin – Tour Coordinator
Susan Oddo – Publicity Coordinator
Stephanie Shigematsu – Member at Large
Susi Torre-Bueno – Newsletter Editor, Past President
Cathy Tylka – Treasurer
Don Walker – Past President
Lucy Warren – Secretary

Let's Talk Plants!, the SDHS newsletter, is published the fourth Monday of every month.

Editor/Advertising: Susi Torre-Bueno;
(760) 295-2173; newsletter@sdhortsoc.org
Calendar: Send details by the 10th of the month before event to calendar@sdhortsoc.org.

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☛New Email? New Street Address?

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

BECOME A SPONSOR!

Do you own a garden-related business?

SDHS sponsorships have high recognition and valuable benefits, including a link to your website, discounts on memberships for your employees, and free admission to SDHS events. This is a wonderful way to show your support for the SDHS. Sponsors help pay for our monthly meetings, annual college scholarships, and other important programs. Sponsorships start at just \$100/year; contact Jim Bishop at sponsor@sdhortsoc.org. Sponsors are listed on page 10; those with ads in the newsletter have the words SDHS Sponsor above their ads. We thank them for their extra support!

2013 SPRING GARDEN TOUR: YOUR CHANCE TO STRUT YOUR STUFF!

By Dannie McLaughlin

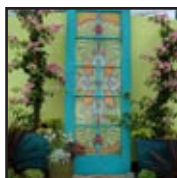


Remember how much you enjoyed the garden tours you've been on? How fascinating it was to see the ways other people used perennials and pathways, succulents and stones, color and texture and art in their gardens? Now you have the chance to show off YOUR garden – and let your hard work and creativity really shine. And for a very good cause, too! Sharing your garden with others is part of the great tradition of nurturing and caring that gardeners have in common. Just as you've enjoyed other people's gardens, so will they delight in yours!

The Spring Garden Tour is our biggest fundraiser of the year and proceeds go towards funding college scholarships for local horticultural students, as well as for our programs that promote the enjoyment and knowledge of horticulture in the San Diego area. Your beautiful garden can help us reach our goals by being an inspiring part of this Tour. Best of all, our volunteers will take care of all the mundane things on tour day, freeing you to do the fun part – talking to visitors about your garden.

Please contact tour coordinator Dannie McLaughlin at dr.dannie@roadrunner.com. Let her explain how easy it is to share your garden with others, and how we'll make tour day a joyful and rewarding experience for you.

Tour planning and organization starts this Fall, and you'll enjoy being part of this very exciting activity. What a delightful way to see some marvelous gardens! Volunteer ASAP to help with: garden selection and photography, event logistics, tour publicity, organizing musicians and artists, signage and map preparation, plant ID, ticket sales strategy, etc. The time commitment is very varied, and some tasks involve just a few phone calls, while others will keep your organizational skills well-honed. Contact Patty Berg for more details at pattyberg@gmail.com. ☛



IMPORTANT MEMBER INFORMATION

The gorgeous hand-painted door from our Fair garden is for sale at Chicweed in Solana Beach (www.ChicWeed.com).

Fall Home/Garden Show – A Little Work, A Lotta Fun!

Tory Monigold and Jason Hunter, SDHS members and partners at Entwined Landscape Design, have graciously agreed to design our Fall Home/Garden Show booth with an Edible Gardens theme. This year's show is on Friday, September 14; Saturday, September 15 and Sunday, September 16. There are still some time slots available for volunteers to staff our booth. The shifts are just four hours and you'll have free admission to see all the great vendors, displays and speakers before or after your shift. Parking will be reimbursed, too. This is part of our outreach to the community and a chance to show and tell San Diegans about all the great benefits of being a SDHS member. You need not be a horticulture expert but you do need to be outgoing. If you're not too shy, this is lots of fun! To volunteer, please contact Patty Berg at PattyJBerg@gmail.com or 760-815-0625.

Coordinate Plant Display Table At Monthly Meeting

We are looking for a volunteer to organize and recruit other volunteers to help with the plant display table (see page 13) starting in 2013. For 2012, Susi Torre-Bueno has been organizing the table to highlight one type of plant, usually related to the meeting topic, and finding an expert to staff the table and answer questions. You can continue this in 2013, or come up with new ideas that would encourage member participation. To volunteer please contact Patty Berg at PattyJBerg@gmail.com or 760-815-0625.

Thanks So Much!



Many thanks to Bobbi & Gene Hirschhoff for hosting our August Featured Garden at their fascinating Encinitas garden. Look for photos on our Facebook page. ☛



TO LEARN MORE...

By Ava Torre-Bueno

Ideal Plants For San Diego's Mediterranean Climate

Only 3 percent of the Earth's surface has the climate condition called "Mediterranean." We are fortunate enough to live in this rarified environment, but it brings responsibilities as well as pleasures. Our gardening, indeed our lives, is limited by the amount of clean water available to us. If we waste our clean water on gardens that don't belong in our region, we will pay the price in just a few years when our major sources of water dry up.

We can have gorgeous gardens that use next to no water, if we plan well. Let's start close to home. Here's a website with plants of the Sonoran Desert (the barrel cactus above is from this website):

www.blueplanetbiomes.org/sonoran_desert_plant_page.htm

This is an informative page about South African plants:

www.southafrica.info/about/animals/flora.htm

Go to Google Images and put in "halfmens plant" to see a particularly fun organism.

This page includes a photo gallery includes over 700 images of Australian native plants: <http://asgap.org.au/>

Continued on page 6



FALL HOME/GARDEN SHOW

Just In Time For Fall Gardening

The Fall Home/Garden Show at the Del Mar Fairgrounds is coming right up on September 14, 15, and 16. This is your perfect opportunity to select plants for our most important planting season from local growers. The Garden Marketplace includes vendors selling hundreds of varieties of plants from local growers.

The San Diego Horticultural Society will have an expanded presence, with examples of some of the many plants that thrive in our wonderful climate. This is a great time to volunteer and have fun sharing your passion with other plant enthusiasts (see page 2).

There will be many garden groups attending. Bring your questions to the Master Gardeners and learn from the experts about other gardening groups you may want to join. Also, there will be many different plants for sale from local nurseries.

The show runs Friday, Sept. 14, 11am-6pm; Saturday, Sept. 15, 10am-6pm; and Sunday, Sept. 16, 10am-5pm. Admission: \$8; children under 12 are free. Seniors: only \$1 on Friday. After 3pm daily, all tickets are \$6. Discount tickets on the website are \$6.

Members of San Diego Horticultural Society can access FREE tickets at www.fallhomegardenshow.com/CLUB. code

For more information and updates on show features, visit: www.fallhomegardenshow.com or our Facebook page: San Diego Home/Garden Shows. 🌿



FROM THE BOARD

By Jim Bishop

This is our 18th year! See page 7 for a summary of all the activities of the past year. We hope to see you at our September meeting to celebrate. There will be cake!

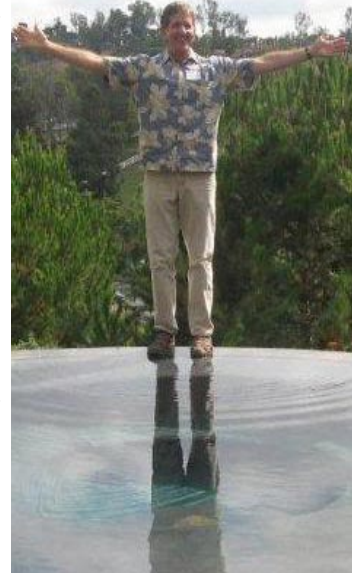
Fall is just around the corner and it is time to start thinking about fall planting. To help get the season started, SDHS members will be given FREE admission to the Fall Home/Garden Show at the Del Mar Fairgrounds (see box at left). Look for your free pass in the monthly email message. You can also contribute by volunteering to help staff our booth at the show; see page 2 for more information. If you have a garden-related business or are a member of another garden-related organization and would like to participate in the show, contact Lawrence Bame at lawrence@sandiegohomegardenshows.com

On October 14 we'll be hosting our Volunteer Appreciation Party, held this year at Susi Torre-Bueno's garden in Vista. Invitations will be emailed this month to members who volunteered in the past year. This replaces the October Coffee-in-the-Garden and will be just for volunteers. We are always looking for more volunteers; see page 2 for opportunities.

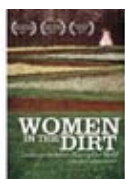
The Pacific Horticulture Society has recently updated their website; see www.PacificHorticulture.org. The site includes seven years of archived articles for online reading.

SDHS is also co-sponsoring with Pacific Horticulture a tour of Morocco and Andalucia. See page 11 to learn more about this tour and other upcoming Pacific Horticulture tours. As we are a sponsoring society of Pacific Horticulture Society, SDHS members can join Pacific Horticulture online for \$18 (a \$10 savings); go to www.sdhortsoc.org/ordernow.htm.

SDHS has purchased, and will be transitioning to, a new membership management system called Wild Apricot. Wild Apricot will replace our current membership database, website, events and email systems. The new site allows members to renew their membership online, update their profiles, volunteer and learn about and register for upcoming events. Members will be able to login to the website to download the monthly newsletter and see exclusive member only content. The new site allows for more interaction between members and offers several new features. We are very excited about this change and will update you as the transition progresses. 🌿



Our Volunteers Walk on Water! Scott Borden at 2011 VAP



THE REAL DIRT ON...

By Linda Bresler

Isabelle Greene

Isabelle Clara Greene is one of the foremost California landscape architects, known for incorporating sustainability and native plants in the landscape. The landscapes that she designs age gracefully and flow naturally with the land and climate, conserving water, energy, and materials.

Still creating beautiful landscape designs at the age of 76, she heads a landscape architecture firm in Santa Barbara, Isabelle Greens & Associates (www.isabellegreene.com), that specializes in working with the natural terrain and promotes sustainable landscaping principles. Isabelle believes that the plants for a landscape should be chosen for their ability to thrive naturally in the landscape and often uses native plants. Their growth habits should fit into the spaces designed for them without the necessity for pruning and trimming. Water, fertilizer, chemical and general maintenance needs should be kept to a minimum. Isabelle actively encourages green building in the community. She sits on The Sustainability Project's Board for Land Use, and is a founding member of the Green Building Alliance.

Isabelle is the granddaughter of Henry Mather Greene, of Greene and Greene Architects, a prominent Arts and Crafts architect in the Pasadena area who designed the famous Gamble house. From a young age, she loved nature and filled her backyard with a "museum" of minerals, insects, and plants. She studied botany at UCLA, receiving a B.A. in 1956, and continued her studies in studio art and then landscape architecture at UC Santa Barbara, the University of Oregon and UCLA.

Her professional life began as a botanical illustrator. A close friend suggested that she design a landscape for his office. This spontaneous first project led to an award. She opened her landscape architecture office in 1964. Within a short period of time, Isabelle was creating some of the most celebrated gardens in the West, and many became known throughout the world.

In her Founder's Statement, Isabelle says: "I try to bring my love affair with this land into the tiny patches of earth entrusted to my design. My life's work stems from a belief that design is really a very small portion of a large whole." She believes that in designing a garden, "it's all about movement. It's about your movement, walking through the garden, and the experience enhanced by different kinds of movement all around: the fluttering of leaves and swaying of grasses in a breeze; the appearance and disappearance of birds and the scuttling of creatures on the ground; and the inexorable movement of time, which is fundamental to a garden's soul...and throughout, the whole collection moves and changes every season."

Isabelle's designs embrace the unique visual qualities of the spaces and the plants themselves. She creates compositions that deftly reinterpret the landscape, inventing anew rather than repeating past practices. Her work moves the viewer beyond recognized images to the essence of the garden experience. The over six hundred gardens that she has designed are diverse, innovative, and original. Yet they have one common element: the ease with which each design incorporates the surroundings, allowing the buildings, garden and adjacent features to appear as if they had been one for many years. She is one of seven female landscape architects featured in the film *Women in the Dirt*.

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



GOING WILD WITH THE NATIVES

By Pat Pawlowski

Ho! Hums, Part 2

Oh give me a home where the hummingbirds roam. All you need are the right plants. Last month I mentioned some; here's a few more: Chuparosa (*Justicia californica*) - Small deciduous shrub with orange flowers.

Lupines (*Lupinus* spp.) - Annuals and perennials, most in blue hues.

Monkeyflowers (*Mimulus* spp.) - Perennials. *M. aurantiacus* is the most drought tolerant.

Scarlet bugler (*Penstemon centranthifolius*) - A perennial to toot about.

Sages (*Salvia* spp.) - Mostly perennials. Star performers are *Salvia clevelandii* and its cultivars. NOTE: Breaking tradition, I'm including *Salvia chiapensis*, a native of Mexico. It's one of the best: a tireless bloomer, evergreen, thrives in a container, accepts some shade.

Woolly blue curls (*Trichostemma lanatum*) - Fragrant evergreen with needlelike leaves and fuzzy blue flowers.

Many of these nectar plants also attract beneficial insects (Surprise! About one-third of a hummer's diet consists of tiny bugs). Naturally, you wouldn't spray pesticide on plants visited by hummingbirds; besides, a healthy plant whose cultural requirements have been met has a natural ability to fight off pests. Learn to accept a few funky-looking leaves; the only plants with perfect leaves are those made of plastic.

Speaking of plastic (although some are made of glass) – there is always the store-bought hummingbird feeder. The recipe is: one part sugar to four parts water. Boil. (No food coloring is needed.) But you must keep the feeder very clean, especially in hot weather. It's actually easier and cheaper to get a few great hummingbird plants instead. Many will reside happily in pots.

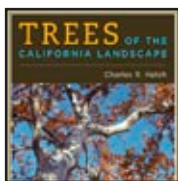
After you've acquired your plants, just add water. By this I mean providing a place for dirty birds to bathe. The best bath is a very shallow, flat area with water running gently across the surface. A small fountain is good. In the wild, hummers will dip themselves into bits of water held cupped in a leaf. Small and shallow is best; they don't need a birdbath the size of a horse trough.

Fall marks the return of the native planting season. Start making out your list of desirables now. The San Diego Chapter of the California Native Plant Society (www.cnpssd.org) has their plant sale in Balboa Park on October 13. The Lake Hodges Native Plant Club (www.lhnpc.org) usually has theirs in North County the first Saturday of November; as the date gets closer, check the website.

As your garden attracts hummers, you'll want to know more about them. According to Claude Edwards, the go-to hummingbird expert, there are six species commonly recorded in our county: Allen's, Anna's, Black-chinned, Calliope, Costa's, and Rufous (shown above). The Annas and Costas are year-round residents.

To find out even more, who you gonna call? How about the San Diego Chapter of the Audubon Society (www.sandiegoaudubon.org). Why not attend one of their meetings – they'll welcome you with open wings. Plus, their field trips are fun, and you'll get to see lots of great plants, some of which you'll want to include in your own homestead for hummingbirds.

Member Pat Pawlowski is a writer, lecturer/garden consultant who was a hummingbird in a previous life. 🐦



TREES, PLEASE

By Tim Clancy

What's your objective?

One approach to pruning trees is to clearly define an objective to be accomplished by the pruning process. The objective will help you then decide what needs to be done to achieve the desired outcome. The book *Pirone's Tree Maintenance* lists four main types of pruning for trees: pruning for safety, pruning for training, pruning for health and stability, and pruning for appearance.

Pruning for safety is a pretty straightforward objective. It's a fairly simple matter to identify large branches that should be removed because they are broken in some way, or dead. These branches can pose a hazard if they fall and injure people or damage property. Providing proper clearance from signs, buildings and traveled ways is also easy to identify.

Is the branch blocking a stop sign or does it obscure the address to your house? (No wonder the pizza delivery is always late!) The San Diego Urban Forests Council has adopted a clearance standard for tree pruning. This will give you an idea of what needs to be done when pruning for clearance: <http://tinyurl.com/Sept-trees-1>.

Pruning for training (now referred to as structural pruning) is meant for mostly young trees. Most of this pruning should focus on eliminating multiple leaders in trees that typically have a strong central leader (trees with an excurrent growth habit). Trees that grow in a *decurrent* form can be pruned to mimic an excurrent form, but you'll be disappointed if you want it to stay that way. The tree's genetic programming is going to want it to grow back to its more natural round headed form. Here's a link to an example of structural pruning: <http://tinyurl.com/Sept-trees-2>.

Things start to get subjective when we enter the category of **Pruning for health and stability**. Pruning for disease control is an accepted practice and can benefit the tree in many ways. Pruning to eliminate a situation referred to as "included bark" can also be a worthwhile endeavor: <http://tinyurl.com/Sept-trees-3>.

There are certainly other situations when a pruning cut will improve the health and stability of a tree. However, if that is the reason you are given it is best for you to ask for specifics. You may want to ask yourself "how does leaving a certain branch diminish the health and stability?" I have seen far too many trees that have had perfectly fine branches lopped off in the name of "health and stability."

Pirone's final category is always the most problematic for me. **Pruning for appearance** is really pruning the tree the way the pruner thinks it should look. As we all know, beauty is in the eye of the beholder. If you start to look around at the way trees are pruned commercially you will see a lot of over-pruning.

A great book with pictures of how trees should look is *Trees of the California Landscape: A Photographic Manual of Native and Ornamental Trees*: <http://tinyurl.com/Sept-trees-4>.

Of course you could check the San Diego Horticulture Society's own *Ornamental Trees for Mediterranean Climates, the Trees of San Diego*.

Next time: A simplified approach to diagnosis to help you arrive at an objective.

Member Tim Clancy is an International Society of Arboriculture Certified Arborist #WE-0806A. Tim welcomes comments and questions and can be reached at treemanagers@gmail.com. ☺

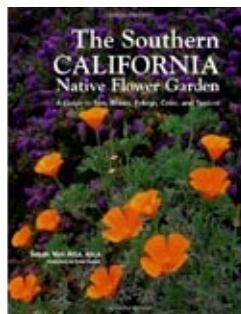


The left trunk on the melaleuca tree in the foreground is leaning drastically and should come out (it was later removed).



BOOK REVIEW

Reviewed by Caroline McCullagh



The Southern California Native Flower Garden: A Guide to Size, Bloom, Foliage, Color, and Texture

By Susan Van Atta

Lean in close and I'll tell you a secret. I don't keep all the books I review. All of them have been worth reading once, but only a few get permanent shelf space in my house. This one is definitely a keeper.

Susan Van Atta is a landscape architect who works out of Santa Barbara. She covers 164 plants in this compact book. She does that in a format that I have seen before. Each page is sliced in three: top, middle, and bottom. In the press release that came with the book, these are called tri-cut flip pages. I once had a cookbook in the same format, and I thought it was clever, but not especially useful. After all, how hard is it to pick recipes? But for selecting plants for your garden, it's terrific. If I remember my high school math correctly, that gives us about 150,000 possible combinations of plants to consider. Whether you're choosing one plant or a yard full, if you want California natives, this is the book for you.

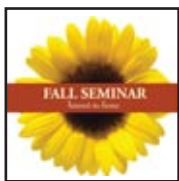
The top sections cover 50 plants that grow to between three and eight feet tall. A series of symbols show whether the plant is no water, low water, or moderate; the type of sun and soil it needs; and the *Sunset Western Garden Book* zones in which it will grow. Each plant and most of the flowers and leaves are illustrated with very good color drawings (of both the entire plant and a flower close-up). Additional symbols show whether the plant attracts butterflies, bees, songbirds, hummingbirds, or other animals. The edges of the pages are color-coded to mark the season when the plants are at their showiest. In addition, the facing 1/3 page has text describing the plant's characteristics and uses. Van Atta packs a lot of information in a small space.

The middle sections of each page have plants that grow from two to three feet high; lower sections show plants that are one to two feet high. The final few pages include 14 trees and shrubs that grow more than eight feet high.

Even if you aren't planning to redo your entire yard in California natives, you do have to replace plants from time to time. Each time you plant a native you provide habitat for native animals, birds, and insects. Since these native plants usually require no fertilizer, minimal water, and little care, they are definitely worth considering when you have to replant.

The Southern California Native Flower Garden (ISBN-13: 978-1-4236-0328-3) is hardbound and 144 pages long. It includes an index, a bibliography, and a list of sources of native plants. None of those sources happen to be in San Diego, but your local nursery should be able to order any of the plants you want, or you may have an excuse for a road trip.

Full disclosure: The publisher, Gibbs Smith, also publishes my recent book, *American Trivia*. They have an extensive catalog (www.Gibbs-Smith.com) that you might find interesting. ☺



SAN DIEGO MASTER GARDENER FALL SEMINAR

HARVEST TO HOME

Registration is now open for this year's San Diego Master Gardener Fall Seminar. This year's theme is Harvest to Home. Come explore what's new in horticulture, home gardening and urban farming. Learn how to cook creative, healthy meals using your garden harvest, as demonstrated by Chef Miguel Valdez from The Red Door Restaurant. If you are curious about urban farming, we are offering the basics of beekeeping and the coop scoop on raising backyard chickens from Bill Tall of City Farmer's Nursery. We are hosting a variety of other sessions on herbs, landscape design, capturing rainwater, as well as tips for growing beautiful fruit and vegetables year round.

Our outdoor Garden Marketplace will feature vendor booths with everything from birdhouses to bulbs. Shop for new and gently-used garden items at our Green Elephant sale, enjoy Master Gardener demonstrations and create your own hypertufa garden planter at the make and take workshop. Our gourmet brown box lunch will be served picnic style, prepared with locally grown fresh produce from Water's Catering.

The fall seminar will be held on Saturday, October 6th from 8:45 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at St. Madeleine Sophie's Center. This beautiful campus set in the foothills of El Cajon is an educational facility for disabled adults. The meandering pathways guide you through three acres of gardens, greenhouses, and a plant nursery produced by the students.

Please join us at this new and exciting venue. For your convenience, we have ample parking, shuttle service, merchandise holding, free refreshments, air-conditioned classrooms and more.

For more information and to register go to www.mastergardenerssandiego.org.

■ Learn More Continued from page 3

Even the Christian Science Monitor advocates water-wise gardening: <http://tinyurl.com/CSM-Medit>

And our own zoo has a Mediterranean demonstration garden: www.sandiegozoo.org/CF/plants/gardendetail47.html

The City of San Diego is experimenting with a water reclamation system that will make us independent of Colorado River water and Sacramento Delta water (see page 6 of the August 2012 newsletter). It wouldn't matter if it didn't rain at all! With this system we would have water security for bathing, drinking, doing the dishes and gardening. Orange County has had this system up and running for several years now. You can go for a tour and see what's up in water purification: www.sandiego.gov/water/waterreuse/demo

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



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

By Patty Berg

For the Esty Sisters, Gardening is not a Spectator Sport!

This month we introduce a new column by our Volunteer Coordinator, Patty Berg. She'll spotlight a different volunteer (or two) in each newsletter. To start off, here's a dynamic duo!



Patty Berg

At first glance, there isn't much about Kathy Esty and her (barely) younger sister Abby that would lead you to guess they worked in science for over 30 years. Their love of whimsical jewelry, bright fabrics and maybe even a flowery hat or two

doesn't exactly put you in mind of genetic engineering and cancer research. But that is exactly the world they inhabited before they discovered early retirement and the joys of volunteering.

As teenagers in 1960s Point Loma, Kathy and Abby enjoyed something of the hippie life. That is if you can imagine hippies who – after they turned on, tuned in and dropped out – pursued advanced degrees at UCSD. This perfectly positioned them to be in the forefront of the biotechnology wave that soon would cluster on Torrey Pines mesa. After successful careers in the pharmaceutical industry, they bring that same drive and energy to the lucky few non-profits where their passions now lie.

"We're Italian!" is how they explain being more than just sisters. "We've been best friends practically since birth," Kathy adds. Born in Chicago, they moved to San Diego when they were just five and six. Having an older brother also seemed to cement their relationship, since he tormented them both, as older brothers can usually be counted on to do. Remarkably, to this day they still share many of the same interests and, lucky for us, one of them is horticulture.

Their home in Bay Park is their new lab and California natives are their new love. Abby points out that a lot of people moved toward xeriscape as the water shortage became apparent, "but we've gone a step further by creating a California native garden to attract more migratory birds." The result has been a work in progress, but the Estys note that it's never been more fun to watch the wildlife enjoy what they've done.

They are quick to point out that they are by no means gardening experts, and that was one reason they joined Hort. "We were looking for a chance to ask dumb questions and get useful answers," they say. They found that SDHS folks were friendly and generous with advice.

You'll often see Kathy and Abby welcoming members and guests at the meeting check-in. They also frequently help in other capacities for our many events and activities. In addition, they volunteer with The Audubon Society, San Diego History Center and the San Diego Floral Association. But their number one cause – the non-profit they are most dedicated to – is After The Finish Line, which provides funding and grants for thoroughbred rescue organizations. Their number one passion, however, is spoiling their newly-rescued six year old Corgi/Beagle mix named Mabel.

That sure seems like a lot to keep up with, but Abby and Kathy clearly thrive on it. These lively sisters and best friends prove the old saying, "if you need something done, ask a busy person!"



HAPPY 18TH BIRTHDAY TO US!

By Jim Bishop

A very heartfelt *thank you* to the passionate founders who created our Society in 1994: Don & Dorothy Walker, Steve Brigham, Diana Goforth, Laurie Bussis, Bill & Linda Teague, Adele Snyder and Kathy Musial. Their vision set us on the path to having a friendly group that enjoys sharing information and the joy of gardening. Our members range from beginning gardeners to skilled professionals – what they have in common is a passion for plants. In the past 18 years we have grown to over 1300 members, making us one of the largest and most active garden groups in the United States. We also thank our sponsors (see page 10) for the financial support that enables us to accomplish as much as we do.

We can use *your* help, too. See page 2 for volunteer opportunities – it's a great way to use your talents and meet like-minded folks. I know firsthand that you get so much more out of a group if you are actively involved. Over 200 members volunteered this year for events like the Spring and Fall Home/Garden Shows, our garden tour, the San Diego County Fair, Coffee in the Garden and many other activities. Our board members (names on page 2) act behind the scenes to keep things running smoothly.

What have we done this year? Our extremely popular Coffee-in-the-Garden gatherings included nurseries and gardens all over the county, plus a Pomegranate & Persimmon Picking in Pauma Valley – thanks to all our gracious hosts. In March, Dannie McLaughlin organized our local garden tour of exceptional La Mesa gardens, our best-attended tour to date. The SDHS display at the Spring and Fall Home/Garden Shows attracted lots of attention. Al Myrick led the judging for our awards for the Regional Science Fair, and also coordinated our three \$1000 college scholarships. In late April, 42 members visited Rancho La Puerta in Tecate for an exclusive behind the scenes horticultural tour. Susi Torre-Bueno coordinated a sold-out bi-lingual workshop in May on *Sustainable Garden Maintenance* (led by Lynlee Austell). In May, many of us toured the varied and horticulturally diverse gardens of the San Francisco Bay area. Our award-winning display garden at the San Diego County Fair, designed by Susanna Pagan and constructed with the help of MiraCosta Horticulture students, was a huge success, winning the most awards of any exhibit. Also in June, Susi Torre-Bueno was honored as Horticulturist of the Year at our private outdoor meeting at the San Diego County Fair Flower & Garden Show.

Our monthly meetings remain the heart of what we do and we are appreciative of our exceptional vendors and everyone who contributes. Mary James assumed the chair of the Program Committee, replacing Judy Bradley, who led the committee for many years. Both did an outstanding job of recruiting exciting speakers. Speakers covered a wide range of topics from native plants, succulents, proteas, edible landscapes, and sustainable gardening to repurposing materials, and the importance of trees.

Our newsletter continues to be a major member benefit, and we encourage all members to read it online. Last October, to help with printing and mailing costs, we began charging for the printed newsletter. Currently over half our members read the newsletter exclusively online. I want to thank this year's regular contributors: Scott Borden, Linda Bresler, Tom Clancy, Joan Herskowitz, Neal King, Caroline McCullagh, Pat Pawlowski, Robin Rivet, Greg Rubin,



Sneak peek of the garden railroad at the September featured garden (Bonita).

Trudy Thompson, and Ava Torre-Bueno. In addition, nearly 20 members help with processing the newsletters that go in the mail – hats off to all of them. Also, many members contributed to the Sharing Secrets column. Thanks to Rachel Cobb, our graphics editor, for always making the newsletter look so good.

So... what's in store for the coming year? October 14 we'll be hosting our Volunteer Appreciation Party in the garden of Susi Torre-Bueno. We'll continue our popular Coffee-in-the-Garden, renamed to Monthly-Featured-Garden to better reflect the event. Most of our 2013 speakers have been selected, and talks will include topics such as Mediterranean plants, plant exploration, an update on the rose industry, and a new book by society members on native plants. Our website will be getting a new look and feel, becoming more interactive with up-to-date information about events, volunteer opportunities and much more.

How much we can accomplish really depends on you, so volunteer now, get involved, and make friends with some truly dedicated gardeners. 🌿



Above: The meditative labyrinth at Jim Helms' Fallbrook garden, which we visited for the July Coffee in the Garden.



Left: One of the fabulous planters at Susan and Frank Oddo's garden, visited in October 2011.



MY LIFE WITH PLANTS

By Jim Bishop

This is a continuing series of articles that chronicle Jim Bishop's experiences with plants and the effect they have had on his life

My First Landscape

At the end of my freshman year of college my parents moved from the Spring Shadows subdivision in Spring Branch, home of Spring Woods High School, to an unincorporated wooded area north of Houston simply known as Spring. They built a two-storey house on a corner lot in a quasi-French style, and lived there for the next 25 years.

Surrounding the house were large oaks and pines, most so tall that their first branches were above the second story of the house... leading my younger brother – much to my father's dismay – to dub it the telephone pole factory. Over the years, most of the trees would be removed... some by tornado.

That first summer my mother and I installed the landscape. We ignored the tradition of a row of foundation shrubs around the house, and instead used curved brick walkways and deep planting beds full of layers of plants. My father complained that there wasn't enough lawn and the neighbors would think we were crazy. We used the latest plant introductions, including a hybrid St. Augustine grass that was chinch bug resistant and required less pesticide.

We started with a brick path along one side of the house and another from the back patio to the vegetable garden behind the garage. The front of the house was mostly boxwoods, hollies, azaleas, flowering quince, ivy, liriopse, and pittosporums. My mother always wanted a redbud tree, so we planted one in the curve of the front walk. At the street we flanked the walk with watermelon-pink crepe myrtles. To block the view of the neighbor's driveway, I placed a loquat tree near the property line, along with variegated *Pittosporum tobria*, leaving them untrimmed to create a 6-foot tall screen. At the front corner of the lot, mother planted a 1-gallon Southern magnolia, which grew to dominate that area. To decrease the amount of west sun on the front of the house we planted a dozen 1-gallon pines, which grew so large that fifteen years later all but one was removed. In another island bed, we planted a bareroot pecan tree with a 3-foot tap root. In planting it we learned how high the water table was. One of us dug out the heavy clay soil while the other baled the water that kept filling the hole. We surrounded the tree with hybrid triploid daylilies we bought from a local hybridizer.

In one island bed we planted roses. None did well except Queen Elizabeth (God Save the Queen!). Between the long hot humid summer, bugs, and diseases, it is almost impossible to grow hybrid roses in Houston.

In the back yard, we installed hydrangeas underplanted with violets



Celosia plumes

and impatiens. Another exceptionally wide bed received dogwoods, gardenias, oxalis, cast iron plants and amaryllis. At the end of the garage mother planted a bottlebrush, wrapped every winter to keep it from freezing. Other beds contained hybrid azaleas, newly introduced bush cultivars of crepe myrtle and fruit trees.

In summer mother planted celosia, which grew 4-feet tall with brilliant flame-like flower spikes in yellow, orange, red, burgundy and purple. Mom would make huge bouquets of them at Thanksgiving. Unfortunately, celosia is wind pollinated, and I developed a severe allergic reaction – ahh, the joys of gardening in Houston!

Jim Bishop is President of San Diego Horticultural Society and a Garden Designer. ☞



FLORAL DESIGN & DECOR VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

You have a special opportunity to work with designer René van Rems, AIFD, as he prepares décor and floral design for the upcoming non-profit fundraiser for San Diego Botanic Garden, their annual *Gala in the Gardens*. The Gala will be held on Saturday, September 8 at San Diego Botanic Garden. The dates for working together at the Garden are Thursday, Sept. 6 (8am–noon and/or 1pm–5pm); Friday, Sept. 7 (8am–5pm); and Saturday, Sept. 8 (8am–3pm). This is a pro-bono opportunity for all participants. No experience required. Please bring a floral knife and pruner if available, dress in layers, bring plenty of water and snacks and wear comfortable shoes. If you would like to learn about design in a hands-on way, please contact Cathy Brinks ASAP in the René van Rems International office at (760) 804-5800. ☞

**Join the fun and bring
ANNUALS and PERENNIALS
to the Plant Display table at the
September 10 meeting.**

**Expert Stephanie Shigematsu will be on
hand to answer your questions.**

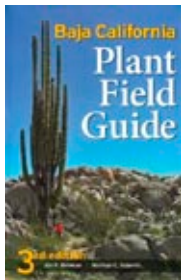
ARE YOU READING THIS IN COLOR??

Our monthly eblast has the password for the digital newsletter, featuring all color images and live links. Back issues are also on our website. Over half our members like it so much they get only the digital edition! To switch to the digital edition exclusively send an email saying "online only" to membership@sdhortsoc.org.



BOOK REVIEW

Reviewed by Susi Torre-Bueno



Baja California Plant Field Guide, 3rd Edition

By Jon P. Rebman and
Norman C. Roberts

Full disclosure: I was pre-disposed to like this book because author Jon Rebman was our 2011 Horticulturist of the Year; a heck of a nice guy, and a passionate and first-rate botanist. That being said, I can unequivocally say that this is a *fabulous* book and has *all* the features I wish were present in many other books. In a press release the publisher notes that, "Over 715 different plants in more than 350 genera in 111 families are described," and "50% of the species listed are also found in southern California and the Sonora desert." So, even if you never head south of the border, you can use this book right at home. Bravo to Dr. Rebman and to the San Diego Natural History Museum for publishing what is certain to become a classic.

Beautiful photographs, excellent maps and illustrations, easy-to-read type, and thoughtful page design have resulted in a very handsome book. An extensive index, comprehensive glossary, handy metric conversion chart, and helpful drawings of leaf shapes and flower parts make the book especially useful because you don't have to keep looking things up elsewhere.

The book begins with 40 pages (by a variety of experts) about Baja's climate, geology, conservation, and more. This section is both better written and more interesting than in other books I've read. My personal experience with Baja California is limited to visits with family in Tijuana, friends in Rosarito, and day trips only as far south as Ensenada, about 62 miles from San Diego. And while I might never go much further south, this book makes the peninsula come alive for me in ways I wasn't expecting.

Following this, 360 pages are organized by plant families, with a brief description of the characteristics of each family. Within each family the species are listed in alphabetical order, with at least one really good photo of each plant. The plant descriptions are both accurate and very accessible – easy for the layman to understand and interesting, too. You will learn about the origin of the plant name, both Spanish and English common names, plus where and how the plant grows. In addition, many plants are put in historical content. Here's three excerpts:

Cnidoscolus maculatus: "This robust, winter-deciduous, herbaceous perennial to 1.2 m tall rises from multiple, tuberous roots and has nasty stinging hairs. The deeply 3- to 5-lobed leaves are 8–15 cm wide with a coarsely toothed margin sporting 1–2.5 cm long, spinelike hairs on each tooth. The white flowers, stems, and usually dark green leaves are armed with stiff, bulb-based, stinging hairs 4–8 mm long. Once having experienced these stinging hairs, you will easily remember both the plant and the name Mala Mujer, meaning "bad woman" in Spanish."

Fouquieria columnaris: "The Boojum Tree is the most charismatic species in the Fouquieriaceae and perhaps in any plant family on the entire peninsula. This species often looks like a large, upside-down, albino carrot and forms strange columnar forests with irregular, curling branches reminiscent of Dr. Seuss books. A landscape dominated by this species and accompanied by other large succulents such as Elephant Cactus/Cardón (*Pachycereus pringlei*), Baja California Tree Yucca (*Yucca valida*), and elephant trees (*Pachycormus discolor* and *Bursera* spp.) is an

unusual and memorable sight that is not easily forgotten."

Salvia apiana: "White Sage is one of the most common aromatic sages in the northern part of our region and is a shrub to 1.5 m tall that has a woody base and grayish-white, herbaceous, 4-sided upper branches. The 4–8 cm long, widely lanceolate, opposite, evergreen leaves are minutely toothed and densely covered with tiny, appressed hairs on both surfaces, giving the leaves a white or pale-green appearance. The lavender to white flowers are 2-lipped with lavender lines on the lower lip, up to 25 mm long, and have strongly exerted stamens and style. The flowers bloom Mar–Jul in clusters on prominent stalks to 2 m high that rise well above the leafy basal stems, making them readily identifiable. In Baja California, White Sage grows in sandy washes and on rocky hillsides in northwestern BC from the USA/Mexico border south to the northern part of the Central Desert in the vicinity of Punta Prieta. It also occurs northward into southern California below 1500 m elevation to the western side of the Mohave Desert. Animals browse on the leaves in the winter and indigenous peoples used this plant for various purposes. It is often used as a condiment for tongue and black bean dishes. It is considered a sacred plant by various groups and is commonly used as incense for cleansing a space of evil spirits..."

I urge you to get a copy of this book, either from the gift shop at the San Diego Natural History Museum or elsewhere. The price is \$34.95; ISBN: 978-0-916251-18-5. ☞



YARD SALE TO BENEFIT NEW COMMUNITY GARDEN IN VISTA

September 8, 8:00am

By Marsha Bode

A group of folks in Vista, with the advice and assistance of SDHS's Susi Torre-Bueno, are forming a community garden to raise organic fruits and vegetables. We have a name – Community Gardens of Vista – and a site in northeast Vista on a 2-½ acre orchard at the intersection of Friendly Drive and Alessandro Trail in Vista. Now we need help to buy fencing material for critter control and other start-up costs.

We are planning a yard sale to jump-start our treasury, and invite you to attend and bring lots of your gardening friends. The sale will be on Saturday, September 8 starting at 8:00am at 2136 Edgehill Road, Vista 92084 (near Foothill Drive and Warmlands). We need donations of all kinds of saleable items; if you can help please call Marsha Bode or Susan Deaver at (760) 842-8081 to arrange a time to drop off your donations.

The garden will feature a large growing area for classes offered to novice vegetable gardeners who will then share in the harvest of what they grow. A second phase will build plots for more experienced gardeners who want to work on their own. The Garden's goal is to appeal to persons of all income levels, skill levels, and ages by growing organic fruits and vegetable that will:

- Contribute to healthy living
- Save money at the grocery store
- Improve the land by learning and implementing Permaculture practices
- Offer a pleasant environment for families and individuals to work and learn together

We also need donations of garden tools and help with preparing the garden beds. For notices of events and photos of our progress check us out on Facebook at "Community Gardens of Vista" or email communitygardensofvista@gardener.com, or call Marsha Bode at (760) 842-8081. ☞

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

We encourage our 1300+ members to be active participants and share in the fun; to volunteer see page 2. A warm hello to these new members

We welcome Serra Gardens in Fallbrook as our newest sponsor – visit their Fallbrook display garden soon (www.SerraGardens.com).

Terrie Butler	Diane & Robert Gill	Surfrider Foundation
Chris & Shirley Cordner	Sarah Leslie	Pam Walker-Munoz
Jason T. Davenport	Chris Manion	Arielle Weisgrau
D.R.G. Industries	Gloria & Jeff Salem	David Weitz
El Capitan FFA	Nan Snody	

HORT BUCKS ARE GREAT!

Kudos to these members whose friends joined in 2012; they earned Hort Bucks worth \$5 towards Opportunity Drawing tickets, name-tags, Plant Forum CDs or dues. To get your Hort Bucks ask your friends to give your name when they join.

Lynlee Austell (2)	Shirley Littler (1)	Joan Roberts (1)
Patty Berg (1)	Rita McConn-Stern (1)	San Diego Floral Assoc. (1)
Linda Bresler (1)	Pat McDougal (1)	Ken Selzer (3)
Jim Bishop (2)	Kay & Vince McGrath (1)	Patty Sliney (1)
Patricia Bockstahler (1)	Gabriel Mitchell (1)	Nan Sterman (1)
Kay Harry (1)	Susan Morse (1)	Marcia Van Loy (1)
Julie Hasl (1)	Karin Norberg (1)	Janet Wanerka (1)
Joan Herskowitz (1)	Diane Norman (1)	Dick & Gail Wheaton (1)
Marla Keith (1)	Joan Oliver (1)	Roy Wilburn,
Jeannine & John Le Strada (1)	Gary Payne (1)	Sunshine Care (1)
	Katie Pelisek (1)	Anne Wolfe (2)



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Westward Expos

LIFE MEMBERS *Horticulturist of the Year

*Chuck Ades (2008)

*Walter Andersen (2002)

Norm Applebaum &

Barbara Roper

*Bruce & Sharon

Asakawa (2010)

Gladys T. Baird

Debra Lee Baldwin

*Steve Brigham (2009)

Laurie Connable

Julian & Leslie Duval

*Edgar Engert (2000)

Jim Farley

Sue & Charles Fouquette

Penelope Hlavac

Debbie & Richard Johnson

*Vince Lazaneo (2004)

*Jane Minshall (2006)

*Bill Nelson (2007)

Tina & Andy Rathbone

*Jon Rebman (2011)

Peggy Ruzich

San Diego Home/

Gardens Lifestyle

Gerald D. Stewart

*Susi Torre-Bueno (2012)

& Jose Torre-Bueno

*Don Walker (2005) &

Dorothy Walker

Lucy Warren

*Evelyn Weidner (2001)

*Pat Welsh (2003)

Betty Wheeler

CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS

Philip Tackill & Janet Wanerka

DISCOUNTS FOR MEMBERS

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

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

Join Grangetto's FREE Garden Club for coupons and tips delivered to your inbox. www.grangettos.com/garden.

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Anderson's La Costa Nursery Barrels & Branches, Botanical Partners, Buena Creek Gardens, California BeeWorks Cedros Gardens, IGS, Pacific Horticulture, Solana Succulents, Southwest Boulder & Stone and The Plant Man.



What's Up at

San Diego BOTANIC GARDEN

In Memory

By Bruce Berg, President,
San Diego County Orchid Society

On October 6 and 7, from 9am to 4pm, the San Diego Botanic Garden will host the 18th Annual San Diego International Orchid Fair. This year's fair is dedicated to the memory of Loren Batchman, one of the finest orchid growers in Southern California. The following is a very accurate testimony about Loren.

On April 3 of this year, Loren Batchman lost his long battle against cancer. We lost a great friend, mentor, and supporter who was a longtime honorary life member of our Society.

The San Diego County Orchid Society recognizes and appreciates the many contributions, support, training, education, and motivation that we have received from Loren for many decades. As an active member of the Society, Loren presented many talks about his work and passion for the breeding of Cymbidiums and Zygopetalums. This is in addition to the many outstanding displays of orchids at our shows. He also has been a big supporter of the conservation work of the Society.

Loren was an accredited American Orchid Society (AOS) judge for over 24 years. This past year, he was nominated for the honorary status of Judge Emeritus, which recognizes the many years of support for AOS judging locally in Southern California, nationally, and internationally. He published articles for AOS and for international publications on the hybridizing of Cymbidiums and Zygopetalums. He developed and presented training materials for new AOS judges.

In 2000 he started publication of the Cymbidium Society of America journal. He did all these things while also starting and running Casa de las Orquideas with his wife, Nancy, in 1976. He was always happy to share his love of orchids. Prior to this, he was a rocket scientist working with the aerospace industry here in San Diego. One of his favorite sayings was, "It really does take a rocket scientist to grow orchids."

He has registered over 376 Cymbidium hybrids and over a dozen Zygopetalum

Continued on page 11



Loren Batchman

hybrids, for which he has been awarded 147 AOS and 126 CSA awards.

In a larger way, he has also been recognized as one of the world's leading hybridizers of Cymbidiums and Zygopetalums. We will miss his friendly manner, inspiration, and training that he has extended to all orchid enthusiasts. 🌿



PACIFIC HORTICULTURE 2013 TOURS

By Scott Borden

Tucson – Gardens & Wildflowers of the Desert Southwest kicks off the 2013 PacHort schedule of small-group tours. Private and public gardens are featured, including the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum and Tohono Chul Park. Local hosts Dick and Sue Hildreth, Tour Manager Scott Borden. March 6-11.

SDHS is the co-sponsor of Morocco and Andalusia: Islamic Gardens & Architecture, April 4-15. Stay at charming, well-located hotels, tour top private gardens & estates and enjoy the finest local cuisine. Escorted by Katherine Greenberg, an expert in Mediterranean garden design and author of *Growing California Native Plants*.

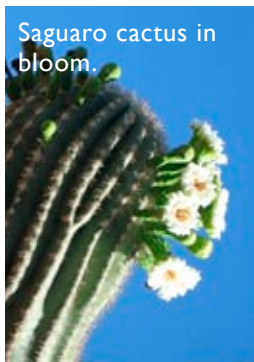
Gardens of the Philadelphia Region, May 20-26, features some of the nation's top gardens, including Chanticleer, Longwood, Meadowood Farms, Winterthur, Mt. Cuba and more. If you missed the 2008 SDHS tour to Philadelphia, here's your chance to see some truly amazing gardens!

Details coming soon on a spring PacHort trip to Santa Cruz Island, a summer excursion to Scotland and an autumn adventure to Northern Italy.

AND, there is still space open for November 2012 Oahu and Kauai adventure

For more info visit <http://www.pacifichorticulture.org/tours/> or call 800-976-9497

SDHS is one of six west coast societies providing support for the Pacific Horticulture Society. Producers of Pacific Horticulture magazine, PacHort also offers small group tours designed to educate and inspire plant enthusiasts everywhere. 🌿



Saguaro cactus in bloom.



Chanticleer garden in spring

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ALTA VISTA GARDENS... COME WATCH US CONTINUE TO GROW!

By Bryan Morse

It's been a while since my last report on the progress at Alta Vista Botanical Gardens in Vista. Since that time, needless to say, a lot has been accomplished. I guess that all of our growth has raised expectations; people expect to find something newly created every time they visit. We can't keep that up forever.

Of particular interest to me is the rapid addition of a soon to be world class Heritage (Antique) Rose collection. Following the installation of the first thirty rose bushes this spring, we are adding a few a month, as they become available. Our renowned Rosarian and the Curator of the collection, Ivy Bodin, has acquired hundreds of Antique rose cuttings from varied sources; they are being rooted out for future installation on our perimeter fence, throughout the Pan-Asian Garden, and near the Labyrinth.

This spring we imported hundreds of yards of fill dirt to create a new valley on the North Slope. This will house the soon to be built Pan-Asian Garden. Local collectors have offered a multitude of specimen bamboos to plant in this area. These will eventually create a perimeter forest that will enclose this new Garden. In addition, we received a donation of two hundred tons of gray boulders, which will be used in the creation of the Garden and its water features. This area was created in conjunction with the planned relocation of our Growing Area out of the space slated for the immediate expansion of the Australasian Garden and down into its new permanent home to the northwest of the Pan-Asian Garden valley.

On the top of the hill, to the west of the Garden Headquarters, the Sharon Kern Culinary Herb Garden has been completed and is graced by five whimsical sculptures created by Phillip Glashoff. West of there, the Ceremonial Garden field of

Dymondia is growing in. It includes a new pond from which rises Lia Strell's 'Golden Torsion' sculpture. Permits are in plan-check for the rose-covered gazebo that shall grace the ocean view promontory to the west of the pond. Just to the south of this area, we have identified the location for the soon to be built Poet's Patio, below which the new Medicinal Herb Garden is under construction.

The Labyrinth has grown in nicely and has become very popular for Solstice and Equinox group walks, and this summer with monthly full moon walks that are drawing over forty enthusiasts each time. This Fall we are introducing a new event, perhaps a little unconventional, but nevertheless relevant to our vision of what a Garden should be.

Come join us and be part of the shift in the Ceremonial Gardens. Creative Healing... Playing for Change Day: September 22, from 1:00 pm to 6:00pm. Get information from key earth-conscious speakers and listen to a variety of musical performances. We are the messengers: the artists, the musicians, and the healers who will be sharing our talents and getting the message out. We will also have healthy solutions for all who show up. What can we do now to keep our families and friends healthy? Wander the Garden and listen to the healing sounds of the Crystal Bowls. We will stir your awakening to a positive tomorrow.

For more information visit www.altavistagardens.org.

Bryan Morse is President of the AVG Board. He is a landscape designer and environmental artist/contractor.

Walking the labyrinth



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BOOK REVIEW

Reviewed by Ava Torre-Bueno

The Big Thirst: The Secret Life and Turbulent Future of Water

By Charles Fishman

We are almost all water illiterate. This is the premise of *The Big Thirst: The Secret Life and Turbulent Future of Water* (2011). And it does seem to be the case: very few people know where their water comes from or how it's purified. Politicians make water policy based on their fantasies rather than on science and data (except in, of all places, Las Vegas!).

Fishman looks at water from several perspectives by telling the stories of different places in the world that have, or have not, tackled their water security. Las Vegas has made itself water safe. It's hard to believe when you think of all those giant fountains in front of hotels, but all of that water is reclaimed from the sewer system. And it's very, very clean; dolphins swim in it! Atlanta, Georgia, on the other hand, has stuck its bureaucratic head in the sand and may have had its water source cut off by the courts by the time you read this review.

Australia had a severe ten-year draught called The Big Dry that ended three years ago with tremendous rains for each of the last three years. This could easily be our fate. We could be at the beginning of our own Big Dry in the US right now; it's impossible to know.

What you will know when you finish this book is that we are not remotely ready for the future of water. The entire world is in a water crisis, but we are mostly like Atlanta – we're ignoring it. This is the value of this book: it will wake you up to the reality of the world water crisis. Fishman tries hard to be calm, and to help people understand what they can do to create local water security. Indeed, there is no global action to take on water; only local action has any meaning.

The Big Thirst is a good book but it does have a few weak spots. Fishman is uncritical of Monsanto's GMO plants that use less water than standard plants. He is trying so hard to not be an alarmist that the book sometimes becomes un-engaging and sits on the nightstand for a few days, unread. Do keep reading though, because every one of us must become the steward of our own water and the water downstream from our gardens.

Here are some actions to take:

Stop using bottled water. It is often LESS PURE than tap water (if you live in the US; <http://tinyurl.com/botinv>) and costs \$8/gallon – tap water costs one penny/gallon. Bottled water takes enormous amounts of energy to get to the store because it takes a lot of gasoline to ship it. And plastic water bottles are killing marine life all over the world.

Stop calling water reclamation "toilet-to-tap." Call it *water reclamation*, and learn about it so you can get over the yuck-factor and realize that reclaimed water is MORE PURE than bottled water or your current tap water. In San Diego County our tap water has been through the systems of 350 other municipalities upstream from us, so we are already drinking reclaimed water all the time; it's time to reclaim water here in San Diego. To learn more, go on a fascinating tour of the Water Reclamation Demonstration Project (<http://tinyurl.com/cqaz68y>). Orange County has been using this system for years and people aren't getting sick there, so they should be our demonstration!

Pull out your lawn and put in a native plant garden. In the Southwest US, 70% of household water is used for irrigation, a ridiculous waste of potable water. If you must have a lawn, or a tropical garden, at least use greywater to irrigate (www.rainthanks.com). ☺



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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. **You can find copies of previous Sharing Secrets on our website at www.sdhortsoc.org/sneak_peek_3.htm.**

The question for this month was:
Your newsletter editor went into her garden recently and found that the @#\$\$* rabbits had eaten all the Liatris plants that were about to bloom for the first time. ARGGGH!!!!!! What has made you say "Argggh" this year?

Pat Welsh, whose garden expertise is legendary, wrote about her worst pest this year: GOPHERS! We are waging gopher wars and the gophers are winning! My favorite trap is the "Black Hole", but even with that superior device, mortarless rock walls and sandy soil give gophers the edge. Anyone know a canny trapper with genuine hunting instinct? Or a Rodenator that fills the holes with propane and air, sets it alight and boom! (www.rodenator.com/pests-controls-videos-rodenators).

Lorie Johansen's Argggh moment this year is due to: SNAILS!!! They poop all over the courtyard wall, drink my cheap beer and don't even die or leave a tip! I spent a long morning gathering decollate snails in a Valley Center orchard and diligently spread them about. I am trying to be patient but I don't see that they have done their job very well this year. The brown snails also eat my roses, daturas, and eppies. It's an endless battle but I get so much joy out of doing the snail stomp!

Gabe Mitchell had heirloom veggie problems: This year we wanted to try some heirloom tomato varieties and ordered some seeds online. Come to find out the vendor was based out of the east coast, where early blight has run rampant this past year. All our heirlooms ended up with the blight, and we've since had to revert to the same boring (though resistant) commercial hybrids.

Mary Poteet wrote about geranium pests: This one's easy for me. The geranium budworm (aka tobacco budworm, *Helicoverpa virescens*) destroyed my 10 large hanging baskets of geraniums. We recently moved here from Oregon, where I never encountered this problem, and at first I was bewildered about why my new geranium baskets were doing so poorly. Currently, I'm trying to save these plants by treating them with Bt.

Donna Gottfried is married to her garden problem: My husband decided to plant leaf lettuce seeds in my 4' x 4' raised bed, leaving me no room to plant any other vegetables.

Kathleen and John Anderson have a smelly digging pest: My Argggh!!! is skunks that dig under plants, sometimes completely uprooting the plant.

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Tynan Wyatt had a governmental Arrgggh! Incident: The county, when they spray weed killer on a breezy day, and my 3-year old Desertneyi pomegranate, Sherwood jujube, *Rhus integrifolia*, and Concha ceanothus turn brown overnight. And the worst part is they are spraying for goathead weeds, which don't even grow more than an inch off the ground (I weed whack all the taller weeds) all in the name of wildfire control. ARGGGH!!!!

Sheri Mongeau is another member who says her problem is: The huge numbers of gophers this year.

Janet Milliken said: Snails and huge grasshoppers made me most unhappy. Haven't had snails for quit a few years, but this year they came out en masse.

Devonna Hall has a garden mystery: I bought a beautiful little watermelon cucumber at Pearson's on a recent nursery hopping trip. My leaves are beautiful and it's grown six feet, but not one flower or cucumber has appeared! A friend who was on the trip also bought one and she has lots of cucumbers! We have our plants in a similar spot for sun and protection. Arrghh!

Patty Sliney had critter woes: My ARGGH!!!! moment this year was my new stone and pome tree walk and pick orchard I had planted 2 seasons ago. This was going to be my first harvest, and despite taking "measures" to reduce the ground squirrel and roof rat population, I still only ended up with about one-quarter of my lovely fruits. Between the ground squirrels, rats and snails, about three-quarters of my fruit were eaten or chewed on. Next year it will be all out war on rodents and mollusks!

Sharon's May's ARGGH!!!! is due to tomatoes: My gorgeous heirloom tomatoes were struck by a virus and are no longer producing! After last year's bumper crop, I acquired the tools and skills to can them this year but don't have enough to eat fresh! It even attacked my beloved "Indigo Rose", the first truly purple tomato, introduced just this year! Gosh -@#\$\$%* virus!

Christine Harrison also had a tomato disappointment: After planting my tomato seeds in raised beds filled with brand new imported topsoil enriched by me with mycorrhizal fungus, eggshells, organic fertilizer, worm castings, and bone meal and spraying and drenching regularly with home-brewed worm tea and applying fertilizer once a month and side dressing with my own compost and putting down mulch and hand picking the icky green horned worms while in my robe and nursing them into wildly huge plants until I was able to pick beautifully colored fruit... I was shocked to find that they all tasted like GROCERY STORE TOMATOES! In hindsight, I think I probably gave them too much water.

Kristie Hildebrand has an unusual problem – can someone suggest a solution?: I've got a 4' retaining wall along the north side of my home with a 5'5" wall that abuts an alleyway which leads to a large open field to the NW and slopes downhill to the SE to a dirt road/semi-paved street and other fields. On the alleyway side there is about 14" of dirt from the wall to a concrete drain which captures rainwater and that leads down to the street. I'm growing *Bambusa textilis* 'Gracilis' due to privacy issues and planted some star jasmine to tumble down the wall to hide water seepage stains during the rainy months (unfortunately wasn't done correctly by previous homeowner). Also, previous homeowners planted a running bamboo so I had it removed and installed 30" of polyethylene barrier just in case there

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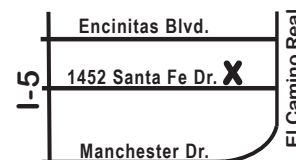
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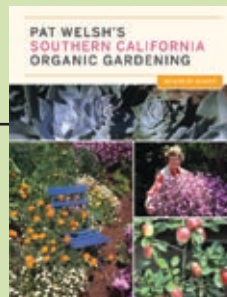
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were further problems with wandering rhizomes. Industrious gophers have gone under the concrete drain, under the wall, under the barrier and have come up right beside my star jasmine through little "doors." They gnaw off branches (doesn't matter if they are large or small) and pull entire branches down into the holes, then backfill the "door." I'm amazed at how large some of the branches have been that go missing. I lost 4 large plants this way. My husband has gone gopher shopping in the alleyway but this area is a bit of a challenge because he says the tunnels go down about 6 feet. I was in a panic on what to do so I put aluminum foil around the base of each new & old plant and then tied strips a little further out that make noise. Seems to work for now.

Sue Lasbury wrote about critter problems: This year my garden has become a haven for wildlife, which is great up to a point. It's a new garden with practically all natives and drought tolerant plants. However, something rather large has been digging big holes under my fence in the middle of the night. Each time I fill the holes and reinforce the fence with boards and bricks. But the next day I find yet another hole. Whatever it is also digs holes in the garden, snaps off plants, including the beautiful large head of an *Aeonium arboreum* 'Zwartkop'. I'm tempted to set out traps and I just may do that if it doesn't stop. However, I'm afraid I will hurt birds and lizards and other small creatures. It's terribly frustrating to find this kind of damage and not really know how to stop it. I live in the Del Mar Highlands/Carmel Valley area, near Torrey Pines High School. We do have a large canyon just up the hill. It may be raccoons, possums, or even a coyote.

Diane Foote said: I have the best fed rats in the neighborhood - they've been dining on my tomatoes, beans, eggplants and the peanut butter in the traps. I also have never seen so many rabbits before - and my dog, who loves to chase rabbits on our hikes, has been no help in her own backyard! Arggggh! :-)

Roy Wilburn is also fighting squirrels: Rabbits have been no problem this year because all of our organic gardens are fenced in with hardware cloth. I didn't think we would have our annual squirrel problem this year, until I went to the garden last week and saw that these vermin chewed up all the tender leaves on my most recent squash plantings. I am pulling out my Squirrelinator trap today and going after those guys. I got my trap at Grangetto's (see ad on page 21), and even though they come with a humane(?) way to kill them, I relocate them to Carmel Valley and release them by my house.

Deidra Krutop shared this with us: In my two Point Loma gardens there's been a population explosion of stick bugs. They range from babies a quarter inch long to adults 3" long. They will strip a plant of many leaves and keep looking for more. Aarrghh! Not cute anymore.

Jennifer Harris has another buggy pest: I've said "ARGGGH" (and worse) to meal bugs (aka mealworms)! Almost seems as though they are already in some bagged soils that we buy? They especially love beautiful overly fed, watered, and "plumped up" succulents - a reminder that these plants are actually supposed to go through their natural annual dried out and stressed looking phase!

The question for next month is:

Susan Krzywicki collects pine cones from her native trees and uses them as decorative mulch for her potted plants; they look attractive and keep the soil a bit moister. What kinds of mulch do you use in your pots? (Thanks for sharing this, Susan.)
Send your reply by September 5 to newsletter@sdhsoc.org.



AUGUST PLANT DISPLAY

By Sheldon Lisker, Sharon May,
Pat Pawlowski and Susi Torre-Bueno

What is the Plant Display?

Each month members bring in plants, cuttings or flowers and put them in blue bottles on our display tables. What a great way to see what plants grow well in our area. EVERYONE is invited to participate. Each month the display highlights one type of plant, and an expert talks informally about the plants and answers questions. All plants are welcome, but we hope you'll try to bring plants in the categories shown here. Write descriptions similar to those below, and put them with your plant(s).

Join the fun and bring ANNUALS and PERENNIALS to the September 10 meeting. Expert Stephanie Shigematsu will be on hand to answer your questions. We thank Bill Tall of City Farmers Nursery (a SDHS sponsor; www.CityFarmersNursery.com) for being our helpful expert on edibles at the August meeting.

Brunsvigia josephinae CANDELABRA LILY

(Amaryllidaceae) South Africa

What a rare treat it was to see this amazing flower at our meeting! This uncommon deciduous South African bulb sends up 3" wide grayish-green leaves to form a clump up to 3' tall and wide. In summer it sends up a huge inflorescence of dozens of red flowers. According to www.PlantZAfrica.com, "This plant has by far the biggest bulb and inflorescence among the geophytes in South Africa... The leaves only appear in winter and rapidly die back in summer before the flowers are borne in late summer to autumn... The 30-40 flowers are carried on open, widely spreading umbels, are dark red, and orange-yellow toward the base. The individual flowers are tubular, measuring 15mm long and produce nectar, which is enjoyed by sugarbirds." The flower head displayed was from a 10-year old plant that took five years to produce its first bloom. (Sheldon Lisker, Sun City, 8/12) – S.L. & S.T.B.

Citrus sinensis 'Valencia' VALENCIA ORANGE

(Rutaceae) Horticultural Hybrid

The Valencia orange, delicious to people, is also the host plant for the Giant Swallowtail Butterfly! This evergreen tree is native to Southeast Asia and has long been cultivated in China. The standard size tree grows to 20' tall, but dwarf and semi-dwarf sizes are also available. It bears sweetly-scented white flowers in spring and delicious juicy fruit in summer. The butterfly eggs are about the size of a poppy seed, and are laid on the top surface of the leaf. Citrus trees can afford to lose a few leaves to Giant Swallowtail caterpillars – the butterflies are so beautiful. (Pat Pawlowski, El Cajon, 8/12) – P.P.

Lycopersicon esculentum (= *Solanum lycopersicum*)

'Indigo Rose' INDIGO ROSE TOMATO (Solanaceae)

Horticultural Hybrid

This gorgeous deep-purple cherry tomato is a new introduction developed at Oregon State University. It is the first blue/black tomato with antioxidants in the skin. Seeds are available from Territorial Seed Company (www.territorialseed.com). For more information about the health properties of this plant see <http://tinyurl.com/purpletom>. (Sharon May, Carlsbad, 8/12) – S.M.

Continued on page 18

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Phaseolus vulgaris 'Royal Burgundy' ROYAL BURGUNDY PURPLE BUSH BEAN (Papilionaceae)
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In addition to the plants described above, those below were also displayed.

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

Can you spot the phony plant this month? The phony plant in the August newsletter was *Cuphea* 'David Copperfield' DISAPPEARING CIGAR FLOWER.

- Allium cepa* 'Purple' PURPLE SCALLIONS
(Sharon May, Carlsbad, 8/12)
- Capsicum baccatum* 'ECUADORIAN RED AJI' ECUADORIAN RED AJI (Charley Fouquette, El Cajon, 8/12)
- Capsicum chinense* BRAZILIAN BIRD PEPPER
(Charley Fouquette, El Cajon, 8/12)
- Capsicum chinense* HABANERO PEPPER
(Charley Fouquette, El Cajon, 8/12)
- Capsicum pubescens* CHILE (Charley Fouquette, El Cajon, 8/12)
- Capsicum pubescens* 'Manzano' MANZANO CHILE
(Charley Fouquette, El Cajon, 8/12)
- Capsicum pubescens* 'Rocoto' ROCOTO CHILE
(Charley Fouquette, El Cajon, 8/12)
- Feijoa* 'Coolidge' COOLIDGE PINEAPPLE GUAVA
(Sue Fouquette, El Cajon, 8/12)
- Ficus carica* 'Brown Turkey' BROWN TURKEY FIG
(Sue & Charley Fouquette, El Cajon, 8/12))
- Ocimum basilicum* BASIL (Sue Fouquette, El Cajon, 8/12)
- Lycopersicon esculentum* 'Moonglow' MOONGLOW TOMATO
(Sue Fouquette, El Cajon, 8/12)
- Lycopersicon esculentum* 'Striped Roman' STRIPED ROMAN TOMATO (Sue Fouquette, El Cajon, 8/12)
- Lycopersicon esculentum* 'Ukrainian Purple' UKRAINIAN PURPLE TOMATO (Sue Fouquette, El Cajon, 8/12)
- Phaseolus vulgaris* 'Dragon's Tongue' DRAGON'S TONGUE BEANS
(Sharon May, Carlsbad, 8/12)
- Phaseolus vulgaris* 'Trionfo Violetto' TRIONFO VIOLETTO POLE BEANS (Sharon May, Carlsbad, 8/12)
- Physalis philadelphica* 'Paisley' PAISLEY TOMATILLO
(Fancy Veggie Grower, Carlsbad, 8/12)
- Physalis philadelphica* 'Purple' PURPLE TOMATILLO
(Sharon May, Carlsbad, 8/12)
- Raphanus sativus* 'Watermelon' WATERMELON RADISH
(Sharon May, Carlsbad, 8/12)
- Solanum melongena* 'Japanese Long Purple Asian' JAPANESE LONG PURPLE ASIAN EGGPLANT
(Evey & Susi Torre-Bueno, Vista, 8/12)

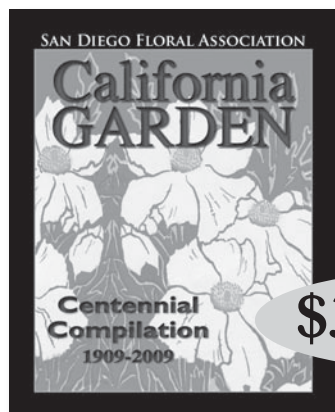


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AUGUST MEETING REPORT

By Susi Torre-Bueno

We had a really good turnout for our August meeting, with lots of lively stuff going on. The students who won our awards for their Science Fair projects - Erica Barrett and Jillian Drake - were there with fascinating poster board displays. Also on hand were the winners of our \$1000 annual college scholarships: Tony Gurnoe, Cari Johnson, and Donovan McAtamney. We hope to see these new members at future meetings.

At least one member told me she arranged her vacation so she wouldn't miss our speaker; the funny and personable Matthew Levesque (www.buildingresources.org). He held us captive with a fascinating presentation about his "ideas for repurposing local materials," and we ran out of sale copies of his book, *The Revolutionary Yardscape*. In just under an hour I believe he persuaded us all to add artistic and functional objects to our gardens by rethinking the stuff we, or other people, throw away.

For starters, Matthew let us know that, "Play is the single most powerful thing you can do in your garden," and the walkways, sitting areas, fences and arbors he built for his own garden were both the source of his slides and the heart of his useful book. He encouraged us to "invoke a real serious drop dead kick-ass attitude" about repurposing objects so we can "turn things over and re-imagine them."

With a very engaging manner he reminded us that gardens all too often look the same because stores sell the same stuff from coast to coast. But, "each garden should have a distinct and wonderful personality," which we can achieve affordably by "grabbing what is local." By rethinking how to use an object we can make it our own in a meaningful way.

For example... about 35% of granite countertops break before installation, and this massive amount of waste (about 365 tons/week in San Francisco alone!) can make stunning one-of-a-kind patios. If you worry about slipping on the polished stone, just turn it over and walk on the rough surface. Sweep dry Portland cement between your granite stones and water it with a mister to form a solid binding agent. Broken, unfinished or discarded gravestones (call them "monuments") also make great stones for various garden uses.

In need of a rain chain and don't want to pay over \$35/foot for standard ones? Use old keys grouped on O-rings and hooked together with hand-made s-hooks, or discarded copper wire twisted around a broom handle. Similarly, twisting other kinds of wire can yield a handsome lightweight screen, lengths of bent metal conduit with their bottoms buried 18" in the ground makes an artistic garden fence, and other wire can form the airy roof of an arbor. Flat metal sheets with various shapes cut out of them - known as "skeletons" - form wonderful stair rails or even fences.

Glass and plastic also play big roles in Matthew's garden. Old plastic light covers from parking lot lights, with one votive candle inside them, form large glowing "eggs" in his front garden (he's testing solar lights to replace the candles). When tumbled, broken glass and broken clay flowerpots make gorgeous "gravel," and eyeglass lenses piled into clear cylinders and lit from below become gorgeous garden lights. Used stainless steel pots and strainers also make great candle holders and reflect the light in charming ways.

Leftover wood from a neighbor's fence is reborn as stairs, platforms and small decks. Matthew saved money on stain for the wood by combining cooking-grade canola oil with artist's color. A huge wooden

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laminated beam was cut down to make a bench, and other reclaimed wood wound up in tables and planter boxes.

To find local resources to explore, visit the website for the Building Materials Reuse Association: www.bmra.org. Matthew also recommended the Habitat for Humanity reuse stores: <http://www.sdhfh.org>.

Thanks, Matthew, for great inspiration and an outstanding presentation! If you missed this talk you can borrow the video at the next meeting you attend. ☺



Matthew Levesque's patio showing many repurposed materials.

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Join in the fun!



Members at our August meeting inspecting the unusual - and beautiful - veggies displayed by Sharon May (far right) and Charley Fouquette (far left). The huge flower head was brought in by Sheldon Lisker. Plant Display details are on pages 17 and 18. Bring YOUR annuals and/or perennials to the September meeting and join the fun!

Photos by Rachel Cobb



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