



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Where passionate gardeners meet to share knowledge and learn from each other.

socalhort.org

January 2012 Newsletter

OUR NEXT MEETING

Thursday, January 12
7:30 pm
Friendship Auditorium
3021 Riverside Drive
Los Angeles

We meet the second Thursday
of each month at 7:30 pm

It is free to SCHS members and
\$5 for non-members without a
guest pass, which is found on
the front of your member card.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Jeffery Morawetz
Vivian Shu
Katrina Smith

JANUARY OPPORTUNITY DRAWING

Kathy Musial has been reliably
arranging our Society's
Opportunity Drawings since
the days they were called Plant
Raffles.

We owe a huge debt of
gratitude to Kathy for her work
to bring a quality plant
provider to each meeting,
month after month.

She has turned the reins over to
John Schoustra starting with
this month.

Our January Opportunity
Drawing provider is not
available at press time.

NEXT SHARING SECRETS QUESTION

Many of us have soil conditions
that require some amendments
to allow for healthy plant
growth.

Our Sharing Secrets question
for January is:

**Which soil additives do you
use and what soil
conditions cause you to
need them?**

You can answer on the cards
we'll supply at our January 12
meeting or e-mail your
response to bushweit@yahoo.com
by Friday, January 13.

IN THIS ISSUE

| | |
|---|---|
| December Meeting Recap by Steven Gerischer | 2 |
| SCHS Volunteers | 2 |
| Pacific Horticulture Tour: Natural History of Santa Cruz Island | 2 |
| Passing of John A.A. Thomson, PhD, D.A. | 2 |
| Horticultural Happenings by Lili Singer | 3 |
| Upcoming Programs | 4 |
| Wind Storm Postpones January Garden Tour..... | 4 |
| Whom to Contact..... | 4 |

The January Meeting



Wayne Armstrong: The Fig and Fig Wasp

Professor **Wayne P. Armstrong**, our January
guest presenter, will be educating us about
the fig and the fig wasps that pollinate the
fruit.

In this talk, he will be teaching us about the
interesting and unique biology of figs. The
genus *Ficus* (figs) has a most unusual
inflorescence and life cycle. The fig we love
to eat is not actually a fruit, but an outside-in
inflorescence, and these flowers are
pollinated by minute symbiotic wasps.

There are about 830 species of figs and they
each have their own "in-house" pollinator
wasp. It is without a doubt the most
complicated and remarkable example of
coevolution between a plant and an insect. It
is also a difficult topic to generalize because
there are so many variations and exceptions
in fig wasp biology and behavior.

Professor Armstrong has a teaching reach
that few others in the profession can
approach. He has been teaching biology and
botany, including Botany of Spring
Wildflowers and Plants and People, for the
past 45 years at Palomar College in San
Marcos, California.

He's also served as co-instructor on field
expeditions to the U.S. Virgin Islands,
Yucatan, French Polynesia, Ecuador (The
Galapagos Islands and Napo River – a
tributary of the Amazon), Grand Cayman,
Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, Costa Rica
and Dominica.

Armstrong has also written over 200
botanical articles for most of the best known
publications including *Pacific Horticulture*,
World Magazine and *Fremontia* among many
others.

But with all his prolific and impressive
educational accomplishments it is on the
World Wide Web where Professor
Armstrong's presence really exceeds all

others. His on-line versions of the botany
and biology courses he teaches include
thousands of pages of his lecture notes and
over 7,000 of his photo images and
illustrations. His on-line *Textbook of Natural
History* called *Wayne's Word* is nothing short
of massive and a resource accessed by
students all across the globe. You can find it
at waynes-word.com.

Armstrong says, "Writing allows me to vent
my enthusiasm and creativity beyond the
classroom and contribute to my field."

JANUARY SELECTED BOOKS

Our speaker recommends the fascinating
booklet, *The Fig: Its Biology, History,
Culture, and Utilization* by William Bicknell
Storey et al, published by Jurupa Mountains
Cultural Center.

Copies may be available from the California
Rare Fruit Growers Assn. (crfg.org) or at
botanical garden and public libraries.

Also, signed copies of the *Santa Monica
Farmers' Market Cookbook* by Amelia
Salzman – with delicious recipes and good
uses for home-grown figs – will be available
for \$19.

Blenheim Press, August 1, 2007
Soft cover; 224 pages; 112 recipes; 8" x 8.75"

December Meeting Recap

The December meeting of the Southern California Horticultural Society found us back in our familiar and comfy Friendship Hall location. The members' night and holiday party was highlighted by all of the yummy treats brought in by our members – there were some seriously good cookies and savories on that table! Thanks to all of you who baked your favorite recipes and brought them in to share with everyone.

The “program” was to feature photographs from our membership – best shots of horticultural interest, etc. – but the contributions were a little thin from everyone and came mainly from the board members. Thanks to **Kathy Musial** and to **Al and Pat Steen** for putting the slide show and festive music together.

The plant exchange was a little more active – even with our one plant limit – and many members were extra generous with their horticultural offerings. There was a full Sharing Table at the back of the room with curious and beautiful things looking for a new home. Pretty much everything went, and the table was emptied by evening's end.

As is usual with the holiday meeting, a few items got left behind in the confusion. They will be brought to the January meeting.

Table decorations of greenery were created with the usual flair by **Jill Vig** (much from storm blow down material). Thanks, Jill!

Thanks also to everyone who helps before, during and after with set up, running and clean up. We are always looking for more volunteers to help, so at the January meeting, if you can stay awhile afterwards, we could use a little help getting out of the building by 10 o'clock.

Thanks to all – and may the New Year be a good one for all of our members and their families.

- By Steven Gerischer

SCHS VOLUNTEERS

We are gratified to welcome two members who generously answered our recent appeals to help with Society functions. They will be working behind the scenes on needed activities.

Please follow their lead and contact **Steve Gerischer** if you are interested in becoming more active in the success of our Society.

Phone: 323-257-3629

E-mail: sglarkspur@aol.com

An immediate need is for one or two members to join our **Finance Committee**. **Karl Bechtel** responded to our plea last year and we will miss his involvement. His move away from the area has caused him to resign and we thank him for his contributions.

Your expected time commitment would be attending four meetings a year to review quarterly statements. If you have an interest in investing and accounting, please contact our Treasurer, **Laura Bauer**.

Phone: 626-437-9459

E-mail: laurab@ehuffy.com

PACIFIC HORTICULTURE TOUR: NATURAL HISTORY OF SANTA CRUZ ISLAND JUNE 3-8, 2012



Guided sightseeing on the island by Glenn Keator.

Escorted by Steve Gerischer.

This is a rare opportunity to explore the unique flora and fauna of California's Channel Islands, home to species of plants and animals found nowhere else on Earth. Twenty-five miles off the coast of southern California lies Santa Cruz Island, the largest of California's eight Channel Islands.

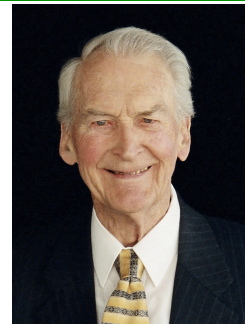
More than 1,000 species of plants and animals inhabit the island's high peaks, deep canyons, pastoral valleys and 77 miles of dramatic coastline. Once on the brink of ecological collapse, Santa Cruz Island now offers visitors a glimpse of what southern California used to be like hundreds of years ago.

To stay in this natural setting, there are special conditions that guests will experience during their visit. For example, accommodations on the island will be spent in shared dormitory-style rooms with bunk beds or in personal tents outdoors. All meals are prepared by guests using a communal kitchen and dining room.

Activities are moderate to strenuous.

Limited to 15 guests.

For more information please contact: Sterling Tours - Santa Cruz Island 2012 sterlingtoursltd.com/SantaCruz.html



PASSING OF JOHN A.A. THOMSON, PH.D., D.A.

A long-time member of our Society, Dr. John Ansel Armstrong Thomson, inventor of the world-famous horticultural vitamins-hormones solution SUPERthrive®, passed away peacefully on November 28, 2011, five days after his 100th birthday. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him. He is fondly remembered for distributing samples of SuperThrive® to fellow members at our meetings.

Thomson developed the SUPERthrive® formula in 1939. Seventy-two years later, he was still engaged in the daily operations of his company, Vitamin Institute, actively selling worldwide. As the new President, his daughter Patrisha Thomson will continue her father's legacy of improving horticultural and agricultural crops with the firm's sole product. She, too, is a SCHS member.

Dr. Thomson held a Ph.D. in biochemistry, and has collected awards and commendation for his lifetime of work. In 1940, he earned the Science & Industry's only Gold Medal at the San Francisco World's Fair Golden Gate International Exposition.

In 2006, Dr. Thomson became the first chemist to be honored with a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Lawn & Garden Marketing & Distribution Association. Other honors include Lifetime Environmental Awareness Award from Sustainable Environmental Education and induction into the *Nursery Retailer* magazine's Hall of Fame.

Dr. Thomson was proud that throughout World War II, his SUPERthrive® was used by five U.S. Government departments to: transplant mature trees for defense plant camouflage; plant and sustain low-dust turf landing fields; improve soil conditions where salt interfered with plant success; develop vital drug- and oil-bearing plants domestically; and increase production of necessary gualule rubber.

When asked about his primary philosophy of life, Dr. Thomson summed it up saying, "My whole idea is to try to leave the world better off for wherever I touch it." All of us who knew him know that's what he did.

Contact individual locations to confirm events and for more details; some may require a facility entry fee.

☞ = Registration requested or required.

ARCADIA 91007
LOS ANGELES COUNTY ARBORETUM & BOTANIC GARDEN

301 N. Baldwin Ave.
626-821-4623; arboretum.org

Wednesday, January 4
10:00 am, repeats
Wednesday, January 18
10:00 am, and
Saturday, January 21
2:00 pm

It Blooms Every Year: Aloes is the topic for *Bookworms*, A Free Storytelling Program for kids (ages 3-6) & families. Free with garden admission.

Thursday, January 7
9:00 am–12:00 noon
Rose Pruning, a workshop & demonstration with Jill Morganelli. Fee. ☞

Thursdays, January 12–March 1
9:30 am–12:00 noon
Thursday Garden Talks with Lili Singer. Winter series includes Native Plants: *Gardening in the Shade* with Carol Bornstein, 1/12; *Cochineal, Cactus, Cane and Cucumbers: The Ethnobotany of Three Plants and One Insect*, with Mitchell Hearn Bishop, 1/19; and *Gardening with Children* with Rosalind Creasy, 1/26. Fee.

Saturday, January 21
10:00 am–1:00 pm
Square Foot Gardening Workshop, with Jo Ann Carey. Fee.

CLAREMONT 91711
RANCHO SANTA ANA BOTANIC GARDEN

1500 N. College Ave.
909-625-8767 x200; rsabg.org

First Saturdays, including January 7
10:00 am–1:00 pm
Free Native Plant Clinic with native plant experts.

Saturday, January 22
9:00 am–12:00 pm
At Grow Native Nursery, Westwood: *Organic Pest Control for Fruit Trees*, a hands-on workshop with Herb Machleder. Wear closed-toe shoes and gardening gear; bring water and gloves. Free.

Saturday, January 28
9:00 am–12:00 pm
Fruit Tree Pruning, a talk & demonstration by Rachel Young. Fee. ☞

CORONA DEL MAR 92625
SHERMAN LIBRARY & GARDENS

2647 E. Pacific Coast Hwy.
949-673-2261; slgardens.org

Saturday, January 4
9:00 am
Floral Design Using Tropicals. Fee. ☞

LA CAÑADA FLINTRIDGE 91011
DESCANSO GARDENS

1418 Descanso Dr.
818-949-4200; descansogardens.org

Saturday–Sunday, January 14–15
9:00 am–5:00 pm
Pacific Camellia Show features early-blooming varieties. Free with garden admission.

Saturday, January 21
9:30 am
Mushrooms and Gardens: What? Why? How? with Florence Nishida. Fee. ☞

Saturday, January 21
11:00 am
Rose Pruning Demo with Rachel Young & Richard Troche. Free with garden admission.

Saturday, January 21
1:00 pm
Meet the New Roses, an illustrated lecture with Tom Carruth. Free with garden admission.

Saturday–Sunday, January 28–29
9:00 am–5:00 pm
Southern California Camellia Council Show includes plant sale. Free with garden admission.

PALOS VERDES PENINSULA 90274
SOUTH COAST BOTANIC GARDEN

26300 Crenshaw Blvd.
310-544-1948
southcoastbotanicgarden.org

Sunday, January 8
1:00–4:00 pm
Fruit Tree Pruning Demo by Rick Wheeler. Free with garden admission.

Saturday, January 15
12:00–3:00 pm
Rose Pruning Demo hosted by the South Coast Rose Society. Free with garden admission.

Saturday, January 21
9:00 am–5:00 pm
Family Picnic Day: Winter Desert Garden. Free with garden admission.

SAN MARINO 91108
HUNTINGTON BOTANICAL GARDENS

1151 Oxford Rd.
626-405-2100; huntington.org

Sunday, January 1
10:30 am–4:30 pm
Last day of *Viewing Stones Show* featuring nearly 150 outstanding examples. Free with garden admission.

Thursday, January 12
2:30 pm
Garden Talk & Plant Sale: Reimagining the California Lawn, with Carol Bornstein. Plant sale follows. Free.

SANTA BARBARA 93105
SANTA BARBARA BOTANIC GARDEN

1212 Mission Canyon Rd.
805-682-4726; sbbg.org

Saturday, January 28
9:00–11:30 am
Natural History of Coronado Butterfly Preserve, an excursion with Fred Emerson to study wintering monarch butterflies. Fee. ☞

SUN VALLEY 91352
THEODORE PAYNE FOUNDATION FOR WILDFLOWERS & NATIVE PLANTS

10459 Tuxford St.
818-768-1802; theodorepayne.org

Thursday, January 5
8:00–10:00 am
First Thursday Bird Walk, with Ken Gilliland. Bring your own binoculars. Free.

Saturday, January 14
9:00 am–1:00 pm
Native Plant Horticulture with Lili Singer. Fee.

Saturday, January 21
1:30–3:30 pm
Manzanitas for the Garden with Bart O'Brien. Fee.

Saturday, January 28
1:30–3:30 pm
Fire-safe Landscaping for Homeowners with Melanie Baer-Keeley. Fee.

TORRANCE 90503
THE MADRONA MARSH PRESERVE

3201 Plaza del Amo
310-782-3989
friendsofmadronamarsh.com/calendar.htm

Sunday, January 8
2:00–4:00 pm
Second Sunday Science: Birds of Winter with Tracy Drake. Fee.

Sunday, January 7
10:00 am–12:00 noon, repeats
Tuesday, January 10
6:30–8:30 pm
Out of the Wilds and Into Your Garden, a native plant class with Connie Vadheim. Free.

Sunday, January 29
10:00 am–12:00 pm
Native Walk, open to all. Free.

The **San Diego Horticultural Society** meets Monday, January 9, 6:00–9:00 pm, at Del Mar Fairgrounds.

Activities include *A Rollicking Trip into the World of Cactus and Succulents*, a talk by Scott Calhoun. Information: 760-295-7089, sdhortsoc.org. Free to members; fee to non-members.

- Compiled by Lili Singer
Send notices to lili.singer@sbcglobal.net

UPCOMING SCHS PROGRAMS

February 9 – **Zsolt Debreczy** will discuss his new book, *Conifers Around the World*. Book sale and signing.

March 8 – **Chip Sullivan** will present *The Floral Imperative*.

April 12 – **Iris Forum**, with panelists **Dr. Richard Richards, John Schoustra** and **Bob Sussman**.

May 10 – **Lorene Edwards Forkner** will be our featured speaker.

June 14 – **Chris Rosmini** will discuss garden design.

July 12 – **Sam Watters**.

August 9 – **Matthew Levesque** will discuss *The Revolutionary Yardscape*. Book sale and signing.

September 13 – **Annual Award Banquet** honoring the 2012 Horticulturist of the Year at the Huntington Botanical Gardens.

October 11 – **Scott Kleinrock** will tell us about *The Huntington Ranch Project* at the Huntington Botanical Gardens.

November 8 – **Helen Popper**, author of the forthcoming *California Native Gardening: A Month-by-Month Guide*, discusses her book.

December 13 – **Annual Members' Night**.

WIND STORM POSTPONES JANUARY GARDEN TOUR

We had planned a visit to the Pasadena home of the late **Judge Cynthia Hall** this month, however, it will be rescheduled for this spring. It was damaged by severe winds from the storm that devastated significant parts of the Huntington Botanical Gardens and the Los Angeles Arboretum.

We are developing other tours and field trips that will be announced when details have been set.

Southern California
Horticultural Society
PO Box 94476
Pasadena CA 91109-4476

NEWSLETTER
JANUARY 2012

Board of Directors

Steven Gerischer, *President & Pacific Horticulture Board*

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Bettina Gatti, *Secretary & Internship Coordinator*

Laura Bauer, *Treasurer & Finance*

Joel Lichtenwalter, *Membership Secretary & Field Trips*

Debra Bushweit Galliani, *Newsletter & Membership*

Lisa Ceazan, *Website*

Sandy Masuo, *Facebook*

Kathy Musial, *Programs & Pacific Horticulture Board*

Bart O'Brien, *Programs*

John Schoustra, *Plant Sales & Opportunity Drawings*

Lili Singer, *Selected Book Sales & Newsletter Calendar*

Sula Vanderplank, *Green Sheet*

Jill Vig, *Pacific Horticulture Board*

818-567-1496 / socalhort.org / **Join us on Facebook**

Newsletter Editor: Debra Bushweit Galliani, bushweit@yahoo.com

Associate Editor: Joe Galliani

Contributors to this issue:

Lisa Ceazan, Joe Galliani, Steven Gerischer and Lili Singer.

Next deadline: Friday, January 13 (for February newsletter).

It is the Friday following our monthly membership meeting.

Please contribute an article or information of interest.