



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

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

socalhort.org

February 2012 Newsletter

OUR NEXT MEETING

Thursday, February 9
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.

Participate in the **Plant Forum** by bringing one or more plants to display and for discussion. You'll get an Exhibitor's Ticket for the Opportunity Drawing.

FEBRUARY OPPORTUNITY DRAWING

Our February Opportunity Drawing plants will be provided thanks to the generosity of **Jo O'Connell** at **Australian Native Plants Nursery** (australianplants.com).

Thanks to **John Schoustra** who will be transporting them from Jo's Ventura nursery, as she is not able to attend.

We will have a selection of these Australian native plants for the Opportunity Drawing along with additional plants available for sale.

NEXT SHARING SECRETS QUESTION

A conifer in a yard generally makes a statement and some contribute significantly to creating a desirable, and sometimes dramatic, landscape.

Our Sharing Secrets question for February is:

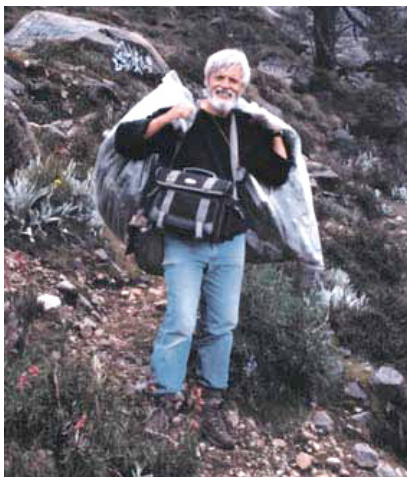
Name a conifer that you think would enhance a garden and why.

You can answer on the cards we'll supply at our February 9 meeting or e-mail your response to bushweit@yahoo.com by Friday, February 10.

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The February Meeting



Zsolt Debreczy: *Conifers Around the World*

In 1975, dendrologist **Zsolt Debreczy** and nature photographer István Rác (then still a university student) set themselves a wildly ambitious and never before accomplished goal: to seek out and document all the conifers in the world's temperate zones and their adjacent regions. To make it even more challenging they wanted to record them in their most pristine natural habitats.

The two spent the next 30 years, with the eventual assistance of over a hundred nature-loving volunteers, generous financial

supporters and field associates from countless regional and local institutes and organizations (including our Society's own **Kathy Musial** from the Huntington Botanical Gardens).

Debreczy and Rác spent an astounding almost 2,000 days (over five continuous years) in the field hunting down conifers. They were able to visit and document the world's most inaccessible conifer taxa and to include the accompanying flora and vegetation in their research.

Along with the collection of 340,000 photographs they compiled, their exacting documentation has become the new voluminous *Conifers Around the World*. In this astounding two volume book they present more than 500 species of conifers in 56 genera, including several that were new to science.

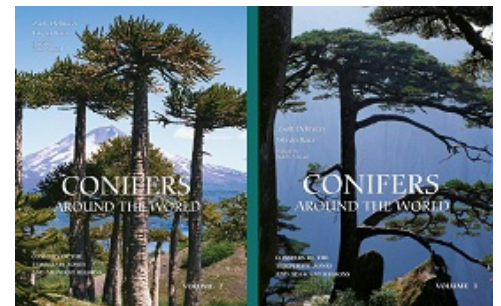
Dendrology is the study of trees and other woody plants and Zsolt Debreczy, our February guest speaker, is Research Director of the International Dendrological Research Institute, Inc., in Boston, Massachusetts, a position he has held since 1990.

Zsolt holds a Ph.D. in biology and began his career as curator of the higher plant collection at the Botanical Department of the Natural History Museum in Budapest, Hungary.

Beginning in 1988, he spent three years as a Mercer Fellow and Visiting Scientist at the Arnold Arboretum at Harvard University. In 1994, he was a founding member of the International Dendrological Foundation.

In his guest presentation, Zsolt will feature one conifer from each of the 11 chapters of his book and discuss the extensive fieldwork that went into documenting them as part of the Dendrological Documentation Project.

FEBRUARY SELECTED BOOK



Conifers Around the World is an impressive, two volume, hard cover book, with 1,089 pages and more than 3,700 color photographs (dendropress.com).

The discount price to members is \$225 and limited copies, "hot of the press," will be available for sale from the author by cash or check.

January Meeting Recap

Our January 12 meeting of the Southern California Horticultural Society featured our guest presenter, Professor **Wayne Armstrong**, speaking about the fascinating symbiotic relationship between figs and the wasps that pollinate them.

The Fig and Fig Wasp was the title of the evening's talk – and one of the things that he stressed during this presentation is that the more you think you know, the less you really do know.

The scientific information underlying this complex system of figs and fig wasps is constantly being updated and informed by new studies and published papers – some of which refute long-held ideas about the relationship of these tiny wasps to their respective figs.

Considering the steady stream of information, it is a dizzying and complicated area of natural science/horticulture that includes so many remarkable components.

One of the amazing things we learned was that some species of *Ficus*, newly introduced into gardens, seem to have their own attendant wasps because the trees produce seedlings. It has not yet been determined whether those wasps were introduced along with the trees, or whether they have come from other standing populations of those particular figs.

This botanical puzzle is difficult to condense into a one-hour program and Professor Armstrong invited us to explore further on his website, waynes-word.com.

Thanks to Professor Armstrong for kicking off our new year with this fascinating look at one of the more bizarre and strangely elegant systems of reproduction in the botanical world.

Our Opportunity Drawing plants were provided by **Matt-Dell Tufenkian**, from his nursery, **Dominus Plantarum**. He also brought a nice selection of plants for sale. Thanks, Matt!

In addition, thanks to **John Schoustra** and **Joan Citron** for bringing plants to sell.

We appreciate everyone who brought in forum plants as well. We hope to see you on February 9, for Zsolt Debreczy and his discussion of the new book, *Conifers Around the World*.

- By Steven Gerischer

SHARING SECRETS

In January, we posed the question, “**Which soil additives do you use and what soil conditions cause you to need them?**” Some members shared their insights and experiences.

In Santa Monica, I have sandy soil and I get the free compost from The Learning Garden at Venice High School. It's a great mixture of everything: wood, leaf, lawn trimmings. I mulch twice a year and take a dead soil back to rich dark loam.

- Katarina Eriksson

Aside from mulching quite a bit when I first moved in – which I haven't done for a while since the wildflowers I planted have improved the soil a lot – the only amendments I use are citrus food for my potted Meyer's lemon and lime trees. I've had the lemon in the same pot for about 15 years so it needs some supplemental nutrition.

- Sandy Masuo

Sul-Po-Mag (roses especially). It makes them healthier. Worm castings (is this a soil additive?).

- Steve Gerischer

SECRET CONTRIBUTOR

Potting soil instead of amendments as it doesn't break down as fast as amendments seem to. Also, fine gravel for succulents and cactus.

Add your response to this question on our **Facebook** page discussion board.

SOCIETY NEWS

We're very excited and grateful to extend our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to the 17 very generous members who responded to our end of the year appeal for additional financial support for our Society.

We received an impressive \$2,045 in donations which will allow us to fund educational opportunities for future horticulturists through our internships; outreach programs that share information and skills for sustainable gardening; and new presentations that will enrich our gardening experience.

If you're interested in helping our non-profit, volunteer-run Society continue to meet our operating costs, your own tax-deductible contribution would be gladly accepted any time of the year. No donation is too modest and every penny received will be put to good use serving our members and the programs we offer them.

HORTICULTURAL HAPPENINGS

There are so many events in February that we couldn't fit them all on one page. The list continues on page 5.

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

Thursdays, through March 1
9:30 am–12:00 noon

Thursday Garden Talks with Lili Singer. Winter series includes *Plant Combinations* with Mark Bartos, 2/2; *Fungi in Local Gardens and Beyond* with Jerry Turney, 2/9; *Lush Landscapes/Little Water* with Richard Hayden, 2/16; a field trip to two nurseries and a private garden in Ventura County, 2/23. Fee.

Saturday, February 4
10:00 am–12:00 noon

Mushroom Identification...just in time for the Mushroom Fair! with Jerry Turney. Fee.

Sunday, February 5
1:00–4:00 pm (repeats first Sundays in March and April)
Plein Air Painting, a one-day workshop with Marion Eisenmann. Fee. ☞

Sunday, February 12
10:00 am–4:00 pm
Wild Mushroom Fair features growing and cooking demonstrations, vendors and a guest speaker. The public is invited to bring found mushrooms for ID. Free with garden admission.

Saturday–Sunday, February 25–26
10:00 am–5:00 pm
Orchid Show & Sale sponsored by the Cymbidium Society of America, San Gabriel Valley Branch. Free with garden admission.

CLAREMONT 91711
RANCHO SANTA ANA BOTANIC GARDEN
1500 N. College Ave.
909-625-8767 x200; rsabg.org

First Saturdays, including February 4
10:00 am–1:00 pm
Free Native Plant Clinic with native plant experts.

First Sundays, through June, including February 5
8:00–9:00 am
Beginning Birdwalks with members of the Pomona Valley Audubon Society. Free.

Saturday, January 18
9:00 am–12:00 pm
Plant Propagation for Homeowners, a class with Dave Lannom. Fee.

(Cont. on page 5)



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GREEN SHEET

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

OCTOBER 2011 PLANT FORUM NOTES

Compiled by Sula Vanderplank and Jorge Ochoa

Photographs by Paul Martin

Thank you to all who brought plants to the October 2011 meeting. Everyone is encouraged to bring in plants to share with the group. Remember that you do get one free Exhibitor's Ticket for the Opportunity Drawing if you bring in one or more plants for discussion at the Plant Forum table.

In addition to the plants discussed below, the following plants, described or listed in the Society's *Selected Plants for Southern California Gardens* (2000) or previously written up for a *Green Sheet*, were shown. [Family names in accordance with the Angiosperm Phylogeny Group II (<http://www.mobot.org/mobot/research/apweb/>) are included for your reference.]

Cyclamen graecum (Myrsinaceae), exhibited by Bart O'Brien, grown in Upland.

Diospyros 'Fuyu', persimmon (Ebenaceae), exhibited by Joan Citron, grown in Reseda.

Ginkgo biloba, ginkgo (Ginkgoaceae), exhibited by V. Raymond, grown from seed in Temple City.

Plumbago indica [*P. coccinea*] scarlet leadwort (Plumbaginaceae), exhibited by Eric Brooks, grown in the Baldwin Hills.

Rhodophiala bifida, blood lily (Amaryllidaceae), exhibited by Sheldon Lisker, grown in Sun City.

Stenocarpus sinuatus, firewheel tree (Proteaceae), exhibited by Joan Citron, grown in Reseda.

Sternbergia lutea, autumn daffodil (Amaryllidaceae), exhibited by Sheldon Lisker, grown in Temecula.

Plants that could not be fully identified:

Curcubita cultivars, gourds (Curcubitaceae), garden volunteers exhibited by Joan Citron, grown in Reseda.

Epidendrum hybrid, reed-stem orchid (Orchidaceae), exhibited by Jim Jaeger.

Photographs (left to right): *Cyclamen graecum* and *Rhodophiala bifida*.



Photographs (left to right): *Sternbergia lutea* and *Epidendrum* hybrid, listed on page 3.



Information in this compilation was gleaned and condensed from the Plant Forum exhibit cards, numerous sources in our library, and a suite of various internet sites.

Acis nicaeensis [*Leucojum nicaeense*], (Amaryllidaceae), exhibited by Sheldon Lisker, grown in Sun City.

This small Mediterranean bulb is native to a small area of southeastern France. Sheldon says this one is easy and notes that it reaches 8 inches in height in Southern California, with flowers in early fall (needs summer drought). Available from B&T World Seeds.

Brunsvigia litoralis, candelabra flower (Amaryllidaceae), exhibited by Sheldon Lisker, grown in Sun City.

This South African native is a large summer-blooming bulb from the southeastern Cape that can reach up to 2 feet in height. This species has twisted leaves and stunning red flowers. Sheldon notes that this one is “easy” and flowers dependably.

Echeandia texensis, Texas crag lily, copper spider (Asparagaceae), exhibited by Ann Brooks, grown in Baldwin Hills.

This striking yellow “lily” (recently placed in the asparagus family) is endemic to Texas. It is often called a bulb but actually has underground corms. Ann notes that it reaches up to 4 feet high and 18 inches wide, flowering in mid fall. It is reported to cope well with drought and alkaline soils by davesgarden.com.

Erythrina vespertilio, bats-wing coral tree (Fabaceae), exhibited by Bart O’Brien, grown in Upland.

This Australian tree has several common names including “bean-tree” and its aboriginal name “ininti.” It has been an important species ethnobotanically in Australia with uses that include water vessels, throwing tools and weapons. The bark is used medicinally and the seeds are decorative. Bart says this tree reaches up to 10 meters high by 5 meters wide in the wild but is much smaller here in Southern California, where it likes full hot sun. Bart notes that he brings his indoors to overwinter and keeps it dry.

× *Mangave* ‘Bloodspot’ (Agavaceae), exhibited by Bart O’Brien, grown in Upland.

This is a hybrid of a *Manfreda* and an *Agave* that results in a compact succulent with beautiful leaf patterning (grey-maroon). It is thought to have originated in Japan and was introduced in 2008. Little is known about this recent introduction in California but Bart notes that it likes full hot sun. Available from San Marcos Growers.

Tanacetum vulgare, tansy (Asteraceae), exhibited by Veronica Raymond, grown in Temple City.

This common European daisy has relatively large heads of disc flowers forming large yellow “buttons,” hence its additional common names: bitter buttons and golden buttons. The ancient Greeks are believed to have cultivated this plant for its medicinal properties. It is invasive throughout the United States frequently occurring in wet areas and spreading along ditches and waterways.

(Cont. from page 2)

Saturday, February 19

10:00 am–3:00 pm

Family Bird Fest includes participation in the Great Backyard Bird Count. Free with garden admission.

FULLERTON 92831

FULLERTON ARBORETUM

1900 Associated Rd. at Jamboree

657-278-3407; arboretum.fullerton.edu

Saturday, February 4

9:00–11:00 am

Gardening For Success – Happy Trees Make Happy People, an ornamental tree hands-on pruning class with Greg Pongetti. Fee.

Saturday, February 4

1:30–3:30 pm

Water Conservation Gardening: California Friendly Plants, a class with Steve Gerischer. Fee.

Saturday, February 25

1:30–3:30 pm

Hypertufa Pot Workshop, a hands-on class with Steve Gerischer (our president gets around!). Fee.

LA CAÑADA FLINTRIDGE 91011

DESCANSO GARDENS

1418 Descanso Dr.

818-949-4200; descansogardens.org

Saturday, February 4

9:00 am–5:00 pm

Camellia Festival features tours led by faeries (9:30 am–12:00 noon; first come, first served); guided walks (10:30 am, 12:00 noon, 1:30 pm). Free with garden admission.

Saturday, February 11

11:00 am

Backyard Chickens and Bees, a class with John Lyons. Fee.

Saturday, February 18

10:30 am

Redirecting Rainwater, a class with Rachel Young. Fee.

Saturday, February 25

1:00 pm

Heritage Oak Walk with Wen Wang highlights Descanso's native coast live oaks. Free with garden admission.

Saturday–Sunday, February 25–26

9:00 am–5:00 pm

Southern California Camellia Society Show and Sale. Free with garden admission.

LONG BEACH 90807

RANCHO LOS CERRITOS HISTORIC SITE

4600 Virginia Rd.

562-570-1755; rancholoscerritos.org

Wednesday, February 8

7:00 pm

Winter Lecture Series: Native California Plants, with Lili Singer. Fee.

PALOS VERDES PENINSULA 90274

SOUTH COAST BOTANIC GARDEN

26300 Crenshaw Blvd.

310-544-1948

southcoastbotanicgarden.org

Saturdays

11:00 am and 1:00 pm

Forty-five minute docent-led Tram Tours. Fee.

Sunday, February 5

1:00–2:30 pm

Reimagining the California Lawn, a talk by Bart O'Brien. Book-signing follows. Free with garden admission.

Thursday, February 16

10:00 am–5:00 pm

Pine Needle Woven Art Basket Workshop with Rose Hammer. Fee. ☞

Saturday, February 18

9:00 am–5:00 pm

Family Picnic Day: The Greenhouse. Free with garden admission.

SAN MARINO 91108

HUNTINGTON BOTANICAL GARDENS

1151 Oxford Rd.

626-405-2100; huntington.org

Thursday, February 9

1:00 pm

Tour of conifer collection with speaker Zsolt Debreczy and Kathy Musial. Rain cancels.

2:30 pm

Garden Talk: Conifers Around the World, with Zsolt Debreczy. Plant sale follows. Free.

Saturday–Sunday, February 11–12

10:30 am–4:30 pm

Camellia Show and Sale, cosponsored by the Southern California Camellia Society. Free.

Saturday–Sunday, February 25–26

10:30 am–4:30 pm

Bonsai-a-Thon, includes exhibits, a bonsai bazaar & demonstrations. Free with garden admission. Saturday workshops. Fee. ☞

Saturday, February 25

10:30 am–1:00 pm

Ranch Open House, a behind-the-scenes tour of the Huntington's urban agriculture site. Free with garden admission.

SANTA BARBARA 93105

SANTA BARBARA BOTANIC GARDEN

1212 Mission Canyon Rd.

805-682-4726; sbbg.org

Thursdays, February 18 and 23

4:00–6:00 pm, plus all-day field trip TBD

Southern California's Countless Conifers, a class and exploration led by Bob Haller and Nancy Vivrette. Fee. ☞

SUN VALLEY 91352

THEODORE PAYNE FOUNDATION FOR WILDFLOWERS & NATIVE PLANTS

10459 Tuxford St.

818-768-1802; theodorepayne.org

Thursday, February 2

8:00–10:00 am

First Thursday Bird Walk, with Ken Gilliland. Bring your own binoculars. Free.

Saturday, February 4

1:30–3:30 pm

Natives: The Big Picture, a lecture by Lisa Novick. Fee.

Saturday, February 11

1:30–3:30 pm

Water Features for Native Gardens, a workshop with Bob Allen. Fee.

Saturday, February 18

1:30–3:30 pm

Container Gardening with Natives, a class with Steve Gerischer. Fee.

Saturday, February 25

9:00 am–12:00 noon

Propagating California Native Plants, a hands-on class with Madena Asbell and Tim Becker. Fee. ☞

Saturday, February 25

1:30–3:30 pm

Local Lepidoptera: Butterflies and Moths of the L.A. Region, a talk by Daniel Marlos. Fee.

TORRANCE 90503

THE MADRONA MARSH PRESERVE

3201 Plaza del Amo

310-782-3989

friendsofmadronamarsh.com/calendar.htm

Sunday, February 4

10:00 am–12:00 noon, repeats

Tuesday, February 7

6:30–8:30 pm

Out of the Wilds and Into Your Garden, a native plant class with Connie Vadheim. Free.

Wednesday, February 15

8:00–10:00 am

Bird Walk with Bob Shanman. Free.

Saturday, February 18

7:00–9:00 pm

Night Hike. All ages welcome. Fee. ☞

The San Diego Horticultural Society

meets Monday, February 13, 6:00–9:00 pm, at Del Mar Fairgrounds.

Activities include the talk, *Trees of Ill Repute: Shifting from Malignant to Benign*, with Robin Rivet. Fee. Information: 760-295-7089, sandieghorticulturalsociety.org.

- Compiled by Lili Singer

Send notices to lili.singer@sbcglobal.net



Photograph:
Boöphone by
Paul Martin.

UPCOMING SCHS PROGRAMS

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 her approach to garden design and some of her work.

July 12 – **Sam Watters** will present this evening's program.

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 (aka Cookie Night)**.

WE'RE PLANNING A FEBRUARY 26 GARDEN & NURSERY TOUR

On **February 26**, we are hosting a special field trip to **Nuccio's Nurseries** in Altadena, world-famous growers of outstanding camellias and azaleas, starting at **9:00 am**. Then we'll be taking a guided tour of **Wynne Wilson's** nearby private garden. We'll end our Altadena trip with a **potluck picnic at Farnsworth Park**.

See the enclosed flyer for more information and to register. Return the form with your payment of \$15 per SCHS member and \$20 per non member. Or register at our February 9 meeting. Rain or shine. Contact Joel Lichtenwalter with any questions.

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

NEWSLETTER
FEBRUARY 2012

Board of Directors

Steven Gerischer, *President & Pacific Horticulture Board*

Jim Henrich, *Vice President & Membership*

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Joel Lichtenwalter, *Membership Secretary & Field Trips*

Debra Bushweit Galliani, *Newsletter & Membership*

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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*

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Associate Editor: Joe Galliani

Contributors to this issue:

Laura Bauer, Joe Galliani, Steven Gerischer, Paul Martin, Jorge Ochoa, Lili Singer and Sula Vanderplank.

Next deadline: Friday, February 10 (for March newsletter).

It is the Friday following our monthly membership meeting.

Please contribute an article or information of interest.



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY



THE BEST OF ALTADENA: BEHIND THE SCENES AT NUCCIO'S NURSERIES AND THE PRIVATE GARDEN OF WYNNE WILSON

Sunday, February 26, 2012

Join us on a special field trip to **Nuccio's Nurseries** in Altadena, world-famous growers of outstanding camellias and azaleas. We'll be taking a guided tour at Nuccio's and then we'll visit **Wynne Wilson's nearby garden**. According to Emily Green in the *Los Angeles Times*, Wilson's "partnering of indigenous coral bells and lilac with the Mediterranean staples of citrus and lavender is so stupidly beautiful, you want to cry." We'll end our Altadena trip with a **potluck picnic** at Altadena's beautiful **Charles Farnsworth Park**.

Our picnic will start around 12:30 pm at the Wisteria Picnic Site. Please bring something to eat and share (desserts are always appreciated!). We will provide sodas, water and utensils. **This trip will go forward rain or shine (we will not be able to provide refunds in the case of bad weather).**

Directions and parking: Please **meet at Nuccio's Nursery at 8:45 am**. Nuccio's is located at 3555 Chaney Trail in Altadena. From the 210 Freeway in Pasadena, exit onto Fair Oaks Boulevard heading NORTH. At the top of Fair Oaks, make a left onto West Loma Alta Drive. Look for a hanging, blinking yellow light and turn right onto Chaney Trail. The nursery will be on the left. Carpooling is encouraged.

To secure your reservation, please complete and send in the form below, along with your check, by February 23. If you have any questions, contact Joel Lichtenwalter at: joel@growoutdoordesign.com or by phone at 310-908-5036.

SCHS ALTADENA TOUR AND PICNIC

PLEASE RESPOND NO LATER THAN THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23.

Yes, please reserve: _____ Member Tickets at \$15 each = \$_____ Total

_____ Non-member Tickets at \$20 each = \$_____ Total

_____ Total Tickets \$_____ Total Enclosed

Member's Name(s) _____

Non-Member Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Make your check payable to SCHS. Mail to: PO Box 94476, Pasadena, CA 91109
SCHS Phone: 818-567-1496 Website: socalhort.org