

June Meeting Recap

The June meeting of the Southern California Horticultural Society was a presentation of an: *Introduction to Native Bees of California* by Hartmut Wisch. Hartmut showed us an amazing number of close up photos of our many native bees and the flowers they use for for collecting food. Hours of patience are required to catch a shot of bees emerging from their underground nests, or alighting on a tiny blossom. Many of the bees pictured are only a few millimeters long.

The passion Mr. Wisch has for his subject was clearly evident as he spoke about the remarkable life cycles of these insects. Hartmut also spoke of the research which is showing that in many cases our native bee populations are well suited to pollinate crops as well as they do our California native plants. The macro-photography revealed many details that would be lost to the casual observer of these bees—many of which might be mistaken for gnats or tiny flies. Some of the easier to identify, or larger species, like our carpenter bees, were rendered in such stunning jewel-like detail with commentary about behavior and habits that they seemed utterly new. It was a treat to see pictures of the Leafcutter Bee after seeing evidence of its presence in my own garden for so many years. I have to admit that since the talk I have slowed down and watched the blossoms on my St. Catherine's Lace and Toyon a little more closely.

Of particular interest to many gardeners present was the information that many of our native bees are specialists and can only be seen in our gardens if we plant the specific plants they have evolved to utilize for pollen or nectar. Also mentioned was the need for restraint when mulching as many of our bees are ground nesters and need open soil.

We would like to thank Hartmut Wisch for the wonderful introduction to our native bees! Thanks as well to all of those who helped organize the speaker and set up and run the meeting—as well as those who stayed to help clean up.

Please join us for the July 10 meeting of SCHS as we welcome Ron Rasmussen and his presentation of: *The El Moro Elfin Forest in Los Osos*.

—Steven Gerischer

SHARING SECRETS

In June, we asked you to answer "*How has the lack of a pronounced winter chill affected your garden?*" and here are some of your responses. Read more on our SCHS MemberLodge website, schs.memberlodge.org.

Natural selection is the guiding principle in my yard, and frost tender plants that can't hack it at 33 degrees in Burbank generally fall out of the gene pool. I have an interesting tradescantia that does not like the chill so it is very lush right now! If the climate stays like this, I may have to try the *Pedilanthus tithymaloides* again!

—Sandy Masuo

Several of my fruit trees did a double-take – early ones like Tomcot apricot bloomed and set fruit two times two months apart, and later ones like Double Delight nectarine leafed out only on the bottom half of the tree and now in June are just leafing out on the top half. Definitely strange!

—Yvonne Savio

My low-chill fruit trees don't require many chill hours to set a crop, but the mild winter definitely did affect their schedule. Compared with the past couple years, my 'Royal Rosa' apricot was about two weeks premature, while my 'Arctic Star' nectarine and 'Cotton Candy' aprium were closer to four weeks ahead of schedule.

—Yoav Paskowitz

Silent Auction Donations, and Note regarding Horticulturist of the Year Award Dinner.

Our Horticulturist of the Year Award Dinner honoring Don Hodel, will be held on a **Saturday (September 13)** instead of the usual second Thursday of the month—look for details in the upcoming announcement. In the meantime we are seeking interesting and exciting donations for the silent auction to raise funds for SCHS and the work we do (including funding our speakers and our internship program). If you have favorite shops or service providers who might be willing to donate time, or gift certificates, or even a planted pot from your favorite nursery, ask them if they would be willing to support us. If you have anything to donate or need a question answered please contact Steven Gerischer at: sglarkspur@aol.com. Or call at: (323) 257-3629.

COFFEE IN THE GARDEN: DOUBLE FEATURE

Our wonderful June event took place on a mild morning and afternoon in Beachwood Canyon in the shadow of the Hollywood sign. We were privileged to see the gardens of SCHS members, Judy Horton and Gail Cottman. The two gardens could not have been more different, yet each was a beautiful expression of the passions and interests of its owner. The morning began at the garden of Judy Horton. This garden was designed to be seen from inside her charming bungalow-style home. However, the views outside and around the garden were intriguing and spectacular. The hostess and the Coffee in the Garden committee provide tables full of wonderful sweet and savory things to snack on while we toured the garden.

The next stop was the remarkable garden of Gail Cottman. This garden is as much an art installation as it is a garden, with thousands of tiles set into cement to create a series of colorful mosaics stretching up many levels of a steep hillside. There were themed areas (many referencing Oz) and whimsical collections of curious and beautiful things. The whole was almost overwhelming.

Thank you! to Judy Horton and Gail Cottman for letting us see and enjoy these two beautiful gardens. Thank you as well to Joel Lichtenwalter, Yvonne Savio and Al and Pat Steen, as well as everyone else who helped make this Coffee in the Garden such a special experience.



above: Judy talking to us about the garden.
below: the garden from inside the house.

