

March Meeting Recap

The March meeting of the Southern California Horticultural Society was a presentation by Randy Baldwin, of San Marcos Growers, on the *New Australian Plants for California Gardens*. As a grower and nurseryman, Randy is on the forefront of trials and evaluations of the new plants being introduced for the retail market in California. Australia has provided a wealth of new plants in recent years and while many of the genera discussed at the talk were familiar to gardeners, the cultivars and forms were not.

San Marcos Growers is marketing numerous plants that hail from all parts of Australia, with a focus on drought-tolerant and water-thrifty plants which will be a boon to California landscapes. It was interesting to hear about how many varieties and cultivars of plants had been tried and rejected—either because of difficulty in propagation or cultivation.

Randy showed many beautiful and instructive images of the Aussie flora growing in the nursery or in landscapes utilizing drought-adapted plants. His handout was very useful in remembering the dazzling array of choices, including an amazing number of *Lomandra*!

The information in Randy's talk was of particular interest for anyone wanting to mix Australian plants with plants from other Mediterranean climates. Their adaptability and tolerance for a wide set of conditions make many of these plants attractive in ways that go beyond their obvious beauty.

Randy also provided and discussed the raffle plants, and we would like to thank him for that, as well as for giving us a comprehensive and beautifully illustrated talk covering all of the recent introductions from "Down Under."

Thanks to all of the people who helped to make the meeting run; the Programs Committee for arranging for our speaker to present his program; everyone who helped set up and run the meeting; and all of those who stayed late and helped clean up afterwards.

Join us on April 10 for a talk by Renee Shepherd on: *What's New and Noteworthy in the Seed World – Great Unique Varieties for the Home Gardener*.

–Steven Gerischer

SHARING SECRETS

In March, we asked you to answer "*Which Australian native plants are you growing, and how are they doing?*" and here are some of your responses. Read more on our SCHS MemberLodge website, schs.memberlodge.org.

Some of my favorite Australian natives are: *Darwinia citriodora* 'Seaspray', *Correa* 'Dusky Bells', *Carex apressa*, *Myoporum parvifolium* 'Pink Form'—creeping boobialla, *Chorizema illicifolium*, *Anigozanthos* 'Amber Velvet', *Dianella* 'Little Becca', *Lomandra longifolia* 'Breeze', *Hibbertia aspera*, *Prostanthera rosea*, *Callistemon* 'Little John', *Leucospermum* 'Vlam', *Leucadendron* 'Safari Sunset'.

Most of my plants are new to the garden and have just started their spring growth spurt. They all survived the winter with no sun and almost no water, quite a testament to their hardiness. The shining star of the collection is *Chorizema illicifolium*, a ground cover that is smothered in orange pea type flowers. The flowers last a long time and are highly visible from quite a distance away.

–Gloria Leimbach

I planted four grevillea bushes last spring. They require moderate watering, have bright red blooms most of the year and (best of all) attract hummingbirds. It's become my favorite plant.

–Gail Cottman

After seeing the blooms of *Hakea laurina* that Sheldon Lisker brought in to the SCHS Plant Forum table I wanted to plant one. I asked Jo O'Connell (of Australian Native Plants Nursery) about the plant and found that with careful watering it will tolerate my clay soil (along with a number of wonderful grevilleas and chamelauciums). It is now ten feet tall and filling in nicely.

–Steven Gerischer

SCHS INTERN PRESENTATION

The 2013 SCHS intern awardee, **Cynthia Robinson** was scheduled to give a presentation of her work at Los Angeles County Arboretum and Botanic Garden at the February meeting, but was ill and could not attend. The intern presentation will be rescheduled for our May meeting.

Coffee in the Garden A Beautiful Day in Downey

On a lovely March morning close to eighty SCHS members and their guests met at the garden of Catherine Pannell and Robert Waters, in Downey. The recent heavy rains had refreshed a thirsty landscape and encouraged a flush of bloom. The garden around the house is a mixture of some of the more traditional and familiar landscape plants with some spectacular and unusual plants which were showing their best on this bright spring morning.

The habitat/native garden occupies a formerly empty lot next to the house and was busy with activity from bees and other insects, as well as numerous birds. The fremontodendrons were just coming into bloom and many of them could be heard before seen from the number of bees visiting the open flowers. It was remarkable to learn that this garden was only ten years old. The size of many of the California native plants was testament to their rapid growth under good conditions. A winding trail that runs through and around the garden allows viewing from all angles and the dense growth, particularly around the perimeter planting, provides many hiding, perching and nesting sites for birds.



Fremontodendron

The refreshments provided by our generous hosts, and by the members of the Coffee in the Garden committee were a welcome way to sit and enjoy this beautiful garden. A big thanks to Joel Lichtenwalter, Yvonne Savio, Pat and Al Steen, and Laura Bauer and everyone else who helped to make this such a wonderful day!

A special thanks to Catherine Pannell and Robert Waters for opening their garden to us and providing much of the refreshments.

We hope you will all keep coming to our Coffee in the Garden events.

–Steven Gerischer