



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

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

socalhort.org

NEWSLETTER

August 2015

OUR NEXT MEETING

Thursday, August 13

Friendship Auditorium
3201 Riverside Drive
Los Angeles, CA 90027



Socializing: 7:30 pm
Meeting begins: 8:00 pm

SCHS WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

Emmanuel Annor
Michael Beckman
Caroline Doepke Bennett
Orchid Black
Barbara L. Blake
Jinah Jung & Newton Truong
Susan M. McDonald
Carole Nese
Lana Wong & Helen Wong
Glad to have you join us!

SHARING SECRETS

The SCHS Sharing Secrets question for August is:

What exotic fruits do you grow? And how do you use them?

Answer on our web site at schs.memberlodge.org or e-mail your response to: gardensbysabine@aol.com by Friday, August 14

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GROWING RARE & EXOTIC FRUIT TREES IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Presented by Bruce Blavin

Summer is the season for sampling all manner of tasty, exotic fruits that Southern Californians are lucky enough to be able to grow. This month's program by Bruce Blavin will explore this rich bounty. He will share his recipes for successful cultivation of rare fruit trees, from the ideal soil type to chill requirements to mulching tips.

Originally from Detroit, Michigan, Bruce grew up in Woodland Hills, where he began his life-long interest in fruit trees by helping his dad plant several trees as a child. As he moved from one home to another over the years, one constant was the planting of fruit trees on each property. His travels to foreign countries exposed him to the tremendous diversity of exotic edibles, and attending meetings of the California Rare Fruit Growers (www.crfg.org) gave him the knowledge and courage to experiment with growing fruits from around the world. In addition to expanding his horticultural knowledge, joining CRFG "...has given me the opportunity to meet some of the most interesting people I have ever met," says Bruce.

To date, Bruce has planted over 500 fruit trees and roughly 4,500 other plants. He is a member of several plant societies – epiphyte, bamboo, and clivia to name a few – and his interests extend to bees as well. He currently maintains several bee hives on his property. Bruce plans to bring samples to the meeting, so don't miss out!



SHARING SECRETS RESPONSES:

What is your new favorite drought-beating plant or tree?

Favorite drought beating tree: *Palo Verde*, and drought beating shrub: *Matilija Poppy*

- Newbie, Elizabeth Haffner, Diamond Bar

One of my favorite drought tolerant plants is not new to me but seems to be new or unknown to most other gardeners. It is:

spineless form of Rhagodia spinescens

It has grown happily in my garden for 20 years, often receiving no supplemental water. Rooting as it moves along, it can control slope erosion and its dense growth smothers weeds!

- Penny Hlavac, Fullerton

Pinus monophylla - slow growing but beautiful; after a few years gets no water other than rain

Oenothera speciosa - easy grower with a lengthy, profuse bloom of pink flowers

Want to try: *local Datura* (grows in Griffith Park); they are still blooming in July, on a hot dry slope, even in this drought

- Ron Martinolich, Eagle Rock

Barleria obtusa! In my garden this has outlasted succulents in terms of water needs and it doesn't look drought resistant; blue flowers bloom in fall above lush green foliage. Introduced to me by Steve Gerischer.

- Judy Springborn, Glendale

JULY MEETING RECAP

California is home to more endemic and endangered plants than any region in the continental U.S. except Florida, and we are continuing to learn more about the rich plant biodiversity of our neck of the woods thanks to explorers like Jim Riley, who was the featured speaker for the July meeting. (Originally scheduled co-presenter and conservation scientist Sula Vanderplank was unable to attend.)

Conservationists often emphasize the importance of “acting locally and thinking globally” and that certainly was the origin of Jim’s passion for native flora. He left the world of finance and real estate to pursue botany starting in his own backyard. After founding the San Mateo Creek Conservancy at San Onofre State Beach, he moved on to preservation and expanded his horizons southward to the maritime succulent scrub of Baja California, Mexico, where he serves as manager of Reserva Natural Valle Tranquilo.

The California Floristic Province stretches from the southwest corner of Oregon along the coast, inland to the Sierra Nevada and southward to the northwestern portion of Baja California. This last area is the focus of “Plant Guide: Maritime Succulent Scrub Region, Northwest Baja California, Mexico”, co-authored by Jim, plant taxonomist Jon P. Rebman of the San Diego Natural History Museum, and Vanderplank, who serves as a biodiversity explorer for the Botanical Research Institute of Texas and as science advisor for Terra Peninsular, AC. Jim’s talk was rooted in the contents of the guide, which presents more than 200 plants found in the region.

Maritime succulent scrub is composed of many plants familiar to those of us in the L.A. Basin, and Jim identified the coastal sage scrub “big four” as coyote bush (*Baccharis pilularis*), California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), black sage (*Salvia mellifera*), and California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*). With average rainfall of just three to five inches (as compared with 12 to 25 in coastal scrub regions), the distinguishing feature of maritime succulent scrub is the “succulent” element, in this case agaves, dudleyas, and cacti (*Mammillaria*, *Stenocereus*, *Opuntia*). Jim’s presentation was a stroll through the abundant photos of the guide, and with an array of anecdotes he imparted the sense of adventure and enthusiasm that went into it. A follow-up guide to the flora of Baja California Sur is in the works - which will undoubtedly be every bit as engaging.

🌿 Sandy Masuo

SCHS SOMIS DAY TRIP “REVISITED”

The June 27 “Secrets of Somis Revisited” SCHS field trip was a unique opportunity for the 30 attendees to get behind-the-scenes looks at three diverse destinations in the Ventura County agriculture preserve known as Somis. The tour included visits to two different types of nursery growers plus a rare look at a 40-acre private garden that is a work in progress.

The first stop on the tour was at Boething Treeland Farms in Moorpark where Andrew Trafton, Purchasing Agent, presented a brief history of the company while the bus drove through the 11-acre growing yard. He provided information on how trees are propagated, irrigated, fed, and kept disease-free, as well as data on the daily operations.



Attendees watched employees shift trees from 24” to 36” boxes and then Andrew answered visitors’ questions as the bus headed to the next destination.

At Greenwood Daylily Gardens, owner and tour guide/host, John Schoustra, showed another side of the nursery business with a more specific growing focus. He explained how micro-climates and irrigation



challenges on his property impact multiple business decisions including plant propagation choices. Visitors were given time to shop before the bus took them to John’s hilltop home and demonstration garden, where they lunched on a catered meal prepared by chef Damiano Carrara. Afterward John discussed some of his new plant introductions until it was time to be bused to the final stop of the day.

Richard Baron’s 40-acre “Garden of Dreams” is an ever-evolving project conceptualized by one man and largely based on his love of trees. While Richard originally started the layout himself, including the island in the middle of a man-made lake, in recent years he has enlisted the assistance of landscape designer Nick Williams. Together they have mapped out the site and installed numerous mature “rescue” trees in groupings that will eventually delineate various areas, including the Chinese garden, the topiary circle, and the European castle. While most areas are still in the “dream” stage, others, like



the island with its many specimen trees, are fully realized. For visitors who saw this garden on the first SCHS Somis tour in 2009, the progress was evident and piqued their interest for yet another return visit in the future.

🌿 Sabine Steinmetz

On behalf of the trip attendees, the SCHS would like to thank the board members who were able to pull together this trip on short notice, the various locations for opening their gates to us, and our tour bus driver for maneuvering everyone safely around with his excellent driving skills.

CALL FOR SILENT AUCTION

The SCHS holds its annual Silent Auction in September, during our Horticulturist of the Year event. The auction is a major source of funds for our Society and a great chance to bid on a diverse assortment of intriguing things. If you have a donation you would like to contribute, please bring it to the August meeting, or contact Steven Gerischer to coordinate a time for pickup at: sglarkspur@aol.com or by phone (323)257-3629. We are accepting interesting plants, garden-related items and anything other gardeners or the human race in general would find fun and/or useful... You may also bring items to the event, but please contact me ahead of time so I can prepare a bid card in advance. Thank you!

🌿 Steve Gerischer

Please contact location(s) to confirm listed events, and for a full schedule.

Events are free with admission unless otherwise indicated.

ARCADIA 91007
Los Angeles County Arboretum and Botanic Garden
 301 N. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia 91007
626.821.4623 arboretum.org

Saturday, 8/15, 10am-12noon, Ayres Hall area. Hypertufa Pot Workshop. Steve Gerischer. This workshop will show you how to create "instant antiquities" from hypertufa, an artificial medium with absorbent properties similar to tufa rock. Beginning with a small container, techniques will be illustrated so you can make larger pieces at home. All materials are provided, but wear comfortable clothes, a hat, and bring water. \$25 members, \$35 non-members. Pre-registration required.

Saturday, 8/22, 10am, Crescent Farm. Crescent Farm Workshop: Xerigation. Staff Members Leigh Adams, Yara Herrarte, John Latsko and Horticultural Supervisor Jill Morganelli will discuss use of watering techniques for best results: how different soils absorb water, correcting irrigation emitters, plus strategies to irrigate problem spots and irregularly shaped beds. A visit to the Crescent Farm is included, where you will see how a lawn was converted into an evergreen, low-water landscape using appropriate plant selection and accurate irrigation. Bring gloves, drinking water; wear closed-toed shoes and a hat.

Saturday, 8/29, 9am-3pm, Education House. School Gardens from A to V. Dave Karp discusses how to build a great school garden, with ideas on funding, curriculum and horticulture techniques - from "A"quaponics to "V"ermiculture. Teachers and parents welcome. Lunch included. \$40 members / \$45 non-members.



LA CANADA/FLINTRIDGE 91011
Descanso Gardens
 1418 Descanso Drive, La Canada 91011
818.949.7980 descansogardens.org

Tuesday, 8/18, 10am. Taking Care of Garden Tools. Descanso's expert horticulturalists will teach you how to best care for and maintain your garden tools. Bring gardening gloves.

SAN MARINO 91108
Huntington Botanical Gardens
 1151 Oxford Road, San Marino 91108
626.405.2100 huntington.org

Saturdays and Sundays, through 8/23. Weird, Wild & Wonderful: New York Botanical Garden 2nd Triennial Exhibition. The eccentric beauty of the plant kingdom is celebrated in this traveling exhibition of 47 contemporary botanical illustrations by international artists.

Wednesday, 8/19, 1:30-3pm. Tropical Nursery Tour. Dylan Hannon, Huntington's curator of tropical collections, leads a tour of the nurseries where rare orchids and other plants are grown. \$5 members; non-members \$5 plus general admission. Purchase tickets online or call 800-838-3006.

Saturday, 8/22, 10:30am-1pm. Ranch Open House. Self-tour Huntington's urban agriculture site and take home ideas for sustainable gardening. (Cancelled in the event of rain.)

Sunday, 8/23, 2pm. Simple Steps Toward Sustainable Landscapes. Scott Kleinrock, Huntington's landscape design and planning coordinator, discusses patterns, natural cycles, and systems that keep gardens and our local natural landscapes thriving, and will share steps for using that knowledge to make gardens more sustainable in times of drought.



CLAREMONT 91711
Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden
 1500 N. College Ave., Claremont 91711
909.625.8767 rsabg.org

Saturday, 8/29, 10am-12noon. How to Replace Your Lawn Workshop. Antonio Sanchez and April will teach you how to kill your lawn, remove it and use native plants to create a beautiful low maintenance, water-wise garden. Limited seating. \$20 members, \$30 non-members. RSVP online.

Saturday, 8/29, 4-7pm. Medicinal Plants of California Herb Walk. Join experienced herbalist William Broen for a garden walk featuring medicinal and edible plants native to California. Participants will learn traditional and modern uses of approx. 30 species, as well as relevant folklore associated. Bring a sack lunch or snack and a water bottle. Limited to 20. \$20 members, \$25 non-members.

SUN VALLEY 91352
Theodore Payne Foundation
 10459 Tuxford St., Sun Valley 91352
818.768.1802 theodorepayne.org

Saturday, 8/22, 1:30-3:30pm. Botanizing Baja California by Mule: Adventures Into Remote Regions with Sula Vanderplank, Ph.D. This talk by "Scientist Sula" highlights 5 mule trips near the center of the Baja California peninsula, taking us through unique environments and exploring the cowboy culture of isolated mountains, as well as stunning scenery accessed by mule travel. \$20 members, \$25 non-members.

Yvonne Savio

HORTICULTURE CAREER POSITION JOB OPENING

CALIFORNIA SCIENCE CENTER Director of Horticulture

For details about the position, go to:
californiasciencecenter.org/about/employment-opportunities

To apply for the position: Send cover letter, resume and salary target to the HR Dept. via fax at 213-744-2673, email to HR@cscmail.org, or mail to California Science Center Foundation, HR Dept., 700 Exposition Park Dr., Los Angeles, CA 90037. No phone calls please. EOE.

SCHS INTERN TO PRESENT AT AUGUST MEETING

The 2015 SCHS intern awardee, Adriana Garcia, will give a short presentation during the August meeting about her work at the Rancho Los Cerritos Historic Site.

CITRUS PSYLLID DISEASE DETECTED AGAIN IN L.A.

On July 13, 2015 the UC Statewide IPM Program reported that a new incidence of the citrus disease Huanglongbing (HLB) was detected. For details, entire post here: www.ucanr.edu/blogs/blogcore/postdetail.cfm?postnum=18309

Meetings regularly held at Friendship Auditorium, 3201 Riverside Drive, Los Angeles CA 90027, starting at 7:30 pm, unless otherwise noted.

Aug. 13 - Bruce Blavin of California Rare Fruit Growers

Sept. 10 - Horticulturist of the Year Annual Banquet, honoring Kathy Musial. L.A. Arboretum

**SAVE
THE DATE!**

Oct. 8 - Program TBA

Nov. 12 - Plant Breeding talk with John Schoustra

GARDENING QUOTE OF THE MONTH...

AUGUST



*"Gardening requires lots of water -
most of it in the form of perspiration."*

- Lou Erickson

Steven Gerischer, *President, Pacific Horticulture Board*

Laura Bauer, *Treasurer & Finance*

Pat Steen, *Secretary, Membership*

Carol Bornstein, *Programs*

Yoav Paskowitz, *Finance*

Yvonne Savio, *Field Trips & Horticultural Happenings*

John Schoustra, *Plant Raffle & Plant Sales*

Lili Singer, *Selected Book Sales & Programs*

Jill Vig, *Pacific Horticulture Board*

Rachel Young, *Finance*

Sabine Steinmetz, *Newsletter*

Steven Ormenyi, *Coffee in the Garden*

Marilee Kuhlmann, *Programs*

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Contributors to this issue: Steven Gerischer & Yvonne Savio

Next deadline: Friday, August 14 (for Sept. newsletter).

It is the Friday following our monthly meeting.

Please contribute an article or information of interest.



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