

The SCHS ushered in the fall planting season by hosting a panel of local designers for the October program. Amy Nettleton, Carlos Flores and Andreas Hessing all specialize in creating resource-conserving, regionally appropriate gardens, without sacrificing aesthetic appeal. After an introduction by Lili Singer, each landscaper spoke about favorite California native plants, with accompanying slide shows. The SCHS also provided a print-out of the plants being discussed.

Amy Nettleton of South Pasadena is a landscape architect who chose to showcase plants that are readily available in the trade and support wildlife. She shared pictures of various projects, including a succulent wall that elicited an enthusiastic audience response, and she also explained the practical applications of her choices, which included:

- *Lyonothamnus floribundus subsp. asplenifolius* - Santa Cruz ironwood
  - a fast-growing, 20' evergreen tree
  - narrow & upright / can be espaliered
  - attractive foliage, flowers & bark

Q & A: appreciates some shade inland, but must have good drainage everywhere

- *Cercocarpus betuloides* - mountain mahogany
  - 10'-20' multi-trunked evergreen tree
  - has beautiful feathery, plumed seeds
- *Heteromeles arbutifolia* - toyon
  - widely distributed and available
  - versatile garden plant (clip into formal hedge or leave natural)
  - great food source for wildlife
- *Eriogonum giganteum* - St. Catherine's lace
  - 5'-6' h & w buckwheat, with silver foliage
  - large white umbels turn to rust
  - cut back annually to control size

Note: *var. compactum* is 1/2 size

- *Isomeris arborea* - bladderpod
  - 4' h x 5' w, needs space to grow naturally
  - grown for yellow flowers/chartreuse capsules
- *Aristida purpurea* - purple three-awn
  - has a long-blooming season
  - cut back 2x a year to prevent seeding
  - excellent sub for Mexican feather grass
- *Bouteloua gracilis* - blue grama grass
  - can be mowed as a lawn, or kept tall
  - known for its "eyelash" seed heads

Q & A: spaced 3' apart, the plants will touch within 2 years for a meadow-effect

- *Dudleya hassei* - Catalina live-forever
  - succulent with gray 1' d rosettes
  - can form a mat for use as a ground-cover

Carlos Flores is a Los Angeles-based landscape architect and garden designer, whose slide show focused on the evolution of a single garden he designed, which is located in the mid-city area. He showed a chronological progression to showcase plant successes and growth rates for the following plants:

- *Dudleya hassei* - Catalina live-forever
    - attracts beneficial insects & hummingbirds
- (for more info. see previous description)



- *Dudleya edulis* - San Diego dudleya
  - 1' h x 2' w with "fingertip" style habit
  - equally nice in containers, as an accent plant or placed with boulders
- *Eriogonum giganteum* - St. Catherine's lace
  - a bee-magnet buckwheat when in flower, and winter food source for birds
  - use for cut flowers or dry arrangements

- (for more info. see previous description)
- *Eriogonum kennedyi* - Kennedy's buckwheat
  - a tiny 5" h x 2' w selection
  - use as a path filler or edging plant

Q & A: should not be walked on regularly, but will recover / regenerate if damaged

- *Heuchera 'Wendy'* - Wendy coral bells
  - 2' h & w, it will spread to form a mat
  - good in low light, but also adaptable
- *Prunus ilicifolia* - holly-leaved cherry
  - 10'-40' h x 20' w evergreen tree
  - slow-grower, drought-tolerant, adaptable
  - cherries are a food source for birds

Q & A: took 4 years to establish good roots, after which growth rate finally accelerated

- *Salvia apiana* - white sage
  - 3'-5' h x 4'-6' w with chalky foliage
  - tall flower stalks attract bumblebees
  - cut back annually to maintain form

Andreas Hessing has an MFA in Sculpture and works as a landscape contractor and designer. His home in Altadena is landscaped with 100% California native plants, and he chose to focus his presentation on plants selected for their aesthetic attributes, which included:

- *Artemisia californica* - California sagebrush
  - often grown for scent rather than appearance
- *Acalypha californica* - California copperleaf
  - 3' h & w, grown for its "copper" color
  - natural form looks best, but Andreas is experimenting with clipping it as a flat hedge
- *Arctostaphylos glauca* - big-berry manzanita
  - averages 10'-12' h, but can grow to 20'
  - large glaucous leaf & shreddy, red bark

Q & A: sample shown was planted on a mound in soil amended with DG to improve drainage

- *Eriogonum* - various buckwheats
  - *E. crocatum*, aka saffron buckwheat is grown for its gray foliage & chartreuse flowers. Nice as an accent or massed.
  - *E. kennedyi* / *E. wrightii* are eponymous low mounding species, which self-seed
  - *E. arborescens* is the Santa Cruz Island buckwheat that is adaptable to a variety of garden conditions and will self-seed

- *E. giganteum var. compactum* can be container-grown for sculptural effect (for more info. see previous description)

- *Myrtillocactus cochal* - cereus cochal
  - a Baja cactus that looks beautiful if back-lit
- *Rhus lentii* - pink-flowering sumac
  - a cousin of *R. integrifolia* that requires no summer water & has magenta flowers

Q & A: available at Tree of Life Nursery and Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden

- *Salvia pachyphylla* - desert mountain sage
  - 3' h & w, with showy purple bracts
  - tolerant of varied light conditions
- *Yucca* - use against a wall for a sculptural effect

Each speaker was allotted time to respond to questions, and after the presentations, audience members were given the opportunity to purchase tickets for the plant raffle which followed. The raffle was composed of selections featured in the program, as well as seed packets donated by the Theodore Payne Foundation, and it provided a fitting conclusion to the evening's program.

✂ Sabine Steinmetz

## SCHS COMMUNITY EVENT

On October 2, the SCHS participated in the annual One Chicken Fest, "a planet-based community festival" that is about making "small, positive changes in our lives and in the community to help the planet and ourselves", according to the mission statement on its website.

Board members Carol Aronson and Pat Steen represented the SCHS at a booth that had hand-outs of Green Sheets and newsletters, as well as displays with photos of field trips, Coffee in the Garden, and other events. They also fielded questions about the SCHS and had membership forms available.

Although the 10 am - 2 pm event was not very well-attended this year, it does represent the type of outreach the SCHS is trying to become more involved with. We would like to increase awareness of our organization as active members of the community, and to help promote the SCHS for current and future generations of gardeners.

We appreciate Carol and Pat giving of their time for the day and thank the other board members who participated behind the scenes in preparing for the event. Read more about the festival at:

[onechickenfest.org](http://onechickenfest.org)

## IS YOUR LAWN HARMING YOUR CAT?

Contributed by: Leigh Marcos

How many gardeners have tried natural, organic steps for growing plants and creating the perfect lawn and wondered, there must be an easier way to do this? Many of us may have looked to fertilizers and pesticides to take an easier route to success.

Unfortunately, I was not aware until too late what effects using chemicals in the pursuit of perfection could have on my cat, Mr. Spot. Eventually, with some advice, we realized they had made him irreversibly ill. I miss Mr. Spot, and he inspired me to write about how, while we work to achieve the perfect landscape, we should not forget the impact on our cats too.

Link to complete article at:

[www.shieldmypet.com/are-your-lawn-care-products-harming-your-cat](http://www.shieldmypet.com/are-your-lawn-care-products-harming-your-cat)