



# SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

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

socalhort.org

NEWSLETTER

February 2016

## OUR NEXT MEETING

**Thursday, February 11**

Friendship Auditorium  
3201 Riverside Drive  
Los Angeles, CA 90027



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

## SCHS WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

*We are pleased to have the following new members join us for 2016:*

Tanya E. Finney  
Michael & Megan Hamilton  
Natasha K. Krakowiak  
Margie Mellody



## SHARING SECRETS

The SCHS Sharing Secrets question for February is:

*What "Bucket List" garden do you hope to visit some day?*

Answer on our web site at [schs.memberlodge.org](http://schs.memberlodge.org) or e-mail your response to: [gardensbysabine@aol.com](mailto:gardensbysabine@aol.com) by Friday, February 12

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## Unconventional Chocolate

*Discussing, Making and Tasting Chocolate Using Pre-Hispanic Methods*

Patricia Tsai graduated from the Wharton School of The University of Pennsylvania in 1997 and holds a B.A. in Economics with a concentration in Accounting. In 2001, while on a trip to Oaxaca, Mexico, she learned that chocolate was made in a very traditional and pure way, and this set her on a new career path.

After her return to the U.S., Patricia embarked on a five year journey of figuring out how chocolate was originally made and where to source the beans. She became an apprentice of Vicente Gutierrez from Cacep Chocolates, a cacao grower in Tabasco, Mexico. It was from there that she gained an understanding of what kind of beans to use, and how they should be fermented and processed. The knowledge gained from this apprenticeship allowed Patricia to begin making and marketing her own chocolates.

She began by selling to high-end restaurants and at farmers markets in 2009, which led to the birth of Los Angeles' first bean-to-bar chocolate



factory in 2011, with the opening of ChocoVivo, her small retail spot on Abbot Kinney in Venice. The uniqueness of her concept is that it combines the production capacity of a chocolate factory with a retail location. It has a café with a chocolate tasting bar that also serves customizable drinking chocolate, allowing Patricia to educate consumers and provide the transparency of a true tree-to-table concept.

Patricia likes to call herself the "Chocolate Maker", and she will be bringing samples as well as chocolate bars for sale. Just in time for Valentine's Day! Hope everyone can make it, but if not you can visit Patricia at [ChocoVivo.com](http://ChocoVivo.com).

## REMINDER: NEW MEETING TIMES

**Beginning next month, our Monthly Meeting times will be adjusted by a half hour. Socializing will begin at 7:00 p.m., and the meeting will start at 7:30. Mark your date books!**

## THANK YOU! 2015 SCHS DONORS

Our year-end appeal raised \$1,700. for the Society. Your support will help us bring in more great speakers during 2016 and offer more fun social events like field trips and "Coffee in the Garden." And you make it possible to continue our mission of horticultural education and advocacy: we are currently looking into sponsoring a second summer horticulture internship! Plus we plan to pursue another oral history project.

Look for future updates in the Newsletter. And thanks for helping our Society GROW!

 **Laura Bauer,**  
Treasurer



In January, our featured speaker, Tom Parker, Professor of Biology at San Francisco State University, provided us with an overview of the diversity found in the *Arctostaphylos* genus throughout California. He presented a slide show to illustrate his talk on how the adaptations of various species have evolved to allow for survival within their specific environments. These featured species, as well as many others, can also be found in the "Field Guide to Manzanitas" which Parker coauthored, and copies of which he had available for purchase.



Parker began by stating that the three most important processes which drive diversity within the manzanita plant communities are: amount of exposure to drought, variability of soils, and exposure to wildfires. Species of *Arctostaphylos* have been found ranging from maritime climates with serpentine soils, to areas with soil types as varied as dolomite, granite and sand, while still others survive in the fog zone and snowy climates. However, what they all have in common is the need for their seeds to be exposed to fire in order to germinate.

Parker then spoke on the concept of mutualism; a state in which two different organisms thrive when exposed to one another. In the case of manzanitas, and certain other chaparral plants, conifers can act as mutualistic agents to produce mycorrhizae, which assist with plant survival in poor soils and during times of drought. His research has found that these fungi are highly diverse within stands of *Arctostaphylos*, and that manzanitas share up to 80% of mycorrhizal species with conifers, and up to 60% with oaks.

Under the topic of diversity, Parker explained that the cycle of wildfires allow for new seedlings to evolve and

adjust to their environment as the "adult" population is burned away. The highest diversity within California appears to be along the central coast, where there are many soil types, fog and fewer people. He then shared a slide show presenting a selection of species and their adaptations.

- *A. montaraensis* which is found only on Montara Mtn. and San Bruno Mtn.
- *A. nissenana* and *A. viscida*, which both feature gray, shreddy bark, are found in the Sierra Nevada at 3,200 feet
- *A. myrtifolia*, the rare "Lone Manzanita" which grows in acidic soils in a limited range along the central coast

However, Parker also mentioned that specific features all manzanitas share are the growth of new stems in the spring, followed by new bark in August and September. This new bark growth causes the old bark to split away, creating an outer peel. And all species produce dormant seeds which must be stimulated by smoke chemicals in order to germinate, which are often found in large seed banks.

He discussed how these banks are formed by rodents burying caches for future consumption. When predators reduce the rodent population, the buried seeds' chances for eventual germination increase. He and his research teams also determined a correlation between the depths at which rodents can find their caches and the depth at which seeds need to be buried in order to survive high intensity heat from wildfires.

In summation, Parker stressed again that climate, soils and wildfires were the three most significant contributors to the diversity of manzanita species found within our varied California climate zones. He also remarked that, of the over 90 identified species, more than 60 have protected status. A short question and answer session concluded the presentation.

🌿 Sabine Steinmetz

## CURRENT STATUS OF PLANT RAFFLE

Our Society strives to comply with all legal and governmental rules and regulations. We file taxes, we carry insurance, and we file annual Raffle Reports with the California Office of the Attorney General. They define a raffle as "a type of lottery in which prizes are awarded to people who pay for a chance to win". This is considered gambling by the State of California, but they allow eligible non-profit organizations to hold raffles as fund-raising events as long as they follow certain rules. One rule is the "90/10" rule as explained on the Attorney General's website:

"Penal Code section 320.5, subdivision (b)(4) (A) states that 90 percent of the gross receipts generated by the sale of raffle tickets for any given draw are to be used by the eligible organization for charitable purposes. For example: An organization raised \$100 in ticket sales. It would be required to spend \$90 of that amount to further its charitable purposes, and only \$10 could be used to help pay for expenses or operating costs associated with conducting the raffle."

Conversely, if we purchased raffle plants for \$10, that would be considered a direct expense and we would have to raise \$100 in ticket sales to comply with the 90/10 rule. Non-compliance is considered a criminal offense.

Unfortunately, sales of raffle tickets have slowed greatly over the past few years. We plan to hold more raffles this year, but at this point, items will have to be donated. Our current "Raffle Czar", John Schoustra, is looking for growers or individuals willing to donate to the Society.

The drop in raffle sales appears to be partially due to the fact that many people leave meetings before the raffle in order to get home earlier. We hope that shifting our meeting times a half an hour earlier will encourage people to stay until the end of the meeting. We hope that holding fewer raffles with more specialized prizes will reignite some excitement around the plant raffle.

🌿 Laura Bauer

## SHARING SECRETS RESPONSES:

What is your LEAST favorite gardening chore, and why?

As I clean up after recent rains, the only drawback to the wet weather is the rejuvenation of the snail and slug population in my garden. Disposing of those slimy buggers is definitely my LEAST favorite gardening task.

- Anonymous

From my childhood: Hose winding, raking fig leaves, and picking up fallen figs.

- Lili Singer

Hose wrangling!

- Gail Butensky

Thinning, dividing and finding new spaces to replant bulbs is a real chore, especially in a mature garden. I feel guilty throwing bulbs out, so sharing with friends is my preferred option.

- Anonymous

Gopher control...

- John Schoustra



## HORTICULTURAL HAPPENINGS

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

Events are free with admission unless otherwise indicated.

Locations are listed by Zip Code.

### NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM OF L.A.

900 Exposition Blvd., Los Angeles 90007  
213.763.3466 nhm.org

Sundays, 2/28, 3/6, 3/23, 3/20, 1-4:30pm. Grow Your Own Vegetables! Master Gardener Florence Nishida instructs on creating an edible garden for fresh, organic produce. Learn how to improve soil; what, how, and when to plant; when to add compost and water; managing pests; increasing yield and variety. \$100 members, \$120 non-members. Discounts to \$80 for 4 class series are limited to certain zip codes only by phone registration: call 213-763-3499 for availability. Or register online at [www.nhm.org/workshops](http://www.nhm.org/workshops).



### LOS ANGELES COUNTY ARBORETUM

301 N. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia 91007  
626.821.4623 arboretum.org

Thursday, 2/11, 9:30am-noon, Palm Room. Drought Resilient Gardening with Rishi Kumar. Learn to take an ecological approach to maintaining a landscape, by restoring wildlife habitat, growing food and regenerating community water resources. Part of "What's Happening in Gardening" series hosted by Matt-Dell & Rebecca Tufenkian. \$100 for series of 8 Thursday classes, or \$20 per class.

Thursday, 2/18, 9:30am-noon, Palm Room. Creating Drought Resilient Soil with Lynn Fang. Introduction to soil ecology, including soil water dynamics, natural soil fertility, and how to boost soil's ability to store more water, reducing the need to irrigate. Part of "What's Happening in Gardening" series hosted by Matt-Dell & Rebecca Tufenkian. \$100 for the series of 8 Thursday classes, or \$20 per class.

Saturday, 2/20, 10am-noon, Bamboo Room. Raised Bed Gardening with Matthew Geldin of Farmscape. Learn about picking the right soil for raised beds, best irrigation techniques, and seasonal growing tips to help you achieve abundant harvests in your vegetable garden! \$25 members, \$35 non-members. To register call Education Dept. at 626.821.4623 or pay at the class.

Thursday, 2/25, 9:30am-noon, Palm Room. Composting at Home and in the Community with Lynn Fang. Discover the benefits of adding compost to soil and ways to make compost at home. Learn of community and municipal composting programs, zero waste policies, and how you can support these efforts. Part of "What's Happening in Gardening" series hosted by Matt-Dell & Rebecca Tufenkian. \$100 for series of 8 Thursday classes, or \$20 per class.

Saturday, 2/27, 10am, Crescent Farm. Xerigate, Don't Irrigate! Crescent Farm Staff will cover how different types of soil absorb water, selecting irrigation emitters, and strategies to get water to problem spots and irregularly shaped beds. Tour the Crescent Farm for a demo on how to create a vibrant ecosystem at home when only watering twice a week. Please bring gloves, drinking water; wear close-toed shoes and a hat. Free with Arboretum admission.

### DESCANSO GARDENS

1418 Descanso Drive, La Canada 91011  
818.949.7980 [descansogardens.org](http://descansogardens.org)

Saturday, 2/6, all day. Water Symposium. Practices to help you be water-wise all year round. **Workshops are subject to change, so check website.** 9:30am, Rain Harvesting in LA, Marilee Kuhlmann, Urban Water Group; techniques to harvest rainwater, determine how much to collect and ways to "harvest" water after rains stop. 11am, Four Seasons of Color with California Natives, Lili Singer, Theodore Payne Foundation; A garden with native plants can seasonally showcase flowers, seed, fruit and foliage including the wealth of trees, shrubs, vines, perennials and grasses, all suited to thrive in our climate. 12:30pm, Water-Wise Walk & Talk, Rachel Young, Descanso Director of Horticulture and Garden Operations; Guided walk of water conservation practices in the landscape. 2pm, Planning a California Native Garden, Lisa Novick, Theodore Payne Foundation; Illustrated talk on the basics of planning a native garden - how it saves water, energy and wildlife, gardening do's/don'ts, and how to make a site map. Also on site: Friends of the L.A. River, water utilities table, native plant table, and water sommelier Martin Riese offering insights on how water impacts the way we taste food.



### HUNTINGTON BOTANICAL GARDENS

1151 Oxford Road, San Marino 91108  
626.405.2100 [huntington.org](http://huntington.org)

Thursday, 2/11, 2:30pm, Ahmanson Room, Brody Botanical Center. 2nd Thursday Garden Talk & Sale: Seeds, Seed Banks, and California Flora. Globally, conservationists are racing to secure genetically diverse collections of living seeds to preserve biodiversity. Evan Meyer, seed conservation program manager at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, will discuss seed conservation and how these efforts are being carried out in California. Plant sale follows.

Saturday 2/13 1-4:30pm & Sunday 2/14 10:30am-4:30pm. Brody Botanical Center. 44th Annual Camellia Show. Hundreds of blooms compete for honors in various categories at this event, co-sponsored by the Southern California Camellia Society. Discover new varieties to grow at home and have experts answer questions on care and cultivation, demonstrate pruning, disbudding, grafting, and other techniques. Camellia plants will be available for sale.



### RANCHO SANTA ANA BOTANIC GARDEN

1500 N. College Ave., Claremont 91711  
909.625.8767 [rsabg.org](http://rsabg.org)

Sunday, 2/7, 10am-12:30pm. Identifying Local Mushrooms. Learn how to identify local fungi, including edible and inedible species. \$36 members, \$45 non-members. To register, go to: [www.rsabg.org/community-education](http://www.rsabg.org/community-education)



### THEODORE PAYNE FOUNDATION

10459 Tuxford St., Sun Valley 91352  
818.768.1802 [theodorepayne.org](http://theodorepayne.org)

Saturday, 2/20, 1-3:30pm. Irrigation Practices for Native Plant Gardens with Tim Becker. Class covers irrigation

## OPPORTUNITIES

principles, techniques and equipment best suited for native plant landscapes - with examples and time for questions. \$30 members, \$40 non-members.

Thursday, 2/25, 1-3:30pm. Four Seasons of Color with California Natives with Lili Singer. Native gardens can be a seasonal showcase of flowers, seed, fruit, and foliage. Learn about trees, shrubs, vines, perennials, and grasses that can ensure color all year long. \$25 members, \$35 non-members.

Saturday, 2/27, 8:30am-12:30pm. California Native Plant Horticulture with Lili Singer. Basics on gardening with California flora: why natives are valuable, plant communities, planting techniques, establishment, irrigation, pruning and maintenance. For beginners; prerequisite to our 3-Part California Native Plant Garden Design course. \$40 members, \$50 non-members.



### SAN DIEGO BOTANIC GARDEN

230 Quail Gardens Dr., Encinitas 92024  
760-436-3036 [sdbgarden.org](http://sdbgarden.org)

Saturday, 2/20, 9am-1pm. Build Your Own Hydroponic Spring Garden. Learn principles of the hydroponic wick method by building your own sustainable garden to take home. Fee includes materials. Instructor: Alex Kallas of AgPALS. \$80 members, \$96 non-members.



### FULLERTON ARBORETUM

1900 Associated Rd., Fullerton 92831  
657-278-3407 [fullertonarboretum.org](http://fullertonarboretum.org)

Thursday, 2/11, 9am-12noon. Plant Propagation. Nursery Manager Brian Maddock will lead a tour to collect a variety of California and drought-tolerant plant species seeds/cuttings, and instruct participants in propagating them utilizing numerous techniques. \$10.00. Second Thursday of every month.

Saturday, 2/20, 10-11:30am. Improving Your Composting Skills. Learn how to build / improve your system and speed up the process of building rich soil. Class provides an overview for beginners, as well as answering questions and providing participants with advanced techniques. \$10.00.

Yvonne Savio

## DOCENT TRAINING OPPORTUNITY

Rancho Los Cerritos Historic Site is offering a training class for Garden Docents. Classes will be Friday mornings February 19 through March 18, 9:00-12:30. There is no charge but a commitment of leading a tour once to twice a month is expected. This five week training course will give you an insight into the history of California as well as the history of many of the plants. This is your chance to share your enthusiasm for plants, as well as the stories of the garden with the Rancho guests.

Contact Marie Barnidge-McIntyre, Horticulturist for the Rancho Los Cerritos Historic Site for details or if you are interested in participating.

[marieb@rancholoscerritos.org](mailto:marieb@rancholoscerritos.org)

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

February 11 - Unconventional Chocolate  
with Patricia Tsai

March 10 - Mediterranean Climates Around the World  
with Phil Rundel

**NEW MEETING TIMES BEGIN**  
**Socializing at 7:00 • Meeting at 7:30**

## GARDEN QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"I prefer winter... when you feel the bone structure  
of the landscape - something waits beneath it,  
the whole story doesn't show."

- Andrew Wyeth

FEBRUARY

Steven Gerischer, *President, Pacific Horticulture Board*

Laura Bauer, *Treasurer & Finance, Website Liaison*

Pat Steen, *Secretary, Membership, Internship Coordinator*

Carol Bornstein, *Programs*

Yoav Paskowitz, *Finance*

Yvonne Savio, *Hort Happenings, Coffee in the Garden, Field Trips*

John Schoustra, *Vice-President, Plant Raffle & Plant Sales*

Lili Singer, *Selected Book Sales, Programs, Archives*

Jill Vig, *Pacific Horticulture Board, Special Projects*

Rachel Young, *Finance*

Sabine Steinmetz, *Newsletter*

Steven Ormenyi, *Finance, Coffee in the Garden*

Marilee Kuhlmann, *Programs*

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*Newsletter Editor:* Sabine Steinmetz

Contributors to this issue: Laura Bauer & Yvonne Savio

**Next deadline: Friday, February 12** (for March newsletter)

Please contribute an article or information of interest.



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