



# SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

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

socalhort.org

NEWSLETTER

December 2017

## OUR NEXT MEETING

**Thursday, December 14**

Friendship Auditorium  
3201 Riverside Drive  
Los Angeles, CA 90027



**Socializing: 7:00 pm**

**Meeting begins: 7:30 pm**

## SCHS WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

*Please say hello to:*

**Christine Moore**

*Consider giving an  
SCHS Gift Membership  
to a friend for 2018...*

[www.socalhort.org](http://www.socalhort.org)



## SHARING SECRETS

The SCHS Sharing Secrets question for January is:

*Are there any SoCal gardens you recommend or enjoy during the winter? Why?*

Answer on our website at [socalhort.org](http://socalhort.org)

or e-mail your response to:

[gardensbysabine@aol.com](mailto:gardensbysabine@aol.com)  
by Monday, December 18

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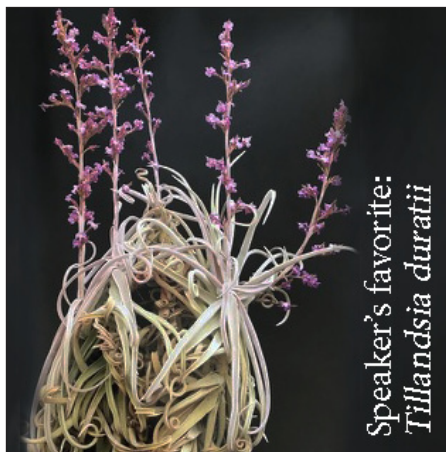
## BROMELIADS FOR THE HOME GARDEN

The speaker we have scheduled for December is Jerry Robinson, one of the owners of Rainforest Flora, Inc., which was begun with a passion for tillandsias and it has since expanded to encompass more Bromeliad genera and other plant families as well. Jerry's program will be a "show and tell" showcasing plants from his nursery, some of which will also be available in a Plant Raffle, as well as for purchase.

Jerry grew up in the San Francisco East Bay Area, enjoying many outdoor activities including: skiing, backpacking and camping in the Sierra Nevadas, California Coast Range, White-Inyo Mountains and Death Valley. He was also influenced in his adventurous life choices by trail rides and pack trips on horses in the Trinity Alps, and white water rafting through the Grand Canyon.

Upon graduating from UCLA in 1971 with a degree in Geology and minor in Scuba Diving, Jerry joined an expedition to salvage sunken Spanish Galleons in Caribbean locations, where he first met his future business partner, Paul Isley III. In 1976 Rainforest Flora was formed and has since expanded into almost 300,000 square feet of growing space,

with tillandsias in various stages of growth numbering in the millions. It is the largest producer of tillandsias in North America and one of the largest




Speaker's favorite:  
*Tillandsia duratii*

Photo courtesy of Rainforest Flora.

in the world, boasting plants Jerry has collected in travels to Mexico, and various Central and South American countries, to name just a few.

When Jerry is not collecting or propagating plants for his nursery, he might be out scuba-diving, hang-gliding, or on occasion relaxing with his wife Rhonda in Manhattan Beach where they reside.

Please join us for a fun and festive evening as we celebrate the winter holiday season. 

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## SCHS HOLIDAY PARTY

In addition to hosting a guest speaker, the December meeting also doubles as our annual holiday party, featuring:

### PLANT RAFFLE & SALES

Donations from our speaker will go into a Plant Raffle, while other plants will be available to purchase during the evening... Shop for gifts or for yourself!

### TASTY TREATS

To celebrate the season, we invite you to bring a sweet or savory treat to share with the group. Appetizers, finger foods, cookies and desserts are all welcome - we'll provide the tableware.

### GIVE-AWAY TABLE

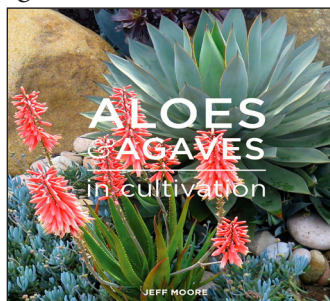
Give or receive at our "Freebie Table" where members' gently used garden-themed treasures will be displayed for a timed give-away. Always fun, but please be prepared to take your items home if no one else snaps them up this time...

### PLANT FORUM

Bring a cutting or plant to exhibit and share in our popular Plant Forum. Seasonal bouquets are welcome too.

*See you in December!*

Our November meeting was held in the Witherbee Auditorium at the Los Angeles Zoo, with guest speaker Jeff Moore, co-owner of Solana Succulents Nursery, who shared with us a slide show based on his book *Aloes and Agaves in Cultivation*. He spoke briefly about his Solana Beach nursery, which has stocked common, rare, and unusual succulents for the past 25 years. His expertise with these plants was evident as he spoke about aloes, agaves and their relatives, with an emphasis on how they grow throughout California.



Jeff began his presentation by giving a short description of the differences between agaves and aloes. Aloes are Old World plants which have leaves that are easily broken off and rarely, if ever, will poke you. Agaves on the other hand are New World plants with fibrous leaves and have sharp spines on the margins of their leaves. However, they both have similar growing habits, and therefore make excellent planting companions, which Jeff showed in his slides, beginning with the aloes.

Some of the plants he showed were *A. arborescens*, the most common aloe in California for the last 150 years, *A. bainesii*, a tree form that can grow to over 20', *A. plicatilis* with its distinct fan-shape, *A. castanea* which grows horizontally, the somewhat rare *A. helenae*, the misleadingly-named *A. striata*, and a species that Jeff calls *Aloe* 'Dave Verity', which has pretty bicolored flowers. Most of his pictures featured aloes during their blooming season, and many also showed hummingbirds enjoying the flowers.

He spoke next about the true "red" aloes, such as *A. dorothaea*, *A. cameronii* and *A. vanbalenii*, and mentioned that

many other species' leaves turn reddish when they are stressed or have too much sun exposure. Before moving on to agaves, Jeff mentioned a few other aloe features, including: many can be grown from seed; blooms can be used as cut flowers; and they have very few health problems, except for aloe mite infestations which are non-fatal and easily treated.

Agaves, originating primarily in Mexico and Central America, made up the remainder of his talk. Agaves are monocarpic, meaning they can only flower once before dying, but they can produce off-shoots, and there is much diversity within the genus. There are large specimens such as *A. americana*, *A. ferox* and *A. vilmoriniana*; smaller species and cultivars like *A. victoriae-reginae*, *A. 'Little Shark'* and *A. 'Royal Spine'*; plus everything in-between. Some specimens he highlighted were the tentacled *A. bracteosa*; the stunning but hard-to-grow *A. pelona*; the scary-sounding *A. horrida* with its nasty spines; and designer favorites such as *A. 'Blue Glow'*, *A. 'Red Margin'* and the only "soft" agave, *A. attenuata*, which does not need to have its tips clipped.

Jeff encouraged questions during and after his talk and, in addition to sharing his beautiful images, design tips and botanical information, he brought along plants for sale, plus copies of the book that inspired the presentation, as well as his first publication, *Under the Spell of Succulents*. His latest book, *Soft Succulents*, will be available by the end of 2017, and all three titles can be ordered through his website at [www.solanasucculents.com](http://www.solanasucculents.com).

✿ Sabine Steinmetz



Both photos courtesy of speaker.

## SHARING SECRETS RESPONSES

*What is your favorite So Cal deciduous or "winter" tree and why?*

I have several "favorite" deciduous trees, including: my just-harvested Meyer persimmon; my new Babcock peach which will bear fruit this late spring for the first time; my 'Near East' crape myrtle for its bark; and my Sicilian honey fig. I also love my evergreen, dwarf Meyer lemon for its yellow fruit against the dark of winter.

- Shirley Marneus

My favorites are the ginkgo and the liquidambar. Ginkgo leaves turn seasonally until the entire tree is a mass of golden yellow with the ground underneath covered by a golden carpet. I look forward to this each year and have two favorites in my neighborhood that I try not to miss. Liquidambar provide interest for a longer period of time, and depending on the tree, leaves can turn maroon, red, gold, yellow or brown (generally a mix) before dropping. When the tree is bare in winter, many seed "balls" dangle down. Small birds attach themselves upside down to the balls to take seed from the pods. If your tree is planted in the right location you can enjoy watching this tree in the winter from a comfortable warm spot inside your house!

- Barbara Crane

Ginkgo – because it makes beautiful yellow snow.

- Kathy Musial

In late fall, I love our California black walnuts where they coexist with the (evergreen) toyon in the canyons, especially in the Santa Monicas. Walnut leaves turn a bright, golden yellow and make an exquisite companion to the green leaves and red berries of the toyon. But if the question is about favorite "winter" tree, then give me those wonderful Chinese magnolias that drop their burnt brown leaves (ugh), to reveal silvery trunks and stems, soon to be decorated with either white star shaped flowers (*Magnolia stellata*), or pink, white or purple cup shaped flowers (*M. soulangiana*).

- Anonymous

## SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY ANNUAL APPEAL

During this season of giving we ask that you consider making a tax-deductible donation to the SCHS to support our on-going programs including student internships, oral histories documenting the horticultural contributions of our treasured members, and the guest speakers / programs / events we present at our monthly meetings.

A letter detailing SCHS objectives will be arriving soon, as well as being posted on our website. Any and all donations are welcomed and appreciated. *Thank you!*



## DECEMBER HORTICULTURAL HAPPENINGS • EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

*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.**

### RANCHO LOS CERRITOS

**4600 Virginia Road, Long Beach 90807**  
**562-206-2040** [rancholoscerritos.org](http://rancholoscerritos.org)

Every Saturday & Sunday, 1-5pm. Free One-Hour Garden Tours. See trees dating to the mid-19th century, plus landscaping from the early 1930s by landscape architect Ralph Cornell. For details, visit <http://www.rancholoscerritos.org/things-to-do-hub/tours/>

Saturday, 12/16, 1:30-4:30pm. Drought-Tolerant Plants with the Water Replenishment District of Southern California. Registration required. Contact Monica Sijder at 562-275-4234 or [msijder@wrd.org](mailto:msijder@wrd.org).



### LOS ANGELES COUNTY ARBORETUM

**301 N. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia 91007**  
**626.821.4623** [arboretum.org](http://arboretum.org)

Saturday, 12/9, 10am-12noon. Tree Identification, Do You Know the Trees of Southern California? with Dr. Jerrold Turney, plant pathologist and certified arborist. This lecture will cover 15-20 species followed by a walk in the Arboretum to see the trees covered in the lecture. Learn about identification, growth habits, proper care, common diseases and pests, plus best places to plant them in your garden. Dr. Turney is currently the plant pathologist for the Department of Agricultural Commissioner/Weights and Measures for the County of Los Angeles. \$25 Arboretum members / \$35 non-members. Call Education Dept. to register or pay at class.

Saturday, 12/16, 10am-12noon, The Year In Crescent Farm. Learn sustainable gardening through hands-on experience at the Crescent Farm, a reclaimed landscape where we explore horticulture techniques for water conservation and food production. Please bring gloves, drinking water; wear closed-toe shoes and a hat. Review planning and results of this year's work as we share our successes and failures. Free for members and non-members with arboretum admission. Call Education Dept. to register or pay at class.

### DESCANSO GARDENS

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

Saturday, 12/9, 10am. Wreathmaking. Make a winter wreath with natural materials, including botanicals gathered in the Gardens. Expert instruction will be provided to get you started. \$40 members, \$50 non-members. Includes materials. Register online, at Descanso Visitor Center, or by phone. Early registration encouraged as class usually sells out.

Saturday, 12/9, 2pm. Wreathmaking class repeats.

Sunday, 12/10, 2pm. Wreathmaking class repeats.



### EATON CANYON NATURE CENTER

**1750 No. Altadena Dr., Pasadena 91107**  
**626-398-5420** [www.ecnca.org](http://www.ecnca.org)

Saturday, 12/16, 9am-12noon, Nature Patio. Conservation Work Day. Help weed invasive plants to conserve habitat for native species. Gloves, tools and snacks provided. Bring drinking water and wear clothing, footwear and sun screen for outdoor work. Volunteers aged under 18 must be with an adult. RSVP: [eatoncanyon.conservation@gmail.com](mailto:eatoncanyon.conservation@gmail.com). Repeats every 3rd Saturday.



### HUNTINGTON BOTANICAL GARDENS

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

Every Saturday, 10am-1pm. Ranch Open House. Stop by our urban agriculture site during the weekly open house and pick up some fresh ideas for sustainable gardening. Experts from the University of California Los Angeles County Master Gardener program will be on hand to answer questions and offer seasonal tips.

Thursday, 12/14, 2:30pm, Ahmanson Room, Brody Botanical Center. Garden Talk & Sale: California "Super Bloom" 2017. Revisit last spring's "super bloom" of California wildflowers in an illustrated lecture by Kathy Musial, curator of living collections at The Huntington. Images from Anza-Borrego, Joshua Tree, Antelope Valley, and Carrizo Plain will be included. Plant sale follows the talk.



### THEODORE PAYNE FOUNDATION

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

Saturday, 12/9, 9-11:30am. Native Plant Garden Maintenance with Lili Singer and Steve Singer. Learn about watering, fertilizing, mulching, pest management and how to develop good maintenance goals. Part of the class is outdoors; bring your hat and water. \$40 TPF members, \$50 non-members.

Saturday, 12/9, 1:30-3:00pm. La Tuna Canyon Regeneration Series: Prepping for Fire with Ellen Mackey. Learn how one homeowner has protected her house from fire with practical solutions. Free for those affected by the La Tuna Fire, those who serve that community, and residents of other fire-prone areas.

Saturday, 12/16, 1:30-3:30pm. La Tuna Canyon Regeneration Series: Tipping the Scales - Invasive Species in Fire Preparation and Recovery with Dr. Sabrina Drill. Learn how exotic (non-native) plants, insect pests, and other invasive species affect pre- and post-fire situations – and how fire prep, suppression, and recovery can help or hinder the spread of invasives. Also included: a call for volunteers to help with Theodore Payne Foundation post-fire regeneration projects. Free for those affected by the La Tuna Fire, those who serve that community, and residents of other fire-prone areas.

Saturday, 12/16, 9-11:30am. Irrigation Practices for Native Plant Gardens with Tim Becker, TPF's Director of Horticulture. Learn best irrigation principles, techniques and equipment for native plant landscapes – with practical examples, a demo of TPF's irrigation system and plenty of time for questions. \$30 TPF members; \$40 non-members.

Friday, 12/29, 5pm. Deadline for enrollment for 3-Part Native Garden Design with Shawn Maestretti, beginning January 6. This course offers a foundation in design styles and process, the importance of sustainability and how to model a garden after patterns in nature. Students will devise a base/plot plan, implementing knowledge of hardscape materials, irrigation, soils and more. \$225 TPF members, \$275 nonmembers; \$285 member couples, \$335 nonmember couples.



### RANCHO SANTA ANA BOTANIC GARDEN

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

Saturday, 12/16, 8-9:30am. Free Family Bird Walk through the Garden with Chris Verma of Wild Birds Unlimited Register online: [www.rsabg.org/bird-walks](http://www.rsabg.org/bird-walks)

Saturday, 12/16, 10-11am. Free Grow Native Nursery Workshop: Seed Bombs. Learn how to craft a seed bomb using California Native Wildflower seeds. Register online: [www.rsabg.org/nursery-calendar](http://www.rsabg.org/nursery-calendar)



### FULLERTON ARBORETUM

**1900 Associated Road, Fullerton 92831**  
**657.278.3407** [fullertonarboretum.org](http://fullertonarboretum.org)

Saturdays, 12/9 and 12/23, 10am. Free Nature Tour. Meet at the Nature Center and join one of our knowledgeable docents as they guide you on a tour through the beautiful garden. Repeats 2nd and 4th Saturdays.



### COASTKEEPER GARDEN

**1560 E. Santiago Cyn. Rd., Orange 92869**  
**714.850.1965** [coastkeeper.org](http://coastkeeper.org)

Saturday, 12/9, 9:30am. Monthly Garden Share. Attendees bring garden-related items such as plants, cuttings, pots, tools, produce, etc., to trade. For more information, go to <https://www.facebook.com/groups/CoastkeeperGardenShare>. Repeats second Saturdays.

 Yvonne Savio

## MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM ENROLLMENT INFORMATION

If you live in L.A. County and would like to become a Master Gardener, here's the link:

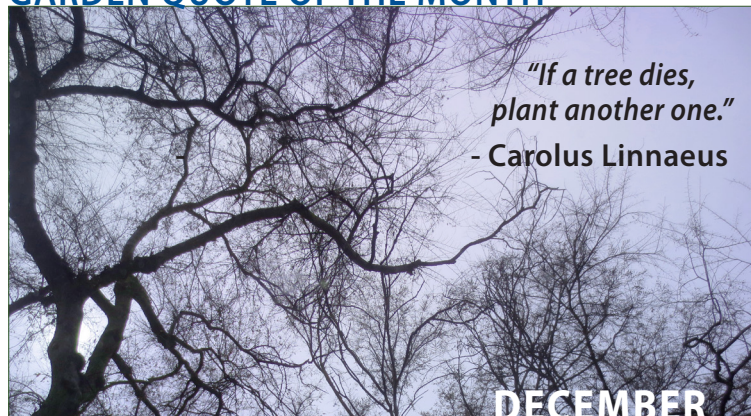
[http://celosangeles.ucanr.edu/UC\\_Master\\_Gardener\\_Program/](http://celosangeles.ucanr.edu/UC_Master_Gardener_Program/)

**Deadline to submit online application is January 8 at 6 p.m.**

Unless otherwise noted, meetings are regularly held at Friendship Auditorium, 3201 Riverside Drive, Los Angeles, 90027

- 🌿 December 14 - Jerry Robinson of Rainforest Flora talks about Bromeliads for the Home Garden  
**PLUS** our Annual SCHS Holiday Party!
- 🌿 January 11 - 1st Meeting of 2018 - program TBA - Check [socalhort.org](http://socalhort.org) for up-dates...
- 🌿 February 8 - Jeff Chemnick of Aloes in Wonderland presents a plant collector's travelogue

## GARDEN QUOTE OF THE MONTH



Southern California  
Horticultural Society  
P.O. Box 94476  
Pasadena CA 91109-4476

NEWSLETTER December 2017

Steven Gerischer - *President, Oral History Committee, PR, Pacific Horticulture representative, Tech Support for meetings*  
 Laura Bauer - *Treasurer, Finance Committee, Website Committee*  
 Pat Steen - *Membership Secretary, Recording Secretary, Coffee-in-the-Garden, Greeter*  
 Carol Bornstein - *Program Committee*  
 Yoav Paskowitz - *Finance Committee, Oral History Committee, Website Committee*  
 Yvonne Savio - *Horticultural Happenings, Coffee-in-the-Garden, PR*  
 John Schoustra - *Vice President, Field Trips, Finance Committee, Plant Raffle, Plant Sales at meetings*  
 Lili Singer - *Book of the Month, Nomination Committee, Program Committee, PR, Archives, Social Media Committee*  
 Jill Vig - *Coffee-in-the-Garden, Oral History Committee, Pacific Horticulture representative, Special Projects*  
 Sabine Steinmetz - *Newsletter, Sharing Secrets*  
 Steven Ormenyi - *Finance Committee*  
 Marilee Kuhlmann - *Hospitality Committee, Program Committee*  
 Carol Aronson - *Coffee-in-the-Garden*  
 Aprille Curtis - *Social Media Committee, Plant Forum supplies*  
 Fleur Nooyen

**818-567-1496 / [socalhort.org](http://socalhort.org) / Join us on Facebook**  
 Newsletter Editor: Sabine Steinmetz

Contributors to this issue: Yvonne Savio

**Next deadline: December 18** (for January newsletter)  
 Please contribute an article or information of interest.