



# SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

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

socalhort.org

NEWSLETTER

January 2018

## OUR NEXT MEETING

**Thursday, January 11**

Friendship Auditorium  
3201 Riverside Drive  
Los Angeles, CA 90027



**Socializing: 7:00 pm**

**Meeting begins: 7:30 pm**

## SCHS WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

*We welcome the New Year  
at our January meeting as  
we greet all our old friends -  
and look forward to making  
many new ones during 2018!*

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

## SHARING SECRETS

The SCHS Sharing Secrets  
question for January is:

*What garden-related gifts  
were you happy to receive  
for the New Year?*

Answer on our website at  
[socalhort.org](http://socalhort.org)  
or e-mail your response to:  
[gardensbysabine@aol.com](mailto:gardensbysabine@aol.com)  
by Friday, January 13

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and Opportunity ..... 1

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## CITRUS DIVERSITY: LOOKING AT ITS PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE

For our first meeting of the year we will be welcoming Tracy Kahn, the curator and Givaudan Citrus Variety Collection Endowed Chair for the University of California, Riverside Citrus Variety Collection. This living collection is one of the world's most diverse living collections of citrus and citrus relatives (<http://www.citrusvariety.ucr>). Kahn and Mikeal Roose are co-principal investigators at UCR on a grant funded by the market board for the citrus growers in California (California Citrus

Research Board), to conduct integrated citrus breeding and evaluation research for California.

For her presentation, Kahn will talk about the origins of citrus diversity, provide a virtual tour UCR's Citrus Variety Collection, and provide us with a glimpse of the collection's collaboration with a flavor company. She will also share her insight into the spread of Huanglongbing (HLB) or Citrus Greening Disease, a lethal citrus disease that has devastated the Florida citrus industry and is currently spreading throughout Southern California.

Kahn received her Bachelor's degree in Botany from the University of Michigan; she received her Ph.D. in Botany from the University of California, Riverside in 1987. In 2005 she also graduated from the California Agricultural Leadership Program - a two-year development course focused on critical issues facing California agriculture and the leadership skills required to help resolve some of those issues. In 2012, she received the Award of Excellence from the California Citrus Research Board for her exceptional service to the California citrus industry.

The evening's presentation will showcase interesting samples from UCR's collection as well as provide pertinent information for all citrus lovers. Having an expert speak to us just as our citrus trees at home are beginning to blossom and fruit, and to learn more about the threat of HLB and what the future may look like for growers in Southern California's citrus industry will be enlightening. Please join us.

Photo credit: Elena Zhukova



## REMINDER

### MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM ENROLLMENT DEADLINE

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.**

**HAPPY NEW YEAR 2018!**

SOUTHERN  
CALIFORNIA  
HORTICULTURAL  
SOCIETY



Just days after the Lilac Fire near San Diego destroyed much of his growing grounds as well as the homes of his caretakers, Jerry Robinson of Rainforest Flora Nursery arrived at the SCHS December meeting to give his scheduled presentation. Despite the devastating losses he and his partner, Paul Isley, incurred to their business, Robinson gave an interesting and upbeat talk, albeit tinged with irony when he spoke about the impact of the fire on his livelihood of the past 40-plus years, and the postponement of his own retirement plans, originally scheduled for the next year.

By way of introduction, Robinson gave a brief history of Rainforest Flora, formed with his partner Isley in 1976 out of a love for the unusual "air plants" known as tillandsias. The business eventually expanded to almost 300,000 horizontal square feet of growing space, with tillandsias in various stages of growth numbering in the millions. It is this inventory that was most heavily impacted by the fires, especially as tillandsias can

The number of salvageable plants surviving the fires will only become evident over the course of the next few years as the nursery is rebuilt and new cuttings are propagated from rescued plants.

Robinson shared that the bulk of his sales comes from providing novelty items to retailers such as Home Depot, who purchase home items such as "bird on a ring" and driftwood planters to which tillandsias are attached. The most recent bonanza came in the way of Day of the Dead novelties which yielded sales in excess of 250,000 units to Trader Joe's in the last few years. The wholesale business allows the partners to also grow other exotic plants which are available at their wholesale/retail showroom in Torrance. Robinson generously brought along a large selection of these for the evening's plant raffle, which proved quite popular, including the following featured bromeliads. The neoregelia with its large, colorful leaves; the "flaming torch" billbergia; plus the vriesia and guzmania, grown for their large flower spikes, were all on display.

In addition to donating a beautiful array of plants, as well as providing care and propagation tips, Robinson also stayed to answer questions from the audience. In light of his personal situation, we at the SCHS would like to express our gratitude to Robinson for going above and beyond in honoring his commitment not only to attend this evening, but for providing us with an enjoyable holiday program as well. We wish him all the best in the coming new year.

✿ Sabine Steinmetz



Photo credit: Paul Isley

take decades to grow to maturity. The partners began importing the plants in the 1980s from Guatemala, and Robinson estimated they have since collected over 2,000 species, often from areas where their habitat is threatened by the land being razed to provide grazing grounds for beef cattle.

## SCHS SUPPORTS WILDFIRE RELIEF

The 2017 wildfires affected many of the SCHS membership personally, either directly or by impacting the lives of people known to them. It has been a devastating time, with many people losing their homes, and in some cases their businesses as well.

Two of the end-of-year fires, the Thomas Fire in Ventura, and the Lilac Fire in San Diego, impacted nurseries with whom the SCHS has enjoyed long-term relationships, and the Board unanimously voted to lend them financial support. The society contributed \$500 apiece to Australian Native Plants and Rainforest Flora, both of which sustained significant damage.

We are happy to report that as of this printing, both donation sites have nearly met their goals. However, we are providing links below for any members who may still wish to help by contributing beyond their "asking" goals.

*Thank you!*

**Australian Native Plants** owner Jo O'Connell in Casitas Springs lost her home which was adjacent to the nursery. While much of the nursery was spared, their entire seed bank and reference library, amassed over 25 years, was destroyed.

[www.gofundme.com/AustralianNativePlantsFireFund](http://www.gofundme.com/AustralianNativePlantsFireFund)

**Rainforest Flora** lost two caretakers' homes, impacting three families, plus two greenhouses containing plants which in some cases take decades to mature. Nursery co-owners Jerry Robinson and Paul Isley are planning to rebuild.

[www.gofundme.com/lilacnursery](http://www.gofundme.com/lilacnursery)

## SHARING SECRETS RESPONSES

*What So Cal gardens do you enjoy or recommend to visit during the winter?*

I was at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden recently and everything was very fresh-looking ... especially the Toyons all covered in their beautiful seasonal berries.

- Carol Aronson

Descanso Gardens, because the Camellia Forest is just beginning to bloom!

- Elysa Rosenfeld-Ortiz

The Huntington always has something blooming - in the winter it's the Camellias and various plants in the Cactus Garden!

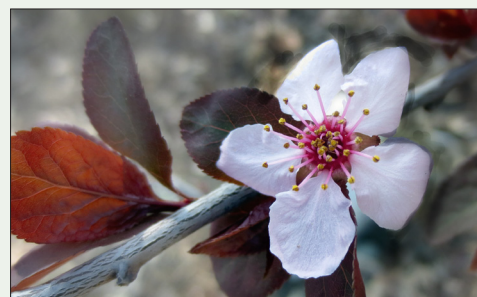
- Aprille Curtis

I look forward to the all-too-brief displays from the Saucer Magnolias around town - Descanso has a gorgeous burgundy one right by the pond just past the Center Circle. And the Huntington has some unusual Rhododendrons and Camellias worth checking out too, as well as the many fruit trees in the Chinese Garden which are always spectacular!

- Sabine Steinmetz

Don't miss the fantastic Aloes in your local neighborhoods... and look at the Jade plants covered in flowers at this time of year - not so "ordinary" now are they?

- Anonymous





*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.**

## **SOUTH COAST BOTANIC GARDEN**

**26300 Crenshaw Blvd., Palos Verdes 90274**  
**310.544.1948 southcoastbotanicgarden.org**

Sunday, 1/28, 1-3:30pm. Fruit Tree Pruning Demo with certified arborist Rick Wheeler, who will discuss and demonstrate proper pruning techniques. Guests will have plenty of opportunity for questions and answers prior to visiting the Garden's rare fruit orchard.



## **LOS ANGELES COUNTY ARBORETUM**

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

Thursday, 1/11, 9:30am-12pm. What's Happening in Gardening: Healing with Medicinal Plants of the West with James D. Adams, associate professor of Pharmacology and Pharmaceutical Sciences at USC. Dr. Adams is interested in pain control, stroke and eczema therapy using California medicinal plants. \$25 per class / \$140 for the 8-class series. Call Education Dept. to register, or pay at the class.

Saturday, 1/13, 10am-12noon. Landscaping with Trees with certified arborist Jerrold Turney, who will walk you through tree selection including size, fruit-bearing potential, shade, hardiness, and pest/disease resistance; plus demonstrate optimal planting and maintenance practices to ensure strong growth. \$25 Arboretum members, \$35 non-members. Call Education Dept. to register, or pay at the class.

Thursday, 1/18, 9:30am-12noon. What's Happening in Gardening: Rose Pruning with Jill Morganelli. Winter is the time to prune roses in So Cal, and Jill will demonstrate her method as she prunes in the Rose Garden. \$25 per class / \$140 for the 8-class series. Call Education Dept. to register, or pay at the class.

Thursday, 1/25, 9:30am-12noon. What's Happening in Gardening: How The LA County Arboretum Changed My Life with author Christopher Nyerges, who will share how his interest in Ethnobotany got sparked at the Arboretum. \$25 per class / \$140 for the 8-class series. Call Education Dept. to register, or pay at the class.

Saturday, 1/27, 10am-12noon. Winter Garden Care, with landscape guru Laramie Haynes, who will review many plants, such as roses, salvias, and small fruit trees that benefit from winter pruning. Other garden tasks such as dividing, fertilizing and mulching will also be reviewed. \$25 Arboretum members, \$35 non-members. Call Education Dept. to register, or pay at the class.



## **CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY (CNPS)**

**San Gabriel Mtns Chapter / Eaton Canyon Center**  
**1750 No. Altadena Dr., Pasadena 91107**  
**818-398-5420 www.lacnps.org**

Thursday, 1/25, 7:30pm. Pines, Pikas and Pygmy Pussypaws: Flora of Rock Creek, Eastern Sierra Nevada with Joy England of Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden. Between

2012 and 2016 Joy made 1504 collections around Little Lakes Valley and examined >1000 historical collections, compiling a checklist containing 591 taxa. Her graduate research involved documenting the vascular plant flora of the watershed based on preexisting specimens and new collections, and in 2017 she earned her Master's degree in Botany from Claremont Graduate University.



## **HUNTINGTON BOTANICAL GARDENS**

**1151 Oxford Road, San Marino 91108**  
**626.405.2100 huntington.org**

Every Saturday, 10am-1pm. Ranch Open House. Stop by this urban agriculture site (open weekly) and pick up fresh ideas for sustainable gardening.

Tuesday, 1/23, 7:30pm, Rothenberg Hall. Portland Japanese Garden: The Journey Continues. Join garden curator Sadafumi Uchiyama as he reflects on the Portland Japanese Garden's expansion and newly founded institute for teaching history, design, construction and maintenance.

Saturday, 1/27, 9-10am, Ahmanson Room, Brody Botanical Center. Container Gardening with Master Gardener Yvonne Savio. Learn how to maximize your garden by using containers in a one-hour clinic that will cover different types and sizes of containers best suited for planting vegetables, herbs, fruits, flowers, and ornamental trees. Savio will also offer guidelines for the use of seeds or transplants, watering, soil mixes, and sun exposure for greater success.



## **THEODORE PAYNE FOUNDATION**

**10459 Tuxford St., Sun Valley 91352**  
**818.768.1802 theodorepayne.org**

Thursday, 1/18, 10am-11:30. Class to be held at LA Metro Headquarters, not TPF. Building Resilience with Native Plants: Right Plant, Your Place with Lili Singer, Director of Special Projects and Adult Education at TPF. Nearly 30% of all Metro water use is related to landscaping. In response, Metro stations and landscaping designs are utilizing drought-tolerant California native plants to reduce the need for irrigation while maintaining regional biodiversity. Learn how to assess conditions of your site, including climate, soil, sunlight, and space, and what irrigation needs native plants have.

Friday, 1/19, 2-3pm. Native Plant Maintenance Basics -Walk & Talk with TPF's Horticulturist, Steve Singer. A quick overview of maintenance practices for the California native garden held on TPF grounds. Wear comfortable shoes, bring your hat and water bottle. \$15 members, \$20 non-members.

Thursday through Saturday, 1/26, 27 & 28, 8:30am-4:30pm. Winter Plant Sale. Three days of discounts, plus expert advice. Members: 15% off plants, seed and TPF wear all day. Non-members: 10% off plants, seed and TPF wear after 11:00am. Not yet a member? Join at the door!



## **RANCHO SANTA ANA BOTANIC GARDEN**

**1500 N. College Ave., Claremont 91711**  
**909.625.8767 rsabg.org**

Saturday, 1/20, 8-9:30am. Free Family Bird Walk with Chris Verma of Wild Birds Unlimited. Register at: <http://www.rsabg.org/bird-walks>.

Saturday, 1/20, 10-11am. Grow Native Nursery Workshop: Creating Seed Bombs. Learn how to craft a "seed bomb" that can spread the gift of native wildflowers. Register at: <http://rsabg.org/nursery-calendar>.

Sunday, 1/21, 10am-1pm. Medicinal Plants of California Herb Walk with herbalist William Broen. Learn traditional and modern plant uses of approx. 30 species, as well as relevant folklore. \$20 members, \$25 non-members. Register at: <http://rsabg.org/classes>.

Saturday, 1/27, 3-5pm. Kumeyaay Ethnobotany with anthropologist Michael Wilkin-Robertson, who will discuss the interdependence between California native peoples and native plants. \$5 per person. Register at: <http://rsabg.org/classes>.



## **DESERT HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY OF THE COACHELLA VALLEY**

**75080 Frank Sinatra Dr., Palm Desert 92211**  
**deserthorticulturalsociety.org**

Wednesday, 1/17, 6-8pm. Desert Soils - More than Just Dirt with Robin Kobaly, who will describe the root partnerships of mycorrhizal fungi that help most desert plants survive, and why added fertilizers can damage that relationship. Plant exchange before the meeting @ 5:30 PM Bring pups, cuttings, plants to share with others. RSVP by registering at [www.deserthorticulturalsociety.org](http://www.deserthorticulturalsociety.org)



## **U.C. RIVERSIDE BOTANIC GARDEN**

**900 University Ave., Riverside 92521**  
**951-784-6962 gardens.ucr.edu**

Sunday, 1/7 (Rain date is 1/14), 1-3pm. Annual Rose Pruning Demonstration, co-hosted by the Gardens and the Mountain View Rose Society. Demos run continually from 1 to 3 p.m. Botanic Gardens Staff, volunteers and local experts demonstrate how to prune hybrid tea, floribunda, miniature roses and climbers, and are available to answer questions. Demonstration is free, although donations are always gratefully accepted. Come out and learn how to take care of your roses and you may even win a raffle prize!



## **FULLERTON ARBORETUM**

**1900 Associated Rd., Fullerton 92831**  
**657-278-3407 fullertonarboretum.org**




Saturday, 1/20, 9am. Learn to Prune Herbs, Grasses, and Native Plants. Ismael Vargas will teach you the basics of pruning, focusing on roses, herbs, grasses, and native plants. \$25 members; \$20 non-members.

Saturday, 1/27, 9am. Medicinal & Edible Plants of Southern California. with herbalist William Broen. Explore the Arboretum as Broen illuminates the many uses, both past and present, of various California native plants, including elderberry, white sage, yerba santa, manzanita, live oak, and stinging nettles, among other plant species. \$35 members; \$40 non-members.

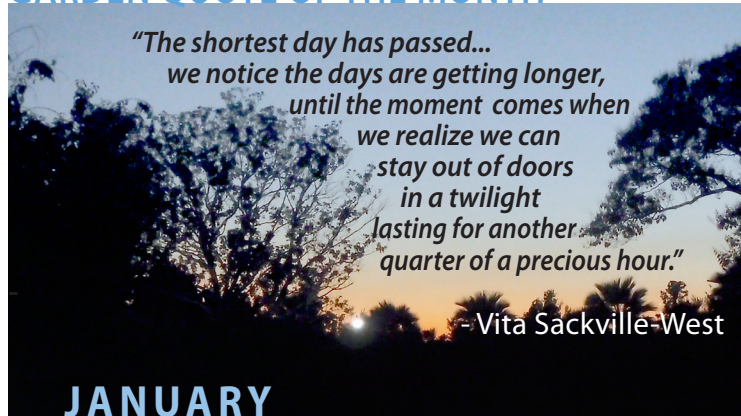
Saturdays, 1/13 and 1/27, 10am. Free Tour. Meet at Nature Center and join one of our knowledgeable docents as they guide you on through the garden. Repeats 2nd and 4th Saturdays.

Yvonne Savio

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

-  January 11 - Tracy Kahn, Chair for the UC Riverside Citrus Variety Collection speaking on Citrus Diversity
-  February 8 - Jeff Chemnick of Aloes in Wonderland presents a plant collector's travelogue
-  March 8 - Speaker & program TBA

## GARDEN QUOTE OF THE MONTH



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

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**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  
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Contributors to this issue: Yvonne Savio

**Next deadline: Monday, January 15** (for February newsletter)  
 Please contribute an article or information of interest.