

On June 8, Jeff Chemnick, owner and operator of Aloes in Wonderland, a specialty nursery in Santa Barbara, spoke to the SCHS about his recent work on creating a field guide to the plants of the state of Oaxaca in Mexico. While leading botanical and ornithological ecotours throughout Mexico since 1984, and developing a focus on Oaxaca, he came to realize the need for such a publication. On this evening, Chemnick introduced us to the team of prominent botanists he has been working with on the field guide, and shared incredible photos of the many remarkable plants they have selected for inclusion.

Chemnick stated that most of the plants would be ones which can be seen from the road when traveling, with preference being given to endemics. Oaxaca has the highest floral diversity in Mexico due to its terrain which ranges from the mountains to the coast and contains rivers, valleys, cloud forests, rainforests and drylands. The team focused primarily on flowering plants from over 9,000 species found in Oaxaca, selecting 800 for the guide. They are currently working on completing the text, which will provide field markers to aid travelers in locating examples, in addition to detailed plant descriptions.

Following is a list of some of the genera and specific plants Chemnick talked about and shared photos of: *Selaginella*, *Ipomoea*, *Lobelia laxiflora*, *Cephalocereus totolapensis*, *Pittocaulon praecox*, *Echinocactus platyacanthus*, *Pachycereus weberi*, *Ferocactus macrodiscus*, *Disocactus martianus*, *Mammillaria*, *Furcraea macdougallii* and *F. longaeva*, *Pseudalcantarea grandis*, *Sabal mexicana*, *Brahea dulcis*, and *B. nitida*, plus a number of tillandsia and agaves including *T. imperialis*, *T. carlos-hankii*, *T. ionatha*, *T. streptophylla*, *A. nizamensis*, *A. marmorata*, *A. macroacantha*, *A. stricta*, *A. guiengola*, *A. salmiana* and *A. atrovirens*. As an internationally-recognized expert in cycads, Chemnick also showed photos of *Dioon califanum* and *Dioon planifolium*, as well as other common Oaxacan species including: *Nolina longifolia*, *Dasyllirion lucidum*,

*Yucca mixtecana*, *Beaucarnea stricta* and *B. gracilis*, *Pseudobombax ellipticum*, *Cebia parvifolium* and *C. pentandra*, *Jacaratia mexicana*, *Enterolobium cyclocarpum*, and “El Tule” *Taxodium mucronatum* which is the fattest tree in the world at 41 feet in diameter. He wrapped up his slideshow showing various *Echeveria*: *E. gigantea*, *E. laui*, *E. rosea*, *E. nodulosa*, popular flowering ornamentals like *Salvia mexicana*, *S. purpurea*, *S. cinnabarina*, *Dahlia imperialis*, *Sobralia macrantha*, *Epidendrum radicans* and *Laelia anceps*, plus some prolific non-natives that travelers are likely to encounter with curiosity, which may or may not make it into the final field guide.

While we eagerly await the publication of this comprehensive book, you can learn more at Chemnick’s website: [www.aloesinwonderland.com](http://www.aloesinwonderland.com), or revisit this incredible presentation on YouTube.

**Link to view entire program:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8avEAACqDQ>

## SCHS ON YOUTUBE

Below are a few of the videos (with links) that SCHS has archived on our YouTube channel. In August we will print a more comprehensive list since we’re not having a monthly program – in case you want to do some summer binge-watching!

*Fergus Garrett’s RBLs lecture on biodiversity*  
*Tom Spellman on antioxidants in the garden*  
*Scott Logan sharing a native wildlife oasis*  
*Steve Gerischer on growing roses organically*  
*Greg Starr presenting agaves for landscapes*

**Click here to discover more videos!**

## SCHS MONTHLY GARDEN SHARE

**Summer is officially in full swing – so we need to be ready for the heat!**

- Adjust any automatic irrigation as needed for the higher temps.
- While you’re doing supplemental watering try rinsing off foliage too - but do it early in the day!
- Harvest your veggies to keep them producing longer for you.

- Keep adding mulch to beds to help stabilize soil temperatures and curtail emerging weeds.
- Don’t do any heavy pruning this month - or anything strenuous in the heat – and stay hydrated!
- Continue dead-heading your annuals and don’t forget to collect seeds for next year.

 Sabine Steinmetz

## IN MEMORIAM Joan Seidel



It is with great sadness that we report on the loss of long-time SCHS member and friend, Joan Seidel, who passed away on May 27, surrounded by her loving family.

Joan was born in Pittsburgh, PA, and an aptitude for math and engineering propelled her to become one of the first women to graduate from the prestigious Carnegie Institute of Technology. She accepted a job in aerospace with Lockheed Aircraft Corp. in Burbank, CA, where she met the father of her children, Lisa and Jon. Although they divorced soon after Joan’s birth, Joan continued working, and in 1968 bought the home she raised her kids in and where she tirelessly worked on her garden, fulfilling a lifelong passion for horticulture.

She single-handedly landscaped her downslope lot and crafted the beautiful garden it is today, providing a joy for herself and gifting a gem to her neighborhood. Joan affectionately became known as “the Blue Bottle Lady” for the collection displayed in her front garden – a sight admired over the years by all passing by. This lovely space was recently where her family and friends gathered to celebrate her life – overlooking the garden that she loved so much.

We send our heartfelt condolences to Joan’s family and thank her daughter Lisa for asking those her attended her remembrance ceremony to consider making a donation to the SCHS in lieu of flowers. Joan was actively involved in the society for many years and served on the Board of Directors as well as volunteering her time in a myriad of ways that provided invaluable support to the organization. Our members will always remember Joan for her spirit and miss her dearly as a friend.

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