



# SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

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

socalhort.org

NEWSLETTER

February 2017

## OUR NEXT MEETING

Thursday, February 9

Friendship Auditorium  
3201 Riverside Drive  
Los Angeles, CA 90027



Socializing: 7:00 pm

Meeting begins: 7:30 pm

## SCHS WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

*We have no new members to welcome from last month, but...*

*An SCHS Gift Membership would make a lovely Valentine's Gift for that special someone...*

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

## SHARING SECRETS

We would like to thank member Catherine Pannell Walters for the fun February Sharing Secrets question:

*What is your favorite rainy day, garden-based reading material? Design magazines? Seed catalogs? Botanical-themed mysteries?*

Answer on-line at [socalhort.org](http://socalhort.org) or e-mail your response to: [gardensbysabine@aol.com](mailto:gardensbysabine@aol.com) by Friday, February 10

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## HARDY GERANIUMS FOR SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

We are pleased to welcome Robin Parer as our speaker for February. She is an Australian-born horticulturist who lectures frequently throughout the United States and has been featured in magazines such as *Garden Design*, *Horticulture*, *Martha Stewart Living* and *Sunset* among many others. She recently finished writing *The Plant Lover's Guide to Hardy Geraniums*, published by Timber Press in 2016, and will be bringing copies for sale.



Photo provided by speaker.

Robin Parer has owned and operated Geraniaceae Nursery in Marin County, California for the past 34 years, where she has collected and propagated over

500 geranium species, selected color forms and hybrids. She is a regular participant in the San Francisco Flower and Garden Show, and has won Best of Show several times for her Marketplace Exhibit. Robin has also received an Annual Award for Outstanding and Meritorious Contributions to Horticulture in California from The California Horticultural Society.

Specimen plants from her collection of Geraniaceae are displayed in a one-acre demonstration garden along with perennial flowering shrubs and garden sculpture by local artists. Pelargoniums live in a 10,000 sq. ft. greenhouse which is full to overflowing. The garden and nursery are open by appointment.

Hardy geraniums are found on all continents except Antarctica, but not all are suited to the hot, dry summers and mild, wet winters of Southern California. Generally speaking, the shores and mountains of the eastern Mediterranean are likely to provide plants that are best adapted to hot summer gardens. However, most geraniums are wild flowers, and even some that grow in more temperate summers seem to be able to adapt.

Robin will show a number of suitable examples, talk about the latest selections and discuss how they might be used in a planting scheme. We look forward to learning more about this remarkable genus of plants that fills the role of the supporting cast in a garden, providing attractive leaves and bursts of flowers, particularly in the spring. Plants will be available for purchase after the presentation. ❧

## IN MEMORIAM ❧

### Joan DeFato

b. April 23, 1935

d. January 20, 2017



Photo courtesy of Susan Eubank

*Joan DeFato, a beloved and longtime SCHS member, passed away January 20 surrounded by family, some of whom had come out from the East Coast to be by her side. She will be remembered fondly by the many people she crossed paths with when she served as head librarian for the Los Angeles County Arboretum and Botanic Garden from 1973 to 2004, and as secretary of the Pacific Horticultural Foundation from the 1990s until her retirement in 2004. Many of us at the SCHS will remember her as an enthusiastic member who actively volunteered in many society functions for decades, and for years mailed out our monthly newsletter and provided sparkling cider for our holiday party. We will miss you, Joan.*

*Susan Eubank, current Arboretum Librarian at the Los Angeles County Arboretum and Botanic Garden, remembered "having an immediate partnership" with Joan when they first met in the 1990s, as they bonded over shared interests in library science, all things botanical and their shared love of the plant life in the Los Angeles area. Susan remarked that Joan's strength as a reference librarian was extraordinary, as she was often the first person to have an answer no matter how obscure the question. On a personal note, she recalled Joan as a welcoming and friendly presence when Susan first joined the SCHS, as well as a gracious colleague and mentor in later years when Susan took over Joan's former position at the Arboretum Library. She said that Joan was always willing to make her wealth of experience and knowledge generously available to all, without imposing it on anyone. Susan will be writing a longer memorial tribute to Joan for the Arboretum which will be posted on their website at [www.arboretum.org](http://www.arboretum.org).*

Our first meeting of 2017 was both entertaining and informative, as four Southern California landscape professionals shared their impressions of the 2016 Chelsea Flower Show in London. The program was moderated by Marilee Kuhlmann of the Urban Water Group and the G3 Garden Group, who introduced the panel of speakers: Yvonne Savio, retired head of the Los Angeles County Master Gardener Program and blogger on her website GardeningInLA.net; Francesca Corra, owner of Dirt Diva Designs and member of the APLD (Association of Professional Landscape Designers); and Shawn Maestretti, owner of Shawn Maestretti Landscape Design and member of the ASLA (American Society of Landscape Architects). Each panelist shared their personal slides and spoke about favorite designs and what they felt were the biggest “take away” ideas they brought home from the show.

Marilee gave a brief overview of the show, sponsored by the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS), which takes place annually during the third week of May on 11 acres of the Royal Hospital in Chelsea, London. It takes two weeks to set up the event which lasts for 6 days and features 17-21 gardens (each of which may cost \$500,000 to build and 18-24 months to plan), plus 30 or so small gardens and about 500 exhibitors.



Best in Show 2016, designed by Andy Sturgeon  
Photo credit: www.telegraph.co.uk

The first presenter was Yvonne Savio, whose experience at the show was from the perspective of a novice attendee. The event was on her retirement “bucket list” and she confessed to crying from the emotional response she had to the overwhelming scope and scale of the show. Yvonne therefore chose to focus on “My Favorite Take-Home Treasures,” including sculptures, crazy costumes and clothing, and specialty plants, such as a blooming *Meconopsis*. Other displays she enjoyed were the dyer’s

garden, the low allergy garden and the educational displays on the theme of “Greening Grey Britain.” While she found everything to be intriguing, Yvonne was relieved knowing that she was not going to be taking anything home except her memories.

Shawn Maestretti spoke next and felt that his lasting impression was that the show presented “An Emphasis on Garden Culture” which he feels is not as strong in the United States as it is in Europe. He gave a brief history of the show, which began in 1862 as the Royal Horticultural Flower show and was a way for the public to follow the gardening trends of the royals. Its popularity soon caused it to evolve and feature designs of individuals, eventually bringing it to its present renown with the participation of respected international designers. Shawn then shared pictures of some of his inspirations from the 2015 and 2016 shows, which were a combination of practical concepts that could be applied in any garden, as well as others that were more expressive and not as feasible for practical implementation. His favorites ranged from Dan Pearson’s Best in Show naturalistic design from 2015 to the whimsical driftwood garden art sculptures displayed last year, all of which led him to the decision to refer to himself as a “Garden Architect” in an effort to promote a greater awareness of local gardening culture.

Next to speak was Francesca Corra, who concluded that her Chelsea experience tied in with the concept of creating a “Sense of Place” which she described as making one’s physical surroundings worth caring about and setting them apart from other spaces. This in turn led to related themes she pulled from the show, which were wellness and healing, and artistic elements. These concepts were evident in her selection of slides and included sculptural pieces, soothing fountains, well-designed stonework, a garden for meditative “mindful living,” and one of her personal favorites: Chris Beardshaw’s garden featuring a serene sculpture of a sleeping face. Francesca’s take-aways from the show were the many inspirations and fresh ideas she is eager to implement locally in future garden designs.

In summation, Marilee shared images from Chelsea shows she attended dating back to 2010. Some of the designers that were meaningful to her were: Luciano Giubbilei, Joe Swift, Jo Thompson, Paul Martin, James Basson, Cleve West and Andy Sturgeon. In particular, she remarked that Tom Stuart-Smith’s “cloud”

garden was an example of a design that would translate well into a California palette. Marilee also spoke about the scope of the show, with television coverage beginning on the Sunday prior to the show’s Monday opening which is reserved for the press and the queen. RHS members are then admitted Tuesday and Wednesday, with the remainder of the public being allowed in Thursday through Saturday. An estimated 24,000 people attend daily.

The panel then answered audience questions, ranging from judging criteria to financing of individual gardens, to how a design is actually executed once accepted into by the RHS for inclusion in the show. The entire evening was an interesting look at this annual event with facts and features for all horticultural tastes, and a great start to the new year of SCHS programs.

*✿ Sabine Steinmetz*

## FEBRUARY HORT 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](http://nhm.org)

Sundays, 2/26, 3/5 & 3/12, 12noon-4:30 pm. Grow Your Own Vegetables: 3-Class Edible Gardening Workshop Series. Learn how to grow edibles; create good soil; what, how & when to plant; composting & watering; managing pests; increasing yield & variety. 3-class series: \$100 members, \$120 non-members. Visit [nhm.org/workshops](http://nhm.org/workshops) for info. about available discounts and registration.



**SOUTH COAST BOTANIC GARDEN**  
26300 Crenshaw, PV Peninsula 90274  
310.544.1948 [southcoastbotanicgarden.org](http://southcoastbotanicgarden.org)

Saturday, 2/18, 2-3:30pm. Beneficial Bugs In The Garden with Lili Singer. This illustrated lecture highlights helpful bugs you are likely to find in home landscapes, with tips on how to attract and conserve them. Lili is the Director of Special Projects and Adult Education at the Theodore Payne Foundation for Native Plants, as well as an award-winning horticulturist, educator and garden writer.

*Continued on Page 3*

## SHARING SECRETS RESPONSES

*Are you capturing or diverting any water from recent rains? In what ways?*

Yes. Robert and I have identified and planned four separate areas for gravel reservoirs in crucial areas in our “formal” back and front yard that replace or will replace lawn areas. Three are completed. A fourth, our most ambitious, is in the works for this year. The results have all been positive and

two have fully served the purposes that we intended. However, there have been unintended consequences that we are now having to ameliorate during the summer and autumn: reflective heat, higher temperatures in the yard, loss of the visual cooling a lawn can give, and lower humidity in the yard.

We also recycle 100% of the gray water to our yard from our washing machine by first distributing to a 40 gallon garbage can with a sump pump, to a hose, to a sprinkler. However, in a yard of our size, the approx. 240 gallons every two weeks, is literally a drop in the bucket, and this past summer we simply

did not have enough water to go around and found ourselves in the dire straits of sacrificing heritage plants even though we were no longer watering lawns. I am sure all of you were in the same circumstances.

- Catherine Pannell Waters

*Thank you for sharing this with our membership, Catherine! You can read a more detailed description of Catherine and Robert's water-conservation efforts in the "Sharing Secrets" on-line column. - Ed.*

*Continued from Page 2*

## EL DORADO NATURE CENTER

7550 E. Spring St., Long Beach 90815  
562-570-1745

Saturday, 2/4, 2-4pm. Foreground, Mid-Ground and Background: Vertical Space and the Well-Designed Garden.



## LOS ANGELES COUNTY ARBORETUM

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

Thursday, 2/9, 9:30am-12noon. What's Happening In Gardening - Gardens of Downtown L.A. with Rebecca Tufenkian. Join a virtual tour of beautiful gardens and green spaces amidst the cement jungle of downtown L.A. \$25 per class (incls. admission). Call Education Dept. at 626.821.4623 to register, or pay at class.

Saturday, 2/11, 10am-12:30pm. New California Landscape with Arboretum Horticultural Supervisor Jill Morganelli. Includes garden construction, installation tips for irrigation, water-savvy plants from Australia, So. Africa, California natives, and our specialty gardens. Classes held outdoors in all weather. \$25 members, \$35 non-members (incls. admission). Call Education Dept. at 626.821.4623 to register, or pay at class.

Sunday, 2/12, 1-3pm, outdoors in Garden for All Seasons. What's Happening In Gardening - Hahamogna Cooperative Nursery with Nursery Manager Nick Hummingbird. Learn about this co-op nursery which provides low-cost native plants for restoration, conservation and park uses. \$25 members, \$35 non-members (incls. admission). Call Education Dept. at 626.821.4623 to register, or pay at class.

Thursday, 2/16, 9:30am-12noon. What's Happening In Gardening - Irrigation Overview with Brandon Walker, Co-Owner/Operator at J. Harold Mitchell Supply. Class will cover methods of irrigation (including drip vs. spray), and ways to work with municipal watering restrictions. \$25 per class (incls. admission). Call Education Dept. at 626.821.4623 to register, or pay at class.

Saturday, 2/18, 10am. Crescent Farm Series - Swale Workshop with Crescent Farm Staff and Jill Morganelli. Learn how to design, build and maintain swales to provide topography and water-harvesting opportunities. Bring gloves and drinking water; wear closed-toe shoes and a hat. Visit [www.arboretum.org](http://www.arboretum.org) for more info. or call 626.821.4623.

Thursday, 2/23, 9:30am-12noon. What's Happening In Gardening - Arboretum Library Resources for Better Gardening with Arboretum Librarian Susan Eubank who has worked in three climates in three botanic garden libraries for almost 20 years. She will discuss the library materials available to help make you a better gardener wherever you live. \$25 per class (incls. admission). Call Education Dept. at 626.821.4623 to register, or pay at class.

Saturday, 2/25, 10am-12noon. Raised Bed Gardening with Farmscape's Matthew Geldin. Workshop covers soil selection, irrigation, garden planning and seasonal growing tips. \$25 members, \$35 non-members (incls. admission). Call Education Dept. at 626.821.4623 to register, or pay at class.



## CALIFORNIA RARE FRUIT GROWERS

Foothill Chapter (L.A. Arboretum)  
301 N. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia 91007  
foothillcfrg.org

Saturday, 2/4, 9:30am. Annual Scion Exchange. Members share scion wood from apples, stone fruits, grapes, figs, pomegranates and more. Green cuttings from dragon fruit, cherimoya, white sapote, etc. will be available. Bring fresh scionwood from healthy deciduous fruit trees, fruit you're currently harvesting, and homemade treats to share. DO NOT BRING CITRUS CUTTINGS OR SCIONWOOD OF NEWER PATENTED VARIETIES! For more info, visit website or email: Dave Szymkowski, [david.szymkowski@gmail.com](mailto:david.szymkowski@gmail.com).



## DESCANSO GARDENS

1418 Descanso Drive, La Canada 91011  
818.949.7980 descansogardens.org

Saturday, 2/18, 10am. Water Walk with Rich Atwater and Rachel Young. A guided walk focusing on water resources and conservation efforts, the big picture of water in the L.A. area, water wise practices at Descanso, and conservation efforts for your own garden.

Saturday & Sunday, 2/11 and 2/12, 9:30am-2pm. Camellia & Tea Festival. Celebrate the camellia! Enjoy tea tasting, camellia crafts for kids, a guided walk of the Descanso Gardens Camellia Collection, plus a dance performance and interactive workshop.



## CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY (CNPS)

San Gabriel Mtns Chapter / Eaton Canyon Center  
1750 No. Altadena Dr., Pasadena 91107  
818-398-5420 [www.lacnps.org](http://www.lacnps.org)

Thursday, 2/23, 7:30 p.m. Hiding in Plain Sight: A New Cactus Species From the California Desert with Michelle Cloud-Hughes. *Cylindropuntia chuckwallensis* is a newly-described cactus found locally. Learn how this cholla was determined to be a distinct new species, and find out where to see it.



## HUNTINGTON BOTANICAL GARDENS

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

Thursday, 2/9, 2:30pm. Ahmanson Room, Brody Botanical Center. 2nd Thursday Garden Talk & Sale: South African Succulents. Ernesto Sandoval, collections manager for the UC Davis Botanical Conservatory, offers a grower's perspective on succulent plants in South Africa and Namibia. Plant sale follows.

Saturday, 2/11, 1-5pm & Sunday, 2/12 10am-5pm, Brody Botanical Center. 45th Annual Camellia Show co-sponsored by the So. California Camellia Society. Shop for camellias, get expert tips on care and cultivation, and enjoy 100s of blooms competing for top honors.

Saturday & Sunday, 2/25 & 26, 10am-5pm, Brody Botanical Center. Annual Bonsai-a-Thon with bonsai masters. Exhibits, demos, prizes, "bonsai bazaar", and live auction at 3 p.m. each day. Proceeds support Golden State Bonsai Collection at The Huntington.



## THEODORE PAYNE FOUNDATION

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

Saturday, 2/11, 8:30am-12:30pm. California Native Plant Horticulture with Lili Singer. Learn basics about native plant communities, planting techniques, establishment, irrigation, pruning and maintenance. Prerequisite to 3-Part California Native Plant Garden Design course. \$45 TPF members, \$55 non-members.

Saturday, 2/11, 9:00am-12noon. Propagating California Native Plants with Propagation Manager Jordan Isken. Learn basics of vegetative propagation. Start cuttings or divisions, and leave with a flat of starts! Class limited to 10. \$50 members, \$60 non-members.

Saturday, 2/11, 2-3pm. Seed Workshop for Kids (ages 6-10) with Seed Program Manager Genevieve Arnold. Hands-on session on what seeds are and how they grow. Kids will leave with two 4-inch pots of sown seed and a packet of TPF Seeds. \$10 TPF member child with 1 adult; \$15 non-member child with 1 adult.

Friday, 2/17, 1:30-2:30pm. Native Plant Maintenance Basics with Steve Singer. A quick overview of maintenance for the California native garden, held outdoors. Wear comfortable shoes, and bring your hat and water bottle. \$15 members, \$20 non-members.

Saturday, 2/18, 1:30-2:30pm. Looking at Space, a design lecture with Amy Nettleton. This illustrated talk reveals elements that define landscape space and how they can affect physical and emotional qualities of an area, and may help us shape satisfying spaces that emulate native landscapes. \$10 members, \$15 non-members.

Saturday, 2/25, 2-3:30pm. Designing & Maintaining Beautiful Sustainable Gardens with Carol Bornstein. Class offers tips on creating / managing a native plant garden with minimal water and waste for year-round beauty. \$25 members, \$35 non-members.



## RANCHO SANTA ANA BOTANIC GARDEN

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

Wednesday, 2/8, 1-2:30pm. Secrets of RSABG's Collections: Printed & Pressed. Janet Farrell Brodie, PhD, and the Garden's Library Specialist Irene Holiman will lead a tour about the resources that RSABG's library, archives and herbarium offer. \$10 members, \$15 non-members. Register on-line.

Saturday, 2/18, 10-11am. Grow Native Nursery Workshop: Sowing, Seeding & Planting. Learn planting techniques for a successful native plant garden.

Sunday, 2/19, 10 am - 3 pm. Family Bird Festival. Learn about the diverse bird life in the Garden and participate in the "Great Backyard Bird Count," a global citizen-science project.



## FULLERTON ARBORETUM

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

Saturday, 2/18, 9am-10:30am. Medicinal & Edible Plants of Southern California and the Southwest. Herbalist William Broen discusses elderberry, white sage, yerba santa, manzanita and live oak, among other plant species. \$35 members, \$40 non-members.

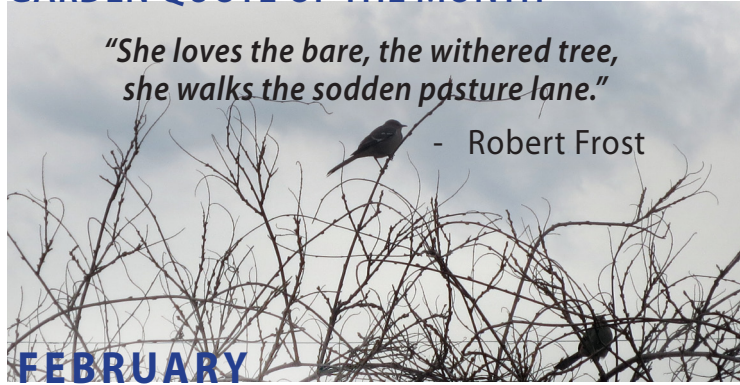
Saturday, 2/25, 10am-12noon. Designing Native Plant Gardens. Landscape designer Steve Gerischer will teach you how to design your garden by choosing native plants that will bloom in succession. \$35 members, \$40 non-members.

Yvonne Savio

Meetings regularly held at Friendship Auditorium, 3201 Riverside Drive, Los Angeles CA 90027, unless otherwise noted.

- February 9 - Robin Parer, owner of Geraniaceae Nursery and author of *The Plant Lover's Guide to Hardy Geraniums*
- March 9 - Barbara Eisenstein, author of *Wild Suburbia: Learning to Garden with Native Plants*
- April 13 - Scott Kleinrock, speaking on the new California Garden at the Huntington Botanical Gardens

**GARDEN QUOTE OF THE MONTH**



- 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*
- 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**
- Aprille Curtis** - *Plant Forum supplies*
- Steve Singer** - *Hospitality Committee*

**818-567-1496 / socalhort.org / Join us on Facebook**  
*Newsletter Editor: Sabine Steinmetz*  
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**Next deadline: Friday, February 10** (for March newsletter)  
 Please contribute an article or information of interest.



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