



Southern California Horticultural Society Newsletter

www.SoCalHort.org

June 2010



Photograph by Ken Druse

NEXT MEETING

Marcia Donahue:
Planting Sculpture, Sculpting Plants

Thursday, June 10, 2010 at 7:30 pm
Announcements 7:45 pm
Speaker 8:00 pm
Friendship Auditorium
3201 Riverside Drive, Los Angeles

*The meeting is the 2nd Thursday of each month at 7:30 pm.
Program free to members with the membership card. Non-
members pay \$5. Ample on-site free parking.*

The program will be about the art of gardening as she has practiced it in her garden and in others for the past 30 years. She

will talk about making garden sculpture from stone, wood and clay and placing it so that it looks as though it grew there. The garden itself is a sculpture and is full of meaning for its gardener and guests.

Marcia Donahue is a sculptor and gardener who has lived in the same garden in Berkeley for the past 32 years and in California for most of her life. She has done sculptural work for many gardens, public and private. She loves plants and her work is largely inspired by them. Her own garden is open to the public Sunday afternoons and for the Garden Conservancy Open Days Program.

***Please join us in welcoming the
following new members:***

Nick and Oyun Allis

Resources for Southern California Gardeners on Facebook: a review

By Susan C. Eubank, Arboretum Librarian
Los Angeles County Arboretum
& Botanic Garden

Yes, I was a reluctant adopter of Facebook, but as I explore the garden world there, I started to look at Facebook as a current awareness service and direct marketing tool. There are other social networking alternatives, such as LinkedIn, other current awareness services such as Google Alerts and other direct marketing venues such as subscribing to e-mail newsletters from your favorite organizations. Southern California has lots of presence on Facebook and I've learned things easily, which I haven't seen otherwise. It is good for quick access to a broad body of knowledge that you direct. There has been great hullabaloo lately about privacy on Facebook, but many people, stores and institutions create pages they want to be seen by the public, even organizations that you would normally pay a membership fee



Trichostema lanatum at the Golden West College Native Garden. Photograph by Daniel Songster



A show at the San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society featuring the Madagascar plant, *Euphorbia milii*. This photograph is also the profile picture for their page.

For now let's wander through some Southern California opportunities. The botanical gardens/arboreta are well represented. The Huntington, Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, Descanso Gardens, Fullerton Arboretum, Golden West College Native Garden, Theodore Payne Garden and the Los Angeles County Arboretum and Botanic Garden are examples. I feel as though I get a daily sense of what is happening there, because each of the institutions promote a plant or program at least once a day. Some also scan the web for interesting blogs and news articles about the plant world, so I get a flavor of their interests. Daniel Songster, of Golden West College Native Garden, Huntington Beach often shows a photograph a day of what is looking really great in the garden (see right above). It is also used to promote programming. I've watched all the botanical garden summer camp advertisements fly by. Eventually it feels like a comparison, although that happens in slow motion, because they aren't all posting the advertisement on the same day.

The plant societies also have representation. Examples are the San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society, the California Coastal Rose Society, Orchid Society of Southern California, the San Gabriel Mountain Chapter of the California Native Plant Society and the San Fernando Valley Iris Society. They promote their programs and show really beautiful pictures of their favorite plants. As their alerts scroll by I feel part of a broader plant community. There are also discussions where the group helps each other identify plants and make comments about growing conditions and best performers. The unidentified iris (photograph, p. 3 lower left) was posted to the group. There were several helpful comments about a possible identification. These came not only from members of the San Fernando Society, but from irisarians throughout the country who were linked to the Society's page. The native plant societies are pretty good about advertising their hikes and other field trips. I also link to groups such as the Catalina Island Conservancy, the Audubon Center at Debs Park and Back to Natives Restoration. I'm always looking

to for some of the information. You can control your presence on Facebook; just be aware that you have to do that, just as you would anywhere. My motto for my work with the internet is to remain alert and professional at all times. That is true of the rest of my life too.

for innovative children’s programming that integrates plants into other nature programming. The Audubon Center (photograph at right) has some innovative ideas on how to do that.

The retail nursery world is also well represented. Examples are Las Pilitas Nursery, San Marcos Growers, Burkhard Nursery and the California Cactus Center. I had a head’s up on Memorial Day sales. I also had a new awakening that many nurseries in southern California have active educational programs and I always like to see pictures of the sales plants at the nursery and from the customers after the plants have found a home. I’ve enjoyed seeing everyone showing off all their pictures of Fried Egg Plant, *Romneya coulteri*. Nurseries, customers, wildflower hunters, everyone is enamored of the flowers’ exuberance this year. The photograph to the right was one in a series of shots done by the Tree of Life Nursery. This is the ‘wow’ shot. The others in the series gave a good sense of the plants’ performance in the landscape.

Professional organizations and water agencies also have a presence. I’m not a member of either the Los Angeles-San Gabriel Valley Chapter of the California Landscape Contractors Association or the Southern California Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects, but I can get a sense of what is important to them as well as their activities from their groups or pages. Bewaterwise is a cooperative project of Metropolitan Water District of Southern California and the Family of Southern California Water Agencies. They send out tips, photographs of drought tolerant plants, links to water conservation activities, information on the Sacramento-San Joaquin River and Delta system. I take them in as my inspirational thoughts for the day. (Well, sort of.) Their tip of the day for Thursday, May 27 was “Water your yard only before 8 a.m to reduce evaporation and interference from wind. You will save 25 gallons of water per day.”

The Los Angeles Community Garden Council and the University of California Cooperative Extension, Los Angeles County, give me a great sense of the outreach horticulturists are doing in our communities. The Community Garden Council is often soliciting for volunteers and arranging work days in various gardens. It makes community building sound fun. There are usually good incentives; sometimes seeds,



Purchased as *Iris* ‘Best Bet’, potentially identified as *I.* ‘Whispering Falls’, *I.* ‘Crashing Wave’, or *I.* ‘Modern Venus’ as a help to the poster. Photograph by Andi Rivarola



An Audubon Center at Debs Park guide leading a local preschool group through the park. Photograph by Martha Benedict.

sometimes lunch. The Cooperative Extension has been touting the efforts of their Master Gardeners and giving a flavor of their Victory Garden program. These classes help gardeners in local areas get started growing edibles on their



Romneya coulteri, photograph by Tree of Life Nursery

own or in community gardens.

The southern California garden writers are very active on Facebook. All the Los Angeles Times writers have a presence. The benefit of the connection is that you can see the other things they are up to besides writing for the Los Angeles Times. I get insight into their blogs, the books they are working on as well as articles they are writing for other magazines. (Emily Green just recently deleted her page in all the privacy hullabaloo. I’ll miss her well-researched blogs coming my way everyday. Now I’ll deliberately have to seek it out or do an RSS feed to my e-mail.) Southern California has an active “blogging” community. I’ve found those folks through my connection to the Garden Writers Association, which also has a page. Debra Prinzing is very generous with her stories about her book research and even her family trips to see wildflowers. I really enjoy learning about her plant

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escapades. Landscape designer and garden writer, Billy Goodnick from Santa Barbara keeps us all entertained with his “Crimes against Horticulture” photographs. The community has supported his vision and he is now thinking about writing a book on the subject.

When our new director came to The Arboretum from Harvard, he asked me where the Southern California



Buds from Debra Prinzing’s trip to see *Yucca brevifolia*.

gardening community had a listserv. Apparently New England has a very active internet community in that format. I was a little flummoxed when I couldn’t come up with one for Southern California, but I feel that I have created my own version with my selections.

Now for the cautions and suggestions. Every new technology has its benefits and problems. Social networking sites

are still working their way through as mainstream technology. Young people take them for granted. The older generations are skeptical. Try not to get too concerned about the terminology. “Friends” they are not. They are connections. Use the same caution you would with any of your other internet connections. Create your own security and privacy just as you would anywhere else on the internet. The information is presented in a running scroll that has a new entry every time one of your connections creates an entry. From a librarian’s perspective this doesn’t make for very permanent or searchable information but, as I said at the beginning of the article, it works well as a current alert service. It can get overwhelming, just as your junk mail pile from the U.S. Postal Service does. You can decide not to keep your connections or you can also “hide” them, i.e., not have to view the entries from that connection. This is



Billy Goodnick’s caption is “*Ficus retusa nitida*: Expedience trumps beauty.”

particularly useful when some of your connections get heavily involved in games played through the social network. It’s also worth a reminder to those folks that your interest is their professional information. Connections can be grouped so the game players can spare the rest of us their obsessions. In conclusion, my skepticism about social networking has been assuaged somewhat by the community of Southern California gardeners I have found there. The experience has grown up a lot from my first social networking experiment I had an intern do for the Arboretum Library four years ago. Facebook is just yet another iteration of our community to take advantage of, if you want to.



Billy Goodnick’s caption for this *Opuntia* sp. photo: “Smart thinking - place them along a narrow path. Acupuncture, anyone?”

AUGUST MEETING

Our August meeting will be something we have been trying to fit in for awhile now, a panel discussion. The title will be ‘Ask the Experts’ and questions about any horticultural subject will be welcomed from the floor. We are hoping for a lively talk expressing the varied viewpoints (even controversial ones) from our panel-made up from the distinguished ranks of our Society. If you would like to submit your questions ahead of time, please feel free to e-mail them to me, Steve Gerischer, at: sglarkspur@aol.com. A recent poll of our members revealed that the subjects that interested most people were drought tolerant gardening, vegetable/edible gardening, Mediterranean gardening, roses, and native plants. These are just some suggestions — feel free to ‘ask the experts’ about anything horticultural under the sun. Even ‘Topsy-Turveys’ and pink flamingos. (I will keep my opinions to myself.)

BOOK SALE

In concert with our ‘Ask the Experts’ panel we will be having a book sale. Every year we receive boxes of books (for the banquet Silent Auction), and we cannot handle them all in such a limited time frame—and so in the interest of benefiting the Society (and clearing out a few members households) we are calling for donations of your new or used garden related books. Those big, glossy coffee table books and signed first editions will still be welcomed as donations for the silent auction, but the every day information, garden design, and plant related books we can hawk at pre-set prices and all proceeds will go towards the care and maintenance of the SCHS. Please bring your donations to the June or July meeting or contact me at the e-mail address above.

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Website: www.SoCalHort.org

The Next Newsletter Deadline is
July 15, 2010 for the July-August issue
Interested in Contributing
Or Having an Article about Your Garden?
Contact the Feature Articles Editor at
Susan.Eubank@Arboretum.org
or 626-821-3213



SOUTHERN
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Membership Form

Please complete this form and mail with your check
made payable to SCHS to:
SCHS, PO Box 94476, Pasadena CA 91109-4476

Name(s): _____

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Phone: (_____) _____

Email: _____

Please designate your membership level:

___ \$ 40 **Individual** - Receives the SCHS Newsletter,
Pacific Horticulture magazine, free admission to regu-
lar meetings and 2 guest passes.

___ \$ 25 **Student** - Individual benefits (requires copy
of current student ID)

___ \$ 50 **Household** - Individual benefits for two or
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___ \$125 **Cultivator** - Planter benefits plus the choice
of a SCHS publication

___ \$250 **Benefactor** - Cultivator benefits plus two
tickets to the SCHS Annual Awards Banquet

Individuals, students and households, please pay 3/4 of
the membership price if joining after Sept. 30; pay 1/2
of the price if joining after Dec. 31; pay 1/4 of the price
if joining after Mar. 31. All other levels pay full price
and receive full benefits.

Visit our website to learn more about membership benefits:
socalhort.org

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NEWSLETTER
June 2010



Upcoming Southern California Horticultural Society Programs

June 10 — Marcia Donahue: Planting Sculpture, Sculpting Plants

July 8 — Jim Downer: What's Bugging Your Garden

August 12 — Ask the Experts: An Open Forum

September 9 — Annual Banquet: Horticulturist of the Year: Yvonne Savio

October 8 — Robert Perry: Landscape Plants for California Gardens

November 11 — Mike Evans, Tree of Life Nursery

December 9 — Holiday Greens & Floral Demonstration with Christine Saunders

January 13 — Rosalind Creasy: Edible Landscaping

February 11 — Sam Watters: Early Gardens of Los Angeles