What brings four disparate Southern California landscape professionals together to speak at our January meeting? Their recent travels to see the Royal Horticultural Society Chelsea Flower Show, of course! Join us as a panel of local plant lovers presents unique first-hand impressions of the show, accompanied by their slides from this international event.

The moderator for this program will be Marilee Kuhlmann of the Urban Water Group and the G3 Garden Group, a local landscape designer with an extensive background in water conservation. She is currently serving as a landscape consultant for the City of Santa Monica, and sits on various local boards, including the SCHS.

The first of the panelists is Francesca Corra, owner of the award-winning landscape firm Dirt Diva Designs. As a landscape artist, she seeks to create spaces that are environmentally sustainable as well as beautiful. Francesca is a long-time member of the APLD (Association of Professional Landscape Designers) and is a certified G3 professional.

Also on the panel is Shawn Maestretti, a plantsman, licensed landscape contractor and designer whose company, Shawn Maestretti Landscape Design, creates gardens throughout Los Angeles that strive for aesthetic goals as well as sensible practices based on his extensive horticultural knowledge. He is a graduate of the UCLA Extension Landscape Architecture Program and is a member of the ASLA (American Society of Landscape Architects) and the APLD.

Rounding out the presenters will be Yvonne Savio, who worked for the University of California for 36 years, and is known to many as the force behind the Los Angeles County Master Gardener Program. Upon her retirement in 2015, Yvonne launched her popular website: www.GardeningInLA.net, where she blogs weekly and continues to serve the gardening public by posting garden events and job opportunities. In addition to her other activities, Yvonne is also currently serving on the SCHS board.

What plant secrets, insights, varied perspectives and other surprises might this diverse group have to share about the Chelsea Flower Show? Find out by joining us for this fresh presentation at our first meeting of 2017!
At our annual Holiday Party and Potluck in December, attendees socialized while enjoying sweet and savory treats brought in by fellow members, perused the Give-Away Table and contemplated early holiday shopping from assorted vendors. Social hour was followed by an entertaining slide show presented by Kathy Musial and Steve Gerischer about the two back-to-back trips the Pacific Horticulture Society (PHS) booked to Madagascar in October 2012, as each of them had escorted one of the tours. Although plants from this botanically-rich island nation featured prominently in their show, it was their personal observations that kept the program on a light note to match the casual mood of the evening.

Kathy is Curator of Living Collections at the Huntington Library and Gardens, and has travelled extensively with the PHS, and was able to showcase both her horticultural knowledge as well as her travel expertise in her talk. Steve is currently president of both the SCS and the PHS, and while he also enjoys seeking out botanical adventures worldwide, his travelogue was enhanced by more anecdotal observations. As Kathy travelled with the first of the tours, she began the evening’s presentation.

She gave us a brief history of Madagascar, wherein we learned that after its prehistoric geological split from both the African continent and the Indian peninsula, the island’s native plants and animals evolved in relative isolation and 90% are endemic to the island. While this makes Madagascar a global biodiversity hotspot, its increasing population as well as political and socioeconomic factors contribute to ongoing habitat destruction, which continues to increase at a rapid rate. Ecotourism and other diversionary measures are helping to slow the destruction of some ecosystems, but the future of many more is still uncertain.

One of the highlights of Kathy’s trip was a visit to the world famous Avenue of the Baobabs, featuring six species found only in Madagascar. They are the remnants of a once-dense forest, and while extremely popular, they are located in a completely unprotected area. From there, the trip continued at Andasibe-Mantadia National Park, where Kathy saw both Asplenium nidus and Rhipsalis baccifera. This leg of the tour also included a nighttime walk to more easily spot some of the many indigenous chameleons found on the island.

Kathy explained that with most excursions originating from the capital city of Antananarivo, frequent trips in and out of that city were necessary in order to get to any destination. This was the case for the tour’s next stop at Berenty Reserve, which could only be accessed by first flying in, and then driving along a bumpy road. It is home to the world-renowned Spiny Forest where the forest itself is surrounded by a sisal plantation. From there she visited Andohahela National Park, home of ring-tailed lemurs and plants including Uncaria decaryi, 8 foot tall Kalanchee beharensis and Dypsis decaryi. The last tour stop for her group was Isalo National Park, where the group hiked to the Jurassic rock formation known as Fenetre de l’Isalo while admiring big ladybugs and Pachypodium rosulatum along the way.

At this point, Kathy shared how tenuous air travel in and out of the country can be. Upon her group’s return trip, during a fuel stop in Marseilles, they experienced a delay of several hours because Air Madagascar had not paid their fuel bill. While they were eventually transferred to another plane, the incident unfortunately impacted Steve’s arrival, as the original plane was the one scheduled to bring his group into Madagascar! This created a ripple effect for his group, with late arrival times at every destination that caused much rescheduling.

While Steve’s tour eventually made it to the same locations, his group was a lot less happy about travelling in the heat and humidity knowing they would probably get “bumped” at most of their stops. Steve shared photos of many plants, including Angraecum orchids, Catharanthus roseus, Ravenala madagascariensis and various Uncaria. He talked about the many indigenous animals he saw on the trip, including the crested drongo bird, the Madagascar flycatcher, the leaf-tailed gecko and the Madagascar golden orb spider. He also showed some of the gardening tools that tour participants purchased and which required explanations for being in their luggage while going through the airports. Fortunately, his group made it back without further incident.

After the presentation, Kathy and Steve answered some audience questions and then members were given a chance to make some last-minute purchases, as well as converge at the ever-popular Give-Away Table. After a signal from Steve Gerischer, members grabbed the prizes they had been eyeing all evening, and the last meeting of 2016 was over.

Sabine Steinmetz

**SHARING SECRETS RESPONSES**

*What are your gardening resolutions for the coming new year?*

The same as last year - and the year before that! Don’t bring home any more plants that I don’t know where they will go in the garden, or have time to plant right away, only to have half of them live and die in nursery cans...

Old habits are hard to break, but new lessons can be learned - I almost never go to nurseries or plant sales alone unless I’m shopping for a client, and if I go “for fun” with someone else, I try to remember to leave the credit cards at home.

Right now I can (proudly?) say I only have 1 flat and 7 cans left over from 2016 that need to go in the ground and I already know where they are going to live. Now I just need to make the time to plant them - but that’s a another resolution.

- Sabine Steinmetz

I plan to spend more leisure time in my garden, rather than just “enjoying” it while I’m working in it!

- Anonymous

**A FEW SUGGESTIONS FOR 2017**

- install a rain barrel (or several)
- finally start that compost bin / pile
- invite some wildlife into your garden
- don’t let those weeds go to seed this year!
- take better care of your tools
- read some of those gardening books you’ve been hoarding - or donate them -
- make visiting a local public garden part of your monthly schedule - equal parts therapy and inspiration
- make a plan and stick to it - your progress will be your encouragement to keep going

If nothing else, resolve to spend more time appreciating your garden just as it is.
The Plant Forum is a display of plants grown by members & exhibited at our monthly general meeting.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>PLANTS SHOWN at OCTOBER 13, 2016 MEETING</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Barleria obtusa</strong> (Acanthaceae)</td>
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<td>Bush Violet shown by Eric and Ann Brooks. This South African shrub grows in forest margin areas where there is sufficient summer rainfall. It has pleasant looking evergreen foliage and is useful as a large scale ground cover. Blue flowers appear in fall and winter. The blooms are 1” wide and have an open, tubular form, clustering at branch ends. The plant is easy to grow and is listed as being 3’ x 5’ but it acts as a scandent shrub and will grow up into trees or lean across fences and other plants. Self seeds occasionally. Fairly drought-resistant when established.</td>
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| **Malvaviscus arboreus var. mexicanus** (Malvaceae) |
| Turks Cap Mallow shown by Eric and Ann Brooks. Malvaviscus is found from the southern United States south through Mexico and Central America. These large shrubs grow in full to part sun and bloom most of the year with intriguing ‘closed’ flowers of bright red (the upright petals stay semi-furled, and pollinators must work to get down inside the blooms). Malvaviscus can easily reach 15’ x 15’ but can be kept smaller with judicious pruning. Attracts hummingbirds and butterflies. |

| **Erythrina humeana ‘Raja’** (Fabaceae) |
| Dwarf Coral Tree shown by Eric and Ann Brooks. This hybrid coral tree grows only to 10’ and has late summer flowers of dark red. The leaves have a pronounced point at their tip. |

| **Gomphocarpus physocarpus** (Asclepiadoideae) |
| Balloon Plant/Family Jewels - exhibitor not indicated. From South Africa, this tall milkweed can top 6’ and has nodding clusters of typical milkweed flowers in white, but its main feature are the inflated seed pods covered with soft hairs, giving rise to the many colorful common names. Easily grown and will seed about - they appreciate full sun and regular watering. Monarch butterflies will lay eggs on these plants and like many exotic milkweeds they are less than ideal host plants for the caterpillars. |

Also exhibited:

| **Dahlia ‘Café au Lait’** |
| Shown by Gloria Leinbach |
| (pictured at left) |

| **Pelargonium transvaalense** |
| Shown by Matt-Dell Tufenkian |

| **Pteris cretica** (exhibitor not indicated) |
| **Farfugium japonicum ‘Aureomaculata’** (exhibitor not indicated) |

Compiled by Steven Gerischer

November “Green Sheet” on reverse

Please note, there were no Plant Forums in August and September.
PLANTS SHOWN at NOVEMBER 10, 2016 MEETING

**Chrysanthemum sp. ‘Icicles’** (Asteraceae)

Shown by Aprille Curtis. This popular spider mum has long, draping reflexed petals of pure white. Spider mums and other showy large-blossomed chrysanthemums benefit from staking and disbudding to increase the flower size and quality, but good results can be seen with less effort. Great cut flowers.

**Euphorbia genoudiana** (Euphorbiaceae)

Shown by Matt-Dell Tufenkian. This small, shrubby euphorbia is native to Madagascar and has narrow leaves and stems armed with pale spines. The appearance is similar to Alluaudia and Didierea (also from Madagascar). Makes a great container subject. Sharp drainage is a must.

**Agave guiengola ‘Creme Brulee’** (Agavaceae)

Shown by Matt-Dell Tufenkian. A cultivar from a species found originally in Mexico, this variegated agave will eventually grow to around 3 to 4 feet high and 4 to 5 feet wide. The glaucous green foliage is marked with cream colored margins sometimes blushed pink.

**Leucospermum sp. ‘High Gold’** (Proteaceae)

Shown by Gary Kamisher. This yellow flowering pincushion shrub is a combination of species originally from South Africa. L. cordifolium ‘Yellow Bird’ was crossed with L. patersonii. This hybrid grows from 4 to 5 feet high by 6 to 8 feet wide. It requires excellent drainage and needs summer-dry conditions to thrive. An excellent cut flower. Pincushion blooms are prized in the floral trade for their dramatic look and long vase life. Attracts hummingbirds and occasionally orioles.

**Hypoestes aristata** (Acanthaceae)

Shown by Aprille Curtis. This South African sub-shrub is evergreen and should be pinched or pruned a couple of times during the growing season to improve overall shape. The violet-purple flowers cover the plant from mid-fall into winter. After flowering, cut it back hard as you would a salvia. Best with part shade inland. Easy and spectacular when blooming. Not a fussy plant.

**Also exhibited:**

**Pelargonium sp.** from South Africa (Geraniaceae)

Shown by Matt-Dell Tufenkian

**Catharanthus roseus ‘Soiree Kawaii’** (Apocynaceae)

Shown by Steven Gerischer

Compiled by Steven Gerischer
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.

JPAUL GETTY MUSEUM - GETTY CENTER 1200 Getty Center Dr., Los Angeles 90049 310-440-7300 www.getty.org/museum

Daily, 11:30am, 12:30pm, 1:30pm, 2:30pm, 3:30pm, 4:30pm. Garden Tours. Meet at bench outside entrance to tour the Central Garden, designed by artist Robert Irwin - an evolving work of art, with tree-lined walkways through extraordinary sights, sounds, and scents.

JPAUL GETTY MUSEUM - GETTY VILLA 17985 Pacific Coast Hwy., Pacific Palisades 90272 310-440-7300 www.getty.org/museum

Thursdays & Saturdays, 10:30am, 11:30am, 12:30pm, 1:30pm, 3:30pm, 4:30pm. Garden Tours meet outside the entrance. Discover rich mythological and cultural connections of four ancient Roman gardens.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY ARBORETUM 301 N. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia 91007 626-821-4623 arbotem.org

Thursday, 1/12, 9:30am-noon. What’s Happening In Gardening - Propagating Pelargoniums from Cuttings with Matt-Dell Tufenkian. Learn more about growing these easy-care, great-smelling, and drought-tolerant plants! Matt-Dell teaches how to start baby plants from seeds and cuttings. $140 for the series (8 Thursdays beginning 1/12/17 or $25 per class includes Arbotem admission). Call 626-821-4623 to register or pay at the class; For more info, visit: www.arbotem.org

Thursday, 1/19, 9:30am-noon. What’s Happening In Gardening - Hum on In! Gardening with Our Tiniest Birds with Lili Singer. Learn about hummingbirds and the many species that spend all or part of the year in this region. This illustrated lecture discusses how to create, plant and maintain a garden that attracts and supports these birds year round. $140 for the series (8 Thursdays beginning 1/12/17 or $25 per class includes Arbotem admission). Call 626-821-4623 to register or pay at the class; For more info, visit: www.arbotem.org

Saturday, 1/28, 10am-morn. Home Orcharding with Steve Hofvendahl. Learn basics of growing fruit trees in Southern California. Includes: best-adapted species/varieties, care and pruning, lay-out considerations. $25 Arboretum members / $35 non-members (incl. admission). Call 626-821-4623 to register or pay at the class; For more info, visit: www.arbotem.org

DESCANSO GARDENS 1418 Descanso Drive, La Canada 91011 818.949.7980 descansogardens.org

Saturday, 1/21, 10am. Family Nature Walk. This guided walk will take 6-10 year olds and their families on an expedition to discover how Descanso Gardens is a habitat for many animals in winter. No registration required.

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, 1/26, 7:30pm. Wild Suburbia: Learning to Garden with Native Plants with Barbara Eisenstein. Referencing her new book Wild Suburbia, Barbara will talk about transforming a high water-use yard into a habitat garden aboundig with native plants. She will discuss how attendees might select best gardening practices for their conditions, and ways to improve dissemination of accurate information on sustainable gardening with California native plants.

EATON CANYON NATURE CENTER 1750 No. Altadena Dr., Pasadena 91107 626-398-5420 www.ecnca.org


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 information, go to http://rsabg.org/nursery-calendar.

RANCHO SANTA ANA BOTANIC GARDEN 1500 N. College Ave., Claremont 91711 909.625.8767 rsabg.org

Saturday, 1/21, 10-11am. Grow Native Nursery Workshop: Creating Seed Bombs. Learn how to seed bombs of beautiful California Native Wildflower seeds. To register and for more information, go to http://rsabg.org/nursery-calendar.

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

Saturday, 1/21, 10am-morning. Rose Pruning. Properly pruned roses are more disease-resistant, require less maintenance, and yield better blooms. Landscape designer Steve Gerischer simplifies this prickly topic on the ‘why’, ‘when’, and ‘how’ of proper rose pruning.

Yvonne Savio
UPCOMING SCHS PROGRAMS

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

January 12 - Impressions of London’s Chelsea Flower Show with Shawn Maestretti, Francesca Corra, Yvonne Savio, moderated by Marilee Kuhlmann

February 9 - Robin Parer, owner of Geraniaceae Nursery and author of The Plant Lover’s Guide to Hardy Geraniums

March 9 - Program TBA

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- Carol Aronson
- Aprille Curtis - Plant Forum supplies
- Steve Singer - Hospitality Committee

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Newsletter Editor: Sabine Steinmetz
Contributors to this issue: Steve Gerischer, Yvonne Savio

Next deadline: Friday, January 13 (for February newsletter)
Please contribute an article or information of interest.

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Pasadena CA 91109-4476

NEWSLETTER January 2017