BULBS: FROM THE OLD WORLD TO YOUR GARDEN

The month of May brings us popular local speaker and succulent expert, Tom Glavich, a long-time grower of bulbs and succulents. He is currently serving as vice president of the Southern California Daylily and Bulb Society (SCHAS) and is also a co-chair of the Inter-City Cactus and Succulent Show, held the second week in August at the Los Angeles Arboretum. Glavich is also a member of the Board of Directors of the Cactus and Succulent Society of America (CSSA) and is the author of the Beginner’s Guide to Gasteria, Haworthia, Agave and other Succulent Monocots, which includes several genera of bulbous plants. Many pictures of the bulbs that will be discussed this evening can be seen on his website: Skyvewsucculents.com.

The presentation will consist of pictures and a talk on some old world bulbs that are known to do well in Southern California gardens, with a concentrated focus on two Mediterranean-climate regions: the Mediterranean basin itself, and the Cape Province of South Africa. A few bulbs from slightly outside these areas that are suitable for local gardens will also be mentioned.

Glavich’s pictures are almost all species, most in cultivation, but some in habitat. As a grower, he will provide helpful hints on useful potting mixes, as well as touching on the cultivation and propagation of these bulbs in our Southern California environment. Glavich recommends Bulbs by John E. Bryan, and Color Encyclopedia of Cape Bulbs by John Manning, Peter Goldblatt and Dee Snijmans, as reading for those interested in learning more on this topic.

After his presentation, Glavich will answer questions and offer selected plants for sale. With plenty of interesting selections to learn about and possibly take home, don’t miss this program!
The SCHS April meeting took place at the Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens, and consisted of a private tour of the 10-acre Desert Garden led by John Trager, Curator of the Desert Garden and Desert Collections at the Huntington, followed by a panel discussion on succulents with Laurel Woodley and Steve Gerischer in the Brody Botanical Center.

Guests gathered at the main entrance to the Huntington, and were led down to the California Garden for the start of Trager’s walk and talk. He mentioned that some of the aloes planted in-ground in the gardens began as test subjects in pots in the California Garden, like Aloe striata.

Following the path near the Orbit Pavilion, he pointed out Ethiopian aloes, Mangave ‘Macho Mocha’, Agave titanota and a ‘Blue Glow’ agave that was in full bloom. Additionally, he spoke about dealing with aloe mites, and suggested the best treatment is to trim off infested leaves and burn them, saving any clean off-sets for future planting.

Walking down the main road surrounding the Cactus Garden, Trager continued pointing out plants of interest, like Kalanchoe luciae and a blooming Agave marmorata. This brought the group to a large installation of Echinocactus grusonii, or golden barrels, artfully interspersed with a variety of “old man” cactus. First brought from Mexico and planted at the Huntington in 1908, the golden barrels are now endangered in the wild.

From there, he walked us through a part of the Cactus Garden that had many more succulents in full flower, including various aloes, Crassulaceae, and cacti, pausing to take questions under a large Caesalpinia cacalaco. Trager concluded the tour with some growing tips the Huntington uses for different conditions (i.e.: adding a mixture of compost and silica to new planting beds or using crushed lava rock as an amendment in flat areas to aid with drainage), and then took the group to the Brody Center for the panel presentation by two local designers and succulent experts, Laurel Woodley and Steve Gerischer.

Woodley, a past SCHS Horticulturist of the Year recipient, is a retired biology professor from Los Angeles Harbor College, who has been involved in Southern California horticulture since the mid-1960s, and was past director and president of the Cactus and Succulent Society of America, where she currently serves as advisor. She shared slides from her personal collection of gardens she considers to be examples of good design, which integrate other elements with plants to create a harmonious landscape.

She shared pictures of the Patrick Anderson estate in Fallbrook, where the yellow color of his house is used as a unifying background for a variety of plants in colored pots selected for their compatibility with the house. To create additional interest, plants are chosen based on varying shapes, sizes and heights. Sculpture, a pond and the repetition of orange and turquoise accents throughout the garden also tie various areas together visually.

Other slides Woodley showed included Sherman Gardens in Corona del Mar which uses miniature sempervirens to maximum effect, and shots of some favorite plants such as the Agave lophantha ‘Tricolor’, Euphorbia ‘Snowflake’ and a beautiful Aloe castanea in full flower. Steve Gerischer rounded out the evening’s program with slides featuring well-placed succulents in designed landscapes as well as in their native habitat, to serve as inspirations for home gardens. Gerischer is the current president of the SCHS and owner of Larkspur Garden Design. He has an extensive knowledge of succulents and their myriad uses, which he shared in his presentation. He discussed the need to plan garden spacing for eventual plant growth as well as for plant replacements; shared thoughts on using containers, such as hypertufa, to showcase specimens; and offered design suggestions for mixing different varieties in one location to avoid having sections of the garden look like “plant ghettos.” Additionally, Gerischer shared design tips for combining plants with other elements, such as including containers with groups of in-ground plants (Judge Hall Garden in Pasadena), or incorporating personal items among the plants (Woollcott/McCarthy Garden in the Hollywood Hills), to create unique focal points.

He concluded his talk by citing some of his favorites, such as Agave attenuata ‘Boutin Blue’, and also suggested South Coast Botanic Garden, the Cactus and Succulent Society of America’s website (cssainc.org), Desert Creations and the Cactus Ranch nurseries in the San Fernando Valley, plus specialty garden club sales as some resources for home gardeners to find the more unusual specimens they might want to try in their own gardens.

Sabine Steinmetz

**SHARING SECRETS**

**RESPONSES**

Do you know of any venues we could use for our monthly meetings? We are considering rotating locations to improve accessibility to more members.

Members submitted a variety of alternate meeting places, which the SCHS board will be researching for feasibility (room capacity, cost, location, etc.) in the coming months.

We thank you for your many thoughtful suggestions and hope we will be able to implement some of them in the near future. Check online and in the newsletter for updates, or speak to one of the board members.

We are always happy to receive member participation in our ongoing efforts to improve the SCHS experience for everyone, and encourage you to keep contributing...

Thank you!
MAY HORTICULTURAL 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

2nd Saturdays through July. Meet at North Ticket Booth for Saturday Strolls in the Nature Gardens with Carol Bornstein, director of the NHMLA Nature Gardens. Talk about which plants are tough, which are fussy, how much to water, and what plants will attract butterflies, birds, and other wildlife to your home garden.

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

Daily, 11:30am, 12:30pm, 2:30pm, 3:30pm, 45-minute 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.

J PAUL GETTY MUSEUM - GETTY VILLA
17985 Pacific Coast Hwy, Pacific Palisades 90272 310-440-7300 www.getty.edu/museum

Thursdays & Saturdays, 10:30am; 11:30am, 12:30pm, 1:30pm, 3:30pm, 40-minute Garden Tours meet outside the entrance. Discover rich mythological and cultural connections of four ancient Roman gardens.

SOUTH COAST BOTANIC GARDEN
26300 Crenshaw Blvd., Palos Verdes 90274 310.544.1948 southcoastbotanicgarden.org

Saturday, 5/12, 10am-4pm. South Coast Rose Society Show & Sale. Rose and clematis enthusiasts are encouraged to enter flowering blooms in our community show between 6:30am to 10am. Vases will be provided for blooms, but please bring flower arrangements in personal containers. The SCR will have roses, tools and our famous rose cocktail for sale.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY ARBORETUM
301 N. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia 91007 626.821.4623 arborc.org

Saturday, 5/19, 10am-12noon. Crescent Farm: Meadow Planting & Care. Learn how easy it is to make meadow magic happen using native and compatible flowers from seed. We'll be making seed balls for everyone to enjoy and launch!

Saturday, 5/26, 10-11am. Greywater 101: Grow Fruit at Home with Your Bath and Laundry Water. Learn how to save water and grow sub-tropical fruits using greywater from sinks, showers, and washing machines. Learn about common and popular systems, design considerations, costs, regulations, health and safety, soaps and products, and how to choose a system that is a good match for your home and landscape.

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

Saturday, 5/19, 8-10:30am. Community Service Day. Help with hands-on care in the Rose Garden. Instruction will be provided and work supervised by Descanso horticulture staff. All experience levels welcome, ages 16 or older. Wear comfortable clothing, closed-toe shoes and bring gardening gloves, water and a hat. Limited space. RSVP required. Please email volunteer@descansogardens.org by Wednesday, May 16. Additional instructions will be sent with a form to sign in order to participate.

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, 5/24, 7:30 pm. Lessons learned from 12 years of local stewardship in an urban nature park in Southern California, with Barbara Eisenstein. For 12 years, volunteers have been caring for a nature park in the city of South Pasadena to prevent it from reverting to its formerly degraded state. Prior to the creation of the park, the site along the Arroyo Seco Flood Control Channel was used for illegal dumping, homeless encampments and passive recreation including walking and horseback riding. Within six months of the opening in 2004, recently extirpated weeds were making a comeback on the 3-acre parcel. In response, Eisenstein initiated a volunteer park stewardship program, Friends of South Pasadena Nature Park. Over the years, they have developed strategies for replacing noxious weeds with locally appropriate native plants, and conditions are gradually improving. Many of these practices would work in other newly designated urban habitat parks. Eisenstein is a native plant gardener, writer and blogger. Her book, “Wild Suburbia – Learning to Garden with Native Plants”, guides new and experienced gardeners on a journey toward sustainable, habitat gardening. She is also a research associate at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden and Plant Sale Chair of the CNPS San Gabriel Mountains Chapter.

SAN DIEGO BOTANIC GARDEN
230 Quail Gardens Dr., Encinitas 92024 760-436-3036 sdbgarden.org

Saturday, 5/26, 9am-3pm. Palm, Cycad, Bamboo and Tropical Plant Sale. This one-of-a-kind event features rare and exotic species of palms, cycads and other tropical plants, and is co-hosted by the Palm Society of Southern California and San Diego Botanic Garden. For more info. go to: www.sdbgarden.org/tropical-sale.htm

FULLERTON ARBORETUM
1900 Associated Road, Fullerton 92831 657.278.3407 fullertonarboretum.org

Thursday, 5/10, 9-11am. Oak Hall Classroom. Beginner Bonsai with instructor Jim Pierce, curator of the current bonsai exhibit at the Arboretum. In this class for beginners, you will receive a bonsai tree, basic plastic pot, soil, plus instructions on care and maintenance. Topics include survivability, soil, transplanting, appropriate pots, fertilizers and styles of bonsai.

Saturday, 5/12 & 5/26 10am. Free Nature Tour. Meet at North Ticket forms. Plant sale follows the talk.

THEODORE PAYNE FOUNDATION
10459 Tuxford St., Sun Valley 91352 818.768.1802 theodorepayne.org

Saturday, May 12 10am-12pm. FREE! BirdLA Day Event: Backyard Birding with Native Plants Workshop with Steve Gerischer, owner of Larksprur Landscape Design and president of the Southern California Horticultural Society. Learn how to attract and support birds in your own backyard, including which native plants provide food, shelter, and nesting sites.

Saturday, May 12 12-2pm. BirdLA Day Event: Bird Origami Folding Workshop presented by www.pincelbox.com. Drop in to fold your own origami birds with expert! All ages welcome. No experience necessary, and all materials provided. The event is free, but RSVPs are appreciated.

Saturday, May 26 1:30-3:00pm. Four Seasons of Color with California Natives with Lili Singer, TPF’s Director of Special Projects and Adult Education. Through vivid images and a detailed plant list, this multi-hued program reveals a vibrant array of trees, shrubs, vines, perennials, groundcovers and grasses that will ensure year-round interest and color. $20 TPF members, $30 non-members.

Yvonne Savio
UPCOMING SCHS PROGRAMS

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

May 10 - Tom Glavich, author and lecturer, speaking on South African and Mediterranean bulbs

June 14 - Saxon Holt, garden photographer & author, presents a slide program on garden photography

VENUE CHANGE  This event will be held at the L.A. Zoo.

July 12 - Rebecca Burgess, founder of Fibershed, speaking on restoration ecology fiber systems

GARDEN QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“A leaf fluttered in the window this morning, as if supported by the rays of the sun...”
- Anais Nin

MAY

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Laura Bauer - Treasurer, Finance Committee, Website Committee
Pat Steen - Membership Secretary, Recording Secretary, Coffee-in-the-Garden, Greeter
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Yvonne Savio - Horticultural Happenings, Coffee-in-the-Garden, PR
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Contributors to this issue: Yvonne Savio

Next deadline: Monday, May 14 (for June newsletter)
Please contribute an article or information of interest.

Southern California Horticultural Society
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