# Houseplants & Balcony Gardening

We begin the new year with a presentation on how to use and care for indoor plants, by horticulture professor Jennifer Hinostroza of Mt. San Antonio College (Mt. SAC). She will be speaking to us about general requirements for houseplants and other container plants, as well as best practices and maintenance.

Jennifer worked in the retail nursery industry for several years while she was a student at Cal Poly Pomona, and was also involved in several different horticulture therapy programs. As part of the completion of her B.S. degree, she took an internship at the Disneyland Resort in the horticulture department, which led to a full time work with them that lasted seven years. This provided her the opportunity to gain experience in many different positions, including landscape design and interior landscaping.

In 2006, Jennifer began her current teaching career at Mt. SAC as a Professor of Horticulture. One of the courses she teaches is Interior Landscaping which deals with the design, installation and maintenance of interior plants that are used in residences, offices, hotels, malls, restaurants and other locations.

While her presentation for the SCHS will draw on some of the materials Jennifer presents in her courses, she will primarily focus on light requirements and watering, appropriate plant choices for different light levels, temperature requirements, fertilization, and the benefits of having plants indoors. Additionally, she will provide care tips, recommended reading on the topic, and will be available to answer our questions after the program.

We look forward to welcoming Jennifer and learning more about this interesting topic. At a time of year when many of us spend less time gardening outdoors, we can all benefit from finding new ways to enjoy our plants while staying inside.

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**PHILANTHROPY**

In the SCHS’s continuing efforts to support local horticultural interests, the board recently voted to donate $500 to Mountains Restoration Trust in Calabasas. They lost their headquarters to fire in 2016 and are still working on rebuilding as they continue their mission to preserve the natural resources of the Santa Monica Mountains through habitat restoration, education, land acquisition and conservation easements.

**GREEN SHEETS**

They’re back!!! We have finally compiled data, located photos and written descriptions for the “missing months” of 2018’s Green Sheets. We are pleased to present a record of the specimens members bring in to exhibit at our Plant Forums, and we always appreciate your participation!

**2019 MEMBERSHIP**

We would like to thank all of you for your membership and look forward to offering you diverse horticultural experiences in 2019 through our monthly programs, Coffee-in-the-Garden events and unique field trip opportunities.

We are also glad when you encourage guests to attend a meeting so they, too, can see what the SCHS is about and may consider becoming members as well.

Thank you for your continued support, and we will see you throughout the year!
Our monthly meeting in December was a celebration of the season as we came together for our Annual Holiday Party, held for the first time at the Canoga Park Women’s Club, and attended by members as well as a large number of guests from the west San Fernando Valley.

After people had a chance to mingle and sample the tasty goodies brought in by members, SCHS president Steve Gerischer introduced guest speaker Jo O’Connell, owner of Australian Native Plants in Casitas Springs in the Ojai Valley. As a survivor of the 2017 Thomas Fire, she provided a thought-provoking presentation about Australian plants in general, with a specific focus on planting recommendations for fire prone areas.

Jo’s nursery has been in business since the early 1990s, and is open by appointment. She lost her home in the fire, and has been rebuilding it and the business during the last year. Jo spoke about some of her favorite tough specimens to try in our changing climate - selected for their flowers, attractive qualities, cold and dry tolerances, as well as fire resistance and/or ability to regenerate.

Landscaping with fire resistant trees and plants, coupled with diligent maintenance, were criteria Jo cited to help mitigate the risk of fire. She defined “fire resistant” plants as those that can absorb more heat from an approaching fire without burning and consequently slow a fire down. Fire resistant trees can also help trap embers and slow down the danger to structures from approaching winds.

Her maintenance recommendations included removing lower branches from trees, keeping any branches off and away from the roots of structures, pruning and keeping plants well-irrigated ahead of and during the fire season. Suggestions for design elements that could help make home landscapes more fire resistant, were: planting a well-watered hedge on the fire prone side of a structure, replacing lawns with organic mulches, DG or gravel to slow down fires, and using swales to retain moisture. She even suggested we test plants for fire resistance by tossing a handful of their leaves into a barbeque to see how long they take to burn.

Jo then listed many of the “survivors” that made it through the fires or bounced back soon thereafter, as well as others with similar attributes that might be good options to plant for a fire resistant garden. Genera she recommended to use for hedges, foundation shrubs and cut flowers included Grevillea, Eremophils, Xanthorrhoea, Scaevola, and various species within the Acacia and Hakea families. A. longifolia, A. elata, A visigilia, H. hakeoides, H. trineura and H. denticulosa ‘Stinking Roger’ were some Jo considered to be good candidates to survive both fires and drought conditions.

During 2018, Jo observed the regrowth and noted which ones appeared to be recovering the best. Cassia brevistriata was the first to regenerate, and both Banksia integrifolia and Brachychiton acerifolius came back strong. She also mentioned that Tristaniopsis laurina was a great “indicator” tree for knowing when your garden needs watering. Plants that burned to the ground but regenerated were: Calothamnus ‘Little Lion’, Erimphylla decipiens, Melaleuca hypericifolia and the Lomandras, which she claims can withstand just about any extreme weather conditions. Jo also shared that many of the plants featured in her presentation would be incorporated in the rebuilding of her home, which will be set in a dry rainforest landscape with “screens” planted 20’ away from all structures.

Following a question and answer session with Jo, all in attendance were encouraged to peruse the plants she brought along for sale and to browse the “Give Away” table, which quickly emptied after a countdown by Steve Gerischer. With a great speaker, food, drink, plants and freebies, the evening’s program had something to send everyone home to a great start for their holiday season.

**Sabine Steinmetz**

**SHARING SECRETS**

Last month our question was:

**What kinds of gardening plans have you made for the New Year?**

We received a great selection of replies - some of which came from guests!

- Finish my Japanese garden, and plant more natives on my hillside.
  - Janet

- Turn the garden into a British Tavern/Nautical theme with plants that reflect the islands and Great Britain.
  - Shawn Lochridge

I plan to change out some plants that were seriously damaged in the two heat waves of late spring and early summer. (Probably some of my favorite roses will hit the trash can!) The California natives, Australian plants and some South African plants breezed through the heat showing almost no distress.

Guess I know what to plant.
  - Anonymous #1

Stop growing Lavandulas (too short-lived); plant more Aloe varieties; do more fuel reduction pruning!
  - John Schoustra

Plant lots of wildflower seeds!
  - Carol A.

Guerrilla Gardening at my job at DCT H2O Reclamation Plant using natives and Mediterranean plants, plus flowers for the hummingbirds, butterflies and bees!
  - Sanitation Fairy

I double-checked with County Ag extension, and our citrus fruit are not under quarantine yet, as the disease itself hasn’t been detected here in Burbank. Therefore, as a precaution, I’m making foods with my citrus to give away. I made preserved lemons as Christmas presents for my cooking friends and will do more in January, plus maybe some lemon-ginger preserves.

Also, I’ll continue filling in blank spaces in my garden with California natives. Those from the TPF autumn sale are in the ground and loving it thanks to recent rains.
  - Anonymous #2
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 ideas for sustainable gardening.

Thursday, 1/10, 2:30pm. Rothenberg Hall. Garden Talk with rose hybridizer Tom Carruth, the E. L. & Ruth B. Shannon Curator of the Huntington Rose Collections. He will introduce his newest floribunda, ‘Huntington's 100th’, to commemorate the upcoming centennial beginning fall of 2019. This rose is pastel yellow with a blush of orchid pink and cream, with a powerful fragrance reminiscent of citrus blossoms and sweet fruit. Available for purchase following talk.

Thursday, 1/24, 4:30-5:30pm, Auditorium, Brody Botanical Center. Botany Bay Series: Plant Science for Citizen Scientists. Discussion and hands-on lab time with Jim Folsom, the Telleen/Jorgensen Director of the Botanical Gardens.

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


Saturday 1/12, 1-5pm. Garden 1-Hour Tours. Meet at Nature Center, where one of our docents will guide you on a tour through the beautiful garden. Members $20, Non-members $30. Register online.

SAN DIEGO BOTANIC GARDEN
230 Quail Gardens Dr., Encinitas 92024
760.436.3036 sdbgarden.org

Saturday, 1/26, 9am-12noon. Living Wall / Vertical Garden with instructor Mary Lou Morgan. Learn the basics as we plant a 10' x 20' wall with a variety of succulents. Living walls can be indoors or outdoors and incorporate a multitude of colors, textures and sizes. Members $30, non-members $36. Addt’l. $80 per-student materials fee payable directly to instructor on day of class. Register by January 19.

REDLANDS HORTICULTURAL & IMPROVEMENT SOCIETY
Church of the Nazarene,
1307 E Citrus Ave, Redlands, CA 92374
909-793-3333 (Frank Herendeen)
redlandsgardenclub.com

Thursday, 1/17, 7pm. Overview of the World of Mushrooms with Master Gardener Jerry Poupard. Fungi and their mushrooms have survived and thrived for millions of years. Their survival tactics can provide genetic solutions for mankind - often in a delicious way. Get a broad overview of the quiet fungal space race taking place, with a focus on mushroom nutritional and medicinal benefits, plus cooking and tincture methods to access these benefits. Free to all.

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

Tuesday, 1/8, 1pm. Container Gardening in Southern California. Expert gardener Yvonne Savio will discuss advantages/disadvantages of growing in containers: choosing pots & plants, basic gardening considerations, tips & techniques. $20 members; $25 non-members.

Saturday - 1/12 & 1/26, 10 am. Public Nature Tour. Meet at Nature Center, where one of our docents will guide you on a tour through the beautiful garden. Monthly: 2nd & 4th Saturdays.

COASTKEEPER GARDEN
1560 E. Santiago Cyn. Rd., Orange 92869
714.850.1965 coastkeeper.org

Saturday, 1/12 9:30am. Monthly Garden Share. Bring garden-related items such as plants, cuttings, pots, tools, produce, etc., to trade. More info. online. Repeats 2nd Saturdays.

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

**UPCOMING SCHS PROGRAMS**

- January 10 - Horticultural educator Jennifer Hinostroza of Mt. San Antonio College will present “Houseplants and Balcony Gardening”
- February 14 - Jason Dewees, horticulturist, palm expert and author, will talk about “Designing with Palms”
- March 14 - Mike Evans, owner of Tree of Life Nursery will speak about California native plants
- April 11 - Speaker Matt Candeias, author of the popular *In Defense of Plants* blog (Presentation topic TBA)

**GARDEN QUOTE OF THE MONTH**

“The beginning is the most important part of work.”

- Plato

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- Sabine Steinmetz - Newsletter Editor, Sharing Secrets
- Jill Vig - Coffee-in-the-Garden Committee, Oral History Committee, Special Projects

**NEWSLETTER**

Southern California Horticultural Society
P.O. Box 94476
Pasadena CA 91109-4476

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