August brings anthropologist Michael Wilken-Robertson to the SCHS, to present his explorations of the captivating world of northern Baja California’s original peoples and their descendants, whose profound knowledge of the land has sustained them from ancient times to the present. He currently teaches in the anthropology department at California State University, San Marcos and is the author of *Kumeyaay Ethnobotany* which explores the remarkable interdependence between native peoples and native plants of the Californias and serves as the basis for his presentation.

Wilken-Robertson’s research and advocacy work with Native Baja Californians has explored traditional arts (pottery, basketry, oral narratives, and song), ethnobotany, history, languages, and cultural landscapes of the indigenous peoples of the northern Baja California region. He has developed lifelong collaborative relationships with native artists and traditional authorities to foster cultural revitalization and sustainable community development. His fascination with native plants and the natural landscapes of the Californias has inspired him to explore the many ways that humans have interacted with their environments, from the past up to the present.

The program will provide in-depth descriptions of 47 native plants and their uses, lively narratives, and vivid photographs. It connects the archaeological and historical record with living cultures and native plant specialists who share their ever-relevant wisdom for future generations.

Wilken-Robertson will also share some of the stories behind his book and have copies available to purchase at a book signing following the talk.
The SCHS was entertained and educated in July by Robert “Bob” Allen, who spoke on Southern California’s native pollinators and their impact on our ecology. By combining his personal interests, studies and research as an entomologist, botanist, instructor, and nature photographer, Bob was able to present a program that gave life to scientific data, often through his beautiful photographs.

The slide show began with a basic introduction to the process of pollination, including details about its various mechanisms, and he dispelled some common fallacies (e.g., the misconception that butterflies and honeybees are major pollinators). Bob then spoke about beetles, flies, butterflies, moths, ants, and wasps, as well as various types of bees and the ways in which they pollinate specific types of plants. He also explained that only the estimated 1,600+ native bee species, who evolved alongside our native plants and have the necessary structures and behaviors required for effective pollination, are the most successful at pollinating those native plants.

Bob proceeded to share relevant facts about native pollinators – who they are, and how they operate. He explained the difference between long-tongued and short-tongued bees, sweat bees, leafcutters and others, as well as the fact that most bees are solitary ground dwellers. He also showed his own incredible photos illustrating this diversity, as well as a very brief video showing a native bee being hit in the abdomen by pollen that is “exploding” from a solanum flower. Because research suggests that flowers of native plants are up to four times more attractive to native bees than non-native flowers, Bob suggested that gardeners incorporate as many native plants into their gardens as possible. He used the slide below to explain the benefits of this approach vs. planting a predominantly non-native garden:

![Sterile Garden vs Naturalistic Garden](image)

After his presentation, Bob encouraged people to learn about native bees by getting out of manicured gardens to observe bees in the wild, and also recommended visiting the Pollinator Partnership website at: www.pollinator.org. For those interested in learning more, Bob is the author of the field guide *Wildflowers of Orange County and the Santa Ana Mountains* (published 2013 and also relevant to much of the L.A. basin), which is available from the Orange County chapter of the California Native Plant Society at: https://www.occnps.org/wildflower-book.html.

SCHS VISITS L.A. ZOO’S BOTANICAL TREASURES

On July 13, SCHS members were treated to a behind-the-scenes horticultural tour at the Los Angeles Zoo and Botanical Gardens in the hours before it opened to the public. Hosted by SCHS member and zoo employee, Sandy Masuo, attendees were told how the zoo feeds its many herbivores with plants grown on the grounds whenever possible; what the animals’ most popular “browsing” foods are (including ficus, mulberry, acacia and Chinese elm); and insight into how the zoo tries to create environments that simulate the animals’ native habitats, while using plants they will not be likely to destroy.

She then introduced attendees to a group of docents who split guests into groups to tour and explore the zoo grounds.

Docent Landes Bell, Kate Gaman, Teri Hoffman, Francie Klein and Rita Lossett, led visitors to botanical specimens including *Xanthorrhoea*, *Jubaea chilensis*, several *Stenocarpus*, and *Metasequoia glyptostroboides* among others, before rendezvousing at Bonnie’s Edible Garden. Established in 1989, this garden grows plants to help enrich the lives of the animals. Docent Paulette Heath provided guests with history and some trivia, including that corn stalks (minus the corn) are a favorite of the elephants. After the tour concluded, visitors were able to explore the entire zoo on their own to see both animals and plants – perhaps with a fresh perspective.

We would like to thank the SCHS board and Sandy Masuo for arranging this unique tour, and to give special recognition and appreciation to the wonderful docents who came in early on a Saturday morning to provide SCHS members with horticultural insights about the zoo. To see a photo album of the tour, please visit our Facebook page.

SHEARING SECRETS

In July we were curious about:

**What garden get-aways do you recommend visiting during the summer?**

Milded Matthias Botanical Gardens on the UCLA campus.

- Joan Mead

Frederik Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

- Jessica Carlson

Self-Realization Fellowship in Pacific Palisades and San Diego Botanic Garden in Encinitas (formerly Quail Gardens).

- Joan Borgman

Santa Barbara Botanic Garden - all seasons to understand what your native garden will look like year ‘round – and my garden!

- Suzanna

Thanks for these wonderful suggestions - one of which would make a great road trip!
AUGUST  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.

NATIONAL HISTORY MUSEUM OF L.A.
900 Exposition Blvd., Los Angeles 90007
213.763.3466

Daily, 10am-5pm. Meet outside the Nature Lab (under the bridge) for a walk in the Nature Gardens to explore the diversity of life that calls L.A. home. Every Saturday and Sunday, 11am, Nature Gardens Exploration. Meet outside the Nature Lab (under the bridge) for a hands-on activity in our Nature Gardens.

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

Every Saturday and Sunday, 11am, Nature Gardens Exploration. Meet outside the Nature Lab (under the bridge) for a walk in the Nature Gardens to explore the diversity of life that calls L.A. home. Every Saturday and Sunday, 11am, Nature Gardens Exploration. Meet outside the Nature Lab (under the bridge) for a hands-on activity in our Nature Gardens.

EATON CANYON NATURE CENTER
1750 N. Altadena Dr., Pasadena 91107
626.398.5420
ecnca.org

Saturday, 8/17, 9am-12noon, Nature Patio. Conservation Work Day. Help weed invasive plants to conserve habitat for the native species. Gloves, tools and snack provided. Please bring your own drinking water. Wear clothing, footwear and sun protection for outdoor work. Volunteers under the age of 18 need to bring along an adult. RSVP to eatoncanyon.conservation@gmail.com

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. Canceled in event of rain.

RANCHO LOS CERRITOS
4600 Virginia Road, Long Beach 90007
562.206.2040 rancholoscerritos.org

Saturdays & Sundays, 1-5pm. Rancho Los Cerritos offers free 1-hour garden tours for visitors. For details go to: www.rancholoscerritos.org/things-to-do/hub/tours/.

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

Saturday & Sunday, 8/10 & 8/11, 9am-2pm. Inter-City Cactus & Succulent Show is a competitive display of some of the best cultivated plants in So Cal. Free for members and for non-members with paid admission. For questions, call 626-821-3222.

Friday, Saturday, & Sunday, 8/16-18, 9am-12noon. California Rare Fruit Growers Festival of Fruit 2019. A 3-day celebration with growing talks, workshops, garden and nursery tours, vendor booths, tastings, and more. Free for members and for non-members with paid admission. Register online at: https://festivaloffruit.org/. For questions, call 626-821-3222.

Saturday, 8/24, 10am-moon. Learn All About Invasive Plants with Arboretum Plant Information Consultant Frank McDonough. Find out what makes a plant invasive and what are some problematic plants in So Cal today. $25 members, $35 non-members. Register online at arboretum.org/calendar. Questions? Call Education Dept. at 626-821-4623.

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

Saturday, 8/10, 8:30-10am. Cool Container Plants with Flora Ito, TPF Nursery Sales Manager. This outdoor session offers tips for potting up natives. Pots and supplies, including our custom soil mix, will be available for purchase. $15 members, $20 non-members. Register at: https://www.eventbrite.com/o/theodore-payne-foundation-6606817237

Saturday, 8/10, 1:30-4pm. Right Plant, Right Place. Find out how to model a garden landscape – with practical examples, a demo of TPF’s system, and time for questions. Bring a hat and water bottle. $30 members, $40 non-members. Register at: https://www.eventbrite.com/o/theodore-payne-foundation-6606817237

Saturday, 8/17, 1:30-3:30pm. Look, Ma, No Lawn! with Steve Gerischer, owner of Larkspur Garden Design. Ready to lose the lawn? We’ll explain how and offer low-care, low-water native plant alternatives that need no fertilizer. $25 members, $35 non-members. Register at: https://www.eventbrite.com/o/theodore-payne-foundation-6606817237

U.C. RIVERSIDE BOTANIC GARDEN
900 University Ave., Riverside 92521
951-784-6962 gardens.ucr.edu

Saturday, 8/10, 6-8pm. Twilight Tour. Join us for a guided tour and enjoy the magic of the Gardens at Twilight! Light refreshments will be served. $7 members, $10 non-members. Tickets available at www.gardens.ucr.edu. For more information, ucrgb@ucr.edu or 951-784-6962.

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

NEWSLETTER August 2019

UPCOMING SCHS PROGRAMS

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

August 8 - Anthropologist Michael Wilken-Robertson speaking on Kumeyaay Ethnobotany: Shared Heritage of the Californias

Sept. 28 - SCHS Annual Horticulturist of the Year Award Banquet and Silent Auction, honoring Mike Evans

VENUE CHANGE - HOTY banquet will be at L.A. Arboretum

Oct. 10 - Turf Alternatives Panel with Cassy Aoyagi, Ellen Mackey, Joel Lichtenwalter and moderator Wynne Wilson

Nov. 14 - Program TBA

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Jill Vig - Coffee-in-the-Garden Committee, Oral History Committee, Special Projects

818-567-1496 / socalthort.org / Join us on Facebook
Newsletter Editor: Sabine Steinmetz

Contributors to this issue: Michael Wilkens-Robertson, Yvonne Savio

Next deadline: Monday, August 12 (for September newsletter)
Please contribute an article or information of interest.

GARDEN QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“Why just fit in if you were born to stand out?”
- Theodor Geisel (aka Dr. Seuss)

AUGUST

Southern California Horticultural Society
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