Joining us to present a lively lecture at our festive December meeting will be Marie Barnidge-McIntyre, Horticulturist at Rancho Los Cerritos Historic Site. She will speak about the traditional plants we use to decorate our homes for the Christmas holidays, what cultures influenced these choices, how they evolved and what legends are associated with each species. Regardless of which seasonal holiday you celebrate, hearing about the history of these decorations will no doubt enhance your appreciation for the plants that are an integral part of the winter holidays.

Marie grew up exploring the natural world of foothills and meadows in the San Fernando Valley. Her first job in the field of horticulture was as a nursery consultant, identifying pests and problems as well as designing landscapes. Her next major foray into horticulture was working on an oak mitigation project, where she harvested and propagated acorns, planted the saplings, and then protected them from natural disasters and a variety of wildlife - including out-of-range cattle - while they became established. These experiences served her well when she applied for a position at Rancho Los Cerritos Historic Site in Long Beach in 1992, and was hired as their first horticulturist. (Read more about this important piece of California history at: https://www.rancholoscerritos.org/about-hub/history-hub/mission-and-focus/)

Although the original position encompassed research, restoration, and maintenance of the gardens and grounds, Marie’s job eventually broadened in scope. She is currently restoring a landscape designed in the 1930s by renowned landscape architect Ralph D. Cornell. It has matured and changed significantly, and Marie’s goal is to stay true to Cornell’s vision, using materials available at that time in order to ensure historic integrity. Marie is also in charge of harvesting materials from the garden that are used to create unique crafts sold in the Rancho gift shop; recruiting and training volunteers to lead garden tours; and simultaneously training and working alongside interns and students. One of her greatest joys is sharing the many fascinating stories about the plants at the Rancho and the people associated with them.

We look forward to hearing some of Marie’s stories and learning how we might incorporate age-old plant-based traditions into our own contemporary holiday celebrations. Please join us for a fun and entertaining evening!
At the November SCHS meeting, our speaker was Dr. Travis Longcore, who presented a unique and “illuminating” program on ecological effects of nighttime lighting on the plants and animals living in our gardens. He is an Associate Adjunct Professor at the UCLA Institute of the Environment and Sustainability, and has been instrumental in the development of the field of study assessing the effects of light pollution on species and habitats.

Dr. Longcore began his slide show with graphs illustrating the principles of Correlated Color Temperature (CCT) in the light spectrum, and the responses to the daily shifts in CCT found in both animals and plants. For instance, nocturnal plants have different photo-receptors than humans, and require darkness to bloom and attract pollinators. Other plants require darkness to go to “sleep” by closing the petals of their flowers, often providing a warm place for insects to rest overnight. These responses to natural patterns of darkness illustrate the importance of dark nights to plants, their pollinators, and even their predators.

Examples of animals that can experience negative consequences when they “lose the night” include migratory birds which are wildly attracted to bright lights (urban centers, lighthouses) and may come to harm or have their routes disrupted; sea turtles who only lay their eggs in the dark; small mammals that fear light because it makes them vulnerable to predators; and mockingbirds, that are used to singing under a full moon to protect their territory. All of these are susceptible to exhibiting unnatural behaviors when triggered by external light sources at night.

Increases in the use of nocturnal illumination also have unintended impacts on the plant world. Slugs become more active in the light - while some of their predators, like toads, prefer the dark and may decrease their activity; beetles that would normally break down garden debris at night, thereby helping feed the soil, avoid areas with solar LED lights; and many plants simply cannot bud out if consistently illuminated at night (as in the case of landscape uplights and suburban streetlights).

Dr. Longcore’s recommendations for mitigating these issues and minimizing the adverse effects of unnatural light included: placing lights in the landscape only where they’re needed (to light paths, for safety, etc.); turning lights off when not in use (ex: with motion detectors); directing the light where it is needed and not “flooding” a wider area than necessary, especially onto plants and into the canopies of trees; and use the lowest possible CCT in your lighting (the warmer, the better, preferably in the yellow or orange range). The goal is to use lights in the color spectrum that humans can see, but that do not adversely effect species that are sensitive to higher Kelvin temperatures, which equate to cooler light colors. He then shared some slides illustrating landscape lighting tips from designer Linnea Tillet. Her advice is to go for soft contrasts, where you can distinguish shapes (plants, steps, furniture) without creating glare, and to shield fixtures to prevent light spread. Over-illumination can create very dark shadows, which can lead to other types of problems.

After answering some audience questions, Dr. Longcore indicated that training for landscapers in this area is slight, but that the website of the International Dark Sky Association (www.darksky.org) is currently the best resource for learning more on this fascinating subject. Or you may wish to check out his book, Ecological Consequences of Artificial Night Lighting, which provides a scientific basis to begin addressing the challenge of conserving the nighttime environment. it is available through his website at www.travislongcore.net.

SCHS ONLINE
The SCHS board has been working at bringing awareness of the organization to a larger audience. Our hope for the coming decade is to build interest, promote attendance at meetings and SCHS events, and increase membership.

Creating a more visible online presence to increase our reach is one of the tools we have been developing over the past months. With the help of member and marketing consultant Erin Castillo, we are now live-streaming our meetings and also promoting them on our Facebook page

www.facebook.com/pg/socalhort/videos/
and on our new YouTube channel

www.youtube.com/channel/UCYYBy88Q361IQVnV69qgmGg

You can link to these pages directly by clicking on the addresses above, or from the home page on our website at:

www.socalhort.com

Additionally, Erin has set up an Instagram profile for SCHS that features information about upcoming speakers, botanical shares from our monthly Plant Forum, local and seasonal horticultural events and opportunities, plus lots of beautiful images from gardens across So Cal. Check it out, “like” and share your favorites, and tag @socalhort to feature your plants on:

www.instagram.com/socalhort

SHARING SECRETS
After not receiving any responses to queries printed in our long-running column for several months, we have decided to retire this feature from the newsletter. (Archived questions and answers can be found on the SCHS website under the sharing Secrets tab.)

For those of you who are still interested in “Sharing Secrets” with other members, you can find questions - new and recycled - posted on the SCHS Instagram page (see link above.)

Sabine Steinmetz
P.S. Look for a new monthly feature in the newsletter, beginning with the January 2020 issue...
DECEMBER 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

Daily, 10:30am-12:30pm, outdoors on the Education Conservatory. A family-friendly festival celebrating with you!

 fullerontarboretum.org

FULLERTON ARBORETUM
1900 Associated Road, Fullerton 92831
657.278.3407

Saturday, 12/14, 10am. Friends’ Guided Tour. Meet at the Nature Center and join one of our knowledgeable docents as they guide you on a tour through the garden. Limit 15 people. $5 donation. Repeats on Saturday, 12/28 same time.

Friday & Saturday, 12/13 & 12/14, 5-8pm. Holiday Luminaria Stroll. Take an evening stroll through the luminaria-lined pathways of the Arboretum and enjoy live music, warm drinks plus a winter market featuring ceramic and glass artwork made by CSUF students. $15 members and Titan Card holders, $20 non-members.

Saturday, 12/21, 8:15am. Forest Bathing Walk. Take the opportunity to slow down, tune in and rediscover the feeling of curiosity for nature around you as you’re led through a series of sensory invitations to experience the Arboretum in a new way. $25 members, $30 non-members.

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

12/10-12/15, 12/17-12/23, 12/26-12/30, 5-8:30pm. Botanic Wonderland Holiday Nights in the Garden. Celebrating our brand new Dickinson Family Education Conservatory. A family-friendly festival containing many holiday traditions you’ve come to know over the years at the Garden and, for the first time ever, select areas of Hamilton Children’s Garden and Toni’s Treehouse will be lit up and ready to play in during evening hours.

For more info visit: www.sdbgarden.org/botanicwonderland.com/sandiegobotanicgarden/Home

CANOGA PARK WOMEN’S CLUB
7401 Jordan Ave, Canoga Park 91303

(cool parking & comfortable venue)

We look forward to celebrating with you!

SCHS 2019 Holiday Party!
Thursday, December 12

SPECIAL VENUE

Yvonne Savio
**UPCOMING SCHS PROGRAMS**

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

- **Dec. 12** - Marie Barnidge-McIntyre will speak on decorating with holiday greens at our Annual Holiday Party. Enjoy seasonal treats, our Give-Away Table and more!

**NOTE: VENUE CHANGE - Canoga Park Women’s Club**

- **Jan. 9** - Nick Araya, arborist and co-owner of TreeCareLA, will speak on tree health and preservation

- **Feb. 13** - Program being confirmed - TBA soon

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**GARDEN QUOTE OF THE MONTH**

“The color of winter is in the imagination.”

- Terri Guillemets

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**Southern California Horticultural Society**

P.O. Box 94476
Pasadena CA 91109-4476

**NEWSLETTER December 2019**

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

- **John Schoustra** - President, Field-Trip Committee, Finance Committee, Plant Raffle, Plant Sales at meetings
- **Steven Gerischer** - Vice President, Oral History Committee, PR
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- **Pat Steen** - Membership Secretary, Recording Secretary, Field Trip and Coffee-in-the-Garden Committees, Greeter
- **Carol Aronson** - Field Trip & Coffee-in-the-Garden Committees, Program Committee
- **Carol Bornstein** - Program Committee
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- **Lili Singer** - Board Nomination Committee, PR, Archives, Social Media Committee
- **Sabine Steinmetz** - Newsletter Editor, Sharing Secrets, Graphic Design
- **Jill Vig** - Coffee-in-the-Garden Committee, Oral History Committee, Special Projects

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**Newsletter Editor:** Sabine Steinmetz

Contributors to this issue: Marie Barnidge-McIntyre, Yvonne Savio

**Next deadline:** Monday, December 16 (for January newsletter)

Please contribute an article or information of interest.