The SCHS will be ringing in the new year on January 14 with a unique presentation by Scott Logan, a graphic artist and wildlife photographer who is currently serving as the Gottlieb Native Garden’s naturalist, where he is documenting its wildlife, coordinating university research projects and monitoring the overall health of the garden. For over five years, he has devoted himself to documenting and photographing the wildlife in the Gottlieb garden, revealing the astonishing range of biodiversity that’s capable of thriving in our backyards – or apartment window boxes – when the right plants and habitat are established.

Logan’s webinar will focus on the wildlife he has documented in his new book, The Gottlieb Native Garden: An Intimate Wildlife Journey. During the 1990s, in an effort to conserve water and provide habitat for wildlife, Susan and Dan Gottlieb began replacing the exotic ornamentals in their Beverly Hills garden with California native plants. The result was the now-renowned urban oasis that has been a haven for researchers, educators and a broad range of environmental groups. The garden is known for the immense numbers of hummingbirds it attracts and has become a major research site for the UC Davis Hummingbird Health and Conservation Program. Logan is a collaborator with the UC Davis program and is currently working on obtaining his Federal Hummingbird Banding Permit.

Born and raised in Los Angeles, Logan has been observing the city’s remarkable urban wildlife since childhood, which has influenced his career choices, including being an active wildlife lecturer, bird tour leader and a partner in Wild Wings Ecology. His photographs and graphic designs have been featured in books, magazines and scientific periodicals, and The Gottlieb Native Garden: An Intimate Wildlife Journey is available for purchase online from Wild Wings Backyard Nature at www.wildwingsla.com.

Whether you have visited the Gottlieb garden previously, or this virtual tour will be your first, this webinar is sure to be an inspiring way to begin your gardening journey in 2021. We look forward to seeing all of you there!
To close out the year, and just in time for “rose pruning season”, on December 10 the SCHS was pleased to have Steve Gerischer present a program on growing roses using organic gardening practices. He focused on the procedures he has personally found to work best in Southern California gardens during the time he has been growing roses without using chemical fertilizers and pesticides.

Gerischer began his professional horticultural career at Smith & Hawken, and then worked at Hortus Nursery in Pasadena until it closed. He has also been designing and installing gardens for many years as the owner of Larkspur Garden Design, and is currently the vice president of the Southern California Horticultural Society.

His program was titled “Mission Possible: Growing Roses Organically”, and Gerischer spoke about the many lessons he’s learned through experience, beginning with how he had very little interest in roses to begin with. It was not until he began working at Smith and Hawken that he began to appreciate them. While working at Hortus, Gerischer was charged with ordering bare root roses and he decided to educate himself about rose history, giving him a greater understanding of their biology and how to grow them successfully. He recommended reading Peter Beales’ Classic Roses and The Rose by David Austin as excellent resources to learn more about rose-growing history.

Historically speaking, wild roses are non-remontant (once-blooming), and it wasn’t until the late 1700s to early 1800s that repeat bloomers from China were introduced to Europe. Gerischer explained that the bloodlines of these re-bloomers run through today’s garden roses, and that by understanding their nature we can learn how to better cultivate them. Remontant roses are most likely to bloom twice (in spring and in fall) if allowed to grow naturally, given only water and without constant fertilizing. They should “rest” during the summer, when there is less water available, so they can re-bloom in the fall. Most modern rose cultivars are grafted onto vigorous rootstock, with the scion selected for its desired qualities (color, size, scent, etc.). However, Gerischer also recommended trying “own root” varieties (available online) which can be very long-lived and are generally healthier.

He spoke next about the growth needs of roses, specifically the nutrients required by all breeds, namely nitrogen (N), phosphorous (P) and potassium (K), whose initials can be found on all commercial packaging in various ratios. Gerischer has used organically certified brands, recognizable by the OMRI designation, for a variety of reasons during the last 27 years. Not only do the organics allow for a more habitat-friendly garden, by allowing insects (pests as well as beneficials) to appear on the plants, which in turn bring in birds to eat them, but they also contribute to plant health and soil fertility. All of these factors encourage seasonal cycles of growth, dormancy, etc. that build a healthier garden over time, although he did indicate that switching to organics is at first, slower, messier and most likely problematic, which will level off after a few seasons.

During the period of adjustment, you will see more problems and pests appear (such as aphids), but once the plants are weaned off inorganic chemicals, they will strengthen, and instances of pest infestations should reduce significantly. Because plants take up the nitrogen in organic food more slowly, they will not send out lots of tender shoots rapidly, which are what attract more aphids. New growth on organically fed roses usually appears within six weeks, and is more vigorous in resisting pests. For the smaller quantities of aphids that do appear, Gerischer recommended hosing them off with water, or rubbing them off by hand. Typical rose foliage problems can also be mitigated through the use of organics, again, because the plants can develop at a slower pace and thereby increase their own resistance over time. However, he noted two exceptions, chili thrips and rose rosette disease, which may only respond to chemical pesticides. Finally, for problems with cane borers he advised cutting the cane back until there was no sign of any hole, and then “sealing” the top of the cut with chapstick. Routine care advice included watering well (based on soil type), light mulching twice a year, regular inspections to head off problems, and eliminating weak plants that cannot significantly improve no matter how much effort you expend on them.

To wrap up, Gerischer shared his annual rose chores calendar, beginning with November, when he stops deadheading, allowing rose hips to form, and thereby signaling the plant to start entering dormancy. In late December and continuing through January, it’s time to strip all the foliage off the plants, as well as remove it from the ground, and then dispose of it (do not compost). Then pruning can occur, and Gerischer gave specific tips for different types of roses. Once pruned, he feeds them with a sulphur, potassium and magnesium mixture, and then top-dresses with alfalfa meal, to feed plants slowly until his seasonal applications of fertilizer begin in March. Gerischer uses compost, chicken manure, compost tea and fish emulsion. Peak bloom typically occurs around April 15, and from then on he cuts flowers (effectively pruning and encouraging further growth), into early summer. He stops fertilizing his roses in late June, early July, and also slows down on his watering. He resumes feeding and watering in mid-September, in anticipation of fall blooms, and then stops fertilizing in October, so the plants can once again slow down, bringing the year to a close.

You can review this presentation and hear all of Gerischer’s tips, including specific roses he recommends growing, and answers to audience questions, by visiting the SCHS archives on our YouTube channel.

SCHS MONTHLY GARDEN SHARE

Let’s start the year slowly, but get on to the right track...

- Finish rose pruning & planting (see video link above for tips)
- Cut back grape & berry vines
- Prune fruit trees, including apple, pear & stone fruits
- Rake up/compost deciduous leaves, retaining some leaf mold to protect & feed plant roots
- Continue to reduce irrigation, but deep-water trees if needed
- Clean swales, gutters & drains

Learn more about SCHS and check us out online at:
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Sabine Steinmetz
CULTIVATING PLACE: HOW A GARDEN CULTURE OF CARE STRENGTHENS PLACES AND THEIR PEOPLE

Thursday, February 11, 2021 at 7:30 pm

Presented by Jennifer Jewell, host of the national award-winning weekly public radio program and podcast Cultivating Place: Conversations on Natural History and the Human Impulse to Garden

This special program - the first in the SCHS's Ruth Borun Lecture Series - will explore the philosophy of Jewell's Cultivating Place podcast that gardens/gardeners are powerful agents and spaces for potentially positive change in our world. Challenges covered range from addressing climate change, to habitat loss, to cultural polarization, to individual as well as communal health and being. Jewell provides examples of important plant-based work being done by women around the world that are profiled in her book The Earth in Her Hands, and innovative place-based gardens that celebrate western landscapes in her upcoming book, Under Western Skies.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION TO BE POSTED SOON AT WWW.SOCALHORT.ORG
Until we are able to meet again in person, monthly programs will continue to be scheduled as online webinars.

**January 14** - WEBINAR  
Scott Logan, current naturalist at Gottlieb Native Garden, shares “Planting California Natives Created a Wildlife Oasis!”

**February 11** - WEBINAR  
RUTH BORUN LECTURE SERIES INAUGURAL PROGRAM  
Jennifer Jewell, host of Cultivating Place, on “How a Garden Culture of Care Strengthens Places & Their People”

**March 11** - WEBINAR  
David Brenner, founder of Habitat Horticulture  
to present a program about living walls

**April 8** - WEBINAR  
Michael Martinez, master gardener and founder of L.A. Compost will speak about composting

**GARDEN QUOTE OF THE MONTH**

“A way over yonder, is a place I have seen –  
In a garden of wisdom,  
from some long ago dream.”

- Carole King

**JANUARY**

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

**NEWSLETTER January 2021**

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**Newsletter Editor:** Sabine Steinmetz

**Contributors to this issue:** Scott Logan, Yvonne Savio

**Next deadline:** Monday, January 18 (for February newsletter)  
Please contribute an article or information of interest.