

Garden Clippings

Orange County Master Gardeners' Newsletter

Volume 10 Number 1

January 2004

January Meeting

Saturday, January 3, 2004
510 E. Memory Lane, Santa Ana

Schedule

8:30 – 9:00 a.m. Setup Plants 'n Things
9:00 – 9:30 a.m. Snacks and Socializing
9:30 a.m. General Meeting
10:15 a.m. Plants 'n Things
10:30 a.m. Enrichment Program

Members with last names starting with H-Q, please bring a breakfast snack to share. Other members are also welcome to bring goodies.

Also, remember to bring along any items you wish to contribute to our Plants 'n Things raffle.

Please recycle by bringing seed catalogs to share this month.

And, Rita Corpin will gladly accept any holiday cards for her school craft project. There will be a box on the back table for all cards you care to donate.

Enrichment Workshop—Backyard Habitats

Learn how to create a wildlife friendly landscape from Michael Hearst, currently the Public Information Officer for Orange County Vector Control. Michael is an adjunct faculty member at Fullerton College, teaching Horticulture and Natural History. He'll be receiving his M.S. in Environmental Science; Education and Communications from CSU, Fullerton in June 2004.

Timber Press Orders

We receive up to 40% on orders from Timber Press. If interested, refer to the catalog at www.timberpress.com and coordinate your orders with Bonnie Kocsis.

Master Gardener Class Schedule

Contact Kathleen Phipps first if you're interested in auditing a class.

Jan. 3: Trees with Alden Kelley

Jan. 10: Fruit Trees with Tom Spellman of Dave Wilson Nursery

Jan. 17: Citrus & Avocado at Cal Poly with Greg Partida

Jan. 24: Landscape Design with Charles Lamb of Emerald Design

Jan. 31: Tools with Bob Denman

Volunteer Venues

Sherman Gardens has a new training class beginning January 12, so sign up ASAP if you'd like to be a docent at this beautiful site.

Fred urges more people to try out the plant clinic on the second Saturday each month from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. at the Arboretum. The "regulars" would love to see some new faces and "newbies" will gain valuable experience.

Jan Youngquist announced that there is an opening for plant specialists for the second Sunday and for the fifth Saturday.

Reminder: volunteering in the Arboretum office or gift shop does NOT count toward OCMG volunteer hours.

New venue opportunity: the elementary schools in Anaheim need kid-friendly landscaping ideas to improve the school's appearance. If interested in coordinating or working on a committee, contact Don Schulze.

Missing in Action: the OCMG apron from the plant clinic box. If found, please return to the box or Jan Youngquist. The banner has been found!

Leaves from the President



Happy New Year to everyone! It was so nice to see so many of our current students at our last meeting. I am sorry I did not get a chance to talk to all of you personally, but there will be more meetings to attend and after graduation so many more opportunities. Going to meetings and sharing information is part of the fun of being a Master Gardener.

Geri Cebellis' talk at our meeting inspired me to get out my camera and take new pictures of my garden. I need to redo and edit parts of my garden, so now when the weather is bad I will have new photos to look at while going through the garden catalogs arriving daily in the mail and be inspired.

At the beginning of the New Year, many of you make New Years' Resolutions. I don't. I make to do lists. This year, I am making one list of just fun things I want to do. I hope you all do the same. -- Sharon Neely

Gardening Events

Fullerton Arboretum. Call 714/278-3579 ext. 0 to register.

Jan. 24: Rose Care & Pruning with Glen Williams, Arboretum Garden Manager
10:00 a.m.-noon Bleachers

Camellia Shows: The shows open to "the public" at 1:00pm, but volunteers who "clerk" at the show, can arrive as early as 7:00 am. Contact Theresa Piech to volunteer: working with her camellia group (an approved OCMG venue) allows free entrance to Descanso Gardens.

Jan 17 Descanso Gardens, La Canada-Flintridge

Jan 24 Rogers Gardens, Corona del Mar

Jan 31 Descanso Gardens, La Canada-Flintridge

☎ Contacts

Sharon Neely, *President*.....

Iris Stuart, *1st Vice Pres.*.....

Public Education & Outreach

Kathleen Phipps, *2nd Vice Pres.*... ..

Janet Meade, *Treasurer*.....

Fred Snyder, *Plant Clinic*.....

Jill Patterson, *Newsletter Editor*

Submit articles by the 10th of each month via:

Jackie Brooks, *Vol. Hours*.....

OCMG Website: <http://www.ocmastergardeners.org>

Debris from the Editor

I always make at least one New Year's resolution, so I interviewed members at the December meeting for ideas. Unfortunately, I can relate to every one of these resolutions!

Fred Snyder plans to finally finish a garden trail he began last year. Kathleen Phipps vows to keep her potted plants watered. Geri Cibellis' daughter is getting married; thus she has a deadline to ready her garden for the wedding. Bob Anspach is going to plant more plumerias and hibiscus and insists white fly is no problem as long as the plant is sprayed with water at the first sign of infestation.

President Sharon Neely and new trainees Gloria Potocki and Nancy Spires want to just take care of their garden this year while Jan Youngquist doesn't want to acquire more plants than she can take care of. Mary and Bill McMurran hope their tomatoes actually produce this year (we all shared the same problems with our heirlooms last summer!). Cindy Polera-Burch's ambition is to complete her butterfly garden which her husband is designing with a gazing ball and copper pipe antennae that acts as a fountain.

Happy New Year and may you actually accomplish all of your resolutions!

--- Jill

Fruit Facts

MALABAR CHESTNUT – *Pachira aquatica* – Bombacaceae

Donated by:
CRFG/Haluza and
planted in 1992
(r.f.-04)

Common names:
Malabar chestnut,
Guiana chestnut,
Zapoton,
Pupumjuche, Saba
nut



The Malabar chestnut is not a true chestnut but is related to the silk floss tree. It is native to Central America and northern South America. It is cultivated in many tropical regions, including Southern California. In the wild it is a tree that grows in freshwater swamps and alongside rivers.

The Malabar chestnut is a spreading tree that grows to 50 feet in the wild, but in home cultivation it grows more like a large shrub. It has greenish bark with large glossy leaves and creamy white flowers. The flowers emerge from long buds. The petals curl back to the base of the flower, leaving the spectacular cluster of three to four inch off-white stamens. They are followed by oval-shaped woody pods, which may reach 12 inches in length and 5 inches in diameter.



The fruit is an oval pod with pointed ends resembling the kapok or silk floss seed pods,

but the seeds inside are nuts, very tightly packed within and very tasty. The pods enlarge until they burst, and the nuts fall to the ground.

The nuts must be collected as soon as they fall or just before they fall. The seeds or nuts are boiled in hot water. The boiled nuts will have a boiled potato flavor.

The longer the fruit remains on the ground, the more the nuts will become bitter, making them almost impossible to eat. In some cases it has been found that, depending on the area where the tree is growing, the nuts will always be of bitter flavor.

In many countries the wood of the Malabar chestnut tree is used in the manufacturing of vault ceilings or church domes.

The young leaves, in some areas, are cooked and eaten as a vegetable.

The Malabar chestnut plants can be easily started from seed and will root from cuttings. It grows in locations protected from drying winds. The tree should be fertilized frequently during the growing season. This tree seldom needs pruning and may be grown in full sun to partial shade.

The Malabar chestnut will tolerate brief exposure to temperatures as low as 28° F, but may drop some leaves.

This particular plant at the arboretum has suffered frost damage from time to time, as can be seen if you look at the lower trunk. Common sense would suggest keeping the plant on the dry side during the cold weather, something difficult to do in some California winters.

—*Alfredo Chiri*, OC Calif. Rare Fruit Growers liaison to the Fullerton Arboretum.

In Memory of Pat Sawyer: Anyone wanting to donate money to the Friends of the Fullerton Arboretum in remembrance of Pat Sawyer can either bring it to the January meeting or mail it to OCMG, PO Box 1103, Yorba Linda, Ca 92885-1103. Checks should be made out to The Friends of Fullerton Arboretum.