

Garden Clippings

Orange County Independent Master Gardeners' Newsletter

Volume 15 Number 3

March 2009

March Meeting

Saturday, March 7, 2009

510 E. Memory Lane/2615 Valencia, Santa Ana

Schedule

8:15 – 9:00 a.m.	Setup Plants 'n Things
9:00 – 9:45 a.m.	Business Meeting
9:45 - 10:00 a.m.	Plants 'n Things
10:00– 11:00 a.m.	Program
11:00	Clean up

Members with last names starting with **R– Z** please bring a breakfast snack. 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 and any gardening catalogs or magazines you'd like to share.

Enrichment Workshop—Conservation Gardening Practices—C.J. Forray

CJ Forray is a horticulturalist and garden designer who spent many years as a curator to 5 collections at a botanic garden and was also a horticultural educator. She left the botanic garden in 1994 to practice horticulture consulting and design in the private sector specializing in historic plants and theme gardens. She has advocated and lectured on "non-toxic" and "conservation" gardening practices for decades. She continues to lecture on and advocate for "non-toxic" and "conservation" gardening practices. She will explain how we can convert our existing gardens to that end without going crazy. Get your questions ready!

Board Meeting: Third Tuesday of the month at 6:30 pm at the home of Cheryl Borden.
Confirm date with Janet Meade beforehand.

Gardening Events

Fullerton Arboretum. Pre-register for all classes by calling 714/278-3407

Sun. Mar. 1: Clearance Sale at the Potting Shed, 10 am – 4 pm. Last day of the sale

Thur.- Sun. Mar 19 - 22: Monster Tomato and Pepper Sale, 10 am – 4 pm, free admission.

This is the largest tomato and pepper plant sale in the west, with over 180 varieties of tomatoes and 80 varieties of peppers on sale.

Fullerton College Horticulture Dept., 321 E. Chapman, Fullerton 92832, 714-992-7135

Fri. – Sun. Mar 6 – 8: 2009 Tomato Sale, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

From tiny to jumbo, in a rainbow of colors, over a hundred varieties to choose from this year - Beefsteak, Cherry, Container, Grape, Oxheart, Saladette, Sauce/Paste, Slicer. **More details on website -- <http://horticulture.fullcoll.edu>**

The Road Less Traveled Store, 2202 N. Main St., Santa Ana. RSVP at 714-836-8727. Park on Buffalo. Website: www.roadlesstraveledstore.com.

Sat. Mar 14: Beekeeping Lecture, 11 am – 1pm. Learn the importance of bees in nature and as a vital part of our food system. The ladies of Backyard Beekeepers will also be discussing basic beekeeping and honey tastings/pairings.

Spring is almost here! Time to start vegetable seeds indoors.

For many other gardening events, check <http://www.orangecountygardeners.org>

May Speaker

Helen Elich has been doing an awesome job finding our monthly speakers, but wants your input for an upcoming speaker. She has scheduled Christy Wilhelmi for May and wants to know on what topic you'd like Christy to speak. Please go to Christy's website, read one of her newsletters, and then email Helen with your preference: www.gardenerd.com

Book Review

Fruitless Fall: the collapse of the honey bee and the coming agricultural crisis

by Rowan Jacobsen
Bloomsbury Press, 2008

*Where have all the flowers gone, long time passing?
Where have all the flowers gone, long time ago?*—Pete Seeger

Ever wonder why vanilla is so expensive—especially the vanilla bean itself? All vanilla is hand-pollinated, making it the most labor-intensive crop in the world. The stingless melipona bee has been wiped out by deforestation and that bee was the only wild pollinator of the vanilla orchid.

The almond industry in California, which produces over 80% of the world's crop, is completely dependent on pollination by imported bees. Spain, the second-largest almond producer, has a measly 5% of the market. Hives are shipped from all over the United States to California each February to pollinate the trees. In the 1970s, the price to rent a hive was about \$10. In 2004, the per hive rental was \$50.00. In 2007, it jumped to \$160 and more. It wasn't due to the increase in gas prices. No, in 2006, commercial bee keepers found that one third of the world's bee population—thirty billion bees—had died.

Bees pollinate almost 100 commercial crops. Without bees, we would have no strawberries, tomatoes, blueberries, clover, or alfalfa (important feed sources for dairy cattle). Without bees, our

food sources would be indescribably curtailed. Without bees, our gardens can not exist.

The death of thirty billion bees has been attributed to Colony Collapse Disorder. Jacobsen, who also authored *Chocolate Unwrapped* which explains the health benefits of my favorite food, delves into the complicated causes of the decline in bee populations and what we can do to reverse it. Cell phones, despite the popular press, are NOT one of the causes! Our European honey bee is beset by much more than radio waves—pesticides, fungus infections, and varroa mites are just some of the threats they face. The Africanized honey bee and the Russian honey bee may well be our future pollinators.

This is an immensely readable book with all the hallmarks of a suspense novel. The author covers history, entomology, and the detective work of commercial beekeepers and scientists as he documents the crisis we must solve.



Clan Apis

By Jay Hosler

Active Synapse, 2000

Hosler, an entomologist who specializes in bee research, created this delightful graphic novel* that chronicles the life of Nyuki, a honey bee. Full of humor and replete with explanations of the workings of a hive, this is an excellent introduction to the life cycle of bees, suitable for children through adults.

*graphic novel: also called comic books (but they are so much more!), graphic novels are books written with sequential art and text. *Maus* by Art Spiegelman is a graphic novel about the holocaust which won a Pulitzer Prize Special Award in 1992.

--Reviews by Jill Patterson

BOOK REVIEW

By Barbara Eaves

Plants in the Getty's Central Garden

By Jim Duggan

Foreward by Robert Irwin

Photography by Becky Cohen

Published 2003 by Getty Publications

On a recent visit to the Getty Center to see an exhibit of illuminated manuscripts, I, as usual, spent more time in the garden than in the buildings viewing the art. I'm always amazed at how different the gardens look each time I visit, and always take lots of pictures to use as inspiration for my own garden (though on a much smaller scale and budget). The Getty's design has changed since my first visit shortly after it opened in 1998 and I was reminded of how all gardens evolve over time. Mistakes are made, tastes change, and knowledge increases, so that the garden at the Getty, like my own, is a constantly evolving landscape.

At the check stand in the bookstore, I found *Plants in the Getty's Central Garden*. I found it to be a wonderful read, and gained insight into how a great artist and an equally great nurseryman and landscape designer collaborated to create this beautiful place.

Robert Irwin, the architect, had definite ideas when he agreed to design the garden, but he didn't know much about plants. Jim Duggan is a nurseryman and landscape designer in the San Diego area, and he had to find a way to translate Irwin's painterly vision into the medium of plants, soil and climate.

One of Duggan's biggest challenges was to find plants that were suited to our Mediterranean climate yet still expressed Irwin's desire for a garden that would be experienced in much the same way that a painting or sculpture would, though in a more dynamic way. Irwin wanted bold splashes of color and texture. He wanted to incorporate the sound of running water and the movement of the trees and grasses in the wind. He wanted the garden's style to be as

contemporary and unconventional as the museum's buildings. Irwin wanted to create a sculpture in the form of a stream, and the landscapers were doubtful that his ideas were workable. Irwin handpicked the rocks and supervised their placement, and the result is a unique work of art.

Working on such a huge scale is awe inspiring, and a testament to these two great artists. They learned and grew in their respective professions, were willing to compromise on their initial vision, worked really hard, and sometimes even 'happy accidents' occurred. I'm sure we can all relate this process to our own gardens—constantly evolving, challenging and above all, lots of fun.

☎ Contacts

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Submit articles by the 10th of each month via:
e-mail

or snail mail:

Jean Rice, *Vol. Hours*.....

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

Green Scene Approaching!

Sharon Neely will take sign ups at this month's meeting for our booth at the Fullerton Arboretum Green Scene, April 18 – 19. If you'd like to volunteer and can't make the meeting, please give her a call.

June Plant Exchange

Start those cuttings and seeds now so you'll be ready for our annual plant exchange at the June meeting. It's a "bring one, take one" exchange of rooted plants—I'm starting my plumeria cuttings this weekend! You can bring multiples of the same plant or bring a variety of different plants. If anyone is looking for a specific plant, let me know and I'll put it in the next newsletter.