

# Garden Clippings

Orange County Independent Master Gardeners' Newsletter

Volume 15 Number 6

June 2009

## June Meeting

**Saturday, June 6, 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/Election
9:45 - 10:00 a.m.	Plants 'n Things
10:00– 11:00 a.m.	Plant Exchange
11:00	Clean up

To celebrate the last meeting of our membership year, we're asking everyone to bring a breakfast item to share.

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.

## 2008-09 Slate of Officers

President, Bob Shaw

1st Vice President, Ann Porter

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Helen Elich

Treasurer, open

Recording Secretary, Barbara Eaves

Corresponding Secretary, Cheryl Borden

Many thanks to nominating committee chair Sharon Neely and committee members Helen Elich and Bob Shaw.

## Enrichment Program: Plant Exchange

It's our annual plant exchange! For every plant you bring to exchange, you get to take one home. Bring 10-12 well-rooted plants of any kind or combination. Each plant must be labeled with the **botanical and common names** along with a note as to how to maintain the plant.

## Gardening Events

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

**Sat. June 6: Award Winning Home Composting Workshop II**, 10 – 11:30 a.m.

For experienced composters who could use a helpful review of composting basics.

**Sat. July 11: Tomato Tasting and Sizzlin' Summer Salsa Contest** 10am - 2pm. Free

Bring your best tomatoes and homemade salsa for judging.

**Sherman Gardens**, 2647 East Coast Highway, Corona del Mar 92625, 949-673-2261  
[www.slgardens.org](http://www.slgardens.org)

**Wed. June 3: Patio Gardening.** 9 am. . \$30 non-member/\$25 member

Learn how to fine tune your garden. Soil mixes, watering schedules, fertilizing, and pest control will be discussed.

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

## Bylaws

Bylaws are included with this month's newsletter and will be voted on at the June meeting. Virginia Carlson, Lois Daybell and Sharon Neely, the Bylaws Committee members, wish to thank Jerry Young and Jean Rice for their help in proof reading, suggestions and corrections.

**This is our annual business meeting!**

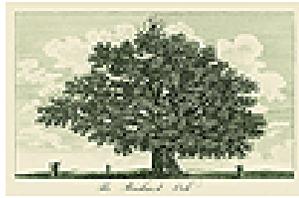
We will hold elections and collect dues (\$20.00).

We will vote on the bylaws.

**Reminder!** Next general meeting is August 1

No general meeting in July

# Leaves from the President



I am extremely pleased with the direction of our organization.

Creating our independent non-profit organization was done with the deliberate effort of awesome volunteers who spent literally thousands of hours laying its foundation. The current board and so many others have worked incredibly hard to ensure that our autonomy is maintained not only for us but for future OCIMG members.

The addition of 'Independent' to our name has turned out to be a very positive thing. It has given us a chance to revisit our written materials and modify them. While all materials *did* state that we were an independent organization, we have further elaborated on what that means so that things are crystal clear and there are no future misunderstandings. As another positive to our name change, Sharon Neely reported that at Green Scene, where our new banner was displayed for the first time, many expressed positive interest in our organization *because* of our independence.

With the current budget situation in California, we are so fortunate now more than ever to have created a self-supporting group that is not dependent on anyone else for its existence. As we all know, any time government claims there is no money for essentials, "non-essentials" such as cooperative extension and associated master gardener groups are redlined. Apparently this is what is happening right now in Contra Costa County and possibly elsewhere in the state.

Without wasting energy on thoughts of being shut down or disbanded, we are able to go forward and grow. On such a note, we have reserved classroom space for our Fall program and are moving full speed ahead. If you know anyone who is interested in attending those classes, please talk to Helen Elich, Bob Shaw, or any board

member as soon as possible; that way they can be included in our mailings.

Lastly I would like to thank the entire board (Sharon Neely, Fred Snyder, Bob Shaw, Jean Rice, & Cheryl Borden) for all their hard work this year in our reorganization. Without them, quite simply, we would *not* be headed where we are--in the right direction. Thank you also goes to Jill Patterson, for continued excellence in producing our newsletter; Helen Elich for obtaining outstanding speakers; Jan Youngquist for "wo"manning plants 'n things; Nancy Shaw for setting up snacks 'n things; Virginia Carlson, Lois Daybell and Sharon Neely for updating our bylaws for all of our review; and so many others who have helped in ways I know I'm forgetting. I am very grateful and thankful to have worked with such a terrific group.

I wish all of you health, wealth, happiness, and a pest free garden.

Janet Meade, President, Orange County  
Independent Master Gardeners

## Volunteer Hours

Please send in your volunteer hours to Jean Rice BEFORE the June meeting. Only members with hours submitted for the 2008-09 membership year are eligible to vote in the June election and on the proposed bylaws changes.

### ☎ Contacts

Janet Meade, *President* .....

Sharon Neely, *1st<sup>d</sup> Vice Pres*

Bob Shaw, *Treasurer*

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

Jill Patterson, *Newsletter Editor*

Submit articles by the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month via:

e-mail at

or snail mail

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

Website: [http:// www.ocmastergardeners.org](http://www.ocmastergardeners.org)

## OUR POLLINATORS ARE DYING

By Helen Elich

While surfing the TV last month I heard some sound bites about bats dying in upstate New York and took it upon myself to do some research since they play an important role in our lives.

The bat referred to in the newscast is primarily called the little brown bat which is common in North America and is known as *Myotis lucifugus*. Other endangered bats would include *Myotis Sodalis*, an Indiana bat, the long-eared bat *Myotis septentrionalis*, and the eastern pipistrelle (*Perimyotis subflavus*). Since bats serve as predators for insects and a pollinator for plants, the decreasing bat population is as grave a concern among agriculturalists as the decline in bees (CCD-Colony Collapse Disorder). Scientists believe the deaths of bees and bats are unrelated. The signs of illness among the bats include weight loss and a white fungus around their noses now being dubbed the "White Nose Syndrome (WNS)." . WNS is cold fungi referred to as *Geomyces* and the first detection was found in caves in 2006

It is felt that the die-off of bats can cause economic impact since bats feed on insects that can damage dozens of crops including wheat and apples. It is also feared that there may be a significant spread in communicable diseases without the presents of the bats.

Bats are the greatest insect eaters and a nursing bat can eat half of its weight in insects every day, while the brown bat can eat 600-1000 mosquitoes in an hour. The primary consideration for their deaths is pesticides since bats are sensitive to the same toxins used to kill insects.

Bat Guano as we know is a great fertilizer. With the increase in manufactured fertilizers, bat guano is now considered the truffles of the fertilizer world with its high nitrogen content.

More than 1,100 species of bats exist worldwide. Forty five species live in North America. Bats range in size from the bumblebee bat in Thailand, weighing less than a penny, to Indonesian flying

foxes with wing spans of six feet. Seventy percent of bats are insectivorous. The other thirty percent eat everything from fruit, pollen and nectar to fish, frogs, lizards and small rodents. Three species lap blood.

Are you hungry? Bats pollinate plants that produce chocolate, cloves, coconut, bananas, allspice, cashews, dates, figs, mangoes, and avocados. There are roughly 200,000 varieties of animal pollinators in the wild, most of which are insects. Entomophily, pollination by insects, often occurs on plants that have developed colored petals and a strong scent to attract insects such as, bees, wasps, and occasionally ants (Hymenoptera), beetles(Coleoptera), moths and butterflies (Lepidoptera), and flies (Diptera). In Zoophily, pollination is done by vertebrates such as birds and bats, particularly, hummingbirds, sunbirds, spiderhunters, honeyeaters, and fruit bats. Plants adapted to using bats or moths as pollinators typically have white petals and a strong scent. They pollinate agave plants, which yield mescal and tequila. When agaves are hand pollinated, their production drops to 1/3,000th of those plants which are visited by bats. Bats pollinate the neem tree, a source of non-poisonous pesticides. They visit the plants which yield cork, balsa wood, ebony, latex, chicle, kapok and sisal.

Not feeling well? Bats pollinate plants which are involved in the production of cortisones, salves, astringents, emetics and anthelmintics. Vampire bats, which live only in Latin America, produce a 'clot buster' in their saliva which is being used experimentally to treat stroke victims. It's a major improvement over current protocols, allowing a much longer window of opportunity for treatment. And it doesn't damage brain cells, as the current drug does. Vampire bats are altruistic. They adopt orphans from their colony and feed colony members who are ill or unable to feed themselves.

Do you love the earth? Bats, through pollination and seed dispersal, are responsible for over 90% of rain forest reforestation.

Are bugs bugging you? Without birds and bats, insects would soon overwhelm the earth. The largest bat colony in the US is in San Antonio,

TX. They eat more than a million pounds of insects every night.

Some bat myths demystified: Bats are not blind and they don't get in your hair. They aren't major carriers of rabies. An average of one person per year in all our fifty states dies of bat rabies. Three people every year die on amusement park rides. Almost ninety people a day commit suicide.

Bats are intelligent, gentle and thoroughly amazing creatures. Some purr like cats when they are contented. Recent studies indicate that Mexican freetail bats communicate with at least 23 different vocalizations which include a basic form of syntax and grammar. Yet over half of our U.S. bat species are endangered or in rapid decline, due to loss of habitat and persecution by humans.

I learned a lot doing this research and can only add, next time I have some chocolate, bananas, or tequila ..... I will say THANK YOU!!

Websites with more information:

[www.vet.cornell.edu](http://www.vet.cornell.edu)

[www.breitbart.com](http://www.breitbart.com)

[www.livescience.com/animals](http://www.livescience.com/animals)

[www.popsi.com](http://www.popsi.com)

[www.naturalnews.com](http://www.naturalnews.com)

[www.batplants.co.uk](http://www.batplants.co.uk)

[www.desertgardens.suite/uk](http://www.desertgardens.suite/uk)

[www.waynesend.palomar.edu](http://www.waynesend.palomar.edu)

### **National Garden Club Training Class**

Friday – Saturday, July 31 - August 1.

"Gardening Study School Series 20, Course IV" at Soka University of America, 1 University Drive, Aliso Viejo 92656.

Sponsor: Orange County District Garden Clubs.

Series of four ten-hour (two-day) courses covering basic botany, soils, plant propagation, houseplants, container gardening, plant diseases and pests, growing vegetables, development and evaluation of new plants, growing flowers, classifying plants, pruning techniques, growing fruits, growing woody ornamentals, lawns and

lawn alternatives, home irrigation techniques and more. All gardeners can become accomplished horticulturists. To assist its members in achieving this goal, National Garden Clubs created the Gardening Study courses program. With the completion of this course program, a gardener becomes an accredited gardening consultant. More information on the curriculum and a contact email for registration information, including fees, is at:

[http://cagardenclubs.org/html/Calendar/garden\\_study.html](http://cagardenclubs.org/html/Calendar/garden_study.html)

### **FREE Native Plant Workshop**

Join Back to Natives for a FREE workshop for the community on June 14, from 9am – 1pm. Learn how you can use native plants in your yard to save water (and money) and provide habitat for butterflies and birds. Participants will learn about the process of creating a native plant habitat garden from beginning to end. Bring your gloves and be ready to help plant a garden at a residence in Yorba Linda. RSVP to [info@backtonatives.org](mailto:info@backtonatives.org)

### **Celebrate the Opening of the Restored Rancho Los Alamitos Native Garden**

Saturday, June 6, 2009 • 11:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Free Admission to Rancho Los Alamitos and site activities, including tours, crafts, and demonstrations; pre-registration and payment required for seminars. Go to:

<http://www.rancholosalamitos.com> and click on “events”.

“ Rancho Los Alamitos welcomes you to a garden gathering to celebrate how the combined work of man, nature and art has created cultural landscapes that have become living parts of our California heritage.”

**Parking is at California State University Long Beach Lot 11** located on Palo Verde Avenue between Atherton and University Drive with continuous shuttle service to the Rancho.