

Garden Clippings

Orange County Independent Master Gardeners' Newsletter

Volume 19 Number 4

April 2013

April Meeting

Saturday, April 6, 2013

Rancho Santiago Community College Rm. 107
2323 North Broadway, Santa Ana, CA 92706

8:30 – 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. Enrichment Program
11:00 – 11:30 a.m. Clean up

Members with last names starting with **S - Z**, please bring a breakfast snack. Other members are also welcome to bring goodies. Also, please 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 Program: Leslie Gilson, the Power of One

Leslie Gilson, a Huntington Beach resident, with the backing and support of Jean Nagy of The Huntington Beach Tree Society and the city of Huntington Beach, took on the restoration of the Norma Gibbs Monarch Butterfly overwintering site in 2007. They removed 179 dead and dying Eucalyptus trees and re-forested with a plan provided by Creekside Science. Arbor Day 2008 saw over 800 nectar and milkweed plants put in by 200 volunteers. The goal is to lure the majestic Monarch back and restore this magnificent overwintering site. We'll learn more about the park and its restoration plus facts about luring butterflies to our own gardens.

Also Harriet Bouldin, Development/Membership and Volunteer Manager from the Fullerton Arboretum, will give a short presentation on volunteer opportunities there.

Gardening Events

Sat. April 20: "Square Foot Gardening". 10 – 11:30am

Tips and resources for growing organic fruits and vegetables in less space. Home of Cerise Outhier (OCIMG trainee), 1315 Whittier Blvd., Brea. RSVP via email: couthier@gmail.com

Fullerton Arboretum. Pre-register for all classes by calling 657/278-3407.

Sat. April 13: "Intro to Plant Identification III". 9:00am – 1:00pm. \$25/members/\$30/non-members. Pavilion classrooms.

Develop the necessary skills to be able to identify California plant families on sight. Some knowledge or completion of Plant ID I & II is strongly recommended Taught by Bob Allen.

Sat.- Sun. April 20-21: "Green Scene". 10am – 4pm. Bleachers. \$6/members/\$8/non-members

Learn the basics of home composting and receive a free booklet to guide you through the learning and start-up process.

Rancho Santa Ana Botanical Gardens 1500 N. College Ave., Claremont, CA 91711, just off Foothill Blvd. and east of Indian Hill.

<http://www.rsabg.org>. Pre-register for all classes by calling (909) 625-8767 x224. \$8 admission.

April is wildflower season! "**Where They Grow Wild**" is an exclusive display of original artworks from RSABGs archival collections. Gallery open: Friday – Sunday, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Sat. & Sun. Wildflower Walks with nature interpreters begin at the Admission Kiosk at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.

Leaves from the President



On a recent trip up to see family in Sonoma County, we got to see a real Northern California Spring. On a walk in the Jack London State Park, we saw wonderful wildflowers: California

Poppy, Indian Paintbrush, Baby Blue Eyes, and Buttercups were some of the most beautiful.

We also went to the Luther Burbank (1849-1926) home and gardens. He is responsible for almost 400 major contributions to plant diversity, mainly through crossbreeding and hybridization.

Luther Burbank was born on March 7, 1849, on a farm near Lancaster, Massachusetts and received little more than a high school education. Inspired by Charles Darwin's *Variation of Animals and Plants Under Domestication*, Burbank determined that better plants could be developed through natural selection and new varieties created through crossbreeding, or hybridization.



His first successful plant was developed through selection. In 1871 he found a potato seed ball and planted its 23 seeds in a special plot. One produced many large, firm potatoes. Burbank replanted these and reaped a

small harvest of fine potatoes. He then moved to Santa Rosa, CA. *"I firmly believe, from what I have seen, that this is the chosen spot of all this earth as far as Nature is concerned."* -- Luther Burbank

He worked by effecting multiple crosses of foreign and native strains to obtain seedlings,

which he grafted onto fully developed plants for rapid assessment of hybrid characteristics. He carried on his plant hybridization and selection on a huge scale. At any one time he maintained as many as 3,000 experiments involving millions of plants. In his work on plums, he tested about 30,000 new varieties. Much of his valuable data was lost, but he wrote several books. **Luther Burbank, His Methods and Discoveries and Their Practical Applications** was published in 12 volumes in 1914-15. Burbank died in Santa Rosa on April 11, 1926.

Major Plant Contributions

The Plant Patent Act of 1930 amended U.S. patent law to permit protection of new and distinct varieties of

asexually reproduced plants resulted from the growing awareness that plant breeders had no financial incentive to enter plant breeding

because they could not exercise control over their discoveries. Due to this legislation, at least 16 Plant Patents were issued to Burbank posthumously. Introduced by Luther Burbank:

- POTATO: 'Burbank'
- FRUITS: 113 Plums and Prunes, 10 Different Apples, 16 Blackberries, 13 Raspberries, 10 Strawberries, 35 Fruiting Cacti, 10 Cherries, 2 Figs, 4 Grapes, 5 Nectarines, 8 Peaches, 4 Pears, 11 Plumcots, 11 Quinces, 1 Almond, 6 Chestnuts, 3 Walnuts
- GRAINS, GRASSES AND OTHER FORAGE: 9 Different kinds
- VEGETABLES: 26 Different kinds
- ORNAMENTALS: 91 Different kinds



Anne Porter, President
Orange County Independent Master Gardeners

PS: We need a nominating committee! Please contact me if you're interest in participating or if you'd like to run for office.

Saikei Bonsai

Saikei embraces the traditions of bonsai but allows a greater freedom in composition, such as the use of ordinary stones and seedlings. This makes for a perfect beginning point for the bonsai enthusiast. The bonsai enthusiast can derive pleasure by organizing bonsai into saikei patterns while he is waiting for them to mature. The compositions are suited to cement or earthenware trays. Saikei applies the same techniques used in bonsai for training trees to conform to desired shapes, but gives emphasis to the naturalness of the shape. A sakei tree appears as if its form had been determined by nature, such as the weather, and its natural location, rather than by the hand of its owner.

More on Saikei

DonMartin

There are many grasses used in Saikei. Several basic considerations to keep in mind:

1. Grass should be short with small leaves that grow close to the ground.
2. The grass must have strong roots and must spread vigorously.
3. Grass should be hardy so it will thrive in the shade.

Grasses make the landscape more colorful and beautiful. It's important that you select a grass that matches, both in shape in color, the principal tree.

Editor's note: My apologies for misspelling saikei as "shikei" last month!

New Online Magazine

The spring issue of [Leaf Magazine](#) is available. The online magazine reviews Amy Stewart's new book *The Drunken Botanist*, gives tips on surviving the nursery experience and profiles great gardeners and garden designers. It's free at: <http://www.leafmag.com/site>



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Vintage Gardens Closing July 1

After 30 years, Vintage Gardens in Sebastopol is closing. They are one of the only sources for roses grown on their own rootstock (the advantage being there will be no suckers to prune) and an unparalleled source for heirloom roses and hydrangeas. Owner Gregg Lowery writes "group of old rose lovers ... have created a non-profit organization to preserve the collection of roses that I developed with Phillip Robinson beginning in the late 1970s. The Friends of Vintage Roses, assisted by the Heritage Rose Foundation, have begun the work of stabilizing and restoring a collection of old and rare roses that once numbered over 5000 varieties". Vintage Gardens will accept orders for in-stock roses through June 30 at their website, www.vintagegardens.com.

Editor's note: All the roses in my garden are from this company and have withstood years of neglect and lack of fertilizing and pruning. I do recommend them highly and am very sad to learn of their closing. Order now while you can!

May Meeting

We are having a field trip to the Bolsa Chica Wetlands on May 4, 2013. Meeting time and directions will be in the May newsletter.

Bolsa Chica is a very special place for many different reasons:

- Wetlands are among the richest habitats of life in the world.
- Bolsa Chica is one of the few coastal wetlands left in California since some 95% have been destroyed by development.
- As part of the Pacific Flyway, Bolsa Chica is an important rest stop for migrating birds who fly thousands of miles.
- Bolsa Chica Mesa, sand dunes and Wetlands are one ecosystem used by many birds and animals, such as the Great Blue Heron which fishes in the wetlands and hunts and nests on the mesa.
- Bolsa Chica is one of the largest wetlands between San Francisco and Mexico.

Heard through the Grapevine:

Virginia Carlson was profiled in the March 6, 2013 OC Register and March 27 Star Progress as one of the founders of the Del Norte Garden Club in 1977. Congratulations, Virginia!

Jan Youngquist sends her best to all of us. We hope to see her at one of our meetings soon.

Anne Porter is recovering from surgery on her other hand.



And your editor is heading for Ecuador in May for a 3-week vacation! Did you know Ecuador grows more than 30% of

the world's cocoa beans? And is the leading exporter of roses to the U.S.?

Renee's Garden Seeds

We've learned about three major seed companies, all started by men. Renee Shepherd is a pioneer in introducing specialty vegetables and herbs to home gardeners and gourmet restaurants. Listed in the April 2013 Sunset Magazine as one of 10 garden visionaries, Renee was inspired after tasting a mesclun mix during a visit to Italy in the 1980s. She brought the seeds back to be grown by small farmers for chefs such as Alice Waters and started Shepherd's Garden Seeds in 1985 in her basement (shades of Apple Computers!). It grew so quickly, she sold it to White Flower Farms, but remained with the company until 1996. She began her current venture the following year and her website includes informative articles on propagation, recipes, and Renee's garden blog.

The company has signed the "[Safe Seed Pledge](#)" developed by The Council for Responsible Genetics and does not sell chemically treated or genetically engineered seeds. They offer both certified organic seeds and conventional seeds, and support sustainable farming practices.

Renee has a PhD from UC Santa Cruz, where she taught in the Environmental Studies department before starting her own business. She has written two cookbooks, *Recipes from a Kitchen Garden* and *More Recipes from a Kitchen Garden*, both available from her website at reneesgarden.com and amazon.com.

While still considered a small-scale seed company, Renee's Garden now offers more than 400 varieties of vegetable, herb and flower seeds bought worldwide, mostly from family-run companies. Every variety is tested in the trial garden in Felton and in Vermont, Florida and Washington to ensure they can grow in a variety of climates.

The company donates seeds to local causes, including homeless and school gardens, as well as international communities such as mothers in Uganda living with HIV/AIDS.

Sources: reneesgarden.com; davesgarden.com, Santa Cruz Sentinel, March 26, 2011