

Garden Clippings

Orange County Independent Master Gardeners' Newsletter

Volume 19 Number 10

November 2013

November Meeting

Saturday, November 2, 2013

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

Schedule

8:30 – 9:00 a.m. Setup Plants 'n Things
9:00 – 9:30 a.m. Business Meeting
9:30 - 10:30 a.m. Enrichment Program
10:30 – 10:45 a.m. Plants 'n Things
11:00 – 11:30 a.m. Clean up

Members with last names starting with **R - 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: Begonias with Bonnie West



We've met Bonnie West at our December meetings; this month, we get to hear her speak on one of her favorite plants.

Commonly thought to originate in Brazil, there are three types of begonias and more than 1200 species and hybrids to enjoy. Size ranges from miniatures to plants that gain 6 feet in height. Fibrous begonias are often planted outside; rhizomatous begonias are grown for their foliage, and tuberous begonias are beloved for their flowers which look like small roses. Begonias have been used for medicine and are an excellent source of Vitamin C. Tuberous begonia stems have a taste and texture similar to rhubarb. While primarily a shade plant, there are now varieties that do well in sun.

Gardening Events

L.A. County Arboretum 301 North Baldwin Ave., Arcadia, CA 91007 tel. 626.447.8751

Sat. & Sun. Nov. 2 & 3: "Winter Cactus Show and Sale" Ayers Hall \$9 admission. 9am – 5pm.

The San Gabriel Valley Cactus & Succulent Society exhibits the splendors of the fall and winter, growing succulents and cacti rarely seen in summer shows. Featured plants will include succulent pelargoniums, wild relatives of the common geranium, and *Cyphostemma*, succulent members of the grape family mium.

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

Sat. Nov. 9: "Composting 3: Worm Composting" 10 – 11:30am. Bleachers, Cost: \$5/ members & \$7/ non-members. Free To Residents of Fullerton, Placentia, Brea, Santa Ana, Orange and Buena Park.

Learn how to introduce and maintain worms in your home composting system.

Sat. Nov 16: "Eat the Yard 3: The Thriving Edible Landscape" Pavilion Classrooms. 9am - noon. Bleachers. \$25/\$30non-members

This class will help you to determine how to get the most food out of your edible landscape for the least amount of labor and money.

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.

Sat. Nov 2: "Fall Plant Sale". 9am – 4pm Free!

Native and drought-tolerant plants, lectures, live music, and gourmet food trucks.

Leaves from the President



What's in a Zone?

There are a number of planting zone schemes. Have you ever wondered what's involved? According to the California Garden Web ([http://cagardenweb.ucanr.edu/Your Climate Zone/](http://cagardenweb.ucanr.edu/Your_Climat_Zone/)): "Temperature hardiness climate zones are based on normally expected high and low temperatures and serve as guides to help you know which plants will grow where you live.

Temperature is not the only factor in figuring out whether a plant will survive in your garden. Soil types, rainfall, day length, wind, humidity, and heat also play their roles. Even within a city, a street, or a spot protected by a warm wall in your own garden, there may be microclimates that affect how plants grow. The zones are only a guide and a good starting point, but you still need to determine for yourself what will and won't work in your garden."

In our area, we are dominated by three basic zones (per the Sunset scheme): 22: Cold-Winter Portions of Southern California's Coastal Climate; 23: Thermal Belts of Southern California Coastal Climate; and 24: Marine Influence - Southern California Coast.

The Roger's Garden's page (<http://rogersgardens.com/rgblog/?p=246#sthash.cfXXx6IW.dpuf>) has some interesting points:

"Probably everyone reading this is, according to the USDA, gardening in zone 10a or 10b or Sunset zone 24 although some in the area are in the canyon bottoms of Newport Coast and might drift into zone 23 or even 22.

But consider this: Orange County shares the same latitude as Lubbock, Texas or Charleston, South Carolina. Surprisingly, we share the same plant zone as Orlando, Florida. In addition, Orange County receives no summer rain while summer is the wettest time of the year in Orlando. Are

Orlando gardens and Orange County gardens really that much the same? Are you beginning to see a few of the problems with plant zones?"

If you joined us on the trip to the Newport Beach Back Bay, you'll know how diverse these zones can be and how much they can change in just a few blocks. We were in an area that is almost completely dominated by the ocean, but it is also influenced by the canyons that cut through the area from the east. These can bring Santa Ana winds, as well as lower winter temperatures than you'd normally expect so close to the ocean. So, we saw Pickleweed (a succulent) along with California Buckwheat, Toyon, and Sedge as we looked across one of California's natural estuaries that stretches inland about three miles – mostly considered part of Zone 24 (but bordered by Zone 22, not 23!) with the mild winters and cool, foggy, summers associated with the ocean's dominance.

That's why I am able to grow both a healthy Ocotillo and my neighbor has beautiful Plumeria. We may both be in Zone 23, but our homes and fences create very effective microclimates. And that's why the books all say that the Zones are only a guide and a good starting point, but you still need to determine for yourself what will and won't work in your garden.

All this can wreck havoc with our planting plans and schedules. Best of luck staying "in the zone".

Anne Porter,
OCIMG President

Volunteer Opportunity

Back to Natives needs volunteers to assist in their nursery, as interns, and with habitat restoration projects (removing non-native plants, planting native plants, collecting seed, propagating plants, etc.). If you are interested in learning about these **volunteer community service opportunities:**

Send an email to [volunteer\(@\)backtonatives.org](mailto:volunteer(@)backtonatives.org), and be added to their email list They will inform you about upcoming volunteer opportunities.

Pyrethrins and Pyrethroids: What's the Difference? Part 1

By Don Martin

Pesticides, in this case, insecticides and miticides, are still the primary means of regulating pest populations in greenhouses. There are two chemical classes of botanicals. One includes pyrethrins/pyrethrums; the other class is pyrethroids. These two classes of insecticides share similar properties: they are all nerve toxins. That means they attack the nervous system of the insect. Pyrethrins also work the same way by interrupting the normal transmission of nerve impulses.

Pyrethrum is one of the oldest insecticides known for household use. It's a compound derived from the flower of the chrysanthemum by processing the flowers into a powder.

Pyrethroids are man-made versions of the pyrethrins esters (an ester is an organic compound made by replacing the hydrogen of an acid by an alkyl or other organic group. Many naturally occurring fats and essential oils are esters of fatty acids.). There are two types based on molecular and physical characteristics. Type one has a negative temperature coefficient. That means they are more effective when it's cooler. They also bind strongly to soil or growing medium.

Debris from the Venturesome Editor

Last month's visit to the Muth Interpretive Center was a real treat. Our guide pointed out many of the plant species and the issues surrounding the Back Bay. The exhibits inside the Center made it very clear that the only reason we are now able to enjoy this beautiful protected area is because a few people in the community joined together and began a grassroots movement to stop development in this area. Just a few people were able to make a difference and preserve one of the last remaining wetlands in California.

I extended my visit by returning the following morning for a 2-hour guided kayak tour of the Back Bay. A small group of us enjoyed a leisurely paddle among the plants. Eye-opening

was discovering how trash floats downstream from many miles away; though the state-wide coastal cleanup took place just two weeks ago, there was plenty of trash already accumulating in the reeds and sedges. Kayak tours are held each Saturday and Sunday at 9am and reservations are recommended.

I spent last Saturday at Saddleback College listening to renowned experts speak on native plants and beneficial insects. The OC Native Plant Society hosted the workshop which included a fantastic buffet lunch put on by the college's culinary students. The food and drinks were amazing, especially the watermelon juice with a bit of lemon and mint to cut the sweetness. Let's just say that I didn't bother to eat dinner that night! During lunch, we were treated with another lecture on native plant foods. Yes, our California First People did eat more than piñon seeds and acorns! Orchid Black's lecture on water-saving techniques in the garden was one I found most interesting. Her strong opinion is the drip irrigation is for growing vegetables in the desert; it has no place in a native landscape. Natives prefer overhead water (mimicking rain).

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