

# GROWING PAINS



Miracosta Horticulture Club  
of Oceanside first meeting  
was February, 1989

## February 2020 Newsletter for the MiraCosta Horticulture Club of Oceanside

**Next meeting Saturday, February 8, 2020**  
Garden Room, Alta Vista Gardens,  
1270 Vale Terrace Drive, Vista, CA 92084  
11 am to 3 pm

**Workshop: Plant propagation with Master  
Gardener Kathryn Blankinship, for scions,  
tree cuttings, and other plants**

**Program: Native Plants Joan Bockman**

**May 16 and 17 – MCHC Plant Sale at AVBG**

### Presidents Message

**January Guest speaker:** Our guest speaker, Hilary Kearney, provided an educational program on honeybees and her presentation helped me identify bees I have under my eaves. She also explained about bee hive characteristics. I learned a lot about bees from her PowerPoint photos and really enjoyed her program. I have decided to just let the bees live in the eaves above the front door, and not have any flowers near the front door where the bees would be feeding and risk disturbing them. Last year we had a huge bee swarm (looked like black netting) that stayed in our front entry way for a few days that was frightening. There must have been a million bees, and we had no idea what to do with them. Were they moving

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in? Actually, they were gone within a few days. I do not know why they chose to nest on that particular tree branch in that area of the yard, but I guess it is just Mother Nature at work.

**Bee loving plants:** I have added some bee feeding plants to the back yard, including pansies, lavender, besides the various sages. Some herbs that bees like are sage, mint, thyme, oregano and borage.



A honey bee (left) is distinguished from a yellowjacket wasp by its hairy body and wide rear legs designed for carrying pollen. (Photo courtesy of Michael Merchant.)

**Bulbs from the January Workshop:** I have some pots full of bulbs from the workshop that are beginning to send up growth. Tulips are a sure sign of spring, and will easily grow. Remember to plant pointy side up. The daffodils were in the refrigerator for 60 days before planting.

**Request for Plants and pots:** Connie Kemp, our Membership VP, has requested Pots -plastic, clay or ceramic and succulents that may be used for simple cultivation for a philanthropic project Solutions For Change, a life-changing answer to homelessness. It provides shelter to women with children who are drug and alcohol free. It is a 1,000-day program that provides, parenting, financial skills while receiving safe and stable housing for participants. Educational, social skills and work are the foundation for changing lives and preventing the cycle of poverty. The plants and containers will be used for a workshop for the women as a craft time between their work and educational schedule. This is a stressful time for these women and gardening as we all know is wonderful therapy.

## **February 2020 Workshop Program**

Kathryn Blankinship, master gardener will present a workshop demonstration on garden grafting including scions and some general gardening common sense on propagating favorite plants. Bring some of your favorite cuttings to share at the workshop. Also, if you have a favorite garden tool that you find helpful, bring it to show and tell.



## **FEBRUARY 2020 GUEST SPEAKER**

Joan Bockman, Buena Vista Nature Center

Buena Vista Nature Center is located at The Buena Vista Creek Ecological Reserve covering 148-acre property. Habitats include Diegan coastal sage scrub, southern arroyo willow riparian forest, coastal and valley freshwater marsh, and non-native grasslands. Several bird species are present.

The Buena Vista Nature Center was built by BVAS in 1987, in partnership with the City of Oceanside and with support funding from the state's environmental license plate program. In 2014, BVAS renovated the Nature Center, adding a second story view deck. The center is located at 2202 South Coast Hwy, adjacent to the 220-acre Buena Vista Lagoon Ecological Reserve. The 3,500 square foot facility houses a series of interpretive displays featuring local wildlife, and has a natural history library, small gift shop, and meeting rooms. The Nature Center hosts a variety of programs for all ages; the monthly evening programs delve into topics such as butterfly migration, tropical birding, and local raptors. There are nature-themed special events each year, including the Birdhouse Auction, Endangered Species Day Open House, and Nature Summer Camp. They publish a newsletter for the membership and maintain an informative website. There is an extensive library of nature literature, and slides.

What is a Native Plant Garden?



Our coastal hillsides are covered with plants that some people call weeds, but anyone who takes time to learn about these "weeds" soon finds a vast number of attractive and interesting native

species that would make great additions to their gardens. San Diego Coastal Sage Scrub rivals the rainforest for the diversity of plant and animal life!

The BVAS native plant garden is a small-scale demonstration habitat that showcases these native species and increases our understanding of the world as we observe the web of life in action.

Native plants are those plants that have evolved here, not those introduced by man. When a plant has been introduced within the past few hundred years, the necessary adaptations haven't had time to occur. Often native species are lost as the new plant takes over. Pampas grass is an example of an introduced plant. It does not provide food or shelter and has destroyed native areas.

### **Isn't it Hard to Maintain?**

Native plant gardens are easier to maintain than ornamental gardens once you understand them. The plants rest during Summer/Fall and grow in Winter. If native plants are watered in the late summer, the dormant season is interrupted and harmful bugs and microbes continue to multiply. It is best to let the garden dry out for one month during August. The growing season starts with the rains in October. Pruning is twice a year in January and August.

### **NOTE FROM THE JANUARY 2020 WORKSHOP:**

#### **TULIPS**

"Tulips are indeed true perennials," explains Frans Roozen, technical director of the International Flower Bulb Center in Hillegom, the Netherlands. "Getting them to bloom in your garden year after year is no problem, if your garden happens to be located in the foothills of the Himalayas, or the steppes of eastern Turkey."

Tulips were imported into Holland in the sixteenth century. When Carolus Clusius wrote the first major book on tulips in 1592, they became so popular that his garden was raided and bulbs stolen on a regular basis.

Tulip mania reached its peak during the winter of 1636–37, when some bulbs were reportedly changing hands ten times in a day. No deliveries were ever made to fulfil any of these contracts,

because in February 1637, tulip bulb contract prices collapsed abruptly and the trade of tulips ground to a halt.

### **Was the Dutch Tulip Bulb Market a Bubble?**

The Dutch tulip bulb market bubble, also known as Tulipmania was one of the most famous market bubbles and crashes of all time. It occurred in Holland during the early to mid-1600s when speculation drove the value of tulip bulbs to extremes. At the height of the market, the rarest tulip bulbs traded for as much as six times the average person's annual salary.

Today, the Tulipmania serves as a parable for the pitfalls that excessive greed was imported into Holland in the sixteenth century.

### **What is the health of your Christmas Cactus, Poinsettia and Amaryllis:**

Holidays are over. Are your plants still thriving? Did you buy extra leftovers at the garden center? Christmas Cactus:

Let plants dry before watering. Keep in bright light but not direct sunlight, as leaves will burn.

They will go dormant in the fall so let them rest before next season. I have given these plants as gifts, and have been told that they are still alive after 2 years.

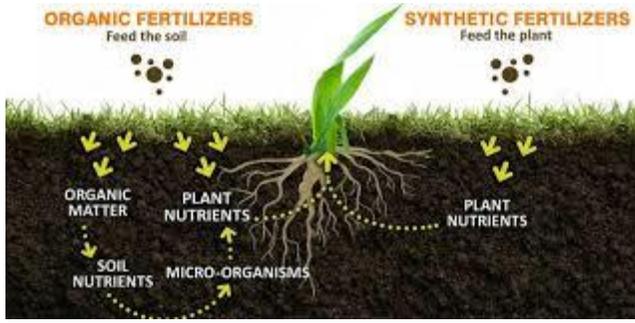
Poinsettia Plants:

I have planted them outdoors with southern exposure. If the plant gets afternoon sun, no wind and do not freeze, they should survive the winter and bud out in the spring. I have been to Cuernavaca, Mexico, to a friend's home, and see these plants, in the ground, as big as a house.

Amaryllis:

I have left them in a pot in the shade after Christmas outdoors, and they have rebloomed again.

## Fertilizer:



### What do numbers mean on fertilizer?

The first **number** is the amount of nitrogen (N), the second **number** is the amount of phosphate ( $P_2O_5$ ) and the third **number** is the amount of potash ( $K_2O$ ).

These three **numbers** represent the primary nutrients (nitrogen(N) - phosphorus(P) - potassium(K)). This label, known as the **fertilizer grade**, is a national standard.

**Nitrogen:** Nitrogen is so vital because it is a major component of chlorophyll, the compound by which plants use sunlight energy to produce sugars from water and carbon dioxide (i.e., photosynthesis). It is also a major component of amino acids, the building blocks of proteins. Without proteins, plants wither and die.

**Phosphate:** Phosphate is a macronutrient and a form of the element phosphorus. Fertilizers containing phosphate help stimulate plant growth, aid the development of strong roots and aid in flowering.

**Potash:** Potash, a form of potassium oxide, is vital to plants throughout their life cycle. As it's water soluble and aided in the breakdown process by soil bacteria, potash is easily absorbed by plants and helps them flower and bear fruit. Potash also helps plants better use other nutrients and prevent nitrogen depletion.

What kind of fertilizer to use when planting Tulips, Daffodil and Amaryllis in pots? At the January 2020 bulb planting workshop, we used 3-5-3.

House plants:

Dracena, normally known as Lucky Bamboo:  
Ficus tree: Do you notice white tiny flakes in the air? You may have white fly. Try worm castings 2 inches on top of the soil. It takes about 60 days to really help the plant, so you may want to spray with an organic spray.

Worm castings: Despite the higher NPK values of compost, though, worm castings have a huge positive effect on plant growth. When up to 20% of the soil consists of worm castings, plants germinate better, grow faster, and produce higher yields.

Compost tea. The compost tea ingredients are: 2 cups good, aerobic, nice-smelling, fully finished organic compost.

1 Tablespoon unsulfured blackstrap molasses.

1 Tablespoon organic liquid kelp fertilizer.

1 teaspoon organic liquid fish fertilizer.



February is the the Mira Costa Horticulture club of Oceanside birthday.

We will have cake at the meeting. The club was established in 1989.

### SAVE THE DATES:

May Plant sale at Alta Vista Botanical Gardens.

Sale dates are May 16 and 27, 2020. Setup days start Wednesday 13, 2020. Carol Fehner is the Chair and will have more information at the meeting.