

GROWING PAINS



Newsletter for the MiraCosta Horticulture Club of Oceanside

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Announcements

Tour and luncheon at AgriService, El Corazon located at 3720 Oceanic Way # 204, Oceanside, CA 92056. Starts at 11:00 sharp following a 15 minute general meeting. Only members that have signed up with Ed Fitzgerald will be able to attend this event.

December meeting – The holiday pot luck and Chinese gift raffle will start at 12:00. As we get closer, we will be asking for RSVPs in order to confirm attendance.

Plant sale dates – The annual plant sale will be held on June 1-2. There will be need for volunteers during the weeks prior as well as after for cleanup.

President's Message

By Tandy Pfost

Reading list continued

Matt spoke at San Diego Horticulture Society a few years ago, and I picked up his first book. It can be used as a field guide or just very interesting reading. Each page has photos of trees, leaves, flowers, berries, etc. along with the story of each. The identification key and how to use it opens UP a world of fascination about our California trees. I can't wait to get the new book. He is a PhD and professor at Cal Poly at San Luis Obispo and specializes in cultivated trees. He is also the

California coordinator of the Official National Register of the Big Trees.

Matt Ritter

1. A Californian's Guide to the Trees Among Us 2011
2. California Plants: A Guide to Our Iconic Flora 2018

Debra is a native Californian and has been called the "Queen of Succulents". She designs landscapes and containers as well as holds crafty workshops and teaches classes. She is often present at Waterwise Botanicals events.

Lee Baldwin

1. Designing with Succulents 2007
2. Succulent Container Gardens 2010
3. Succulents Simplified 2013

I have both these books that I will pick up periodically to get some inspirations. The first one has abundant details of plants to consider in the landscape. The second one is all about how to conserve water and create wonderful gardens without lawns. There are recommended plant selections and profiles along with their favorite Sunset zones.

Carol Bornstein

1. California Native Plants for the Garden 2005
2. Reimagining the California Lawn: Water-Conserving Plants, Practices and Designs 2011

At the nursery, I often show pages of this book to customers who are interested in local trees. This is

a well-done book about trees for reference, or for those like me, just for reading.

San Diego Horticulture Society

1. Ornamental Trees for Mediterranean Climates, the trees of San Diego 2005

The author takes us on a journey around the world for interesting and mostly mouth-watering fruits. This is a story, there are no pictures. He writes also about California Rare Fruit Growers, David Karp, a journalist and fruit hunter in Los Angeles and other noteworthy fruit hunters.

Adam Leith Gollner

1. The Fruit Hunters 2008

The first book is all about the floral industry and quite interesting. I saw her speak at the SD Horticulture Society about the second book, and she had cocktails available to the attendees. This book was a New York Times Bestseller. She has written other books including ones about wicked bugs and wicked plants, that I have not yet explored. This book is an adventure about how plants have been used to make alcoholic beverages. There are also cocktail recipes!

Amy Stewart

1. Flower Confidential, the Good, the Bad and the Beautiful 2008
2. The Drunken Botanist, The Plants that Create the World's Great Drinks 2013

TO BE CONTINUED ONE MORE TIME FOR THE LAST GROUP OF BOOKS



Future Garden Design

Robert and Sheryl Yantis

Future garden design should emphasize the wiser use of our precious resources. Simple changes to traditional garden design and maintenance will create sustainable landscapes that use less energy, water and other resources. They will generate less waste and have very little impact on the existing landscape. By adopting sustainable practices, we can save time, effort and money while

preserving the landscapes around us for many generations.

Here are some things we can do:

- We can reduce water waste. Plant native and adaptive plants that suit our hot summers and require less water. We can irrigate in the early morning and late in the evening when there is less evaporation and wind. Rainwater harvesting can also save water resources and provide additional water for our gardens.
- We can prevent water pollution. Prevent contaminated storm water runoff from ruining our lakes and rivers by reducing our use of fertilizer and pesticides. When we create rain gardens, we help to clean and filter water as it is absorbed back into the ground.
- We can minimize yard waste. Make your own compost and improve your soil at the same time. Reusing materials on-site whenever possible reduces the cost of your new landscape and saves you money on waste disposal.
- We can stop digging. Every time we put a shovel in the soil, we damage the delicate soil ecosystem comprised of earthworms, beetles and many other microorganisms that keep our gardens healthy. We need to stop walking on wet soil and compacting our soil. We need to put away our shovels and start mulching.
- Put the right plant in the right place. We need to choose plants that complement each other and will thrive with the natural resources available. Pick hardy native and adapted plants that can survive our unexpected weather conditions and hot summers. If we group plants with similar requirements, such as sun and water, they will help each other prosper by deterring pests, preventing weeds and providing shade.
- Plant a tree. Provide for future generations by planting trees. Trees provide us with blossoms and fruit and attract wildlife. Trees can frame beautiful views, screen unsightly views and absorb noise. They are essential to the diversity of our landscapes.
- Make room for wildlife. Add plants for wildlife, and leave some untidy areas in your garden. Include some evergreen plants in your garden. Even the most formal gardens can include an area where plants are left standing through the winter and

where dead wood is stacked to provide habitat for insects and other animals.

Resource depletion, loss of biodiversity and changing climate are becoming more pressing concerns. There are a number of simple choices we can make that will have a significant effect on sustainability and impact our gardens and their ability to cope with unpredictable weather conditions. With everything that gardens do for us, we owe it to ourselves to make better use of our resources and preserve and protect them for the future. Gardens make us happy. Spend time in your garden and enjoy it for many years.

Examining the Future of Gardening

Michelle Moore

What is the future of gardening? First of all, I believe this should be a statement rather than a question. It should read: Gardening; our future. Gardening is the key to a happy planet and a happy society. While that may seem like a bold claim to make, it needs to go one step further. Greenhouse gardening is not just a luxury or a segment of gardening, it is pivotal for a better world.

Do you remember the time before computers? The growing gardening and green revolution can impact our lives just as dramatically. Growing in a greenhouse is the way to practice gardening and reap the benefits more of the year. It's a path to sustainable living and perhaps even a solution to our energy crisis. Before heading forward too far, let's take a look at where we've been for the past 10 years.

Only a few years ago gardening was in danger of becoming a lost art. Family structures changed, people migrated to the cities, and the holy grail of a green lawn became the epitome of home gardening. Gardening skipped an entire generation. Mothers entered and prospered in the workforce. Microwaves became mandatory appliances in nearly every home, and convenience food became the norm rather than an occasional indulgence. Many children grew up thinking the grocery store was the only source of fresh produce.

Many of my peers report their only first-hand gardening experience was with their grandparents. Luckily, those fond memories serve to reinforce our collective memory of our connection to the land. As gardening curriculums become popular in schools, many parents are finding their way to gardening through their children. Not having experience

themselves, there is a new batch of gardeners needing help and education along the way.

A large shift happened in 2001 after the tragic terrorist attack on our country. People started saying home rather than traveling. Many people turned their efforts and energy into improving their homes and their yards. This was a time people focused on creating beauty in their lives. Our customers told us they were primarily growing ornamental plants rather than food.

Now that we are again experiencing uncertain times, people are growing their own food. Prices at the grocery store increased significantly once prices at the pump hit \$4.00 per gallon. Suddenly, shipping lettuce across the country in a refrigerated container didn't seem to make so much sense. Community gardens are springing up across the country as people come together to create and plant previously unused spaces. Urban gardens are flourishing as people creatively make use of every available opportunity. Fire escapes and barren patches are now beautiful green spaces providing food for the community.

I think this trend will explode in the next decade as more people turn to greenhouse growing. Growing in greenhouses removes many of the obstacles gardeners face specific to their zone. In a greenhouse, the growing season will be substantially longer and gardeners can take advantage of the vertical space.

Not only will growing our own food reduce our dependence on fossil fuels, we will realize many nutritional benefits. Food eaten close to the time of picking contains significantly more nutrients and eating better is one of the most significant contributors to overall health. We cannot ignore the tremendous societal cost associated with obesity and poor diet. It's not much of a surprise that home grown food tastes better too.

In addition to thinking about our food, significantly more people are adopting sustainable living strategies. Hopefully we will not be talking of a looming economic crisis 10 years from now. Instead I predict we will be taking a much more active role in reducing our footprint and increasing our self-reliance. No matter what is happening in the next decade, it's certain we will be able to produce more with less time and fewer resources.

In addition to people growing their own food, small local farmers will grow more to support the needs of

the community. Larger agricultural producers will give way to the micro farmers who will supply a significant amount of our food in a healthy and sustainable manner. Vertical growing will be used by commercial growers as well as home growers.

Equally exciting is the possibility we will someday be able to grow our own fuel. Quite a few companies are currently at work developing alternative energy sources. Biofuel is getting a lot of attention as competing companies race to be the first to market. One company, Valcent Products Inc. claims algae is the solution to our nation's fuel needs. They are currently testing their Algae Bioreactor on a large scale in Texas. Algae grow quickly and can be pressed into oil that can further be refined into biodiesel and even jet fuel. Valcent Products Inc. claims they can produce biodiesel with a 78.5% reduction in carbon emissions, which would truly make algae a green fuel. While the technology is still a way off, can you picture a day when you can grow your own fuel in your greenhouse?

Technological advances will shape the way we garden. The way we garden will shape the way we live. There are few segments in today's society that understand the benefits of delayed gratification as well as gardeners do. There are also few segments of society that share a gardener's optimism and intellectual curiosity. Gardeners still believe in miracles. People who plant seeds and see an entire plant spring from a tiny package from soil, light, water and heat understand the miracle of life as they patiently watch a tiny plant push its way into the world. Instilling the wonder and beauty of our world on the next generation may solve even more of our problems than we can imagine. Cultivating our own appreciation and connection to the natural world will make us happier and healthier people today, tomorrow, and for years to come.

How Air Plants Derive Nutrients

Kelley Rawlsky

Air plants are epiphytes, which means they live on a host for support, but they are not parasitic. They also grow without soil. In nature, epiphytes are most commonly found living on tree trunks or branches in tropical or subtropical regions. The good news is they can be grown indoors.

If air plants are not grown in soil, then how do they get nutrients and water? When growing in nature air plants get everything they need from the sun,

moisture in the air, and organic matter that falls their way.

Epiphytes get their water and nutrients through trichomes — small, hair-like structures often silvery in color. They open and close to receive and retain water so the plant can absorb moisture and nutrients. Examples of epiphytes are tillandsias, bromeliads, orchids and Spanish moss.

Tillandsia often have a woody base with some root-like structures that help them attach to their host structure. They typically only flower once during their life cycle. Their flowers tend to be red or purple and they bloom for several days to several weeks. The tips of the plant will often turn red or orange in an attempt to attract pollinators.

There are many different varieties and cultivars of Tillandsia. While growing all varieties is possible indoors, the air plants with thicker and stiffer leaves tend to retain moisture longer and are therefore better suited to our drier climates.

Basic care for air plants includes providing ambient temperatures indoors, bright but indirect light, adequate air circulation and watering. Lacking roots, these plants need to be soaked and misted regularly. Remove the plants from their container, turn them upside down in a bowl of water and soak for 20 to 30 minutes once a week. Shake off the excess water and lay them on a towel to dry. In addition, misting them several times per week will make for happy plants.

There are endless creative opportunities for displaying air plants. You can place them in a vase or shallow dish. They can be attached to bark, shells, or rocks. Other interesting ideas are hanging glass globes or wire plant stands.

*"When the trees their summer splendor
Change to raiment red and gold,
When the summer moon turns mellow,
And the nights are getting cold;
When the squirrels hide their acorns,
And the woodchucks disappear;
Then we know that it is autumn,
Loveliest season of the year. Carol L. Riser*

PENNIES for PINES

