Native Gardener’s Corner-Member’s Tips, Tricks, and Techniques has been a regular newsletter feature since the September/October 2009 issue, offering chapter members and local experts a chance to briefly share information on many things related to gardening with natives. Now that planting season is here, this seemed a good opportunity to share some of the excellent information from past columns.

Here are excerpts from November/December 2009: “Which native plant do you find to be the most successfully grown in a wide variety of landscape situations and “looks good” for much of the year?”

Laura Camp: Arctostaphylos ‘Howard McMinn’ - Lovely glossy leaves, absolutely gorgeous flowers, hummingbird plant, with terrific bark. It can be pruned every which way, works in clay soil, can take full sun (to quite a bit of shade), and although it can take some peripheral water, it is of course drought-tolerant. Manzanitas are great, great plants, and this hybrid/cultivar is a best seller and sometimes can be found at Home Depot—for good reason.

Sarah Jayne: Rhus integrifolia, Lemonadeberry. It’s trainable and tractable, produces flowers in late winter and red berries most of the summer. Can be ungainly in shape, but can be pruned to fit any situation. Seeds sprout all over, but they are easily removed (when young) To me, it is one of the great, reliable, locally appropriate garden backbone plants.

Ron Vanderhoff: Heucheras. At the garden center, when we’re trying to encourage use of native plants this is usually a good place to start. Heucheras (Coral Bells) look good year-round, have charming flowers, tolerate nearly full sun or moderate shade, attract hummingbirds, can be drought tolerant or handle some summer water, and are perfect for incorporating into existing “exotic” landscapes. Our favorites are those from Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden and Santa Barbara Botanic Gardens, such as ‘Wendy’ (amazing), ‘Santa Ana Cardinal’, ‘Opal’, ‘Genevieve’ and the ‘Canyon Series’. Don’t bother with most of the fancy, colored-leaved exotics, which pop out within a few months—get the real thing.

Greg Rubin: ‘Sunset’ Manzanita—Adaptable, colorful, evergreen, good foundation or mounding groundcover. Erigeron ‘WR’ (sometimes known as "Wayne Roderick") Neat, nearly year-round bloom (with deadheading), nearly evergreen, can be used as a groundcover. Salvia ‘Pozo Blue’—Fragrant, adaptable, clay tolerant, fast growing, long bloom. Ceanothus ‘Remote Blue’—leaves like Mirror Plant, great medium blue, frothy flowers, clean and sparkly, evergreen. Rhamnus ‘Mound San Bruno’—I use this one in Japanese Gardens for its elegance and colorful berries, evergreen, likes watering with good drainage, clay tolerant. Toyon - Can’t miss

Alan Lindsey: Bladder Pod (Isomeris arborea). The specimen I’m most familiar with is in my garden. It’s a full sun plant with inflorescences and pods that catch visitors’ attention, and it blooms all year. The yellow flowers attract hummingbirds and insects and although the dried pods can be messy, leaf litter is not a problem on this evergreen. Its crushed leaves do have an unusual scent; some may find it offensive. Bladder pod does need some room; it can grow as tall as 6 feet with the same spread. I planted mine 2 feet from a brick walk and have to prune it back occasionally; it doesn’t mind the pruning.

Thea Gavin: Ceanothus thyrsiflorus var. griseus ‘Yankee Point’. I have two of these in my garden, in slightly different “microclimates,” and each is flourishing on minimal (once or twice a month) summer water after three years. As Fross and Wilken recommend in their comprehensive book Ceanthus, it’s a good idea to prune the stems that want to grow straight up—this keeps ‘Yankee Point’ the beautiful low groundcover it was horticulturally selected to be. While I haven’t seen too many flowers yet, the year-round deep green glossy leaves alone make it a favorite.

Head for the Desert

If only in my mind, today I’ll travel up the interstate, past too many lawns to a place where rocks have not been wrecked into symmetry and laid low to insult of white and yellow stripes and tire whine—a place where scorpions share your shoes, where Yucca brevifolia’s friendly wave points the way to family circles of perfumed creosote bush, that ancient desert dancer shimmying in the wind right now, if only in my mind.

Thea Gavin
CONSERVATION

STINKWORT: A NEW INVASIVE THREAT IN OC

A colony of Stinkwort (Dittrichia graveolens) has recently been discovered in Arroyo Trabuco at the edge of Ladera Ranch. Stinkwort is one of California’s most serious invasive plant threats, especially in the Bay Area and northern Central Valley. This was the first time it had been discovered in OC. It was found by OC wildflower expert Bob Allen. The population covers about 1.7 acres along a narrow gravel roadway and adjacent footpath in an area just north of the Crown Valley Parkway bridge over Trabuco Creek. Bob immediately reported the infestation to OCNPS and within a few days chapter members had mapped the infestation and begun steps to insure its immediate removal.

OCNPNS’ Invasive Plant Subcommittee, led by Dr. Jutta Burger, Ron Vanderhoff and Celia Kutcher, with Bob’s assistance, communicated the significance and urgency of the infestation to Jennifer Naegele, Chief Restoration Ecologist at OC Parks. Because the plants were already dispersing seed, if OC Parks was unable to act swiftly, our chapter offered to mobilize its own volunteers. With our urging, Jennifer and OC Parks have organized resources to remove this year’s infestation. Ongoing removal efforts, combined with several years of monitoring will be needed to ensure complete eradication. OCNPS will continue to monitor the area. (Many thanks to Ron Vanderhoff for the information in this article.)

ACTION NOW: Familiarize yourself with the photos of Stinkwort and the more detailed information on it on our website. Be on the lookout for it when you’re out wildflower-watching. Stinkwort is almost exclusively found in disturbed soils, as along roadsides and trails. If you see it, please record its exact location and take some identifying photos. If you take a sample, please place it immediately into a sealed bag. Also, since the seeds readily attach themselves to moving targets, please check your clothing and shoes thoroughly before leaving the area and remove and bag all traces of seeds. Report the find immediately to Jutta, Ron or Celia (contact information is on the back page of this newsletter). You may also want to familiarize yourself with CalWeedMapper and report the occurrence on their site. By taking these actions, you will be a big help in protecting our natural areas from the threat of this highly invasive plant.

SADDLE CREST

The hearing that had been scheduled for Oct. 21 has been rescheduled for Dec. 16, 1 PM, 601 West Santa Ana Blvd, Santa Ana. On the chance that the hearing will again be rescheduled, check with Celia Kutcher the day before if you’d like to attend. See all 2013 and 2014, and earlier, Conservation Reports for background on this long-running issue.

ALISO CREEK RESTORATION

The Army Corps of Engineers presented their Aliso Creek Mainstem Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study at a Stakeholder Information Meeting on Sept. 17. The PowerPoint presentation and additional info are on ocwatersheds.com, on the “Aliso Creek Reports and Studies” subpage under the “Watershed Programs – Our Watersheds” tab. The Study is part of the basis on which the Corps will decide whether to fund the restoration project.

Dittrichia graveolens flowers are about 1/4" long; they have 10-12 ray florets and 9-14 disk florets. The phyllaries are in rows of 3 or 4.

Field Trip: Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, Sunday, November 9

Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden is an 86-acre museum of plants—a living collection. The Garden contains more than 22,000 plants, representing nearly 1,400 species, hybrids and cultivars of native California flora. To take care of this vast collection, an accession system is vital. Plant curation, like art curation, involves the organization of information about its components. We will be guided into some special areas of the garden and discuss some hidden secrets of the collection. A behind-the-scenes tour of the RSA’s massive herbarium, which houses over 1.1 million specimens and is the tenth largest in the U.S., will conclude the tour.

Meet at 9 AM at the entrance booth at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, 1500 N. College Ave, Claremont. For those who are not already members of the garden, there is an $8 entry fee. Bring comfortable shoes, camera, hat, notepad and enthusiasm.

Chapter Meetings
Chapter meetings are held on the third Thursday of the month, except in July and August. Unless otherwise stated, meetings take place at the Duck Club in Irvine. Doors open at 6:45 pm; the program begins at 7:30. The November meeting will take place at the Fullerton Arboretum.

Directions to Fullerton Arboretum, 1900 Associated Road, Fullerton: From the Orange Freeway (57) exit east on Yorba Linda Blvd. Turn left on Associated Road, then left into the Arboretum parking lot. The meeting will take place in the Visitor Center/Education building.

Thursday, November 20, 2014
Speaker: Nick Jensen—What can the Flora of Tejon Ranch tell us about the flora of California?
At approximately 270,000 acres, Tejon Ranch is California’s largest contiguous piece of private land. Located primarily in the Tehachapi Mountains of Kern County, Tejon Ranch occupies one of the most interesting and complex areas of ecological convergence in the state: the junction of the San Joaquin Valley, Sierra Nevada, Western Transverse Ranges, and Mojave Desert. Prior to 2008, when 90 percent of the ranch was placed under conservation agreements, Tejon Ranch was closed to scientific research. Recent botanical collecting and herbarium-based research associated with progress toward a flora of Tejon Ranch has identified many range extensions, and the possible discovery of numerous species new to science. We present current findings from this research and an analysis of the flora of Tejon Ranch in relation to adjacent ecological regions. This analysis provides a framework for understanding the evolution of the flora of the Tehachapi Mountains and adjacent regions.

Nick Jensen is currently a graduate student at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden/Claremont Graduate University. His research interests include biogeography, rare plants, and biodiversity. His primary research project is the flora of Tejon Ranch, which is centered in the Tehachapi Mountains. Nick is also interested in gaining a greater understanding of the threats to California’s plants, and relationships among southern California Streptanthus (jewelflowers). Prior to his graduate career, Nick served as the Rare Plant Program Director for CNPS and has worked as a botanist for the US Forest Service, Chicago Botanic Garden, and the private consulting industry. Note: Nick received our Chapter’s 2013/14 Charlie O’Neill Grant to support this work involving the flora in and around Tejon Ranch.

Directions to the Duck Club
The Duck Club is located in the San Joaquin Wildlife Sanctuary next to the IRWD water treatment facility. Access is off Campus Drive. To get there:
From Jamboree, go south on Michelson to Harvard Avenue. Turn right on Harvard. At University Drive turn right again. At Campus, turn right and stay in the far right lane, which leads to the right turn to the Duck Club.
From Culver, pass Michelson and continue on to University. Turn right and continue to Campus Drive.
When leaving, it’s right turn only onto Campus. See our website for a map & other info.
The Irvine Ranch Water District neither supports nor endorses the cause or activities of organizations that use the District’s facilities, which are made available as a public service

Thursday, December 19: It’s Your Turn!
Share some favorite photos of native plants, wildlife, habitats, or gardens—local, California, or anywhere in the world. Keep it to five minutes to make sure that everyone gets a turn, and that we get home before midnight. (Someone will be holding a stopwatch and cracking the whip!)
The techie stuff: Digital photos must be in a standard digital photo format: .jpg,.png, or .psd. They can be fancied up with Powerpoint or Keynote. Submit them on a flash drive, portable hard drive, CD, or DVD. Windows users: do NOT submit them as an autoexec [.exe] file. Video presentations must be in a standard video format: .mov (preferred), .avi,.wmv, or .mpeg. Once again, Windows users, see above. Please try to arrive early to allow time for your presentation to be transferred before the meeting.
The board members will provide a festive spread on the hospitality table, but if you have a special treat that you would like to share, feel free to bring it along.
Our book sales table will be well stocked for that last minute holiday shopping AND our new T-shirt (see below) will be available!

NEW OCCNPS T-SHIRT COMING SOON! ORDER NOW!
Our new OCCNPS t-shirt will be available at our December 18 general meeting, just in time for Christmas gifting! See the new design—donated by Don Dufur of DD Graphic Designs—on our website, occnps.org.
The shirts can be ordered and pre-paid online anytime up to December 1, or at the November 20 general meeting. Pre-paid shirts can be picked up at the December 18 meeting, or can be shipped (for a fee) after that date. Women’s and long-sleeve are available by pre-order only. We will also have a supply of non-pre-paid standard t-shirts in S, M, L, and XL, which will continue to be available online and at most of our monthly meetings until they’re gone.

Elections are coming up. Want to volunteer? Contact Dan Songster or Sarah Jayne.
CNPS Membership Application

☐ New member    ☐ Renewal

☐ Individual ............................................. $45

☐ Family .................................................. $75

☐ Plant Lover ............................................. $100

☐ Patron .................................................... $300

☐ Benefactor .............................................. $600

☐ Mariposa Lily ......................................... $1500

☐ Student/Limited Income ............................... $25

[Organizations, please go to CNPS.ORG]

☐ Affiliate with the Orange County Chapter.

The chapter newsletter, CNPS Bulletin, and Fremontia are included. Membership is tax deductible, minus $12 for Fremontia. Make check payable to CNPS and send to: CNPS, 2707 K Street, Suite 1, Sacramento, CA 95816

Join or renew online: go to www.cnps.org click on Join CNPS

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Contact Information and Teams

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Treasurer: Jutta Burger

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Membership Team:

Team Leaders: Dori Ito & Jennifer Beatty

Volunteer Coordinator: Diane Wollenberg

Outreach Coordinator: Jennifer Mabley

Hospitality: Sarah Jayne

Greeters: Dori Ito, Jennifer Beatty

Volunteer Recognition: Dan Songster

Programs: Dan Songster

Audio-Visual: Bob Allen, Dan Songster

Horticulture Team (Grow Native OC):

Team Lead: Dan Songster

Plant Sale: Dan Songster

Garden Tour: Mabel Alazard, Jennifer Beatty, Dori Ito, Sarah Jayne, Rama Nayeri

Plant Science Team (Research OC):

Team Lead: Bob Allen

Rare Plants: Dave Bramlet, Fred Roberts

Interest Center: Bob Allen

Conservation Team (Protect OC):

Team Lead: Celia Kutcher

Invasive Plants: Henry DiRocco

Explore Team (Explore OC):

Team Lead: Ron Vanderhoff

Field Trips: Ron Vanderhoff

Field Trip Logistics: Rich Schilk

Communications Team:

Team Lead: open

Publicity: open

Newsletter: Sarah Jayne

eNews: Laura Camp & Rachel Whitt

Publications: Jennifer Mabley

Website: Rich Schilk

Education Team:

Team Lead: Sarah Jayne

Educational Grants: Jutta Burger

School Gardens: Sarah Jayne

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California Native Plant Society

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November/December 2014

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