**Native Gardener’s Corner — Members’ Tips, Tricks, and Techniques**

This column is a regular newsletter feature offering chapter members and local experts a chance to briefly share information on many things related to gardening with natives. Answers are listed in order received. Our question for this Newsletter is: “What advice regarding installing a new native plant would you give to a new native gardener?”

**Nancy Harris**—“First, make sure the plant in black pot is totally hydrated or moist. If the soil is difficult to penetrate make a small well in the soil and wet it enough to make it diggable (new word?). Dig the hole (placing back-fill in one spot so it is easy to replace in hole) no deeper than the plant’s crown or a little less so the plant’s crown sits slightly above the soil line. Fill the hole with as much water as possible (3 times if possible) and let it drain. This will give you an idea how good the soil drainage is. Remove plant from pot and check and carefully loosen roots at bottom and sides of plant to be sure no root is circling the root ball, which will eventually strangle the plant. Replace the back-fill into hole and tamp down carefully to remove air pockets (watering will also help with this). Water plant again. I like to place newspaper around the plant a few inches from crown and cover with mulch, but just mulching is good. Use a hand-held water meter to test hydration of plant before watering again.”

**Leon Baginski**—“If you are compelled to plant in the summer, use a shade cloth over the plant or plants so they don’t get roasted by the summer heat while trying to set root. It also allows for less frequent watering and thus less potential for root pathogens.”

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**Ron Vanderhoff**—“In this respect natives are no different than any other plant: 1) Have a plan. 2) Resist temptation. 3) Read the label. 4) Cheap is not necessarily better. 5) Have fun, lots of fun.”

**Barbara Eisenstein**—“Simple but important advice on putting in a new garden includes: Getting the hardscape right with paths, seating, irrigation (if you feel like you must install a permanent system), focal points, mounds and gullies, rocks, etc. Plant in late fall to winter and be careful choosing the right trees, but be more adventurous with short-lived perennials and annuals. Take your time and don’t stress.”

**Rama Nayeri**—“Get the spacing right. Get some newspaper or cardboard and cut out a circle the width the plant will be when mature (say 3’ wide assuming the plant you are using gets that wide). Then set that on the ground and you will have a good visual on the eventual size of the plant and know how much space to leave when planting.”

**Thea Gavin**—“1. Dig a hole just a bit bigger than the plant pot and then fill the hole with water and let it drain at least 2-3 times (especially important in dry season planting). 2. Remove the plant from its pot, knocking off as much of the non-soil material as you can (the woody planting mix). 3. When you refill the hole, use your fingers to poke the soil firmly around the root ball so there are no air pockets. 4. Create a shallow watering basin by mounding up the extra soil in a circle a foot or so away from the plant. And water gently but thoroughly. 5. Mulch with rock chunks, gravel, or shredded bark (but keep it from touching the stem).”

**Dan Songster**—“A few additions to what has been said. In the clay soils of Golden West College Native Garden we create a hole much wider than the root ball, then attempt to fracture the sides of the hole with a pick or bust bar to allow roots and water a future pathway. We seldom add organic amendments unless it is a riparian or grassland plant, but as far as using small rock and decomposed gravel as part of the back fill, we are not shy. Since we are planting in clay soils the use of such inorganic amendments (especially up around the root collar) can be quite helpful for plants sensitive to off season water such as manzanitas and woolly blue curls. Even pure decomposed granite can work—simply look at the huge mound of DG that the Arctostaphylos ‘Lester Rowntree’ at Tree of life is planted in. It has been doing wonderfully for years.

“Finally, we at GWC Native Garden have begun to experiment with gently stripping away much of the “wooden” soils from the root ball, not quite bare rooting them, but close. This means that the roots have immediate contact with the backfill of onsite soil rather than sitting in a bunch of woodchips and green waste that decompose and leave an unstable and poorly rooted plant (which in our experience is also prone to disease). It should be done quickly and once planted, watered immediately. Plants that are known to be sensitive to root disturbance (Romneya sp, etc) should be planted without the root ball being disturbed.”

**Sarah Jayne**—“Watch the videos of Mike Evans planting a shrub at californianativeplants.com”.

Our question for the next newsletter is: “What are some of your favorite native plants in winter and why?”

Email your responses to Dan Songster at songster@cox.net. Please remember to keep replies brief so we can include most of the

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**CALENDAR**

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CONSERVATION

*Understanding Fire Regimes in the Santa Ana Mountains and Laguna Coast*

Friends of Harbors, Beaches and Parks (FHB) has announced the publication of this study, which complements earlier in-depth fire-history studies of the Irvine Ranch lands (2009) and Chino Hills State Park (2012). FHB considered it important to add to the repository of information about wildfires and ignition points by reviewing 100 years of fire data in these two additional areas. Anthropological and paleontological data show that wildfires have long had a role in ecosystem functioning in Southern California. The study shows that fire frequency and acres burned have increased, to the detriment of ecosystem functioning. The increase can be traced to human actions, exacerbated by climate change and non-usual weather patterns. The study can be downloaded at [fhbp.org/publications/PDFs/Fire-and-Water-Quality-Study.pdf](http://fhbp.org/publications/PDFs/Fire-and-Water-Quality-Study.pdf).

MORE ON FIRE AND SHRUBLANDS: Rick Halsey (Chaparral Institute) and Alexandra Syphard (Conservation Biology Institute) have contributed a chapter, *High-Severity Fire in Chaparral: Cognitive Dissonance in the Shrublands*, to a new book, *Nature’s Phoenix: The Ecological Importance of Mixed-Severity Fires*. The book presents reports by an international group of scientists on the current paradigm shift in thinking about wild fire and ecosystems. Management of fire-adapted ecosystems has long been mostly focused on fire prevention and suppression. The ecological role of fire has been little studied, especially the importance of high-severity fire to the maintenance of native biodiversity and fire-dependent ecosystems and species. This text fills that void, providing a comprehensive reference for documenting and synthesizing fire's ecological role. The book is available from [store.elsevier.com/](http://store.elsevier.com/).

BANNING RANCH: Good News! The State Supreme Court has accepted the Banning Ranch Conservancy’s petition to review the Appellate Court’s decision on the proposed Newport Banning Ranch development. Background: [banningranchconservancy.org/news.html](http://banningranchconservancy.org/news.html), and [dailypilot.com/news/tndpt-me-0821-banning-ranch-lawsuit-20150820,0,2890492.story](http://dailypilot.com/news/tndpt-me-0821-banning-ranch-lawsuit-20150820,0,2890492.story).

CNPS, the Center for Biological Diversity, and the Coastal Environmental Rights Foundation signed an *Amicus Curiae* letter asking the Court to do this review. CNPS, CBD, and CERF’s concerns are that: “The Banning Ranch decision also directly impacts the interests of conservation groups because it calls into question well established precedent ... in *California Native Plant Society v. City of Rancho Cordova* ... regarding cooperation between agencies in protecting resources of the state including rare and special status plant and wildlife species as well as California’s coastal resources, and precedent ... in *Douda v. California Coastal Commission* ... regarding identification and protection of environmentally sensitive habitat areas (“ESHA”)."

MORE ON BANNING RANCH: If you have not done so, please sign Banning Ranch Conservancy’s petition to the Coastal Commission at [banningpledge.com/brc](http://banningpledge.com/brc). And thank you!

LITIGATION: Both the Esperanza and Madrona lawsuits are wending their way through their separate legal paths. See previous newsletters for background on OCCNPS/CNPS’ part in these issues.

CHINO HILLS: Congrats to Claire Schlotterbeck, Executive Director of Hills for Everyone and long-time leader of conservation in the Chino-Puente Hills and nearby areas! She was a recipient of a 2015 Political Leadership Award from the Sierra Club’s Angeles Chapter Political Action Committee. —Celia Kütcher, Conservation Chair

LEGISLATION ALERT:

The 2016 California Legislative session is drawing to a close and two bills that CNPS supports, SB 32 and SB 350, need help. Both bills will help reduce human-caused greenhouse gas emissions and reduce the magnitude of impacts climate change is having on California’s natural treasures— including native plant habitats.

You can help get these bills passed by calling, e-mailing, or writing your Assembly member and asking her/him to support the California Climate Leadership package on the Assembly floor, especially SB 32 and SB 350.

SB 32 would continue the policies put in place by AB 32 and set new greenhouse gas emissions targets for 2030 and 2050. Led by big business and sprawl housing developers, opponents are raising specious CEQA arguments and creating false doom-and-gloom economic scenarios to keep moderate Democratic members of the Assembly from supporting the bill.

SB 350 calls for reducing petroleum use in cars and trucks by up to 50% by 2030. Oil companies and their allies have unleashed a deceit-filled PR campaign that targets the Assembly members they see as vulnerable to their claims that SB 350 (which they label the California Gas Restriction Act of 2015) will lead to gas rationing and moms losing their minivans.

For more information see [http://focus.senate.ca.gov/climate](http://focus.senate.ca.gov/climate).

To find your legislative representative, go to [http://leginfo.ca.gov/yourleg.html](http://leginfo.ca.gov/yourleg.html).

PLEASE CONTACT YOUR ASSEMBLY MEMBER TODAY WITH THE MESSAGE THAT SB 32 AND SB 350 ARE THE PATHWAY TO SUSTAINING CALIFORNIA’ S NATURAL TREASURES, INCLUDING NATIVE PLANTS AND THEIR HABITATS.
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.

Thursday, September 17, 2015—Wild by Nature: Sowing Seeds for Spring Wildflowers
Speaker: Genevieve Arnold

In Southern California, fall is the prime time for sowing wildflower seed in the garden. Our State’s famed spring-blooming annuals provide an array of colors and forms—and perform well in many garden spaces, from meadows to mixed beds and borders to containers. This talk offers tips and tricks on soil preparation and sowing techniques, and an illustrated overview of the instructor’s most-beloved species. Come and learn how to use California wildflower seeds to create and maintain a stunning native plant garden around your home!

Genevieve Arnold is the Seed Program Manager for the Theodore Payne Foundation. Previously she served as the Seed Conservation Program and Research Plant Collections technician at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden. Genny has been working with California native seeds for over 10 years. She enjoys the beauty of the native garden in all its phases, including the magical stage of fruit and seed development, as well as viewing California native plants and flowers in their natural habitats on the trails of southern California.

*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

OTHER EVENTS:
Saturday, September 12, 9 am – 1 pm
DROUGHT SURVIVAL EXPO
IRWD, 15600 Sand Canyon Ave., Irvine
Free. Workshops, landscape experts, garden tours, family activities, vendor displays, giveaways & more!
IRWD.com/expo

Saturday, September 19, 7 am – 3 pm
GARDEN NATIVE SYMPOSIUM 2015
Summer Auditorium, Scripps Institution of Oceanography
8625 Kennel Way, San Diego, 92037
$35. Gardenative.org

Saturday, September 26, 8 am – 5 pm
UCANR URBAN LANDSCAPE AND GARDEN EDUCATION EXPO
South Coast Research and Extension Center, 7601 Irvine Blvd. Free. Free. Go to ucanr.edu for more information.

Thursday, October 15, 2015—How to Wild Your Garden with Native Plants
Speaker: Barbara Eisenstein

Thinking of getting rid of the lawn or simply improving your existing landscape? This talk will present practical approaches to transitioning from traditional resource-intensive yards to more natural, interesting, and fun gardens featuring low-water-use native plants. There will be tips on landscaping and gardening with native plants and examples of a variety of sustainable native plant gardens. If you have heard Barbara speak before, then you know you will enjoy the great information as well as her humor and easy manner. Of course, for those who already have native plants in their home landscapes there is always more to learn from Barbara’s presentations. Bring your questions and note pads!

Barbara Eisenstein is a California native plant gardener, horticulturist, writer, and photographer. She lives in South Pasadena and is a former native plant garden hotline expert at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden. She is now an RSABG Research Associate, a board member of the San Gabriel Mountains Chapter of CNPS, and founder of Friends of the South Pasadena Nature Park. To follow her gardening adventures, check out her blog, Wild Suburbia (www.weedingwildsuburbia.com).

“I have one share in corporate Earth, and I am nervous about the management.”—E. B. White

Saturday, October 3, 9 am – 3 pm
CA ORGANIC GARDENING CLUB PLANT SALE
Garden Grove Women’s Club, 9501 Chapman Ave., Garden Grove Free. OCCNPS will be selling plants and books there.

Saturday, October 10, 9 am – 5 pm
Pomona College, North Seaver Auditorium, Claremont
Early Registration: $45 by October 1. Registration is $55 at the door.
socalbot.org

Saturday, October 17, 9 am – 4 pm
PLANT SALE & MEMBER APPRECIATION DAY AT TREE OF LIFE NURSERY
Tree of Life Nursery, San Juan Capistrano
See page 5 for more details.

October 28 – 31
CalIPC SYMPOSIUM
San Diego Convention Center
Go to cal-ipc.org for complete information

November 14 and 15, 9 am – 6 pm
CALIFORNIA NATIVE FOOD SYMPOSIUM
Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden
$45 – $60 Saturday; Sunday free with garden admission
canativefood.wordpress.com
Autumn Garden Open House
Saturday, November 7, 9 am to 12 noon, rain date Nov. 14
In this large garden, the owner has been planting natives in habitat groupings among the existing non-native landscaping for over 15 years. It has blossomed into a collection of over 100 types of natives including grasses, woodland plants, desert plants, a riparian section with a small stream, Coastal Sage Scrub and chaparral, a Channel Islands area, and potted native succulents. In addition to the native plant gardens, the yard includes fruit trees and a large vegetable garden. While Greg Rubin has consulted on some of the projects, the owners themselves have provided most of the hard labor, installing the dry stream beds, irrigation systems, and meandering paths, not to mention the many plants that have transformed the landscape from conventional suburbia to a natural paradise. The rewards are low water use, habitat for insects, animals, and birds, and of course the beauty of native plants. Here is inspiration for your own native plant dreams and on this special day, you will discover some of the secrets of success.
The workshop will take place out side (thus the rain date!) so hat and sunscreen are strongly recommended. There will be handouts, but bring pencil, note paper, and your questions. The group will be limited to 20 people so sign up early to assure a place! The fee—$20 per person—will help support our Acorn Grant program for school gardens.
To register:
Send a check, the number of people attending and a self-addressed stamped envelope to S. Jayne, 30 Winter-sweet Way, Irvine 92612. The address and directions will be mailed upon receipt of registration.

FIELD TRIPS
Sunday, November 8—Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden
A great way to kick off the fall native planting season! Our group will be guided into some special areas of this 86 acre plant museum and discuss some hidden secrets of the collection. Behind-the-scenes stops will be a big part of this trip and will include the seed bank, the library, and a tour of the massive herbarium. Be sure to visit the Grow Natives Nursery following the visit. Meet at 9 am at the entrance booth at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, 1500 N. College Ave., Claremont. For those who are not members, there is an $8 entry fee. Bring comfortable shoes, camera, hat, notepad, and enthusiasm.

Highlights from the annual Board of Directors planning meeting
On July 12, the OC-CNPS Board of Directors met for its annual all-day planning meeting. It wasn't easy, but the twelve board members did their best not to be distracted by this year's fabulous location in the ocean-front conference room of a historic beach cottage at Crystal Cove State Park. Even though the waves were sparkling and shore birds dancing, there was strategic planning to be done.
Along with vital budget presentations (and the chapter is fortunate to have its financial house well in order), there was much discussion that centered on attracting new members while continuing to engage current members.
One way the chapter hopes to do this will be the "Garden Open House" program. Building on the success of the chapter's May Garden Tour, the Garden Tour Sub-committee plans to organize a series of opportunities for OC-CNPS members to spend the morning in an established native plant garden, enjoying light refreshments, while garden owners share tips on how they have developed a beautiful native garden at home. Participants will be charged a small fee to help generate operating funds for the chapter.
Besides strengthening membership participation via new programs like the Garden Open House—as well as through improving existing programs such as the current Garden Tour and plant sales events—efforts will also be made to reach a variety of demographic groups; a focus on children, for example, could be accomplished by pursuing more family-friendly programs and partnerships.
Have you checked out the chapter’s web site lately? Very good already, www.ocnps.org, and is only going to get better (e.g. smart-phone-friendly) after some much-needed updates are made—another priority discussed and decided upon at the meeting.
If you’ve reached the end of this article thinking, "Hmm . . . all this stuff sounds pretty interesting; I've got some more ideas and would like to get involved" . . . then maybe it’s time for you to consider ways to make a difference by serving on the Board of Directors or one of the subcommittees. This would help the chapter meet another strategic goal: fill all the open volunteer positions. (Contact Dan Songster to discuss this.) It’s a rewarding way to help preserve and protect California native plants by working with a great team—and sometimes you get to spend the day at the beach together.

Thea Gavin, Board of Directors Member

Invasive Plant Management Program
Persistence is a key to invasive plant management! Click on Invasive Plants in the bar at the top of the home page. And if you have spotted a possible invasion, record the exact location, take several identifying photos, and immediately report your findings to invasives@ocnps.org.
2015.8.30

my grandma made noodles from scratch
she rolled them out with a rolling pin
made from a piece of broomstick

i watched a pastry chef on a cooking show
he made pie crust with a stick fat in the middle
that tapered down to the ends
not my grandmother’s rolling pin

while walking in bommer canyon this week
i was reminded of my grandma’s noodle making
there right before me was a rolling pin shape
not long and skinny like my grandmother’s
but fat in the middle and tapered to each end
like the cooking show’s chef
slowly it emerged from the side of the trail and
pressed smooth the dust
and when mid trail it was clear to me
it was fat in the middle and tapered to the ends
i knew it to be a snake
a rattlesnake
not my grandmother’s rolling pin
and not the cooking chef’s rolling pin
but that sight brought back fond memories
of homemade noodles made by my dear grandma
while walking a hot dusty trail in bommer canyon

Bommer Canyon
Irvine CA

Southern Pacific Rattlesnake
Crotalus oreganus helleri

chuck wright

Fall Plant Sale and Member Appreciation Day at Tree of Life Nursery
Saturday, October 17, 9 am to 4 pm
This is the time to look for the best selection for Fall Planting! And knowledgeable CNPS gardeners will be on hand to assist with your selection. In addition, informative talks will be offered throughout the day. Here’s the tentative schedule:

9:30-Coastal Influenced Gardens
Description: Using plants that live naturally and beautifully along the immediate coast and into highly coast influenced Sunset Zone 24.
Speaker: David Pryor - will share his experiences as a biologist/ranger at Crystal Cove State Park.

10:30-Creating a Woodland Theme
Description: A relaxing, multi-storied woodland garden can surround your home and save water at the same time.
Speaker: Dan Songster - co-founder of the Golden West College Native Garden 40 years ago. Ever since then, he has been the guy with a line of people waiting to ask him questions at native plant events.

11:30-Coastal Sage Plants Bring Life to Your Garden
Description: Orange County’s lower elevation predominant plant community, coastal sage scrub, contains a range of textures, aromas, flowers, and fascinating insects to enliven our gardens.
Speaker: Jutta Burger Ph.D., Irvine Ranch Conservancy managing director of science and stewardship

1:30-Goldilocks “Just Right” Plants for Your Yard
Description: Plants for Orange County that balance aesthetics, low water use, nativeness, availability, nature value, and garden friendliness.
Speaker: Brad Jenkins, former president of the California Native Plant Society.

As usual, CNPS members will receive a 10% discount on all purchases. This is a great time to renew or become a new member!

A Blog for Native Plants and Gardening
First, an apology: the previous newsletter published an incorrect address for this witty and informative blog. The correct address is: CANativeGarden.blogspot.com. Currently enjoy Tilden Garden in lovely photos and rhapsodic prose. Then continue with the Grand Canyon series, which includes some fine poems as well as gorgeous pictures. Terry LePage, the blog’s author, is both a writer and a photographer. Invite her to your garden—you’ll love the results.

Speaking of gardens, it’s not too soon to be thinking about the 2016 garden tour! Is this the year to put your garden on the tour? The Garden Tour Committee wants to know!
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.

Name ____________________________________________
Address ___________________________________________
City/State/Zip _______________________________________
Phone/E-Mail _______________________________________

Please charge my ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard
Acct #: ____________________________
Exp date ____________________________
Signature ____________________________
Phone # ____________________________

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Secretary ........................................... Jutta Burger ........................................... jburger04@gmail.com
Treasurer ......................................... Brad Jenkins ........................................... bradcjenkins@yahoo.com

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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 Kuchter
Invasive Plants: Henry DiRocco
Explore Team (Explore OC):
Team Lead: Ron Vanderhoff
Field Trips: Ron Vanderhoff
Field Trip Logistics: Rachel Whitt

Communications Team:
Team Lead: open
Publicity: Bob Huttar
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

Contact Information and Teams

September/October 2015

FIRST CLASS MAIL