



CHAPTER MEETINGS

Herbaria in the Age of Digitization

January 20, 2022

Speaker: Mare Nazaire, Ph.D.

As a collection of preserved plant specimens, herbaria are the libraries that document the world’s plant diversity. There are over 3,400 herbaria worldwide, containing nearly 400 million specimens. Think of that! The information associated with these collections, such as geography, distribution, habitat information, phenology (the timing of plant growth and reproduction), associated species, molecular data, and field notes, is a rich resource for establishing baseline data and advancing research on the world’s biodiversity and climate change.



The herbarium at California Botanic Garden, formerly Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, is the third largest herbarium in California, and is involved with the National Science Foundation’s ten-year program creating greater accessibility to natural history collections by digitization—database, image, and geo-reference—of its collections. Initiated in 2011, the program is titled Advancing Digitization of Biodiversity Collections (ADBC). California Botanic Garden is currently involved in four concurrent ADBC digitization projects. This presentation

will discuss the role of herbaria in climate and biodiversity research and how digitization is reshaping herbaria use and access.

Mare Nazaire joined California Botanic Garden in 2013 and currently serves as the Administrative Curator of the RSA Herbarium. She earned her doctoral degree in botany at Washington State University in 2013. Her research focuses on systematics of *Mertensia* (Boraginaceae), floristics of California, aquatic and wetland plants, and more recently, floristics of high elevation meadows of the southern Sierra.

This is a Zoom meeting. Register in advance at:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUtcemoqTkoGNNSViziF2wdTCjQPG-shxrm>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Fascinating Fungi Explorations in Orange County and Nearby Regions

February 17, 2022

Speaker: Joanne Schwartz

Joanne Schwartz is an avid, amateur mycologist, having studied fungi since the 1960’s. She has collected and photographed fungi throughout the new and old worlds and has participated in field studies in Japan, Peru and Bolivia as well as the Redwoods of coastal California. Always searching for fungi to study, photograph and identify, Joanne is often found looking down while hiking. She is also an eager mycophagist (fungi-eater) and prepares wild fungi for tasting and for the dinner table whenever possible. *Go to occnps.org for more information.*

Calendar

- Jan 6 Board Meeting
- Jan 9 Mushroom Field Trip--FULL
- Jan 20 Chapter Meeting
- Feb 3 Board Meeting
- Feb 17 Chapter Meeting

NATIVE GARDENERS 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.

The request for this newsletter was: ***“What native plant have you had good success with as a groundcover, (or have seen and can’t wait to try) in your garden?”***

Lori Whalen: “By far and away I’ve had the greatest groundcover success with both *Fragaria* species (wild strawberry), *F. vesca* for shade and *F. chilensis* for sun. Hands down.”

Brad Jenkins: “For areas that are mostly shade, try *Ribes viburnifolium* (evergreen currant, Catalina perfume). For the first two years, cut stems at 18 inches above the ground. That provides a bushy growth on the top layer. After the first two years, cut stems that reach above two feet. This technique creates a dense, lush, dark green groundcover or low hedge.”

Greg Rubin: “I’ve got a bunch that I use in different situations: **Shade:** *Fragaria californica*, *Salvia sonomensis*, *Ribes viburnifolium*; **Light shade:** *Clinopodium chandleri*, *Ceanothus* 'Heart's desire', *Berberis repens*; **Sun:** *Ceanothus* 'Yankee point', *Arctostaphylos cruzensis*, *Arcto. franciscana*, *Arcto.* 'John Dourley', *Arcto* 'Pacific mist'; **Hot slopes:** *Baccharis* 'Pigeon point', *Eriogonum* 'Bruce Dickenson', *Artemisia* 'Montara', *Arctostaphylos* 'Harmony', *Ceanothus* 'Joyce Coulter', and *Adenostoma* 'San Nicolas.’”

Nancy Harris: “I planted *Fragaria chiloensis* (Beach Strawberry takes more sun than the *Fragaria californica* forest strawberry) in my small front yard along with a large uneven patch of 'Pacific Coast Hybrids' Irises. They have woven together with some *Aster chilensis* to create a pleasing tapestry. The birds and my granddaughter's Dachshunds love the strawberries.”

Trude Hurd: “I don't have any good ground cover stories to share, unless you count California Poppy which spreads everywhere in late winter-spring and hides all my smaller native plants!”

Bart O’Brien: “*Phyla nodiflora*! Easy and durable. Great for bees and smaller butterflies (skippers especially). Mow (or weed-wack) a few times a year in the warmer months and you’re done. Likes heavy soils and hot weather. An occasional watering is all that’s needed. Can go dormant in cold weather, but generally not an issue for much of SoCal.”

Leon Baginski: “Turkey tangle frog fruit (*Phyla nodiflora*) has been almost indestructible in my yard. Soil type doesn’t seem to matter and it is very hardy. Doesn’t grow densely but spreads readily and adapts to the garden well.”

Linda Southwell: “Groundcovers I like the most are *Salvia leucophylla* ‘Pt. Sal’, *Salvia* ‘Bee's Bliss’, ‘Pt. Reyes’ *Ceanothus* and ‘Dana Point’ Buckwheat. For places with lots of shade *Ribes viburnifolium* is wonderful.”

Rama Nayeri: “Many years ago I designed a garden in which we planted *Fragaria californica* (Wild Strawberry) as a ground cover and it did really well. The homeowner’s kids picked the strawberries as they ripened. I have also had luck with growing the native strawberries in pots in my own garden.”

Ron Vanderhoff: “For fairly large areas in full, dry sun it's hard to beat *Salvia* 'Bee's Bliss'. With its silvery-grey foliage, fragrant aroma and spring flowers it's an easy almost no-maintenance choice. In dappled shade, with a bit of irrigation, I love *Fragaria californica* (wood strawberry). It hugs the ground with deep

green, semi-glossy foliage that looks good all year and it spreads just right, not too much and not too little.”

Tina Cremer: “*Lessingia filaginifolia* ‘Silver Carpet’- excellent silver foliage color is a good accent. Very low to the ground. And Kurapia, (*Lippia (Phyla) nodiflora*), is a good lawn substitute- a low, clover-like plant that will grow in most conditions.”

Alan Lindsay: “I use these four species for ground cover in my garden, which is less than a mile from the ocean and in clay soil. In order of my preference: *Grindelia stricta* var *platyphylla*, *Erigeron glaucus*, *Symphotrichum chilense*, and *Carex praegracilis*. My experience has been that all four need thinning and or dead heading twice a year. Rate of spread varied but none were slow.”

Dan Songster: “Two really strong contenders for easiest to grow and best all-around include *Baccharis* ‘Pigeon Point’ in sunny conditions (regardless of soil types). And that buckwheat favorite, ‘Dana Point’ which combines being easy to grow while serving several pollinators. Its dense coverage, is hard to beat. For a rambling, slightly larger plant (that I consider a groundcover) the Manzanita ‘Pacific Mist’ is easy to grow even in clay soils.”

Our question for the next newsletter: “*In what ways does your native garden make you happy?*” Email your responses to Dan Songster at songster@cox.net. Please attempt to keep replies brief so we can include most of the responses!

A book review from our friends at **Pacific Horticulture:**

Garden Allies: The Insects, Birds & Other Animals That Keep Your Garden Beautiful and Thriving by Frédérique Lavoipierre, with illustrations by Craig Latker, Timber Press, 2021

Review by: Richard G. Turner Jr., Editor Emeritus, *Pacific Horticulture*, 11/2021

As Editor of *Pacific Horticulture* magazine, I was thrilled when garden educator Frédérique Lavoipierre accepted my invitation to contribute a regular column exploring the roles that such animal visitors play in a healthy and diverse garden. She was more than enthusiastic. I had hoped for a year’s worth of “*Garden Allies*” columns, but Frédérique had a longer-range vision. She quickly assembled an outline of topics to cover over a period of several years. The column soon became the favorite reading in each issue of the magazine, according to random and informal surveys of our readers. When I retired in 2012, Frédérique was only partway through her long outline; I was pleased that my successor, Lorene Edwards-Forkner, continued to publish the “*Garden Allies*” column.

Now, *Garden Allies* is available as a book, filled with Frédérique’s engaging stories of the diverse array of life forms that help us to maintain healthy and productive gardens. The new book also includes beautiful line drawings produced by Craig Latker, a former student of mine in the landscape architecture department at UC Berkeley. An exceptional artist, Craig had graciously agreed to create the illustrations from the very outset of the magazine’s column.

Simply because of their astounding numbers and diversity, invertebrates fill the majority of pages in *Garden Allies*. From minute creatures, invisible without a microscope, to bees, bugs, butterflies, and more, Frédérique introduces each group with stories that make us want to know these critters in more detail.

She acknowledges that not all arthropods are a positive addition to a garden, but the pesky species are seldom a significant problem, and they often have some endearing qualities at some stage in their lives.

The good guys—the truly beneficial organisms—invariably win out in the end, and the garden is better for the diversity they bring to it.

Beyond attacking the villains in the garden, many of these beneficial creatures provide critical pollination services for fruits and vegetables, whether edible or merely ornamental features of our favorite trees and shrubs. Though the smallest visitors often go unseen, their value as decomposers of organic matter or as facilitators of nutrient flows between soil and plants is paramount to the health of our gardens—and our planet.

A coyote has recently begun visiting my garden, and the wonderful result is a total disappearance of the rats that had plagued the garden for decades. While *Garden Allies* does not address the potential role of coyotes, Frédérique does devote a chapter to vertebrates, from reptiles and amphibians to birds and bats—megafauna on a small scale—that serve both to enliven the garden and help keep the pests under control.

To be honest, you won't become an expert on all the insects, spiders, and millipedes—nor even the birds—that you might find in your garden with just a reading of *Garden Allies*, but the book includes a most helpful list of resources in film, print, and online to help you learn more about this fascinating aspect of the garden's natural world.

I cannot imagine a garden without all these beneficial visitors bringing life and balance to the landscape. *Garden Allies* provides the perfect primer for what could easily become a lifelong dedication to the study of these fascinating creatures.

NOTE: Frederique will be our speaker on a special March 19, 2022 presentation at Tree of Life Nursery, which should be an in-person event. More details as the date draws near!

Gardens are Essential—Especially During a Pandemic

Gardens are an essential (perhaps *the* essential) component of the built environment at all scales. As we take tentative steps forward towards a future where the next global pandemic likely lurks just around the corner, we must not underestimate the value of our gardens and green spaces. We need not only to protect and cherish them, but also to enlarge and reconfigure them to serve as safe outlets for public recreation, social interaction, and mental health and well-being. The need to connect—to oneself, to others, to the greater outdoors—is fundamental. Self-isolation is not. Whether a balcony of potted plants, a postage-stamp front yard filled with perennials, wildflowers spilling over a trail, or a well-worn dirt track along the bank of an urban river, gardens are fundamental. They nourish our soul, connect us to our communities, and provide safe and healthy places for us to escape confinement and recreate. Gardens let us showcase the best parts of ourselves.

Haven Kiers

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