

THE GARDEN SPRINKLER

Fall 2004

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER PUBLISHED BY THE WATER CONSERVATION GARDEN AUTHORITY

Welcome Marty Eberhardt, Water Conservation Garden Executive Director

Submitted by Kate Breece, Helix Water District



After a nation wide search, the Water Conservation Garden is pleased to announce the appointment of Ms. Marty Eberhardt as Executive Director.

Ms. Eberhardt grew up in Saigon, Bangkok, and Washington, D.C. She obtained her Bachelors degree in Education from Prescott College, Prescott, Arizona, and her Masters degree in Education in Biology from the University of Arizona, Tucson.

Gravitating to the Tucson Botanical Garden in the mid-1980s, she served as Education Director for three years. Selected as Executive Director in 1988, she helped raise funds to develop the 5.5-acre facility and to enhance its educational outreach programs. She ultimately increased the staffing and volunteer teams from three full time to twenty-five full and part time employees, with a volunteer force of hundreds.

"The Tucson Botanical Garden was rewarding for a number of reasons," Ms. Eberhardt explains, "I worked with several groups of people—board members, staff, and volunteers, who gave their all. They believed in the mission and worked as a team."

Excited to see San Diego progressing in the direction of water conserving landscapes, Ms. Eberhardt believes the Water Conservation Garden to be a major player in this movement. She plans to attract more volunteers, obtain vibrant publicity for The Garden, and to structure events, programs, and resources in a manner that will further the efforts to fulfill the Garden's mission. "I want to assist San Diego in its efforts to showcase the natural and cultural environment, to reduce outdoor water use, and to enhance the quality of life for all."

The Garden is delighted to have her aboard. Stop by to welcome Marty Eberhardt at the Water Conservation Garden.

A Note from the New Director

I am delighted to have the opportunity to promote water conservation in San Diego at a time when it is so clearly needed, and to do so through the beauty and educational messages of the Water Conservation Garden. I am deeply impressed by the foresight and persistence of those who created the Garden, and who brought it this far. It is now my task to introduce the Garden to more people, and to help spread the word that living in a dry area opens the door to a world of fascinating and lovely plants and landscapes. I look forward to getting to know our members and visitors, and to encouraging those of you who do not fit into either of these categories to get to know us better. Together, we can help to help to make the region more environmentally sustainable AND more beautiful.

Marty Eberhardt

Garden Adds Membership Benefits Program

We appreciate our Garden members and your continued support and dedication. With all new and renewing memberships, the Garden is now providing benefits and incentives. Beginning with the New Year, we are adding some fee-based classes and seminars. Check out the discounts for new and renewing members on the back panel.

www.thegarden.org • Enjoy the beauty of drought tolerant plants - visit The Garden

Become a Volunteer at The Garden

Submitted by: Sue Chambers, Docent President

As part of our continuing efforts to provide information to the public about the Water Conservation Garden, more Docents and Volunteers are needed. This is an opportunity to join an exciting program of education and sharing information with others.

The next Docent class begins October 23, and is held each Saturday afternoon from 1:30-4:00pm. for six weeks. Docent training classes provide in-depth instruction in: seven steps of xeriscape, plant identification, characteristics of low water use plants, conducting garden tours, and in techniques to conserve our precious water supply. As a graduate, you will be part of a dedicated group who share their time and talents, while expanding your gardening knowledge and experiences. Continuing Docent workshops provide guest speakers and further hands-on training in plant propagation, design and planting of succulent gardens, garden and display maintenance, and other garden related activities.

There are additional opportunities available at the Garden for Volunteers. We offer specialized training for the Volunteer team. Volunteers will:

- conduct garden tours for school and adult groups
- assist in the office and gift shop
- perform specialized garden and display maintenance
- participate in the speaker's bureau
- serve as Ambassadors for special events.

For more information and to apply call the Garden Office at (619) 660-0614.

Water Facts and Folklore Make The Most Out Of What You Have

Submitted by Dee Maranhao

The Padres that established our first early missions came from Spain, another country with an arid climate. Their first concern was growing food. Ever diligent, they tried sowing their seeds in the riverbed, where flooding waters quickly washed away the young seedlings. They then planted their fields upstream, where there seemed to be more rain, but droughts prevailed. Tired of carrying their drinking water up to Presidio Hill, the priests would move their mission six times, finally settling in Mission Valley,

where they built the county's first masonry dam, now called Old Mission Dam or Padre Dam. It too, met with unfortunate circumstances, as the sandy bottom allowed a great portion of the precious water to percolate beyond the surface. Dedicated to their dreams, they constructed the county's first aqueduct, complete with a settling basin with sand traps to filter the water, a sluice that powered the gristmill, and irrigation ditches that brought water to imported olive and pepper trees. They made the most of what they had. They teach us a timeless and great lesson....

Garden Playing Cards Available in the Garden Gift Shop!

Submitted by Kate Breece, Helix Water District

Don't miss these beauties! Each card blooms with one of the Garden's magnificent flowering species. Aces, Kings, and Queens are specially marked as California natives.

Over a period of many months, hundreds of photos were taken at the Garden to ensure that a wide variety of water-wise species were represented in this special edition of *Garden Playing Cards*.

The deck highlights year-round, blooming, low water use plants that you see in the Garden. The full color cards identify each species by common and botanical name. Two extra cards provide information about each species. The cards are easy to slip in your pocket or purse when touring the Garden, and for searching your local nursery for that "special plant."

These high-quality cards can be dealt again and again. For non-card players, the Garden also offers a beautiful, full color, *Card Poster* that includes card photos of all fifty-two species, identified by common and botanical name.

Stop by the Garden Gift Shop to pick up your deck of cards or poster for only \$5 each.



The GARDEN SPRINKLER is a quarterly publication of The Joint Powers Authority (the City of San Diego, Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District, Helix Water District, Otay Water District, Padre Dam MWWD, San Diego County Water Authority) for **The Water Conservation Garden**, 12122 Cuyamaca College Drive West, El Cajon, CA 92019 (619) 660-0614



GARDEN STAFF
Marty Eberhardt, Executive Director
Steve Maranhao, Facilities Administrator
Daniel Mayorga, Landscape Technician
Summer Desmond, Office Assistant

Dee Maranhao, Editor

Water Conservation Garden Fall 2004 Calendar of Events

***Please call (619) 660-0614 to reserve your seat for all sessions (unless otherwise noted).**

A CELEBRATION OF SAN DIEGO NATIVE PLANT LANDSCAPES

*SATURDAY, OCTOBER 9, 9:30-11am

Kay Stewart, Landscape Architect, will narrate a slide presentation of San Diego gardens that focus on gardening with natives. Kay is an active member of the Native Plant Society and shares her vast knowledge of native plant materials and her enthusiasm for this special plant group.

***If you miss this presentation, you have a second chance on Saturday, Oct. 30**

FALL FESTIVAL

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 16, 9am-3pm

Fall festival activities include a book signing, plant and gift shop sales, tours, conservation booths, children's activities, and fiber arts displays of spinning, weaving, knitting, and more. Check out Page 4 for details.

A BEHIND THE SCENES TOUR WITH GARDEN DESIGNERS

*SUNDAY, OCTOBER 24, 1:30pm

Water Conservation Garden designers, *Jeri Deneen* and *Jon Powell*, Deneen Powell Atelier, Inc, have won countless prestigious awards for their design of the Garden. Join them for this informative and stimulating tour that includes design challenges and triumphs, discussion of special Garden features and signage, and their shared visions for our award winning Garden.

***If you miss this tour, you have a second chance on Sunday, Nov. 21**

A CELEBRATION OF SAN DIEGO NATIVE PLANT LANDSCAPES

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 30, 9:30-11am

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SIMPLE WATER SAVING STEPS FOR THE LANDSCAPE

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 9:30-11am

Pamela Holmfeldt, Landscape Designer, specializes in low water use landscape designs. By following these easy tips on irrigation scheduling, organizing, and maintaining your existing landscape, you will save dollars and water, with the added bonus of having a healthier garden.

GARDENING NATURE'S WAY

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 9:30-11am

Connie Beck Crusha, writer, instructor, and speaker, is a volunteer with the National Wildlife Federation and the California Native Plant Society. Learn what it takes to bring the birds and butterflies to your garden. Most gardens can become wildlife havens, just by adding a few new plants, adopting some organic gardening practices, and by making a few simple garden design changes.

RESIDENTIAL LANDSCAPE TIPS FOR THE HOMEOWNER

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 9-Noon

Sponsored by *Metropolitan Water District*, this information packed session covers basic landscape design and landscape plants, sprinkler systems, and plant water and fertilizer needs. **Seating is limited.** Please register by email to Pam Rega at prega@otaywater.gov. For more information call (619) 670-2291.

A BEHIND THE SCENES TOUR WITH GARDEN DESIGNERS

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 1:30pm

Water Conservation Garden designers, *Jeri Deneen* and *Jon Powell*, Deneen Powell Atelier, Inc, have won countless prestigious awards for their design of the Garden. Join them for this informative and stimulating tour that includes design challenges and triumphs, discussion of special Garden features and signage, and their shared visions for our award winning Garden.

LUSH LANDSCAPING ON A LOW WATER USE BUDGET

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 4, 9:30-11am

Dee Maranhao, horticulture copyeditor and educator, will take the mystery out of xeriscape practices with her, "If it's not broken, don't fix it," approach to low water use landscaping. Learn to watch the plant for signs of how much water it needs and when to give it a drink. Other topics of discussion include soils, mulches, irrigation, and local resources. Handouts and a walking tour of the garden follows.

HOLIDAY SALES IN THE GARDEN GIFT SHOP

DECEMBER 13-18

Discounts on gardening books for big (adults) and little kids, succulent gift pots, garden art, and more. See Page 4 for details.

***The Water Conservation Garden Authority Board Meetings are held the second Wednesday of each month at 3:30 p.m.**

The public is invited to attend.

12122 Cuyamaca College Drive West • El Cajon, California 92019 • www.thegarden.org

OPEN: 7 days a week from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00p.m.

Fall Festival 2004

Saturday, October 16, 9am - 3pm

Celebrate Fall—It's time to garden in San Diego!

- **Booths open 9-3:** Conservation information, children's activities, fiber arts Education Corral
- **Docent Led Tours:** special tours by our trained Docents at 10:30am, 12:30, and 2:30pm
- **Book Signing and Sales:** Meet the author, James Lightner, author of *Native Plants of San Diego County*. James will be selling and signing his book from 9-3.
- **Plant Sales:** Succulent Gardens grown by the Docents, herb sales, nursery sales at Cuyamaca College Nursery
- **Garden Gift Shop:** Books, cards, posters, garden item sales and discounts
- **Opportunity to Join:** Renew or join the Friends of the Garden at the Fall Festival and receive a **free** pack of *Garden Cards*. (See page 2 for details on these beautiful cards).

San Diego County Native Plants

By James Lightner

Submitted by Marty Eberhardt, Water Conservation Garden

At last, hikers, birdwatchers, weekend strollers, and other nature lovers have a compact, easy-to-use guide to San Diego's incredibly diverse flora. Many of us enjoy using *Flowering Plants of the Santa Monica Mountains*, by Nancy Dale, or Norman Roberts' classic *Baja California Plant Field Guide*, but some of our local plants just aren't found in those books. Granted, as Lightner himself notes, if he were to display all 2000 plus of the County's plants, his book would be too big to lug around. Instead, there are 520 species, with excellent photographs, often of flower, fruit, leaf, and form, or some combination of these. Desert plants are the least represented, so those traveling to desert areas might want to supplement the book with one of the excellent desert flower guides. We stock Lightner's book in our gift shop, and he will be signing copies at the Fall Festival on October 16, so you have plenty of opportunities to buy the book.

Visit Our Gift Shop

Clearance Sale October 1-16

Deep discounts on overstocks —lavendar gift items, garden art, and more!

Special Holiday Discount Week December 13-19

10% off on all items

Garden books make great gifts; Garden cards fit right into a stocking, give a living gift with our docent-made succulent gardens.

We have a special selection of books on low water use landscaping, native plants and birds, and children's titles.

The *Garden cards* are here! Beautiful, fun, and entertaining flower playing cards for only \$5! Posters, too. (see page 2)

Succulent Gardens

Garden Art

Shop Hours: Mon.-Fri., 9-4, Call (619) 660-0614 for weekend hours.

Have you met I.R.I.S.?

Don't miss this interactive kiosk in the gift shop. Use a simple touch screen for plant selection, learn more about the Garden!

Spotlight on a Species— Chinese Pistache—Shades of Things to Come

Submitted by Kate Breece, Helix Water District



Two benches face eastward in a comfortable arrangement, with a view of hazy, purple mountains. Above each bench, a Chinese pistache, *Pistacia chinensis*, tree draws the eye. Adorned with lush, green foliage, they gracefully foil the heat, lending shade to the quiet restful *cul de sac*.

Fall's cool, dry days and chilly nights turns the pistache a vibrant red—coloring the landscape like few other deciduous trees can in San Diego.

Pistache, the sun lover, thrives in well-drained soils. Branching upright or arching, it reaches heights of 25 to 40 feet and to widths of about the same. Spring brings small greenish flowers.

Drought tolerant, easy to transplant, and with a bit of dark exfoliating bark, the shade of the pistache is a perfect spot to rest on a hot afternoon—or a vivacious spot of color to visit in late October.

Come to the Garden for a *Pistache Experience!*

Education and Events Coordinator Position Opening at the Garden

The Water Conservation Garden is seeking an Education and Events Coordinator to create, organize, and staff the adult and children's educational programs, and to coordinate all concerts and special events. We are looking for an individual that is flexible, creative, and an enthusiastic team player. This is a part time, hourly position. Interested candidates should visit the website at www.sdcwa.org for a complete job description and application information.

Ask the Facilities Manager

Submitted by Steve Maranhao, Water Conservation Garden

Q: *We're getting ready to re-landscape our yard and were wondering what kind of amendments, if any, to use when we plant.*

A: **Soil acts as a reservoir for water, air, and nutrients—all vital elements for plant growth.** It also acts as an anchor—this is especially important for trees, so that they remain upright. The soil is the key element in the success of any landscape project, but unfortunately, the preparation of it is often overlooked. With our San Diego soils, we want to create more air space in the soil, that in turn assists in ease of water movement through the soil, moving it and nutrients down to the roots. The roots are where the plants take in most of their required water and nutrients.

When we talk about amendments, usually it's some form of organic material. When incorporated into a clay soil, organic amendments create larger pore spaces. **Organic amendments break down over time, so any benefit is short lived, unless you add amendments year after year.** This works well for an annual bed or vegetable garden, but not for the shrub planting on the side of the house.

In the long run, alleviating any soil compaction might be a more productive way to spend your time and money. A compacted soil greatly reduces the ability for plants to use water, nutrients, and oxygen. The plants' response to these deficits is to develop roots close to the surface, resulting in a need for more water (lack of drought tolerance). Surface roots, water and nutrient stress, and a weakened tree that is subject to pests and disease all contribute to plant failure. We've actually had a few trees at the Garden fail due to soil compaction.

So, add the amendments, if you want, but at the very least, fix the compaction. Fixing a compaction problem is no small task. Digging up the whole area to be landscaped, at a minimum of 12 to 18 inches deep, takes heavy equipment and some manual labor as well. This preliminary work, before you plant, provides the long-term conditions favorable to strong root growth. **If you do nothing else, this will be the one thing that rewards you and your plants, over the life of your landscape.**



FRIENDS OF THE GARDEN

MEMBERSHIP ENROLLMENT

I am a New Member Renewing Member

I would like to be registered at the level indicated:

- Individual / Student \$20
- Basic \$30
- Supporting \$50
- Sustaining \$100
- Patron \$250
- Benefactor \$500

I would like to support the Garden with an additional donation of \$_____

Please make checks payable to Water Conservation Garden and send your enrollment with payment to The Water Conservation Garden, 12122 Cuyamaca College Drive West, El Cajon, CA 92019.

Name (Please Print) _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip Code _____

Telephone Number _____

Email Address _____

Thank you for being a Friend of the Garden. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Our Mission Statement:

“To create awareness of long term landscape water and resource conservation by educating the community on the benefits of state-of-the-art techniques and devices and to encourage and enhance public understanding and acceptance of the benefits of Xeriscape landscaping.”

Open 7 days a week from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. Docent Tours; Sat. 10:30 and Sun. 1:30 pm

Benefits

Individual/Student

Free newsletters
Free Garden admission

Basic

Same as above, plus
Gift shop: 10% discount
Classes/Events: Free or discounted admission

Supporting

Same as above, plus
Facility rentals: 10% discount—
up to \$25 value annually

Sustaining

Same as above, plus
Facility rentals: 10% discount—
up to \$50 value annually

Patron

Same as above, plus
Engraved brick paver in garden
pathway
Facility rentals: 10% discount—
up to \$125 value annually

Benefactor

Same as above, plus
Engraved brick paver in the plaza
Facility rentals: 10% discount—
up to \$250 value annually

**WATCH FOR NEW
CLASSES, WORKSHOPS, AND
EVENTS IN 2005**

MEMBER AGENCIES
City of San Diego
Grossmont - Cuyamaca Community
College District
Helix Water District
Clay Water District
Padre Dam MWD
San Diego County Water Authority

at Cuyamaca College



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