



The Fruit Leaf

Santa Clara Valley Chapter
California Rare Fruit Growers, Inc.



January/February 2010 <http://www.crfg.org>

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Membership

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Next Meeting

February 13, 2010
Emma Prusch Park
Social and set-up 12:30
Meeting 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Speaker for February

Our February meeting's guest speaker will be Larry Saltzman. You are probably familiar with Larry, as he writes a regular column on Organic Gardening for the *CRFG Fruit Gardener Magazine*. Larry's talk will focus on permaculture techniques that can be applied to our yards, gardens, and fruit trees.

The permaculture design methodology is an attempt to help people live in a more ethically responsible way in harmony with the environment. Permaculture designers create systems which are resilient and sustainable over the long term. Permaculture design helps reduce the amount of fossil fuel energy needed to maintain human habitations and farms. Larry's talk will focus on one application of permaculture design - food forests. A food forest is a perennial agroforestry system that mimics natural forests. Food forestry has been practiced by indigenous people all over the planet for many thousands of years. The Mayans of Southern Mexico and Central America were masters of these kind of systems, as were many of the people of the Amazon. The talk will focus on how we can learn from both indigenous food forests and from the insights of modern biology. Food forests can be created on scales that range from backyard to thousands of acres. It is possible to "retrofit" conventional orchards, small or large, to become food forests.

Larry has a certificate in permaculture design, and together with his wife, Linda, co-founded *The Santa Barbara Organic Garden Club* about ten years ago. They live on a 1/3 acre property in Santa Barbara where they have jointly designed a backyard scale food forest that currently contains over 100 fruit, nut, and edible seed trees, along with berries, grapes, perennial, and self seeding vegetables.

Tropical Delicacies from Cold-hardy Palms

By Lisa Stapleton

A few years ago, when my son was in fourth grade, a puzzling thing happened when I was picking him up from his after school daycare.

“Do you have any, Evan?” one kid asked him. “It’s in my cubby,” Evan replied. “You can have them for the soccer ball eraser.” Then another kid came up and asked him the same thing. “I don’t know,” Evan said. “Check my cubby and see.” When a third kid asked him if he “had any left,” I knew that if I didn’t ask what Evan was doing, I was going to pop. “Evan, what do those kids want from you,” I asked. “Um, mom, they liked the extra palm berries in my lunch,” he said, displaying about a lunch box full of interesting erasers, tiny airplanes, and McDonalds toys. Essentially, my son was the monopoly kingpin of a fourth-grade economy, all based on our jelly palm.



A taste sensation

Apparently, my palm berries had become not just a local hit at home—where the kids and I ate tons of them—but had become an instant sensation in the lunchroom. Just as they’d become a sought-after delicacy at work, in my graduate classes, and anywhere else I’d shared them. Most people’s first response is, “Hey, that’s really great, what is this thing?”

The small fruits of the slow-growing *Capitata*—otherwise known as the pindo or jelly palm—range from a light creamy yellow to reddish-orange, are about the size of a small plum. Their leaves are beautiful, like large ferns almost, and the fruits have a tropical flavor that’s a little like citrus, a little like pineapple, maybe a little like a passion fruit. The ones that aren’t propagated by fruit tree growers, or which don’t get enough water, tend to be fibrous, but the ones I’ve gotten from fruit growers have all tasted wonderful. (The badly cared-for trees outside of The Jungle, a local kid’s play place, are very mediocre tasting, but you can at least see what the trees look like.) Inside, there’s a small stone, and it’s through these seeds that new plants are created. (Unlike many of the fruits we grow, they’re not propagated through meristem culture or scions, so the best that a plant vendor can promise is that they will almost certainly strongly resemble the parent. They’re also self-fertile, so you don’t need a pollinator.)

What’s it like to grow them?

Pindo palms generally grow to 15-20 feet tall, and can get to be two to three feet in diameter. They are cold hardy—purportedly down to about ten degrees Fahrenheit—and my San Jose specimens have never shown any cold damage at all. (This is surprising, as they’re native to southern Brazil and Uruguay.) They don’t seem susceptible to pests, and indeed, in some towns along the Gulf Coast, they’re planted as street trees.

Their biggest drawback—other than the need to spit out the stone—is that it takes about 7-10 years to grow from gallon-size to fruiting. (They can easily spend the first five or six years in a large pot.) I had almost given up on mine after eight years, and had announced to my husband that if it didn’t do something productive soon, I was going to chop it down and give the space to something that would. My husband looked at it intently, and said, “What are those funny-looking torpedo things sticking out of it?” Turns out, they were three green flower casings, which would open up and flower that very season, producing about two hundred berries each. It must have known it was living on borrowed time.

Each spike lasts about a week from first ripe fruit to the end of the harvest for that particular spike, and they tend to have one or two weeks between them, so you can typically have fruit for two to six weeks. In south San Jose, the earliest mine has ever fruited is late August, and it’s always done by halloween at the latest.

Jelly palms fit all my requirements for rare fruit:

- They're virtually unknown where I live.
- Lots of people love the fruit when they taste it.
- They have a very distinctive taste.
- Like pawpaws, they're generally unavailable in stores, so if you like it, you must grow it yourself.
- They have the added bonus that they usually ripen in the fall, when a lot of fruit has already come and gone.
- Finally, it's a pretty plant, great for achieving a tropical feel in the landscape. Add to that the fact that it seems to be pest-free and trouble-free here, and for many, it can be a really fun plant to grow.

Where to get plants, more info:

It's hard to find jelly palms, but you can sometimes get them at Yamagami's. Some mail-order and Web sites also sell them:

- Encanto Farms, www.encantofarms.com
- Raintree, www.raintreenursery.com
- Patrick Schafer sometimes speaks at CRFG meetings and grows jelly palms in Northern California. He can be reached at pls@hughes.net.

I will bring seeds to the next meeting. So if you want to wow people with an unusual taste, and you like a tropical look in your plants, try adding a jelly palm to your collection. It will doubtless be an interesting, rewarding adventure.



Lessons and Tips from 2009

By Lisa Stapleton

When I was a teenager and messed up, my dad would always say sternly, "I hope you at least learned something from all this." Since January seems a good time for reflection on what I learned the previous year, here are a few tidbits that I gleaned in 2009:

- * Deer don't eat pawpaws, says Steve Boboricken. And deer are a big problem in the Los Altos area, where Steve lives. That's why Steve has planted many pawpaw seedlings and a few named varieties on his large, hilly lot. Many of them have already produced good-sized fruit, which is a notable achievement, since pawpaws are fairly slow growers.
- * Bader's Black (Persian) mulberries had tons of fruit in early July, and looked as if they would bear for another month, through most of July. I have a very young Persian mulberry, so that got me to thinking that when it gets big, it should be possible to have mulberries for about four months. I hope that the feast will start in late March or April with Early Bird; Tehama, Australian, Oscar, Tehama, Shangri-la, Pakistan, and Illinois Everbearing will follow, and I hope to finish in late July with the Persian mulberry. Of course, mulberries can be dried or made into frozen pie filling, too, for berries in the off season. Some cultures use mulberries to lessen ringing in the ears, and my husband swears that it helps lessen his suffering from the condition, so I try to dry as many as possible.
- * Bearss limes eventually turn yellow and look just like lemons if you let them hang on the tree long enough. Several CRFG members say they taste best that way, too; they're a little sweeter. They're like peppers that way; most peppers, whether they're advertised as green, yellow or purple, eventually end up red or orange if you leave them on the plant long enough.
- * Several citrus growers in our membership suggest a 10 percent foliar feeding of Epsom salts to supply magnesium and sweeten oranges. It can be applied at ripening time and still have an effect, so if yours are sour, it might be worth a try.

- * Some CRFG folks say they leave their oranges on the tree for up to two years, and they end up much sweeter. Valencia oranges, in particular, need to be on the tree about up to 18 months. So if yours are sour, it might pay to experiment a little with harvesting times.
- * As bare-root season gets into full swing, it's worth mentioning that if you're running out of space for new plants, you might be able to fit in some understory trees, particularly if you have partial sun down low, but more sun up high. For example, if your space is shaded by a low wall or a one-story house, you might be able to work in a hazelnut (which grow in the dark shadows of redwoods when young), serviceberry (often found growing wild in dense northern California forests), pineapple guavas (which can be trained as a bush or a tree), pawpaw (which grows in the under stories east of the Mississippi River), or even an avocado, which can tolerate some shade when young if it can eventually break through to full sun.
- * Planting beans in among your trees can help to add nitrogen. I've put them under trees, on my parking strip, and especially in the second-floor flower-pots on my balcony. Not only do they smell better than manure, but I don't have to haul poop through the house and up the stairs. Plus, the kids actually argue over my green beans, which melts my gardener's heart every time it happens.
- * I was amazed by Axel Kratel's ability to grow even tropical plants, such as cherimoyas and sapotes, in his Santa Cruz yard. His summer tour encouraged my husband, Loren, to buy a cherimoya plant for our San Jose home. We'll let people know how it works out next year.
- * While prepping my talk for the summer garden tours, I got to thinking that the easiest rare fruits I've grown have been pineapple guavas, palm berries, jujubes, serviceberries and mulberries. No diseases, and in my yard, we

Tired of Losing Plant Labels?

Try These Tips From the Membership

Jack Conner, saranjac@comcast.net

At the Garin Ranch Orchard in Hayward, we have been experimenting with medicine bottles as identifying tags. We began by removing the pasted-on labels, and then cutaway the tops with the screw caps. This leaves a cup with a flat bottom. We poked a round hole through the middle of the bottom and inserted a strong copper wire with a knot on one end and a hook on the other. The hook slips easily over a branch and can be bent by hand so that the wind will not blow it away.

At first, we wrote the label of the tree on the inside of the cup with a black wax pencil (the kind that is wrapped in paper so that you get a fresh point by uncoiling a strip of paper along the score). The pencil lasts longer inside, we supposed. The first such tags went on in 2007, and they are still there and still legible. Then an ingenious volunteer wrote the label both inside the cup for protection from weather, and outside the cup for ready visibility. The first such cups were hung in 2008, and the labels were still easily readable inside and out when we last looked last November.

The white cups are easier to find among the foliage than any other kind of label we have tried. As we gain more experience, we might get around to further reporting.

Lee Valley Hardware sells a sort of double-ended carabiner, which would let you attach a roll of tape, or a sling, or anything with a hole in it, to a belt or a belt loop and would not require you to destroy a cable tie every time you wanted to move the tape or whatever.

John Baum, baumgrenze@yahoo.com

I want to share a tape tracking suggestion. I like hanging my tape from the edge of the table when I'm not using it. It keeps the end from reattaching to the roll, and it is handy. This year it was so handy that near the end, it suddenly disappeared into the hands of someone with a greater need for it.

Here's my tape-roll identification suggestion. Clip a cable tie through the center of the roll, leaving plenty of slack, and use it to attach a plastic label with your name and address (a piece cut from an opaque plastic bottle that you



were going to recycle anyway should work). This should also help others from confusing yours with theirs.

Come to think of it, pieces cut from vitamin bottles could serve as temporary scion ID tags, too, but be sure that you use a garden-quality felt tip pen to write on it. Ordinary felt tip pen ink has a short lifetime in the weather and sun. By the time a scion has taken, the sun has taken the writing.

Also, I'd like to share my systems for tracking grafts on my multi-variety apples and pears. Some years ago, I began making ID tags for my trees using some 0.01" thick copper sheeting that I found at Alan Steel in Redwood City (<http://www.yelp.com/biz/alan-steel-and-supply-co-redwood-city>).

The sheet is smooth on one face and rough on the obverse. It comes on a large roll. My recollection is that it is about 24 inches wide. You can roll off the amount that you want, and they lend you shears to cut it free. I usually cut it into 0.75" x 2" strips and punch a hole at one end. I attach it to the tree using scraps of telephone hookup wire. (The wire is free if you find a technician working on a street box and ask politely for the scraps.) I started by embossing the smooth face with the variety name, harvest month, and year of grafting. That proved hard to read after a few years, when the bright copper color faded to an unobtrusive brown. I tried several types of opaque marking pen and have settled on a fine-point Sakura Pen-touch gold marker. The labels are easy to read at a distance, fairly unobtrusive, and relatively low cost. They have remained readable for four seasons. Here's the URL for Sakura: <http://www.sakuraofamerica.com/Marker-metallic-paint>.

As I graft, I have always used a 2-color paint marking on each scion. I use exterior quality latex from the craft store and brush on a band of color on the tree end and the scion end of the scion adjacent to the graft. Any two colors can code for two varieties. A check of my spreadsheet for thirteen colors shows that they can code for 169 varieties, plus another 13 if each color is also used by itself for a variety. To the extent that I can, I like to start a season with a new 'tree color.' I come back and tag after I know that the grafts have taken. These markings last for about five years and are a good guide to where to return tags that have blown off the tree.

Sini Falkowski

I am reading different methods of making tagging labels. At the Scion exchange we do sell aluminum Impresso labels. If someone will ask Karl Gross nicely, perhaps he can bring some to the next Chapter meeting. From mail-order garden-supply sites, I have purchased a huge roll of plastic labels that can be written on with a pencil. The writing never fades. After five years, I still have not used all the labels. At that time, I think I paid \$15 for a roll of 500 – 1000 labels.

Nancy Garrison, nancyg2@aol.com

I don't think anyone has yet mentioned using pencils for plant labels. That's what I use in the nursery. The china markers are great, but sometimes too coarse if you need to include much information. Try to find a very soft lead (graphite?) pencil. I use an old IBM test marker on old, traditional, plastic plant labels. It leaves behind actual pencil material and will hold up for years in the sun. If the plastic is slick, you can get the pencil to write better if the "lead" is wet. (Dare I say that I wet the 'lead' with my tongue?)

Conrado Leonardo, muraya@aol.com

I had a bundle of the aluminum tags from the nurseries and I would write the identity and date on the tag. I then run a copper wire through the hole, loop the wire around the branch, and twist the ends of the wire together. But it is hard to find those tags these days. So I cut the top and bottom off of an aluminum soda can. (I try to drink the contents first.) I cut the leftovers into strips 1/2 -inch wide by 4 to 5- inches long (they are usually curled and I try to straighten them). I write what I want on them with the pointed end of a long nail. (The harder you bear down on the strip as you write, the better the indentation will be.) Use the same nail to poke a hole on the strip on one end, and use a copper wire to hang the tag around a branch. The wires from a leftover telephone line are usually very good if you have some. The individual strands are small and easy to cut and handle, and they should last a lifetime with the plastic sleeve over them.

I have a lemon tree with 17 grafts on it; some with a plastic tag with soft pencil writing and transparent tape over it, and a soda-can ID strip beside it on the same wire. I did not throw away the original ID because I hate throwing things away.

I was always afraid of getting a cut from the thin aluminum can strips. Wear some rubber gloves, or you can sand the edges of the strips also. It sounds like a crazy way to make some tags but it works. I have not had a cut yet. Make sure that you write on the inside side of the soda can strip. You can turn the tag over and reminisce about the soda that you had to drink first.

Elaine Lee-Lou, *food2grow@gmail.com*

Last season I cut up old mini-blind slats and used them as ID tags. They are quite durable. If you have large patio vertical blinds, those slats are large enough to be cut up into different shapes to complement the tree. For example, a pear tag could be cut into the shape of a pear. Adds a bit of visual zing. There's a lot of potential for play here.

I have found that Sharpie ink tends to disappear after a season or two, especially if left in the sun. There are permanent, oil-based markers that work very well and impervious to the elements. There are also "paint" markers, which hold up very well. I just checked the tags from last year and they're still as good as new.



Corrie Grove

We had so many interesting ideas of graft name tags that I wanted to suggest that we bring examples of our tags to the next meeting for all to see and from which to learn. We can then talk about these and explain their good and bad points. Also, someone asked specifics about the brand and type of marker used, so if you used specific markers or tools, bring those along, too.

Quotes from the Scion Exchange

Yeffi Vanatta

The exchange is always a lot of fun, and I look forward to the interactions with the members as we ponder tasty varieties. Our big "A-ha moment" this year came during the presentation, when we figured out that while a few of our grafts on our great big plum trees took last year, they were not going to grow more than the few inches we have seen unless we took off a substantial portion of the remaining tree.

Also informative was the explanation of water sprouts, which will limit the growth of a branch below them, and the discussion of "balancing" your varieties on the tree so none take over.

Also, at the scion prep 2 weeks back, someone mentioned a great photo presentation for grafting by Joe Real. It took me a while to find this on the internet, but the link is at <http://citrus.forumup.org/about500-0-asc-0-citrus.html>. I thought that I would include this as it is a bit challenging to find.

Eric Olson

I enjoyed the Scion Exchange. I was able to get several plum varieties. Unfortunately, I had an overbooked Saturday, so I couldn't stay for long. I thought this was the best scion exchange I've ever attended, and I've been to at least four or five.

Karyn Plank

Since I'm a CRFG member and could prove it, I really appreciated the luxury of having the hour before the official start of the scion exchange to leisurely search for the scion wood I wanted. It removed the aura of frenzy that has existed at prior scion exchanges. I heard that some people complained about the new rule, but as someone who has paid both the chapter and state dues and helped out at the scion prep day, I feel that I earned that hour.

I stuck around for Bader's grafting presentation and it was well worth the time spent. It's the best I've ever seen. Bader patiently explained what he does and had a big grin on his face the whole time. He clearly loves grafting. Also, using the camera so that what Bader was doing could be displayed on a big screen was a stroke of genius. I got good information, and a real sense for how I should do my grafts in the future.

Last but not least, I bought one of the \$7.50 'variety unknown' apple whips and plan to graft one or two of my new apple scions on it. I think the folks in Santa Cruz and Monterey counties provided them so that's cool.

All in all, a great scion exchange. The only thing I wish I could have gotten were more pomegranate scions. The two I did manage to get are pretty wimpy.

Deane Gardner

Nice work on the 2010 scion exchange! Thank you. As usual, I realized after the event that I could have found a home for several additional fruit varieties if I'd only thought a little harder while I was there. But I did bring home some nice surprises.



Membership Renewal Notice!!

For those of you who receive a hardcopy of this newsletter, please check your address label – if the date shown after your name is 12/31/09, your membership has expired. Please renew it at the next meeting or send a check to my address. Annual membership is \$10. You will be removed from the mailing list and the SC CRFG Yahoo egroup at end of February.

Sarah Sherfy, 9140 Paseo Tranquillo, Gilroy 95020

408-825-9700

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Party with us in the orchard



We are setting up predictable, monthly work parties at the Prusch Park scion orchard. This is not just a great opportunity to serve CRFG and greater society, but also a great place to become friendly with fellow enthusiasts, and to learn a lot about how to manage your own orchard. The parties will run from 9:00 am until around noon, on the FIRST SUNDAY of each month. Please mark this as an eternally repeating meeting on your calendar, and give yourself a reminder a day or two ahead. Don't be shy about arriving late or leaving early - your participation will be welcomed for any fraction of the scheduled time. We are adding fun activities to coincide with the work parties. Refreshments will be provided. If it is raining, or seriously threatening, the party will be off. Whoever is leading the party (to be shared by Scott, Milovan, and me) will try to send out a timely letter to confirm any cancellation. If you need to speak to someone, try me, at 650-570-5567. We will also try having mini-parties, for an hour or so, prior to the regular CRFG meetings, on the second Saturday of even months. Just show up early, and meet over by the shed. Walt Crompton, Geronimo@astound.net

Rose Petal Jam



Recipe from Lucie Hupp's Gardening Without Tears the Diary of a Fancy Dirt Gardener, James G. Hupp Publisher

Gather freshly opened roses that have not been sprayed with an insecticide. (Shake out that stray aphid or spider.) The white base of the rose petal contains a bitter substance and must be removed. Grasp all of the petals, pulling them from the stem, and snip all of the white tips at one time using a pair of kitchen scissors. Prepare one cup of packed Petals (it won't hurt to have more).

Put the petals in a blender.

Then add: 3/4 cup water

Juice and pulp of one large lemon

Blend at high speed while adding: 2 1/2 cups of sugar 1/2 cup at a time

Put 3/4 cup water and one package of powdered pectin in a small saucepan and boil for one minute, stirring well. Add this to the blender and blend thoroughly. Allow the mixture to settle a moment; then pour into small sterilized jars (baby food jars with caps are good). Seal and allow to stand six hours to set; then put into the freezer. The jam will keep for one month in the refrigerator.

Any fragrant rose may be used. If you have only white or yellow petals, you'll get a sort of honey-colored jam unless you want to use a bit of red food coloring. This jam calls for hot biscuits and butter, or good, homemade bread.

Submitted by Becky Davies

Becky's Note: Lucie also made sweet violet petal jam in this same way



Lindcove Takeaway: News on Greening Disease

By Karl Gross

Greening disease has a new name, and it will probably take some practice before most of the membership has it down pat: Huanglongbing (HLB). No matter what you call it, it's a terrible scourge of citrus in Florida. So far, it hasn't made it to Northern California, but the pest that carries it, the Asian Citrus Psyllid (ACP), has been detected in most of the Southern California counties. (San Diego, Riverside, Los Angeles, Imperial, and Orange have quarantines at this time.)

The name of the plant ailment was recently changed from "Greening Disease" to the Chinese word, Huanglongbing, because China was the country in which it was first discovered. Huanglongbing is Chinese for "Yellow Dragon Disease," an apt description because infected trees turn yellow, usually starting from one branch, as if attacked by a yellow dragon. It would have been better if we'd at least started out calling it "yellowing disease."

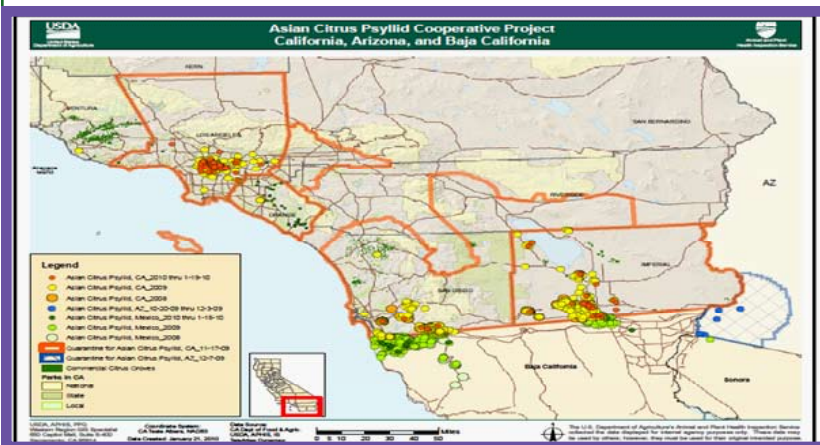
Beware the ornamentals

The Asian Citrus Psyllid is believed to have spread within Florida on an ornamental landscape plant known as *Murraya paniculata*, a preferred host of the pest. Names include orange jasmine or jessimine, and mock orange. The pest also loves leaf, *Murraya (Bergera) koenigi*. Currently, all Florida counties and are shown to be infected and every commercial grove in Florida is within 15 miles of an infected area.

And, while we don't have HLB in California at this time, we now have the Asian Citrus Psyllid (ACP) in parts of Southern California, so can San Bernardino, Ventura, and Santa Barbara be far behind? That's why we need to be extra careful as we travel and collect plants, especially from Southern California. You don't want to get the disease, and your neighbors don't want you to spread it.



Photo from: <http://www.cdffa.ca.gov/phpps/acp/>



Map from APIS

http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/plant_pest_info/citrus_greening/downloads/pdf_files/ca-az-map.pdf



Figure 10. Asian citrus psyllid adults and nymphs on the back of a leaf (top) and on a citrus terminal (bottom). Notice the white, waxy tubes coming from the psyllids

Read the full Publication 8218, on Citrus Bacterial Canker Disease and Huanglongbing (Citrus Greening) by ANR University of California. Above two pictures taken from: <http://anrcatalog.ucdavis.edu/pdf/8218.pdf>

Local Classes

In-Depth Winter Pruning: Pome Fruits

(Apples, Pears)
Saturday, February 6, 10:00 am-2:00 pm
Rain-out date February 13 / call first 8am
Friends of the UCSC Farm & Garden
Center for Agroecology and
Sustainable Food Systems
1156 High Street, Santa Cruz, 95064
(831) 459-3240, Fee \$20.00

Local Classes

Propagation Methods,

A lecture with Kathleen Navarez
Wednesday, February 10, 7:00 pm
[Western Horticultural Society](#)
Christ Episcopal Church,
1040 Border Road, Los Altos
650-207-6625 jmulenburg@gmail.com
Fee \$5.00; members free

The Buzz on Native Bees

A lecture and walk with
Professor Gordon Frankie, bee expert.
Saturday, March 6, 1:00 am-3:00 pm
[UC Botanical Garden at Berkeley](#)
200 Centennial Drive, Berkeley, 94720
510-643-2755, Fee \$10.00;
pre-registration required

Fruit Tree Varieties

Nancy Garrison, Horticultural Speaker
Saturday, February 20, 10:30 - 12:30
<http://fruittreevarieties.eventbrite.com/>
Common Ground in Palo Alto
650-493-6072 Fee \$31

In-Depth Winter Pruning: Stone Fruits (Plums, Peaches, Nectarine)

Saturday, February 20, 10:00 am-2:00 pm
Rain-out date February 27/ call first 8am
[Friends of the UCSC Farm & Garden](#)
Center for Agroecology and
Sustainable Food Systems
1156 High Street, Santa Cruz, 95064
(831) 459-3240 Fee \$20.00

Growing and Pruning Blueberries

A workshop with Master Gardener Jack Kay
Saturday, February 27, 10:00 am-12:00 pm
[UCCE Master Gardeners of Santa Clara County](#)
Charles Street Community Garden
433 Charles Street, Sunnyvale
408-282-3105

JUST A FEW OF CREG WINNING GRAFT'S



SCVC 2010 SCION EXCHANGE

Final Thoughts

Karl Gross

This year saw new faces all along the process of the SCVC Scion Exchange, along with familiar ones, new entrance procedures, different rootstocks, more scions, as large a crowd as we've ever had, hands on demonstrations, and the smoothest set-up and break-down ever.

Our 6th year at the Multicultural Center and Meeting Hall at Prusch Park and still the best place to hold the event. Many year's ago we tried a system where the scions stood upright, didn't work out well, but, if we get any more crowded, people and scions, we may have to revisit that attempt. We cut ~110 varieties from Andy's Orchard, took ~85 varieties from the Heritage Orchard at Prusch, gathered another 110 from Filoli, received 61 from the Monterey Chapter, and Sacramento brought down some 30 varieties. Don sent quite a few bags of grapes, as did another member who brought a multitude of bags from the Central Valley. By the time you add in what people brought to add to the tables, we were approaching 500 different varieties. And we could have used more, so next year, think about bringing from your own trees, more pomegranate, Asian pears (Nashi), grapes, figs, and odd varieties for which we only have you to depend on for the scion material.

Speaking of Prep work...We did a single cutting day at Andy's Orchard – one long day, thanks to Ann, Kathleen, Jack, Chris, Joan, Milovan, Scott, and Andy. We ran into a holiday and Prusch Park was closed the day we were supposed to mark the trees, so Scott led the effort to mark trees ahead of the cutters on Work/Prep Saturday and did so right to the end. Great job Scott. The cutters had wet grass, but no rain to work in. The Work Prep Day in January was shoulder to shoulder and at times people moved outside to cut the scion material. Becky organized a lunch crew and they set-up the potluck for lunch that was great as always. We used fewer ziplock bags thanks to not duplicating varieties, which helps in our own small way (saves bags, time, and effort), while we still get the scions.

Normally we prep the MCC for the Scion Exchange on the Friday before the event, but an evening reservation kept us out that day, so we had an early set-up crew (Piyush, Scott, Grover, George, Ralph, Jack, Chris, and others) show up to move tables, theater props, chairs, scion signs, flagging, etc. Meanwhile Jack and Sarah's folks showed up and started setting up the entrance and membership tables. Then Erik brought in the bagged scions from Andy's cooler. Lastly, the sales table was opened with Sini, Joan, Becky, and Madeline spending all or much of the day there. Special thanks to everyone that stuck around to the end and helped with moving the tables, etc., back into place and the final clean up. A necessary job or we wouldn't get invited back next year. (Piyush, George, Scott, Susan, Grover, Jack, Corrie, Chris, and others that, again, I forgot to note as it gets a bit hectic).

As you can tell, and I say it again, a Scion Exchange of the size and complexity of our Chapter's does not happen on a whim or the spur of the moment. A core of dedicated volunteers were there every time I needed another person to help out on a task no matter the size. Additionally another group of folks pitched in whenever they could and without them we'd still be working on the preparation. The other Chapters always pitch-in by sending their own volunteers to help us on Prep Days, so we thank them. THANK YOU ALL Very Much!

Special Thanks go out to the Prusch Park staff for letting us into the Park on Saturday morning a bit earlier than normal so we could make up for missing the Friday set-up. The extra half hour or so saved us and we were set-up for the Scion Exchange in plenty of time.

Jim Kern and Bader Kudsı, for the fourth year in a row, ran the grafting demonstrations to standing room only crowds and in fact saved us from the absolute crush early on by drawing off people to the Meeting Hall. As always, Jim and Bader, thanks ever so much for your effort and skills. Another generation has been taught the grafting skills.

We followed the usual pattern of a successful Scion Exchange, thanks to the dedicated volunteerism of many of you. Each new person we introduce to grafting is one more potential member and productive asset to the Chapter. Good Job!

Best of skill, craft and luck with your grafting. And, remember to let your trees tell you when it is time to start grafting (watch for those buds starting to swell). And, if you haven't had enough, see you at the February meeting when there will be a few more scions a comin'.

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