

## Valley-Wise Gardening

by Beth Gale, Nursery Manager

*You don't have to sacrifice beauty to be environmentally conscious*



Emily Griswold

Nursery manager Beth Gale with flowering *Echium wildpretii*, the aptly-named tower-of-jewels.

The beloved Ruth Risdon Storer Garden is a highlight for many visitors to the Arboretum, and rightly so. It is a beautiful example of a Valley-wise garden. We use the term "Valley-wise" to mean gardens with well-adapted plants, efficient irrigation, mulch, relatively small areas of turf, porous path surfaces, and other features appropriate for California's Central Valley and regions with similar conditions.

To create your own Valley-wise garden, choose plants that are drought tolerant, are pest and disease resistant (which reduces your pesticide and fungicide use), require low maintenance, and provide food for beneficial insects and birds. Make sure you water during cool morning hours, irrigate the whole root zone by watering deeply just every two weeks, and adjust spray nozzles to avoid watering sidewalks and paths. Use mulch to help keep weeds down (reducing the need to apply herbicides), minimize loss of moisture from soil, reduce soil compaction, and moderate root zone temperature (it keeps roots cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter).

You don't have to sacrifice beauty to be environmentally conscious, and the Storer Garden has proved that with the right ingredients you can enjoy a rewarding and spectacular outcome. Many Arboretum All-Star plants (see "Arboretum All-Stars: 50 Great Plants for Central Valley Gardens," *Arboretum Review*, Fall 2005) and other great plants found in the Storer Garden will be available at our Fall Plant Faire on October 6. Here are a few highlights.

### Shrubs for background and large spaces

Marie Simon's pink ceanothus (*Ceanothus × pallidus* 'Marie Simon') has clouds of pink flowers in midsummer with semi-deciduous foliage borne on red stems. Although this isn't a native ceanothus, it is quite drought tolerant. It's a nice change of flower color and has larger, attractive leaves.

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Find great plants  
at the  
**33rd ANNUAL**

*Plant Faire*

Saturday, October 6    Member sale 7-9 a.m., public sale 9 a.m.-3 p.m.  
Arboretum Nursery at Orchard Park (Orchard Road at LaRue Road, UC Davis)

10% member discount! Join or renew at the door for a free plant!  
\$5 off membership fee—one day only!

*Correa* 'Dusky Bells' is a charming Australian native that has large, long dark-pink tubular bell flowers that cover the plant in January. This is a hummingbird favorite and really cheery in the dead of winter. *Ribes malvaceum* 'Montara Rose' is a lovely California native that prefers part shade. It blooms in mid to late winter before much of the garden even looks alive. The flowers are an unexpected darker pink that attract hummingbirds and people alike.



*Ribes malvaceum*  
Charles Webber © California Academy of Sciences

Rose glow Japanese barberry (*Berberis thunbergii* 'Rose Glow') is a stunning plant with bronze-red new foliage that is marbled with pinkish-white markings and looks as though an artist has been at work. This is a versatile shrub that can be used as a specimen plant or as a hedge and provides red berries in the fall for birds. It requires regular irrigation. Oakleaf hydrangea (*Hydrangea quercifolia*) is a handsome shrub for a shaded area with its oak-like leaves that turn crimson in the fall and large, elongated white flower clusters in early summer that last for months. It requires regular irrigation.

## Accent plants with spiky, upright forms

Tower-of-jewels (*Echium wildpretii*) is an oddball in the sense that it is a biennial, meaning it just grows vegetatively for the first year and then blooms and dies the second year. It seems at first that it is an ordinary and unassuming plant, but by the second year you see what it is truly made of. It sends up a show-stopping six to ten foot column of small rosy red flowers that attract bees. Your neighbors will all be asking, "What is that plant?"

Dusky chief New Zealand flax (*Phormium* 'Dusky Chief') is a New Zealand native that looks much like a grass but is actually in the agave family. This plant has a pleasing upright structure with rich wine red leaves that glow when backlit. Many phormiums struggle with our hot summers, but this one has proven itself worthy in the garden.

## Great grasses

Purple love grass (*Eragrostis spectabilis*) is a great small and manageable grass that has delicate puffs of rosy-purple to golden flowers in late summer and foliage turning reddish in the fall. With a common name like love grass, who wouldn't want this addition to their garden? Shenandoah switch grass (*Panicum virgatum* 'Shenandoah') is one of my personal favorite grasses. It has blue-green foliage tipped with red and will turn

all maroon in the fall. In midsummer it sends up red flower clusters that can last throughout winter. In a breeze it adds wonderful movement to the garden and really glistens in the sun.

## Large perennials for the back of the border

Mexican lobelia (*Lobelia laxiflora*) has showy tubular red-orange blossoms that persist over the long summer season. This Southwest native doesn't mind some neglect and attracts hummingbirds in the meantime. Perennial stock (*Matthiola incana*) is a short-lived but funky "Dr. Seuss" plant that has very fragrant flowers in the spring. It may not look like much in the fall, but you'll be glad you have it in the spring.

## Mid-sized plants

Autumn joy sedum (*Sedum* 'Herbstfreude') is a great garden classic with pink flowers in late summer that change color throughout fall and succulent leaves that also change to yellow in the fall. The butterflies and bees really appreciate the food, and you'll enjoy the lasting beauty it brings as the rest of your garden prepares for winter.

Pewterleaf pelargonium (*Pelargonium sidoides*) has velvety gray leaves and rich burgundy flowers that keep going most of the year and is truly jewel-like. Amy's purple hebe (*Hebe* 'Amy') is an evergreen New Zealand native with showy violet flowers in summer, but is grown more for its purpled-tinged foliage. This plant has a nice neat form and is rewarding throughout the year. Mexican honeysuckle (*Justicia spicigera*) is a Mexican native that provides bright orange flowers from spring through fall that the hummingbirds just love. Its evergreen foliage provides year-round interest but may look best cut back in early spring.

## Low-growing perennials for the front of the border and for ground cover



Ellen Zagory

*Origanum libanoticum*

Lebanese oregano (*Origanum libanoticum*) is a trailing Mediterranean native with cute round leaves and decorative pink bracts. To get the most effect out of this plant, put it in a container or near a wall edge. Dwarf plumbago (*Ceratostigma plumbaginoides*) is a terrific low growing groundcover with brilliant peacock blue flowers and foliage that turns to

maroon in the fall. Both Catlin's giant carpet bugle (*Ajuga reptans* 'Catlin's Giant'), with purple torch-like flowers in the spring, and Can-can coralbells (*Heuchera* 'Can-Can'), with purple foliage year round, make excellent colorful shade accents.

Using the practices described above and the cool and unusual plants from our sale, you will be able to make your own Valley-wise garden and enjoy it for years to come.

# Storer Garden Exhibits Highlight Valley-Wise Gardening

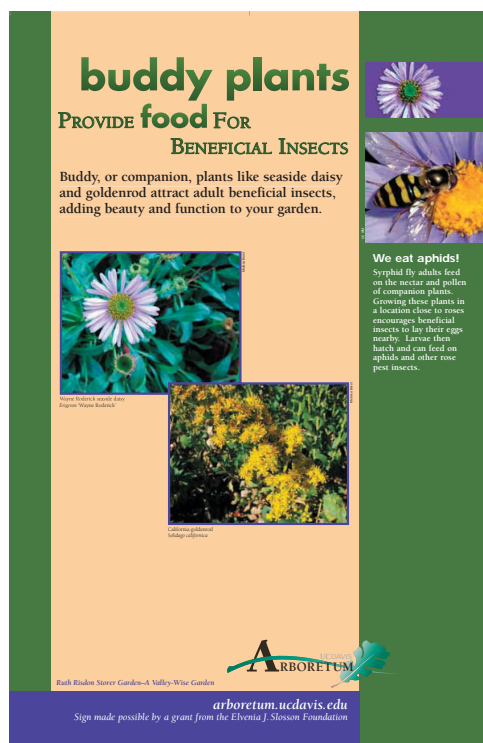
By Holly Crosson, Interpretation Coordinator

Would you like to create a beautiful home garden that will save you money, give you more free time and enhance the environment? Novice and seasoned gardeners alike can learn by visiting the seven new interpretive exhibits about Valley-wise gardening in the Ruth Risdon Storer Garden.

Most California gardens are given 40% more water than they need. Too much watering is the major cause of plant death in many home gardens. In one of the new exhibits you'll have a chance to test your watering wisdom and learn how to create a Valley-wise garden, one that needs water only once every two weeks for about seven months of the year, April through October.

Many gardeners know that mulch protects the soil, reduces weed growth and water use, and improves the garden's appearance, but have you ever wondered how to select the right type of mulch, how much to use, and how often you should reapply it? The new mulch exhibit focuses on the numerous benefits of using mulch in your garden and gives practical advice about how to do it.

Who doesn't love a rose in the garden? This deep affection may turn to frustration if you have roses that are susceptible to common fungal problems like powdery mildew, black spot and rust. These diseases don't have to ruin your roses if you choose resistant varieties such as those highlighted in our new exhibit about low-maintenance roses. Insect pests such as aphids can also plague roses. With careful companion planting near your roses (using "buddy" plants like deergrass and yarrow), you can attract and shelter beneficial insects that will eat aphids and solve your problem without the use of pesticides.



This exhibit teaches visitors about using companion plantings to support beneficial insects for pest control in Central Valley gardens.

In addition to the new Valley-wise gardening exhibit at the Storer Garden, look for new orientation signs that introduce visitors to the history and importance of our plant collections, along with new wayfinding signs that help visitors locate important features, in the Carolee Shields White Flower Garden and Gazebo, the Eric E. Conn Acacia Grove, the Warren G. Roberts Redbud Collection, the Australian Collection, and the East Asian Collection.

The new exhibits are made possible by grants from the Elvenia J. Slosson Foundation, the Institute for Museum and Library Services, and the UC Davis Office of Administration Campus Sustainability Program.



Wayfinding signs like this one for the Australian Collection help visitors navigate through the gardens.

## BENCHES IN STORER GARDEN AVAILABLE FOR DEDICATION

Are you looking for a way to thank an important person in your life or honor the memory of a loved one? Consider dedicating a bench in the Arboretum in their honor. Three of the lovely new benches in the Storer Garden are still available to be dedicated. Your contribution will ensure the continued maintenance and improvement of this beautiful garden, and your honoree will be recognized with a handsome plaque on the bench.

To learn more about the Arboretum commemoration program, please contact Amy McGuire at (530) 754-9126 or [almcguire@ucdavis.edu](mailto:almcguire@ucdavis.edu).



# National Recognition for Arboretum Director

by Mary Burke, Director of Planning and Collections

## Kathleen Socolofsky Receives the American Public Gardens Association 2007 Professional Citation Award



Arboretum Director Kathleen Socolofsky (second from left) received the 2007 Professional Citation Award of the American Public Gardens Association in Washington, D.C. in June. This national award honors a public garden professional for significant achievements in public horticulture. Pictured presenting Kathleen with a plaque are awards committee members (l. to r.) Eric Tschanz, President and Executive Director, Powell Gardens; Virginia Hayes, Curator, Ganna Walska Lotusland; and Dan Stark, Executive Director, APGA.

In Washington, D.C., at the annual meeting of the American Public Gardens Association (APGA), conference attendees stood and applauded loudly as the UC Davis Arboretum Director, Kathleen Socolofsky, received the 2007 APGA Professional Citation Award. One of the highest awards in our field, the APGA Professional Citation recognizes the significant accomplishments in public horticulture of a mid-career professional who has excelled in one of the disciplines generally associated with public gardens and who has shown great skill, innovation, and achievement in his or her career. Kathleen was the unanimous choice of the national APGA Awards Committee.

The APGA National Award Committee awarded this Professional Citation in acknowledgement of Kathleen's demonstrated mastery of strategic thinking, leadership, and management at the UC Davis Arboretum and for her successful launch of multiple new initiatives here at UC Davis, as well as for the ground-breaking work in innovative methods of exhibit development for informal science museums she developed at the Desert Botanical Garden. We are all very proud to be working with her.

During the past several years, Kathleen led several major new campus initiatives, with the UC Davis Arboretum at the center:

- Kathleen led the Arboretum through a community-centered planning process that incorporated over 4,000 visitor surveys and resulted in a comprehensive ten-year plan. This effort, involving campus and political leaders, excited new interest and ideas about the possible role the UC Davis Arboretum could play on campus.

- Working with business leaders in the California nursery industry and with deans and faculty at UC Davis, Kathleen helped lead the launch of the new California Center for Urban Horticulture. The UC Davis College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences (CA&ES) recently committed more than \$1 million dollars over five years for this major new campus initiative.
- Under Kathleen's leadership, the Arboretum began the popular Arboretum All-Stars program, a program promoting the best garden plants for the Central Valley of California. This innovative project has attracted national attention.
- Working with faculty in the School of Education and CA&ES, Kathleen initiated the UC Davis GATEways Program (Gardens, Art, and the Environment). This new campus initiative proposes a new model for a contemporary land-grant university—one that puts UC Davis students front and center, leading tours, teaching classes, and explaining the work of UC Davis researchers and scholars to Arboretum visitors.
- Working with the CA&ES Dean of Undergraduate Education and local artists, Kathleen also helped expand the Art/Science Fusion Program, using the experience of art as a way to teach science.

Other UC Davis Arboretum staff also made an impact at this year's national conference. Carmia Feldman presented a well-received talk on the Arboretum's exhibit development program. Emily Griswold led the first meeting of a national oak curatorial group and Mary Burke presented the new national zoo-botanical garden GIS initiative to APGA information technology specialists, recruiting members for the new Alliance for Public Garden GIS. Missy Borel and Brian Morgan, UC Davis graduate students and Arboretum employees, each received a student travel award from APGA that allowed them to attend the meeting and meet professional botanical garden staff from around the country.

### ARBORETUM ON PUBLIC T.V.

The Arboretum was featured in an episode of *Road Trip with Huell Howser*, which aired July 12 on public television stations statewide. The popular host interviewed director of horticulture Ellen Zagory and commented, "I've never visited a park as beautiful as the [UC Davis] Arboretum. It's unbelievable... That's as beautiful a place as anywhere I've been in California."

# UC DAVIS ARBORETUM

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### FALL 2007



#### GUIDED TOURS

*No charge, no reservation required*

#### PLANT FAIRE PREVIEW TOUR

Saturday, September 29, 11:00 a.m.  
Orchard Park Nursery

#### WALK WITH WARREN

Wednesday, October 10, 12:00 p.m., Gazebo

#### PLANNING YOUR GARDEN TO CONSERVE WATER

Sunday, October 14, 2:00 p.m., Gazebo

#### FALL IN THE NATIVE PLANT GARDEN

Saturday, October 20, 11:00 a.m.  
Buehler Alumni & Visitors Center

#### GARDENING WITH THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT

Saturday, October 27, 11:00 a.m., Gazebo

#### UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL WITH CALIFORNIA NATIVE TREES

Saturday, November 3, 11:00 a.m.  
Buehler Alumni & Visitors Center

#### CHANGING SEASONS IN THE ARBORETUM

Saturday, November 10, 11:00 a.m.  
Buehler Alumni & Visitors Center

#### WALK WITH WARREN

Wednesday, November 14, 12:00 p.m.  
Arboretum Headquarters

#### VALLEY GARDENING THE RIGHT WAY

Saturday, November 17, 11:00 a.m.  
Arboretum Terrace Garden

#### IMPROVE YOUR CONTAINER GARDENING

Saturday, December 1, 11:00 a.m.  
Arboretum Terrace Garden

#### WALK WITH WARREN

Wednesday, December 12, 12:00 p.m., Gazebo

#### BUTTERFLIES IN AND AROUND THE ARBORETUM

Saturday, September 29, 1:00-3:00 p.m., Wyatt Deck

Join Entomology Professor Arthur Shapiro for an informal talk on our local butterflies, followed by a walk through the Mary Watis Brown Garden of California Native Plants to look for butterflies and their habitats. All ages welcome!

#### PRACTICING NATIVE CULTURE

Sunday, October 14, 1:00-3:00 p.m., Wyatt Deck

Join Maidu/Wintun/Hupa/Yurok cultural interpreter Diana Almendariz as she shares traditional plant knowledge through stories and hands-on activities. Learn to make a doll from tule reeds, and try your hand at grinding acorns. All ages welcome!

#### BOTANICAL WATERCOLOR WORKSHOP: POMEGRANATES

Saturday-Sunday, October 20-21, 2007

9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., Arboretum Headquarters Library

Fees: \$120 (\$100 members, students) + \$15 materials fee (required)

Two-day workshop for students at any level. Beginners welcome. All students will create their own botanical watercolors of pomegranates. Paints, paper, and tools provided by instructor Catherine Buscaglia. Advance registration required: (530) 752-4880, jhayes@ucdavis.edu.

#### FOLK MUSIC JAM SESSIONS

Alternate Fridays, October 5, 19, November 2, 16, 30, December 14  
(no session Dec. 28)

12:00 p.m., Wyatt Deck (next to Redwood Grove)

Pull out your fiddles, guitars, mandolins, banjos (you name it) for an acoustic jam session. Campus and community folk musicians play together over the lunch hour. All skill levels welcome. Listeners welcome!

#### ARBORETUM VOLUNTEER TRAINING

Tuesdays, Oct. 16–Dec. 4 (no class Nov. 20), 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

Fee: \$55/\$45 members

Learn about Central Valley gardening and California natural history. Train to become a volunteer gardener, nursery assistant, docent, or naturalist. No experience necessary. Contact Amy McGuire at (530) 754-9126 or alm McGuire@ucdavis.edu.

## 33rd ANNUAL Plant Faire

Saturday, October 6 Member sale 7-9 a.m., public sale 9 a.m.-3 p.m.  
Arboretum Nursery at Orchard Park (Orchard Road at LaRue Road, UC Davis)

**10% member discount—Join or renew at the door for a free plant—\$5 off membership—one day only!**

Don't miss the biggest and best plant sale in the Central Valley! More than 1,000 varieties of great plants for your garden. Featuring Arboretum All-Star plants and a great selection of native plants. Locally grown, adapted to our climate. Fabulous houseplants and exotics from the Botanical Conservatory. Expert gardeners will be available to advise you. Proceeds support the Arboretum and the Conservatory. See plant list at [arboretum.ucdavis.edu](http://arboretum.ucdavis.edu) in mid-September.



# Garden News

## VOLUNTEER TRAINING

Would you like to learn more about California ecology and Central Valley gardening, join a group of active, dedicated people, and make a real contribution to the important work of the Arboretum? You are invited to become an Arboretum volunteer. There is something for everyone in the Arboretum's volunteer program. This year we are recruiting for tour leaders for adults and school groups, volunteer gardeners, and nursery assistants.

This year's volunteer training course will meet on Tuesday mornings, 9:00 a.m. to noon, October 16–December 4 (no class November 20). Following the core course, there will be additional training in each of the areas of specialization. The fee for the course is \$55, or \$45 for members of the Friends of the UC Davis Arboretum. To learn more about volunteering or to sign up for the course, please contact Amy McGuire at (530) 754-9126 or [almcguire@ucdavis.edu](mailto:almcguire@ucdavis.edu).



## NATURE'S GALLERY

This spectacular ceramic mosaic mural, created by UC Davis students, community members and Arboretum staff and volunteers, was the talk of the town in Washington, D.C. this summer. It was installed in the U.S. Botanic Garden on the Capitol Mall as part of an exhibit created by the American Public Gardens Association (APGA) to celebrate the important work done by America's public gardens. Twenty gardens from across the country were showcased in this exhibit. The mural depicts drought-tolerant plants in the Ruth Risdon Storer Garden at the UC Davis Arboretum and their insect associates, and demonstrates an innovative model for educating students and the public about the sciences through the arts. The mural was a GATEways pilot project by the Art/Science Fusion Program, under the leadership of Professor of Entomology and CA&ES Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education Diane Ullman and ceramic artist Donna Billick, with support from the Provost's Office and the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. The mural will be in Washington until October, when it will return to Davis to be permanently installed in the Arboretum.



## RYAN DEERING REJOINS HORTICULTURE STAFF

By Emily Griswold, Asst. Dir. of Horticulture

Please join us in welcoming Ryan Deering back to the Arboretum staff as our new GATEways Horticulturist. As Nursery Manager from 2000 to 2005 Ryan trans-

formed Orchard Park Nursery into a new plant sales venue and greatly expanded the nursery volunteer and internship programs. Ryan left the Arboretum in spring of 2005 to travel the world with



Linda Johnson

his wife, Annie. Their 15-month journey included stops in France, Switzerland, Turkey, Botswana, South Africa, India, Myanmar, Thailand, and Australia.

Two highlights of Ryan's travels were garden internships in the Mediterranean climate regions of South Africa and Western Australia. He had the opportunity to spend two months as an intern at the Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden in Cape Town. Kirstenbosch is dedicated to the native plants of the Cape Province, so it was a perfect setting to study the incredible biodiversity of the local flora. During Ryan's month-long internship at the King's Park Botanic Garden in Perth, Australia he participated in an ecological restoration project and a fire ecology study in the garden's on-site nature preserve. One of his most memorable experiences was scuba diving to monitor stands of seagrass in shark-infested waters!

Now that he's back home, Ryan's newest adventure is to learn about fatherhood. He and Annie had a daughter, Zara Jane Deering, on May 23. Ryan's new challenge as GATEways Horticulturist at the Arboretum will be to work with volunteers, students, and academic partners on new garden development and renovation projects. He's brimming with new ideas for interpretation and outreach in the Arboretum, which are key elements of the GATEways project. Ryan's current projects include completing the renovation of the Acacia Grove, developing plans for new plantings in the Australian Collection, and creating and leading a new native plant horticulture internship program.

Marion Scrolofsky

Walter Sistrunk

# Donations this Quarter

*We extend our sincere gratitude to these donors*

## NEW & RENEWING MEMBERS

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Memberships, UC Davis Arboretum, One Shields Ave., Davis, CA 95616

# FROM THE DIRECTOR



Dear Friends,

I'd like to use my column this time to thank all of you for supporting the Arboretum. Support from individuals is becoming increasingly important as we grow, serve more visitors, and have higher levels of gardens, exhibits, and programs to maintain.

We are grateful for a major gift from the estate of Mary Baer. Planned gifts such as this are critical to our success because they allow us to make strategic investments in our program and garden development. The Friends of the UC Davis Arboretum Board will be working with me this year to educate our members and volunteers about the importance of these types of gifts and to make it easier to plan for them.

I would like to recognize Dr. Eric Conn for his generous gift of \$30,000 to be split between long-term use (the Louise and Eric Conn Endowment) and short-term use (improvements to the Conn Acacia Grove). This thoughtful gift recognizes the importance of balancing long- and short-term needs in planning for the future of the Arboretum.

I would also like to thank Janet Thatcher and family, Bruce and Bev Watros, and the Mel Gagnon family, who have recently made commemorative contributions to dedicate new benches in the Storer Garden. If you would like to honor someone important to you, there are still three memorial benches in Storer Garden available for dedication (see p.3).

We depend not only on those who make financial contributions, but also on our supporters who contribute their service. I would like to thank the members of the Friends Board who are continuing in their leadership roles, and welcome Kathy Olson, who is joining the Board as a member at large. Kathy has been an active nursery volunteer and is taking on the leadership of the Plant Sales Task Force.

In fact, I'd like to thank all of our wonderful volunteers, without whom the Arboretum would be ... well, it's impossible to imagine the Arboretum without our volunteers! If you'd like to learn more about gardening and California ecology, and meet a wonderful group of people, I invite you to sign up for our annual volunteer training class (see p. 5).

I'm looking forward to seeing you all at the 33<sup>rd</sup> annual Plant Faire on Saturday, October 6. Please spread the word and invite your friends and neighbors—this is our most important fundraiser and a great time for people to join and become supporters of the Arboretum!

Best regards,

*Kathleen*

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