



# UCRBG Newsletter

## Go Native

By Lois Whyde

At the recent plant sale one group of plants sold out before any other, and that was the California natives! And with good reason. Once established, California natives are extremely drought tolerant, sturdy and will withstand abuse. Many of them will flower profusely while others have attractive foliage. But they are not always easy to find on the retail market.

With the abundance of natives planted in and around the Botanic Gardens we have a variety to use as mother stock, either from seeds or cuttings. But natives are not always easy to propagate due to their finicky nature. California native plants often have strong seed dormancy, particular germination needs, or requirements for freezing or scarification before they will germinate. Many natives are also difficult to propagate from woody cuttings and grow slowly when planted.



*Heteromeles arbutifolia*, Toyon

Here are just a few of the natives that will grow well in your garden and landscape. You might want to check out our specimens here in the Gardens to see their growing habits and characteristics before you decide what to plant. All the following are in the North Coast area of the Botanic Gardens and can be found on the switchback trail.

### **Toyon** (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*)

Located just down the driveway from the garage office, this easy to grow evergreen is showiest during the fall and winter months with bright red berries. A large shrub, toyon will grow up to 30 feet tall and 15 feet wide. This species is often called California holly, a common name that came from early settlers equating the dark green leaves and red berries to hollies (*Ilex*) from their home countries. Even though these two species are not related, the common name

stuck and in fact, the Hollywood Hills are named for this plant due to the abundance of toyon on the hillsides.

While animals will eat toyon berries, they contain a small amount of cyanogenic glycosides that break down into hydrocyanic acid when digested. While toxic to humans, Native American tribes found that by mild cooking, the astringent acid is removed. They used the fruit as a tea for a stomach remedy and also to make a jelly. Tolerant of a variety of soils, toyons grow best in part shade in our hot, dry area.

### **California Buckeye** (*Aesculus californica*)

One of the most asked about plants in the Gardens because of its unique characteristics is the California buckeye. This tree grows up to 40 feet tall and wide and goes dormant and loses its leaves in summer heat. Each tree seems to be slightly different as to when they lose and regain their foliage, probably due to the amount of water they receive. Their large creamy white flowers grow in elongated inflorescences called panicles that are 4-8 inches long and attractive to butterflies. Once the leaves drop, the large, 2-3-inch-long, unusual fig-shaped capsule fruits are exposed. Inside the capsule, the seed is large and orange brown. While this species is related to the Ohio buckeye, *Aesculus glabra*, the fruits of *A. californica* are many times larger and like its Ohio relative, the seeds of both species are toxic to humans. *continued on page 3*

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## Director's Report - Dr. Jodie Holt



Public botanic gardens are unique enterprises, established for the goal of maintaining a curated plant collection for public education and enjoyment as well as research and conservation. Ranging in size from less than one to hundreds of acres, rarely do public gardens employ sufficient staff for their size and complexity of grounds and programs. Thus, we all depend heavily on partnerships with our volunteers, campuses, municipalities, contractors, vendors, and members. Even our visitors,

who come for an outdoor experience, often give back in the form of memories and stories of what they love about the Gardens, and of course, their donations. In spite of the challenges of this job, I start each day in the enviable position of feeling grateful for the people I encounter each day, and their incredible loyalty and passion for our Botanic Gardens.

The year 2018 has been another tumultuous one, and we are pleased that we can serve as a peaceful haven for UCR students and staff and visitors from surrounding communities to get away and immerse themselves in nature and gardens. On a smaller scale we have had our share of tumult including power outages just a few days before and plumbing backups during the fall Garden Market & Plant Sale. While our staff are extraordinarily talented, we are grateful for the tremendous support and help we receive from our campus partners, especially Deborah McWilliams, CNAS Physical Planning Liaison, who navigates the complex landscape of safety, security, construction, and campus policies to help us address our aging infrastructure and plans for improvement. For example, when you visit the Gardens you might notice evidence of tree trimming around our high voltage wires. What is not obvious is the partnership Deborah helped us forge with Riverside Public Utilities, who added our trees to their regular maintenance schedule, saving us thousands of dollars each year.

As another year comes to a close, I continue to be grateful for our incredible staff and student workers, the strong support and assistance we have received from UCR and CNAS administrators, staff from many campus units, volunteers, and of course our members, all of whom work to help us achieve our mission to engage the campus and community in the science of nature, gardens, and conservation. I am especially appreciative of Theresa McLemore, our long-time Manager, who will be retiring in December of this year. Theresa has been a passionate worker and advocate for the Gardens who will be greatly missed! You will continue to see her around as she plans to return for a period of part-time work and then become a regular volunteer, for which we are grateful.

We look forward to another exciting year ahead and hope to see you all in the Gardens in 2019. I always welcome your feedback and input; please contact me at [bgdirector@ucr.edu](mailto:bgdirector@ucr.edu) or 951-784-6962.

Jodie

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The UCR Botanic Gardens Newsletter is a quarterly magazine published by the UCRBG staff, 900 University Avenue, Riverside, CA 92521, and is one of the benefits of membership in the Friends of UCRBG

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There is some evidence that shows *A. californica* is toxic to non-native trees, so if you do plant one in your landscape, don't plant it near your established trees.



*Aesculus californica*, California buckeye

#### California Fuchsia (*Epilobium canum* 'Route 66')

Cascading over the railing on the switchback in North Coast, this California native is known as California fuchsia for its vibrant scarlet tubular flowers. This easy to grow perennial shrub reaches 1 ½ to 2 feet high with a spread of 2-3 feet. It grows best in full sun and may need monthly watering in the summer, especially in this area. After blooming in the summer to fall, the plants tend to get scraggly and need to be cut back in early winter. Cutting them back to the ground revitalizes them the following spring. If they are not cut back, they tend to die the following year.

The plant is easy to grow, reseeds itself and comes up from rhizomes. *Epilobium* is a hummingbird favorite, thus giving it another common name of hummingbird flower.



*Epilobium canum* 'Route 66', California fuchsia

## Early Fall Bird Walk

The Gardens held an early fall Bird Walk & Breakfast event on September 22 to a sold-out group of 36 guests. We are fortunate that UCR, and in particular the Botanic Gardens, are hot spots for many species of permanent resident and seasonally migrating birds. Three expert guides from campus volunteered their time and expertise to lead the walk. Dr. Norm Ellstrand from the Department of Botany and Plant Sciences led a group of novice birders and instructed them in the basics of binocular use and bird watching, Dr. Gene Anderson from the Department of Anthropology led a group of experienced birders interested in a leisurely bird walk, and David Rankin



Gene Anderson, David Rankin and Norm Ellstrand

from the Department of Biology led the advanced birders keen on a faster-paced walk to spot as many birds as possible. Following the walks, guests and guides convened in the Conference Room for a continental breakfast, hosted by Director Holt, and discussed the bird sightings of the day. When all checklists were combined, a total of 151 birds of 36 different species were spotted during the 2+ hour walks. The most abundant species observed were hummingbirds and bushtits, while the most colorful sightings included a Lazuli Bunting, Western Tanager, and Western Bluebird. Our early morning Bird Walk & Breakfast events have become increasingly popular and fill up quickly once announced. Be sure to check our online Calendar of Events for the date of our Winter Bird Walk & Breakfast!

# DOCENT TRAINING CLASS !

A six week Docent Training Class will begin on February 5, 2019. If you are interested in the rewarding and fun experience of leading tours for children and adults please contact the office at [ucrbg@ucr.edu](mailto:ucrbg@ucr.edu) or call 951-784-6962.

## Spotlight On ... Theresa McLemore

By Lois Whyde

“Ok Chickens, you know what time it is.”

As strange as that phrase may sound, if you are located near a Botanic Gardens employee or student worker, you may hear this over the walkie talkie radios as Gardens Manager, Theresa McLemore, calls out to remind us it is break time. Calling us her chickens is a term of endearment in Theresa vernacular. Her chickens are all of us who work for her here at the Gardens. Soon we will not hear her say that, for after 12 years as Manager of the UCR Botanic Gardens, Theresa is retiring at the end of the year.

Before arriving in Riverside, Theresa was employed at the Huntington Library, Art Collections and Botanical Gardens in San Marino, or the “H place” as Theresa calls it. She gained valuable experience in her 12 years there, which she in turn brought to the UCR Botanic Gardens. She has extensive knowledge of a wide range of plants including California natives.

But her best quality, (in my opinion) is her dedication to the UCRBG. There is not a week, or weekend for that matter, that goes by that Theresa is not thinking about the Gardens. She is constantly concerned about preserving collection material, enhancing the visitors’ experience and improving the grounds.

She has poured her heart into the Botanic Gardens and it shows. Her attention to detail is astute and she is constantly reminding all of us to do this, and not to forget to do that. This attention to detail is not only focused on the grounds, but also on the employees, especially the students.

One of Theresa’s natural skills is her ability to recruit quality student employees. For a lot of them this is the first job they



CONGRATS  
THERESA  
ON YOUR  
RETIREMENT!

have ever had. Once hired, she instructs, nurtures and

devotes herself to developing them into valued employees. For that reason, Chickens is an appropriate term, as she ‘broods’ over all of us, expanding our knowledge, developing lifelong skills and helping us to grow into better human beings.

Theresa thinks of the Botanic Gardens as part of her family and her employees think of her as part of the Gardens. So while it will be difficult for Theresa to say goodbye, it will be equally hard for all of us to say goodbye to her. Please join me in wishing her a fruitful and enjoyable retirement and may she come back often to visit her Chickens.

### A note from a graduated student worker

I am truly grateful for the time I spent working at the Botanic Gardens, and even more so for being able to work for Theresa. Just a few of Theresa's traits that I aspire to replicate are her compassion, energy, and ability to give meaningful advice. Theresa's passion for the Gardens and care for her employees will stick with me forever.

Sincerely,  
Zachary Dunn

## Art in the Garden



Ryan Klachko and Carson Brown

It was a beautiful day in the UCR Botanic Gardens on Saturday, November 3rd for the 7th Annual Art in the Gardens. Over 900 visitors (a record turnout!) were treated to the very diverse artworks of the 26 participating artists and artisans, including the wonderful pastries provided by Mien Van de Ven. The event received rave reviews from both the artists and visitors who enjoyed the variety of artwork and the beauty of the Gardens. One of the highlights of the event was the participation for the first time of two of UCRBG’s student workers, Carson Brown and Ryan Klachko, who were selling beautifully crafted wood items made from recycled wood obtained from the Gardens.

A special thank you to the team of volunteers who helped make this event a success: Steve Orr, Nancy Cox, Pauline Calkin, Susen Moors, Merrill Barton, Jake Jacobson and Marilyn Jacobson, and, of course, the staff of the Gardens. We hope to see you for 8th Annual Art in the Gardens on Saturday, November 2, 2019!

## Butterfly Corner

### Sonoran Blue

Article and Photos by Ann Platzer

It is unlikely that the Sonoran Blue will visit your Riverside garden but do not fret; instead, turn off your computer or TV, put on your hiking boots and visit the Santa Rosa Plateau Preserve in February or March. You may be greeted by the Sonoran Blue, considered to be the most beautiful of our small Southern California butterflies with its unmistakable bright



Photo 1: Adult female

red-orange patches contrasting with brilliant iridescent blue wings. The Sonoran Blue, *Philotes sonorensis*, family, Lycaenidae has a wing-span of only three quarters to seven eighths of an inch. Close-focus binoculars are recommended! The upper side is silvery-blue with red-orange spots at the outer margin of the forewings. The upper hind wings of the female, but not the male, also has a red spot (Photo 1: adult female). Below the wings are dusty gray with a distinct red-orange patch.

The Sonoran Blue is an early spring flier peaking in February and March or April, but may be seen through June at higher elevations. It is usually seen flying low along cliff bottoms and rocky canyons where its food plant grows. Ed and I first saw a

female on the way to the Santa Rosa Plateau Preserve at the end of March 2012.

The female lays eggs singly on the fleshy leaves or stems of the host plant live-forever, *Dudleya* species, (Photo 2: *Dudleya lanceolata*) which include *D. cymosa*, *D. lanceolata*, and *D. saxosa*. The young larva bores into the plant to feed on the thick juicy contents; however, generally a few posterior segments of the larva remain outside on the surface of the plant. The light brown pupa overwinters in dead leaves at the base of plants or may hibernate under stones. The adults have one generation per year.



Photo 2: *Dudleya lanceolata*

The Anza-Borrego Desert State Park in San Diego County is another place to observe this stunning butterfly. Go soon because, unfortunately, this spectacular little jewel of California, like a number of our other fauna, is near the endangered or threatened list. So go see it while you can! Many lepidopterists can tell you of a local colony of a favorite butterfly that has ceased to exist because of habitat destruction due to a subdivision, highway, supermarket, or dam. For example, a gigantic earth-filled dam obliterated the largest known southern colony of the Sonoran Blue in the San Gabriel Canyon.

A number of butterfly species are currently on the endangered species list. The Sonoran Blue population has been declining over the last 50 plus years. Please do not dig up their food plants for your home garden. It does not help the butterflies' survival in the wild. Thanks to Edward Platzer for reviewing this article.

Happy Butterfly Gardening!

## Fall Garden Market & Plant Sale and Looking Ahead

By Theresa McLemore & Jodie Holt

As our valued members you fully understand the importance of our Garden Market & Plant Sales. Not only do they give you the opportunity to find just the right plant to add to your garden, they also give you a chance to see old gardening friends, enjoy the unique ambiance that the Gardens provide, and give you the satisfaction of knowing you are supporting the UCR Botanic Gardens with your membership. That loyalty is very important to us as our Garden Market & Plant Sales require abundant advance planning, preparation and coordination, all of which is supported by your membership and financial contributions.

In preparation for the Fall 2018 Garden Market & Plant Sale, staff and volunteers were very successful in propagating new and unusual varieties as well as some old favorites. Informative signage was assembled, plant lists were created, and descriptive tags were printed and inserted into every pot. In addition to the hours of propagating, growing, and tending to plants, we must set up the sale site to best serve our attendees. This year was especially challenging; heavy wind storms, interrupted internet connectivity, downed electrical service, and vehicle issues all made the set up process more difficult. With creativity, campus support, and the hard work of staff and volunteers we managed to pull all the loose ends together and have a very successful event. *continued on page 10*

## In The Works

By Jodie Holt

Progress is being made on all fronts in the Gardens; here are a few of our recent initiatives and accomplishments.

- The collection in the greenhouse has been reorganized following the plan outlined in the fall Newsletter, and creation of a new Conservatory in the first section is well underway.
- An arbor company has been contracted to remove the vines from the geodesic dome so that much-needed repairs to the wood lath structure can finally be made.
- With the help of volunteers Mien Van de Ven and Antoon Ploeg, our staff have been making progress cleaning up the unique tree collection in the Subtropical Fruit Orchard. Our goal is eventually to open the 3-acre space for visits and tours.
- The Alder Canyon lawn continues to take a beating from our well attended events and steady stream of visitors. Unfortunately, the welcome shade in the canyon is not ideal for maintaining a healthy lawn, so over the winter we will once again close off the lawn for renovation, mulching and reseeding.
- We are continuing to replace broken or missing plant labels in the Gardens and have labeled the new plantings in the Australian section and the Salvia Knoll.
- With guidance and support from our financial team in the BEES Administrative Unit, we have acquired new UCRBG branded swag in the form of canvas tote bags and clay pot coffee mugs, both of which were hot sale items at the fall Garden Market along with our branded tee shirts. New branded items are being considered as well.
- At Art in the Gardens we held our second Pop up Garden Shop in the gatehouse, where we sold plants propagated from our collection as well as tees, totes, and mugs (which sold out!). In the future we plan to continue having pop up sales during events in the Gardens.
- We are working with UCR Advancement and Communications to design and produce all new UCRBG brochures, including Welcome, Membership, Celebration & Memorial, and Volunteer brochures. These should be available by spring 2019.
- In our ongoing effort to increase connections with campus and community, I have been giving presentations about the Gardens in CNAS Freshman Seminars and to various community groups in Riverside and surrounding towns.
- Preparation for a Docent Training Class is underway. The class will run from February 5th to March 12th and will meet weekly from 9:00am to 12:00pm. Please contact the Gardens if you are interested.
- The UCR Recreation department and UCRBG have partnered to include a Botanic Gardens element to the Camp Highlander Youth Camp programs beginning with the winter camp in November. Camp Highlander student Counselors will lead youth groups through this new nature hike element.



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EMPTY POTS  
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GLADLY TAKE  
THEM!

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## What to See in the Gardens

By Theresa McLemore

In the Botanic Gardens on any day of the year there is always something in bloom, a creature to observe, a tree to rest under, a fragrance to enjoy. As the Manager it has been my privilege to watch the Gardens change through the seasons over twelve years. Each season reveals its own beauty and another perspective of the Gardens. Out of all the seasons, I enjoy winter the most. There are quite a few deciduous trees throughout the Gardens. Their fallen leaves form beautiful carpets that fill the air with an earthy scent and create a warm home for insects and lizards. Many limbs and tree branches are revealed to expose the linear structure that forms the backbone of our collection. The contrast of the bare trees against our winter skies is dramatic. If flowers are your thing, they are out there as well! Lavender flowers adorn the spiny *Solanum hindsianum*, Baja nightshade, that can be found in one of our geographic gardens, Latin America. Not far from this you will find *Elaeagnus pungens*, silverthorn. Its branches hide thorns and the flowers are hard to see, but the fragrance is sweet. The evergreen *Schinus molle*, Peruvian pepper tree, at Pepper Rock is lovely in the late afternoon as the sun lights up the leaved branches that gently sweep the soil underneath. Near the lath house is a glorious *Camellia sasanqua* 'Australilan Hiryu' that is covered with cherry pink flowers. Upon close inspection you will see that the flower



*Camellia sasanqua* 'Australilan Hiryu'

petals have a sparkling sheen. The *Tagetes lemmonii*, Mexican marigold, in the Butterfly Garden is a gold beacon to overwintering birds that feast on the prolific bloomer. The towering *Salvia purpurea*, purple garden sage, near the garage is covered with purple flowers that attract hummingbirds. It is not unusual to see them swooping and charging at each other, laying claim to this lofty plant. I will miss my daily walks through the Botanic Gardens to note what needs to be added to our work list. I will especially miss the seasonal changes, the sights and sounds. Most of all I will miss working with

those that love the Gardens and see its importance. These individuals are willing to do what they must to make this unique beauty available to all. Please come to the Botanic Gardens to enjoy all that it has to offer this winter or in any season.



*Tagetes lemmonii*, Mexican marigold

## Membership Information

- ▶ Memberships may be renewed on the UCRBG website: [www.gardens.ucr.edu](http://www.gardens.ucr.edu)

### Benefits of Membership

- ▶ Early entry to the Garden Market & Plant Sales
- ▶ Quarterly Newsletter
- ▶ Reduced price for select UCRBG events
- ▶ Member only events
- ▶ Use of Horticultural Library
- ▶ 10% discount at local businesses:
  - Bonnett Irrigation
  - Louie's Nursery
  - Paradise Garden Center
  - Parkview Nurseries
- ▶ Discounts or free entry to 320 gardens, arboreta & conservatories in the U.S. [www.ahsgardening.org](http://www.ahsgardening.org)

## Birds of the Gardens

### The Ruby-crowned Kinglet

By Chris Swarth

In winter, if one sees a lone, tiny, hyperactive songbird foraging in the outer parts of a shrub or low tree – wings flicking, constantly on the move – it’s likely to be a Ruby-crowned Kinglet. The greenish kinglet is a ubiquitous winter visitor to gardens, parks, backyards, riparian woodlands, and forested canyons throughout Southern California. In the UCR Botanic Gardens look for them almost anywhere among shrubs, cacti, and trees. As the name implies, it does have a red crown (male only), but this is only displayed when the bird is agitated and feeling aggressive towards a threat. Otherwise the red corona is concealed by greenish cap feathers.

The diminutive Ruby-crowned Kinglet is a solitary bird by nature and generally shuns close association with members of its own species. The rapid, raspy call notes (ji-jitt... ji-jitt... ji-jitt...) given as it moves about in the foliage announce its presence and signal to any nearby kinglet – “stay away, leave me be.” These were dubbed “sequestration notes” by U.C. Berkeley ornithologist Joseph Grinnell. In winter when insects are scarce it’s especially critical for birds to maximize their foraging efficiency and energy intake. By excluding con-specifics from its foraging path the kinglet reduces competition and improves its chances of encountering ample insect prey along its route. It will join with loose flocks of the Oak Titmouse, Bushtit, or Yellow-rumped Warbler, but this is only temporary. Rarely will you see more than a few Ruby-crowned Kinglets together in the same tree.

Kinglets search leaves and branches for aphids, leafhoppers, psyllids (jumping plant lice), scale, small beetles, flies, and various insect larvae. They are a true friend to the gardener. Ruby-crowned Kinglets also “hover-glean,” a foraging technique in which they hover in place for a second or two near the outer leaves of a plant while snapping up small flying insects with their short, pointed bill.

Ruby-crowned Kinglets breed in the coniferous forests of western mountains and across northern Canada. Recently small numbers were discovered by Phil Unitt, San Diego Natural History Museum, nesting high in the San Jacinto Mountains - the southern-most breeding spot in California. For unknown reasons, breeding populations in the Sierra Nevada are declining. They migrate into our area in late September and remain until April.



Ruby-crowned Kinglet; Photo by Ninad Thakoor

A Ruby-crowned Kinglet played a role in the discovery of the Great Gray Owl in Yosemite National Park in 1915. In June, Joseph Grinnell and his field crew were carrying out field studies at their camp near Glacier Point when their attention was drawn to a large fir tree by the persistent “ratchet” calls of an excited kinglet. When they approached the fir out flew the huge owl. The owl was collected for the museum back in Berkeley, as was Grinnell’s habit, and it became the first record for breeding by the Great Gray Owl in the lower 48 states. In his account of this famous ornithological event Grinnell gives full credit to the kinglet for discovering the owl!

*Chris Swarth currently assists California Audubon and the Western Riverside County Biological Monitoring Program with studies of the endangered Tricolored Blackbird.*

## Volunteer Orientation

Interested in volunteering at the Gardens?

Volunteer Orientations are held the second Tuesday of each month at 9:00 am. Meet in the Meeting Room and wear comfortable shoes to tour the Gardens.

Let us know your areas of interest by completing the volunteer interest form on the UCRBG website <https://gardens.ucr.edu/involved/volunteer.html>.



## Wildlife of the Gardens

### Bobcat- The Wildcat of North America

By Michele Felix-Derbarmdiker

The Bobcat (*Lynx rufus*) is the most abundant wild cat of North America, but it is very elusive, so seeing one is a rare treat. Catching a glimpse of this beautiful animal can leave one with a sense of awe or perhaps inspire a chuckle. Bobcats are stealthy predators but their bobbed tail, large ears and feet that seem in



Photo by Chuck Farrar at the UCRBG

disproportion with their bodies can give them a slightly comical appearance. Whether your encounter prompts awe, a smile or both, bobcats are an impressive animal that should be respected and better understood. Hopefully this piece will encourage you to continue your education on this secretive cat.

#### Habitat/Feeding

Bobcats can be found in a variety of habitats in North America, ranging from Canada to Northern Mexico. Like most cats, they rely on stealth and camouflage to hunt, so thickly vegetated habitats are preferable. Bobcats are at home in mountain, woodland, semi-arid, arid and even suburban environments. The cats expertly utilize the components of their territories to stalk and hunt small animals, primarily rabbits. Don't let their size fool you. Bobcats are opportunistic crepuscular hunters with long muscular back legs capable of leaping 12 feet, excellent vision/hearing, sharp retractable claws and strong jaw allowing them to take down prey 8x their weight. Prey will vary based on geographical location and seasonal changes.

#### Breeding

This normally solitary cat of the shadows will begin to seek out a mate in late winter. The males are usually fertile from around October to summer. Females typically give birth in April or May to 1-6 kittens. Young are born in the main den within the female's territory and raised only by the female. The kittens begin to travel and learn to hunt with their mother around 5 months old and disperse to establish their own territory by their first birthday. Most breed by their second year. Adults have few predators but kittens can be preyed upon by coyotes, owls, eagles, cougars, bears and male bobcats.



Photo by Chuck Farrar at the UCRBG

#### Identification

The North American Bobcat shares similar characteristics with other members of the *Lynx* genus. Here are some identifying characteristics:

Size: ~ double the size of average house cat, weight range 14-40 lbs.

Coloration: Can vary depending on location. For example, cats in the mountains tend to be darker while those in dryer regions are lighter in color. Fur is primarily tan in color with spots and dark bars on foreleg and tail; look for the short "bobbed" tail for which it gets its name.

Appearance: Yellow eyes with black pupils, long back legs, large paws, pointed black tipped ears, ruffs of extended fur around the face.



Photo by Pam Roose at the UCRBG

#### Threats

Currently, Bobcat populations are stable within their range. Localized dwindling populations can be found. Until protections were established in the 1970's, populations were steadily decreasing due to overhunting. Despite these protections, Bobcats still face several threats:

- Urbanization/habitat fragmentation
- Ingestion of rodenticides
- Diseases from ticks and mites
- Decreased genetic variation
- Hunting for sport, fur and livestock protection
- Car collisions.

*Michele is a UCR graduate who worked as a field biologist for 6 years throughout Riverside County and is currently a naturalist for Riverside-Corona Resource Conservation District.*

## An Oce-What?

By Lois Whyde

Recently a visitor to the Botanic Gardens notified one of the student staff that they had just spotted an ocelot laying in the shade of the redwoods in the North Coast section of the Garden. They had pictures, although dark and not very close, of a spotted, cat-like creature looking calmly and coolly,



Photo by Larry Ewing at the UCRBG

straight at the camera. This is a centrally located and popular area of the garden and probably one of the most trafficked and noisy sections. What would an ocelot be doing there?

While they were once found from south Texas up into

Arkansas and Louisiana, today ocelots are endangered and there are less than 50 left in the U.S. and those are found in the lower Rio Grande Valley. They also have a long ringed tail and slightly rounded ears.

So, if it was not an ocelot the visitors saw, what was it?

It was probably Bob, our resident bobcat.

Countless times this summer our staff have encountered Bob. Over the last few months he (or maybe it's Bobbie) has become much more visible and comfortable being around us. During lunch one day, as we were eating at the table outside the garage office, Bob nonchalantly walked right by us. Never quickening his pace or looking back at us, he just proceeded on his way.

Traveling up to the *Ficus* grove area of the garden one day I turned the corner to the lawn area and came across Bob. He was digging in the turf, like a dog, after a gopher. I was less than 15 feet away before I stopped the ATV. Bob just turned his head, looked at me, and went right back to digging. It was exciting being so close to this beautiful cat with tufted ears and a bobbed tail.

I watched while Bob walked 10 feet away from me and lay down in the shade of the *Cocculus laurifolius*. By this time, I was joined by Carson Brown, one of our student staff and we stood there watching Bob as he cleaned himself. It wasn't too long before he was bored with us watching him and he proceeded to walk toward Palm Corner.

There have been other countless instances where staff have run across Bob and even what appeared to be a bobcat kitten. Jorge Fregoso captured photos of Bob taking a shower under the sprinklers. The animals have been seen in many areas of the garden and even in the neighbor's orchard.

So, did the visitors really see an ocelot?

No, I think it was Bob.

### Garden Market & Plant Sale, continued from page 5.

Every event provides us the opportunity to make changes to enhance your Gardens plant sale experience. At this plant sale we initiated practices that made the checkout process even smoother and more accurate. Our conveniently located hold areas allowed shoppers to leave their plants while shopping with other vendors. Delicious refreshments were available in two locations. Children had the opportunity to enjoy a T-shirt painting workshop. New UCR Botanic Gardens branded products - terra cotta mugs and canvas tote bags - were very popular and some items sold out quickly.

At the same time, after each plant sale we must evaluate the revenue/expense balance in order to insure that we are using Gardens staff and resources wisely and sustainably.

Once again we were forced to confront the reality that our Garden Market & Plant Sales, while remaining extremely popular, actually cost us more than they reap in revenue when staff time and effort are considered. For this reason, we have decided to continue to pursue changes that will more closely align with our mission as a public garden and also lead to greater financial sustainability. Since fall in southern California is truly the best time to plant perennial plants, which comprise most of what we sell from the Gardens, going forward we will continue to host and strive to improve the Fall Garden Market & Plant Sale. For spring 2019, we will instead host a smaller, more intimate, members only event, our "Spring Celebration & Member Appreciation Plant Sale." Mark your calendars for April 6, 2019 for this first time and unique event that will be open to just you, our members! This event will also be "in place" in our upper nursery where our beautiful plants are propagated and grown. You will have a chance to shop, take tours, and visit special places such as the Greenhouse, Butterfly Garden, Rose Gardens, Geodesic Dome, and even our Horticultural Library in our Schneider House Office. You will also be able to see firsthand some of the changes that we have made to our facilities. All of these improvements have been made possible by the generosity and support of our members and donors.



Jane Evans and her painted t-shirts

*As 2018 draws to a close, I want to express my deepest gratitude for the long-time support of members of the Friends of the UCR Botanic Gardens, one of UCR's oldest volunteer support groups. Over the past year, your generosity has supported augmentation of our collection, garden and trail upkeep, and educational programs, including dozens of docent-led school tours for students of all ages.*

*I am pleased to highlight our current ongoing initiatives that donations have helped make possible. Our **Connectivity Project** features signage and displays, hand crafted garden signs, trail markers, and a new GIS interactive app that provides real and virtual tours of the Gardens and collection. Our **Conservatory Project** features a newly designed section in our re-roofed greenhouse for display of unique shade-loving plants for demonstration, teaching, and conservation purposes. Finally, we are pleased to be able to support our **UCR student workers** with donor gift funds, which enhances our workforce, helps with their education, and provides a pipeline for future careers in related fields.*

*Your contribution will keep our Gardens and valuable programs growing strong. Please make your gift today!*

*I look forward to seeing you in the Gardens.*

*Jodie S. Holt*

Jodie S. Holt, Ph.D.

Director UCR Botanic Gardens



## Your legacy in the Gardens

Would it be meaningful to you to make an impact that will ensure the beauty and vitality of the UCR Botanic Gardens for future generations to enjoy? There are many ways to accomplish this, including a gift through your will or a charitable gift annuity that pays income back to you. You may direct your gift to education, preservation, or general support of the Gardens.

If you would like more information on how to leave a legacy to the UCR Botanic Gardens, please contact:



Brianna Wrightsman  
 Director of Development  
 College of Natural and Agricultural Sciences  
 951-827-3278  
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*If you have already remembered the Gardens in your plans, please let us know as we would appreciate the opportunity to steward your generous gift.*

University of California, Riverside  
Botanic Gardens  
900 University Ave.  
Riverside, CA 92521

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## UCRBG Calendar of Events

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| January 8   | <b>Volunteer Orientation</b> , Meeting Room, 9:00 am             |
| January 13  | <b>Rose Pruning Demonstration</b> , Rose Gardens, 1:00 - 3:00 pm |
| January 20  | <b>Rose Pruning Demonstration (Rain Date)</b> , 1:00 - 3:00 pm   |
| TBD         | <b>Bird Walk &amp; Breakfast</b> , Meeting Room, 6:30 am         |
| February 5  | <b>Docent Training Class</b> , Meeting Room, 9:00 am - 12:00 pm  |
| February 12 | <b>Volunteer Orientation</b> , Meeting Room, 9:00 am             |
| February 23 | <b>Winter Event</b> , Meeting Room, 2:00 - 5:00 pm               |
| March 12    | <b>Volunteer Orientation</b> , Meeting Room, 9:00 am             |
| April 6     | <b>Spring Celebration &amp; Member Appreciation Plant Sale</b>   |

**Please note:** The UCRBG will have late openings (1:00 pm) on the 1st and 3rd Friday of each month.