



UCRBG Newsletter

PRIMAVERA IN THE GARDENS!

By Jodie Holt

Primavera in the Gardens, our largest annual fundraiser, was conceived by the Friends 21 years ago to support the UCR Botanic Gardens. While we receive generous support from CNAS, our operating budget is largely funded by gifts, donations, raised revenue, and fundraising. Without all these sources we could not continue to provide daily free admission, offer educational programming, and launch new projects and initiatives in the Gardens. As costs escalate and funding needs grow, we are extremely grateful to our sponsors, guests, and vendors who continue to support our vision by participating in Primavera in the Gardens.



The 21st annual Primavera in the Gardens was held on a cool and somewhat rainy Sunday, May 19, 2019. As with last year, we greatly appreciated the collaboration of University Advancement in planning, design and production of materials and signage, promotion and correspondence, and coordination of sponsorships for this special event. With the contribution of the CNAS Development team Primavera has become an even more elegant and successful fundraising event.

We are thankful for the generous support of 15 sponsors this year. Including sponsors and their guests over 300 participants attended the 21st Primavera in the Gardens. Guests found Alder Canyon staged with a wonderful display of canopied vendor booths serving fine foods and beverages. Appetizers

and desserts were provided by 9 local restaurants and UCR's own Citrus Grove Catering, who staffed two booths this year. Beverage vendors included two Temecula wineries, both long-time participants, four local craft breweries, and Augie's Coffee House. For the first time guests were treated to a California wine booth showcasing fine wines from Napa and Sonoma Counties.

Music was provided once again by Marti & the Smooth Catz, playing retro rock and smooth jazz in the turnaround with a beautiful desert background, and Professor Tom Perring, playing acoustic folk music in Alder Canyon. This year for the first time we engaged A Touch of Ivory Entertainment, who enlisted violinist Tyler Emmerson to play near the Gardens entrance for all to enjoy. The Silent Auction, once again organized and staffed by volunteers, offered 37 fantastic items for competitive bidding and raised over \$3,700 to support the Gardens.

Primavera could not happen without generous donations of time, talent, and resources by dozens of dedicated people. We gratefully acknowledge our UCRBG staff for making the Gardens so beautiful for this special event; our hardworking Primavera team for organizing and managing the event; dozens of volunteers and UCR Advancement Ambassadors; our generous vendor, florist and silent auction donors; and our sponsors and guests; all of whom helped make our annual fundraiser a resounding success!

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Director's Report - Dr. Jodie Holt



The summer Newsletter is always packed with news and photos from a busy spring season, and this year is no exception. Adding to our already-full spring calendar, we have continued our program of making significant improvements to our collection, gardens, trails, facilities, operations, membership, and visitor experience. I know that our staff and volunteers are ready for the summer slowdown in events, tours, visitors, and even plant and weed growth, which gives us time to slow down ourselves, catch up on behind-the-scenes work, and take much needed vacations.

Our staff is small— five full-time and two part-time staff (not counting me) and around eight student workers. If it were not for hundreds of regular and event-specific volunteers none of our accomplishments would be possible. As examples, one long-time volunteer spent over 80 hours securing 85 volunteers to insure the success of our Spring Celebration & Member Appreciation Plant Sale. Another long-time volunteer coordinated all student Ambassadors and volunteers needed for the success of Primavera. A group of volunteers stepped forward to tackle cleanup of the Baja California Garden, while several campus groups volunteered for cleanup days in the Australia Garden. Volunteer rosarians taught over 140 guests how to prune roses last January, and after a propagation class for Master Gardeners, participants pitched in and propagated hundreds of plants for the next plant sale. Another volunteer coordinates our amazing Docents, who tirelessly volunteer for dozens of school tours bringing thousands of K-12 students to the Gardens each year. Big events, rowdy students, and rampant weed growth are no match for the dedication of our UCRBG volunteers!

There are many reasons to volunteer—giving back to the community, feeding a passion, learning new skills, working with others, feeling good about yourself, and more. Volunteers are most likely to return if they believe in the mission and importance of the organization for which they work, their efforts are appreciated, and they enjoy the experience. I am in awe of the passion and dedication of our volunteers, and their enthusiasm inspires me to insure that our mission is clear, our values are strong, and our appreciation is demonstrated. It is only with confidence and dependence on our staff and volunteer workforce that we can move forward with new and improved gardens, programs and events, and dream big—perhaps one day having a new building for displays, events, food venues, parking and a grand new entrance to the Gardens!

With the help of our volunteers we can continue our journey towards becoming a truly extraordinary oasis of nature in the Inland Empire that provides an educational, enriching, and aesthetically pleasing experience for our campus, community, and region. As always I welcome your comments, suggestions, feedback and volunteering! Please feel free to contact me at bgdirector@ucr.edu or 951-784-6962.

Jodie

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Friends Membership Update

As a Friends member you are contributing to UCR's living museum, curated to inspire research, education, and appreciation of nature and its stewardship. Formally established in 1980, the Friends have provided support for the development and maintenance of the Gardens for decades. Through funds accrued from annual membership dues, the Gardens have been enhanced, unique collections have been expanded, and education programs have provided enriching experiences for students of all ages. The UCR Botanic Gardens today would not be possible without the enthusiasm and support of the Friends.

Student - \$20 and Individual - \$50

- ▶ Early admission to plant sale events and members-only plant sales
- ▶ 10% discount at participating local nurseries and garden centers. For a complete list visit <https://gardens.ucr.edu/involved/friends.html>
- ▶ eNews and quarterly digital UCRBG Newsletter
- ▶ Discounted and member-only Gardens events
- ▶ Use of UCRBG Horticultural Library
- ▶ American Horticultural Society (AHS) Reciprocal Admissions Program (RAP). For a complete list visit <http://www.ahsgardening.org/gardening-programs/rap>

Family - \$75

- ▶ Membership benefits apply to two adults and two children under 18 years of age per household

Sustainer - \$150

- ▶ All of the Family Membership Benefits
- ▶ Free admission for two to Gardens educational events including lectures, workshops, Bird Walks, and Twilight Tours
- ▶ Option of receiving printed AHS RAP Directory
- ▶ Option of receiving printed UCRBG Newsletter at no extra charge

Benefactor - \$500

- ▶ All of the Sustainer Benefits
- ▶ Invitation for two to exclusive Gardens events and receptions such as a behind-the-scenes presentation and tour of new installations and areas not yet open to the public

Patron - \$1,000

- ▶ All of the Benefactor Benefits
- ▶ Invitation for two to special VIP Gardens events with Director and special guests

Printed UCRBG Newsletter \$20

Join the Friends online at <https://gardens.ucr.edu/member> or by check payable to UCR Foundation, mailed to UCR Foundation PO Box 112 Riverside, CA 92502-0112.

Free entry or discounts to 320 gardens with your membership!

Member Appreciation Spring Plant Sale

By Janine Almanzor



This year's Spring Plant Sale was held in appreciation for the support of our Friends members and took place in the upper nursery area of the Gardens. All the planning and preparation to make the area accessible to hundreds of shoppers proved to be successful. There was a little more exploring for the shoppers to do than at our usual sales

because the plants were in various locations in the lath house, the green house, and outside. Many people enjoyed the behind-the-scenes tours led by Theresa McLemore of the Greenhouse, Dome and Butterfly Garden. Shoppers were very pleased with the plant quality and selection and commented that it was nice to walk around in the upper areas, as many had never been there before. Other nice comments we received were:

"The shuttles were very efficient and seemed to move people around quickly."

"All the wonderful volunteers and students were amazing!"

"The complimentary baked goods and beverages offered to the customers were awesome!"

"Everything looked like it went extremely smoothly."



We would like to extend a big thank you to all the volunteers who made the event run so smoothly and to Becky Levers for undertaking the task of organizing all the volunteers. The refreshments were gener-

ously provided by University Advancement and staffed by Brianna Wrightsman, our CNAS Director of Development.

Spotlight On... The Gatehouse

By Jodie Holt



The UCR Botanic Gardens receives tens of thousands of visitors from campus and the community each year. This includes thousands of walk-in visitors, thousands of school children on dozens of school tours, hundreds of participants in educational events, and numerous Friends members and visitors attending

fund-raising events. The entrance gatehouse building is one of the first things our visitors see and it is important that it be attractive, functional, and present UCR and the Botanic Gardens in a positive light.

As part of a recent campus project to improve ADA accessibility in public spaces, we worked with an outside contractor to make significant upgrades to the restrooms that are part of the entrance gatehouse. UCR funds paid for ADA improvements, including remodeling one restroom, pouring a new sidewalk, and installing a railing. Taking advantage of the construction underway, we partnered with CNAS to fund additional upgrades, including remodeling the second restroom, replacing all fixtures (toilets and sinks) and doors in both restrooms, installing a new refrigerated hydration station, pouring additional concrete and adding steps to maintain the trailhead to the North American Desert Garden, adding new exterior LED lighting, and painting all interiors and outside trim. We are grateful to the excellent contractor and his crew whose design and workmanship beautified the building both inside and out while preserving the sense of symmetry. They also carefully redesigned the sidewalk to maintain access to the donation box and utility of the cashiering window, since this is the only UCR cashier-approved site in the Gardens for donations and cash handling.

We appreciate the patience of our visitors, event guests, tour participants, and rental groups during construction when the restrooms were closed and only a portable restroom was available at the entrance. We hope you will agree that the upgrades to this special 40+ year old building were well worth the wait!

Spring Bird Walk in the Gardens

Another successful Bird Walk and Breakfast was hosted in the Gardens on Saturday, April 13. As usual the event sold out, although damp and drizzly weather made a few folks stay home. Expert UCR birders Norm Ellstrand and David Rankin volunteered their time as guides, and after a brief welcome and orientation the group headed out at 6:30 am for a birding walk before the Gardens were opened to the public. After the birding walk the guests returned to the Conference Room for a continental breakfast, organized by Pam Ferre and hosted by Director Holt. Norm and David led a review of bird sightings of the day and it was clear that weather did not keep the birds away. A total of 31 species was recorded, including five different species of hummingbirds (including 13 Anna's Hummingbirds), a flock of 100 Cedar Waxwings, and one Plumbeous Vireo, a spring and fall migrant sometimes seen in the Gardens. Our early morning Bird Walk and Breakfast events are increasingly popular so check our calendar often to find out when the next one will be held.



Plumbeous Vireo ~ Photo by Norm Ellstrand

Butterfly Corner

Satyr Comma

Article and Photos by Ann Platzer



Adult, dorsal view

Last July Ed and I visited Oak Glen with the California Native Plant Society, where we enjoyed a wonderful tour with Dr. Tim Krantz, a noted expert on the flora of the San Bernardino Mountains. We saw a wonderful display of native plants and also an abundance of butterfly species. Of special note was the Satyr Comma, *Polygona satyrus*, which flashed bright orange and black upper wings with naturally scalloped wing margins (photo: Adult, dorsal view). The underside of this butterfly is brown patterned like a dead leaf; thus, it is another bright colored butterfly that all but disappears from view when it lands with closed wings. This species is a medium-sized butterfly with a wingspan of 25-28 mm (1¾-2½ inches). It is a

rather swift flyer but rarely flies any great distance before landing, which makes it easy to photograph.

The Satyr Comma prefers moist woodlands and riparian habitat along streambeds, especially where its nettle host plant, such as stinging nettle, *Urtica dioica*, grows in abundance. Oak Glen and also Two Trees Trail in the Box Spring Reserve are ideal searching areas for the Satyr Comma. As this species favors moist areas, it is rarely seen in the desert.

The female Satyr Comma lays pale green eggs singly, in stacks, or in groups on the lower sides of nettle leaves. The caterpillars eat leaves and are said to make a shelter for protection by pulling down and fastening the edges of a leaf around themselves with silk. When searching for a larva look for a “hanging tent;” however, remember that stinging nettle imparts a painful irritation when you touch it, so be careful while searching!

Satyr Comma butterflies live for almost a year and adults overwinter in cold areas by crawling into narrow cavities such as trees. In early spring, generally February or March, they start flying again. Progeny from eggs laid by this brood emerge in June, July and August. There are two to three broods per year in Southern California. Adults rarely eat nectar on flowers, rather they take sap from trees, congregate at rotting fruit, and even take nutrients from animal scat or carrion.

The range of this species is extensive. They are found from the southern Yukon and the Northwest Territories of Canada; south through Western Canada, the western United States, and Baja California; and across to southern Arizona and southwest New Mexico. They also range east across the Great Lakes states to northern New England and Nova Scotia.

Thanks to Ed Platzer for editing this article.

Happy Butterfly Gardening! AP

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Below: Jodie & Doug Holt & Jodie's sister, Laura Francis



Tyler Emmerson



Jane & Richard Block & Frank Heyming



Smokey Canyon BBQ



Tom Perring



Antoon Ploeg, Mien Van de Ven & Peter Atkinson



Chani Beeman, Marilyn Odello, Eduardo Steinbrick, Ruth West, Monty Van Wart, Bill Kleese, Paul Suino, Jay Steinbrick, Anna Vela, & Judy Nightingale



Chris Roholt & Ann Platzer



Norm Ellstrand & Tracy Kahn





Left: Stephen King & Darlene Cunningham

Below:
Amber Jones
Lucy Heyming
Phyllis Franco



Paul Akers, David Rabinowitch, Norm Ellstrand, Carrie Poindexter, Marsia Alexander-Clarke & Kathryn Poindexter



Siri & Gurumantra Khalsa



Silent Auction team: Gina Barton, Linda Carter, Karen Fleisher, Carol Haffter, Helga Stafford, Denise Ritz, not pictured - Janice Ponsor

THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS SPONSOR
BILL KLEESE



Birds of the Gardens

Black Phoebe

By Chris Swarth

The Black Phoebe is a solitary, medium-sized songbird in the flycatcher family that's found in the open with scattered shrubs or low trees, and usually near water. They have adapted well to life in modern-day suburbia and are seen throughout Riverside. Males and females look alike: entirely sooty black except for white on the lower breast and under the tail. When feathers on



Photo by Ninad Thakoor

top the head are erected, the crown has a pronounced peak. The pointed, yet flattened bill (well seen in the photo) is well adapted for catching flying insects. Stiff bristles at the base of the bill are very sensitive to touch; when an insect brushes them the bill is stimulated to open and clamp shut in a nano-second!

Like other flycatchers, the phoebe prefers a conspicuous low perch such as a bare branch, fence, bench, or water spigot. Here it glances this way and that before sallying out to snatch a flying insect. After a brief and at times acrobatic chase in pursuit of its prey, the phoebe will return to the same or another suitable nearby perch. Bees, wasps, flies, beetles, damselflies, and dragonflies are the favorite food of the phoebe.

While perched, the phoebe repeatedly pumps its tail down – a good behavioral “field mark” easily seen even from a distance. The distinctive appearance, fly catching behavior, and tail pumping make it unlikely the Black Phoebe would be confused

with any other bird. The phoebe has a simple, monotonous song that it gives frequently, seemingly - “fee- bee, fee bo.” In the Botanic Gardens you’ll most likely encounter them near the entrance, foraging over mowed grass, or close to the small stream.

According to Grinnell and Storer’s classic reference work, Animal Life in the Yosemite (1924), favored habitats include coastal cliffs, banks of rivers and creeks, borders of lakes and ephemeral ponds, fountains in parks, and cattle troughs. Along the northern Sonoma County coast, pairs of Black Phoebes are spaced on territories about 500 m (547 yards) apart where they forage next to tide pools and on the steep cliffs that rise 50 feet above the pounding surf. Kelp flies are their main quarry in this marine environment.

The female builds a nest composed of mud pellets that she cements to a vertical wall. Grass stems, hair, and dry vegetation are mixed with the mud. According to the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, nest sites have these features in common: a ceiling that protects the nest from weather and may provide concealment, placement near or directly over water, location close to a source of mud for construction materials, and area surrounding the site suitable for foraging. Natural sites include dirt ledges along streams, sheltered pockets on large rocks over water, or in a tree under a broken limb. Man-made sites include building eaves, bridge stringers, drainage culverts, and abandoned wells. A pair is sitting on eggs today (May 5) in a nest plastered above the opening to a tool shed next to my daughter’s vegetable garden in Mariposa. While incubating and feeding the young, adults become quite tolerant of moderate, regular human activity near the nest.

Insect-eating birds such as the Black Phoebe require healthy, sizeable populations of insects for survival. By limiting or avoiding the use of insecticides around the house or garden there will be more insects for our bird populations. Growing native plants on your property will also favor a diversity of insects and provides good foraging habitat for songbirds in general.

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

RSVP early, space
is limited!
951-784-6962
ucrbg@ucr.edu

Twilight Tours

Sat., July 13, 6:30 - 8:30 pm

Sat., August 10, 6:00 - 8:00 pm

Pay online at
gardens.ucr.edu

\$7/member

\$10/nonmember

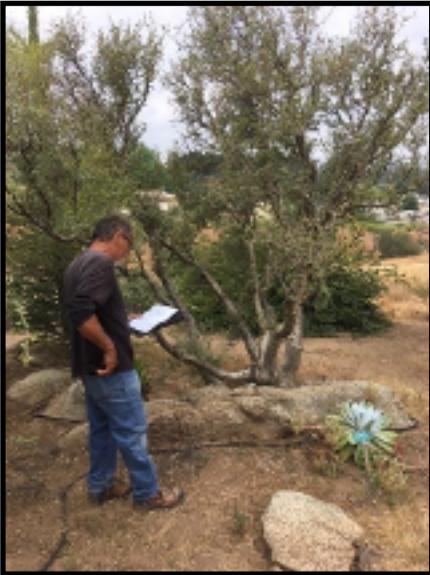
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above, just RSVP

What to See in the Gardens

By Lois Whyde

Color in the Botanic Gardens this spring has been spectacular due to winter rains that promoted blooming throughout. While some visitors do not venture far from Alder Canyon or our themed gardens, our geographic gardens offer beautiful plants and expansive views for those willing to walk up the hill. Pick up a map at the Gardens entrance and check out these sections where staff and volunteers have been weeding, improving trails, and planting new specimens.

Baja California



Just up the hill to the right of the Gardens entrance is the Baja California section. Due to the generosity of a volunteer group, the Riverside Garden Oasis Society, the section is undergoing a make-over. Marc Chacon, a founder and current president of the society, outlined their goals: educate the community about low water-use plants suitable for gardens in our

area, restore habitats in the community, plant gardens in the community, and help seniors with yard needs who are sidelined by illness. These dedicated volunteers have been pruning and pulling out overgrown plants in Baja to reveal specimens that were rarely seen. Under the direction of Janine they will soon augment the collection in this area with species native to Baja California.

Coastal Sage Scrub

Continuing along the perimeter road on the western edge of the Gardens you will find a sea of coastal sage scrub, dominated by *Encelia farinosa*, or brittlebush.



The rains brought one of the most extensive blooms in years, attracting large numbers of butterflies that flutter in clusters, colliding into each other and often passersby. It is truly a site to behold,

made better by the views from this section.

Australia

Beyond the coastal sage scrub is our large Australia section, which has been augmented with trees and shrubs native to that continent thanks to generous plant donations from Australian Outback. Several newly planted shrubs are *Eremophila* species, members of the figwort family (Scrophulariaceae) and endemic to Australia. These species range in size from low growing shrubs to small trees and their foliage is variable in size, shape and color. One group of *Eremophila* has tubular flowers with two upper lobes that differ from three lower ones, offering a landing pad for insect pollinators. A less common group of *Eremophila* has flowers with lobes curled down, suitable for bird pollinators that hold onto the stem while visiting flowers. In Australia the fruit of this species are eaten by emus, hence one of the common names, emu bush. *Eremophila* species are well suited for the dry Riverside climate and will tolerate frost. They have a long flowering period and an abundance of beautiful flowers, making them attractive and water-wise garden plants. A bench in this section helps visitors enjoy the ambiance of Australia and magnificent views of the campus and Riverside. A walk to areas of the Botanic Gardens that you haven't visited is well worth the effort. We hope you enjoy the improvements we are making, which would not be possible without the help of many volunteers.

THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS SPONSORS

FRANK & LUCY HEYMING



In The Works

By Botanic Gardens Staff

As summer approaches, our busiest season for visitors, school tours, events, and plant growth is winding down. We have many exciting activities to report that will enhance the Gardens and the visitor experience for years to come.

- ▶ Renovation of our entrance gatehouse/restroom building was completed in April and the facilities are now open for use. See “Spotlight On” in this issue for more details.
- ▶ Our Friends membership program was updated, new benefits were added, and a beautiful new membership brochure was designed and produced by UCR Advancement and UCR Communications. See “Member Update” in this issue for more information.
- ▶ New UCRBG “swag” with our beautiful agave brand was added to our inventory, including ball caps, garden kneelers, and aprons for volunteers to use during events. These will be sold during Plant Sales and at occasional Pop-Up-Shops.
- ▶ Plans for our Native American Plants Garden are well underway, guided by Theresa McLemore, Manager Emeritus and Special Projects staff. A garden design was rolled out at Primavera and installation is planned for fall.
- ▶ Progress is also being made on the Conservatory in the first section of the greenhouse with new brick flooring laid by Jorge and the staff and a center display of special orchids.
- ▶ A generous donation of plants by Australian Outback, a Garden Market vendor, allowed us to refresh the planter bed outside the Conference Room after extensive gopher damage and also augment the collection in the Australia geographic garden.
- ▶ Abundant rain brought rampant growth of not only our collection but also our weeds. With help from many individual and groups of volunteers, Lois and the staff have performed major clean-up in several geographic gardens, including Australia, Baja California, and the North American Desert.
- ▶ Our plant nursery areas, including the lath house, greenhouse, and outdoor benches were renovated and improved for our first ever in-place plant sale in April. We continue to discuss ways to improve the plant sale experience while reducing the enormous staff time required to relocate plants for each sale.
- ▶ Jorge continues to make improvements in our facilities and address safety concerns, including channeling the extensive runoff this winter to prevent washout of the pathway behind the greenhouse.



New Friends Membership Brochure



New garden kneelers for sale

Support the UCR Botanic Gardens To donate online

Donations may be made with a secure credit card payment process by searching

Botanic Gardens at <https://myadv.ucr.edu>



**Thank you to our sponsors,
vendors, donors, volunteers,
and all who helped make
Primavera possible.**

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(in-kind donation)
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UCRBG Calendar of Events

- 
- | | |
|------------|--|
| June 11 | Volunteer Orientation , Meeting Room, 9:00 am |
| June 27 | Friends Annual Meeting , Meeting Room, 6:00 - 8:00 pm |
| July 9 | Volunteer Orientation , Meeting Room, 9:00 am |
| July 13 | Twilight Tour , 6:30 - 8:30 pm |
| August 10 | Twilight Tour , 6:00 - 8:00 pm |
| August 13 | Volunteer Orientation , Meeting Room, 9:00 am |
| October 19 | Fall Plant Sale |

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