



Celebrate Native Plants!

We Californians will be celebrating our very first **California Native Plant Week** which was declared by the state legislature to be the third week in April. The purpose of the week is to preserve California's native plant heritage for future generations by raising awareness about our state's rich botanical diversity.

The California Native Plant Society (CNPS) and other community organizations will be promoting the event through native plant sales, wildflower shows, gardening workshops, lectures, hikes, and more. See some of the local events on page 7 or visit the statewide online calendar at <http://californianativeplantweek.org>.

We hope all Californians will learn more about native plants and take an active role in preserving California's flora by:

- taking a walk in a preserve,
- visiting a local botanical garden or arboretum,
- talking to an expert or searching online,
- joining a native garden tour, or
- planting a native!

About the CNPS

The California Native Plant Society, through its nearly 10,000 members and 33 regional chapters, has been working to represent the public's interest in protecting California's beautiful native plants and their habitats since 1965. Run by a professional staff and volunteers, CNPS is a non-profit organization that advocates the use of sound plant science in conserving natural areas throughout the State of California. For more information visit www.cnps.org.

The Riverside-Corona Resource Conservation District works with the local Chapter of the CNPS by hosting meetings, providing training, and cooperating on plant sales. To learn more about the Riverside-San Bernardino Chapter, please visit <http://www.enceliacnps.org/> or contact Kate Barrows at (760) 217-0121, kate.cnb@verizon.net.



The Riverside-Corona Resource Conservation District

RCRCD provides resource management assistance to private and public landusers and conducts land treatment, education, and volunteer programs to steward natural resources. RCRCD fosters the sustainable use of natural resources for each land-use, including native habitats, urban/suburban areas and agriculture.

RCRCD serves parts of western Riverside & San Bernardino Counties; areas surrounding and portions of:
Riverside
Corona
Norco
Grand Terrace
Colton
Reche Canyon
Temescal Canyon
Gavilan Hills
Highgrove
Woodcrest



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Why are California's native plants important to celebrate?

Native plants have evolved within their local complex of ecological conditions, including climate, soil type, and rainfall. They continue to co-evolve with native animal species that depend upon them as sources of food, shelter, and refuge.

Native plants are perfectly suited to their local climate and soils, so require less water, fertilizers and pesticides in yards and gardens.

Yards with local native plants provide “stepping stones” of habitat from wildlands through cities for urban-adapted wildlife, such as some birds, bats, butterflies, beneficial insects and more.

Native landscapes help clean water and air, provide critical habitat, control erosion, infiltrate water into underground aquifers, and more.



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Books about Native Plants by Southern California Authors

Landscape Plants for California Gardens by Bob Perry

Reimagining the California Lawn by Bart O'Brien

Flora of the Santa Ana River and Environs by Oscar Clarke, Greg Ballmer, Danielle Svehla and Arlee Montalvo

Care & Maintenance of Southern California Native Plant Gardens by Bart O'Brien, Betsey Landis, Ellen Mackey

California Native Plants for the Garden by Dave Fross, Carol Bornstein, and Bart O'Brien

Native Plants for School Gardens by Betsey Landis.

Wildflower Information

Wildflower Hotline from the Theodore Payne Foundation (818) 768-3533

<http://www.theodorepayne.org/hotline/hotlinelinks.html>

<http://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers> Hosted by USDA Forest Service.

A Native Plant Garden of Learning

Students at Victoria Elementary School converted a small patch of unused schoolyard into a native plant garden during the spring of 2010. Julianna Cruz's fourth and fifth grade students prepared the soil, spread weed block, planted native species, and spread mulch to transform the worn schoolyard. A drip irrigation system conserves water for the water-wise garden.

Mrs. Cruz's students developed the native plant garden with funding from an RCRC mini-grant and from the Riverside Educational Enrichment Foundation (REEF).

Mrs. Cruz and Mrs. Murtaugh teach the after-school elective 'Green Team'. Students garden, compost, and learn through



From unused schoolyard to...



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hands-on activities. The Green Team collects green waste from the lunch tables and composts it to create rich soil that is used in the gardens. In addition to the native plant garden, the teachers have found small, unused portions of the campus to convert to a vegetable garden, a shaded arbor with loofah vines, an orchard, and a composting area.

Mrs Cruz is an outstanding science educator, as well as a children's book author. She has written *The Tale of Tommy & Teresa Trout: A Learning Journey from Egg to Fry* based on her experience raising the fish through the 'Trout in the Classroom' Program. The local Deep Creek Fly Fishers with the California Department of Fish and Game provide training and support for the classroom program.

The Victoria School students use the story *The Tale of Tommy & Teresa Trout*, to learn about the life cycle and environmental needs of trout. Students then take an 'Accelerated Reader' quiz online to check their comprehension. To learn more about the program, please visit Mrs. Cruz's website at: www.hatchinginspirations.com. The book can also be purchased through the Inlandia Institute.

RCRCD provides mini-grants for up to \$250 to help fund school conservation projects such as tree plantings, re-vegetation projects, and gardens. For an application, please contact Erin Snyder at (951) 683-7691, Ext. 207, or download from www.RCRCD.com (See education)



RCRCD Native



Riverside-Corona Resource Conservation District conducts a variety of native plant restoration, propagation, education and research projects.

Restoration

RCRCD restoration projects are cooperative efforts between private landowners and agencies on public and/or private lands or on District easements. The habitat recovery projects usually involve the removal of invasive plants, reestablishment of the local native species and ongoing monitoring.

Propagation

Native plants are produced from cuttings and seeds for local revegetation projects at the RCRCD native plant nursery. RCRCD grows about 80 native species with an inventory that fluctuates from 4,000 to 8,000 plants over the year. In addition, the RCRCD nursery harvested cuttings from 24 sand tanks that provide mule fat and five species of willow.

Staff collects seed for future restoration, water quality, and bank stabilization projects. RCRCD works with seed companies to collect seed from local, native populations to maintain the genetic diversity of our area. In addition, RCRCD is storing Irvine Ranch Conservancy seeds in refrigerated storage rooms. The native seeds will be used for the conservancy's future restoration efforts.

Education

Periodically, RCRCD provides educational programs about native plants. During the past year, plant restoration ecologist Dr. Arlee Montalvo trained biologists at a hands-on plant identification workshop. With the California Native Plant Society, she also held a workshop to train staff and volunteers in vegetation sampling techniques.

Research on Plants for Restoration

Dr. Montalvo conducts projects that help us understand more about local native plants and their use.

She has been leading two projects designed to help land managers choose genetically appropriate plants for wildland planting projects. The first project involves the development of a list of important native species for seeding and revegetation projects in southern California. Dr. Montalvo has been collating information for more than 30 species and drafting plant profiles for posting on the new RCRCD web site. The information will help growers produce seed in a way that reduces the chance of unintentional selection, loss of genetic diversity, or cross contamination of seed resources.



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Photos by Diana Ruiz and Arlee Montalvo

Plant Programs

The second project involves the refinement of methods used to produce science-based plant lists and local plant materials using alluvial scrub habitats and plants within the Santa Ana River watershed as an example. The project began in April, 2010 in collaboration with the U.S. Forest Service, area resource conservation agencies, the California Native Plant Society (CNPS), and a local organic farm. The team will determine which species in the various types of alluvial scrub communities should be used for restoration in different areas of the watershed. The group

will also determine which species may require commercial seed production and will begin to train growers about minimizing genetic erosion and unintentional selection during production. These projects were funded by the US Forest Service Plant Materials Program.



The research provides opportunities for student interns and volunteers. For example, volunteers worked with staff to sample 43 plots of alluvial scrub vegetation in three major areas of the Santa Ana watershed, representing over 400 acres of alluvial scrub habitat.

Weed Management

RCRCD continues as a partner with the Santa Ana River - Orange County Weed Management Area (SAROCWMA), which works to eradicate non-native weeds on both private and public lands in portions of Riverside, San Bernardino and Orange Counties.

Santa Ana Watershed Association

RCRCD is a member of SAWA, the Santa Ana Watershed Association. SAWA is a non-profit organization that works to restore native habitat in the Santa Ana River Watershed. SAWA removes invasive plants and animals from waterways and, when necessary, replants native species that do not naturally reestablish. With SAWA, RCRCD conducts ongoing invasive plant monitoring and/or removal projects. Learn more about SAWA at: www.sawatershed.org.

To learn more about gardening with native plants and where you can purchase them, request a free copy of *Wild about Natives* from RCRCD at snyder@RCRCD.com or (951) 683-7691, Ext. 207. This booklet can also be found on our web site under RCRCD Publications.



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Arlee Montalvo (left) assists teacher Julianna Cruz with plant selections for a native garden.

Dr. Arlee Montalvo

Arlee Montalvo, PhD has been RCRC's plant restoration ecologist for 7 years. She monitors native landscapes, develops and carries out plans to restore degraded habitats, and manages the native plant nursery.

Dr. Montalvo has worked for over 30 years doing research on native plants. Her studies bridge basic and applied aspects of plant biology and conservation science. She has worked on native plant landscaping, optimization of native plant palettes for restoration, and research on different cultivation practices and planting methods for restoration. Dr. Montalvo published a guide to help land managers choose genetically appropriate plant sources for wildland planting projects and is currently working on information profiles for many of our local species. She is the co-author of *Flora of the Santa Ana River and Environs: With References to World Botany*, which identifies 900 local plants and brings them to life with 3,200 images and illustrations. The guide is available from our office, at local major bookstores, and from the publisher's website at www.heydaybooks.com.

Wendy Cook

Wendy Cook, Field Assistant, propagates plants in the native plant nursery, tends to the Land Use Learning Center, and helps with habitat restoration projects. She has a passion for the natural environment and a love of native plants and the creatures that depend on them. Wendy has extensive natural history and field botany experience. She served on the board of the Mojave Desert Bird Club for 13 years and is currently a board member for Friends of Juniper Flats. Wendy orchestrated an effort to plant over 2000 Juniper seeds in the Willow Fire Burn area in South Apple Valley, Juniper Flats region. Before coming to RCRC, she worked at Oak Hills Nursery in Hesperia, growing, propagating and selling both native and ornamental plants and earned her Associate's Degree in Liberal Studies from Victor Valley College. We are very fortunate that Wendy has joined our team.



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Sustainability Resources

Learn about groups that are helping our communities become more sustainable.

My Green Riverside is an online forum for people with green interests, such as gardening and conserving water. Sponsored by Growcology. <http://mygreenriverside.ning.com>

Growcology is a public-benefit organization that encourages citywide (Riverside) collaboration, hands-on green workshops, and a free online community. Growcology offers the Resourceful Garden Program. www.growcology.com (951) 389-GROW (4769)

Preserve the Plateau (PTP) is a collaborative of homeowners and organizations that is working to raise awareness about the Gavilan Hills Plateau's biodiversity and impacts from urban development. www.preservetheplateau.org

Wood Streets Green Team is a proactive community group that promotes sustainable living practices within Riverside. <http://woodstreetsgreenteam.ning.com>

Riverside Land Conservancy works to preserve important habitats and open space. www.riversidelandconservancy.org

Dates to Remember

- April 2** **Waterwise Landscaping 101** Please see back cover for details.
- April 2-3** **UCR Botanic Gardens Plant Sale** with classes and experts to answer questions. Saturday, Noon - 4 PM and Sunday, 9 AM - 3 PM
<http://gardens.ucr.edu/events/springsale.html>
- April 9** **Garden-Friendly Plant Sale** also **April 23** Please see back cover.
- April 16** **Celebrate Native Plant Week!** at Riverside Metropolitan Museum (951) 826-5273. Mt. Rubidoux Nature Walk 9 AM -10 AM Meet at the Glenwood Gate (down road gate) Museum program: 3580 Mission Inn Ave., 1:30 PM - 4:30 PM Wildflower talk with Tracy Albrecht of Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mtn. National Monument.
- April 17** **Family-friendly hike at Harford Springs**; 10 AM - Noon. Free magnifying glass for kids. Lorrae Fuentes (951) 787-6797 CA Native Plant Society <http://enceliacnps.org/>
Harford Springs is a 325-acre Riverside County wildland park which is located south of Lake Mathews on Gavilan Road. The entrance to the reserve is opposite a mobile home park.
-  **Statewide events:** <http://californianativeplantweek.org>
Local events: <http://enceliacnps.org/>
- Wood Streets Green Team Home Garden Tour** 11 AM -5 PM, Riverside. Includes sustainable yards with vegetable gardens, drought-tolerant and native plants.
<http://woodstreetsgreenteam.ning.com/events/2nd-annual-how-to-garden-tour>
- April 19** **Earth Day at Naval Surface Warfare Center** 11:30 AM – 1 PM Visit RCRC D's *Celebrate Native Plant Week* booth. Bob Beauregard (951) 273-4027
- April 20** **Earth Night in the Garden** Visit RCRC D's and CNPS's *Celebrate Native Plant Week* booths, 450 E. Alessandro Blvd., Riverside 3:30 - 7:30 PM
- April 21** **Wildflower Identification Workshop** for everyone. 7 - 9 PM Special kids' table for identifying wildflowers. Ca Native Plant Society at RCRC D facility, Building F. Lorrae Fuentes (951) 787-6797
- April 22** **Author Rebecca O'Connor** discusses her book *Lift* which intertwines stories of her personal life and the Peregrine falcon that taught her some of life's most enduring lessons. 4:30 PM An Inlandia Institute program at the Highland Library & Environmental Learning Center. Repeats **June 11**, Corona Public Library time TBA at <http://www.inlandia institute.org/>
- Earth Day**
- April 23 – 24** **Wildflower Show** at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, 1500 N. College Ave., Claremont. Open daily 8 AM - 5 PM Free with standard Garden admission.
- April 23** **Hike at Lake Skinner** lead by Christine Moen and Dr. Arlee Montalvo (951) 640-9549 Time and location TBA. <http://enceliacnps.org/>
- May 7** **Duck Daze** 10 AM - 3 PM Hidden Valley Nature Center 11401 Arlington Ave, Riverside. Guided nature walks, crafts, hayrides, games, live animals. \$4 each (951) 785-7452 www.hiddenvalleynaturecenter.org
- May 21** **Xeriscape Festival and Tour** starting at the Riverside Plaza in front of the theater. San Gorgonio Chapter of the Sierra Club www.sangorgonio.sierraclub.org
Xeriscape Festival info: (951) 219-1820



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All RCRCD programs and services are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis, without regard to race, national origin, religion, age, gender, or orientation.

Free Landscape Classes in Corona

The Corona Department of Water and Power offers free landscape classes for residents. Some of the classes include *Edible Landscape Design*, *Creating Habitat*, and *Irrigation 101*. Please RSVP to (951) 736-2234 or email StopTheDrop@discovercorona.com. For more information: <http://discovercorona.com>. See Water Conservation Programs.

Visit Corona's **Spring Into Summer Savings** water conservation event **May 7th**, 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM at The Crossings in Corona to learn about yard retrofits, irrigation evaluations and drought tolerant plants.



www.FreeSprinklerNozzles.com **Get yours while supplies last!**

IE Garden Friendly

The Inland Empire Garden Friendly program was recently created to increase climate-appropriate landscaping throughout the region. The program includes plant sales, free workshops and a website with plant lists.

At ten 'Parking Lot' events, the public will be able to purchase drought-tolerant plants at up to a 50% discount. Also, IE Garden Friendly labels will identify plants at Home Depots throughout the Inland Empire. At this time, the Home Depot and its vendors, including Toro, Rainbird and DIG are the major corporate sponsors to offer water-wise plants and irrigation systems.

Plant Sales

April 9 9 AM – 2 PM: Home Depot, 3323 Madison St., Riverside
April 23 9 AM – 2 PM: Home Depot, 1355 E. Ontario Ave., Corona

Four free water-wise workshops are being offered to help homeowners select plants. **Waterwise Landscaping 101** will be held on April 2 at Western Municipal Water District's new location: 14205 Meridian Pkwy., Riverside, (951) 571-7296. Free. 9 AM - Noon. Please visit the IE Garden Friendly website at www.iegardenfriendly.com for additional plant sale and workshop information.

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