Arboretum All-Stars: Gorgeous, Easy-Care Plants
by Lili Singer, Special Projects Coordinator

Theodore Payne was an English expatriate who adored the wild California landscape and devoted six decades of his life to propagating California native plants and making them available to gardeners. The Foundation established in his name has carried on that work for another five decades.

It follows then that the Theodore Payne Foundation has recently allied with University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) researchers, UC Davis Arboretum staff and the non-profit California Center for Urban Horticulture as a test site for their Arboretum All-Stars Trials Program. The goal of the program is to find and introduce plants that are able to thrive in hot dry conditions, resist pests and diseases, and attract wildlife such as bees and birds.

“In other words,” says S. Karrie Reid, UCCE Junior Specialist, Department of Plant Sciences, and Arboretum All-Stars Trials Program Director, “tough drought-tolerant plants that invite beneficial wildlife and stay attractive without the use of chemical pesticides and fertilizers.”

The initial list of 100 plants to be trialed includes trees, shrubs, groundcovers, vines, perennials and grasses. According to Reid, many are already in the trade but under-represented in retail nurseries, and twenty-five percent are hard or presently impossible for gardeners to find. The plants hail from various mediterranean climates. Many of the plants, including the first ten to be trialed, are native to California.

The ongoing program entails four stages.

Stage 1: Initial Plant Selection  The initial 100 candidates for the program included designated Arboretum All-Stars—heat-loving drought-tolerant plants already being promoted by UC Davis Arboretum—and other plants being considered as All-Stars. The first ten selected for trialing were native plants from varied natural ecosystems and for various potential landscape uses.

Stage 2: Low-Water Tolerance Field Trial  Low-water field trials began at the UC Davis Arboretum in 2006, using four irrigation levels to assess drought tolerance, as well as survival.

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under garden conditions where the plants might be combined with higher water-use species or adjacent to a high water-use lawn. No soil amendments were used and all plants, even those that naturally grow in shade, were subjected to full sun for a rigorous test of wind, sun, temperature and water tolerances.

Plant performance was assessed using a plant growth index. Monthly height and width measurements were performed on plants in each irrigation level. General appearance, flowering and the presence or lack of pest problems were also noted. Of ten plants trialed over a period of two years, five were advanced to the next stage of testing in community gardens throughout California. A second group of ten is in field trials now; one species has already been eliminated due to a pest problem.

Stage 3: Zone Garden Trials The first seven test sites included coastal, inland and low mountain mediterranean-climate gardens in the Central Valley and San Diego County. UCCE Master Gardeners were responsible for planting, tending and collecting data. Soil types, irrigation frequency and unusual weather were tracked. Each month, caretakers took measurements and rated each plant on a scale of 1 to 5 (poor to excellent) in five categories: foliage, flowering, pest resistance, disease resistance and overall vigor.

The program’s focus has shifted statewide in search of plants that are reliable in all areas. Thirteen sites are now involved, with locations in San Joaquin, Amador, Orange, Riverside and Los Angeles counties—the latter being the Theodore Payne Foundation.

Three each of six different plants—all native—are currently being evaluated at TPF. All were transplanted from one-gallon containers into sunny spots and native soil—without soil amendments. The plants are described in the table on the facing page.

TPF staffers Madena Asbell and Mary Brooks are monitoring and evaluating the plants, which are rated monthly for foliage appearance, floral display, insect resistance, disease resistance and overall vigor. Weather conditions and maintenance required are also

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Gardens are never finished. The successful ones start with tiny transplants well-suited to that garden’s conditions. Installed and maintained with care, those little plants thrive and, in time, mature. Yet, even mature gardens—ones that fulfill a plan or vision—are never static.

Gardens are natural systems, and plants are vulnerable to weather, human error and pests—including the furry herbivore profiled on page 7. Some attrition is normal, and plants may die without explanation. Trees and large shrubs mature, shading out sun-lovers, offering spaces to try a few shade-loving plants!

Gardens are science experiments performed by citizen scientists at home—and academics in the field, as in our cover story. But gardens are also works of art that move at their own unpredictable paces. Even the science of weeding can be artful, as in John Wickham’s creative approach, detailed on page 10.

Change is intrinsic to gardening and draws me into the garden each day. Nature takes and nature gives. I ponder the lessons and feast on the beauty of bud and bloom, the glory of seed and the sweetness of subsequent birdsong. Such joy lasts a lifetime. ■

—Lili Singer
noted. Plants will be measured four times each year.

After three months, the trial plants at TPF are doing well, with the exception of *Bouteloua gracilis* (known to be a tough plant and expected to rally!).

**Stage 4: Commercial Introduction**

The first Arboretum All-Stars Introductions hit independent retail nurseries this spring (“No big boxes,” says Reid), handsomely tagged with ample cultural information. Select commercial growers will be propagating and distributing the plants to nurseries.

The Theodore Payne Foundation will not be retailing Arboretum All-Stars introductions under the All-Stars banner. However, five of the six plants we’re trialing now are propagated and stocked by TPF.

The Foundation is proud to be part of this valuable program. You will find many of the California natives in the Arboretum All-Stars program for sale year-round in our nursery, along with many other drought-tolerant, pest-resistant, wildlife-attracting native species and cultivars that are naturally adapted to your garden’s conditions.

No doubt, Theodore Payne would be pleased.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BOTANIC AND COMMON NAME</th>
<th>ALL-STAR CHARACTERISTICS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ceanothus ‘Valley Violet’</strong> (Valley Violet maritime ceanothus)</td>
<td>Evergreen shrub with of purple-blue blossoms. A UC Davis Arboretum introduction with a ‘staggering spring floral display.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Penstemon heterophyllus ‘Margarita BOP’</strong> (Margarita BOP foothill penstemon)</td>
<td>Compact blue-flowering perennial introduced by Las Pilitas Nursery and one of our best sellers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Iris ‘Canyon Snow’</strong> (Canyon Snow iris)</td>
<td>Floriferous white hybrid iris introduced by Santa Barbara Botanic Garden.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Salvia clevelandii ‘Winnifred Gilman’</strong> (Winnifred Gilman Cleveland sage)</td>
<td>Sweetly aromatic shrub with deep blue-purple flowers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bouteloua gracilis</strong> (eyelash grass or blue grama grass)</td>
<td>Warm-season bunchgrass with pretty eyelash-like inflorescences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Isomeris arborea</strong> (bladder pod)</td>
<td>Evergreen shrub with yellow flowers and unusual pale-green seedpods.</td>
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</table>

Got Books? TPF Needs Them!

**Book Sale to Be Part of Fall Festival**

It won’t be long before TPF’s fabulous Fall Festival, our biggest plant sale of the year. This autumn, in addition to plant sales, we’re holding a book sale—and to make it happen, we need your donations!

**We’re looking for new, used, rare, classic, inspirational and practical titles** for California native and mediterranean-climate plant gardeners and nature lovers of all ages.

- Loosen up your bookshelves and make room for more books!
- Pass beloved tomes on to other gardeners—and help the Foundation at the same time!
- Donate a new book for the sale!

All proceeds benefit the Foundation and help support our programs.

Please bring your book donations to the Foundation during business hours, Thursday through Saturday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

And mark your calendars for Fall Festival and Plant Sale, Friday–Saturday, October 9–10 (discounts to members; memberships sold at the door) and Friday–Saturday, October 16–17 (discounts to all).
Calendar of Events and Classes | Summer 2009

We offer an enticing summer menu of programs for new and seasoned native plant gardeners.

Classes fill quickly; please reserve early! To enroll, call (818) 768-1802. Visit our website (theodorepayne.org) for updates, and information on our three-part California Native Plant Garden Design course. Design classes are limited in size to ensure individual attention, and they fill almost immediately. If you’re interested, please call to add your name to the waiting list.

Check in at the Bookstore on the day of the class or event. Please note our cancellation policy: for one-part classes, no refunds for cancellations made within seven days of the class date. For the three-part design course, a full refund will be given if cancellation is made more than seven days before the first class. If cancellation is requested seven days or less before the first class, only a postponement will be given, with the following fees attached: $105 for members, $150 for nonmembers; $165 for member couples, $225 for non-member couples.

JULY

Native Plant Horticulture with Lili Singer
Saturday, July 18, 9:00 a.m.–noon
$35 members, $45 non-members
This class offers the basics on gardening with California flora. You’ll learn what a “native plant” is and why natives are valuable, and learn about plant communities, planting techniques, establishment, irrigation, pruning, maintenance and where to see and buy native plants. Recommended for beginners; a required prerequisite to our California Native Plant Garden Design course. Lili is a horticulturist and garden writer and TPF’s special projects coordinator.

Container Gardening with Native Plants with Steve Gerischer
Saturday, July 18, 1:30–3:30 p.m.
$25 members, $35 non-members
Container gardens are beautiful, versatile and can enhance any garden. Potted native plants also provide habitat for birds, butterflies and other welcome wildlife. Steve creates award-winning landscapes with his company, Larkspur Garden Design, and lectures on gardening topics.

Native Plant Garden Maintenance with Barbara Eisenstein
Saturday, July 25, 9:00 a.m.–noon
$30 members, $40 non-members
This hands-on session, limited to 12 participants, covers watering, fertilizing, pruning, mulching and maintenance. Barbara is an avid native plant gardener, garden writer and consultant (wildsuburbia.blogspot.com), and former horticultural outreach coordinator at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden.

August

Container Gardening with Native Plants with Steve Gerischer
Saturday, July 18, 1:30–3:30 p.m.
$25 members, $35 non-members
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Classes in Calabasas

TPF goes on the road to offer classes at Headwaters Corner—Masson House, located at 23075 Mulholland Highway in Calabasas, 91302. Call us at (818) 768-1802 to sign up.

Fee: $40 per class (members and non-members)

Look, Ma, No Lawn! with Lili Singer
Saturday, July 25, 9:00–11:00 a.m., repeating Friday, July 31, 6:30–8:30 p.m., Saturday, September 19, 6:30–8:30 p.m., and Friday, September 25, 6:30–8:30 p.m.
Learn how to replace your turfgrass with low-care natives that need no fertilizer and use a fraction of the water.

California Native Plant Horticulture with Lili Singer
Saturday, August 22, 9:00 a.m.–noon, repeating Friday, August 28, 6:30–9:30 p.m.
Learn the basics of gardening with California flora: site assessment, planting techniques, establishment, irrigation, pruning, maintenance, where to see and buy native plants, and more.

Pine Needle Basketry with Leigh Adams
Saturday, July 25, noon–4:00 p.m.
$40 members, $50 non-members
Learn how to prepare and use pine needles to coil and create a lovely one-of-a-kind basket. No experience necessary! All materials provided. Class size limited to 10. Leigh, an “adult child” who works in fiber, glass and other media, is artist-in-residence at the LA County Arboretum.

AUGUST

Waterwise Irrigation for Native Plants with Bob Galbreath
Saturday, August 1, 1:00–3:00 p.m.
$25 members, $35 non-members
Essential information for every native plant gardener! This class offers the basics on techniques and equipment for water-efficient irrigation in urban landscapes. Bob is an irrigation consultant with 30 years’ experience.

Propagating California Native Plants with Louise Gonzalez and Brendan Galipeau
Saturday, August 8, 9:00 a.m.–noon
$35 members, $45 non-members
Discover the basics of propagating California native plants! Different techniques will be learned and various species of plants propagated in each hands-on session. Limited to eight participants.

Hypertufa Pot Workshop with Steve Gerischer
Saturday, August 8, 1:00–3:00 p.m.
$25 members, $35 non-members
A super-fun, hands-on, messy activity for grown-ups! Using cement, perlite and coir, each attendee will make a container that resembles an old stone trough. Wear old clothes and shoes. All materials provided.

Native Plant Horticulture with Lili Singer
Saturday, August 15, 12:30–3:30 p.m.
For details, see July 18 listing.

TPF Kids: Art and Science of Native Plants with Pamela Burgess and Lisa Novick
Saturday, August 22, 9:00–11:00 a.m.
$15 members, $25 non-members; admits 1 adult + 1 child (age 5–12)
Join Pamela, TPF’s first artist-in-residence, and Lisa, TPF Outreach and Volunteer Coordinator, for two hours of solar-powered fun. Make shadow drawings and learn about plant-animal connections and the sun. Wear comfortable clothes and shoes, and bring a hat and water.

Native Plant Garden Maintenance with Jan Scow
Saturday, August 22, 9:00 a.m.–noon
$30 members, $40 non-members
Learn what a “native plant” is and why natives are valuable, and learn about plant communities, planting techniques, establishment, irrigation, pruning, maintenance and where to see and buy native plants. Recommended for beginners; a required prerequisite to our California Native Plant Garden Design course. Jan is a registered consulting arborist and licensed landscape contractor. His firm, Sustainable Gardens (sustainablegardens.us) helps clients live more sustainably.
What to Do in the Garden Now
by Lili Singer, Special Projects Coordinator

There’s always something to do in the garden, but work early and late in the day, when summer’s heat is less intense.

**Plant**  Plant desert species, including *Chilopsis linearis* (desert willow), *Calliandra californica* (red fairy duster), *C. eriophylla* (pink fairy duster) and *Sphaeralcea ambigua* (desert mallow). Because these plants are accustomed to summer rains, they will accept irrigation needed to get them through warm months.

Plant riparian plants, such as *Artemisia douglasiana* (mugwort), *Platanus racemosa* (western sycamore), *Juncus spp.* (rush) and *Sisyrinchium californicum* (yellow-eyed grass). These species appreciate occasional summer irrigation.

Don’t plant *Fremontodendron* spp. (flannel bush) and *Trichostema lanatum* (woolly blue curls) until autumn; these native shrubs can’t take summer water! Fall is also safer for *Arctostaphylos* (manzanita) and *Ceanothus* (California lilac).

Space transplants according to mature dimensions, and cover bare soil between the plants with mulch.

**Sow**  Start warm-season grasses from seed. Choices include *Bouteloua*, *Aristida*, *Muhlenbergia*, *Pleuraphis* and *Sporobolus* species. Seed and instructions are both available in the TPF store.

**Weed**  As summer wanes, a new crop of annual weeds will emerge; hand-pull them before they set and distribute seed. Dig perennial weeds (Bermuda grass, dandelion, etc.) deeply to completely remove their roots (e.g. taproot, rhizome, stolon).

**Water**  Long hot days and warm soil call for judicious watering. Check soil moisture first and water only when the top few inches are dry. Always water deeply—never “a little bit” (this only encourages soil-borne diseases).

New plantings require frequent attention and regular irrigation for at least one year, until they’re established. To encourage root development, soak the original root ball and surrounding soil thoroughly.

Remember: most native bulbs (especially *Calochortus*) want absolutely dry conditions through October.

**Prune**  Deadhead spent salvia and penstemon, unless you plan to collect the seed—or feed the birds. Cut sage plants back by one third. Trim cool-season grasses to a couple of inches above the crown.

If truly necessary, prune top-heavy evergreen shrubs and trees now, when they are dormant. Remove dead wood, as needed. (Prune winter-deciduous plants in fall and winter.)

**Mulch**  A 3-to-4-inch layer of organic matter (leaves, bark, wood fibers—especially materials from your own garden) or decorative rock helps retain soil moisture, moderate soil temperatures, suppress weeds and beautify the garden. Keep all mulches a few inches away from stems, crowns and trunks.

**Collect**  Most native fruit and seed ripen during summer. Harvest when brown and dry, store in paper bags in a cool dry location—or donate them to the Foundation.

**Plan**  Relax in the shade and think about autumn: new plants, paths or structures. Need help or inspiration? Browse the Foundation’s library and bookstore, wander our grounds and sales yard, talk with knowledgeable staff and volunteers—or take a class in the air-conditioned Education Center.

California Native Seasonings and Condiments with Connie Vadheim
Saturday, August 29, 2:00–3:30 p.m.
$20 members, $30 non-members
For gardeners who cook: A discussion of native plants that can be used to flavor and enhance your food, with recipes for their use! Connie is adjunct professor of biology at CSU Dominguez Hills and a key figure at Madrona Marsh Preserve in Torrance.

SEPTEMBER

Changing Seasons in the Native Garden with Louise Gonzalez
Saturday, September 12, 9:00 a.m.—noon
$30 members, $40 non-members
Learn what to expect when autumn arrives and your native garden responds to shorter days and cooler temperatures. This class, taught by TPF’s nursery manager, begins with a lecture on how native plants function and ends with a walk through the grounds for close examination of plants. Wear comfortable shoes, a hat and sunscreen.

Native Plant Horticulture with Lili Singer
Saturday, September 12, 12:30–3:30 p.m.
$35 members, $45 non-members
For details, see July 18 listing.

Design Fundamentals for Native Plant Gardens with Andreas Hessing
Saturday, September 19, 1:30–3:30 p.m
$20 members, $30 non-members
Explore a personal approach to landscape design that incorporates artistic expression and practicality with green construction strategies. Andreas is an artist and landscape designer. For almost 20 years, his site-specific installations have celebrated regional biodiversity while focusing on the philosophical, political and social implications of California’s indigenous flora.
Our current art exhibition program began about eight years ago when Board President Emerita Frances Liau uncovered an unusual collection of hand-painted photographs by Ida L. Moody in our archives and hung them up on the wall. The images were a welcome addition to the worn-out bulletin board stretching across the long wall in a room that was all office space. We now have an active art gallery dedicated to both contemporary and historical work depicting the California flora.

This summer the Theodore Payne Gallery revisits that first effort with an expanded exhibit of the special work of Ida L. Moody. These hand-painted photographs depict California plants in landscape, still life and botanical.

The Technique
Hand-colored photographs emerged almost immediately after the photographic process itself. In 1839, Swiss photographer Johann Baptist Isenring began offering hand-tinted portraits to satisfy people unaccustomed to the stark, realistic photographs of early daguerreotypes. Hand-tinting softened the images in these seemingly harsh early photographic processes and provided photographers an opportunity to embellish portraits of their clients.

By the turn of the 20th century, hand-tinting had become widely used in the production of postcards, the format most familiar with this artistic mode. By the 1930s, though, color photography was emerging and the commercial demand for hand-painted photographs dried up. Artists, however, continued to work in this medium.

Hand-painted photographs are created through a series of artistic and technical steps. First, the right photograph is selected, paying particular attention to light and shadow in the original image. When developing the image (remember, this is principally a product of film and chemical processing), the artist can choose to use toner or dye to develop the image and move away from the typical gray scale. Sepia tone is a familiar example.

Artists then retouch the photo to remove imperfections in the image, mask certain areas to ensure that no color is accepted in those places and prime the remainder of the image to ensure that color is accepted on the remaining surface. Now color can be applied.

Hand-coloring can be done in oil, watercolor or pencil, and may involve several media. A wash of color is often applied across the image. One of the most important decisions artists make is how they will treat shadows in the image. Will subtle shades of color in the shadows be emphasized to create depth, or will flat saturated colors deemphasize shadow?

In her thoughtful review of hand-colored techniques, Cheryl Dorsking says that hand-colored photographs create “a mystical and ethereal dialogue with the photograph and the viewer.” The images by Ida L. Moody in this season’s exhibit certainly evoke that feeling.

The Artist
And who was Ida L. Moody? We don’t know! We haven’t found any biographical information about her or any records concerning her work. What we do know is that she employed a fascinating artistic technique to create a wholly unique and unusual body of work. The number of images produced and the range of plant material selected for representation is impressive, making this a one-of-a-kind collection.

If you have any information about Ida L. Moody, please let us know. And we hope you enjoy her hand-painted photographs, on view in the Theodore Payne Gallery through September 30, Thursday through Saturday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Wildlife Observed at TPF

by Madena Asbell, Assistant Sales Manager

As I drive up the dirt road to the Foundation each morning, a common sight at this time of year is the bouncing white bottom of *Sylvilagus audubonii* or cottontail rabbit. And, as many gardeners know, those that are not seen often make their presence known in other ways—such as the sudden disappearance of grasses we planted last fall or in the fur-packed coyote scat on Wildflower Hill Trail.

Also known as the desert or Audubon’s cottontail, this rabbit is widespread throughout the Southwest. Unlike other rabbit species, the cottontail does not burrow or live in social groups. Rather, it builds a nest above ground, like a hare. One of the things that makes the cottontail a rabbit, however, and not a hare, is that its young are born blind and hairless. (Hares are born with fur and able to see.)

Cottontails often build their nests under evergreen shrubs whose lower branches reach the ground and provide protection from their many predators, including hawks, coyotes, bobcats and snakes. A male cottontail is called a buck and the female (who is usually larger than the male) a doe. They generally breed from December or January through late summer. Although they may have as many as five litters per year, each litter is quite small, with only about three babies in each.

If you are familiar with the rare *Eriogonum crocatum*, you might know that its common name, Conejo buckwheat, is derived from Conejo Valley, where the plant naturally occurs. This valley (which straddles Los Angeles and Ventura counties and includes the communities of Thousand Oaks, Westlake Village and Agoura) was named for its early residents, cottontail rabbits—conejo being the Spanish word for rabbit. (In the 18th century, English settlers in New York had a similar word for rabbit—“coney”—and so Coney Island was named for its furry early inhabitants.)

Rabbits are herbivores, which can make them unwelcome in gardens. Their diet varies based upon what is available, and they are especially fond of grasses and many herbaceous plants. According to Bart O’Brien, hungry cottontails at rabbit-riddled Rancho Santa Ana Botanical Garden never bother ferns and seem less interested in such plants as *Erigeron*, *Iris*, *Salvia*, *Sisyrinchium* and *Mimulus*, although they may taste them before they decide to go elsewhere. Caging *Achillea*, *Lavatera* and native grasses until they are established can help minimize damage to these plants.

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**Cottontail Rabbit**

**Scientific Name** *Sylvilagus audubonii*

**Description** 15 in. long, with tall, erect ears. Light grayish-brown above, white below and on tail.

**Diet** Vegetation, including grasses, forbs, tender bark, and twigs.

**Habitat** Grasslands, woodlands, shrublands, deserts.

**Range** North Mexico to Montana, up to 6000 ft.

**Activity Pattern** Active all day, especially morning and evening.

**Lifespan** 2-5 years.

**Telltale Signs** Round brown droppings and roughly nibbled twigs.
Really, really…fall/winter is the best time to plant a native garden. Why? Because the soil is still warm from summer and rains usually come—perfect conditions to promote root growth. When you plant during fall and winter, new plants focus their energy on root development. Then, in spring, herbaceous growth begins. This timetable keeps native plants on a natural cycle and helps prepare them for summer dormancy.

BUT, if you absolutely can’t wait, or just planted or still have plans to plant in summer, here are some important considerations.

**Know Your Soil Type**  Is it well-draining sand or loam, or is it sloooow-draining clay? Knowing your soil type will help you to determine how often you need to water, and yes, you will have to water new transplants throughout the summer.

Sandy soils need watering more often than clay because water drains away quickly. An easy way to determine your drainage is to dig a hole about the size of a one-gallon plant. Fill the hole with water and wait. If water is gone within 30 minutes, you have great drainage; within two hours, fairly good. But if water is still there the next day, you have poor drainage. Plants in slow-draining clay soil need less frequent irrigation.

**Know Your Exposures**  How hot is your garden in July and August? Are you planting in full sun or shade? A hot, full sun exposure is more stressful to a plant than a cooler shady location. Because most native plants go dormant in summer, expect to see some changes in your plants as they make adjustments to the long hot days. To limit dehydration and protect themselves from intense heat, many natives reduce surface exposure by dropping at least half to all of their leaves in summer. Some plants also change the orientation of their leaves, literally turning foliage so that large leaf surfaces are vertical to the ground, instead of horizontal.

You can reduce stress on summer-planted natives. For the first two weeks or so after installation, shade transplants from the southern or western sun with umbrellas or temporary lean-tos.

**Watering**  How often you water depends on soil type as well as the exposure. Water evaporates much more quickly in a sunny exposure than a shady one. Where you live is also a factor. Coastal locations are afforded marine influences that don’t quite reach the Antelope Valley. Coastal gardens may not need irrigation as often as warmer inland gardens.

Watering about once a week is usually enough if you are watering deeply, but this frequency is affected by how well your soil drains. Each one-gallon-sized transplant should receive at least one gallon of water every time you water. In order to irrigate properly, you must check soil moisture first. Dig down around the plant at least two inches. If you feel moisture, check again in a couple of days. Most people lose plants from over-watering, that is, watering too frequently—when soil is still moist. Less is definitely more when dealing with this type of plant material.

New growth on a plant dehydrates very rapidly and will wilt in the hot sun. Wilting does not always mean that your plant needs water, and unnecessary irrigation can be harmful. Always check the moisture content of the soil before your run for the hose.

An easier way to plant in summer is to use plants that don’t mind summer water. Natives from riparian areas are used to and need regular water year round, and plants from desert areas are accustomed to summer rainstorms (see facing page for some remarkable desert natives). Grasses are also an option—and no, we’re not talking Marathon sod! See our Plants of the Month on the back cover for a few unusual grass ideas.

As always, your contributions to the Seed Room are welcome and appreciated.

Special thanks to the Hildebrandts for a dehydrator, and to Anita Sheridan and Debbie Taylor for glass jars.

Thanks also to Amy Mainzer for donating seed of *Aquilegia pubescens* and *Hazardia cana*.

Most native plant seed ripens in summer—and we need more nylons to catch mature seed that pop out of their pods. We’ll take old pantry hose, stockings or knee highs—and put them to very good use.

—Kathy Parenteau, Seed Room Sales Supervisor
Palo Verde—Two species of *Cercidium* are native to California: *C. floridum*, blue palo verde, and *C. microphyllum*, little-leaf palo verde. Both trees are specially adapted to their tough desert climates. As the soil dries, they drop their foliage to reduce water loss, but their remarkable blue-green, chlorophyll-rich bark is able to photosynthesize.

Jojoba—Do you recognize these common names: goatnut, deernut, pignut, sheepnut? Would you invite this plant into your garden? Yes! It is *Simmondsia chinensis*, and its more commonly used common name is jojoba. The handsome shrub’s odd common names suggest that its nuts are eaten by wild and domestic animals. Jojoba is also known for the liquid wax produced by the seeds, a substance widely used in beauty products.

Century Plant—The common name for *Agave deserti* (and many other *Agave* species) comes from the belief that the plant lives 100 years before flowering. Actually, most specimens bloom in 20 to 40 years, which is still a long time! Like most agaves, *A. deserti* is monocarpic, meaning it flowers only once before dying. However, before it dies, the plant reproduces vegetatively, leaving a ring of offspring (pups) around the mother plant.

—Louise Gonzalez
IN THE NATIVE GARDEN

A Weed Notebook

by John Wickham

Few topics motivate more lively discussion than weeds. Every gardener has a favorite weed to hate. Eradication strategies abound, with strong opinions on the effectiveness or appropriateness of certain approaches and intent curiosity in anything new. After ten years with a hot-and-cold battle against weeds in my yard, I implemented a series of novel tactics that are already showing promise.

A few years ago, a co-worker mentioned that he spends about one-half hour each day out in the yard weeding, before coming to work. He figured that a little bit each day was better than killing himself on the weekends. Recently, I thought I’d give that a shot and made up the following plan:

Each day I’ll start in one corner of the yard and weed for 30 minutes. I’ll begin every day in that same corner and keep working my way around the yard. I expect, in time, to make it through larger and larger swaths of the garden.

I liked the methodical, patient element to this plan. Forget all the other weeds and simply focus on this patch. Eventually, that patch will be my entire yard.

It seems to work. After nearly two months, much of my back yard has been cleared of weeds. There are still occasional seedlings, but the bigger problems are gone in those areas, and I’m making great headway. I very proudly described my strategy to Bart O’Brien at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, who commented, “You mean the Bradley Method.”

D’oh! It has a name?

It turns out the Bradley sisters developed a habitat restoration process in Australia to combat weeds. As they hiked along wildland trails, the sisters would pull invasive weeds. Over time, they discovered that invasive species were reduced in number and native plants began to take their place. An interesting part of their findings was that massive weed removal only lead to reinvasion by weeds. A more gradual approach helped native flora recovery more quickly.

After nearly two months, much of my back yard has been cleared of weeds. There are still occasional seedlings, but the bigger problems are gone.

Now, this isn’t the point in a home garden. There, we help the natives along by planting well-grown plants from pots, not waiting for seeds to sail in and germinate. So an approach that completely clears an area, keeps it cleared and continually expands the cleared area is something of a modification to the Bradley Method.

I’ve tacked on two other strategies. (I’m certain they have names, too, though I haven’t heard them.) In my research, I ran across an old adage: One year’s seeds equal seven years of weeds. So, first, I yank any weed with seeds on it. Better to get it out now, even if it isn’t in the rotation yet.

My other new tactic is to hit particularly bad areas on the weekends. I try to spend an hour or two clearing a thick patch. It’s not the gradual practice of the Bradley Method—it’s that deeply satisfying slash-and-burn approach. Unwanted vegetation may return to these areas, but I’m hoping these spots get incorporated into my regular Bradley Method sweep before new weeds sprout and go to seed again.

The nice thing about the Bradley Method is that it takes pressure off the gardener. You don’t have to worry about those bad patches any more because you will get to them. It’s only a matter of time. No stress. And if you feel like making a big push, go for it.

My next strategy is to force weed seeds to life…and a quick death. I hear the practice is called “grow and kill.”

Erodium cicutarium, red-stemmed filaree, a European native now well-established in Southern California gardens. Prevent infestations by pulling it and other weeds before they set seed.
CELEBRATING OUR

Outreach Expands with Your Help

by Lisa Novick, Outreach and Volunteer Coordinator

Spring 2009 was busier than ever, with our 6th Annual Native Plant Garden Tour and attendance at numerous events throughout Los Angeles. Compared with last spring, we received twice as many calls for our presence at eco- and water-related events and, thanks to our dedicated volunteers, we accommodated nearly all requests. Our activities are listed below. Not listed is the volunteers’ prep work—training meetings, materials gathering and study time—that made these events such a success for TPF. Thank you, volunteers!

If you would like to volunteer, please contact Lisa Novick at lisa@theodorepayne.org. More volunteers are always needed so that no one becomes burned out!

Altbuilt Expo, Santa Monica    Nan Dowling, Carlos Flores, Marilynn Hildebrandt, Jared Nielsen, Beatrice Olsen, Debbie Taylor

Discovery Garden    Jakub Gawronski

City of Pasadena Open Space Eco-Event    Michelle Auchterlonie

Crescenta Valley Water District Spring Fair    Kathy Linowski, Anne McNeill

Elementary School Field Trips to TPF    Joan Harrison, Sally Roberts

First Saturdays    Susana Ethal, Dee Farnsworth, Joe Grant, Janica Jones, Linda Sue Nibbe, Anita Sheridan and Los Angeles World Airports staff (Cathy Burger, Brianna Castrellan, Lois Castrellan, Louie Castrellan, Michelle Cortez, Georginannah Navarette, Brandon Nunn, Diana Sanchez, Rhonda Stavropoulos, Angie Thornton, Art Thornton)

Arts Council    Pamela Burgess, Joan Harrison, Michael Lewis Miller


Garden Tour Preparation    Dee Farnsworth, Marilynn Hildebrandt, Loretta Leiker, Julie McIntosh Shapiro

Graphic Design    John Vega

Hollywood Farmers’ Market    Michelle Auchterlonie, Bonnie Biddison, Mike Brown, Larry Gabriel, Tyr Jung, Loretta Leiker, Iain McConnell, Jared Nielsen, Beatrice Olsen, Aida Takizawa, Debbie Taylor, Mittz Zack Walters

Propagation Class    Mary Brooks, Brendan Galipeau

Outreach Event, Juniper Hills    Kathy Parenteau

Immeasurable thanks to veteran TPF volunteer Joe Spano for so ably narrating our 27th annual Wildflower Hotline!

Last Saturdays    Dee Farnsworth, Brendan Galipeau, Jared Nielsen, Anita Sheridan, USC students from the Parkside International Residential Hall (Grace Hirshan, Abigail Ong, Susie Phadke, Reyna Pulliam, Jason Schukraft, Rachel Smith, Jasmine Wong), and the Verdugo Hills High School Interact Club (Noemi Agagianian, Samantha Arman, Joshua Denogean, Leslie Dominguez, Amy Nam, Tyla Vaa-LeTourneau)

LA Garden Show, LA County Arboretum    Gail Butensky, Mike Che, Anne Eli Kerschner, Loretta Leiker, Keith Malone, Rob Rizzardi, Aida Takizawa, Debbie Taylor, Sarah Wilson

Earth Day Weekend, LA Zoo    Evelyn Warner

Irrigation Class, Santa Monica Pier    Pam Bottaro, Sarah Wilson

Spring Green Fair, Metropolitan Water District    Joe Grant, Debbie Taylor

Office    Sima Bernstein, Jenny Garcia, Loretta Leiker, Kathleen Linowski, Kathy Parkentude

Poppy Day    Megan Aguiling, Mary Brooks, Edward Condit, Teresa Cuba, Leslie Dominguez, Dee Farnsworth, Janica Jones, Lynnette Kampe, Karina Lopez, Keith Malone, Fredric Maupin, Jerry Schneider, Debbie Taylor, Spencer Westbrook, John Wickham

Propagation    Mary Brooks, Shirley Chung, Roxanne Corea, Nancy Edwards, Andrew Peck, Antonio Sanchez

Sales Yard    Teresa Cuba, Brendan Galipeau, Marie Massa

Seed Room    Sima Bernstein, Teresa Cuba, Greg Maltby

West Basin Smart Landscape Expo, El Segundo    Lisa Fimiani, Keith Malone

Sony Pictures Plant Sale    Kathy Mainzer, Jeremy Moreno-Gershman, Jared Nielsen, Peter Stern, Debbie Taylor

Spring Plant Sale, South Coast Botanic Garden    Lisa Ceazan, Anne Eli Kershner, Rob Rizzardi

Arbor Day, South Pasadena Library    Sarah Peterson

Toluca Lake Outreach Event    Debbie Taylor

Weeding    Megan Aguiling, Sima Bernstein, Amber Orozco, Anthony Ramirez, Tierra del Sol

…and thank you, as ever, to our webmasters Ken and Rhonda Gilliland and to our Board members for their dedicated effort on behalf of the Foundation.

If your name is missing from the volunteer listings, please forgive the omission and let us know so we can credit you in the next issue!
Each month we feature a different species and offer a 20% discount to members.

**July**  *Bouteloua curtipendula*—Side-Oats Grama (Poaceae)

This graceful, versatile bunchgrass grows quickly to 2-by-2 feet. Nodding summer flowers are followed by bird-attracting seed heads. Prefers fast-draining soil; accepts full sun or light shade and occasional to moderate irrigation. Use in meadow or grassland plantings; combines well with spring wild flowers. Deer resistant; good slope stabilizer. Winter dormant.

**August**  *Pleuraphis jamesii*—James’ Galleta (Poaceae)

This fast-growing rhizomatous desert bunchgrass reaches 2 feet high and spreads but can be mowed to 3 inches. Unmowed plants sport golden brown late-summer seedheads. Full sun is best; prefers loose soil but will adapt; accepts drought or regular moisture. Excellent erosion control. Winter dormant.

**September**  *Juncus textilis*—Basket Rush (Juncaceae)

A handsome species with spreading clumps of 5-to-6-foot-tall evergreen stems, brownish summer flowers and late summer seed (for the birds). Prefers moist conditions; full sun to part shade; tolerates clay soil. Good erosion control. Use against walls or near water features. Fibers are valued for basketry.

*Please note:* We reserve the right to make changes. Offer is good while supplies last—sorry, no rain checks or holds. We may need to limit quantities. Please check our website for more information on the plants listed here.