



# LOS ANGELES CHAPTER

2018 Volume XXIII Issue 1

<http://www.crfg-la.org>

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## MEETING

**Date:** January 27, 2018

**Place:** Sepulveda Gardens

16633 Magnolia Blvd, Encino, CA 91316

## Program: Annual Grafting Demonstration & Scion Exchange

There will be grafting demonstrations by some of our most successful grafters at our January meeting, followed by our annual scion exchange. Please bring plant materials to share (seeds, cuttings, scions, etc.)

NO CUTTINGS FROM PATENTED TREES

NO CITRUS PLEASE

### Scion wood preparation info:

- Wood should come from clean, disease-free plants. Cut as near to our meeting date as possible.
  - Select straight wood from last year's growth. Scions should be 1/4" – 3/8" diameter (pencil size) and contain several buds (2 -3 minimum).
  - Bundle by variety in a moist paper towel(s) and place in a ziplock-type bag, leaving a slight opening in the ziplock bag for the wood to breathe. Make sure that the towel(s) stay damp as long as the wood is stored.
  - Label each bag with fruit type and variety, as well as any additional information you feel is pertinent (i.e. minimum chilling hours; needs pollinator; vigor; zip code, where successfully grown, etc).
  - Put your name on the bag, in case people have questions.
  - Keep scion bag in vegetable bin of your refrigerator until the morning of the exchange. Be careful not to let the scion wood freeze!
  - At the exchange, please wait to make your selections until directed by the chairman.
  - Please limit your selections to two of any variety, until all the groups have had their opportunity. Then feel free to go back for more!
- All Members: if your last name begins with A-M please bring something for our refreshment table.**

## FIELD TRIP: Deborah Oisboid's Drought Garden

**Date:** February 24, 2018 at 10:00 am

**Place:** (Private address)

## PROGRAM:

When the DWP began their turf removal program, Deborah knew it was time to tear out the front lawn. After gathering a plethora of plants, stones, wood chips, decomposed granite and flagstones - and having only a vague idea in mind - she transformed a typical suburban front yard into a rollicking collection of colors, shapes, and textures. She is proud to show how drought tolerant means more than a couple of cacti and a patch of stones. Potluck lunch, please. OK to bring guests.

## SAVE THE DATES - CALENDAR FOR 2018 LA CHAPTER

- March 10<sup>th</sup> - Field Trip: Sylmar High School/Tom Spellman
- April 28<sup>th</sup> - Sepulveda Gardens- Rachel Surls: "Cows to Concrete"
- May 26<sup>th</sup> - Field Trip
- June 23<sup>rd</sup> - Sepulveda Gardens - Garrett Long: "Soil Health and Regenerative Practices"
- July – *Date to Be Announced*. (To avoid conflict with the 2018 Festival Of Fruit held in Northern California at the end of July)
- August 25<sup>th</sup> - Sepulveda Gardens
- September 22<sup>nd</sup> - Field Trip
- October 27<sup>th</sup> - Sepulveda Gardens
- November 17<sup>th</sup> - Field Trip
- December 15<sup>th</sup> - Sepulveda Gardens - Holiday Party

## Words From Our Chairman



Taking on a position as Chairman of the LA chapter of the CRFG could be a daunting task. Or it could be a very special opportunity to work with an amazing group of people who are incredibly supportive. Jim Schopper has done such an amazing job as Chairman, and our board are some of the best people I have had the opportunity to work with. We have all grown and are better people and Fruit Growers thanks to CRFG.

Our scion exchange in January is always an exciting event - many thanks to all of you who participate and share your fruit tree cuttings. It's fun to show our neighbors our garden with our stone fruit tree with 15 different fruit grafted onto the same tree. I always enjoy meeting new members and hearing about what they are growing. My wife Monica and I are having fun increasing our collection of dragon fruit thanks to Edgar, Donovan, Edna and others. The generosity that everyone shows when they share cuttings and plants they donate at our meetings is inspiring!

Be sure to check the calendar for a list of events we have planned to date. We are always looking for more opportunities to visit our members gardens or other locations you feel would be enjoyable for our group, so please let the board know if you have an idea for a field trip or wish to volunteer to show off your own garden.

I think it's important to have much input from individual members so we represent what everyone would like to see our group accomplish over time. I welcome you all to let me know your ideas when we are together, or by dropping me an email.

Working to assist our fellow members is something Jim and I both agree is a wonderful way to give back to those who need help in their gardens. Feel free to let the board know if you can use some help getting

your gardens in shape but may not have the physical ability to do so yourself.

Three cheers again to Jim and Debbie Schopper for their 7 years as our leaders and I hope I can make them proud as I start my tenure as Chairman of our LA Chapter of CRFG.

Tony Stewart

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## LOOKING BACK

By Debbie Schopper  
Member at Large

### November

We titled this meeting "Cover Your Bases". It was a different kind of meeting, in that we invited members to bring their questions and discuss problems they were having in their back yard orchard/gardens. A panel of members heard questions then offered their suggestions. The answers were not limited to the panel only, as others in our club shared successes as well.



Additionally, Member Nancy Weilgart was honored for her many years of unselfish service to CRFG. The meeting began with member Charles Portney introducing plants and trees that he and some of our members brought for a huge silent auction. Each plant was named and described; they included fingerlimes, Becky Mystery banana, Babaco papaya, pepinos, collard trees, paprika peppers, pigeon peas, cape gooseberry, cherry of the Rio Grande, white sapote, pink plumeria, avocado seedlings,

hibiscus, aloe, Jack fruit, Wonderful pomegranate, dragon fruit and asparagus ferns.

### **December Meeting**

December is the month of our annual holiday party. And party we did! We began with our holiday potluck lunch as all members pitched in to set up our meeting. We had our favorite singer/member Marcia Melcombe and Mark Nudelman entertain us with holiday songs. As one member said, "It would not be a holiday party without Marcia singing."

Member Ed Valdivia presented Jim Schopper with a gift to thank him for his past seven years serving as CRFG LA Chapter Chairman. Tony Stewart and his lovely wife, Monica, were introduced. Tony will be serving as our new Chairman for the 2018 year.



We ended our celebration with a White Elephant gift exchange and a silent auction as we said goodbye to 2017.

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## **Time of the Season: A Bee Garden**

By Deborah Oisboid, Editor

Now is a great time to plan(t) a very special garden. Not (just) for butterflies, but for bees!

There are over 4,000 species of bees native to the United States, and 1500 particular to California. Bees are active roughly March through October. Planting a well-designed bee garden provides food and shelter, allowing bees to nest and breed in safety. Choose a selection of plants that will bloom successively during this time period. Bees will enjoy a continuous supply

of food if one flower becomes available just as another is done for the season.

The best plants to choose for your bee garden are varieties native to your area. But if you want to attract native bees don't over-mulch. Many native species nest in the ground and if your entire garden is mulched, they can't dig their nests!

Bees require two types of plants to survive: pollen plants and nectar plants. Pollen is taken back to their nests to feed the young bees. Nectar plants feed the adult bees to give them energy while looking for pollen. Some of nectar is also brought to the nests to feed the baby bees.

Variety is the spice of life to a bee. Bee gardens that use 10 or more species of bee-preferred plants tend to be the most successful. Using a wide variety in your bee garden will also attract a wide variety of bees.

Flowers should be planted in large patches of similar varieties to allow bees to dine in one spot for long periods of time. Gardens with scattered plants do not attract as many visits, and therefore receive less pollination, because bees expend too much energy flying between locations.

Bees have excellent color vision (they see a similar breadth of the color spectrum as humans) but it's shifted toward ultraviolet. This means red is in the same wavelength as green. Imagine trying to find flowers among foliage if they are all the same color!

When planning a garden for bees, one of the first questions to ask is which bees you're planting for.

Small bees, which have short tongues, are most often attracted to small, shallow flowers. Plant flowers such as daisy, marigold, butterfly weed, valerian, buttercup, aster, yarrow and Queen Anne's lace.

Larger bees, with longer tongues, can handle slightly deeper flowers. They enjoy plants such as delphinium, larkspur, columbine, monkshood and snapdragon.

Long-tongued bees are also attracted to various herbs, such as sage, oregano, mint and lavender.

Leaf-cutting bees are drawn to plants in the legume family and sweet clover.

We live in a Mediterranean climate, so anything adapted to places like southern Italy will do well here such as basil, rosemary, bay laurel, and pomegranate. Many herbs are also drought-hardy and great for bees

– parsley, sage, rosemary, and thyme is not only a familiar tune, but a bee paradise. Many of the local bee-friendly plants are also attractive – poppies, sunflowers, mallow, sage, buckwheat, yarrow.

This brings up another important point – planting for all seasons. Go for plants that bloom in spring, summer, and fall. The earlier blooming flowers will help the first bees emerging from hibernation. And late in the year pollinators need a diet rich in protein and carbohydrates to sustain them as they migrate or head back into hibernation.

Information was gleaned from the following websites:

- [http://www.xerces.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/CaliforniaPlantList\\_web.pdf](http://www.xerces.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/CaliforniaPlantList_web.pdf)
- <http://www.losangelescountybeekeepers.com/gardening-for-bees/>
- <https://honeylove.org/how-to-bee-garden/>
- <http://www.latimes.com/home/la-hm-0604-how-to-plant-a-bee-garden-20160531-snap-story.html>
- <http://beekeepinglikeagirl.com/top-10-bee-friendly-flowers-plus-book-giveaway/>
- <https://xerces.org/2017/11/10/planning-your-plantings-for-climate-resiliency/>

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## Gardening Tips for January/February for Los Angeles (Southwest Region)

This list merges Almanac recommendations for January & February. For the full list check out

<https://www.almanac.com/gardening/tips/CA/Los%20Angeles/01>

### CLEANING

- Control weeds while they are young and tender, or better yet - before they sprout. Remove weeds before they seed.
- Many insects can be found in the garden during the winter months. To help control them, spray with a dormant horticulture oil.
- Finish pruning fruit trees and grapes in February; fertilize deciduous fruit trees with nitrogen when they leaf out; prune frost-sensitive citrus after spring growth.

### PREPARING

- Prepare your garden soil for spring planting. You can also prepare new soil for flower, rose, or shrub beds. Mix in organic material to give plants a healthy start.
- Finish pruning roses and begin fertilizing in February.

### PLANTING

- Continue to sow cool-season vegetable seeds, such as beets, carrots, cabbage, peas, and potatoes.
- Continue to transplant artichokes, asparagus, chard, lettuce, and onions.
- Begin planting perennial garden crops, such as blueberries, blackberries, and grapes.
- Most bare-rooted trees and shrubs as well as bare-rooted deciduous fruit trees can be planted now.

### OTHER

- Fertilize houseplants with a water-soluble fertilizer and remember to water them. Do not overwater, as that can lead to diseases.
- Water lawns and gardens deeply once or twice a week, depending on the amount of rain. Do not overwater.
- Do not prune spring-flowering plants until after they bloom. When pruning, never remove more than 1/4 of the total plant.
- Protect your plants from frost damage if the temperature could drop to the 20s or below.

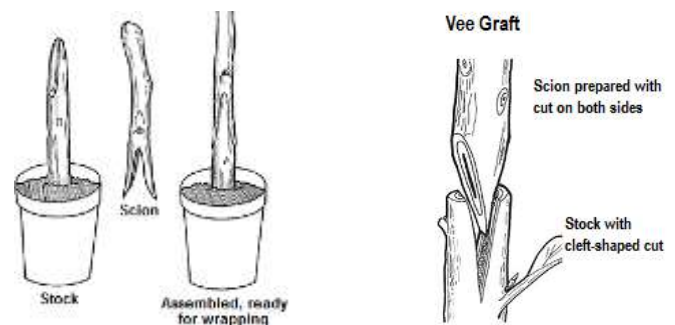
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## Propagation Method of the Month

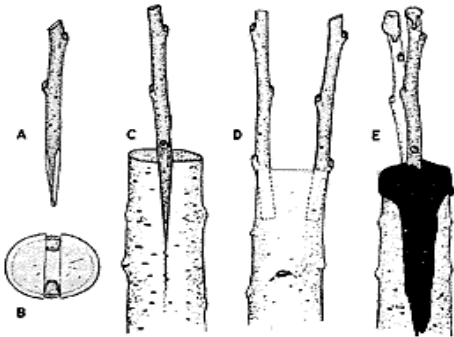
By Deborah Oisboid, *Editor*

Of course the first newsletter of the year MUST have an article on grafting! After all, that's what our January meeting is all about. Grafting is a way to attach a part of one plant onto another. There are many different grafting techniques. However they all essentially join two plants by bringing together identical-shaped mating faces. The goal is to get the living cambium layers to grow together and make the two into one.

**Saddle and Vee Grafting** works best when the stock is dormant and less than 1 inch in diameter. In saddle grafting, an inverted V shape is cut from the top of the rootstock. A V is then cut into the base of the scion, and the two pieces are joined together. A Vee graft is exactly the same except in reverse.

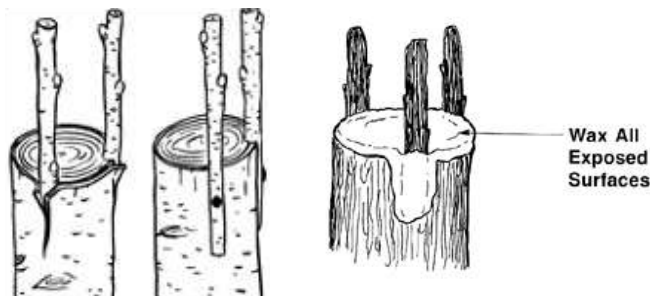


**Cleft grafting** is best done on main stems or scaffold branches during the winter and early spring and involves making a cut, or cleft, through the center of the stock and inserting a scion into each end of this cleft. It is best adapted to branches 1 to 2 inches in diameter. The grafts are made within 2 to 3 feet of the trunk or main branches and preferably not more than 4 to 6 feet from ground, or new top of tree will be too high.

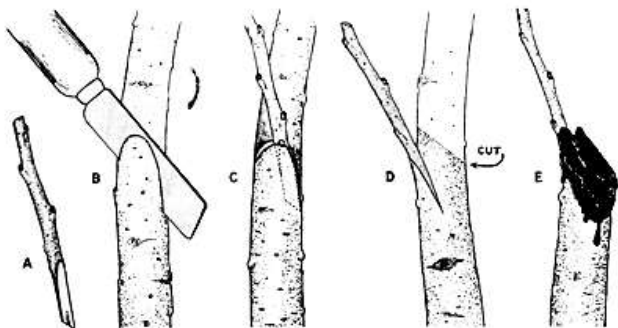


If you graft two scions onto one stock, you might want to remove the lesser scion when the other is firmly established or they may fight for dominance and you could lose both.

**Bark Grafting** involves making vertical slits through the bark of a plant's rootstock, and then inserting multiple scions around the rootstock. Bark grafting is preferred over cleft grafting when rootstock is at least 4 inches in diameter. It is performed in the early spring when tree bark is easily removed from the wood.



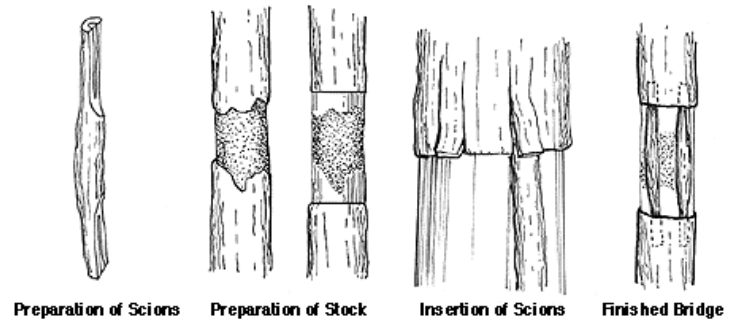
**Veneer Grafting** is an ideal choice for propagating conifers that are slow growing. Veneer grafting involves removing bark from one side of the scion and from a portion of the rootstock, and then placing the exposed cambiums together.



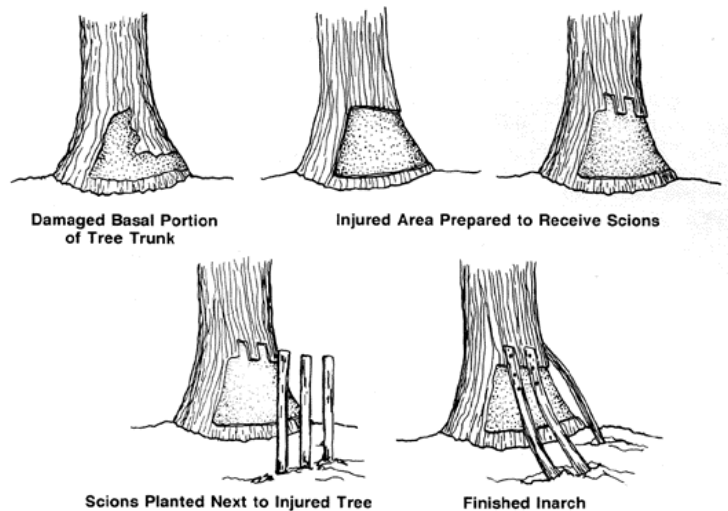
**Whip-and-Tongue Grafting** is similar to Saddle grafting: this method is commonly used on woody ornamentals or nursery crops (eg, young apple and pear trees) when the branches are relatively small (no more than ½-inch in diameter). The “whip” of the rootstock holds the “tongue” of the scion in place, and vice-versa. Use similar diameter stock and scion.



**Bridge Grafting** is best in cases of plant disease or damage; the bridge effectively creates a bridge over the area to provide support and ensure nutrients and water are able to reach all areas of the plant. This type of grafting is performed during early spring before active plant growth begins.

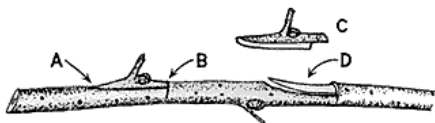


**Inarch Grafting** is used to bypass a damaged area of a stem. The difference between the two methods is that inarch grafting uses an existing shoot or sucker from the same plant that is growing below the injury and extends the growth to a point above the injury. Water and nutrients can then travel from below the damaged area to the top of the plant.



**Bud grafting** involves using a bud instead of a stem for a scion. Budding is done after the tree has left dormancy, when the bark of the stock slips easily and when there are well-grown buds.

The first step is to cut bud sticks of the desired cultivar from strong shoots of the present season's growth. These buds should be mature, as indicated by a slightly brownish color.



The most important thing about grafting is to line up the cambium layers of the scion and stock as closely as possible. The cambium is the middle layer between the xylem (central woody part) and the bark. Keeping the cambium layers aligned is important and the most difficult part of the graft. If they don't touch, the sap can't bridge the gap and heal the joint.

Reasons for a failed graft:

- Stock and scion were not compatible.
- The cambiums did not line up properly.
- Scion was upside down.
- Grafting was done at the wrong time of the year.
- Rootstock or scion was not healthy.
- Scions were dried out or injured by cold.
- Scions were not dormant.
- The graft was not properly covered.
- The scion was physically moved by storm, birds, or other means.
- The graft was shaded too much by other growth.
- The graft was attacked by insects or disease.
- The graft union was strangled because tape was not cut or released in time.

Sources:

- <http://www.gardenguides.com/86743-types-plant-grafting.html>
- <http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/hort/hil/grafting.html>
- <http://teca.fao.org/read/7794>

## Letters to the Editor

*This is a reprint of a letter published in the March-April 2017 CRFG-LA newsletter.*

Here are my observations about our Chapter's recent scion exchange. I really look forward to this yearly program since it gives me an opportunity to diversify my orchard plus the trees of some of my friends. Those of you who made contributions will have the satisfaction of knowing that you are helping your fellow chapter members in their goal of growing fruit. Some of you made this project very user friendly. For instance, Lianne Rugeroni included in her package of Methley plum cuttings very readable instructions (printed – not hand written) which included chill requirements, fruit descriptions, etc., -- very thorough. Karen and David Payton packaged their cuttings wrapped in a moist paper towel and proportioned for individual taking.

On the other hand, a few of you did not package your cuttings. The wood became separated and without identification. I noticed one package with the fruit type but not the specific variety. Next year, keep in mind that the scion wood needs to be kept as damp and cool as possible; and with legible and specific identification. This will help ensure that you as a donor have done as much as you can to deliver a meaningful product.

All in all, the attendees went home with useful packages of scion wood.

--Roy Imazu

Have a suggestion? A question? A story to share? Send it to [editor@crfg-la.org](mailto:editor@crfg-la.org) and see it published here!