



LOS ANGELES CHAPTER

2017 Volume XXII Issue 4

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

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MEETING

Date: July 22, 2017 at 10:00 a.m.

Place: Sepulveda Gardens
16633 Magnolia Blvd, Encino, CA 91316

Program: Jorge Ochoa: Passion Fruit

Jorge Ochoa, director and instructor of the Horticulture Program at Long Beach City College, will speak to us on South America's Aphrodisiac – Passion Fruit. Passion fruit: the name evokes an exotic tropical paradise, an aphrodisiac or a wonderful flavoring for many juice mixes and pastries. Nature provided over sixty different species of edible passion fruit, but most people are only aware of just one (*Passiflora edulis*). Join Jorge Ochoa as we take a trek through the jungles of Central and South America to learn about the many unfamiliar passion fruits that are becoming popular and that you can grow in your backyard.

All Members: if your last name begins with A-M please bring something for our refreshment table. And since it will be served close to noon, please consider something lunch-y.

FIELD TRIP: Cottonwood Urban Farm

Date: August 26, 2017 at 10:00 am

Place: (Private address)

PROGRAM: Tour of Cottonwood Urban Farm, given by founder (and member of our Los Angeles Chapter) Elliot Kuhn

In the winter of 2012, educator and LA native Elliot Kuhn began converting a dusty, vacant plot in Panorama City into a highly productive urban farm. Nestled in the basin of the Tujunga Wash, Cottonwood Urban Farm (CUF) uses creative growing techniques (season extension, intercropping, succession planting) to cultivate a variety of vegetables, fruits and herbs without the use of any large scale commercial farming equipment. With a deep connection to community, education, and ecology, CUF places social responsibility first and works with local non-profits and a local substance abuse program for youth. Therapeutic work days are offered to the residents of the teen facility on an ongoing basis. Come and be inspired by all that Elliot is doing!

PS: Elliot will have trees from Dave Wilson Nursery (mostly apple and stone fruit) available for purchase. They are in 15-gallon containers so plan ahead!

SAVE THE DATES - CALENDAR FOR 2017 LA CHAPTER

- Sept 23rd - Sepulveda Gardens - Paul Talley: Figs
- October 28th - Field Trip- to be announced
- Nov 18th - Sepulveda Gardens – to be announced
- Dec 16th - Sepulveda Gardens - Holiday Party

Words From Our Chairman

No Chairman column this issue. See you next month!

LOOKING BACK

By Deborah Oisboid, Editor

May Meeting

We had quite an educational experience at our May meeting at Sepulveda Gardens. Our guest speaker Anna Howell is an expert entomologist from the University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources. She gave a fascinating lecture on bees and other pollinators. For instance, did you know there are more than 100,000 types of bees worldwide, and over 1500 bee species in California



alone? That not all bees make (edible) honey? That some bees are smaller than the head of a pin? She said she could have talked for another hour or two, and to be honest, I would have listened for another hour or two. It was that fascinating. Her information was wonderfully presented and well appreciated.

June Meeting

In June we took a field trip to Mulberry Haven in Ojai, where we met with and were given tours by owner Carol Vesecky and biodynamic orchardist Kody Ryan. The tours featured an amazing collection of trees including many varieties of their namesake mulberries, as well as apples, figs, oranges, persimmons, jujubes, and more. The orchard, located in the hills at the edge of the California wilderness, has a splendid peacefulness and we enjoyed learning the history of the farm, going back to its time as a hostel, and about the many types of fruits and vegetables grown there. Our generous hosts even allowed us to pick handfuls of incredibly sweet but very stain-

inducing dark Persian mulberries - a rare treat and well worth the messy fingers!



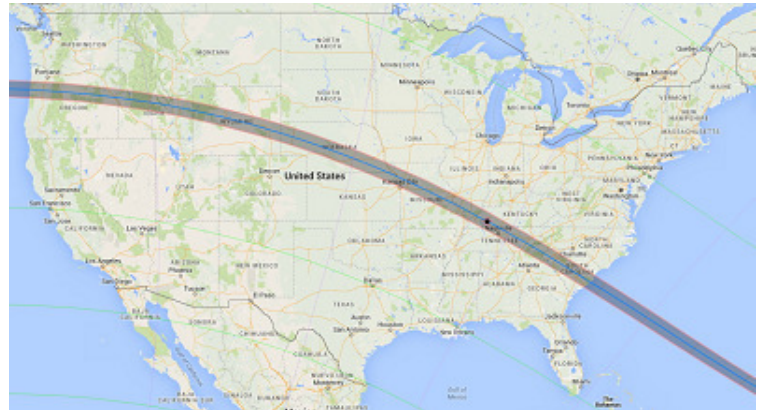
Many thanks to Carol and Kody for sharing their delightful haven with us.

Time of the Season: The Great Solar Eclipse of 2017

By Deborah Oisboid, Editor

A total eclipse of the Sun occurs when the Moon passes between the Earth and Sun, blocking out the Sun's light. Although the entire eclipse can last a couple of hours, its spectacular total phase lasts only a few minutes. The chances of observing a total solar eclipse from your backyard are very rare; totality exists only along a narrow path on Earth's surface. Everyone outside of this band will only see a partial eclipse.

For the first time in nearly four decades, a total solar eclipse will sweep across the mainland United States.



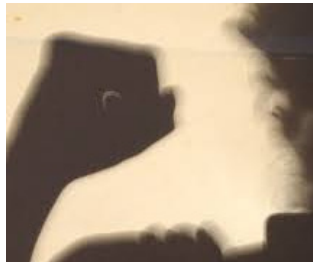
On Monday, August 21, 2017 between 9:05 am – 11:45 am, the so-called Great American Total Solar Eclipse will darken skies from Oregon to South Carolina, along a stretch of land about 70 miles wide. Sadly, Los Angeles is not in the path of totality. However, many locations which are in the path will have special events. Check them out at <https://eclipse2017.nasa.gov>.

Eclipse Viewing Warning: Never stare at the Sun without proper eye protection! You could cause permanent

damage to your eyes, even blindness. Regular sunglasses are totally useless for eclipse viewing – DO NOT USE SUNGLASSES TO STARE AT THE SUN. But there are ways to safely observe the sun.

The simplest method for viewing is a pinhole camera. Make one by poking a tiny hole in a 3x5 card and holding it a few inches above another white surface.

Or use anything with small holes. A colander can work, and so can holding your fist up with a tiny opening! This is an "indirect" way of observing the sun, because the viewer sees only a projection of the sun.



To view the sun directly (and safely), use "solar-viewing glasses" or "eclipse glasses" or "personal solar filters" (these are all names for the same thing), according to the safety recommendations from NASA. The "lenses" of solar-viewing glasses are made from special-purpose solar filters that are hundreds of thousands of times darker than regular sunglasses. These glasses are so dark that the only thing visible through them is the sun. But beware! NASA and the AAS recommend that solar-viewing or eclipse glasses meet the current international standard: ISO 12312-2. Some older solar-viewing glasses may meet previous standards for eye protection, but not the new international standard.

Gardening Tips for July/August for Los Angeles (Southwest Region)

This list merges Almanac recommendations for July & August. For the full list check out <http://www.almanac.com/gardening/tips/CA/Los%20Angeles/03>.

CLEANING

- Finish pruning spring-flowering shrubs by mid-July
- Divide and transplant iris, peonies, and other spring blooms as they go dormant.
- Deadhead spent flowers; this may encourage new blooms in September.
- Remove old vegetable plants that have stopped producing.
- If white crust develops in containers, it's salt buildup; remove and water heavily to flush out salts.
- Harvest vegetables and fruits regularly to keep your garden productive.
- Garlic and onions are ready to harvest when their tops start to bend over. Remove their tops after

they've dried for a couple of weeks and store in a cool place.

PREPARING

- Be sure to regularly water houseplants and potted plants. Use a water-soluble fertilizer so that the plants do not lose vital nutrients. Do not let houseplants dry out.
- Check the mulch around your plants; make sure to put in a 3- to 4-inch layer to conserve moisture.
- Check out local plant sales for great deals!
- Feed your roses at midmonth to encourage flowers.
- Generally, trees and shrubs need deep watering every 10 - 14 days to a depth of 3 inches.
- Stop fertilizing trees and shrubs so that they can start preparing for winter dormancy.
- Order your spring-blooming bulbs in August

PLANTING

- July - Plant transplants of tomatoes, eggplants, and peppers. You can also start seeding lima beans, pumpkins, and squash.
- Late July, plant iris and daylilies. Prepare soil now for fall planting.
- Plant new perennials, shrubs, and trees; they have a better chance to establish themselves during the milder fall months than those planted in the spring.
- August - Start your fall vegetable garden by planting broccoli, Brussels sprouts, Chinese cabbage, carrots, collards, lettuce, and other cool-season vegetables that will winter over.

OTHER

- The best time to garden is in the early morning or late in the day to avoid the heat of the day.
- Pick your annuals and perennials frequently to encourage more flower production.
- Stay on top of weeds; don't let them go to seed.
- Beware of caterpillars, aphids, spider mites, and other insects in the garden.
- Water your containers twice a day. Apply a slow-release fertilizer.
- Be alert for summer drought conditions. Be sure to water your flower beds and vegetable gardens deeply two to three times a week.

Propagation Method of the Month

By Deborah Oisboid, *Editor*

Information selected from The AHC [Plant Propagation](#), edited by Alan Toogood.

This month's topic is Cuttings. Propagating from cuttings takes advantage of a plant's ability to regenerate. Roots sprouting from

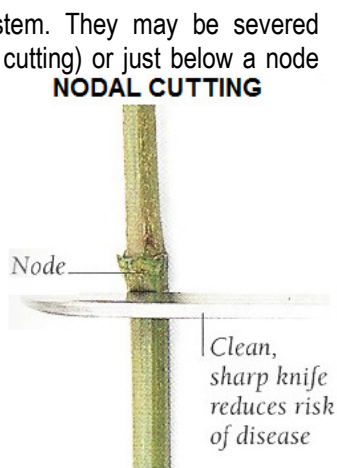
stem, leaf, or bud tissue are known as adventitious roots. To produce these, a group of growth cells, usually close to the central core of sap-carrying tissue, changes. They become root initials (root cells) which form root buds and then adventitious roots. These are also called “induced” or “wound” roots because, in most plants, they occur only after some type of wounding, such as cutting off a piece of bark.

In some plants, such as ivy, poplars, and mint (rosemary and salvias), pre-formed root initials are (dormant) in the stems, so they root rapidly and easily from cuttings. A few plants even form root buds, which are normally visible at the bases of shoots.

Other, often hardy, woody plants, are difficult to root. Callusing on these may hinder root formation, and it may be best to graft instead.

PREPARING CUTTINGS

Most cuttings are taken from a stem. They may be severed between the leaf joints (intermodal cutting) or just below a node (nodal cutting). Nodal cuttings expose the most vascular (sap-carrying) tissue, increasing the likelihood of root formation. Other ways to encourage rooting include wounding, (works well on woody plants) combined with a rooting hormone compound. The growing tip may also be removed from a cutting to redistribute natural growth hormones to the rest of the stem for root and shoot growth.



TYPES OF CUTTINGS

Cuttings are taken from stems, leaves, or roots. There are several types:

SOFTWOOD CUTTINGS

These are usually taken from the first flush of growth in the spring. They have the highest rooting potential of stem cuttings but a low survival rate because they lose water and wilt quickly. They are vulnerable to bruising, which makes them susceptible to botrytis (rot).

GREENWOOD CUTTINGS

These stems are still young but beginning to firm up. They are easier to handle than softwood cuttings and not so prone to wilting.

SEMI-RIPE CUTTINGS

When stems are firmer and buds have developed, they are semi-ripe. Cuttings may be taken with a heel, especially from broadleaved evergreens and conifers.

HARDWOOD CUTTINGS

These are from dormant wood. They are slower to root but robust and not prone to drying out.

LEAF-BUD CUTTINGS

Often taken from shrubs, these provide an economical way of using semi-ripe stems.

LEAF CUTTINGS

A few plants can regenerate new plants from a detached leaf or section of leaf tissue. Examples are Begonias, Crassulas, African Violets, and Peperomia. Interestingly, while it is possible to root leaves of plants such as Clematis, Hoya and Mahonia, they cannot produce buds so can never develop into complete plants.

ROOT CUTTINGS

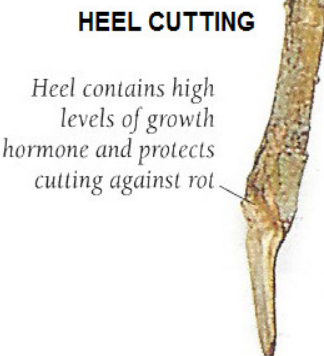
A limited range of plants – ones that naturally produce shoots or suckers from the roots – can be propagated from root cuttings. Their roots are usually thick and fleshy, in order to store the food that allows the root to survive as it produces shoots.

SUCCESS WITH CUTTINGS

Success will depend on several factors: mainly the age, health, and growth habits of the parent plant.

Always choose a healthy plant; diseases or pests can be transmitted to a cutting. Material taken from young plants, especially when in active growth, is usually more likely to root.

Water the parent plant thoroughly a few hours beforehand so that the tissue is fully turgid, especially for leafy cuttings.



The time taken for a cutting to root depends upon the plant, the type of cutting, age of the stem, how it was prepared, and the rooting environment. Leafy cuttings root in about three weeks; woody cuttings take up to five months.

Prepare and insert cuttings quickly to avoid losing moisture through transpiration. Keep surfaces and equipment clean. Cutting tools should be sharp to avoid crushing plant cells along the cut.

Bottom heat of 59-77F can encourage rooting. However, the surrounding air should be cooler to avoid encouraging growth of foliage instead of roots. The rooting medium should be moist at all times and the air humid, especially with leafy cuttings.

Letters to the Editor

Have a suggestion? A question? A story to share? Send it to editor@crfg-la.org and see it published here!