



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

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LOS ANGELES CHAPTER

November - December 2014 Volume XIX

MEETING

DATE: November 22, 2014

TIME: 10:00 a.m.

PLACE: Sepulveda Gardens
16633 Magnolia Volved
Encino, CA 91316

PROGRAM: **Anna Howell** is an experienced entomologist who has contributed her efforts to many research projects at UCCE Ventura.

Anna will be speaking about pest management as it relates to your fruit trees. She will address the questions you have emailed her regarding your concerns.

If you have specific questions please email them to Anna. She requests that you email her your pest questions prior to the meeting. Then she will be better prepared to **answer them at the meeting.** Her email address is: adhowell@ucdavis.edu

Attention Members! If your last name begins with A-M please bring something for our November table. Since we are usually eating around noon, and even enough we love all those sweet treats, please also consider a dish more appropriate for a lunchtime meal.

PROGRAM:

DATE: December 13, 2014

TIME: 10:00 a.m.

PLACE: Sepulveda Gardens
16633 Magnolia Blvd
Encino, CA 91316

PROGRAM: **OUR FESTIVE HOLIDAY POTLUCK** **Everybody Brings Food.**

Remember *this is a full meal, not just snacks.* It is a chance to prepare your favorite dish. Please bring **a dish that serves 8**, and it would be great if you would **include the recipe.** Besides food plan to **wear colors of the Season!**

Once again we can look forward to **Marcia Melcombe**, along with **Mark Nudelman**, entertaining us with some wonderful holiday music! "*Baby it's Cold Outside*" ♪ □ ♪ ...and more.

Also bring plants for the raffle/sale. Finally, we will have a **gift exchange**, so if you wish to participate, wrap up something you think others would like; it does not have to be new, but in "gently used condition". Those that bring a gift will receive a raffle ticket at the door.

Save the Date

January - January 24th- Sepulveda Gardens - GRAFTING/SCION EXCHANGE

Orange County Chapter will hold their grafting meeting on January 17th

February - TBD

If you know of any member who may need a ride to the Holiday Party let me know. If you would like to *volunteer to transport* somebody contact me. If you are *a member who needs transportation* please contact me by email editor@CRFG-la.org or phone 818-772-9523. I will try to match up drivers and passengers. NO PROMISES.

Chairman's Chat



Dear Los Angeles chapter members and friends, Planted any fruit trees lately? Recently I worked with a local nurseryman on a tree planting project at Sylmar High School. We planted some tropical fruit trees: Pitanga (Brazilian cherry) guava (Turnbull) Jaboticaba (Brazilian grape tree) and Acerola (Barbados cherry). I learned something that day about planting tropical trees.

We planted the trees on mounds. **First**, we dug holes and back filled them with a **blend of 2/3 thirds native soil and 1/3 third compost/peat**, compacting as we filled. **Then**, cutting off the bottom of the plastic can, we made two vertical cuts up 2/3 thirds of the can and placed it in a shallow hole. We continued to back fill, tamping the soil as we built a mound around the can.

Lastly, when the mound was almost at the top of container, we cut the rest of the lower portion of the container and removed it leaving the top of the container around the tree. It looks like we left the tree in the container and just mounded soil around it. But actually there is only the top 1/3 portion of the container left in the mound. Basically, the tree is planted at the same depth as it was in the nursery container. We then applied some gypsum to the top of the mound. And as it is commonly said, it sweetens the soil and breaks up clay soils. The other benefit is that it adds calcium and sulfur to the soil and builds disease resistance.

However, not everyone believes all this about gypsum.

For more information and some very interesting comments, please visit:

Dr.Chalker-Scott's web page

<http://www.theinformedgardener.com>

In areas where there is poor drainage or where it could be an issue, such as sites with soggy or heavy clay soils, fruit trees should be planted on mounds. These mounds are typically 6- to 12- inch raised pyramids of soil piled at the bottom of the planting hole, and they ensure that water runs away from the tree's roots and crown. Put only the soil that you took out of the planting hole back into it, and make sure that after the soil settles, the tree is planted at the same depth as it was in its nursery container. Planting your fruit tree roots too deep can result in collar and root rot and tree death. In landscapes with sandy soil or excellent drainage, mounds are not usually necessary.

We, the *Los Angeles Chapter California Rare Fruit Growers*, have planted an orchard of twenty trees at Sylmar High School. The trees are the result of generous donations from *Papaya Tree Nursery, David Wilson Nursery* and *L.E. Cooke Nursery*. This is a teaching tool for the horticulture department. If you have time, we need your expertise in pruning this fall. Please let me know your availability. Date?

TBD. Learning is fun,

May I leave you with this thought?

Suburbia is where the developer bulldozes out the trees, and then names the streets after them. ~ Bill Vaughn.

Jim Schopper

LOOKING BACK

By Debbie Schopper, Member at Large

September Meeting

Our September meeting was held at the Sepulveda Garden Center with guest speaker Tom Del Hotal, speaking about "**Berries**".



Tom has been a member of the San Diego CRFG chapter for over 30 years and is the owner of *Fantasia Gardens*. Tom is a part-time instructor at Southwestern College in the *Landscape and Nursery Dept.*, and holds many

degrees and certifications in the nursery field. He can be seen on YouTube demonstrating fruit tree pruning.

Tom's handout on "**Berries**" listed strawberries, musk strawberries, blackberries and blackberry hybrids, raspberries, low chill blueberries, southern highbush blueberries, mulberries, che (a relative of the mulberry), poha /cape gooseberry, goji berry, and elderberry. The strawberries covered: were Alpine, Sweetheart, Day Neutral, and June-bearing. Each type of berry listed several named cultivars. Growing tips, favorites, pruning and more were covered by Tom's thorough talk on **Berries**.

Tom has informed us that the **2015 Festival of Fruit** will be held in and hosted by the San Diego chapter and will be titled, "**Year of Drought Tolerant Fruits**".

The meeting ended with a plant silent auction and potluck lunch.

October Meeting

Our October meeting, was also held at the Sepulveda Garden Center, and featured speaker, Tim Thompson who spoke about **Mangoes**. Tim began his talk by giving a brief history of how he became interested in plants as a young boy in Illinois. Encouraged by his father, Tim began growing and selling vegetable plants to neighbors to earn money. Whenever a question arose regarding plants, types, where they could be grown, etc., there was a trip to the library to research the answer. Later, when his family moved to California, his plant business grew (thanks to the great California growing season) and he opened a plant stand on Hwy. 126. Many local farmers allowed Tim to sell their produce with a 50/50 split of profits. As a young military man serving in Vietnam, Tim was introduced to tropical fruits and one in particular caught his interest and taste buds, the **Mango**. He began researching mangoes grown in Africa, India, Southeast Asia, Mexico, and other parts of the world. His 40 plus years of growing and researching Mangoes has led him

to find and also patent varieties that are cold tolerant, consistent producers, pest and mildew resistant, and are the tastiest.

For much more information and also to purchase mango trees go to: www.socalplantbreeders.com

Tim can also be found on YouTube under his name, "*Tim Thompson How To Grow A Mango From Seed*".

The meeting ended with a plant silent auction, potluck lunch and members were also able to order Mango plants from Tim Thompson.

MEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome our **new** members since spring 2014: I haven't included this in past newsletters so if I missed your name please accept my apologies. In no particular order...

Lut and Robert Helin	Dusty and Mandy Rhodes
Eric Wheeler	Cara Korngold
Clair Lin	John Leoni

THINKING OF CRFG

By Catherine Diaz, Editor

We recently received correspondence from long time member Jorge Pelaez, updating his current health condition. He comments that his time as a CRFG member has been heartfelt and memorable and he misses it all.

His communication prompted me to solicit volunteers to transport members who may be challenged to attend the meetings and events on their own. Refer to the first page if you wish to help out.

IN THE COMMUNITY

By Joseph Scarpine, CRFG Member

Mr. Edgar Valdivia at home in Simi Valley exhibiting his giant Dragonfruit (Pitaya)!



Edgar and his wife Pat are long time friends of the Conejo Valley Botanic Garden www.conejogarden.org and for years have done tours of the Rare Fruit Garden,

bringing many visitors. Also, on multiple occasions Edgar (as keynote speaker) has given lectures on Rare Fruit at our Matilija Poppy Festival, accompanied by his wife Pat. They offer attendees delicious samples of Cherimoya, Sapote, Pomegranate, loquat and many other exotic fruits of the world. One of the favorites is the sweet "Pat's Delight"; which is an original citrus they created crossing a Valencia Orange with a Ruby Red Grapefruit! Many of our Capulan Cherry, White Sapote, Blood Orange, Quince and Cherimoya trees have been planted courtesy of The California Rare Fruit Growers Association of which Edgar and Pat are members www.crfg.org

At the beginning of summer 2014, they donated six new Dragonfruit specimens to our garden (see photo) with the hope



that in years to come they will bear fruit. THANK YOU SO MUCH for your contributions to our garden Edgar and Pat!!!!

The Kandil Sinap That Wasn't - Part II

By Deborah Oisboid, CRFG Member

I completely ignored the part where the book said Kandil is a Fall-harvesting (not Summer) apple. After all, with warmer weather, why shouldn't the fruit ripen earlier?

This year I brought a TON of fig and apple cuttings to the scion exchange. Then someone in CRFG asked how I had identified the apples as Kandil Sinap. He thought they might be something else.

Back to school I went! I bombarded the horticulture teacher with questions. The poor fellow really couldn't remember. The tree had been planted more than 10, maybe 20 years ago. But he gave me a clue: it had been donated by the local nursery, which was still in business up the street about a mile.

Mel-O-Dee Nursery in Chatsworth is family owned and run, and has been around since forever. It's a very nice place and I highly recommend anyone in the area to go and check them out! The owner is very knowledgeable and can tell you a lot about her stock. She told me her father was in charge 10 - 20 years ago. He has since retired, but she would ask him for me. However, she had never heard of a Kandil Sinap, and was sure they'd never carried anything like it in all of their history. Her father later confirmed, it was definitely NOT Kandil. But what was it?

The answer was eventually provided by Tom Spellman of *The Dave Wilson Nursery*. DWN provides a huge majority of the fruit trees in California, and I hoped Mr. Spellman would be able to help. So I brought a couple of baby apple cylinders to the Sylmar High School field trip in April, where Tom was a guest speaker, and asked if he could identify them.

"That's easy," he said. "Those are little Anna apples that haven't been pollinated."

But I have LOTS of grafts on my apple tree - more than 15 varieties now!

"It needs to pollinate with an early variety, such as Ein Sheimer or Golden Dorsett, to become plump and round and full flavored," he told me. "Otherwise they stay skinny and cylindrical like yours." Apparently Anna is one of the few apples that, although they require cross-pollination by another variety, can still grow fruit if not pollinated. (The subject of fruit tree fertility is a huge subject deserves its own article.)

So that's the end of my story. My exotic Kandil Sinap apple has been transformed in to the more common "Anna" variety. I'm sorry for passing them off as something else at the Exchange. And I apologize for the extra work given to those who grafted them onto their trees. You'll have to re-label them now. It really was an *Honest Mistake*, though.