LOS ANGELES CHAPTER

September 2007 Volume X Issue 5

http://www.crfg-la.org

September Meeting

Date: Saturday, September 22, 2007
Time: 10:00 A.M.
Place: Sepulveda Garden Center
16633 Magnolia Blvd., Encino, CA 91316

Program: Alfredo Chiri will speak to us about tropical and subtropical fruit. He will emphasize the importance of choosing the right one for YOUR area and tips on sustaining its growth. You surely recognize **Alfredo's** name, since many articles written by him have appeared in our newsletters over the last couple of years. **Alfredo** has also volunteered much of his time to the care and upkeep of the **CRFG** garden in the Fullerton Arboretum. Currently he is busy working on a book about tropical and subtropical fruit. **Alfredo** is bringing some lucuma plants for the raffle. Look forward to an informative and interesting presentation.

*****There will be a short meeting of our Chapter Officers after the meeting*****

October Meeting

Date: Saturday, October 27, 2007
Time: 10:00 A.M.
Place: Limoneira, Ranch Tour, 1141 Cummings Road, Santa Paula, CA 93060, 805-525-5541
Cost: $2.50 per person

The customary price for this tour is $15 each. However, our Chapter Board has decided to offer **this special price of $2.50**/person to our members with the remainder coming from our treasury. Isn't it wonderful to be a part of **CRFG's LA Chapter**? Please pre-register at our September meeting or email Lynn at lmaxson@pacbell.net. The Citrus Ranch Tour is approximately a 1 hour event. This event is provided by either courtesy van or trolley. The Limoneira Company, which is one of the largest working lemon ranches, was founded in 1893. We will learn about growing cycles, global farming challenges, citrus trends and the colorful row crops. It's an informative tour which takes you to the mule barns, historic buildings, and housing camps to let you in on how the company was founded and where they are today. Take advantage of this offer and attend this historic tour!

DIRECTIONS: from the San Fernando Valley take the 101N to CAMARILLO
Take Central Avenue exit in Camarillo. Turn right onto Central. At end, turn right onto Vineyard. Continue to stop light. Turn left onto Hwy. 118/Wells Road. Continue over bridge, turn right onto 126 East. Take Briggs Rd. Exit, turning left onto Briggs. At first stop sign, turn left onto Telegraph Rd. Take first right onto Cummings Rd. After 1 mile, turn left at the **Limoneira** Company sign. Continue on ranch road until you see flags and the brown main ranch building on your right side. Use Visitor's parking. Enter center building.

We are looking for someone to join our Board and take the position of **Publicity Coordinator.** If you are interested please contact Bob Goldsmith at: 818 889-6875. We will discuss more about this position at our September meeting

Almond

by **Alfredo Chiri**

ALMOND - ***Prunus dulcis*** - Rosaceae
The botanical name of the almond was changed in 1980 to ***Prunus dulcis*** [**Mill.]; formerly *P. Amygdalus*** or ***P. communis*.**

The almond originated in the hot dry climate of Iran and was spread along the shores of northern Africa by Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans. Spanish Padres who settled the Mission at Santa Barbara brought the almond to California in the 1700s. Larger plantings did not occur until the 1800s.

It is a small to medium-sized tree, 10 to 25 feet tall, with gray bark with light colored glabrous (smooth) branchlets. Leaves are linear and firm, oblong-lanceolate, 3-4 inches long, shining above, lighter beneath like the peach trees. The tree produces "spurs" or short lateral branches which bear most of the fruit; they grow only an inch or two each year.

Almond flowers are lighter pink to white and nearly identical to the peach flowers in structure. Flowering in old wood gradually declines; hence older limbs become unfruitful and are pruned out. Most cultivars with highly self-unfruitful limbs must have good bee activity and pollinizers interplanted with the main crop. Pollinizers are planted in separated rows. Since pollination is so critical, usually 2 pollinizers are used, one blooming slightly ahead but overlapping the flowering season and another one slightly after.

The fruit starts as a drupe and ends up as a nut. The fruit is large, 1 ½ inch, and more or less long, oblong-ovoid and compressed, the flesh hard and splitting at maturity, disclosing the shallow pitted stone. The variety grown in the arboretum is primarily a sweet-kernelled form.

Fruiting begins in 3-4 year old trees, with maximal production by 6-7 years. Unlike its cousin, the short-lived peach, almond trees can produce for 50+ years. Trees are harvested by shake-and-catch method. Nuts are then wind-rowed and left for a period of time to dry further.

Almonds require deep, well-drained, loamy soils with pH 6-7. The almond tree is a true Mediterranean fruit crop, requiring mild winters and long, rain-less, hot summers with low humidity. The tree requires only 300-500 chill units for proper bud break; they survive single digits and teens Fahrenheit. Almonds bloom in February in California.

Propagation is by T-or chip-budded onto a variety of seedling rootstocks, primarily peach seedlings. Trees are planted 22-30 feet apart in square or rectangular arrangements with separate rows of pollinizers.

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Mango Pudding

Thanks to **Tor & Terri McInnis** for this delicious recipe

Yield: 8 servings
Active preparation time: 15 minutes
Cooking time: 20 minutes, plus 1 hour for the mango mixture to cool and 3 hours to set the pudding

6 mangoes, peeled, seeded and very finely chopped (about 6 cups)
2 tablespoons fresh lime juice (from about 1 lime)
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup plus 2 tablespoons sugar
2 1/2 teaspoons powdered gelatin
4 cups heavy cream

• Place the mangoes, lime juice and salt in a large saucepan over medium heat and cook, stirring occasionally, until the mangoes are very soft, about 5 minutes.
• Add the sugar and continue cooking, stirring and scraping the bottom of the saucepan, until the mixture becomes syrupy, with a few chunks of mango remaining, about 15 minutes. If the sugar starts to brown, reduce the heat. Let cool to room temperature.
• Sprinkle the gelatin over 3 tablespoons of cold water and set aside for 5 minutes. Stir the gelatin into the cooled mango mixture until it dissolves, then mix in the cream.
• Divide the mixture among 8 4-ounce ramekins or serving bowls. Chill in the refrigerator until set, about 3 hours, and serve cold. Mango pudding can be refrigerated for up to 1 day.

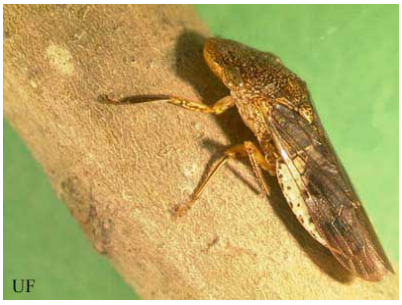
Tor MacInness sharing some pointers with our members

Tor and his wife **Teri** opened their beautifully landscaped garden to about 50 of our members in September. His garden abounds not only with fruit trees but also beautiful roses, other flowers and many ornamentals mixed with his fruit trees on all four sides of his house.

Many of his plums and other prunus varieties had succumbed to Pierce's Disease, a bacterial disease (Xylella fastidiosa), which is carried by the glassy winged sharpshooter. The disease was originally seen in grapes. Sad to say, **Tor** has lost many trees, some with as many as 40 varieties grafted on. He showed us what the disease looks like on one of his fruit trees and on his surrounding oleander: crispy brown leaf tips and/or edges of leaves, similar to the look of fire blight.**(Editor's note: you will find an article about this disease at the end of this article)**

Tor showed us a healthy apple tree with about 40 varieties grafted on and a dwarf peach, also with many grafts. He noted that only about 7 of the apple grafts fruit consistently. **Tor's** artistery has resulted in a garden that is beautifully arranged and creates a peaceful and harmonious environment.

Afterwards, **Teri** invited us to some delicious refreshments. Thank you both for a wonderful day!



New Agricultural Pest for Southern California
Glassy-winged sharpshooter
(*Homalodisca coagulata*)

Economic Importance: Originally from the southeastern United States, Glassy-winged sharpshooter (GWSS) is a large leafhopper which has piercing, sucking mouthparts. In California, there is concern since this species is a vector of certain plant diseases (see below). GWSS is a vector of the bacterium, *Xylella fastidiosa*, also called phony peach disease, Pierce's disease of grape and various other scorch leaf diseases. In southern California, a different strain of this bacterium called **Oleander leaf scorch** causes necrotic conditions to leaves of Oleander. The bacteria clog the xylem (water transport) tubes of the plant causing the tips of the leaves, and, in advanced stages, the entire plant to turn brown and die. Studies have shown that GWSS transmits the disease in our area. The disease appears confined to parts of Orange County and near Palm Springs in Riverside County and likely occurs elsewhere in southern California. GWSS has recently been shown to transmit **Pierce's disease** to grapes in the Temecula area of southern California. Like Oleander leaf scorch, Pierce's disease kills the host. Since GWSS has become abundant in certain areas of southern California, there is concern that GWSS will pose a serious economic threat to the viticulture industry if it spreads to the wine producing areas of central and northern California.

Hosts: At least 73 species of plants in 35 families are known to be favored by GWSS. In the eastern U. S. both adults and larvae feed on stems and leaves of sunflower, hollyhock, okra, lambsquarters, cotton, corn, cowpeas, oak, ash, silk tree, crape myrtle, and peach. Larvae of the first and second instar apparently do not survive well on woody plants. Adults and older larvae prefer feeding on stems and twigs rather than leaves of plants. Adults are often found feeding alone, but large populations have been observed on a single plant. In California, GWSS has been taken on Citrus, Oleander, *Pinus*, Eucalyptus, Sycamore, and *Prunus*. Nick Nisson, Entomologist for the Agricultural Commissioner's Office in Orange County has seen adults line up

along terminal twigs of leafless, dormant peaches, as well as on apricot, and carrot wood. He has also observed that the sharpshooter is abundant in orange groves during the summer. Populations can be so heavy that the their white excrement gives the appearance of whitewash conditions to leaves and ground beneath. Eggs are commonly inserted in leaves. During the winter, many of the sharpshooters migrate to other plants. Egg masses can easily be found in leaves of the ornamental trees of magnolia and carrot wood, for example.

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONER/WEIGHTS AND MEASURES DEPARTMENT

Identification: GWSS is easily distinguished from all other species but one, the **smoke tree sharpshooter**, by its large size(. The male is 11-13 mm long while the female is between 11-14mm)

The general color is brown to black. The upper part of the head and thorax are brown or black with numerous ivory or yellowish spots. GWSS is readily separated from its near relative, the smoke tree sharpshooter, *Homalodisca lacerta*, by series of uneven creamy white spots; a series of sinuous marks are found in *H. lacerta.* Some females of both sharpshooters can be seen in the field with a pair of chalky white spots on the middle of each wing. These white spots, called brochosomes, are the result of the female leafhopper "packing" dried excrement on minute spine-bearing portions of each fore wing using their hind legs. The purpose of this behavior is unknown although from a distance, sharpshooters vaguely resemble bird droppings. If this is true, the insects may derive protection from potential predators.

Life History: In the eastern U. S., the species has been reported as overwintering as adults in wooded areas. In the spring, adults gradually migrated to new hosts until populations built up in March and April. Eggs were laid in April in leaves of herbaceous plants or sometimes in leaves of woody plants. They were laid in clusters in the lower epidermal layer of leaves. In the summer, populations fed on herbaceous plants and occasionally congregated in large numbers on weakened peach trees. After summer hosts dried up, the sharpshooters moved to woody hosts during August, September, and October, at which time populations were greatest in peach orchards. Overwintering habits of large populations on oak are as follows: during cold snaps the insects dropped to the ground overnight, then gradually returned to oak to feed as the temperature rose during the day. In insectary studies females mated only once. Eggs hatched in 12 days. The larval stage averaged 59.5 days in the first generation. The second generation was carried to the fourth larval molt, which was completed in 33.5 days. In the third generation, the larval stage was completed in 72.2 days. Adults lived an average of 60 to 64 days among generations. There appeared to be two complete generations and a partial third annually. In California, GWSS overwinter as adults and begin laying eggs in February. A second generation begins in June with adults overwintering until the following year.

Distribution: Glassy-winged sharpshooter occurs in the eastern United States. It is prevalent in the Southeastern U. S. (Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Mississippi, Alabama, Texas, Missouri, and Arkansas), but has been taken from Wisconsin and northern Mexico.

This species was noticed for the first time in California with a specimen sent in by Santa Barbara County Entomologist Jerry Davidson. Farm Advisor Phil Phillips made the find on *Eucalyptus* spp. in Ventura, Ventura County, on 7 March, 1994. After further investigation this new pest was also found to be established in Fontana, San Bernardino County (28 February 1994), and specimens discovered that had been collected in January 1990 in Irvine, Orange County area.. Presently GWSS occurs throughout Los Angeles and has been taken as far north as Kern County.

Comments: This leafhopper probably entered California in nursery stock, as eggs, which are difficult to detect but are frequently intercepted during agricultural quarantine inspections. GWSS appears to be more common than our native smoke tree sharpshooter; at least this last species is taken less frequently compared to GWSS.

Additional Literature:

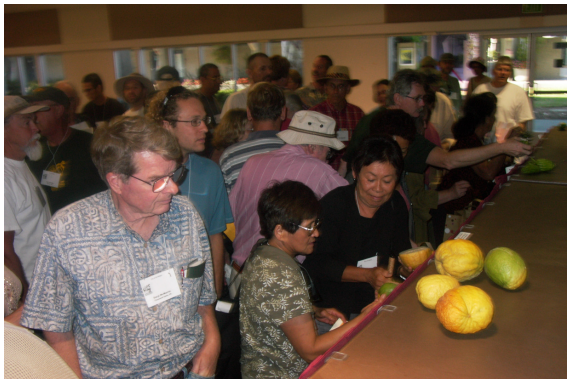
Gill, R. J. 1994. New state records—Glassy-winged sharpshooter. Calif. Plant Pest & Disease Report 13(1-2):8-11.

Varela, L. G., R. J. Smith, P. A. Philips. 2001. Pierce's disease. Univ. Calif. Agric. Nat. Resources Publ.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

We are just delighted to welcome 5 new members to our Chapter: **Vittorio Arestegui, Josue Barbosa, Anna Cardella, Arthur P. DeFrance** and **Ken Tate**. We look forward to seeing them at our next meeting and welcoming them in person.

Festival of Fruit a Great Success



An enthusiastic crowd admires the citron fruits provided by David Karp

This year's Festival of Fruit in Chula Vista was a great success. Not only the speakers, but the wonderful tours that were offered made for a fabulous weekend. Kudos to the San Diego Chapters that put on such a wonderful event! All of their hard work certainly paid off.
Next year the Orange County Chapter will be hosting the Festival. It will be the "Year of the Avocado".

Who's Who in our LA Chapter

HERB & Anita Drapkin

THE DRAPKIN BIOGRAPHY

A Brooklyn boy meets a Chicago girl and they get married. And so it began. **Anita** had graduated from the Art Institute of Chicago and, at that time, was the youngest teacher in the Chicago school system. She taught art classes at the high school level.

Herb attended the New York State School of Agriculture in Farmingdale, Long Island. He majored in animal husbandry and dairying. On graduation, he was employed at a dairy milking forty cows producing Grade A raw milk. **Herb** had a New York State Dairy Bacteriologist and Milk Testing license.

Not satisfied to be a farmhand, he left the dairy and worked for a non-ferrous metal alloy company, achieving foreman status.

He was then drafted in World War II and ended with an assignment in California. Under the ASTP program, **Herb** took the aptitude test for medicine and qualified. He was then sent to Northwestern University School of Medicine in Chicago.

It was here in Chicago that **Herb** met **Anita** and the two were married. They moved to Los Angeles for Herb's medical internship and residency at the Cedars of Lebanon Hospital (now known as Cedars-Sinai Medical Center).

A**nita**, at this time, was teaching in the Art Department of the Pierce College Evening School.

Herb never lost his desire and interest in farming and, in time, purchased two orange groves in Fillmore, California, which he still manages.

Anita and **Herb** were introduced to the California Rare Fruit Growers by a long time member, **Dr. Samuel Grossberger** and the late **Ron Kadish**. They have both enjoyed all their years as members of the club, especially the people and all of the knowledge that permeates the organization.
Anita and Herb have three children and three grandchildren.
Herb loves to experiment in agriculture and is now growing Gold Nuggets, which are seedless mandarins. They are growing successfully, being hedged and picked using minimal labor with an experimental platform picker that was designed by **Herb**.
How lucky we are to have two such wonderful people as members of our LA Chapter!

ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS!! If your last name begins with M-Z please bring something for our tasting table.