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# LOS ANGELES CHAPTER

2018 Volume XXIII Issue 5

## MEETING:

**Date:** September 22, 2018  
**Place:** Sepulveda Gardens  
16633 Magnolia Blvd, Encino, CA 91316  
10:00 am start time

## 2018 Chapter Officers & Committees

**Chairman:** chairman@CRFG-la.org  
Tony Stewart 213-760-5142

**Vice Chairman:** co-chair@CRFG-la.org

**Treasurer:** treasurer@CRFG-la.org  
K. Payton 818-222-7556

**Secretary:** hospitality@CRFG-la.org  
Margaret Frane 310-828-0092

**Newsletter Editor:** editor@CRFG-la.org  
Deborah Oisboid

**Program Chairman:** program@CRFG-la.org  
Pat Valdivia

**Photographer:** photo@CRFG-la.org  
Edgar Valdivia

**Historian:** historian@CRFG-la.org  
Emory Walton 805-497-8835

**Food Coordinator:** food@CRFG-la.org  
Chris Warren 818-362-8537

**Plant Sales Chairman:** plants@CRFG-la.org  
David Payton 818-222-7556

**Plant Sales Associates:**  
Dusty Rhodes  
Ian Marabe

**Members at Large:** atlarge@CRFG-la.org  
Debbie Schopper 818-362-3007  
Andy Neiman

## Program: Jorge Ochoa - Fruit in an Urban Landscape

Jorge Ochoa, director and instructor of the Horticulture Program at Long Beach City College, will speak to us on growing fruit in your own backyard.

## Secondary Program: Blow-out Plant Sale/Raffle/Auction!!

CHARLES PORTNEY will be bringing a wealth of rare food-bearing plants, as well as seeds, fruits and cookbooks for sale/auction. He requests that the rest of us do the same. Also if you have spare (long) pots please bring some to help Charles propagate more wonderful things. (Long pots for long tap roots, please.)

**All Members: if your last name begins with A-M please bring something for our refreshment table.**

## MEETING:

**Date:** October 27, 2018 at 10:00 am  
**Place:** Sepulveda Gardens  
16633 Magnolia Blvd, Encino, CA 91316  
10:00 am start time

## Program: Charles Mali - Whitewashing for Longer Lasting and Healthier Plants

Charles Malki, biologist and plant expert, from IV Organics, will speak to us on "Whitewashing for Longer Lasting and Healthier Plants." Learn about the simplest way to give your trees some sunscreen.

**All Members: if your last name begins with N-Z please bring something for our refreshment table.**

## **SAVE THE DATES - CALENDAR FOR 2018 LA CHAPTER**

- November 17<sup>th</sup> - Field Trip - TBA
- December 15<sup>th</sup> - Sepulveda Gardens - Holiday Party

## Words From Our Chairman



I hope everybody survived the crazy heat wave we have been experiencing here in Southern California the past two months. Our backyard hit 120° in Santa Clarita! We did our best to protect the trees in our garden but we definitely had some damage to our avocados and some of our tropicals.

We had the opportunity to attend The 2018 Festival of Fruit held in Campbell, California this past July. As always, there were some amazing speakers with information we found very useful for our own garden. The local chapter in Santa Clara did an amazing job putting together a very well-run festival with a diverse group of vendors that we enjoyed visiting and purchasing products from. One of the favorite lectures we heard was from the gentleman who did the orchard planted inside Apple Park, the headquarters of Apple Computer in Cupertino. He gathered and planted over 900 fruit trees inside the circular structure of Apple's headquarters.

There were many homes available for garden tours and everyone was impressed with the diverse variety of trees in their gardens. It's always fun to see how someone else has arranged their garden and the different types of plantings that they have had success with.

The home garden tour for our LA chapter in August was a visit to the home of Fang Liu and Jany Han. They have only been in their home in Burbank for a little over two years and it is impressive how far they've come in a short period of time. They are very organized: they have their garden set up by varieties and I think everybody was able to take some tips away from what they've done. They also have a wide variety of plants in pots that they will be planting as the seasons come and go. I want to thank them for

opening up their garden to our chapter and encourage others to do the same.

Tony

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## LOOKING BACK

By Debbie Oisboid

### July Meeting

Hope you had fun at the Festival of Fruit!

### August Meeting

Our field trip to Fang Liu and Jany Han's house in Burbank was a Rare Fruit Grower's treat. There were so many different types of plants, and even the "common" ones were fascinating! Before he could even start showing everyone around, Fang was inundated by questions about his propagation area where he is growing Konjac, a plant which produces a single leaf which looks like a triad multiple, whose root can be made into jelly, and which is related to the Corpse plants at the Huntington Library. He is also propagating fig, papaya, rose apple, wax apple (aka wax jambu), atemoya, several varieties of sweet potato, and plenty of other trees and edibles.

In just two years Fang and Jany have converted their 1/5 acre yard into a rich diversity of trees, vegetables, flowers and more, all aided by their three beehives. (One hive is a "volunteer" swarm which opted to stay soon after his first two hives were established).

Among their multiple garden patches they are growing sweet potato, okra, corn, yellow watermelon, bok choy, carrots, peppers, paprika, watercress, luffa, tapioca, gynura procumbens (aka Longevity Spinach), ashitaba (whose yellow sap is purported to have many health benefits) and more. We saw over 15 different varieties of pomegranate, as well as several grape vines, apples, ice cream bean, papaya, monk fruit, Jamaican cherry, goji berry moringa, persimmon, and even a thriving Miracle Berry plant which is coddled and moved several times a day to keep it in a comfortable location as the heat and light change.

On the patio, Fang has successfully grafted several citrus varieties onto a rootstock sport. He plans to

air-layer the grafted portions off the parent to create several new trees. His grafts are so happy they have already produced gorgeous fruits. (He said the graft materials came from a safe source, guaranteed not to have Asian Citrus Psyllid.)

We learned the Liu's sandy soil tends to dwarf their plants because the water drains away so fast, so they added almost two full scoops of wood chips, brought in a bit at a time, to cover the soil and keep the moisture from evaporating as well. We were treated to one of the delicious yellow watermelons grown and hand-pollinated by Fang, and many of the seeds were scooped up by CRFG members to try their own luck at growing the tasty fruit!

Fang and Jany, your garden was a delight to visit and we learned so much from you both. Thank you very much for sharing your yard us.

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## **The Anatomy of Garden Weeds:** Part 3

By Roy Imazu

There is an old adage that you must have heard before: "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." It certainly applies when any discussion is held concerning weed control in the garden.

Any strategy that stops weeds from emerging is worthy of attention. Exclusion of sunlight prevents germination. An effective mulch is one method. Various sizes of bark are available in bags at the nursery. Color can be brown or red. Depth should be two inches or more to be effective. Some tree trimming businesses will provide free wood chips.

Home produced compost is another choice. Most gardens provide materials for the compost bin. Leaves, expired plant material, and grass clippings are examples of what could be used. If more material is needed, components from your neighbors' yards can be obtained. Leaves collected from oak trees are especially beneficial for acid-loving plants such as blueberries and azaleas. They could be used as a mulch for those plants or added to the compost pile.

Recycled material from the kitchen and the home is another resource of mulches. Newspaper, aluminum foil, plastic (Zip-lock and other containers), and Styrofoam could be cut and re-sized to act as weed deterrents. Use of some of these materials may

require modifications to offset the negative effects of wind, for example.

Used carpeting and roofing shingles make good material to line your garden path. They are both long-lasting and moisture-resistant. Two avocado trees in Lake View Terrace are mulched with old rugs to protect their shallow roots, and also to provide cushioning for the many fruits that fall from these mature trees.

Your choice for a mulch will be determined by your garden expense budget, aesthetics, availability of materials and resourcefulness. The City of Los Angeles provides a supply of free mulch in Van Nuys at the end of Hayvenhurst Place near Roscoe Blvd.

*Roy is a retired gardener and landscaper. He had a C27 and pest control license and took care of the irrigation and weeds at St. Nicholas Church in Northridge for 10 years.*

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## **Too Hot! Scorch and Sunburn in Trees**

By Deborah Oisboid

### WHAT:

Leaf scorch is a common problem that affects many trees. It starts as browning around the edges of the leaves, affecting more of the leaf surface as it progresses and eventually may turn the entire leaf brown. Leaf scorch mainly affects woody plants. The areas between the leaf veins turns brown and die, but if cells near the major vein continue receiving enough water they will remain green. Evergreen trees and shrubs with needles show scorch by turning a purplish or light tan color.

There are three kinds of leaf scorch: nutrient-related, weather-related and bacterial.

1. Nutrient scorch occurs when the tree is deficient of a nutrient vital to its health, usually iron or manganese. Look for brown between the veins of the leaves at the tips of the branches.
2. Weather-related, or environmental leaf scorch, occurs when leaves have literally been burned by the sun, hot temperatures, or a general lack of rain.
3. Bacterial leaf scorch looks similar to weather-related at first glance, but has a few distinctions: The disease starts toward the back of branches and gradually makes its way to branch tips. Bacterial leaf scorch comes back year after year.

On trees with large leaves, the areas between the veins turn brown and die, but if cells near the major vein continue receiving enough water they will remain green. Evergreen trees and shrubs with needles show the scorch symptom by turning a purplish or light tan color.

### CAUSES

Leaf scorch is seen when temperatures rise and humidity drops. The problem gets worse when there are hot, dry winds. Blasts of air can remove water faster than the tree can replace it. If moisture stress continues, the entire leaf and eventually the woody part of the plant dies.

Reflected heat from vinyl fences, buildings, or other structures increases leaf scorch. Anything that interferes with water uptake also increases scorch susceptibility.

Additional causes of leaf scorch include poor water penetration into the soil. This problem is worse on hillsides or slopes. Some trees cannot move water from the roots to the top of the tree fast enough. There are numerous reasons why this happens. The soil may have enough moisture, but the tree may have trouble absorbing it.

Salt in the soil or water can cause chemical drought. Certain herbicides also cause leaf burn on the plants.

Diseases and insects, including aphids, scale and others, rob trees of needed moisture. Borers prevent translocation of water up the tree. Fungi, including phytophthora, verticillium, and other wilt diseases cause trees to scorch.

Sunburn is just what it sounds like. Bark is like our skin and can get damaged by too much sun. Trees with thin bark, such as avocado, are particularly susceptible. If left unprotected, a branch that is exposed, especially to the south or west sun, will burn.

### PREVENTIONS & CURES

Keep lawn mowers, weed whips, and other equipment away from the tree base as they can damage the water-transport capacity of the bark and cambium.

Check susceptible trees and give them a deep watering every two or three weeks. Let the water penetrate one or two feet into the soil. Normal lawn watering is shallow and does not supply the deep soil moisture most trees need.

In spite of this, avoid the temptation to drown the plants. Overwatering may cause leaf scorch because the water displaces oxygen in the soil and can rot the tiny feeder

roots that absorb the water.

Bacterial leaf scorch, on the other hand, becomes more dangerous each year. If you suspect it, talk to an arborist. If you catch it early, you can treat your tree each year to prolong its life. Or, if it's too late, you may need to remove your tree entirely.

Help your tree maintain vigor with these steps:

- During stretches of sunny, hot, and dry days, water deeply.
- Lock in soil moisture with several inches of mulch.
- Fertilize trees regularly to provide needed nutrients.
- Test the soil and provide adequate micro-nutrients (iron or manganese) if the tree is nutrient deficient.
- Research your tree's ideal growing conditions. For example, if it's planted in a spot with full sunlight, but prefers partial shade, you might consider moving it to a more suitable place.
- Put on sunscreen. No, not Coppertone. Dilute white latex paint 50%-50% with water to make a sufficiently opaque coating on the tree trunk and branches.
- Provide shade. Use shade cloth, a beach umbrella, a chair, a table, whatever fits over the tree.

After the heat wave has passed, don't be in a rush to prune off burnt plant material. As with frost-damaged leaves and twigs, they're ugly but they may provide important shelter to lower leaves and branches. The exception is if disease sets in. Roses, for example, are susceptible to many diseases and are ok to prune if sunburnt.

Story sources:

<http://gregalder.com/yardposts/avocado-trees-get-sunburned-what-to-do/>

<http://www.schundler.com/tipburn.htm>

<https://www.succulentsandsunshine.com/how-much-heat-can-succulents-handle/>

<http://blog.davey.com/2017/07/see-burnt-tree-leaves-fix-leaf-scorch-symptoms-with-treatment/>

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## **Easy, Inexpensive Slow-drip System**

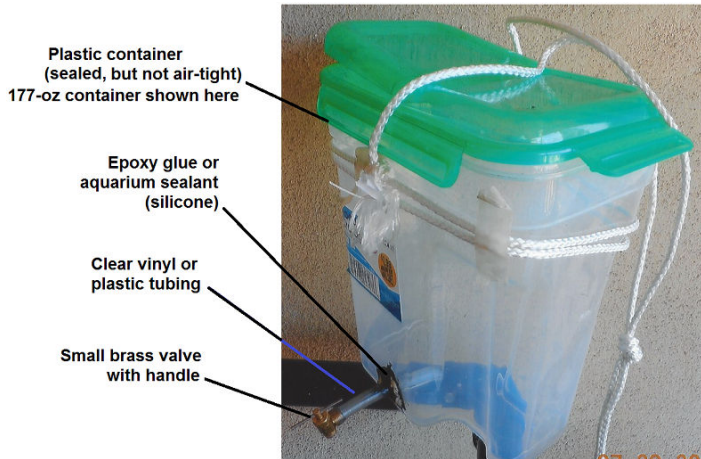
By Roy Imazu & Deborah Oisboid

With the extreme heat of summer, it's a good idea to slow-water plants to make sure they get adequate hydration over the course of a day. (Humans should be drinking lots of water, too!)



If you have a container that is difficult to keep watered, this contraption may be the answer. The 177-ounce container (illustrated below) is available at the 99 Cents store. Pick up a brass valve and a length of clear vinyl plastic tubing from your local hardware store. Epoxy glue seems to work both on the clear plastic container and vinyl tubing. (Aquarium silicone might also work to seal the tubing through the container hole). With the valve set to drip, water will be disbursed over a long period of time.

Be sure to keep the container covered to prevent mosquitos from breeding in the still water.



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!

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## Letters to the Editor

### Save the Earth – recycle your plastic cups!

CRFG-LA member Van Do has a new way to start seeds or plants in recycled plastic cups. Instead of simply poking a hole in the bottom of the cup, she fits the lid onto the mouth of the cup, then turns it upside down and cuts the bottom off the cup. This allows the soil to drain out the bottom, provides a large amount of space for roots, and assists in transplanting because the wider opening at the bottom allows the plant + soil to slip out easily without turning it upside down. This cup-lid combination can be reused as many times as it remains intact.