

# San Juan Capistrano Garden Club

**President's Message**

***April 2026***

Change seems to be all around us. In March, the time changed and spring began. We had very wet February followed by a very dry and hot March. Also, lots of changes in our world. The same is true for the Garden Club.

We have 2 open board positions: Secretary and VP Programs. The Secretary documents board and club decisions to be in compliance with rules to maintain our tax-exempt status. The VP Programs plans the content for our meetings and field trips. We need both of those board positions to be filled not later than the start of our new year on July 1 or we may not be able to continue as a club.

Another change is that the August fundraiser does not have a chair so at this point we will not have a program/activity in August. Because of our 501(c)(3) status, our programs/events need to have a horticultural/educational component for members and/or be a fundraiser to allow us to support horticulture-related projects in our community.

I am looking forward to our April 20 Field trip to the Moulton Museum (a good tie in to the SJC 250 celebrations) and our Garden Stroll on May 11.

If you have thoughts on the future of our club, please contact any board member.



# Tooting Our Own Horn

Did you know....

~~The SJC Garden Club's Sweet Stem Senders make 70 door decorations for the Atria Senior Home 5 holidays a year and delivers them personally to the residents.

~~The SJC Garden Club has 3 food drives a year for the San Clemente Military Family Outreach to assist our military families at Camp Pendleton.

~~And donates new baby clothes and other items at our Holiday Brunch to San Clemente Military Outreach for their annual baby shower for 40-50 expectant moms.

~~The SJC Garden Club donates scholarships to a deserving Saddleback Community College students each year. This year one recipient will receive \$1000.

~~The SJC Garden Club donated \$1000 to our local San Juan Elementary School to help reestablish their school garden.

~~The SJC Garden Club at each meeting collects money, our "Pennies for Oaks" campaign, which is donated to Earthroots. This non-profit organization is working to find a way to prevent our beautiful California Oak's from being invaded by the lethal Gold Spotted Oak Borer.

Did you know.....

SJC Garden Club is a CGCI Blue Ribbon Garden Club? Only because we meet the criteria with activities such as those listed above.

These programs happen because of the generosity and volunteer hours of members in our club. Thank you.



# Upcoming Events

**April 20—10:45 am**

**Field Trip: Moulton Museum, Laguna Hills**

**Lunch after: Hacienda on the Lake**

**May 11—10:30 am—1 pm**

**Garden Stroll**

**June 15—10 am**

**Meeting and Speaker: Andrew Stroscher**

***Carnivorous Plants***

**July 20—10 am**

**Trash to Treasure Sale**



# Membership Luncheon

*You Are Invited*



**San Juan Capistrano Garden Club**

**Membership Luncheon**

**Friday, February 6, 2026**

**11:30 am Tavern at the Mission**

**RSVP: Lou Heimann by Tuesday, February 2, 2026**

New members are guests of the Garden Club, Others are No-host



The Membership Committee and three new members gathered at the Tavern at the Mission for a fun luncheon.

# Field Trip to Moulton Museum

Our **Monday, April 20th** meeting will be our highly anticipated tour of the Moulton Museum at 25256 Cabot Road in Laguna Hills. Dr. Elisabeth Lange, the museum director and her staff of docents will welcome us to our area's newest and only local history museum. The museum focuses on the unique heritage of our area going back more than 150 years and includes displays of authentic artifacts from the ranching and farming activities of that time and place. The museum also includes a beautiful art gallery called Nellie's Gallery with rotating exhibits which is also included in our tour. There is a **\$5 charge per person** for this very personal experience of the museum.

We will meet at the museum at 10:45 to begin touring at 11:00. After enjoying our tour, the lovely Mexican restaurant, Hacienda on the Lake at 27792 Vista del Lago (off Marguerite Pkwy. in Mission Viejo), will have an area reserved for us with a beautiful view of Lake Mission Viejo for our group to enjoy a **no host** lunch with fellow club members. This will be a wonderful opportunity to socialize with old friends and make new ones in a beautiful setting. Looking forward to seeing you there!

*Ginny Kerr—Program VP*



Hacienda On The Lake

# OC District Meeting



## *San Juan Capistrano Garden Club*

*Condo Birdhouse with ADUs*

*Designed & Built by Mark Rottmann*

*Husband of SJC Garden Club Member Karen Rottmann*



On Monday, March 30th 4 members of our club (Lou Heimann, Marcia Kelley, Pat Lussier & Cindy Sorensen) attended the OC District of CGCI meeting at Sherman Gardens. It was a beautiful day at the garden in spite of the ongoing renovations. Best of all was the time spent with members of other Orange County garden clubs, enjoying wonderful snacks (*especially* District Director Donna Hood's home-made chocolate crepes), exchanging ideas and viewing the fabulous silent auction baskets.

We are so lucky to have the talented Mark Rottmann, husband of member Karen Rottmann, who designed and built this wonderful birdhouse as our club's silent auction donation. The auction raised more than \$1300 for scholarships.

District Director, Donna Hood, acknowledged the District Blue Ribbon Clubs, of which San Juan Capistrano is proud to be one.

Clubs are given 3 minutes to *"Toot Their Own Horn"* and share how their clubs have been *"Connecting"* with their communities. (*"Connect" was the theme for the meeting*). Our club shared some of the activities that we have been engaged in (see article on page 2). We were all proud that we could share the many ways that San Juan Capistrano Garden Club is able to connect and make a difference in our community. All of this happens because members show their commitment and support for our fundraising and donation activities:

Provide holiday cheer to seniors at Atria



Scholarships for students studying horticulture

Encourage junior gardeners at elementary schools

Help our local military families, and much more

Please keep these things in mind when you are asked to help out with committees.

# Garden Stroll Update

We have an exciting garden stroll planned for the members and guests of the SJC Garden Club. Where else can you get free garden ideas in your neighborhood? Five members have volunteered their gardens, which includes three larger plots and two condo/patio-size gardens. So mark your calendars:

**SJC Garden Stroll**  
**Monday, May 11**  
**10:30am to 1:00pm**

We still need **2-3 more docents** to help the host gardeners. Contact Shelly Trainor if you are interested in helping out. Docents and homeowners will have an opportunity to see the gardens **before** the tour is opened to the members.

Sign-up sheets for **Docent Volunteers** and for **Members** attending will be available at the field trip in April.

*Lou & Shelly, Garden Stroll Co-Chairs*

*See info next page*



# Garden Stroll



**FOR MEMBERS AND THEIR GUESTS—BRING A FRIEND (or two!)**

**JOIN US FOR A NO-HOST LUNCH AT**

**SOL AGAVE, Marbella Plaza**

**Please! Wear closed toes shoes—No HEELS (due to uneven walkways)**

**No Children under 18. NO PETS! Not wheelchair accessible.**

**Garden addresses will be emailed to all members.**

# Sweet Stem Senders

Sweet Stem Senders are at it again! The cute bunnies: Pat Lussier, Cathy Reed, Pat Webster, Kathy Dixon, Pat Martin and Mary Crawford met to create some Spring goodies for the seniors at Atria. The delivery was a huge success. Pat Martin, Janet Sperber, Pat Webster and Kathy Dixon, because of the hard work of the creators, were able to give every resident a cheerful door hanger for their apartment. We were able to visit with some familiar faces and made some new friends!

We are always greeted so positively by the residents and we quickly realize our hearts are filled right along with our senior friends. These seniors are always anticipating their holiday visits by the Garden Club of San Juan! Thank you all for your participation!! Happy Easter and Happy Spring to all!



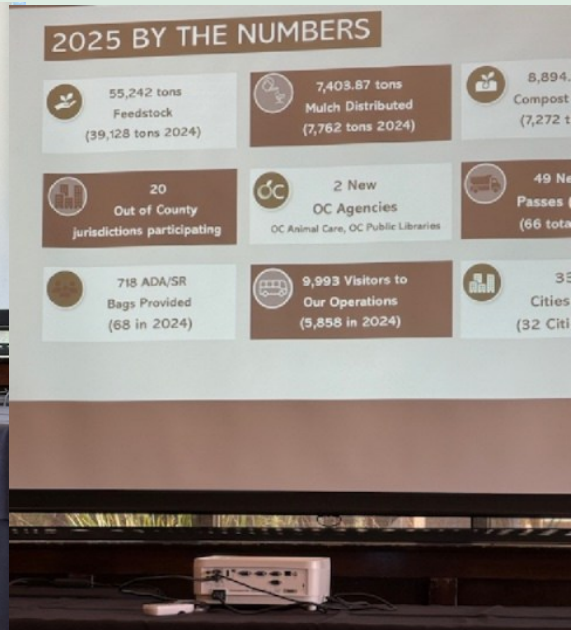


## Attention Sweet Stem Sender Volunteers

I am coordinating all of you lovely and willing volunteers to join your friends in creating each seasonal craft and delivering them to Atria. This fun day takes place at Kathy Dixon's house. Please put my contact information in your phones as it will ensure that my call is legit and that you can pick up or return my call. I missed connecting with a few of you for the Easter craft possibly because you didn't recognize my number. Thanks, Janet Sperber

Cell (949-212-9702)

# March Speaker



INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT	PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT	COMMUNITY SOFT LAUNCH	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Request Process, Workflows, Coordination</li> <li>Internal County Agency Outreach                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>OC Parks, Public Works</li> </ul> </li> <li>External Outreach                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jurisdictions</li> </ul> </li> <li>First Residential Compost Giveaway at FRB (May 21, 2022)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Access                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residential Requests</li> <li>Landfill Coordination</li> </ul> </li> <li>Bulk Requests                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Application Process</li> <li>Bulk Open Pass</li> </ul> </li> <li>First Countywide Compost Giveaway (November 5, 2022)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Standardize Operating Process</li> <li>Cost Recovery Considerations</li> <li>CDFA License and Product Registration</li> <li>Agriculture Commissioner Network</li> <li>WISE Agreements</li> <li>Potential Partnerships</li> <li>Countywide Compost Giveaways</li> </ul>	
COMMUNITY FORMAL LAUNCH	MARKET DEVELOPMENT	BREAKING GROUND	EXPANSION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Website Launch</li> <li>Online Scheduling System</li> <li>Targeted Outreach                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Landscape Companies</li> <li>Landscape City Contractors</li> <li>City Public Works Depts</li> <li>City Compost Giveaways</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bagging Machine - Increased Opportunity</li> <li>Partnerships                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water Districts</li> <li>Sanitary Districts</li> <li>School Districts</li> <li>County Procurement Language</li> </ul> </li> <li>Second Countywide Compost Giveaway (April 1, 2023)</li> </ul>	<p><b>2023</b></p> <p>Valencia Greenery</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Website Launch</li> <li>Online Scheduling System</li> <li>Targeted Outreach                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Landscape Companies</li> <li>Landscape City Contractors</li> <li>City Public Works Depts</li> <li>City Compost Giveaways</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**Waste Recycling**

Composting provides many benefits to the environment

**COMPOSTING**

- REDUCES ORGANIC WASTE**: Composting organic material such as food waste and green waste can reduce trash disposal by up to 35 percent.
- CONDITIONS SOIL**: Compost creates nutrient-rich humus, which conditions the soil for lawn and garden use. The nutrients feed grass and plants.
- SUPPORTS HEALTHY SOIL**: Composting generates beneficial micro-organisms that help aerate soil, decompose organic materials used by plants and safeguard against plant disease.

**COMPOST**

Compost is typically used as a soil amendment, but may also provide plant nutrition. Finished compost is typically finer than mulch and screened to reduce its particle size, to improve soil incorporation.

**MULCH**

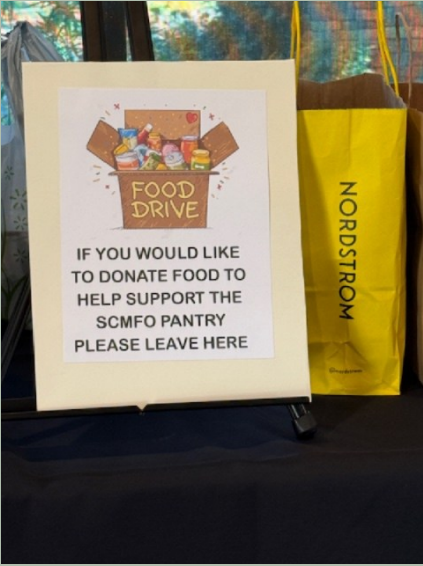
OCWR's composted mulch is coarser, larger in particle size and contains a larger percentage of composted wood particles. It is commonly used on the surface of the soil and helps retain water in the summer and absorb more rainwater in winter.

Our material is Seal of Testing Assurance (STA) Certified by the U.S. Composting Council as compost and mulch derived from curbside residential green waste. The mulch is screened 3/8 to 3 inches. The STA Program helps you make the best decision for your application by providing the 3 C's:

- Clarity** - Similar to a nutrition label, the STA Program's Compost Technical Data Sheet (CTDS) includes test results, a list of ingredients, and recommended directions for use.
- Consistency** - The STA Program provides checks and balances within the STA Lab and Participant network to ensure proficiency and consistency with testing procedures and compliance, providing a way to apply comparisons of compost properties.
- Confidence** - Similar to trusting a vehicle history report when purchasing a vehicle, the STA's CTDS report provides consumers with confidence and knowledge of what is in the compost and how it was produced.

Thanks to Kathy Rowley for all these great pics

# Thanks for Your Support



## March Food Drives - March, 2026

A big thank for the generosity from so many organizations that donated food to us to help us keep our shelves fully stocked.

This month we received food donations from San Juan Capistrano Garden club, St Andrew's by the Sea Methodist church, St. Clement's church and several other organizations that had food drives for us.

This has become so important and needed by us to have the ability to maintain a small food bank through these regular food drives. Food is so appreciated and needed by the young military families.

A big thank you to all donated much appreciated.



**Thanks to everyone at San Juan Capistrano Garden Club for donating food items to help keep the food pantry at SCMFO filled. Our local military families greatly appreciate your support!!**



## Butterfly Garden/Monarch Waystation

**Sadly, there has not been enough support for the Butterfly Garden and work there will be discontinued.**



# Gardening Happenings



April 25-26, 2026

<https://floralparkhometour.com>

Master Gardener's Expo

April 11, 2026

Murray Senior Center, Mission Viejo

San Clemente Garden Club

Garden Tour

May 16, 2026

Lake Forest Garden Club

Plant Sale & Boutique

Saturday before Mother's Day

Southern California Spring

South Coast Plaza Garden Show

The OC District for CGCI will be participating  
in the Crate & Barrel/Macy's Home Store Wing

Thursday-Sunday, April 23- 26, 2026.



If you are aware of neighboring Garden Club events that may be of interest to our membership,  
please send print-ready copy to: [chateaulussier@msn.com](mailto:chateaulussier@msn.com)

# More Gardening Happenings

## Spring 2026 FLOWER SHOW

THURSDAY  
APRIL 9th  
11:30 – 3:30 PM

Where:  
PLACENTIA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
2050 Valencia Ave, Placentia, Ca. 92870

COME SEE AWARD-WINNING  
FLORAL ARRANGEMENTS,  
MINIATURE ARRANGEMENTS,  
FAIRY GARDENS,  
TABLE-SETTINGS, SUCCULENTS  
AND MORE...

**PLANTS FOR SALE**

WEBSITE: DELNORTEGARDENCLUB.COM  
FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK



**DEL NORTE  
GARDEN  
CLUB**  
**FREE  
ADMISSION  
FREE  
PARKING**

COMPLIMENTARY  
REFRESHMENTS  
DONATIONS  
APPRECIATED  
*Donations help support  
our horticulture  
scholarships*

LOVE TO GARDEN???  
COME JOIN US...  
*Meetings are held the  
2nd Thursday morning  
of each month  
at this same location*

2026 Annual  
Native Garden Tour  
Saturday, April 18th  
Free Event

CALIFORNIA IN MY GARDEN

<https://chapters.cnps.org/oc/home/gardening/garden-tour-native-plants-orange-county-california/>

FREE ADMISSION



San Clemente Garden Club  
in partnership with  
The City of San Clemente Parks & Recreation

SAVE THE DATE!!  
Garden Tour May 16

# Garden Fest

Saturday - April 11, 2026  
8 am - 2 pm  
San Clemente Community Center

**HUGE PLANT SALE  
AND FLEA MARKET**

Master Gardener Tool Sharpening  
Exhibits • Demonstrations  
City Water Conservation Info.  
Local Art • Funky Container Contest  
Kids Gardening Activities

[www.SanClementeGardenClub.com](http://www.SanClementeGardenClub.com)



Proceeds benefit horticultural scholarships,  
junior gardeners, and civic beautification.

Vista Garden Club's  
90<sup>th</sup> FLOWER SHOW  
Jim Porter Recreation Center, Brengle Terrace Park

Saturday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>  
2:00 pm – 5 pm  
Sunday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>  
10 am – 4 pm

Plant Sale and  
Garden Art Boutique  
Saturday, noon – 5 pm  
Sunday, 10 am – 4 pm  
IT'S FREE!

# Garden Magic

<https://www.californiagardenclubs.com/vistagardenclub/>

# More Gardening Happenings

saddleback college  
horticulture & landscape design

## SPRING PLANT SALE



APRIL 16&17

9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

at the greenhouse

The Spring Plant Sale conducted by the  
Horticulture and Landscape Design Department  
at Saddleback College is a fund raiser  
for student scholarships.

*Come early for the best selection!*

## SJC Garden Club Seed Sale

Thanks to everyone for their support  
of our seed sale.

We collected more than \$175 to help support  
our educational programs!!!!

# Happy National Garden Month

<https://ngb.org/april-is-national-garden-month/>



CALIFORNIA NATIVE  
Horticultural Foundation

For those who might be interested in what Mike Evans (formerly of Tree of Life Nursery) has been up to—here is a link to a great YouTube video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lEvm5atYl0I>

Coin Native Presents:

*Festival of the Butterflies*

**Save the Date**

**October 3, 2026**

*San Juan Capistrano*

*goinnative.net*  
Talks, tours, live music, food & fun!

# A Monarch Recovery



There are people in California who remember driving through certain valleys in October and having to pull over just to take it in.

Monarch butterflies by the millions, moving south. Filling trees in coastal groves so densely the branches sagged. The air shimmering with orange wings. People who saw it describe it as one of those experiences that makes you feel genuinely lucky to be alive on a planet where something like that exists.

Recent winter population counts for western monarchs have come in around 20,000 to 30,000 individuals. That's not a typo. From millions to tens of thousands — a collapse of roughly 99% within living memory.

The causes are the same ones driving declines across the insect world: habitat loss, pesticide exposure, climate disruption. But for Monarchs specifically, the destruction of milkweed has been devastating in a very direct way. Milkweed is the only plant Monarch caterpillars can eat. It's not a preference or a tendency. It's a biological requirement. No milkweed means no caterpillars means no next generation. Decades of herbicide use in agricultural areas eliminated milkweed from millions of acres that monarchs once moved through.

California's response is the largest monarch recovery initiative the western United States has ever seen: 15 million milkweed plants, to be established along a single connected migration corridor by 2030.

The corridor design is the key detail. Scattered patches of milkweed help but they don't solve the core problem, which is fragmentation. A butterfly navigating hundreds of miles of migration needs reliable habitat at regular intervals. Break that chain too many times and the journey becomes impossible. The goal here is to rebuild a continuous route — to stitch back together what was severed.

Conservation scientists are careful with optimism when species have fallen this far. But 15 million plants along one corridor is the kind of commitment that says: we believe there is still time. We believe this population can recover if we give it something to come back to.

The monarchs that remain are still making the journey. California is trying to make sure it's worth completing.

# Top 6 Flowers to Bring the GOOD Bugs



## Block By Block—Cities Become Habitats Again



# Need The “411” on Garden Club Events????

Check out our website—open 24/7

<https://www.sanjuancapistranogardenclub.com/>

Click on “Newsletters”

## Board of Directors

Shelly Trainor - President

Cindy Sorensen—VP Ways & Means

Lou Heimann—VP Membership

Open—VP Programs

Pat Lussier—VP Communication

Maureen Gebelein—Treasurer

Open—Secretary

Sharon Dunn—Advisory Member

Janet Sperber—Advisory Member

## Newsletter

Members are welcome to submit print-ready items for publication that would be of general interest to our membership. Submissions are subject to editorial review.

Send to: [chateaulussier@msn.com](mailto:chateaulussier@msn.com)

# Garden Radio Show



*“In The Garden”  
Radio Show*

Presented by  
**UC Master Gardeners  
of Orange County**

Every Thursday Morning  
8:30 - 9:30am

*Airs on KUCL (88.9 FM)*

# Gardening Resources

## Harmony in the Garden

<https://harmonyinthegarden.com/>

**Blogs, tips, photos—Check out the issue:**

**Garden Ideas from Garden Tours: Takeaways, Tips, and Inspiration**

## Garden Design

<https://Gardendesign.com>

**English, Japanese, Mediterranean, Tropical, Eco-friendly**

## LEARN ABOUT BUTTERFLY GARDENING

<https://naba.org/butterfly-gardens/>

## Laguna Hills Nursery

**Free gardening classes**

<http://www.lagunahillsnursery.com/Classes.html>

Perhaps the most important lesson I learned when I began gardening in California and wanted success with certain perennials, trees, shrubs, and annuals, was the information on soil from Gary Matsuoka. Fortunately he is still teaching the concepts below. It is worth a trip to his Saturday classes at his nursery! The Soil Class is held several times a year.

Mozelle

**Check out their extensive YouTube Content including:**

**Compost is NOT Good Soil:**

<https://www.youtube.com/c/GarysBestGardening>

## Paper Garden Workshop

<https://www.papergardenworkshop.com/>

**Garden Design and Landscape Graphics in a FUN way**



# And More Gardening Resources



Did you know OCCNPS has an online archive? Search for "Fall Color" and find helpful resources from past newsletters like "[Fall Blooming Plants](#)" and "[Plants for Fall Color](#)." Use the search feature to find exactly what you are looking for!

<https://chapters.cnps.org/oc/2018/10/29/summer-and-fall-blooming-favorites/>

<https://chapters.cnps.org/oc/2018/10/28/plants-for-fall-color/>

**“Visit SJC” SJC Chamber of Commerce**

**Sign up for their newsletter for events/happening in and around SJC**

**<https://www.sanjuanchamber.com/>**

***SJC Garden Club is a proud member of the SJC Chamber of Commerce***

**Orange County Bird of Prey Center**

**<https://www.ocbpc.org/>**

**Sponsor a bird for release—how cool is that!**

**Knowable Magazine**

**A nonprofit publisher dedicated to synthesizing and integrating knowledge for the progress of science and the benefit of society**

**<https://knowablemagazine.org/>**

**Voice of OC**

**A nonprofit, reader-funded newsroom**

**<https://voiceofoc.org/about/>**

**California Native Horticulture Foundation (Mike Evans)**

**[calnativehort.org](http://calnativehort.org)**

**O C Library—Seed Library Program**

**Availability:** At specific branches, including Brea, Costa Mesa, El Toro, San Juan Capistrano, San Clemente, and Westminster.

**How it Works:** Adult patrons can obtain a limited number of seed varieties per month.

**Purpose:** To promote sustainable living, community gardening, and reduce reliance on industrial agriculture.

# And Even More Gardening Resources



## City Farmer's Nursery

<https://www.cityfarmersnursery.com/>

A Little Bit of the Country in the Heart of the City

Online database of bluebird trails in  
OC & surrounding areas

<http://tiny.cc/SCBC-database>



Southern California  
Bluebird Club

**plant depot**

NURSERY & GIFT

[plantdepot.com](http://plantdepot.com)

Sign up for their monthly newsletter  
Seasonal plant ideas, garden/soil/fertilizer guides

## Santa Margarita Water District

<https://www.smwd.com/>

Lots of free classes, events and tours—gardening, landscape design,  
water saving, irrigation, trips to local water storage & water treatment

## UC Agriculture and Natural Resources (UCANR)

<https://ucanr.edu/>

Loads of articles on all aspects of gardening

## California Native Plant Society

<https://www.cnps.org/>

All about CA native plants

## Calscape

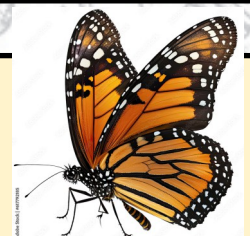
<https://calscape.org/>

Spectacular resource for finding, identifying and caring for native plants  
from CA Native Plant Society

## Monarch Watch

<https://monarchwatch.org/>

All things about Monarch Butterflies



# And Even More Gardening Resources

Super cool idea from Janell



<https://farmersdefense.com/collections/farming-sleeves?pb=0>

