Newsletter

San Juan Capistrano Garden Club

November 2025



Basic Edible Garden Design and Kitchen Herbalism

Speaker: Rachael Davidson

November 17, 2025

Rachael will share about edible plants, emphasizing CA native and adapted plants, and general uses along with design tips for creating a functional and beautiful herb garden! If you have a tiny container garden or acres to plant, this workshop will inspire you with new ideas and plants to explore in your garden, on your plate and your medicine cabinet.

Rachael, currently employed at Tree of Life Nursery, is a mother, gardener, kitchen herbalist, landscape designer and lifelong student who enjoys sharing knowledge. Once upon a time, she had an herbal product business, Gathering Basket Herbals, and sold hand blended teas. Her experience with edible plants and herbal medicine began with discovering a book in her teens, called the "Green Witch Herbal" in a small bookstore in Northern California. She enjoys learning about plants everywhere she goes and loves hearing family and cultural folklore about plant uses from anyone who has stories to share!



Rachael Davidson Heart and Soil Landscape Designs

Upcoming Events

November 17 – 10 am

Meeting and Speaker: Rachael Davidson

Basic Edible Garden Design & Kitchen Herbalism

Special Guest: Donna Hood—CGCI OC District Director

December 8 – 10 am-Holiday Brunch—Members ONLY

NOTE: THIS IS THE 2ND MONDAY

Sign up at the November Meeting—\$52/person See enclosed flyer for additional info

January 19 - 10 am

Meeting and Speaker: Shelly Trainor, Master Gardener

Bees, Butterflies and Other Pollinators

February 16 - TBA

March 16 - 10 am

Meeting and Speaker: Issac Novella, OCWR Landfill Site

Administrative Manager—Recyclables & Organics

Garden Stroll 2026

Thanks to all the club members who opened their gardens and homes for our successful Garden Stroll this past June. A Garden Stroll for our club members and guests is planned for next spring, Monday May 11. It was at the request of the owners that we schedule it one month earlier as they felt their gardens were at their best in spring.

All we need now to have this happen are 4 gardens (opening your home for the tour is optional). So, if you would like to include your garden or volunteer the name of another garden, please sign up or add a name to the Garden STROLL SIGN-UP sheet at the November meeting. Or you may email Lou or Shelly with the name and contact information.

Lou Heimann & Shelly Trainor, Co-chairmen

A Special Request

These are extraordinary times and sometimes those who have the least are often impacted the hardest. Due to circumstances beyond their control, our military families at Camp Pendleton are experiencing issues due to receiving partial/no pay and reductions in the SNAP program. San Clemente Military Family Outreach (who we have helped in the past) is experiencing unprecedented calls for assistance. If you would like to help, it would be great if you would bring something from the list below to help SCMFO keep food on the tables of the families of those who are serving our country.

Please bring to the November meeting. Thanks!!

Pancake Mix (just add water kind) Maple Syrup

Peanut butter Parmesan Cheese-shaker type

Spaghetti (long noodles only) Pasta Sauce (Marinara)

Top Raman Noodles Canned Chicken

Canned Tuna

PLEASE—no perishables!

Gift Cards from Target or Walmart are always welcome.

Karen Rottmann & Pat Lussier

Congratulations!

Our Garden Club is pleased to provide contributions that help support our local military families and will again do so at our holiday party! Congratulations Karen and Mark Rottmann who were honored as the San Clemente Military Family Outreach (SCMFO) Volunteers of the Year at their annual Salute to the Stars Fundraiser dinner. We're proud of them and happy to be part of their efforts to provide critical assistance to our young military families!



Each January/February SCMFO** has a baby shower for 40-50 new/expectant military Moms from Camp Pendleton Marine Base. We did such a great job in July with the food drive to replenish their Panty, they have asked us for some help again.

Below is a list of baby items always needed:

Size 3 to 12 month pajamas/sleepers, onesies, darling outfits

Bibs

Socks

Bath towels & wash cloths

Receiving blankets & other soft blankets

Swaddles

Burp Cloths

Small books (cloth or plastic) and baby toys

Hygiene items: Baby shampoo, lotion, baby bath

Pacifiers

Diapers size 4-6 (babies grow fast!)

Wipes

Target and Walmart Cards

Consider neutral colors - some moms know the baby's gender, some don't.

If a group would like to pool funds and purchase a larger item, there is always a need for:

Car seats

Strollers

Pack 'n' Plays

Baby carriers

Baby Einstein/Fisher Price Activity Mats

Your generosity is greatly appreciated.
Please bring unwrapped items to our Holiday Brunch, December 8



Pictures from the February 2025 Baby Shower





**SCMFO (San Clement Military Family Outreach) Is an all-volunteer run organization that provides emergency services to enlisted Marines E6 and below. These service people are at the lower-end of the pay scale, many from out-of-state, with little local support. If you would like more information about SCMFO, please check out their website: https://militaryfamilyoutreach.org/

Need The "411" on Garden Club Events????

Check out our website—open 24/7

https://www.sanjuancapistranogardenclub.com/
Click on "Newsletters"

Board of Directors

Cindy Sorenson VP Ways & Means

Lou Heimann VP Membership

Ginny Kerr VP Programs

Pat Lussier VP Communications

Maureen Gebelein Treasurer

Shelly Trainor Secretary

Newsletter

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

Send to: chateaulussier@msn.com

The Results are In!

At the September meeting, a survey was conducted to learn how members feel about the annual programming for our club. 32 completed surveys were received. Here are the key results:

**We should replace at least one field trip with a speaker meeting

**We should have 2 to 3 field trips per year with a preference for a garden tour for one of them

**Members are equally divided on whether the November crafts program should be replaced with a speaker in the future

Based on the results, your board is planning the following calendar for 2026:

January- speaker

February-speaker

March- speaker

April- field trip

May - Garden Stroll (chairs: Lou Heimann & Shelly Trainor)

June- speaker

July - Trash to Treasures (need a chair by April 1 or would be a speaker)
August—annual fundraiser dinner (need a chair by April 1, or alternative
program will be developed)

September—speaker

October-field trip

November - craft—IF a chair is identified before June 30, otherwise speaker

December - annual member brunch-need a chair

These program/events don't just magically happen on their own. The same few people cannot be called upon to do <u>all</u> events. Step up and be part of your club. Sign-up sheets for committees and chairs will be available at the November meeting.

Shelly Trainor

Restoring Butterfly Garden/Monarch Waystation

Have you visited the butterfly gardens lately? Please reach out to Lynn Rollison to join this dedicated group.

We are still meeting the 2nd & 4th Mondays at 9am. The garden had a bountiful spring and summer. It's

about time to do some cutting back. And we are starting to think about what we can add to give us fall and winter color. Two of our members have donated beautiful benches and a table, and another donated a sun dial. Come out and join us.

Lynn Rollison



It Is Time for YOU to be a Part.....

"I always wondered why somebody doesn't do something about that.

Then I realized I was that somebody." – Lily Tomlin BE THAT SOMEBODY—MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

WE CAN DO THIS!

Planning for our next year is in process

If you find our events enjoyable/valuable/fun this is your time to become the "somebody" who does something about <u>that!</u> Programs, parties, fun-draisers, garden strolls don't magically happen on their own. Lately, it seems just a small percentage of members are keeping the club running.

This is not sustainable.

At the November meeting there will be sign-up sheets for committees and chair positions. If everyone waits for SOMEBODY ELSE to step up, several events will be cancelled. Committee chairs and volunteers must be identified far enough in advance to contract with the golf course and to do meaningful planning. If you step up, you will not be on your own—there experienced members, who have done these jobs, who will help you.

Be brave—go for it & help your fellow club members!

Pat Lussier-VP Communications

October Field Trip—Landfill Tour

Many THANKS to the wonderful staff at Prima Deshecha Landfill for an informative and totally awesome tour. And to all our intrepid trekkers!







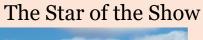




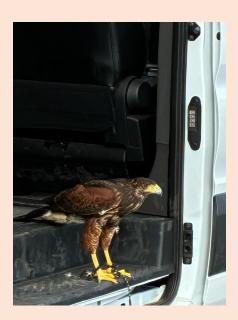












Sweet Stem Senders

Sharing Halloween Magic!

Atria residents were overjoyed seeing our Halloween garb. Met many new faces this visit, all full of smiles. Many new stories and lots of visiting with the residents and staff. Such a rewarding trick or treat. One lady even had candy treats ready for us as we delivered our wicked door decorations. Always so much fun!

Kathy Dixon







https://homegrownnationalpark.org/about-us/

Did you know fall is one of the best times to plant trees and shrubs?

We just added a new guide—graciously shared by our friends at Leaf & Limb—to help you do it right. It covers how to plant, mulch, and water properly, plus simple tips to avoid common mistakes

https://homegrownnationalpark.org/planting-native-trees-and-shrubs/?
utm_source=Start+a+new+HABITAT&utm_campaign=f1fb572c84EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2023_11_06_03_46_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_-f7088a1207_-1421129464&mc_cid=f1fb572c84&mc_eid=261694463c

This is how many pollinators spend part of their lives in your yard



Disturbing leaves, soil, and plant debris harms next season's bees and butterflies, and it threatens the birds that rely on them for food.



Garden Radio Show



From Tree of Life

Customer Meet & Greet

December 6, 10 am-2pm

Tree of Life Nursery is gathering together CA native plant nurseries from Los Angeles to San Diego in one place for our customers to meet!

Great opportunity to welcome CA native plant nurseries from all over Southern California to meet our customers (that's you!). As Tree of Life Nursery winds down to its closing at the end of December 2025, this will be a unique opportunity to meet CA native plant growers and learn more about their nurseries and plant availability.

Gardening Happenings

Master Gardener's Expo

April 2026

Murray Senior Center, Mission Viejo

Lake Forest Garden Club

Saturday before Mother's Day

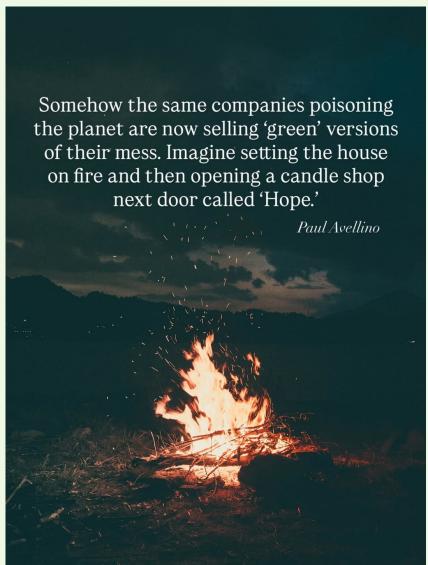
Southern California Spring
Garden Show—South Coast Plaza
The OC District for CGCI will participate in the South Coast
Plaza Garden Show Thursday-Sunday, April 23- 26, 2026.

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

Pesticides

Farmers who add wildflower strips need fewer pesticides. Nature's pest control is cheaper than chemicals. Buy seeds, not poisons.

Our "war on weeds" has become a war on life itself. Clover feeds bees. Milkweed feeds monarchs. Goldenrod feeds everything. Throw out the Roundup and let life outside your window GROW!



The world we live in - where corporations slap a leaf on the label, use the word eco, and suddenly we're supposed to believe the same system built on extraction has found enlightenment.

Plastic water bottles made with "less plastic." "Sustainable" fast fashion that still ships around the globe. Oil companies with commercials about wildflowers and windmills.

It's not green. It's marketing.

And it works because we're tired. We want to believe progress is happening. We want to think we can buy our way into better habits without changing the habits themselves.

But sustainability isn't something you can sell. It's something you live. It's growing what you can, repairing what you have, and knowing that "less" is often the most powerful thing you can do.

The planet doesn't need a rebrand. It needs honesty. It needs less polish and more humility. Because no matter how many "ecofriendly" products they invent, the most sustainable choice will always be the one we didn't throw away in the first place.

Mosquitos!

"Southern House Mosquitoes" (a.k.a. Culex mosquitoes) and West Nile Virus

Culex mosquitoes are one of two mosquito species of public health concern in Orange County, due to their ability to spread <u>West Nile virus</u>. Residents play an instrumental role in reducing mosquito populations by

eliminating sources of standing water and reporting unmaintained pools for treatment



"Ankle Biters" (a.k.a. Aedes aegypti mosquitoes) and Travel Safety

The Aedes mosquito is a daytime biting mosquito that can transmit diseases, including dengue, Zika, and yellow fever. Fortunately, Aedes mosquitoes in Orange County (OC) do not carry the bacteria and virus-

es that cause these diseases. However, that could change if a traveler contracts a mosquitoborne disease. At the same time, abroad, a local Aedes mosquito could bite them upon their return home and then spread the newly acquired disease agent to our local community.

- Use mosquito repellent while traveling
- Continue to use repellent for two weeks after returning home to stay bite-free

Visit a healthcare provider if you have symptoms of sickness and mosquito bites For residents, these are the best ways to avoid bites from the Aedes mosquito:

- Dump out standing water sources weekly to prevent breeding
- Wear an EPA-registered repellent
- Wear loose, long-sleeved clothing (Aedes can bite through leggings)
- Connect with your neighbors to make sure they know how to avoid mosquitoes

If you have saucers for your potted plants, add small gravel or sand to them to prevent Aedes from laying eggs in any standing water.

For more information, visit our <u>Aedes Frequently Asked Questions</u> page:

https://www.ocvector.org/aedes-mosquitoes-a-k-a-ankle-biters#docaccess-89411d23ea095c9a4ac1ccff402bc4fc88b8ed5cd2cf82a55cb2b2f52eofb570



ORANGE COUNTY MOSQUITO AND VECTOR CONTROL DISTRICT

Tell Orville
Redenbacher's:
We shouldn't
have to choose
between
popcorn and
pollinators.

Add your name

Call on Orville Redenbacher's to support bee conservation

Last year saw the most lethal winter on record for honeybee colonies in the U.S. and more than 700 bee species native to the country are on the decline. Much of this mass die-off has been

linked to the use of neonicotinoid pesticides, or neonics, a class of potent neurotoxins used across millions of acres of American farmland.

https://environmentamerica.org/california/take-action/call-on-orville-redenbachers-to-support-bee-conservation/?
akid=12586.1480687.VP4uBi&email_blast=104112586&rd=1&reference=AME4-FCNS%3AWILDLIFE%3ABEES-1025%
2BEM9%3A03L%3A0HH-CCP%2oCAE%2oPopcorn%2oBees%
20ADV&t=101&utm_campaign=AME4-FCNS%3AWILDLIFE%3ABEES-1025&utm_content=EM9%3A01C%3A0HH-CCP&utm_medium=email&utm_source=salsa

Gardening Is A Long Game

Let Your Garden Grow Wild | Rebecca McMackin | TED surveying the success increasing biodiversity even in the middle of New York City

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qxgEoq1_m6U



Saving Flower Seeds for Replanting

Saving seeds can be economical, since a single flower can generate dozens or even hundreds of seeds. Although the procedure is simple, there are a few techniques that will improve your chances of being a successful seed saver.

Seed resources: Check with your local Orange County Library branch—many have seed libraries.

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 <u>"Fall Blooming Plants"</u> and "<u>Plants for Fall Color</u>." 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. 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 borrow a limited number of seed varieties per month.

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

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

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





I breathe through my skin. When the rain comes, my tunnels flood, and the air runs thin.

Each year, I turn and enrich tons of soil per hectare—quietly, freely, unseen.

The castings I leave behind are fertile, rich with nutrients, and prized by growers.

A ton of this living compost can be worth hundreds of dollars for the life it restores.

I might live for five years in the right soil.

But on hard pavement, I can barely survive a few minutes before I dry out or suffocate.

One worm like me stirs and aerates the ground in ways that feed countless bacteria.

Together, we build soil that gives plants up to seven times more nutrients than ordinary earth.

The truth is, I'm not escaping. I'm suffocating. Gasping for air. If I'm on pavement, put me back under some plants please.

Humans Are The Only Species That Sprays Food With Poison So That Other Animals Won't Eat It -And Then Go Ahead To Eat It Themselves.



Leaves aren't trash. They're nature's mulch, free insulation, and an all you can eat buffet for next season's soil life. When you send them away, you're literally throwing out nutrients your garden paid for all summer long.

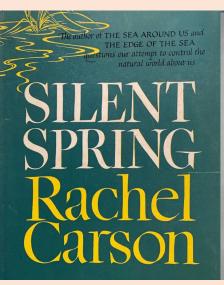
Instead, here's what you do:

- Rake them into your garden beds to act as a natural blanket that keeps soil temperatures steady and feeds beneficial microbes.
- Add them to your compost shredded leaves are carbon gold and help balance all that green waste.
- Create a leaf pile in a quiet corner it'll become a winter condo for fireflies, frogs, and pollinators waiting out the cold.
- Use them for pathways or erosion control around raised beds or bare spots in the yard.

And if you absolutely must get rid of them, use paper bags. They'll break down, the planet will sigh in relief, and yes... I'm still judging, but at least you're not using plastic.

By spring, those "messy" piles you leave will break down into rich leaf mold. Black gold for gardeners that you can't buy in a bag.

So next time you think about raking and bagging, just remember, mother Nature never wastes a leaf. Be more like her.





Notable Woman

Before Rachel Carson's "Silent Spring", the dominant view was that humans should and could dominate nature with chemicals. Her book's true power was not just exposing pesticides' dangers, but dismantling

this very premise. She re-framed the conversation to one of ecological interconnectedness, proving that an attack on the environment is an attack on ourselves. this philosophical shift is her enduring legacy, sparking the modern environmental movement.