

# NEWSLETTER

*Fall (September – November 2019)*

## Chilean Garden plans continue to grow

*Plants sought to complete new section*

Recently the Conejo Valley Botanic Garden only had four of the five Mediterranean-climate areas of the world designated.

That is all about to change with the addition of a new Chilean Garden and an expansion to the existing Mediterranean Garden.

This new addition is a result of moving a bordering fence back to create more space next to the existing Mediterranean Garden.

The expansion of the Mediterranean Garden is part of a 2019 grant with the Conejo Valley Recreation and Park District.

The CVBG Board of Directors approved the multi-phase Chilean Garden plan, which included first removing existing succulents, relocating a very large tree, and installing an irrigation system and new gravel paths.

The Chilean Garden will be somewhat different from other areas in the garden. For one thing,

Chile, a country in South America that borders the Pacific Ocean, has a very diverse climate and that is reflected in the plants that grow there.

CVBG Board Director Steve Davis, a retired landscape architect, said Chile has a nice Mediterranean zone, similar to California climate and terrain, though a little more extreme.

Chilean gardens are known for their extreme beauty and tolerance for dry weather.

However, finding the Chilean plants locally has posed quite a challenge, Davis said.

Chilean plants are not as well-known as those from other Mediterranean climate areas, such as southwest and southern Australia, parts of

***Chilean garden story, continued on page 2***



*A preliminary plan for the new Chilean Garden  
(Courtesy of Steve Davis)*



*Chilean wine palm (Jubaea chilensis)*



*Rock purslane (Calandrinia spectabilis)*



*Chilean jasmine (Mandevilla laxa)*

*The Conejo Valley Botanic Garden is a volunteer, non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation, cultivation and display of native and other water-conserving plants.*

## **Chilean garden story, continued from page 1**

California (between San Diego and Cape Mendocino), countries in the Mediterranean basin, and the Western Cape in South Africa.

Davis said that because of this, there are no more than a handful of Chilean plants (maybe three or four) that are commonly available in nurseries and that people are able to buy. Whereas, there are hundreds of plants available from other Mediterranean zones.

Some of the Chilean plants that are available have also come from seed or from cuttings.

In fact, the first phase of the Chilean garden will be filled with plants such as rock purslane (*Calandrinia spectabilis*) and Chilean jasmine (*Mandevilla laxa*), which are being propagated at the CVBG with the help of Treasurer Jim Allyn in the greenhouse.

Other plants, such as the Chilean wine palm (*Jubaea chilensis*), one of the slowest growing palm trees on earth, are harder to come by and are very expensive.

Davis said that the CVBG will be seeking help from other gardens, but is also looking for people in the community who would like to help curate the garden.

"There may be someone out there that comes from Chile or who has lived there or is very interested in it. Or someone who has some of these plants and is interested in sharing them," Davis said.

We are excited about this new addition to the garden, which will take several years to complete.



*The empty space next to the existing Mediterranean Garden that will soon house the new Chilean Garden.*

Those interested in helping with the new Chilean Garden should contact Steve Davis at [conejo.garden@yahoo.com](mailto:conejo.garden@yahoo.com).

### **New Chilean Garden Plants:**

#### **SHRUB & GROUND COVER PALETTE**

Peruvian lily (*Alstroemeria ligtu*)  
Lemon verbena (*Aloysia citrodora*)  
Darwin's barberry (*Berberis Darwinii*)  
Angel's trumpet (*Brugmansia 'Charles Grimaldi'*)  
Tara (*Caesalpinia spinosa*)  
Rock purslane (*Calandrinia spectabilis*)  
Box-thorn fuchsia (*Fuchsia lycioides*)  
Hummingbird fuchsia (*Fuchsia magellanica*)  
Chilean pitcher sage (*Lepechinia salviae*)  
Tupa (*Lobelia excelsa*)  
Chilean jasmine (*Mandevilla laxa*)  
Chilean passion flower (*Passiflora pinnatistipula*)  
Chilean puya (*Puya chilensis*)  
Flaming Belles (*Tecoma fulva*)

#### **TREE PALETTE**

Monkey puzzle tree (*Araucaria araucana*)  
Chilean palm (*Jubaea chilensis*)  
Mayten (*Maytenus boaria*)  
Hualo (*Nothofagus glauca*)  
Chilean mesquite (*Prosopis chilensis*)

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## **CLU students and staff care for garden during volunteer event**

Students and staff from California Lutheran University volunteered their time at the Conejo Valley Botanic Garden during the annual United Way Day of Caring held on Sept. 28, 2019.

The CLU group helped place stones along pathways in the garden, as well as trim down some overgrown Matilija poppies.

Their help is much appreciated by everyone at the garden!

*(Photo by Alex Dizon. More photos from the Day of Caring are available on the Conejo Valley Botanic Garden Flickr page.)*





# Dedicated work of volunteers celebrated at annual party

## *Steve Davis named 2019 Volunteer of the Year*

Volunteers are the lifeblood of the Conejo Valley Botanic Garden. That's why the CVBG each year plans a party just to show how much the volunteers are appreciated here.

This year, the CVBG recognized our outstanding volunteers during our annual Volunteer Recognition party held Sunday, Oct. 12, 2019 in the Kids' Adventure Garden.

CVBG Secretary Sandy Krutilek greeted volunteers with a smile as they arrived to the event, which included food, beverages, and a meet-and-greet.

"Everybody is important in this organization, whether you only volunteer a little bit or every day of the week," CVBG President Beverly Brune told the attendees at the event. "Can you imagine that all that is completed here at the garden is by volunteers? It's really incredible."

Brune recognized many of our newer volunteers, our youngest volunteers, and our regular, longtime volunteers.

Board Director Steve Davis was named the 2019 Volunteer of the Year. He was selected by fellow Board Directors for his tireless work and commitment to the garden over the years.

Davis, a retired landscape architect, plans the big projects for the garden (his design work at the garden dates back to the early days of the garden!). He is always willing to help, and his always friendly nature is much appreciated!

A special moment during the event included recognition of Kristine Lucas and daughters Auden and Merit. Kristine is the daughter of Maryanne Lucas, past president and longtime garden volunteer, who with her creativity and generosity founded the Kids' Adventure Garden. Sadly, Maryanne passed away two years ago, but her legacy continues on in the garden.

One of the pleasantly-surprising highlights of the event was a cake with beautiful garden-themed frosting made by our extraordinary volunteer, Virginia (Ginny) Greer. We already knew Ginny was amazingly artistic with her work in the garden, but we were all simply amazed by her cake making and decorating skills!

Thank you to all our volunteers for making this year one of the most successful ever!



# Helpers beautify garden, get outdoor work experience

A group of young adults with special needs have been providing invaluable help at the Conejo Valley Botanic Garden, while also learning skills that will help out when they look for employment.

The group of about ten helpers from Villa Esperanza Services come out at least once a week to the garden and complete a variety of tasks for about an hour each time, such as raking leaves, mulching between plants, and redoing rocks along border paths.

David Hergesheimer, a longtime regular garden volunteer, meets with the group on a regular basis, patiently leading them through their tasks and providing a helping hand along the way.

Villa Esperanza Services serves individuals with developmental disabilities, and provides the tools and support necessary for children, adults and seniors with special needs.

Their volunteer time at the CVBG is one of the only outdoor opportunities the group has to help out in the community.

"They really appreciate coming to the garden, and look forward to each day they are here," said Michelle Alexander, a skills instructor at the Villa Esperanza Services' Camarillo branch.

Alexander, who comes out to the garden with the



*CVBG volunteer David Hergesheimer helps a young adult from Villa Esperanza Services.*

group, said the time out in the garden is invaluable because it gives each individual a chance to participate in the community and interact with others.

"When they are ready, they can use the skills that they have learned to have a job and earn a paycheck," Alexander said.

The CVBG very much appreciates all their great work!



## *Happenings in the garden*

\* CVBG Board Directors K. Marshall Monley and Carl Zhu completed the arduous task of clearing out poison oak in garden areas that needed it the most. Without their help, the garden would be looking at a very costly project. With the poison oak clear, tree trimmers are able to clear unwanted and dead trees from the stream.

\* Much-needed gravel was recently spread on the floor of the sales area of the Garden Shop by the Saturday Crew led by CVBG Vice President Melvin Earley and Board Director Joseph Scarpine. Volunteers helping with this project included Alex Dizon, Frank Greenleaf, Dave Hergesheimer, and Daisy and Hampton Chiu. This new flooring will certainly help visitors shop a bit easier!

\* Dedicated workers Jim Weismann, Jorge Soto, Ed Merlo, and Jim Cyr have been clearing out a proliferation of mature California brittlebush (*Encelia californica*) from the west end of the Trail of Trees. This task not only helps with weed abatement for the adjacent condominium complex next to the garden, it also helps removes competition for trees in that area.

\* Jim Cyr and Jim Weismann also removed dead branches from the main garden and six barrels of leaves from the Kids' Adventure Garden after the recent Santa Ana winds. Visitors noted how clean the garden was after the very strong winds!

### **Garden Fun Fact:**

The leaves of poison oak do come in three, usually, so the mnemonic "leaves three, let it be," is a good one to teach children. Blackberry vines, among others, also bear heavily notched and lobed leaves in triplets, but blackberry stems look hairy.





## Fall gardening tips

—**Cool food:** Now's the time to plant those cool-season veggies, such as broccoli, carrots, cauliflower, lettuces and greens, potatoes and peas. Also plant those cool-season herbs, such as cilantro, dill, and fennel.

—**Don't forget those bulbs:** Now is also the time to plant South African bulbs and lilies. Also, make sure to pre-chill bulbs that need it for spring bloom, including tulips, hyacinths and crocuses.

—**Compost happens:** Everything you rake up, cut back or pull can go in a compost pile. Toss in leaves and clipping from the garden, certain kitchen scraps, even newspapers. For quick compost, use half-brown and half-green material, keep it damp and turn frequently. Composting is quite easy and there are many resources and books that will show you how.



Did you know the large Valley Oak (*Quercus lobata*) just outside the garden's entrance next to the playground is at least 300 to 400 years old?

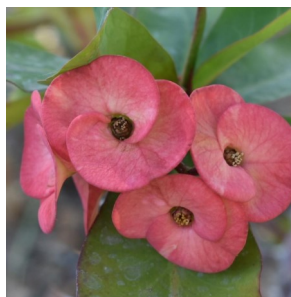
This oak and others like it once sustained Southern California's indigenous peoples.

Both the Valley Oak and Coast Live Oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) even inspired the name for the City of Thousand Oaks.

If you look under these trees, you'll see many acorns that fall on the ground in October. These acorns feed a variety of animals, including the acorn woodpecker, California scrub jay, yellow-billed magpie, and California ground squirrel!

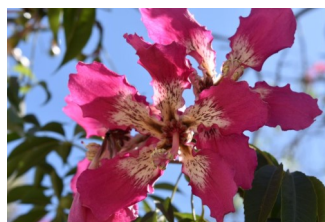
## What's blooming

Some of our favorite plants are blooming right now at the Conejo Valley Botanic Garden. Here is a sampling:



**Crown of thorns (*Euphorbia milii*)** is a cactus-like succulent that is drought tolerant and does well in poor, rocky soil. Native to Madagascar, its common name refers to a legend that this plant was used as the thorny crown worn by Jesus at his crucifixion.

**Tropical milkweed (*Asclepias curassavica*)** is a non-native garden plant that is popular as both a caterpillar food and butterfly nectar plant.



**Silk floss tree (*Ceiba speciosa*)** is a deciduous tree native to the tropical and subtropical forests of South America. It grows quickly from seed, and can become 30-foot tall specimens in just a few years.

**Cape plumbago/leadwort (*Plumbago auriculata*)** is native to South Africa. *Auriculata* means "with ears" referring to the shape of the leaves. The sap causes discolorization of the skin resembling the color of lead, from which the Latin name *Plumbago* and the popular name leadwort are derived.

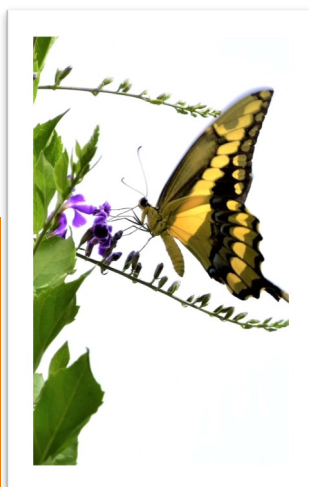


*Winter is an etching, spring is  
a watercolor, summer an oil  
painting, and autumn a  
mosaic of them all.*

—Stanley Horowitz, poet



*Butterfly photo taken by  
visitor Don Ross in the  
Kids' Adventure Garden.*



*The beautiful (and delicious) cake made  
by volunteer Virginia (Ginny) Greer and  
presented at our recent volunteer party.*

## **CONEJO VALLEY BOTANIC GARDEN**

### **Officers**

President – Beverly Brune  
Vice president - Melvin Earley  
Secretary – Sandy Krutilek  
Treasurer – Jim Allyn

### **Directors**

Steven Cohan, Ph.D  
Steve Davis  
K. Marshall Monley  
Joseph Scarpine  
Michele Willer-Allred  
Carl Zhu, Ph.D

### **Newsletter Editor**

Michele Willer-Allred

### **Address**

400 W. Gainsborough Rd.  
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360

**[www.conejogarden.org](http://www.conejogarden.org)**

### **Garden Hours**

Sunrise to Sunset  
Closed July 4th, during rain and when  
paths are muddy. Also closed during  
high winds and fire danger.

### **Renew Your Membership or Become a New Member!**

Your tax-deductible dues payment and/or  
contribution should be sent to:

#### **Conejo Valley Botanic Garden**

400 W. Gainsborough Rd.  
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360  
Include your name, address,  
Email and telephone number.

### **Annual membership**

\$50 - Family  
\$25 - Individual

**As a member, you'll receive our  
newsletter, a 10% discount on Gar-  
den Shop purchases, invitations to  
special events, and much more! With  
your membership card, receive spe-  
cial admission privileges at gardens  
listed on the American Horticulture  
Society website at  
[www.ahsgardening.org/gardening-  
programs/rap](http://www.ahsgardening.org/gardening-<br/>programs/rap).  
(Some restrictions apply)**

## **CALENDAR**

**Thursday, Oct. 31** Happy Halloween!

**Sunday, Nov. 3** Daylight Savings  
(Just a reminder: Set clocks back one hour!)

**Monday, Nov. 11** Veteran's Day

**Thursday, Nov. 28** Happy Thanksgiving!

### **Ongoing**

#### **Kids' Adventure Garden**

Open Sundays 11 am-3 pm

#### **Live Music by RubySkye**

First Sunday of the month 11:30 am-1 pm

#### **Plant Sales in the Garden Shop**

Every Sunday 11 am-3 pm

#### **Floral Design Classes**

In the Sogetsu style  
1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month  
Contact Camille: (805) 498-7421

#### **Kids' Birthday Parties**

Email Sandy Krutilek:  
[conejo.garden@yahoo.com](mailto:conejo.garden@yahoo.com)

#### **Garden Tours (including children groups and school tours)**

Email Mary Freed:  
[conejo.garden@yahoo.com](mailto:conejo.garden@yahoo.com)

## **DONATIONS RECEIVED**

**(June—September 2019)**

Westlake Village Garden Club

Robert and Stephanie  
Anderson

