

# DIGGERS DIRT

The Dirt being dished this month...

## General Meeting:

**The Huntington  
Gardens  
1151 Oxford Road  
Oak Grove Ave.  
San Marino**

**Wednesday, Feb 7th 10:30**

Beneficial  
Fungus With  
Mycologist  
Florence  
Nishida.



(Wear comfortable shoes for possible mushroom hunt...)

Sack lunch & meeting.

Guests may attend workshop portion only.

## Look ahead...

Feb 27 (Joint Club Mtg)

Mar 7

Apr 4

Auction Prep- Apr 16-17

Auction - Apr 18 (Old Mill)

May 2

June 6

## Board Meetings

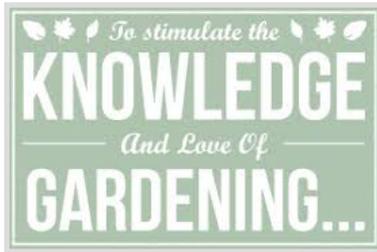
Monday's preceding the General Meeting at 10:30am. Please let Cathy know if you would like to attend.



“All mushrooms are edible. Some only once.”  
-Proverb

## From the President

What IS a mushroom? Some are considered delicacies; some are poisonous and some even glow in the dark. And what sort of hard-to-find organism seems to appear at will and then disappear completely? The world of fungi has been called “the hidden kingdom”: It is largely unseen - only visibly appearing in unpredictable and mysterious ways. It is estimated that there may be 1.5 - 5 million species of fungi on earth, of which only 100,000 species have been described, and that 94 percent of the species have yet to be discovered! As gardeners we may be familiar with the term “beneficial fungus”, but unclear on what it is, what it does and how it does it. Luckily next month our guest speaker, mycologist Florence Nishida from the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles, will set us straight by sharing her professional knowledge and passion of this fascinating kingdom of organisms.



## Mark Your Calendar

### Upcoming GCA Dates

#### NAL Conservation Conference

Washington, DC  
Feb 26-March 1, 2018

#### GCA 105<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting

"How the West is One"

Hosted by the 18 Clubs of Zone XII  
San Francisco, CA  
April 26-29, 2018

#### The GCA Annual Meeting Flower Show

"Wonders of the West"

April 26 – April 29, 2018

3-month plant ownership deadline January 26th.

Entry Deadline is Feb. 15th  
(Schedule and entry forms available at [gcamerica.org](http://gcamerica.org))

In advance of our meeting I encourage you to keep your eyes open for mushrooms and fungi as you work in your gardens. You may be amazed at what you find in damp mulch and soils. Take a picture to bring for identification in February and hone your photographic skills at the same time!

✿ See you in the garden ✿

*Cathy*

*What Will You Find In Your Own Backyard?*



Books to read:

All That the Rain Promises and More  
A Hip Pocket Guide to Western Mushrooms

Mushrooms Demystified

\* Both books by David Arora, who grew up in Pasadena, CA

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## What's going on in the GCA? Explore the GCA Member Showcase!

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On the GCA Member landing page, click on the “Read, Watch, Shop” tab in the top bar, and then click on “GCA Club Members Showcase” in the dropdown menu. This is an easy and fun way for you to connect with other members of the GCA and to share an experience you may have had in the areas of Conservation, National Parks, Horticulture or even a special event within your club.

To share an experience, just click on the green “Share an Experience” bar and follow the prompts. You can upload a picture and enter a short description.

You can also find out what other people have shared, get some great ideas, and explore all across the GCA! Narrow your search by key word, Zone or club member, or pick a Conservation topic, Horticulture function or type of Club event like ‘field trip’, ‘speaker’ or ‘workshop’. Click on the ‘National Parks’ icon to select certain parks or all of them, and find out what your fellow GCA members are doing. A recent search for Yosemite National Park found seven member submissions – the pictures were awe-inspiring!

<https://www.gcamerica.org/index.cfm/members:publications/list>

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## Local Birds and Native Plants

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The Audubon Society has a great new internet feature that helps you find native plants, pollinators and birds for any zip code in the US. Try it, by going to [www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org)

Click on the “Featured” column. At the top of the new page, click on “Grow Native Plants”. Type in your zip code and you will see pictures of select native plants specific to your area, hand chosen by Audubon experts for your local birds. You can filter by plant type, bird type, plants that attract pollinators and native plants that provide nuts, fruits seeds, etc. You can even save plants to your own reference list.



Take time to explore the rest of this website, which is packed with fascinating information. Don't miss the live bird cams!

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## Auction Planning = POTS!

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Auction Co-Chairs Sally M and Sally H remind us that it is time to start planning those 10 Diggers Pots. Take inventory of pots you may have. Give them a scrub, remove any sticker residue, and get pot screens for the drainage hole. (Vinegar and water help remove hard water marks.) Below are some great sources for pot hunting.

<p><b>Pottery Mfg. &amp; Dis. Inc.</b> 18881 S. Hoover St Gardena</p>	<p><a href="http://potterymfg.com">potterymfg.com</a></p>	<p>Great prices and you don't have to have a resale license to shop there.</p>
<p><b>Lincoln Ave Nursery</b> 804 Lincoln Ave Pasadena</p>	<p><a href="http://lincolnavenuenursery.com">lincolnavenuenursery.com</a></p>	<p>Support your local nursery! Good variety and convenient.</p>
<p><b>Bellefontaine Nursery</b> 838 S. Fair Oaks Ave. Pasadena</p>	<p><a href="http://bellefontainenursery.com">bellefontainenursery.com</a></p>	<p>Also convenient!</p>
<p><b>Potted</b> 3158 Los Feliz Blvd Los Angeles</p>	<p><a href="http://pottedstore.com">pottedstore.com</a></p>	<p>Modern and one-of-a-kind pots. Can be pricy</p>
<p><b>California Cactus Center</b> 216 S Rosemead Blvd Pasadena</p>	<p><a href="http://cactuscenter.com">cactuscenter.com</a></p>	<p>Smaller hand-made pots.</p>

Most nurseries have some pots. Even OSH and Home Depot sometimes have something wonderful.

Check out thrift stores and garage sales for other interesting containers that could be used as a pot. Please inspect all pots and containers carefully to be sure they aren't cracked or damaged.

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“Pots-et-Fleurs: A style of flower arrangement, which combines rooted ‘pot’ plants with cut flowers.”

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**POTS-et-FLEURS = FUN WITH FLOWERS!**



Eugenie demonstrates how to make the perfect Pot-et-Fleurs arrangement at our January meeting.



Pot-et-Fleurs arrangements can be changed whenever you like by adding different types of cut flowers!

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## Feed Your Roses

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Roses, especially the repeat-bloomers, are heavy feeders. While they can survive without being fertilized, they will be healthier, and produce more blooms when fed regularly during the growing season.



“Rose Cocktails” are custom nutrient/fertilizer blends worked in to the drip line of the rose bush at the beginning of the growing season, and a couple more times during the year. While everyone seems to have their favorite version, a good one is:

### **From Island Seed and Feed**

29 S Fairview Ave, Goleta, CA 93117

1 x 50lb. bag “Landscape Mix”

1 x 28 liter bag Composted Chicken Manure

2 x 22 liter bags Worm Castings

Mix together. Work 3 cups per rose bush into the soil. Water in well.

Feeds 50 roses.

(\*“Landscape Mix” is a proprietary blend of alfalfa, soybean, kelp, fish and feather meals pioneered by Rosarian Dan Bifano. The NPK ratio is 3.75-1.5-1.75. Chicken manure provides nitrogen and phosphorus. Worm castings add beneficial bacteria and microorganisms, which help roses take up and make better use of nutrients in the soil. )

### **Frank Burkard’s Rose Cocktail**

1 Cup Alfalfa Meal (feeds microbial life in the soil, contains micronutrients)

1 Cup Gypsum (loosens clay soils, buffers soil salts, promotes root growth)

1 Tbsp. Chelated Iron

1 Tbsp. Epsom Salts (promotes dark green leaves)

1 Tbsp. Sulfur (lowers soil pH; helps plants form important enzymes & proteins)

1 Tbsp. Bone Meal (slow-release source of phosphorus)

Mix thoroughly and apply to Rose bush, worked in around the drip line.

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## Roses, Dry Heat and Chilli Thrips

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Did your rose blossoms look stunted and singed last year? The long dry heat and high temperatures we have experienced the past few years in southern California has fostered the spread of Chilli Thrips. This is a new exotic insect from south central Asia that attacks the tender growing tips of many plants – especially roses!



Strong visual evidence of the presence of Chilli Thrips can be observed by dead tissue occurring within the vein structure of the upper developing foliage around the bud. Chilli thrips manifest themselves by preferentially feeding on new growth near the bud, and their presence on roses results in characteristic wrinkled leaves, with distinctive brown scarring along the veins of leaves, the buds of flowers, and the calyx.

Tom Carruth, rose curator at the Huntington Botanical Gardens, has found that overhead watering twice a week seems to help. It washes off the dust and cools down the plants. The Huntington now waters its roses twice a week, early in the morning for 20 minutes, from sprinklers at least three feet high. The roses are completely stripped of every leaf during the January pruning, and every bit of old mulch is removed, to eliminate hiding places for pests. Tom later applies 3-4 inches of new mulch to keep the rose roots cool. He recommends wood bark, “the bigger chunks the better” as a mulch.

After the Roses are pruned in January and new growth begins to emerge, Tom feeds the roses with Scott’s Natural Lawn food, which is an organic granular fertilizer. During the warm months, the Huntington gardeners also spray with organic liquid fertilizers, using a blend of kelp emulsion and “Verde”, a liquid fertilizer available at hydroponic stores and on-line.

(\*Note: as a very last resort, Tom has used Spinosad® spray, a naturally-derived insecticide, but cautions that as it is toxic to bees, use it only when bees are likely to be in the hive at dusk and during the hottest months. Spinosad breaks down rapidly in sunlight and is relatively non-toxic to adult bees when dried. Please visit <http://npic.orst.edu/factsheets/spinosadgen.html> for more information.)

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## Founders Fund Finalists

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The Founders Fund Committee is pleased to present this year's finalists! The first Founders Fund award was granted in 1936 in the amount of \$700. Today, the winning proposal receives \$30,000 and each of the two runners up receives \$10,000.

In choosing finalists, the committee uses the GCA purpose statement as criteria for selecting projects that exemplify "actions in the fields of conservation and civic improvement," as well as those that educate and "stimulate knowledge and love of gardening." Please review information on these three worthy finalists, found in the Winter GCA Bulletin. We will vote at the March meeting and submit our choice as a club to the GCA by April 1<sup>st</sup>. (\*Note - This is the only GCA award that can be voted on by each and every member of the 200 GCA member clubs!)

### 2018 FOUNDERS FUND AWARD FINALISTS      Proposal Summaries

#### **Roots Rising: A Food Truck and Financial Stability**

**Proposed by:** The Lenox Garden Club, Zone I **Seconded by:** The Worcester Garden Club, Zone I

Roots Rising seeks to launch a non-profit food truck that will be a mobile classroom, a work site, a business incubator and our flagship enterprise. At-risk teens who work on farms, in community gardens and in food pantries will source ingredients from local farms and prepare nutritious meals that will be sold to the community while they learn entrepreneurial, horticultural, and culinary skills.

#### **Dunbar Garden Kitchen-Classroom**

**Proposed by:** The Little Rock Garden Club, Zone IX **Seconded by:** The Memphis Garden Club, Zone IX

For 25 years Dunbar Garden has provided educational opportunities to students and adults.

The proposed kitchen-classroom will facilitate cross-curriculum knowledge to over 800 children via workshops in the neighboring community.

Visualize children cooking and eating eggs gathered from their chickens; honey on bread ground from wheat they have grown; marketing locally their herbs and vegetables, if the children have not eaten them first!?!

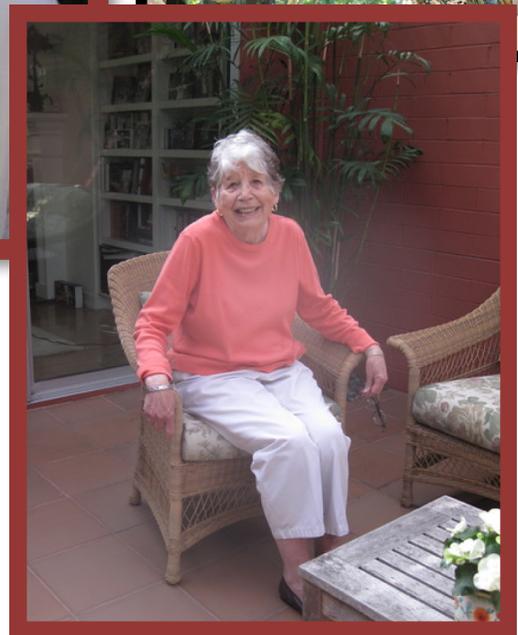
Dunbar's current primitive facilities limit the programs sowed and excitement reaped!

### **A Therapeutic Garden: Nurturing Plants and Lifting Spirits**

Proposed by: The Kenilworth Garden Club, Zone XI Seconded by: The Evanston Garden Club, Zone XI

Misericordia provides care to over 600 children and adults with wide ranging developmental disabilities. The installation of a garden that will include walk-er/wheelchair accessible paths and raised work spaces will allow the staff to implement horticultural therapy techniques, gardening activities and vocational training. In addition to these everyday activities, the tangible benefits are beyond measure: increasing awareness and enjoyment of the outdoor world, facilitating communication and socialization, improving focus and reducing stress and anxiety.

### **In Celebration of Anne**



*Anne Neville  
Gracious Digger and friend  
January 16, 2018*