

DIGGERS DIRT

The Dirt being dished this month...

General Meeting:

10:30 am Program

(Unless otherwise noted)

12:00 noon Meeting

Nov 3 - Cindy Wenzlau

10:30 - Dried Flowers

12:00 Sack lunch & meeting

Guests Welcome - great meeting for prospective members!

Look ahead...

Nov 3 - Cindy Wenzlau's

Dec 1 - Gwen Babcock's

Holiday Workshop & Boutique

Jan 5 - Gretl Mulder's

Chelsea Flower Show w/ speaker, Natasha Hopkinson

Feb 2 - Huntington Library

New Director, Nicole Cavender

Feb 22 - Huntington Library

Joint Meeting hosted by PGA Edie Soloway - Nature Photographer

Mar 2 - Old Mill Workday



From the President

Dear Diggers,

I just got back from visiting our son's at their respective colleges and found them to be so appreciative to be back amongst their friends, enjoying football games and in person classes. I believe we all are feeling that sense of appreciation for the things we missed during the hardest times of the pandemic. I value our in-person time together, working side by side as we did at the Old Mill recently sharing our family events, new updates, recipes, gardening tips and all the other conversations we have during these times of connection. I also really enjoyed our painting class in the garden that we continue to maintain and make special for all visitors.

Mar 2 - Old Mill Workday
 Prep for Auction
 Conservation Program -
 Susan & Sally
 April 3 - Plant drop off Old Mill
 April 4-5 - Auction Set Up
 April 6 - Plant Sale & Auction
 May 4 - Huntington Library
 Roses with Tom Carruth
 June 1 - Annual Meeting
 Judy McDonald's

Board Meetings

10:30 a.m. Monday's preceding the General Meetings at Lisa's home. Please let Lisa know if you would like to attend.

C-Change Zoom Mtg

Kathleen Biggens, created a non-partisan, climate change lectures series to help explain climate change in everyday language. She is offering a Zoom presentation on November 2nd at 10:00am at La Casita including the Pasadena and Hancock Park Garden Clubs. Let Susan B know if would like to attend the presentation.

For more info on C- Change:
<https://c-changeconversations.org/>



I felt the same appreciation from all the Shirley Meneice speakers excited to share about the visitors flooding back into the botanical gardens around the country and their joy in educating us all on the various gardens, growing and sustainable techniques, new garden variety's, etcetera. They are also mindful of appreciating what we have and what threatens our gardens today; global warming and lack of water. Craig Morell, Kampong Botanical Director noted the second year in a row of a varietal of grapefruit setting fruit during the winter months – a sign of our changing weather issues. (The wonderful recorded sessions are on the GCA Website to enjoy.)

As they say, it is often hard to appreciate something until it is gone or scarce. We have certainly faced these issues over the years which I believe only strengthens are steadfastness to care for our world and the people in it, to be grateful for what we have and to be filled with wonder and awe at what nature provides when balance is found.

Enjoy this lovely fall weather as the holidays quickly approach – try and be in the moment and take it all in, enjoy the hugs we missed for so long.

Off to plant dreams and pick weeds,

Lisa



Mark Your Calendar

Upcoming GCA Dates

www.gcamerica.org

Virtual Conservation Study Conference

Nov. 17-18, 2021

GCA Virtual Floral Design Conference

Dec. 8, 2021

NAL Conference TBD

Washington, DC
Feb 28 - Mar 2, 2022

GCA Virtual Photography Study Conference

Mar 31, 2022

GCA 2022 Annual Meeting Hybrid

Parsippany, NJ
Apr 27 - 30, 2022

Old Mill Workdays

October 11th & 25th
(Mondays)
November 8th



Horticulture

As fellow Diggers, I imagine it was also a challenge for you to sit at your computer for all 4 sessions of the recent Shirley Meniece Horticulture Conference when there were chores that needed attention outside... In case you missed it, look in on the GCA website (go to members login and then type in: "2021 SMHC event page" on the search bar) to watch segments at your leisure. It is worth it for the comedic interpretations of the botanical names mentioned by the transcriptions running across the screen alone!

<https://www.gcamerica.org/members/shirley-meneice-horticulture-conference-2021>

SEED SHARE:

To send seeds from other GCA members, got to the website and search Seed Share Database any time of year.

CHALLENGE PLANT:

Erigeron "W.R." Seaside Daisy

The Seaside Daisy was passed out to all the Diggers. Awards will be presented to those who have the healthiest plant at the end of the year! Good luck ladies!

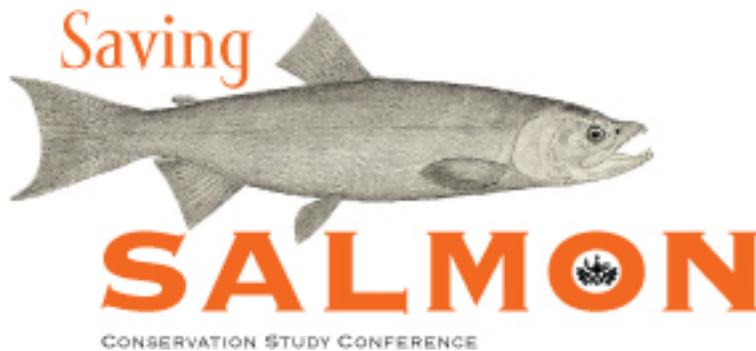


Conservation

The GCA Conservation Study Conference will be held virtually on November 17 and registration will open on October 14. All GCA members are welcome to attend and there is no charge for this conference.

Saving Salmon
Conservation Study Conference
November 17, 2021
Registration opens October 14

Salmon loom large in the Pacific Northwest as a bellwether species for the ecological and economic health of our region as well as for the traditional culture and identity of NW indigenous peoples. Join us as we take a deep dive into understanding the impact of this iconic fish.



Photography News

If you would like to receive notice of upcoming opportunities to enter photographs in GCA newsletters or flower shows, please contact Sally Miller.

I receive information from time to time and forward it to those members who are interested.

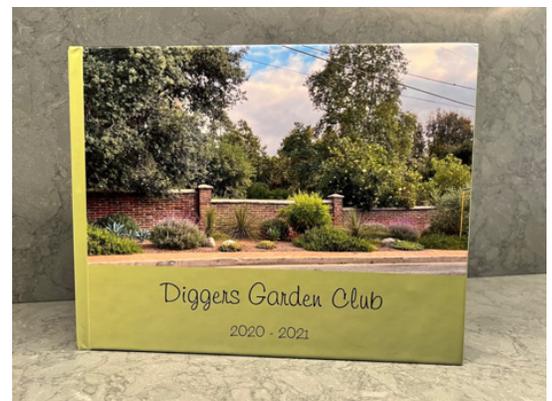
Copies of the 2020-2021 Diggers Photo Album are available to order from Shutterfly. Use the link below.

If you'd like to see a copy in person, we will bring it to all the Fall meetings.

Or you can contact our Historian Judy McDonald or Photographer Sally Miller.

<https://www.shutterfly.com/share-product/?>

[shareid=5a4eb179-6b1d-482f-944d-7bd4fcfa2e9c&cid=SHARPRDWEBORDLNK](https://www.shutterfly.com/share-product/?shareid=5a4eb179-6b1d-482f-944d-7bd4fcfa2e9c&cid=SHARPRDWEBORDLNK)



— Sally Miller

Programs

Coming up at our November meeting, Cindy and Cathy will be leading a workshop in drying flowers and dried floral arranging. Our dynamic duo has been following this growing trend and have a few tricks and techniques to get the most out of your blooms. As you all know, the flower supply chain was hit especially hard by the Covid pandemic and you've probably noticed that dried flowers are cropping up everywhere. Get ready to open your mind to this hot topic.

Also, at the November meeting, in preparation for December's Christmas arrangement workshop, we are going to be assembling chicken wire cages and would appreciate help from anyone who can stay a bit longer to help out. Bring your wire cutters and gloves! We also need more small baskets and water-tight containers. Please bring to Cindy's house or feel to drop on my porch at any time before the November meeting.



Painting in the Old Mill Garden

Being together again felt like an old worn in gardening glove

Thank you to all the Diggers who helped spruce up the Old Mill at our annual kick-off meeting and work day. We also had some additional fun, post-meeting, with a painting class in the gardens. Our project was titled "Sweet succulents" – and...to the surprise of no one, we had some very sweet results. Check out some of our talented artist's inspirations in the photos below!



Floral Design

Reminder: Upcoming GCA Floral Design Conference (virtual - called "Celebrations") on Dec 8th, which is open to all. The registration link will be emailed to everyone mid Nov. and I encourage all to attend or even just watch some of it. They always upload parts of the presentations on the GCA website afterwards but not all content is transferred. Since this will be before the December holidays there will surely be lots of great design ideas!

Preserving Fall Leaves (branches & flowers)



One great way to preserve leaves, branches and some flowers is by replacing the water inside their cells with a glycerin solution. This method keeps the leaves pliable and easy to work with.

(Silica crystals are also great for drying leaves and flowers but the plants will become brittle and fragile.) Glycerin-preserved leaves are wonderful to use in making long-lasting autumn wreaths, dried floral arrangements and seasonal décor.

Collect some colorful leaves. Yellow leaves hold their color the best. Red and orange leaves will turn russet while green leaves will turn green-brown. (Some ideas are Ginko, Liquidambar, Japanese Maple, Japanese Persimmon, Chinese Tallow, Chinese Pistache, Crepe Myrtle & Lombardy Poplar)

Buy a bottle of pure Glycerin. Make sure there are no additives or fragrances. (Found at most pharmacies and craft stores. I got a 6-ounce bottle at CVS for \$9.00)

Get two flat baking pans. (One to soak the leaves & the other to weigh them down.) Mix a solution of one part glycerin to two parts very warm (boiling ok) water and stir well. Make a fresh, angled cut on the leaf stem (as you would for a flower). Lay the leaves in one pan and pour the glycerin solution over them to cover completely. Put the second pan on top to weigh down the leaves. Let them soak for 3-4 days until they feel soft and supple. Remove, rinse off the excess solution, blot dry with paper towels and let dry further with good air circulation. They are then ready to use. (*Under humid conditions the leaves may "weep", and the oily droplets could potentially stain a wooden surface. Exercise caution.)

Preserving Branches. You can also use this glycerin method to preserve branches such as Magnolia, Camelia, Oak, Viburnum, Bay Laurel, Ligustrum, Nandina, Holly, etc. Some find that a solution of half glycerin and half water is optimal, but one part glycerin and two parts water is also ok. Cut specimens with mature stems and leaves will provide a better final product because they contain more lignan in their cell tissues. This gives the plant better structure and firmness. Harvest branches from deciduous trees/shrubs before they change to fall color and avoid soft, new growth. Do not take stems longer than 18-24 inches. Longer branches require the glycerin solution to travel further and it may not replace the water in the plant cells at the top before the cells wither and die.

Make a fresh, angled cut at the stem base and place in a tall container with enough glycerin solution to ensure that the cut ends are covered (about two inches). Over time, midribs and veins will turn brown followed by the leaves. Ligustrum will absorb the solution in a week while Magnolias and Camelias may take four weeks or more. Once the foliage has turned brown, remove and rinse off the excess solution. Pat dry and allow to dry further in an area with good air circulation. The foliage can now be used for floral design. *The remaining glycerin solution may also be reused numerous times.*

Preserving Flowers. Rose, Jasmine, Statice, Yarrow, Tulip, Marigold, Ranunculus, Gerberas, Hydrangea, and Lavender are a few flowers that preserve well in a glycerin solution, but it is worth it to experiment with others. Cut the stems to about six inches and remove most of the foliage. Use a one part glycerin to two part water solution. Cut the base of the stem on a diagonal. You may smash a woody stem with a hammer or peel some of the skin from the base to facilitate uptake of the solution. Preservation time varies depending on the flower. Thin petalled flowers may be ready in a week and others may take three weeks. Check the blossoms after a week or so. If they have a rubbery feel and are pliable, they are ready. If the flowers seem limp after treatment, hang them upside down for a week until the solution works into all petals and they stand up as desired. It is a good idea anyway to hang the flowers to air dry for a couple of weeks. Blooms preserved in glycerin will keep for six to twelve months.

