



The Perennial Post

Newsletter of the Sacramento Perennial Plant Club  May/June 2016

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The Sacramento Perennial Plant Club provides educational opportunities for Sacramento area gardeners and horticulturalists to learn about perennials appropriate to our climate and water limitations.

Meetings are held the fourth Thursday of the month (except July, Aug, Nov and Dec) at 7 pm at the Shepard Garden and Arts Center in McKinley Park, 3330 McKinley Blvd., Sacramento. Meetings are free and open to the public.

May Program Speaker

Bob Tadlock

Healthy Soil, Healthy Plants

SHEPARD GARDEN AND ARTS CENTER
THURSDAY — MAY 26, 2016 • 7:00 PM

From the start, life just kept pointing towards plants for Bob Tadlock. Fowler's Nursery, Gemco's garden center, Capital Nursery and Exotic Plants were among the many jobs where he cut his teeth. And that was in addition to the past 26 years as a grower at Farmers Markets. He credits learning the art of propagation from Bonsai growers at a Buddhist church. Ten years ago he and his wife Kathy moved to their ten acre Garden Valley homesite which was riddled with blackberries. Not good, but the berries indicated that there was water on the property. Now that the berries are cleared, this is a botanical wonderland in a setting of fir, incense cedar, big leaf maple and native ferns. Bob will discuss the importance of soil and ways to improve it with mycorrhiza, a symbiotic relationship between fungi and plant roots.

June Program Speaker

"Farmer Fred" Hoffman

The Healthy Heart Garden

SHEPARD GARDEN AND ARTS CENTER
THURSDAY — JUNE 23, 2016* • 7:00 PM

Widely known radio host, Fred Hoffman (a.k.a. Farmer Fred), is not only respected for his extensive gardening knowledge, but also for his wit and popular blog (<http://farmerfredrant.blogspot.com>). Additionally, he is a lifetime Master Gardener who has logged 10,000 volunteer hours, writes a regular garden column, has been featured on television and been recognized for his contribution to horticultural understanding by the Garden Writers Association of America and the California Association of Nurseryman. After a diagnosis of type 2 diabetes and high cholesterol that led to a quadruple bypass, Fred Hoffman made some big changes. He lost a whopping 50 pounds, exercises regularly and eats out of his heart healthy garden. He will share tips on growing some of his favorite vegetables and fruits.

*Remember there are five Thursdays in June; we meet on the fourth Thursday.

WWW.SACRAMENTOPERENNIALPLANTCLUB.ORG

Calendar

May 11

SPPC Board Meeting
Saul and Julie Wiseman
(530-885-9248)
Potluck Dinner—5 p.m.

May 14

Arboretum Plant Clearance Sale
9 a.m.–1 p.m.
UC Davis Arboretum Teaching Nursery
<http://arboretum.ucdavis.edu/default.aspx>

May 26

SPPC General Meeting
Bob Tadlock
Healthy Soil, Healthy Plants
7 p.m.

May 29

Pat and Raylin Ferris' Open Garden
10 a.m.–2 p.m.
(See page 5 for details.)

June 8

SPPC Board Meeting
Beverly Shilling (916-452-4762)
Potluck Brunch—10:30 a.m.

June 23

SPPC General Meeting
"Farmer Fred" Hoffman
The Healthy Heart Garden
7 p.m.

August 6

Harvest Day
8 a.m.–2 p.m.
Fair Oaks Horticulture Center
11549 Fair Oaks Blvd.
Fair Oaks, CA 95628
http://ucanr.edu/sites/sacmg/Harvest_Day/

August 7

Bat Talk and Watch
6:15 p.m.
California Fish and Wildlife Headquarters
45211 County Rd 32B
Davis, CA 95618



The Perennial Post

The Perennial Post is published bimonthly except for July and August. Contact the editor, Cheryl McDonald, at mcdonald4214@sbcglobal.net or call (916-524-5943) with any questions or suggestions. Garden-related articles are welcomed. A color version of this issue of *The Perennial Post* along with archived newsletters can be viewed at: www.sacramentoperennialplantclub.org

President's Message

Saul Wiseman

My last *Perennial Post* president's message. I'm retiring as president but not as a member. I will continue to attend the general meetings, the plant sales, and the garden tours. I want to thank all the Board of Directors for their support. I want to thank all the other club members for giving me the opportunity to be president for all these years. I have enjoyed the experience.



DUANE GOOSEN

Membership News

2016 Membership Roster

Please check that your contact information has been listed correctly in the membership roster. If there are any corrections, or if you want to be removed from the list or you wish to receive the newsletter by e-mail please call **Carol Meininger** (916-967-1018) or send an e-mail to sacppc@sbcglobal.net.

Welcome to New Members

Barbara Beddow
Kathy Moore
Chris & Nancy Tooker
Virginia Uchida
Bonnie & Kent Williams

Next Meeting and Newsletter

The next general meeting is Thursday, September 22 when **Suzanne Leslie O'Brien** will speak about the slow flower movement. The next newsletter will be the September/October issue. If you have suggestions for newsletter articles please email your ideas to **Cheryl McDonald** (mcdonald4214@sbcglobal.net).

**Have a wonderful summer and take time to sit down,
sip on a cool drink, and enjoy your garden.**

Who's Afraid of a Little Rain?

KAREN MARTIN



A little rain could not stop Madeline!

She made a hat out of a plastic bag and kept on working as she had for many, many years as chairperson of the plant sales. The Spring Sale was a great success. We owe a deep sense of gratitude to Madeleine for all the years of hard work she put into making the Spring and Fall Plant Sales such successful money makers. Madeleine and Emma have worked together, as a team, to provide a beautiful selection of plants. Thank you to all the members who said yes when Madeleine called, asking you to volunteer on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Madeleine is ready to hand over the job of chairperson to **Deborah Renfrew** who has volunteered to take the reins. Thank you Deborah. Don't think that Madeleine is through

with sales, she will be there answering questions about plants and being the friendly, welcoming face of our club. Thank you Madeleine.

—Janice Sutherland

New Garden Tour Chairperson

Do you have an idea for a garden tour? **Noelle Anderson** has agreed to be the new chairperson, or facilitator, for tours. She asks that you contact her with your suggestion. It could be a bus tour to somewhere a couple of hours away, a car trip to some interesting nurseries, or—something we all truly love—a peek into your private garden to which you might add a walk or short drive to a few of your neighbors' yards. Interesting and beautiful plants are only part of the allure of private gardens. It's also fun to see how people:

- Design entertainment areas, children's play spaces and vegetable gardens
- Work with sun and shade
- Make large spaces seem cozier and small spaces seem comfortable
- Incorporate garden art

The neighbors on your tour do not need to be in the Perennial Plant Club. Noelle will help you with the details of your tour. Contact her at nandersn@surewest.net or 916-731-4648.



ONE MORE CHANCE

Plant Clearance Sale

Plants left over from our recent spring sale will be on sale at the May and June general meetings.

Harvest Day

Saturday, August 6, 2016

8 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Fair Oaks Horticulture Center
11549 Fair Oaks Boulevard
Fair Oaks, CA 95628

Sponsored by the Sacramento County Master Gardeners, *Harvest Day* is Sacramento's biggest one-day gardening event featuring speakers, demonstrations, educational booths, open gardens, produce tasting, a plant clinic and more. Bring your questions to the Fair Oaks Horticulture Center and enjoy!

Volunteers are needed for the SPPC booth. Sign-ups at the June meeting.

FOR SALE

Aged horse manure, no weeds, alfalfa fed horses. Pickup truck of three yards for \$60. Free delivery and unloading. Call Carol at 916-397-2854.

Local Garden Tours

18TH ANNUAL EAST SAC GARDEN TOUR

Saturday, May 7 and Sunday, May 8
10 am–4 pm

Tour seven beautiful and inspiring gardens in Sacramento's "Fabulous 40s" neighborhood. Stroll along the tree-lined streets to view a variety of lush and creative gardens.

For more information and ticket prices, go to

davidlubingardentour.com

CAPAY VALLEY MOTHER'S DAY GARDEN TOUR

Sunday, May 8 • 10 am–5 pm

Visit nine breathtaking gardens in Capay Valley. Come join in the delight of spring flowers while strolling through the Valleys' finest gardens. Talk to the gardeners themselves and learn the secrets of their success.

For more information and ticket prices, go to

www.capayvalleygardentour.com

18TH ANNUAL LAND PARK GARDEN TOUR & TEA

Sunday, May 15 • 10 am–4 pm

The self-guided tour will highlight unique private gardens featuring newly renovated back and front yards, artist studios, outdoor dining areas, stunning pools and much more.

For more information and ticket prices, go to

www.facebook.com/landparkgardenteatour

25th ANNUAL PENCE GARDEN TOUR

Sunday, May 15 • Noon–5 pm

Stroll through ten gorgeous private gardens in Central Davis. Enjoy bidding on items at an extensive silent auction, sample refreshments, and watch painters create landscapes right before your eyes.

For more information and ticket prices, go to

www.pencegallery.org

What is Red Lava Fines?

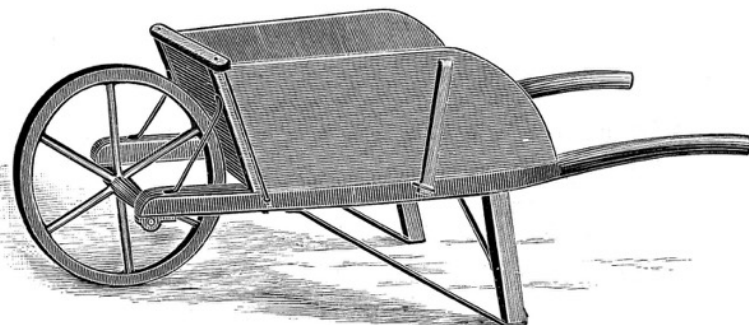
by Diana Morris

Our January speaker, Ernesto Sandoval, director of UC Davis Botanical Conservatory, shared his expertise in "Beautiful Dry Gardens." One of Sandoval's strong tenets consists of tilling red lava fines into the clay soil with which he works, making for a richer draining, growing mixture. This was something new to me as I have always relied on compost and mulch for my soil amendments. But gardening is a continual learning process, so perhaps red lava should be considered.

A road trip to C.L. Smith Landscaping Materials, 37763 Hwy 16, Woodland, found a mound of red lava fines with a helpful employee of the company John Cobb willing to share his knowledge of the soil amendment. Cobb says the lava comes from Clearlake Lava, located in Clearlake, a quarry that crushes the red lava rocks into fine, sand like amendment. Most of the red lava is mixed with clay soil and used for infield baseball and softball fields, easy to slide into base on this mixture and makes for good drainage on the field. Cobb says Sandoval is one of the few gardening individuals that use the product.

However, Cobb says many of the seed companies around Woodland request their own custom soil mixtures from Smith's that include red lava fines. The mixtures are used to start seeds and transplants. He mentioned Monsanto in Woodland uses a custom blend but when pressed for the ingredients he declined saying it was a trade secret. When he mentioned seeds and transplants, I recalled seeing what looked like fine, tiny red gravel-like ingredients in some plants I have bought over the years. These were plants from gardeners that mixed their own potting soil.

I came home with two 5 gallon buckets of red lava fines, price is \$3 per gallon and \$50 per cubic yard. Another source of the amendment is Hasties, 9350 Jackson Rd in Sacramento. I'm looking forward to adding the lava to my potting soil and just may try it on a garden spot.



Pat and Raylin Ferris' Open Garden

1848 MARKHAM WAY, SACRAMENTO 95818

SUNDAY, MAY 29, 2016 • 10 AM – 2 PM

Talk and discussion at 11 am—facilitated by Pat Ferris.

Bring your questions and insights regarding lawn makeovers, drought-tolerant perennial gardens, gardening for birds, butterflies and bees, and neighborhood parks (“playborhoods”).

Pat and Raylin can address their process of designing and transforming the site.



The Ferris' garden is an example of what can be done when we choose to eliminate the ubiquitous front lawn and instead design a front yard outdoor living space that invites neighborhood interaction and provides habitat and sustenance for wildlife.

The result is a summer drought-tolerant, watershed appropriate garden, filled with native and Mediterranean climate perennials and shrubs to shelter, feed and nourish year-round the widest array of birds (especially hummingbirds), butterflies and bees.

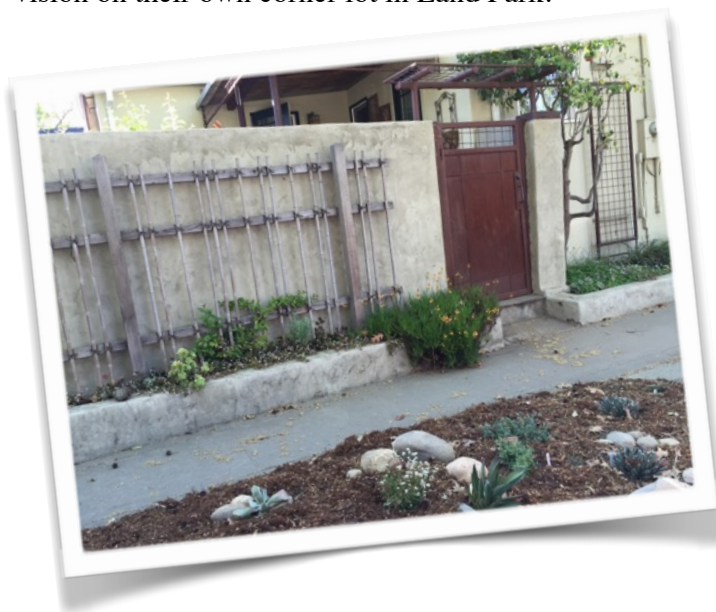
In the late 1970s, Pat was a landscape designer/contractor who tore out the lawns of Audubon Society members in the Bay Area and created hummingbird gardens. After about six years, realizing the difficulty of making that a livelihood, he changed careers to support his beloved family. Now more than 35 years later, Pat and Raylin are returning to that same enthusiasm and what they learned from their mentors, both past and current, to manifest that vision on their own corner lot in Land Park.

Pat and Raylin have transformed their 2,500 square feet of front and side yard lawn by sheet mulching, creating a flagstone patio set on sand and filled with pebbles rather than concrete and mortar for permeability and water retention, installing an in-line emitter irrigation system with smart controller, and planting for blooms and berries year-round.



The garden is relatively new, having been begun formally only less than a year ago, so it will certainly evolve and mature. It consists of three sections: a shady woodland garden with the patio/sitting area sheltered under a large-canopied native sycamore, a cottage garden full of blooming perennials that are more sun-loving, and a large succulent rock garden newly constructed.

The ultimate vision is to make the site a welcoming informal neighborhood park, with a sitting area on the front patio for neighborly interactions with all ages, one or more additional benches, a canister for dog biscuits, hopscotch painted on the sidewalk, and a mini-lending library (perhaps stocked with Mediterranean climate gardening books and the Ferris' key inspiration—the children's/adult book *The Big Orange Splot* by Daniel Manus Pinkwater—check it out!).





Ready for Summer Reading?

Stock up on great summer reads at the Book Den, operated by The Friends of Sacramento Public Library. Proceeds benefit all 28 branches of the Sacramento Public Library by funding the purchase of new materials and system-wide programming efforts like Summer Reading.

The next sale is **Friday, May 6** (5 pm – 8 pm) and **Saturday, May 7** (9 am – 4 pm). **Sales are scheduled for the first Friday and Saturday of each month.** Friday is only for members of the Friends of the Sacramento Public library (membership is \$15.00 for individuals and can be purchased at the door). The Book Den is located at 8250 Belvedere Ave. 95826.



DEADHEADING

Historic Rose Garden and Hamilton Square Garden
1000 Broadway, Sacramento

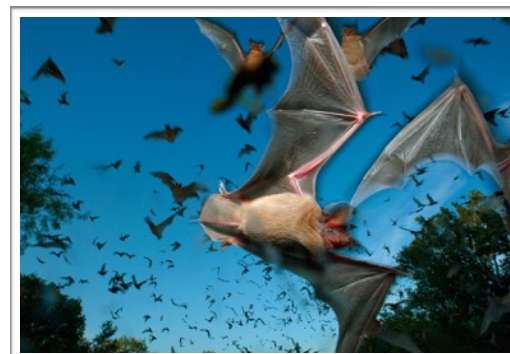
Deadheading at Daybreak
Saturdays starting at 7:30 a.m.
May 14, June 18, and
September 19
(not July or August)

Deadheading at Dusk
Mondays starting at 6 p.m.
June 6, August 1, and
September 5
(not July)

The Bats of the Yolo Causeway

by JoEllen Arnold

Bats are an incredibly diverse family of mammals. Of the more than 1300 species worldwide, we are blessed to have about 17 species here in Northern California and one of those is the Mexican Free-tail Bat, *Tadarida brasiliensis*. This little bat, which weighs only about half an ounce, has a number of astounding characteristics. As a species, it congregates in the largest known masses of any mammal on earth, with an estimated 20 million coming together to form a maternity roost in Bracken Cave, outside of San Antonio Texas. The bats there, and the bats we will visit in August at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area, are females who have come to give birth to pups which are one third the mother's size when they are born in about late May. To support their pregnancy and subsequent nursing, these little bats have to find huge numbers of insects, so many that it is estimated that just 500 of them eat enough insects every night to fill a brown paper grocery bag. There are an estimated 250,000 bats under the Yolo Causeway who fly out over a huge



JOEL SARTORE. Used with permission.

area searching for their favorite foods, all of which are insects, including the corn farmer's most hated, the Corn Root Worm Moth. Researchers estimate our Yolo bats will consume about 500 pounds of insects nightly, which the farmers really appreciate.

You'll see that the bats fly out in "ribbons" as a defense against predators like the hawks we may see hunting them. Mexican Free-tails are amazing speedsters, flying up to 50 or 60 miles per hour and soaring two miles high in search of food as they disperse over an area perhaps 50 miles away from their roost. These hard working mothers hunt for hours, before each returns individually to nurse her own pup, which she is able to find again amid the masses of babies which are all about the same age and size, tucked into the expansion cracks under the Causeway where the concrete stays toasty warm. When the pup is about 5 weeks old, it begins to fly and to hunt, but the mother continues to provide milk until it is finding enough prey on its own. The survival rate is not high, with only about one pup in four making it through its first year, but if it is one of the lucky few, it may live up to twenty years, eating many millions of insects in its lifetime. When we visit, the pups will be practicing their flight skills and learning to feed themselves as they swim through the evening sky, echolocating and following their mothers into the heights.



Bat Talk and Watch

Sunday, August 7, 2016

This event is open to current SPPC members and their guests. This is a good outing for families, including grandchildren.

Cost: \$12.00 / 2016 SPPC Member
\$12.00 / Guest (ages 18 and under are free)

Arrive at:
California Fish and Wildlife Headquarters
45211 County Rd 32B
Davis, CA 95618

Talk begins at 6:15 p.m.

Wear layers as it can be cold and windy at the location where we'll be waiting north of the Causeway.

Bug repellent is a good idea. It can be buggy, especially at ground level.

Socks and closed shoes are recommended. There is not much walking, but the ground is uneven.

Bring binoculars for viewing other wildlife and your camera for an emergence selfie!

Bring a chair if you are not up for standing while waiting for the bats to emerge. They usually emerge around sunset, but weather conditions affect the emergence timing.

Bring a snack to share with others (not the bats)!

Bat t-shirts will be available for purchase in child and adult sizes at very reasonable prices.

For more information call **JoEllen Arnold** at 916-501-8995.

Visit the web site: <http://yolobasin.org/bat-talk-and-walks/>

Deadline August 1

Cut along dotted line and send with check made out to: SPPC

Mail to: Pat McKnight, 1930 Larkin Way, Sacramento, CA 95818 (patmck.sppc@gmail.com)

Bat Talk and Watch

MEMBER NAME _____ 2016 MEMBER? _____

E-MAIL _____ PHONE _____

NUMBER OF ADULT GUESTS _____ NUMBER OF CHILDREN OR YOUTH _____ AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ _____



The Perennial Post

SPPC Newsletter
2743 San Luis Court
Sacramento, CA 95818



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Abutilon and Lyda Rose in Barbara Lane-Piert's garden

CHERYL McDONALD