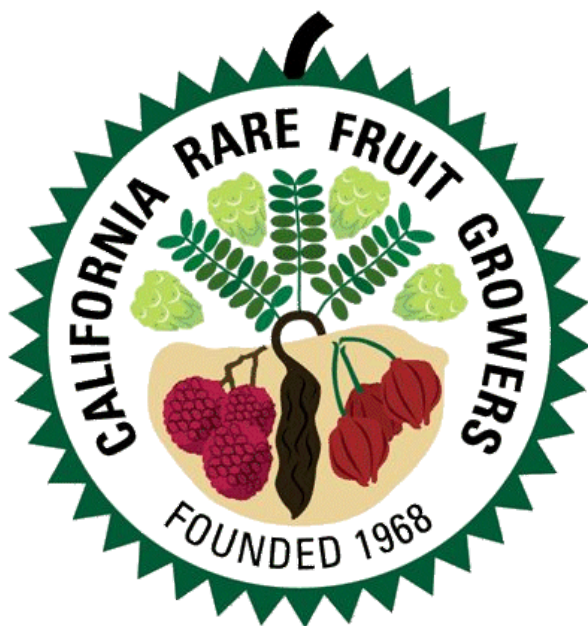


CALIFORNIA RARE FRUIT GROWERS

SAN DIEGO CHAPTER

APRIL 2005 NEWSLETTER



NEXT MEETING is April 28th

Meeting minutes for March: Paul Fisher led our meeting in absence of our chair. The most significant item of club business was the discussion of the Home and Garden Show. We made \$257, which is half of what we made last year. Cherimoyas were a popular item, and we need to propagate more for upcoming sales. Nino Cupaiuolo, the president of the Cherimoya Association, spoke for the remainder of the evening. The Cherimoya Association was founded in 1987 for the purpose of exchanging information and fostering research on the Cherimoya. The Association is currently interested in the

propagation of a standard Cherimoya rootstock--one that is not susceptible to root rot.

European knowledge of the Cherimoya dates back to the Spanish invasion of South America. The Spaniards found the fruit growing in the Andes, Peru, Ecuador and Bolivia. These are countries close to the equator, where there is little difference between winter and summer. Cherimoyas co-evolved with the beetles that pollenate the fruit. As those beetles don't live here in San Diego, hand pollination is frequently required. Ways to increase self-pollination include planting trees close together and leaving fruit on the ground, which encourages beneficial insects. Common pests of the Cherimoya include brown snails, black scale, and mealybugs. Nino developed a variety he named "Fortuna." This variety is mainly self-pollinating and has an excellent seed/size ratio. The Cherimoya's relative, the Atamoya, will grow in San Diego, but will not thrive as well as it does in hotter, moister climates such as Florida. The raffle table was rich with Cherimoya seedlings and wonderful Cherimoya fruit. Thank you everyone for another great meeting as see you on April 28th.

Linnea Lamar

THE VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

YOU'VE GOT DISCOUNTS!

Kniffings Nursery is offering CRFG members 10 per cent off on trees. 14940 Oak Creek Rd. El Cajon, CA 92021 (619) 561-0611

Meritt Mountain Discount Nursery (Paul Fisher) is offering 20 % off on all trees.

1266 Vista del Monte, El Cajon, CA 92122 (619) 322-4141

Well, I think that the investigation into the plant sale is over now, and this time we can really put some bad blood behind us and move on. But before we do, I'd like to set the record straight on a few points. I've met with Judith Abeles and she has had a chance to clarify things. If you will remember, I had taken Judith's after the fact inquiries into last year's sale as a threat to the future of the sale, and an attempt to change club procedures by recourse to adversarial outside means. She has

explained to me that I misunderstood her intentions entirely and that all she had in mind was the best interest of the club -- that is, ensuring that club had not been cheated by the participants in the sale. Let me say that I am sorry for my part in any misunderstanding.

I'd further like to call attention to an excerpt from an email by City official, Stephen Hill, which I ran awhile back in this column. In the email, Mr. Hill characterized Judith's complaint against our plant sale in rather insane and inflammatory terms. Basically that email excerpt is what the City and San Diego Botanical Garden Foundation, (SDBGF) wanted me to answer. Its sensational claims set the tone for everything that went after. Now I have heard directly from Judith that Mr. Hill **mischaracterized** her message to him. I am truly sorry if I passed along words wrongly attributed to anyone, regardless of who did the attributing.

Anyway, it is good to be done with this storm, which, like many storms, has left the landscape changed. Prior to this, there were no written rules for Plant Sales. Now there are. Over the last couple of years I had verbally coordinated a number of changes to our chapter's rules with Bob Hodges, the main SDBGF officer. These changes included allowing plants to be sold at regular meetings by individuals, where a minimum percentage of the gross receipts went to the club; our plant sale format, which allowed the consignors of plants to sell those plants at the sale, under the condition that they donated back to the club a percentage which met or exceeded the SDBGF minimums. Both of these arrangements were verbally approved by Bob Hodges under the unwritten rules prior to their implementation.

The written rules change this. They prohibit any sales at meetings, other than sales of supplies at cost, and sales of tickets for raffles of donated plants such as our "opportunity table". They also lay down the rule for plant sale events like our Labor Day Weekend Sale that individual members will not be allowed to take money for their own plants. Only a club designated central cash register or registers will be able to accept money.

This limitation on the plant sale is a bit discouraging and it is not necessary. We have already shown that we can do it the way we did last year's sale and still maintain control of the process and reap benefits that exceed the minimums set out in the SDBGF rules. And we can do this in a way that allocates most of the work and the risk involved with consigned plants to the consignors.

Under the central cash register system, things are flipped around. In simple terms, we work for the consignors. We sell their plants, handle all cash, and take the associated risks. We take on a set of headaches and get not one extra penny of benefit for the chapter for our trouble.

Perhaps I sound less than happy about this, but don't get me wrong. The rules are the rules. As long as we use the lovely facilities in the Casa del Prado rent free, we must follow the rules. No question. But that does not prevent us from seeking a change in the rules, an approach that I advocate. And I do not believe that I am alone. There are other clubs that use a decentralized plant sale system similar to ours. They will be severely inconvenienced by the written rules if those rules are enforced consistently. I expect that the SDBGF will hear from them. I also think that there is an opportunity for our club to get someone elected to the SDBGF board. In fact, even ignoring any plant sale issue, I'd say we have a duty as a member organization in the SDBGF to support the current Board. Right now several positions on the Board are empty, and two people wear most of the hats and do almost all of the work. We really should run a candidate for the SDBGF board. Talk to me if you think that you'd like to do this job.

Well, enough of the dreary and dry. Let me lighten this thing up by thanking Alva Whetton for her excellent review in this issue of our excellent field trip to Durling Nursery. It sure was fun. And I'd like to conclude with three cheers for the loquat. The trees are just loaded with clusters of big ripe perfect fruit this year. Our family enjoys them right off of the tree every morning before going off to work and school. There is something uniquely satisfying for kids and adults alike about standing around together picking, peeling and gorging on abundant fruit outdoors on a beautiful morning. I have no doubt that this is a pleasure that we humans, as a species, have been sharing and savoring for a lot longer than we have been humans. It is always nice to see another generation growing up aware that food does not originate at a supermarket.

Our two year old, Connor, is particularly amusing. Our loquat trees are all in our front yard which is not fenced. Connor is not allowed out there without adult supervision. We have to keep all ways out there sealed. How can you tell if someone has left a way unsealed? Well, you may be reading a book, or taking a shower or watching TV and a little hand will present you a loquat to peel.

Take care, and I'll see you at the next meeting.

David Silverstein

THE DURLING NURSERY TOUR

What a glorious day it was! The sun was warm, the skies blue, and the air was sweetly scented with citrus blossoms. All those daring enough to make the 1 1/2 hr trek up from the War Memorial to the Durling Nursery in Fallbrook were justly rewarded. The meandering, tree-lined path led up the driveway to "The Shop" where Mr. Durling himself and his right hand man gave an interesting and informative lecture on the history of citrus worldwide and in California, when to pick the fruit, how we attain new varieties, where seedless fruit comes from, and propagation techniques, as well as the history of Durling Nursery itself.

A family run nursery with 80 working acres and 55 employees, the Durlings have succeeded in creating a thriving business from humble beginnings as a tree farm located in National City, 50 years ago. Mr. Durling attributes 50% of his success to the climate and well water and the remainder to 50 years and 4 generations of trial and error.

After the lecture, the group enjoyed a tour of the growing grounds. We had the privilege of observing a husband and wife team bud grafting 1 yr. old seedlings. They averaged 2,500 grafts per day with one grafting while the other wrapped the graft. At a 99% success rate, we were all duly impressed. The caravan of cars, trucks, and SUVs then made their way to a high terrace and hillside planted with examples of citrus groupings for small spaces. We saw clusters of 3 to 4 different varieties of citrus or apples with their canopies intertwined and fruiting on the exterior foliage. Other trees had multiple grafts also with 3 to 4 different varieties of citrus on one trunk. The group was happy to glean what it could from the ripe fruits that had fallen to the ground. Many of us enjoyed tasting and even brought home some examples of the many different varieties.

The tour concluded back at "The Shop" with a wonderful lunch of sandwiches, fruit, chips, cookies, and cold bottled water provided by the Durlings. It was the perfect end to a lovely tour. Our hosts were even so gracious as to offer all who attended, a variety of large avocados to take home as parting gifts. This tour was a real treat for all. Our next opportunity to return as a group will be in two years. Plan to attend. This is a tour not to be missed. Thanks again, Durling Nursery! We all had a blast. See you at the meeting,

Alva Whetton

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Jose Gallego – Webmaster and Director of National Affairs (619) 697-4417 webmaster@crfgsandiego.org	Irene Sias – Greeter (619) 482-0938 Greeter@CRFGSanDiego.org
Oscar Butler – Librarian, 858-458-3533 mbutlr@pacbell.net	

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- **IF YOU HAVE SOME NICE FRUIT / FRUIT TREE PICTURES, LET DAVID SILVERSTEIN KNOW. OUR NEWS PAPER ARTICLE WILL NEED A FEW GOOD PICTURES. REALLY. I'M NOT KIDDING.**
- **The Bonsai club is displacing our 9/22/05 meeting with preparation for their show. It seems like an ungodly amount of preparation. But think about whether to move our meeting to Wednesday night the 21st, or to a week later on the 29th. I'm going to talk to Bonsai and see what they are thinking and if there is any way around this business. It seems to me that they could stage some stuff in the room, and even work quietly in the back while our meeting is going on. Anyway think about your preference in case it comes to that. We'll decide at the next meeting.**

Don't forget to check our website at www.crfgsandiego.org.

NEXT Meeting:

WHERE: Casa del Prado Building Room 101, Balboa Park

WHEN: April 28, 2005

MEETING TOPIC: Dr. Gary Bender will tell us about a new avocado pest, the avocado lace bug. Then Dominic Crescenti will describe some of the organic pesticides and supplements available from J&H Biotech.

For membership, please mail your application form and check to

CRFG, San Diego Chapter

C/O Paul Fisher
1266 Vista Del Monte Dr.
El Cajon, CA 92020

CALENDAR == YEAR OF THE APPLE

Month	Meeting Topic	Event(s) For the Month
April 28 Casa del Prado 101	Dominic Crescenti will then discuss some organic supplements and pesticides available from J&H Biotech. Dr. Gary Bender will tell us about the newest Avocado Pest in the County, the Avocado Lace Bug.	Green Scene, Fullerton Arboretum. Date Saturday, 23 April 2005.
May 26 Casa del Prado 101	Organic Fertilizers	Member Garden Tours
June 23 Casa del Prado 101	Lychee and Longan. Presentation and Discussion.	Del Mar Fair
July 28 Casa del Prado 101	Bananas. Two local experts, Jon Verdick and Paul Fisher will lead the discussion.	Quail Garden Picnic.
August 25 Casa del Prado 101	Figs. Steve Spangler and John Verdick	
September 22 Casa del Prado 104	Paw Paws. How to find and grow them. What are the best varieties?	ANNUAL FRUIT TREE SALE. SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 3, 2005. Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. 9:00 a.m. until it's over.
October 27 Casa del Prado 101	Mangos. Perry Coles will present and lead the discussion. Pomegranate tasting.	
November 17 Casa del Prado 103	Back by popular demand, Terry Salmon will present Vertebrate Pest Control II, focusing this time on rats and gophers. Also, workable bird management techniques.	
December 15 Casa del Prado 101	Holiday Dinner, Elections and Gift Exchange	