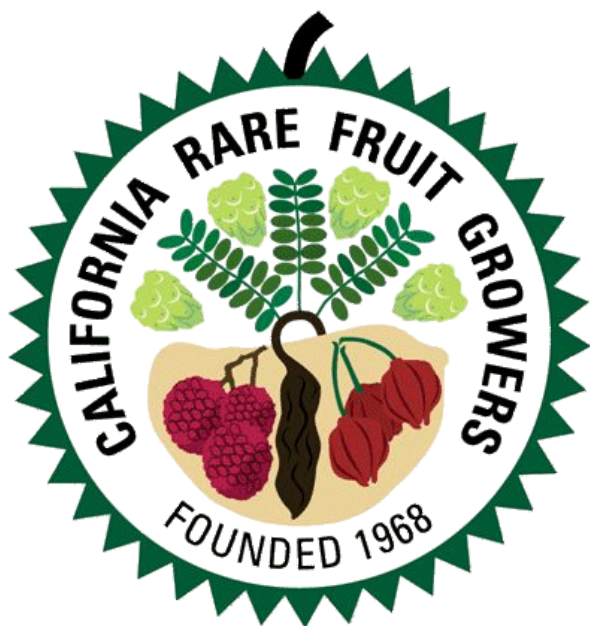


CALIFORNIA RARE FRUIT GROWERS

SAN DIEGO CHAPTER

JUNE 2005 NEWSLETTER



NEXT MEETING is June 23d

May Meeting Minutes--And More

The first item of discussion for the business meeting was our impending participation in the Del Mar Fair. Everyone is encouraged to volunteer. If everyone volunteered just a little, the work would be less and the fun would be more. Actually, "working" at the fair is more fun than work. It's really more like hanging out talking to people about the topics we love best. I remember walking through an exhibit of a botanical paradise at the fair, a tropical fruit growers dream-come-true park. I also bought some hibiscus with 10" blossoms. Of course, there's wonderful food there and great nightly entertainment. Anyway, you won't have experiences like this if you don't volunteer. And admission and parking are free to volunteers. Call June at (760) 672-4718 to sign up for a few fun-filled hours.

This year's potluck-picnic and plant sale at Quail Gardens will be on July 23rd. It will start at 11:00. This is a great opportunity to visit Quail Gardens and see all the rare fruit trees we hear

about in our meetings. There is no admission fee for this event, and CRFG's resident experts would welcome questions on the cultivation of Quail Garden's exotic specimens. You may also have the chance to buy something interesting, and you are welcome to bring your plants to sell for the benefit of the chapter.

The San Diego Botanical Association has many openings available on its board. On July 9th at 7:00 PM in room 104, the Association will hold an introductory meeting to talk to prospective board members and others interested in joining the club.

Our speaker for the evening was John Noble, a landscape architect specializing in herbs, native plants, and organic gardening. He owns his own landscaping business called Coastal Sage Gardening. He has some great ideas on soil improvement. Chemical fertilizers are not necessary in the landscape. Micro-organisms provide the key in developing rich, healthy soil. One may add amendments such as rock phosphate, bat guano, kelp, manure, bone meal, and mushroom compost to obtain the needed nutrients. Organic debris (e.g., fallen leaves, fruit, grass clippings) enhances the soil's quality. If the debris is left on top of the soil, its presence encourages the growth of earthworms. Earthworms benefit the soil by aerating it and also by fertilizing it with their--one of my favorite euphemisms--castings. This "top-feeding" method is better for the soil than tilling in amendments. One method of feeding is to make mini-compost systems around the garden. These leech nutrients to plants when watering. John mentioned a helpful tip in telling us that newspapers left in the garden provide a good environment for propagating earthworms. And, after all, if the earthworms grow up in this literary-rich environment, the soil will produce a community of well-informed micro-organisms, thus leading to model-citizen plants

The ideal soil will consist of 50% sand and composted organics, 25% air, and 25% water. It should be very light and not compacted. Spikes can

be shot down into the soil for aeration. Annuals such as a clover may be grown under fruit trees, which also help aerate the soil. One may perform a quick soil test by taking at least a six-inch slice of soil and putting it in a jar and shaking it to examine the layers. Also, if one squeezes the soil and it keeps its form, it contains a predominance of clay.

In sum, there are many ways one can have better soil, some of them requiring that we do less (such as cleaning up dead leaves) than before. And,

if we don't have any bat guano, bones, or other things we want to bury handy to enrich the soil, fortunately, we may purchase a healthful assortment of soil amendments at John Noble's store across from the Point Loma Library in Ocean Beach, open Sundays. Thanks everyone for another great meeting, and see you all June 30th.

Linnea Lamar

THE VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

I hope all is well with everyone. I've little business to discuss because other members having been seeing to a lot of the stuff, such as the SDBGF work. Thanks. I do appreciate that. Around our house we're eating a lot of tomatoes from a volunteer plant that resulted from last year's accidental tomato breeding program. I was growing several varieties of tomatoes recommended in *100 Heirloom Tomatoes for the American Garden*, by Dr. Carolyn Male, a good book by the way. One variety called Kellogg's Breakfast produced beautiful bright orange slightly lobed medium sized tomatoes. Though beautiful and fairly prolific, the fruit was nothing special under my growing conditions. Next to that I grew one called Noir de Crimee. This is the European strain of what we call Black Krim. Both are descended from a "black" variety, grown in the Crimea or Black Sea region. This was a weak grower in my garden and not very prolific. But the fruits I got were quite good. There was as always a certain amount of waste and rat depredation last year followed by a rainy winter. The result was a good vigorous plant that rambles over about 40 square feet of garden. It produces lots of tomatoes that are approximately the color of the Noir de Crimee and approximately the shape of the Kellogg's Breakfast. The flavor and texture is a little bit uneven. Some seem to take after their mealy and uninteresting parent. But most have the flavor and texture similar to the Noir de Crimee. This is interesting. And it is completely unintentional. And very nice to come home every day and pick two to four of these little beauties.

The moral of the story, the simple fruit growing one that is: seek out new and superior versions of the fruits you like and grow them. The primary purpose is to find good fruits. The secondary purpose is to have them growing in proximity to one another so that varieties can develop that may be superior to the parents. In this case, two parents that I would not grow again intentionally produced a hybrid that I would grow again if I can.

Anyway, take care. If I remember, I'll bring a few suckers from that plant to the next meeting so others can see how it does in their gardens. Oh yes and it seems fairly blight resistant at this point. The ocean breeze seems to make tomatoes very susceptible to fungal blights of the foliage. And this plant is not showing any even though it has been producing and ripening fruit.

David Silverstein

A FEW DETAILS ON THE SDBGF ELECTION

+ *The open positions are: Pres., 1st Vice, 2nd Vice, Recording Sec., Correspondence Sec., & Treasurer*

+ *The elections will take place at the July SDBGF meeting (2nd Thurs) which will start at 6PM and include a Chinese dinner. (Club Presidents are encouraged to attend this dinner, but there is a \$10 FEE)*

+*Any botanical club member may be considered for any SDBGF board position at large so please notify the nominating committee. All nominated candidates must be present at the July meeting to run and win. To represent our club, our club has to designate you as its representative.*

David Silverstein -- Chair (619) 523 8565 chair@crfgsandiego.org	Paul Fisher --Vice-Chair, Membership Manager and Treasurer (619) 440 2213 vicechair@crfgsandiego.org
Barry Resetco (858) 278-3732 and Jack Skeels (619) 465-3312 – Facilities Team	Zhenxing Fu -- Newsletter Editor (858) 587-2723 editor@crfgsandiego.org
Linnea Lamar, Secretary, 619 392-9815 theearthwalker@cox.net	Jim Neitzel (619) 262-8959 and Mike McCright 619-384-1989, Program and Event Coordinators eventscoordinator@crfgsandiego.org
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:

* 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

* Festival of Fruit is coming up. It is September 6 through 10 in Santa Cruz. The main event, speakers etc are on Saturday the 10th. It looks good. The field trip on the 6th is to the USDA experimental orchard up at Winters, CA. There will be fruit tasting.

* CRFG booth at Del Mar Fair: Carol Graham (760) 753-6757 still has many slot open for the fair. Mainly M-F 1-4 pm and most of the weekend slots are still available as well. She does not have voice mail but is usually available after dark every night to 9 or 10. Please call Carol if you have time and would like to help to man the booth. Thank you!

* Board Members: It is time to convene a Board meeting. Let's meet at Paul Fisher's house at 9:00 a.m. on June 26.

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

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

NEXT Meeting:

WHERE: Casa del Prado Building Room 101, Balboa Park

WHEN: June 23, 2005 at 7:00 p.m.

MEETING TOPIC: Presentation and Discussion on growing Lychee and Longan in Southern California.

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. July 23rd. It starts at 11:00.
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. Presentation and discussion on growing them. 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	