

March Meeting Recap

The speaker for the was Dr. John Kabashima, speaking on a new and serious threat to our trees and shrubs—the Polyphagous Shot Hole Borer. The news was grim, but Dr. Kabashima injected as much humor as possible into the talk. The Polyphagous Shot Hole Borer (or PSHB) is a type of ambrosia beetle. Ambrosia beetles are beetles of the weevil subfamilies which live in nutritional symbiosis with ambrosia fungi and with bacteria. The beetles excavate tunnels in trees in which they cultivate fungal gardens, their sole source of nutrition. It is this fungal infection which usually spells doom for the tree or shrub. PSHB was introduced from South East Asia (probably into two distinct areas—South-east San Diego County and Los Angeles County). Currently there is no biological control for the beetle but researchers are touring parts of South East Asia looking for anything that might help. Catching the infestation early may allow for treatment of an affected tree with expensive injections of systemics. Many plant pests live on a narrow range of plant types—the PSHB preys on many types of trees and shrubs—hence ‘polyphagous’. The extra bad news is that once the beetle has bored into a tree and created nesting galleries the female and her progeny don’t emerge (often a time when biological controls would be effective). Brother and sister beetles can mate within the protection of tree tissues. Identifying PSHB can be challenging as there are many other pests that can create some of the same symptoms. Dr. Kabashima showed us how the borer holes can be photographed alongside a ballpoint pen tip—this can help experts figure out the size of the beetle that made the hole and help identify whether or not its PSHB.

We would like to thank Dr. John Kabashima for giving us this informative (though depressing) talk. He did warn us we would feel like crying. For more info go to: ucanr.edu/sites/socaloakpests and: civr.ucr.edu.

Thanks to all of the members who help set up, run and clean up after the meeting. Thanks to John Schoustra for providing the raffle plants (some of them new introductions from his nursery).

—Steven Gerischer

SHARING SECRETS

In March, we asked you to answer “What is the most unusual herb you grow, and how is it used?” and here are some of your responses. Read more on our SCHS MemberLodge website, schs.memberlodge.org.

I have grown lovage and love it. It's been in my garden for 2 years and I'm hoping it returns this year. It tastes like celery, but maybe celery on steroids, a bit. The reason I grow it is for its hollow stems which may be used for a sipping straw in a bloody mary. Divine.

—Kathy Itomura

HORT HAPPENINGS EXTRAS

(It's Spring! Lots of Happenings!
No More Room on Page 3!)

ENCINO 91406

California Native Plant Society
Sepulveda Garden Center
16633 Magnolia Blvd
Encino 91406
www.lacnps.org

Saturday, 4/18, 9am-4pm. Native Plant Week Wildflower Show,

Symposium, and Plant and Book Sale. Symposium will feature speakers throughout the day: 10-11:30am Finding L A's Hidden Wildlife Through Citizen Science by Lisa Higgins; 12-1:30pm Chumash Indian Plant Knowledge by Jan Timbrook; 2-3:30pm Small-Space Native Garden: Creating Intimate Outdoor Spaces by Steve Gerischer. Plants for sale will be available courtesy of our co-sponsor Theodore Payne Foundation. We welcome native plant cuttings from home gardens -- they must be available for set-up on Friday April 17. For more information, contact Snowdy Dodson at snowy.dodson@csun.edu

PASADENA 91107

Eaton Canyon Nature Center
1750 North Altadena Drive
Pasadena 91107
616-398-5420
ecnca.org

Thursday, 4/23, 7-9:30pm.
California Native Plant Society - San Gabriel Mountains Chapter meeting.

FULLERTON 92831

Fullerton Arboretum
1900 Associated Road
Fullerton 92831
657-278-3407
fullertonarboretum.org

Saturday & Sunday, 4/18&19, 10am-4pm. Green Scene. More than 80 specialty garden vendors offer extraordinary plants, handcrafted & custom garden art and pottery. Speakers on a variety of inspiring garden topics. More information at http://fullertonarboretum.org/event_green.php