

Our speaker in August was anthropologist Michael Wilken-Robertson, who presented his cultural explorations of northern Baja California's original peoples and their descendants, whose knowledge of the land has sustained them from ancient times to the present. He currently teaches in the anthropology department at California State University, San Marcos and is the

Photo courtesy of speaker.



author of *Kumeyaay Ethnobotany* which explores the remarkable interdependence between native peoples and native plants of the Californias. His research has focused on the many ways humans have interacted with their environments, from the past up to the present, with a focus on Native Baja Californians.

The indigenous Kumeyaay people can be found in the southwestern part of California in the U.S. and northern Baja in Mexico, where they share a cultural history that does not recognize borders. There are variations within Kumeyaay territory in the way people live, including language, but much ethnobotanical knowledge is common. Up until 200 years ago, their territory was much further-ranging, and they roamed seasonally for food, e.g.: gathering pine nuts during the summer in the mountains and acorns at lower elevations in the fall. After agriculture was introduced to these people, they became more settled and less nomadic.

In present day, much of the population lives in four federally recognized regions, and it is up to the elders to pass cultural traditions, including ethnobotanic knowledge, to younger generations orally. In addition to learning about edible plants (*Manzanita*, *Prunus ilicifolia*, *Chia*), native traditional arts rely on plant materials as well, including the stalks of *Yucca schidigera*, which are used to fire pottery, and *Juncus textilis*, *Muhlenbergia rigens*, and *Rhus trilobata*, commonly used in basketry. Many of the native peoples' cultures claim to harvest plants sustainably, so that they will be available from the same grounds year after year.

After the program, Wilken-Robertson answered questions and stayed for a book signing of *Kumeyaay Ethnobotany* (which features in-depth descriptions of 47 native plants and their uses). It connects an archaeological and historical record with living cultures and native plant specialists who share their knowledge for future generations.

To see the evening's presentation in its entirety, visit our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/socalhort/.

✂ Sabine Steinmetz

The SCHS board recently enlisted a new member to help us with marketing and publicity, as well as to live-stream our meetings - including the upcoming HOTY Banquet! She has provided a brief description below of some of the things she will be doing for the SCHS every month, and we're excited to have her!



Photo provided by Erin Castillo.

Hi, I'm Erin Castillo and I am thrilled to be working with the SCHS because I get the honor of making stuff happen - which I do in my training and consultancy business. Every month, you can find me at our meetings - setting up the tripod to record both our presentation and the plant forum, which will then post LIVE to our Facebook page!

Can't make it to a meeting? No problem - just go to the SCHS Facebook page on the day of to watch our live stream at 7:30 pm. Never miss a speaker or plant forum again! Plus, you can access all recorded events by clicking on "Videos" from our Facebook page.

Please come by and introduce yourself the next time you see me - if I haven't already gotten to you first!

SHARING SECRETS

In August we asked you:

What seeds are you collecting for next year's garden?



Always Zinnia and Tithonia.

- Aprille Curtis

I'm growing good, medium-sized tomatoes and will try saving some seeds this year.

- Steve Ormenyi

Aesclepias (orange) for the monarch butterflies, and yellow Clivia.

- Tricia McGrath

Borage and *Verbena bonariensis*.

- Gloria Leinbach

Freesia, Lapeirousia, Sparaxis and other South African bulbs.

- Steve Gerischer

All of them...

- Anonymous

Good luck with your collections!

SCHS 2019 Annual Award Banquet & Silent Auction

Saturday, September 28, 2018

Ayres Hall at L.A. County Arboretum ■ 301 N. Baldwin Ave, Arcadia 91007 (enter thru side gate)

Social hour & silent auction begin at 5:30 pm. Auction closes at 7 pm, followed by dinner, & award presentation at 8:15 pm

(Remember: we accept credit cards at the auction!)

Register online until Sept. 25, or call Laura Bauer at (626) 437-9459 thereafter to check for ticket availability.