

# Oak Notes

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NEWSLETTER OF THE RANCHO SANTA ANA BOTANIC GARDEN VOLUNTEERS

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## Horticulture & Research

Richard Davis

## Visitor Education

Ann Morgan & Katy Douglass

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Dorcia Bradley

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## OAK NOTES

### Editor

Fred Brooks

### Contributing Editors

Gene Baumann

### Publisher

David Bryant

The deadline for articles to be submitted for the October 2019 issue of OAK NOTES is Sunday, September 15. Thank you for your prompt submission!



## FROM THE PRESIDENT

### Marla White, Volunteer President

*"We can find meaning and reward by serving some higher purpose than ourselves, a shining purpose, the illumination of a thousand points of light . . . We all have something to give."*

—President George H. W. Bush

*"Volunteers help drive our country's progress, and day in and day out, they make extraordinary sacrifices to expand promise and possibility."*

—President Barack Obama

I am honored to begin my term as President of your RSABG Volunteer Organization. I am in awe of the many volunteers who contribute countless hours to the different areas that support our Garden's mission. I have been a RSABG member for many years. Upon retirement, I wanted to continue to work with students and share my passion for the natural environment. I volunteer as a Nature Interpreter, co-chaired the Visitor Education Committee, participated in the HALO grant team supporting RSABG Volunteer programs, and now serve as your Volunteer Organization President.

I hope you have enjoyed a restful, healthy and fun-filled summer. Our garden is going into its resting stage, but our volunteers have been busy this summer working on special events such as Teacher Open House, Garden Groove, Cinema Botanica, and continuing to assist in our year-round activities in the Herbarium, Library, Seed House, Bench Brigade, Nursery, Grounds Crew, and as Nature Interpreters.

Please consider signing up for the Garden Buzz, the monthly newsletter of the Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden. To sign up, scroll to the very bottom of our website to fill in your email account.

PRESSED IN TIME: BOTANICAL WINDOWS ON A CHANGING WORLD

GARDENS ACROSS AMERICA - UNITED STATES BOTANIC GARDEN

AT BOTANY'S EDGE: THE JOURNEYS & DISCOVERIES OF RSABG GRADUATE STUDENTS

 Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden  
1500 N College Avenue, Claremont CA 91711  
(909) 625 8767 | info@rsabg.org



SIGN UP FOR OUR NEWSLETTER



Other RSABG social media links that may interest you include:

- Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/RSABG/>
- Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/rsabg/>
- Twitter <https://twitter.com/rsabg?lang=en>

Volunteers at RSABG bring light to our community and to the guests that visit the Garden. Thanks for all you do! See you September 13th for the Quarterly Luncheon, and around the Garden!



## FROM THE DIRECTOR

**Lucinda McDade, RSABG**  
**Executive Director**

### Welcome back Oak Notes!

It seems like just yesterday that Oak Notes went on summer vacation. The truth is that time flies whether or not you are having fun (not that I've not been having fun!). Inevitably, a new season of Oak Notes makes me think back .... my first Oak Notes column for the fall of 2018 was entitled something like, "What's happened and *WHAT HAPPENED???*" The latter referred to the fact that, at this time last year, our Garden was suffering from a horrible heat wave that began with 118° on July 6th and lasted for the entire month. This followed the very dry winter of 2017/2018 which no doubt contributed to the vulnerability of our plants. Compared to last summer, this summer has been delightful. Sure, we've had some hot patches but nothing like last year. Also, of course, the winter rains of 2018/2019 were very, very good to us – including a wet May – so that our plants began the summer in far better condition than last year. NOT to mention the hard work of our horticulture staff. They did a great deal of planting over the course of the rainy season, and then turned their efforts to weed control and maintenance as the season changed. Of course, summer is not over until it is over....

Speaking of the hard work of our horticulture staff, be sure to visit the Grafton Garden on your next walk through the East Alluvial Gardens area. Our newest Garden area is essentially done; there is a bit more planting to do (the planting season in the spring had passed before we were finished and we will begin again in the fall when the weather is more suitable for the successful establishment of new plants), and also a bit more mulching. Enjoy the benches, the water feature (the kids and birds certainly do!) and the shade. The Grafton Garden is in the area of the East Alluvial Gardens that is devoted to the plants of the Channel Islands, and this theme has been adhered to in the new plantings.

I also want to provide you with an update on the Forest Pavilion project. First, fund-raising progress over the summer has been solid and I want to specifically recognize the involvement of volunteers in this effort. THANK YOU to all of you who have stepped up to help meet the challenge of funding the meeting site and pathway into the Forest Pavilion from the school bus drop-off site. Wonderful! And thanks to Cindy Walkenbach for leading the charge – it is not too late to make a contribution! You already know that a generous gift from the family of faithful volunteer Mary K. Pierson will result in the

Center for Sustainable Gardening being named for her, which is also quite wonderful! Over the summer, the family of another terrific volunteer, the amazing Sally Prusia, committed to providing a naming-level gift for the Sun Garden (exact name to be determined). I love that we will remember these incredible volunteers and *human beings*, every time we visit, speak about, or write about what will be iconic places in our Garden. Clearly, volunteers have played, and continue to play, leadership roles in making the Forest Pavilion a reality.

In terms of planning and construction, a number of things have happened over the summer. Early in the summer, the process of selecting a general contractor for the project was undertaken. As part of the process, a Request for Qualifications was followed by a Request for Proposals to selected firms that met our requirements. Three contractors were interviewed and we unanimously selected WCS LLC (see: <https://wcs-construction.com/>). Owner Pat Williams and his team are extremely enthusiastic about the project and have a commitment to their work that fits well with RSABG's culture. I feel confident that you will all approve!

The second set of developments over the summer was a bit more challenging. We discovered that there was considerably more utility-related work than anticipated a year ago. First, there was a power easement that directly impacted the planned siting of the Support Building (a.k.a. restrooms). After interacting with Southern California Edison, and considerable deliberation and consideration of alternatives, the decision was made to resite that component of the project. The result is a very good one in that the Support Building (restrooms, flex space for small meetings / greenroom functions) will be positioned to better serve the entire East Alluvial Gardens area but still be adjacent to the Forest Pavilion. Second, we discovered that the path of the domestic water line to the site was not as indicated on our most recent utility map. At some earlier time, before the tenure of any current staff member, water lines in the East Alluvial Garden areas were rerouted, but new maps were not made. Of course, that had to be corrected after these changes were fully revealed. This resulted in setting the project back about five months, plus an increase in the cost of the project—among other things, trenching for power is expensive and resiting the support building will require additional civil engineering work. Undaunted, we continue on our way!

Fast forward into fall: I am excited to work with your new leader, Marla White, and also with your out-going president, Cindy Walkenbach, in her new role as Trustee. Soon we will be in the middle of new volunteer training... wreath making... *Bump*... opening of the Grow Native Nursery for the sales season... and so much more! I very much look forward to working with all of you in the coming year!



## VISITOR EXPERIENCE

**David Bryant,**  
**Director of Visitor Experience**

### We made it!

Wow! Many of our climate-adapted California native plants may have slipped into siesta mode during our Mediterranean summer, but with your help, our Visitor Experience events and exhibitions have been full of energy and life these last few months.

Through our events, we welcomed in thousands of guests through Butterflies & Brews, Brew Wild Beer Festival and Cinema Botanica: Movie Nights in the Garden. Each of these events highlighted California native plants in myriad ways for people to enjoy. We welcomed new audiences and old friends at these special programs, connecting more people to the wonderful world of California flora. Brew Wild in fact brought in over 900 guests in celebration of our California native plant and beer species! Eighteen craft breweries created unique brews with plants from our Garden, providing guests the opportunity to taste the real flavors of our state. Thank you to all our volunteers who helped make these events successful.

Through our exhibitions, we've shared our Garden's behind-the-scenes research and collections with an enthusiastic public. *At Botany's Edge* in the Container Garden showcases our graduate students and their cutting-edge botanical research. Mare Nazaire, Administrative Curator of the RSABG Herbarium, and I also curated and produced *Pressed in Time*, an Art Gallery exhibit that attests to the importance of our Herbarium's collections in the scope of biodiversity and ecological change. Through the lens of ten famous botanists, the exhibit speaks to the enduring legacies and impacts of our Herbarium and the invaluable data that our collections hold for current and future researchers. Please visit both of these exhibitions when you have a chance!

Visitors also had wonderful encounters and experiences at our California Butterfly Pavilion. A beloved exhibit that shares the beautiful partnerships between plants and pollinators, the pavilion was redesigned to better accommodate our visitors and provide inspiration for butterfly gardens in the home landscape. Thank you volunteers for making this exquisite experience special.

With this summer coming to a close, I look forward to working with all of you for Things That Go Bump in the Night and the Fall Plant Sale at Grow Native Nursery!



## MEET STEPHANIE SMITH

**Administrative Assistant for  
Community Education**

Greetings Volunteers! I am very excited to be joining the Community Education Department and Touring Programs. I've enjoyed getting to know quite a few of you over the past few years while working in the kiosk. This summer has been a great transition to my new position. I'm ready for Fall! I am so looking forward to working alongside this team of wonderful volunteers as we start a new year of touring programs and family education events.

All are welcome to join the Education Materials Work Party, Monday, September 23rd at 9 a.m. in the Horticulture Classroom. Stuffing envelopes, bundling fiber, and preparing event craft items are just a few of the fun projects lined up. No experience required. New volunteers are always welcome. Following the Work Party is this season's first Volunteer Enrichment Meeting at noon in the East Classroom. Come for both!

Looking ahead to October, be sure to mark your calendars for Things that Go Bump in the Night, October 11 & 12 from 5:30–9:00 p.m. This is always a great family-friendly event with activities, crafts, and educational stations highlighting creatures that come out after dark. There are plenty of volunteer opportunities. Sign up in Volgistics and attend the volunteer orientation on Thursday, October 10 at 1:00 p.m. in the Outdoor Classroom.

Training for new Nature Interpreters also begins in October. You'll learn all about leading guided tours for schools and other guests of all ages. I've witnessed, while in the kiosk, how engaging and fun it can be! I encourage you to join in this important service to the garden and the community we share. Training sessions are on Fridays, October 18 & 25, November 1 & 15, December 6 & 13 from 8:30–12:30 a.m. in the East Classroom.

Keep an eye out for more education volunteer opportunities in the coming months. Your support is invaluable. Thank you for choosing to be here.





## VOLUNTEER

## PROGRAMS

Kathleen Noll, Manager of  
Volunteer Programs

### Hello Garden Volunteers!

I am delighted to welcome you all back from summer!

**Save the Date:** Volunteer Quarterly Business Meeting & Potluck Luncheon, Friday, September 13 at 11:30 a.m. in the Outdoor Classroom. This fun potluck lunch offers an opportunity to catch up with Garden friends, learn the latest information on what is new around the Garden, and meet your new Volunteer Organization board members.

### Welcome New Volunteers:

RSABG 101: New Volunteer Orientation Friday and Saturday morning, September 27 & 28 from 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. We are recruiting volunteer Nature Interpreters for the Touring Program, as well as new volunteers to assist in the Gift Shop,

Horticulture, Research & Conservation, and Public Outreach. Please welcome our new volunteers!

### Coming up:

RSABG is building a team for the 18th Annual Claremont Village Wine Walk on Saturday, September 14 from 3:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. This is a fun outreach opportunity for Garden volunteers 21+ to get out into the community for a few hours of fun. Over 40 village businesses will serve as wine-tasting and food-sampling sites (several are non-alcohol sites). A portion of the proceeds benefits RSABG!

**Things that Go Bump in the Night:** October 11 & 12, 5:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. Family Education Event for family, friends and flashlights! Explore the nocturnal world of plants and creatures most active at night! Discover the “night life” of wolves, owls, spiders, insects, plants and fungi!

**Fall Plant Sale:** October 19, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. The annual opening of Grow Native Nursery at RSABG includes an amazing selection of California native plants, seeds, and decorative and seasonal wreaths made by the Native Designs floral team. GNN hours of operation are Thursday – Sunday, 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. through May.



  
RANCHO SANTA ANA  
BOTANIC GARDEN

# Share Nature with a child

Docents needed for Garden and school tours.  
New Volunteer Training sessions:

Friday & Saturday  
September 27 & 28  
8:30 am - 12:30 pm

attendance at two half-day trainings is required.

Volunteer applications available at  
the Garden and online at [www.rsabg.org](http://www.rsabg.org).  
For more information, please contact  
the Manager of Volunteer Programs  
at [knoll@rsabg.org](mailto:knoll@rsabg.org).

## VOLUNTEER LIBRARY NEWS

### New Library Section

Beginning in September 2019, the Volunteer Library will establish a specific section to highlight "Pioneer Botanists/Naturalists."

Where possible, we will focus on individuals important to California's native flora. Future book reviews will include biographies on John Muir, Freemont, Marcus Jones, and others. If you have suggestions regarding books about individuals that should be included in this section, please let the Volunteer Library Committee know. We hope you will visit this new section in your Volunteer Library.

### Books, Books, Books

The Volunteer Library Committee is very pleased to see a significant number of books checked out. However, it is equally important to return checked-out books within two weeks so that others may have access to all books. So please check you reading material at home during the start of our new "season" and return overdue books ASAP. Thank you!

## BOOK OF THE MONTH

### Gene Baumann, Volunteer Library Committee

*Alice Eastwood's Wonderland*

By Carol Green Wilson

Published by the California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco  
Copyright 1955, 222 pp.

Alice Eastwood (1859-1953) is regarded by many to be one of the most significant botanists and naturalists of the Western Slope. Largely self-educated in the field of Botany, she traversed California, Colorado, Utah, and upper Mexico for over 60 years, mentored many, gave her name to more than 8 California plant species, named over 100 plants, and was the Curator of the Botany Department at the California Academy of Sciences for 55 years. In California, Miss Eastwood (as she preferred to be addressed) published over 300 articles, risked her life to save many of the Herbarium specimens during the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fire, and then rebuild that collection to over 300,000 specimens. Miss Eastwood was known and admired by many including Susanna Bixby Bryant, Marcus Jones, Philip Munz, Willis Jepson, John Thomas Howell, Mary and Townshend Brandegee, and many others.

### A Very Happy September Birthday to:

Win Aldrich  
Donna Bedell  
Brenda Bolinger  
Herb Boss  
Patricia Brooks  
Eleanor Carter  
Peter Cherbach  
Laura Holbrook  
Alan Jack  
Samuel Kamler  
Marga Loncar

Judy Maciariello  
Dean McHenry  
Sylvia McKenzie  
Ann Morgan  
Kathleen Mulligan  
Fran Neu  
Tom O'Keefe  
Cathy Reaves  
Mike Smith  
Susan Spradley



For decades Miss Eastwood was listed among the top 25% of professionals in her discipline in *American Men of Science*. At age 92 she was named President of the Seventh International Botanical Conference in Sweden and was the only one present to be invited to sit at the desk of the esteemed Linnaeus.

Carol Green Wilson's book details these and many other accomplishments of Miss Eastwood in a thoroughly delightful and readable manner. Readers will be amused and awed at her riding horseback sidesaddle in a full-length dress (with bustle) and staying in rugged miners' cabins as she collected throughout the Sierra Nevada Range. Other travels included her trips through Southern California to visit Huntington Library and its botanical gardens before the buildings were erected (circa 1915), as well as her consultations with Philip Munz to complete a rare folio translation from Latin to English.

This book can be checked out from the Volunteer Library. Although it is now located in the "New Book" area, it will be placed in the Library's newest section, "Pioneer Botanists/Naturalists."





Photo by Deb Woo

## TARANTULA HAWK WASP

Fred Brooks, Oak Notes Editor

The tarantula hawk wasp (*Pepsis* spp.), as its name suggests, preys on tarantula spiders. Only the larvae feed on living spiders, however. The parasitoid female and nonhunting male exist on the pollen and nectar of a few plants, including milkweed (*Asclepias*) and mesquite (*Prosopis*).

The wasp species generally seen in our area (*P. grossa*, syn. *P. formosa*) has a shiny blue-black body and bright reddish-orange wings. This coloration acts as a warning to its predators that this wasp is dangerous. The sting of *Pepsis* wasps is known to be unbelievably severe, second among insects only to the bullet ant (*Paraponera* sp.) of Central and South America. It is not the toxicity of the poison itself that incapacitates its prey, but the unbearable, immobilizing pain.

The female wasp hunts for a tarantula when she is ready to reproduce. Flying until a tarantula is spotted or smelled, she follows it to its burrow, enters the burrow, and flushes the spider back into the

open. The wasp then waves its antennae, agitating the spider and causing it to raise its front legs and bare its fangs. She quickly grabs the second pair of the spider's legs and injects her venom into a nerve center. After dragging the living, paralyzed spider back to her burrow, she lays an egg on the spider's abdomen. The female wasp then leaves the burrow and seals it.

When the larva hatches from the egg it bores into the spider and feeds, carefully avoiding vital organs so the tarantula remains alive and edible. The mature larva then forms a pupa, changes into an adult wasp, and leaves the sealed burrow.

One of the unanswered questions about the female wasp regards her egg laying. Why does she only lay a fertilized egg on a female spider, producing a female wasp, and an unfertilized egg on a male spider, producing a male wasp?

# RSABG Volunteer Quarterly MEETING & LUNCHEON

## Buckwheat BASH!

**FRIDAY**  
SEPTEMBER

**13**

**11:30 AM**

**LANTZ**  
OUTDOOR  
CLASSROOM

**Please join us for the Buckwheat Bash!**

Tram service begins at 11 am at the Admissions Kiosk.

Please bring an entrée, salad, appetizer, or dessert to share.

See what the buzz is all about!

Catch up with everyone's summer adventures

Meet your new Volunteer Class!

Please wear your name badge. Staff is welcome!