El Niño in the Garden

You may have been wondering how the Garden fared this winter, with all the rainfall you either experienced or heard about on the news for our area.

The rainfall total for the year (July 1, 1997-June 30, 1998) was nearly 54 inches. Our average is 26. Much of this rain came in deluges, challenging the capacity of drains throughout the grounds.

The rains were especially heavy from January through June, swelling the normally placid flow of Strawberry Creek through the Garden. Besieging its banks, the creek frothed and eddied through its twisted canyon, potentially endangering the Japanese Pool, for sustained downpours have, in the past, dammed the creek with fallen branches, and this, in turn, has forced the overflow of churning, muddy water into the pool. After the recent restoration of the pool’s serene beauty, such a prospect was unthinkable.

To prevent the unthinkable, two massive debris traps, the “grizzlies,” straddle Strawberry Creek upstream from the pool. Whenever it rains, the grizzlies require daily tending, and some days, the ordeal

Mudslides in the Mesomamerican Area.
Spring in the Garden is always incredibly busy and this year was no exception. Thanks to the hard work of the Volunteer Propagators under the direction of Martin Grantham and coordination of Theresa Lipton the Spring Plant Sale grossed the best amount of revenue since 1992! Over 100 volunteers from all arenas of the Garden assisted in this effort. The Garden Shop staff continues to enhance visitor experiences by answering thousands of questions. The Docents experienced an exceptionally busy touring schedule as schools tried to make up for being rained out earlier in the year. Thanks to you all!

We welcome Daria Curtis to the ranks of the Garden’s horticulturists. Daria takes over stewardship of the Mediterranean and the North American areas. She comes to the Garden with extensive experience, including an internship at Longwood Gardens in Pennsylvania. Her father lives in Italy, so with her frequent trips to the Mediterranean areas and her experience with gardens in the East, she is uniquely qualified to nurture these important parts of the Garden’s botanical collection.

On April 8th the World Conservation Union released its first ever Red List of Threatened Plants. This publication indicates that 12.5% of the world’s vascular plants are threatened with extinction. This corresponds closely with the Center for Plant Conservation’s estimate that “10% of the plants in the United States are in danger of extinction.” These statistics are indeed of concern to all of us. This
Garden Volunteers Recognized
LONG TIME VOLUNTEERS RECOGNIZED

Volunteers are tremendously important in the overall scheme of things here at the Garden. Without them, a great many important things simply would not happen. Each year we honor our volunteers at a special Volunteer Recognition event, which is always a happy and spirited affair. This year, it was a pot luck dinner in the Garden after hours, with libations in the Tropical House, a real treat!

Special honorees this year are Ann Brown, Judy Gordon, Nick Mills and Cecile Weaver, who have completed five years of volunteer service at the Garden; Brenda Wong and Betty Wren, ten years; and Bill Brobisky, fifteen years. Congratulations, and many thanks to all of you!

The contributions of these volunteers represent some of the activities for which we depend on all our volunteers. Ann Brown helps in the Garden Shop and at plant sales. Judy Gordon helps at special events and at plant sales. Dr. Nick Mills is here the first Saturday of every month at the Sick Plant Clinic. Cecile Weaver is a propagator and a docent. Brenda Wong and Betty Wren are docents, and Bill Brobiski propagates bulbs.

A pleasant aspect of volunteer recognition is that we are able to reflect each year on the tremendous contribution our volunteers make to all aspects of Garden operations. This year’s honorees join a group of 57 additional active volunteers who have been working at the Garden in one capacity or another for more than five years. Of these, 29 have been with us more than ten years, 13 for more than fifteen years and 7 for more than twenty! We never cease to be amazed at the commitment and loyalty this represents, and we are very thankful for the vast quantities of time and talent all the volunteers have given and continue to give the Garden.

The Botanical Garden is blessed by the numbers of volunteers who show up here, rain or shine, to help us. Their assistance takes many forms: You have read in these pages of the docents, currently 91 strong, who give tours for the public. Their audiences range from rapt kindergarten children through Cal students to Elder Hostel participants, and sometimes include visiting dignitaries from foreign countries or world famous scientists. They also visit elementary school classrooms with presentations on botany and California ecology. Our education program would hardly exist without them.

You hear a couple of times each year about our Plant Sales, and you may even be a regular customer. The Volunteer Propagators propagate and grow most of the plants we sell here at the Garden, both at the big sales and year round at the Garden Shop.

The Garden Shop is another splendid volunteer venue. Volunteers select all the fabulous collection of books and the delightful gift items and cards, and the pleasant people you meet there are volunteers, too.

Less visible, but no less important are the loyal folks who help out with projects in the Curator’s office, in the Seed Room, and on the grounds. Still others help us at plant sales, planning programs, and staffing special events.

TWILIGHT WALKS IN THE GARDEN
Evening is a special time in the Botanical Garden. Creatures seldom seen at midday emerge from their hiding places. The light has a special quality. For years you’ve had the opportunity to tour the Garden with a docent at 1:30 p.m. on weekend days. Now’s a chance to enjoy the Garden with an expert guide at this special time of day. You could even bring a picnic supper to enjoy afterwards! Wednesdays, July 22, July 29, August 5 and August 12 at 5:30 p.m. Free, with Garden
Venezuela: from Amazonas to the Andes;
The Lost World of the Tepuis & the “Serengeti” of the Llanos

Travel with the Garden

Venezuela: from Amazonas to the Andes; the Lost World of the Tepuis and the “Serengeti” of the Llanos

Come along and experience the wondrous world which is Venezuela with UCBG Horticulture Manager David Brunner. The trip will provide opportunities to enjoy and learn about one of the most biologically diverse countries in the world. We will visit the extraordinary world of the Tepuis, sandstone massifs which rise strikingly thousands of feet above the tropical forest, and we’ll see Angel Falls plummeting off the precipice. On the summit of Kukenan tepui we will encounter a world evolved in near isolation where the daisies are trees and the pineapples are carnivorous. Next we will visit the Andes where within only a few miles we’ll travel upward from towering lowland rain forests, through orchid and fern drenched cloud forest, into the Paramo with its giant herbs, and finally the miniature gardens of the alpine zone above 12,000 ft. Along the way we’ll see birds of every description including the Andean cock-of-the-rock and even perhaps the mighty Andean Condor. We’ll also stop and see the Evergreen Dry Forest of Andean valleys where Cattleya and other orchids abound and where cacti have large leaves. Finally, we will experience the Llanos, the extensive floodplains of the Orinoco Basin where wildlife is so abundant the area is often called the “Serengeti of South America.”

Travel dates are February 1-14, 1999. For reservations and further information contact Geostar Travel at (800) 624-6633.

Armchair travel and trip preview

Join us for travel the easy way and enjoy a preview of the February trip. David Brunner will present a slide show and about the Venezuelan bioregion on Tuesday, September 22, 6:00 p.m. Come share in the excitement about this trip and learn about the fascinating region. Wine and cheese will be served after the brief presentation.

Photos by Bruce Holst.
The Doctor Says

At the National Clonal Germ Plasm Repository at Davis, CA, there are 73 accessions of pomegranates. Fruit Garden 30 (2): 18, 19, 26.

A Washington, DC, based national conservation group, American Forests, has reported that cities should have an overall tree canopy of 40%. Benefits include among other things, better air quality and storm water relief. In a survey of 4 large cities (Atlanta, Georgia; Austin, Texas; Baltimore, Maryland; and Milwaukee, Wisconsin) using system technology, satellite images, and remote censoring to map, measure and analyze such urban areas, it was found that none of these cities had the aspired 40% coverage. Arbor Age 18 (2): 39.

A new Chocolate Cream Body Wash, with cocoa butter, is now available. Although the fragrance is chocolate, the material is made for bathing, not for consuming. Chocolatier, Aug.-Sept. 97: 10.

A researcher in Florida has developed a diet pill for mosquitoes, which alters their digestion, making it impossible for them to feed, lay eggs or survive. Environmentally Safe Citrus and Vegetable Magazine 62 (6): 54, 56.

A fast growing tree, the Austree Hybrid (Salix matsudana x alba) is now available in California. This hybrid has been bred and selected not only for its rapid growth (10-15 feet in one season) but also for its tolerance of diverse climates and conditions. They good for wind protection, privacy and fire stops. They can also be used as a cash crop in wood production, as bio-mass for co-generation plants, as wood for briquettes, for pulp production, erosion control by wind and water, shade in summer and, because they are deciduous, they will allow sunshine around homes in winter. California Landscaping Jan. 1998: 16-17.

Now available are miniature Asian lotuses that produce 2-4” flowers and can thrive in bowls 6-10” in diameter. The water temperature needs to reach 75∞F before the plants produce flowers. For beginners, the cultivar ‘Chonshuihau’ is suggested. It has semi-double flowers that open pink and turn white. Organic Gardening 45 (1): 14.

Currently, a keepsake silver dollar coin commemorating the U.S. Botanical Garden in Washington, D.C. is available. Of the $37 price, which includes as presentation box, the USBG receives $10 for renovation of grounds and the conservatory. The coins can be ordered directly from the mint by calling 1-800-MINT-USA. The American Garden Jan.-Feb. 1998: 6.

A seed catalog, principally of fragrant flowers but also of many unusual plants, called The Fragrant Path is available for sending $2 to The Fragrant Path, P. O. Box 328, Fort Calhoun, NE 68023. The American Garden Jan.-Feb. 1998: 16-17.

The EPA and California Department of Environmental Protection have registered Kaligreen (potassium bicarbonate), designed to control powdery mildew on roses and other ornamental plants. American Nurseryman 187 (6): 8.

From Oregon some new large fruits are becoming available. ‘Black Butte,’ a blackberry has fruits 2’ long and 1” wide. Another large blackberry, which is especially sweet, is ‘Siskiyu.’ A high yielding and large fruited highbush blueberry, ‘Chandler’ also is becoming available. Two new strawberries, which in Oregon ripen about the 4th of July, and add about 3 weeks to the bearing period, are called ‘Firecracker’ and ‘Independence.’ Agricultural Research 46 (1): 21.


A new chemical soon will be available to improve apple quality, particularly in apples, which are shipped. The material, trade marked under the name of ReTain, improves the quality by inhibiting ethylene which hastens ripening. Cal. Grower 21 (11): 7.

Robert D. Raabe
Garden Notes

Horticulturist Eric Schulz accompanied John Fairey and Carl Schonfeld of Yucca Do Nursery, Texas, to northeastern Mexico in October 1997. The Garden was one of several sponsors of this trip and received over ___ seed lots as a result. The group travelled and collected throughout the states of Coahuila, Nuevo Leon, and Tamaulipas.

Jerry Parsons and Judith Finn attended the Fifth Annual Pest Science Conference at U.C. Davis, December 16-17. They heard talks about pest research at UC Davis. Some of the topics included the problems that are faced in the biological control of weeds. The Entomology Department will be producing a CD-ROM in 1999 for the easy identification of pest problems. This will be a great tool for nurseries, etc. to diagnose diseases and insect problems as presented to them by the public.

The Bay Area Gardens Network meeting took place on February 13th, hosted by Hakone Gardens in Saratoga. The Garden was represented by several members of the staff. We are pleased to report that a funding proposal to help produce a Bay Area-wide garden brochure was successful and will be in production by this summer.

It seems we are deeply involved in the effects of water both falling from the sky and approaching within our municipal supply system. Our utility district switched over from chlorine to chloramines to treat the water supply this past spring. While safer for people, chloramines are toxic to gill-breathing organisms, especially fish. The UC Berkeley campus has gone to significant expense to install systems to remove the chloramine from all water used to irrigate sensitive habitat within the Garden and all over campus where research programs would otherwise be jeopardized by the introduction of chloramines.

Curatorial Assistant Martin Grantham taught Advanced Plant Propagation in the Merritt College Horticulture Department during the Spring Semester. Two articles by Martin on ferns in the Garden were recently published in From the Garden, one of the two major garden magazines in Argentina. Martin also gave a presentation on ferns and bryophytes (mosses and liverworts) in the Garden for our docent continuing education class on March 30th.

Jerry Parsons, Lawrence Lee and Martin Grantham attended the Protea Festival, An International Symposium sponsored by the UC Santa Cruz Arboretum in March which featured specialists from around the world speaking on the botany and cultivation of Proteaceae. The information gleaned will help with the ongoing work in the Australasian and South African areas.

Dr. George Argent, Vireya Rhododendron expert and Head of South Asian Botany at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh, made a surprise visit to the Garden on April 25th just after we closed down the spring plant sale. Martin Grantham toured him through our Asian section and showed him the Garden’s small collection of vireyas.

Curator Holly Forbes collected flowering material in the Sierran foothills with former Garden staff member Wayne Roderick in preparation for the Oakland Wildflower Show, held May 9-10 at the Oakland Museum. The annual show was sponsored by the following organizations: the Oakland Museum, the Jepson Herbarium, the Garden, and the East Bay Chapter of the California Native Plant Society. Next year will mark the 30th anniversary of the wildflower show as held at the Oakland Museum.
ANNOUNCEMENTS & HIGHLIGHTS

The Garden is now open from 9 am to 7 pm. Enjoy these extended hours through Labor Day. We invite you to discover your Garden in the soft light of the evening hours. Bring a picnic dinner and experience the Garden’s aromas and blooms that can be found at no other time of day.

Fall Plant Sale
Sunday, September 27, 1998
10am - 2pm

Chose from a special selection of salvias in bloom, species and cultivars of Crinum, bulbs from the South African section of the Garden and much, much more, including cultivars of Lapageria rosea never before released in the U.S.

Look for details to come in the Fall Newsletter and on the web at:
http://www.mip.berkeley.edu/garden/

Foods of the Americas

Once again, the Garden presents Foods of the Americas. The Conference Center will be the site of the spectacular Mesoamerican marketplace. Find out about crops which originated in the Americas, then see them growing in the Crops of the World Garden, Tropical House and Cloud Forest. Free with Garden Admission. September 26 through October 18th, 10 am - 4 pm.
BOOK REVIEWS

Gardening

THE LAVENDER GARDEN, BEAUTIFUL VARIETIES TO GROW AND GATHER, by Robert Kourik, color photographs by Deborah Jones; Chronicle Books, San Francisco, CA, c1998; 120pp; hdc. $18.95.

Gardeners in the San Francisco Bay Region live in a gardener’s paradise, and are fortunate in having a wonderful collection of authors, living right here, giving us expert advice and counsel. Local gardeners already know Robert Kourik through his books and lectures. Not so many of us have known that he has a passion for lavender, one of the most used herbs throughout written history. This passion has led him to write about the 16 varieties of lavender he grows successfully (and we can too), harvests, dries, and uses in crafts projects and cooking. To help us with our own planning for a lavender garden, he tells us where we can find seeds and plants, aromatherapy supplies, and where we can see great fields of lavender without traveling to the South of France (Motanzas Creek Winery and Estate Grown Lavender, near Santa Rosa).

Letters

DEAR FRIEND AND GARDENER, LETTERS ON LIFE AND GARDENING, by Beth Chatto & Christopher Lloyd; Francis Lincoln, Ltd., London, UK, c1998; 206pp.; hdc. $22.95.


Two or three years ago, Roger Phillips and Leslie Land in THE 3,000 MILE GARDEN, wrote to one another about their widely separated and very different gardens. Now we have two more collections of letters, one about the challenges and joys of managing two of the most well-known contemporary gardens in England, and the other an imaginary correspondence between an American novelist working in her beloved garden today with Thomas Jefferson, a great and dedicated gardener of the past.

Beth Chatto and Christopher Lloyd, frequent visitors to the San Francisco Bay Area and prolific authors, have written to one another describing their garden problems and pleasures, their daily lives and travels, over a two-year gardening period. It is easy to identify with them, even though we are here
Armchair Travel Adventures

and they are not, because we know them so well.

Reading DEAR MR. JEFFERSON is a completely different experience.
Laura Simon, an author of historical romances, has slipped easily into gardening monologues with Thomas Jefferson. At first she is quite frank about the difficulty of corresponding with a famous gardener who lived and worked two hundred years ago, but after researching heirloom garden seeds and the origin of tomatoes, her correspondence didn’t seem so crazy after all.

What a pity that these good books, in time for summer reading, have appeared when we are most busy with our own gardens. Save them for cold winter days, between reading the winter seed catalogs and making plans for your next year’s garden.

Armchair travel adventures

ONE RIVER, EXPLORATIONS AND DISCOVERIES IN THE AMAZON RAIN FOREST, by Wade Davis; Simon & Schuster (A Touchstone Book), New York, N.Y., c1996; photographs; maps; 537pp.; pap. $16.00.

In 1941 the ethnobotanist, Richard Evans Schultes, left Harvard to explore and map the Amazon basin and its tributaries for over a decade. Thirty years later, two of his students, with his help and direction, returned to the Amazon to search for the botanical origins and ethnobotanical uses of wild coca growing throughout this large geographic region.


Alfred Russel Wallace, co-discoverer of the theory of evolution and one of the great Victorian scientist-explorers, wrote about his discoveries and travels in THE MALAY ARCHIPELAGO one hundred and forty years ago. Now Tim Severin, in a replica of the boat Wallace himself sailed in, has followed this journey. Severin writes about his own adventures finding the flora and fauna - and what has happened since then - in the world Wallace discovered.

Travel Guides, easy to carry and read

THE GARDEN LOVER’S GUIDE TO BRITAIN, OVER 100 GARDENS FROM STOURHEAD TO KEW, by Patrick Taylor; Princeton Architectural Press, New York, N.Y., c1998; Color illus; color photos; maps; 144pp.; pap. $19.95.
Includes Scotland and Wales.

THE GARDEN LOVER’S GUIDE TO FRANCE, OVER 100 GARDENS FROM VERSAILLES Princeton Architectural Press, New York, N.Y., c1998; Color illus; color photos; maps; 144pp.; pap. $19.95.
New Members
The UC Botanical Garden welcomes the following new members:

Keith Abey
Steve Albert
Terry Anderson
Shannon Baker
Sharon Begovich
Karen Biber & Thomas Holdford
Margaret Bottomley
Roger Brett
Phil Burns
Polo de Lorenzo Sonoma Horticultural Nursery
Bonnie & Rick Dlott
Jeff Dlott & Rebecca Connally
Wendy Draper
Kristin Eppler & Ruth Silverman
Gabriel Escobar & Regina McGrath
Sara Everitt & Joe Sabel
Rob Ferber
Janice Fletcher
Virginia Goodwind
Steve & Michaela Hayes
DeeDee Heath
Sheila Humphrey
Lynn Jackson
Maggie Johnson
Barbara Keller
Chris Kniel
Nora & David Koh
Nancy Leoni
Eve Livingston
Kay Loughman
Joseph Minafra & Lana Cheng-Minafra
Mary Mohr
Marjorie & Alfred Molakidis
Robert Morey
Anne Mullan
Karen Ng
Richard & Joanna Pearlman
Bill Prather
Jennifer Rapada
Robert Rawson Industrial Wastewater Solutions
William Reed
Joyce Renaker

Jeannie Riley
Lisa Rillingale
Michael Rime
Jackie & Richard Rubinstein
Edward Rustvold
Toshiko Sakata
Amy Sanger
Carole Saville
Laura Sawczuk
Fred & Nan Schurkus
David Schwartz & Charly Wolf
Schwartz & Associates
Peter Shelton & Javier Valencia
Deborah Smith
Marion & Mathew Snyderman
Richard Spitler
Jennifer Steele & Arthur Ogus
Grateful Thanks
The Garden wishes to thank these donors who have made a substantial gift over and above membership:

Rita Atkinson
Shannon Baker
Alan Bearden
Mr & Mrs Stephen Bechtel Jr
Mike Boss, Rock & Rose Landscaping
Dr & Mrs Estol Carte
Joseph & Susan Cerny
William & Dorothy Clemens
Adolphus Graupner, Jr.
Maureen Kennedy
Robert & Caroline Lichtenstein
Barbara Lyss
Bill McJohn
Lisa Olson & Deborah Lohrke
Bill Prather
Dr & Mrs John Schieffelin
Philip & Jan Spieth
Peter & Agnes Summers

In Appreciation
The Garden offers appreciation and thanks to these donors for their generous contributions:

Amy Dondy, Hot Canary Talent
Roxanne Morse

Annual Fund
Richard Atwood
Debra Blanke

M Bricker
Verne & Ruth Hendrix
William Hull
Richard Persoff
John & Marjorie Sproul

Special Thanks
The Garden would like to honor and thank those supporters making substantial donations.

Mr & Mrs Jerome Carlin, The Leo J and Celia Carlin Fund
Carl & Elizabeth Helmholz, The Laird Norton Family Fund
David & Evelyn Lennette

In Memory
The Garden offers appreciation and thanks for the gifts from these donors in memory of:

Jeanne Patterson House from
Lee House, Sr.
Lee House, Jr.
Jerry House

Henry Hall Mackenzie & Mariod Scudder Mackenzie from
Edward Culin

Chiura & Haruko Obata from
Grace Kogura

Elizabeth & Robert Ratcliff from
Kathlene Holser
Clifford B. Holser
Dorothy M. Kulp
Janet & Gryffyd Partridge
Susan M. Smith
Nancy Swearengen

Robert Ratcliff from
The Athenian School
Bill & Elly Bade
Margaret L. Beach
Carol C. Bense
Walter Thomas Brooks
Calendar of Events

An Introduction to the Garden (IG)
Saturdays, July 18, 25, August 1 & 8, 10 a.m. - noon
Get to know the Botanical Garden in depth! Join our talented horticulturists and docents for a series of talks and walks that will acquaint you with the colorful history of the Garden and the scientific principles that guide plant collection, selection and arrangement at this fabulous living museum. We’ll take a look at the history of the Garden, the biogeographic themes in the Garden, the California section, and the special collections. Series: Members $35, Non-members $45. Individual sessions: Members $10, Non-members $12.

Twilight Walks in the Garden (TW)
July 22, July 29, August 5 or August 12 at 5:30 p.m.
Take advantage of long summer evenings in the Garden and the expertise of the Garden Docents. Join one of our marvelous docents for a leisurely walk in the Garden at this special time of day. Free with Garden admission.

Medicinal Plants Series (MP)
September 13, 19 and 20, 10 a.m. - noon.
The use of plants to cure diseases and alleviate abnormal symptoms is ancient and nearly universal in human cultures. In this series, we will explore medicinal plant use in three of them. Horticulturist Elaine Sedlack will introduce you to the use of medicinal plants in Europe, Herbalist and Acupuncturist Barbara Wilt will discuss Chinese Medicinal herbs, and Docent Jan Vargo will share some of her expertise on the herbal medicines of Mesoamerica. Each talk will be accompanied by a look at the various herbs in the Garden. Series: Members $25, Non-members $30. Individual sessions: Members $10, Non-members $12.

Carnivorous Plants for the Whole Family! (CP)
Sunday, September 13, 2 - 4 p.m.
Patricia Kite, distinguished author of children’s books about carnivorous plants, and Peter D’Amato, owner of California Carnivores and author of The Savage Garden will each give a short talk about these fantastic plants, and will sign their latest books, which will also be available for purchase. Light refreshments will be served. Members $6, children free. Non-members $10, children $2.

Art in the Garden (AG)
Ten classes, beginning September 23, 9:30 a.m. - noon
Karen LeGault resumes her popular art class. Develop your eye, and explore the techniques that make nature paintings look alive! Suitable for beginners as well as more experienced artists. Members: $125, Non-members: $150.

As always, Dr. Raabe & Dr. Mills will see all patients at the
Sick Plant Clinic on the first Saturday of every month
9 am to noon, at the Garden Conference Center

For more information on these Garden programs, call 510/643-2755.