

Winter in the Arboretum

Ornamental bark and glossy berries stand out

Ellen Zagory, Director of Horticulture

At the UC Davis Arboretum it sometimes seems there are only two seasons—blasting, hot summer or gray, damp winter. The marvelous mild and clear days of fall are all too brief and quickly give way to the central California version of winter, when the cold fog hides the sun and chills our toes.

NATIVES IN THE WINTER GARDEN

In the Mary Watis Brown Garden of California native plants, the nearly white trunk and branches of California buckeye (*Aesculus californica*) reach upward like a reverse lightning bolt. Large, shiny-brown seeds may be seen dangling from splitting fruit or decorating the ground. Evergreen madrones (*Arbutus menziesii*) exhibit beautiful copper and mahogany-colored bark on muscular-looking trunks and often show orange-red fruit. The bark of the manzanitas is deeper mahogany-red but equally beautiful. The fern-leaf Catalina ironwoods (*Lyonothamnus floribundus* ssp. *aspleniifolius*) stand sentinel along a secondary path with shiny, divided leaves and reddish, shredding bark.

In November and December we see the delicate flowers of the chaparral currant (*Ribes malvaceum*) emerge along with fresh green foliage. The cream and pink flower clusters provide nectar for the Anna's hummingbird, a year-round inhabitant. In January and February, manzanitas bloom

with attractive clusters of urn-shaped flowers. *Arctostaphylos densiflora* 'Howard McMinn', the Vine Hill manzanita, is one of our most dependable, with clean, dark-green foliage and pinkish-white blooms. Nearby, one of our most spectacular but under-appreciated winter features is the silk tassel bush (*Garrya elliptica* 'James Roof') with long, silvery flower clusters that dangle like icicles from the ends of the stems.

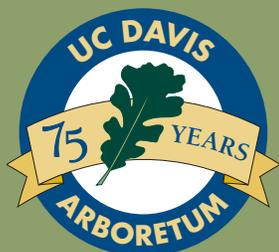


Winter walkers in the Arboretum; toyon berries brighten the winter garden.

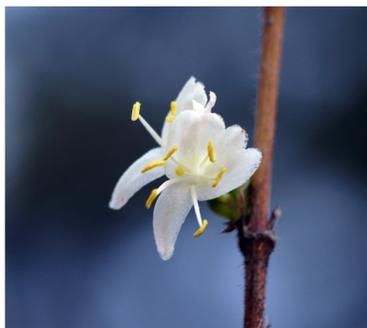


Saron Holt

A winter walk in the UC Davis Arboretum is the perfect opportunity to warm your toes and observe the subtleties missed during the warm days of summer. Instead of masses of blooms and industrious pollinators, winter highlights include foliage color, ornamental tree bark, clusters of glossy berries, and interesting plant forms. As an added bonus, winter gardens are alive with the calls and movement of migrating birds.



Later in the season *Ribes aureum*, the golden currant, provides displays of forsythia-yellow flowers. *Ribes viburnifolium*, the evergreen currant, makes a shiny mound of foliage beneath our majestic Valley oaks (*Quercus lobata*); its tiny flowers are not showy on their own but create a maroon mist over the planting when in bloom. Complementing these cool-season bloomers and frequent throughout the Arboretum is the mostly evergreen and dramatic form of native deer grass (*Muhlenbergia rigens*), with its upright and arching foliage and flower spikes reminiscent of Fourth of July fireworks.



This winter fest of flowers is continued by the perennial hellebores (*Helleborus x hybridus*) with their cream-to-pink bracts around central tufts of stamens. They grow in the shady areas along with winter jasmine, *Jasminum nudiflorum*, with tiny golden yellow flowers sprinkled along its green stems. The deep blue flowers of *Rosmarinus officinalis* ‘Mozart’ and other dark-flowered rosemary varieties add richness to the color scheme.



At the end of February and into March several *Narcissus* varieties bloom among the other plants, brightening the garden with their jolly trumpets. Azure bush germander (*Teucrium fruticans* ‘Azureum’) brightens even the darkest days when it produces deep-blue flowers on silvery white foliage.

NEW PLANTINGS AT THE EAST END

GATEways horticulturist Ryan Deering has been hard at work augmenting the collections near the east end of the Arboretum with new plants from Australia and New Zealand. Many of these additions are notable for their splendid forms and unusual foliage. *Xerochrysum bracteatum* (formerly *Helichrysum*), everlasting, is planted throughout the area, demonstrating the variety of flower colors available. In winter the flowers of the Australian fuchsias emerge, dramatic and bright in the case of *Correa pulchella* ‘Orange Flame’ and subtle in *Correa* ‘Ivory Bells’. Of all the recent additions, my favorite is the delicate filigree foliage of *Grevillea thelemanniana* ‘Gilded Dragon’ whose branches drip with coiled red flowers. Many of the plants in this area produce nectar harvested by hummingbirds, and the large trees seem to house a concentration of songbirds that add musical notes to a visual symphony.



LATE WINTER HIGHLIGHTS

February is the month to witness the magnificent display of the Acacia Grove, when the trees are covered in golden puffball flowers. If the weather is right, often the golden show combines with the magenta of the redbuds, an assurance that warmer weather is on the way. Later in the month the plantings at the Arboretum Teaching Nursery spring into life, led by the dark purple mass of *Hardenbergia violacea* draping over the fence, followed by the purple mounds of *Ceanothus maritimus* ‘Valley Violet.’



WINTER FLOWERS AT THE WEST END

At the west end of the Arboretum, December brings the incredible orange and yellow spikes of red hot poker, *Kniphofia* ‘Christmas Cheer’, accenting perennial plantings around the nursery and in the Storer Garden. *Prunus mume*, the Japanese flowering apricot, marks the start of the spring bloom season in February when its deep rose flowers burst on the scene. In the same area the delicious fragrance of both pink- and white-flowered forms of winter daphne, *Daphne odora*, fills the air with its sweet, lemony scent. Nearby in the Gazebo, bare stems are cloaked with the delicate and tropical-smelling white flowers of *Lonicera standishii*, the winter honeysuckle.



March is the month when spring fully arrives throughout the Arboretum with displays of California lilac (*Ceanothus*) in its many shades of white, blue and violet. The catmint, covered with pale blue blossoms, cloaks the ground and the tiny white flowers of the Santa Barbara daisy reappear. Roses again begin to bloom and the hummingbird sage sends up its spikes of red whorls. As the days lengthen and rainy days dwindle we delight in the green freshness of the landscape and the blue skies of the coming dry season.

Pleasures of the winter garden, from top: winter honeysuckle (photo by Mia Ingolia), everlasting (Kajetan Dzierzanowski), gilded dragon grevillea (Gnangarra), Ray Hartman ceanothus (John J. Kehoe), ivory bells correa (C.T. Johansson), chaparral currant (Ellen Zagory).

NATURE'S GALLERY COURT UPDATE

Suzanne Ullensvang, Resource Development Manager

Anticipation is growing about the installation of the Nature's Gallery mural and courtyard. The Nature's Gallery mural is a stunning work of art, composed of over 140 tiles hand-crafted by UC Davis students, staff, faculty, and community members through a collaboration between the UC Davis Arboretum and the Art-Science Fusion Program. Each tile showcases a different drought-tolerant plant from the Ruth Risdon Storer Garden in the Arboretum or an associated insect.

The mural will stand in an inviting tree-lined courtyard between the Storer Garden and Arboretum Teaching Nursery. In addition to being a beautiful new entry feature at the Arboretum's west end, Nature's Gallery will also serve as an integral part of our youth and adult education programs.

Special preview parties in August and September offered Nature's Gallery donors an insider peek at plans for the Nature's Gallery Court installation. The 60+ guests attending each event enjoyed the chance to experience how the tiles were designed and created, walk the layout of the site, see the construction plans, learn about the design of the surrounding planting beds and mingle with other supporters and staff.

Arboretum Director Kathleen Socolofsky officially welcomed and thanked Nature's Gallery donors and the exceptional partners and participants who made this project possible. A number of donors in attendance also shared the personal stories of their tile dedications during the program. The wide range of stories was touching and varied—honoring living loved ones, memorializing family members, leaving a mark in a place they loved—and captured wonderfully the many ways that people feel connected with the Arboretum.

The design for this courtyard was created by UC Davis alumnus Ron Lutsko, recent recipient of an Award of Excellence from the American Society of Landscape Architects. The Campus Planning and Community Resources unit is managing the overall installation of this unique venue. Site preparations for the installation began this past summer and Nature's Gallery Court construction officially began in early November. On November 10, the concrete foundation for the central wall was poured and set by Contractor Steve Stomblor and his crew.

The addition of Nature's Gallery Court to the west end of the Arboretum is sure to be a draw for visitors to the campus and the Arboretum. It will serve as an example of how our UC Davis community of volunteers and sponsors supported this installation with their time, creativity and donations. Their donations also support the campus Art-Science Fusion program, which serves as the catalyst for this and similar community art projects.



Katie Heinrich



Walter Sistrunk



Diane Ullman

From top: contractor and UC Davis alumnus Steve Stomblor building the Nature's Gallery Court; the Nature's Gallery mural on view at the U.S. Botanic Garden in Washington, D.C.; a student artist working on her tile; the Storer Garden, the inspiration for the mural.



Debbie Aldridge

It's not too late to be a part of this exciting project! There are still plant and insect tiles plus other features of the courtyard such as garden walls, the main plaza and planting beds available for dedication. To learn more about dedication opportunities in Nature's Gallery Court and to see photos of available tiles visit dedications.ucdavis.edu or contact Suzanne Ullensvang at sullensvang@ucdavis.edu or (530) 752-8324. Thank you to all the generous donors who have already contributed to Nature's Gallery Court.

arboretum *Stories*

In honor of the Arboretum's 75th anniversary, we invite you to share stories, reminiscences, and thoughts about your experiences with the Arboretum. Stories will be featured in the newsletter, on our website, and on signs in the garden. To share your story, email arboretum@ucdavis.edu; include your name and phone number, and include a photo if possible.

The Arboretum has always been a magical place for our family, filled with fond memories starting back in our beginning days of dating and courtship as students here at



UC Davis in the mid 70's. The love of my life and I would often picnic by "the duck ponds" near Mrak Hall. We even contemplated a simple outdoor wedding at the Wyatt Deck, as it is now called. However, in those early days, it was not so quaintly named! We searched the campus map back then to find the location for our wedding invitation, only to find that our lovely deck area there by Spafford Lake was called the "Snack Shack" in reference

to the snack bar there in olden times. We had to laugh and decided that perhaps the name took away from the romantic nature of our plans, though fitting for my love and enjoyment of food!

Following a more traditional church wedding, many delightful family picnics continued through the years, bringing children and friends to the Arboretum to share the ponds and the ducks and the funny story of wanting to marry at the Snack Shack! Thank you for all the beautiful memories, dear Friends of the Arboretum!

Lei Putney



My first encounter with the Arboretum was April 2009. I had won a free flight to Davis and I was determined to go and visit this famous arboretum. I visited and fell in love with it. It's because of the Arboretum that I decided to attend this university. So the Arboretum basically shaped my future! I LOVE the Arboretum!

Melissa Cruz

Student Co-Coordinator
Arboretum Ambassadors

Inspire Learning, Create a Legacy with a Tribute Gift

The recent Friends of the UC Davis Arboretum annual appeal mailing announced three new dedication opportunities in honor of the Arboretum's 75th anniversary. Tribute gifts, made to honor a loved one or commemorate a special occasion, help support the Arboretum's plant collections and public education programs. Gifts are fully tax-deductible.

To learn more about making a tribute dedication in the Arboretum, please contact Suzanne Ullensvang at sullensvang@ucdavis.edu or (530)752-8324.



OAK CIRCLE OF LIFE TILES

20" diameter \$1,000

Each of the 43 Oak Circle of Life tiles represents one part of the life cycle of a mighty oak tree. Together they form an interlocking pattern on the south seatwall at the entry to the Shields Oak Grove.

Students and community members working with the UC Davis Art-Science Fusion Program hand-crafted these beautiful ceramic art pieces.



REDWOOD GROVE TILES

\$750

Dedicate a tile in the Redwood Grove etched with a redwood needle motif and your custom inscription. The tiles will be displayed along the south seating walls.

BENCH AND PLAQUE

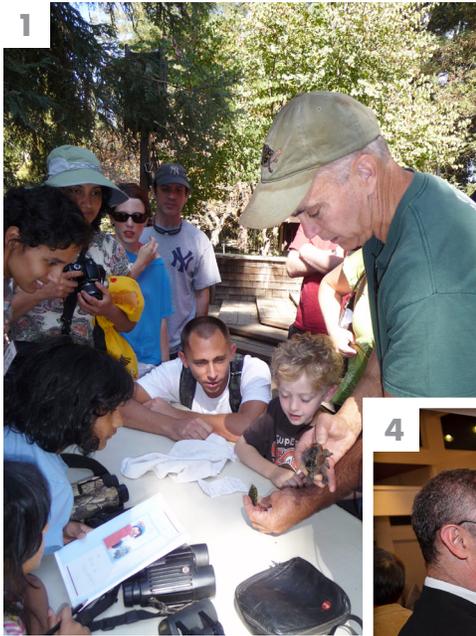
6' bench with 6" x 4" personalized plaque \$6,000

New bench sites are now available in the Oak Grove and Australian collection. Benches and bench sites are also available in other select areas of the Arboretum.



Katie Herrick

Fall GATEways Events (Gardens, Arts, & The Environment) in the Arboretum



Photos 1, 2, 5, 6: Elaine Fingerett; 3: Ashley Borgenquast; 4: ZoArt Photography; 7: Carmia Feldman



1. Evolution and Ecology professor Brad Shaffer (right) points out the differences between native and non-native turtles in the Arboretum waterway during a Turtle Talk and Tour.

2. Professor Ted Molinski, UC San Diego, spoke on "Medicines from Nature: Drugs that Changed the World" at a Science Café at the Wyatt Deck, co-sponsored by Chemistry Professor Jared Shaw and the National Science Foundation.

3. L-R: Actors Will Klundt, Erika Haaland, and Jose Cagigal in Davis Shakespeare Ensemble's production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Gazebo.

4. L-R: Provost Ralph Hexter and Arboretum Director Kathleen Socolofsky chat with Nancy and Howard Shapiro, who hosted a dinner party to celebrate the Arboretum's 75th anniversary.

5. Poet and Arboretum volunteer Rebecca Moos (r.) co-sponsored a reading by fellow poets Francisco Dominguez and Vanessa Niño-Tapia at the Wyatt Deck.

6. Skip Mezger (right), campus landscape architect, shows off the plans for Nature's Gallery Court to some of the project sponsors at a preview party.

7. Shoppers among the grasses at the 75th Anniversary Plant Faire.

STAY CONNECTED

- Visit our website: arboretum.ucdavis.edu.
- From the homepage, sign up for the free monthly e-newsletter, *The Leaflet*.
- Become a fan on Facebook.
- Search "UC Davis Arboretum" on Flickr to see photos others have taken and post your own.
- Subscribe to "The UC Davis Arboretum" channel on YouTube to view videos of the Arboretum and post your own.
- Submit a review of the Arboretum on yelp.com.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

WINTER 2012

Guided Tours

No charge, no reservation required

WALK WITH WARREN

Wednesday, January 11, Noon, Gazebo

SLIDE SHOW AND TOUR: BIRDS OF DAVIS

Saturday, February 4, 11 a.m.
Arboretum Headquarters

WALK WITH WARREN

Wednesday, February 8, Noon, Gazebo

NATURE'S GALLERY COURT

Saturday, February 18, 2 p.m.
Arboretum Teaching Nursery

ALL THINGS ACACIA

Saturday, March 3, 2 p.m.
Arboretum Headquarters

WALK WITH WARREN

Wednesday, March 14, Noon
Arboretum Headquarters

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANTS SPRING TO LIFE

Saturday, March 17, 2 p.m.
Buehler Alumni & Visitors Center



Arts & Letters

FOLK MUSIC JAM SESSIONS

Alternate Fridays, January 6, 20;
February 3, 17; March 2, 16
12–1 p.m., Wyatt Deck

Folk musicians are invited to bring their acoustic instruments—fiddles, guitars, banjos, mandolins, squeeze boxes, you name it—and play together informally over the lunch hour. All skill levels are welcome, and listeners are invited.

NATIVE CALIFORNIAN ELDERBERRY FLUTE-MAKING WORKSHOP

Sunday, February 26, 1–3 p.m.
146 Environmental Horticulture

In this free two-hour workshop, people of all ages will learn how to make and play a Native Californian elderberry flute. East Bay Regional Parks docent Antonio Flores will talk about the culture of flute-making and also about the endangered elderberry beetle. All materials will be supplied. Please bring a sharpened pocket knife. Adults will need to supervise their young children.

DAVIS SHAKESPEARE ENSEMBLE

For information about performances, summer camp sign-ups, reading groups, and other collaborative events with the Arboretum, please visit www.shakespeare.davis.com or e-mail davis.shakespeare@gmail.com.

Build a Wild Home

Sunday, February 5, 1–5 p.m.
Arboretum Gazebo

Rain location: 146 Environmental Horticulture

Join the Wild Campus student group to build bird, owl, bat, and bee boxes that will later be installed in the Arboretum and on campus. All ages welcome—adults will need to supervise their children. Bring a hammer and something to kneel on; we will be working on the ground. No early sign-up required, but you can reserve a project by emailing your name and your preferred project to WildCampus411@gmail.com. The event is free.



Member Appreciation Plant Sale

Saturday, March 10, 9 a.m.–1 p.m.
Arboretum Teaching Nursery

Members only—join or renew at the door.

New members receive a free plant.

Get first choice of our Arboretum All-Stars and other great plants for Central Valley gardens! Enjoy music, refreshments, and children's activities. Expert garden advice available. Bring your member card or join at the door for 10% member discount. Free parking in Visitor Lot 55.

Donations August–October 2011

We extend our sincere gratitude to these donors

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IN MEMORY OF GLORIA WALTON

Janet Tankersley

NATURE'S GALLERY COURT DEDICATIONS

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Address service requested

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From the Director



Dear Friends,

Winter is a great time to visit the Arboretum and enjoy the subtle beauty of the season. If you find yourself in a contemplative mood, take a walk and seek out the striking bark, seed pods, and berries that highlight the winter garden (see page 1). If you prefer more interaction, you'll enjoy our winter programs, such as building homes for wildlife or making a native California elderberry flute (page 6). And don't miss the Member Appreciation Plant Sale on March 10, where you can get first choice of our fabulous spring plants. It's our way of saying thanks to our dedicated members.

This winter, be sure to experience the community spirit embodied in the new Nature's Gallery Court (page 3). As I write this in early December, construction is moving along nicely—the wall where the mural will be displayed and the seating walls are almost complete. I want to thank all the donors who have supported this project and helped to create this lovely new feature, a welcoming gathering area and an engaging teaching aid.

And speaking of community spirit, it is heartwarming to hear all of the stories from people who have been touched by the Arboretum (page 4). Please continue to send in your funny or moving or amazing stories in honor of the Arboretum's 75th anniversary.

I especially want to thank everyone who has given a year-end contribution in response to our annual appeal and those who have made tribute gifts honoring loved ones or recognizing special milestones. As part of the 75th anniversary celebration, consider commemorating your love of the Arboretum with a gift (see page 4).

I look forward to seeing you this winter at one of our programs or out enjoying the gardens.

Best wishes,

Kathleen