

LOS ANGELES CHAPTER

2019 Volume XXIV Issue 3

<http://www.crfg-la.org>

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MEETING:

Date: May 25, 2019 at 10:00 am

Place: Sepulveda Garden Center
16633 Magnolia Blvd, Encino, CA 91316

Program: Oleg Daugovish Ph.D - Blackberries & Raspberries

Oleg Daugovish Ph.D., is the Strawberry and Vegetable Crop Advisor for the UC Cooperative Extension Ventura County. He will give a PowerPoint presentation and speak to us about blackberries and raspberries. Please bring any questions you have regarding the growing, etc., of these fruits.

All Members: if your last name begins with A-M please bring something for our refreshment table.

BOARD MEETING TO FOLLOW: Board members please bring your questions and concerns.

FIELD TRIP: Home of Jesus Alvarez - MEMBERS ONLY, PLEASE

Date: June 22, 2019 at 10:00 am

Place: Private residence in San Fernando

Program: Intensive gardening

Jesus' garden of more than one hundred trees consists of avocado, citrus and many different stone fruits. Jesus is doing all of this in a 40 by 40 foot backyard. Sounds like a true and enthusiastic fruit lover, doesn't he? Unfortunately, due to the yard size, he can only accommodate 40 people maximum. There will be a sign-up sheet made available prior to the field trip. Also, it would be best if you could car pool, as parking is limited (unless you are willing to walk about a block).

Remember this is someone's home. Please do not bring pets or children, and please do not ask to enter their residence.

SAVE THE DATES - **CALENDAR FOR 2019 LA CHAPTER**

- July 27 Sepulveda Gardens - Steve Murray
- August 24 Field Trip
- September 28 Sepulveda Gardens - David Karp
- October 26 Field Trip - Lewis Perkins
- November 23 Field Trip
- December 14 Sepulveda Gardens

Words From Our Chairman



I hope everyone is enjoying the spring season as much as we are at our home with all of the blossoms bursting from our fruit trees. We look forward to the bounty that will come in the near future. Looking back, we had several events that I hope everyone was able to attend.

In March we had the Sylmar High School fruit tree symposium where we learned how trees are propagated from Daniel Nelson at LaVerne nursery. Thanks to all the generous donations, we raffled off over 100 fruit trees.

Some members attended the LA Nature Fest on the same weekend and members reported it was a very nice event as well.

Our April tour to the home of Jerry Schwartz was very informative. We saw all of his hard work over the years and the success he has achieved. I think we all went home thinking we can plan a few more trees in the space we have because Jerry showed us that can be done successfully.

As we look forward, check our calendar and note that we will have a speaker coming in May to discuss blackberry and raspberry growing. We have a field trip in June which I encourage members that have not attended field trips to try and make it because they are all a great experience. (Please note space is limited and you will need to sign up to attend.)

August 16, 17th, and 18th will be the annual Festival of Fruit. I encourage everybody not only to attend but to donate time to our nearby chapter, as they need help with all the planning and activities. I'm looking forward to attending events at the Huntington Botanical Garden and the LA Arboretum. I think everybody will be excited with the theme this year: "Annonaceae". It will be fun to hear discussions on growing pawpaw, cherimoya, and atemoya as well as the other fruits that they will be featuring. Please not only attend but donate time if possible.

To volunteer please contact the Foothill chapter at <http://www.foothillcrfg.org/> or <http://www.facebook.com/groups/292850462374>

Tony

LOOKING BACK

*By Deborah Oisboid, Editor
And Emory Walton, Historian*

March Meeting

It was a gorgeous day on March 16, the first warm weekend after a month of rain. Perfect for our field trip to Sylmar High School. Things started early because there were two presentations. The first, by Lynn Fang, was a presentation on composting / vermiculture. She described a compost heap as a "rocking party for microbes." If you give them good food (they like to eat greens / nitrogens and browns / carbons), offer them good drinks (water), and add some entertainment (turn it occasionally), then the microbes will have a terrific time breaking everything down to brown gold. We learned that coffee grounds and manure, while brown in color, are considered "green" for composting (high nitrogen). We also learned that getting the pile to the optimal temperature of 130F helps reduce or even eliminate pathogens such as E. Coli and Salmonella. While both composting and vermiculture both break down food waste, vermiculture also provides additional nutrients directly from the worms' guts. Worms don't want to be kept too hot. They want air and moisture - but not too much water! It's a good idea to start feeding the worms soft foods such as melons and fruits, and add firmer food waste as the culture grows. To harvest, put new food to one side and when the worms shift over, take out the finished black goodness for the garden.

For the second presentation we shifted to the other building where we heard from Charles Malki of IV Organics. Charles gave a brief talk on why it's a good idea to paint tree trunks white. He also has several interesting YouTube videos on gardening.

Our final speaker, Daniel Nelson, the director of LaVerne Nursery in Piru, taught us how they grow

avocados. The first step is to get the rootstock, which they grow from Zutano seeds. However, this means letting HUGE piles of fruit rot so the seeds can be squeezed out before planting, and it means Dan doesn't really enjoy guacamole very much! When the seedlings are about two feet tall they graft onto them. He says their success rate is so high probably because the rootstock hasn't fully developed, and the cambium and heartwood are sort of combined, making the merging of cambium to scion much more likely. He uses larger seeds as stock because they have more carbohydrates and grow very fast.

Dan fielded a variety of questions as well, from listing some of his favorite trees to grow, to discussing diseases including Citrus Greening Disease.

The event ended with a fabulous fruit tree auction of donated plants from local nurseries as well as many grown right here at Sylmar High School. All funds go to benefit the agriculture program at the school.

We extend our thanks to all the wonderful people who organized and prepared this exciting and incredibly informative outing!



Charles Malki, Karen Payton, Tony Stewart, Steve List, Dan Nelson, and Jim Schopper

March Event - L.A. Naturefest at NHMC

On the weekend of March 16-17, our chapter was invited to set up a display at the Los Angeles Museum of Natural History during their Nature Fest weekend. It has been many years since our chapter has set up a display table to attract new members, and the Nature Fest was a good venue.

Our table featured photos from past Fruit Shoot contests, bowls of exotic fruits contributed by several members, copies of the Fruit Gardener magazine, announcements of the upcoming Festival of Fruit, an informative flyer that included an application form for joining CRFG, grafting demos, and sampling of blood oranges contributed by Paul Talley and macadamia nuts contributed by Bill Brandt. The sampling was a very popular attraction to our table, as were the contest photos. Many thanks to the members who volunteered to host the table: Emory Walton, Virginia Walton, Roy Imazu, Edward Slapczynski, Bruce Blavin, Edgar Valdivia, Deborah Oisboid, Fang Liu, Jany Han, Denise Friese and Bill Brandt.

April Meeting

"If you plant close enough, you don't have any weeds." Words easily proven true at the home of Jerry Schwartz, our host for CRFG-LA's April field trip. Somehow he has managed to squeeze into his nearly 1/3-acre property over 200 fruit trees and other wonderful plants. He has avocados & acerola, bee tubes, citronella & citrus (more than 60 varieties!), dragonfruit, elderberry, feijoa & figs, guavas & grapes, hachiya and other persimmons, jaboticaba & jujube, kinow mandarins, loquats, mulberries, Oregon snow peas, pawpaw & peanut butter tree... well, you get the idea. His back garden is so thick and full that the walking path is only one person wide.



The house, when purchased in the 1970's, only had four walnut trees, some hedges, and a citrus tree from the original Valley orchard. Jerry tore out everything except the citrus, and began planting. In spite of having no master garden plan, everything seems to be growing very nicely together, all very

lush and green. He had many gems of wisdom to offer as well. When asked about pruning, he suggested "if it fruits, I trim." Regarding garden pests such as squirrels, opossums, and raccoons, "I have friends. The friends have 4 legs..." (Barking sounds came from inside the house.)

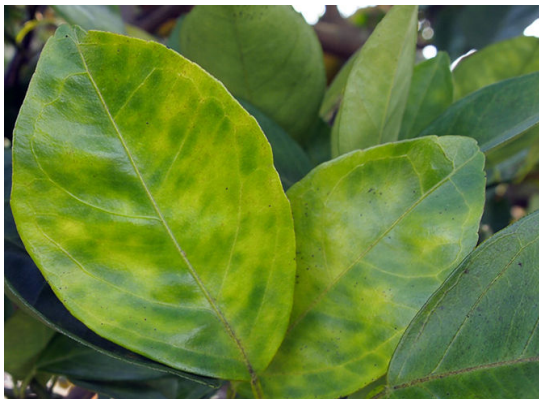
After the tour, his two-legged friends enjoyed a huge and varied potluck lunch, and relaxed on the patio listening to some lilting harmonica music. Thanks to everyone who shared their delicious food, and especially thank you so much, Jerry, for sharing your inspirational and wonderful garden with us!

Citrus Greening Disease

Excerpted from several online sources

One of the topics brought up at Dan Nelson's forum at Sylmar High School was Citrus Greening Disease, also known as *Huanglongbing* or Yellow Dragon Disease. This disease has destroyed the vast majority of Florida's citrus trees, and has gained a foothold here in California as well. We need to be on the lookout for this disease and prepare for the worst.

Huanglongbing originated in Asia a century or more ago. It is caused by a bacterium, *Candidatus Liberibacter Asiaticus*. It is mainly transmitted by the Asian citrus psyllid, which feeds on young citrus leaves. Propagation using bud or budwood materials from infected trees is another way to spread the disease, and is the origin of the first known case in California (2012.)



"Blotchy" yellowing on leaves

HLB clogs citrus trees' phloem (the vascular tissue that transports sugar from the leaves). This causes fruit to be small and bitter, and eventually makes trees unproductive or kills them.

Infected trees have been found mainly in Orange County and in the San Gabriel Valley and adjacent regions of Los Angeles County. So far, all confirmed detections have been in backyard trees, not commercial groves.



"Sooty" mold on leaves from Asian Citrus Psyllids

What does HLB look like? The symptoms include:

- Twig dieback
- Leaf yellowing (uneven or irregular, not symmetric)
- Green, misshapen fruit
- Blotchy yellow mottle on leaves
- Yellow or corky leaf veins
- Salty, bitter tasting fruit
- Off-season blooming
- A curved central core inside the fruit

Note that these symptoms may not appear until years after the tree becomes infected. That makes early detection difficult and even more critical.



Asian Citrus Psyllids feeding at 45-degree angle on leaves

Asian citrus psyllids are tiny – less than 1/8th of an inch long. The young form of this pest (nymphs) produce a white, waxy substance to direct honeydew away from their bodies. Asian citrus psyllids can also cause a sooty mold to form on citrus tree leaves. There has been some success to control psyllids using insecticide treatments, double-dosing affected plants with a foliar pyrethroid to kill adults, and a soil-applied systemic insecticide to control nymphs hiding inside young leaves.

While detection methods are constantly improving, there is still no known cure. Rapid removal of infected trees is the only way to stop the spread of the bacteria responsible.

Because HLB is such a potentially devastating disease, it is in our best interest to do what we can to minimize the risk:

- Become aware of the nature of the Asian citrus psyllid and the symptoms of HLB.
- Inspect for Asian citrus psyllids monthly. Look for small, brown pests that feed on citrus leaves with their body tilted up away from the leaf at a 45-degree angle.
- Check the smallest, tender new leaves sprouting on your citrus tree. This is a favorite spot for the pest to feed and lay eggs.
- Control for ants. Ants protect harmful pests like the Asian citrus psyllid.
- When grafting citrus varieties, it is important to use only registered budwood from a reputable source to avoid grafting material infected with *Huanglongbing* to your healthy tree.
- Do NOT move plants, fruit, or plant parts out of your area, especially across state or international borders.
- Consume fruit on your own property.
- Dry or double bag plant clippings prior to disposal.
- Do not knowingly throw infected cuttings in the green compost bin. (LA County Department of Public Works has specific rules about accepting green waste in quarantined areas: <https://tinyurl.com/HLB-Compost-pdf>)
- The disease also affects some relatives of citrus, like orange jasmine and curry leaves. If you have any of these plants in your yard, inspect them for signs of the psyllid as well.
- Contact the California Department of Food Agriculture Toll-Free Pest Hotline (1-800-491-1899) to report suspicious insects or disease symptoms in your citrus trees.



Asian Citrus Psyllid Eggs and waxy exudate on new growth

Source materials:

<https://www.latimes.com/food/la-fo-citrus-greening-20190329-story.html>

<http://californiacitrusthreat.org/pest-disease/>

<https://www.bioadvanced.com/articles/controlling-asian-citrus-psyllids-and-citrus-greening-disease>

<http://ipm.ucanr.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn74155.html>

A Public Service Announcement: Beware of Standing Water!

By Deborah Oisboid, Editor

Our unusually wet winter season gave us some wonderful water, our reservoirs are nice and full, and we have a statewide snowpack at 150% of normal! While it's great the current drought is over, that moisture has a big (tiny) drawback.

Mosquitos.

As you know, mosquitos lay their eggs in stagnant water. The eggs become larva - become pupa - become biting adults within one week of hatching. Worse, the *Aedes* mosquito has entered the state. These nasty critters can transmit dengue fever, yellow fever, chikungunya, and the Zika virus. All this on top of the "normal" mosquito-borne diseases such as West Nile virus.

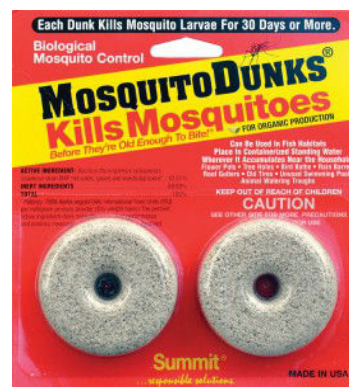
Standing water and mosquito breeding season is not a combination we need.

What can you do to avoid these pests?

- Remove standing water. Take a stroll around your yard and tip over any stacked pots or other containers which hold water.
- Block entry to rain barrels. Screen all openings (such as downspouts from the roof gutters) with a 1/16 inch fine mesh to keep mosquitoes out.
- Larvicide. Use a larvicide such as Mosquito Dunk (*Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis* / *BBTI*) in ponds and other standing water. Larvicides target only these insects and do not cause harm to pets, fish, and humans.
- Repellent. DEET, Picaridin, Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus, or IR3535 are proven mosquito repellents.

More information about mosquito abatement can be found at the Greater Los Angeles Vector Control website at:

<https://www.glavcd.org>



Disclaimer: this is not a promotion for a particular product, but only a suggested solution. - Editor

Secret Source, Part 2

By Deborah Oisboid

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not constitute endorsement or approval by the CRFG.

Bruce Blavin recommends Exotica, Champa, and Mimosa for obtaining rare fruit trees.

Exotica Rare Fruit Nursery

2508 E Vista Way # B, Vista, CA 92084

<https://www.exoticararefruits.com/>

It is well worth the trip if nothing else to experience an adventure into what a great nursery could be. Although he has lost almost 50% of his land over the years Steve Spangler, the owner-proprietor, is a delightfully strange nurseryman, with a spectacular collection of rare fruit trees.

Champa Nursery

4254 Tyler Ave, El Monte, CA 91731

<https://www.champanursery.com/>

This is a more organized, clean nursery with a wonderful collection of very rare fruit trees and a competent staff to help make your choices.

Mimosa Nursery

6270 Allston St, Los Angeles, CA 90022

<https://www.mimosala.com/>

They can be a little put-offish due to language barriers but their collection of rare fruit is also magnificent. Try to purchase the trees on sale for the best prices - and ask when the trees you want will go on sale here.

Bruce adds, "Both Champa and Mimosa are unlike any other nurseries in that they sell really rare varieties that might not have "a chance in hell" of surviving outside without tremendous care. They will even tell you so, if you ask honestly. They often pick up truly tropical varieties for their clients because their clients demand them. Regardless of their survival chances. Just a word of caution."

He also said, "When exploring new nurseries I always try to find the owners and ask about their passions in fruit trees, then they usually will reveal the gems they have to sell at their nurseries. Perhaps it was a special variety of fruit tree developed by a family member or brought to this country when they first moved here from a foreign land."

Cityplants update

<https://www.cityplants.org/calendar/>

(New information regarding last month's recommendation by the Editor)

In the previous newsletter (February) I bemoaned the fact that there were no fruit tree "adoption" events on this year's Cityplants website. Since that time they have added many events, mostly fruit tree giveaways! Check out their calendar for dates and locations, bring a water bill to prove you live in Los Angeles, and be sure to get there early. There is often at least an hour's wait for your free tree(s).

May 18, 2019 9:00 am - 11:00 am

8840 Vanalden Ave, Northridge, CA 91324

June 1, 2019 8:00 am - 10:00 am, The Home Depot

11600 Sherman Way, North Hollywood, CA 91605

June 1, 2019 9:00 am - 11:00 am

452 N San Fernando Rd, Los Angeles, CA 90031

June 8, 2019 9:00 am - 11:00 am

786 S Mission Rd, Los Angeles, CA 90023

June 22, 2019 9:00 am - 11:00 am

1400 N Gaffey St, San Pedro, CA 90731

June 29, 2019 9:00 am - 11:00 am

2027 Stoner Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90025

Where is your favorite place to get new plants? I'd love to include your recommendations next! -*Editor*

Letter From the Editor

If you're willing to share your secret, what is your favorite place (nursery, hardware store, grocery, discount shop, etc.) to buy new plants, and why? I would love to include it in a series of articles with great tips on the best plant sources. Please send your ideas to editor@crfg-la.org. Thanks in advance and I hope to hear from you!

-Deborah Oisboid, Editor

Have a suggestion? A question? A story to share? Send it to editor@crfg-la.org and see it published here!