

Fall Plant Sales Feature All-Stars, California Natives, Pollinator Plants

Ellen Zagory, Director of Horticulture and Diane Cary, Communications Director

New demonstration plantings at the Arboretum Teaching Nursery make it easy to choose great plants for your sustainable garden



Ellen Zagory

Autumn sage, *Salvia greggii*, an Arboretum All-Star, is visited frequently by hummingbirds and the pipevine swallowtail butterfly. You'll find several color forms at Arboretum sales.

FALL PLANT SALES

NEW—TWO fall sales this year!

Saturday, October 3

Member sale 9–11 AM
 Public sale 11 AM–1 PM

Saturday, Oct. 17

Public sale 9 AM–1 PM

Arboretum Teaching Nursery

At the fall plant sales at the Arboretum Teaching Nursery, gardeners will see beautiful new raised planters showcasing gorgeous plant combinations and intriguing garden themes that gardeners can replicate in their own home landscapes. These demonstration plantings include two beds highlighting the Arboretum All-Star plants, a habitat planting to support birds and butterflies, a garden of California native plants, and a pollinator garden meant to attract the greatest diversity of pollinating insects possible in a small area.

Recently we have heard a lot about the decline of plant pollinators, such as the die-off of European honeybees from Colony Collapse Disorder, which threatens crop production in some areas. In the insect world, a particular concern is a decline in the abundance and distribution of several wild bumblebee species as well as other native bees—important crop pollinators in their own right.

This same trend has also been shown for wild birds. The 2009 State of the Birds Report, produced by a partnership of government wildlife agencies and conservation groups, “reveals troubling declines of bird populations during the past 40 years—a warning signal of the failing health of our ecosystems.”

Are our home landscapes, intended to surround us with a bit of natural beauty, actually damaging the natural world that inspires them? Constructed landscapes, like those around our homes, replace native vegetation with non-native plants. Introduced ornamental plants often are not attractive to native insects and other animals and cannot provide them with the nutrition they need to survive. With less available habitat, native animal populations will decrease.

What can California gardeners do to help offset these effects? How can our gardens function within the tapestry of native vegetation around us? These questions have yet to be completely answered, but have led to a new way of thinking for gardeners.

CREATING A SUSTAINABLE HOME LANDSCAPE

At the Arboretum, we believe that gardens and other constructed landscapes, if properly designed and correctly planted, can provide support for our native fauna and flora.

The UC Davis Arboretum's Valley-Wise Gardening program and the Arboretum All-Stars, our top recommended plants,



Ellen Zagory

Wayne Roderick seaside daisy (*Erigeron* 'W.R.') with the native metallic green bee (*Agapostemon texanus*). This beautiful insect is a widespread pollinator.

provide a template for an ecologically-friendly garden. Incorporating beautiful and low-water-use plants, selecting local construction materials and porous pavers, and using designs that slow storm water flow all help conserve and protect our precious water supplies. Selecting disease- and insect-resistant plant species can reduce or eliminate the need for pesticides. Plants that provide seed, fruit, nectar and pollen support songbirds, hummingbirds,

butterflies, bees and beneficial predatory insects. Using California native plants can be especially important, since native plants support the native invertebrates, like insect pollinators, that are the bottom of the food chain.

The plants discussed below are good choices for supporting birds, butterflies, and pollinators. They are all on view in the new demonstration plantings at the Arboretum Teaching Nursery. Most of these plants will be available at the fall plant sales; we'll have the rest of them for sale in spring.

ATTRACTING HUMMINGBIRDS

One of the easiest creatures to attract to a Central Valley garden is the Anna's hummingbird, a nearly year-round resident. Hummingbirds love salvias, and both native and non-native sages will make a hummer happy. One favorite is the native *Salvia spathacea*, hummingbird sage, which blooms in late spring and into summer. *Salvia greggii* and its hybrids will flower in spring and again with a bigger display in fall, and attract hummingbirds. For more fall nectar supply, use selected forms of California fuchsia (*Epilobium canum*), like the narrow-leaved, upright, green 'Bowman's Best,' that put on a good show. Some great non-native nectar plants for hummingbirds—all Arboretum All-Stars—include coral yucca (*Hesperaloe parviflora*), purple bottlebrush (*Callistemon* 'Violaceus'), and the dramatic poker plant (*Kniphofia* 'Christmas Cheer'), which will light the garden at the winter solstice.

NATIVE PLANT COMBINATIONS

Native manzanitas that bloom in January and February, like *Arctostaphylos densiflora* 'Howard McMinn', provide winter nectar. Early spring-blooming western redbud (*Cercis occidentalis*) is an important native along the riparian uplands of the Putah and Cache Creek watershed. Bee sage (*Salvia apiana*) and giant buckwheat (*Eriogonum giganteum*) will accent the beds with their silvery foliage, while *Ceanothus maritimus* 'Valley Violet' and silver coffeeberry (*Rhamnus tomentella*) will provide early-season nectar for beneficial insects.

POLLINATOR PLANTING

Beneficial insects include the many bees, butterflies and moths important for pollination of food crops, ornamental plants, and wild plants. In addition to pollinating, hoverflies, lacewings, many beetles, and predatory wasps are beneficial because they eat insect pests. Some smaller perennial pollen and nectar plants that we have found to be attractive and adaptable in the Central Valley are California goldenrod (*Solidago californica*, Cascade Creek form), Wayne Roderick seaside daisy (*Erigeron glaucus* 'W.R.'), and yarrow (*Achillea* 'Coronation Gold'). Among the woody shrubs and larger perennials, some of the most tolerant of our conditions are the larger forms of wild buckwheat, such as *Eriogonum giganteum* and *E. fasciculatum*, and a number of California lilacs, especially *Ceanothus maritimus* 'Valley Violet', C. 'Ray Hartman', and C. 'Concha'.

While many of the plant species useful to beneficial insects may also be visited by butterflies, some bloom too early in the Central Valley to coincide with the summer and fall flight periods of many butterflies.



Emily Griswold

Hummingbird sage (*Salvia spathacea*) attracts its namesake.

Natives that bloom in the summer (buckwheat, goldenrod, yarrow, seaside daisy) are useful for attracting butterflies. Some good generalist nectar providers also include later-blooming non-native species. The perennial sedums, such as "Autumn Joy," have been shown to be excellent, attracting a number of different butterfly species in summer. Ornamental oreganos like 'Ray Williams,' 'Santa Cruz,' 'Hopleys,' and 'Betty Rollins' are butterfly favorites, and in spring and summer lavenders also provide nectar. For late summer and fall, asters of many kinds can be used; one favorite is 'Purple Dome,' whose bloom can be delayed by cutting it back in July.

Food plants for the caterpillar stage are necessary for butterfly reproduction. In the new demonstration plantings, milkweeds (*Asclepias* spp.) provide food for monarch butterfly larvae and nectar for a wide variety of butterflies. We plan to add California pipevine (*Aristolochia californica*), the only larval food of the beautiful, iridescent blue-black California pipevine swallowtail.

Collections & Gardens

SHIELDS OAK GROVE OPEN AGAIN

Diane Cary, Communications Director
Emily Griswold, Assistant Director of Horticulture

Using the principles of sustainable landscaping (see below), we have the opportunity to create patches of habitat in our gardens and community landscapes. If enough gardeners, landscapers, and public agencies implement these plants and practices, we will be able to piece together habitat corridors between larger natural areas, allowing native birds and insects to continue their age-old patterns of migration. Our gardens can become a commitment to the preservation of resources and creatures that sustain us, and help ensure a more diverse and more stable environmental future.

LEARN MORE

- The Garden Habitat Network www.gardenhabitat.net
- National Wildlife Federation www.nwf.org
- Art Shapiro's Butterfly Site butterfly.ucdavis.edu
- Audubon At Home audubonathome.org
- Xerces Society www.xerces.org/pollinator
- River-Friendly Landscapes www.sacramentostormwater.org/riverfriendly

PRINCIPLES OF SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPING

Adapted from River-Friendly Landscapes

- Landscape in harmony with the natural conditions of the local watershed.
- Choose appropriate plants for the site conditions.
- Reduce waste and recycle materials.
- Nurture healthy soils while reducing fertilizer use.
- Conserve water, energy and topsoil.
- Use IPM (integrated pest management) to minimize chemical use.
- Reduce stormwater runoff.
- Create wildlife habitat; use native plants when possible.



Dianna Johns

In a dramatic turnaround from last year, the seasonal heron and egret colony that had been steadily increasing and damaging trees in Shields Oak Grove did not form this spring. A deterrent project developed in partnership with the UC Davis Museum of Wildlife and Fish Biology was entirely successful, and none of the big birds nested in the grove.

In the past, up to 2400 birds nested or roosted in the grove, and last year there were 866 active nests at the peak of the breeding season. As we have previously reported, guano (droppings) from the birds accumulated on foliage and the soil underneath the nests, causing leaf loss and branch death and the build-up of toxic levels of salts in the soil. The birds also damaged trees by pulling off live twigs for nest construction (*Arboretum Review*, Spring 2009). The odor, the danger of aerial bombardment, and possible human health hazards from exposure to the guano made the grove unusable for human visitors from March through September.

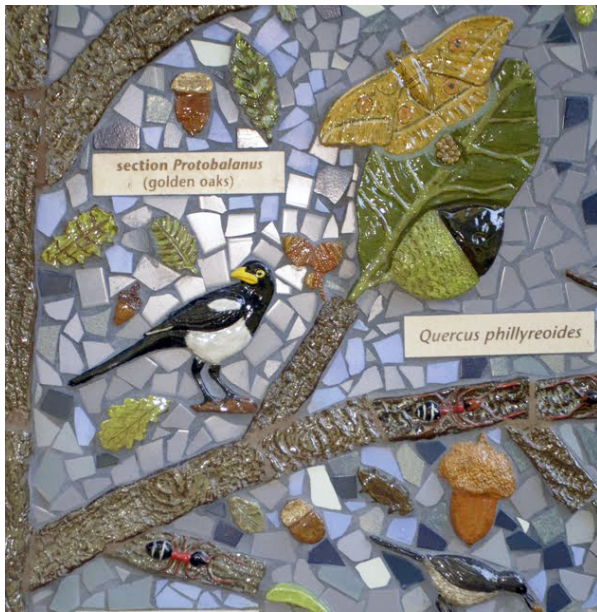
In past years we tried various “passive” dissuasion techniques—pruning trees, removing old nests, hanging mylar strips, flying shiny balloons, and raking up twiggy nesting materials from the understory. When these proved unsuccessful, we worked with wildlife experts to develop a management plan using “active” dissuasion methods. The management plan was available for public comment

in the winter as part of the environmental review of the program. The birds are protected by law, and the plan was carefully crafted to not cause harm to the herons or their chicks.

This year, wildlife biologist Mana Hattori coordinated a crew of wildlife interns, wildlife biologists, and garden specialists who spent two hours every morning and evening in Shields Grove from March through June, playing recordings of heron distress calls, shining laser lights at birds that flew into the grove, and occasionally firing off pyrotechnic noisemakers. Most of the grove was fenced off and closed to visitors during this time.

The dissuasion effort, designed to protect the Arboretum's most important scientific research collection, was remarkably successful, exceeding the biologists' most optimistic expectations. The scientists were prepared to stop all deterrent efforts as soon as nesting began, but that never happened. The numbers of birds observed peaked in April and dropped off to virtually zero by the end of June. In mid-July, the fence came down, and Shields Oak Grove was opened to visitors again.

The effort was costly: the Arboretum spent about \$45,000 during the 2008-2009 fiscal year on the environmental review and dissuasion program. The program will need to continue at a lower annual maintenance cost every year for the foreseeable future. But the value of this documented collection of more than 300 mature specimens of nearly 100 oak species, varieties, and



Oak Family Tree ceramic mosaic mural (detail) created by students in Entomology 1: Art and the World of Insects and community members.

hybrids, most of them grown from acorns collected in the wild at sites around the world, is far greater. The collection has been recognized for its national significance by inclusion in the Oak Group of the North American Plant Collections Consortium. Fifteen university and institutional botanic gardens and arboretums comprise the Oak Group, preserving important germplasm and maintaining oaks for international teaching and research.

OAK DISCOVERY TRAIL

The success of the heron dissuasion program not only allowed us to protect the collection, it also made it possible for us to invite visitors back into Shields Oak Grove. We can now move forward with plans to construct thematic trails to encourage visitors to explore the collection. We received a \$150,000 grant from the federal Institute for Museum and Library Services to build the first of three planned trails. This will be called the Oak Discovery Trail and will feature plant labels, interpretive signs, and a cell phone tour presenting information on oak biology, the importance of oaks in human history and culture, their significance in mythology and lore, and their use in home gardens and urban landscapes.

Trail construction is scheduled for fall 2009, to be followed by new plantings to create an understory of native grasses, bulbs and wildflowers. Some new oaks will be planted in open areas, to add to the 304 trees now in the grove. We will also add benches and public art elements.

The culmination of the project will be Oak Discovery Day, a community celebration of oaks, with guided tours of the Oak Discovery Trail, hands-on activities for families, and presentations by UC Davis faculty and students, local environmental organizations, and native Californian cultural interpreters.

Also planned for future construction is the Oak Diversity Trail, featuring information on oak ecology and taxonomy, the

challenges facing oak populations, and conservation efforts worldwide. The third trail, the Oak Research Trail, will highlight the Arboretum's collection of oak hybrids and a remnant population of valley oaks and will focus on the uses of oaks in scientific research and environmental restoration.

OAK FAMILY TREE MURAL

As a first step in the Oak Discovery Trail project, the oak grove was enhanced with the addition of a beautiful ceramic mosaic mural called "Oak Family Tree" that represents the evolutionary relationships among oak species. Students in Professor Diane Ullman's Entomology 1 course visited Shields Oak Grove with Assistant Director of Horticulture Emily Griswold to study oak taxonomy and diversity. Each student worked with ceramic artist Donna Billick and Arboretum staff to create hand-built tiles accurately depicting a leaf, an acorn, and an associated insect for one of the oak species in the Arboretum's diverse collection. Branches textured like oak bark connect the 29 oak species on the mural to reflect our most current understanding of oak relationships.

Many Arboretum volunteers, community members, and students from Willett Elementary School also participated in the creation of the mural. They formed and painted the myriad oak leaves and acorns as well as oak-associated insects, birds and mammals that now surround the tree. Peter Tucker, son of the late oak scholar and Arboretum supporter Dr. John M. Tucker, was one of the most dedicated volunteers for the project, and created many of the velvety tree ants that parade along the limbs of the tree. The mural was installed on the south side of the utility building at Shields Oak Grove near the "Tree of Life" and "Valley-Wise Visions" murals.



Quercus prinoides, dwarf chinkapin oak

which has been used many times over the decades to study the evolutionary relationships of oaks. The mural also reflects Dr. John M. Tucker's lifelong interest in oak taxonomy and relationships, and so it is a wonderful tribute for the mural to be dedicated in his honor.

Shields Oak Grove is an important scientific collection, a resource for home gardeners, landscape professionals, and restoration biologists, and a beautiful refuge in an increasingly urban setting. We are committed to maintaining the collection at the highest professional standards of care. If you would like to help support these magnificent trees, consider making a gift to the Shields Oak Grove Endowment. Contact Development Director Deborah Rice at (530) 752-2179 or djrice@ucdavis.edu for more information.

Members & Volunteers

Suzanne Ullensvang, Resource Development Manager

FRIENDS BOARD UPDATE

The Friends of the UC Davis Arboretum Board is pleased to announce its line-up of officers for the 2009-10 board year

which started July 1: Martha Ozonoff, president; Ernie Lewis, vice president; Mary Patterson, secretary; Shirley Maus, treasurer. Kathy Olson and Lois Crowe will continue their service on the board as members at large. In addition, the Friends board welcomed a new member at large, Nancy Shapiro. Nancy was nominated for service on the board and graciously accepted an invitation to join. Nancy and her husband Howard founded the organic seed company Seeds of Change in New



Nancy Shapiro

Mexico prior to moving to Davis. She looks forward to being part of a hands-on working board and becoming more engaged in the activities of the Arboretum.



Darrell Deering (left) and horticulturist Ryan Deering (holding daughter Zara) chat with volunteers Barbara and Kend Linderholm at the volunteer party in June.

VOLUNTEERS THANKED AT JUNE EVENT

Arboretum staff members hosted a festive party in early June to honor and thank our outstanding volunteers. Nearly 100 guests enjoyed a BBQ dinner featuring delicious treats prepared by staff, plus music and a slide show highlighting volunteer projects during the past year. Putah Creek Lodge was adorned with “starry” décor to go with the event theme celebrating volunteers as the true Arboretum All-Stars. Acknowledgements by staff members plus a fun door prize drawing rounded out the evening. Kathy Olson, one of our dedicated volunteers, commented that “the Arboretum’s volunteer appreciation party is a great event—one that I look forward to all year long.” Thank you, volunteers, for your terrific contributions!

DEDICATE A GIFT AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Deborah Rice, Director of Development

What better way to remember and honor a loved one or organization than with a special tribute gift. Your gift provides a permanent remembrance and helps to support Arboretum projects and programs. There are many opportunities—from dedicating a garden bench to a named garden or endowment. This is a gift that keeps on giving!

We want to thank the following people for supporting the Arboretum with a tribute gift this year:

- Bea and Kevin Olsen: two benches in the Ruth Storer Garden, each featuring a plaque with an inspirational quote.



Dr. Eric Conn

- Eric Conn: a demonstration bed in the Arboretum Teaching Nursery, in memory of Louise K. Conn.
- Howard, Nancy and Sedra Shapiro: a demonstration bed in Arboretum Teaching Nursery.

Benches are available for your personal dedication throughout the Arboretum, including the Acacia Grove, the area surrounding Lake Spafford, and the recently renovated Australian collection near the east end of the Arboretum. Bench tributes include a 4” x 6” plaque with a personalized inscription. Demonstration beds inside the Arboretum Teaching Nursery are also available for dedication. For more information about tribute gifts and memorial benches, please contact Suzanne Ullensvang, (530) 752-8324 or sullensvang@ucdavis.edu.

LEARN HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT THE ARBORETUM

- Annual gifts
- Membership
- Benches and memorials
- Endowments
- Named projects or programs
- Foundation support
- Business partners
- Planned gifts

For more information contact Deborah Rice, Director of Development, (530) 219-8145, djrice@ucdavis.edu.

Guided Tours

No charge, no reservation required

PLANTING PERENNIALS

Sunday, October 4, 2 p.m.
Gazebo

TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL CONTAINER GARDENS

Saturday, October 10, 11 a.m.
Arboretum Terrace Garden

WALK WITH WARREN

Wednesday, October 14, noon
Arboretum Headquarters

MEET SOME CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANTS

Sunday, October 18, 2 p.m.
Buehler Alumni & Visitors Center

OUTSTANDING OAKS!

Saturday, October 24, 11 a.m.
Gazebo

AUTUMN COLORS IN THE STORER GARDEN

Saturday, October 31, 11 a.m.
Gazebo

WATER-WISE PLANTS FOR YOUR GARDEN

Sunday, November 8, 2 p.m.
Gazebo

WALK WITH WARREN

Wednesday, November 11, noon
Gazebo

FALL PRUNING FOR THE HOME GARDENER

Saturday, November 14, 11 a.m.
Gazebo

NATIVE AMERICAN USES OF PLANTS

Saturday, November 21, 11 a.m.
Buehler Alumni & Visitors Center

GARDENS, ART, AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Saturday, December 5, 11 a.m.
Buehler Alumni & Visitors Center

WALK WITH WARREN

Wednesday, December 9, noon
Gazebo

Arts & Letters

POETRY IN THE GARDEN

Scott McLean and Thomas Centolella

Thursday, September 24, 7 p.m.
Wyatt Deck, Old Davis Road

Scott McLean is on the faculty in Comparative Literature and Nature and Culture at UC Davis. He is a published poet and the editor of the *The Real Work*, a collection of interviews with Gary Snyder. Thomas Centolella was the recipient of the 1996 Poetry Medal from the Commonwealth Club of California, the 1992 Lannan Literary Award for Poetry, and a Stegner Fellowship at Stanford.

Kel Munger and Sandra Gilbert

Thursday, October 29, 12 p.m.
Wyatt Deck, Old Davis Road

Kel Munger is Book Editor at the Sacramento News & Review and author of the poetry collection *The Fragile Peace You Keep*. Her poetry has appeared in numerous journals and anthologies. Sandra Gilbert, Distinguished Professor of English Emerita at UCD, is the author of seven collections of poetry, a memoir, and an anthology of elegies.

Sponsored by Rebecca Morrison and Poets and Writers Inc.

FOLK MUSIC JAM SESSIONS

Fridays, Oct. 2, 16, & 30; Nov. 13; Dec. 11
12 p.m., Wyatt Deck, Old Davis Road

Pull out your fiddles, guitars, banjos (you name it) for an acoustic jam session. Campus and community folk musicians play together over the lunch hour. All skill levels welcome. Listeners welcome!

Opening Night

READINGS BY THE CREATIVE WRITING FACULTY

Thursday, October 15, 7 p.m.
Wyatt Deck, Old Davis Road
(backup location in case of rain: 126 Voorhies)

Award-winning fiction writers and poets from the UC Davis Creative Writing Program will read from their work in the Arboretum to kick off the academic year. The evening program includes Lucy Corin, Joshua Clover, Pam Houston, Joe Wenderoth, and Alan Williamson. Sponsored by the English Department and the Arboretum.

Fall Plant Sales

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3

35th Annual Plant Faire

Member sale 9–11 a.m.

Public sale 11 a.m.–1 p.m.

Arboretum Teaching Nursery

Choose among hundreds of varieties of great plants for Central Valley gardens, including Arboretum All-Stars and pollinator plants. Enjoy children's activities and beautiful new demonstration plantings. Join at the door for early admission, 10% member discount, and a free plant!

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17

Warren Roberts Retirement Reception

Public sale: 9 a.m.–1 p.m.

Arboretum Teaching Nursery

Find some great plants for your home landscape and join us to celebrate the extraordinary career of Superintendent Warren G. Roberts and wish him well as he prepares to retire after 37 years at the Arboretum. (Good news—he plans to continue working as a volunteer!) Join at the door for 10% member discount and a free plant!



On the Air

Sundays, Oct. 18, Nov. 15, Dec. 13
11:05 a.m., KSTE Radio 650 AM

Arboretum Superintendent Warren Roberts talks with Farmer Fred Hoffman about what's colorful in the Arboretum and recommends some favorite plants.

Donations this quarter

We extend our sincere gratitude to these donors

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IN MEMORY OF BILL & VIVIENNE HAGGERTY

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IN HONOR OF WARREN ROBERTS

Peter Horton

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Newsletter Editor/Designer: Diane Cary



From the Director



Dear Friends,

After 37 years of extraordinary service to the UC Davis Arboretum, Superintendent Warren G. Roberts has announced his decision to retire. During his tenure, Warren has helped bring the Arboretum from a bare-bones operation—staff literally had to bring their own pencils—to a beloved “jewel” of the campus, an important scientific resource, and a thriving organization that is recognized nationally for its contributions to the fields of sustainable horticulture, informal education, and museum curation. Warren’s expertise and accomplishments in the horticultural field have ensured that the Arboretum maintains the highest professional standards and contributes to the most exacting scholarship. Additionally, his charm, wit, and warmth and his amazingly extensive circle of friends have made him an invaluable ambassador for the Arboretum.

So it is with mixed emotions that I contemplate this transition. I am grateful for Warren’s many contributions over his long and illustrious career. I am thankful that, during this time of serious and painful budget cuts, he made the generous decision to retire to help with the Arboretum’s financial bottom line. It is difficult to imagine the Arboretum without Warren—so I am especially grateful that he intends to continue to work with us in the area of fundraising, to help us build the support that will ensure the long-term stability of the Arboretum he loves and to which he has dedicated his career.

It is very fitting that one of Warren’s legacies, the Arboretum plant sales, should be the occasion for our members and the gardening community to come and congratulate him on his retirement and celebrate his many successes. Please join us at a special plant sale and retirement reception at the Arboretum Teaching Nursery on Saturday, October 17, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. In addition to cake and punch, you can pick up some wonderful plants for your garden and get Warren’s expert advice on which plants to choose and how to grow them!

You can also check the calendar in this issue (page 6) for the dates and times of the monthly Walks With Warren, where you can enjoy his unique, personal stories about the plants in the Arboretum. And please stay tuned for the next issue of the newsletter, which will have an extensive feature story about Warren and details of our plans for further celebrations in his honor.

I hope to see you at an Arboretum event or out enjoying the gardens.

Best regards,

Kathleen