

The Green Side Up



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Fullerton Arboretum Nature Guide Newsletter March 2015

In the Cement with Bement

"The Green Side Up" one year anniversary contest winner is the Red tailed Hawk from the July newsletter. We are looking forward to another great year. And the NGs are soaring high. Speaking of a high, our next fieldtrip is to Santa Rosa Plateau on April 1st. Even higher is the fieldtrip the Mt. Wilson Observatory on July 15th. It should be great way to expand our horizons. Be sure and send RSVP to Harriet if you plan to attend the Mt. Wilson fieldtrip, which will require a nonrefundable \$12 and a commitment by May 1st .

"See you on the Path"

Plant of the Month



Michelia doltsopa, closely related to the magnolia and known as **Sweet Michelia or Silver Cloud**, is a large shrub or tree native to the eastern Himalayan region and the Meghalaya subtropical forests in India. The wood is fragrant. The plant varies in form from bushy to narrow and upright, can grow to a height of 30 meters tall. The tree flowers in spring and produces heavily scented white flowers. It has long leathery and glossy dark-green leaves, 6–17 centimeters in length, that provide a point of interest all year long. The wood is a rich brown.

Michelia is named for Pietro Antonio Micheli, 18th century Italian botanist. *doltsopa* ; Latinized form of the Tibetan name for this native plant.

Quote of the Month

Beware the Ides of March. - William Shakespeare

Have you ever wondered what the Ides were like I have?

Idus, Ides—thought to have originally been the day of the full moon.

The **Ides of March** (Latin: *Idus Martii* or *Idus Martiae*) is a day on the Roman calendar that corresponds to the 15th of March. It was marked by several religious observances and became notorious as the date of the assassination of Julius Caesar in 44 BC. The death of Caesar made the Ides of March a turning point in Roman history as one of the events that marked the transition from the historical period known as the Roman Republic to the Roman Empire

Dates to Remember

March 17th - NG Meeting 1 P.M. Oak Hall

April 1st - Fieldtrip Santa Rosa Plateau

<http://www.santarosaplateau.org/>

April 18-19th - Green Scene

May 9th - Flowers, Tea and Friends

June 16th - NG Meeting pot luck

July 15th - Fieldtrip Mt. Wilson Observatory

<http://www.mtwilson.edu/>

July 31st - Full Moon Ides of Summer 2nd annual "Get no Sleep Over"

Bird of the Month



Male Blue Bird

Description: 7-inches (17.8-cm) long. Both birds are blue with Rufus undersides, although the female appears more gray.

Where Found: Generally near the nest boxes (one in the Sycamore at the North pond, and one in the tree just north of the South Pond, and also one near the farm above the bee boxes). They either perch in trees or forage on the grass.

When: Mostly spring through summer, and occasionally during fall and winter.

Notes from our own NG Kappy Hurst who is a Blue Bird monitor

Be looking for these pretty, social birds with groups of yellow-rumped warblers. A pair of bluebirds starts “shopping” for nest cavities or boxes in late winter and the female begins building a nest in early spring. (Note: In 1984, Mr. Dick Purvis could find only 2 pairs of bluebirds in Orange County. He began hanging nesting boxes in trees, as an aid for these cavity nesters. All of our trees were being cleared for new homes and dead or dying trees were being cut down for better aesthetics. The nesting boxes fill a void, but through a new Cavity Conservation Initiative, we are encouraging parks, golf courses and cemeteries to leave “snags” for the woodpeckers and bluebirds to nest in.) A female bluebird will lay 2-6 eggs in a week, incubate them for 2 weeks and they will fledge after 3 weeks. She may have 2 and even 3 broods from April to August. They love insects and worms (80% of their diet), berries and seeds. They truly are.....bluebirds of happiness. They'll make you smile.

I would encourage all of you to attend Gillian Martin's presentation on March 17th. She has worked hard at educating so many groups on cavity conservation. She is a delight to listen to and so knowledgeable. Mark your calendars!

Editors note; I was able to accompany Kappy on her day of monitoring boxes it was an enlightening day. If you are ever with Kappy in the garden have her whistle, she has a whistle that make them come. Our guest speaker at the March meeting will Gillian Martin from the Cavity Conservation Initiative. a program of the So. Ca. Bluebird Club.

NG Facts from Kathy



Tropaeolum, commonly called Nasturtium, has 80 species. It has been given the nicknames of “nose-twister” and “nose-tweaker”. It was named by Carl Linnaeus. The common name comes from an oil that the plant produces that is similar to that of watercress.

It is native to South and Central America. The perennial roots can survive the winter underground at altitudes of 10,000 feet. They were first imported to Spain and described in an account in 1569.



Nasturtiums are a common flower grown by seed. They come in a range of colors from cream, yellow, orange and red in the solids. With stripes and blotches in the same color range. They like the sun. Here in the arboretum they grow in the deciduous grove.

The flower is used in salads and has a slight peppery taste. The unripe seeds can be dropped in spiced vinegar to produce a garnish in place of capers. In herbal medicine, they are used for their antiseptic and expectorant qualities.

Researching the nasturtium in the ‘language of flowers’ many meanings can be found: patriotism, impetuous love, victory in battle, charity, and encouragement during a long journey.

Exploring further in *The New Encyclopedia of Flower Remedies* by Clare G. Harvey found the following fun information.

For Deva Flower Elixirs:

Nasturtium (*Tropaeolum majus*) To be used during “funny spells”, such as when overloaded by work or in a pre-influenza state. Also used for those who tend to overindulge the intellect to the detriment of their physical well being.

Flower Essence Society (flower essences to nourish and heal the soul):

Nasturtium (*Tropaeolum majus*) For intellectuals who think too much and deplete their life force and emotional verve from too much study. Restores warmth, vitality and radiant energy.

Plant ID from Penny



There are over 900 species of salvias (sages) worldwide. Karwinski's Sage (*Salvia karwinski*) from Mexico and Central America is one of the largest. It can be found in the Thorn Forest section of the arboretum and is a hummingbird favorite.

The Volunteer Luncheon



If there is something you would like to add to the Newsletter (a plant, a bug, an animal, a photo or anything of interest found within the Arboretum) please submit it along with a description and where it can be found to: NGNews@outlook.com. Please submit your article by the third Tuesday of the month. You may also like to visit www.bugsafari.blogspot.com, and www.stevkayphoto.com, Cindy and Steve are regular contributors to the Newsletter.

Remember the Nettle

The larval food plant of the Red Admiral Butterfly *Vanessa alalanta* .
Look for young caterpillars in the shelter of folded up leaves.

