



December 2022

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your continued support of our gardens and programs! The past year has been full of exciting activities and accomplishments. We look back with much gratitude for our loyal volunteers, dedicated membership, energetic student workers and interns, and of course, our small but devoted and hard-working staff. We'd like to share with you news of the gardens and some of our goals for the new year. We hope that you will take this opportunity to help us continue our efforts by remembering the Arboretum in your end-of-year philanthropy.

Connecting People with Plants

Why is the Arboretum essential? This can best be answered with the beautiful simplicity of our mission statement: *Connecting People with Plants*. Humanity simply would not exist without plants, nor would any of our planet's diverse life forms! The Arboretum inspires and educates about the wonder and importance of plants; their amazing forms, textures, colors, smells, unending edible and medicinal values, and the critical habitat they provide to all living things. On any given day you can see (or hear) upwards of 30 different species of birds in our gardens. Native and exotic honeybees thrive year-round with the abundance of our pollen and nectar-providing flowers. Owls, coyotes, bobcats, foxes, herons, hawks and even mountain lions rely upon the Arboretum for food and shelter. Our human visitors come to explore and learn, to relax and enjoy nature, to exercise and get fresh air, and to "travel" the world by seeing, smelling, and touching extraordinary plants in a beautiful, natural setting.



Our season of growth and bloom is underway—the true “spring” of our Mediterranean climate. With three decent rainfalls thus far, now is the time for planting trees and shrubs and for you to come and be inspired by our gardens!

Great News!

Much work has taken place in the gardens over the last year. Hundreds of new plants were put in, replacing older, senescing ones. Established shrubs and trees received long overdue pruning to improve their strength and aesthetics. New plantings include a trial garden of Salvias from around the world and a Coastal Prairie Garden to highlight many of this rare habitat's native wildflowers and grasses. We built a new walkway and rock wall extending from our parking areas to Norrie's Gift & Garden Shop to provide our visitors with a safer off-road walking path. And Norrie's continues to sell a record number of plants, beautifying businesses and home gardens far and wide!

After almost 3 years with a total staff in the single digits, we are THRILLED to announce that our staff has regrown! This past year we were able to rehire 1.5 staff positions. Erin Copp is our new part-time Administrative and Volunteer Program Assistant. Erin helps our office staff by welcoming and orienting new volunteers, processing memberships, supporting Norrie's Gift & Garden Shop operations, and helping with day-to-day activities in the office, all while bringing a friendly and welcoming personality to our community. Jose Rodriguez is our new full-time Horticultural Specialist, assisting Rick Flores in the care of our gardens, training and supervising student workers, installing garden and nursery hardscapes, and providing horticultural care to our Gondwanan (southern hemisphere) collections. Both are doing wonderful work and have provided much needed help to our staff.



We Are Growing Our Community

This fall we welcomed the season by hosting a fundraiser with our friends at *Pacific Horticulture*. Guests were immersed in the beauty of our gardens, treated to tours, plant recommendations and workshops, and a delicious farm-to-table meal provided by *Colectivo Felix*!

Our board members and staff tabled many community events including the University's *Cornucopia* and the Farm & Garden's *Harvest Festival*, introducing new students and community members to the Arboretum – thank you, Erin and Susan, and Aideed, Nisha and Jose pictured at right.



Conserving California's Native Plants

The Arboretum's Native Plant Program manages our native gardens, operates a seed bank recognized by the Center for Plant Conservation, and supports students through our Interactive Ecology Internship Program. This year we continued development of the California Conservation Gardens with a great deal of planting in our Maritime Chaparral and Central Coast Rock Gardens. We also continued our conservation efforts with the California Plant Rescue, with 61 never before seed-banked rare species from around the state, now secured in long term collections for research and restoration. This work was recently featured on the front page of the Mercury News and picked up by the New York Times! We have collected over 150 species, new to seed banking since the project began. We also began installation of a Coastal Prairie Garden, which was spearheaded by student intern Anna Geiger. Anna researched seed germination techniques, made a design, and planted and maintained the garden in its first year for her senior project. Anna is now an apprentice propagator at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. And finally, two of our UCSC student interns produced exceptional work that you can now purchase at Norrie's Gift & Garden Shop – *Field Guide to Birds of the UC Santa Cruz Arboretum*, written and illustrated by Grace Brieger, and *Mushrooms of the UCSC Arboretum: An Annotated Checklist* by Julien Pometta.



Including the Community in a Rare Event

Perhaps our most newsworthy event of the year was the amazing opportunity to share the rare blooming of the Corpse Flower, Titan Arum (*Araceae*). For the first time ever, and with a monumental effort by staff and student workers, the Arboretum presented this remarkable plant to the entire Bay Area community. The event drew

thronges of interested visitors and wildly increased our social media presence. A special thanks to Sylvie Childress and Jim Velzy who cared for the plant for 10 years at the UCSC Greenhouses. And a huge thanks to Professor Emeritus, Lincoln Taiz who, alongside Arboretum Director Martin Quigley, provided hours and hours of in-person expertise. Lincoln, who brought the original titan arum bulb to the Arboretum many years ago, also made a generous donation to facilitate the corpse flower presentation at the Arboretum.



Looking to the Future

As funding permits, we continue to conceive and design the installation of the Northwest Africa plaza above our gift shop, featuring plants from Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria. Also on the horizon is the expansion of our Chilean collection. We are working to increase picnicking and gathering spaces, including an *upper terrace courtyard* above the steps between our Horticulture Buildings. This new area will feature a paved surface, seating and an arbor. (draft sketch at right)

A long overdue revamping of our maintenance facility area is set to begin, with improved workspaces and better facilities to keep our valued equipment and materials organized and safe from the elements.

With such a small staff and multiple users of our tools and equipment, creating a cleaner and more organized facility will help us be more efficient with our time while ensuring proper care and storage of our equipment, extending its usefulness.

Happily, we are resuming First Saturday Garden Tours and introducing a Kids Story Time & Adventure Hour. We have also added a wonderful new Birds & Blooms Tour where guests learn about our flowering plants and the many birds that call the Arboretum home.



Our hopes, dreams and the health of our gardens rely on your generous support!

We hope you will take this opportunity to make a donation to support our efforts, renew at a higher level of membership for the coming year, and to remember the Arboretum in your end-of-year philanthropy. We also need to build our endowment, to ensure future stability and growth of the Arboretum. Contact our office at (831) 502-2998 for more information or visit our website at: arboretum.ucsc.edu.

The gardens at the Arboretum offer a glimpse of what future gardens on the Central Coast can look like as the vast majority of our collections are drought-loving and require no water during summer months. We hope you will visit us regularly—the gardens are always beautiful with plants blooming year-round.

From all of the Staff, Volunteers, and Students at the UC Santa Cruz Arboretum & Botanic Garden, we wish you health, peace, and prosperity in 2023!

Yours very truly,

Martin Quigley,
Executive Director