



From The Gardens' Bench

Celebrate Educate Recreate

Winter 2022-23

Hello from the Gardens

President's Message

I begin this year so thankful for the generous spirit of our supporters. We rely wholly on the contributions of our steady donors for our daily operations. And this coming spring will likely consume extra resources to recover from a particularly harsh winter.

It is particularly amazing how much we have been able to accomplish with the special endowments we have received over the years. If not for those, we would not have the refurbished stage and the handicapped ramp completed last year. It has also given us the ability to reinforce our annual budget when needed for basic maintenance and repair.

We are entering another year with rising costs, increased vandalism and challenging environmental changes in the garden. So, we are trimming our budget as much as possible



keeping to the basics of maintenance and beautification of the existing spaces. We have future projects planned for expansion and revitalization, but they will be put on hold until additional special funds – grants or endowments – can be secured to fund them. So this seems a fitting time to remind you of the wonderful gift an endowment would mean to us for the

Dunsmuir Botanical Gardens. *Arlene Dinges, President*

DON'T SPRING into garden clean-up too soon...



Please Wait until temperatures are consistently above 50° F. Many butterflies, bees and other pollinators are currently wintering in dead leaves & hollowed out stems of last years plants. **LET THEM BEE**

However, now is the time to prepare, sow, prune and more. February is the still time for planning and designing your garden and organizing your seeds by their sowing dates. If weather cooperates, prepare and build your raised beds, mulch your perennials, roses may need pruning, as do the fruit trees and berry bushes.

February is the time to stop procrastinating. Take a walk in nature to lift your spirits and boost your energy so you can get cracking with your gardening duties.

Order your seeds, compost your beds, keep feeding the birds, start collecting rainwater, and sharpen and clean garden tools. Maintain gates,

fences and trellises that the harsh winter may have damaged.

March is just around the corner and the beds could be warm enough to work. An all-purpose fertilizer is recommended at this time. If green manures were used last fall, now is the time to put that nutrient-dense mass to its highest use. Simply chop up the fresh greens and leave them to rot on the surface of the soil. If ground is not frozen, plant roses, dogwoods, birches, cherries, and plums.

Till April, keep planning and preparing, then planting as soil conditions allow. Early lettuce, peas, and beet greens are among the first vegetables to plant in early spring. In a blink of an eye, there will be an ever increasing amount of work to be done. Take one step at a time. Be patient. Enjoy the rain. And most of all, be kind to yourself.



All Plants Considered



Weather continues to play a most important role in the health of plants in the Dunsmuir Botanical Gardens. After a stretch of unusually hot and dry years, 2023 will hopefully feature more precipitation than recent history. However, we still need a significant amount of precipitation before summer to ensure the garden and forest health.

The early fall snowfall heavily damaged two mature native oak trees in the garden. These trees now have large hanging, damaged branches (widow makers) that happened when the weight of the snow on their oak leaves broke their branches. Scheduling their removal and finding the funds for their expensive removal is a challenge. Falling debris also damaged the artistic railing along the northside of the rock garden. Another of our large Sugar Pine Trees (*Pinus lambertiana*) has died. This is a large tree and will require an arborist to climb the tree and take it down in sections. Gardens are dynamic landscapes and 2023 has been more challenging than most.

Garden goals for 2023 include the continuing scheduling of mulching garden beds, selected pruning of leggy garden shrubs, completing the development of the gardens adjacent to the new handicap ramp, widening and improved placement of rocks along the pathway that runs along the north side of the rock garden and the expansion of the garden border along the upper edge of the children's garden. The flower

borders near both the stage and the children's garden will continue to feature new and outstanding annuals and perennials.

One of the new trees in the handicap garden area is *Davidia involucrata*, commonly known as the Handkerchief or Dove Tree. This tree is from China and boasts late spring flowers with large, pure white sepals

that float like a dove or hang like a handkerchief. It may take several years before the tree develops its first crop of stunning flowers but once it matures into a blooming tree it will be a major spring highlight in the garden. Many tree enthusiasts consider this tree as the most handsome of all hardy blooming trees. Introduced to Europe in 1904.

If you would like to volunteer in the garden then please mark your calendars for our annual cleanup day which is tentatively scheduled for Earth Day, April 22nd. Weather permitting, we will meet at 10 a.m. at the picnic tables by the stage. There will be fallen leaves and branches, damaged shrubs and more to clean up.

Bring warm clothes, gloves and sturdy shoes. If you have some pruners and a leaf rake that would be great too. I can sharpen any pruners you might bring. Your support is deeply appreciated. See you in the garden!

Ernie Wasson, Gardens' Horticulturist



Membership Drive 2022

"Always beautiful, always free" our motto says it all. It is membership drive time again and we are hoping to have another great year. Continuing and new memberships allows us to continue to enhance and maintain one of the prettiest places along the Sacramento River.

Your membership helps the Dunsmuir Botanical Gardens to maintain native and ornamental plantings overseen by a professional horticulturist and a second dedicated gardener. The combined knowledge of these two garden experts keeps our small piece of heaven healthy and "always beautiful".

Membership makes the gardens "always free" for public enjoyment. So, we are looking forward to hearing from you knowing that your donations and memberships keeps us dedicated stewards of the Dunsmuir Botanical Gardens.

~ Memorial Donations ~

A wonderful way to honor a loved one and to also support the Gardens is with a memorial donation. Checks can be made out to the Dunsmuir Botanical Gardens and sent to P.O. Box 242, Dunsmuir CA 96025, with the name and address of the family where an acknowledgement card can be sent. These donations are used by our horticulturalist to purchase perennial plants, shrubs and trees to add to the Gardens' permanent plant collection.



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Dunsmuir Botanical Gardens

a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization
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