



# Connections With Nature:



## Mike's Field Notes — A National Day for Public Gardens

Perhaps it started with mothers. Nearly all good things do. The grand idea to celebrate mothers was later followed with a similar day for fathers, and even the Earth. Now there are days for many causes and commodities, including public gardens. Beginning in 2009, the American Public Garden Association partnered with Rainbird to bring national attention to public gardens around the country. Large, small, public, private - they are all encouraged to participate - and so are we as we celebrate with our fellow gardens across the country on the Friday before Mother's Day, May 11, 2012.

Many public gardens proclaim free admission for the day (we're still free every day) or discounts in gift shops (we will, too) or reach out to their communities to aid a cause or support people in need. This year we are asking your help in bringing a bit of the color and fragrance of gardens to those that cannot visit a garden on National Public Gardens Day.

Cut flowers from your home garden. Find a bouquet-sized re-use-able container around the house. Bring them to SLO Botanical Garden Oak Glen Pavilion on Friday, May 11, and we will have our volunteers arrange the flowers into bright and cheerful bouquets to be delivered to those that cannot get out to visit gardens themselves. For your efforts you will receive a 15% discount in our Gift and Garden Shop - and a great sense of brightening that day for others.

I'll see you on National Public Garden Day at our Garden!



## A Visual Tour of Royal Botanical Garden - Melbourne

Tuesday, May 1, 5 PM

Join us for an evening with Tim Wall, visiting California Collection curator from Royal Botanical Garden (RBG) Melbourne. Tim will give a presentation at Oak Glen Pavilion about RBG and his work specializing in California natives. Join us at 5 PM to enjoy wine and appetizers before Tim's presentation. Learn more about Tim Wall at [slobg.org/speaker-tim-wall](http://slobg.org/speaker-tim-wall).

Cost: \$5 for members/\$10 for non-members, at the door. Vision Guild members are free. No reservations are required.

## Garden Fresh Family Cooking

May 5, 1 PM - 3:30 PM

Kids will harvest beets and other foods from the Children's Garden and learn to create a home garden and cook a delicious four course meal for everyone to share! Spaces are limited. Visit [slobg.org/kids-cooking-class](http://slobg.org/kids-cooking-class) to find out more and call 805.541.1400x304 to reserve your spot now.

## Colors of Nature: Plant Dyes

May 12, 1 PM - 3 PM

Enjoy a day of creative exploration as we delve into dyes from plants. Bring something white and made of cotton or wool you want to "jazz" up with plant dyes. Suggested donation \$5. Visit [slobg.org/kids-natural-dyes](http://slobg.org/kids-natural-dyes) for more info.

## SAVE THE DATE!

### Mediterranean Adventure Camp

July 9-13 and August 6-10

Visit [slobg.org/education/summer-camp](http://slobg.org/education/summer-camp) for more info and call 805.541.1400x304 to reserve your spot today!

## Kid Cool Plant

### We Got the Beets!

by Lindsey Collinworth, Education Coordinator



This delicious root can be sweet as candy, but you won't end up with a stomach ache from eating too much! Beets are a major food source in many countries and are high in vitamins and minerals that make you strong and healthy. From savory roasted beet soup to beet chocolate cake, beets make a wonderful addition to any meal. Beets also come in a variety of colors and are available all year on the central coast. As an added bonus, use the beet-tops in soups and stir-fries to add even more nutrition to your meal. The bright red color of some beets, called "betalain," can stain your skin and clothes, so prepare with care. Or, use this bright red color to dye white fabric, like socks and shirts!

Beets are fantastic, learn more about them by joining us for the following Kid and Family Events in the Children's Garden.

## Friends of SLO Botanical Garden

### Board of Directors

President.....John Peterson  
Vice-President.....Pete Jenny  
Treasurer.....Fred Bogart, CPA  
Secretary.....Gaby Levine  
SLO County Parks Liaison.....Curtis Black,  
Deputy Director — Parks

Ke-Ping Tsao, MD  
Helen Sipsas • Eve Vigil  
Naomi Kinney • Pandora Nash-Karner

### Staff

Executive Director.....Mike Bush  
Business Manager.....Debbie Hoover  
Director of Volunteers.....Kristina Van Wert  
Education Coordinator/  
AmeriCorps Volunteers....Lindsey Collinsworth  
Membership Coordinator.....Kathy Sutherland  
Special Event Coordinator.....Christine Hance  
Gardener.....Shay Blackburn

### Committees

Accessioning.....Pete Pedersen  
Board Development.....Ke-Ping Tsao, MD  
Concert Producer.....Pandora Nash-Karner  
Education.....Ken Levine  
Finance.....Fred Bogart, CPA  
Garden.....Eve Vigil  
Interpretation.....Ken Levine  
Library.....Carolynne Palmer  
Membership.....Gaby Levine  
Newsletter Editor.....Christine Escartin  
Graphics/Marketing.....Pandora Nash-Karner  
Programs.....Open  
Science Advisory.....Matt Ritter, Ph.D.

San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden  
3450 Dairy Creek Rd. San Luis Obispo, CA 93405

[www.slobg.org](http://www.slobg.org)

805.541.1400 FAX 805.541.1466

Phone service sponsored by  
Utility Telephone

## Business Partners

### Silver Member



Rabobank

### Business Member

Jensen – Lenger Surveys  
Morris & Garritano Insurance

### Event Sponsors

Frame Works  
Halter Ranch Vineyards  
Rabobank

Help our Garden grow...become a Business Member. Visit our NEW website at [slobg.org/help-us-grow/business-support](http://slobg.org/help-us-grow/business-support) to find out how we can be business partners.

## SLOBG Concert Series ~ 2012

### Hawkeye Herman and friends

Sunday, June 3 at 4 PM

With over 40 years of performing experience and many recordings, Michael "Hawkeye" Herman, a member of the Blues Hall of Fame, exemplifies the range of possibilities in acoustic blues and personifies versatile musicianship, originality, and compelling artistry as a blues storyteller. He will be joined onstage by special guests Tom Corbett on mandolin, Phil Salazar on fiddle, and Sarah Jane Nelson on vocals. Visit our website at [slobg.org/hawkeye-herman](http://slobg.org/hawkeye-herman) for details and links to each performer's website.

Hawkeye performs a wide variety of traditional blues, ballads, swing, and original tunes on six-string and twelve-string guitar, and is an adept and exciting practitioner of slide guitar and slide mandolin. His dynamic performances have won him a faithful following, and he leads a very active touring schedule of performances at festivals, concerts, school programs, and workshops.

Seating limited, reserve early on-line at [slobg.org/hawkeye-herman](http://slobg.org/hawkeye-herman) or call 805.541.1400x302. \$15 members/\$20 non-members. Indoor concert, doors open 3:30 PM, concert begins 4 PM. Free docent led tour begins in the Preview Garden at 2:30 PM. No-host bar. Concert Series sponsored by New Times and KCBX.



Blues wizard, Hawkeye Herman



Tom Corbett Sarah Jane Nelson



Phil Salazar

## Theater at the Garden

### *The Botanical Engineers,*

another organically grown product from  
*Espresso!* Chamber Theatre

Saturday, May 26 at 4 PM

The Garden is excited to host the bright and lively outdoor performance of *The Botanical Engineers*, an original musical comedy, at the Garden's outdoor amphitheater. This thought-provoking comedy runs about 60 minutes, includes four songs, and benefits the Garden. Advance tickets are \$15 for members/\$20 for non-members and can be purchased on-line at [www.brownpapertickets.com](http://www.brownpapertickets.com) or \$25 (cash or check) at the door, if still available.

*The Botanical Engineers* is a musical comedy adapted by playwright Devin Wallace from his 1991 radio play produced for National Public Radio (NPR Playhouse). For information about the play, please visit [slobg.org/espresso](http://slobg.org/espresso) or [espressotheatre.com](http://espressotheatre.com).



*Espresso!*  
Chamber Theatre



San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden's mission is to honor  
and preserve our connection with nature.

# Eve's Garden Shop

Friends of SLO Botanical Garden  
3450 Dairy Creek Rd.  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93405  
www.slobg.org

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
PERMIT # 459  
SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA 93401

## Item of the Month —

### *The Southern California Native Flower Garden*

by Janet Swanson, Volunteer

This month's featured items is the charming book, *The Southern California Native Flower Garden* by Susan Van Atta, who designed the landscape around the Botanical Garden building complex. She is an award-winning landscape architect who is dedicated to creating environmentally appropriate landscapes featuring habitat restoration and the use of native plants.

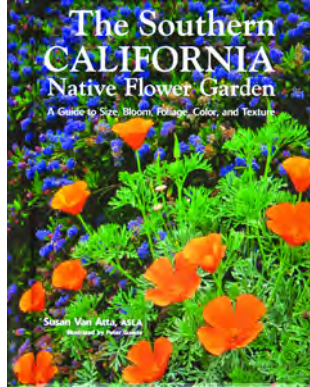


Photo by Ron Kindig



This small book is chock full of information specifically targeted to 164 of our California native plants. Each page has lovely illustrations and information for each plant: height and spread of plants, soil needs, the Sunset Climate Zones, and icons depicting the type of wildlife each plant attracts. The most unique feature of the book is the tri-cut flip pages that allow you to mix and match plants to give you an idea of how to combine the plants in your garden according to size, time of bloom and color of flowers and foliage.

During the month of May this book will be on sale in Eve's Garden Shop at 15% off for Garden members and 10% off for non-members.

## Plant of the month

by Ron Kindig, Volunteer

### Western Columbine

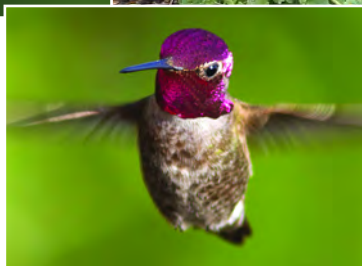
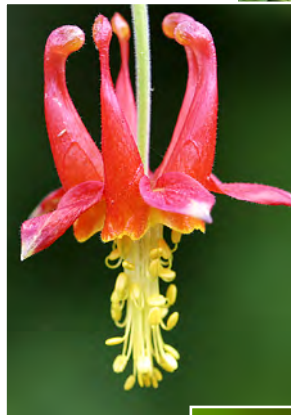
Columbine (*Aquilegia formosa*) announces summer's approach with its brilliant red flowers that nod with the wind. Its lacy foliage also gives it a fairyland quality.

Sometimes called Western or California columbine, it is native to California, Utah, and up to Alaska. Use it as a border, for a color splash, and in native, woodland, and bird gardens. It is fire resistive as well (Zones 1 to 3). It is hardy to 0° F. You can find it in Beds A and B in the Garden.

Hummingbirds and butterflies are both attracted to it, and song birds like the seeds if you allow them to form. (It is self-seeding and will spread on its own.) It is also deer and rabbit resistant. For more flowers, cut back old stems. Retire old plants after 3 years or so.

Specimens of columbine will be available for purchase at the **Spring Plant Sale on Saturday, May 12** (see cover article).

*Aquilegia formosa* was chosen for the *Garden's 128 of Our Best*, which includes plant photos, descriptions, and uses of 128 of the Garden's best plants for the landscape. This book is available in Eve's Garden Shop. Find out more about our plants on our newly renovated website at [slobg.org/our-gardens/what-we-grow](http://slobg.org/our-gardens/what-we-grow).



Columbine photos by Ron Kindig, Anna's Hummingbird by Ron LeValley

*Hummingbirds are a frequent visitor to the beautiful blooms*