



Central Coast Chapter CRFG

June 20th 2023 Newsletter
by Jenny Weaver & Tom Sheldon

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Next CRFG Meeting Fruit Tasting and Much More!

This Meeting is Open to the Public. Bring your friends!

When: July 8th, 2023

Where: CRFG Demonstration Orchard
Cal Poly University Campus
Highland Ave, San Luis Obispo

Parking: No parking permit is required on Saturdays.

Park in the parking lot in front of the Crops Unit or along Highland **off the road between the bike path and the fence.**

Schedule:

12:00 1:00 Set up

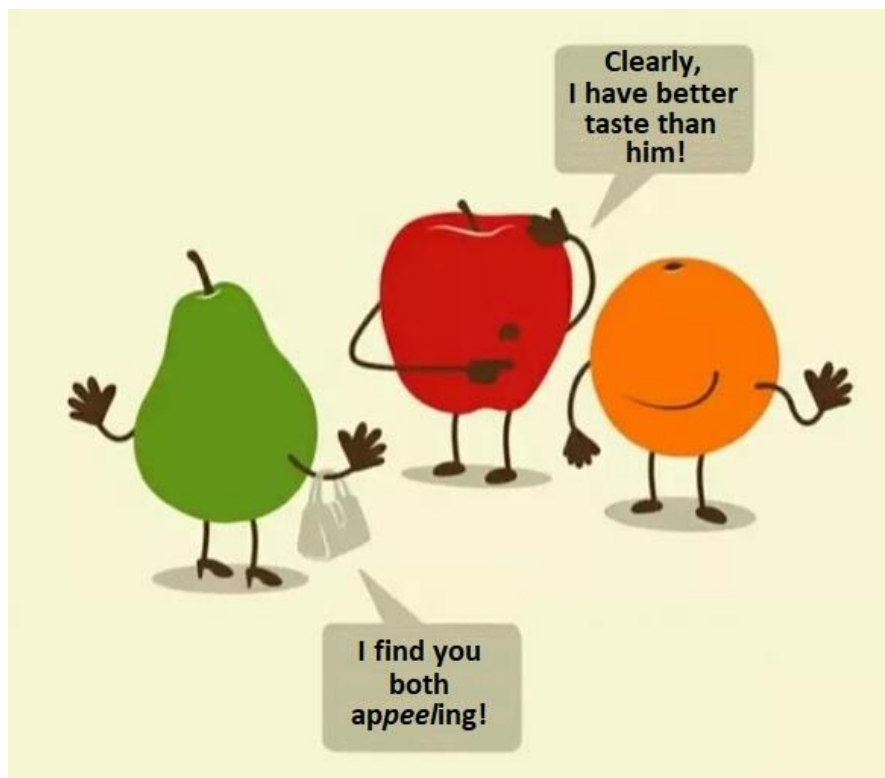
1:00 – 3:30 Socialize, fruit tasting, Officer's announcements, kid's potting bench...

Bring fresh, tasty fruit from your orchard that is clearly labeled with your name, the variety, location grown etc. Bring chair, water, hat.

Share fruit and growing techniques. Check out the orchard...

Parents with kids!! Families with children will have the opportunity to assemble *the orchard's first children's potting bench!* This project is limited to the kids and their parents/guardians. It's not very big. Dara will bring paint and brushes! For those involved, wear paint clothes!! (*What fun! I wish I were a kid again!*)

3:30 Clean up, lock up...





Announcements of Upcoming Events

July 20, 2023 Mid State Fair at Paso Robles Event Center

CRFG will have a demonstration table on July 20th from 4:00-8:00p.m. at the Mid State Fair. CRFG will give grafting demonstrations, chapter handouts, chapter and fruit growing information will be shared.

CRFG volunteers wanted! Check with Linda Robertson.
tinyapplefarm@gmail.com

The California Mid State Fair in Paso Robles runs from July 19-30.
<https://www.midstatefair.com/fair/>

July 22, 2023 Repair Café in conjunction with iFixit 1:00 -4:30p.m.

Oak Park Christian Church
386 Oak Park Blvd, Grover Beach

CRFG will have a table at the Repair Café to answer questions about growing fruit plants and share information about our chapter.

Bring something to be repaired for free and while you wait, help Marv and Linda Robertson give out plant growing advice and information about CRFG.

Linda Busek, the organizer of Repair Café says this:

"Get free help fixing: household appliances, phones, laptops, bikes, clothing, outdoor gear, toys, and more! Plus get gardening and grafting advice as well as have your knives sharpened!"

We also encourage folks to bring their garden abundance to share with their neighbors and we provide a separate table for 'Shared Abundance'."

August 12, 2023, SAVE THE DATE! BBQ and Budding Meeting

This meeting is for members only. It will be held in a yet to be announced CRFG members' orchard in Arroyo Grande. Chefs Tucker and his brother will be cooking meat on their home-made mobile BBQ. Meat and bread will be provided by our CRFG chapter. Members will bring side dishes and their own beverage and table settings.

There may be a plant sale, exchange or raffle.

Chapter members will demonstrate T-budding, chip budding and bark grafting in the orchard.

We will provide more information in the July Newsletter or by email. In late July you will receive an email asking you to respond if you are attending so Tucker knows how much meat to order.

Once you respond that you're attending, you will be provided with the time, the address, directions, and instructions for parking, host requests, etc.

September 12-14, 2023, 2023 National Heirloom Expo in Ventura!

Our chapter has been invited to have an exhibition booth at the Heirloom Expo!. It's free to exhibit and you are not required to be at the booth the entire time if you have a display. This is what Linda Robertson says:

"The festival started in Santa Rosa, and I helped out with the Redwood Empire chapter table for a couple of years when I lived up north. Our display was a large collection of seasonal fruit contributed by chapter members from their orchards, along with a few plants. The Monterey chapter had a similar table that was all apples.

I'd really like to put together a committee to work on preparing a display, and if possible get a couple of people who can make the trip down there for a day or so. I can go. Let me know if you're interested."

Check with Linda Robertson to volunteer. tinyapplefarm@gmail.com

The event will be held at the Ventura Fairgrounds.

"What began in 2011 as a celebration of pure food and sustainable living has developed into an impressive event that annually draws upwards of 20,000

participants. Featuring the largest display of heritage produce, the Expo now focuses on the preservation of heirloom foods without genetic modification. Many individual and commercial growers supply an abundance of fruits and vegetables for exhibiting and tasting.”

It’s become known as the “World’s Fair of Pure Food.” Check out the Heirloom Expo’s website for more information:

www.TheHeirloomExpo.com

info@theheirloomexpo.com

Sept 29 & 30, 2023, Arroyo Grande Harvest Festival

CRFG will have a booth again this year on Saturday September 30th. Last year’s booth was successful and fun!

Contact Tucker if you want to help.

Start saving plants to donate. Make sure they are clean, pest free and labeled clearly as to variety and growing needs. And label it with a price. Only you know how valuable the plant is, how hard it was to propagate etc...

To learn more about the event, check this website:

<https://www.agharvestfestival.com/homegrown-growing-contest>

Meeting Notes and Presentation

Report by Dara Manker

Our meeting on June 10th was at Bay Laurel Garden Center in Atascadero.



Joleah (far left) chats with Manny about figs. In the background, Sha Palmer (far right) donates seedlings for the attendees to take home. They included Ice Cream Bean, and others. Manny took them home to care for them and we'll look to sell them at future events.

Thanks to Sha!



Here are pre-meeting photos with folks gathering and chatting. Nursery trees for sale are in the background.



Linda tells us about volunteer opportunities. She made a sign-up sheet for the Scion Exchange (for February 2024).



I made sign-up sheets for the AG Harvest Festival (September 30th) and the National Heirloom Exposition (September 12-14). Sharon had made the meeting attendance sign-up sheets and included a column to allow people to volunteer for anything in which they were interested. We circulated all these forms on clipboards amongst the attendees.

We had a good turnout with about 30 people in attendance.

Marcia Geulff, our host spoke to us as well, gave a short history of the nursery which did not start out as such, and led folks on a tour, explaining the different sections of the nursery.

Orchard News-New Trees in the CRFG Demonstration Orchard

by Dara Manker

Last month's newsletter showed pictures of the five new trees purchased from Bay Laurel Nursery by our chapter. They were planted by Bob and Medhi during the May 13, 2023 Orchard Workday.

Read all about them and see pictures of their fruit by clicking the associated links below.

These newest trees are:

- [Elberta Peach](#)

This tree replaces a triple-grafted peach/nectarine that was originally planted in memory of Art Henzgen. One of those grafts was an Elberta peach. We had to remove the original tree due to disease (gummosis). We plan to graft to the new tree when it is a little bigger so that it, too, will be multi-grafted..

The Dave Wilson Nursery's website says this peach is rich in flavor, scoring high in taste tests. It ripens in July/early August in Central CA, up to 3-4 weeks later in colder climates. It is self-fruitful. Chill hours: 600.



- [Sweet Treat Pluerry](#)

"A complex interspecific hybrid, predominantly of plum and cherry, giving it the sweetness of a cherry, combined with that summer fresh plum zing," reads the Dave Wilson Nursery website. "Much larger than a cherry, but slightly small for a plum, this precocious and prolific variety will hang on the tree for over a month, and the colorful fruit make Sweet Treat a true ornamental. Reaches peak ripeness at the end of July. Pollinated by Santa Rosa plum, Burgundy plum, and Flavor King Pluot" (the last two are present in the CRFG Demonstration orchard). Chill hours: 200-300 hours.



- [Emerald Drop Pluot](#)

This interspecific plum's heritage includes plum and apricot. It is grafted to Myro 29C rootstock. Dave Wilson Nursery says this is a consistently high-scoring variety in their taste tests. "Medium to large fruit with green skin and yellow-orange flesh. Prolonged harvest: early picked fruit is firm, yet juicy and sweet. Left to hang, the fruit turns greenish-yellow with



honey-like orange flesh. Upright tree sets heavy crops once established. Pollinated by Flavor Granade Pluot or Santa Rosa Plum” (the former is present in the orchard). Ripens mid July to early August in Central CA. Chill hours: 400 hours or less.

- [Shinko Asian Pear](#)

We chose this Asian pear because of its resistance to fire blight. If you recall from the last newsletter, we had a bout of fire blight last fall that affected all of the Asian pears in the orchard.

Dave Wilson Nursery says this pear is of excellent quality: juicy, sweet, flavorful, and refreshing. This pear is late ripening, in September in Central CA. It is fertilized by Hosui, Kikusui, Bartlett, and Chojuro (the latter is present in the orchard). Chill hours: 450.



- [Royal Medlar \(*Mespilus germanica*\)](#)

I chose this one because the fruit I tasted at Robert & Carol’s orchard was delicious. It has the flavor of cinnamon applesauce. It has many attributes that would make it a great choice for home growers, including being self-fertile, pest and disease resistant, is hardy to -25°F, and usually bears the second year after planting (information from the onegreenworld.com website). It grows 6-8 feet high.

“Unique and very uncommon in North America, Royal Medlar has been popular in Europe since the Middle Ages. Forming an attractive, small tree, growing 8-10 ft. in height, Medlar’s long, dark green, tropical looking foliage is accented by large white flowers and striking chestnut brown fruit. The fruit ripens in mid to late October when it turns very dark brown and becomes soft. It is then ready to eat and has the taste and texture of spiced applesauce.”



In July 2022, Seth donated a Cherry of the Rio Grande and an orange Chamba Surinam Cherry. Larry donated an Apple Guava that he had grown from seed.

- [Cherry of the Rio Grande \(Eugenia aggregata\)](#)

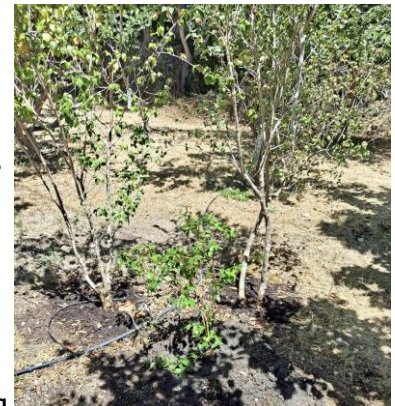
“Easy to grow with low maintenance habits makes Cherry of the Rio Grande a highly sought after evergreen shrub. Native to Brazil this shrub is highly drought and soil tolerant and requires very little maintenance. Dark reddish-purple fruit appear approximately three weeks after the little white flowers and grow into a 1 inch long treasure with a sweet cherry-like flavor. Unique and tropical in appearance, fast growing and requiring almost none of the gardener’s time or effort, makes Eugenia a great garden addition.”

This information is from the urbantropicals.com website.



- [Chamba Surinam Cherry \(aka Pitanga\)](#)

Chamba is considered one of the most productive varieties. The photo to the right shows the new tree in the foreground. The Surinam cherries in the background were donated by the Scotts a little over 5 years ago.



“An evergreen shrub 10’ in height. In spring and again in fall the Surinam cherry bears small, round fruits with eight prominent ribs. These are usually red, but are best enjoyed fresh almost black. Calling the taste amazing does the fruit justice. They are juicy and aromatic. Use them for making an excellent jelly also. Grows in zones 9 and 10.

Withstands temperatures in the low 20’s. Self-fruitful. An easy-care greenhouse plant and because it’s tropical it stays evergreen year round. These are seed grown. This is an easy plant to grow. [...]. If planted in a hedge, they produce flowers. Surinam cherry is not a very demanding plant, but like most fruits does its best when cared for. See that it receives ample moisture when blossoming and fruiting. Fertilize it twice a year as it starts to set fruit. Apply 1 cup of balanced plant food each time. Prune as little as possible if you don’t want to reduce the fruit crop temporarily.”

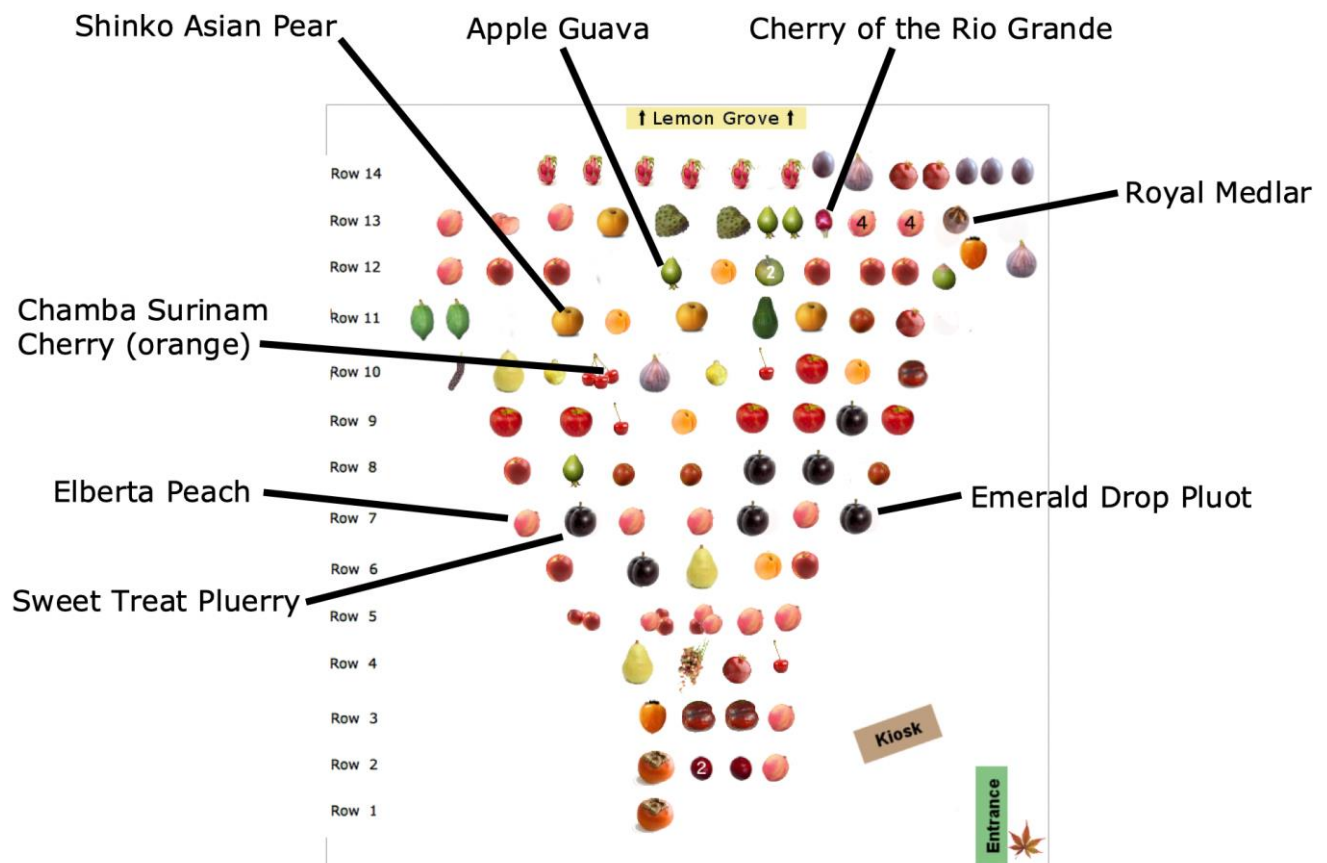
This information is from deserthorizonnursery.com.

- [Apple Guava \(Psidium guajava\)](#)

Larry (who grew this tree from seed and donated and planted it in the orchard), wrote: "Larry Kandarian picked up an apple guava from a vendor at the Santa Monica farmer's market (I think), and gave it to me. I started a number of plants from the seeds during the summer of 2021, but only two survived my long absence in the winter. I have an old tree on my property in Hawaii and it is a heavy producer."

The rarepalmseeds.com website reads that it is, "A small, evergreen tree from South America with peeling bark, leathery, glossy green leaves and irresistibly aromatic, sweet, yellow-skinned fruits that are pink inside and can be eaten fresh or made into jams, drinks or desserts."

Location Of New Trees In The Orchard



What's Bugging Me in the Garden!

By Jenny Weaver June 21, 2023

Apple Scab

Larry H. noticed some spotted apple fruit during the Orchard workday in May.



Dara took the apple samples to the San Luis Obispo County Agriculture Department to identify the problem. They were sent to the CDFA Lab and the results came back from the Lab as Apple Scab (a fungus). Dara says "The infected apples were Ein Shemer & Golden Dorsett. We're cutting these trees down. The Red Fuji is ok as of now."

Do you have apple leaves with yellow spots? Apple fruit with brown spots or

scabs? It may be caused by this fungus. We had a very wet winter so the fungal spores had plenty of moisture to spread! Learn more from this link.

<https://ipm.ucanr.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn7413.html#:~:text=The%20fungus%20Venturia%20inaequalis%20causes,weather%20is%20cool%20and%20moist>

Indian Walking Stick



I've got darn Indian Walking Sticks on a potato plant in my Pismo Beach garden. I could see notches in the leaves of the plant. I looked every morning for snails or slugs but only found some small debris on the leaves. That debris turned out to be juvenile Indian Walking Sticks! They knew how to use their camouflage.

Indian Walking Sticks are easiest to find with a flashlight at night, when you can catch them in the act of eating your plants! During the day, they hide in plain sight.

Indian Walking Sticks were originally in the pet trade, but some bug keepers managed to let their pets free into the garden, and now they've spread all over southern California.

They are extremely hard to control because 1) one Walking Stick can lay 1,000 eggs WITHOUT mating! 2) the eggs are tiny and look like frass and 3) the insect blends in by changing its color and looking just like a small stick!

Here's more information: <https://ipm.ucanr.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn74157.html>

Be Careful! An Indian Walking Stick looks similar to a Praying Mantis which is a BENEFICIAL insect. Praying Mantises have a large head (unless the female has bitten the male's head off!). They have triangular heads with bulging eyes

supported on flexible necks. They also have large forelegs.

When it comes to Indian Walking Stick, it's hard to tell which end is the head and which is the tail!

A Praying Mantis is your friend in the garden. It will eat insects as small as Aphids to as large as Crickets.

Wikipedia says this about Praying Mantis:

"Mantises are generalist predators of arthropods.[2] The majority of mantises are ambush predators that only feed upon live prey within their reach. They either camouflage themselves and remain stationary, waiting for prey to approach, or stalk their prey with slow, stealthy movements."

In conclusion, Indian Walking Sticks are BAD. Praying Mantises are GOOD!

So, know which is which before you squish!

