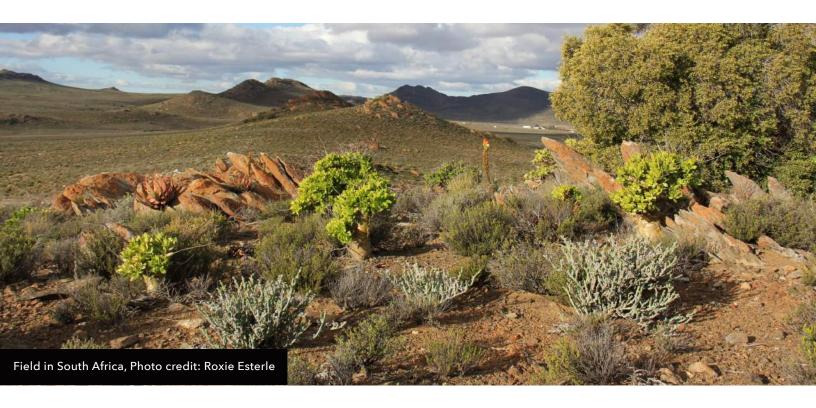


ROXIE ESTERLE



A JOURNEY WITH LEGENDARY SEED GROWER STEVEN BRACK



In the early 1970s, Steven Brack founded Mesa Garden, the premier cactus and succulent seed nursery in the country. Steven's many successful pollination and germination techniques have influenced growers around the world. His philosophy of producing seed grown specimens for collectors and retailers aimed to reduce field collection, laying the foundation for current thinking about conservation of wild populations. Steven sold Mesa Garden in 2016, allowing him to travel extensively in South Africa.

In Fall, 2022, Roxie and Jim Esterle were among a small group of fortunate adventurers who explored a narrow strip of South Africa's west coast with Steven Brack and Karel du Toit. Curious about the unusual origins of Steven's impressive knowledge about growing succulents, Roxie interviewed him on several occasions and traveled to New Mexico to visit Mesa Garden see the operation at work. This presentation combines highlights of traveling with a seed fanatic and an insider view of the story of Mesa Garden.



ROXIE ESTERLE

Roxie Esterle brings a lifelong love for biology to the study of cacti and succulents. As a science educator for all grades from middle school to college, she was acknowledged statewide for her creative lessons, hands-on methodology, and leadership. Roxie and Jim have traveled the world to explore distinct biological habitats including Galapagos Islands, Madagascar, Borneo, Ethiopia, South America, and South Africa. Each of these trips has elevated their appreciation for the fragility and uniqueness of these destinations.

Roxie credits LACSS for cultivating her learning about and enthusiasm for succulents and cacti. She has been a member of the board for over a decade, including serving as President. She is presently the Secretary of the Cactus and Succulent Society of America (CSSA).



Hi to all cacti and succulent lovers,

Isn't this just the most exciting time of year!!!?? Amazing that our "longest day" of the year has passed and we are headed for winter. Remember that line when our 110° temperatures arrive soon.....

I volunteered at the CSSA Show and Sale as a monitor in the Succulent Show room. Awesome plants in the Show – some I have never seen. I was fortunate to be in the company of the owner of some of those plants who shared her knowledge of them with everyone who inquired. And that is what it is all about! We will always teach someone and someone will teach us. That is one trait I have found to be true among all C&S enthusiasts. We share what we know, for the betterment of each other, the hobby and the cultivtion as well as protection of our plants. For our new members, there never is a dumb question! Everyone will learn from your question and the (many) response(s). When there are many opinions, each of us must figure out which one works best for our plants and unique micro clime. Trial and error and experience is the modus operandi for us.

That same sharing approach to learning is featured in our Plant of the Month feature. Each plant is not just a pretty face. Along with the Plant Description by Kyle Williams and Manny Rivera's narrative, each plant displayed tells a story – source, cultivation, uniqueness, taxonomy, etc. "What have I learned from all that has been presented in POM that I can utilize for my plants?" Hmmmmm

We were not defeated by a pandemic or a drought. Quite the opposite, cacti and succulents became more and more popular - attracting new hobbyists and some very impressive landscaping. This translates into very energetic meetings with fantastic speakers. So, bring your questions, your plant of the month contestant, your energy, and don't forget when it is your turn to provide some refreshments.

See you soon. Joyce

BOARD BOLLONG BOLLONG

LACSS MISSION STATEMENT

The Los Angeles Cactus and Succulent Society (LACSS) cultivates the study & enjoyment of cacti & succulent plants through educational programs & activities that promote the hobby within a community of fellow enthusiasts & among the greater public.

CO PRESIDENTS

Artie Chavez + Joyce Schumann

PAST PRESIDENT

Kim Thorpe Chavez

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Ron Behar

2ND VP, PLANT OF THE MONTH

Manny Rivera

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Roxie Esterle

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Manny Rivera with Artie Chavez + Kimberly Gomez-Tong

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PLANT PROCUREMENT

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HISTORIAN

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AWARDS DINNER CHAIR

Vacant

LIBRARIAN

Joyce Schumann

POM PLANT DESCRIPTIONS

Kyle Williams

SOCIAL MEDIA COMMITTEE

Kim Thorpe Chavez Dan Curran Kimberly Gomez-Tong



Refreshments!

A warm "HELLO" to LACSS members! We have seen an increase in attendance at our monthly meetings after bringing back refreshments. Since most of our members (excluding retirees) come straight from work, it is nice to have a snack while enjoying the LACSS meeting.

It is a collective effort and responsibility each month to supply our members with sustanence,

THIS BRINGS US TO THE MONTH OF MAY AND THE ALPHABET ASSIGNMENT IS FOR THE MONTH IS LAST NAMES BEGINNING WITH LETTERS "I, J, K AND P."

If your last name begins with that letter, please bring something to share, enough for approximately 10 people. If you'd like to bring more that is okay too.

To facilitate set-up and clean-up, we ask that your contribution be in individual portions and/or a disposable container. At the end of the meeting, all leftovers, including containers, will be discarded. If you are available to help set up or tear down the refreshment center, please see me at the meeting at the Refreshment Table.

If you are unable to contribute, the club will also have a jar/bowl at the refreshment table if you would like to donate money so that the club can continue to supplement refreshments brought by the attendees.

June - Members whose last name begins with "G, L, Y"

July - Members whose last name begins with "I, J, K, P"

Aug - Members whose last name begins with "M"

Sept - Members whose last name begins with "S, T"

Oct - Members whose last name begins with "N, W, Z"

Nov - Members whose last name begins with "B, V"

Jan - Members whose last name begins with "O, R"t

JANUARY

Matucana, Submatucana, Oroya Aeonium

FEBRUARY

Coryphantha, Neolloydia, Neobesseya Sarcocaulon

MARCH

Echinocactus Anacampseros, Avonia, Grahamia

APRIL

Aztekium, Epithelantha Aloinopsis, Antimima, Aptenia, Argyroderma

MAY

Cacti staged as miniature Succulent staged as miniature (Diameter of pot NO LARGER THAN 3")

JUNE

Favorites

JULY

Melocactus Euphorbia Medusoid

AUGUST

Mammillaria (Dichotomous & 2 Heads) Gasteria, Astroloba

SEPTEMBER

Cacti from Coahuila Nolina, Calibanus, Beaucarnea

OCTOBER

Espostoa Fouquieria

NOVEMBER

Crest and Monstrose

DECEMBER

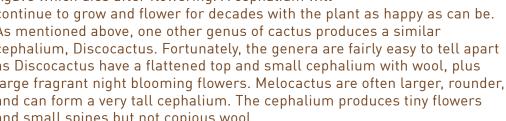
Holiday Awards Party

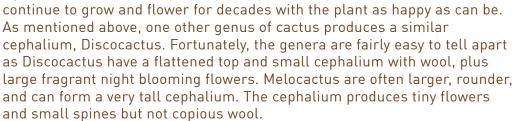


Melocactus, from Brazil, Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean, is one of the very first genera of Cacti described by Linnaeus in 1753. His work, Species Plantarum, is considered the official starting point of modern botany, specifically the botanical names of plants as we recognize them today. Although popular in cultivation, many of the species are endangered in the wild.

Melocactus has a very unusual growth habit that is nearly unique among cacti (only Discocactus is similar). When young the plant looks like a run of the mill globular green cactus. The kind of cactus you might not even give a second glace to in a nursery. However, after several years of growth a

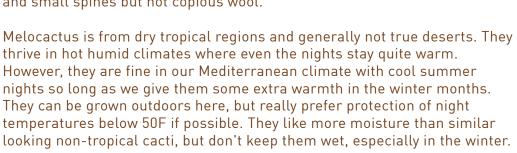
sudden, radical, change occurs and the cephalium is produced. The cephalium is a structure that produces nothing but flowers, fruit, and small spines. It has no chlorophyll and is smaller in diameter than the main body of the plant. Specifically, this structure is formed on top of the main body of the plant. The body of the plant stops growing upwards and all growth for the rest of the plant's life will be in the cephalium. This isn't like Agave which dies after flowering. A cephalium will







Melocactus peruvianus





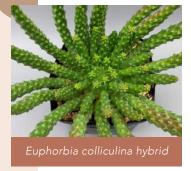
PLANT OF THE MONTH

EUPHORBIA M. E. D. U. S. O. I. D. E. O. R. M.

Nature has an uncanny ability to surprise us with its diverse and extraordinary creations. One such marvel is the Euphorbia medusoids, a peculiar plant that captivates the imagination with its unique appearance. Bearing an uncanny resemblance to the mythical Greek figure, Medusa, this enigmatic succulent has gained significant attention among botanists, horticulturalists, and plant enthusiasts alike. In this article, we delve into the intriguing world of Euphorbia medusoids and uncover the secrets behind its captivating allure.



Also known as Medusa's head or Medusa's hair, is a remarkable species belonging to the Euphorbiaceae family. Native to the arid regions of South Africa, specifically in the Eastern Cape province, this succulent stands out due to its bizarrely shaped stems. The plant typically forms a cluster of thick, fleshy stems that resemble the writhing, snake-like hair of the mythological creature, Medusa.



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Like many other succulents, Euphorbia medusoids has evolved several adaptations to thrive in arid environments. Its succulent nature allows it to store water in its fleshy stems, enabling the plant to withstand prolonged periods of drought. The small, finger-like protrusions on the stems serve as shade for the plant, reducing water loss through evaporation and providing protoction from intense sunlight.



Euph rbia me usoids is a plant that evokes curiosity and wonder, both for its intriguing appearance and its remarkable adaptations to survive in harsh environments. It serves as a reminder of the incredible diversity found in the plant kingdom and the remarkable ways in which organisms adapt to their surroundings.

Tips and Tricks to Growing Euphorbias From Seed

written by Gianluca Bacci

Many of the sought after medusoid or caudiciform Euphorbias can often be difficult to grow from cuttings: they either rarely produce divisible offsets (Euphorbia suppressa for example), or cuttings may seldomly grow to look like their seed grown counterparts (like E. horwoodii, or E. knuthii). For these reasons growing euphorbias from seed can be a useful practice for a collector. Here I hope to outline some of the tips and tricks I have developed over the years to hopefully make growing these loved plants from seed a much easier task.



Figure 1. Euphorbia herrei with Organza bags to collect seeds



Figure 2. E. decepta with "candy wrappers" around seed capsules

Step 1: Collecting

Euphorbia seeds can be a pain in the butt to collect due to their exploding capsules which tend to shoot the seeds to every unreachable nook and cranny before one can get to them. In addition to this, if the capsules are harvested too early the seeds are often nonviable making it difficult to time optimal seed collection before expulsion. Because of this, I have come to rely heavily on several types of mesh bags to collect my seeds. The first type of bag I use is a pre-made drawstring organza bag, which I balk order from Uline. These are incredibly useful for gathering seeds on long inflorescences, or at the tips of long branches which can be easily bagged up (see Fg 1.). Large bags can also be used to engulf an entire plant when it is loaded with seed, simply wait until all of the capsules have dehisced, and voila, you have a bag of seeds. For species whose seeds are produced on structures that are too small to be bagged with a drawstring, I use a little assembly that I call my candy wrappers (see Fg 2.). These are made from fabric mesh that I fold and tie off the ends with wire, these can then be pulled open and pseudo-velcroed onto the textured epidermis many of the plants we grow possess. This allows one to capture seed pods at almost any angle on almost any plant. Once the seed pods are bagged all that's left to do is wait for them to pop, and then collect the seeds.



Figure 3. Newly prepared seed pots.



Figure 4. Seedling pots sitting in my greenhouse under the same ambient conditions as my parent plants.

Step 2: Germination

If one has ever tried germinating Euphorbia seeds using a standard germination technique (such as the baggy method), they may have noticed that germination rates tend to either be very low, or extremely sporadic. Despite this, many species of euphorbias seem to come up quite regularly as volunteers in neighboring pots. After making this observation countless times, I came up with a hypothesis that Euphorbia seeds may need to dry out between waterings in order to germinate, and after running a few tests I found this to indeed be true. After some more trial and error I developed the following protocol for germinating all of my Euphorbia seeds: First, I fill up 4" plastic Square pots a quarter inch from the top with planting media (the same media I use for my adult plants, 90% pumice plus a bit of organics and decomposed granite). I then microwave the pots until the soil at the center is hot to the touch, which pasteurizes the media (exact microwave times will vary based on quantity of pots and type of microwave). Next, I sprinkle the seeds evenly on top of the soil making sure to leave room between the seeds for the plants to grow a little once they germinate. Lastly, I spray them down with 3% hydrogen peroxide to help with surface sterilization, and then cover them with a thin layer of perlite (the exact thickness of which varies depending on the size of the seeds - less top dressing with smaller seeds and more with larger). I use perlite instead of some other media as it seems to be dense enough to prevent the seeds from pushing themselves out of the planting media, while simultaneously being light and sterile enough to avoid damaging or suffocating seedlings (See Fg 3.). Now here is the important part, I thoroughly water the pots once with distilled or RO water and then let them completely dry out over the course of the next week or two. Once pots are bone dry I water them again. This second watering will usually induce rapid germination at which point I continue to water them about 2 to 3 times per week (see Fg 4.). If germination does not occur after the second watering, simply repeat the drying process again. I have found some especially stubborn species require two or three wetting and drying cycles before they will germinate. I typically leave my seedling Euphorbias in their group pots for approximately one year before I separate and plant them in individual containers, although some especially fast-growing species may need to be divided up sooner.

This protocol for germinating Euphorbia seeds is a good broad brush stroke method, however, I still encourage people to experiment and try new things to develop their own cultivation methods. Each species' and grower's environment is a little different, so modifications should be made to suit the needs of plants and growers alike. I hope some of these tips will come in aiding the growth of more beautiful rare seed grown Euphorbias!



My name is Gianluca Bacci, and I am an avid succulent collector. I have grown plants for over 15 years, and have been working professionally in the horticultural industry for the past 7. I currently manage and care for the xeric plant collection at the UC Davis Botanical Conservatory, which has well over 2000 species of succulents and cacti. I am also a physics major, and current student at UC Davis. Photo: E. Sandoval



DIG IT YOURSELF PLANT SALE

JULY 8TH, 2023

<u> 9AM - 1</u>PM



DON'T MISS THIS OPPORTUNITY!! MOVING SALE!!

EXPAND YOUR COLLECTION OR BUY SOME PLANTS FOR YOUR LANDSCAPING PROJECT!

BRING GLOVES, TROWEL, SHOVEL, CONTAINERS TO HOLD PLANTS, BUBBLE WRAP OR NEWSPAPER TO TRANSPORT YOUR PLANTS.

SUSAN PHILLIP'S HOME, SATURDAY, JULY 8TH 9AM TO 1PM ADDRESS: 12353 HESBY ST, NORTH HOLLYWOOD, CA 91607 1GALLON: \$10, 5GALLON: \$20

for more info, contact Desiree: desireealexander86@gmail.com

CACTUS SUMMER PLAYLIST

BY JACKSON BURKHOLDER precisioncactus@gmail.com

School is out for the summer, and even though that doesn't completely apply when you are trying to wrap up your thesis, it certainly wouldn't feel right writing a complex article on botany or anatomy. In Colorado, July and August are some of the only months of the year when its comfortable to do things like a have a BBQ on the patio or visit an outdoor swimming pool and listen to some tunes, so I thought it would be only be appropriate to write about a less serious topic.

Fortunately, as a fan of the Cactaceae as well as of central European music, there are plenty of opportunities to relax to songs that feature my favorite plants (which are also very popular in that part of the world where few things are more exotic than strange spikey pants from the Americas). Below are few of my favorite songs from my years of searching out cactus-themed music. I Hope you enjoy them, and if you know of any music that mentions cacti or succulents, please let me know!

COMEDIAN HARMONISTS - MEIN KLEINER GRÜNER KAKTUS (MY LITTLE GREEN CACTUS):



This is the oldest song featured in this article, which was released in Germany in 1934. The Comedian Harmonists were an all-male vocal group formed in Berlin in 1928 inspired by Jazz music from the United States. After a few years they became popular in Europe, even making film appearances, but faced many difficulties due to the declining situation in Germany and eventually had to break up in 1940. As the name of the group implies Mein Kleiner Grüner Kaktus is a humorous song about a cactus on an apartment balcony that is useful for preventing burglars until it falls off the upper story balcony onto the head of the inhabitant of the apartment below.

2. JIŘÍ KORN - CHLUPATÝ KAKTUS (HAIRY CACTUS):

This is a short but endearing song about the artist's favorite cactus, which is apparently covered in a copious amount of trichomes or thin spines. Unfortunately, the identity of the plant as either an Espostoa or an Oreocereus is never mentioned, but I like to think it's a Sulcorebtia patriciae. If you find the original music video from when the song was released in 1974 it is a pleasure to watch with the three vocalists singing while each waving a small grafted cactus to the music. Jiří Korn is a Czech musical artist and actor who has been active since the late 60s.

3. BOVSKA - KAKTUS (CACTUS):

This song by the Warsaw-based artist Bovska doesn't have too much to do with cacti, as they only appear in the lyrics once or twice as different plants are compared in different mental states (I think). Desert plants are featured mainly in the music video which shows the artist dancing in a desert conservatory where many familiar plants including Ceiba speciosa, Agave attenuata, Stenocereus pruinosus, Mammillaria elongata, Kroenleinia grusonii var. albispinus make cameo appearances.

4. LIDIJA BAČIĆ - KAKTUS (CACTUS):

Balkan music always has a great summer vibe and this cactusthemed song from Croatia is no different. Not only do the lyrics prominently feature cactus as the singer reassures her lover that they are good for each other unlike a cactus and a balloon, but the music video is enjoyable and includes surprisingly realistic depiction of a cactus and succulent enthusiast. It tells of the story of the singer trying to get the attention of her boyfriend who is only interested in learning about cactus and taking care of his collection. Many of us can probably relate (to the boyfriend at least!).



Figure 2 - Jiří Korn (far left) sings while holding a grafted hairy cactus



Figure 3 - BOVSKA dances in a desert conservatory while some Stenocereus pruinosus appear on either side.



Figure 4 - Lidija Bačić acts bored while her boyfriend tends to his collection of cacti and succulents.

The only negative comment is on the Euphorbia lactea crest, which is clearly not a cactus!

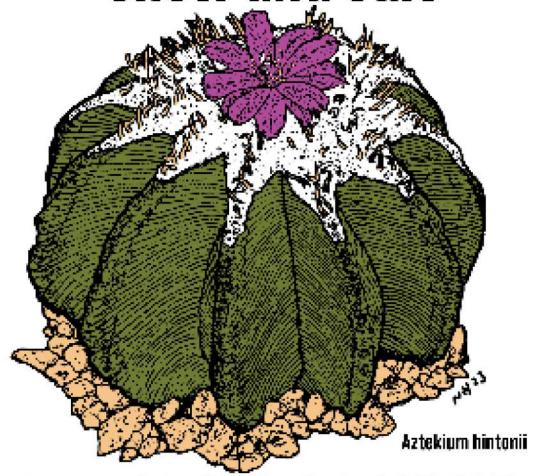
Although it's not a specific song, any article on cactus-themed music would be remiss in not mentioning the deep house / ambient techno anthologies released by the Cactus Traxx Label. Each one is named after a different species of cactus from Wilcoxia poselgeri to Rebutia senilis and features 4-5 ethereal tunes. According to Discogs.com, each copy of the limited-edition vinyl even came with a packet of seed for the namesake cactus of each respective album. However, it's safe to assume that these seeds most likely didn't have any field numbers or provenance.



Jackson Burkholder has been growing cacti and succulents for over twenty years. He grew up attending Colorado Cactus and Succulent Society events, and what started as one or two small plants every year has turned into an obsession with desert flora. He is currently serving on the Board of the Cactus and Succulent Society of America and the leadership team of the International Cactaceae Academic Network. His focus is on well-documented South American cacti that thrive in the high elevations and cool nights of Colorado as well as winter hardy species from North America.

Jackson is also interested in restoring and using antique scientific equipment and experimenting with traditional scientific techniques. He combines both of his passions by studying plant anatomy and is working on finishing his master's thesis on this subject at Texas State University.

Cactus & Succulent Show and Sale



<u>August 4th, 2023</u> - Sale 8AM-5PM <u>August 5th & 6th, 2023</u> - Show & Sale 8AM-5PM

Los Angeles County Arboretum - www.intercityshow.com

Hosted by the Long Beach, Los Angeles and San Gabriel Valley Cactus & Succulent Societies

Instagram: @intercityshow
Facebook Group: intercityshow

We encourage you to bring your own box to the sale

DON'T MISS OUT!

Intercity Show and Sale

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

The Inter-City Cactus and Succulent Show is a major collaboration of the Los Angeles, San Gabriel Valley, and Long Beach Cactus and Succulent held at the Los Angeles County Arboretum on August 4th, 5th, and 6th.

We need about 30 members to volunteer as clerks, security, holding area, entries, hosts, and more.

To sign up, please see Sandy at the July 7 meeting, or contact at:

SANDY CHASE (818) 367-0864 or email at exoticfloraandfauna@msn.com

ALL VOLUNTEERS WILL RECEIVE A COMPLIMENTARY INTER-CITY TSHIRT WHICH WILL BE DISTRIBUTED AT THE AUGUST 3RD LACSS MEETING

PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR TSHIRT SIZE WHEN CONTACTING SANDY.

2023 CACTUS AND SUCCULENT CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

JULY 12 - 16	CSSA CONVENTION INFO. WWW.CACTUSANDSUCCULENTSOCIETY.ORG
JULY 21 - 22	ORANGE COUNTY CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY SUMMER SALE FRI NOON-6PM,SAT. 9AM-4PM INFO. CALL 657-549-0702 1000 S. STATE COLLEGE BL., ANAHEIM, CA
AUG 4 - 6	INTER-CITY SHOW AND SALE - RESERVATIONS REQUIRED INFO. WWW.INTERCITYSHOW.COM OR CALL 805-264-6262 PLANT SALES 8AM-5PM DAILY, SHOW OPEN 8AM-5PM AUG. 5-6 LA COUNTY ARBORETUM, 301 N. BALDWIN AVE., ARCADIA, CA
SEP 2	HUNTINGTON BOTANICAL GARDENS SUCCULENT SYMPOSIUM 9AM-3PM RESERVATIONS REQUIRED RESERVATIONS- WWW.HUNTINGTON.ORG, SYMPOSIUM-CALL 626-405-3571 HUNTINGTON BOTANICAL GARDENS, 1151 OXFORD RD., SAN MARINO, CA
OCT 1	LONG BEACH CACTUS CLUB ANNUAL AUCTION 1PM-3:30PM INFO. CALL 714-553-6914 WOMEN'S CLUB OF BELLFLOWER, 9402 OAK ST., BELLFLOWER, CA
OCT 8	LONG BEACH CACTUS CLUB ANNUAL AUCTION 1PM-3:30PM INFO. CALL 714-553-6914 WOMEN'S CLUB OF BELLFLOWER, 9402 OAK ST., BELLFLOWER, CA
NOV 3 - 5	HUNTINGTON FALL PLANT SALE - RESERVATIONS REQUIRED SAT-SUN 10AM-5PM INFO. RESERVATIONS- WWW.HUNTINGTON.ORG HUNTINGTON BOTANICAL GARDENS, 1151 OXFORD RD., SAN MARINO, CA