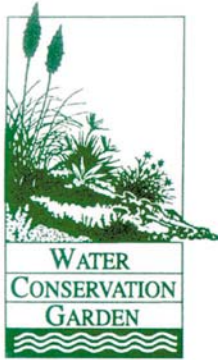


Media Release



For Immediate Release

September 26, 2005

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<http://www.thegarden.org>

California-Friendly Gardening Festival Showcases Water-Wise Plants, Designs, Technology...and Fun!

El Cajon, CA – As the hot summer season winds down, now is the time for San Diego County residents to start thinking about the fall planting season. **The beautiful plantings and displays at The Water Conservation Garden at Cuyamaca College will be the backdrop for the California-Friendly Gardening Festival on Saturday, October 8, 2005 from 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. at 12122 Cuyamaca College Drive West in El Cajon.** The event is free and open to the public.

This year's California-Friendly Gardening Festival will give people the opportunity to learn about water-wise landscaping, purchase drought tolerant plants, get personalized design advice, and participate in some family fun at the same time!

Several professional landscapers will be featured in an expert lecture series at the California-Friendly Hall of Learning. Designers include Kay Stewart, Greg Rubin, Chris Wotruba, and Jan Tubiolo. Their specialties range from fire-wise landscaping with native plants to water-wise landscape design. Homeowners are encouraged to bring photos and diagrams of their yards to get a free 15-minute one-on-one review with a designer. In addition to these designers and others, Dan Carney, a landscape architect and irrigation expert, will be give 20-minute lectures throughout the day.

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There will be several giveaways at this year's event. The first 100 attendees will receive a deck of the Garden's beautiful flowering plant playing cards, complete with color photos and horticultural information. Attendees can also enter an opportunity drawing for a landscape design consultation, a "sidewalk strip" makeover, free gardening classes, and a grand prize of a free home landscape re-design of either the front or back yard of a standard residential home.

Native plants from Tree of Life and Las Pilitas Nurseries will complement other California-Friendly plants, from Rancho Jojoba Nursery, Mary's Garden (bulbs), Tom Piergrossi's Landscape and Nursery (salvias), and Brown's Herbs Etc. Water Conservation Garden docents will sell beautiful succulent wreaths, perfect for the upcoming holiday season. Other garden products, such as succulent soil mix and compost tea will be for sale, along with plant-related gifts such as herbal soaps, and garden art.

Vendors will also be on hand featuring the latest water-efficient irrigation technology. Homeowners are encouraged to learn how a Weather-based Irrigation Controller can take the hassle out of programming their sprinkler timer and save water at the same time. Other booths will have information on ways to save time, money, and maintenance through California-Friendly Gardening. The National Wildlife Federation will even show visitors how to attract beneficial wildlife to their California-Friendly garden!

The festival combines learning with family fun. Children are invited to participate in a Garden scavenger hunt, plant low-water-use plants from seeds and take part in a Great Pumpkin Walk. In The Garden's amphitheater, Dr. Wilderness will delight visitors with his "SPLASHTASTIC" Magic Show. And all can enjoy the Garden to the beat of Paul Horn's steel drum, Greg Campbell's guitar and vocals, and Wood 'n'

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Lips Etc.'s late-fifties folk music and early rock. Come early and stay late...tamales, beans and rice, roasted corn, fruit smoothies and kettle corn will keep visitors well fed.

Garden members will receive discounts in the gift shop, featuring a wide selection of gardening books and gifts, as well as beautiful tee shirts. New members or those who renew a membership will receive a free deck of the Garden's flowering plant playing cards, or the new garden t-shirt for just \$5.

The festival will highlight the award-winning 4.3-acre garden and its message of low-water-use landscaping to those who are turning their minds toward gardening and those who would simply love to visit a beautiful garden in the fall. For more information, visit the Garden online at <http://www.thegarden.org> or call 619.660.0614. The 2005 California-Friendly Gardening Festival is sponsored by: Rain Bird Irrigation, Hunter Industries, Bank of America, and the Metropolitan Water District.

The Water Conservation Garden is a 4.3-acre water-conservation demonstration garden run under the auspices of a joint powers authority. Its member agencies are the San Diego County Water Authority, Otay Water District, Helix Water District, Padre Dam Water District, the City of San Diego, and the Grossmont-Cuyamaca College District. The Garden receives supported through its member agencies, memberships, donations, grants, facility rentals and gift shop sales.

The Garden is open seven days a week from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. There is signage for self-guided tours. Evening and weekend tours, classes, and events are available to visitors. Directions to the Garden are listed below. Call (619) 660-0614 for further information and visit the web site at www.thegarden.org.

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Directions to the Garden: The Water Conservation Garden is located at 12122 Cuyamaca College Drive West in El Cajon, where Jamacha Rd. (not Jamacha Blvd.) and Hwy 94 meet. From Hwy 15 or Hwy 805, merge onto Hwy 94 East to Cuyamaca College Drive West. From Hwy 8 take the 2nd St. off ramp in El Cajon, which turns into Jamacha Rd and then turn onto Cuyamaca College Drive West. For Information about the garden, including detailed directions and a map, go to: www.thegarden.org.