

# PTCA NEWS

*Improving San Diego's quality of life through proper tree care.*

## PTCA 2022 SUMMER TREE WALKS

### June Tree Walk - The 'Big Fig' with Magen Shaw

It's time to launch our 2022 Summer Tree Walk Series! And there is no better spot to kick things off than "the Big Fig" at Balboa Park.

On June 7, We will begin our summer tree walk season with Magen Shaw, the Balboa Park Horticulturist. She will meet us at 5:45 PM at the Big Fig tree next to the San Diego Natural History Museum. She will share some history on this iconic park resident and details of the project to build a public viewing platform. Attendees will get a closer look at the much loved tree.

Balboa Park is known for its diverse collection of plants and trees. The landmark Moreton Bay Fig tree is the largest of the *Ficus macrophylla* represented in the park. It was planted as a small tree in a garden of the 1915 Panama-California Exposition and, with more than a century of growth, has become a magnificent giant. The tree was officially measured in 1996 at 78 feet (24 meters) high, with a crown width of 123 feet (37 meters) and a trunk girth of 486 inches (12.3 meters). It is one of the three largest Moreton Bay Fig trees in the state of California.

A new viewing platform around the iconic Moreton Bay Fig tree, which is located between the Natural History Museum and Spanish Village



in Balboa Park, was unveiled on April 30, 2021. Identifying the construction impact of the public viewing platform started with the planning and understanding of how the different stages of construction would affect the tree, and then managing the impact of those actions on the tree's health. The tree had been fenced off to the public since 1989 due to previous damage to the roots. The nonprofit organization formerly known as Friends of Balboa Park, in partnership with landscape architect Pat Caughey of Wimmer Yamada & Caughey, led the due diligence and construction of the viewing platform to ensure the tree's protection while allowing visitors to get physically closer to the tree to appreciate its canopy.

2022 Tree Walks will be free to members and employees, and \$25.00 for nonmembers. Please visit the PTCA website at [www.ptcaosd.wildapricot.org](http://www.ptcaosd.wildapricot.org) to register, and for more information.



### Monthly Meeting Details

Date: Tuesday, June 7

5:45: Meet at the 'Big Fig' in Balboa Park

Location: Balboa Park  
1788 El Prado  
San Diego, CA 92101

Cost: Free for Members  
\$30 for Non-Members

**Walking the 'Big Fig'**  
Magen Shaw

**Register Online**  
[www.ptcaosd.wildapricot.org](http://www.ptcaosd.wildapricot.org)

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KatesTrees.org

## PTCA NEWS

### SD County Fair - Volunteer Opportunity

The PTCA is still looking for volunteers to man the booth at the upcoming San Diego County Fair!

After a two year hiatus, the Fair is officially scheduled for June 8 - July 4, 2022. The PTCA is excited to have representation in the Horticultural Information Booth during this year's event.

There are currently 4 timeslots still available for PTCA volunteers:

- June 12 (Afternoon)
- June 18 (Afternoon)
- June 19 (Afternoon)
- June 22 (Afternoon)

Volunteers receive two credential passes for the fair (per shift), and parking passes may also be provided (TBD). Volunteers are also eligible for CEUs.

If you are interested in volunteering this year, please contact Stan Baczyński at 619-890-7569 or [treestan@cox.net](mailto:treestan@cox.net). For more information on the Fair, you can visit their website at [www.sdfair.com](http://www.sdfair.com). We will have more info on volunteer shifts in the May PTCA newsletter as well.

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### For membership applications

Please make request via e-mail  
[at ptca@epicentermgmt.us](mailto:ptca@epicentermgmt.us)

**OUR MISSION** is to improve our community's quality of life by making our urban forest safer and more beautiful through education and proper tree care.



.....  
**EDUCATIONAL MEETINGS** are held on the first Tuesday of each month at Filippi's Pizza Grotto (Scripps Ranch), located at 9969 Mira Mesa Blvd, San Diego. The cost to attend general meetings is free for members (*who pre-register*), \$30 for non-members.

During the summer months, arboricultural tours ("Tree Walks") are featured throughout San Diego County. These are free to members and 25.00 to non members.

Information and registration for upcoming meetings is available at our website at [www.ptcaosd.wildapricot.org](http://www.ptcaosd.wildapricot.org).

CEUs are available!

## PTCA ANNUAL SEMINAR & FIELD DAY

is held every August, featuring industry experts bringing the latest research and information to San Diego's historic Balboa Park.

Cosponsored by the Professional Tree Care Association of San Diego and City of San Diego Parks and Recreation Department, this is your best local opportunity to get information or training in your field of tree care.

## Have an event for our calendar?

Submit it to:  
[kathleen@epicentermgmt.us!](mailto:kathleen@epicentermgmt.us)

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## May PTCA General Meeting Recap

Our May Meeting covered a wide range of topics of interest to our membership. Each discussion point has been broken down here for review.

### **Snakes**

There have been rattlesnakes in the local news lately. Understanding rattlesnake capability is a good way to quell myth and mystery. Having a bite response plan also helps reduce confusion. Many reported snake bites often involve alcohol and youthful male behaviors. However, I know several folks who did not fall in that category and did get bitten in their own yards. Surprise! So, call 911 for the fastest treatment. Do not apply constriction or cut and suction. Just call 911!

We have several different species of rattlesnake in our area. DO NOT kill them on sight! They are an important part of any ecosystem. Small rattlesnakes are more dangerous since they often deliver more venom in their bite. This is because they have not learned to control the volume of venom released through their fangs. Most mature rattlesnakes in our area will reach about 3 feet in length and they can strike up to 2/3's of their body length. DO NOT test this distance. The rattles on the tail are not like annual rings. Instead, they mark how many times the snake has shed its skin and a snake can shed 3-4 times per year. The area of the tail below their rattles will have black and white stripes. More details on rattlesnakes can be found on the UC IPM website. Clients may appreciate having an info resource.

### **Heat**

Climate changes will result in warmer weather sooner in the work year. Those who work outdoors should stay hydrated with water. There are two big concerns when the temperatures rise about 85 degrees; Heat Stroke and Heat Exhaustion. Team members should watch each other for early signs and take steps to hydrate and cool down. While both conditions will share similar symptoms, the key is to respond quickly when you stop sweating. It is suggested that supervisors check on their work teams more closely. Work sites and crew members should have easy access to clean cool water without a shared communal cup for drinking. This is a good way to avoid citation by OSHA.

### **Urban Corps: Career Training for Tree and Landscape Industry a grant funded program – Lauren Welch**

Lauren Welch is the Development Director for Urban Corps of San Diego County.

Urban Corps received half a million in funding to place Corps members in urban forestry jobs in San Diego. The grant pays for courses, certifications, stipends for students and potentially OJT or internships at jobs after they graduate but before they get jobs.

They would like to include additional workforce job placement companies to sit on our Industry Advisory Board and help design the program based on the needs of your company.

### **Kates Trees – Anne Fege**

Anne Fege spoke briefly on the program Kates Trees. This is a program founded to recognize the Life and Legacy

of Kate Sessions.

Kate Sessions was a botanist, horticulturist and a landscaper. She lived from 1857 to 1940 and was often referred to as the mother of Balboa Park for all of the trees she caused to be planted there: over 100 trees a year to the park and 300 trees for the city to plant in other parts of San Diego. She is also credited with introducing over 140 new plant species to San Diego gardens. The Jacaranda is one such tree she introduced. In her career she designed gardens, wrote many articles, taught classes, and led tours on the plants she loved. She left us an incredible legacy and now we have the opportunity to volunteer and return some of that energy to future generations. For more information, visit [Katestrees.org](http://Katestrees.org)

### **Utility Arboriculture at City College – Melissa Bewley**

Melissa Bewley provided an overview of the Employee Training Institute and the Utility Line Clearance classes – This was introduced last year at the annual conference of the Western Chapter of the ISA. The Utility Line Clearance Industry has responded to a shortage of workers. In order to meet this demand, many community colleges in the state have begun to enroll students in a special internship program. The full-time instruction is done by 7 different instructors with a combination of field and classroom education and training. It is designed to produce qualified employees in 5 weeks. The partnerships formed in this program include California Conservation Corps, California Urban Corps, San Diego Gas and Electric, PGE, and Davey Tree and Utility Tree. San Diego City College is currently participating in this program.

### **Library Legacy Project**

Part of the PTCA mission statement is about education to promote proper tree care. The PTCA once had a lending library that included books and VHS tapes on tree care. It became a laborious chore to manage. So over time this aspect of education withered and declined to a point of nonexistence. Many arborists have assembled extensive personal and professional libraries on trees and arboricultural practice. At this time several PTCA Members are working on a project to recycle literature on trees and tree care to interested people.

Jim Thompson, long time PTCA member and recent president, left such a library with expectations to see it used to the best effect. Discussion with Jim's son, Wayne, and PTCA has led to the decision to sell these books and use the proceeds to fund scholarships for students pursuing arboricultural careers. There are certainly some treasures in this library. In trying to establish some price ranges for these, it is easy to see why some of us did not rush to obtain them when they were first introduced.

In talking about this project with older arborists, the idea of a library legacy has some appeal as they contemplate their own crowded shelves. We all have our treasured acquisitions of knowledge and we want to see them adopted as useful resources. Treasure and knowledge can be a bargain at the right price. Watch for a table of treasures at the Summer seminar.

## Canary Island Pine (*Pinus canariensis*)

Dan Simpson

I chose *Pinus canariensis* or Canary Island Pine as my tree of the month. One reason is I have a huge one in the neighbors yard. It torments me with its seasonal pollen and noisy cone drops in the night! The other reason relates to a friend who discovered something in a tall pine in her a neighborhood. More on that later.

Canary Island Pines are from the Canary Islands which is a Spanish territory in the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of Africa. There are very few large specimens of *P. canariensis* left there due to logging in the past. This species, sometimes known as Pino canario, is tall and conical in shape with a classic excurrent habit. You will notice many mature specimens with twin trunks. It is very different from other pines in our area. It is considered somewhat drought tolerant but that may be due to other factors.

One interesting feature is the long medium green needles in bundles of three. They also shed moisture that gathers on their flexible needles much like the rigid needles on a Torrey Pine. During our cycles of coastal fog and morning low clouds there is more moisture in the air. Maritime pine species seem to support moisture harvest and provide water to the surrounding soil.

We are learning more each year about the importance of trees for wildlife. The industry has long advocated avoiding disturbance of nesting birds and often needs onsite inspection and approval of a biologist to continue work. Pruning in the canopy of a wildlife tree is like a home remodel for some creatures. Some tree climbers who are concerned about wildlife and conservation of habitat are extra considerate and avoid impact on a nest.

Even if the nest is currently not in use, avoid pruning that will create future exposure of that nest to winged predators like crows or mockingbirds. These birds will eat the eggs or the young of many bird species. Knowing in advance who



Photo by Georgeanne Irvine.

roosts where and when is a good way to engage clients with their role in habitat management.

It's not what's in a tree but *whooo* might be in a tree. Consider that and the answer may be revealed one evening by a booming voice of the night. This is the case of my friend's discovery. She had noticed the Canary Island pine over the years and then got to watch a pair of hawks nest successfully. During the COVID lockdown people spent more time at home. We all needed something else to occupy our interests. The nesting hawks raised their single chick over the course of three months. As it grew it provided much viewing enjoyment and discussion. It was named Hope as a sincere wish for the future.

This year there were no hawks but instead a pair of great horned owls. There are two young owlets now trying their wings but not quite ready to fly. Also notable was a definite decline in the population of neighborhood rabbits. Obviously, the growing young owls needed both of their parents working the night shift for fast food. So regardless of the tree, you just glance at, you can be sure it is more than just a visual amenity for others in your biosphere.

**Save the Date:  
33rd Annual PTCA  
Seminar & Field Day 2022  
August 19-20**

**Featuring Brian Kempf, Don Hodel and many others!**



## PTCA 2022 Scholarship Recipients



*Steven Bleeke and Minely Lizarraga, 2022 Scholarship Recipients.*

At a recent meeting, the PTCA Board of Directors agreed to support a scholarship in the amount of \$500.00 to a deserving arboriculture student at Cuyamaca Community College.

The Ornamental Horticulture Department and the Cuyamaca College Botanical Society (a student club within the department) have managed their scholarship program for over 40 years. The awards are donated by a variety of different individuals and community organizations. It is also one of the few community colleges where students can earn a degree in Arboriculture. The donated funds by the PTCA is an outreach effort to connect our tree care industry with future arborist professionals.

An additional scholarship was funded by Dan Simpson in memory of Jim Thompson, an active PTCA member and Former Air Combat Marine. The awards event and dinner was held on Thursday evening, May 19th, at the Water Conservation Garden at Cuyamaca College. This is the first in-person event since COVID impacted classes there.

Donors can offer guidance on preferred candidates but have no involvement in the final selection. The most significant request was for an arboriculture student and also a military veteran to honor Jim's service. The recipient of the Jim Thompson Memorial Scholarship was Steven Bleeke, a Navy Veteran, who is pursuing two associate's degrees in Arboriculture and Landscape Design. He also is treasurer for the CCBS and provides service to their leaders.

The PTCA donation was combined with donations from West Coast Arborists and Leaf It 2 Us Tree Service. It is called the Tree Hugger scholarship. This scholarship got started many years ago by one of Dan Simpson's arboriculture classes. It has been continued by Jose Bedoya of Leaf It 2 Us who is a former student and also teaches some of the arboriculture classes. The total of this scholarship was \$1250.00. The recipient was Minely Lizarraga, who already has a Bachelor's degree in liberal arts but is soon to receive her associate's degree in nursery technology. She is the new manager of the campus nursery and has a strong interest in California native plants and edible plants in the landscape. She certainly has trees in her future, especially after sitting with Brad Brown and Chuck Morgan who saw her excitement about future possibilities with trees.



## URGENT DROUGHT UPDATE

IN-PERSON Meeting

Wed June 1, 2022

### Save our water AND our trees

Registration \$15-\$25.00

<https://mailchi.mp/f925ac58ab83/2021awardwinners-5849595>

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# Tree Selection For Wind, Salt & Fire Risks

From Turf Magazine

Climate extremes and storms seem to increasingly dominate headlines. Drought, forest fires, hurricanes, and flooding are just a few of the weather-related crises we saw in the U.S. in the last few years.

Such weather impacts can wreak havoc on prized, irreplaceable, and otherwise long-lasting landscaping. While the simple solution is a return to natives, even natives or zone appropriate plants can suffer when the zone experiences extremes. The record breaking freeze in Texas and the blazing heat in Oregon last year damaged or killed otherwise healthy zone-appropriate plantings in just a matter of days.

According to a 2018 Yale School of the Environment paper, U.S. plant hardiness zones are moving north at 13 miles per decade. When the map was last updated in 2012, nearly half the country was upgraded to half a zone warmer than it had been in 1990. The Arbor Day Foundation says this affects which trees are right for planting. In 2015 it completed an extensive updating of zones and documented the shifts since 1990.

While maps shift, mature trees can't shift with them. We can fertilize, prune, and keep them at optimum health to better weather adverse conditions, but ultimately our most valuable landscape elements must often just bear up. Which is why we need to give them a fighting chance. We need to pick the right trees for potentially wrong conditions. This is the era of the tough tree.

What makes a tough tree? One that is proven to best withstand nature's onslaught. Turf perused university extensions and other reputable sources to create tree lists for weather extremes. Got a windy spot? Learn from Florida experts, who deal with hurricanes, a resilient choice that grows in your zone. If there's a native that solves your problem, even better.

It should be noted that no tree is hurricane-proof or fireproof, but some are more "resistant" than others. Placement, other plants, and maintenance are equally important factors to consider beyond species. But we hope this provides a handy first reference for problem areas.

## Hurricane Resistant

It's no surprise the University of Florida Institute of Food & Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) Extension has a whole website entitled "Trees and Hurricanes." They even list trees with the least wind resistance: sand pine, Chinese elm, water oak, and laurel oak. While UF research showed that sand live oaks (*Quercus geminata*; Zones 8-10) are the most resistant to wind damage, other good choices include (numbers represent zones):

- Southern magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*) 7-9
- Live oak (*Quercus virginiana*) 7-10
- Bald cypress (*Taxodium distichum*) 4-10

Those somewhat resistant to storm damage include:

- Sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*) 6-7
- American holly (*Ilex opaca*) 5-9



- Sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*) 4-9
- Swamp chestnut oak (*Quercus michauxii*) 6-9
- Spruce pine (*Pinus glabra*) 8-9
- Gumbo limbo (*Bursera simaruba*) 10b-11
- Tupelo or Blackgum (*Nyssa sylvatica*) 3-9

While not technically trees, sabal palm (*Sabal palmetto*; Cold hardy to 8a or b) are an excellent choice as well. Smaller ornamental trees like crepe myrtle and dogwood are also mentioned.

## Salt Tolerant

The Clemson Cooperative Extension Home & Garden Information Center has a list of salt tolerant plants for the South Carolina coast. Trees are rated high or moderate tolerance. High tolerance means a tree can handle direct salt spray. These include:

- Southern Red Cedar (*Juniperus virginiana* var. *silicicola*) 3-9
- Live Oak (*Quercus virginiana*) 8-10
- Southern magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*) 7-9
- Yaupon Holly (*Ilex vomitoria*) 7-10

Trees with moderate tolerance can grow beachfront adjacent, but should be sheltered. They include:

- American Holly (*Ilex opaca*) 5-9
- Loquat (*Eriobotrya japonica*) 8-10

## Fire Resistant

First published in 2006, but reviewed in July 2020, Fire Resistant Plants For Home Landscapes, is a 48-page free downloadable guide to a diverse list of plants that are both fire resistant and attractive. Not just trees, the publication also covers ground covers, perennials, and shrubs and was produced by the Pacific Northwest Extension of Oregon State University, Washington State University, and the University of Idaho.

When it comes to conifers, ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*; Zones 3-6) and western larch (*Larix occidentalis*; Zones 4-7) are among the most fire-resistant due to their thick bark, which protects them from fire, and the high moisture content of their foliage.

The list of deciduous trees is long and includes:

- Amur maple (*Acer ginnala*) Zones 2-7.
- Bigleaf maple (*Acer macrophyllum*) Zones 5-9.
- Red maple (*Acer rubrum*) Zones 3-9.
- Horsechestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*) Zones 3-8.
- Red alder (*Alnus rubra*) Zones 4-7.
- Mountain alder (*Alnus tenuifolia*) Zones 5-9.
- Birch (*Betula* species) Zones 2-7.
- Western catalpa (*Catalpa speciosa*)
- Hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*) Zones 3-9.
- Eastern redbud (*Cercis Canadensis*) Zones 4-9.
- Flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*)
- Hawthorn (*Crataegus* species) Zones 3-9.
- European beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) Zones 4-7.
- Green ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*) Zones 3-9.
- White ash (*Fraxinus Americana*) Zones 4-9.
- Thornless honeylocust (*Gleditsia triacanthos* var. *inermis*. *cvs*) Zones 3-9.
- Kentucky coffeetree (*Gymnocladus dioicus*) Zones 3-8.
- Walnut (*Juglans* species) Zones 4-9.
- Sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*) Zones 6-7.
- Crabapple (*Malus* species) Zones 3-9.
- Western or California sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*) Zones 7-10.
- Quaking aspen (*Populus tremuloides*) Zones 2-7.
- Chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*) Zones 3-8.

- Canada red chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana 'Canada Red'*) Zones 2-10.
- Oregon white oak (*Quercus garryana*) Zones 6-8.
- Pin oak (*Quercus palustris*) Zones 4-8.
- Red oak (*Quercus rubra*) Zones 3-8.
- Purple Robe locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia 'Purple Robe'*) Zones 4-8.
- Mountainash (*Sorbus aucuparia*) Zones 3-5.

While these lists can provide ideas and starting points, reach out to your local University Extension for more specifics on "tough" trees in your area. And look for more to come on drought and flood-tolerant trees in Turf's June issue focusing on Water.



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## KatesTrees.org - Gold Leaf Award Recipient

Congratulations to PTCA Member Anne Fege and her project, [www.katestrees.org](http://www.katestrees.org), for receiving the 2022 Gold Leaf Award for Outstanding Landscape Beautification Project!

Anne Fege envisioned an action plan based on San Diego's "Mother of Balboa Park", Kate Sessions, who single-handedly vowed to plant 100 trees every year in the city, in exchange for a small piece of land to propagate more trees.

Anne's idea was to recruit community members to join her vision of duplicating this concept of planting 100 neighborhood trees, and after three years of persistence, she has achieved several goals. A loose-based coalition has raised monies to buy young trees; another project propagated 100 trees from cuttings to donate for free, and there were small saplings purchased, inspected and subsequently offered to disadvantaged neighborhood residents to pick up at local nurseries and plant in needy urban spaces.

In SoCal, fall is a better time to plant trees than spring, so Kate's birthday on November 8th was the date chosen to commemorate Arbor Day, and related tree planting and advocacy. The work continues, but without Anne's tenacity and hard work - it would have languished and failed.

### ***The Kate Session Commitment***

Kate Sessions, touted as the Mother of Balboa Park, is a historic San Diego figure who embodies an environmental legacy that has a visible impact throughout the early settled parts of our city. Kate's commitment to planting shade trees in San Diego offers a relevant local platform for reigniting a community based stewardship tree planting program to support local Climate Action Plan.

Based on an arrangement that Kate Sessions developed with city leaders to plant 100 trees per year in Balboa Park, the Kate Sessions Commitment is a program designed with the goal of increasing tree canopy coverage one community at a time, and inspiring all neighborhoods to protect and be proud

of their trees.

Each community is invited to pledge to the Kate Sessions Commitment and to plant 100 trees per year. Community engagement programs will include education of Kate Sessions' legacy, and working with local residents to select key areas within their neighborhood where tree canopy coverage is most desirable. By taking action, residents will learn the fundamentals of planting trees, environmental stewardship and commit to ongoing watering and maintenance.



Bronze statue of Kate Sessions located in Balboa Park's Sefton Plaza.

**Connecting the Dots: urban trees, human health, & climate change**

Featuring Dr. Kathleen Wolf

Presented on Zoom

Wednesday, June 1, 2022

8:30 am - 10:00 am

Registration

\$25.00 - WCISA Member

\$35.00 - Non-Member

[wcisa.net/events](http://wcisa.net/events)

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