

**JANUARY 2012**

Member of:  
Desert Empire District,  
California Garden Clubs,  
Inc., Pacific Region,  
and National Garden  
Clubs, Inc.

# Desert Trumpet

Newsletter for  
Desert Planters of  
Ridgecrest,  
PO Box 841  
Ridgecrest CA 93556  
Website:  
www.desertempiredistrict.org

## Officers:

- President  
Dave Jester
- Vice-President  
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- Editor  
LaVerne Harms
- Contributors  
D. Jester, W. Church,  
A. Spiegel, & L. Harms

**Desert Planters  
of Ridgecrest  
Charter Motto:  
"Make  
RIDGECREST  
Clean & Green"**

## President's Theme:

*Building a Sustainable Environment, One Flower at a Time*

## The President's Corner

By Dave Jester

Why do you garden? Why don't you garden? What is the difference between a gardener and a non-gardener?

Have deadlines to meet, problems to solve, reports to write, dinner to cook, homework to do, bills to pay, dogs to walk, children to bathe, and bathrooms to clean; all become less sharp after a quiet stroll through a small garden. As your car rounds the curve on the way home, you see the sweet flowers in your garden, the worries of the day become less, even if for only a moment. Digging, pounding, hauling and pulling make that troublesome boss go away for the time being.

Gardeners are delighted when something blooms, sprouts or produces something to eat. Its a miracle that happens over and over again. Gardeners think plants are to have and to watch, not always to be neatly displayed as if on a magazine page. Plants bring birds, butterflies, bugs, varmints and interest to the little plot of land that a gardener calls home. Gardener's ponder textures, colors and scents, not layouts, drains and designs. Getting another plant is the ultimate quest. Getting those acquisitions to grow in the right place is the pinnacle of success.

## PRUNING FRUIT TREES

By Wanda Church

Each year in January and February the good gardener needs to prune trees and other plants growing in the garden. It is done in the cold, dormant period so you can see the shape and location of the branches and also to protect the tree from possible infection at the cuts. Different species require different pruning techniques and at different times, so it is important to really know what you are doing before you make that first cut.

Unlike shade trees, deciduous fruit trees should be pruned every year before the buds swell in order for maximum growth and also for better fruit production. Fruit trees are less forgiving than most shade tree species, so if you do a bad pruning job, the fruit may turn out small and possibly no fruit at all.

There are three pruning phases in the life of a deciduous fruit tree. The first pruning cut should be done when you plant the young tree. This should be made to produce a vase-like shape of limbs to set the structural branches for the mature tree.

The second phase of pruning is done the year following the first pruning and helps to more establish the structure and scaffolding of the branches.

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**DPR General Monthly Meeting,***January 21, 1:00PM.*

**New Location:** Maturango Museum of Indian Wells Valley, 100 E. Los Flores, Ridgecrest.

**Speaker:** Mike Prather

**Topic—“Future of Owens Lake Water Resources.”**

This program is in keeping with the club’s emphasis on being water wise. A question and answer period will

**New Home for Desert Planters  
Meetings  
Maturango Museum of Ridgecrest,  
100 E. Los Flores Ave.**

follow the program.

**MIKE PRATHER** has been residing in Inyo County since 1972 when he and wife Nancy moved to Death Valley to teach in a one room school house. Mike has actively been working on land and water issues in the Owens Valley since 1980. He is the former president of the Owens Valley Committee, Eastern Sierra Audubon and Sierra Club (past chapter chair). The re-watering of 62 miles of the Lower Owens River and the massive wildlife return to Owens Lake as a result of the Los Angeles Owens Lake Dust Control Project have been the center of Mike's conservation focus since the early 1980's. The enhancement and protection of the Owens River and Owens Lake Important Bird Areas attracts most of his current efforts and he invites everyone to join in the fun. Mike and Nancy live in Lone Pine and are retired (or 'real tired') from thirty years of teaching.

**Grow and Show:** All members are invited to bring plant specimens from their gardens to share at this meeting.

**Door Prizes and Refreshments**

**National Garden Clubs, Inc.***January 20-21.*

**NGC Winter Executive Committee Meeting,**  
Albuquerque, New Mexico.

**DPR Business Meeting***January 25, 1:00PM, 4th Wednesday*

Meeting place TBD. “Yellow Dot” Program to be discussed. **All members are welcome.**

**CGCI Events***January 23, 2012. "Having Fun with Floral Design"*

Time 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. See Shane and Mary at Descanso Gardens.

*February 6-9. CGCI Winter Board Meeting,***Pismo Beach "Share the Possibilities Along the**

**Central Coast"** where informative and fun workshops are planned for Monday evening, February 6, 2012, and Tuesday morning, February 7, 2012. See the CGCI Website for more information.

**Desert Empire District Winter Meeting/  
Luncheon***(Monday) February 13.***Host: Desert Planters of Ridgecrest**

9:30AM Coffee,

10:00 AM Meeting called to order.

Heritage Village Clubhouse

425 Heritage Drive, Ridgecrest, CA.

The luncheon is \$5.00. We will start with a Continental breakfast, then proceed with our meeting at 10:00 AM.

**Ridgecrest Chamber of Commerce Lunch***February 14, 2012, 12:00 Noon. 2nd Tuesday, at*

Victoria's at the Heritage. (In the courtyard at Heritage Inn). RSVP 375-8331. DPR is a long time member.

**DPR Future Event in April**

The Second Annual Ridgecrest Wildflower Festival is fast approaching. Booth price is \$65.00 plus a \$25.00 refundable deposit. Festival dates are: April 13-15. Location will again be at Kerr McGee Center on Saturday/Sunday (14, 15th). *Dave Jester*

**Desert Planters Logo**

1. A contest is in place for the individual(s) to design a DPR Club Logo.
  2. Logo contest winner will receive a \$100.00 dinner for two at a yet to be chosen eatery.
- Submission date no later than February 1st, 2012.

- CALIFORNIA GARDEN CLUBS, INC. (CGCI) State Garden Club information [www.CaliforniaGardenClubs.org](http://www.CaliforniaGardenClubs.org).
- PACIFIC REGION [www.PacificRegionGardenClubs.org](http://www.PacificRegionGardenClubs.org)
- NATIONAL GARDEN CLUBS, INC. for National Garden Club information—[www.GardenClub.org](http://www.GardenClub.org).
- Desert Empire District (DED). To download the *Desert Trumpet*—[www.DesertEmpireDistrict.org](http://www.DesertEmpireDistrict.org).

## 'A Globally Significant Shorebird Important Bird Area in the Making'

By Mike Prather

An enormous wildlife resource has returned to Owens Lake, a migration stopover to tens of thousands of shorebirds and waterfowl that was lost nearly 100 years ago. The lake was dried as a result of water gathering by the City of Los Angeles, but now is receiving careful application of water to control the regional dust storms born with the lakes death. Roughly 35 square miles of Owens Lake's surface are covered with shallow ponds or sheet flooding resulting in thousands of acres of rich feeding habitat for sandpipers, snowy plovers, ducks and geese. In fact, 9 more square miles of ponds and sheet flooding are currently under construction.

In 2001 the National Audubon Society designated Owens Lake an Important Bird Area. Creation of a collaborative lake-wide conservation action plan was begun by Eastern Sierra Audubon and Audubon-CA in partnership with Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, Department for Fish and Game and the State Lands Commission. This process has grown into a larger effort to design an Owens Lake "Master Plan" that would seek to save water for the Los Angeles in return for large tracts of designated habitat for shorebirds and waterfowl.

Today hundreds of birders and wildlife watchers are visiting the lake on guided fieldtrips to see this amazing migratory spectacle. Nesting snowy plovers (the largest inland site in California), large flocks of least and western sandpipers, thousands of American avocets, peregrine falcon, white-faced ibis and more are all at your feet on tours of the lake. Now the challenge is to determine how much of the rare resource can be protected in perpetuity. Can a balance be found between the need for water by Los Angeles and need to protect wildlife for the citizens of California?

*By Mike Prather, Lone Pine, CA*

## On the Road to Recovery

Great news to hear that our Recording Secretary Lucille Nielsen is on the road to recovery. Were all looking forward to see her smiling face again and wish her good health.

*Editor*

## Christmas Party

Thank you Gerry & Dick Wisdom for hosting the Annual Christmas Party. Everyone enjoyed all the delicious food and hospitality. Our President Dave prepared a beautiful dessert with left-overs for the guests to take home.

## Museums on Us and the Living Desert

ART SPIEGEL

Bank of America offers a unique free admission program for its cardholders at 150 museums across the United States. Their program is called Museums on Us, and it offers free admission, one per cardholder, on Saturday and Sunday during the first full weekend of every month. A couple with two BofA credit cards can receive two free admissions.

Most of the museums in Southern California are art museums or cultural museums, but we happened to be near Palm Desert last week, and the Living Desert is on the list. We have automobile club (AAA) visa cards issued by BofA. Living Desert is a zoological and botanical garden in Palm Desert. In addition to wildlife, it includes the following gardens:

Baja Oasis Garden  
Barrel Cactus Garden  
Butterfly Garden  
Cahuilla Indian Ethnobotanical Garden  
Chihuahuan Garden  
Wortz Demonstration Garden  
Hummingbird Garden  
Mexican Clumnar Garden  
Mojave Desert Garden  
Native Bee Garden  
Opuntia Garden  
Palm Oasis Garden & walk through aviary  
Palm Garden  
Sonoran Aviary & Garden  
Smoketree Garden  
Vizcaino Desert Garden  
Yucca Garden  
Yuman Garden

For information on the Living Desert, visit their website [www.livingdesert.org](http://www.livingdesert.org).

For a list of the nationwide participating museums in Museums On Us, visit [museums.bankofamerica.com](http://museums.bankofamerica.com).

## PRUNING FRUIT TREES

By Wanda Church

The third phase of pruning begins at 5 to 7 years when the tree is beginning to mature. At this stage, the tree should be pruned for fruit production and invigorating the growth of new fruiting wood and maintaining a healthy, productive and good looking tree.

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