

Volume 12, Issue 5, May 2025

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Meetings 4th Tuesday  
6pm



# Scripps-Mesa Garden Club

## Next Meeting May 27

**Karen Lopez's  
Garden**

11760  
Handrich Dr.  
Scripps Ranch  
6pm



*Carlsbad Flower Fields*

Contributed by Karen Lopez

## Spring & Summer Events Calendar

June 24 - Garden Tour,  
Debbie Honeycutt  
(10855 Canarywood  
Court)

July 22 - Garden Tour,  
Ann Massey (11454  
Caminito Elado)

Aug 26 - Summer Pot-  
luck, Lynnell Hallock

## Scripps-Mesa Garden Club Officers 2025

Co-Presidents - Jean Bruckner, Dave Fortner, Karen Lopez

Secretary - Barbara Measelle

Treasurer / Member Directory - Char Fitzgerald

Program Chair - Jackie Brown

Editor / Monthly Newsletter / Publicity -  
Denise Stewart

Venue / Refreshments - Louise Badham

Website / Photos - Brydon Bennett



## *A Message from Karen Lopez...*

Sorry for the technical difficulties at our first Community Center meeting. We will have those glitches worked out before our next meeting there, which won't be until September. We have 3 garden tours and our annual potluck filling out the upcoming 4 meetings for May through August. Hopefully, you can join us for the garden tours as they are a fun way to pick up some new-to-you plant ideas and tips.

I need to check the status of our library box at Walter Anderson's nursery. I'm hoping the new signage is more obvious and the books aren't continuing to disappear. Any garden books that you no longer need can be contributed to the library box. All you need to do is place them inside the box next time you visit the nursery. Or if you prefer, you can bring them to a meeting and give them to me and I will add them for you.

I made it to the Carlsbad Flower Fields this year!! The rows of ranunculus are spectacular along with the Orchid house and all the creative gardens maintained by the Master Gardeners of SD.

Another reminder to watch for baby birds and mammals as you take care of all your spring garden chores. May is a busy baby wildlife month in SD. See the chart on the next page published by the SD Humane Society/Project Wildlife showing when to expect different babies.

Happy Gardening!!

**Karen**

## **Minutes of the Scripps- Mesa Garden Club Meeting of April 22, 2025**

Once again we were treated to the almost encyclopedic knowledge of a member of the Master Gardeners organization, Linda Stewart. Every state has a Master Gardeners organization and California's is based out of UC Davis, but chapters are all over our state.

This evening's topic was 'Houseplants' which she defined simply as any plant that grows in your home. We were provided with an abundance of handouts addressing numerous aspects of the care and feeding of house plants.

Her first recommendation was to know what you are purchasing. A handout listing 'Easiest Houseplants' provided a guide. Things to consider when choosing a houseplant are placement in your home, lighting, temperature, humidity. However the primary problem with houseplants is over watering as indicated by yellow-green foliage. Her tip was to water thoroughly so that the water runs through and then set a schedule to water based on your observations of how your plant is doing.

Lighting is another crucial factor. Does the plant

need bright light? Sansevieria does. But Mother-in-laws tongue, could grow in a closet. Orchids need the right light, usually an East window. What about using ice cubes to water orchids? 'Nays' dominated but there were a small number of advocates. Succulents Linda reminded us are not a family with genus, species etc. but are broadly defined as a plant holding water in leaves, stems and roots. They do make good houseplants.

The advice on POTS was to make sure they were wider on top and taller than wider. The signals to repot a plant are roots coming out of the bottom of the pot or mounding on the top. Make sure there is a hole at the bottom of the planter to drain.

Fertilizer is best if organic and best if there are equal numbers for NPK, such as 10 10 10. An illustrated handout on Terrariums was also provided.

Our organization is now guided by a group of Co-Presidents: Jean Bruckner, Dave Fortner and Karen Lopez. Due to the closing of the Library for repairs our meetings will continue at the Scripps Community Center or as the summer comes on, in the garden's of our members. Dates and locations will be announced.

**Contributed by Barbara Measelle, Secretary**



# May Garden Chores



- \* Plant [summer flowers](#).
- \* Harvest cool-weather crops
- \* Replace the cool-weather crops with heat-loving crops such as okra and sweet potatoes
- \* Stay on top of [pests](#). May is the month insects will begin coming out of the wood-work
- \* [Water](#) fruit trees regularly
- \* Add netting to protect the fruit on your bushes and trees
- \* Plant warm-season vegetables like [beans](#), [melons](#) and [squash](#)
- \* Fertilize your rose bushes
- \* Allow leaves from daffodils or other spring bulbs to linger
- \* Mulch flower beds, beneath trees and shrubs
- \* Build a compost bin
- Lightly [prune roses](#) to promote fall flowering.
- \* [Plant](#) frost-tender species e.g., avocado, bougainvillea, citrus, and hibiscus. Water regularly to keep root zone moist, but not soggy.

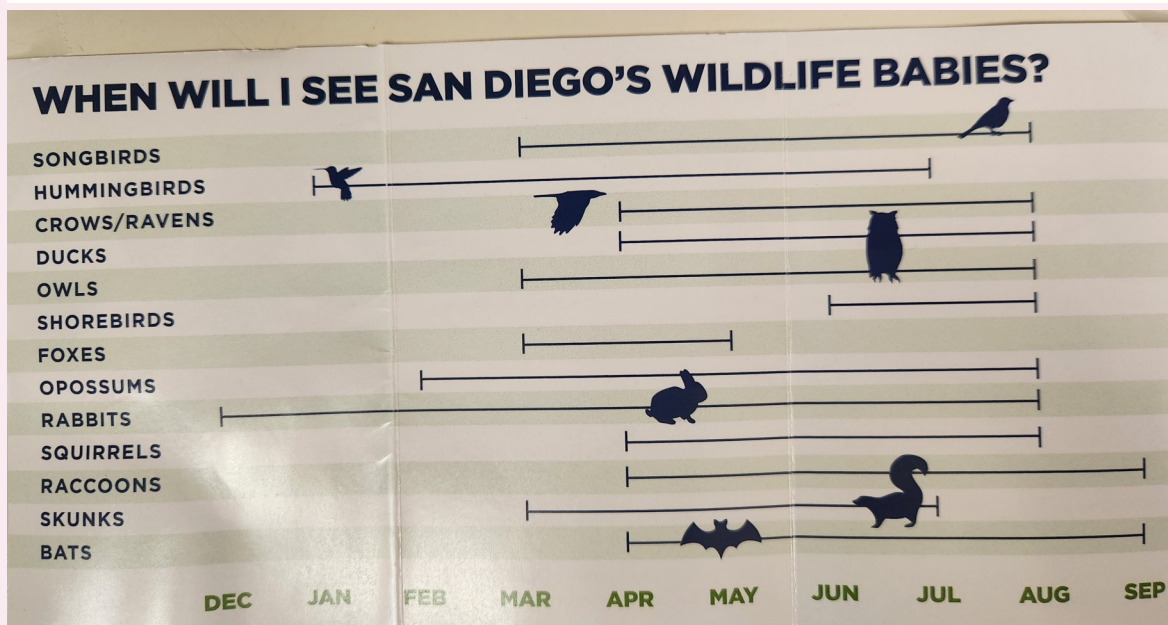


Chart  
From  
SD Humane  
Society

# Reflections on the Predator-Prey Relationship

By Brydon Bennett

We gardeners do not like plant pests. Our hearts' dip when we see the early signs; discoloring, wrinkling, chew marks, a white smudge, a clump of something on a green stem. Our reflex priority is the plant, our plant, our investment towards a flowering edible future. Then, almost immediately we feel the dilemma of how to respond: poison or irritant, natural or synthetic, spot-treat or carpet bomb? We may even sense a tinge of interest in the pest, which too is a courageous organism trying to thrive in it's ecosystem. Of course, our preferred outcome is to have natural plant defenses and predator-prey relationships deliver the equilibrium we desire, where every organism gets its opportunity, we don't have to witness the brutal struggles, and our plant lives its best life and delivers for us.

I do some volunteer landscaping at a site which includes a plant border on the side of a fairly busy road way. The border has a variety of hardy shrubs and bushes including Lantana, sweet pea bush (Polygala sp.), Cleveland sage, kangaroo paw, and rosemary. I grow these at home and they never have pest issues, but those along that thoroughfare face constant pest afflictions of various kinds. The soil and watering appear suitable, for at times the plants flourish with new branches, green leaves and even some flowers. But then the rust and the scale bugs inevitably appear and cover the plant. "Why?", I wondered, are these particular roadside plants so susceptible to these pests?

My first idea for an answer is connecting the pests and the road traffic. Perhaps the cars are transporting pests via our roads and the swirling vortices from moving vehicles are blowing them onto the verge where they spread over the plants? Surely the equilibrium has been disrupted by this constant bombardment of airborne pests.

But what if the disruption is not the pest? What if it is about the predator? In general, the predators of scale, aphids, and mites are larger and more mobile. These predators are wasps, ladybugs, lacewings, and birds. I realized that I rarely see any of these predators in the plant border. Similar sized insects like bees are also uncommon. Perhaps the busy traffic is a deterrent for predators rather than a spreader of pests. I like my second idea of an answer much better. But how to respond and restore equilibrium? Do I now have to act as the ultimate predator?

***More next page...***



**Scale bugs on Salvia**



**Scale bugs on Polygala**



**Rust on Lantana**



Photo  
By  
Cindy  
Fortner



## Alan's Hummingbird

By David Fortner

In anticipation of our upcoming backyard garden tour at Karen's, this month will feature Alan's Hummingbird. Of the two common hummingbirds in San Diego, Alan's is orange and green colored while Anna's is mainly green with a red throat and cap. At only 4 inches long with a wing-span to match, this high-octane tiny bird is an insect-eating machine. As is commonly known, hummingbirds eat nectar and thus pollinate 1000 flowers a day, but they also eat several hundred to over a thousand insects daily as well. Female hummingbirds consume up to 2,000 insects a day just to feed their young! Attract them to your yard with beautiful flowers, a hummingbird feeder, and maybe even a compost pile to attract some additional insects. If you do have a hummingbird feeder, please make sure you change the sugar water often because it does go bad in a few days and can actually kill the birds, especially when it's hot. Hang the feeder in the shade about 6 feet up to avoid cats and roadrunners.

The formula for the mix is 1/4 cup sugar to 1 cup water.

It is very entertaining to watch these beautiful birds zipping around the yard catching insects, chasing each other, and showing off their impressive flying skills.

## Treasurer's Report

by Char Fitzgerald

Here is a semi-annual Treasurer's report

20 paid members =\$660.

4 Speaker's fee paid-\$300.

Community room rental - \$300.

\$180. check made for room deposit damages

2 Expenses paid =-\$67.34

We should have balance of \$707.35

And we have 2 Speakers fees and pay for the meat entree at the August barbeque.

In the past, one of the benefits of a membership is the member's garden visit. That member can invite friends if they want, but usually it is for paid members only.

Does someone want to change that?



A neighbor grows these fabulous orchids outdoors in the sun in a pot of orchid bark with very little fertilizer. He soaks them weekly in the pot that lets the excess water drain easily.