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Scripps-Mesa Garden Club

Featured at the January 27th meeting

Fruit Tree Expert Tyler Trimble



The January 27th meeting begins at 6pm

Scripps Ranch Library Community Room

Tyler Trimble will bring many years of experience in orchard management to share at our club meeting.

- * Fruit tree selection
- * Planting guidance
- * Pest and disease management
- * Harvesting tips
- * Soil testing and fertilization

***Grow Our
Club***

**Invite a friend to
learn from
our speaker**

President's Message from Karen Lopez

Happy New Year!! I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season and was able to celebrate with family and friends. I've been so happy to see all the rain which will be beneficial for our spring gardens!! Hopefully it will continue (on and off) throughout the next couple of months and not turn dry on us. Everything in my yard is thriving right now, and I can't wait to get back to my gardening chores. My bum hip has kept me out of the garden for the last 6 months, but I had a total hip replacement last week and look forward to my recovery and getting back to the things that keep me busy, gardening and tennis.

I want to introduce you to the Ramona Hawk Watch that happens every Saturday at 10:00am during the months of January and February. This is a great program sponsored by the Wildlife Research Institute where you will experience free wildlife education about birds of prey and other critters that roam our neighborhoods. You will get to meet the birds and animals up close as seen in the pictures below. I encourage you to attend one of these presentations. I will be attending one of the weekends in February if anyone wants to tag along with me.

Hawk Watch | WRI | Ramona Grasslands www.wildlife-research.org/hawkwatch

Wishing everyone peace, happiness and good health in 2026!!



Barn Owl



Great Horned Owl



Hawk

Photos by Karen Lopez

Red-tailed Hawk by Dave Fortner

This month's bird features the Red-tailed Hawk. At 25 inches long, with a wingspan of over 4 feet, these large, broad-winged, wide-tailed hawks are a rich brown above, pale below, often with a 'belly band', a dark patagial bar on the front of the wing, and adults have that unmistakable red tail. Look for them soaring high in the sky and listen for their single, blood-curdling screeeech. They are the most common hawk in San Diego, and for that matter, the USA. They eat small mammals--think mice and rats, not typically cats and dogs. So once again, do not use any sort of rodenticide as that will poison all the creatures that prey on mice and rats.

The photograph shows a Red-tail at our bird feeder, just before he hopped down and caught a mouse!



Photo by Cindy Fortner

January Garden Chores



In California, January is a time for gardening that may seem like a write-off month, but it is actually a crucial time for setting up the entire year. Here are some essential tasks to complete in January to prepare for a successful spring:

- Test your soil
- Add organic matter
- Plan crop rotation
- Get tools ready for action
- Avoid wasting time by checking old unused seeds Sprinkle a handful of seeds on a dampened paper towel. Place the towel and seeds in a plastic container. Keep the container somewhere warm and keep towel moist. Monitor for germination. If less than 50% of seeds germinate, replace seeds with new ones.
- Add a rainwater harvesting system
- Make homemade compost
- Plant bareroot fruit trees
- Plant violas and pansies
- Plant more cool season veggies
- Maintain birdbaths and feeders



Save the Date - Master Gardener Dawn Standke, who presented our Horticultural Myths talk at the October meeting, has invited our garden club to an open house to tour her home garden on Sunday, April 19th. She will be hosting a party for the SD Horticultural Society the day before and wanted to offer a tour to our club the day after since her yard will be in tiptop shape!! More details to follow in the February newsletter.

Guidelines for attracting birds to your garden

Fresh Water—maintain a safe place for birds to gather to drink and bathe.

Food—peanuts, sunflower seeds, native berry trees supply nutrition

Shelter—dense shrubs, evergreens, pine trees

Perennial Plants— are natural food sources

Safe Habitat— avoid pesticides

Birds chirping around you is a beautiful realization that life is incredibly good. Let this sound be a gentle break in routine.

Hiral Nagda

