

Arboreta and Botanic Gardens

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Renovations slated for 1990

\$1 Million for Garden Improvements

Within the past several months the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors has approved \$320,000 in matching grant funds to be used for capital improvements at the Department's facilities. Each of the four gardens received a grant to be matched on at least a one-to-one basis by its private support organization. The grants and the Board-approved projects are:

--\$125,000 to the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum for renovation and refurbishment of the Peacock Cafe including new interior decor, new kitchen, and construction of new outdoor dining terraces. This grant will be matched by \$275,000 from the California Arboretum Foundation.

--\$70,000 to Descanso Gardens for the first phase in renovating the Lake/ Waterfall area. This will combine the two existing lakes into a larger, single-level lake and create a longer shoreline with a greater viewing area of the lake and wildlife. This grant was matched by \$70,000 from the Descanso Gardens Guild.

--\$50,000 to South Coast Botanic Garden to complete the first phases of renovating the garden's main entry from Crenshaw Boulevard. It will include grading and surfacing the road, erecting new signs, fencing and planting along Crenshaw Boulevard. This grant is being matched by \$50,000 from the South Coast Botanic Garden Foundation.

--\$65,000 to continue restoration of the main residence at the Virginia Robinson Gardens. This project will involve cleaning, patching and painting the exterior of the building as well as the wall bordering Elden Way, repairing and painting all exterior trim, and restoring and refitting all exterior doors, windows and shutters. The Friends of Robinson Gardens have committed \$110,000 in matching funds to complete this work.

In the 1987-88 budget the Board of Supervisors established a ceiling on the amount of admission fee revenue the Department must return to the *(FUNDS continued on page 2)*



Dining terraces outside the renovated Peacock Cafe will overlook the main lawn.

FUNDS continued from page 1)

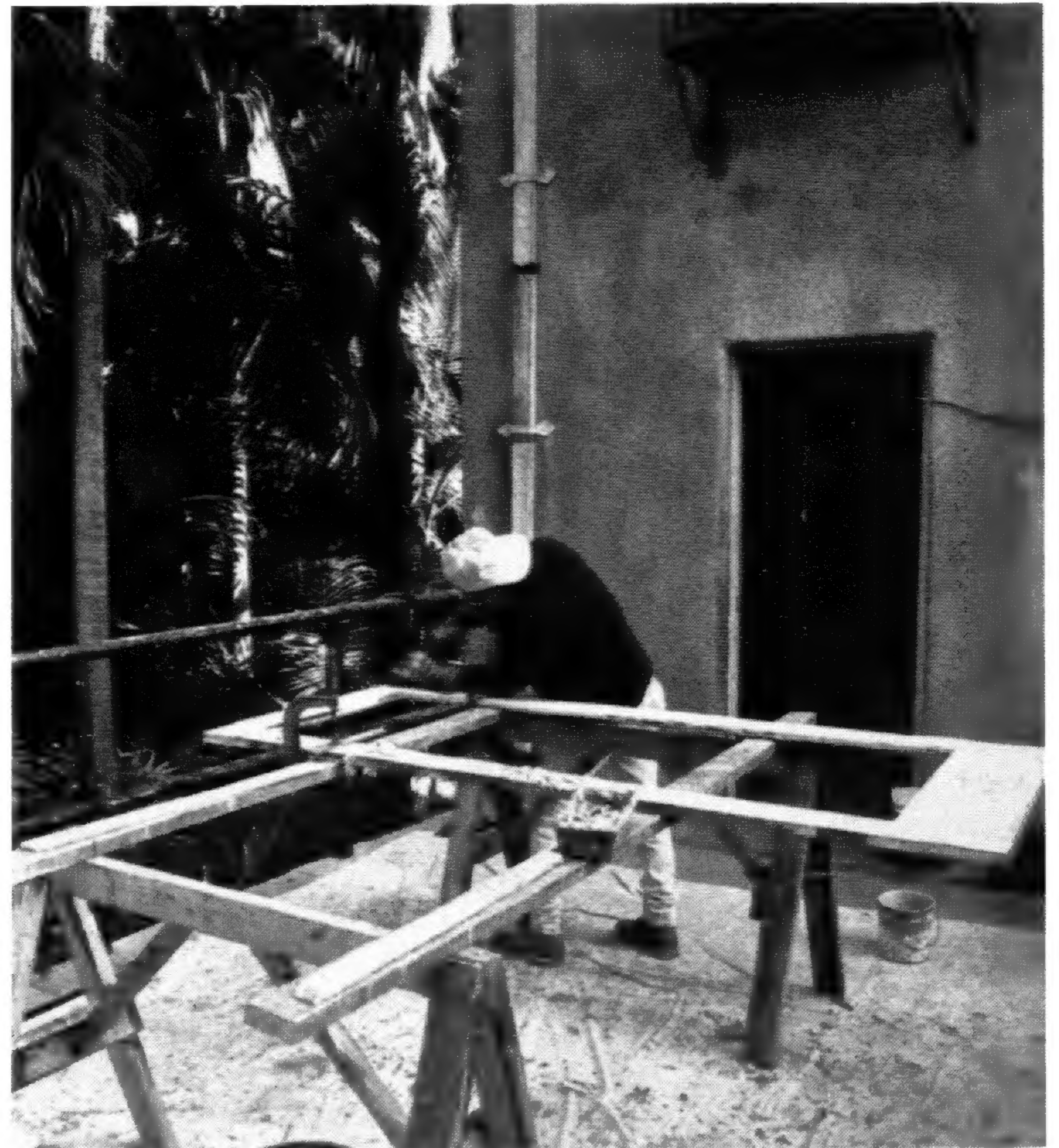
County each year. Any revenue above that amount was placed in a special trust account to be used for capital improvement grants approved by the Board. These funds were matched on at least a dollar-for-



The entry road at South Coast is finished so work can begin on the next phase, new fences and signs.

dollar basis by the Department's private support organizations.

When added to prior approved projects, more than \$1 million worth of improvements will have been made to Department facilities through this public-private matching grant program. We look forward to this continued spirit of cooperation in future years.



Doors and exterior trim on the Virginia Robinson Garden main residence will be refitted and painted.

Month-long festival greets spring at Descanso

This year's Festival of Spring Flowers at Descanso Gardens will bloom even longer than usual, Mar. 24 through April 22, accenting the garden's camellia heritage with thousands of new annuals and bulbs.

Known worldwide for its 30-acre camellia forest, Descanso's festival takes place at the height of camellia season.

Superintendent George Lewis, along with staff and volunteers, has planted masses of bulbs, giving visitors a glimpse of what flowers spring offers in California. Major plantings include a "tulip promenade" of 30,000 bulbs, 10,000 daffodils and thousands of Dutch irises and cornflowers.

Beds of pansies, primroses, snapdragons and violas line walkways. The iris garden will be in full bloom just as the first buds begin to open on the modern hybrid tea roses. The Modern Rose section features All-America Rose Selections from the past four decades.

Historical roses, some that date back to Roman

times, will also be coming into bloom. The famous Descanso lilac collection hybridized to bloom with little winter chill also should still be in flower.

Flowering succulents and fruit trees--crabapple, plum, cherry, peach and nectarine--complete the setting.

Inside Van de Kamp Hall, weekend flower shows offer concentrated bursts of blooms. The Pasadena Garden Club Flower Show takes place Mar. 24 and 25, the Flower Arrangers Guild of Southern California show is Mar. 31 and April 1; and the San Fernando Rose Society will hold a show and sale April 21 and 22.

Other plants including annuals, perennials, shrubs, and even rooted cuttings from the famous Descanso camellias will be on sale March 24 through April 1.

Whatever their choice, visitors can leave the festival with inspiration for their own backyards and maybe even the plants to get started.

Artist chosen for new volunteer coordinator post

Patricia Bergen filled the newly-established position as Volunteer Coordinator at the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum in October.

California Arboretum Foundation volunteers, called Las Voluntarias y Los Ayudantes, make up one of the Arboretum's most valuable resources,

donating about 30,000 hours a year to the garden. They maintain the Garden for All Seasons, assist in the gift shop and library, lead tours, serve on grounds mapping teams, help preserve the historical buildings, and provide information in different areas such as a speakers' bureau.

As Volunteer Coordinator, Ms. Bergen will evaluate the program and determine how to channel volunteer efforts, ensuring that the program is continually upgraded to provide the best possible services to the public.

Ms. Bergen has worked with volunteers at the Ojai Valley Museum and Ventura County Museum as well as the Ventura County Parks and Harbor Commission, Ojai Cultural Survey Evaluation, City of Ojai Architectural Review Board, and the Pasadena Historical Society. She also served as a council member on the Ojai City Council for four years.

A professional artist for the past 30 years, she holds a bachelors degree in painting and has taught art at The Thatcher School in Ojai and Ventura Community College.

Ms. Bergen lives in Alhambra with her husband Franklyn. She has 3 sons and 2 granddaughters.



Patricia Bergen

Los Angeles Garden Show design winners named

A panel of noted horticulturists had the difficult task of naming the winning entries at the Los Angeles Garden Show. Designers used the theme "At Home in the Garden" to inspire Southern California gardeners. The show ran Oct. 20 through 29 at the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum.

Lew Watanabe of Good Earth Enterprises was the big winner, collecting the Sweepstakes Award, a Theme Award and *Fine Gardening* magazine's award. His design featured a "weeping wall" of water cascading over black granite slabs. Heavenly bamboo, azaleas and grasses surrounded the shimmering centerpiece.

Monrovia Nursery won the Judges Award for its cedar-topped mountain which towered over a glade of rock plants in an Alpine Garden. A cool fog wafted through the air as visitors traveled a footpath winding down the slope and through a cave before passing by a lily-filled pool.

The California Association of Nurserymen, Los Angeles Chapter, also won a Theme Award for its



Water glistens on a black granite wall and mists over design that won Sweepstakes Award for Lew Watanabe.

(AWARDS continued on page 4)

Kids touch nature and vice versa at ecology fair

three-tiered backyard display. Trees and shrubs shadowed the background; a vegetable and herb garden with ornamental kale highlighted the center.

Sassafras Nursery won the Alice Frost Thomas Perpetual Award for best use of color as well as the John Armstrong Award for best use of roses.

Santa Barbara Botanical Garden won the Best Educational Award for their display of rare California plants backdropped by a painting of their natural habitats.

The City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power won the Hugh Evans Award as well as the Theodore Payne Award for their educational display of water conserving garden plants.

The "Home Garden of the Future" by Cornell and Wiskar Landscaping won the Rose Marie Head Award for Outstanding Contractor Display.

A seaside garden display by Armstrong Garden Centers, Inc., won the Harry E. Rosedale Award for Best Retail Nursery. The garden featured grey redwood decking, a pond for fish and aquatic plants, a barbecue pit and container plants watered with a drip system.

Landscape Assistance won the Manfred Meyberg Award for their 12-foot tall indoor waterfall.

Other named awards went to Fair Oaks Nursery, Stewart Orchids, Hines Nursery, the Los Angeles Wholesale Flower District, Cycad Gardens and K.Yuge Nursery.

Judges Merit Awards were given to Canvas Speciality, Sam's Gazebo, L.J. Hausner Construction Co., Mi Casa Verde Greenhouses, Joseph Macia and Tropics, Inc.

Every program the Department undertakes has somewhere within it the underlying goal of improving the environment. But with the annual Environmental Education Fair the purpose is as straightforward as the name.

For the past nine years the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum has joined with 12 other organizations to put on a fair, funded by a State grant, where 50 to 60 exhibitors offer conservation materials for use in classrooms and other youth education programs.

In 1990 the Environmental Education Fair will be held March 10 to tie in with Arbor Day and the imminent 20th anniversary celebration of Earth Day. With the growing involvement of youth groups, the fair is expected to attract even more than the 4,000 plus visitors who came last year.

Hands-on exhibits emphasize the vital interaction between animals--including humans--and their environment. To get young people literally in touch with natural science, exhibitors lead them in activities like dipping hands into creature-filled tide pools, sawing logs, petting live insects, sand painting and scores of other absorbing adventures.

School field trip leaders from the California Arboretum Foundation give several walking tours of the grounds, popular with adults as well as the youngsters.

Competitive scholastic events for elementary through high school teams reward students' environmental proficiency.

The fair began almost a decade ago to help teachers caught in a bind; state mandate required them to teach environmental education but did not supply classroom materials or information on activities. On the other hand, many agencies had materials and projects teachers could use but no widespread network for getting their resources into classrooms.

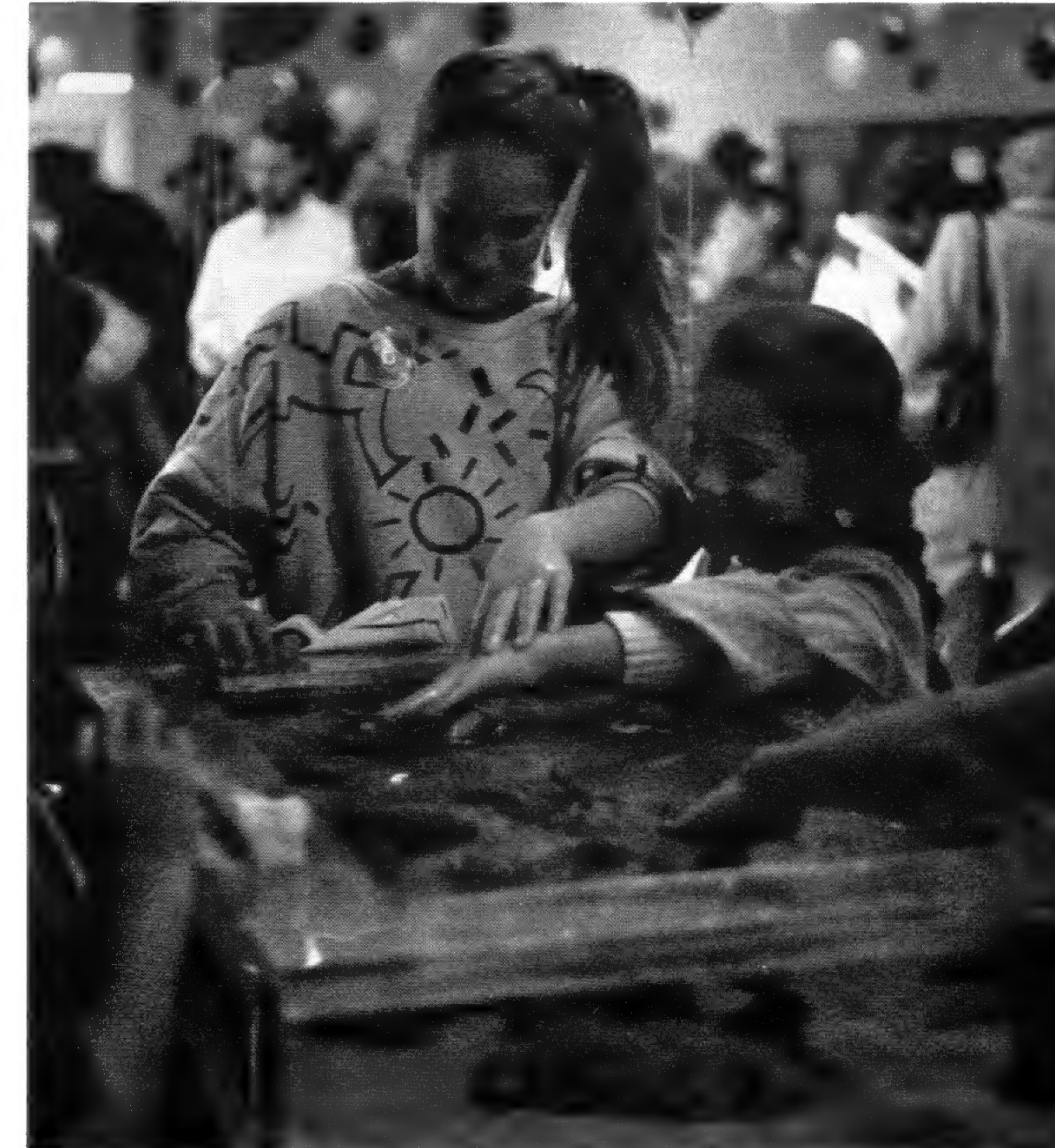
Free or inexpensive field trips, workshops and classroom projects developed by private and governmental organizations often went unused because the education community did not know about the programs.

In an example of interagency cooperation, Southern California Edison obtained a \$3,500 grant from the Environmental License Plate Fund through the State Department of Education. A committee of

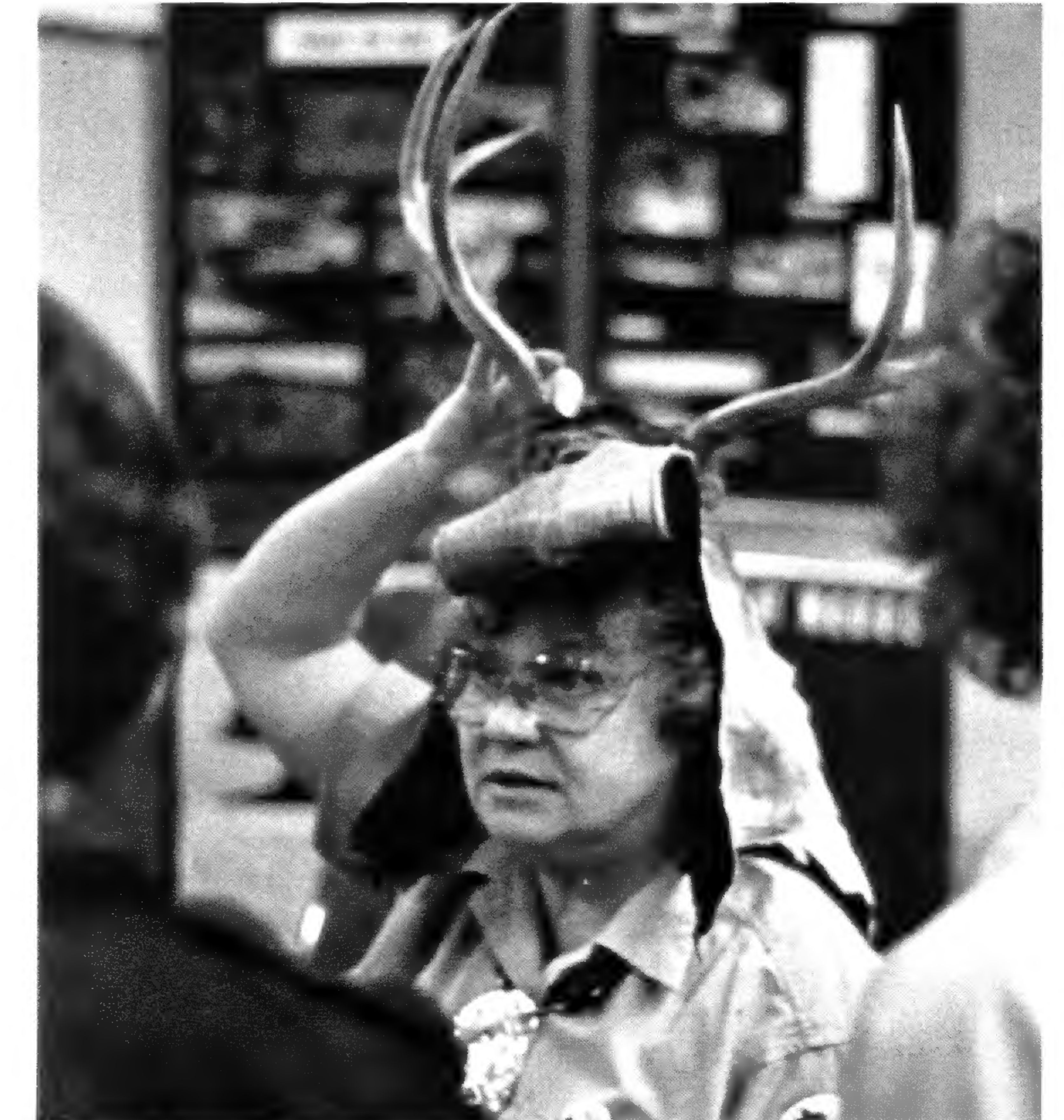
volunteers from other organizations with a stake in the environment was formed and the Arboretum was approached to host the one-day fair.

As it developed, the Arboretum was the ideal

site; Ayres Hall of Environmental Education is large enough to accommodate the crowds, and the natural beauty of the gardens sensitizes visitors to their natural surroundings.



Students investigate sea creatures in a tidal pool, a display at the annual Environmental Education Fair.



Helen Schram models an Indian headdress for the William O. Douglas Outdoor School, a fair exhibit.



Alpine plants shade Garden Show visitors following the path through Monrovia Nursery's winning design.



Children of all ages play non-competitive nature games at Environmental Education Fair.

African shrub evaluated for possible introduction

The Los Angeles State and County Arboretum initiated its Plant Introduction Program in 1958 with the release of *Felicia amelloides* 'Santa Anita'. Since that time, over 100 different kinds of plants have been introduced to horticulture in Southern California, several of which are now commonly used in landscaping, such as the freeway daisy, the fall-flowering silk floss tree and new cultivars of *Agapanthus*.

The Plant Introduction Program of the Arboretum entails the testing of numerous plant types for their suitability to the growing conditions in Southern California. A candidate plant is scrutinized not only for its ornamental qualities but also for its adaptability to the Mediterranean climate of cool, wet winters and hot, dry summers.

The success of the Arboretum's introduction program comes from the breadth of material under consideration, ranging from ground covers and accents plant to trees and shrubs. At any one time, numerous plants are being considered, each at a different stage of evaluation. Because of the semi-arid climate of Southern California, the Arboretum is testing a number of plant species with low water needs. These are often referred to as "drought tolerant" plants. One such species that is currently receiving careful consideration is *Eriocephalus africanus*.

The name *Eriocephalus africanus* is Greek, meaning "wooly-headed" and "from Africa". In its native South Africa, this species is known as "Kapokbossie" (little Kapok bush) or "wilde-roosmaryn" (wild rosemary). From these names, one can correctly assume that the plant is aromatic and has a wooly or cottony appearance at some point. And in fact, the seeds, found in clusters at the ends of branches, are densely covered with small hairs.

The African rosemary is a member of the daisy or sunflower family and is not related to the real rosemary, *Rosmarinus officinalis*, of the mint family. The plant itself is a small much-branched shrub up to three feet high and about as broad. The leaves are aromatic, evergreen, alternate in arrangement, gray-green in color, and small and narrow in shape. The small white flowers are clustered at the end of branches. They appear mainly in the winter months, but flowers can be found from November to April. These flower clusters are followed by the hairy seeds that give the plant its name.

Because the African Rosemary or Kapokbossie originates from a geographical region with a Mediterranean climate similar to our own, the plant grows easily in Southern California. The species naturally occurs over a wide area along the coastal parts of the Cape Province of South Africa. It is a rather hardy plant and tolerates a variety of soil types. It should be given plenty of water during the winter months and needs only occasional water during the rest of the year. The species is easily grown from seed sown in the fall, and germination occurs in about two weeks. The plant can also be grown from cuttings taken late in winter or early in spring. This small shrub with its gray-green foliage looks best in the landscape when grouped together and used to offset the green foliage of many other garden shrubs.

This is just one example of the kinds of plants that the Arboretum continues to evaluate in its search for new plant species for the urban landscape of Southern California. Many other interesting new plant types should be expected in the future.

---Dr. Daryl Koutnik, biologist



Fuzzy seeds which give Eriocephalus africanus its botanical name will soon replace flower clusters.

Gardens chosen to field test 20,000 narcissus bulbs

The significance of 20,000 narcissus bulbs planted at two County gardens goes beyond the beauty of their fragrant drifts of white flowers. Masses of the bulbs were planted along the Meadowbrook stream at the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum and in the volunteers' garden at South Coast Botanic Garden. The bulbs, paperwhite *Narcissus tazetta* 'Ziva', are part of nationwide field tests that will establish a database of information on narcissus.

The County gardens are the only places in Southern California chosen to participate in the trials. In all, more than 100,000 bulbs were planted for evaluation at 14 public gardens around the US.

The gardens' staff records height, time of flowering, strength of the plants, etc. When combined with observations from other test gardens, the information will form a solid database so homeowners and landscapers know what to expect from the bulbs in USDA zones 8, 9 and 10.

The computer program is being developed by Dr. August A. De Hertogh from North Carolina State University who has been doing research for the bulb industry for 25 years. His program will eventually catalog the performance of all bulbous plants. Then gardeners can research a bulb's adaptability in their area by pushing the proverbial button.

Dr. De Hertogh describes bulbs as "biocomputers" that can be programmed to bloom at specific times. Before the bulbs were shipped to

test gardens, they were chilled for six weeks to begin the predictable blooming process.

The uniform-sized bulbs were supplied by AGREXCO of Israel, the world's largest producer of paperwhite narcissus bulbs. The cultivar 'Ziva' accounts for 90 percent of the narcissus bulbs exported by this quasi-governmental agency. Because 'Ziva' succeeds so well as a forced plant, the company is investigating whether its use could be extended out of the greenhouse into the garden.

The plants are expected to naturalize in this zone, becoming a permanent addition to the bulb and perennial beds at the Arboretum and South Coast.



Narcissus tazetta 'Ziva' blooms in Meadowbrook.

Construction begins on Kallam memorial garden

Crews began moving earth and plants this fall for the newest addition to Meadowbrook at the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum. A garden of perennials dedicated to Grace V. Kallam will occupy the site of the former bulb garden between the stream and the western road.

An "All Year Garden" like the one the late Mrs. Kallam enjoyed at her home in Pasadena was designed by landscape architect Shirley Kerins. Floyd Kallam's bequest provides for a permanent memorial to his wife including funds for construction and an endowment for maintenance.

The garden should be completed and ready for dedication ceremonies in the spring of 1990.



Designer Shirley Kerins and contractor John Schoustra examine plans for the Grace V. Kallam Garden.

GARDEN EVENTS

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|---------------------------------------|--|---|---|
| <p>JAN.
7</p> | <p>Rose Pruning Demonstration
South Coast Botanic Garden
11 am and 2 pm
South Coast Rose Society members demonstrate pruning in Rose Garden. bring tools for hands-on tips.</p> | <p>FEB.
10</p> | <p>Valentine Plant Sale
Arboretum
9 am - 4 pm
Exotic plants-- gingers, heliconias, anthuriums, jasmine, and orchids for sale. Experts on hand with advice.</p> |
| <p>JAN.
13</p> | <p>Rose Pruning Demonstration
Descanso Gardens
1 pm - 4 pm
Staff shows techniques for climbers, floribunda and hybrid teas in rose garden. Tips on pruning and culture.</p> | <p>FEB.
17 - 18</p> | <p>African Violet Show
South Coast Botanic Garden
Sat. 10 am - 4 pm, Sun. 9 am - 4 pm
South Coast African Violet Society display of "Violets at the Country Fair". Cultivars and supplies on sale.</p> |
| <p>JAN.
14</p> | <p>Fruit Tree Pruning Demonstration
South Coast Botanic Garden
2 pm
Dr. Jean Natter and other experts illustrate pruning techniques in the Garden's orchards.</p> | <p>MAR.
3 - 4</p> | <p>Daffodil Show
Descanso Gardens
Sat. 1:30-4:30 pm, Sun. 10 am-4:30 pm
Southern California Daffodil Society displays hundreds of blooms in spring tints--apricot, yellow, cream & white</p> |
| <p>JAN.
27 - 28</p> | <p>Bonsai Show
Arboretum
10 am - 4:30 pm
Baikoen Kenkyukai Bonsai Society shows miniature deciduous and fruit trees. Demonstrations each day at 1 and 3 p.m.</p> | <p>MAR.
24 - APR.
22</p> | <p>Festival of Spring Flowers
Descanso Gardens
9:30 am - 4:30 pm
Display gardens, mass plantings of tulips, daffodils and spring delights. Plants on sale Mar. 24 - April 1.</p> |



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