

POLLEN PRESS

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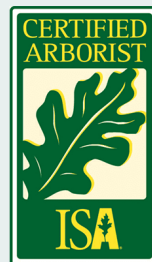
MONARCH ENVIRONMENTAL



Monarch provides unbiased, expert consulting for all things landscape. We are an unaffiliated third-party working with homeowners' associations, commercial projects, and nonprofits to support landscapes and the people who care for them.

CONTRACT MANAGEMENT · WATER MANAGEMENT · ISA ARBORIST SERVICES

PROJECT MANAGEMENT · NON-SYNTHETICS





Monarch Environmental
Propagating Plant Propaganda
Since 2008

Spring 2022
Volume 2, Issue 1

Pollen Press

SPRUNG

There are two types of people in our world: those who work with plants and those who work for plants. At Monarch, we are the latter. Contrary to popular opinion, I did not embrace horticulture for fame and riches. I am here, as well as my colleagues, because we simply have no choice but to serve the landscape. We were drafted at some point, some tendril tugged at our heartstrings or some leafy canopy obscured the view of another life. In short, we got *sprung*.

It can happen at any point in your life so I warn you: don't go out in the spring unawares. Don't meditate on the way early light filters through the chlorophyll or inhale a fragrant bloom in the crisp air. Don't gobble a nectarine warm from the sun, don't let the breath of a greenhouse envelope you. Not unless you want to become one of *those* people—the people who never have clean nails and text their friends when they see a new cultivar or set aside their weekend to mix fertilizer. The plants have us and there's no turning back.

Thankfully, we have a place. We make our living sharing our experience and knowledge and passion. Somehow, the plants have convinced you to hire us on their behalf and we are indeed very grateful. In return, they know we put them first and answer directly to the landscape before anyone else. In this issue, we look in on the birds, welcome the bees, and get swept up in the romance of horticulture.

Jen Wilson

Director of Horticulture

Editor in Chief



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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Who Did That?! Common tree damage and what to do
- Tot Lot Safety: keep your playground safe this season
- Meet Landscape Hero Cody Harkins
- How to get birds in the landscape and keep them happy

LANDSCAPE STRESSORS

Aside from natural enemies like pests and disease, trees are sometimes at risk from their allies. Check in with your trees and their surroundings during every landscape inspection. Enlist an arborist for chronic issues.

- ◇ Irrigation. Are sprinklers directly hitting tree trunks? Although they need water, being constantly wet leads to poor health. Consider your feet—it's wise to wash them but not to constantly wear wet socks!
- ◇ Weather. Even species that are native to your area may need extra support in times of severe weather and drought. Likewise, reduce or pause irrigation during rain events.
- ◇ Soil. The soil microbiome is quite sensitive although it just looks like dirt to most of us. Cleaning fluids, over-fertilization, pet waste, and other materials may contaminate soil and harm trees. Take note of any residues, strong odors, or disturbed soil and monitor for signs of distress.
- ◇ Vegetation. Tree trunks should be visible all the way down to where they taper at the ground. Remove encroaching plants and weeds.

WHO DID THAT?!

Have you observed damage to your trees that has made you wonder, *who or what did that?* Monarch's Arboriculture Department is here to help! Let's take a look at some common issues we see in the urban forest, demystify their origins, and help get them resolved.

Tuliptree Scale (on *Magnolia*)

- Adult Tuliptree scales can sometimes become so prolific that they will cover every branch of a stressed Southern Magnolia, which is one of their favorite hosts (left). If their populations are allowed to go unchecked, they can literally suck the life out of the tree, ultimately leading to its untimely death.



Juvenile Tuliptree scales (called "crawlers" at this stage of life, while they are actually mobile) are seen covering the underside of this Magnolia leaf. Luckily, a lone Twice-Stubbed Lady Beetle – a natural enemy of scales as well as many other insect pests – is on the scene to eat as many of them as possible, helping to reduce the crawler population (right).

The early- to mid-summer months are when crawlers become active, which is the best time to treat for this pest. Regular monitoring for scale activity is the best way to get ahead of this issue and ensure that your Magnolia trees remain safe.

PROBLEM: Lumpy bugs on stems
 CULPRIT: Insect pest (tuliptree scale)
 SOLUTION: Monitor and treat



Redhumped Caterpillars (on *Liquidambar*)

- Have you looked at a *Liquidambar* (American Sweetgum) tree and wondered why part of the canopy appears to have been stripped of its leaves, with only the leaf skeleton remaining intact? The culprit: Red-Humped Caterpillars, going after fresh new spring growth.



The larval stage of this pesky moth can defoliate an entire tree overnight – this may not kill the tree, but it will stress it to the point that it may be difficult to produce enough new growth to re-establish the whole canopy.

Redhumped Caterpillars are usually most active in April and May, so ask your arborist to keep an eye out to determine if treatment may be necessary.

PROBLEM: Leaves are stripped, ground is sticky
 CULPRIT: Insect pest (redhumped caterpillars)
 SOLUTION: Monitor in early spring and treat as soon as possible



Invasive Shot Hole Borer [ISHB] (on *Koelreuteria*)

- If you have *Koelreuteria* trees in your community, there is a very strong chance that you've seen what looks like Amber oozing out of the tree's trunks. This is one defense mechanism that trees sometimes employ to ward off attacks by beetles such as the Invasive Shot Hole Borer. The trees will use sap to physically push the beetles out of their trunks, to prevent these borers from colonizing the wood within.



As you can see, Invasive Shot Hole Borers are very tiny beetles – the exit holes they leave in a tree's trunk are approximately the size of a ballpoint pen tip.

While many trees can successfully ward off a serious beetle attack using their own natural defenses, it may be necessary to treat high-value specimens in order to reduce the beetle population within as well as to suppress the disease they vector, Fusarium Dieback.

PROBLEM: Oozy globs of sap on bark
 CULPRIT: Insect pest (Invasive shot hole borer)
 SOLUTION: Monitor and support general tree health. Treat valuable specimens.

Photo (left) by Dr. Akif Eskalen, UC Davis



Poplar Rust (on *Populus*)

- You may have noticed that sometimes Poplar trees will start to turn a beautiful shade of orange – except it's not the fall, so why would the tree turn colors and start to drop its leaves?? The answer may be a rust fungus, which can cover entire leaves with its vibrant orange spores.



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While treatment may not always be necessary, a severe rust infection can lead to premature leaf drop and overall stress. If you suspect that your Poplar may be infected, call your arborist to schedule a diagnostic inspection.

PROBLEM: Leaves have CHEETOS® appearance, covered in orange particles

CULPRIT: Pathogen (rust fungus)

SOLUTION: Arborist will diagnose and recommend treatment



Chinese Elm Anthracnose (on *Ulmus*)

- Certain varieties of Chinese Elms are highly susceptible to a common plant pathogen called Anthracnose, which can cause them to develop such severe cankers that it looks as though the tree is being split open from the inside. While the health of most trees may not be drastically affected by this disease, large cankers such as the ones pictured here may weaken the tree and make them more prone to limb or trunk failure.



Unfortunately, this disease is very difficult to manage, so it's important to choose a resistant cultivar such as *Ulmus parvifolia* 'Drake' when planting a new Chinese Elm. If your established Elms show signs of these cankers, they should be thoroughly evaluated by a certified arborist. An experienced arborist can develop a pruning plan that will reduce the amount of weight borne by disease-weakened branches, or they may recommend removal if it is deemed to be a hazard to surrounding people and property.

PROBLEM: Trunk appears to be melting

CULPRIT: Pathogen (Anthracnose)

SOLUTION: Strategic pruning to manage disease or removal



Mechanical Damage (on *Tristania*)

- This poor *Tristania* (left) just couldn't catch a break – it was planted in turf without a proper tree well, and thus was subject to repeated lashings by string trimmers and mowers. When a tree's root collar is regularly damaged by lawn equipment and is also frequently hit by irrigation overspray, its trunk will begin to decay and ultimately decline in health.



When it comes to employing good cultural practices to prevent tree health issues, one of our most frequently recommended actions is to install and maintain adequately sized turf-free wells around all trees (right photo). Whether your tree well encompasses a two-foot radius around the trunk or a twenty-foot radius, it's always a good idea to keep turf and its associated maintenance equipment away from your tree!

PROBLEM: Abrasions on lower trunk, usually in varying stages of healing

CULPRIT: Mechanical damage (string trimmer)

SOLUTION: Create a tree well as wide as possible



Trunk Girdling (on *Pinus* and *Platanus*)

- While newly planted trees often benefit from being properly staked or guyed to prevent them from toppling in high winds, we must always remember to remove any and all wires or ties from the tree as soon as it becomes established and can support itself. Cases in point, trees whose guy wires were not removed in a timely manner may be at a higher risk of failure due to their trunks being weakened by the hardware embedded within.



Even though this staking tie doesn't encircle the entire trunk of this young Sycamore (right), leaving it embedded in the trunk is never a good idea. Arborists and landscape managers alike must always work to inspect and replace or remove stakes in a timely manner (typically within two years after tree installation), or risk eventually losing what could have been a perfectly healthy and stable tree.

PROBLEM: Bark is pinched or warped around foreign material

CULPRIT: Mechanical damage (tree supports)

SOLUTION: Routinely monitor tree supports and remove when ready



GET THE PICTURE?

Diagnosing tree stressors in the field requires skill and experience. Arborists will often confer on subtle issues to get a correct identification, or a tissue sample may be required for laboratory analysis. If you are concerned with a struggling tree, help your arborist by passing along a detailed description of your observations.



Is it an INSECT PEST? There are many insects that are not harmful and may actually benefit your landscape. Take a clear photo of insects, noting what part of the tree they are frequenting, what damage has been caused (are leaves curled, edges chewed, holes appearing?), and check for sticky residue.



Could it be a PATHOGEN? Diseases can be difficult to diagnose unless they have advanced, obvious symptoms. Viruses, bacteria, and fungus are all examples of pathogens that attack trees.

If tissues are distorted, discolored, or showing a residue with no apparent source, the plant may be infected. A close-up picture of the affected area as well as a picture of the entire plant is helpful. Soil and/or tissue samples may be required.



MECHANICAL damage is usually easy to spot. If you pay close attention to the tree's environment, you may notice

interference from lawn equipment, pet damage, or even human abuse. Treating trees as though they are inanimate objects can lead to poor habits like leaving decoration in branches, puncturing the trunk with nails, screws, or staples, or neglecting to adjust lighting fixtures and support systems.



Top-tier tot lot style tip: “bunny ears” or “puppy ears” are the hot hair trend these days.



KEEPING KIDS SAFE

The weather is warming up and summer days are ahead! Routine maintenance and inspections are a very important part of keeping your community tot lots safe. Here are some questions to assist with your inspections:



Is your loose-fill fall surfacing raked and at the appropriate level to protect up to the manufacturer's recommended fall height?

Many tot lots with sand and wood chips have stickers from install showing where the surface levels need to be. If the tot lot does not have access ramps, another way to determine if your surfacing is sufficient is it should be level with the curb. Please make sure you purchase fall surfacing with all of the appropriate ASTM (American Society for Testing and Materials, now called ASTM International) testing certificates to reduce liabilities.

Are the S-hooks connecting the swing chains showing signs of wear and tear?

S-hooks are the S-shaped connectors attaching the chain to both the swing bay and the seat of the swing. The S-hooks can start to wear down from back-and-forth motions since friction

strains the hardware. If you see ruts forming on the metal or signs of rust, consider replacing them soon.

Do you see signs of damage to the play equipment?

You don't need to be a trained CPSI (Certified Playground Safety Inspector) to spot a potential liability on a playground. If you see something broken, sharp, or not “right”, speak up! Notify your community manager right away—a photo and location would be helpful, along with details of what you observed.

Lastly, you may want to spread the word to parents and guardians to not allow children to play on playgrounds with helmets or drawstrings on sweat-shirts.

Playground safety is designed to prevent life-threatening injuries and these tips will keep your tot lots a safe and fun place to pass the time this summer.

Junior Monarchs Sadie and Bradley generously take time out of their busy schedules to test out playground quality with their mom, Director of Client Services Bethany Ross. Bethany is also the team's Certified Playground Safety Inspector.



People need green spaces to thrive and those domestic landscapes rely on people in return.

PEOPLE MAKE IT HAPPEN

Look around and ask yourself, *who takes care of all this?* According to the National Association of Landscape Professionals (NALP), the IBIS World Landscaping Services Industry Report shows that the landscape services industry had a market size of \$105.1 billion in 2021. What can seem like a “hidden” industry employs more than one million people and represents more than 600,000 landscaping service businesses. One million jobs represent one million families and tens of millions of family members.

That is a staggering impact on our community and our economic well-being. Our lives would be stark without people getting up before the sun and hard-charging until sundown. Their efforts are reflected when you enjoy what they create and maintain. Landscapes are not all about beauty. Landscapes are about building communities, throwing birthday parties in the park, meeting new people, exercising, family reunions, barbecues, concerts, picnics, and finding a respite from the screen. We need to be reminded that these landscapes are not stale assets; they are dynamic, living beings that require care and respect.

The landscape is extraordinarily easy to take for granted and so are the people who make it happen. More than ever, the human workforce has been at odds with the demand in our industry. Horticulture majors have dropped by 90% since 1980 and the labor force has begun to choose equal-paying jobs that offer air conditioning. How do we fix this? For starters, we need to circle back to the title of this article. People are making it happen, and they are always more important than the process. As a society, we often look at “gardeners” as laypeople who chose their respective paths out of necessity, not know-how. What needs to be communicated is how diverse and impactful our industry truly is.

Not all are called to be caretakers of nature, but all enjoy the fruit of the one million people making it happen. This brief note is to encourage those reading to pause next time they are surrounded by a landscape and tip your cap to those who make it possible.

It's all about the people.

Matt Davenport, CEO

ASK THE CEO

Q: What has Monarch's growth been like over the past 13 years?

A: We were one (me) in 2008 and now we have more than a dozen experts in their respective fields

Q: Why do you think you have grown?

A: The world has become more specialized and our clients enjoy and appreciate having an objective expert on their side to ensure things get done for the right price and in the right way.

Q: What's next for Monarch?

A: I'm working to establish a company that has industry-leading experts who are in the landscape industry for the right reasons. We are continually trying to identify those people so we can ultimately grow into new markets throughout CA and other regions

Q: What are you most proud of when it comes to Monarch?

A: The team that I have been fortunate enough to build and the relationships I have made with clients that have become friends. I believe the team we have in place is the best in the industry. Like my old coach (and probably yours, too) used to say, "It ain't bragging if its true!"



Don Neff shows off his haul! Proper equipment (clean, sharp garden tools) will make harvesting easy on the picker, the fruit, and the tree.

HARVEST LIKE A PRO

- ◇ Clip stems as close to the fruit as possible. Pulling will tear skin and fruit will decay quickly.
- ◇ Avoid leaving long stems which can puncture other fruit in the bag
- ◇ Leave the “button” on the avocado (the bit of stem attached directly to the fruit) to slow ripening
- ◇ Boots, gloves, and attention will prevent injury from thorns and rough terrain

JOURNEY OF A LEMON

RANCHO MISSION VIEJO

Somebody was serious when they called it Orange County. Our climate is decidedly perfect for Citrus orchards (and avocados, too!) which is not to say they don’t need a lot of support to reach their full potential.

Rancho Mission Viejo relies on Don Neff (President, Neff Ranch) to manage their 450 acres of urban orchards.

According to Neff on this project, “Our experienced orchard management team has been able to identify and address the specific needs of the orchard, including



The orchard along Chiquita Canyon Drive

soils and nutrition, pruning, and irrigation management, working to ensure a healthy and successful crop.”

Residents can harvest the bounty and join tours to review best harvesting practices and share ideas for using fresh produce at home.

- * Learn more about Neff Ranch www.neffranch.com/
- * Learn more about Rancho Mission Viejo www.ranchomissionviejo.com

WHEN LIFE HANDS YOU LEMONS...

Does your home or community have an overabundance of fruit? Here’s what you can do:

- ◇ DONATE! Food banks and pantries are generally happy to accept fresh produce. Websites such as OC Food Help (ocfoodhelp.org) can help you locate a nearby pantry.
- ◇ Get creative in the kitchen. Candy those peels, freeze some popsicles, pack a punch bowl, make some jam or fruit leather.
- ◇ Guacamole: invented to deliciously cope with avocado overflow
- ◇ Leave a box at shared mailboxes for the neighbors or at your door for delivery folks



Monarch’s Matt Davenport hits the slopes and shares his harvest with local restaurants.



Bees can't resist a Citrus flower! This lime tree is abuzz with fruitful labor.

BE(E) FRIENDLY

Bees are critical in our landscape for pollination. Food and flowers both depend on pollinators of all kinds and bees are no small part of our survival. That being said, there is still significant resistance to inviting them into our residential areas.

I'm allergic! is the reason I hear most often in talking to homeowners. The truth is, this confines you to the indoors. Where there are flowers, there will be bees. Take



control of your environment by having the medical supplies you may require at hand. Do not provoke or disturb bees (they are usually so intent on their job that it takes a fair amount of effort to get their attention).

Are you in a situation where you must cohabitate with those fuzzy pollinators? If plants that are superior at attracting bees cannot be avoided, one workaround is shearing off the blooms periodically. Of course, this defeats the purpose of utilizing these plants but your comfort and safety in the landscape is also part of its utility.

Removing plants because they have effective flowers is not a sustainable practice and will ultimately compromise your landscape design and the ecosystem that supports beneficial wildlife. Instead, protect yourself with good outdoor habits (be alert and do not tease), a medical plan if necessary, and plant super-attractors out of reach.

GETTING BUSY

Bees are the primary pollinator for *Citrus* (humans, wasps, wind, butterflies, and other pollinating forces can help, too). What can you do to secure these teammates?

- ◇ Plan for the off-season. Make sure you have plants that support bees all year-round, not just when your desired crop is blooming.
- ◇ Be mindful about what sprays are used in your landscape. If possible, select products with lower impact on bees and apply as little as possible (including fertilizers).
- ◇ Bees get thirsty, too! Providing small amounts of water will help pollinators navigate hot days. A shallow dish is enough.



Trees with a small stature can have a big impact. Kumquats are a great way to provide fruit in tight areas.

CONTRACTOR'S PICKS

Trust your experts when it comes to choosing plants. Here are some of Cody's favorites:



Aloe 'Blue Elf' - it's easy to care for, transplants well, and it's beautiful.



Vitex purpurea—low maintenance but looks impressive. You can use it for a screen, a hedge, or a small tree by itself.



Quercus agrifolia (coast live oak) - my favorite tree! They stand out and just look amazing, plus they're pretty tough.

LANDSCAPE HERO: CODY HARKINS

Meet Cody Harkins, one of our Landscape Heroes!



Cody got his start in landscaping at age 12, mowing the lawn with his dad. By the time he was 16, he had a regular route of 35 houses, learning the subtleties of building a reliable reputation in his own neighborhood.

As a young husband and father with a growing family to support, Cody pursued a career in landscaping with Valley Crest. Horticulture, irrigation, landscape operations, and leadership proved to be a great fit, seeing him through Disneyland's landscaping team and joining O'Connell Landscape Maintenance in 2013. Cody is now the General Manager for Sendero and Esencia at Rancho Mission Viejo, a project that covers over 17.5 million square feet of landscaping.

Cody's depth of horticultural knowledge reflects his years spent learning in the field. Understanding the habits and needs of each species as well as the dynamic of how landscape elements work together informs his daily decisions and long-term planning.

What did you learn from your early career?

I started in the Inland Empire, which has a different plant palette compared to Orange County. It was more difficult because the temperatures could be more extreme, especially with frost. We also had less reliable reclaimed water that would damage plants. I learned a lot about how to troubleshoot.

What's the best part of landscaping?

Putting down fresh sod! I don't get to lay much sod these days, but it's so satisfying to see bare dirt suddenly green. Really, any renovation project that fixes up an unattractive area is what makes me happy. It's like a puzzle, figuring out how to make a landscape look good and keep it happy.

What is your management style?

Treat everyone with respect. Constantly training is also really important, which means I'm constantly learning. Crew members taught me Spanish in the field and I was fluent by the time I was twenty. I love that there is always something new to learn in landscaping: a new plant or tree we can use, a new technique, or even just a new scientific name. It keeps us sharp!



Landscapers are homemade! Cody and his dad make their lawn the pride of the neighborhood.



A Harkins weekend still means exploring the great outdoors, such as visiting General Sherman in Sequoia National Park.

What can be better about the way we plan landscapes?

I wish plants weren't installed too close to sidewalks. This is a big problem in a lot of neighborhoods, we're spending tons of time keeping plants off sidewalks. It's dangerous because it's a trip hazard and it makes the landscaper look bad because some of these plants grow too fast to keep up with. Getting the spacing right in the beginning makes everyone's job easier.

What are you most proud of in your career?

It's hard to say, it's a lot of little things. What stands out to me are projects that were really difficult and took a lot of work to pull off. I'm proud when a turf renovation project is completed because they are complex and rewarding when you see the final product. Installing the newest sycamore at El Prado park was important to me; there were a lot

of unforeseen challenges and seeing that tree growing makes me proud.

What's next?

My goal is to get my arborist license and learn more about trees. I try to spend as much time as I can learning from arborists in the field, it's always interesting. I'm also working on becoming a Certified Water Auditor and doing more horticultural classes in general. Being at The Ranch is the best job I've had, with the best team. I want to stay here and add as much value as I can.

Thank you, Cody, for making time to share your story. Cody has his hands full at work and at home, with four chickens, two dogs, two children, and one potbellied pig. When he's not exploring with the kids or helping with a family project, you might find him cruising on his Harley as the landscape rolls by.

LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT

Cody's advice for managers working with landscape contractors in their communities:

- ◇ Communicate! It's better to speak up when something looks wrong, don't wait for the landscaper to see the same thing.
- ◇ Timing is important. I like a clear task with a due date or deadline, it makes it easier to schedule the crew.
- ◇ Be specific. Adding a map or photo to your request or work order will help save time. You don't need to know what the plants are called, just tell me where to find them and what to look for.





CONVERSATIONS WITH...

TOM LARSON

Monarch's Matt Davenport joins industry leader Tom Larson for a conversation about horticulture and humanity.

How did you get into this industry?

I really enjoyed mowing grass and taking care of my yard when I was 10 or 11. I guess I was doing a good job, so neighbors asked me to start taking care of their yard. I ended up starting my own little push mower business. It gave me a chance to see how things grow and develop. The whole thing just really interested me. After high school, I joined the Marines and eventually graduated from Cal Poly Pomona with a degree in Agricultural Science. A fellow churchgoer told me, follow your interest and what God has given you, pursue it and then give it away. She said, if you do that you will have more energy, innovation and be able to withstand the challenges that will come your way. That's how I started, and I still feel that way today. There is a lot to discover.

When people ask how I'm doing I say, "I'm bangin' on four cylinders and leakin' oil!"



PEACE Farm is the culmination of Tom's experience, love of the industry, and his community's support.

saddleback.com/connect/ministry/peace-farm/rancho-capistrano

Tell us about your career in the industry?

After graduation, I took a job in Kern County and later took a job managing Keeline Wilcox Nursery which sold trees to everybody from Steven Spielberg to Bob Hope. The products we sold were awesome. We shipped trees to Saudi Arabia and all over the world.

From there, I worked for Sea Tree Nursery. I then started my own consulting firm called Integrated Urban Forestry. We worked closely with developers and decision makers regarding tree health, and overall urban forest management. I sold my company to Dudek and then went to work for them by helping them grow an urban forestry division as well as a fire management program, which are still making a strong, positive impact.

After Dudek, I worked for the Great Park Foundation. I was hired to oversee the conversion of the El Toro Marine base into a park. While there, I developed the farm and food lab but ultimately

needed a change. After 5 years, I wanted to get out and do what I'm doing now at the PEACE Farm.

What is the Peace Farm?

The PEACE Farm is a raised planter farm, led by volunteers with a heart for growing and serving their community. The PEACE Farm is a place to use your hands and feet to grow goodness that gets served up to the community in need. I have been given the unique opportunity to build something that allows me to be innovative and help grow food and hearts.





What have you learned that you want to pass on?

Dorothy Kellen, who was the City of Anaheim’s first librarian, taught me so much. I used to take care of her yard and she told me that if you put a nickel into someone’s life you will get a dime. She also would say that fragrance sticks to the hand that passes the rose. Dorothy furthered what my mom had taught me—life is about doing things *for* someone, not *to* someone. When you can solve a problem, provide a service or product that provides satisfaction for someone, you have cre-

ated a relationship that is the groundwork for future growth. I feel like I could talk all day on what I want to pass on!

Do you have any words of wisdom for our readers?

I learned to explore first, then discover and finally learn. Once you apply those learnings to your life you will find yourself having an “AH-HA!” moment along the way. Exploring, discovering, and learning have always been very important to me. The best education is to be out there bumping shoulders, making mistakes and learning. You need to learn how to relate to people.

Any closing thoughts, Tom?

Most people don’t understand that when you work with a team you work with all sorts of backgrounds. When I was in the Marines, you didn’t say: he’s Black, or Puerto Rican, or white, or Italian. No, we were in harmony and when you have diversity and harmony you can get so much done. I feel very blessed.

Tom, Thank you for your commitment to service. Please know that your life’s work and the example you set has made a significant difference in our industry and beyond. You are the kind of man I aspire to be and I so much appreciate you taking the time to share your wisdom and experience.

-Matt Davenport





Landscape fire risk and field safety specialist



Monarch outreach and education speaker



GIS mapping specialist in arbor care management

ISA Certified Arborist WE-13969A



Rain Bird Academy

Gold Standard Customer Service



Certified Water Manager
Certified Irrigation Auditor



Bilingual English/
Spanish

MEET ANGEL CABRAL

Arbor care consultant Angel Cabral joined Monarch’s Arboriculture Department in 2021 and has proven to be a valuable addition to the team, especially in detailed field work. His diverse industry knowledge and quick sense of humor have made clients and coworkers glad to have him onsite.

Angel has a varied background, including eight years as a Fire Explorer for the City of Redlands Fire Dept and over two years as a Firefighter for Cal Fire in the City of Highland. His understanding of how fire poses a huge risk to Southern California landscapes is critical in keeping our team informed and proactive in fire safety. As an EMS responding to 911 dispatch in San Bernardino for twelve years and a field training officer for American Medical Response, Angel is unflappable, swift

to take action, and puts his work first.

With a true love of arboriculture, Angel has spent over ten years developing his career in the landscaping industry. He provided arbor care business development, field estimations, and project management for Andre Landscape. While with Andre, he became Plant Healthcare Lead and Branch Manager for the Arbor Care Dept. He was also Site Leader for the Saluting Branches organization for Miramar National Cemetery.

Angel has been married for fourteen years and has four daughters, proving he is no stranger to hard work and putting others first. We’re grateful to have an intrepid, hilarious, sincere colleague looking out for the trees in our communities.

MEET NICK MAYER

Nick is a native of San Clemente, CA where he grew up with a natural green thumb and a love for the outdoors and camping with his family. He attended California Coast University where he received his BS in Business Administration. Nick began his career as an estate manager in 2013, overseeing landscape maintenance crews and irrigation infrastructures. During this time, Nick developed a passion for water conservation, environmentalism and finding creative ways of making landscapes both beautiful and sustainable.

ing and maintaining sustainable irrigation, and both designing and executing creative landscapes for clients. During his 9 years in landscape contracting, managing, designing and sales, Nick has built a robust skill set in maintenance, landscape construction, irrigation, plant health care and selection, horticultural sustainability, and creative landscape design. Nick joined Monarch in 2022 and continues to provide clients and coworkers with sustainable and efficient landscape and irrigation plans, transparency and enthusiasm, and trustworthy project management.

Nick’s eye for design, customer service, and his knack for creative problem solving paved the way for his own landscaping business executing residential projects, manag-

ing and maintaining sustainable irrigation, and both designing and executing creative landscapes for clients. During his 9 years in landscape contracting, managing, designing and sales, Nick has built a robust skill set in maintenance, landscape construction, irrigation, plant health care and selection, horticultural sustainability, and creative landscape design. Nick joined Monarch in 2022 and continues to provide clients and coworkers with sustainable and efficient landscape and irrigation plans, transparency and enthusiasm, and trustworthy project management.

Nick and his wife, Kristen Mayer, are expecting their first child this summer and we’re looking forward to a new baby Monarch!

OBITUARIES

Have you experienced winter die-out on *Acacia*? Did you blame frost, irrigation, or your landscape contractor? The real culprit could be rodents. In lean times, critters will chew tough materials that they would normally disdain in warmer seasons. The telltale sign is inconsistent die-out that appears between healthy growth. Upon close inspection, you will find frayed bark indicating a midnight feast.



ARBOR DAY PUZZLE

S N E E R G R E V E H K U G A
 R T R E E O Y B A R K N I X A
 E L O L O F C Q A I X U K C O
 W Y G T A H W U T M X R I O D
 O P S E O F Q E C T E T U O D
 L O L U X T V R H A R L R Q N
 F N W O R G D C M U T M Y E G
 W A S E L O P U S Y A K G X Q
 C C C Y O X A S W N N Y I Q N
 A C C A C B U A C R X I J N Y
 M J H U J T W Y O O I I A X S
 B Q T J U E U C A L Y P T U S
 I P F B O T A I Q Y Q T J E Z
 U E R U T L U C I R O B R A M
 M A B R A N C H E S P U E U U

ACORN
 BARK
 CANOPY
 DORMANCY
 FLOWERS
 OXYGEN
 ROOTS

ARBORICULTURE
 BRANCHES
 CATKINS
 EUCALYPTUS
 GROW
 POLESAW
 TRUNK

ARBUTUS
 CAMBIUM
 CITRUS
 EVERGREEN
 LEAFY
 QUERCUS
 XYLEM

Once you've found all the words on the list, copy the unused letters starting in the top left corner to reveal a hidden message. Submit your hidden message to jen@monarchu.com for a tree-related treat.

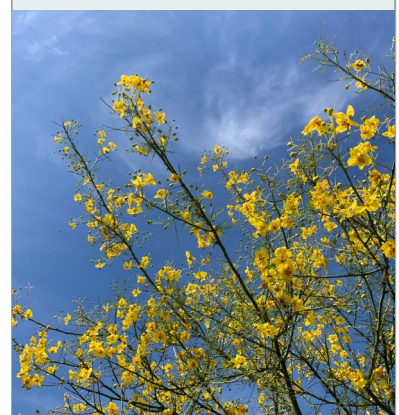
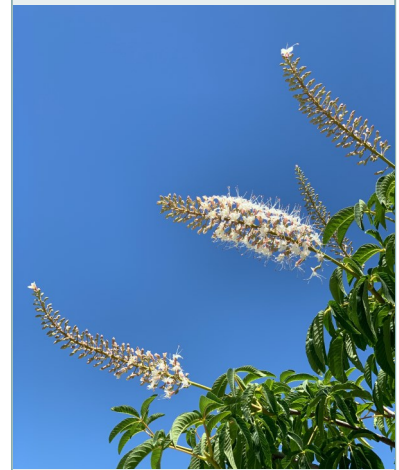
CELEBRATE ARBOR DAY

National Arbor Day is April 29, 2022. This holiday falls on the last Friday every April but many cities and organizations assign their own day to celebrate trees in spring.

- ◇ Upper Oso Creek Trail in Mission Viejo (April 23) - volunteer to plant trees (949) 470-3095
- ◇ Pretend City in Irvine (April 29) - included with museum admission
- ◇ Encinitas Arbor Day (April 30) - free with giveaways, tree planting, and more

Find more:

www.arborday.org/celebrate



MAKE IT A HOME

If your landscape is already established, there may not be much you can do to add more plants. Here are some tips for making an existing landscape more attractive to your feathered neighbors.

WEED CONTROL

Banish invasive species from your landscape. Not all weeds are considered invasive in our area and are more of a nuisance than a threat. True invasives out-compete native species that wildlife rely on for survival. Check out the California Invasive Plant Council for more information:

www.cal-ipc.org/

LEAVE A MESS

A too-clean landscape leaves painfully few opportunities for birds to hide from predators, nest and raise young, hunt, or ride out rough weather. Dead trees or brush in areas that aren't actively used by humans are a huge boon to small creatures like birds.

CAREFUL FEEDING

Be informed if you want to provide appropriate food. Make sure you do your research on feeding specific species and keeping feeders in good condition. Refer to the Audubon Society:

www.audubon.org

BIRD BUFFET

With the onset of spring, we can't help but wonder what the birds and the bees are up to. Getting a peek into the lives of local fauna doesn't mean you need to travel far from home. Patio plants and backyard gardens, greenbelts and parks can provide a veritable flap of activity.

If you're planning a bird garden, you have a lot of fantastic options. Here are some things to consider:

Why does my landscape need a variety of materials?

Attracting and providing for a range of creatures means having something for everyone. Create a palette that appeals to a range of visitors. Include plants that attract with flowers, fruit, shelter, or other materials instead of focusing on just one method. This strategy will also protect the land-

scape against species-specific failures—if you only plant *Lantana* and the entire population is killed by frost, you have no back-up.

How can I improve aesthetics?

Relying on the same colors, shapes, and textures looks uniform to a fault. Contemporary landscaping favors mirroring natural environments with an exciting palette of materials. Incorporate trees, shrubs, and ground-covers that compliment each other's forms and colors. Stroll through local gardens and explore nurseries to see what thrives in your climate and what plants go well together.

Avoid the "hodge-podge" look of planting a single specimen of each variety you choose. Groups of the same plant make more of a statement and appear intentional.

TREES & LARGE SHRUBS

Alnus



SUMMER

Alnus species such as white alders (*A. rhombifolia*) and red alders (*A. rubra*) provide seeds, buds, and nesting material

Arctostaphylos



WINTER, SPRING

Fruit and flowers from *Arctostaphylos* (manzanita) attract scrub jays and hummingbirds

Cercis



SPRING, FALL

Cercis (redbud) are small trees with big style. Bright pink flowers in spring and seeds in fall are attractive to birds.

Platanus



SPRING, WINTER

Platanus (sycamore) provides seeds for snacking and hummingbirds may use the downy seed-coating for their nests

Heteromeles



WINTER

Toyons fill a vital niche in the landscape, providing berries through the winter when other plants are dormant.

Rhamnus



SUMMER, FALL

Coffeeberry has flashy red berries that birds love. They are said to get "drunk" on these fruits when ripe!

Rhus



SUMMER, SPRING

Rhus integrifolia and *R. ovata* (lemonade berry and sugar bush) are staples in the native landscape. Hikers and birds love the fruit.

Sambucus



YEAR-ROUND

Elderberries are popular with many birds for many reasons. Flowers, fruit, and the entire plant are used. Good for nesting.

FILLER SHRUBS

Ceanothus



SUMMER, FALL
Birds eat seeds and quail will nest or hide here. This native is available in a range of blues/violets or white. Shrub or groundcover.

Eriogonum



YEAR-ROUND
Buckwheat is a constant source for those who eat leaves and will also produce seeds in fall. Various sizes and colors of this native.

Ribes



WINTER, SUMMER
Flowers are especially popular with hummingbirds. Berries are a bright treat and worth a taste for humans, too.

Salvia



SPRING, FALL
Everyone loves a sage! Hummingbirds and other pollinators adore the flowers, and seeds are a big attractor in fall.

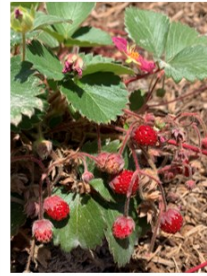
SUB-SHRUBS & GROUNDCOVER

Asclepias



SPRING
The stems of milkweed are sought after in early spring for nesting. Later, birds will help themselves to insects gathered here.

Fragaria



YEAR-ROUND
Strawberries! Of course, birds love the fruit in summer and fall but they'll also nibble on leaves in any season.

Lupinus



SUMMER
Lupines are hugely important to quail. Other birds will harvest seeds, as well. *Seeds can be dangerous for kids/pets*

Mimulus & Diplacus



SPRING, SUMMER
Another hummingbird favorite is monkeyflowers. Investigate which Genus suits your specific habitat. (Pictured: *Diplacus*)

MVP (MOST VALUABLE PLANT)



Quercus sp. (oak)

YEAR-ROUND

If you want to be the hero of the landscape, plant an oak. These trees are used by the greatest diversity of local wildlife, including birds.

- Nesting material, nesting sites, general shelter
- Acorns are a valuable food source
- Bark is used to store acorns and harvest insects
- Galls and exposed insects are used as food
- Catkins (flowers) are used as food and lure other creatures that may be eaten

RESOURCES

These resources were used in the creation of this article and can provide you with further research. Always check with a trusted source for wildlife information. Your local native-based nurseries can be a valuable source for what plants will work in your area, which plants have similar growing needs, and what looks good together!

LAS PILITAS NURSERY

www.laspilitas.com

This nursery in Santa Margarita is California-specific and has a huge library of digital resources.

NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION

www.nwf.org

America's oldest conservation organization! Wildlife guides are available for birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, plants, and more.

PACIFIC HORTICULTURE

www.pacifichorticulture.org

This quarterly journal is tremendously valuable to the West Coast landscaper. Find well-researched articles on horticultural topics, including wildlife.

TREE OF LIFE NURSERY

californianativeplants.com

Monarch's local favorite. This native-based nursery in San Juan Capistrano provides in-person and digital education.



CALENDAR

SPRING TO SUMMER

Things are heating up out there. Soaring temperatures will mean everything needs a closer eye—irrigation, pest control (not only will you have more pests but you must avoid applying pesticides in high heat), growth management, weeds! The whole landscape seems to leap into action and so should its caretakers.

- ◇ Bi-weekly mowing will need to shift to a weekly plan. Your mow crew will be busy so be aware of extra demands that will scatter your labor force, reducing efficiency (even pulling a few weeds or trimming a few vines takes time).
- ◇ Time to break out the PGRs (Plant Growth Regulators). These products can help slow down aggressive growers. This means less time spent pruning and hedging.
- ◇ Fertilize your acid-loving plants, like *Azalea*, *Camellia*, and *Gardenia*. An iron chelate works well for this application.
- ◇ Spring mulch is best applied in April and May to protect soils from summer heat. This will retain moisture, suppress weeds, and nourish your soil as it breaks down.

GLOSSARY

Arbor Day—the tree-planting holiday celebrated on the last Friday of April, since 1872

Biodiveristy—the breadth of variety in lifeforms in a habitat. Increase this diversity by planting a large selection of plants to attract different wildlife.

California Invasive Plant Council —This organization provides science-based information on invasive plants and their impact and control

CPSI—Certified Playground Safety Inspector

Food Banks—a place to donate your excess produce and support your community

Mechanical Damage—trauma caused to plant tissue by a physical source, like foot traffic or landscaping equipment

Orchard—a planting of trees for food production. This can be fruit (such as oranges and avocados), nuts, or other crops like maple syrup.

Quercus—Oak trees, the plant most widely used by wildlife for survival in our area



PLANT PROFILE

TAGETES LEMMONII

AKA Mexican mint marigold or copper canyon daisy

HEIGHT Up to 6' but generally maintained around 4' with an eventual spread of 6-8' (or more, if allowed)

WATER Low water, summer dry

CARE Hard pruning will keep this species in check but you may be sacrificing some blooms. It is better to give it space rather than constantly hedging, although it will bounce back even after a severe cut.

BLOOM Fall and winter, although you're likely to see blooms throughout the year, especially in overcast weather. Flowers are rich, golden yellow and bloom cycles are profuse.

FEATURES

- ◇ Strongly fragrant foliage when disturbed. It's a love-or-hate aroma, medicinal and lingering. If you are not a fan, simply place it out of reach. (I love it, though! -Ed.)
- ◇ Takes sun or part shade but give less water in lower light. Watch out for fungal outbreaks like powdery mildew if you have less sun.
- ◇ Native to Mexico, this plant matches the needs of many CA natives. It is a great addition for landscapes that seek sustainability without losing reliability and curb appeal.
- ◇ Tolerates clay soils and other poor soil conditions
- ◇ Great for pollinators like birds and butterflies since it blooms nearly year-round, providing support when other food sources may be dormant

Monarch Environmental

34237 Via Santa Rosa
Dana Point, CA
92624

949.207.3770
grow@monarchu.com
monarchu.com

Rooted in Relationships
◇
Cultivating Collaboration
◇
Growth with Purpose



KEEP IN TOUCH



Team Monarch at the CACM SoCal Law Seminar



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Wren Davenport studies the life cycle of the butterfly at O'Neill Regional Park.

*Explore our digital library
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