

# NEWSLETTER



ARBORETA & BOTANIC GARDENS

*prepared by the public services division*

June 9 1972

## RESEARCH DIVISION

On May 26, 1972, a surprise visitor came to the research laboratory center. She was Ms. Anas platyrhynchos. She flew down and landed at the center of our water lily pool. She was very happy and excited, as observed by some of us, diving and bathing with many movements. But it was a very short visit, for she flew away gracefully. We hope she will visit us again.

During the past 15 years, research workers at the Arboretum have established numerous field plantings of Cistus (rockrose) in the foothills of the San Gabriel and Santa Monica Mountains. The purpose of these plots was to study the ability of Cistus species introduced from the Mediterranean area to grow in the wildlands of Southern California and ultimately to test the "fire retardance" of the plants under actual field conditions. Several of the plots have been selected for further investigation to answer the question of whether or not Cistus is becoming permanently established (naturalized) in our chaparral-covered foothills. Field work currently underway includes counting and mapping the distribution of Cistus seedlings when they occur on both unburned and burned sites. Involved in this phase of the project are Ken Montgomery, Marcella Juhren and Bob Gonderman of the Research Division and Tom Strid from Cal Poly, Pomona, who is doing his Senior Project research on this problem. The data collected so far indicate that Cistus can and, in fact, is naturalizing on certain wildland sites under favorable conditions. These favorable conditions include moisture at the right seasons, vegetative competition, soil factors, and animal disturbance. However, in other areas where conditions are apparently not favorable, the plantings are gradually diminishing in size as the old bushes die and are not being replaced by seedlings.

## DESCANSO DIVISION

In spite of the hot dry days, Descanso Gardens still has fair color in the rose garden, and among the bedding plants such as the delphiniums, geum, and the snapdragons.

There is quite a bit of talk about the greenness of the trees and shrubs at the gardens, and some of the personnel think it is due largely to the drought that we have had all winter and spring. Because it was dry for so long a period we began watering much earlier. Normally, we would not have, therefore the plants have been receiving water over a much longer period than before. Result, lush green leaves.

## PEOPLE

Mark Anthony visited the gardens last Friday, so he is coming along. Pete Zabriski visited us last Tuesday. He is still on a walking chair support but is close to coming back. Bill Boor had a head-on collision with an automobile while riding his motorcycle on the 15th of May. He suffered a broken elbow, a few broken ribs, many cuts and bruises. He has been released from the Queen of Angels hospital and is now recuperating at home.

A new face added to the staff. Welcome to Dennis Marshall, our newest employee, who will fill the position of grounds maintenance man.

## PROJECTS:

The bird house refurbishing project is finished and it is worth a trip to Descanso just to come and see it. This is no ordinary bird station. The setting and location make it rather unique. You can see land birds one moment and with a turn of the head you can see the water fowl.

So make it a point to visit our bird station and see or hear a murmuration of starlings, an exaltation of





1972. "Research division." *Newsletter Arboreta and Botanic Gardens* 1972:Jun.9, 1.

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