



## Cheers From The Chair

My New Years Resolutions.

- 1) I am going to reduce the number of plants that I propagate this year – Yeah, right like that’s going to happen!
- 2) I will spend less time in my garden and more time with my family – Well I am 0 for 2 with my resolutions so far!
- 3) I will not spend countless hours trying to chase down that next “must have plant” that I just read or heard about – Who am I kidding! I have already failed with this one and it is only January 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- 4) I will not bore my non-fruit friends with the news that my xxx plant just fruited for the first time – Seriously, if they are not into the rare fruit scene, who needs them!

All kidding aside, I must say that I love learning about plants and their fruits, and enjoy experimenting with new species, trying to learn about what might and might not grow in our climate. It is a great hobby, possibly bordering on obsession for me, keeps me outside and active. I can’t think of a better and more rewarding hobby for me.

So maybe my New Year’s resolution should be to continue growing my garden and sharing the knowledge I gain with anyone who is interested. Now that is a resolution I can keep!

On to club business. It is that time of year again, and we are starting our search for our 2016/2017 chapter officers. These are very rewarding positions, and necessary for the continued functioning of our group. I am not going to say that it is easy, but the time commitment is not too onerous, and the personal satisfaction and new friendships that you gain from volunteering makes it all worth it. So please consider helping out by throwing you name in the hat for one of the available positions. Uncle Cherimoya needs YOU!

Cheers,  
Richard

### New Members

by Dawne Dickinson

No new members

## Holiday Party at the Gardens

Sunday, Dec 13th at 12 noon the buffet table was full of great food.

When Richard Reid announced that it was time to eat. The food line began with Jim Neitzel (life member of our chapter) in the lead.

There were trays of ham & turkey furnished by Helen Driver, Kathryn Blakinship, and Richard Reid.

Looking at a small empty space on the table it appeared that there were no potatoes or pasta then I remembered a crock-pot full of rice with mushrooms that we had plugged in to keep warm. Thank you Lena Shiroma. You made the day...

Near the end of the table were many different salads, cooked veggies, and smoked Yellow Fin Tuna. As I looked across to the dessert table there was another line.

Some members wanted dessert first. Why didn't I think of this? Who could blame them. Everything looked so delicious and the taste confirmed this.

When everyone was almost finished with this scrumptious food Dawne was ready to start the drawing for the door prizes. All door prizes were donated by the members. Cielo & Kevin Foth donated a great pair of pruners, John & Sally Sanderson brought about a dozen bags of Persimmons, Skip & Linda Vint brought a seedling Cherimoya tree and a hot pepper plant, Bob Meyers brought eggs, which were the first to go. Art & Dottie Logan supplied the Poinsettias, which decorated the tables, and then given away as door prizes.

There were several misc. items brought in by other members.

Thank you all for the door prize donations. They were greatly appreciated.

Next came the gift exchange, that was handled by Art & Dottie Logan, which is done raffle style. Everyone seemed to have fun and I think everyone ended up with a nice gift. My number was called near the end when most gifts were frozen but I still ended up with a beautiful orchid.

During the gift exchange, Jim Neitzel was cutting up Cherimoyas and Mangos for tasting. Thanks Jim for the 2<sup>nd</sup> dessert.

## Holiday Party Wrap Up Cont.

This wonderful party didn't just happen. We had many volunteers.

First, Mark & Laura Lee and Art & Dottie Logan donated Carambola and 2 large Mangos in exchange for the rent. The chapter paid \$100.00 to clean & sanitize the bathrooms.

On the evening before the event Chris & Sara Finley, Kyle Czech (Wendy's son), and Art & Dottie Logan met at the garden house to set up as much as possible. Chris with help from Kyle & Art set up the tables & chairs that were in the house & garage.

Sara took charge of the tablecloths and fit them to the tables.

We then placed the Poinsettias where they belonged.

On the morning of the party Cory Krell with the help from Bill & Bonnie DiAngelo traipsed thru the woods at the back of the garden house to retrieve the Opera chairs from storage to finish the setup. Wendy & Lena helped clean the chairs and put them in place.

After the party Cory led a crew to help put the chairs back in storage and stack them properly. Chris was in charge of the crew to help to get all tables back in place.

Sara took care of the tablecloths, which I took home to launder.

Many members took bags of trash home because the gardens do not have trash pickup. Bonnie & Bill grabbed brooms to clean the floor and Wendy had a roll of wet paper towels to clean all of the small spots on the floor.

Helen and her helpers cleaned up the kitchen.

With all the members helping, we finished a little after 3PM.

Some members toured the gardens to see the new display of Dinosaurs and Dragons. If you did not tour the gardens you may do it on Earth Day (April 9<sup>th</sup>) or do a self guided tour.

If you are a member of our chapter you may tour the gardens free on any day that it is open to the public. Your guest will have to pay a small fee.

Hope to see you there. This is one of the benefits of your chapter having a Steward level membership. This does not entitle you to free classes or docent lead tours. You need your own membership for that.

Dottie Logan

# EARTH DAY

## Is coming to the gardens

Saturday, April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016 is Earth Day at Alta Vista Botanical Gardens.

I have already secured our booth for the day.

Art & I bartered a 15 gal. avocado for the 10'x 10' space.

We still need more room around our space. Could someone please help us with another tree / shrub or two.

We need members to start thinking about what they can donate for the sale and what hours they can volunteer to work.

There is a new vine in many of my seed catalogs. The Hops vine seems to be the next popular plant. My Hops plant is in a 15 gal. pot and may have several rhizomes that our gardener can repot later this month.

I plan to move the pots to the front yard since they are toxic to dogs.

If you have a Hops vine or other plant to donate, please let Art or Dottie know

Two neighbors have already asked for a rhizome because they want to try to make beer.

Please sign up to be on the plant sale committee.

Dottie Logan

### Member Matters

#### Membership

Chapter dues with E-MAIL newsletters are \$10.00 for one member plus \$5.00 for each additional household member. Chapter dues with USPS newsletters are \$15.00 for one member plus \$5.00 for each additional household member. USPS is only for those without E-mail. You must also be a member of our parent organization, [CRFG, Inc.](#) To renew, please fill out a **NEW APPLICATION** online or bring it to our next meeting. Please contact our Membership Committee Chair Dawne Dickinson if you have any questions.

# Fruit (or genera) of the Month – Garcinia

## Richard Reid

### Preface

The following is a description of my initial experiences with growing young *Garcinia* species in coastal Southern California. I have yet to bring any to fruit, but I am hoping that this fact will change soon as my oldest plants get established. My point in writing this is to share my initial experiences and hopefully generate a discussion among Subtropical fruit enthusiasts who might also be attempting to grow these beautiful plants.

My first introduction to the *Garcinias* was through a trip to Thailand some 15 years ago. I tried a Mangosteen fruit and was immediately hooked. I must have eaten 5 kilos of the fruit in the week I was there. Upon returning home, I did some research on Mangosteen cultivation and quickly gave up on any hope of growing them in my climate, they are just too tropical for Southern California. I forgot about them, with the exception of the occasional discovery of the fruit at the local Asian markets, whereupon I would buy and greedily devour all the fruits I could!

With the advent of the internet, and sites like this one (thanks Leo!) I have been able to expand my knowledge of unusual, rare and exotic fruits and one of the things I discovered is that there are many different edible fruits in the *Garcinia* genus, and although they may not (or may!) be as tasty as the “Queen of Fruits” many are said to be quite good and might also be a bit less temperamental than the Mangosteen. The internet has also allowed me to source plants and seeds of many species so that I can try my hand at growing them.

Readers of this article in Florida might already be growing some on the plants I am experimenting with and hopefully they can chime in with their experiences. I am sure that there are also some intrepid souls like me in California that are experimenting with these plants and hopefully they can share their knowledge.

General learnings - these are general comments about the plants and I will get into the specifics of each species later in the article.

First of all, I will describe what I have found for my personal microclimate, A USDA 10b or Sunset Zone 24. We are around a mile from the Pacific Ocean, on a west facing bluff. Our humidity is always higher and our high temperatures lower than those who are just a mile farther inland. It is my opinion that those who live in the California sub-tropical belt (e.g. Sunset 23) will have even better success than I am having.

All of the plants I have worked with so far are tropical to near tropical in their distribution, prefer warm humid conditions. They are at their best for me in late summer (August and September) when it is warm and before the Santa Anas hit. The hot dry winds really dry out the leaves, and for some it takes a few months to bounce back.

By and large they slow or stop growing in the late fall when the nights start to get cool and will resume in late spring, some starting earlier than others. Cold hardiness goes from none to possibly frost tolerant, and that is one of the things that I am learning as I go. It is important to note that there have been no really serious cold spells in my microclimate (nights at 32 or below) since I have planted these things out and until I do I will not have an idea of how cold tolerant some of them are.

Another trait I have found is that as seedlings and young plants they need partial to full shade. I have burned many plants simply by putting them out in full "sun" on a cool overcast June day. For many of my larger plants, I find that they are doing well on the north side of a fence where as they get taller they will reach above the fence into full sun.

Finally, they all seem to be sensitive to over fertilization, and I have damaged the leaves a few times by giving them a bit too much in an attempt to move them along. I now give my in ground plants a weak (1/4 strength) fish emulsion every other month during the spring and summer.

Listed from what I find to be most hardy to least hardy:

Plants with the most potential for Southern CA.

*Garcinia sp.* "Achachairu" or "Bolivian Mangosteen"- This plant goes by many scientific names, all of which are incorrectly assigned to it, *G. humilis*, *G. laterifolia*, and sometimes *R. brasiliensis*. The fruit is said to be a very pleasant sweet/sour and is now commercially marketed in Australia. I have a few of these growing in my yard and other than being a bit sensitive to full sun, they have proven to be the hardiest of all the garcinias I have tried to grow to date. They have taken low temps down to the low-mid thirties (34-36) with absolutely no damage and continue to grow well all year long. It will be interesting to see if these plants will be able to take some frost.

*Garcinia intermedia (syn Rheedia edulis)* "Lemon Drop Mangosteen" – While the young plants I have had require a shaded environment when small (I killed 2 and severely set back 1 by planting them in a spot that got afternoon sun, they seem to handle the dryer climate and cool winters fairly well. They also survived temps in the low-mid thirties but are much slower to start new growth flushes in the early summer than Achachairu. This may be due to the bad sunburn that my remaining plant received early in its life but I do have a batch of seedlings going so I shall see how they fare.

*Garcinia sp.* “Luc’s Mexican Garcinia” – This is a newly discovered garcinia from the area north of Puerto Vallarta, with what is reported to be a very delicious fruit. The seedlings I have of this plant are young so my experience is limited, but they survived and did very well this past winter growing under 50% shade cloth and no other protection. One small seedling was even planted in the ground in full sun and is doing well. I am optimistic and very excited about this one. Recently I was told that this plant may be a subspecies of *Garcinia intermedia*.

Plants that may do well with the right microclimate

*Garcinia gummi-gata* (syn. *Garcinia cambogia*) “Gamboge” – The garcinia of weight loss fame. Young specimens of this plant have also taken the same amount of cold as the *Achachariu* and *G. intermedia* but appear to be a bit less tolerant of the cold as well as the dryer conditions that we get sometimes.

*Garcinia brasiliensis* “Bakupari” – My experience with this plant is limited so far, but I do have a large number of three year old seedlings at present. They did well last two winters, with minimal protection, but since they were warmer than average it is hard to say just how they will do in the long run. They were unhappy this past May with the very dry conditions we had for a few weeks. It is reported to be able to handle a few degrees of frost, so this will be a good plant to experiment with.

*Garcinia dulcis* “Mundu” – My four year old *G. dulcis* plants continue to limp along, growing slowly and looking neither happy nor unhappy. One plant in a small “greenhouse” is doing much better than the ones outside, so I am thinking that this plant would be happy with just a little bit more heat and humidity than my yard is able to provide.

*Garcinia madrono* “Madrono” – I would have placed this plant in the group above except for the fact that one of my two in-ground plants partially defoliated when temps got to the low-mid thirties (the other was unscathed). It came back quickly however and is now my largest plant at about 5 ft tall. It is clearly the most rapid grower of all the garcinias I have.

*Garcinia sp.* “Madrono del Monte” - This plant is surviving for me, although not thriving. It looks like it needs more humidity than we have and it does not like the cold. My 4 year old plant defoliated when the temps got down to the low-mid thirties, but it survived and put out new growth the following summer. It also resents the sun as a young plant as I severely sunburned a 2 year old seedling when I brought it out of a shady location to under some 25% shade cloth. My jury is still out on this plant.

*Garcinia macrophylla* – Three year old plants, much like the *G. dulcis* are hanging in there, not thriving but not dying. My guess so far is that they really want more heat than I am able to provide for them as they do not perk up until late August or



September. They survived temps in the low-mid thirties, but a soggy cold soil has always meant a rapid decline.

*Garcinia prainiana* “Cherapu” or “Button Mangosteen” – My original attempts with this plant failed miserably. two years ago I started another batch, and they are doing much better. I attribute this to the very light potting mix I started using to prevent them from having their roots too wet in the winter. They are now growing (I use this term loosely as they are about the slowest growing plants I have ever seen) outdoors under shade and have survived temperatures down to the high thirties. This plant might be a Southern California candidate after all.

Plants to try if you have a greenhouse or are a glutton for punishment

*Garcinia magnifolia* – This plant I have attempted to grow a few times due to its beautiful leaves that can reach up to 40 cm in length. Unfortunately every November they will start a slow death spiral as the night temperatures start to hit the low 40’s. I am currently trying one more time with a large batch of seeds in the hopes that I can get a cold hardy selection.

*Garcinia forbesii* – this plant does not like bright light, does not like the cold and is an extremely slow grower. I am down to 3 plants at almost 3 years old with the tallest being 4 inches high. And that is growing in a heated “grow-room.” Any that I have taken outside immediately start going downhill and dying. They seem to need both the heat and humidity that our climate cannot provide.

The last few that I am starting with but have limited personal experience.

*Garcinia gardinieriana*

*Garcinia acuminata*

*Garcinia morella*

*Garcinia paniculata*

*Garcinia kydia*

I shall share my experiences with these in a follow up report.

In addition the ones I have described above, there are many other species, many of which have already been grown and fruited here in Southern CA. Species such as *Garcinia xanthochymus* or “False Mangosteen”, *Garcinia livingstoneii* “Imbe,” or “African Mangosteen.” *Garcinia aristata* or “Cuban Mangosteen” and I am sure many I have never heard about in enthusiasts back yards. If you are one of those with a garcinia growing in your collection, we would love to hear about it, so please share your experiences with the fruit growing community.

## Food Forest Festival

The Food Forest Festival will be a significant event on the Coastal Roots Farm calendar that celebrates Jewish cycles and tradition, educates the community about agroforestry, and marks the first season of food forest planting. The event will consist of a day-long work party and festival celebrating Tu b'Shvat (which begins the evening of January 24<sup>th</sup>) and the creation of our food forest. Participants will be able and encouraged to join work parties throughout the day to help with various elements of installing the food forest, and will also be invited to participate in afternoon workshops on different subjects related to agroforestry, trees, Judaism, and Permaculture. Darshan, a Jewish hip-hop and psychedelic band, will serenade participants during and at the end of the day.



## Volunteer Opportunities

Wendy is looking for Volunteers to help man the tables for the Scion Exchange on the 15<sup>th</sup>. If you would like to help please contact her.

Interested in practicing your publication skills? We are currently looking for a volunteer to take on the position of newsletter editor. If you would like to help out with this please contact your friendly chapter chair.

Thanks!

## Raffle

There is no raffle this month. They will resume with the February meeting

## Refreshments:

### PLEASE BRING ITEMS IF YOUR BIRTH-MONTH IS January

Please bring something to share for the refreshments table at our Chapter meetings. Home grown fruits and vegetables are the best. However, other munchies are also greatly appreciated. Please be sure they are ready to serve.

## Name Tags

Please keep your name tags after each meeting and bring them back with you for the next. We are hoping to have everyone be responsible for their own name tags to make things a bit easier on those who have had to keep track of them all this time. If you are interested in a more professional looking name tag, you can purchase them from the CRFG Inc. for \$11 by calling 805-543-9455 or email [market@crfg.org](mailto:market@crfg.org). You must be a member of our parent organization (CRFG, Inc.) to order name tags from CRFG. To make it easier you can pay using PayPal.

## Chapter Dues for 2016

Most memberships expire on Dec 31, 2015. Please pay your membership dues in November, January, or February. Your membership is past due on March 1, 2016 and your membership may be removed after notification. As a reminder, all chapter members should also be members of our umbrella organization CRFG Inc. So if you have not joined yet, now would be a convenient time to do so.

## North San Diego County Chapter Financial Statement December 1 – December 31

by Dottie Logan and Helen Driver

Opening Balance (12/1/15)	\$14,353
<b>INCOME</b>	
Membership dues	\$120
Total Income	\$120
<b>EXPENSES</b>	
Alta Vista Cleaning fees	\$100
Holiday Party Supplies	\$6
Total Expenses	\$106
 Net Income	 \$14
 Closing Balance (12/31/15)	 \$14,366

### Chapter Contacts

#### Board Members

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#### Other Contacts

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Calendar of Activities	
North San Diego County CRFG	Other Local Events
1/13 – Board of Directors Meeting Encinitas Public Library	1/24 Food Forest Festival Coastal Roots Farm, Encinitas
1/15 - Annual Scion Exchange MiraCosta College	1/27 San Diego Chapter Scion Exchange Balboa Park
3/6 – Grafting workshop?	