

Register for Native Garden Tour

Registration is now open for the free Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour, which will take place Sunday, May 2, 2010, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at various locations throughout Alameda and Contra Costa counties. Participants on the sixth annual, free, self-guided Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour can choose from fifty showcase native plant gardens. They will have the opportunity to learn how select and care for California native plants, lower their water bills, design a low-maintenance garden, attract butterflies, birds, and bees, and garden without using pesticides. More than 40 talks will be offered throughout the day. More than 5,000 people are expected to register for this annual event; early registration is suggested to ensure a place.

The collection of gardens offered this year range from Jenny and Scott Fleming's 50-year-old collector's garden to several that are newly installed, and from five-acre lots to small front gardens in the flats. Garden styles run the gamut—from restoration gardens containing local native plants to the horticulturally available suite of natives from throughout California, and from gardens designed and installed by owners to those designed and installed by professionals.

In the "Preview the Gardens" section at www.BringingBackTheNatives.net are photographs of each garden, extensive garden descriptions, and plant lists, as well as a list of nurseries that sell natives. Landscape designers familiar with designing with natives can also be located on the website; many of these designers offer discount consultations to tour participants.

A companion feature, the Native Plant Sale Extravaganza, will take place on Saturday and Sunday, May 1 and 2. This exclusive sale features a number of native plant nurseries which carry large quantities of hard-to-find California natives. This two-day shopping opportunity offers native plant fans a good selection of native plants and provide a relaxed shopping experience. Knowledgeable staff will be on hand to help shoppers select the right plants for their gardens, and Saturday shoppers will have time to visit more showcase native plant gardens on Sunday, May 2, during the Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour.



Two of the gardens are in Livermore (pictured).



California native plants are adapted to the local soil and climate and are easy to care for. Native plants are naturally drought tolerant. They attract native birds, butterflies, and other forms of wildlife. And, as the gardens on the Tour show, California native plants are beautiful; these lovely gardens display a sense of place that is uniquely Californian.

Admission to the Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour is free. Registration prior to April 20 is required and

can be completed at www.BringingBackTheNatives.net. While registering, a visit to the Carpools and Gardeners Match section of the website will help registrants find neighbors to share gardening skills, native plants, or tools; to plan work parties; or carpool, either on the day of the Tour, or to the Select Tours.

For more information, contact Kathy@KathyKramerConsulting.net or call (510) 236-9558 between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m.