



**Foothill Chapter
California Rare Fruit Growers**

Next meeting:

Saturday, April 1, 2006 at 9:30 a.m.

Los Angeles County Arboretum

301 N. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia

Temporary change of venue to Conference Room (ask directions at front desk or gift shop)

It's been a busy two months since our last meeting, starting with a scion exchange and grafting demo at Joel Johnson' garden, followed by the annual CRFG scion exchange, a very enjoyable cherimoya lecture, and then our first Garden Gathering of 2006.

April meeting - topic to be determined.

Sorry, as we go to press, we are still awaiting confirmation of our speaker and topic. Of course, we'll have the usual Q&A among our group - this month's topic: how did everyone's grafts turn out?

Early Scion Exchange Preview and Grafting Demonstration, January 27

A week before the normal February scion exchange at the chapter meeting, Joel Johnson kindly offered to host a very interesting and useful early scion exchange and grafting demo at his garden in the Bungalow Heaven neighborhood of Pasadena. We had a good enthusiastic group touring his garden full of exotic fruits (complete with

chicken coop to provide the fertilizer). Joel led us through various grafting techniques, including grafting directly onto the trunk, and novel (to me) methods of grafting figs. See photos below.



Left:

Joel showing an attentive audience the basics of his grafting technique.

Right:
Highly successful grafting of multiple scions
topworked onto trunk of fig.



**February Meeting Main Event: Cherimoya
Lecture**



Mr. Nino Cupaiuolo of
the California
Cherimoya Association
(www.cherimoya.org) is
a top expert in growing
cherimoyas in
California. In front of
one of the biggest
audiences in recent

memory, Mr. Cupaiuolo gave an excellent overview of how
to grow and harvest the best varieties of cherimoyas most
suitable for this area. He brought many varieties to view, and even better, permitted a
taste test and exit poll of top varieties after the lecture and Q&A session.



Mr. Cupaiuolo educates our members at the best-attended lecture in recent memory



Upclose and personal with the many cherimoya varieties grown in Southern California (Mr. Cupaiuolo is second from right, fielding questions from the audience)

February Meeting Secondary Event: Scion Exchange 2006

Depending on how early spring starts in a given year, the February date of the regular meeting can be a bit late for a scion exchange in the San Gabriel Valley, hence Joel Johnson's offer to host an earlier exchange at his Pasadena house in January. However, timing was still good for a low-key exchange before the main lecture at the February meeting. Chapter members brought perhaps thirty or more of their favorite varieties of stone fruits, grapes, etc. to share with others. We always appreciate fellow gardeners' recommendations of what works for them, and then their sharing scion wood to spread the successful varieties.

Right: Welcoming new members at the scion exchange



March Garden Gathering

We kicked off the 2006 season of member's garden tours at the editor's garden in the foothills of Monrovia. Though the weather was still cool and spring late this year, a good crowd turned up to tour a mostly dormant garden. Fortunately, there were plenty of citrus samples to be tasted. For those of you interested in my first attempt at establishing an Orchard Mason Bee colony, I am happy to report that the bees (dormant at the time of the gathering) have emerged and started laying eggs in the nesting block provided. Thanks also to the many people (too many to list, but special thanks to Debby Prohias, Ruth Stern and Vera Matuszak) who generously provided plants, scionwood, and fruit to share and swap. For those who took samples of Debby's chaya (an ancient Mayan food crop), you can easily find details on growing and cooking this nutritious plant on the web (e.g., see <http://www.urbanharvest.org/gardening/vegetables/chaya.html>).

Ruth Stern has graciously offered to host the next Garden Gathering in May - more details to be provided at the meeting.

If anyone is interested in hosting this popular event in future months (May, July, September, November) please speak to Joel Johnson at the meeting, or contact him at joel@aridscapes.com).



Is this peach tree ever going to flower?



A sampling of citrus and a few other in-season fruits from the editor's garden

Ideas on Future Chapter Meeting Topics

Ideas for future speakers at our chapter meetings are always welcome. If you have expertise in a particular subject and are willing to share, or if you know an expert who can speak, or even if you just have a request for a particular topic, please let Rod Kiewiet know (foothill@crfg.org).

Sharing Table

Members with last names starting with 'A' through 'M', please bring goodies for the Sharing Table (of course we won't turn any donation away, regardless of your last name). And everyone, please lend a helping hand by cleaning up during and after the meeting.

Chapter Miscellany

Plant Raffle

Please bring extra plants, to the next meeting, with information and instructions for care. This is a steady fundraiser for our chapter, so please bring your unwanted extras.

Dues

Please pay CRFG and local chapter membership dues at the next meeting if past due.

Nametags

Please wear your CRFG nametag, if you have one, to our meetings, so new people can learn some names. If you don't have a nametag yet, you can order one at the next meeting.

Save a stamp

If you are reading this and still also receive a postcard reminder, please drop me a line and I'll happily remove you from the snail mail list. Please respond to me at david.szymkowski@adelphia.net.

THE FOOTHILL CHAPTER OF THE CRFG meets at 9:30 a.m. the first Saturday of alternate months (February, April, June, August, October, December) at the Arboretum of Los Angeles County, 301 N. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia (just south of the 210 Freeway). There is no charge to enter the Arboretum to attend the meeting, which is usually in Lecture Hall "A". The easiest access is straight through the Gift Shop, then down the stairs to the right in the adjacent building. CHAIRMAN: Rod Kiewiet, foothill@crfg.org

Date of next CRFG chapter meeting: Saturday, June 3, 2006