

# THE GARDEN NEWS

SPRING 2026



Newsletter for the Hortense Miller Garden Community

P.O. BOX 742, LAGUNA BEACH, CA 92652 • (949) 464-6645 • HORTENSEMILLERGARDEN.ORG

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## SUNSHINE, ART & COMMUNITY AT OUR OPEN HOUSE

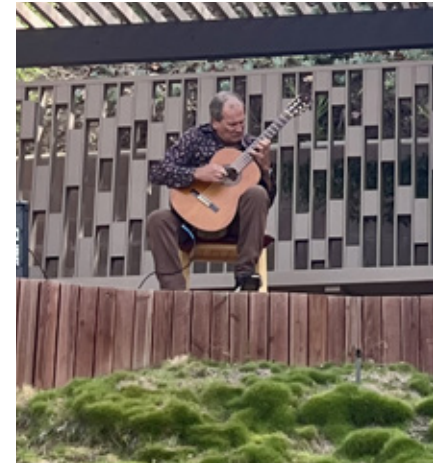
What a beautiful day! Our Annual Open House in March brought out more than 250 visitors, and with sunshine overhead and a steady flow of guests all day long, the garden felt especially lively.

We had plein air painters from the SoCalPapa Artists set up throughout the grounds, capturing the garden in the moment, while beekeeper Jess Murray gave a fascinating talk that drew plenty of interest.

The art workshop with Candice Brokenshire and Lovisa Kjerrgren was a lot of fun—using watercolor pencils and even adding yarn for texture! It turned into a mostly adult crowd, which made for a relaxed and creative atmosphere. Eric Henderson kept the mood just right with live music throughout the day, creating a welcoming backdrop as people explored and connected.

We were also happy to bring in some donations and connect with new volunteers and members—always one of the best parts of these events. A big thank you to our amazing volunteers who helped everything run so smoothly, from tours to workshops and beyond. And thank you to everyone who came out to spend the day with us—we truly appreciate your support and love seeing the garden enjoyed by so many.

*More Open House pictures inside!*



*Live Music by Eric Henderson*



*Beekeeper Jess Murray*



*Sandra Morrison, with her watercolor painting*



Dear Friends of the Hortense Miller Garden,

As we welcome the beauty and renewal of spring, I am delighted to share a season filled with energy, growth, and meaningful engagement at Hortense Miller Garden.

Our Saturday Open House on March 28 was a resounding success, welcoming approximately 250 visitors to experience the garden in full splendor. The day was filled with curiosity, connection, and appreciation for this extraordinary space. The enthusiasm of our guests was truly inspiring, and I encourage you to enjoy the wonderful photos capturing the event on the final pages of this newsletter.

In preparation for the busy season, we recently completed a significant effort to trim and re-shape all of the trees throughout the property. This important work not only enhances the natural beauty of the garden but also supports the long-term health and sustainability of our plant collections. The results are already evident, with improved vistas and a renewed sense of harmony across the landscape.

We are also proud to share that Hortense Miller Garden was selected as a featured filming location for a City of Laguna project highlighting sustainability efforts connected to The City. The film, which aired at the Rivian Theatre in early March, prominently showcased the garden as a model of environmental stewardship. It was an honor to see our mission and setting recognized in such a meaningful way.

Interest in the garden continues to grow, especially following a social media feature earlier this year. We've seen a notable increase in visitors registering

for docent-led tours through the City's recreation website, keeping our dedicated docents and volunteers busier than ever. Their extra efforts ensure every guest enjoys a thoughtful, enriching experience.

Hortense Miller Garden remains an important place for fostering sustainability and connection to nature. This is reflected in our recent programs, including popular workshops and lectures like our well-attended Open House session on beekeeping, which continue to inspire curiosity and environmental stewardship in our community.

None of this would be possible without the unwavering support of our volunteers and members. Your time, energy, and commitment are the foundation of everything we accomplish. On behalf of the entire organization, thank you for your continued dedication and passion.

With gratitude and warm regards,

Kimberly A. Jameson  
President, Hortense Miller Garden





## BLOOM IN ALL YOUR COLORS

Featuring Sweden-born, Laguna Beach–based artist Lovisa Kjerrgren

This spring we're excited to share the colorful work of Sweden-born, Laguna Beach–based artist Lovisa Kjerrgren in our newest exhibit, Bloom in All Your Colors.

Lovisa's paintings are lively and full of personality—funky forms, bold colors, and playful details that feel right at home at the Hortense Miller Garden. Her work explores ideas of diversity, authenticity, and self-expression, using plants and garden life as inspiration.

Drawn to the beauty and complexity of nature, Lovisa often looks closely at plants, shapes, and patterns, transforming them into imaginative landscapes that celebrate how different forms and colors can thrive together.

Just like a garden, the message is simple: things are most beautiful when there's room for every color to bloom.

[www.kjerrgren.com](http://www.kjerrgren.com) | [lovisa@kjerrgren.com](mailto:lovisa@kjerrgren.com)





Looking ahead to our Summer exhibition, the Friends of the Hortense Miller Garden are delighted to present a new series of oil paintings by local artist Mary Chabre titled *The Quiet Appetite*.

Inspired by native carnivorous plants, Chabre explores the delicate boundary between beauty and danger in the natural world. Through expressive color, gesture, and form, her work invites viewers into a landscape where plants seem to take on personality—at times alluring and elegant, at others mysterious, even unsettling.

This new body of work unfolds like a quiet narrative, drawing us into the tension between attraction and apprehension. The paintings encourage close looking, rewarding viewers with moments of delight, curiosity, and unease as familiar forms shift into something more complex and unexpected.

The *Quiet Appetite* will be on view mid-June through mid-September 2026. Don't miss this opportunity to experience this striking new series in the unique setting of the Hortense Miller Garden.

[www.marychabre.com](http://www.marychabre.com)



## ELIZABETH MCGHEE'S COLORED PENCIL WORKSHOP

Tuesday, April 21 — 9:45am - Noon  
Tuesday May 12 — 9:45am - Noon

### *Two Dates for Spring!*

Taught by LOCA Arts Education artist Elizabeth McGhee. Sponsored by LOCA.  
All materials provided.

**Request a reservation at [hortensemillergarden.org](http://hortensemillergarden.org)**



### *Learn to Draw A Gourd*

Using a blended colored pencil technique, participants will follow step by step instructions in order to make their own still life drawing of a gourd. Students will be taught about lighting, transparency, texture, and color.



### *Learn to Sketch a SeaScape*

Using a blended colored pencil technique, participants will follow step by step instructions in order to make their own seascape sketch. This technique is a quick and tidy way to sketch on the go.



## MINDFUL MEDITATION WORKSHOP WITH LORI KAHN

**Saturday, May 30 — 9:45am - 1:00pm**

The Hortense Miller Gardens provide an ideal setting for Mindfulness Meditation. Guided by Lori, we learn to fully engage with our surroundings, quiet the inner chatter that can create stress and distraction, and connect with the natural sense of calm that exists both in the garden and within ourselves.

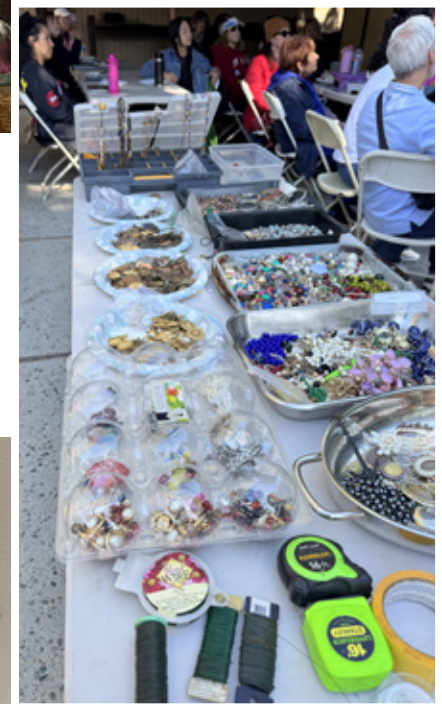
## ART IN THE GARDEN AT HORTENSE MILLER GARDEN



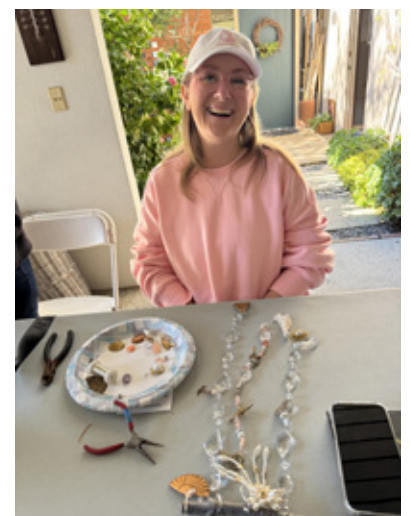
PUMPKIN AND LOG SUCCULENT WORKSHOP



Beautiful things are created at the free workshops hosted by the Diane Lannon at Hortense Miller Garden



SUN CATCHER WORKSHOP





Red-tailed Hawk



Sweet Baby Hummingbirds



Blooming late spring through summer, especially in coastal California gardens is the **Agapanthus africanus**, commonly called **Lily of the Nile** or **African Lily**.

### A few interesting facts:

- Native to South Africa
- Extremely drought-tolerant once established, which is why it's common in Southern California landscapes
- Attracts bees and pollinators
- Often used along paths, slopes, and garden borders
- It's right at home in a place like the Hortense Miller Garden, where Mediterranean-climate plants thrive.



Garden volunteers have been helping us identify plant species throughout the garden. Cyndie Metz discovered some spiffy new labels, and she and Marsha Bode put them to good use—walking the paths and labeling many of the plants along the way. Thanks to their efforts, visitors can now learn a little more about the unique plants that call the garden home.



## A HORTENSE MILLER STORY

*By longtime friend, Marsha Bode*

During my years as Garden Manager of the Hortense Miller Garden, one of the highlights was spending time with Hortense, listening to her stories about the garden and her childhood. At the end of the day, after the tools were put away, I would go into the house to say goodbye. Hortense would always ask what work we had done—what areas we tended, what we planted, and what hadn't survived the dry months.

One afternoon she asked to walk with me to the wild area at the base of the long trail from the cul-de-sac. As we walked, she commented on the plants along the path, sharing stories of where she had found them, who had given them to her, or which ones she had discovered in books and wanted to try.

Near the bird feeder there was once a steep path (now closed) leading up through Ceanothus, Toyon, and Lemonade Berry. Hortense climbed the path while I stayed a little below, just in case she slipped. Stopping beside a large Lemonade Berry, she said, "If you ever fall on this path, grab a Lemonade Berry branch. They're very limber and won't break." She pointed out the rebar that held the steps in place and warned how dangerous it could be.



No sooner had she said that than she tripped on a piece of rebar. I reached out, but she was too far away. In one quick motion she grabbed a Lemonade Berry branch, swung in a wide arc past me, and landed lightly on the path below.

"There—just like that," she said, as if nothing unusual had happened.

To this day, whenever I pass that spot, I remember that remarkable moment—and the remarkable 95-year-old woman who showed me exactly how it was done.

*Lemonade Berry (Rhus integrifolia), a native Southern California shrub common in coastal sage scrub and chaparral. Its flexible branches and clusters of pink flowers later produce sticky red berries with a tart, lemony coating.*



## A DELIGHTFUL DAY AT THE HORTENSE MILLER HOUSE & GARDEN



3.28.26  
COMMUNITY  
OPEN HOUSE  
PHOTOS BY  
TOM WOOD





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OPEN HOUSE  
PHOTOS BY  
TOM WOOD

