



Photo by Joseph Scarpine

Quince
(*Cydonia oblonga*)

August in the Conejo Valley Botanic Garden

In late August or early September, take a walk up to our **Rare Fruit Orchard** where you may see the quince, one of the oldest cultivated fruits known to the ancient world, probably cultivated before the apple. Cultivation took place for thousands of years in Iran, Armenia and Turkey, before spreading throughout the Mediterranean.

Among the ancient Greeks and Romans, the quince was a ritual offering at weddings, for it had come from the Levant with Aphrodite and remained sacred to her. Plutarch reported that a Greek bride would nibble a quince to perfume her kiss before entering the bridal chamber, "in order that the first greeting may not be disagreeable nor unpleasant."

Charlemagne was partly responsible for introducing the quince into France with his orders in the year 812 to plant trees in the royal garden. From there, it slowly made it's way to the rest of Europe and the new world.

The tree is deciduous, growing up to 25 feet and is the sole member of the genus *Cydonia*. The fruit ripens to bright yellow and has a strong aroma when fully ripen. It is probably the only fruit that cannot be eaten raw. Quince are too hard, astringent and sour to be eaten from the tree. Instead, they are used to make jam, jelly and an interesting wine. They can also be stewed or roasted.

Periodic tours are conducted in the Rare Fruits Orchard by Joseph Scarpine. Look for the emailed announcements.

Sandy Krutilek



Turtlehead
(*Chelone lyonii*)



Parrot's Beak
(*Lotus berthelotii*)

What's in a Name?

by Diane Conejo

Sometimes a plant has a special characteristic about it that reminds us of something else and the common name can reflect that. Take the two examples above: Can you identify the part of the plant that might have earned the plant its common name?

In the first plant, **Chelone lyonii**, the buds form a tight protuberance that does indeed look like a turtle's head peeking from the lower part of the inflorescence. In fact, the genus part of the name **Chelone** is from the Greek, meaning turtle or tortoise. The species name is not related to a lion as we might suspect, but instead to a nurseryman, anthropologist & author whose name was William Scrugham Lyon. He published in 1897, *Gardening in California*, the first treatise written specifically for our region. He was one of the first documented authors to advocate the use of native plants such as the **Mimulus** and the **Matilija Poppy**. Interesting, yes?

The second plant is one that I was just introduced to this year, **Lotus berthelotii**, or "**Parrot's Beak**". It is a great plant to use as a unique creeping groundcover or a "spiller" in a container. It combines well with succulents and other drought tolerant plants in well-drained soil or potting mixtures. The common name derives from the shape of the petal formation. Do you see the resemblance? (When we hear 'Lotus', we often associate it with a waterlily-type of flower, but that genus is actually **Nelumbo**, with the common name being lotus. So, don't be confused.)

"**Parrot's Beak**" is available as an annual/perennial in many soCal nurseries, but you may have to search a little harder for a **Chelone lyonii** plant. The search is well worth it, since it is considered a host plant for caterpillars and baby butterflies. Can't have enough butterflies! Happy gardening!



Sunday Plant Sale

The featured plant this month is **Japanese Anemone**. We have a variety of pink and white, single and double flowered plants ready for sale and it is a good time to plant in the ground for summer bloom.



Plant sales are held every Sunday at the CVBG from 10:30-2:30 in the area next to the Kids' Adventure Garden, located at 350 W. Gainsborough Rd. California natives, hardy, water wise perennials, shrubs, trees and succulents, reasonably priced are available. CVBG volunteers will be happy to help you with selections and share their expertise.

SPECIAL PLANT SALE ANNOUNCEMENT

Irene Benyoung is willing, by special appointment only, to meet customers at the Plant Sale area on Wednesdays. Please contact her by e-mail to make an appointment.
ibenyoung@yahoo.com

Birthday Parties

The birthday parties held at the KAG on Saturdays have become very popular. So popular that Betty needs more volunteers to give her some help. It is a lot of fun and not too much work. Sometimes the kids come in costumes, depending on what the 'theme' of the party may be. The adults set up and take down the tables and chairs. There is a donation to use the garden. You help by keep your eyes on the kids as they get excited about having a party at the KAG. Sometimes you even get a piece of birthday cake. If you are willing to help by giving a few hours of your time, give Betty a call at 1-818-889-0560.



Learn Flower Design

Learn Flower Design in the Sogetsu Style. Develop creative self-expression through flower arrangement and learn the beauty of line and space. Keiko (Camille) Van Ast holds a First Teacher's degree from the Sogetsu School of Ikebana in Tokyo, Japan. She has studied Ikebana for more than 25 years.

For Registration call Camille at 805-498-7421

Classes will meet the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month

9:00-11:30 a.m. in the

Kids' Adventure Garden

Classes are ongoing

A one time fee of \$20 for a textbook is required.

Class fee of \$25 per class includes the flower fee of \$10

Want to Help us Grow?

Do you love Conejo Valley Botanic Garden and would like to help, but just don't have the time to volunteer? Even though much of the work you see going on in the garden is done by volunteers, we still have expenses for planting, heavy pruning and new improvements. These projects are funded through grants and donations from the community. If you would like to help us grow, tax deductible donations are always welcome and may be made out and sent to Conejo Valley Botanic Garden, PO Box 6614, Thousand Oaks, CA 91359. Thanks for all your support!

Conejo Valley Botanic Garden Needs You!

The Garden is managed and maintained by community volunteers. Without your help, the garden cannot thrive.

None of the volunteer positions at CVBG has a minimum number of volunteer hours attached. If you can help for a few hours a month, great! For more information on any of our volunteer opportunities, please go to our web site at www.conejogarden.org and click "Volunteers."

WE CURRENTLY NEED VOLUNTEERS FOR THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS:

Assistant to the Volunteer Coordinator: Help recruit new volunteers and match them with garden jobs they might enjoy.

Adopt A Garden: We have an ongoing need for volunteers to join the teams working in our theme gardens. Days and hours are flexible so give us a call.

Garden Nursery: There is no better way to learn about California native and water wise plants than to join the teams working in the propagation and sales nurseries.

The Kids Adventure Garden: KAG is open from 11:00 to 3:00 each Sunday. Docents welcome families to the garden, answer questions and ensure everyone is safe and has fun. You will train with an experienced Docent. You can sign up for one shift a month or as many as you want.

Email: conejogarden1623@hotmail.com .

For information and directions to the garden, visit our web site at www.conejogarden.org.

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