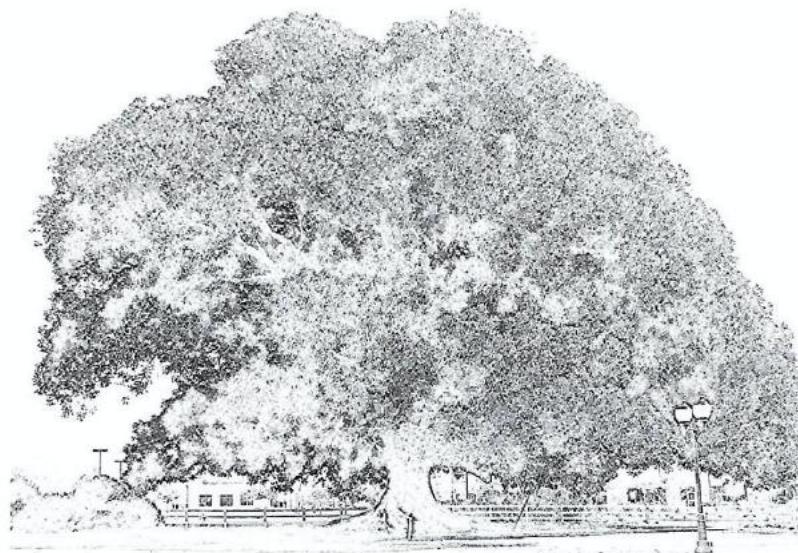


Camarillo Ranch



Garden Tour

Research Team:

Barbara Burrows, Karin Farrin, Beth Miller, Lynn Preiss, Sherry Reynolds

Garden Tour Photos and Text

by

Sherry Reynolds

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1. Arizona Ash

Arizona Ash is a fantastic desert shade tree and has an enjoyable shape and provides (relatively) cool shade in summer. However, it grows to become a large tree as can be seen in this photo of the tree at the Ranch, and if you have an aversion to raking leaves in the fall, it might not be the best tree for you. The male and female flowers are on different trees. The male flowers drop in the spring in large quantities, that can be composted rapidly. The female drops large quantities of one-winged seeds (samara), providing you with a continuous source of seedlings. Description: A fast-growing perennial deciduous shade tree native to Arizona and parts of Southwestern New Mexico. The “velvet” is gray fuzz that covers the young twigs and leaves. Young trees are pyramidal but the shape becomes more rounded and open as mature height is reached. This is an especially useful shade tree where summers are long, hot and dry and where soils are alkaline. It is the species (with its varieties) used most in desert areas, commonly planted as a shade & street tree.

Leaves consist of 3-5 narrow oval leaflets, each about 3 inches long. Foliage turns yellow in autumn.

Bark: gray, deeply furrowed into broad, scaly ridges.

Frost Tolerance: Hardy to -10F

Heat Tolerance: Excellent

Sun Exposure: Full Sun



2. Canary Island Date Palm: Phoenix Canariensis: Pineapple Palm

The Canary Island Date Palm is one of the most majestic of all palm trees. This sub-tropical palm tree has been grown for exotic landscape for over 200 years.

The Canary Island Date Palm is also known as the "Pineapple Palm" because of the unique pineapple shape it forms after it is trimmed.

This large, stately palm often reaches a size too massive for most residential landscapes but, fortunately, it is very slow-growing and will take a considerable amount of time to reach its 50 to 60-foot-height. Canary Island Date Palm is most impressive with its single, upright, thick trunk topped with a crown of 8 to 15-foot-long, stiff leaves with extremely sharp spines at their bases. The stalks of inconspicuous flowers are replaced with clusters of one-inch-diameter, orange-yellow, date-like, ornamental fruits which ripen in early summer. The trunk can reach a diameter of four feet and is covered with an attractive, diamond-shaped pattern from old leaf scars.

Canary Island Date Palm should be grown in full sun on fertile, moist soil for best growth but is tolerant of any well-drained soil. It can be planted on the inland side of coastal condominiums and large homes due to moderately high salt-tolerance. It does well as a street or avenue tree, even in confined soil spaces. Canary Island Date Palm will require pruning to remove old fronds. Older leaves frequently become yellow from magnesium or potassium-deficiency. Preventive applications of appropriate fertilizer help avoid this. Avoid damage to the trunk by locating it properly in the landscape and keeping landscape maintenance equipment away.

Only prune fronds which hang below the horizontal. Do not remove those growing upright since this may slow the growth and reduce vigor.

Min.Temp. 20.8 F / -6.3 C
USDA Zone 9a - EGF Zone H4



3. Melaleluca Nesophyla: Pink Melaleluca Evergreen *Melaleuca nesophila*

Not to be confused with *Melaleuca quinquenervia* (the Paperbark Tree) the Pink Melaleuca grows naturally as a small tree between 15 and 20 feet tall but can be used in a wide variety of instances from clipped hedges, to a large screen shrub/tree, as an accent tree, or even as a shade tree. The Paperbark Tree is the common Melaleuca everyone thinks of and that is seen all over with its distinctive peeling, spongy, whitish to light brown bark. The Pink Melaleuca doesn't share this annoying trait with its brother although it does have interesting, swirling bark. A very tough tree that can take abuse, ocean spray, heavy winds, high heat, and poor soil and come out the other side looking attractive and thriving. It has unique, attractive flowers that appear as feathery globes on the branch ends throughout the year. An additional reason for its use is its growth habit. Often developing a gnarled, sprawling appearance it can easily provide a very interesting visual addition to the yard or garden that can even evoke a sense of bonsai at times.



4. Avocado: Fuerte

An established favorite. Harvested late fall through spring, the Fuerte is the original high quality California Avocado.

Description:

Pear-shaped

Medium seed

Peels easily

Great taste

Size:

Medium to large fruit, ranging from 5 to 14 ounces

Appearance:

Smooth thin green skin

Creamy, pale green flesh

Ripe Characteristics:

Skin remains green

Fruit yields to gentle pressure when ripe



5. Bird of Paradise

Bird-of-paradise or crane flower (*Strelitzia reginae*) is a native of South Africa and is closely related to the banana. The herbaceous plant derives its common names from the unique flower it bears, which resembles a brightly colored bird in flight. The leathery leaves are held upright on stiff leafstalks and are about 6 inches wide and 18 inches long. The plant forms a 3- to 5-foot-tall clump that can be used as a focal point in the landscape or in mass plantings. The evergreen leaves of bird-of-paradise do not drop from the plant, which makes it an excellent addition around pools or wherever shedding leaves are an aesthetic and/or maintenance problem.

Bird-of-paradise makes an attractive landscape plant throughout Florida, although it requires cold protection in the northern part of the state. The plant will tolerate temperatures as low as 24°F for a short time; however, freezing temperatures will damage developing flower buds and flowers. To ensure flower production in north Florida, grow bird-of-paradise in a container that can be moved indoors during freezes.

The showy bloom is actually a combination of blue petals and orange sepals that emerge from a beak-like bract (modified leaf). Blooms appear intermittently most of the year. Healthy, mature plants can produce as many as three dozen flower spikes a year, which will last up to two weeks when cut.



6. Avocado: Haas

About the Variety: Our Story

Hass Avocados are one of the more common varieties of avocado. Patented August 27, 1935 by Mr. Rudolph Hass, U.S. Plant Patent No. 139.

Learn more about the [Hass Avocado Mother Tree](#).

Each variety of avocado has its own varietal characteristics. For example, Hass Avocados are known as the “year-round avocado” because of their seasonal availability.

The Hass Avocados in your grocer's produce section are grown in California, Chile, Mexico, New Zealand and The Dominican Republic. That assures you of a ready supply of fresh fruit 365 days a year. Hass Avocados are oval shaped, with a small to medium sized seed, they range in weight from 5 to 12 ounces, with a creamy texture and great taste. They also have a distinctive skin that turns from green to purplish-black when ripe.

Another amazing thing about the Haas avocado for you Weight Watchers out there: regular avocados have 3 points per serving of $\frac{1}{4}$ of the fruit, Haas avocados on the other hand have only 2 points per serving of $\frac{1}{4}$ of the fruit!



7. California Pepper Tree: Schinus Molle

Schinus molle is a quick growing evergreen tree that grows to 15 meters (50 feet) tall and 5–10 meters (16–33 feet) wide. It is the largest of all *Schinus* species and potentially the longest lived. The upper branches of the tree tend to droop. The tree's pinnately compound leaves measure 8–25 cm long x 4–9 cm wide and are made up of 19–41 alternate leaflets. Male and female flowers occur on separate plants (dioecious). Flowers are small, white and borne profusely in panicles at the ends of the drooping branches. The fruit are 5–7 mm diameter round drupes with woody seeds that turn from green to red, pink or purplish, carried in dense clusters of hundreds of berries that can be present year-round. The rough grayish bark is twisted and drips sap. The bark, leaves and berries are aromatic when crushed. Around the Ranch, this was a favorite place for brides and grooms to take photos on their wedding day.*

*This tree has since been removed. California Pepper Trees also extended along the entrance to the Camarillo Ranch. It was called Pepper Tree Lane.



8. Bunya Bunya Tree

The *bunya*, *bonye*, *bunyi* or *bunya-bunya* in various [Australian Aboriginal languages](#) was colloquially named the Bunya Pine by Europeans. However, *Araucaria bidwillii* is not a pine tree (of

the genus [Pinus](#)). It is also commonly referred to as the "false monkey puzzle" and does belong to the same genus as the monkey puzzle tree ([Araucaria araucana](#)).

The Bunya Tree grows to a height of 30–45 metres and the cone which contains the edible kernals, is the size of a football^[2].

The ripe cones fall to the ground. Each segment contains a kernel in a tough protective shell, which will split when boiled or put in a fire. The flavour of the kernal is similar to a Chestnut^[3].

The only recorded bunya festival recorded was by Thomas (Tom) Petrie (1831–1910) who went with the Aboriginal people of Brisbane at the age of 14 to the festival at the Bunya Range (now the Blackall Range in the hinterland area of the Sunshine Coast). His daughter, Constance Petrie put down his stories in which he said that the trees fruited at three year intervals^[1]. The three year interval may not be correct. The Bunya trees pollinate in South East Queensland in September, October and the cones fall seventeen to eighteen months later in late January to early March from the coast to the current Bunya Mountains. Because of heavy rainfall or drought, pollination may vary. In field research (Smith I.R.) there may be some small cones in most years, but the large festival harvests may vary between two to seven years. When the fruit was ripe, the people of the region would set aside differences and gather in the Bon-yi Mountains ([Bunya Mountains](#)) to feast on the kernels.

As the fruit ripened, Locals, who were bound by custodial obligations and rights, sent out messengers to invite people from hundreds of kilometers to meet at specific sites. The meetings involved ceremonies, dispute settlements and fights, marriage arrangements and the trading of goods. The Aborigines' fierce protection of the trees and recognition of the value of the timber, led to colonial authorities prohibiting settlers from cutting the trees in the 1842. The resource was too valuable, and the aborigines were driven out of the forests along with the ability to run the festivals. The forests were felled for timber and cleared to make way for cultivation^[4].

In what was probably Australia's largest indigenous event, diverse tribes – up to thousands of people – once travelled great distances (from as far as Charleville, Dubbo, Bundaberg and Grafton) and stayed for months, to celebrate and feast on the bunya nut. The bunya gatherings were an armistice accompanied by much trade exchange, and discussions/negotiations over marriage and regional issues. Due to the sacred status of the bunyas, some tribes would not camp amongst these trees. Also, in some regions, the tree was never to be cut.

The Bunya Bunya tree also has a nickname. The tree produces large cones, similar to pine cones but about 10 times bigger. When the cones are ready, and the breeze us blowing just right, these cones sometimes come crashing down to the ground. If you or your spouse happen to be standing in just the right spot, you could become the latest victim of the "Widow Maker"



9. Norfolk Island Pine

Description

The Norfolk Island pine is familiar to most as the cute little living table-top Christmas tree that is sold already bedecked with bows and bulbs. In addition to this holiday market, larger specimens are sold as "houseplants" in discount stores and nurseries. In its native land, however, this delicate little plant is a forest giant that can reach heights of 200 ft (61 m). Growing very upright (occasionally with a graceful lean), the tree forms a very symmetrical pyramid, with branches emerging from the trunk in a regular and precise pattern. In Florida most specimens are less than 50 ft (15.2 m) tall as they are the first to be blown away in a hurricane. In California you often see taller

specimens, to about 100 ft (30.5 m). But you are unlikely to see any approaching the heights achieved in their native habitat.

Not actually a pine, this plant is a member of the Araucariaceae family that includes several other trees of ornamental interest including the bunya-bunya tree ([A. bidwillii](#)) and the monkey puzzle tree ([A. araucana](#)). This plant is often incorrectly identified as *A. excelsa*, especially in older references. Adding to the confusion is that some of the plants sold on the market are actually *A. columnaris* which looks almost identical to *A. heterophylla* when young but older plants tend to have branches closer together and darker foliage.

The male cones are cylindrical, 1-3 in (2.5-7.6 cm) long; the seeds are formed inside 3-5 in (7.6-12.7 cm), roughly spherical female cones. The foliage is soft looking and light green. Leaves on young trees are narrowly wedge-shaped, about 0.5 in (1.3 cm) long; on mature trees the leaves are scale like and overlapping, about 0.25 in (0.6 cm) long.

One of our former Docents told us that when she was training, she was told that the Norfolk Island Pine at the Ranch was at one time decorated with Christmas lights! That must have been in the Tree's earlier years!



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The juvenile foliage of the Norfolk Island pine is soft and pliable as well as durable and beautiful! It's even rugged enough to grow indoors where it thrives with little attention.

Location

All of the species of *Araucaria* are native to the Southern Hemisphere where many have economic significance and all are enjoyed for their ornamental appearance. *Araucaria heterophylla* is native to Norfolk Island in the southern Pacific Ocean, east of Australia. This island was discovered by Captain James Cook, claimed for Great Britain, and named for the Duchess of Norfolk. This tiny 3 by 5 mile long tropical paradise is famous not only for its namesake tree, but has a place in history, having been settled in 1856 by Pitcairners, descendants of Fletcher Christian and the other mutineers from the H.M.S. Bounty. Today the Norfolk Island Pine's unique beauty is seen in tropical and sub-tropical landscapes all over the world.



10. Moreton Bay Fig

Ficus macrophylla, commonly known as the Moreton Bay Fig, is a large evergreen [banyan](#) tree of the [Moraceae](#) family that is a native of most of the eastern coast of [Australia](#), from the [Atherton Tableland](#) (17° S) in the north to the [Illawarra](#) (34° S) in [New South Wales](#), and [Lord Howe Island](#). Its common name is derived from [Moreton Bay](#) in [Queensland, Australia](#). It is best known for its beautiful [buttress roots](#), which are also known for damaging municipal footpaths.

As *Ficus macrophylla* is a [strangler fig](#); seed germination usually takes place in the canopy of a [host](#) tree and the seedling lives as an [epiphyte](#) until its roots establish contact with the ground. It then enlarges and strangles its host, eventually becoming a freestanding tree by itself. Individuals may reach 60 m (200 ft) in height. Like all figs, it has an obligate [mutualism](#) with [fig wasps](#); figs are only pollinated by fig wasps, and fig wasps can only reproduce in fig flowers. *Ficus macrophylla* is widely used as a feature tree in public parks and gardens in warmer climates such as California, Portugal, Italy (Sicily, Sardinia, Liguria) and Australia. Old specimens can reach tremendous size. Its aggressive root system allows its use in only the largest private gardens.



II. Stone Pine

The Stone Pine (*Pinus pinea*), is also called Italian Stone Pine, or Umbrella Pine (not to be confused with the [Japanese Umbrella pine \(*Sciadopitys verticillata*\)](#)), and [Parasol Pine](#). It is in the [pine](#) family [Pinaceae](#) and occasionally listed under the invalid name *Pinus sativa*. The tree is native to the [Mediterranean region](#). It occurs in [Southern Europe](#), [North Africa](#), and the [Levant](#).

Stone pines have been used and cultivated for their edible [pine nuts](#) since prehistoric times. They are widespread in horticultural cultivation as [ornamental trees](#), planted in gardens and parks around the world.



12. Bougainvillea: "Fiesta Camarillo"

The large amount of flamboyant color on this species creates a wonderful accent in a garden. Varieties can be in bush or vine form; colors vary. Once established, they tend to be carefree. All varieties are susceptible to frost damage. "Fiesta Camarillo" blooms in a hot pink and gold blend. It is a hybrid that was developed in the 1960's and through the backing of our "Tweedy" Camarillo Rouse, widow of Frank Camarillo, became the city flower of Camarillo at the time the city was incorporated in 1964.



13. Catalina Ironwood: *Lyrothamnus floribundus*

Lyrothamnus floribundus var. *asplenifolius*, Fernleaf Catalina ironwood is a very peculiar evergreen tree endemic to the Channel Islands of the Coast of California. It is a narrow, mid-sized tree with very distinct bark and leaves. Each leaf grows to 4-5" and is deeply lobed with and resembles "chicken feet". Some claim a passing resemblance with cannabis. The leaves continually fall and create a thick layer of tree litter is beneficial to the tree and is aesthetically appealing. Indistinct mature bark peels away to reveal fresh, reddish bark. The two-tone bark is a tremendous asset to this tree.



14. Dawn Redwood” Meta Sequoia; Glyptostrobides Dyptostioboides

Metasequoia glyptostroboides, the dawn redwood, is a fast-growing, critically endangered deciduous conifer tree, sole living species of the genus Metasequoia, and one of three species of conifers known as redwoods. It is native to the Sichuan-Hubei region of China. Although shortest of the redwoods, it grows to at least 200 ft (61 m) in height.

Local villagers refer to the original tree from which most others derive as *Shui-sa*, or "water fir," which is part of a local shrine. Since that tree's rediscovery in 1943, the dawn redwood has become a popular ornamental tree in parks and gardens worldwide.



15. Pittosporum Undulatum

Pittosporum undulatum is a tree growing to 15m tall with wavy (undulating) leaf edges. It is sometimes also known as Sweet Pittosporum, Native Daphne, Australian Cheesewood, Victorian Box or Mock Orange. It carries conspicuous orange woody [fruits](#) about 1 cm in diameter for several months after flowering in spring or early summer.^[1]

Originally *Pittosporum undulatum* grew in moist areas on the [Australian](#) east coast but has increased its range since European settlement. It is a fast grower, and has become a weed in other parts of Australia where it is not indigenous. It is also highly invasive in [South Africa](#), the [Caribbean](#), [Hawaii](#), the [Azores](#) and southern [Brazil](#).^{[2] [3]}

P. undulatum's status around the [Sydney](#) area is contentious.^[4] Even though it is native to the region, *P. undulatum* has spread to soils and bushland where it wasn't found before European settlement, often out-competing other plants. It has done especially well in areas where the environment has been altered by humans - for example by [habitat fragmentation](#) weakening other natives, by [fertilizer](#) runoff from homes increasing soil nutrients and by the suppression of [bushfires](#) near suburbs. Unlike most natives, *P. undulatum* takes advantage of high nutrient levels and its seeds can germinate without needing fire. This has led to the species sometimes receiving the "invasive" label although some^[who?] think that it is merely returning to areas where it grew before people arrived in Australia and began burning the environment far beyond that which previously occurred.^[1]



16. Eugenia

Eugenia, large [genus](#) of chiefly tropical, mostly aromatic, [evergreen](#) shrubs and trees of the [myrtle family](#) (Myrtaceae). The leaves are opposite; the flowers are solitary or in small clusters. The fruit is an edible berry, usually tart, and is commonly made into jam or jelly.

Environmental Eugenia is a glossy leaved shrub or tree, which is often used as a hedge or privacy barrier. An interesting Eugenia plant fact is its relation to the Myrtle family. Discover how to plant Eugenia and enjoy this amazing fruiting plant with superior foliar appeal. Eugenia Plant Facts: The Eugenia genus contains over 1,000 different species. The group is native to tropical regions and cannot survive freezing conditions. Some forms can easily grow up to 20 feet (6 m.) high, but the shrub is easy to keep to a lower habit with annual pruning. Leaves are shiny and oval, with leaves arriving reddish in hue and changing to green as they age. Eugenia care in well-drained soil and proper temperatures is minimal.

Eugenia Plant Varieties. Eugenia uniflora is probably the most common form of this plant. When it is planted in a warm climate with plenty of sun, the bush may flower several times a year and yield a crop of bright red cherry-like fruits. This variety is called Surinam cherry. Cherry of the Rio Grande is another variety of Eugenia useful for the home landscape. It produces a purplish fruit. Eugenia plants prefer acidic soil. Perform a soil test and mix in sulfur the previous season if your soil is too basic. Till to a depth of at least 18 inches (45 cm.) and remove large rocks, roots and other impediments. Mix bone meal into the soil before you plant. Dig a hole as deep as the root ball and twice as wide. Push soil around the roots firmly to prevent gaps and water the plant deeply to settle the soil. Make sure you do not plant the trunk below the soil line. Caring for Eugenia plants when they are newly installed means plenty of water and a watchful eye for pests.



17. Succulent Garden

During Victorian times, succulent gardens, just like having a palm tree or three were all the rage! Especially in a Mediterranean climate like we have here in Ventura County. Identifying all of the succulents in our garden could be another entire article! However, there is one very special succulent who's story I would like to share with you. It's called Gasteria.

And lastly, on the west side of the property, in the succulent garden there are a number of plants named Gasteria. This is a succulent plant which resembles an aloe vera plant, but comes from a different botanical family. The original plant was given to Adolfo by the Franciscan priests at the Mission San Buenaventura. Thus it's nickname "the Mission Cactus". Below is a photograph of this plant in bloom. I have no date when Adolfo received this gift. See the Gasteria below:



Gasteria today

I am hopeful that these plants and many others from Don Adolfo's time can be maintained, as many no longer exist!