2024 Garden Tour
Variations on a Native Plant Theme
by Monica Tudor

WE HAD A GREAT DAY WITH BEAUTIFUL weather for the 2024 CNPS garden tour. We visited four very different gardens and learned how they were established and why the gardeners chose to ditch their lawns.

Schuler Garden
The first was a brand-new garden at the home of Patty Schuler, my neighbor. She explained that she wanted to renovate her front yard but her daughters talked her into going drought-tolerant with some natives. Her daughters had helped with a CNPS plant sale at my house and sold her on the idea. Patty started by not watering her grass, then eventually dug it out. She came over to my house, I went over to her house, and we talked about what she wanted her garden to look like. Patty wanted a whimsical garden with seating as a place for taking family photos, a path, and lots of flowers. She designed her garden with a few suggestions from Cathy at Robbie’s Nursery, but did the work by herself with her husband and kids. She began planting in December 2023/January 2024, a little at a time. She put in wide flagstone paths, a bench for seating and for family portraits, a dry creek, and lots of beautiful plants, grasses, and blooming trees.

Tudor Garden
Next, we went to my house. My front yard landscape is about 7 years old and is mostly sages and buckwheat, with a few desert mallows and poppies and a Desert Museum palo verde tree. We also went to the backyard garden which is about 14 years old. It was not very manicured, because I didn’t have the heart to pull up the volunteers in the paths.

Smith Garden
Next on the tour was Keith Smith’s home. Pat Mumford and I visited it together last year. Keith showed us around and told us he used Arroyo Grande as his landscaper. They worked with him to create an elegant and serene landscape of colored pebbles, paths, and agave. We liked it and thought it would be an interesting stop on the garden tour. Unfortunately, Keith was unavailable the day of the tour so he had his daughter, Jenna Hale, on site. Jenna greeted us and answered questions and gave us commentary on both the front and the back garden, which is also agave and areas of colored pebbles, with paths and with trees and shrubs.

Francis Garden
Our last garden was discovered and suggested by Sabrina Mehtabuddin and Felix Colson. They contacted the owner, Isolde Francis, who agreed to be part of the garden tour. When Isolde and her
Chapter Meetings

upcoming TOPICS

(Topics not determined at publication time. See https://chapters.cnps.org/kern/events/ for most up-to-date information.)

All in-person chapter meetings are held the 3rd Thursday of each month.

Place: 3rd Thursday meetings are held at Point Loma Nazarene University, Bakersfield Regional Center, 5030 California Ave, 3rd Floor, Room 1.

Meeting times: 6 – 8:30 pm:
6 pm - Discussion groups: Plant ID and and native plant gardening; bring snacks to share
7 pm - Program presentation and a short business meeting.

Ideas for speakers are welcome. Contact Paul Gipe (pgipe@ige.org).

Top: Isolde describes to Monica the evolution of their garden. Bottom: the backyard – a combination of food-producing plants and natives.

Update: Our Evolving Native Plant Nursery

Various interested members and volunteers help seedlings get a start at our section of the Panorama Vista Preserve growing area: Clockwise from above: Adam; Bill and Pat; and Sabrina and Fred.

Sow Native Meetings each Friday

Help develop the Kern CNPS Native Plant Nursery

CONTACT SABRINA.MEHTABUDDIN@GMAIL.COM