

2016 Smart Gardening Conference Speaker Biographies

Nicholas Staddon *Keynote Speaker*



Nicholas Staddon has been working with plant breeders, hybridizers, and professional Plant Explorers for the last 20 years. He is sought out as a resource and guest for television and radio gardening shows across the country. He works closely with professional garden writers, providing information on plants both old and new, sharing his views on garden trends and more. Born in England, Nicholas attended Otley Agricultural College where he received his degree in Agricultural Science. He has most recently been working at Monrovia Nursery for nearly 27 years, 15 of which he led the New Plant program. He has managed garden centers in Albuquerque and Santa Fe, New Mexico. He now resides in California and continues to be consumed with a passion for plants and animals. Nicholas is proud to be professionally affiliated with the Royal Horticulture Society, The California Association of Nurserymen, and AmericanHort, formerly the American Landscape and Nursery Association. He is an advisor to Sunset Magazine, the Mediterranean Garden Society of Southern California, on the Board of Advisors to Mount San Antonio College, Agricultural and Horticultural Sciences and Cal-HIP, California Horticultural Invasives Prevention.

Ellen Zagory *Keynote Speaker*



Ms. Zagory has worked at the UC Davis Arboretum since 1984 in a number of horticultural positions from plant propagation to planting design. As the Director of Public Horticulture at the UC Davis Arboretum and Public Garden, she now serves as a horticulturist, writer and spokesperson for the UC Davis Arboretum and Public Garden in a broader partnership with grounds maintenance, campus landscape architects and naturalized landscapes staff. This larger organization, the UC Davis Arboretum and Public Garden, is working to make the UC Davis Campus landscape a visitor destination and an example of more sustainable landscape plants and practices. A confirmed plant nerd Ms. Zagory also frequently travels the state lecturing to UCCE Master Gardeners and regional garden clubs about beautiful heat tolerant and low-water use plants.

Wanda Addison was an educational assistant in Fresno Unified for over 30 years and has been a Master Gardener since 2013. She shares a love of succulents with co-presenter, Roz Tampone and together they have presented many classes on the topic.

Jackie Bradley is a Master Gardener with the University of California Cooperative Extension and a long-time Central Valley resident with many years of gardening experience. In addition to having an article featured in a gardening publication, she has lectured extensively on a variety of gardening topics.

Maggie Courtis has been a Master Gardener since 2005. She has trained extensively in Integrated Pest Management, Edible Landscaping and Sustainable Landscape practices. Maggie enjoys gardening, reading, spending time in the outdoors, and her family, including her adorable one year old granddaughter. She is active in her church and BSF. Maggie's creative outlets include ceramics, which she shows at Clay Hand Gallery.

Robbie Cranch has been herb gardening since she was a small child in her family's herb gardens in Ohio and Oregon. A Master Gardener since 1993, she loves the San Joaquin Valley climate for its benevolence toward herbs and citrus.

Dr. Ruth Dahlquist-Willard is the Small Farms and Specialty Crops advisor for the University of California Cooperative Extension in Fresno and Tulare Counties. Her area of expertise is integrated pest management and interdisciplinary research in small-scale agriculture. She earned her Ph.D. in Entomology from University of Idaho and the Centro Agronómico Tropical de Investigación y Enseñanza (CATIE), Costa Rica, in an interdisciplinary joint doctoral program. She earned her B.S. in Biology from UC Los Angeles and completed post baccalaureate coursework at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona.

Michael Harman has been a Master Gardener since 2007, but an avid gardener for many years prior. He has taught classes in composting, rose pruning, and in keeping with an interest in cooking, olive curing.

Janet Hartin is a UC Cooperative Extension Environmental Horticulture Advisor in San Bernardino, Riverside, and Los Angeles Counties. She specializes in sustainable landscaping principles and practices and is the lead author on the water management chapter of the Master Gardener handbook, and UC ANR publications including 'Sustainable Landscaping in California' and 'Use of Graywater in Urban Landscapes in California'. She serves on the statewide MG Steering Committee and as UC ANR Associate Editor for Environmental Horticulture and has served as Principal or Co-principal Investigator on grants totaling over 1 million dollars in the area of water use of landscape plants.

John Kincade has been a Master Gardener since 2013.

Valerie Kissler has been a Master Gardener since 2005. She looks to lavender as the most versatile of the drought-tolerant herbs and having had 40 years of teaching experience, is most anxious to share lavender learning with you!

Jody Palmer has been a Master Gardener since 1993. Jody Palmer Landscape Design has been creating natural, water-wise, and award winning gardens in the Valley for over 20 years.

Maxwell Norton recently retired after 36 years as a tree fruit and grape UC Cooperative Extension Farm Advisor. He has a Bachelor of Science degree and a Master of Science degree specializing in pomology from CSUF.

Daniel Rourke is Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District's Environmental Resources Manager. He has worked for the District since 2001. He oversees the NPDES stormwater program along with other environmental regulatory programs. After teaching science for 5 years, he began his stormwater career in 1987 with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. In 1990, he moved to California where he managed the Water Pollution Prevention Program for the City of San Francisco for 11 years. He has a Bachelor of Science degree from Penn State University and a Master of Science degree from Shippensburg University.

Ernesto Sandoval A Jose of all plants and master of some, Sandoval grows a very wide variety of plants for teaching purposes as the Collections Manager at the UC Davis Botanical Conservatory. He regularly speaks to a wide variety of gardening groups and explains the science with minimum jargon.

Susan Stiltz is a landscape designer and consultant specializing in water-wise, low-maintenance, sustainable gardens that are Central Valley Friendly. She also works as a Landscape Specialist for the City of Fresno's Water Conservation Program. She has a Bachelor of Science degree in Plant Science from Fresno State, is the volunteer Garden Consultant for the Clovis Botanical Garden and is a board member for Fresno Wildlife Rehabilitation Services. She was formerly with Tree Fresno and is a Certified Arborist.

Tim Sullivan has been a Master Gardener since 2011 and has been focusing on learning new irrigation technologies in agriculture and for the home garden. He has managed the irrigation at the Garden of the Sun and taught numerous classes on irrigation for the Master Gardener program.

Roz Tampone is originally from NY and was an educator in Sanger Unified for 35 years and has been a Master Gardener since 2013. She shares a love of succulents with co-presenter, Wanda Addison and together they have presented many classes on the topic.

Elinor Teague has been a Master Gardener for over 20 years. Her gardening column appears weekly in the Fresno Bee and her Master Gardener minutes can be heard on KYNO on weekends.

Carolyn Unruh was born and raised in SoCal and moved to the Central Valley in the 70's. She became a Master Gardener in 1991. Besides gardening, her interests include travel, hiking, family history, and of course good food and good friends.

Lance Walheim is senior editor of the last 4 editions of the Sunset Western Garden Book, author of 3 books on growing citrus, including Citrus: Complete Guide to Selecting and Growing Over 100 Varieties, published by Ironwood Press. Lance is a specialty citrus grower in Exeter, CA.