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Free Fiesta Botanica Event Celebrates Balboa Park’s Rich Horticultural Heritage

Saturday, May 27, 10:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.

May 3, 2017 (San Diego, Ca.) – Visitors of all ages are invited to celebrate spring amid the region’s most spectacular historical gardens at [Fiesta Botanica: Celebrating Balboa Park’s Plants & Gardens](#) on Saturday, May 27. The family-friendly festival kicks off at 10:00 a.m. with the Fiesta Botanica Floral Wagon Parade along El Prado and continues until 3:00 p.m. with horticultural-themed lectures and demonstrations, hands-on activities for kids, live entertainment, tours of the park’s historic gardens, majestic butterfly releases, and more (see schedule and booth activities list below).

The annual park-wide community event launched during the 2015 Centennial Celebrations as the “Garden Party of the Century.” Fiesta Botanica is now presented by the Balboa Park Conservancy in partnership with the City of San Diego Park and Recreation Department, and is enhanced by the participation of numerous garden clubs, park cultural institutions, local businesses, and community groups.

This year’s floral extravaganza will feature live entertainment by the Danny Green Quartet, Save the Starlight Band and Hullabaloo; open-air sketching stations provided by the Spanish Village Art Center; plant sales in the Casa del Prado patio; four butterfly releases and kids activities in Zoro Garden; and more than a dozen food trucks parked along Village Place.

Free lectures by horticultural experts, including Nan Serman and Greg Rubin, will address a variety of topics, such as drought-tolerant and native California plant varieties, organic gardening, landscape design, and how to grow edible plants. In addition, park rangers and other knowledgeable guides will lead tours of Balboa Park’s many gardens, historic landscaping, and the Botanical Building.

Various community organizations will host more than two dozen activity and information booths along El Prado, offering arts and crafts, horticultural demonstrations, educational programs and packets, seed and plant giveaways and sales, and special exhibits that touch on the themes of gardening, the environment, conservation, and sustainability. Among the highlights are the “Ask a Master Gardener” booth hosted by the Master Gardener Association

of San Diego County, a Sustainability Scavenger Hunt conducted by the Balboa Park Cultural Partnership, a *kodama* fairy garden-making activity presented by the Japanese Friendship Garden, and a lei-making demonstration at the Southern California Plumeria Society booth.

Families can save money and avoid parking during Fiesta Botanica by taking advantage of MTS Family Weekends, which allow two children 12 and under to ride MTS buses and trolleys for free on weekends when accompanied by a paying adult passenger (18+). Getting onboard is easy with the new mobile ticketing app, [Compass Cloud](#). *Rapid* 215 provides limited-stop service to Balboa Park; and visitors can also access Balboa Park via Route 7 (Park Boulevard), as well as via MTS Routes 3 and 120 (Fourth and Fifth Avenues). To plan your trip, visit [sdmts.com](#).

Fiesta Botanica 2017 Schedule

10:00am	Floral Wagon Parade along El Prado, led by Councilmember Chris Ward and the Scripps High School Marching Band and Color Guard
11:00-11:30am	Hullabaloo performs in Zoro Garden; first butterfly release at 11:30am
11:00am	Lecture: Greg Rubin – “California Native Plants”
11:00am-3:00pm	Food trucks along Village Place
11:30am-2:30pm	Save the Starlight Band performs above Zoro Garden
11:30am-1:30pm	Danny Green Quartet performs in the Plaza de Panama
12:30pm	Butterfly release #2 in Zoro Garden
1:00–1:30pm	Ms. Smarty Plants; butterfly release #3 at 1:30pm
2:30pm	Lecture: Nan Sterman – “Gardens of Balboa Park”
2:30pm	Butterfly release #4

Fiesta Botanica 2017 Booths along El Prado

American Society of Landscape Architects – San Diego Chapter — Learn about the planning and artful design of our cultural and natural environments; win San Diego native plant specimens in a raffle.

Association of Professional Landscape Designers — Receive a 30-minute design consultation for \$30 to learn how you can transform your yard into a fabulous outdoor living space, retreat for wildlife, and low maintenance/low water garden.

Balboa Park Conservancy — Visit the Conservancy’s booth to purchase garden-themed items.

Balboa Park Cultural Partnership Sustainability Program — Take part in a Sustainability Scavenger Hunt for prizes; “Every Day Is Earth Day in Balboa Park” coloring activity for kids.

Botany for Kids — Watch a ladybug release and learn how to plant seeds.

California Native Plant Society — Learn about native plant gardening and conservation; take home seeds to plant.

California Rare Fruit Growers — Learn about the state's rare fruit growers and how to grow rare fruit.

Dig Down Deep — Experience a variety of garden-themed hands-on activities, including tasting things, observing worms, and dissecting flowers.

Education First (EF) — Make birdfeeders out of pipe cleaners and Cheerios to take home.

Farm Fresh to You — Learn about the unique organic farm-to-table program; fruit and veggie coloring sheet activity for kids.

Friends of Balboa Park — Learn about the Friends' many projects to improve Balboa Park's cultural landscape.

Japanese Friendship Garden — Make miniature *kodama* fairy gardens — little globes filled with wood chips, moss, and clay *kodama* (Japanese woodland spirits).

Master Gardener Association of San Diego County — Have our Master Gardener answer your most pressing horticultural questions for free, learn about household pests from our hands-on displays, and meet the Lady Beetle puppet.

Renewal by Andersen — Learn about energy-efficient windows and doors through hands-on displays.

San Diego Art Institute — Take part in various art-making activities for kids, including paper crafts, watercolor drawings, and botanical sun prints.

San Diego Carnivorous Plant Society — Learn about carnivorous plants and get up close with live plants on display.

San Diego County Fair — Learn about the many horticultural and agricultural events taking place during this year's fair at the Del Mar Fairgrounds.

San Diego Epiphyllum Society — Explore all aspects of the care and culture of epiphyllums and related plants; purchase 4-inch or 1-gallon plants to add to your garden.

San Diego Floral Association — Learn about the many activities of the region's oldest garden club and the first organization allowed to occupy quarters in Balboa Park.

San Diego Public Library — Enjoy garden-themed crafts for kids, pick up library card applications, and discover the many free educational and cultural resources at 36 library locations in San Diego.

San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) — Pick up schedules for MTS bus and trolley routes to Downtown San Diego and Balboa Park.

San Diego Model Railroad Museum — Think like a model-railroader and create a candy-colored “pom pom mini-tree.”

San Diego Orchid Society — Watch live orchid repotting demonstrations and learn all about the various orchid species and hybrids.

San Diego Tropical Fish Society — Learn about the different types of plants that are beneficial to aquariums from live aquarium displays; ask knowledgeable members about fish keeping and environmental impacts.

San Diego Zoo Global — Learn about the San Diego Zoo’s world-class collection of native plants, including ficus trees, orchids, aloe plants, acacia trees, and palms.

Southern California Plumeria Society — Watch a live lei-making demonstration and learn about the best gardening supplies for cultivating plumerias.

XEWT-TV Televisa — Spin the XEWT Channel 12 prize wheel and enjoy fun activities for kids.

Fiesta Botanica: Celebrating Balboa Park’s Plants & Gardens is made possible by the following partners and sponsors.



The Balboa Park Conservancy enriches the visitor experience and keeps Balboa Park magnificent by sustaining and enhancing the Park’s beauty, and its historic, cultural, and recreational character for the enduring enjoyment of all. Working in partnership with the City of San Diego and surrounding communities, the Conservancy is committed to ensuring that the Park’s spectacular landscaping, grounds, and structures continue to make Balboa Park one of the best urban cultural parks in the country. For more information, visit <http://www.balboaparkconservancy.org>.

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