



MEET THE INSTRUCTORS

Where do the worlds of conservation and education meet?

At Living Desert University (LDU), the Coachella Valley's premier environmental learning center. Students learn how to preserve and protect the fragile beauty of our desert through a fun and fascinating series of adult classes and programs.

LDU offers desert residents the opportunity to become skilled and inspired desert gardeners, naturalists, habitat creators, artists and valley hikers.

Our goal is to offer a broad range of classes that increase environmental sensitivity and ecological action in everyday life.

Our instructors include *professional specialists, educators, certified natural history interpreters, and Living Desert staff.*



2009-2010



DON ACKLEY

Water Management Supervisor, Coachella Valley Water District, Turf Grass Management Instructor, University of California, Riverside Extension

G 120 Water Management in a Desert Garden December 19th, 2009

G 301 Soils of the Coachella Valley January 16th, 2009

Mr. Ackley is currently the Coachella Valley Water District's Water Management Supervisor responsible for both the efficient use of water by golf courses throughout the District, and the execution of the Landscape Water Conservation Ordinance's Landscape Plan Check Program. His former position as the Mobile Lab Team Leader/Program Coordinator for the Coachella Valley Resource Conservation District resulted in conducting irrigation system audits of over 600 irrigation sites throughout the Coachella Valley including over 300 farms and 60 golf courses, culminating in the presentation of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's Water Conservation Field Services Program Award, in recognition of exceptional work in the Conservation Implementation Category.

Before assuming his current Turfgrass Management/Landscape Irrigation teaching assignments at the University of California, Riverside Extension, he taught Soil Science, Irrigation, Pesticides and Conservation of Natural Resources at the College of the Desert for 20 years as an adjunct faculty member. He is a Lifetime Credentialed Community College Instructor, a Certified Landscape Irrigation Manager, a Certified Agricultural Irrigation Specialist and a Certified Landscape/Golf Course Irrigation Auditor with the Irrigation Association, as well as a Certified Crop Advisor with the American Society of Agronomy. In addition, Don holds a Qualified Pesticide Applicator's License in 9 categories with the Department of Pesticide Regulation. He has authored over 20 papers in the field of efficient irrigation applications. Married for 27 years with 6 children he currently resides in the City of Palm Desert.

CASH BAXTER

Plein Air Painter and Master Teacher, Professor for Osher Lifelong Learning Institute

A 370 "Catching the Light" The Impressionists' Way December 19th-20th, 2009

A 800 Plein Air: Sketching in Nature February 13th, 2010

His interest piqued at age three by his beloved journalist/painter grandmother, CASH BAXTER became the youngest student of Chicago Art Institute's Roy Keister. At age fourteen, Baxter had the good fortune to be invited to spend time studying with the master illustrator, Norman Rockwell, in his New England studio. At Southern Methodist University, where he exhibited in many university shows, he studied painting with Jerry Bywaters, a founding member of the 1930's pace-setting artists, the "Dallas Four," and was given two one-man shows by The Shuttles Galleries. His work now appears in galleries and private collections in Arizona, California, Indiana, Illinois, Florida, Nevada, New York, Texas, Oregon, Germany and South Africa.

Currently, Cash Baxter is teaching his third course that he created called "Catching the Light," a painter's view of the international impressionist movement, at California State University at San Bernardino, Palm Desert Campus for the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. Mr. Baxter is a four year resident of Palm Desert, along with his wife, Dr. Betty Baxter.

For more information, visit Cash's website at www.cashart.net



CYNTHIA BRITAIN

Plein Air Artist and Instructor

A 801 The Magic of Desert Light: Plein Air 2 Day Workshop November 21st-22nd, 2009



Cynthia's favorite activities are twofold - painting and spending time in nature. It is the combination of these two passions that have resulted in her becoming an award winning plein air painter. "I can't imagine a more gratifying experience than painting outdoors while listening to the birds sing and feeling the sun on my face."

While majoring in fine art at Fullerton College, Cynthia was introduced to the Impressionist painters. She continued her studies at UCLA and Putney College of Art in England. Both the French Impressionists and the early California Impressionists deeply influenced the direction and concentration of her work.

Europe, the Middle East, the Mediterranean, and the Yucatan Peninsula area all locales where she has enjoyed painting, but California holds a special place in her heart. "Future generations will not have the experience of this quickly disappearing natural landscape. I aspire to create a permanent repository of these unique places in my paintings."

Cynthia Britain's work has been shown at The Laguna Art Museum, The Orange County Museum of Art, and the San Diego Museum of Art, where she was awarded a Gold Medal. Her work is shown in corporate and private collections throughout the world.

For more information, visit Cynthia's website at www.cynthiabritain.com



MIKE CHEDESTER

Curator of Education, The Living Desert, Certified Interpretive Guide

NS 2 Creating Your Desert Backyard Habitat Garden November 14th, 2009

G 3 Maintaining Your Desert Backyard Habitat Garden March 13th, 2010

NS 307 History of the Santa Rosa Mts.: Shumway Ranch April 22nd, 2010

Valley Trek Hike Guide

Mike is a Certified Interpretive Guide and holds two California State teaching credentials.

He was a classroom science teacher for 16 years before joining The Living Desert as Curator of Education in 2003. As Curator Mike directs the volunteer/docent program that includes 500 active members, as well as Community outreach programs, onsite youth and adult tours, Gecko Explorers, Starry Safari Sleepovers and The Living Desert University: continuing community education for adults.

Mike's passion for Education, horticulture, desert ecology and people is a great fit with his position at The Living Desert.

JIM CORNETT

Instructor, Author, Columnist, Owner, JWC Ecological Consultants

NS 402 Ecology of a Palm Oasis January 16th, 2010

Jim Cornett has often been compared to the famed desert naturalist Edmund Jaeger who first popularized the magnificent desert environments of California. Like Jaeger, Cornett has a penchant for writing with more than twenty-five books to his credit and nearly all focusing on desert natural history. Through his writing and lecturing he is one of the best-known naturalists in the American Southwest and "one of the best known naturalists in Southern California" says the University of California.

Mr. Cornett's career began at the Palm Springs Desert Museum in 1975 as its first Natural Science Instructor. In 1980, he was appointed Curator of Natural Science and in 2000 was named the Museum's Director of Natural Sciences. He retired from that position in June of 2004. While at the Museum, Mr. Cornett and his staff were responsible for the planning and development of research, exhibition, and education programs about desert environments.

Mr. Cornett received his Bachelor of Arts degree in biology from the University of California at Riverside in 1976. In 1980, he was awarded the Master of Science degree in that same discipline. His research interests have ranged widely within the area of desert ecology with scientific papers published on reptile diversity, the endangered Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard, the Joshua tree, roadrunners, and the ecology of desert palm oases. Mr. Cornett is the acknowledged expert on desert fan palm oases with thirty-seven scientific articles, eight popular articles, and two books on the subject.

Though respected for his contributions to the scientific literature, Mr. Cornett is best known for his popular writings, most notably his latest book titled ***Wonders of The Coachella Valley***. He writes a weekly column in the Desert Sun, a Gannett Newspaper, and his articles have appeared in Natural History, Wild California, Westways and Desert magazines among many others. Over half a million of his books are in print. He is the author of *Desert Palm Oasis*, *The Joshua Tree*, *Atacama: Desert of Chile and Peru*, *Death Valley National Park*, *Scorpions!*, *Rattlesnakes*, *Wildlife of The North American Deserts*, *Indian Uses of Desert Plants*, *The Namib Desert*, and *Indians and Desert Animals*.

Currently, Mr. Cornett is in the midst of traveling to, and developing, a series of articles and a book on the deserts of the world. He has just returned from Argentina's Monte Desert and is now the first professional naturalist to have visited all 9 of the world's great deserts.



KATHY DUNHAM

Professional Artist and Instructor

A 114 Botanical Watercolor March 20th-21st, 2010

Internationally known artist, instructor and author, Kathy Dunham is the "go to - hands on" teacher. Kathy's strength lies in her ability to communicate the challenging concepts of understanding the basic elements of drawing and watercolor and how to create images through line and color. Kathy has taught all levels of drawing and watercolor at venues such as the Palm Springs Art Museum, Los Angeles County Arboretum. The Living Desert plus led groups on week long plein air workshops into Canyon de Chelly, Arizona. She also teaches for the Royal Caribbean and Princess Cruise Lines. She is the current president of the Coachella Valley Watercolor Society and holds memberships in such prestigious organizations as Watercolor West, American Society of Botanical Artists, La Quinta Arts Foundation and The Artists Council of the Palm Springs Art Museum.

Having authored a book on "Artist's Projects You Can Paint - 10 Floral Watercolors" in addition to several magazine articles on painting. Kathy is a master at keeping her instruction 'understandably simple'. She has a unique talent to explain the processes along with making her classes fun and entertaining. Kathy's beautiful watercolors have won numerous awards and hang in both public and private collections across the United States. She is also a certified instructor for the Wilcox School of Color.

For more information, visit Kathy's website at www.kathydunham.com



ELIZABETH GREEN

Professional Artist and Instructor

A 109b Creating Great Gourds

Local Artist Elizabeth Green, has been creating gourd art for the past 15 years. Exploring the culture, history and uses of gourds and as a decorative medium, has inspired the nature and cultural themes of her designs. She has participated with the Living Desert, Idyllwild Nature Center, Joshua Tree National Park and Santa Rosa & San Jacinto Mountains National Monument events and classes. Currently living in Idyllwild to study the visual arts, she loves to teach the basics of creating art from a gift from nature. She is an award winning artist and community events supporter.

DAVE HEVERON

Landscape Supervisor, Land Concepts at the Reserve, former Gardens Collection Manager, The Living Desert

G 121 The Desert Home Garden Experience: Plant Placement & Irrigation January 30th, 2010

Dave Heveron has spent most of his life in the Coachella Valley and has an appreciation for all plants and animals of the desert. An alumnus of College of the Desert, he continued his education with classes on desert botany and plant sciences from California Native Plant Society, Cal State San Bernardino and UC Riverside Extensions, and the UC Berkeley Jepson Herbarium field studies. In the nineteen nineties he joined the staff at The Living Desert as a gardener, and then worked his way up to the Garden Collections Manager position for five years. During that time he joined the Association of Zoo Horticulture and became a board member of Friends of the Desert Mountains. Dave has spent the last seven years as a Landscape Supervisor for Land Concepts. His primary focus has been on the beautiful desert home landscapes at The Reserve Club in Palm Desert.



GLENN HUNTINGTON

Manager, The Living Desert's Palo Verde Garden Center, Environmental Horticulturist

G 101 Basic Botany for Desert Gardeners December 5th, 2009

G 104a Introduction to Do-It-Yourself Landscape Design January 9th, 2010

G 201 Trees for Desert Landscapes March 13th, 2010

Glenn Huntington is a garden designer, lecturer, educator and horticulturist with over 30 years experience. He has gardened in and around the Coachella Valley for 25 years, gaining expertise in both high and low desert environments. Glenn's philosophy promotes 'environmentally appropriate' landscape design and maintenance techniques.

As the valley's population has grown, Huntington has seen the need for environmentally and ecologically sensitive landscape practice education for desert homeowners. To that end, he founded Living Desert University and its Master Desert Gardener certification program. He lectures in various Master Gardener programs and teaches Plant Science and Horticulture at College of the Desert. His related interests include regional history and landscape painting.

Glenn has served as The Living Desert's Manager Palo Verde Garden Center and Environmental Horticulturist for 12 years. He continues to advance the use of desert native and adaptive plants in beautiful, low resource consumptive landscapes. Glenn has a B.A. from the University of California at Davis and an M.A. in Public Speaking.



DARRELL HUTCHINSON

Biologist and Educator

NS 304c Coachella Valley Native Reptiles January 30th, 2010

Darrell received his education degree from McGill University in Montreal, Canada. For twenty years, he taught elementary school and special education in Canada and the US. Darrell's helped conduct biological studies throughout North and South America, including the rain forests of Costa Rica and the Amazon; and for the last seven years, he's worked in the Colorado Desert as a field biologist for UC Riverside and as a private contractor. His professional interests include ornithology, botany, ecology and paleoanthropology. Together, with his partner Dr. Monica Swartz, he enjoys music, ethnographic art, gardening, and adventure travel.

MARY IRISH

Landscape Consultant, Garden Writer, Lecturer, Former Director of Public Horticulture, Desert Botanical Garden, Phoenix

G 202 Ecology in Desert Gardens February 13th, 2009

G 108 Year 'Round Color in a Desert Garden February 13th, 2009

Mary Irish is a garden writer, lecturer and educator who has lived in Arizona for 20 years.

She is the author with Gary Irish of *Agaves, Yuccas and Related Plants* published by Timber Press, 2000, *Gardening in the Desert* published by the University of Arizona Press, 2000, *Arizona Gardener's Guide* published by Cool Springs Press, 2003, and *Month by Month Gardening in the Desert Southwest* published by Cool Springs Press, also in 2003 with a revised edition of the later out in January, 2008, *Perennials for the Southwest*, published by Timber Press, in April, 2006 and *Trees and Shrubs for the Southwest*, published by Timber Press in 2008. She is a frequent contributor to national and regional publications including *Horticulture*, *American Gardener*, and *NMPro* as well as writing and consulting for a variety of on line plant services.

Irish teaches classes regularly on desert gardening, use and cultivation of agaves and succulents, and desert perennials. Her plant interests range widely with agaves and their relatives, bulbs and desert perennials currently at the top of the list.

She served as the Director of Public Horticulture at the Desert Botanical Garden in Phoenix for 11 years, during which time she managed the Garden's Plant Introduction and Sales Program. She has a B.A. from the University of Texas at Austin and M.S. in Geography from Texas A&M University.



BOB LINSTEAD

Plant Propagator, The Living Desert

G 114 Propagation of Native Plants—A 'Hands-On' Workshop February 20th, 2010



For the past 15 years, Bob Linstead has been propagating plants for The Living Desert. He has grown thousands of native plants for use on grounds and for sale at our Palo Verde Garden Center. There are very few individuals in the Coachella Valley (or elsewhere, for that matter) that have Bob's unique knowledge of native plant propagation. Bob has also propagated plants for Joshua Tree National Monument, the Bureau of Land Management, Huntington Botanical Gardens, the City of Palm Desert and the Palm Desert campus of the University of California, Riverside.

Known for his engaging lectures and workshops throughout the Coachella Valley, Bob is currently working on a book he's entitled *The*

Politics of Plants, How to Save the Environment and have Fun Doing it!

JOE MIGLIORE

Interpretive Guide, Anza-Borrego Historical Association & BLM, Docent, Living Desert Docent, C.I.G

NS 303b Geology of the Coachella Valley & Surrounds November 21st, 2009

NS 315 Understanding Earthquakes January 9th, 2010

Joe returned to desert living in 2000 and quickly immersed himself in his first passion, natural history. Motivated by this love of nature he has committed himself to sharing with others his appreciation for the desert environment.

As a volunteer and docent, he gives talks and leads nature walks and interpretive hikes about the Coachella Valley and environs on behalf of several conservation minded organizations. These include; The Living Desert, Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument, Bureau of Land Management, Anza-Borrego Desert Natural History Association, Wildlands Conservancy at Pipes Canyon, San Jacinto State Park, Friends of The Desert Mountains, the Natural Science Collaborative and the Desert Trails Hiking Club.

Joe's interests include geology, especially this very tectonically active region of south eastern California. He believes that an indispensable part of appreciating our natural history involves interpreting geology as a dynamic and "living" process which has a fundamental influence on the local environment. He regularly gives talks and teaches classes on geology, plate tectonics, earthquakes and earthquake preparedness. Joe has a BA in Zoology from UCLA and is a Certified Interpretive Guide by the National Association for Interpretation.



MACK NASH

Gardens Supervisor, The Living Desert

G Lab Hands-On Desert Gardening Labs February 13th & March 20th, 2010

NS 201 Coachella Valley Native Plants March 27th, 2010

Mack Nash originally became involved with native plants in 1993 when he began working with a landscape company in Santa Fe, New Mexico where the specific focus was using native plants. During this time he frequently went on plant walks with the Santa Fe Chapter of the Native Plant Society of New Mexico. Mack earned his Bachelor of Science in Botany from the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque in 1999.

Mack has lived in the Coachella Valley since 1999. He has worked with the BLM, The Center for Natural Lands Management, and began working at The Living Desert as a Collection's Gardener in 2000. As an avid plant fanatic, he quickly began learning the native plants of the area. His primary passion is continuously learning new plants; but through his experience at The Living Desert, Mack has come to have a great appreciation for wildlife and natural history.

In 2003 Mack was promoted to The Living Desert's Gardens Supervisor. In addition to his supervisory responsibilities he maintains the Mojave and Baja Desert Gardens, the McDonald Butterfly Garden, Fanciful Fliers: the Hummingbird and Butterfly Pavilion, East Africa Garden, Primitive Garden, and the Mexican Columnar Cactus Garden.



PAUL ORTEGA

Landscape Designer, Desert Garden Center, LLC

G 109 Southwest Plants on Parade December 5th, 2009

Originally drawn to the Palm Springs area to pursue his dream of opening a retail nursery specializing in desert and desert-adapted plant materials, Paul immediately began to educate himself on the desert plant palette by taking courses at the College of the Desert and Living Desert University, the adult education arm of The Living Desert. This was followed by a 6 month stint as a full-time employee of the retail nursery at The Living Desert, as well as program coordinator of Living Desert University, helping further his knowledge of plant materials that work in our local environment.

Afterward, Paul began to develop the landscape design agency that today is Desert Garden Center, LLC. In addition to heading the company, Paul teaches at Living Desert University and is a guest speaker throughout the Coachella Valley on topics related to his interest and passion for desert plants. He is a co-founder and current chairman of the Desert Horticultural Society of the Coachella Valley and a member of the Architectural

Advisory Committee for the City of Palm Springs. Additionally, Paul is an associate member of the Association of Professional Landscape Designers and belongs to the California Native Plant Society. Paul has been a resident of the area since 2001.

KERWIN RUSSELL

Natural Resources Manager, Riverside-Corona Resource Conservation District

G 115 Introduction to Pest Management in Desert Gardens December 12th, 2009

Kerwin has worked in the field of horticulture and landscaping since 1980. He has also been involved with the management and installation of water quality features and habitat restoration in the Inland Empire since 1993, and has worked for the RCRC since 1988. Kerwin works directly with regulatory agencies such as US Army Corps of Engineers, Department of Fish and Game, US Fish and Wildlife Service and the Water Quality Control Board.

He currently holds permits for work with listed species that occupy native habitat from CA. Fish and Game and US Fish and Wildlife Service. He has also been a member of the recovery team for the Santa Ana Sucker and the sucker ad-hoc committee, which has determined that water quality is one of the issues with this species decline. He has designed and installed a number of small detention basins using native plants for filtering of runoff from streets and has active licenses for restricted use pesticide applications, irrigation auditing and water conservation management.

Kerwin is also a credentialed teacher with the State of California in landscape gardening and maintenance and has a degree in Horticulture with a minor in Geology.



DARR SANDBERG

Professional Artist, Living Desert Docent

A 800 Plein Air: Art at the Whitewater Canyon Preserve January 16th, 2010

A 800 Plein Air: at Cabot's Pueblo Museum February 27th, 2010

Darr was born in January, 1963, in Drumheller, Alberta Canada, where his father was serving his vicarage with the Lutheran Church. Early on, Darr showed a huge interest in art, and a debatable degree of discipline. He fed that interest in drawing and painting throughout elementary school, junior high and high school, but simple economics meant that, for Darr, graduation was followed by gainful employment rather than college.

Throughout his twenties, he continued to make art, primarily extremely tight and detailed pen and ink drawings. He was fortunate to have access to life drawing classes, and to Golden Gate Park for botanical studies.

As Darr worked his way into more grown-up employment, there was less and less left at the end of the day for making art. By the time he became a database programmer, studying and making art had been relegated to 'someday when I retire'.

In 2003, health issues exacerbated by the stress and demands of being a workaholic programmer forced Darr to change directions - 'someday when I retire' became 'why not now?' Since that decision, He's been studying the work of favorite artists, and making the best use of this course correction. The drawings and paintings on his website are the results.

Currently, Darr lives in Southern California, in the rapidly growing city of Desert Hot Springs, with his beloved partner, two cats (Berberé and Molé) and a Mollucan Cockatoo named Leila.

For more information, visit Darr's website at www.darrsandberg.com

SCOTT SCOTT

Professional Guide and Owner, Trail Discovery - Desert Safari Hiking Tours
NS 280 Desert Hiking Basics December 12th, 2009

Scott has lived in the Valley for more than 20 years. He started Trail Discovery in 1992 to give visitors a 'vehicle' into the desert environment. He has a deep love for nature/wilderness and all living things, and enjoys sharing his knowledge & experience with others. With the help of several guides / friends, Scott has guided over 15,000 guests to a dozen different wilderness locations in & around Palm Springs. He is an avid hiker, mountain climber, cyclist & activist to preserve the wild and free places of this planet. Scott has hiked and climbed extensively in the Santa Rosa, San Bernadino and San Jacinto Mountains, hiking several times a week, (5,000 - 10,000ft. vertical gain a week!).

For more information, visit Scott's website at www.palmspringshiking.com



PETER SIMINSKI

Director of Conservation and Education, The Living Desert
NS 301a Tracking & Observation in Nature February 20th, 2010

Peter Siminski has worked as a naturalist in the Sonoran Desert for over twenty five years. He is the contributing author on two books concerning Sonoran desert natural history, and has led trip to all parts of this desert. He is best well known for his international efforts for Mexican wolf conservation. Peter is also The Living Desert's Director of Conservation and Education.

ROBERT SPRACKLAND, PH.D.

International Instructor, Author, Lecturer

NS 112 Land of the Small January 23rd, 2010

NS 401 The Basics of Ecology January 23rd, 2010

NS 114 Venom! February 27th, 2010

NH 102 Desert Animals of the Southwest February 27th, 2010

Dr. Robert George Sprackland, Director of the Virtual Museum of Natural History, is an internationally recognized herpetologist and author who has conducted tropical biodiversity surveys, principally in Australia and New Guinea. Some of his fieldwork was featured on the television show *O'Shea's Big Adventure*, and he has served as a zoological consultant to BBC and the Discovery Channel. Dr. Sprackland earned his Ph.D. at the University of London, and has taught anatomy and physiology at several colleges.

His published books include *Giant Lizards* (1992, second edition 2009), *Animals and Fishes in Aquaterrariums* (1994), and *All About Lizards* (1977), and he has published scores of articles about natural history, military history, and education in a variety of magazines and journals.

For more information on the Virtual Museum of Natural History, visit their website at www.curator.org



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