

# Southern California Bamboo

The Newsletter of the Southern California Chapter of the American Bamboo Society

A California 501(c)-3 non-profit educational corporation, incorporated July 22, 1991

Chapter website: [www.ABSSoCal.org](http://www.ABSSoCal.org)

**ABS SoCal Activities / Events planned: ( Monthly meetings are usually on the third Saturday of month.)  
( Changes will be noted below. )**

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Time:</b>	<b>Activity / Event:</b>
Sat. 18 June 2011	10:00	Work Party and Potluck at SDBG Reference Collection
Sat. 16 July 2011	10:00	TBD (To be determined)
Sat. 20 Aug. 2011	10:00	Work Party and potluck at SDBG Ref Collection and preparations for sale.
Sat. 17 Sep. 2011	10:00	<b>Maybe!</b> Sale of plants from reference collection. Annual Meeting.
Sat. 15 Oct. 2011	10:00	View bamboos at Cliff Sussman's office: 150 West Foothill Blvd., San Dimas
Sat. 19 Nov. 2011	10:00	TBD
Sat. 17 Dec. 2011	10:00	TBD - maybe nothing as close to Xmas events

## Calendar of ABS SO-CAL Events is Bare!

-Theo smith

The calendar above has a lot of TBD - To Be Determined "events." Why is this the case? The explanations here are mine. If you have others whether they agree with mine or not, I would like to know them.

In the past when events were planned — such as a visit to The Huntington, or the LA Arboretum, etc. very few, I'm talking at most five, people showed up to share the walking around and conversations about bamboo. Perhaps we do this because we can go to public gardens at our own convenience.

I also understand that for many, the reason for Chapter membership is to know when there is a bamboo sale at Quail. This worked well in the past when the only available bamboos were the plants back-yard growers would bring to the sale. Such sales have become compromised, if you will, by the fact that some of our bambuseos are successful commercial growers. Also, the presence of a mealy bug (specific to bamboo) in San Diego County has prohibited bamboo sales at Quail.

Other venues and personnel to staff the events are hard to arrange. And it is hard to certify that a plant from home is free of the mealy bug. There just seems to not be enough volunteer energy and interest in putting on a plant sale. Further, bamboos are available from growers nation wide, and one does not need to wait for a sale at Encinitas, CA. All kinds of bamboo information, some useful, some questionable, are available at the click of a mouse in an internet browser.

I would like to have more members volunteer to share their bamboo proclivities - either their private gardens, their growing techniques, or bamboo craft projects, whatever - with the rest of the membership. Such sharing could be a chapter visit to "your place." However, an easier mechanism would be through pictures and a write-up you submit for inclusion in the Chapter newsletter.

Please contact me, Theo Smith, and let us talk about your desire to share, the place and potential times. Or email to me your material to place in a newsletter.

## Voss, Gil

By Caroline Dipping with permission of San Diego Union-Tribune

From bamboo and succulents to hops and tobacco, Gil Voss' green thumb knew no bounds. For more than 40 years, botany was the vocation as well as avocation of the former curator of Quail Botanical Gardens (now San Diego Botanic Garden).

"He was into growing all kinds of exotic plants of the world," said Wayne Armstrong, a retired Palomar College botany teacher who taught Mr. Voss and later, as friends, marveled at his ability to make the rarest of plants thrive. "I never knew any student ever who had that kind of skill and knowledge."

Mr. Voss died of complications from organ transplant therapies April 28 at his home in Eugene, Ore. He was 64.

As curator of Quail Botanical Gardens from 1974 to 1990, he was instrumental in computerizing plant records, designing and installing landscape for the waterfall system, establishing a docent program, and arranging plant collections according to their geographic nativities. He also worked toward, and succeeded in getting, the gardens' accreditation with the American Association of Museums.

At Quail, Mr. Voss established a bamboo quarantine and introduction facility with the American Bamboo Society. Since its inception in 1986, the facility has introduced more new bamboo species into the United States than any other agency or organization.

An author of numerous journal articles, Mr. Voss also shared his horticultural and botanical acumen with others, including Rancho Guajome Adobe, Balboa Park, Old Town State Historic Park, Niguel

Botanical Preserve, and the Los Angeles County Arboretum. He was a fellow of the Royal Horticultural Society, a founding member of the American Bamboo Society, and past president of the Palomar Cactus and Succulent Society.

"He was one of the most capable plant men I ever met," said Stephen Facciola. "We were both interested in the economic uses of plants. ... Whenever I had any questions, he was the first person I would call."

"Even though he was learned, he was a very common-sense, intuitive person."

Gilbert Amy Voss was born Aug. 29, 1946, in Culver City, the youngest of three sons to Howard and Merdith Fravel Voss. A graduate of San Dieguito Union High School, his interest in plants led him to take botany classes at Palomar College and obtain a bachelor's degree with a triple major in anthropology, botany and zoology from San Diego State University in 1969.

Mr. Voss also had a reputation as a gastronome and was particularly interested in the role herbs and spices played in recipes.

"Over time, he became a living encyclopedia of all the world's cuisines," said friend Jim Bauml, retired botanist for The Huntington Botanical Gardens in San Marino. "He would know not only the botanical name and the English name and the local name for a certain spice in a ceremonial dish, he would make these incredible dishes at home for his wife and friends."

Mr. Voss is survived by his wife of nearly 36 years, the former Alison Rowe. No services are planned. Donations in Mr. Voss' memory may be made to The Nature Conservancy, The Humane Society, UNICEF, and Seed Savers Exchange, 3094 N. Winn Road, Decorah, Iowa 52101.

[caroline.dipping@uniontrib.com](mailto:caroline.dipping@uniontrib.com) (619) 293-2823

**Vivax growth:**

- Theo Smith

I have a small grove of *Phyllostachys vivax*. Part had grown under the power line. In the spring of each year, when the new shoots began reaching into the power lines, I would shake them to break the tips off, but the power company would want to cut the culms back fearing they would continue to grow. I finally gave up and dug up a five by fifteen foot patch directly under the power lines. The picture on right shows one of two chunks removed with the rhizomes and parts of culms attached. Notice that the rhizomes go no lower than about 8 to 12 inches.

The grove is pushing up new shoots, four whose growth is documented in the table below and photographed and discussed on a later page of this NL.



What's below the surface.

Culm ID	A	B	C	D
diameter in inches:	3.5	3.25	2.5	2.25
	Height of culms on different days, inches.			
May 22, 2011	177	86	55	71
May 20, 2011	144	63	40	50
24 hr growth:	33	23	15	21



View of culm growth from rhizome showing initial internodes. Dry rhizome and culm were cut in half.



**Torii of Bambusa Beecheyana**  
- Theo Smith

From Wikipedia: A torii (lit. bird perch, or where birds reside, English:) is a traditional Japanese gate most commonly found at the entrance of or within a Shinto shrine, where it symbolically marks the transition from the profane to the sacred.

The cross pieces are of curved beechy culms, having a natural curvature. Strictly speaking this torii does not fulfill the Japanese design requirements. Mine is missing a vertical piece in the middle, and the cross pieces are pairs of culms rather than a single cross piece, and the Japanese torii are usually painted red.

The horizontal cross pieces are fastened to the vertical sides by a single bolt through all three pieces at their junction.

The bottom 12 inches of the posts are inserted into vertical tubes of ABS plastic pipe buried in the ground with gravel below the bottoms to allow for drainage. (See picture) This mechanism makes it easy to remove the torii from the ground for replacing parts or painting, etc.

The Torii is at end of path in my yard as it abuts to my neighbor's gravel side yard where cars are sometimes parked. The gate forms a point of transition from neighbor's yard to mine.

The notion of "where birds reside" is appropriate because the my yard's bamboo has become a home for hummingbirds. This early spring there were five nests, and now there are two more. Of course I have many hummingbird feeders and a small fountain which the birds delight to drink from and bathe in.

The picture above shows the top of the post showing how the horizontal pieces have been indented a little bit at point where the bolt goes through them. This reduces the tendency to rock left and right adding stability. The top of the post is filled with a round wooden piece, glued in place, to keep the culm from collapsing under pressure of the bolts. The glue provide some waterproofing.



**Wedding Arch made of bamboo**  
- Theo Smith

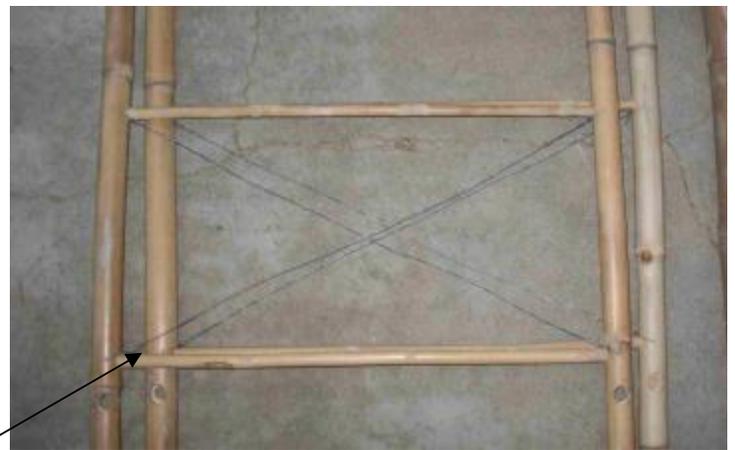
The arch above was made of bamboo at request of Doreen's oldest nephew. (Doreen is the model standing in the arch to help convey a sense of the arch's dimensions. )

The top cross pieces are of *B. Beecheyana*, hence the curvature like the torii on the prior page. The vertical poles are of *B. dolochoclada*. I used *Bambusa* poles rather than *Phyllostachys* poles because the *Bambusa*s have thicker walls. The vertical pieces insert into holes in the top cross pieces and are held in place by wire pins inserted through small holes drilled through the junction.

The cross pieces between the horizontal upper part and between the pairs of vertical end supports are inserted into holes drilled—actually bored using a forstner bit since it makes a smoother hole than does a twist drill— through only one side. Small pins hold the pieces in place as described above. Stability is achieved by using small guy wires in form of a X across the horizontal separating pieces.

The small diameter horizontal cross poles pass through holes in the vertical posts and are held in place by pins. Holes for these pieces were bored from each side of the vertical pole to give clean edges to the holes. Twist drills tend to leave ragged hole edges. Holes were drilled smaller than the diameter of the bamboo which is to be inserted therein. Then, with the chosen piece to be inserted, the hole was carefully widened, using a hand tool to grind away excess material until the inserting piece fit snugly.

The item is easily disassembled into two vertical pieces, one top cross piece, two small poles and eight pins. The dark pieces in middle are metal stakes, one for each end to be pounded into ground at spacing such that a vertical pole can be held to it with a hose clamp. This provides for quick assembly and disassembly. (The circular loops in the picture to the right are the hose clamps.)





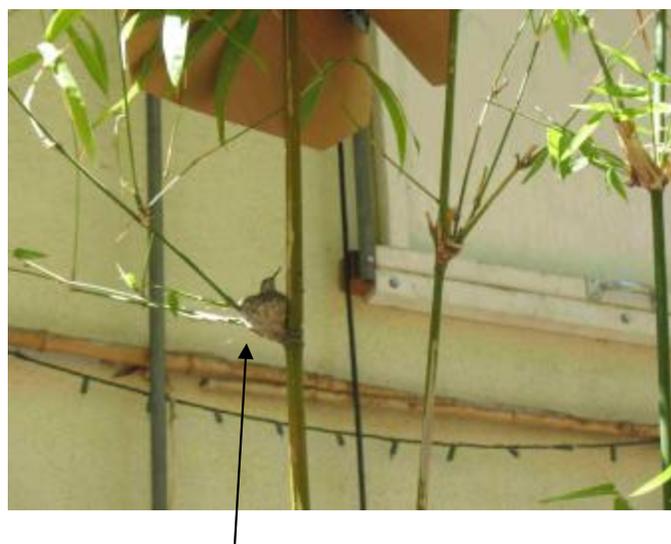
**Baby hummingbirds on day of departure.**

- Theo Smith

I like this picture, and was lucky to get it just before the little guy outside the nest left for good. The nest, up tight against a *B. membranaceous* culm of about two and a half inches diameter, which is on the right of the picture, is where the birds were born and raised. The nest is about six and half feet from ground along a path making observing them easy.

Other nests in the yard have been less stable. One of the first I discovered was in an arching culm of *D. Asper* which would swing and sway in the winds. I thought, wow, how can the birds, mother on the nest especially, stand all the motion from the winds? But further thoughts revealed that the birds themselves fly in sudden bursts and changes of direction! Hence, no problem, no need for motion sickness tablets.

I understand baby hummingbirds stay in the nest by holding tightly with their feet. Mom makes the nest at the trailing tip of bamboo and other plants to keep them safe from predators.



The picture above shows a humming bird nest in crotch of a culm and branch of a bamboo in a pot along my driveway next to the house. I watched the nest be built in three days. The cardboard "roof" was my idea because some rain began to fall in the fourth day.

**Vivax culm growth:**

The picture to the right has several points of interest.

One is the vertical half pipe in white which constrains the culm to grow more straight up than out toward the sun which would be the right side of picture.

Another is the orange markings on the pipe which show the locations of the tips of the culm on two days 24 hours apart. Since the markings may be hard to see, especially in the black and white view, I have inserted arrows pointing to the marks.

A third is the growing culm whose growth is being measured and guided. It displays the typical *Ph. vivax* splotchy culm sheaths.

The culms on the right are more green than the culms on the left because they are younger. This supports the observation in the source list that the *Ph. vivax* culms turn grey-green as they age.



<b>Officers of the Southern California Chapter of the American Bamboo Society, May 2011</b>			
Director , President	Danielo Ramos to 2011	619-301-7295	<a href="mailto:mahalo299@msn.com">mahalo299@msn.com</a>
Director, Vice President	Don Reed to 2013	760-230-1112	<a href="mailto:aum@cox.net">aum@cox.net</a>
Director, Secretary	Cliff Sussman to 2013	909-599-9921	<a href="mailto:cliffsussman@ca.rr.com">cliffsussman@ca.rr.com</a>
Director, NL Editor, Treasurer	Theo Smith to 2011	951-359-1706	<a href="mailto:trsmith00@sbcglobal.net">trsmith00@sbcglobal.net</a>
Director	Bob Verkade to 2013	760-453-6540	<a href="mailto:bverkade@yahoo.com">bverkade@yahoo.com</a>
Alternate Director	Mike Mullert to 2011	619-465-4690	<a href="mailto:mamullert@yahoo.com">mamullert@yahoo.com</a>
Alternate Director	Bob Thies to 2011	909-261-6186	<a href="mailto:gobigbob@hotmail.com">gobigbob@hotmail.com</a>

The Southern California Chapter of the  
American Bamboo Society, Inc. NL editor  
5325 Peacock Lane  
Riverside, CA 92505-3135



*Address correction requested*



**Note:** Newsletter may be available in .pdf format at the ABS SoCal website: [www.abssocal.org](http://www.abssocal.org) - IN COLOR!

### The Southern California Chapter of the American Bamboo Society and The American Bamboo Society membership application

Renewal       New

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership for 2011 is (check one)

Annual: \$15 - ABS SoCal ONLY

- Annual: \$50 - ABS and ABS SoCal Chapter (\$40 digital)     Supporting: \$70 - ABS and ABS SoCal Chapter (\$60 digital)  
 Lifetime: \$800 - ABS Membership only (\$600 digital)     Patron: \$130 - ABS and ABS SoCal Chapter (\$120 digital)  
 Lifetime: \$300 - ABS SoCal Chapter only     \$15/year for each additional Chapter checked below:  
 Three years: \$140 ABS and ABS SoCal Chapter (\$110 digital)     International: \$55 - ABS only (\$40 digital)

- Florida Caribbean;     Hawaii;     Louisiana-Gulf Coast;     Mid-States;     Northeast;     Northern California;  
 Pacific Northwest;     Southeast;     Texas Bamboo Society;     Tierra Seca

Make check to ABS-SoCal: Mail to: ABS SoCal Membership, 5325 Peacock Lane, Riverside, Ca 92505-3135

Check here only if you do NOT want your phone number and e-mail address listed in directories.