

July 25, 2026

Speaker: Nan Sterman, California Dreamin' - Gardening in a Mediterranean climate



Thanks to California's Mediterranean climate, gardening here is different from anywhere else in America and most places around the world. In this talk, we discuss what it means to live and garden in a Mediterranean climate. Nan talks about soil, rainfall, plants, and techniques for creating productive and beautiful gardens that thrive in our climate. She also shows examples of gorgeous gardens in many different styles, all done with a Mediterranean climate-adapted plant palette. Nan also will be selling and signing some of her books.

Because Nan is extremely well-known for her books and TV show, "A Growing Passion," originally on KPBS and now on YouTube, her talk will excite interest beyond PCSS members. For that reason, we are opening the July meeting to the public. PCSS requests a \$5 cash only donation for non-members.

Nan Grows Gardens... and Gardeners

California-based Nan Sterman is passionate about plants and gardens. Nan is a pioneer in sustainable landscaping with a focus on California and other low-rainfall climates. She takes a wholistic approach to connecting plants, people, and the planet, and advocates for gardens that work with the local climate and environment rather than battle against them. Nan wears several "hats," among them: plant expert, garden designer, teacher, author, botanist, award-winning journalist, TV host and producer.

Some examples of Nan's work include:

- Her most recent book, "Hot Color, Dry Garden," a how-to guide for creating color-filled, drought resilient gardens.
- Hundreds of gardening articles for newspapers, magazines, websites, and marketing clients too.
- The award-winning public TV show, "A Growing Passion." Forty-eight episodes originally produced for public television are available on YouTube. (link below)
- "Garden School" guides students along the path to becoming happy, successful gardeners.
- "Strong Starts" teaches students how to grow summer vegetables starting from seed.
- "Fundamentals of Southern California Gardening" empowers gardeners to understand their gardens based on the how's and the why's of successful gardening in the region's dry, Mediterranean climate.
- "Mastering Southern California Gardening" for graduates of "Fundamentals of Southern California Gardening" focuses on plants, design, and other valuable gardening topics.
- "GardenWise" offers several subscription levels that deliver monthly menus of timely garden tasks for ornamental gardens, edible gardens, and houseplants along with a "plant of the month" that introduces gardeners to Nan's favorite, regionally appropriate plants.
- On-demand short courses cover a range of topics for gardeners in Southern California and other Mediterranean climate regions, both hobbyists and professionals: water-wise gardening, the basics of drip irrigation, how to grow and use culinary herbs, houseplants, bulbs, fruit trees, seasonal maintenance, and more
- Social media content on Instagram and Facebook. Nan's Facebook group, San Diego Gardener, supports more than 21,000 active gardeners across San Diego County.
- Leading garden tours across the globe so far including Europe, South Africa, Costa Rica, Australia, and around the US. In November, Nan is taking a group to Japan.

Nan's approach dates to the 1970s when she was involved in the first wave of the sustainability movement. Nan trained at the Integral Urban House in Berkeley, California, earned a botany degree from Duke University, a master's in biology from UC Santa Barbara, and a master's in instructional design from San Diego State University.

Prior to delving into the gardening world as a profession, Nan spent a decade creating curricula, training programs, and educational materials for Fortune 500 companies, zoos, aquariums, museums, schools, and not-for-profit organizations. Her ability to take complex information and create effective educational programs is one of her greatest strengths and a major source of her successes.

Links:

Nan Sterman, WaterWise Gardener www.WaterWiseGardener.com

Nan Sterman's Garden School www.NanStermanGardenSchool.com

Instagram: [NanStermanWaterWise](https://www.instagram.com/NanStermanWaterWise)

Facebook: www.facebook.com/WaterWiseGardener

A Growing Passion on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@agrowingpassion>