

New Club Store Opens Downtown For Better Service



The new Club Store and Service Center, a short walk for most downtown Club Members, officially opened May 1. Stop by!

It's officially open!

Have you visited the new Club Store and Service Center? It's open, to better serve you!

The new Club Store and Service Center, 120 W. Second St., between Spring and Main Streets, opened May 1 and greeted Club Members who were excited about the new facility.

The new Club Store and Service Center is open for all your Club needs:

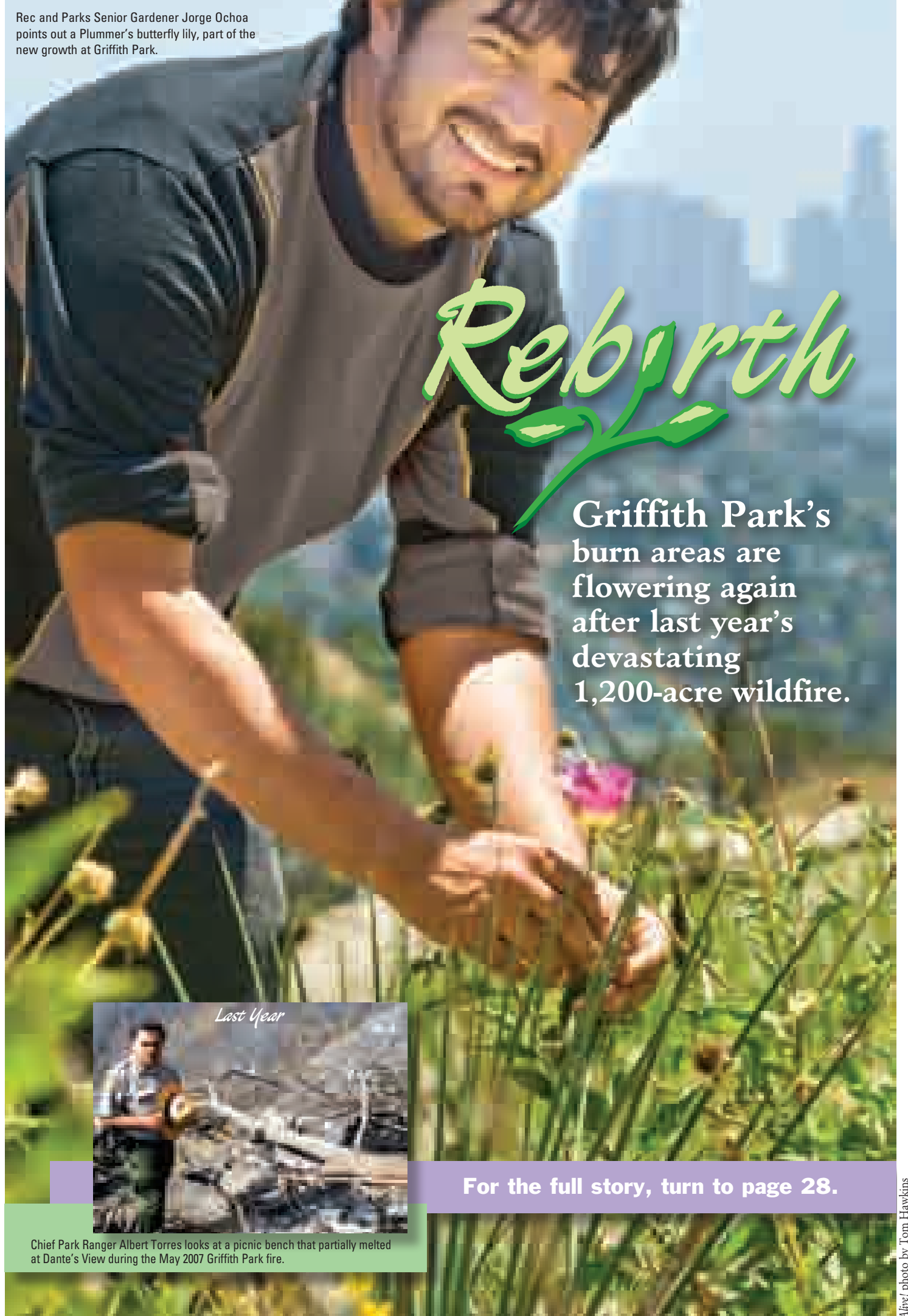
- The City's best ticket discounts
- Officially licensed City apparel and merchandise
- Club account services
- It's downtown at street level!

Stop by for your ticket and merchandise needs – or just say hi!

The Club Store in the World Trade Center has closed.

See page 13 for photos from the first day.

Rec and Parks Senior Gardener Jorge Ochoa points out a Plummer's butterfly lily, part of the new growth at Griffith Park.



Rebirth

Griffith Park's burn areas are flowering again after last year's devastating 1,200-acre wildfire.

Scholarship Applications End June 30

Applications are available for Club Scholarship 2008 program until noon June 30. They are available online only.

CLUB HEADQUARTERS — You have until noon June 30 to submit your applications for a 2008 Club Scholarship.

Applications are available online for the Club's 2008 Scholarship Program. Five people will be rewarded for their academic achievement and given stipends.

A total of \$7,500 is available for the five Club Scholarships. First place is awarded \$3,500. Deadline is noon June 30, 2008; applications must be physically in the Club Store and Service Center, 120 W. Second St. downtown, at that time.

For all the details, see the story on page 40.



Chief Park Ranger Albert Torres looks at a picnic bench that partially melted at Dante's View during the May 2007 Griffith Park fire.

For the full story, turn to page 28.

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It's Father's Day!


See the tributes on page 14.

Alive! Feature

Inside:

🌿 Interviews with Albert Torres and Jorge Ochoa about new growth and a stronger awareness campaign.

🌿 Plus, a field guide to help you identify some of Griffith Park's native vegetation, for the next time you hike through L.A.'s urban forest.



Rec and Parks Senior Gardener Jorge Ochoa points out new growth to Club CEO John Hawkins. John and Jorge are surrounded by large-flowered phacelia.

❖ The Griffith Park Fire: One Year Later ❖

Rebirth

Last year's devastating fire burned approximately 1,200 acres of Griffith Park. One year later, nature is taking its course, under the watchful eye of Rec and Parks staff, including Albert Torres, Chief Park Ranger, and Jorge Ochoa, Senior Gardener.

May 8-9, 2007



Dante's View, on fire.

[Griffith Park Fire: One Year Later]

Griffith's New Growth

The Mexican sage (at right) is not native to California. It is used extensively in ornamental gardens. This picture was taken at the gardens surrounding the Ranger Station.

Beloved Griffith Park is recovering very nicely, thank you, from last year's fire, under the watchful eye of Rec and Parks. To the list of those watching out for the park, you can now add Smokey the Bear – the American icon's presence has been added at most of Griffith Park's main entrances, to remind the countless thousands who enjoy the urban forest of the fire danger that day, plus giving helpful reminders.

That's one of the changes that has been made to Griffith Park since last year's destructive fires, which, while perfectly natural and part of life, were still dramatic in their size, direction, ferocity. The park is being left to its natural cycle, with a few small exceptions.

Alive! interviewed Albert Torres, Chief Park Ranger, and Jorge Ochoa, Senior Gardener, and got reports on the park's recovery, and the department's plans to heighten awareness of fire dangers in the park.

And after that, enjoy a field guide to Griffith Park, to point out some of the park's more colorful vegetation.

Alive! thanks Albert and Jorge for their time and assistance.

Destruction and Renewal

Senior Gardener Jorge Ochoa tends to Griffith Park as it recovers.

ALIVE!
INTERVIEW

Club CEO John Hawkins and *Alive!* editor John Burnes interviewed Rec and Parks Forestry Division Senior Gardener Jorge Ochoa as a companion piece to the interview with Albert Torres on May 13. Jorge is considered one of the most knowledgeable of the Forestry Division. — Ed.

Alive! First, how did you come to this position?

Jorge Ochoa: I started as a park management intern. It's a special internship through the City, where they find people who have certain skills and knowledge and then train them to become supervisors, and they join the department. My knowledge in plants is what allowed me to be in the Forestry Division.

Now, I am a certified arborist, which is always helpful for them to have around.

Where did you get the certification to be an arborist?

Jorge: All certification for arborists is through the ISA, the International Society of Arboriculture. It's a worldwide association.

Have you always had a natural interest in plants, vegetation and greenery?

Jorge: Yes. I think if I look back I've always had some interest, starting when I was a child. And that became my career.

And now you're doing it all the time.

Jorge: Now I'm doing it. One of those things that you always seek is the perfect job, or the perfect career or the perfect field, and some people don't get it. But I think I am definitely in my field.

Initial Worries

What were your thoughts a year ago when you saw the fire? What was your thought when you saw those flames going over the park?

Jorge: The biggest concern was the public. This fire was in an area where there were no houses

nearby, of course, and it would be a natural process for the vegetation. But having houses close to the park, it all became a serious concern. Also, my initial thought was it is really bad because it's really hot, and there's no telling how far the fire will extend.

And also, in a way, it might be somewhat good because the fire is a natural process for a lot of the plants. That's how some of them get regenerated, and new ones will come out.

Incidentally one of my small assignments is to survey the different plants that are out there. I found a Plummer butterfly lily, which is in serious danger of becoming extinct in California, and that we have at the park. We have several other rare plants.

And that wasn't there before?

Jorge: If it was there before, it has never been recorded.

After the fire, different groups have taken interest in Griffith Park. There is a vegetation task force, and there is a list that's going around, where they list the different plants that have been recorded in the park. As well as herbarium -- somebody collected them and sent them to our library. So we have a list that we go by. Sometimes we find something that is not in that list where they list the different plants that have been recorded in the park based on personal observations and herbarium specimens -- somebody collected plant samples and sent them to the plant library. Sometimes we find new plants which have never been recorded for Griffith Park.

Park Recovery

How is the park doing since the fire? What's your report card for the park?

Jorge: It's coming along. I started noticing growth about a month [after the fire]. Some of the plants were already coming back, the ones that weren't seriously burned. A few months later, some of the more perennial shrubs like the laurel sumac started to grow.

And then of course we had our rain, and then there was a period where there was a tremendous amount of wildflowers; California poppies, different Phacelias, different lupines, and the list can keep going on and on. So those came first.

And after those came and went, then we started getting the castor bean, and the mustard and some of the other unwanted plants, the non-natives. They were here already, but after the natives went and died, then those became a lot more noticeable.

There were reports about the hills being purple -- well, I have pictures of them when they were just covered with wildflowers, poppies and couple of other plants.

Fires are natural things. Does the vegetation come back new and different after fires?

Jorge: Yes. There are certain types of plants that will come only after a fire, so it's part of their biology. Think about a natural habitat where there are a lot of plants and there is very little light that gets to the ground. If some of those plants were to come out in the middle of the season, there is not enough light for them to survive.

— See "Jorge Ochoa," page 35



Wild Canterbury Bells



Alive! Feature

Senior Gardener Jorge Ochoa (right) points out to Club CEO John Hawkins where the fire most likely began, down the slope from Dante's View. Laurel sumac is on the left; field mustard, a non-native plant with yellow flowers, is on the right.



Albert Torres: A Year On

Chief Park Ranger remembers the devastating fire last year, and what we have learned.

ALIVE! INTERVIEW

Chief Park Ranger Albert Torres, who has served the City for 33 years, was on the front lines as his Park Rangers

worked hand in hand with the LAFD and the LAPD to extinguish the wildly spreading flames and managing the area around the park. Club CEO John Hawkins and Alive! editor John Burnes sat down to talk to Albert Torres May 13. — Ed.

Alive!: It's a year on now from the Alive! cover story of the Griffith Park fire. What do you recall from those days?

Albert Torres: I recall very vividly the onset of the fire, our response to the fire and the unusual behavior of the fire that day. I was at Vista del Valle, which is the high point in the park, and we saw that the fire came up the hill and then over and down the other side of the hill toward the ranger station, and I thought that was extremely unusual. I reported it as such to the incident commander and from then on it was quite an incident.

What was unusual about that fire?

Albert: One of the things was the time of year. Normally, our fire season starts toward the July and sometimes even later, so over the years we hadn't had these kind of fires. There was a big fire [the previous] January in Griffith Park and there were a few smaller fires that were notable, but this fire was, well, the size of it was incredible from our perspective. In other jurisdictions, a 1,200-acre fire is not such a big thing, but for Griffith Park it is quite a big thing.

Things were really dry last year.

Albert: Yeah, it certainly was, and also the conditions, the temperature, the humidity and the amount of fuel that was within the park at the time.

Fuel, meaning trees and shrubbery and grass.

Albert: Yes. That's correct, the native chaparral of the park.

Talk about the job that the rangers and the firefighters and the support personnel did those two or three days.

Albert: It was a tremendous effort by all the City foresters, and the Park Rangers were a part of that. There were long shifts. We worked into the night at the beginning of the fire, and people worked long and very hard hours to address the fire and then to address the immediate recovery.

For example, for at least a month we had smokers in the park. What I mean by smokers is embers that were still hot, that emanated smoke and that were a potential to restart a fire. So from the time that the fire was knocked down — I think it was about three days — the Park Rangers and the Fire Department addressed those smokers within the burn area.

So they did extraordinary well.

Albert: Oh, I think so. Absolutely.

The Recovery Team

How are things coming back? How are the vegetation and the growth and the use of the park and other things returning?

Albert: One thing that happened was that Rec and Parks recognized that we needed to convene a recovery group, so the department brought in numerous experts from the community; from within the City; geologists from the Bureau of Engineering; superintendents from various departments; and people from outside. They brought in a biologist who is an expert on finding out about the flora and fauna of the park. They

brought someone from the National Park Service, a very learned person, a fire ecologist, and they convened meetings regularly to talk about the recovery of the burn zone and the implications on the entire park. This was headed by Mike Schull, head of our planning and development group in Recreation and Parks.

They addressed numerous issues. One of the issues they addressed was the possibility of coming storms in the winter. A decision was made based on best practices to hydromulch a good portion of the burn zone, a very complicated process. It involved distributing about 400 acres of hydromulch on areas that were a threat for erosion.

Tell me about that process. What does hydromulch mean?

Albert: Hydromulch is a fiber that is spread on the charred area without seed. It's a best practices technique to mitigate erosion, and there were a lot of areas identified by the contractor, by numerous technical people, that they needed to hydromulch. [A contractor] spread this hydromulch by helicopter primarily, some by hand, and it was quite an operation.

Hydromulch adds substance. There's no seed in it.

Albert: No seed whatsoever, and there was no need for seed. The whole purpose was to grab on to that soil and to mitigate the erosion. It has worked very well.

It was done just in time because we did have some pretty good storms this winter, and it really mitigated any real damage.

It held on?

Albert: There was also a tremendous effort by our Forestry Department and Jorge [Ochoa] will talk about that. They

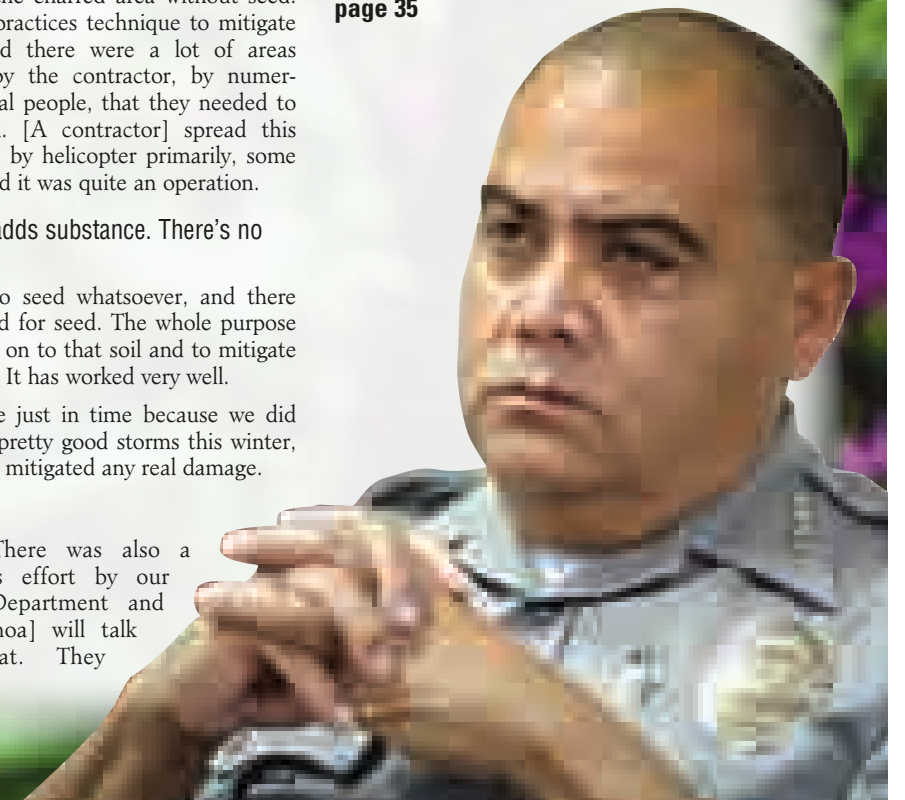
immediately took care of hazards in the park in the way of tree limbs and trees that needed to be removed, and so the Forestry Department and Rec and Parks did a great job of doing that.

Another part of the recovery is there's a volunteer group working in the park to remove invasive plants. One of the byproducts of a fire like this is that invasive plants like the castor bean will come in and invade an area. The Department is getting volunteers to come out and remove those plants.

Volunteers

Talk about the volunteers. Is that within the City or people who live around Griffith Park?

— See "Albert Torres," page 35



The Griffith Park Fire
May 8-9, 2007



The fire left Dante's View devastated.

Photo: Forestry Division, Rec and Parks

Griffith Park Fire:

*One
Year
Later*

Senior Gardener Jorge Ochoa is surrounded by large-flowered phacelia (foreground) and laurel sumac (background).

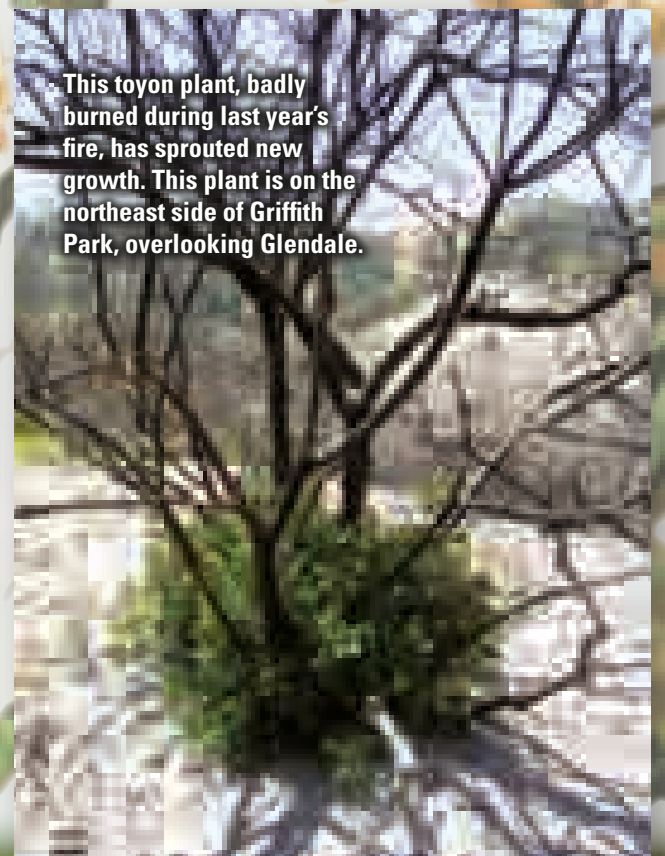


Senior Gardener Jorge Ochoa poses by a plaque given by City Hall to thank the safety officers who put out last year's blaze. The plaque is near the Greek Theatre.



Bush Monkeyflower

This toyon plant, badly burned during last year's fire, has sprouted new growth. This plant is on the northeast side of Griffith Park, overlooking Glendale.



Alive! Feature *Rebirth*

Senior Gardener Jorge Ochoa points out new toyon growth to Club CEO John Hawkins.



Senior Gardener Jorge Ochoa (left) and Club CEO John Hawkins stand near new laurel sumac.

Senior Gardener Jorge Ochoa points out common vervain.



Senior Gardener Jorge Ochoa (right) and Club CEO John Hawkins pass more laurel sumac on their hunt for more new growth.



Griffith Park FIELD GUIDE

Hiking in Griffith Park? Enhance your fun!

Rec and Parks Senior Gardener Jorge Ochoa wants to help you really enjoy your next visit to Griffith Park, by noticing all the beauty around you.

So he put together the following collection of some of the park's most common – and beautiful – plant species. Next time you're in the park, you'll know at least some of what you're looking at.

One of his principal jobs is to identify and photograph individual plant species that grow in the park. He has hundreds of photos of species. If *Alive!* gets enough interest, we can publish more.

Enjoy!

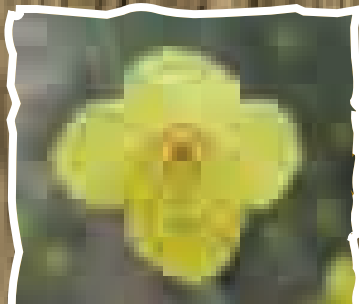
Next time you're in Griffith Park, see how many of these native species you can spot.



Blue Dicks



Bush Sunflower



California Suncup



California Wild Rose



Cleveland's Shooting Star



Fuchsia-Flowered Gooseberry



Golden Yarrow



Heart-leaf Penstemon



Indian Tobacco



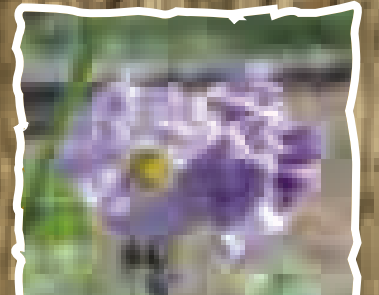
Large-flowered Phacelia



Monkey Flower



Pink Thistle



Purple Nightshade



Sacred Datura



South Coast Morning-Glory



Speckled Clarkia



Wild Sweetpea