

# CREATIVE PLANT DESIGN

## *Volunteers Recycle and Reuse*

Perhaps no volunteer group at the Arboretum takes the notion of recycle and reuse to more glorious heights than the Los Voluntarios Creative Plant Design team. Inspired by the delicate, intricate and whimsical forms of succulents, members of this group can be found rummaging through the green waste pile, rescuing bamboo trimmings, palm fronds and other bits from the wood chipper to craft stunning works of art.

Los Voluntarios board member Beverly Harris heads the team of volunteers dedicated to finding new ways to showcase succulents in beautiful designs. Liewen Thomas says, "I started in Creative Plant Design as a way to be involved at the Arboretum, never realizing how much joy I would get from working with the succulents." Joanne Sanders adds, "The group is wonderful and I have learned so much. I still remember the day I first visited the work area. When I saw the beautiful succulent wreaths being created there, I knew I had found a perfect fit."

Creative Plant Design supplies the Arboretum Garden Gift Shop and plant sales with these popular living sculptures. Last year, customers purchased a total of \$10,000 worth of these arrangements at the shop and LA Garden Show. Prices range from \$35 for wreaths to \$100 for elaborate arrangements that could include a Mexican palm frond planted with succulents.

"It is so rewarding to be able to use our interests and talents to support the Garden Gift Shop and other Arboretum events," says Liewen. "My experiences here have really enriched my life."

All those who over the years have enjoyed the efforts of this dedicated group can attest that many lives have been enriched by the loving artistry of Creative Plant Design! 🌱

— Nancy Carlton is Volunteer and Special Events Coordinator at the Arboretum.

*On this page from top: Succulents take center stage in this intricate arrangement in a bamboo planter.*

*Below: Reusing PVC pipes as planters.*

*Right: A completed arrangement created by a volunteer.*







Carlton, Nancy. 2011. "Giving back: creative plant design, volunteers recycle and reuse." *Exploring the arboretum : magazine for the members of the Los Angeles County Arboretum and Botanic Garden* 2011:summer/fall, 4.

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