



# SUFA E-News

## Fall 2022



Welcome to the Fall 2022 issue of the Sunnyvale Urban Forest Advocates (SUFA) newsletter. This quarterly newsletter will keep you informed about how you can participate in SUFA's efforts to increase the tree canopy in Sunnyvale through education, tree plantings, and advocacy.

### **Branch Out Sunnyvale is Still Growing!**



The City of Sunnyvale has allocated funds to subsidize 50 private trees and has contracted with Our City Forest of San Jose to implement the Branch Out Sunnyvale program. As of this writing, 21 trees have been planted and 11 more are in the application process. There are a limited number of trees left, so apply today! Learn more about the program, review the tree list, and fill out the application at [www.sunnyvaltetrees.org/branch-out-sunnyvale/](http://www.sunnyvaltetrees.org/branch-out-sunnyvale/)

Please note: SUFA and the City of Sunnyvale are very aware of residents' concerns about additional water use during a drought but are agreed that the long-term benefits of planting a tree far outweigh the immediate cost of the water used to maintain it. A newly-planted tree requires only 10 - 15 gallons of water per week.



### **SUFA Library Presentation**

SUFA presented a program titled "Our Urban Forest" at the Sunnyvale Library on October 8. The forty people in attendance learned about Sunnyvale's urban forest, the role the urban forest plays in our community, and what to consider when selecting a tree.

The program was well received and SUFA hopes to work with the library to present another such program next year. Following the presentation, about twenty people joined a tree walk to learn about the trees near the library and the Civic Center. This was SUFA's last tree walk of the year but watch the newsletter for tree walks beginning again in April of next year.



## Tree on the Street Interview: The Scarlet Oak

**SUFA: Thank you for being willing to be interviewed by Sunnyvale Urban Forest Advocates. First, can I get your full name?**

**Scarlet Oak:** Certainly! I am a scarlet oak or, in scientific terminology, *Quercus coccinea*; *Quercus* meaning oak and *coccinea* meaning scarlet. Pretty straightforward as far as Latin botanical names go, don't you think? But, you can call me "Hara" if you'd like.

**SUFA: Hara! Why Hara?**

**SO:** You know! Scarlet Oak Hara...Sorry, lame tree joke.

**SUFA: You are located here at Serra Park and are surrounded by native coast live oak trees. Are you from around here like the oaks?**

**SO:** Actually, no. Scarlet oaks hail from the eastern and mid-western areas of the U.S. but, like a lot of mid-westerners and easterners, we have found a happy home here in California and have been heartily welcomed by the natives. Personally, I enjoy the climate.

**SUFA: My reading indicates that you're in the family *Fagaceae* (beech family) but part of the "red oak" subgenus.**

**SO:** Yes, our big family of 400 species is divided into red oaks, white oaks, and intermediate oaks. I am often confused with other red oaks - the pin oak (*Quercus palustris*), the Shumard oak (*Quercus shumardii*), and the red oak (*Quercus rubra*).

**SUFA: So how can the average person tell you all your red oaks apart?**

**SO:** Well, one way is to compare the differences between our sinuses.

**SUFA: As in nasal cavities?**

**SO:** Oh, goodness, no! As in the indentation between the lobes in our leaves. And before you say it, not as in ear lobes, either. Actually, tree leaves share many anatomical terms with humans. We have sinuses, lobes, veins, ribs, and sometimes even teeth. But I think perhaps, that the easiest way to identify us is by looking at our acorns – the color, the shape, and the characteristics of the cap.

**SUFA: There are indeed loads of your acorns here on the ground.**

**SO:** Yes, like all oaks, we scarlet oaks provide acorns that are a great food source for many creatures. In Sunnyvale the wildlife that enjoy my acorns are squirrels, mice, woodpeckers, blue jays, and crows...lots and lots of crows.

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**SUFA: Lastly, we always ask our street tree interviewees what makes them a good tree for the urban forest. What would you say?**

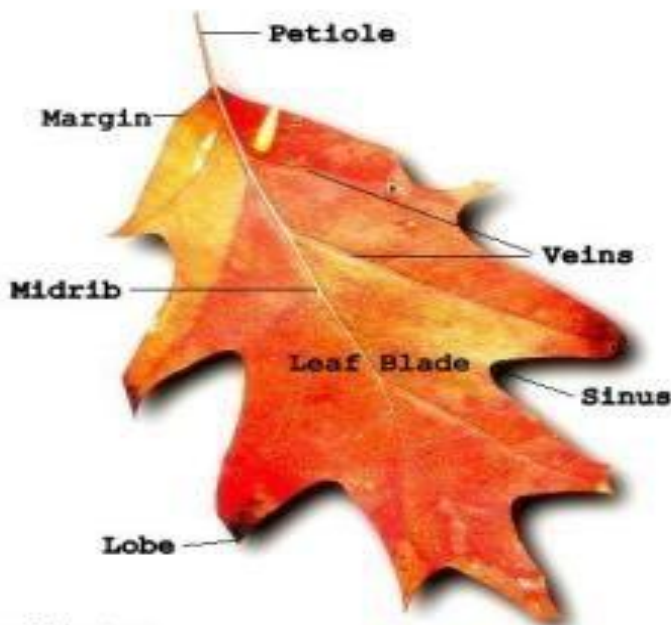
**SO:** Well, we're not a very common street or park tree in Sunnyvale – there are only about 200 of us, but we are well-loved for the shady canopy we provide in parks and over hot city streets, for providing local wildlife with food and nesting sites, and for our spectacular fall color.

**SUFA: Well, thank you so much for your time. You are indeed gorgeous! Happy Fall!**

**SO:** Yes, fall indeed. Soon all my leaves will be gone with the wind.



**Scarlet oak leaf and acorn (*left*) and scarlet oak street trees on Plymouth Dr. (*right*)**



**Anatomy of a leaf showing veins, ribs, lobes, and sinuses.**

**The California Schoolyard Forest System is a new, statewide initiative to increase tree canopy on public school grounds across California to shade and protect PK-12 students from extreme heat and rising temperatures due to climate change.**



Across California, more than 10,000 public schools serve 5.9 million PK-12 students on ~130,000 acres of public land, every day. Most of that land is paved with hot asphalt surfaces and lacks tree canopy in places children spend their time, so millions of PK-12 students are exposed to unhealthy high temperatures on a regular basis. As temperatures rise due to climate change, these stark campuses pose increasing health risks for children when they are outdoors, and also increase indoor temperatures and cooling costs. Since children are more vulnerable to heat than adults this is a problem for all schools in California. However, the lack of tree canopy and green space creates a significant, disproportionate burden on school communities with the lowest income and in communities of color, which already face environmental, economic, and racial injustices. Adding shade trees to schools that serve the most vulnerable populations will not only reduce extreme heat and environmental justice issues, but will also address other stark inequities in access to green space, hands-on educational resources, and health and wellbeing.



**A typical California schoolyard with little or no greenery or shade and where asphalt temperatures can reach well over 125 degrees.**

**A California schoolyard as envisioned by the Schoolyard Forest System - providing shade and cooling for buildings as well as students.**



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## VISION

The California Schoolyard Forest System<sup>SM</sup> seeks to create schoolyard forests across PK-12 public school grounds statewide to directly shade and protect students from extreme heat and rising temperatures due to climate change.

## GOALS

- **Plant enough trees** by 2030 that, when mature, will cover at least 30% of each school property in the areas used by children and youth during the school day.
- **Center equity** by prioritizing schools and districts in under-served communities with the highest poverty level, fewest trees, and hottest climates.
- **Use school grounds as a PK-12 learning laboratories** across the curriculum and grade levels.
- **Build environmental and climate literacy** by engaging students in standards-based hands-on research, design, planting, and stewardship of their schoolyard forests.

For more information visit: <https://www.greenschoolyards.org/ca-forests>



May we suggest "***What Plants Talk About***" : a documentary from the series **Nature** which you can find on Kanopy.

[Nature: What Plants Talk About | Kanopy](#)



### Synopsis:

Hard core science is effortlessly integrated with a light-hearted look at how plants behave. Scientist J.C. Cahill takes us on a journey into the "secret world of plants," revealing an astonishing landscape where plants eavesdrop on each other, talk to their allies, call in insect mercenaries and nurture their young. It is a world of pulsing activity, where plants communicate, co-operate and, sometimes, wage all-out war.

TIP: Through Kanopy, the Sunnyvale Public Library provides access to various movies and documentaries.

Learn more at: [Movies & TV | Sunnyvale, CA](#)