



BULLETIN
THE CALIFORNIA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY
California Academy of Sciences
Golden Gate Park
San Francisco, California 94118



May 20, 2002

4:00 PM Botanical gardens walk with speaker at Strybing Arboretum. Parking is available behind the San Francisco Co. Fair Building and on 9th Ave.

Dinner & Meeting will be held in the S.F. County Fair Building at Strybing Arboretum, Golden Gate Park.

6:30 PM Social Hour and Plant Sale.

7:00 PM Potluck Dinner

*****Fee \$5. Reservations must be made with Elsie Mueller 800-884-0009**

Monday, May 20, 2002
ANNUAL MEETING, POTLUCK DINNER, ANNUAL AWARDS, PROGRAM
“Observations of a Traveling Plantsman”

Presented by Richard Turner, Recipient of the 2002 Annual Award.

The program will include many areas of the world—a bit of Mexico, Australia, Chile and South Africa. It will be mostly of plants in the wild and may include a few gardens. Dick has traveled to every continent but Asia to study plants in the wild and in the garden, and will present a few of his observations from those travels.

The **Plant Drawing** each month provides an important source of funds for the Grants and Scholarship Program. In May, a **Silent Auction** of plants will be the special feature. Rare and unusual plants donated by members, nurseries, and Strybing Arboretum Society will be available for bidding as well as other plants for purchase. Our appreciation to **Strybing Arboretum and Botanical Gardens**, courtesy of **Dr. Don Mahoney** who graciously donated the beautiful specimens for the April meeting.



Coming Meetings

Co-Sponsored with Strybing Arboretum Society

Monday, June 17, 2002

“Understanding Color: The Impact of Blue in the Garden” Presented by Robin Parer.

The color blue is a powerful tool in a gardener’s repertoire. Color can be used in garden planting schemes to suggest temperature, light and mood. Color can unify or provide a discordant note. Blue has many moods and many uses. Many gardeners love blue flowers, and use them in their gardens in some very revealing ways. We don’t need to limit ourselves to blue flowers. There are blue leaves, blue garden artifacts, and borrowed blue atmosphere effects. We will examine how our eyes see blue and how we can use the color to bring depth, mystery and enchantment into our gardens.

Monday, July 15, 2002

“Orchids and other flowers of Southeast Australia”

Ron Parsons, internationally recognized flower photographer, will present a program based on two wildflower expeditions to Australia taken in 2000 and 2001 where he visited the states of New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania. His key interest was to see as many native orchids as possible. As we all know, orchids only associate with other beautiful flowers which were also photographed. Some other beautiful plants include *Banksia*, *Teleopea*, *Pimela*, *Goodenia*, *Drosera*, *Viola* etc.



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President's Letter

by Katherine Henwood

Now the bright morning-star, Day's harbinger,
Comes dancing from the east, and leads with her
The flowery May, who, from her green lap, throws
The yellow cowslip, and the pale primrose.
Hail, bounteous May!

Milton: Song on May Morning

May seems to be so contrary, sun and warmth, rain and cold, I'm surprised the plants know what to do next! I love the spring green you see everywhere, the whole countryside looks like a park, and yellow cowslips and pale primroses are not the only things that May throws from "her green lap". Poppies, 'butter-and-eggs,' many different lupines, buttercups, the native iris, "Milk-Maids," and that's only what you see casually. In the garden, the second group of bearded iris are in bud, I've had the first rose, "Chrysler Imperial" make its first bloom, 'Brandy,' 'Double Delight,' and 'Fragrant Cloud' are ready to burst. The *Sarracenia*s are in bloom, strange looking flowers that they are, the pitchers are right behind them. (Mustn't eat our pollinators, you know.) New growth on everything. Bounteous May, indeed!

By the time you read this, the Spring Field trip will be over, and our annual Plant Sale will have closed with its usual triumph. The Plant-Sale committee has really worked it's collective fingers to the bone, and we thank them, and all of you who grew plants, collected plants, delivered plants, labeled plants, thought plants and are temporarily sick of plants! I know your enthusiasm will return almost immediately. Strybing's Annual Plant sale will also be history, and I know that many of you will have taken advantage of that sale, too. Your gardens must be overflowing, I know mine is.

Coming up this month is our Annual Awards Meeting and Dinner. This will be held in the County Fair Building, as usual. It will be a potluck. Your dish should serve eight, and you should bring your own tableware. There is a small cost, \$5.00, to help cover the cost of tablecloths, napkins and plates. The speaker will be Dick Turner, and should be a grand presentation. I've been told that there are all new chairs and tables!

There will also be a Silent Auction of some very nice plants, so be prepared and bring you checkbook. I look forward to seeing you all. ✨

Cal Hort to Sonoma Field Trip Mini Photo Album



Here are a few photos from the very successful Sonoma Springtime Medley Field Trip on April 20. A full set of color photos showing specific plants and beautiful landscapes is available on our website at www.calhortsociety.org.



Clockwise from top left:
Cedrella sinensis 'Flamingo'-the beautiful pink tree from the garden of Dr. Herb Weber. • One small section of the private five acre Tiffany garden. • One of the many relaxing spots at Quarryhill Botanical Gardens. • Some of the plant 'loot' picked out from Emerisa Gardens.

March Plant Forum

by Don Mahoney

"A picture is a worth a thousand words." Fully believing the old adage, color photos of the following plant are available on our website at www.calhortsociety.org in the 'Plant Forum' section.

1. *Pinquicula emarginata*

LENTIBULARIACEAE

Katherine Henwood

This small insectivorous plant forms small rosettes and has small white flowers. Like the following two species, it needs bright light but no sun. They also need distilled water or rainwater and need to be constantly wet. They will grow outdoors but prefer a cool greenhouse. They will not take frost.

2. *Pinquicula esseriana*

LENTIBULARIACEAE

Katherine Henwood

This one forms multiple rosettes almost like a little sedum and would almost make a good hanging basket. It had little lavender flowers.

3. *Pinquicula x Weser*

LENTIBULARIACEAE

Katherine Henwood

This little plant was like a flat African violet with pink flowers but African violets won't trap insects on its leaves like this one does.

4. *Euphorbia xantii*

EUPHORBIACEAE

David Feix

This Baja plant has stems that appear leafless but when in bloom has arching sprays of small pink flowers which were quite attractive. Needs summer heat to survive. The plant shown was 3' high.

5. *Euphorbia tirucalli*

EUPHORBIACEAE

David Feix

The common name 'sticks on fire' is appropriate for this plant that usually is leafless. It has glowing pink to orange stems and is borderline hardy in the Bay Area. It grows best with heat and can reach 5' or 6' tall. It must have well drained soil and little water during its resting period.

6. *Justicia rizzinii*

ACANTHACEAE

David Feix

A beautiful small evergreen shrub rarely seen although it is hardy into the teens. It comes from southern Brazil and takes sun or part shade. It is smothered with orange tipped yellow firecracker flowers in mid-winter.

7. *Acacia pravissima*

FABACEAE

Roger Raiche

This sawtooth acacia becomes a 25' open tree that casts light shade. It is cold hardy into the teens but needs summer heat to grow well. It gets good fall color. The branches are very decorative.

8. *Oxalis gigantea*

OXALIDACEAE

Roger Raiche

This thick stemmed oxalis is not really a giant but can have rambling stems to 6' long. It comes from Chile and goes summer dormant. It was yellow flowers.

9. *Abelia x grandiflora* 'Francis Mason'

CAPRIFOLIACEAE

Roger Raiche

While the true species gets to 8' tall, this plant is smaller and is densely branched. The leaves are so variegated yellow they almost look pure golden. It has pink flowers, likes well-drained soil and is hardy to 0°.

10. *Pleione x orinoco* 'Gemini'

ORCHIDS

Fred Coe

Commonly called windowsill orchid, although they grow well outdoors as they are hardy to 28°. This hybrid had two flowers per stem which were a rich dark ruby red. They are deciduous in the winter and need well drained soil.

11. *Pelargonium crithmifolium*

GERANIACEAE

Fred Coe

This South African native has pale flowers and is grown more for its large caudex like trunk. It is summer deciduous and should be kept dry during its dormancy in the summer.

12. *Veltheimia bracteata*

LILIACEAE

Fred COE

This South African bulb is usually pint this plant on display had a pure white stem. Hardy to the high 20s, these bulbs can be kept evergreen with careful watering or else be allowed to go dormant in the summer. ✨

Have a digital camera?

The most popular section of Cal Hort's website is the Plant Forum but, unfortunately, our current photographer, Bruce, can't always attend the meetings to take the photos...which leaves a big gaping hole in the list of plants shown on our website, depriving many of the pleasures of proper plant identification.

To circumvent this, we are making up a list of alternate photographers who could snap photos of the Plant Forum in Bruce's absence. All you need is a digital camera and a computer to send the photos. No special photographic talents are required. You will be given at least 24 hours advance notification if you're needed.

Interested? Please send bruce@calhortsociety.org a note to be put on the list or if you have any questions. It's a fun and easy way to garner the appreciation and respect of not only your fellow members, but of plant lovers world-wide!



Passionflowers

by Lisa van Cleef

In my next life, I want to come back a passion flower. Beautiful, popular, with a vigorous constitution-life wouldn't be so bad. Passionflowers are one of nature's greatest creations and the day I get bored by a passionflower in bloom is the day I start a long vacation from plants until my sense of awe is functioning properly again.

The intricacy of the flowers and their color combinations, coupled with the delicious fruit has made these plants treasured for centuries. In fact, there's a famous story from a



16th century monk, Jacomo Bosio, that describes the various components of the flower as symbols of the passion of Christ. The five stamens are the five wounds Christ suffered, the ten petals are the ten faithful apostles, the 72 corona

filaments of the *P. caerulea* correspond to the number of thorns in the crown of thorns, and the story goes on identifying more flower parts.

That's how beautiful these plants are--people have religious experiences when viewing them.

There are over 400 species of passionflowers with 95% of them coming from the rainforests of South America. The remaining 5% come from North America, Asia and Australia. True, the vast majority of them are difficult to grow outside of their warm, wet homes, but those that are adaptable do very well and passionflowers are found throughout the world where they're grown ornamentally and in commercial production for their fruit.

So well do some species grow, that according to Don Mahoney, the *mollissima* and 'Coral Seas' varieties would be rampant invasives here if not for their inability to survive California's long summer drought. Thankfully, our mediterranean climate is keeping them from becoming the next kudzu.

However, because they are such fast growers, they make a dense, gorgeous screen quickly. The foliage is no slouch in the beauty department either and is typically a lush, rich green color. The *P. incarnata*, native to the eastern U.S., has long lobed leaves that can grow to six inches.

Provide your passionflower a trellis or other support and they'll quickly cover an ugly wall or fence climbing by tenacious tendrils. But you do need to keep a somewhat watchful eye on this plant. The species Don mentioned will grow hundreds of feet if left unattended.

As if all this vigorous-growing beauty weren't enough, many passionflowers produce a delicious citrus-like fruit in late

summer and fall. Though they need heat to produce a sweet fruit, they're commercially grown in Southern California and further south, my *P. edulis* growing in one of San Francisco's sunnier neighborhoods produces a decent tasting fruit. The fruits are typically the size of a ping pong ball and ripen to a deep purple.

WHICH SPECIES TO GROW?

Here's a brief list of great passion vines per Don Mahoney with descriptions in quotes from John Vanderplank's *Passion Flowers*, second edition published by MIT Press in 1996.

P. antioquiensis

"It is undoubtedly one of the loveliest passion flowers with large rose-red flowers that hang from long slender petioles and are visited by hummingbirds in their native habitat 6500-9750 feet up in the mountains of Colombia. Although it will tolerate a slight frost, care should be taken to ensure that the roots are not allowed to freeze."

P. caerulea

"The Blue Passion flower is the best known and most widely distributed of all passion flower species. It produces an abundance of blue and white flowers all through the summer and rich orange fruit the size of a hen's egg in late summer and autumn...*P. caerulea* is one of the hardiest of all the species..."

P. caerulea 'Constance Elliot'

There are many, many named varieties of *P. caerulea*, but Vanderplank considers the bright white, fragrant 'Constance Elliot' the best known.

P. 'Incense'

A "delightful large showy cultivar...a plant which is well worth growing outdoors or in a conservatory. "It produces very fragrant and profuse mauve and violet flowers, blooming from May to July.

P. 'Coral Seas'

According to Don, if people know passion flowers, this is typically the one they're familiar with. You see these bright reddish-orange flowers everywhere. While very bright, it's flowers aren't as showy as other passion flowers, but it's fierce growth habit makes it a choice among people looking for a quick cover.

P. manicata

"This is a very beautiful species which is cultivated in many countries and found in many botanical gardens. In fact, it runs along the south fence of Strybing Arboretum near 14th Avenue. It thrives in cool summers. "A profusion of brilliant scarlet flowers are produced between May and August usually opening in the early morning and beginning to close in the early afternoon of the following day." This plant is found high in the mountains of Peru, Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela.

P. mollissima

Don says he's down on the *mollissima*. It reseeds too rapidly spreading everywhere--it's practically taken over the western fence at Strybing behind the Chilean garden--and it fruits so much it draws vermin. Nonetheless he said to stick it on the list because it's so darn popular you're bound to find

Continued on bottom of next page

Horticultural Calendar

UC Davis Arboretum
(530) 752-4880

May 18

Plant Lovers Affair—the Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens hosts a gathering of specialty nurseries from across N. California. 10:00–4:00 PM, free. For more information or if your nursery is interested in participating (707) 964-4352 x 12. Located in Fort Bragg at 18220 North Highway One.

June 15

Everyman's Guide to Sustainable Gardening—Lotusland presents a workshop on how to work with nature to grow a healthy garden. \$50.00 and includes admission, all printed materials, and lunch. 10 AM – 4 PM. Reservations are required (805) 969-9990 between 9:00 AM and noon, Monday–Friday.

June 29

5th Annual Gig Harbor Garden Tour—Washington (Tacoma Community College), speaker-Marianne Binetti. (253) 851-3776 or www.TacomaCommunityCollege.com.

Strybing Arboretum Society
(415) 661-1316 • www.strybing.org

May 10

Bats! In Strybing Arboretum—lecture and walk, 7-9PM, CFB

May 10

Weeds seminar—12:30-4:30 PM, SAS trailer

May 11

Weeds seminar—9 AM-1 PM, SAS trailer

May 11

Rock Garden Demo/Alpine Plant Sale—12-4 pm, Main Gate, free

May 18

Design with Stone Workshop—South Bay Projects, 9 AM-5 PM, South Bay

May 21

Garden Feast—Reception, Luncheon, Silent Auction. (415) 661-1316 x 301

June 1

Plant Clinic—12-3 PM, Main Gate, free

June 2

Birding walk—8-11 AM, Main Gate, free

June 3

Field Taxonomy—8-session certificate course, 6:30-9 pm, CFB

Passionflowers continued from previous page

this, or one of the *mollissima*-*P. mixta* hybrids at your nursery. According to Vanderplank, "*P. mollissima* is a great favorite, with lovely large pendant pretty pick flowers. *P. mollissima* is often grown for its fruit, and Don says that next to the *edulis* this produces one of the tastiest passion fruits.

Vanderplank goes on to say that the *mollissima* and its close relatives *P. Mixta*, *P. cumbalensis* and *P. antioquiensis* have all naturally hybridized in the wild, giving rise to many variations of leaf and color. ✨

Member Lisa Van Cleef writes the weekly Green Gardener column for the San Francisco Chronicle's online edition. Her column can be found at <http://www.sfgate.com/homeandgarden/greengardener>

www.calhortsociety.org

May 12

Mediterranean-Style Gardening for the Central Valley—Use time-honored techniques to reduce water use and create a cool retreat. Free tour of the UC Davis Arboretum Terrace Garden at 2:00 PM next to Borders Books and Music on First Street.

May 18

Wildlife Garden Day & Plant Sale—Some of the best plants for attracting birds and butterflies, along with books about wildlife gardening. 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM at the Arboretum Terrace Garden, next to Borders Books and Music on First Street.

May 21

Trip to Sonoma County and Rare Plant Nursery—Western Hills Rare Plant Nursery, Armstrong Redwoods State Park & more. 8:30 AM and return by 5:30 PM. \$45 (\$35 for members) and includes transportation and admission.

Magic Gardens Nursery
(510) 528-5540 • www.magicgardens.com
Classes are free and start at 10 AM

Magic Gardens has moved to a new 3-acre location! Call or visit website for directions and more info.

May 11

Fabulous Fragrance in the Garden—Bryn Rowe, Magic Gardens

June 1

Automatic Watering for Container Plants—Tom Bressan, Urban Farmer. Tom will show you techniques that are applicable for all plants, whether they sit on your deck or hang in baskets.

June 15

Long-lived, long blooming perennial and shrub color—Aerin Moore, Magic Gardens.

Jepson Herbarium Public Programs
(510) 643-7008
<http://ucjeps.berkeley.edu/jepwkshp.html>

May 17–19

California Coastal Dune Ecology, Restoration & Flora—in San Luis Obispo County. Early registration required.

May 31–June 2

Pollination Ecology of Spring Wildflowers—UC Hastings Reserve, Carmel Valley. Early registration required.

HORT NOTES:

■ **OPEN GARDEN**—The Harland Hand Memorial Garden will be open on May 19 from 10 AM to 4 PM as part of the Garden Conservancy's Open Days program. A \$5 admission fee benefits the Garden Conservancy and California Horticultural Society. Plants will be available for purchase. 825 Shelvin Drive, El Cerrito. Maps to the five other gardens open that day will be available. Tickets: \$5 per garden. (No reservations required.) For directions: <http://home.earthlink.net/~handgarden/index.html>. ✨

California Horticultural Society *Bulletin*, May 2002

Botanical Tours

August 20-September 7, 2002

Namaqualand & the Cape Floral Kingdom Sponsored by UC Santa Cruz Arboretum. Tour host: Brett Hall.
Leader: Dr. John Manning

September 4-15, 2002

Italian Mannerist Gardens Sponsored by Strybing Arboretum Society and lead by Suzanne Biaggi

September 13-30, 2002

Botanical and Cultural Treasures of China's Yunnan Province in support of The Nature Conservancy's Yunnan Project. (800) 624-6633

For information please call (800) 624-6633 or visit www.geostartravel.com.



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Deadline for publication is the third Monday of each month for the following month's *Bulletin*. Events during the first ten days of the month should be remitted *two* months ahead. Please give any information to Elsie at the meeting or, preferably, email to the Editor at the above address. Faxes and postal submissions also accepted.

Membership year begins January 1. Dues are \$40 individual, \$50 joint household, \$25 Student (with proof of enrollment). To join, or for full range of membership levels, please visit our website at www.calhortsociety.org or call the Office secretary at the number above.

California Horticultural Society

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San Francisco, CA 94118

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