

**BULLETIN**  
**THE CALIFORNIA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY**  
**San Francisco County Fair Building**  
**Ninth Avenue at Lincoln Way**  
**San Francisco, California 94122**

**September 16, 2002**

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

5:30 PM NO HOST Dinner will be at Avenue 9 Bistro, 1243 Ninth Ave., San Francisco \$15.

**7:30 PM Meeting will be held at Strybing Arboretum in the San Francisco County Fair Building at 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Lincoln Way**

**\*\*\*Guest fee \$5.**

Co-Sponsored with Strybing Arboretum Society

**Monday, September 16, 2002**

**“The Botanical Riches of the Zambebian Woodland Flora”**

Dr. Daniel Harder, Director of UC Santa Cruz Arboretum will present a fascinating program about Zambebian flora, the variety of plant communities, and its botanical richness showing photos of the wonderful woodland flora including bulbs, succulents, orchids, endemics and species new to science. He will highlight his work as Director of Missouri Botanical Garden’s program in Zambia in which he provided the government of Zambia with plant diversity information within recognized National Heritage Sites and Botanical Reserves as a first step towards protection of national plant resources. He visited nearly three-quarters of the 600 or so sites and carried out botanical inventories at each area.

The **Plant Drawing** each month provides an important source of funds for the Grants and Scholarships Program. In September the drawing will include donations from **Suncrest Nursery**, Watsonville; UC Santa Cruz Arboretum, courtesy of our speaker; and **Strybing Arboretum** and **Botanical Gardens**, courtesy of Dr. Don Mahoney. Our appreciation to **Sierra Azul Nursery**, courtesy of Jeff Rosendale; **Berkeley Horticultural Nursery**, courtesy of Paul Doty, and to **Strybing Arboretum and Botanical Gardens**, courtesy of Dr. Don Mahoney who graciously donated the beautiful specimens for the August meeting.

**Coming Programs**

Co-sponsored with Strybing Arboretum Society

**Monday, October 21, 2002**

**“TEMPORAL MOMENTS WITH LIGHT IN GARDENS”**

“The California light is perhaps the largest influence on my garden designs.” Whilst I plan for light to play a major role in my garden designs, often the most striking effects occur by chance.” Bernard Trainor, noted landscape designer will show images of magical moments he has shared with light in his garden designs. Bernard’s exceptional landscapes have been recognized by the International Society of Garden Designers in Britain, and the Association of Professional Landscape Designers in America.

**Monday, November 18, 2002**

**“Lamiaceae – Salvias & other horticulturally significant genera in the Mint Family”**

Ernie Wasson, co-editor of Botanica and Nursery Manager/Garden Curator of the Cabrillo College horticultural facilities will talk about Cabrillo College’s *Salvia* collection (which presently features over 200 different *Salvias*) plus other horticulturally significant genera in the LAMIACEAE Family. An important part of plans for the new gardens development will be the certification as a national collection of *Salvias* under the guidelines of the North American Plant Collections Consortium. Ernie will show slides of several uncommon *Salvia* species and new cultivars plus an assortment of other horticulturally significant LAMIACEAE genera including: *Agastache*, *Colquhounia*, *Lavandula*, *Leonotis*, *Lepechinia*, *Oregano*, *Plectranthus*, *Phlomis*, *Sideritis*, *Stachys*, *Teuchrium*, *Trichostema* and *Westringia*.

# President's Letter

by Katherine Henwood

"September was the seventh month of the Roman calendar (septem=seven), but is the ninth according to our reckoning. The Anglo-Saxons called it 'Gerst-month'-the barley month."

## Mottoes for September:

- 'Fair on September first, fair for the month'
- 'Plant trees at Michaelmas & command them to grow. Set them out at Candlmas & and entreat them to grow'

The above quote from *The Country Diary of an Edwardian Lady* by Edith Holden certainly applies to us in the Bay Area. September is certainly one of our better months for sunshine and pleasant weather.

Michaelmas is September 29 and Candlemas is February 2. Whenever and wherever the last mottoes originated, the gardeners knew the effectiveness of setting out trees and shrubs in the fall. Bulbs, too, and some perennials are fit subjects for fall planting. Bulbs are so wonderful, it is really preparing a treat to set them out and be delighted when they poke their heads up to brighten the early spring garden.

On another note, the Cal Hort Council is on the hunt for new Council members. Serving on the Council is a great way to learn how your Society works. So if you would be interested, don't wait to be asked, speak to me or to any of the Council

## Notable Nurseries

Every month, various nurseries donate well-grown and wonderful plants for our Plant Raffle at the meetings. The raffle being a raffle and all, you don't always get that mega-cool plant you've been dying for, even if you put all of your tickets in one cup (as I well know).

To make it easier on you plantaholics, here is the contact information so you can find, visit and patronize these great nurseries. Be sure to let them know you found them through Cal Hort!

### Suncrest Nurseries

Wholesale only

[www.suncrestnurseries.com](http://www.suncrestnurseries.com)

Suncrest is a wholesale nursery situated near Watsonville devoted to broadening the gardening experience with a wide variety of plants suitable for outdoor culture in coastal and near-coastal California. Their special focus, however, is on trial and distribution of worthy new plants, and on helping to revive interest in those which have been unfairly neglected over the years.

They have a fantastic web site filled with useful and interesting articles, a listing of current plants, nurseries who carry those cool plants and more. It's one of the best nursery sites I've ever seen. Definitely worth repeated visits.

### Strybing Arboretum and Botanical Gardens

(415) 661-1316

Ninth Ave at Lincoln Way in Golden Gate Park, SF

[www.strybing.org](http://www.strybing.org)

Strybing's nursery propagates many truly rare and unusual

members. After all, how can we know you are interested if you keep it a secret?

Cal Hort has one major fund raising event each year. This is the Annual Plant sale that has been held at the Lakeside Garden in Oakland. In 2003, it will be held at Strybing in the County Fair Building. The Plant-sale committee will be planning for this event soon and asking for your help. If you would like to be in on the planning process, speak to Jan Olsen-Drobinsky or Ann DeRosa.

Another hot item right now is seed collecting. Our seed exchange offers many hard-to-find seeds to Cal Hort members. Check the list to see which plants are particularly wanted. If you have the plant, collect the seed and gladden the hearts of fellow members!

Our next program will take us to Zambia to view the woodland flora, presented by Dr. Daniel Harder who is the Director of the U.C. Santa Cruz Abortetum. If you have never been there, take a lunch and GO! They have a wonderful collection of *Banksia*, *Leucodendron* and *Protea*. I think they must have the most amazing flower forms—after orchids, of course! While you are in the general vicinity, go on to Sierra Azul in Watsonville.

Remember that we are meeting in the S.F. County Fair Building now, preceded by The Walk at 4:00 PM and dinner at Ave 9 Bistro. I look forward to seeing you then. ✨

plants from its gardens, focusing on material which does well in the Bay Area. However, there are always a few things worth pushing the climate envelope for. Although not open daily to the public, the nursery has monthly plant sales offering a bounty of treasures. The next sales are on September 14th, Open Nursery with Native Plants & Succulents and October 12, featuring trees, ferns and rhododendrons. ✨

## Botanical Tours

### January 2003

**Drakensbergs—a floral treasure**—South Africa in Summer. In support of The Botanical Society of South Africa for flora conservation.

### May 16-June 3, 2003

**Botanical & Cultural Treasures of China's Sichuan & Yunnan Provinces.** In support of Strybing Arboretum Society

### August-September, 2003

**Namaqualand and the Cape Floral Kingdom**  
Sponsored by the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles.

### September 2003

**Wildflowers of Western Australia** with Rodger Elliot & Dick Turner. In support of *Pacific Horticulture*.

For information please call (800) 624-6633 or visit [www.geostartravel.com](http://www.geostartravel.com).

# June 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](http://www.calhortsociety.org) in the 'Plant Forum' section.

## 1. *Miltoniopsis* 'Second Love'

ORCHIDACEAE

Alek Koomanoff, San Francisco

This pansy orchid hybrid has large bi-colored pink and rose flowers that looked rather delicate for such a large flower. These plants are wonderful for the Bay Area as they thrive in a cool greenhouse. They are epiphytes, coming from higher altitudes in Columbia that are basically warm cloud forests. Our winters are a little too cold to grow them outside. See photo at right.

## 2. *Dendrobium vexilarius* ssp. *vexillarius*

ORCHIDACEAE

Alek Koomanoff, San Francisco

This small, almost miniature, orange-flowered orchid covered with flowers originates from high altitudes in New Guinea. It does not like hot temperatures and must be grown cool to produce such a well-grown specimen as the one shown. Like the above species, it is a little too cold sensitive to grow outdoors in the wintertime and is best grown in a cool greenhouse. ✨



## Photographers

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

To circumvent this, we are building 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](mailto:bruce@calhortsociety.org) a note to be put on the list or to ask 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!



THE PLANT FORUM is a traditional feature of our monthly meetings. Members are strongly encouraged to bring new plants or old favorites from their gardens to tell about and share. What is putting on a display in your garden this season? Bring it in and share it with us!

## Seed saving tips and Seed Exchange lists

■ How to save tomato seed: In order to keep the seeds from sprouting in the moist, warm environment of the tomato itself, the seeds are imbedded in a gel. This gel, among other things, contains an anti-germination compound which, thankfully, is easily removed using fermentation. Fermentation mimics the natural rotting of the fruit and has the added bonus of killing seedborne tomato disease.

Choose a completely ripe tomato and squeeze the seeds into a container, add water, and let stand at room temperature for about three days. You'll know when fermentation starts by mold forming on the surface of the water and by the less-than-pleasant odor. Add more water, stir, and then gently scrape the mold and dead seeds off the top. Repeat until only clean seed remains, and then strain, rinse, and spread the seeds at room temperature until dry.

■ Your fellow members of Cal Hort would be delighted to find any of the following seeds in next year's exchange! If you are growing (or have other means of access to) any of these types of plants, please take a little time to collect the seed. Your fellow Cal Hort members will thank you!

### General categories:

California natives, Mediterranean natives, drought tolerant plants, California native annuals, California native bulbs, South African native bulbs, hardy bulbs, fern spores, heirloom vegetables, vines, annuals, trees

**Genera:** *Agave*, *Aloe*, *Cyclamen*, *Dyckia*, *Paeonia*

**Specific plants:** *Acer palmatum*, *Agapanthus* 'Storm Cloud', *Cestrum nocturnum*, *Dianella tasmanica*, *Miscanthus* 'Morning Light', *Neomarica caerulea*, *Paeonia californica*

Any time before Thanksgiving, please send the seeds to:

Dave Tivol  
130 Locksunart Way #4  
Sunnyvale CA 94087

It's not mandatory, but if you can take a picture of the plant in leaf or flower, it could be posted on our web site, where it would help illustrate the beauty (or other pertinent feature) of the plant. Digital photos can be sent to [seeds@calhortsociety.org](mailto:seeds@calhortsociety.org). Prints can be sent in with seeds; we will digitize them and return the originals. Thanks for supporting our Seed Exchange! ✨

## Horticultural Calendar

### September 2 (Labor Day)

**Open Garden**—Wayne Roderick's garden featuring 365 days of color with no watering. 166 Cañon Drive, Orinda (510) 254-0912. Take Hwy 24 to Orinda exit, go left under ramp, at third stoplight, go left. About 2 blocks later, hidden by a huge oak tree, is Cañon Drive. 9 AM to 4 PM.

### September 14

**Nepenthes Species of the Hose Mountains**—Bay Area Carnivorous Plant Society/UCBG co-sponsored talk by Ch'ien Lee, manager of Malesiana Tropicals in Malaysia. , 3 PM, UCBG Conference Center. \$5 voluntary donation to BACPS, plus Garden admission.

### September 19

**Selecting CA Native Plants for Site & Soil**—Ted Kipping, SF Professional Gardener's Association. SF City College. 7-9 PM, (415) 558-8036.

### September 19

**Estate Gardens of California**—lecture and book signing by Karen Dardick at Filoli, 86 Cañada Rd, Woodside. 1 PM–2 PM. \$10 Friends members, \$15 non-members. (650) 364-8300 x233.

### September 21–22

**Fall AIDS Benefit Plant Sale**—21st St. between X & W Sts., Sacramento. (916) 429-8315.

### September 21

**The Legacy of Thomas Church - Town Gardens**—This lecture walking tour is led by Richard McPherson, B.A. E-mail [jessy\\_berg@yahoo.com](mailto:jessy_berg@yahoo.com) to reserve your spot. Association of Professional Landscape Designers (APLD) members: \$35; non-members: \$40; Class size limited to 20 people.

### September 22

**Annual Meeting of The Western Chapter of the North American Rock Garden Society**, 6:30 PM at the SF County Fair Building, 9th Avenue and Lincoln Way. Potluck dinner, plant sale, raffle of items from the Estate of Harland Hand, election of officers, and slideshow. Travel to South Africa with Martin Grantham for a tour from the Eastern Cape's Drakens-berg Mountains to the Western Cape's Kogelberg Biosphere Reserve. Info: (510) 525-9648

### September 29

**UCBG Fall Plant Sale**—Member's Preview 9 AM–10 AM, memberships available at the door. Public Sale 10 AM – 2 PM. Silent Auction 9 AM–11 AM. The U.C. Botanical Garden is located in Strawberry Canyon at 200 Centennial Drive, Berkeley. Info: (510) 642-9856 or [www.mip.berkeley.edu/garden/](http://www.mip.berkeley.edu/garden/)

### October 14-16

**California Master Gardeners Conference**—Asilomar Conference Center, Pacific Grove, CA. Info: <http://groups.ucanr.org/mgconf/> or (408) 264-9654.

Strybing Arboretum Society  
(415) 661-1316 • [www.strybing.org](http://www.strybing.org)

### September 27–29

**Gardening Under Mediterranean Skies III: Design With Purpose**—This two-day symposium features a stellar line-up

of international and local speakers from Northern and Southern California and also useful workshops. Visit [www.strybing.org](http://www.strybing.org) for more info.

### Sept 28

**Public Sale** of mediterranean plants from 12 nurseries exhibiting at Symposium, 3:30-5:30PM, Gallery at CFB

### Sept 29

**Post-Symposium East Bay Garden Tour**, departs 8:15AM from Main Gate

### Oct 2

**Ornamental Grasses**, 8-session certificate course, 6:30-9PM, CFB

### Oct 4

**Advance Plants**, 2-session seminar, 12:30-4:30PM, CFB

### Oct 4

**Star Trek: Autumn Skies**, 6:45-8:30PM, Main Gate

### Oct 5

**Landscape Watercolor**, 3-session course, 10AM-3PM, CFB

### Oct 8

**Botanical Art Studio**, 4-session studio, 5:30PM-8:30PM, CFB

### Oct 9

**Forms of Light**, color photos of plants, Artist Reception, 5-7PM, Library, free

### Oct 12

**Plant Sale**, 10AM-1 PM, Strybing

UC Davis Arboretum  
(530) 752-4880

### September 8

**The Fall Garden: Enjoy Late Bloomers, Prepare for Next Year**—Taffy Bandman will discuss the fall garden during a free tour of the UC Davis Arboretum Terrace Garden at 10:00 AM next to Borders Books and Music on First Street.

### September 22

**Great Plants for Valley Gardens**—Docent Dagny Huillade will discuss great plants for Valley gardens during a free tour of the UC Davis Arboretum Terrace Garden at 10:00 AM next to Borders Books and Music on First Street.

### Hort Notes:

■ THE LIBRARY OF AMERICAN LANDSCAPE HISTORY website is now up and running. Visit [www.LALH.org](http://www.LALH.org) for information on their books or fascinating exhibitions and to download the latest issue of their newsletter, *View*. ✨

## Thank you!

Again, our sincere thanks to **Marjory Harris** for the generous contribution resulting from admissions to the former Harland Hand garden as listed in the Garden Conservancy's 2002 *Open Days Directory*.

# Fern found to cleanse contaminated soil

Could a subtropical fern provide a future way to remove toxic arsenic from soil? That's the dream of a Virginia-based company called Edenspace Systems Corporation, which is collaborating with AHS and members of a regional garden club group on a pilot study that will test the fern's effectiveness in taking up arsenic from the soil.

Edenspace, which specializes in the growing field of phytoremediation—using plants to remove soil contaminants—has acquired the rights to a fern that University of Florida researchers discovered has the amazing ability to soak up high concentrations of arsenic from soil it is planted in. This finding yields hope that the fern could be used to clean up sites contaminated with arsenic from dumped or spilled pesticides, munitions, or mine waste. On a smaller scale, Edenspace researchers believe the fern could help gardeners clean up arsenic that might have leached into soil from pressure-treated lumber.

The fern, which the company calls edenfern™, is a brake fern (*Pteris vittata*), part of a genus of some 280 species of ferns found mainly in tropical and subtropical forests worldwide. Hardy to USDA Zones 9 to 11, it grows best in neutral to slightly alkaline soil in part shade to full sun.

At a meeting held at River Farm in April, 38 members of the National Capital Area Federation of Garden Clubs (NCAFGC)—whose 4,000 members include gardeners from Washington, D.C., Maryland, and Virginia—were given three ferns and a soil test kit. They were asked to select a site in their gardens, preferably near a deck or retaining wall constructed of

pressure-treated lumber, to plant the ferns. They were also asked to take a soil sample from the site before planting so that a baseline level of arsenic in the soil could be calculated.



Photo © Edenspace Systems

In September, the study participants will clip fronds from their ferns and send those to Edenspace for testing to see what levels of arsenic they contain in comparison to the soil sample. Betty Mosher, president of NCAFGC, says the group is proud they were asked to be participants in the pilot study. "We're a very environmentally conscious organization," she added, "so our members embraced this idea in the hope it could

lead to a significant environmental breakthrough in the future for gardeners."

Edenspace's ferns are also being tested in the gardens at AHS's River Farm headquarters. "This is just another way River Farm can serve as an educational model for American gardeners," says AHS President Emeritus H. Marc Cathey.

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The results of the pilot program will be published in the November/December issue of *The American Gardener*, along with a full-length feature article discussing several other promising phytoremediation projects and studies that are going on in North America and overseas.

For even more information, visit [www.edenspace.com](http://www.edenspace.com).

## Get your Cal Hort news **FAST!**

If you just can't wait to get the latest news from our Society *Bulletin*, log on to [www.calhortsociety.org](http://www.calhortsociety.org) and go to the 'Bulletin Online' section to see a PDF version of each issue. The *Bulletin* is posted on our site by the first of every month. You can also view past *Bulletins* back to 2000—it's a virtual filing cabinet!

Full color images of our Plant Forums are also posted to help ID the descriptions given in the *Bulletin*.

Check out the photos of cal Hort's last field trip to three marvelous gardens in and

around Sonoma!

Even if you're not a World Wide Web kind of person, give it a try. It's super easy, immensely convenient and free, to boot! ✨



*Eucomis* 'Sparkling Burgundy'

☆☆Reminder☆☆

# Cal Hort has moved!

The Academy of Sciences, which has been our home for many years, is due to begin a rebuilding process that will take several years. The S.F. County Fair Building is newly refurbished with a new roof, new floors, new paint and new chairs!

Remember that our meetings begin with the Walk in the Strybing Gardens at 4PM, followed by a no-host dinner at Ave 9 Bistro, and thence to the meeting.



### Officers

**President**  
Katherine Henwood  
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### Executive Council

**2000-2002**  
**First Term**  
Ann DeRosa

**Second Term**  
Katherine Henwood  
Bruce Peters (temporary)

**2001-2003**  
**First Term**  
Diana Ross

**Second Term**  
Jana Olson Drobinsky  
Elise Lew  
Don Mahoney

**2002-2004**  
**First Term**  
Michael Craib  
Renee Fittinghoff  
**Second Term**  
Richard Starkeson  
Keitha DeMara

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](http://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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