



Dendromecon rigida Benth



Prunus ilicifolia

BULLETIN
THE CALIFORNIA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY
San Francisco County Fair Building
Ninth Avenue at Lincoln Way
San Francisco, California 94122
AUGUST 16, 2004

4:00 PM Botanical gardens walk with speaker at Strybing Arboretum.

Parking is available behind the San Francisco Co, Fair Building on 9th Ave.

5:30PM NO HOST Dinner will be at Park Chow Restaurant, 1249 Ninth Ave., San Francisco.

7:15 PM Announcements, Plant Forum. Meeting will be held at Strybing Arboretum in the San Francisco County Fair Building at 9th Avenue and Lincoln Way .

8:00 PM Speaker and Plant Drawing.

***Guest fee \$5.

Monday, August 16, 2004

Co-sponsored with Strybing Arboretum Society

Unique and Exciting Plants from the California Islands

Presented by Steve Junak, Herbarium Curator, Santa Barbara Botanic Garden since 1976. He has been exploring the islands of southern California and Baja California for more than 25 years, documenting the plant life, mapping vegetation and rare plants, and leading field trips.

Sixteen islands are situated in the Pacific Ocean between Point Conception (near Santa Barbara) and Punta Eugenia (about halfway down the Baja California peninsula). These islands are natural areas known for windswept landscapes, rugged coastlines, and unspoiled beaches, often teaming with marine mammals and birds. Their floras, rich in endemic species, have long fascinated botanists and horticulturists. Plants from the islands have been cultivated on the California mainland since the 1800s. During this slide-illustrated lecture, Steve Junak will take us on a tour of many of these plants in their natural habitats, from the familiar Channel Islands in the north to the natural lava gardens of San Martin Island, the foggy ridge tops and remote islets of Guadalupe Island, and the desert canyons of Cedros Island.

Steve has written or co-authored a number of articles and books about the islands and is the principal author of *A Flora of Santa Cruz Island*. An avid nature photographer, his photographs have been published in numerous books, including Audubon and University of California Press field guides. He is currently working on books about the plants of San Nicolas and Catalina islands.

The Plant Drawing each month is an important source of funds for the Grants and Scholarships Program. In August, the drawing will include donations from **California Flora Nursery**, Fulton, courtesy of **Sherrie Althouse** and **Phil Van Soelen** and from **Strybing Arboretum**, courtesy of **Dr. Don Mahoney**. Our appreciation to **Berkeley Horticultural Nursery** courtesy of **Paul Doty**, and to **Strybing Arboretum Society** courtesy of **Dr. Don Mahoney** for the outstanding plants donated for the July meeting.

Co-sponsored with Strybing Arboretum Society

Monday, September 20, 2004

“Gardening with one foot in the tropics”

Presented by Davis Dalbok, Award winning Landscape Designer, owner of Living Green, will discuss gardening and garden design in two distinct micro-climates. Drawing out the parallels and differences between his garden near Hilo, Hawaii, and his Fairfax, Marin home, Davis will incorporate visual imagery, conceptual garden design ideas, and illustrative examples of how one can cultivate a sanctuary with a lush, sub-tropical theme.



President's Letter

by Bruce Peters

Every time we start something new it takes a little time to figure out how to fit the new thing into the old patterns and spaces of our lives. While writing this President's letter I realize that I've finally assimilated my new role into my life and become comfortable with it. No longer manic trying to figure out how things are done, when they should be done, who's doing what, I can now focus a little better on our mission statement to "help promote horticulture in California." Notice I say focus 'a little better.' I can't totally leave the scattered part of my personality behind!

One thing I hear from our members is that coming to our meetings can be a little overwhelming once the Latin plant names start flying. It's totally true, trying to learn the botanical names for the thousands of fascinating (or just plain exhilarating) plants we can grow in California can be daunting. I remember my first few years of coming to Cal Hort meetings left my brain numb by about the 45 minute mark....no sooner had I figured out what plant a speaker or co-member was talking about when I would realize they were already 3 plants ahead in the conversation.

Then, one day, someone pointed out to me that those Latin names actually mean something. Somehow, knowing

that *Sparmannia* was named after a real person called Dr. Sparman gave my head something to latch onto. Then I found out that all those species named *edulis* had something in common besides their previously impenetrable name— apparently someone at some point found some part of the plant to be edible! At least *edible* and *edulis* start with the same letter. Oh! Same TWO letters! How handy is that?

From that point on, more and more connections started making themselves known and the whole bi-nomial system of naming plants became more of a useful friend rather than the vexing enemy bent on keeping me out of useful plant conversations.

Since one of the wonders of loving plants is that you'll never run out of things to learn, we've started adding etymologies to our Plant Forum descriptions so that we'll all understand a little better why something's named the way it is. Let me know what you think of it!

On a different note, our new and up-to-date Roster is going to be handed out at the August meeting. If you just can't make the meeting, we'll still send them out with the Bulletin, but the fewer we send out, the less we spend on postage so come on by and pick one up!



Botanical Tours

January 20–February 2, 2005

Drakensbergs—a floral treasure—South Africa in Summer with Panayoti Kelaidis. In support of the American Rock Garden Society

September 12 - 23, 2004

Great Gardens & Villas Of Italy—with Michael Bernsohn as Guide in support of Strybing Arboretum Society. Info: www.venture-out.com/gardens.htm

October 11-27, 2004

Wildflowers, Gardens, Natural History and Fjordland of Chile at the Peak of Springtime Bloom with noted horticulturist and Landscape Architect Professor Wes Conner. In support of Strybing Arboretum Society.

February 5-18, 2005

Gardens of Singapore with Bian Tan & Kristin Yanker-Hansen, Malaysia's Kuala Lumpur & Taman Negara National Park. In support of Strybing Arboretum Society

August 26-September 9, 2005

South Africa in Springtime, Natural History of Namaqualand & the Western Cape Province—In support of the California Horticultural Society with Annie Hayes, award winning horticulturist & owner of Annie's Annuals

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

Volunteer Corner

Being a volunteer-run organization, Cal Hort is always in need of people with various skills and talents to help out. Look below to see how you can help our Society to grow!

Newsletter: The *Bulletin* is always happy to accept stories, articles or fun garden-related tidbits. If you would like to start a column, write something or have just run across an interesting item, share it with the rest of us! Contact Bruce at editor@calhortsociety.org or (415) 824-1833.

Propagation group: We still need a few people to help out with our new propagation group. We're looking for both experts and beginners, to start propagating plants for next year's plant sale.

Contact us at progroup@calhortsociety.org, by phone at (415) 824-1833 or in person at one of our membership meetings.

Open Gardens: if you'd like to open your garden to other members, either for inclusion on a tour or just as a single garden, email opengardens@calhortsociety.org or call Renee at (415) 388-6850.

July Plant Forum by Ted Kipping

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

1. *Casuarina torulosa*

CASURINACEAE (40 SPECIES)

Forest Oak, Sheoke, Beefwood (for color of heartwood), Australian Pine

Casurina – so named because the long, drooping branchlets of this S. Pacific genus supposedly resemble the drooping feathers of a cassowary, Australia's version of an ostrich.

Torulosa – Slightly uneven

Grown by Ann DeRosa in El Cerrito

A graceful, fast growing tree to 80 ft natively found in *Eucalyptus* forests and used for coastal areas or forests. It's quite salt tolerant and takes heat and wind. The fine, jointed stems upon close inspection, initially resemble the similarly constructed fine secondary brush-like radially arranged 'branchlets' of *Equisetum*, the horsetail or scouring rush, and collectively present a wispy, cascading aspect which yields before the wind, adding grace to its surroundings.

2. *Echinops ritro*

ASTERACEAE (ABOUT 100 SPECIES)

Globe thistle

Echinops – resembling a hedgehog or sea-urchin. An allusion to the startlingly metallic blue spiny globes.

Ritro – local name

Grown by Kristin Yanker-Hansen in Danville

An outstanding 2 ft tall midsummer border plant from E. Europe & W. Asia providing handsome architectural effect. Takes the heat and some drought. A glistening blue asterisk.

3. *Impatiens tintcoria & glandulifera*

BALSAMINACEAE (500+ SPECIES)

Touch-me-not, Balsam, Jewelflower

Impatiens – impatient; referring to the explosive manner in which the seeds are discharged when a ripe seedpod is touched or disturbed

Tinctoria – used in dyeing, as in 'tincture'

Glandulifera – bearing glands

Grown by Don Mahoney at Strybing, San Francisco

Many of the tropical and subtropical of the over 500 species of *Impatiens* are aggressive re-seeders. All have a nectar tube full of sweet nectar (ahh! Slurp!) and most are annuals in our climate unless brought in for the winter. Many are shade tolerant and all have a pearlescent, sparkling aspect to the petals, visually repaying one for close inspection of their blossoms.

4. *Juncus effusus spiralis* 'Yellow Stripe'

JUNCACEAE (240 SPECIES)

Yellow stripe corkscrew rush

Juncus – the classical Latin name used by the Romans

Effusus – loosely spreading

Spiralis – spiral shape

Grown by Bruce Peters in San Francisco

'Rushes are round, sedges have edges...' goes the botanical mnemonic rhyme. This one is an idiosyncratic event of a little plant sure to have appealed to Dr. Seuss had he met it and kept it moist.

5. *Macadamia integrifolia*

PROTEACEAE (10 SPECIES)

Macadamia nut

Named in honor of John Macadam (1827-1865), a chemist, medical man and lecturer in Melbourne, Australia.

Grown by Ann DeRosa in El Cerrito

A handsome, broadleaf evergreen to 50 ft from S. eastern Queensland in rainforests and close to streams prized for its sweet edible nuts. Introductions to Hawaii in the late 1800's led to the basis of a very successful industry. Australia itself did not start commercial orchards until the 1950's—the old story of a plant having no honor (or profit) in its own country.

6. *Phlox paniculata*

Polemoniaceae (about 60 species)

Phlox – a flame. Many of the species of the North

American endemic genus are brilliantly colored.

Paniculata – refers to the arrangement of the flowers into a panicle.

Grown by Kristin Yanker-Hansen in Danville

The need for heat tolerance in North American flower borders has led to much selection work for mildew (which thrives in hot, dry air) resistance. Many are the claims, but few are truly resistant. A handsome group when healthy and well-placed.

7. *Sparmannia africanus variegatus*

MALVACEAE (RECENTLY TILIACEAE) – 3 SPECIES

African Linden, Zimmer Linden (used by Germans as a houseplant)

Sparmannia – named for Dr. Andreus Sparman (1748-1820), a Swedish botanist who explored with Dr.

Thunberg in S. Africa..

Africanus – of Africa

Grown by Bruce Peters in San Francisco

A fast growing, multi-stemmed S. African shrub to 18-25 ft with enormous fuzzy, palmate leaves which 'feel you back' and top-most clusters of sparkling white flowers with bosses of golden stamens glorious when viewed against a blue sky. A good, quick screening plant, it will tolerate low light levels and is thus one of those few often futilely sought-after shrubs which can provide a quick screen under the shade of taller trees or even buildings.

8. *Vernonia crinita*

ASTERACEAE (500-1000 SPECIES)

Ironweed

Named for William Vernon (died circa 1711), English botanist who collected in Maryland in 1698.

Crinita – furnished with long, generally weak hairs

Continued on back page

2004 China Field Trip

From May 12- June 1st, 2004 a group of Cal Hort members joined Kristin Yanker-Hansen on a fantastic and fun-filled trip to **China's Sichuan & Yunnan Provinces**. Following are some abbreviated notes from Cynthia Wood and Daisy Mah. **The full story and more photos** are available on our website, www.calhortsociety.org, in the Field Trips section.

May 14 Hong Kong to Chendu airport that was converted from a military operation. Kevin, the local Sichuan Province guide and Stacy Young who would accompany us throughout our trip, greeted us and welcomed us to China. The view out the bus window is rubble, demolition and salvaging in a mad effort to build anew. What remains are the apartment complexes that house masses of residents. Hopefully their efforts will last longer than 20 years, which according to our guides qualifies as very old. The "look" changes as we enter the rebuilt and "luxurious" downtown where the well heeled aspire to live. Still, laundry is drying out on balconies and windowsills. The air is grayish and smoky.

We are excited about being in China and despite our many hours, 16 hours spent aboard two flights plus the waits in airport terminal, none of us opt for a break. We instead head out to rural surroundings to Sanxingdui, a new archaeological museum with an impressive collection that include bronze masks with protruding eyes, 13 feet high fanciful bronze trees with ten suns carried on the back of birds, gold, ivory, 80 elephant remains, bronze shells; an early form of coins and jade knives. Farmers were digging an irrigation line when they discovered pieces of jade first uncovered the archeological site in 1929. Excavation began in 1930s and 40s. Artifacts vary from 4800 to 2800 years old. The Shu Kingdom ruled present day Sichuan from 16th to the 3rd century B.C. They communicated with the spirits, gods and heavenly realms through their worship of mountains and nature.



Tibetan Buddhist & Taoist temple at Mt. Balang/4 Sisters Mtn

Our first of many fine meals consisted of a variety of dishes somewhat reminiscent of a dim sum meal that we might get at our local Chinese restaurants though decidedly more spicy than the ubiquitous Cantonese-American cooking we have grown accustomed to eating.

After being without rest for 36 hours, we welcome our long-awaited rest at the Yinke Dynasty Hotel up on the 15th floor. Tap water is risky to drink and even for brushing teeth unless boiled. Hotel rooms are furnished with an electric teakettle that is very efficient and turns off automatically after the water boils. Tea bags are always nearby.



Fruit vendors at open air market

May 15, 2004 Chengdu, once referred to as the Brocade City, now the "Lotus City" is located at along the Brocade river or Jin Jiang. In the 1980s, the water quality had degraded to a crisis level necessitating severe measures. Home sites were destroyed and residents relocated in order to control pollutants and waste. Much of the pollution was produced by paint, chemical, paper and silk factories. In an effort to provide environmental awareness, the Living Water Garden was created along the banks of the Fu-Nan River.

A side excursion takes us to a Mosque. Photography was prohibited in the exotic house of worship. Our guide tells us that the raised threshold was an attempt to thwart the rodents; perhaps symbolically it kept out evil spirits.

Next destination: an open air market reminiscent of our farmer's market, but Chinese style. It was refreshing to see the colorful produce, meat, beans, herbs, seaweed, noodles, dogs to hopefully become pets and tofu on display

Lunch at Xin Hua International House included a lively tofu dish, sautéed amaranth, a savory custard and broth with pork meatballs, and finally the rice appears. Despite never quite understanding the sequence, our overly abundant meals were enjoyable to a majority of fellow travelers.

Negotiating the streets of Chengdu by bus is an experience not for the faint hearted. Pedestrians, cyclists without helmets, scooters, buses, cars all somehow manage to co-exist. They are accompanied by sounds honks, whistles and ringing bells. On quite a number of occasions, I truly believed we would be involved in a tragic accident.

The dramatic mountainsides with many waterfalls and lost photo "ops" are lushly covered with conifers and a rich understory. Even by bus we try to botanize, *Ligularia* sp. and *Rodgersia* comes to mind. It is amazing to.....



market in Chengdu, Sichuan

hear from botanist Baije that we are not seeing primitive forest, but those that were reforested after the denuding during the Cultural Revolution. Clearly this area is subject to heavy rainfall, though we never were able to get the average yearly rainfall.

We head to the Ah Bah prefecture to Wolong Nature Preserve to help with the survival of the Giant Panda. We spent time after dinner playing with a rented Mah Jong set with lessons compliments of Stacy and Kevin. Our Rosemary Wong who had not played in many years, quickly recalled the nuances of

the game with this refresher course.

“Bu Cutzze” - no thank you and “heng show teung” - you are beautiful. Kevin’s name is Houa Shin. Shin’s name translates to illustrious. We are allowed to stop to photograph the terraced mountainside. and to our good fortune, we are greeted by a hospitable elderly gentleman who offers us a basket small plums harvested from his trees which some, including myself, accept with a bit of reservation but we were fine. There is a forlorn looking outhouse,.

Sunday, May 16, 2004 We visit the Panda Bear Reserve. They are living in a “zoo-like” environment to breed and protect this endangered mammal.

We head to the Ying Chang Valley and seek out plants along protected area. Budding artists are painting, We walk beside rushing streams and waterfalls, spot *Corydalis flexusosa* with it’s blue flowers and vine *Hobellia fargesia*, and *Arisaema sp.* The Shi Crow river runs into Min Jow River. Along the road we follow the path of the river accompanied by the oohs, ahs and wows! of fellow traveler Norman Nagao. We were in awe of this wild, rugged scenery with spottings of Rhododendrons, some 30 species grow in this area.

We are surrounded in so much beauty that I wanted to capture with the aid of my Olympus OM-1. Though risky to park the bus along these narrow roads rarely with much of a shoulder, but yes, we are allowed to stop at one of the temples with the dark gray roof tiles with the upturned roofline. We hit the lottery with this photo op. Peacocks crafted in metal adorned the roof line, Tibetan prayer flags were flapping in the breeze. The lighting was studio-like. An impressive dragon sculpted into a wall that protected the temple and followed the contour of the hillside captivated me. Chickens were scratching in this very sacred and spiritual place. Climbing up the spacious rock steps led to a close up of a sculpture of a male dressed in a robe at one end with a container of used incense. We couldn’t resist the temptation of peeking through the crack in the back doorway where we spotted the glow of

incense burning away in a dark space, dispelling any notion that this was an abandoned temple. It was truly a spiritual and magical experience with some photos that captured the moment. The decorations indicate that this temple is an unusual mixture of Tibetan Buddhist and Toaist religions. “Sheh Sheh” - thank you.

Monday, May 17, 2004 We explore the Suangqioa Gully and Changping Gully, and spot Yaks along the roadside. In the Sung Chow Valley or 2 Bridges valley, we walk on boardwalk known for specimens of *Hippophae sp.* which is harvested for its fruit is eaten fresh and used in a beverage. We are in the highland region inhabited by the Tibetans and Chung minority. Our lovely guide is outfitted in Tibetan dress meets us in our environmentally friendly, but smaller bus. She sings along with the music, very lyrical and sweet.

We stop to photograph scenery and notice vendors at the roadside that included a woman grilling potatoes and yak on skewers, quite tasty and spicy. A gray-haired woman in Tibetan dress is spinning and offers weaver Barbara Woodward an opportunity to spin and allowed me to photograph her with Dana Richson. Yaks are seen grazing along mountainsides. We are fairly close to Tibet Province.

Roadworkers live with high risk. Some are spotted squatting along the road scooping up their rice with chopsticks. They scatter to avoid their demise as vehicles drive dangerously near.

Tuesday, May 18, 2004 “Zye Jea” - good bye. We leave in the rain, but soon is snowing as the bus winds its way down the mountains. Dick Hansen begins to pace and fret, about the lovely, but treacherous conditions. Bamboo is grown as a crop to supply forage for the giant panda bear. Ligularia thrives in lush, heavily wooded, moist mountainsides with waterfalls. Our road snakes alongside rushing waters. Bus driver honks around bend. Cabbage is interplanted with *Gingko biloba* and corn. Cars appear inches away.

The air is thick with smog as we take flight on Air China to Kunming, Yunnan. *Continued at www.calhortsociety.org.*



Tile rooftops in Lijiang, Yunnan

Horticultural Calendar

Sundays

Garden Market—Cool plants for sale and free garden talks 10 AM – 2 PM at the Ferry Building SF. (415) 291-3276 or www.cuesa.org

August 14

Summer Bud Wood Exchange—Bring some prunings from your garden's fruit trees and trade for other unusual fruit wood scions. Hosted by the Golden Gate Chapter of the CRFG. 11 AM – 2:30 PM. For info call (415) 469-0966 or see their newsletter at www.crfg.org/chapters/golden_gate/index.html

August 19 - September 23

Docent Training—Volunteer to become a school-group guide at the Conservatory of Flowers. A six-week training on Thursday mornings. For more info call (415) 750-5226 or www.conservatoryofflowers.org.

August 21-22

Annual Dahlia Show—Dahlia Society of California. 10 AM-5 PM, SF County Fair Bldg. Free

August 27

Plants for Summer-Dry Climates—Saxon Holt will show photos from the new EBMUD book, tour the new Waterwise Garden and refreshments. 10 AM – noon at Heather Farm. \$10 – reservations required. (925) 947-1678 or www.gardenshf.org.

October 2

Filoli Fruit Cook-Off—This year's contest will focus on fruit breads. Entry forms must be submitted by August 27. For info call (650) 364-8300 x233, email greenhouse@filoli.org, or go to www.filoli.org

Regional Parks Botanic Garden

(510) 841-8732 • www.nativeplants.org

September 5

Propagating Natives From Cuttings—An afternoon of plant magic with Martin Grantham. 10 AM – 4 PM. Members \$40, non-members \$45.

October 17

Point Reyes Field Trip—An afternoon of botanizing around the National Seashore, with Glenn Keator. 10 AM – 3 PM, Members \$80, non-members \$95.

October 24

Montara Mountain Field Trip—Another fine afternoon of botanizing with Glenn Keator. 10 AM – 3 PM, members \$80, non-members \$95.

November 21

Seed Propagation—Learn how to collect, store, treat, and sow a wide variety of seeds, with Martin Grantham. 10 AM – 4 PM, members \$40, non-members \$45.

November 28

Native Ferns From Spores—A hands-on afternoon

covering all you need to know on how to grow your own ferns, with Martin Grantham. 10 AM – 4 PM, members \$40, non-members \$45.

Ruth Bancroft Garden

(925) 210-9663 • www.ruthbancroftgarden.org

September 18

Annual Dinner in the Garden—Benefit event for members and guests, also includes an auction. 4 PM. Call for more info.

October 16

Fall Plant and Iris Sale—Vintage Iris cultivars, cacti and succulents. 9:30 AM – 2 PM.

November 5

Dry Garden Design Seminar III—How to winterize your dry garden. Speakers TBA. 8:30 AM – 3 PM.

Strybing Arboretum Society

(415) 661-1316 • www.strybing.org

August 14

Plant Sale—General sale featuring shade plants. 10 AM – 2 PM at the nursery.

August 14

Plant Seminar: What's Hot & What's Not!—See and learn about new plant introductions for the Bay Area. 9 AM – noon, members \$35, non-members \$45.

August 23 – Sept 18

Troubleshooting in the Garden—How to rejuvenate your neglected garden. Five classes and an afternoon field trip. 6:30 – 9 PM, members \$150, non-members \$175.

September 11

Plant Sale—General sale featuring succulents and CA native plants. 10 AM – 2 PM at the nursery

UC Botanical Garden at Berkeley

(510) 643-2755 • www.botanicalgarden.berkeley.edu

First Saturday of the Month

Sick Plant Clinic—Let plant pathologist Dr. Raabe and entomologist Dr. Mills diagnose what ails your plants. 9 AM – NOON at the UC Botanical Gardens. Free

August 11

Grasses in the Garden—An evening tour with Horticulturalist Colin Baxter. 5:30 – 7:00 PM, \$12 members, \$17 non-members.

August 14

Summer Bird Walk—Check out the birds in the garden with Chris Carmichael and Dennis Wolff. 9 – 10:30 AM, \$12 members, \$17 non-members.

August 28

Chinese Medicinal Garden Tour—With herbalist Anastasia White. 9:30 – 11:30 AM, \$12 members, \$17 non-members.

June Meeting Recap by Jason Dewees

Taking the High Road: People and Plants in Pakistan's Shangri La

Presented by Dr. Dan Johnson, Curator Native Plants, Denver Botanic Gardens.

Cal Hort members enjoyed a slide travelogue to the mountains of the western Himalayas, Hindu Kush and Karakorum of northern Pakistan when Denver Botanical Gardens curator of native plants, Dr. Dan Johnson, spoke to the Society at the San Francisco County Fair Building auditorium on Monday evening, July 19, 2004.

The travels he documented for us happened to occur at the moment when Americans became suddenly more aware of these lands.

On September 11, 2001, on a layover at London Heathrow Airport, Dr. Johnson and his companions found themselves catching a glimpse of a TV shot of the smoking World Trade Center before boarding the next leg of their journey to Pakistan. Arriving in Islamabad, the capital founded in the 1960s in the northern Indus Valley, they learned of the extent of the attacks, but information about the Afghanistan- and Pakistan-based network supporting them was not yet news. So they proceeded. The sights Dr. Johnson conveyed were plentiful and spectacular.

The largest mosque on earth, its four minarets over 300 feet tall, stands near Islamabad. Vehicles of all sorts—from manure spreaders to buses and cars—sport gaudy colors and jewel-like mirrors. The friendly bazaars of the ancient nearby city of Rawalpindi offer abundant foods from the irrigated Indus Valley, which Dr. Johnson likened in feel to California's Central Valley, while surrounding ruins like Taxila contain layers of Buddhist artifacts. He and his party purchased modest local garb, the shalwar qamiz, to wear while navigating the rarely touristed mountain precincts.

Accompanied by two cooks, two drivers and a guide, Dr. Johnson's party found forests of *Cedrus deodara*, *Pinus*

wallichiana, *P. roxburghii*, numerous *Acer* species, firs, roses, peonies, and five species of deciduous *Arisaema* as they rose into the terraced moist valley of the western Himalayas. Embattled nubs testified of livestock grazing up to astounding altitudes. The party encountered many nomadic families traveling downward in advance of the first fall snows in the alpine meadows, and then saw the snows themselves in the wake of a thunderstorm.

After passing over 14,000-foot Babisar Pass, Dr. Johnson and company descended into a completely different landscape, one akin to the Mojave Desert, where small villages grow *Lagerstroemia indica*, *Cupressus sempervirens*, and *Populus* species for shade, and waterfalls sluice snowmelt through red-stone canyons.

Most astounding were Dr. Johnson's slides of his encampment in a valley at the foot of glacier-encrusted, 26,658-foot Nanga Parbat, the world's ninth-highest peak and westernmost of the Himalayas. Towering over the valley is a sheer 13,000-foot face that regularly unleashes avalanches.

In the vicinity he found *Acantholimon*, *Polygonum*, *Bergenia*, *Thymus*, *Gentiana*, *Aquilegia fragrans*, and other alpine treats. Illuminated in rosy sunrise glow, Nanga Parbat's image enchanted many in the audience as Dr. Johnson accompanied it with a tape of the music of the mountain people he met there.



Plant of the Month by Josh Schechtal

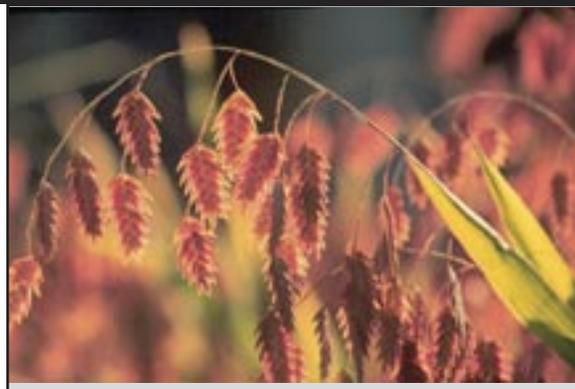
Chasmanthium latifolium

Ornamental grasses have become an important part of the modern garden. They often form the backbone, anchoring the flowering beds while the blooms of other plants come and go. One of the most beautiful grasses in horticulture is northern sea oats. Although it is native to a large area of eastern North America, *Chasmanthium latifolium*'s bamboo-like foliage makes it appear almost tropical. It performs well through several seasons, even transplanted here to the west coast. In spring, the new foliage is bright green. During the summer, the foliage darkens, and forms an upright arching form. In the autumn it glows a rich copper color, finally shading to brown during the winter. The flowers are also green, and mature to a copper color by late summer. The large flowers cause the tall thin stems to bend gracefully and sway in the slightest breeze, and are wonderful for cut flower arrangements.

Northern sea oats, as the name implies, can tolerate salt spray, making it very useful along the coast. Unlike many of

our ornamental grasses, this plant does not need full sun. In fact,

it does best in rich, evenly moist soil in partial shade. It is easily propagated from seed or divisions taken in the spring. This plant is useful in the perennial bed and also as a specimen plant in a container, where its interesting flowers can be appreciated up close.



New Rosters

Your new Cal Hort Membership Rosters will be distributed at the August membership meeting. By picking it up personally, you'll help us to save on postage costs. Please come a few minutes early.

Plant Forum continued from Page 3

late summer to late fall border. This one is Mid-western.

9. *Arisaema tortuosum*

ARACEAE (190 SPECIES)

Jack-in-the-Pulpit, Dragon Arum

Aris – arum

Haima – blood (eg. Haemoglobin), perhaps from the 'flecks' seen in this type species

Grown by Barbara & John Hopper in Kenwood

These herbaceous, usually temperate plants related to skunk cabbage and calla lilies, are fascinating in their bizarre spotting, banding and streaking along with digitate to trifoliate leaf shapes and the unique floral arrangement of the spathe and spadix.

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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.

Membership year begins January 1 and includes a full subscription to *Pacific Horticulture*. 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 (800) 884-0009.



San Francisco County Fair Building
9th Avenue & Lincoln Way
San Francisco, CA 94122

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San Francisco

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Dated Material - Please deliver by August 10