

# Bulletin of the California Horticultural Society

Monthly meetings are held at the San Francisco County Fair Building and are co-sponsored by the SF Botanical Gardens at Strybing Arboretum, 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue at Lincoln Way in Golden Gate Park. Parking is available behind the SF Co. Fair Building on Lincoln Way.

4:00 PM Botanical gardens walk with the speaker.  
Meet at the entrance

5:30 PM NO HOST Dinner will be at Park Chow Restaurant, 1240 9<sup>th</sup> Ave. San Francisco.

7:15 PM Announcements, Plant Forum, and Program Meeting will be held at the SF Botanical Garden in the SF County Fair Building at 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue at Lincoln Way; San Francisco.

\*\*\*Members free

\*\*\*Non-members – A donation of \$5 is requested.

The **Plant Drawing** each month is an important source of funds for the Grants and Scholarships Program.

For August - **Sloat Garden Center of San Rafael** courtesy of Steve Mauricio and **the SF Botanical Garden at Strybing Arboretum** courtesy of Don Mahoney.

Our appreciation to:

- ▶ **Suncrest Nurseries** courtesy of Mike Craib
- ▶ **Pacific Plug & Liner** courtesy of Ryan Hall
- ▶ **SF Botanical Garden at Strybing Arboretum**, courtesy of Don Mahoney

for the outstanding selection of plants donated for the July meeting

August 2009

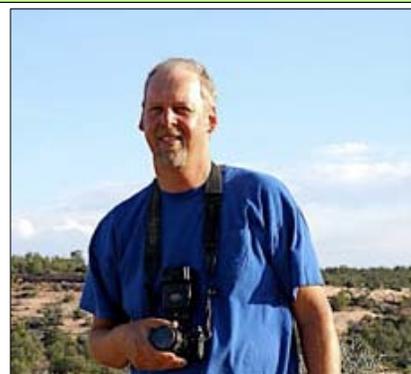
Volume 76, Issue 8

## Wildflowers and Orchids of Australia

August 17th

### Presented by Ron Parsons

Ron has been to Australia seven times since 2000 but last October he made his second trip to Western Australia. Besides venturing out on his own into the bush with co-author Mary Gerritsen and some Australian friends, Mary and he went on a four day orchid tour with An-



drew Brown, one of the authors of the renowned book "*Orchids of Southwest Australia*". They saw many species of orchids as well as numerous species of wildflowers. The southwest portion of the state is one of the few areas of the world with a Mediterranean climate, basically the same as coastal California. Some species will be familiar to the audience while others will be new.



Some plants we will see: *Anigozanthus* spp (Kangaroo Paws) and relatives, *Banksias*, *Thysanotus* (Fringe Lilies), *Drosera* (Sundews), *Lechenaultia* (related to Scaveola), *Pimelea* (related to *Daphne*), etc.

September's meeting

September 21st

### Plant Hunting in the High Andes of Chile and Argentina

Presented by Walter Teague, noted international Plant Explorer who has a genus and numerous species named after him. As well as a distinguished Plantsman, Walter is an accomplished artist and is sure to delight with his well rounded presentation on the Southern Andes.

Last meeting Ryan Hall of Pacific Plug and Liner showed us all sorts of interesting new plants for us to try in our gardens. We also had a little celebration of Elsie's 45 years in serving the Society. Everyone enjoyed the "Thank you" cake after the program. Elsie has been such a mainstay in our organization that we will really miss her at the entrance table each meeting, but more than that, her behind the scenes work, knowledge and experience will make for a difficult transition. Cindy O'Donnell has graciously volunteered to take on many of her duties and Elsie has given her all the tools that she needs. Thank you both, Elsie and Cindy for giving of yourselves for the Society.



Ellen Frank and Elsie Mueller

Speaking of our new Membership Chairperson, Cindy O'Donnell organized a table at the Summer Gardening Fair at the San Francisco Botanical Gardens on August first. Joining her, were Mark Delepine, George Suter, Ann Gilmore, Patricia Van Aggelen and Ted Kipping who all took turns manning the table, chatting with people about Cal Hort and inviting them to join us at one of our meetings. Many thanks to these members for making a statement among the assemblage of gardening vendors and organizations that made up the Gardening Fair. We appreciate being represented at this Fair where we haven't been in the last few years

This month Ron Parsons will wow us, as always, with his spectacular floral photographs. Ron's presentations are always fast paced and always dazzle us with how amazing nature is. I am looking forward to hearing about his adventures in South-Western Australia and seeing his expert photography.

Next Month, **September 21, 2009**, Walter Teague, noted plant explorer and photographer will present "**Plant Hunting in the High Andes of Chile and Argentina**". Walter is from Ecuador, has traveled extensively and will give you a lively evening of new experiences.

To balance out the year, on **Monday, October 19th**, Anthony Garza Jr., Supervisor of Horticulture and Grounds at UC Berkeley Botanical Gardens will be giving us some insight on

"**Life after Lawn: Toward New Naturalism**". He will focus on grasses and other tasty monocots like restios, astelia, lomandra, dianella, and carex. He will show photos of both individual specimens and grouped in naturalist garden settings to give us ideas on how to use in our own gardens.

**Monday, November 16th** will be a special program given by our own **Ernest Wertheim**, a member of Cal Hort for 71 years and an internationally acclaimed landscape architect. He will be sharing his decades of experience on changes in garden design and in Cal Hort.

Our nominating committee will be searching the masses to see if there are any sparks of interest to share in doing some of the behind the scenes duties that all organizations need to function. If everyone does

just a little, volunteer to greet people at the table one evening, give out the door prize tickets, get there a bit early and set up chairs, help set up the audio/visual equipment, write a short article for the newsletter. This will spread the burden and it will make it fun for everyone. We also need some major roles filled, we need a president, a vice president and a newsletter editor. These are all very important positions that need to be filled. Serving on the board in any capacity is very rewarding knowing that you have made a difference. There will be a volunteer list at the entrance table so if you are able to do any of these tasks for a meeting, please sign up.

Your help is appreciated!

### Don't forget to save your seeds...

Seeds collected and turned in by the November meeting are put on the Seed Exchange list in our January Bulletin for distribution in March. The more people participating by sharing their seeds, the better the list.

Turn in your clean seeds, any hard-copy photos and brief description/care to Dave Tivol at any Cal Hort meeting or by mail to Dave at:

30 Locksunart Way, #4, Sunnyvale, CA 94087.

## Plant of the Month

by Josh Schechtel

Sweet Pea Shrub- *Polygala x dalmaisiana*

Polygalaceae Family

This workhorse of western gardens is one of those plants that we see all around us, but it is never given any credit. Maybe this is because, like a mongrel hound, it doesn't have the cachet of a purebred. While some references call it a species, others claim that it is a hybrid between two other species of *Polygala*. I don't really care about its family background- all I know is that this plant blooms for most of the year, providing lots of color for very little water. Some naysayers whine that the purple-pink flowers are a difficult color to work with in the garden. Rubbish! I've seen this plant blending in well in many gardens against blue foliage, silver foliage, and combined with pale yellow flowering plants.



*Polygala* is Latin for 'much milk', and plants in this family were once called milkworts due to the belief that they increased milk production when eaten by cows. Sorry, but I can't tell you if this works or not.

Like most of my favorite plants, just provide it with full sun to part shade, good drainage, and leave it alone! It can grow to five feet tall and about the same in width, although it can be sheared to keep it smaller without making it unhappy. The flowers make excellent additions to flower arrangements, so save those prunings for your vases, and if you've got a cow or two, see if they like it!

## Filoli happenings

### Filoli's Orchard Tours and Nature Education Hikes

#### Saturday Docent-led Nature Hikes

**Date and Time:** Saturday mornings at 10 am – 12:30 pm, now through October 24, 2009

Filoli's Nature Preserve has more than 7 miles of trails crisscrossing 6 different types of native California habitat. The docent-led hike covers approximately 3 miles of well-maintained trails and takes about two and one-half hours. Experienced Nature Education Docents describe wildlife, plants, endangered species and the historical background of the area. **Visitors may not hike without a Docent.**

#### Orchard Tours

**Date and Time:** Thursdays and Saturdays, July through October, 24, 2009, 10:30 am- 12:00 pm

Tour Filoli's unique heirloom orchard and learn about the tradition of how Filoli is conserving not only the rare fruits and trees, but also this defining landscape feature of our country estate.



**For both - Fee:** Visitors taking a docent-led Tours pay the general admission to Filoli (\$12 for adults and \$5 for children and students with ID), which also includes access to the House and Garden. There is no extra charge for the Orchard Tour or the Nature Hike. No charge to Filoli members.

Exception is October 3<sup>rd</sup>, Autumn Festival.

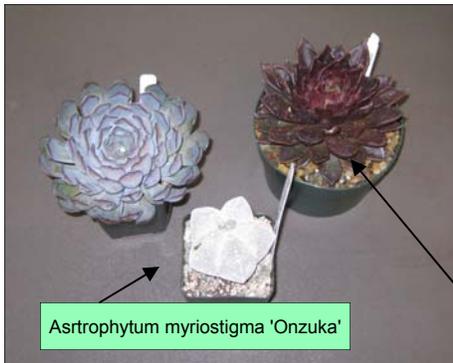
**Tickets: Advance registration is required.** Contact Filoli at 650-364-8300 XT 509 to make a reservation with the Visitors Center. **Visitors may not tour the Orchard or the natural area without a Docent.**

For more information about Filoli, please visit [www.filoli.org](http://www.filoli.org).

Billbergia 'Halleluja'  
Bromeliaceae

Jack Halperin  
San Francisco

Several hybrid Billbergias were exhibited with exquisitely colored leaves. The cultivar 'Halleluja' was also in bloom with a spike of blue tipped half inch flowers. This cultivar had translucent leaves with ruby red coloration on the youngest leaves and then spots and stripes of darker and lighter reds, pinks, and greens. The cultivar 'Strawberry' had a white base color, again with pink and pale green spots and stripes. These bromeliads, whose parents are usually from Brazil, are reliable outdoor plants in the bay area and are underused as they are beautiful and easy to grow. They need partial shade and protection from heavier frost. Bright light brings out the best coloration. As epiphytes, they need well drained soil and appreciate an occasional misting.



Astrophytum myriostigma 'Onzuka'  
Cactaceae

Jack Halperin  
San Francisco

The plant shown was like a small white tennis ball with wings. This named variety is a Japanese hybrid between two subspecies of Astrophytum myriostigma from Mexico, and almost looks like a symmetrical white rock. It is difficult to grow outdoors as it needs limited water and protection even from high humidity in the winter. It needs very well drained soil and is a good houseplant for a warm windowsill.

Echeveria affinis 'Black Prince'  
Crassulaceae

Jack Halperin  
San Francisco

This lovely dark echeveria with almost black leaves was first described by Eric Walther of Strybing Arboretum in 1957. It has been in succulent collections ever since and is often available at succulent sales. It is easy to grow in well drained soil and handles light frost readily. As are most echeverias and dudleyas, the plants are susceptible to mealy bugs.

Browallia americana hybrids  
Solanaceae

Kristen Yanker Hansen  
Danville

This old fashioned Victorian bedding plant was more widely grown in years past. Originally from South America it has been hybridized to give various colors of true blue, violet and white. It's common name is amethyst flower and is most often available as seed although occasionally it can be found in six-packs. It makes a great hanging basket. Usually under a foot tall, it can be covered with a mass of blooms for a long period. It needs regular water and is one of the best blues for bright shade. In warm spots it may continue to bloom through the winter, although it is usually thought of as an annual or short-lived perennial.



Whitfeldia longifolia 'White Candles'  
Acanthaceae

Kristen Yanker Hansen  
Danville

This African native shrub makes a great winter houseplant that can be put outside for the summer. It needs heat to do well. When happy it sends up 4 inch spikes of inch long white flowers with white calyxes giving an extraordinary display. It needs regular water and soil and doesn't like it below 50 degrees.

## September 18, 19 and 20, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, 9:30AM – 5:30PM

The Late Show Gardens—A revolutionary garden show unlike any other – addressing climate change and drought head-on. An unparalleled opportunity for world-class minds to come together in one place and discuss ideas that may help to improve our impact on the world. Celebrate design while addressing climate change, drought, sustainable practices and renewable resources. Show net proceeds will go to The Garden Conservancy and The Trust for Public Land's new Balboa Park. Held at Cornerstone Sonoma, 23570 Highway 121, Sonoma, CA 95476. 9:30 AM –5:30 PM, adults three day pass \$45, youth three day pass \$30. For more info and to buy tickets, visit [www.thelateshowgardens.org](http://www.thelateshowgardens.org).

U.C. BOTANICAL GARDEN AT BERKELEY  
(510) 643-2755 • [www.botanicalgarden.berkeley.edu](http://www.botanicalgarden.berkeley.edu)

## August 29, Saturday afternoon, 1:00PM – 3:00PM

Year of Science 2009 August: Unsel Lecture—Come listen to this year's Unsel lecture on climate change and the future of the California flora. Space is limited; registration required. 1:00 PM –3:00 PM, free.

## September 5, Saturday morning, 9:00AM – 12:00PM

Sick plant clinic—Join UC plant pathologist Dr. Robert Raabe for his monthly clinic and find out which diseases ail your plants. Entomologists will also be available to identify the pests that are living in your plants too. 9 AM–Noon, free.

SF BOTANICAL GARDEN SOCIETY  
(415) 661-1316 • [www.sfbotanicalgarden.org](http://www.sfbotanicalgarden.org)

## August 15, Saturday morning, 9:00AM – 12:30PM

An Introduction to Honey Bees and the Life of a Hive—Learn the basics about the European Honey Bee which is responsible for pollinating 30% of our food supply. For the past few years, headlines from around the globe have chronicled the declining populations of this important insect. 9:00 AM –12:30 PM, \$5 donation at door.

## September 13 and 20, Sunday, 10:00AM – 2:00PM

Demystifying the Sunflower Family: Identification and Medicinal Use—Come learn the secrets to identifying the many native members of the family Asteraceae in order to make accurate use of them in healing and food. The course will cover one session indoors to observe traits under the microscope with a walk in a botanic garden in the afternoon, and one in a local destination to observe how the plants grow, how they're adapted to their environment, and how they are used to treat a variety of common ailments. 10:00 AM –2:00 PM, members \$75, non-members \$85.

## August 29, Saturday, 10:00AM – 1:30PM

Permaculture in the Heart of the Wine Country—Come on this trip to Kenwood Permaculture in Kenwood, California for an introductory intensive workshop on the principles and design concepts of this rapidly growing sustainable gardening movement. This workshop includes a one and one-half hour lecture and slide show followed by a 2-hour garden tour, where you can see permaculture in action. Presented by Karen Boness of Kenwood Permaculture and Willow Landscape Design. 10:00 AM –1:30 PM, members \$65, non-members \$75.

## September 19, Saturday, 9:00AM – 1:00PM

Succulents vs. "Flimsy" Perennials—Following up on his popular "Gardening with Succulents" workshop, UC Davis Botanical Conservatory Director Ernesto Sandoval returns to discuss the cultivation of beautiful succulents alongside other perennials in your garden. Once again, an enticing assortment of succulents will be for sale. 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM, members \$45, non-members \$50.

UC DAVIS ARBORETUM

(530)752-4880 • <http://arboretum.ucdavis>

## August 15, Saturday morning, 10:00AM

Guided Tour: California Native Plants in the Garden—Tour the Mary Watis Brown Garden to see great natives for your home garden. Meet at the Buehler Alumni and Visitors Center. 10:00 AM, free.

## August 23, Saturday morning, 10:00AM

Guided Tour: Planning your Garden to Conserve Water—Tour the Ruth Risdon Storer Garden to learn the best watering approaches and plant choices for water-wise gardens. Meet at the Gazebo. 10:00 AM, free.

## September 12, Saturday morning, 10:00AM

Guided Tour: Simple Secrets for Great Container Gardens—Learn how to plant in pots to create a lush oasis without a lot of water. Meet at the Arboretum Terrace Garden. 10:00 AM, free.

### Plant Sales Coming up

#### SF Botanic Garden Plant sales

Location: Nursery (SW corner of the gardens),  
10 AM to 1PM - 9th and Lincoln, SF

September 12 - Native Plants & Succulents

October 10 - Trees, Ferns & Rhododendrons

November 14 - End-of-the-Season Sale

#### UC Berkeley Botanic Garden Plant Sale

Location: 200 Centennial Dr., Berkeley  
Sunday, September 28, 2008

Members' Sale and Silent Auction: 9 am - 11 am

Public Sale: 11 am - 3 pm



**The California Horticultural Society**  
 San Francisco County Fair Building  
 9TH Avenue & Lincoln Way  
 San Francisco, CA 94122  
[www.calhortsociety.org](http://www.calhortsociety.org)

Non-Profit  
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To join, or for a full range of membership levels, please visit our web site at [www.calhortsociety.org](http://www.calhortsociety.org), or contact Kristin Yanker-Hansen at 925-831-9499



Deadline for publication is the third Monday of each month for the following month's Bulletin, with the exception of December. Events during the first ten days of the month should be submitted two months ahead

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 Ted Kipping

**2009 - 2011**

First Term  
 Demi Bowles-Lathrop  
 Cindy O'Donnell



It's getting Close...

September 18, 19 and 20

This new garden show promises to be a "don't miss it" event. You will see wonderful gardens, art and have the opportunity to buy interesting garden accoutrements and plants. Come to hear an amazing array of speakers.

September 18, 19 and 20;  
 Preview party on Thurs. Sept. 17th with music, raffles, wine, food, fun and fabulous gardens.

Cornerstone  
 23570 Highway 121, Sonoma  
 \$20.00 entry

Show proceeds will go to the Trust for Public Land's new Balboa Park and the Garden Conservancy.

Visit [ww.thelateshowgardens.org](http://ww.thelateshowgardens.org) for more information.