



BULLETIN
THE CALIFORNIA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY
San Francisco County Fair Building
Ninth Avenue at Lincoln Way
San Francisco, California 94122
JULY 19, 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.

Co-sponsored with Strybing Arboretum Society
 Monday, July 19, 2004

Taking the High Road: People and Plants in Pakistan's Shangri La
Presented by Dr. Dan Johnson, Curator Native Plants, Denver Botanic Gardens.

Few might consider a trip to Pakistan in these times, but before 9/11 the world seemed a different place. On that very day we entered the northeastern countryside of Pakistan, where the world's greatest mountain ranges collide, and the dry steppes of central Asia merge with lush forested mountains. Here the Karakorum, Hindukush and Himalaya converge in a cathedral of the world's tallest peaks. Twisting through their heart, the Indus river cuts deeply through the land and has nourished one of the richest and most diverse cultures on Earth. The varied landscape only hints at the rich flora of the region, from the bristling mounds of *Acantholimon lycopodioides* to the windswept *Betula utilis* at treeline. In just two weeks, an unfamiliar territory captivated us all in unexpected ways.

The Plant Drawing each month is an important source of funds for the Grants and Scholarships Program. In July, the drawing will include donations from **Berkeley Horticultural Nursery**, courtesy of **Paul Doty** and from **Strybing Arboretum**, courtesy of **Dr. Don Mahoney**. Our appreciation to the **Dry Gardens**, Oakland, courtesy of **Richard Ward**, and to **Strybing Arboretum Society** courtesy of **Dr. Don Mahoney** for the outstanding plants donated for the June meeting.



Monday, August 23, 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 teeming 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.



President's Letter by Bruce Peters

I'm sensing a change happening in our Society. Slowly but surely, 'new' people are starting to get more involved. I'm not talking about a waterfall for people, mind you, but I understand that, except for a mid western thunderstorm, meaningful change starts slow and takes a little while to get going.

As more people get involved, more ideas can be shared and the more ideas we have, the more fun we can all have. For example, I was very excited to visit some member's San Francisco open gardens at the end of June. Those places really put my garden to shame! It was great to meet new members and hear other people's gardening ideas, all for free and totally low-key. No big schedules to adhere to just a list of places to go and look around. Talk if you want, or just look about. It was really great.



I'm looking forward to our other open gardens coming up throughout the rest of the summer (although why stop there? Winter's also a great gardening time in California...).

Speaking of seeing new gardens, we have an exciting field trip coming up in August. I'm truly embarrassed to admit that I've not yet made it to the Conservatory...me! The tropical loving President of a Hort Society who lives maybe 12 min away! At least I know I'll get there in August, along with 39 other plant-loving Society members. We're also going to visit some local gardens. Look at the insert in this issue and be sure to sign-up.

Thanks to everyone who's taken the small steps out of their comfort zones and volunteered to help on our committees. It's amazing what a Society can do when it's members band together with a purpose and it's also amazing to see it happen.

Zany old Luther Burbank was the vegetable world's first humorist. Grinning maniacally and with trowel in hand, Burbank sold his Santa Rosa nursery—because making money was too dull—and set to work on his life's purpose: confusing the plants around us. Before he was through, he had created satire (the white blackberry), parody (the spineless cactus), farce (a tomato that grows on a potato vine) and, his specialty, the anticlimax (a plum that tastes like a pear).

No, beautiful downtown Burbank was not named for him

—From an unidentified newspaper clipping



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: See info on back page.

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.

“Incorporating Succulents in the Garden for Bold Year Round Interest”

Presented by Ernesto Sandoval, Curator, Division of Biological greenhouses, Section of Plant Biology, University of California Davis.

Ernesto Sandoval, curator at the UC Davis Botanical Conservatory, gave a dazzling slide presentation on succulents at the Society’s June meeting. His digital enfilade in the San Francisco County Fair Building Auditorium involved succulents minor to major. From groundcovers to tree aloes, Sandoval traversed the range of succulents hardy outdoors in low-altitude Central and Northern California climates.

Starting with *Delosperma cooperi*, a dense purple-flowering iceplant hardy even in Denver, passing through images of tree Aloes like *bainsii* / *barberae* (hardy only in the most frost-free zones of the inner Bay Area), and ending with a flourish of public and private succulent-rich gardens, Sandoval gave the audience plenty of ideas for using these dramatic drought-tolerant plants in their gardens.

Gardens like that of Society member Kristin Yanker-Hansen and the Strybing Entry Garden have convinced many to modify the equation of succulents with a desert look. Travels in the native habitats of our favorite succulent species provide visions of epiphytic *Echeverias* and cactus, forest *Beschornerias*, Floridian *Yuccas* and coastal-scrub *Dudleyas* to prove the point that our gardens needn’t be mulched in decomposed granite to look great with succulents.

One cactus species that Sandoval showed prefers the shade of neighboring shrubs: a high-elevation *Echinopsis* he caught bursting into red-violet bloom. If planted in full sun, it yellows and mopes. Many species of cactus collected in Chile and Argentina, some from the Andes, also prefer the coolness of coastal California. Some cool-growing *Echinopsis* (*Trichocereus*) develop into Saguaro-like majesties at a much greater speed than that Arizona icon (called *Carnegiea gigantea*, named for Andrew Carnegie, the American industrialist, and virtually impossible to grow north of the Tehachapis).

Hey! Where’s the Plant Forum?

Whoops! Could it be attributable to the busy summer activities of our membership? There seems to have been a mass case of forgetfulness this past month as many people (Mr. President included!) forgot to bring their plants in for discussion. Help us out next month by remembering to bring something in, especially since many plants are really looking good just about now



Echeveria sp.

Intense foliar color in many species, from the silver of Agaves to the carmine of stressed Sedums, can render bloom a lagniappe. Cultivation conditions and seasons offer a changing display: A parched *Aloe* curls its black marginal spines together over brick-red foliage, then swells out with the rains into spotted jade plumpness, from which spires of red arise, each tube changing to gold upon pollination.

Along with the flamboyant and intoxicating cactus flowers, the *Aloe* inflorescences outdo the visibility of colorful succulent foliage. Slide after Sandoval slide brought gasps from the audience. Chartreuse, pink, yellow, gold, bicolor, tricolor, spicate, candelabra-like – the range of *Aloe* flowers was rivaled only by the range of their vegetative forms. Clambering *Aloe ciliaris*, spiraling *A. polyphylla* (a good bet for the coldest and coolest spots), sci-fi *A. marlothii*, towering *A. barberae* – they fit whatever bill you may have.

Ernesto also opened up a small portal into the inner workings of his mind as regarding soil amending. When creating new planting beds he simply mounds the soil for added drainage, perhaps adding some gravel but never adding compost or other organic matter. Non-organic amendments have the pleasant benefit of **not** decomposing over time allowing raised beds to remain raised over time, rather than slowly sinking to ground-level as various things degrade.

The timing of this talk coincided perfectly with the Cactus & Succulent Sale the following weekend which gave many members the opportunity to try out some of the ideas.

Alcatraz redux

Deborah Lindsay is actively recruiting volunteers for an Alcatraz garden work crew. Last month, Deborah’s contact information was accidentally printed in white. For those of you that can’t read white on white we’re printing it this month in the more conservative method of black on white.

Please contact Deborah Lindsay (dlindsay@parksconservancy.org) if you have questions about volunteering for this project.

Ophiopogon planiscapus

Over the last few years we've been hearing more about using unusually colored plants in the garden. One of the more useful and strikingly colored plants that has become popular is the little black mondo grass, *Ophiopogon planiscapus*. This is a hardy plant from eastern Asia that is a great accent in a pot or in the ground. It makes an ideal contrast when planted with yellow foliage (such as hostas, *Acorus* or *Hakonechloa macra 'Aureola'*) or blue flowers and foliage (such as *Corydalis*, hostas, or *Selaginella*). Because of its small size, this plant is perfect for a mixed container planting. A pale or contrasting mulch can also highlight its unusual color.

All of the cultivars are similar, with narrow, strap-like leaves that emerge green but quickly become striking black. It grows in a clumping form, like most of the members of the LILIACEAE family, slowly spreading by underground stolons. *Ophiopogon* rarely gets taller than 10 inches, and is not an aggressive spreader. It can grow in full sun, but prefers partial to full shade with moist, well draining soil, making

it compatible with ferns and other small shade loving plants.

In late spring or early summer small pink or purple bell-like flowers can be seen on a short spike among the foliage, followed by nearly black fruit. It can be propagated from divisions or by planting the seeds shortly after the fruits ripen.



According to our friends at Trans Pacific Nursery, the name *Ophiopogon* translates to 'snake's beard.' Although this name sounds a little scary, this is actually a well behaved gem of a plant for the garden.

Photo from <http://www.quansettnurseries.com/>



Please welcome to the following new members to the California Horticultural Society.

- | | |
|---|------------------------|
| Rachel Baker | (Terra Sole Nurseries) |
| Judith Buder | James E. Henrich |
| John Dennis & | Y. Lee Huey-Mankin |
| Bill Bulkley | Daniel Lorenzo |
| Gail Dryden | Anne McTavish |
| Elkhorn Native Plant Nurseries (Nicky Hughes) | Caren Meghreblian & |
| Robert Gustafson | Harry Bernstein |
| Sherry & John Hall | Arkin Moore |
| | Joanne Naegele |

Need some Horticultural Help?

The back page of your Cal Hort Roster contains a special listing of our Business members. What better way to insure your future landscaper knows a tulip from a petunia? It's also a great place to find recommendations for your friends!



Bring a new member, get Free Plant Drawing Tickets!

Now when you get a new member to join **and** attend a monthly meeting, you will get a bonus of 6 free tickets to our plant drawing!



You get extra chances to win great plants, other Cal Hort members will get the opportunity to make more horticultural friends, and your friend gets all the benefits of a Cal Hort membership.

How do you claim these tickets? Just tell Elsie or one of the reception volunteers when you first enter that you've brought a new member and they'll give you a certificate to redeem for your free tickets during the announcements. Remember, new members also get 6 free tickets at their first meeting. What could be better? I can't think of a thing.



Horticultural Calendar

The Gardens At Heather Farm
(925) 947-1678 • www.gardenshf.org

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, Berkeley. Free (510) 643-2755 or www.botanicalgarden.berkeley.edu

Sundays

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

Various Dates

Summer Twilight Tours—Stroll The UC Berkeley Botanical Gardens in the evening and learn something too. Check the website for more info. 5:30 PM – 7 PM, members \$12, non-members \$17. (510) 643-2755 or www.botanicalgarden.berkeley.edu

July 17 & 18

The Golden Gate Lily Society offers judged displays of Asiatic and Oriental Lilies, Ikebana flower arrangements, sale of lily plants & flowers. Door prizes. Lakeside Garden center, 666 Bellevue Ave., Oakland (at Lake Merritt). 12-5 pm..

July 31

Summer Evening Party—Enjoy dinner and a stroll in the gardens at Filoli. 5 – 8 pm Advance purchase tickets only, \$45. (650) 364-8300 or 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.

July 10

Bonsai: Hands-on Workshop—An in-depth presentation and hands-on pruning with Mike Baresi. 9:30 AM – NOON, members \$25, non-members \$30, plus a \$20 materials fee.

July 17

Build Your Own Hypertufa Trough—This popular class is back. All materials will be provided to make two planters. 9:30 AM – noon, members \$15, non-members \$20, plus a \$15 materials fee.

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

July 9

Gardening for Wildlife: A Personal View—Don Mahoney shares his secrets. Noon – 4:30 PM, members \$55, non-members \$75.

July 10

Plant Sale—Featuring bird and butterfly plants. 10 AM – 2 PM at the nursery.

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.

Ruth Bancroft Garden

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

August 6

Dry Garden Design Seminar II—Stew Winchester, Bobbi Feyerabend, Brian Kemble discuss designing for hot summer gardens. 8:30 AM – 3 PM. Members \$65, non-members \$70.

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. – 2 PM at the nursery.

Propagation group

Cal Hort is looking to start up a fun propagation group (isn't propagation *always* fun?). We're looking for both experts and beginners, to start propagating plants for next year's plant sale. .

Although still in the planning stages, we'd like to get this group up and running as soon as possible so that the plants will look their best by next year.

We need:

- Volunteers to propagate and care for the plants.
- Greenhouse space (maybe)
- Ideas for choice plants to grow - plants that will pull more people to our sale.
- Seeds, cuttings etc of the chosen plants
- Potting soil & pots
- Other good ideas

This is a great way to gain hands-on horticultural experience, share some of that experience with others, meet new members, help out the Society, learn about new plants... The list goes on and on!

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

Officers

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Renee Fittinghoff

Second Term
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Bruce Peters
Jason Dewees

Second Term
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2004-2006

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Diana Ross

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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.



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