

Bulletin of the California Horticultural Society

Cultivating Friendship, gardens and fun for 75 years

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

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 9th Ave. San Francisco.

7:15 PM Announcements, Plant Forum, and Program Meeting will be held at the SF Botanical Garden in the San Francisco County Fair Building at 9th 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 July, Suncrest Nurseries will be donating plants along with SF Botanical Garden at Strybing Arboretum courtesy of Don Mahoney.

Our appreciation to:

- **Emersisa Gardens, Santa Rosa**
Courtesy of Muchtar Salzmann
- **SF Botanical Garden**
courtesy of Don Mahoney

for the outstanding selection of plants donated for the June meeting

**Please patronize these
business
supporters of Cal Hort**

July 2008

Volume 75, Issue 7

A Treasury of Begonias

July 21st

Laurie Bounsall has been growing Begonias for over 15 years and has been a volunteer in the begonia department at the San Francisco Botanical Gardens at the Strybing Greenhouse for over two and a half years. She will be presenting a slide show outlining the daily activities involved in bringing a Begonia from cutting to a salable plant for the Strybing Botanical Garden Society monthly plant sales. Begonia enthusiasts divide the species and cultivars into a number of classes depending on growth habit and type of rootstock. The classes include: cane stemmed, shrubby, winter-flowering, rhizomatous, Rex, tuberous, winter-flowering and Tuber hybrida group.



A wide selection of begonias will be on display and for sale.

August's meeting - Plant Hunting in Japan and China

August 18th

Bill McNamara, traveled to Japan for a seed and herbarium specimen collecting expedition in Sept. of 2007. He worked mainly in central Honshu, much of which is coined the Japanese Alps. He will take us along on his adventures of plant hunting in the "Japanese Alps" and in Southeastern Yunnan, China, in the Feng Shui Lin, which are small patches of the natural forest left intact because it is believed to protect those villages where most of the landscape has been replaced with agriculture. Bill has taken us on adventures in China in the past and his programs always prove to be interesting and educational. Join us on August 18th!

*"Deep summer is
when laziness
finds
respectability."*

- Sam Keen



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President's message

Ellen Frank

Oh my word, is it hot or what? Gardening in this type of weather is damage control...water, water and more water. It is too hot for any other gardening...water and get your feet wet; shoot the hose straight up and let it rain on you; Okay, I know, you are supposed to water early in the morning when the temperatures haven't maxed out the thermometer yet, but sometimes you just have to water when time permits and if it is early evening and you just want to cool off along with your plants, it is a great excuse to get wet!

We are really coming in to trying times with gardening, many counties and cities are calling for water rationing or restrictions this summer and the need for drought tolerant gardens is getting more and more important with each passing year. Cal Hort will be visiting the Cactus Garden at Stanford University on Sunday, July 20th and perhaps it will inspire you to incorporate succulents into your personal oasis. The

Gamble Garden will also be included, along with some nurseries in the afternoon. Jonathan Silverman is leading this trip and it promises to be a fun outing. Jonathan also has a tour of the Garden Conservancy Garden project on Alcatraz planned for Saturday, Oct. 4th. That one will cost \$20 and is limited to the first 25 people to send him a check. I've been wanting to see the progress of that garden for some time now. See announcements for both later in this issue.

We are still looking for an editor for the bulletin. This is a great job for anyone that either likes to create or likes to write or anyone with some spare time, because the amount of writing you do or the amount of creativity you put into each edition, will be up to the editor. It would be greatly appreciated if someone would volunteer. If you have a friend that you both would like to share the responsibilities, that would be great because a shared task is less work and collaboration produces a stronger end product. Think about it. What

have you done lately for the society? Another greatly needed hole to fill is a chairperson for the San Francisco Flower and Garden Show. In 2009 the show is moving to the San Mateo Event Center. This job entails contacting nurseries and asking for donations for showcasing the newest plants for the coming year. Then arranging pick up, set up, coverage during the show and breakdown. We have a wonderful group of dedicated members that help each year, so it isn't as if you are doing it all yourself. If you can find a friend and co-chair, then the task is lessened for both.

Laurie Bounsall at this month's program promises to take the mystery out of growing gorgeous begonias. And I bet all you East Bay members will enjoy a little respite from the heat. I hope to see you all there!!!



Plant Forum

Don Mahoney

Masdevallia welischii, grown by Kay Este

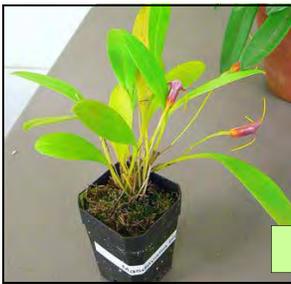
This intriguing orchid was named in 1978 after San Francisco resident David Alan Welisch. Like most *Masdevallias*, this plant loves the fog belt and is not tolerant of high temperatures, coming from 10,000 feet elevation in Peru. It grows best in sphagnum moss with perhaps a little small bark or perlite added. It is best in a bright shady spot. Very early morning or late afternoon sun is tolerated. They need to be kept moist at all times. The genus *Masdevallia* has 400 species and are an amazing treasure for those wanting to grow orchids outdoors year round in the fog belt of zone 17.



Masdevallia welischii

continued from page 2

Masdevallia bicolor, grown by Kay Este



This is a smaller flowered orchid that comes from a large area of central and southern South America. It can tolerate a little more heat and some forms are intermediate growers.

Masdevallia bicolor

Masdevallia notosibiriac,

grown by Kay Este

This orchid has unusual flowers for a Masdevallia as the flowers have a smaller opening for a mouth. It is bright pink and again is a cool grower that resents hot weather. I personally grow a number of Masdevallias in the east bay and find them very easy if their conditions of moist soil, good air circulation and full shade are met. They bloom several times a year and each flower can last for weeks. They are colorful and very beautiful and should be grown by more gardeners.

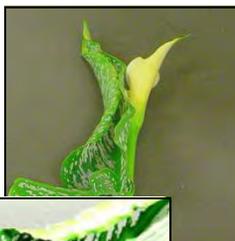


Masdevallia notosibiriac

Zantedeschia collection

By Kristen Yanker-Hansen, Danville

There are 8 species of Calla lilies and the most familiar is the common *Zantedeschia aethiopica*, which is evergreen and loves wet conditions. This common calla lily seen often in gardens comes from the cape province of South Africa. The ones shown are ones from the eastern cape or their hybrids and these are winter deciduous. While in their native habitat they are dry during the winter, here they do not seem to mind winter wet as long as they are well drained and the ground does not freeze. They grow fast starting in April or May and need summer water while they are blooming. They work well in part shade in borders or in containers.



Zantedeschia albomaculata

The ones shown include *Z. albomaculata* which has a white spathe and arrow shaped leaves that from a distance look spotted with white, but really are marked with clear windows that let light through from the back. The next species shown was *Z. elliotiana* which has flowers surrounded by a bright



Z. elliotiana

yellow spathe and less spotted leaves. The third species shown is *Z. rehmanii* which has narrow pink spathes and pure green leaves. These three have been hybridized to give the many forms so available at chain stores the last few years. One hybrid shown was an almost black spathed plant several of which are in the trade, the most common being named 'Schwarzmaker'. All the calla lilies (really arums, not lilies) make great cut flowers and are worth growing in a sunny or partly shaded watered border.



Z. rehmanii

Field Trip - Oct. 4th

Alcatraz

The Garden Conservancy will co-host a Cal Hort Society Alcatraz Gardens Tour

Tour Date : Saturday, Oct. 4th

Location: Pier 33 -
Boat's departure is 8:45am
Time Event starts: 8:30am
Time Event ends: 11:30am



There are ONLY 25 available spots which will require RSVP. There is a cost of \$20 each. Make the check payable to the Garden Conservancy.

You can mail checks, along with your name, address, email address and phone number to:

Jonathan Silverman
P.O. Box 460463
San Francisco, CA 94146

Please feel free to contact Jonathan directly if you have questions at jonnygogotravels@yahoo.com or 650 346 7242

Question Lady - What has been your evolution in your interest in plants?

What were you passionate about in your early gardening days and what is your latest passion in the plant world? We all go through phases of our latest interest in plants where we thirst for knowledge of a certain type of plant or a certain associations of plants (shade plants, succulents, orchids, etc.) and gobble up any type of information we can get, then we ride along for awhile with that interest and then something happens and you grow into another phase where you find a new interest and slurp up any information on that subject. Gardeners and gardens are ever evolving. How has your gardening interest changed over the years?

Bruce Peters writes:

I first started out being interested in shade plants, since that was the area I had to plant in. Then we cleared a new spot in the sun so I started loving fast growing grasses...especially variegated ones. As time went on, fast growing grasses morphed into a love of bamboo (I know, technically they're the same thing, but since they're a different category landscape design-wise, I thought I could consider it a new interest) which are also often variegated.

Then I started noticing that tropicals are often large leaved (like many shade plants), variegated and fast growing. How fantastic is that? Eventually, though, I got tired of trying my darndest to grow things that just really don't love the SF climate, despite being in a greenhouse so I am now leaning more towards liking things that grow well where I am. No more pushing the envelope for me (well, not entirely, but...). Along those lines, I'm starting to look more and more at CA natives.

Also, I've started acupuncture school so starting to look at Chinese herbs and which ones of those will enjoy our climate here. It's surprising the lack of info on that I've been able to find, but I'll keep looking!

Inge Hoffmann writes:

I am Inge Hoffmann and was last years "Horticulturist of the year". My interests first were Cacti and Succulents and my garden was developed along these lines. I went on many Expeditions that were underwritten by the Huntington

Botanic Garden, Heidelberg Botanic Garden and the International Succulent Institute. Many of my plants are thus collected in the wild. In the 1970 to 1986 that was no problem. Then my husband got interested in Palms and they became the center of our lives. We visited the world over in our search for Palm Seed. I was a volunteer for 2 years for the Palm Society and then opened my own business, SEED SERVICE and I am still known around the world as the "SEED LADY".

Today I have 85 species of palms in my garden - in all 110 palms - mostly seed grown. Many of them are now at maturity and are giving me seeds that are still distributed by other Seed dealers. I have a great many slides and am still giving lectures about this rarely talked about hobby. I still judge local shows for Cacti and Succulents. Both, huge palms and a great many cacti and succulents along with Bromeliads can be seen and visited in my garden in San Leandro. Visitors are always welcome.

Ellen Frank writes:

Have I gone through my phases....dwarf conifers, perennials, species pelargoniums and scented geraniums, Japanese maples, California natives, bromeliads. Right now I am in a succulent phase. All of the sudden succulents have come to my consciousness and they are soooo fascinating and beautiful. Part of the reason is I am planning a new garden with succulents and drought tolerant plants and they will be the main headliners in my hillside theater.

Next month's Question Lady column asks "What lures you to gardening?"

Why do you choose to garden when a very many people think it as work? There are many people that just don't like gardening. They may like to look or experience beautiful gardens, but they don't like to do the work, and a lot of it is "work", hard work, but what do you get out of doing the work yourself? Or are you one who just like to look at gardens and watch your plants grow and leave the digging of holes and designing to someone else???

Email editor@calhortsociety.org, write it down - give it to Elsie at the next meeting or drop it in the mail to: Ellen Frank, 2101 Harbor View Dr., Martinez, CA 94553.

"No more pushing

the envelope

for me

(well, not entirely, but...)"

Bruce Peters

Field Trip

**CAL HORT SOCIETY –
SUNDAY- JULY 20 FIELD
TRIP**

- MARK YOUR CALENDAR -

**EXPLORE 2 FANTASTIC GAR-
DENS IN BAY AREA**

FREE

Leader - Jonathan Silverman

(650) 346-7242

jonnygogotravels@yahoo.com

Please RSVP as soon as possible

Stanford Cacti and Succulent Garden.

10:00am - 11:15am - Tour guide – Christy Smith.

<http://grounds.stanford.edu/points/gardens/arizonagarden.html>

There are many unusual plants within the Arizona garden. Selections from the Cacti family include columnar, barrel and monstrose forms. Selections of succulents include Aloes, Crassulas and rosette-forming Agaves.

Directions:

401 Quarry Road.

The parking lot you need to find is at the intersection of Welch and Quarry.

Go into the parking lot where Welch dead ends at Quarry, and proceed thru the lot as if Welch actually continued. That will get you roughly to the appropriate Arboretum entrance.

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Gamble Garden

11:30am - 12:30PM - Tour guide – TBD.

<http://www.gamblegarden.org/index.html>

Enjoy a Mediterranean garden, woodland garden, wisteria garden, rose garden, and more. Spectacular flowers are on the way. Dahlias, zinnias, and roses are especially nice. Look for hydrangeas in the shady parts of the garden. Vegetables are starting to ripen, too.

Directions:

1431 Waverley Street, Palo Alto

From U.S. 280

Exit on Page Mill Road, Palo Alto. Go east on Page Mill for approximately 3 miles, crossing El Camino. After the underpass, turn left on Waverley Street. Continue on Waverley to Churchill Avenue. Gamble Garden is in the next block, on the right. Please use one of our parking lots, entering from Waverley Street or from Churchill Avenue.

From U.S. 101

Exit on Embarcadero Road West towards Stanford University. Go west on Embarcadero for approximately 1.5 miles. At the sixth stop light, turn left onto Waverley Street. Please park in the parking lot on the left.

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Food Time

After the Gardens we can grab a delicious lunch together at Max's Opera Café at Stanford Shopping Center

12:45pm- 1:45 pm

650-323-6297

Nursery Visit Bonus --If interested, there's even more excitement!

2:00pm - 4:00pm

Al's Nursery

Phone: 650-851-0206

900 Portola Road

Portola Valley, CA

Roger Reynolds Nursery

Phone: 650-323-5612

133 Encinal Avenue

Menlo Park, CA 94025

<http://www.rogerreynoldsnursery.com/>

**July 18-19, Friday and Saturday,
8:30AM – 5:00PM**

An Age of Gardeners: Mrs. Bancroft & Her Contemporaries—A two-day seminar and garden tour honoring Ruth Bancroft's 100th birthday. It will be a study of the Bay Area's rich horticultural heritage highlighting it's most prolific gardeners. For more info and to register go to www.gardenconservancy.org/events.pl?ID=132 or call (415) 441-4300.

July 21st, Cal Hort

July 27, Sunday morning, 9:30AM – 12:30PM

Pruning California Native Trees and Shrubs—Workshop on practical pruning techniques for trees and shrubs, focusing on California natives. At the Regional Parks Botanic Garden within Tilden Regional Park. Meet at the Visitor Center. \$45, 9:30 AM –12:30 PM

**August 1-3, Friday, Saturday and Sunday
9:30AM – 4:30PM**

Salvia Summit—A three-day international conference on salvias, Cabrillo College, 6500 Soquel Dr., Aptos. Registration is \$200 per person. 9:30 AM –4:30 PM. For more info and to register, go to http://www.cabrillo.edu/academics/horticulture/Salvia_summit/SalviaSummit.html

U.C. BOTANICAL GARDEN AT BERKELEY
(510) 643-2755 •
www.botanicalgarden.berkeley.edu

**July 23, Wednesday evening, 6:30PM –
8:00PM**

Twilight Tours: From Our Garden to Yours—Join Horticulturist Nathan Smith as he shows you great plants from the Garden's collection for use in your own garden. Members \$15, non-members \$12, 6:30 PM –8:00 PM.

**August 12, Tuesday evening, 6:00PM –
7:00PM**

American Chestnut: The Life, Death and Rebirth of a Perfect Tree—Come learn about the cultural and economic importance of the chestnut to the East coast, especially Southern Appalachia and the strategies that are being used to bring the tree back. Light reception to follow. Members \$5, non-members \$10. 6:00 PM –7:00 PM.

SF BOTANICAL GARDEN SOCIETY

(415) 661-1316 • www.sfbotanicalgarden.org

August 2, Saturday, 10:00AM – 3:00PM

Summer Garden Fair—Come to the garden and join the SFBG community, science groups, other plant societies and other gardeners to learn more about plants and gardening. Take advantage of this opportunity to talk to local experts and purchase special plants and garden accessories. 10:00 AM –3:00 PM, free.

August 9, Saturday, 10:00AM – 1:00PM

Saturday Plant Sale—A general sale featuring shade plants.

10:00 AM –1:00 PM

U.C. SANTA CRUZ ARBORETUM

(831) 427-2998 • www2.ucsc.edu/arboretum

July 24, Thursday evening, 7:00PM

Plant Collecting in Chile—Join Curator Tom Saucedo for a slide show on his travels in Chile in January of this year and the plants he collected while there. Potluck supper at 6:00 PM precedes the lecture. 7:00 PM, donations accepted.

UC DAVIS ARBORETUM

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

July 20, Sunday morning, 10:00AM

Guided Tour: More Color in Your Garden—Learn what to plant for year-round color.

Meet at the Gazebo. 10:00 AM, free.

August 2, Saturday morning, 10:00AM

Guided Tour: Australian Plants for Central Valley Gardens—See some great plants from Down Under in the newly-renovated Australian Collection. Meet at A Street Bridge, 10:00 AM, free.

August 10, Sunday morning, 10:00AM

Guided Tour: Choosing the Right Plants for Your Valley-Wise Garden—Which plants should you select? Meet at the Gazebo. 10:00 AM, free.



75th Anniversary Design T-Shirts and Tote Bags for Sale

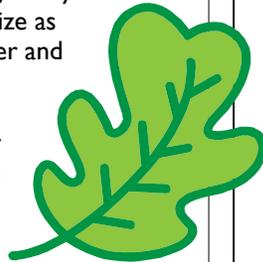


T-shirts – short sleeved / white w/ dk. green design-
\$12 each or 2/\$20 (save \$4)

long sleeved / dk. green w/ white design-
\$14 each or 2/\$24 (save \$4)

Totes -\$12.00 each or 2 for \$20.00
The canvas totes are ideal for grocery shopping. They are the same size as paper grocery bags, but stronger and with handles.

Call 1-800-884-0009 to order or email editor@calhortsociety.org

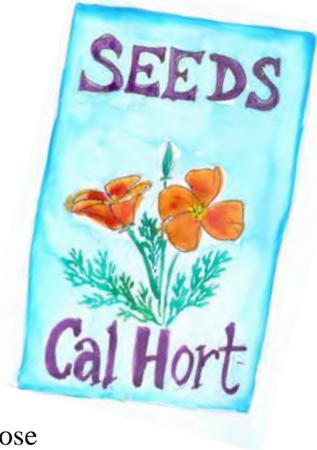


Start collecting seeds for the Seed Exchange

Don't forget the seed exchange as you are deadheading any of your spring flowering treasures. Seeds are donated throughout the year before Thanksgiving and then organized and cataloged into a numbered list which is printed in our January *Bulletin* along with the official order form. Completed forms must be received by March 1. All seeds are then distributed at the March meeting or by mail for those who can't attend. Send your donations, and any hard-copy photos of the seed plants, to:

Dave Tivol
130 Locksunart Way #4
Sunnyvale, CA 94087

Digital images can be sent to bruce@calhortsociety.org
Or bring them to any Cal Hort meeting.



Plant of the Month

Josh Schechtel

Plant of the Month- *Begonia luxurians*, the Palm-leaved Begonia and *Begonia grandis*



Last month we learned about a palm suitable for our climate. This month we continue the theme of adding some tropical-looking punch to our gardens with a palm look-alike. *Begonia luxurians* is a striking plant for shady gardens, where it is equally at home in the ground or in a pot. Although it hails from Brazil, it can withstand cold down to the mid-twenties, and will

grow back from the roots if it suffers from frost damage. Its large leaves are, well, luxuriant, with an appealing texture and shape. The flowers are very small, but produced in a large inflorescence, similar to cotinus, or smokebush. With its bamboo-like canes, palm-like leaves, and cotinus-like flowers, *Begonia luxurians* often keeps people guessing at its true identity. If you have a protected spot in your garden that gets bright shade to partial sun, with rich moist soil, try surprising your friends with this taste of the tropics.

Begonias are such a useful group of plants, I couldn't limit myself to just one. Another of my favorite garden plants that can be grown in most of California is *Begonia grandis*. This begonia grows to about two feet tall, and produces wonderful little pink flowers in loose clusters over the handsome, heart-shaped foliage. The leaves, like many begonias, have a wonderful texture with deep veins, and the stems and undersides of the leaves are an eye-catching burgundy color.

Begonia grandis is completely deciduous, dying down to the ground each winter, and miraculously returning in late spring. It reproduces freely from seeds and from bulblets produced on the stems, making it an easy plant to share with friends. It enjoys similar garden conditions to *Begonia luxurians*.



Although this and the other pictured aren't *Begonia luxurians*, the flowers look the same

To join, or for full range of membership levels, please visit our web site at www.calhortsociety.org, or contact Elsie Mueller at 800-884-0009.

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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We need YOU!!!

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We need YOU!!!

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**Join the Cal Hort
Yahoo! Groups**

This is a Cal Hort members only group for club correspondence and networking. Calendar events and get the latest impromptu news about Cal Hort. If you need information or just want someone to go plant shopping with, just post a message. The more people we get in the group the more valuable it will become. You can choose to get the postings, or check the website periodically for new postings.

Email
editor@calhortsociety.org
for an invitation.



The California Horticultural Society

San Francisco County Fair Building

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San Francisco, CA 94122

www.calhortsociety.org

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