



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

**March 17, 2003**

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

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

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

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

Co-Sponsored with Strybing Arboretum Society

**Monday, March 17, 2003**

**“Clematis, well behaved vines of outrageous beauty”**

Presented by

Patrick Jesse Pons-Worley

The speaker experienced his first clematis, a velvety purple Jackmanii hybrid, as a child at his grandmother's home in Minnesota. After completion of college, he planted his own collection of clematis. He has always been an enthusiastic vine grower with clematis holding a special place for the past 45 years. Other specimens in his collection include Passiflora, Bignonia, Vitis and tropical vines of all descriptions. He is the author of a cookbook 'The Passion fruit Cookbook'; has taught classes on vines; and is an artist known for watercolor and pastel renderings of some of his favorite plants and flowers including clematis. These showy shrubs and vines are gems whose rich variety of colors and forms make them of great use in nearly every garden. Mr. Worley will speak of classic and modern varieties, botanical interest and planting and care of plants. The use of clematis in gardens and their many uses for landscaping possibilities will also be highlighted.

The **Plant Drawing** each month provides an important source of funds for the Grants and Scholarships Program. In March the drawing will include donations from our speaker Patrick Worley and **Strybing Arboretum** and **Botanical Gardens**, courtesy of Dr. Don Mahoney. Our appreciation to **Sequoyah Ridge Nursery**, Occidental, California, courtesy of Hastings Schmidt; **UC Botanical Garden** courtesy of Dr. Chris Carmichael & Anthony Garza; and to **Strybing Arboretum** and **Botanical Gardens**, courtesy of Dr. Don Mahoney who graciously donated the beautiful specimens for the February meeting.

**Coming Programs**

Co-sponsored with Strybing Arboretum Society

**Monday, April 21, 2003**

**“Hibiscus and related Malvaceae: so much more than just a pretty flower”**

Presented by

Georgia Bost

The speaker is President of Village Botanica Nursery, Houston, Texas and the 277 acre Production Farm: Hibiscus Hill Plantation located in Waller, Texas. Nearly all of the temperate North American species of Hibiscus, as well as a number of Asiatic and a few South American genomes – all perennials - are grown at the plantation. Also being grown are more than 120 hybrids of North American native Hibiscus. All of these genomes are being chemically characterized for flowers, green pods, mature seeds, root fibers, and cane fibers as preliminary analyses for future products from this perennial crop. The program will be richly illustrated with slides.



**SAVE THESE DATES**  
**California Horticultural Society**  
**9<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL PLANT SALE**

**May 17-18, 2003**

**Strybing Arboretum, San Francisco County Fair Building**

**Rare and Wonderful Plants**

**For information call Elsie Mueller at 800-884-0009**



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# President's Letter

by Katherine Henwood

All Nature seems at work. Slugs leave their lair--  
The bees are stirring--birds on the wing--  
And Winter, slumbering in the open air,  
Wears on his smiling face a dream of Spring!  
And I, the while, the sole unbusy thing,  
Nor honey make, nor pair, nor build, nor sing.  
Work without Hope

—Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Fate that's what it was, I opened the book and there it was! Mr. Coleridge may have been observant, 'though not a gardener, or he would have been out there stamping on the slugs and pulling weeds. That's what I have been doing! My earlier efforts are paying off, the weeds are under control, and the ranunculus are up, as are the anemones. The Iceland poppies are starting to bud, and the pansies are thick with their funny faces. My mother-in-law always thought they looked angry. Hyacinths are in bloom, the daffodils are coming and I have several vireyas and cymbidiums in blossom as well.

Of course, the camellias, red, white with red stripes and white are starting, pink Debutante and *Chandleri elegans*

(known around here as the Elegant Chandelier) have been at it for several weeks. I have cut back the heliotrope and the salvias that were taking over the world, and my next chore is to move the iris (I know it's the wrong time, but it's now or never) and set out the delphiniums. Not to mention put out the snail bait! The roses are full of new growth, I think now is the time the foliage looks the best.

Those of you who attended The Walk on Monday the 17th got a personal introduction to the New Zealand plantings. After a delicious dinner at Park Chow we enjoyed Scot Medbury's program on the future of the New Zealand Garden in the Arboretum. Scott is a dynamic speaker, and gave us a history lesson on the plantings in the gardens. I think everyone thoroughly enjoyed the program.

The March program is sure to be another great one, Clematis presented by Patrick Worley. I know that Patrick is an interesting speaker, and I'm sure that you will enjoy his presentation, even if you don't have any clematis.

I hope that you will join us for The Walk and dinner at Park Chow. The menu is varied, reasonable, tasty, the service is good and they get us out in good time for the meeting. I hope to see you all.

## Growing bulbs from seed

Some of the seed from this year's seed list requires special treatment for good germination and growth. A variety of native bulb seed (*Allium*, *Calochortus*, *Dichelostemon*, *Erythronium*, and *Tritelea*) and South African bulb seed (*Gladiolus*, *Ixia*, *Lachenalia*, *Moraea* and *Sparaxis*) benefit from cool temperatures (under 40 degrees) to ensure germination.

Since they are winter growers, it is easy to sow the seed in late autumn when the nights are cooler or cold and then the seeds germinate in 2 to 6 weeks. September or October works fine if you want to gamble on having a warm winter or if you have a cool greenhouse to grow them in. A bout of cold and cloudy weather in winter can decrease their growth however, and so some people prefer to wait and plant them in late January or February. The tiny seedlings then begin their growth as the days are getting longer and slightly warmer and the chances of them surviving are higher.

Once the leaves begin to yellow, often as early as April, water should be withheld and the pots should be stored in a cool place for the summer. In the fall bring them back out and resume watering. It is best to not take them out of the seed pot until the second or third year.

No matter what approach you take, beware of slugs, snails, mice, and birds as they can devastate the seed pots in short order. Also be sure and protect them from heavy rain as that will mash them down or wash them out. Another technique especially useful for seed that originate from fire prone regions (including most South African bulbs) is to soak the seed overnight in smoke impregnated water. A product from South Africa is on the market (it is available at the Strybing book store) which can be used to make the water. I always use it and it appears to help greatly.

## Botanical Tours

### April 9-14

**Cal Hort Texas Field Trip** to San Antonio, Austin, Peckerwood & Yuccadoo. [www.calhortsociety.org](http://www.calhortsociety.org) or (925) 831-9499

### May 4

**Cal Hort Coastal Garden Tour.** Visit gardens on the Marin coast in all their spring splendor. \$10 per person. Call (415) 388-6850 or sign up at the next meeting to reserve your spot.

### May 16-June 3, 2003

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

### August 18-September 2, 2003

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

### September 16-October 5 2003

**Wildflowers of Western Australia** with Rodger Elliot & Dick Turner. In support of *Pacific Horticulture* (800) 624-6633 or [www.geostartravel.com](http://www.geostartravel.com)

### January 22-February 4, 2004

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

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

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# January Plant Forum by Don Mahoney

*"A picture is a worth a thousand words." Fully believing the old adage, color photos of the following plants are available on our website at [www.calhortsociety.org](http://www.calhortsociety.org) in the 'Plant Forum' section.*

## 1. **Narcissus 'Jesimay'**

AMARYLLIDACEAE

Kathy Echols, Martinez

This is a cultivar of the hoop-petticoat daffodil *Narcissus bulbocodium*. The parent grows in mediterranean France, Spain and Portugal, so is well adapted to naturalizing in California. This particular form has lovely pastel peach colored large flowers produced in profusion. These bulbs are summer deciduous and are small growers so they need to be planted where they are not overwhelmed by larger meadow or grassland plants.

## 2. **Nemesia 'Busy Bee'**

SCROPHULARIACEAE

Kathy Echols, Martinez

This patented form of the South African short-lived perennial *Nemesia* is a compact variegated form with soft purple-red flowers. Part to full sun and regular soil is all that is needed for these *Nemesias*. They do better with supplemental water but are capable of being drought-tolerant. This one grows to 8" tall by 8" wide.

## 3. **Nematanthus 'Black Magic'**

GESNERIACEAE

Katherine Henwood, Pacifica

Many forms of *Nematanthus*, including this one, make good indoor/outdoor hanging baskets as they are capable of tolerating light frosts and can be brought in or displayed when they come into full bloom in the winter and spring. This one has bright orange flowers shown off against very dark almost black shiny leaves. The plant can make a 2' to 3' basket.

## 4. **Leucojum aestivum 'Gravetye giant'**

AMARYLLIDACEAE

Wayne Roderick, Orinda

Native to Europe and Southwest Asia, summer snowflakes actually bloom here in late winter and are attractive bulbs for slowly naturalizing on cool slopes or in winter-wet edges of shrubs or trees. They have strap shaped leaves and nodding, bell-shaped white flowers with a green spot below each petal tip. This particular variety has larger flowers.

## 5. **Prunus mume (white flower form)**

ROSACEAE

Wayne Roderick, Orinda

Japanese flowering plums can become very long-lived small trees and are often used for bonsai. This white flowering form was very fragrant. One of the first ornamental trees to bloom, this is a classic picturesque tree of Japanese gardens. It is neither a true plum or a true apricot, but something in between. The small flowers cluster tightly to the stems.

## 6. **Rhododendron 'George Budgens'**

ERICACEAE

Don Mahoney, Strybing Nursery

This vireya rhododendron is a hybrid of *R. laetum* x *R. zoeleri*, named after the founder of Berkeley Hort Nursery. It has large 1-1/2" to 2" salmon-yellow flowers with orange tips in trusses of 6-10. Like all vireyas it can bloom year round since they are subtropical. Heaviest bloom is in early spring and mid-autumn. They can be grown with regular rhododendrum conditions but also can be grown as epiphytes, either in hanging baskets or mounted on cork. They are cold sensitive and only tolerate light frosts. They also do not like sustained hot temperatures as they generally come from higher altitudes. They need good air circulation as they can be prone to mildew under stale air conditions.

## 7. **Rhododendron 'Lucy Sorenson'**

ERICACEAE

Don Mahoney, Strybing Nursery

This hybrid vireya was developed by E. B. White of Bovee's Nursery and was named for his wife. It is a delightful small shrub often covered with small clear orange waxy bells. It is almost never out of bloom. It is easy to grow and loves fog and cool temperatures. For culture, see last entry.

## 8. **Rhododendron laetum**

ERICACEAE

Don Mahoney, Strybing Nursery

The plant shown is from a seed-grown plant which was grown by Pete Sullivan at Strybing Nursery in the 1960's. This was one of the first vireyas introduced for horticulture and is often used in hybridizing. It has wonderfully colored salmon-yellow flowers with darker orange edges. This species can become a 4' by 4' shrub and bloom heavily several times a year. Like a lot of vireyas, this one likes to get tall and leggy at first and then branch and fill in as it ages. For culture, see earlier entry.

## 9. **Zamioculcas zamiifolia 'Emerald Frond'**

ARACEAE

John and Barbara Hopper, Kenwood

This aroid from Africa superficially resembles a cycad, hence the genus and species name. This grows from an underground tuber and produces 2' to 3' long shiny dark leathery leaves. It can take moderate frost (in which case it dies to the ground), as long as it has good drainage. It likes summer heat to grow well. It is best used as a house plant.

**Save these dates!**

California Horticultural Society

9th Annual Plant Sale

May 17-18, 2003

Strybing Arboretum Auditorium--

Rare and Wonderful Plants --

# February Meeting Recap Jason DeWees

## The Once and Future New Zealand Garden by Scot Medbury, Ph.D.

Scot Medbury, Director of Strybing Arboretum and Botanical Gardens and the Conservatory of Flowers, told the February meeting that Strybing's New Zealand Garden is perhaps the oldest collection of plants from Aotearoa (or, "the land of the long white cloud," as the Maori call their homeland) in North America.

Having just returned from a two-week trip, Scot Medbury recommended the island nation as an ideal horticultural destination. Not only does it have well-marked old-growth native bush remnants but also excellent botanical gardens in virtually every substantial town. He projected a slide comparing the year-round rainfall and higher summer temperatures in New Zealand to San Francisco's summer drought and chilly summers to illustrate why some species grow slowly, and thus, manageably, at Strybing.

As an intro to Strybing's little piece of New Zealand, Scot described a history of growing New Zealand plants in California reaching back to the 1850s. Strybing's collection originates in the 1915 Panama-Pacific Exposition, where the Dominion of New Zealand constructed one of the most popular pavilions and surrounded it with choice specimens of native plants, among them tree ferns. These plants were auctioned to collectors, including Golden Gate Park Superintendent John McLaren. Today the large rimu (*Dacrydium cupressinum*) in the New Zealand garden is a living relic of that grand celebration of the Panama Canal and San Francisco's phoenix-like rebirth from the 1906 earthquake and fire.

After the Strybing's damage from a December 1995 storm, Scot worked with Tito Patri and Associates on a plan for renovating the New Zealand collection, focusing on four geographic plant communities and one collection of cultivars. Those four communities are:

1) Kauri forest, from the lowland dominated by *Agathis australis*, the monomental conifer exploited almost to extinction for its resin;

2) Mixed coniferous/broadleaf forest, including rimu and the proteaceous *Knightia excelsa*;

3) Coastal forest, containing most adaptable and commonly grown Zealanders in California, like pohutukawa (*Metrosideros excelsa*, AKA New Zealand Christmas tree) and ngaio (*Myoporum laetum*), as well as the little-known southernmost palm, the nikau (*Rhopalostylis sapida*);

4) and subalpine plants, such as vegetable sheep, *Raoulia australis*, gentians and the exotic epacridaceous *Dracophyllum*.

Strybing's own selection, *Leptospermum scoparium* 'Helene Strybing,' will doubtless have a foothold in the fifth planned plant assemblage, the garden of New Zealand cultivars, along with selections and hybrids of *Phormium*, *Hebe*, and other genera developed around the globe.

With conservation issues top of mind in both New Zealand and California (and with species from each land escaped as weeds in the other, like *Eschscholzia* down under and *Myoporum* in Southern California), Scot plans to focus on reintroducing those missing species that succeeded for years in Golden Gate Park without becoming weedy and new introductions unlikely to have ecological adaptation for California's mediterranean climate.

The final detail of the new New Zealand garden Scot introduced is the Gondwana Circle, located at the juncture of the Eastern Australia, South America and New Zealand gardens. This interpretive space will explain the common botanical heritage of the southern hemisphere continents.



## Horticultural Calendar

### First Saturday of each month:

**Sick Plant Clinic**—diagnose what ails your plants. 9 AM–Noon. Free. UCBG, Berkeley. (510) 643-2755

### March 20

**Laws & Regs Update**—(Pest Management & C27) SF Professional Gardener's Ass'n. City College, SF. Env. Hort Dept. (415) 558-8036.

### March 20

**Spring in Scotland; a Plantsman's Perspective**—A slide tour of great Scottish gardens by Steve Hootman, Director of the Rhododendron Species Foundation. Many of the first 19th century collections of wild rhododendrons went to these gardens. American Rhododendron Society, 7:30 PM, Lakeside Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Ave, Oakland. Free. (510) 841-6448.

### April 5

**Annual Dahlia Tuber Sale**—The Dahlia Society of California. 9 AM–NOON, Sunset Recreation Center, Lawton Ave between 28th and 29th Aves., SF (415) 566-5222. Come early for good selection! Plants and tubers.

### April 12 -13

**Rhododendron show and sale**—Cal Chapter, American Rhododendron Society. Many kinds of rhododendrons and azaleas, from small tropical Vireyas to shrubs with large fragrant flowers, Saturday 1 PM TO 5 PM, Sunday 11 AM TO 4 PM, Lakeside Park Garden Center, 666 Bellevue, Oakland. Free. Info: (510) 841-6468.

### June 27-29

**Gardening to Extremes**—Hardy Plant Society of Oregon's 2003 Study Weekend with Pamela Harper, Dan Hinkley, Maurice Horn and more. registration required and it fills up fast. <http://www.hardyplant.com/calendar.htm>

### July 27-Aug 3

**21st Annual Perennial Plant Symposium**—seminars & lectures-trade show in Sacramento-Hyatt Regency (July 27-July 31.) Tours Aug 1-3 San Francisco, Berkeley, Oakland, the Napa & Sonoma areas, Watsonville & Gilroy areas. Info: (614) 771-8431, [ppa@perennialplant.org](mailto:ppa@perennialplant.org).

Continued bottom next page

# Cal Hort Council Member Introductions

Almost all of the Council was introduced at the February meeting. This is what they had to say when asked where they garden and what their special interests were.

**Jason Dewees**, newest member, gardens in the Inner Sunset in San Francisco. He works as a writer for the American Cancer Society, California Division. He is especially interested in Palms, high altitude tropics, California natives, New Zealand and Pacific plants as well as weather, geography and urban planning.

**Bruce Peters**, *Bulletin* editor and Web site manager, gardens in San Francisco and San Diego. He is fascinated by variegated plants and particularly interested in tropics and 'things that grow fast.' He's currently trying to garden despite living with a very rambunctious puppy.

**Ann DeRosa** would only say that she gardens in El Cerrito. She lives on the hillside, and has a spectacular view of the Bay.

**Keitha DeMara** gardens in Lafayette, Orinda and Berkeley. Some of those gardens are her children's. She is particularly interested in fruit trees, tropics, scented geraniums, guavas, scented flowers, weed and herbs.

**Richard Starkeson** is our Secretary, and an attorney specializing in wills, trusts and charitable giving. He gardens in San Francisco and Berkeley. His garden interests are Rhododendrons and South American Plants

**Renee Fittinghoff** gardens in Mill Valley and does design for residential gardens in Marin. She is interested in Mediterranean plants, California natives, culinary gardens, gardens that attract butterflies, birds and pollinators as well as cutting gardens.

**Michael Craib** is our treasurer and is a sales representative for Suncrest Nurseries, Inc., and has been for seven years. He studied Botany and Horticulture at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. He is interested in plants adapted to Mediterranean climates.

**Don Mahoney** is the Horticulture Manager for Strybing Arboretum. He gardens in Richmond and grows California natives, bulbs, succulents and cloud forest plants. (Also rabbits, chickens and tortoises)



**Elise Lew** works for Urban Farmer Co. She gardens in San Francisco and the Peninsula. Her particular interests include orchids and carnivorous plants. She has over 20 years of gardening experience.

**Jana Olson** lives and gardens in Berkeley in the hills. She has a shady canyon held in place by rock walls with a year round creek. This is a change from her previous garden (now owned by Ann DeRosa) which was in full sun with dry land plants. Now she is learning about plants that do better in the shade. In addition to running a store ("Omega-Too," Everything you need to make your old house look old") she has in the past had a landscape design business and has been a trail planner for the East Bay Regional Park District.

**Diana Ross** gardens in Belmont and is particularly interested in Mediterranean plants, and anything that will grow in heavy clay. She is also interested in Folk Art, especially Haitian.

**Jan Hamby**, our Parliamentarian, lives and gardens in Danville. Her special interest is in perennials, unusual plants, foliage and shrubs combined for interesting relationships and color combinations. She likes rose, herb and vegetable gardens.

**Barbara Hopper** lives and gardens in Kenwood, Sonoma County. She has an extensive background in botany, is associated with horticultural societies throughout California. She has many rare and unusual species of shrubs and trees. She describes herself as a plant collector and is fascinated by variegated plants. Asarums, Heucheras, Hostas, fern clematis and podophylums grow well in her garden. Orchids are high on her list, and now she needs to enlarge her greenhouse!

**Elsie Mueller** is our 'Office Secretary' and lives and gardens in San Francisco's Sunset district. She grows dahlias, orchids, fuchsias and "etc."

Lastly, **Katherine Henwood**, President, lives and gardens in Pacifica at the southern end, which is not as foggy as you think. She is especially interested in the gesneriad family, insectivorous plants, hardy orchids, vireyas and can't resist a challenging plant. She enjoys propagating by cuttings and seeds. She always plans to have a color coordinated garden but can never decide what color.

## HELP!!!

The *Bulletin* needs a new Calendar Editor. The position requires just a couple of hours a month to organize, sort and format the press releases, notes etc.. for publication. The only requirements are familiarity of any word processor and an email account. Call Bruce at (415) 824-1833 or email [editor@calhortsociety.org](mailto:editor@calhortsociety.org) for more information. It's a great way to keep tabs on what's going on in the horticultural world.



### Hort Notes:

■ **CARMAN'S NURSERY UPDATE:** For those who would like one more chance to visit their favorite 'not for sale plant,' Carman's Nursery will be open 11-5, Wed-Sat until the middle of May. Then I'll be moving the nursery to my home near Gilroy—"Carman's Nursery...3rd Generation, 3rd Location." Thank you for everyone who has encouraged me in my dream of continuing to grow the unusual plants my dad loved so much. -Nancy Schramon

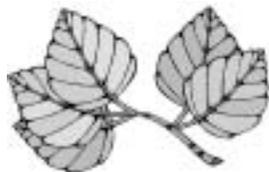
■ **THE SALVIA COLLECTION** brought in to the Plant Forum last was mistakenly attributed to Kristen Yanker-Hansen. The correct exhibitor was Kathy Echols.

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

Stafford Buckley	Hansl Lise
Timothy Crieajak & Susan O'Connor	Laura Muschietti Dana O'Connor
Kathleen Gaban	Suzanne Redell
John V. & Christie W. Hastings	Catalina Quintero-Avila

**LAST CALL FOR 2003 MEMBERSHIP DUES!!!**

If we have not received your renewal by the March meeting, you will be dropped from the roster and mailing list. We **don't** want to lose you--please respond immediately if you do not have the 2003 (orange) membership card! Make checks payable to California Horticultural Society and mail to Elsie Mueller, 1847 34th Ave., San Francisco, CA 94122-4109.



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**Executive Council**

**2001-2003**

**First Term**  
Diana Ross

**Second Term**

Jana Olson Drobinsky  
Elise Lew

Don Mahoney

**2002-2004**

**First Term**  
Michael Craib  
Renee Fittinghoff

**Second Term**

Richard Starkeson  
Keitha DeMara

**2003-2005**

**First Term**

Ann DeRosa  
Bruce Peters  
Jason DeWees  
Second Term  
Katherine Henwood

Deadline for publication is the third Monday of each month for the following month's *Bulletin*. Events during the first ten days of the month should be remitted *two* months ahead. Please give any information to Elsie at the meeting or, preferably, email to the Editor at the above address. Faxes and postal submissions also accepted.

Membership year begins January 1. Dues are \$40 individual, \$50 joint household, \$25 Student (with proof of enrollment). To join, or for full range of membership levels, please visit our website at [www.calhortsociety.org](http://www.calhortsociety.org) or call the Office secretary at the number above.

**California Horticultural Society**

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