

The next monthly general meeting is Monday, March 16, 2015, at 7:15 PM

Monthly meetings are held at the San Francisco County Fair Building, Ninth Avenue at Lincoln Way in Golden Gate Park.

Free parking is available behind the San Francisco County Fair Building on Lincoln Way.

4:00 PM – Botanical gardens walk with the featured speaker. Meet at the entrance to the San Francisco Botanical Garden.

5:30 PM – No-host dinner will take place at Park Chow Restaurant, located at 1240 Ninth Avenue in San Francisco.

7:15 PM – Announcements, Plant Forum, and Program Meeting will be held at the San Francisco County Fair Building.

Cal Hort members may attend for FREE. Non-members—a donation of \$5 is requested

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Plant of the Month

Satureja douglasii



Photo © 2014 Ted Kipping

MONDAY, MARCH 16, 2015

Plant Hunting in Southern China

by Kelly Dodsen and Sue Milliken of Far Reaches Farm



In 2012 Kelly and Sue explored Guizhou and Guanxi provinces, finding many plants that they think will be suitable for the Bay Area. Exploring the highest tropical mountains which had not been botanized by westerners, they found new plants as well as better forms of plants already in cultivation.

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MONDAY, APRIL 20, 2015

Victor Reiter's Last Garden

by Ted Kipping

Victor Reiter was one of the founding members of the California Horticultural Society. His garden was an amazingly successful experiment of growing winter wet and summer dry rock garden plants from the Mediterranean. Although primarily a collector, Victor Reiter was also an artist when it came to his garden.

Late Winter HORTICULTURAL EVENTS

STORYTIME THROUGH THE SEASONS: CLIMBING UP THE GINKGO TREE

Sunday, March 1; 1–3 PM

UC Davis Arboretum, Wyatt Deck, 1046 Garrod Dr, Davis, CA 95616
Celebrate the Chinese New Year in the Arboretum as we explore the cultural and natural world of Asia. Experience Asian culture in a whole new light with stories, activities, and experiences in our East Asian Collection. All ages welcome.

MEMBER APPRECIATION PLANT SALE

Saturday, March 7; 9 AM–1 PM

Arboretum Teaching Nursery, (Garrod Drive near La Rue Road, across from Vet Med), UC Davis Campus

The nursery opens its doors just to members as a thank you for their support. Not a member? Call ahead or join at the door to shop the area's largest selection of attractive, low-water, easy-care, region-appropriate plants. We know that many homeowners out there are in the process of developing their "New Front Yard" by replacing high-water use plants with low-water alternatives. That's why you are going to find just what you need and get the best selection at our first plant sale of the spring season. We are going to have the area's largest selection of attractive, drought-tolerant, easy-care, region-appropriate plants including loads of grasses, California natives and Arboretum All-Stars.

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANTS, AUSTRALIAN PLANTS, PROTEACEAE AND OTHER SHRUBS

Saturday, March 7; 10 AM–NOON

Ruth Bancroft Garden, 1552 Bancroft Rd, Walnut Creek, CA 94598
California native plants make sense in drought-tolerant gardens, as do Australian plants. These plants grow in conditions that match our California climate and can thrive with very little babying after they become established. Come out to The Ruth Bancroft Garden and learn to identify these varied drought-tolerant plants which grace the garden's pathways. The lecture is open to the public. Join RBG staff for this in-depth plant identification class in the garden. \$20, \$15 Members. Space is very limited and pre-registration is highly recommended.

WEDNESDAY WALKS WITH WARREN

Wednesday, March 11; NOON

Arboretum Headquarters (Valley Oak Cottage), UC Davis Campus
Join Warren Roberts, the Superintendent Emeritus of the Arboretum and famous storyteller and punster for an always-engaging noontime exploration of winter in the UC Davis Arboretum's Warren G. Roberts Redbud Collection. Explore and learn more about our redbuds that burst with color in their transition from winter into spring.

LAWN TO GARDEN

Saturday, March 14; 10 AM–2 PM

Ruth Bancroft Garden, 1552 Bancroft Rd, Walnut Creek, CA 94598
Are you ready to get rid of your boring lawn and plant a garden you can spend time in and enjoy? Join us for a hands-on experience where you will not only learn how to complete the task, but also actually get a chance to do it! At this workshop, we will physically transform a portion of a typical suburban front lawn to an amazing garden. You'll learn about the methods to remove that lawn, get the chance to use helpful tools, participate in the transformation of the sprinkler system, and help plant the garden. Dress to work in the garden, bring a lunch and a water bottle. \$20, \$15 Members. Pre-registration is required for this workshop. Please note that the exact location of the workshop will be provided after email registration.

DELIGHTS FROM DOWN UNDER

Saturday, March 14; 11 AM

Arboretum GATEway Garden behind Davis Commons Shopping Center
(meet at the Shovel Gateway Sculpture)

Plants from "down under" show off their flowers during the this season of the year. Tour the Australian and New Zealand collections and have a blooming good time learning about plants from far-away lands. The event is free. Free parking is available in the Davis Commons Shopping Center.

PLANT FAMILY CACTACEAE AND EUPHORBIACEAE

Saturday, March 21; 10 AM–NOON

Ruth Bancroft Garden, 1552 Bancroft Rd, Walnut Creek, CA 94598
Many plants in the garden are incorrectly referred to as "cactus" because of common misconceptions about the plant family. Discover the diversity of the family Cactaceae along with Euphorbiaceae, plants that can look a lot like cactus but contain a milky sap inside and belong to an entirely different family. The lecture is open to the public. Join RBG staff for this in-depth plant identification class in the garden. \$20, \$15 Members. Space is very limited and pre-registration is highly recommended.

LOSE YOUR LAWN

with the Bay-Friendly Coalition

March 28; 10 AM–NOON

Markham Nature Park and Arboretum, 1202 La Vista, Concord
Lose your lawn without tearing it out. Presented by Bay-Friendly Qualified Professionals, our demonstration will teach the tools of lawn conversion with the innovative technique of sheet mulching. Following Bay-Friendly practices, you'll learn to conserve natural resources, reduce pollution, create a vibrant garden and save time and money. Attendees will receive a free copy of the Bay-Friendly Gardening Guide (retails for \$12), climate appropriate plant selections, irrigation resources and a chance to win raffle prizes. \$10 donation, Members free.

SPRING SURPRISES IN THE STORER GARDEN

Saturday, March 28; 11 AM

UC Davis Arboretum Gazebo, UC Davis Campus

Our valley-wise demonstration garden, the Ruth Risdon Storer Garden, is beautiful year round, but especially in spring. Just in time for our first public plant sale of the spring season on April 11, you can come get great ideas for your own water-thrifty garden.

Plant of the Month

by Josh Schechtel

Satureja douglasii, Yerba Buena

Family: LAMIACEAE

Our dry winter continues, much to the dismay of gardeners and water management departments around the state. Usually, this is the season that I would be in my garden (or a friend's garden), planting new plants so that their roots could get established before the dry season starts later in the year. With wishful thinking for more rain, I am going to espouse the merits of *Satureja douglasii*, commonly Yerba Buena. This native groundcover can help fill in one of the most difficult gaps in the garden—shade with sandy or heavy clay soil.

Spreading up to four feet in diameter, but usually less, it rarely grows more than a foot above the ground, producing a pretty green blanket that helps weave together the shade garden. Although it naturally grows in areas with little rainfall, it does receive summer fog drip in many places, so it looks better in the garden with an occasional summer watering. The stems root as they spread, and it is easily controlled by pruning. Yerba Buena is definitely not a thug in the garden!

Growing naturally from southern California to Vancouver, *Satureja douglasii* is ideal under native oaks, bays, madrones and other trees and shrubs that do not need much, if any, summer watering. Small white or pale purple flowers decorate the plant from spring to late summer, but they are very small and not a major reason to plant this lovely native in your garden.

There are, however, several other good reasons to plant it in the garden. One is the tea that can

be made from its aromatic leaves. In addition to being tasty, it is supposed to help alleviate all sorts of bodily aches and pains, colds and insomnia. Another good reason for planting it is that it is relatively deer resistant. As pretty as they look, the scented leaves do not appeal to our hooped 'friends.'

A less practical reason for planting it is its history, involving the early settlers to California. Catholic priests gave the plant its name (*hierba buena*), probably due to its pleasant scent and medicinal properties. It was so abundant that one of the first settlements was named after it. The town of Yerba Buena grew, and after the Mexican-American war, the town was renamed San Francisco. Yerba Buena Island was named after the plant several years later.

The species name honors David Douglas, the prolific plant explorer who discovered many New World plants and introduced them to European horticulture. Try adding a bit of history to a shady spot in your garden with *Satureja douglasii*.



Satureja douglasii



California Horticultural Society
 San Francisco County Fair Building
 Ninth Avenue and Lincoln Way
 San Francisco, CA 94122

www.calhortsociety.org

Monthly Plant Drawing News

Thank you to Strybing Arboretum and Mike Craib of Suncrest Nurseries for supplying a nice selection of plants for the February plant drawing. Please bring unusual plants from your gardens for sharing. It is also an opportunity for our members to obtain unusual plants.

Monthly Plant Display and Discussion

Each month there is a lively discussion about plants brought in by our members. It may be a well-grown specimen or an unusual discovery, or a plant that has attributes that are not known by the mainstream. If you are interested in participating, bring in a plant to show to the group. You can also donate this plant afterwards to the plant drawing.

To join the California Horticultural Society or to find out about a full range of membership levels, please visit our web site at www.calhortsociety.org.

Questions from members about your membership? Please address them to the Cal Hort membership chair, Charlotte Masson. 579 Los Palmos Drive, San Francisco, CA 94127-2209 (gardengurus@gmail.com).

The California Horticultural Society has maintained its quality programs because of the dedication of the volunteer officers, chairs and members. The future of the Society depends upon its member volunteers to provide leadership. The Board asks that members volunteer for positions to keep Cal Hort the best organization it can be.

Deadline for publication in this Bulletin 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.

COUNCIL

2013-2015 (First Term) Ellen Edelson,
 Charlotte Masson, Kristin Yanker-Hansen
 2013-2015 (Second Term) Mike Craib
 2015-2017 (First Term) Steve Morse, Andy Stone

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Parliamentarian	Open
Membership	Charlotte Masson

BULLETIN EDITOR
editor@calhortsociety.org

CALENDAR EDITOR
calendar@calhortsociety.org