

The next monthly general meeting is Monday, March 21, 2016, 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 – This month’s walk will be in a different location from Strybing Arboretum. It will be held at the Conservatory of Flowers on 100 JFK Drive. You can either park in the front of the Conseratory or near the dahlia garden. The meeting will still be held at the San Francisco County Fair Building.

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 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

Plant of the Month

Ageratum corymbosum



MONDAY, MARCH 21, 2016

The Enigmatic Horsetails: Ancient Plants in the Modern World and in Horticulture

with Dr. Chad Husby
of Fairchild Tropical Botanical Garden



There are only about 15 species of horsetails (genus *Equisetum*), but they have a big reach, from the furthest reaches of the Canadian arctic all the way to the tropics, and from high mountains to the seashore. This presentation will explore the unique and unusual characteristics of these plants in nature and in horticulture.

Dr. Chad Husby is Botanical Horticulturist at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden. His Ph.D. research focused on the biology of one of the largest species, *Equisetum giganteum* of South America. He also maintains a large living collection of tropical and temperate horsetails. He has a Masters Degree in Horticulture from Virginia Tech, a Master of Applied Statistics from Ohio State University and a Ph.D. in Biology from Florida International University. He worked at Montgomery Botanical Center for more than eight years managing and building the living collections, especially the tropical conifer collection. Dr. Husby focuses on plant exploration, plant propagation, horticultural research and education. His plant introduction work has taken him to more than 20 countries.

MONDAY, APRIL 18, 2016

Garden Design Process

with Patricia St. John

How do you approach landscape and garden design? Patricia St. John will share strategies for making a successful garden plan, discussing how the selection of plants and ongoing maintenance fit into the process.

SEED EXCHANGE PACKETING "PARTY"

Saturday, March 5; 10 AM

Garden Center, Markham Nature Park and Arboretum,
1202 La Vista Avenue, Concord

The Cal Hort Seed Exchange is a long-standing benefit for Cal Hort members. The 2016 Seed Exchange List is available in Cal Hort's January 2016 Bulletin. The next step in the Seed Exchange is to fulfill your requests by packaging (i.e. "party") and distributing the seeds for distribution and mailing. Like past events, we expect it to take about two to three hours with help from other garden aficionados. We promise good company, coffee or tea, and snacks—and the strong likelihood there will be some "extra" seeds as well. Please let Dave Tivol know (mailto:dtivol@yahoo.com) if you have questions about the activity. Ask Steve Morse (calhortinfo@sbcglobal.net) if you have further questions about the location, arrangements, etc. For starters, we will be inside, dry, and warm—and hoping for some rain. See you there.

ADDING SUCCULENTS TO AN EXISTING GARDEN:

Saturday, March 12; 10 AM–11:30 AM

Markham Nursery, 1202 La Vista Avenue, Concord

Adding succulents to an existing garden can be challenging. There are many things to consider: location, culture requirements, watering schedules and style. Landscape designer Diane Goldsmith will take you through some exercises to help you meet these challenges. Combinations that work will round out the discussion, with a selection of plants from the Markham Nursery that partner well with succulents. You will leave with a better understanding of ways you can add succulents to your gardens. Free; no signup required.

FROM DRY TO WET: THE EFFECTS OF DROUGHT AND EL NIÑO ON TREES IN THE BAY AREA

Saturday, March 12; 10:30–11:30 AM

The Ruth Bancroft Garden, 1552 Bancroft Road, Walnut Creek

In this interactive walk through the garden, Dr. Drew Zwart, a plant pathologist and physiologist on the scientific staff at the Bartlett Tree Research Laboratories, will discuss the short and long-term effects of drought on trees, and the disease and insect problems to look for during and following drought stress and/or wet winters in California. In addition, Dr. Zwart will discuss concerns related to tree stability and hazards to look for in large mature trees. Pre-registration is required for this workshop. \$20, \$15 Members. (925) 944-9352, ruthbancroftgarden.org

THE KIPPINGS INVITE YOU TO POTLUCK*/SLIDE SHOWS

County Fair Building, Ninth Avenue and Lincoln Way,
Golden Gate Park, Fireplace Room

Wednesday, March 15; 7 PM

PELICAN DREAMS, A FILM

with Judy Irving

**Bring a dish and beverage for eight to share,
as well as your own plates and silverware.*

2016 GARDEN TOURS



Kentfield garden which will be on tour in April

APRIL 3 GARDEN TOUR

Time to decide if you're going on our first garden tour of the year on April 3.

We'll start at a Mediterranean garden in Kentfield where we'll enjoy coffee, tea and treats. Everyone is encouraged to bring a brown bag lunch to enjoy together at the Western Hills Nursery west of Occidental. In between, we'll visit an amazing garden north of Occidental; out of respect for the owners of the second garden's wishes, I will hand out driving instructions directly at the first garden. They also ask if you post pictures from the tour, please just refer to it as "the second garden". All the gardens are large, but I anticipate we'll finish up at Western Hills Nursery around 3 PM. Everyone should bring (exactly) \$12 to give me at the first garden to cover the cost of admission at Western Hills and the morning refreshments.

This time I'll be managing the carpools and it is essential that we keep the number of vehicles down to no more than 12. If you're interested in going, RSVP me ASAP at mdelepine@liacook.com and be sure to include:

1. your location
- 2a. prefer to drive—how many passengers can you bring?
- 2b. prefer to be a passenger
- 2c. either drive or ride along

MAY GARDEN TOUR (Date to be determined)

The second garden tour of the year will be in late May. New council member Arcangelo Wessells has invited us over to see his Vallejo garden of exotics. Given that Cornerstone Sonoma is less than twenty miles away, we'd also want to include those gardens on the tour. Then, well, that's where you and the collected wisdom of the Cal Hort community comes in. Where else would we like to go on a fine late spring day in May in that general area? Please email me ASAP with other gardens you'd like to see in that area this May, possibly your own included.

The location and timing of a third garden tour is yet to be determined but the South Bay is looking good. Remember, if you would like to share your own or the garden of a friend with your Cal Hort buddies let me know.

I am looking forward to seeing you on one or both of the tours.

Mark Delapine
mdelepine@liacook.com

Plant of the Month

by Arcangelo Wessells

Ageratum corymbosum

Butterfly Mist

Family: ASTERACEAE

Ageratum corymbosum is a great shrub for part shade. Sometimes we can be in denial about how much sun a spot actually gets. When plants that want full sun are planted in too much shade, they can get a bit thin and weak: an embarrassing error! This Mist Flower, even with just a few hours of sun, will remain a dense solid dome, with purple tinged leaves to break the monotony of gloss in the shade.

Ageratum corymbosum is in the daisy family, the Asteraceae. Unfortunately, the nomenclature can be confusing, as *A. corymbosum* seems to encompass several distinct forms within its broad range. It grows wild in southern Arizona and Texas, and also in cloud forests of southern Mexico and Guatemala, at up to 8000 feet. Wild plants from Arizona, called Flat Top Whiteweed, look very different from what is in the horticultural trade in California. These plants seem to be upright perennials with more delicate foliage and can die back to the ground in winter. Some populations from high elevation cloud forests had previously been named *Ageratum guatemalense*. These seem to be what is grown in the Bay Area.

My plants in Vallejo are about three feet tall and five feet wide, with purple leaves and stems. The leaves are about four inches long. They look soft but are surprisingly strong, with pubescent undersides. The combination of the downy texture and the color of eggplant skin is wonderful.

The flower heads begin forming in February, looking like purple chenille stuffed between the leading pair of leaves. They put on quite a show



Ageratum corymbosum

beginning in March, when the ray florets spring out of the buds a few at a time, like tiny drawings of fireworks, until the plant is covered in pale purple-pink fluff, contrasting with the dark foliage. Each flowerhead is about four inches across, offering a sturdy landing platform for larger butterflies. My plants will bloom solidly for a month or so, but I have not seen butterflies feeding from it. Some descriptions say they will bloom all year, so watering and fertilization rates may affect length of flowering.

My plants receive drip irrigation every six days in summer. They are dense and healthy, but lose some of their leaves in the long dry season. They could probably manage with less water. More water might reduce the seasonal impact of the new growth in winter. These plants are growing next to a fence between two houses. They receive about three hours of midday sun in summer. In winter they receive no sun, but a fair amount of indirect light.

The plant has shown no sign of attracting pests or diseases, and tolerates temperatures down to at least 28°F. Production of new shoots from the woody base shows potential for the plants to resprout if damaged by severe cold or hard rejuvenative pruning. *Ageratum corymbosum* can be found at Annie's Annuals, but it is not always available.



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

www.calhortsociety.org

Monthly Plant Drawing

Each month various nurseries and individual members donate plants for the plant drawing. Thank you to all the members who donated plants at the last meeting. Please bring in plants for our drawing. The funds earned help support the society and its a fun community building event.

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 Paltos Drive, San Francisco, CA 94127-2209.

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.

COUNCIL

2015-2017 (First Term) Mark Delepine, Steve Morse, Andy Stone
 2016-2018 (Second Term) Ellen Edelson, Charlotte Masson, Kristin Yanker-Hansen
 2016-2018 (First Term) Mary Engle, Bart O'Brien, Arcangelo Wessells

OFFICERS

President	Open
Vice President	Open
Past President	Ellen Frank
Recording Secretary	Open
Treasurer	Carl Meier
Parliamentarian	Open
Membership	Charlotte Masson

BULLETIN EDITOR
editor@calhortsociety.org

CALENDAR EDITOR
calendar@calhortsociety.org

Deadline for publication in this Bulletin is the third Monday of each month for the following month's Bulletin; no Bulletin is published in December. Events during the first ten days of the month should be submitted two months ahead.