

The next monthly general meeting is the Annual Dinner, Monday, May 19, 2014, at 6:30 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.

6:30 PM – Annual Cal Hort Dinner
San Francisco County Fair Building,
Ninth Avenue at Lincoln Way

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

Plant of the Month

Rhododendron occidentale



Photo © 2014 Ted Kipping

MONDAY, MAY 19, 2014

Colombia: a Biodiversity Hotspot for Princess Flowers

by Dr. Frank Almeda,
recipient of our 2014 Annual Award



Join us for a closer look at one of the ten largest families of flowering plants—Princess Flowers (*Melastomataceae*)—in one of its cradles of diversity, Colombia. Dr. Frank Almeda will take us on an armchair journey spotlighting some of the work he has done on three recent botanical expeditions, funded by the Planetary Biodiversity Inventory Program of the National Science Foundation, to understand patterns of diversity and endemism better in a family with extraordinary horticultural potential.

MONDAY, JUNE 16, 2014

Learn to Live a Green Life— Grow Your Own Veggies and Fish

By Samantha Rodriguez

Samantha Rodriguez is President and CEO of a green-minded remodeling company with an emphasis on disabled accessibility. With an experienced eye, Samantha combines her construction and art background to achieve ways to integrate contemporary farming methods into every person's lifestyle. In 2009, she began *EZ Farms and Fish* and recently took on partners to become *Sunset Sustainable Farms*. Using the re-circulating aquaponic technology, she is continuing to promote a "green" lifestyle by helping others produce sustainable quantities of organically grown vegetables and fish.

Late Spring HORTICULTURAL EVENTS by Judith Taylor

ROSES WITH CATHERINE WATTERS

Thursday, May 8; 10 AM-4 PM

UC Botanical Garden, 200 Centennial Drive, Berkeley

Roses have been a favorite subject of Botanical Artists for centuries. Come learn techniques and tips for capturing this beloved flower. Admission is \$85 for members, \$90 for non-members. For information about required registration, telephone (510) 643-2755 or e-mail gardenprograms@berkeley.edu.

THE SPECTACULAR DIVERSITY OF BAY AREA PUBLIC GARDENS

Friday, Saturday and Sunday, May 9-11; 9 AM-5 PM

Various Bay Area Public and Botanical Gardens

One of the most enjoyable aspects of looking at plants is sharing the experience with fellow botanists. In this workshop, our instructor, Dean Kelch, one of the most enthusiastic and knowledgeable botanists in the Bay Area, will guide participants through six highly acclaimed public gardens. Workshop fee is \$245 for members, \$285 for non-members. The fee includes transportation from Berkeley to each of the six gardens and a boxed lunch each day. To register call (510) 642-2465 or go to ucjeps.berkeley.edu/workshops/2014/regform_2014.html.

NATIONAL PUBLIC GARDENS DAY AT THE RUTH BANCROFT GARDEN

Friday, May 9; 10 AM-4 PM

The Ruth Bancroft Garden, 1552 Bancroft Road, Walnut Creek

National Public Gardens Day was developed by the American Public Gardens Association in an effort to raise public awareness about the importance of public gardens. It is a wonderful opportunity for the community to visit and learn about the resources available at the Ruth Bancroft Garden, including educational opportunities and family-focused events. Admission is free for the day.

As a special event for National Public Gardens Day, John Ricca, a photography instructor with the Yosemite Conservancy, will lead a photo walk from 10:30 AM to noon. This walk is limited to ten persons, and the fee is \$10. Capture the many colors and textures of the Garden with your camera or smart phone as you learn about lighting, framing and finding an interesting subject for your snaps.

PRIVATE TOUR OF RUTH'S GARDEN

Saturday, May 10; 10:30 AM

The Ruth Bancroft Garden, 1552 Bancroft Road, Walnut Creek

Join Curator Brian Kemble the day before Mother's Day for a rare peek behind the fence. Brian will take a group through the private garden around Ruth's home. In addition to the lath houses and greenhouses filled with succulents, there is an astonishing variety of roses, herbs, perennials and irises. This behind-the-scenes tour is limited to twenty participants. Admission is \$15 for members, \$35 for non-members. Telephone (925) 944-9352 for tickets.

MOTHER'S DAY AT THE RUTH BANCROFT GARDEN

Sunday, May 11; 10 AM-4 PM

The Ruth Bancroft Garden, 1552 Bancroft Road, Walnut Creek

Bring Mom to the Garden for our annual Mother's Day Event. Although regular admission rates apply for others, all mothers will be admitted for free. Tours will be conducted at 10 AM, 11:30 AM, and 1 PM.

The tradition of Mother's Day Tea continues, with seatings at 11 AM and 1:30 PM. Mother's Day Tea includes admission to the Garden for activities and tours. For tickets for the Mother's Day Tea, which include admission to the Garden and are \$35 for adults and \$22 for children, telephone (925) 944-9352.

GUIDED TOUR: WALK WITH WARREN

Wednesday, May 14; Noon-1 PM

Arboretum Gazebo, UC Davis Arboretum

Join Warren Roberts, Superintendent Emeritus of the Arboretum, to discover seasonal color in the UC Davis Arboretum's gardens and plant collections.

UC DAVIS PUBLIC PLANT SALE

Saturday, May 17; 9 AM-1 PM

Arboretum Teaching Nursery, UC Davis Arboretum

Prepare your landscape for long-term water conservation with attractive, drought-tolerant, easy-care, region-appropriate plants including a large selection of California natives and Arboretum All-Stars. Not a member? Join the Friends of the UC Davis Arboretum at the door to receive a new-member, \$10-off coupon. All members receive the regular member discount of 10% off your total purchases.

CAL HORT ANNUAL DINNER

Monday, May 19; 6:30 PM

San Francisco County Fair Building,

Ninth Avenue at Lincoln Way in Golden Gate Park

We gather to socialize at 6:30 PM and begin our potluck supper at 7 PM. Advance Reservations must be made no later than Friday, May 16. Contact: Tena Gallagher, 400 Cliffside Drive, Danville CA 94526, or e-mail tena@aol.com

THE KIPPINGS INVITE YOU TO POTLUCK*/SLIDE SHOWS

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

Tuesday, May 27; 7 PM

FLOWERS OF LEBANON

with Nisrine Machaka-Houri

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

Plant of the Month

by Josh Schechtel

Rhododendron occidentale,

The Western Azalea

Family: ERICACEAE

The western azalea, *Rhododendron occidentale*, is a favorite springtime companion for hikers and gardeners on the west coast. Native to California and Oregon west of the Cascades, it is found in almost any habitat that has year round moisture for its roots. This deciduous shrub provides two shows each year—in addition to its spring flowers, the leaves usually turn bright yellow, orange or red in the autumn. The flowers are carried in trusses at the tips of the branches. They vary in color from near white to deep pink, with a large yellow spot on the upper petal. There are even double-flowered forms and forms with frilled petals. The unopened buds have the deepest coloration, and the sight of trusses of buds and opened flowers is a memorable experience. Unlike many rhododendrons, the flowers are richly scented.

It is believed that *Rhododendron occidentale* was discovered by the great taxonomist Asa Gray, and was first described in a publication by Sir William Hooker in 1857. The first flowering specimen in England was reported in the garden of famed plantsman James Veitch in the 1850s. Despite this impressive horticultural pedigree, *Rhododendron occidentale* has never been readily available in the horticultural trade in its native land. It is not easy to propagate from cuttings, and seedlings do not

always flower true to the parent plant. The best place to find plants is at plant sales in local botanical gardens and horticultural societies. In order to thrive, the western azalea needs a cool root zone with regular moisture. Despite being native to the west coast, these plants are not drought tolerant, so this will limit the places where they will do well. If you are lucky enough to have soil that is moist through the summer, it is worth giving this plant a try.



Rhododendron occidentale



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

www.calhortsociety.org

Monthly Plant Drawing News

The month of May is our annual dinner. Instead of our usual drawing we are asking members to bring in special plants they have propagated for a silent auction. We will also have plants that were displayed at the SF Flower & Garden show as part of the auction.

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, or contact Kristin Yanker-Hansen at (925)831-9499.

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.

Please contact Ted Kipping, the Nominating Committee Chair, for more information about serving on the Council. You can also chat with Council members, either by e-mail, by phone or at any Cal Hort meeting.

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.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

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2013-2015 (Second Term) Mike Craib

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Vice President	Open
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