

# Bulletin of the California Horticultural Society

*Cultivating Friendship, gardens and fun for over 75 years*

Next Monthly General Meeting is October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2009 @ 7:15 pm

October 2009

Volume 76, Issue 10

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

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 9<sup>th</sup> Ave. San Francisco.

7:15 PM Announcements, Plant Forum, and Program Meeting will be held at the SF Botanical Garden in the SF County Fair Building at 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue at Lincoln Way; San Francisco.

\*\*\*Members free

\*\*\*Non-members – A donation of \$5 is requested.

**October's Program: October 19, 2009**  
**Life after Lawn: Toward a New Naturalism**



*Presented by Anthony Garza, Jr., Supervisor of Horticulture and Grounds at the UC Berkeley Botanical Gardens.*

Anthony Garza's landscape designs gravitate toward gardens of grasses, rushes, restios, sedges, phormiums, and interesting accents. This "new naturalism" is a European movement that is slowly taking hold in the U.S., and is often associated with Piet Oudolf, the well known Dutch garden designer.

Garza's design of the gardens at the public entrance to UC-

Berkeley's Botanical Garden are an example of new naturalism. His article in the Fall 2006 *Pacific Horticulture* also elaborated on this type of garden design.

Come and be inspired with new ideas for your garden!

**Friends of Elsie**  
*A Special Event,  
November 16th*

Join us for an intimate special dinner to honor and thank our friend, Elsie Mueller, recently retired after 44 years as Secretary of CalHort.

Nov 16, 2009, 5:30 – 7 pm  
Rec Room, County Fair Building  
9<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Lincoln  
Golden Gate Park

*(This event will precede the California Horticultural Society November meeting.)*

Wine and beverages; light supper; dessert; \$25.00 per person (cash or check. Sorry no credit cards.)

**RSVP by November 1st**

Please send your reservation to Bobbi Feyerabend, 1301 61<sup>st</sup> Street, Emeryville, CA 94608.

tel: (510)450-0803

email: bobbi@fmlanddesign.com

**November's meeting November 16th**

*See left for special event preceding the general meeting.*

**Program: Ernest Wertheim and CalHort -- 1939 to 2009.**

Still an active and prominent Landscape Architect, Ernest will provide us with highlights of his career and his long involvement with CalHort (several times President), and CalHort's impact on gardening and horticulture in the Bay Area.

Included will be anecdotes of his training in pre-WWII Germany, his arrival and work in the Bay Area pre-WWII, the early years of CalHort and its founding members, CalHort's early field trips, the horticulture impact of the 1939 World's Fair on Treasure Island, the founding of the Strybing Arboretum Society by CalHort members, his introduction of Vireaya Rhododendrons, the Saratoga Horticultural Research Foundation, and the nursery industry.

## Historic Gardens of Alcatraz Wins Two Prestigious Preservation Awards

The Historic Gardens of Alcatraz were recently recognized with two prestigious awards from the California Preservation Foundation. Several CalHort members were instrumental in the volunteer restoration of the gardens, spearheaded by the Garden Conservancy since 2003. These awards had only been given in the past to the Golden Gate Bridge, Griffith Observatory, and Leland Stanford Mansion.

The vast majority of work was accomplished by committed volunteers led by the late Carol Ashford. Today, the thriving gardens are a stark contrast to the somber prison. After extensive planning, removal of overgrowth, planting, and repair of deteriorated structures, the gardens are again blooming for the island's thousands of daily visitors. The project team not only revived the gardens created by those who lived on the island during its military and prison eras, but also developed materials that interpret the gardens' history, horticulture, and cultural significance.

This work was the result of a partnership between the Garden Conservancy and Parks Conservancy and the National Park Service to bring the gardens back to life. They established a project team and formed a volunteer-gardener program. After an intensive year of removing accumulated plant debris, the team discovered that many of the garden's historic structural features—terraces, paths, railings, and foundations—were still in place but needed to be repaired or replaced. Historic plants that had been buried began to flourish after removal of invasive species.

Over a four-year period, the team repaired the built landscape (dating back to both the military and penitentiary eras), regraded slopes, and replanted the gardens. Volunteers, who logged in more than 22,000 hours from 2003 through 2008, were critical to the success of this effort. The project is also a model of sustainability, with a water catchment system used for irrigation, a composting system that recycles the gardens' biomass, and a palette of drought-tolerant plants. (See pictures of the gardens at [www.gardenconservancy.org/alcatraz\\_photo\\_page.htm](http://www.gardenconservancy.org/alcatraz_photo_page.htm))

## Plant of the Month

by Josh Schechtel

### Carex glauca Family: Cyperaceae

One of the perennials used in the “new naturalism” garden design are sedges. There are over one thousand species of sedges, and they are found throughout the world. Although most of them are found in damp or wet soil, some are fairly drought tolerant. One such species is *Carex glauca*, the Blue Sedge. The name is a bit of a misnomer, since the leaves, although variable in color, are usually a blue-green rather than a true blue. It produces a typical, fountain-shaped mound of leaves up to 12 inches high, and slowly spreads by lateral shoots. More watering increases the rate of spread, and once established, it is fairly drought tolerant and can handle some foot traffic. The kindest thing I can say about the flowers is that they are small and nondescript, like those of most carex species.



Photo by designer Owen Dell

The Blue Sedge can grow in full sun to part shade, and will need more watering with increasing sun exposure. It is not fussy about soil type, and is hardy to well below freezing. If you want to use this plant as a groundcover, one source recommends cutting it back by three quarters in order to increase the production of runners and increase the rate of spreading. If you are looking for a turf substitute for a small area, consider the Blue Sedge.

**October 17, Lakeshore (Oakland) Neighborhood Plant Exchange, 12:00PM – 4:00PM** 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Free Plant Exchange—Come and trade your excess plants with others. Take home new plants for your yard. All types of plants are welcome, from cuttings to full size. 3811 Lakeshore Avenue, Oakland 94610, easy parking.

**October 14, Wednesday evening, 7:30PM**  
**Roots Demystified: Change Your Garden Habits to Help Roots Thrive**—Robert Kouric lectures on how to have beauty above ground by taking care of the root system below ground. Western Horticultural Society at Christ Episcopal Church, 1040 Border Road, Los Altos. Doors open at 7:00 PM, meeting starts promptly at 7:30 PM. Members free, non-members \$5.

**November 6 and 7, Friday and Saturday, 8:30AM – 5:30PM and 8:00AM – 1:30PM**  
**Plants and Gardens of Australia, Part II**—Refreshing your Australian repertoire: how to mix exciting and appropriate Australian native plants in Bay Area gardens. Part II of a two part series presented by The Garden Conservancy and The Ruth Bancroft Garden. The Friday seminar will be at the Conference Center at the University of California Botanical Garden at Berkeley. Saturday half-day study tour will be Martinez/Berkeley and points in between. For more info visit [www.gardenconservancy.org/events.pl?ID=269](http://www.gardenconservancy.org/events.pl?ID=269) Or call (415) 441-4300. Friday: 8:30 AM –5:30 PM and Saturday: 8:00 AM –1:30 PM, members \$110, non-members \$130.

**November 11, Wednesday evening, 7:30PM**  
**Bringing Succulents Into The Garden**— Patrick Anderson, Horticulturist and speaker on garden design, history, and plants, will present compelling reasons for the use of succulents in garden design. Western Horticultural Society at Christ Episcopal Church, 1040 Border Road, Los Altos. Doors open at 7:00 PM, meeting starts promptly at 7:30 PM. Members free, non-members \$5.

**U.C. BOTANICAL GARDEN AT BERKELEY**  
(510) 643-2755 • [www.botanicalgarden.berkeley.edu](http://www.botanicalgarden.berkeley.edu)

**October 18, Sunday evening, 5:00PM – 7:00PM**  
**Intoxicating Plants of the Garden**—Learn about plants used for making intoxicating elixirs. Sunset stroll will be accompanied by food and drink. 5:00 PM –7:00 PM, members \$50, non-members \$55.

**November 1 and 8, Sunday afternoon, 1:00PM – 2:30PM**  
**Gone East: Exploring the Beauty of the Perfect Tree**—In the first part, you will learn how to identify and select the Asian maple species and in part II, you will tour the Garden's Asian maple species in Autumn color. 1:00 PM –2:30 PM, members \$25 (both parts), non-members \$30 (both parts).

**SF BOTANICAL GARDEN SOCIETY**  
(415) 661-1316 • [www.sfbotanicalgarden.org](http://www.sfbotanicalgarden.org)

**October 24 and 25, Saturday and Sunday, 9:00AM – 1:30PM, 10:00AM – 1:30PM**  
**Designing with Grasses II**—Grassologist Bob Hornbeck brings this sequel to his popular workshop. Learn how to select grasses and grass-like plants for color, effect, low maintenance and drought tolerance. Discover native turf alternatives to replace that water-guzzling, labor-intensive lawn with a beautiful, easy-going meadow. Includes field trip to Matanzas Creek Winery in Santa Rosa. Workshop: 9:00 AM –1:30 PM, fieldtrip: 10:00 AM –1:30 PM. Members \$65, non-members \$75.

**November 7, Saturday, 9:30AM – 1:00PM**  
**Fall Harvest: Medicinal Roots, Barks, and Fruits of California**—This class will explore the diverse array of medicinal biennial and perennial plants found growing throughout California, with an emphasis on those native to the region. 9:30 AM –1:00 PM, members \$30, non-members \$35.

**U.C. SANTA CRUZ ARBORETUM**  
831) 427-2998 • [www2.ucsc.edu/arboretum](http://www2.ucsc.edu/arboretum)

**October 17 & 31, November 14 & 28, and December 12, Saturday mornings, 9:00AM – 11:00AM**  
**The Nature of Plants**—A course in plant biology taught by Dr. Matt Ritter. Five Saturdays (every other Saturday) from October 17 to December 12, 9:00 AM –11:00 AM. Registration fee: members \$30, non-members \$40, includes all course supplies and reading material.

## Don't forget to save your seeds...

Seeds collected and turned in by the November meeting are put on the Seed Exchange list in our January Bulletin for distribution in March. The more people participating by sharing their seeds, the better the list. Turn in your clean seeds, any hard-copy photos and brief description/care to Dave Tivol at any Cal Hort meeting or by mail to Dave at:  
Dave Tivol,  
130 Locksunart Way #4,  
Sunnyvale CA 94087



The California Horticultural Society  
 San Francisco County Fair Building  
 9TH Avenue & Lincoln Way  
 San Francisco, CA 94122  
[www.calhortsociety.org](http://www.calhortsociety.org)



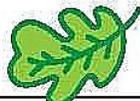
**Cal Hort Needs Volunteers**

*(modified from Supplement to July 09 Bulletin)*

The Cal Hort Board held its bi-monthly Board meeting last Monday evening. Eight Board members were in attendance. Not too bad considering we are in the middle of Summer vacations. The Board had many items to consider that were important to the future of the Society. They covered a multitude of topics as we move forward to essentially an all volunteer Society where all of the various tasks that make the Society run smoothly will be performed by members. However, it has also become obvious that the same members are doing most of these jobs (sometimes multiple jobs) and have been doing them for more than several years. We have been without a President and Vice President for all of this year. Our Treasurer has been on the job for 14 years. Our Bulletin Editor is looking for relief *(and has since resigned)*. Some of the assignments could be shared among several members if we had enough volunteers.

Our Society has maintained its quality programs because of the dedication of its volunteer officers, chairs, and members. The future of the Society depends upon its member volunteers! The Board asks that you consider volunteering for these positions to keep Cal Hort the Society we all want it to be. Contact any of the Board members for further information either by email, phone, or at next Monday's meeting, and especially Ted Kipping, the Nominating Committee Chair. We need you! Your membership Roster can provide Board member telephone numbers and email addresses.

To join, or for a full range of membership levels, please visit our web site at [www.calhortsociety.org](http://www.calhortsociety.org), or contact Kristin Yanker-Hansen at 925-831-9499



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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**Executive Council**

**2007 - 2009**

First Term  
 Steve Morse  
 Andy Stone  
 David Tivol

Second Term

Dan Carlson  
 Don Gerimonte

**2008 - 2010**

First Term  
 Jonathan Silverman

Second Term

James Budke  
 Ted Kipping

**2009 - 2011**

First Term  
 Demi Bowles-Lathrop  
 Cindy O'Donnell