

The next monthly general meeting is Monday, October 17, 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 – Botanical gardens walk with the featured speaker. Meet outside the entrance gate to the San Francisco Botanical Garden. New rules require that if you do not enter with the California Horticultural Society as a group, need to pay the entry fee if you are neither a SFBG member nor a resident of San Francisco. So be on time.

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 are welcome; Cal Hort requests a donation of \$5.

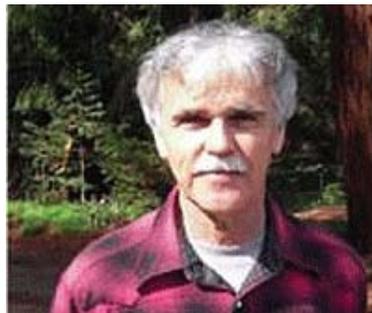


Oxalis polyphylla

MONDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2016

Salvias for the Home Garden

by Dr. Don Mahoney



Using live material, Don Mahoney will showcase the best salvias for the home garden. Included will be cultural tips for not only the commercially available salvias, but also cloud forest, native and other drought tolerant mediterranean forms.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2016

Wild Cyclamens— Delicate Marvels from Nature

by Ori Fragman-Sapir

Head Scientist at the Jerusalem Botanical Gardens



Cyclamens are native in Europe from the Mediterranean into Iran and south to Somalia. Ori Fragman-Sapir, a world-renowned bulb specialist, will show images of the genus in nature and interpret the natural habitats of cyclamen with regard to horticultural characteristics.



Autumn Bulb Mysteries

by Arcangelo Wessells

Fall blooming bulbs have already started! Yesterday *Oxalis polyphylla* started flowering in the ground. This tiny pink flowered plant seems to be the early bird. I received some tiny bulbs of *Oxalis massoniana* this summer, and they had started to grow in a plastic bag in late August. I planted them right away and now they have green growth above ground. I am so glad fall is here.

Spring fever gets me in the fall. By August I already wish for rain. It seems miraculous that my garden has survived. As the days get shorter I dream of getting home earlier each day. What I really look forward to are planting seeds and repotting bulbs of winter growing species. I've been thinking about it for months! I aim to get all the bulbs I grow into the ground, but their seeds are planted in pots and that is where they spend their early years. I have recently found, though, that bulbs flowering in pots can be shared in ways impossible if they are in the ground.

The other advantage of growing in pots is that you get to replot them. This is such an amazing procedure, not just for the plant's health, but for the glimpse into the forbidden world below ground that it provides. The bulbs have distinctive features. I collect wildflower seeds and I am building an internal database of identifying characteristics. In a parallel universe, one could buy a *Field Guide to Senescent Plants, Pappus for Dummies* or the definitive *Peterson Guide to Seed Pods of California*. Also on that useful shelf might be *Encyclopedia of Underground Storage Organs*. Since those books aren't in print, I can only share a bit of experience.

I have some two year old tubers of a Chilean alpine Nasturtium, *Tropaeolum polyanthum*, growing in almost pure sand. Its small tubers were pressed to the bottom of the pot. The tubers were as hard as rock, but the roots were alive and encrusted in sand. I couldn't look inside a deeper pot because the stems had already reached the surface. The tubers are known to bury themselves up to three feet down and can move horizontally to find an ideal location.

I just repotted a big group of *Calochortus* bulbs grown from seed collected between 2007 and 2012. *Calochortus*, which include the Mariposa Tulips, Cat's Ears and Fairy Lanterns, is a western North American genus in the Liliaceae. They don't bloom in the fall, and really don't even start leaf growth for a while, but repotting them still provides a good show. *Calochortus* means 'beautiful grass,' and all species have one narrow basal leaf, while some also have leaves on the flowering stem. In summer the leaf dies away and so do the roots, leaving the bulb. *Calochortus* bulbs have either a membranous or a fibrous coat, depending which section of the genus they are in. This is insulation for the bulb during dormancy.



Calochortus bulb with old bulb coat



Calochortus obispoensis

Many species will not show any leaf growth for quite some time, but a lot of them are beginning root growth now. I give all of my summer dormant bulbs their first watering in early September to encourage that. When the *Calochortus* seedlings came up, they were barely bigger than a pin. They made tiny bulbs their first year. One generally thinks of a bulb as just sitting in the ground, year after year, but they are far from static. The bulbs' locations are actually temporary resting places of a burrowing mass.

The single leaf which emerges each year is generally flattened, but the leaf blade narrows at the base, and becomes tubular. This leaf tube is fused with the bulb coat. In fall, the roots begin to grow from the bottom of the bulb. The bulb lengthens downward, slips free from its coat and the roots will actually pull it farther underground until it reaches its ideal location. This will take several years, and each coat is left where it was last used, still retaining the tube up to the soil level. Many bulbs will still have three or four coats from the previous years, each a bit bigger than its predecessor. As the bulb moves down, the new leaves will continue growing up through the same tube.

Even in one gallon pots, many *Calochortus* bulbs will reach the bottom of the pot and be forced to grow sideways, as they are trying to continue pull themselves farther down. Deep burial seems to be a good strategy to protect against predators, but the bulbs that reach the bottom of the pot are susceptible to rot and predation from insects and slugs through the drain holes. *Calochortus* will usually take four years before they bloom. Some species have been taking even longer. I am hoping that a lot will happen in June!



Calochortus bulbs showing increased size and depth of bulbs

Late Summer HORTICULTURAL EVENTS

GARDENING WITH NATURE IN MIND

Saturday, October 8, 10 AM–3 PM; Walnut Creek

Rain date is Saturday, November 12

\$40; limit 15 participants.

Join environmental educator Judy Adler in this in-depth tour of her half-acre Walnut Creek garden. Judy's suburban garden, part farm, part classroom, part nursery, and part nature preserve, features chickens, a rainwater harvesting system, a pond, and many California native and/or pollinator-friendly plants. The fall workshop schedule is posted on the Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour's website, and registration is open: www.bringingbackthenatives.net/fall-registration. (The address and directions to the workshop, along with a list of items to bring, will be e-mailed one week before the event).

NATIVE PLANT SALE EXTRAVAGANZA

Sunday, October 23; 10 AM–4 PM

Please join us at this year's fall Native Plant Sale Extravaganza, when seven nurseries will be open, with knowledgeable staff on hand to help you select native plants for your garden. Fall is the time to plant natives; take advantage of this great opportunity to purchase hard-to-find plants! For more information: www.bringingbackthenatives.net/fall-2016-extravaganza

Do You Grow These?

If you have enjoyed growing these types of plants which our members have requested, please collect and contribute seed for our exchange.

SPECIFIC: *Humulus japonicum* 'Variegatum'

GENERIC: *Ipomopsis*

CATEGORY: conifers, edible plants

GEOGRAPHIC: California natives in general, particularly wild flowers; South African native bulbs and shrubs; Mediterranean natives

TOLERANCES: drought, heat, shade

Of course, donations of any and all kinds of seeds are welcome! Plants which have given you pleasure will please others of our members, too. Please bring your seeds to the Cal Hort meeting, or mail them before

Thanksgiving to:

Dave Tivol

130 Locksunart Way #2

Sunnyvale CA 94087-4666

Garden Tours with Cal Hort

Those of us who visited David Silvia's garden in San Jose on September 24 passed a very enjoyable afternoon in a fabulous tropical garden. David and Eric were very welcoming hosts. Their knowledge of the many rare plants they have collected was matched by the expert care they have lavished on them. It is a truly bountiful collector's garden but laid out with an artist's eye for preserving views.

As soon as we are able to get a date to tour Facebook's roof top garden we'll announce it and the rest of the gardens on the tour of the south bay. Stay tuned.

Next spring we'll be visiting Davis to tour some of the wonderful gardens Ernesto Sandoval shared with us at the September meeting.

Sign Up to Host a Coffee Social in Your Garden

It isn't too late to invite Cal Hort to your garden for coffee. Remember, you only have to provide the coffee. The rest of us will bring snacks. Arcangelo Wessells hosted the first coffee in Vallejo. Mark Delepine just hosted one in his Berkeley garden on Sunday, October 2.

If you'd like us to get to know what you are doing in your garden think about having us over. For more information contact me, Mark Delepine (mdelepine@liacook.com), and I'd be happy to help you plan and put the word out.

If not in November, think about giving yourself the pleasure of sharing your garden with other garden lovers next spring.



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

www.calhortsociety.org

Plant Drawing News

Each month various nurseries and individual members donate plants for the plant drawing. In September, we had many interesting donations. Please do not hesitate to bring in unusual plants from your garden to share with the members. Also remember the meeting is an excellent place to find plants for your garden that you have never seen before.

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

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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.