



Sacramento Perennial Plant Club NEWSLETTER

Founded 1988

www.sacramentoperennialplantclub.com

May/June 2009

Contents

- Upcoming Programs - page 1
- Board Meetings - page 1
- Garden Tours - page 2-3
- Vendor Sale - page 3
- Spring Plant Sale - page 4
- President's message - page 4
- Mediterranean / Waterwise Gardening - page 5
- Drought Tolerant Plants - page 6-7
- Late Spring Gardening - page 8
- The UC Davis Arboretum All-Star Project - page 8-9
- Propagating Class - page 10
- New Website - page 10

MAY PROGRAM SPEAKER

Jacqueline Tarchala
Amador Flower Farm
All about Daylilies

Shepard Garden and Arts Center
Thursday, May 28, 2009 at 7:00 PM

Jacqueline Tarchala has been in the nursery industry for the last 20 years. She was the Manager of the Amador Flower Farm for ten years. After 'retiring' from the Flower Farm, she started her own consulting and landscape design business. Jackie's been a Master Gardener for 19 years and acquired Lifetime statues after donating over 1700 hours to the MG Program and over 1200 hours of continuing education. Learning is a passion for Jackie and she continues to advance her plant knowledge and education by attending seminars, conferences, and UC advanced education programs. Here other interests include her grandchildren, collecting unusual plants, sewing, her cutting garden and her kitty 'kids'.

JUNE PROGRAM SPEAKER

Seth Taylor
Capital Nursery

The Curious World of Carnivorous Plants; Growing Natures Flycatchers
Shepard Garden and Arts Center
Thursday, June 25, 2009, 7:00 PM

Seth Taylor has been the Sales Manager for Capital Nursery Co on Freeport Blvd for over three years. For the past three years he has also been Host of the 'Capital Nursery Garden Show' which airs every Saturday on 1380 AM Radio – KTKZ from 10am to 11am. He studied at Sierra College with emphasis on Environmental Sciences and holds a California Advanced Nursery Certificate. Seth has been a long time gardening enthusiast with his interests lying in growing unusual plants, succulents and carnivorous species.

He will have examples from his own personal collection and will give a little background into geographical locations, history and a few tidbits that he has picked up along the way.....



Day Lilly, *Good Morning America*, from Amador Flower Farm

The next two Perennial Plant club Board of Directors meetings will be held May 12th at Barbara Lane Piert's (362-5337), and June 9th at Sharon Patrician's (455-8166). There will be no board meeting during July or August. As always, board meetings are open to all members. These meetings are a great chance to see how the club is run and where you might like to help. We also get a chance to tour the wonderful gardens of our members before dinner. Friends, gardens, food, and club business. Can't beat that! Meetings begin at 5 PM and start with a potluck dinner – informative *and* delicious.



JUNE GARDEN TOUR

Amador Flower Farm & Deaver Winery
Saturday, June 13, 2009 – 10:00a.m.
22001 Shenandoah School Road
Plymouth, California 95669

Come join us for a tour of Amador Flower Farm followed by wine tasting at Deaver Winery.

Amador Flower Farm is located on 10 acres in the heart of the Shenandoah wine valley and is owned by club member Jeanne Deaver. The Farm was started in 1994 and has over 800 different daylilies. There are 4 acres of demonstration gardens showing how daylilies can be incorporated into a landscaping setting. These gardens have been planted in themes such as the 'Western Garden', 'Royal Court Garden', 'Stout Medal Garden' and the largest garden, 'Cottage Hill' which is planted like an English garden. The theme gardens have over 200 unusual perennials and grasses used as companion plants to the daylilies. Along with the daylily and perennial plant nursery the Farm has a

gift shop. June is the best time to walk the 4 acres of growing grounds and make notes on your favorite day-lilies.

Deaver Winery is a family vineyard that has been making wine for over 100 years. The 'Deaver wine, 'Sierra Foothill Zinfandel' won the San Francisco Chronicle's 'Double Gold' and 'Best of Class' in 2004. They have gourmet food items and a deli case stocked with meats and cheeses or you can plan on bringing along a picnic lunch and enjoy the picnic area overlooking the lovely pond.

Amador Flower Farm (209) 245-6660 -- Deaver Winery, 2455 Steiner Road, Shenandoah Valley, Plymouth, California (209) 245-4099



THE LATE SHOW GARDENS

Saturday September 19, 2009
Cornerstone, Sonoma, California
Leaving Shepard Garden and Arts Center at 7:30 A.M.

The Sacramento Perennial Plant Club is celebrating its 21st birthday with a bus trip to "The Late Show Gardens" at Cornerstone in Sonoma, on September 19. This trip will be free to members (be sure to check the label on your newsletter to see if you have paid your 2009 dues). After June 15 the trip will be open to guests at the cost of \$55.00. The Late Show Gardens is an alliance, of professionals and dedicated gardeners many of whom are world renowned and travel extensively speaking about their work. The designers and speakers will share with you how they are responding to the demands of global climate change. Some of the many speakers on Saturday are Tom Fisher, Timber Press; Authors and Designers, Roger

Gossler, Tophier Delaney, Ken Duse, Phil von Soelen; Ketzler Levin from NPR, Dick Turner, editor of Pacific Horticulture. Sean Hogan, owner of Cistus Nursery in Oregon and from Sacramento will be a designer and vendor. Kate Frey, gold metal winner at the Chelsea Flower Show and designer of the gardens at Fetzer vineyard, Jack Chandler, Landscape Architect and designer of outdoor furniture and sculptures, Jon Greenlee Author and designer, Robin Parer owner of Geraniaceae are among a few of the designers and vendors who will be participating. The show runs from 9:30 am to 5:30 pm. To sign up for this trip, please call Janice Sutherland at 481-2137.

JULY GARDEN TOUR

Lake of the Sky Garden Tour
Saturday July 25, 2009
10:00AM to 4:00PM

Incline Village at Lake Tahoe, California



The 21st annual garden tour sponsored by the Lake of the Sky Garden Club. View 8 gardens including one lake-front estate and several homes with sweeping lake views. For information: go to lake-of-the-sky.org. Tickets \$20.00



Philadelphia 'Belle Etoile', purple spot mock orange
Good choice for the back of a perennial bed; good spring bloom, showy and stand out in the moonlight; attractive vase-shaped form.



HIGH HAND NURSERY
Dan Hinkley
Hunting the Four Corners of the World
Saturday June 13 and Sunday June 14, 2009
3750 Taylor Road Loomis, California

High Hand Nursery and Monrovia Nursery invite you to join them for a weekend with a true adventurer, Dan Hinkley, an American plantsman, author, horticulturist and nurseryman. Mr. Hinkley is a world-renown plant hunter who has traveled to exotic locations around the globe in search of rare and unusual plants. He has explored the wilds of China, the mountains of Nepal and the cape of South Africa for plants that will thrive in and enrich our gardens here at home. Listen to Mr. Hinkley's tales of adventure and his abiding passion for plants and you will be inspired to bring home some of these treasures for your own garden.

To assist you in your own plant exploration, they are excited to announce Monrovia, one of the world's largest producers of container grown plants, has introduced a new plant collection including six rare and beautiful gems discovered by Dan Hinkley. These include a cold-hardy Fuchsia whose dainty pure white blossoms resemble pearl drop earrings; another Fuchsia with rosy purple foliage

and flowers of the deepest garnet and an Abutilon (flowering maple) whose reddish-orange flowers are suspended in air like tiny lanterns. They will have all of these new Monrovia plants exclusively available.

The lecture at 1:00 pm, June 13, is titled "Good Plants for the Twenty First Century." The lecture at 11:00 am Sunday June 14, is entitled "Recent Travels – in Search of Good Plants." In addition to the lectures, join Mr. Hinkley for dinner on June 13, at 5:30p.m., in the beautiful High Hand Conservatory, where he will sign copies of his latest book, *The Explorer's Garden; Shrubs and Vines from the Four Corners of the World*. Price of admission includes a delicious meal of hand grown, hand crafted cuisine and an autographed copy of Mr. Hinkley's book.

Reservations are required as seating for both lectures and the dinner is limited. Ticket cost for each lecture is \$5.00. The cost for the dinner is \$60.00. For lecture and dinner reservations you can go to www.highhand.com.



9th Annual Vendor Sale a big Success

A special thank you goes to Bea Little, Lonnie Ratzaff, and Joyce Mills for organizing a successful Vendor Sale. The sale ran smoothly due to all of our members who volunteered and shared their time and talents in making this year's Vendor Sale a fun and profitable experience for all. The Board thanks you for your hard work.

Thank you to all the nurseries that participated in the sale including; Golden Pond Flower Farm of Loomis, Native Springs Nursery, Yankee Hill, Morningsun Herb Farm, Vacaville, Friends of San Juan de Oriente, Sacramento, Bob Tadlock Design and Golden Gecko Garden Center, Garden Valley, Jensen Botanical Garden, Sacramento, Mad Man Maples, Rocklin and Monte Cristo Farm, Placerville, Twisted Metal, Sacramento, Rustic Birdhouse, Magalia, The Secret Garden, Elk Grove, The OG, Stockton, Peaceful Valley Farm, Grass Valley, and Vermi Dragon Farm, Brown Valley. In your summer travels make a stop at some of these nurseries or order some plants from their websites.



Perennial Plant Club

SUCCESSFUL SPRING PLANT SALE! Madeleine Mullins

Many thanks to these members who gave their time to make The Spring Plant Sale such a success: - Janice and Bill Sutherland, Jeanne Christopherson, Pat McKnight, Bobby Frieze, Sharon Patrician, John Bodie and his magic truck, Mae Ferral, Peggy Gerick, Bea Little, Pam Myczek, Therese Ruth, Jean Wills, Noelle Anderson, Margaret Corsey, Diane Morris and her daughter and granddaughter Fran Clarke, Daisy Mah, Beverly Shilling, Lonnie Ratzaff, and our president Saul and Julie Wiseman. We would have no sale at all without the enormous contribution of Emma Ahart, to whom we are deeply grateful.



Thank you, Madeline, for another great plant sale.

Mark Your Calendar Plant Sales

UC Davis Arboretum - End of Season 20% off Clearance Sale **May 16, 2009, 9am-12pm.**

Help us clear out the nursery for the summer and get great bargains on top-quality plants.

Bob Hamm - plants sales behind the Gifted Gardener on J Street **May 16 & 17** and **June 13&14 9am-3pm.** Sales at his South Natomas home: **May30&31, June 6&7, and June 20& 21.**

SUMMER MEETINGS

There will be no general meetings in July and August; next meeting is September 24th. Next newsletter will be the September / October issue. Have a wonderful summer and take time to sit down, have a cool drink, and enjoy your garden.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE Saul Wiseman

Three big changes. First, I want to thank Sue Fitz for her help with both the newsletter and the website. For many years she has been involved with the newsletter layout and mailing. She was the person who started our website and has maintained the site for many years.

First change --- the newsletter. Janice Sutherland, who has been sending the copy to Sue Fitz, will now do the newsletter. She will be the editor. One person will do the production of the newsletter. Other members will be involved with Janice in the distribution.

If you would like to write for our newsletter, please send your articles to Janice Sutherland. This May / June edition is Janice's first complete newsletter.

Second change --- the website. Larry Cooke will be the webmaster. He will be updating the site. Already Larry has made big improvements to our site, which has a new address ---sacramentoperennialplantclub.com

We are .com rather than .org because of the paper work involved in changing from Yahoo to Network Solutions as the website provider.

Our old site, sacramentoperennialplantclub.org is still up, but check out the new address. I'm sure you're going to see Larry Cooke add more to the new site.

Third change --- revising the by-laws of the club. Yes, we do have bylaws. Some members of the Board of Directors are involved in making some needed changes; one being a description of what each elected officer or appointed chairperson will be expected to do. Also, we need to elect officers at the January meeting.

Change happens. If you have been attending the monthly meetings, you have noticed that the printed agenda sometimes changes.

Mediterranean / Waterwise Gardening

Fran Clarke

Three years of below normal rainfall (and the installation of water meters) has motivated many gardeners to reduce or eliminate lawn areas and plant more water-thrifty plants. Surprisingly, the gardening sections of most bookstores don't seem to reflect current interest in designing waterwise or mediterranean gardens. One of the newest books, *The Dry Gardening Handbook: Plants and Practices for a Changing Climate* by Olivier Filippi, also reflects concern for climate change in its title, while providing more thoughtful advice than previous books on the subject. Beginning with a well-illustrated section on mediterranean climate areas, *The Dry Garden Handbook*, includes inland California, not just the central and southern coastal areas of California, which do not experience such limiting factors as cold and frosty winter temperatures and harsh summer heat. Filippi warns that everyone's drought is different, depending on the nature and depth of soil, the amount of shade, competition from tree roots, wind and salt. A unique feature is the plant reference section with each plant given a drought resistance code ranging from 1 to 6. The book advises that with the unique conditions of your own garden you may wish to more finely tune it. Each plant is carefully chosen based on more than 20 years of Filippi's observations in the south of France.

Reflecting his experience as a nurseryman, he recommends purchasing small, stocky, well-branched plants grown hard rather than typical fragile nursery plants accustomed to generous water and fertilizer that have a more difficult time adapting to tough conditions. He does not recommend fertilization during the first year of establishment in the drought tolerant garden. (Note: research has shown that trees do not benefit from fertilization during the first year after planting.)

Root quality in mediterranean gardens is particularly important for woody plants – trees, shrubs or sub-shrubs.

Circling knotted roots and a poorly developed root system limit a plant's ability to extract moisture and resist wind. If you should purchase a tree or shrub with these problems, use a sharp knife to make two deep vertical incisions in the rootball to cut through the problem roots. (Note: in the case of trees, return it to its source.)

Dry climate plants are adapted to stony, poor and well-drained soils, but unless you have terraces or a slope with heavy clay soils, you will need to provide raised beds and soil amended with 30-50 percent coarse sand, pebbles, gravel or similar materials to provide aeration. He doesn't mention organic matter, which quickly breaks down in hot climates.

Additional topics include ideal planting time (autumn), watering, mulching, pruning, pests and diseases.

The photography is outstanding, but pictures and illustrations seem to show plantings that are below ground/grade level. Gardeners not familiar with centimeters and the Celsius temperature scale may need to check conversion charts.

Translated from French, *The Dry Gardening Handbook* was published in the United Kingdom and America by Thames and Hudson in 2008. Although pricey at its list price of \$60.00, it is a quality book with important information not contained in older, but still available similar books including Heidi Gildemeister's *Mediterranean Gardening, A Waterwise Approach*, first published in 1995 with a California edition in 2002 (\$24.95); *Plants for Dry Climates*; M.R. and Warren Jones, Revised edition 2001 ((\$29.95); *Make Your Own Mediterranean Garden*, Pattie Barron, 2003 (\$27.50). All books were purchased at The Avid Reader (best selection of books on this topic) in Sacramento except *The Dry Gardening Handbook*, which was purchased online for about 40% off the list price.

Fran Clarke, UCCE, Master Gardener, Sacramento County, ISA, Certified Arborist WE 1319



Achillea millefolium
'Apple Blossom' Yarrow

This is a lovely soft selection of yarrow, with soft ferny foliage and soft sweet pink and white flowers. It is a great 'cottage garden' selection, to add to pink roses, penstemon such as 'Wine Kissed' or Salvia 'San Carlos Festival'



Rosa 'Perle d'Or' golden pearl polyantha rose
Fine shrub rose for Central Valley gardens; has fewer thorns than most roses; drought resistant (All-Star)



Drought Tolerant Plants

by Rosemary Loveall-Sale

Each year brings new records for our California climate. Record heat, cold, days without rain and number of fires have given us the dubious distinction of living in a place and time where the idea of 'normal' means little. Many of our customers are looking for plants and gardening ideas that will give them a lovely garden with as little water as possible. The concept of a dry garden may be one that only includes prickly cactus, gray lifeless sparse foliage and flowers for only a few short weeks in the spring and lots of concrete and other hardscaping. With proper attention to soil preparation, planting and watering techniques, a water wise garden can be attractive year round.

Of course, the plant material is the most exciting part of any garden plan, but a few details for soil preparation will save you the heartache of replanting, or of watching your plants languish as their root systems slowly try to establish under less ideal conditions. So what is really needed for the soil to provide the best conditions for growth? Most importantly, provide good drainage – add compost to the soil, mixing up to 6 inches of compost in the top 12 inches of topsoil. Compost will increase drainage, increase air space for plant roots to respire and easily grow, and give a good substrate for microflora and fauna to live. Heavy clay soils are generally poor for most drought tolerant perennials, which require excellent drainage for healthy root systems.

I usually stress never to add sand to a soil, especially if you are beginning with a heavy clay or clay loam that is commonly found here in Northern California. Clay soil mixed with sand and dried in the hot California sun gives us the building blocks for California missions! I would like to make some exceptions to that rule, given that more of the plants being grown in our gardens are native to very sandy or rocky soils. Never use fine sand, such as builders sand or playground sand. But with plants such as agaves, aloes and many other succulents, the addition of sharp sand and /or small gravel is more beneficial than compost alone. Often these plants are also mulched with a layer of gravel to keep the soil surface dry.

Second, your irrigation system should be able to water plantings deeply. Drip irrigation systems are often used to ensure that only individual plants are watered, although spray heads or overhead watering can also be used. The

important thing with your choice of system is to be sure that plants can be watered deeply, especially when you are getting them established. This will ensure that they are truly 'drought tolerant'. Many people will water often, but only provide enough water to penetrate the top several inches of soil. This doesn't offer the root system any reason to grow deeper, so it is essentially a 'lazy' plant, wilting quickly and producing little top growth. Before planting, it is always a good idea to test water an area, turning on the irrigation system for a set time, and then dig down to see how deeply the water has penetrated. For healthy drought tolerant plants water should penetrate at least a foot for short perennials and shrubs, and up to 3 feet for trees.

Providing ample water early in the life of your garden will produce a large healthy deep root system that will be able to withstand extended periods of drought – often within a year plantings are able to not only survive but thrive with only weekly irrigation, or often only bi-monthly irrigations. This certainly is handy if you travel for your job and are away from home frequently, or go on vacation, or if watering restrictions are imposed in your community (a very real possibility this year). Your landscaping can look beautiful and lush; provide you with flowers and fragrance and the bees, butterflies and hummingbirds with food and shelter with very little water input.

Planting time is also important when establishing a drought tolerant garden. First, it is important to take advantage of cooler temperatures and natural rainfall to help establish plants with the least amount of stress, both to the plant and to the planter! For California natives and many other Mediterranean climate plants, this means early spring planting, or even late winter planting if that plant material is available. Many Mediterranean plants have roots that are actively growing in late winter and early spring, and again in the mid to late fall, while they are naturally dormant, and therefore more difficult to establish, in the summer. So plant as early as the soil allows (you don't want to work to actively in very wet soils) and remember that if you miss the spring planting season, fall is a fabulous time to plant!

So, what about the fun part of planting? What herbs and perennials can be grown in our Mediterranean climate with little watering and fuss?

Let's begin with obvious drought tolerant plants in the mint family. Lavender is the most obvious choice, but with so many species and varieties, which would be the best selections for drought tolerant gardens? While all lavenders are considered drought tolerant and full sun loving, those that would be particularly tolerant of dry conditions are: **Lavandula 'Silver Frost'**,

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

Lavandula 'Goodwin Creek Grey', **Lavandula 'Abrialii'**, **Lavandula 'Grosso'**, **Lavandula 'Gros Bleu'** and **Lavandula dentata**. For the longest bloom, I would choose **'Goodwin Creek Grey'**, since it will bloom from April until November. For cooking and crafting, **'Grosso'**, **'Gros Bleu'** and **'Abrialii'** are all excellent. They are all great bee attractors and are fragrant.

Sage is often used in the drought tolerant garden; although it is important to note that many of the 'New World' sages prefer a bit more shade and water. Some of the finest drought tolerant 'New World' sages are **Salvia apiana**, which is our California native white sage, and **Salvia darcyii**, which is a terrific hummingbird plant from northern Mexico. It is large growing, to 3 feet tall and 5 feet wide, and blooms from May until November. **Salvia clevelandii** and **Salvia mellifera** are California natives that absolutely require good drainage and little summer water to succeed. **Salvia leucantha**, the common Mexican Bush Sage, is a terrific low water user that blooms from late summer until long into the winter in mild climates. **Salvia melissodora**, or grape scented sage, is a large growing drought tolerant sage with flowers in the fall and spring that smell of grapes. **Salvia microphylla** has deep red blooms topping reddish black stems with sticky leaves. This plant is a bit of a rambler, growing to 3 feet tall and up to 5 feet wide as it spills out along the ground. Much shorter is **Salvia nemorosa 'Caradonna'**, which grows to only 1 foot tall with deep violet blue flower spikes. **Salvia chamaedryoides**, or Electric blue sage, is a lovely short shrubby evergreen.

One of my favorite African plants to grow in the drought tolerant garden is Lion's Tail, or **Leonotis leonurus**. This plant is fantastic for hummingbirds, with big whorls of deep orange blooms in spring, and from late summer through fall. It can grow quite large, to 4 feet tall and as wide, and is very easily grown. Alongside it I would grow the Hawaiian native **Lepechinia hastata** or false sage, which has large felted fragrant grey leaves and luscious violet blooms in the late summer and fall, and oddly for its origin, is extremely winter hardy and drought tolerant. **Salvia Africana-lutea** is another stunning South African native with burnt orange flowers in the late winter.

There are quite a large number of terrific groundcovers to grow in very dry conditions. My personal favorites are **Thymus herba-barona**, which is the very fragrant caraway thyme, and **Thymus longicaulis**, or turbo

thyme. Both of these thymes will grow rapidly in full sun or partial shade, with a minimum amount of water needed. They are both long lived and require little care once established. While they both have pretty pink blooms, they are not very showy most of the year. To add some color to a dry area, plant **Achillea tomentosa 'King Edward'**, a low growing yarrow with soft buttery yellow blooms. Also, several of the **Veronicas**, both **'Waterperry'** and **pectinata**, are excellent for providing plenty of periwinkle blue blooms. In areas where no foot traffic is planned, or near a very hot street or path, the ornamental oreganos are indispensable. **Origanum 'Kent Beauty'** with long cascading lime green and pink blooms, **Origanum dictamnus**, with the same type of flowers and very furry gray foliage, or the more upright **Origanum 'Santa Cruz'**, with sprays of soft pink blooms, can take intense sun and heat and will bloom all summer long. **Saponaria ocymoides**, or common soapwort, is a low rambling plant that will bloom with lovely pink flowers from May until mid fall. **Scutellaria suffrutescens**, or pink Texas skullcap, prefers hot dry weather, growing to only 10 inches tall, but 18 inches wide, with deep pink blooms all summer and fall.

Slightly taller groundcovers such as **Nepeta 'Walker's Low'** with gray foliage and bright blue flowers, and many of the Achillea (yarrow), especially **'Moonshine'**, with yellow blooms and gray foliage, and **'Apple Blossom'**, with soft green foliage and bicolored pink blooms. **Helianthemum nummularium 'Double Red'** and **'Sunfleck'** are both very tough evergreen groundcover with free blooming flowers.

Most plants that have silver or fuzzy foliage are more drought tolerant. For example, lamb's ears, or **Stachys byzantina**, are very furry and silver white, and are extremely drought tolerant. Also, **Santolina chamaecyparissus 'nana'** is a pungent scented short growing evergreen, perfect for a short border or for accent. **Artemesia 'Powis Castle'** is a wide growing perennial that is extremely easy to grow – it can be slightly invasive if it is too happy! **Helichrysum italicum 'nana'**, or curry plant, is a very fragrant choice for an accent plant. **Marrubium incanum** is very different from its ugly common horehound relative, with big wavy silvery leaves and bright pink flowers. **Ruta graveolens** is a traditional medicinal plant with feathery grey foliage and yellow blooms.

These plants and many more, may be purchased at Morningsun Herb Farm in Vacaville check out their catalog and order thru their website: www.morningsunherbfarm.com.

Perennial Plant Club

Late Spring Gardening Bob Hamm

May takes us from spring weather early in the month, to summer weather at the end of it. Growth is rapid and a large number of plants come into bloom.

With increasing temperatures, some words on watering seem appropriate. Remember that young, recently planted items take more frequent watering than older, established plants AND that since they are not rooted into the surrounding soil, they need water at their base (rootball), not just depending on the sprinklers. Especially on larger sizes, I've seen a plant dry out and die even when sprinklers were running because it didn't get enough water in its rootball to keep it going.

Think of newly planted items (especially larger sizes) as if they were pots sunk into the ground and you'll have a better idea of why they need more care in watering. They need water in the "pot" (rootball) area and sprinklers often don't do it.

A reminder: If you have any of the following that have finished blooming, now is the time for pruning/trimming them: Forsythia, Flowering Quince, Azalea, Rhododendron, FLOWERING (grown for flowers not fruit) varieties of cherry, pear, plum etc, Witchhazel, early blooming Spirea forms and later in the month when done blooming Dogwood.

Although many gardeners don't realize it, plants like Dogwood, Rhododendron and Azalea will start to set buds for next spring in June and July, so this (May) is the last month that I'd recommend any major pruning on them.

May brings the planting of warm weather annuals and veggies and there is still time to seed annuals such as cosmos, marigolds, and zinnia for mid to late summer color.

Gladiola bulbs can still be planted for bloom later in the summer and the same for the large flowered Dahlias. Tithonia (Mexican Sunflower), Sunflowers and Morning Glory are all warmth loving annuals that can be seeded in now and will grow fast for blooms from mid-summer on into fall. For those of you not good with seeds, I will have some starters available soon.

While young, fast growing plants need regular feeding, as do pots, more mature established plants do not need as much. In fact in mature gardens over feeding can cause too much growth!

Aphids are making their annual explosive appearance on roses and other plants. While you can spray for them, a strong stream of water from the hose to wash them off works almost as well and won't kill ladybugs that come to feed on the aphids. I only wash off large concentrations of aphids; the ladybugs usually appear and take care of the rest in short order. Note that lady bug larva, (the immature stage of ladybugs) resembles little black worms usually with a few red spots. These feed on aphids until they retreat into pupa to hatch out as the ladybugs you know.



Geranium Mavis Simpson is a sun loving, drought resistant evergreen plant making a mound 8-12 inches tall and 2 ft across covered in pink blooms. It is one that has done very

well in the Hamilton Square plantings. A good one for the front of the border, rock gardens, and it can also be used in containers.



The UC Davis Arboretum All-Star Project Ellen Zagory

The goal of the UC Arboretum All-Stars program is to provide sound horticultural information and to help home gardeners make better plants choices. More gardeners are seeking information on sustainable horticultural practices that augment wildlife corridors, support native pollinators, and protect natural resources. By selecting plants that are low-water use the Arboretum All-Star program addresses the state's current water restriction issues. Currently, half

of California's residential water use is for home landscapes. Also, using landscape plants that do not need pesticides, fertilizers, and other chemicals prevents the excess of these chemicals from flowing into the state's waterways.

UC Davis Arboretum now has a list of 100 recommended plants that they call the UC Davis Arboretum All-Stars. The All-Star plants are ones that have been grown and tested in the UC Davis Arboretum's gardens and many

(Continued on page 9)

(Continued from page 8)

receive only infrequent, deep, irrigation once every two weeks in the dry season. The plants also possess valuable qualities such as color, fragrance or winter display. California natives and other plants that attract pollinators, hummingbirds and beneficial insects are also included. A new website (<http://arboretum.ucdavis.edu>) provides photos and information about these plants in a searchable database with recommendations on watering and light requirements.

The Arboretum nursery staff has worked to have the All-Star plants available at plant sales but the popularity of the All-Star selections has exceeded supplies, often selling out quickly. As a result the Arboretum has partnered with the UC College of Agriculture and Natural Resources and the California Center for Urban Horticulture (CCUH) to set up a program to make these plants available at nurseries throughout California. Commercial nursery partners have generously stepped forward and agreed to grow and make available Arboretum All-Star plants by including them in their commercial production plans. Garden Bloomers Takao Nursery became the first commercial propagator of UC Davis Arboretum All-Star plants. Additionally, FloraSource, Inc. is serving as our plant broker, assisting with the selection of plants and movement of materials. The final piece of the puzzle was created through valuable partnerships with three commercial wholesale growers, High Ranch Nursery of Loomis, McCall's Nursery of Fresno, and Native Sons Nursery of Arroyo Grande. With guidance from these professionals, a subset of the UC Davis Arboretum All-Stars is being launched to California gardeners in the spring of 2009. Educational materials, such as a poster featuring twelve selected plants and colored horticultural labels, will accompany the plants. Plants vary in color and garden use from *Bulbine frutescens*, a low perennial with nearly constant columns of clear yellow star-like flowers, to *Aster* 'Purple Dome' a compact, fall blooming perennial that attracts butterflies. An unusual shrub featured is *Ceanothus* 'Marie Simon' with attractive red stems and clouds of fluffy pink flowers in spring.

Plant testing local and statewide

In order to evaluate this recommended plant list for the environmentally diverse climatic zones of California, a testing program was needed to evaluate the plants' performance in controlled conditions. Testing for drought tolerance was critical but also of interest is the plant's performance at higher irrigation levels; could the plant also thrive in a situation near a lawn or incorporated in an existing higher water landscape. University Extension Specialist, Dr. Loren Oki, and graduate student Karrie

Reid stepped forward to carry out research and trialing of selected Arboretum All-Stars. Field plants are subjected to one of four irrigation treatments based on percentages of reference evapotranspiration (ET_0). ET_0 is a measure of water evaporated from a typical turf grass and was measured using a weather station. The four irrigation levels included a 20% ET_0 treatment (low water), 40% (low-medium), 60% (high-medium), and 80% (high). The full report on the field test results can be found in the July-September 2008 issue of California Agriculture magazine. (<http://CaliforniaAgriculture.ucop.edu>). Results of this experiment have assisted Arboretum All-Star program collaborators in making landscape design suggestions and irrigation frequency recommendations and continued grant funding has allowed for irrigation trials to be on-going, testing additional All-Star plants.

Simultaneously Karrie Reid established a system for distributing the All-Stars to UCCE Master Gardeners to test their performance in a variety of climate zones from climates with coastal influences (such as salt spray) to other high summer temperature inland areas as well as colder winter gardens at higher elevations. Master Gardeners at each site keep notes on the plant's performance and take monthly growth measurements, record irrigation frequency, flowering, pest appearance and garden appeal. Zone garden trials are on-going based on available grant funding.

Keep your eyes open for UC Davis Arboretum All-Star plants this spring! They'll be available around the state at selected retail locations (specific store locations are available on the Arboretum's website and will be updated as they increase). By expanding our effort to connect people with the beauty and value of plants, we hope that you will choose UC Davis Arboretum All-Stars for your own garden!



Bulbine frutescens - Cape balsam

Small, evergreen perennial is a wonderful addition to dry perennial borders with its long-blooming spikes of delicate, star-shaped yellow flowers; fleshy, bright green foliage adds a sculptural element to the garden; tolerates drought and poor soils. (All-Star)

Perennial Plant Club

Carolyn Singer's Propagating Classes

Enjoy a garden class in a garden setting! The propagation class takes some students longer than three hours to complete. There is no rush. Bring a lunch to enjoy during or after class. This will allow you more time in the gardens. Also, dress warmly (in layers) since this class begins in the cool of the morning, and is done in the shade. Remember to bring drinking water!

Two propagation classes have been scheduled for 2009, Friday June 19th and Saturday June 27th. The cost of the three hour class and all materials is \$60.00. Students are allowed to take cuttings from any of the large selection of plants in the garden, including rare shrubs, perennials, al-

pinies and vines. Methods for seeding and dividing are also discussed. **Take home triple the cost of this course in plant material for your own garden!** Students may leave their cuttings in Carolyn's cold frame until they are rooted. Plan now for fall landscaping!

Carolyn Singer, owner of **Foothill Cottage Gardens**, offers garden classes, design and consultation services. The extensive plant collection will be open only to students. (530) 272-4362 or email at csinger@stardustweb.net

"DEER IN MY GARDEN, Vol. 1: Perennials & Subshrubs" and Vol. 2: Groundcovers & Edgers" are available thru www.gardenwisdompress.com Vol. 1 has won 7 awards!!

New Website for Sacramento Perennial Plant Club

Larry Cooke, our new webmaster, is developing a new website for our club. The site will have a monthly calendar with gardening events listed. If you belong to other garden clubs and they have an event you think SPPC members would be interested in attending, or if you know of any other gardening events, send the information to Larry.

I hope you are taking pictures of your gardens! Tell us about your garden, and send pictures of your garden, individual plants, or projects you are working on. This will be a nice way of sharing our gardens. With everyone planting vegetable gardens the year, take a picture of your newly planted garden, then send in a picture later in the season to show how the garden has grown and what has been a success.



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