



The Perennial Post

Newsletter of the Sacramento Perennial Plant Club  Nov/Dec 2020

Join us on Zoom to attend our November and December general meetings. An e-mail with the Zoom invitation link will be sent to you prior to the meeting.

We start the evening at 6:30 p.m. with “Club Chat Time” where we share what’s happening in our gardens, must-have tools, or any garden-related information. The general meeting starts at 7 p.m. with Club announcements, Daisy’s “Half-Dozen” of currently blooming perennials, then our featured speaker. The meeting ends at 8 p.m.

November Speaker

Bryan Young

Establishing Functional California Native Grasslands

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2020 • 7 PM

As an undergraduate at UC Davis, Bryan Young was exploring his deep interest in nature and ecology. During an internship at Hedgerow Farms, a farm specializing in native grass seed production, he found his calling. After earning a degree in Wildlife and Fisheries Biology, he landed his dream job. Now for over 25 years, he has been restoring and enhancing the “Bufferlands,” 2,000 acres of open space surrounding Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant in Elk Grove. He will speak on restoration strategies in combating the decline of California native grasslands communities that support a vast array of imperiled wildlife, plant species and diversity.

December Speaker

Lori Ann Asmus

Don’t Get Caught with Your Plants Down!

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2020 • 7 PM

Lori Ann Asmus grew up with a mom who loved plants, kept a garden abundant with vegetables and flowers and ran a houseplant store when macramé hangers were all the rage. When Lori Ann set off to UC Davis, she had her sights on genetics rather than horticulture. But soon after landing a job and mentorship at the university greenhouses, she realized she shared her mom’s love of plants. While earning a degree in a new major, Environmental Planning and Management, she started a houseplant care business which expanded in 1986 to become the “Emerald City.” We will learn the role that plants play in improving air quality and bringing beauty and serenity into our interior spaces and work cubicles.

WWW.SACRAMENTOPERENNIALPLANTCLUB.ORG





Sacramento Perennial Plant Club

OFFICERS

President: VACANT

Vice-President: JoAnne Payan

Secretary: Jane Thompson

Treasurer: Marcia Leddy

CONTACTS

E-Mail: Kirsten Salomon

Gardener's Market/Facebook:
Lili Ann Metzger

Grant Program: VACANT

Membership: Carol Meininger

Newsletter: Cheryl McDonald

Plant Propagation: Daisy Mah

Plant Sales: Beverly Shilling &
Charlene Durant

Publicity/Website: Linda Hax

SG&AC Rep: Noelle Anderson

Speakers: Noelle Anderson

Tour Coordinator: VACANT

WPA Garden: Daisy Mah

Send questions or comments to:

pres.sppc@gmail.com

BOARD MEETINGS

The next two Zoom board meetings will be held on:

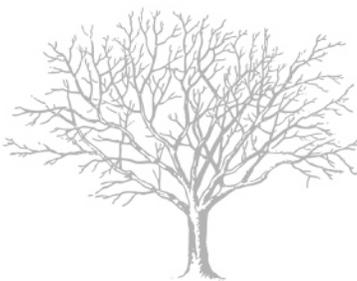
Thursday, November 12—2 p.m.

Thursday, December 3—2 p.m.

If you would like to join the meeting, contact Jane Thompson (artjane7850@sbcglobal.net) to receive an invite link.

NEWSLETTER

The due date to submit a garden-related article for the **Jan/Feb 2021** issue is **December 15**. Please send your article to Cheryl McDonald: (mcdonald4214@sbcglobal.net).



Year in Review

A Message from the SPPC Board

**Calling 2020 a challenging year,
is a bit of an understatement.**

We had a great start to the new year with award-winning podcaster, Jennifer Jewell, who unveiled her recent book, “The Earth in Her Hands” to a well-attended January meeting.

February brought us a new group of Saul Wiseman grant recipients: Leo A. Palmiter Jr/Sr High School, Effie Yeaw Nature Center and Bret Harte Elementary School.

Our Spring Plant Sale in March, held on a rain-soaked weekend, turned out to be one of our more successful plant sales. The sale ended shortly before the beginning of the statewide COVID-19 lockdown. We then had to cancel our much anticipated Gardener’s Market.

During April and May, the focus turned to more communication with members. Our new Facebook page was developed and went live, the website set up a virtual tour of members’ gardens and e-mail news blasts let us know we’re still an active group. Also in May, Club volunteers donned masks and safely returned to tending the WPA Rock Garden.

Our Zoom general meetings began in June when Andi MacDonald shared her catering insights and plant-based recipes. In August, LaVille Logan passed along her propagation tips, and in September, Guy Galante presented his photography and observations of coyotes in our region. In October, we learned all about carnivorous plants from Keith Smith. “Club Chat Time,” held prior to the meetings, was initiated and Daisy continued to inspire us with her “Half-Dozen” blooming perennials.

In September, the Club pivoted to “Pop-Up” Plant Sales. These sales, along with tool sharpening, brought in almost twice what we normally make at the SG&AC Fall Plant Sale. Situated at various sites in our community, the “Pop-Ups” bring the Club to the public; furthering our mission of educating “budding” gardeners about perennial plants suitable to our area.

Going forward, challenges remain. We still need a member to step forward to fill our vacant President position. The grant program is on hiatus until we can safely meet and conduct site visits.

Now, our thoughts turn to fall gardening. Just like how some plants need to be re-planted, re-potted or re-positioned; the SPPC continues to find its footing and positioning for its members—through growth, development and adjustment to new normals.

Meet the New SPPC Board Officers

JoAnne Payan—Vice-President

A lifelong love of gardening, both indoor and out, brings this retired state worker tremendous joy and happiness. JoAnne sought to fulfill her dream of having a garden as “a place of refuge” and found it in her hometown of Sacramento. She relishes the fact her home is within walking distance of several restaurants and her favorite nursery Talini’s. She is proud of her water-wise/drought tolerant garden filled with natives, perennials, raised vegetable beds, and without any turf grass. Besides gardening JoAnne creates with “sticks and fiber” (knitter) currently finishing up a sweater, loves worldwide travel and has visited many public gardens. She is a zealous reader and her current favorite quote is so fitting for our times, “Reading gives us some place to go when we have to stay where we are.”



Jane Thompson—Secretary

A graduate of UCD, Jane has a varied background ranging from apparel design, art docent, community volunteer to public school teacher. Her creativity can be seen and admired in the many colorful and interesting garden art projects she brings to our plant sales (many are repurposed items found around the house). She became acquainted with SPPC through our fall plant sale some 12 years back and has been a dedicated member chairing the Saul Wiseman Grants Program. As her five-year tenure as chair draws to an end, Jane says, “We have awarded grants to some amazing garden groups that have achieved many worthwhile gardening projects in the County of Sacramento.” Giving credit to her mother for inspiring her love of gardening, Jane’s favorite quote is, “With garden work, you always get a great reward for your effort!”

Marcia Leddy—Treasurer

SPPC can thank Daisy Mah for so much including mentoring Marcia at the Land Park WPA Rock Garden in 2010 and inviting her to attend a SPPC meeting. Marcia soaked up the knowledge and information needed to convert her lawn to a drought tolerant garden with everything from alstroemerias to yuccas. She also grows culinary herbs, enjoys baking and “tweaking the amount of sugar and fat in recipes to make them healthier. I’ve taken classes given by UCCE Master Food Preservers of Sac County and like to make jams, jellies and dried fruits using our local bounty of summer fruits.” And she still finds time to work in ceramic arts making garden art for her yard. A Midwest transplant, Marcia is now retired from the workforce—beginning as an RN, next as co-owner of a small business, and finally, small business customer service.

Thank you to our new board officers for their willingness to serve the SPPC during these most difficult times.

—Diana Morris

Fall “Pop-Up” Plant Sales

During this pandemic, nurseries have hired more staff and stocked up as more people are gardening and purchasing plants. Knowing this, we had to rethink what the Fall Plant Sale would look like. Mindful of current COVID restrictions, a site away from a crowded patio area at SG&AC was needed—a location where plant-filled tables and volunteers/customers could easily spread out. Member driveways and backyards came to mind. This new arrangement proved to be very successful and may be used again in the Spring.

The combined sales in September and October brought close to twice the amount we normally make at the SG&AC Fall Plant Sale—without the usual costs for venue, tables, and publicity.

Why such a good return? Here are some changes and enhancements:

- An easy, color-coded pricing system
- Detailed labeling of plants
- Helpful propagators onsite
- Targeted publicity—
Nextdoor, local garden clubs, SPPC members
- Street signage
- Tool sharpening by donation
- Flexible sale hours

The take-aways:

- We are reaching out to local communities by providing these pop-ups.
- We are educating our neighbors while promoting lots of healthy gardening activity.

Thank you to all who helped make this new sales approach a success!

Seasons in My Native Garden

By Patricia Carpenter

“In the great central valley there are only two seasons—spring and summer. Spring begins with the first rainstorm...”

—John Muir, 1911

To a newcomer I can understand why John Muir might reason there are only two seasons. The landscape is green or it is brown (or golden as many Californians prefer to stress). But with a closer look there are more like five seasons in the Sacramento Valley area and they don't agree with the traditional seasonal calendar. The changing of seasons is definitely what I enjoy the most in our one-acre native garden on the slough, west of Davis.



Vitus californica 'Roger's Red'

PATRICIA CARPENTER



Winter fungus



Calochortus luteus Yellow Mariposa Lily



Calliandra eriophylla Pink Fairy Duster

PHOTOS: BETH SAVIDGE

FALL I do agree that our season of new growth starts in the fall, mostly October and November. After the dry summer there is new life in many plants. The California poppies have little green tufts and many shrubs have new leaves. The slough is now drying since the surrounding crops are harvested, but there are interesting animal prints crisscrossing. I did hear a big coyote party recently. Fall is my favorite season—besides the crisp air I love the colors in the riparian areas. Our Roger's Red grape is spectacular some years.

WINTER The renewal continues into December and January, our short winter, when the landscape is green again! The perennial wildflowers are emerging. I always wonder how the California buttercup (*Ranunculus californicus*) stores enough water to thrive in our mostly dry valley grassland. Winter is the season of the wonderful fungus and frosts. And if we are lucky January rains fill the slough and also our swale that flows down into Shly Creek.* If we are not lucky there is a big flood with mud everywhere!

EARLY SPRING / LATE SPRING But before you know it early spring is here. It starts in February and extends to about March. Wildflowers are starting to bloom. The many *Ribes* are the stars and *R. malvaceum* 'Dancing Tassels' is a new favorite. The transition into late spring is more like an explosion with a riot of color during April and May. Everyday there is something new to see and I just can't keep up with it all. The bulbs finally bloom!

SUMMER Slowly summer comes. It is sometime in June when the color fades and the weather warms. Summers are long and dry and linger into September. With no rains, many of the plants shut down or adapt. Bulbs disappear, shrubs like the buckeye are summer dormant, and many plants have gray leaves that will reflect the sun's hot rays for cooling. But the desert area comes alive with blooms into fall! I tend to visit the garden in the very early morning or cool evenings to watch the sunset from the bridge.

*Shly Creek is our own creek. Named after two interns who helped construct it—first and last initials of the two mixed up.

Patricia Carpenter (pcarpenter.flower@gmail.com)
California Native Plant Society Garden Ambassador profile
<https://www.cnps.org/gardening/patricia-carpenters-davis-garden-2-12725>

For more photos of the garden taken by Beth Savidge, professional photographer:
<https://photos.app.goo.gl/A6zKmRdKPqr5AQb5A>

Kathy Moore

I have my favorite garden tool to share as a gift idea. It was a gift from my friend and fellow PPC member, Sandy Bisbee. It's called a [Yankee Weeder](#) and I use it all the time.



Jeannie Claypoole

I give [Master Gardener calendars](#) to friends. To my daughter, I give gift certificates to a specific nursery she likes and she is always happy to have it. Over the years, my daughter has given me two things I didn't suggest but now can't do without: a Hori-Hori knife and special scissors/light pruners specifically for flower arranging. I put garden pruners on my wish list every year. They disappear from time to time and always need replenishing. Perhaps others need the same thing! Another gift I received from a friend and greatly appreciated was a collapsible garden waste container. Gardeners can use more than one of those so it wouldn't matter if you already have one...and they eventually get poked through!



Therese Ruth

Our newest favorites are power augers. They come in different sizes—from planting small bulbs to 4-inch, 1-gallon and larger potted plant sizes. They are available with long shanks so you don't have to bend over to use them. We use ours with our Ryobi battery drill (40v). Saves time and your back.



Stan & LaVille Logan

Stan: How about a bag of E.B Stone's Sure Start? *LaVille* uses it every time she transplants. Then, how about a moisture meter?

LaVille: HAND LOTION! Look up hand cream on the [Beekman1802](#) web site. There are many varieties of hand care products and other great gift ideas.

Barbara Beddow

Small rake—about \$20 at East Sac Hardware. Great to get under bushes and other tight spaces. [Small battery blower](#)—at Home Depot. Not real powerful, but great for clearing up leaves, blowing out the garage, and getting ash off my car. I like it so much I bought a \$200 E-Go brand model to use at my sweetie Fred's house. It works well, has variable power, and a good Consumer Reports rating.



Lightweight gloves from Green Acres—about \$2-\$3, I think. They fit well, give a good grip, and never wear out.

Peggy Kennedy

When I am planting bulbs, I find my hand trowel that marks the depth in inches of the soil into which the trowel is digging especially useful. For pruning large branches up to 2 or 3 inches, I like to use anvil loppers.

Patricia Carpenter

I almost always give one of two gifts. A proper digging fork and instructions on how to use it. I rarely use a shovel. Many people buy what is really a potato fork with flat rectangular tines and it does not work very well for digging, but probably good for potatoes. If it is a good friend or skilled gardener then the fork is carbon steel, new gardeners usually receive [stainless steel](#).



Another gift is [knee pads](#).

I have worn these for about 20 years. They are so comfortable that I have been known to go to the grocery store with them on. I am not alone.

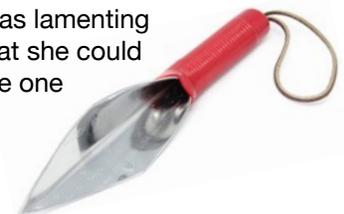


I thought of one more. All interns and garden helpers receive a gift—a [diamond sharpening stick](#) and instructions on how to sharpen pruners. They are encouraged to do so each time they come to help.

These tools are from [Lee Valley Tools](#) and they often have free shipping.

Bobby Frieze

I really like this [trowel](#). The first one I bought at the SF Garden and Arts in the Cow Palace. I recently bought one from Amazon for my daughter who had lost her first trowel and she was lamenting the fact that she could not find the one that I had previously given her.



MORE

Gifts for Gardeners



Cheryl McDonald

Do you have a friend that loves watching birds frolic in a bird bath or dance around the backyard? If so, this book, “150 Frequently Seen Birds of California’s Great Valley,” will be so appreciated. I have a copy and love it! At only 4.5” x 6”, its size makes it easy to tuck in a drawer by the kitchen window or in a backpack to take on a hike. Club member, Peggy Kennedy, co-authored this lovely book. Plus, all proceeds from its sale benefits the mission and goals of the American River Natural History Association and the Effie Yeaw Nature Center. Everybody wins! At only \$16.95, it’s a real bargain. You can order it at the [Effie Yeaw Discovery Store](#).

Janice Sutherland

Since I enjoy winter gardening, I love getting a new pair of flannel-lined jeans and warm wool socks for Christmas.

Marcia Leddy

I treated myself at Christmas time (@Talini’s) a few years ago to a pair of [Hestra Garden Rose](#) leather and cowhide gauntlet gloves. The gloves have been very comfortable and durable in protecting my hands and forearms when I prune roses, as well as other prickly plants. To complete my pruning safely attire I purchased a pair of clear plastic wraparound safety eyeglasses (@Home Depot) for eye protection, especially when working on tall roses & overhead vines.

Risë Ryan

I happened to be reading an article in the NYTimes about an herb tea garden, and inserted within was this pair of [gardening scissors](#) which the gardener had recommended. I’m always a sucker for new small scissors for two reasons—I always lose them somewhere in the garden or in my house, and also because I love the small trimmers for herbs, deadheading and can fit them in my pockets. Also this is RED!! What a cute Christmas gift!!



Sara Lu Vorhes

I think subscriptions to garden magazines are nice. Every other month a friend gives me a strangely named magazine called “Garden & Gun.” Not really much at all about hunting but always some good pictures and articles of southern gardens and sweet dog stories. Very tony ads and places to travel to in the South.

Here’s What
I Would Have
Brought
to the
Holiday
Potluck

Call for Recipes

While we won’t be able to share a meal at our Annual Holiday Potluck, we can still share a recipe. Those recipes (hot dish, salad or dessert) will be gathered in a digital collection titled, “Here’s What I Would Have Brought to the Holiday Potluck.” Send your recipe typed, as a scanned cookbook page, or as a web link to **Cheryl McDonald** (mcdonald4214@sbcglobal.net). **Deadline for recipes is at the end of November.**

For this year, last names starting with the letter:

A thru I send a **dessert** recipe

J thru Q send a **salad** recipe

R thru Z send a **hot dish** recipe

If you wish, include a “side of extras” for each recipe—a photo of the dish and/or an anecdote about the recipe.

Think of this collection as a “digital stocking stuffer”—to members, from members. It should arrive in your email around the middle of December.

Fall Blooming Plants for Hummingbirds

By Ellen Zagory



Tecoma x 'Orange Jubilee'



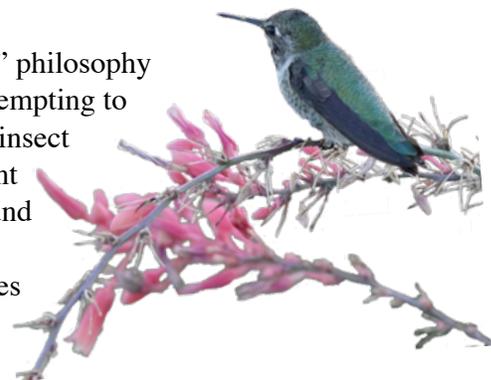
Epilobium canum 'UC Hybrid'



Russelia equisetiformis

PHOTOS: ELLEN ZAGORY

I embraced the “Lose your Lawn” philosophy a few years ago and am now attempting to replace it with a low-irrigation, insect and hummingbird attracting front yard. In our region, the year-round presence of the Anna’s hummingbird makes them easy to attract and provides an entertaining daily glimpse of nature in action. These diminutive iridescent fighters zip and dive while chasing one another and currently are battling over the nectar of my autumn bloomers.



A large and vigorous shrub very popular with my feathered friends is one I planted only two years ago, *Tecoma* X ‘Orange Jubilee.’ Halfway between a shrub and a vine it sends up long unbranched stems tipped with clusters of orange flowers, starting when temperatures rise and continuing into November. It is easy to confuse with another “viny” shrub *Tecoma capensis* (I learned it as *Tecomaria capensis*), the Cape honeysuckle. With darker orange-red curved flowers it blooms only as the days shorten in fall. It’s best to grow Cape honeysuckle in a dry spot as spreads by underground runners that require vigilant removal, a problem that ‘Orange Jubilee’ doesn’t have. Both of these require pruning to induce branching and keep them compact.

California fuchsias are also in full bloom right now and are the highlight of my late season, sunny area. I grow two forms—*Epilobium canum* ‘UC Hybrid’ (also called UCB Hybrid or UC Berkeley Hybrid) and *E. canum* ‘Carmen’s Gray.’ ‘UC Hybrid’ is a form with upright, light gray almost white foliage to three feet tall carrying large orange-red flowers. Originally collected from nearby Cold Canyon near Lake Berryessa, it contrasts nicely with the dark red-leaved amaranth that seeds itself in the same area. ‘Carmen’s Gray’ is similar but more sprawling and useful for cascading over a short wall.

Stealing the show in a red, orange and yellow planting are some new red-flowered autumn sages that I planted last fall. *Salvia* Heatwave™ Series Blaze and *Salvia* ‘Balmircher’ Mirage™ Series Cherry Red are very similar with their prolific dark red flowers produced during the long, hot summer. The present reduction in temperature has helped them push out lots of new fresh flowers hence the name autumn sage. Elsewhere I have had *Salvia* ‘San Carlos Festival’ for many years in a spot that is shady in the morning with blasting hot sun in the afternoon. More of a pinkish-red, it is not as completely covered with flowers as the others (I think because of the shade). It nonetheless draws hummingbirds daily and remains compact.

Last, but not least, in my parade of mostly red and orange autumn bloomers, is *Russelia equisetiformis*, the firecracker plant. Red flowers cover the dramatic mound of arching bright green stems throughout the warm months. It can be damaged and killed to the ground in freezing weather but recent winters have been mainly without frost. Native to Mexico it is a nectar rich plant utilized by the many species of hummingbirds there, and perfect to add to your hummingbird planting here.



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2743 San Luis Court
Sacramento, CA 95818



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Tecoma capensis 'Cape Honeysuckle'

ELLEN ZAGORY