

The Perennial Post

Newsletter of the Sacramento Perennial Plant Club  Winter 2022





Sacramento Perennial Plant Club

OFFICERS

President: Noelle Anderson

Vice-President: Karen Martin

Secretary: Jane Thompson

Treasurer: Marcia Leddy

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Grant Program: Anita Clevenger

Membership: Carol Meininger

Newsletter: Cheryl McDonald

Plant Sales: Vacant

Publicity/Website: Linda Hax

SG&AC Rep: Barbara Lane-Piert

Speakers: Noelle Anderson &

Terri Young

Tour Coordinator: Beverly Shilling

Gardener's Market: Lili Ann Metzer

Propagation Advisors: Daisy Mah &

LaVille Logan

Send questions or comments to:

pres.sppc@gmail.com

BOARD MEETINGS

All SPPC members are invited to attend monthly board meetings.

January 13–12:30 p.m.

RSVP to Beverly Shilling (916-452-4762)

Please bring a sack lunch.

Upcoming board meeting dates, times and location will appear in the monthly E-News.

NEWSLETTER

The due date to submit a garden-related article for the spring issue is March 15, 2022. Please send your article to Cheryl McDonald: mcdonald4214@sbcglobal.net.

The Perennial Post is published quarterly. Archived newsletters can be viewed on the club's website.

ON THE COVER

The winter season is on display in Cheryl McDonald's backyard.

A blooming Helleborus argutifolius 'Corsican Hellebore' is surrounded by Geranium x cantabrigiense 'Biokovo', Cyclamen hederifolium and Carex oshimensis 'Everillo'.

Message from the President

Happy New Year! During the fall I decided my next big project would be to take out all my plants that had looked sick during the last two extremely dry summers, and replace them with dry-climate plants. I checked out four books from the library—didn't want to start spending money too soon. The first one said, "Automatic watering systems are one of the worst inventions of the modern mediterranean gardener"—native plants in a dry climate cannot tolerate both high heat and water. The second one said we have to alter our irrigation systems to suit the needs of our new plants. The first writer lives in England; the second in Palm Springs, CA.

There is much to study and learn here. Main ideas I've gotten so far: we should keep our trees alive if possible, do everything we can to allow rainwater to percolate into our soil, do our planting in the fall so as to allow the plants to get established before the summer, and thoroughly mulch everything.

Now of course, we are having so much rain that we might have flooding in Sacramento! These are the extremes of our new climate. I plan to enjoy our SPPC meetings and speakers for 2022 whether in person or on ZOOM, so I can learn more about how to proceed with gardening in the present time.

—Noelle Anderson

Nominating Committee Needed

SPPC board officers (President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer) will be elected at the May 26, 2022 general meeting and will assume office on July 1. These officers will serve a two-year term. A nominating committee needs to be formed to explore possible candidates.

Lorraine Van Kekerix and **Lili Metzer** will be co-chairs of this committee. We are looking for committee members that can help identify and contact potential candidates. Given the Omicron COVID-19 variant, we will do our work via email and maybe Zoom in January to March. If you are willing to help, please contact Lorraine via email at lkvk@dcn.org, or phone 916-207-2218.

2022 Membership Drive

Dues must be received by **March 31, 2022**, in order for you to be listed in the upcoming membership roster, receive the Club's monthly E-News and the quarterly *Perennial Post* newsletter.

Be sure to fill out the membership form completely and include it with your dues.

For questions, contact **Carol Meininger** (916-765-8390; sacppc@sbcglobal.net).

SPPC Winter Meetings

At the time of this writing, we are facing a winter surge of Covid-19 cases. For the upcoming meetings, our hope is to safely meet in person at the Shepard Garden & Arts Center. Because plans can change at the last minute, please check your email for updates.

January

Heidi Watanabe

Don't Think You Can Be a Farmer? Neither Did I!

THURSDAY—JANUARY 27, 2022 • 7 PM

SHEPARD GARDEN & ARTS CENTER

Growing up, Heidi Watanabe thought vegetables came from the store in a can. Her family never grew anything except their lawn. She thought her future would be sports related since she played so many and that's all she knew.

In December 1996, she met a man who grew up farming. Her journey to farming began after they were married in October 1997. She was coaching all kinds of sports when her husband, working for a fertilizer company, knew many farmers and suggested Heidi work for one. He also asked why not try planting a few things at their seven-acre property in West Sacramento that had been fallow for more than 20 years?

Heidi fell in love with growing and started farming by herself as she started to build their brand name. Her husband eventually farmed full-time with her and they became known for heirloom tomatoes. They are now retired from vegetable farming and grow microgreens instead. What an adventure it's been!

February

Chris Wasserman

"Sacramento County Wildflowers"

THURSDAY—FEBRUARY 24, 2022 • 7 PM

SHEPARD GARDEN & ARTS CENTER

Wildflowers have been Chris Wasserman's interest for a long time. During a vacation in the mountains, when she was six, she asked so many questions about the flowers that her mother, in desperation, bought a wildflower guide.

Chris did not start painting seriously until she retired from nursing and moved to Rancho Murieta. On walks near her home, she was impressed with the many varieties of plants growing in fields and along roads. Since there was much development planned in the area, she wanted to hold on to some of this fragile beauty. That's when she started painting wildflowers. Wanting to know more about the subjects of her paintings, Chris attended lectures and took a class in Field Botany.

Published in 2012, Chris will share with us, *Sacramento County Wildflowers*, where her exquisite watercolors along with lovely photographs by Jan Fetler, showcase the most commonly seen wildflowers in Sacramento County.

March

17TH ANNUAL

GARDENER'S MARKET

SATURDAY—MARCH 12, 2022

SHEPARD GARDEN & ARTS CENTER

NOON SPEAKER

Jennifer Jewell

"Under Western Skies"

Jennifer Jewell is host and producer of *Cultivating Place*, an award-winning public radio program and podcast. She will share her latest book *Under Western Skies: Visionary Gardens from the Rockies to the Pacific Coast*.



From desert sands to seaside oases, gardens in the American West are on the frontier of garden design. *Under Western Skies* proves this, with profiles of some of the West's most innovative gardens. Packed with Caitlin Atkinson's stunning photographs and Jennifer's deep insights into the relationships between people and the landscapes they inhabit, *Under Western Skies* is a must read for passionate gardeners who call the wild West home.

Reminder: The Gardener's Market takes the place of our March meeting.

17th ANNUAL GARDENER'S MARKET

GROW LOCAL | SHOP LOCAL

SATURDAY
MARCH 12, 2022
9 AM – 3 PM

SHEPARD GARDEN & ARTS CENTER

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

We have a great lineup
of returning favorites and new
vendors bringing in some wonderful
plants and garden treasures.

The proceeds of this event help
fund the Grants Program,
speakers and other community
gardening projects.

If you use social media
please post the event information
and share with your friends.

NOON SPEAKER

Jennifer Jewell

Creator, writer and host of
*Cultivating Place: Conversations
on Natural History and the
Human Impulse to Garden*

Many volunteers are needed!

Watch your email for updates
and volunteer sign-ups.

For questions, contact:

Lili Ann Metzer

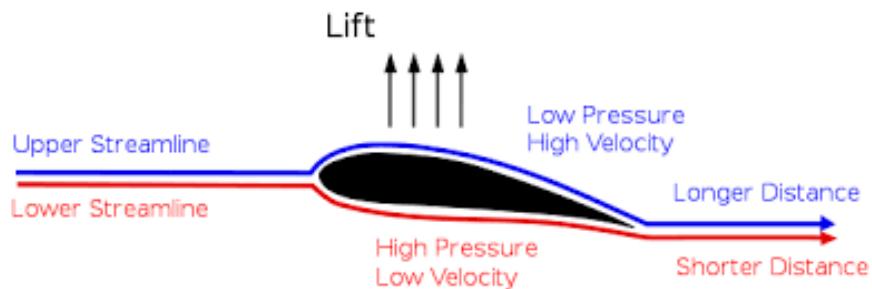
Lili@abqhomeandgardenshow.com;
or 916-837-3291

**Reminder: The Gardener's Market
takes the place of our
March meeting.**

Where's Bernoulli?

This is a science lesson. So if you have no interest
in science, stop reading now.

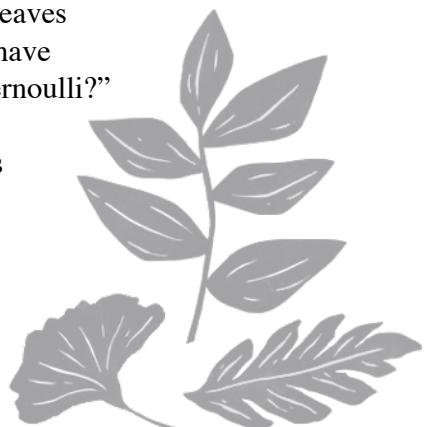
You know the saying, "You cannot keep an old dog from teaching old tricks." I taught science for 37 years, so I cannot help thinking about scientific principles while gardening. For instance, every time I use my leaf blower to move a stubborn magnolia leaf that my neighbor's tree has provided, I think about Bernoulli's Principle. Good old Bernoulli discovered that the faster a fluid moves, the lower the internal pressure. The next time you fly (in an airplane) look at the wing. You will see that the upper surface is curved compare to the bottom surface. This causes the air moving over the top of the wing to travel a longer distance than air beneath it. The air on top therefore has to move faster to get the back of the wing at the same time as the air beneath it. Since the pressure on top is reduced, the greater pressure beneath will lift the wing (and hopefully you along with it).



So why, when I blow air over the top of a magnolia leaf, doesn't it rise? Well, unfortunately I know the answer. Technically it is called "angle of attack." (LaVille and I used to fly small planes.) The air blown at the leaf is coming down on it rather than parallel to it. I supposed if I laid the blower down on the ground so that the air flowed along it, the leaf might rise. But that would look stupid, and I get ridiculed enough as it is.

So the next time you are out blowing leaves and a leaf sticks to the ground so you have to go and kick it, yell out "Where's Bernoulli?" Or the next time you are flying along in a plane, say a silent (or loud) thanks to Bernoulli. He's doing a great job of keeping you up.

Stan, The Science Man



Winter Blooms

by Daisy Mah



Correa pulchella 'Mission Bells' is a member of the Rutaceae or citrus family and is native to southeast Australia. Also known as Australian fuchsia, they grow in part shade to full sun, are drought-tolerant and do best with good drainage. Blooms attract hummingbirds. Its genus honors botanist José Francesco Correa de Serra (1751-1823). Middle English *pulcher* means beautiful.



Cuphea ignea x *C. augustifolia*, 'Starfire Pink' is known as cigar plant belongs to the Lythraceae family. This native of Mexico and Central America can reach 5' x 6' or be kept as low as 2' x 3'. It grows in sun with moderate to average water. Non-stop blooms benefit bees, butterflies and hummingbirds. Genus is derived from the Greek *typhus*, meaning curved (referring to its curved seed capsule) and *ignea*, meaning on fire or glowing.



Hybrid *fuchsia magellanica* 'Globosa' is a member of the Onagraceae family with origins in southern Chile and southern Argentina. It is cold hardy, heat-tolerant and somewhat drought-tolerant. As with all fuchsias, they attract bees, butterflies and hummingbirds. It is also mite resistant. Cuttings are rooting and will be offered at future SPPC plant sales. Genus pays tribute to Leonhart Fuchs, a German physician (1501-1566), species *magellanica* refers to the straits of Magellan. *Globosa* refers to the globe shape of the flowers.



Iris unguicularis, commonly known as Algerian or winter iris, belongs to Iridaceae family. This native of Greece, the Near East and northern Africa blooms from November to March. Besides blue, it comes in white, shades of lavender and pink. It is drought-tolerant and is sensitive to being overwatered. It is well-adapted to our summer heat, can be divided in fall through late winter and is tolerant of both sun and shade. Genus *Iris* shares its name with the Greek goddess of the rainbow; *ungicularis* means clawed.

Survey Says . . .

by Linda Hax

Thanks to all who responded to our Fall Survey. Your thoughtful survey responses will assist Board members plan future programs and activities.

- No surprise, as a generally older group, we spend little time on social media; even our club's Facebook and website garner only "occasional" viewing at best. However, the majority of respondents showed interest in added interactive website features.
 - At least one Zoom meeting was attended by 78 percent of respondents and 34 percent of respondents attended almost all of our Zoom meetings with 91 percent experiencing no technical difficulties. Is this what they mean by lifelong learning?
 - Of the 9 percent who did experience technical issues, those problems were resolved 50 percent of the time.
 - We prefer our in-person, evening meetings but 32 percent of us would opt for Zoom meetings in January and February.
 - Tours and/or meetups garnered top member interest and four members volunteered to coordinate tours, so expect 2022 to bring touring opportunities. Many respondents volunteered to help with meeting refreshments, plants sales, plant propagation, assisting the public at meetings or plant sales, plant sale cleanup, and event publicity. Thanks for volunteering!
- All timely respondents were entered into a drawing for a \$25 Green Acres gift card. The winner drawn at our November board meeting was **JoEllen Arnold!**

Fungi in the Garden

By Patricia Carpenter

PATRICIA CARPENTER



EVERY winter, or starting in fall if we get a good early rain like this year, I look forward to the fungi that appear in the garden. For the past 20 years or so I have enjoyed and photographed them in my own garden and on my adventures around the world. It was in Switzerland that I saw my first red mushroom with white dots, probably the poisonous fly agaric.

On a trek in Argentina to see Iguazú Falls, a couple children noticed I stopped to check out the many fungi along the path. Soon I was hearing “¡Venga aguá, venga aquí!”, letting me know there was a new find. In New Zealand I was introduced to the earthstar and bird’s nest fungi. I now know these both grow in Davis as well. These bird’s nests are easy to miss as they are about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch in diameter. Rainwater will fill the cup and splash out the ‘eggs’ that contain the spores. Beth Savidge, who has amazingly photographed my garden for the past two years, loves fungi too! Her macro shots are especially awesome. Most mushrooms we can’t identify, but she found the earthstar in her garden and gave me some to release the spores from the center sphere into my own garden. I squeezed them and hit with a stick but the rain will also release spores from the tiny hole on top.



Left: Bird’s nest fungi.

Right: Earthstar from Beth Savidge’s yard.

Fungi were once classified as plants but no more, they now have a kingdom of their own. With no stems, leaves or root, they must get their nourishment from the environment.

Saprophytic fungi grow on dead organic matter. These are found on animal remains, logs, dung, twigs and leaves and are very important in decomposition and the making of humus in the soil. Most of us have seen the white mycelium often found under the leaf litter in our gardens. This is a mass of the very fine filaments, hyphae, that are found in soil and on decaying organic matter. The majority of their life is in the mycelium phase. The mushrooms we see above ground push up from the hyphae to form the fruit bodies or reproductive parts with spores that will be released to grow more hyphae.

We often have an abundance of these mushrooms in the garden in winter because of all the decaying organic matter in our California native area. We don’t remove any debris—it is all tossed back onto the ground. Also in this category are the penicillin and baking/brewing yeasts that are extracted from saprophytic fungi.



Top: Unknown yellow mushroom.

Center: Turkey tail shelf fungus.

Trametes versicolor.

Bottom: Cup fungus, *Peziza*.

Parasitic fungi grow on living plants and animals and often weaken and kill the host. We see mushrooms and lichen on tree trunks and branches. Rust, smut, wilt and mildew are microscopic parasitic fungi we gardeners know well. Athlete's foot is a common human fungus.

Mycorrhizal fungi are those in a symbiotic relationship with most trees and also other plants. The mycelium attaches to the tree rootlets, forming a bond that allows simple sugars to move from the trees to feed the fungi and soluble mineral nutrients and water from fungus to plant. Mycelium can attach to the roots of different species so they might share nutrients. This is the case under our redwoods where the extensive redwood roots help to support the shady understory plants. About three quarters of green plants benefit from this beneficial relationship. The UC Davis Arboretum oak grove is a great place to discover mycorrhizal mushrooms.

Edible mushrooms are numerous in California, as are the poisonous ones. I have always been afraid of all fungi I see in the garden or on trails. However, years ago I saw morels growing in a friend's garden in Davis. Shortly after, a neighbor gave me a bag of them to eat—he told me he gathers them for restaurants. Being uneducated, I was leery! The day we ate them I put a note and a morel in a bag on the counter with the source, just in case.

Morels can be found in wood chips, forests, in many orchards and stream banks. Some are abundant after burns, like the *Morchella tomentosa* black morel. Two years ago, I found a source for morel spores.



Left: *Morchella tomentosa*, black morel.

Right: Shaggy mane, ink cap, *Coprinus*. Many species are edible.

Three were native to California that I added to the native area and the other three from Europe were released far away in my main garden. Sadly, no morel mushrooms showed up last winter, but it was a very low rainfall year. I am still hopeful for a future late winter or early spring harvest.



PATRICIA CARPENTER

One of the many coral fungi, some are edible and tasty.

Fungi are fascinating! So much variety can be seen in some of our finds in the garden:



PHOTOS: BETH SAVIDGE

Unidentified fungi.

Fungi are captivating, but confusing! There are so many synonyms with the taxonomy and nomenclature still evolving. I hope this new gift book from Beth will help me sort a few things out. [California Mushrooms, The Comprehensive Identification Guide](#), by Dennis E. Desjardin, Michael G. Wood, Frederick A. Stevens, 2015.

To see more of Beth Savidge's photos of Patricia's native and main gardens, go to these Google pages: ([2020](#), [2021](#))



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