

The Perennial Post

Newsletter of the Sacramento Perennial Plant Club 🌿 Winter 2025



DAISY MAH

WWW.SACPLANTS.ORG



Sacramento Perennial Plant Club

MISSION STATEMENT

The Sacramento Perennial Plant Club provides educational opportunities for Sacramento area gardeners and horticulturalists to learn about perennials appropriate to our climate and water limitations.

OFFICERS

President:

Vice-President: Cheryl McDonald

Secretary: Catherine Cardozo

Treasurer: Marcia Leddy

CONTACTS

Facebook: Lili Ann Metzger

Gardener's Market: Lili Ann Metzger

Grants Program: Anita Clevenger

Member Open Gardens: Lee Perrone

Membership: Linda Monroe

Newsletter/E-Blasts: Cheryl McDonald

Plant Sales: Risë Ryan

Propagation Advisors: Daisy Mah & LaVillie Logan

Website: Weston Monroe

SG&AC Rep: Barbara Lane

Speakers: Lori Ann Asmus

Send questions or comments to:

president.sppc@gmail.com

NEWSLETTER

March 10 is the due date to submit a garden-related article for the spring issue of *The Perennial Post*. Please send your article to Cheryl McDonald: cmcd2743@gmail.com.

WHEN & WHERE?

Club meetings are held the fourth Thursday of the month (except July, Aug, Nov and Dec) at 7 p.m. at the Shepard Garden & Arts Center in McKinley Park, 3330 McKinley Blvd., Sacramento. Meetings are free and open to the public.

ON THE COVER

Cycas revoluta, sago palm grows in the shade of a weeping Kashmir Cypress in the WPA Rock Garden.

Photo: Daisy Mah

Looking Ahead

We have a full year ahead of us featuring interesting monthly speakers, our 20th Annual Gardener's Market, spring/fall plant sales and much more.

Solid leadership is critical for our club. We're a big club and, as a team, work very hard to accomplish big things—it's imperative that we fill the vacant President position. For more flexibility, the president and vice-president positions can be shared as co-presidents. If interested, please contact past president, **Lorraine Van Kekerix** (lvk@dcn.org). To give you an idea of what's involved, a brief list of duties is below:

PRESIDENT/VICE-PRESIDENT

Plan agenda for board and general meetings; preside over meetings. Attend club functions. Communicate with board members and committee chairpersons. Be the club contact person for the City of Sacramento and Shepard Garden & Arts Center. Prepare and submit to the City rental/permit applications for meetings and special events.

The 2025 membership drive has begun. You can renew your membership online at sacplants.org/membership. The printed 2025 Membership Form can still be filled out and submitted by mail or in person at our meetings with dues attached. The form is included in this newsletter on page 7.

—Cheryl McDonald



BETH SAVIDGE

Patricia Carpenter's Seasonal Winter Ramble

Sunday, January 19 • 11 am–3 pm

[Register here](#) for the event. **RSVP is required.**

You are invited to enjoy Patricia's native garden on a typical cold winter day—hopefully without rain. The garden, a secluded 1-acre wild escape on the slough, is located west of Davis. Started in 2005, it now features about 400 species and cultivars of California native plants. Visit [Patricia's Garden Ambassador profile](#) to learn more about this garden, access a map, view a plant list, and take a virtual tour!

Highlights:

- Winter growth, wildlife, birds, fungi and emerging wildflowers.
- Color, form and texture of the trees, flowers, berries, leaves and bark.
- Observe seasonal maintenance — pruning, cutting back, planting and pest control.

Stop by any time between 11:00 am and 3:00 pm RAIN or SHINE for the self-guided garden ramble. Maps available for use onsite.

January & February Meetings

Club meetings are held at the Shepard Garden & Arts Center in McKinley Park, 3330 McKinley Blvd., Sacramento. Meetings are free and open to the public.

JANUARY

Daisy Mah

Three Decades at William Land Park

THURSDAY—JANUARY 23, 2025 • 7 PM

After the conclusion of a tour of the William Land Park work site and meeting staff, the Parks Supervisor tried to tamp down **Daisy Mah's** interest as she gazed over the hillside—referred to as the maze or the jungle—ablaze in white, a plant she would later coin the “wretched onion.” His words were uttered in vain; the dreamer was smitten and thus began a story lasting over three decades. The hillside garden, developed in 1940 by the Works Progress Administration (WPA), had long been reduced to ivy, periwinkle and weeds. Daisy learned all too soon the folly of gardening with minimal support, lack of experience, vandals and thieves. As years passed, other areas were renovated but have since been abandoned, victims of budget crunches. In Daisy's post-retirement, the WPA Rock Garden quickly went into decline but now with help from dedicated employees, volunteers and funding from the Perennial Plant Club, the garden supporters are marching forward with rekindled hope and vision.

FEBRUARY

Saul Wiseman Grants Committee

Introduction of the 2025 Saul Wiseman Grants Awardees

THURSDAY—FEBRUARY 27, 2025 • 7 PM

Since 2015, the Saul Wiseman Grants Program brings us in contact with a host of remarkable people actively engaged in providing greater access to healthy soil and open spaces, increasing the supply of food for the hungry in our community, or creating places of beauty in our neighborhoods. Many are talented educators dedicated to making all manner of gardening experiences available in our school and public places. Our February meeting will focus on celebrating the 2025 Saul Wiseman Grants awardees.

Plaza Cervantes Garden—2024 Saul Wiseman Grant Awardee



20th ANNUAL GARDENER'S MARKET

GROW LOCAL | SHOP LOCAL

SATURDAY

MARCH 8, 2025 • 9 AM – 3 PM

SHEPARD GARDEN & ARTS CENTER
FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

The Gardener's Market is our one-day event where we:

- **SUPPORT** small, specialty nurseries and local garden artisans.
- **EDUCATE** the community with our display of blooming perennials and by answering the public's questions at “Ask-A-Gardener” sessions.
- **PROMOTE** our club's many activities.

Returning and new vendors will bring in some wonderful plants and garden treasures.

Proceeds from this event help fund our grants program, our monthly speakers and other club activities.

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

Volunteers are needed!

SET UP: FRIDAY, MARCH 7 • NOON–4 PM

Bring blooms for our “What's Blooming” display, help with plant labeling; donate used gardening books and magazines for our used book sale; help guide vendors to their booth location, and more!

EVENT: SATURDAY, MARCH 8 • 7:30 AM–4:30 PM

Help guide vendors to their booth location; work a two-hour shift promoting SPAC activities; greet the public; help answer questions in the “What's Blooming” section, and more!

For questions or to volunteer, contact:

Lili Ann Metzger

lmetzer@wavecable.com

or 916-837-3291

New Plantings in the WPA Rock Garden

by Daisy Mah

Despite enduring triple digit temps this past summer, volunteers at the WPA Rock Garden tirelessly and repeatedly weeded the “wretched onion” and spurge, mulched and deadheaded in preparation for a recent planting spree. Some plants, planted a year ago, weathered a brutal summer without signs of stress and escaped the hands of vandals and thieves. As we envision an uncertain future with minimal volunteer and paid staffing, climate change and drought, CA and Mediterranean natives have been chosen to meet the challenges that may lie ahead. Additionally, they are beneficial to wildlife and befitting to a garden with a wild streak. A vital component to our success is financial support from the club through its plant and t-shirt sales. Wholesale nursery, Cornflower Farms, is also a source for many new additions. The following are a few examples.



Achillea millifolium 'Salmon Beauty', a CA native classified as circumboreal, a plant distributed throughout the northern hemisphere. Blooms creamy yellow to salmon from spring through summer attracting pollen and nectar seeking butterflies and bees.

Arctostaphylos manzanita 'Dr. Hurd', a CA native is on the wish list. Envisioned is a group planting of this 15' manzanita tree showcasing its stunning mahogany red trunk, blue green leaves and pure white urn shaped flowers.



Bouteloua gracilis, blue gramma or mosquito grass, native to the western states improves soil, wildlife friendly and quietly compliments the garden.



Cycas revoluta, sago palm donated by member Risë Ryan now grows in the shade of a weeping Kashmir Cypress near another donated cycad.



Dasyliirion longissimum, the Mexican Grass tree, native to the Chihuahuan desert promises to be a stunning focal point with its imposing 10' x 10' proportions and form.



Eriogonum arborescens, Santa Cruz island buckwheat blooms spring to fall, attracts bats, birds, bees, moths and butterflies.



Grevillea 'Long John', from Australia grows to 10' with spidery coral-pink flowers, long narrow leaves has proven to be a rugged and welcome addition.



Plantago subnuda, nude plantain, a CA native was produced from seed donated by member Patricia Carpenter. Green rosettes of leaves and flower

The Most Forgiving of All Shrubs

by Barbara Lane

By now our perennials have gone to bed for winter, our seeds are planted (maybe), trees/shrubs are pruned and now for the dreaded rose pruning days. Prior to retiring from being a consulting rosarian, I had so many calls toward the end of year for advice on pruning roses. Thank goodness I am retired from those days. Those of you who are worried about pruning roses...don't worry. A rose is probably the most forgiving of all shrubs you have in the garden. Shovel pruning is an easy way out if your rose has not made you happy. Feel no guilt. The nurseries, both local and online, need all the help they can get and will be happy to sell another. If that happens then choose wisely...Disease-free (or almost free) is top of my list for easy rose care. Choose the color you like, the fragrance you love (mine is myrrh...the scent of many Old Garden Roses and the 'English' roses by David Austin) then bring out the cutters (secateurs), gloves and coffee (tea). Sunny skies would be nice too. Away you go. The instructions below are perfect...if you make a mistake it doesn't matter the rose will still reward you...Maybe some music or a book on your AirPods and you will be a happy pruner...Happy New Gardening Year...Barbara.

HARD PRUNING

Stems are cut back to three or four buds from the base. This leaves short, sturdy stems about 5-6 inches high.

Hard pruning is recommended for newly-planted bush roses and is often used for established Hybrid Teas grown solely for the production of exhibition blooms

It is no longer recommended for established roses grown for garden display although it is still used for very weak-growing Hybrid Teas and for rejuvenating roses. Hard pruning should never be used for Floribundas.



MODERATE PRUNING

Stems are cut back to about half of their length. Weaker than average stems should be reduced by more than this amount.

Moderate pruning is recommended for nearly all established Hybrid Teas growing in ordinary soils. Established Floribundas are pruned using a variation of this system.

If the roses are well cared for, you can expect exhibition-quality blooms as well as a fine garden display following the use of moderate pruning. Hard pruning is no longer considered to be essential for winning prizes.



LIGHT PRUNING

Stems are cut back to about two-thirds of their length. This means that after the removal of all unwanted wood, the remaining stems are merely tipped.

Light pruning is not generally recommended as it produces tall spindly bushes bearing early, but poor quality blooms, if used year after year.

In special cases, however, light pruning is the only method to use. Very vigorous Hybrid Tea varieties such as *Peace* should be tackled in this way, and all roses growing in very sandy areas should be lightly pruned.

Pruning instructions and illustrations are from "The Rose Expert" by Dr. D.G. Hessayon.



Rule of Thumb . . . Finish pruning by Valentine's Day

Clean Up Tools

It may be a little late . . . but you know what they say. I just finished cleaning up the street, and thought of a practical blog. The claw came by today and, of course, left a mess behind as usual. The once-a-month sweeper will be by in a week, and I can't stand to wait that long. So I dragged my blower, garbage can, broom, and dustpan out and cleaned up both sides of the street. This combination has worked well for me for decades, and I thought these might work well for you



as well. The important key is that all the cleaning tools need to be light, and that they all fit in the garbage can. The broom width is 18 inches and the aluminum dustpan has a wide grip. So, if you are going to buy a garbage can, make sure the bottom is as wide as your broom. It occurred to me that perhaps you don't enjoy sweeping the street, or maybe don't have a lot of concrete slab areas around your house. That's why I added the two rakes to the second picture. Once again, these are very light.

The Blue Hawk series in Lowes has these. Note that one rake is narrower. I was too lazy to pick up the rake off the lawn one day, and the mower ripped off the tines on one side. I thought the mower would simply pass over—not my best decision. Anyway . . . I cut the tines off the other side, and it turned out to be my favorite rake for working amongst plants.

There you have it—a great clean up collection, because they are light and all will fit in a garbage can that can be dragged around your property (and street). By the way, after a couple of years of use, you will find that you have ground holes in the bottom of the can—but that's OK, because now you can leave it outside all year, and it won't collect rainwater.

Stan, The Cleanup Man



2025 MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

Options for becoming a member:

- **Go to** <https://sacplants.org/membership/> and complete and submit the membership form online.
- **Fill out** the printed membership form, include it with your dues, and either:

Mail to:

Marcia Leddy
3145 17th St.
Sacramento CA 95818

Or, **drop it off** at the club's January, February or March general meeting.

Questions?

Contact **Linda Monroe**
(916-996-9985;
lm Monroe1@gmail.com).



2025

Sacramento Perennial Plant Club Membership

**ALL MEMBERS—PLEASE FILL OUT THIS FORM COMPLETELY
AND INCLUDE WITH YOUR DUES**

Membership Status

(Please check a box.)

☐ **NEW**

☐ **RENEWAL**

NAME _____ DATE _____

E-MAIL _____ PHONE _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____

CITY

STATE

ZIP

Joint Membership

NAME _____

E-MAIL _____ PHONE _____

1. YEARLY DUES: ____ \$20 Individual ____ \$25 Joint ____ \$5 Student

2. PAYMENT: ____ Cash ____ Check (Make checks out to PERENNIAL PLANT CLUB)
Credit card transactions will be available at the general meetings.

3. INCLUSION IN OUR YEARLY ROSTER? YES ____ NO ____

4. SEND completed form and dues to: Marcia Leddy, 3145 17th St., Sacramento CA 95818

The *Perennial Post* will be e-mailed to members. However, if you wish to receive the newsletter by regular mail, please check here ____.



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SPPC Newsletter
2743 San Luis Court
Sacramento, CA 95818

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Mahonia 'Oregon Grape'

CHERYL McDONALD