

MARCH 2022 MEETING

March 9th, 7:00 PM In-Person Meeting

This meeting is an in-person meeting at the Garden House in Shoup Park, 400 University Ave., Los Altos. *All attendees will be asked to provide proof of vaccination and to wear masks while indoors.* If possible please arrive early to help with set up at 6:30, meeting starts at 7 PM. A recording of the meeting will be available later for those that can not attend in person. Meetings are free for members, cost for non-member in-person attendees is \$10. See page 7 of this newsletter for information about joining WHS.

Speaker: Kipp McMichael

Topic: Succulents at Large: Designing with Larger Succulents

Though most familiar as small rosettes in living wreaths and well-packed planters, many succulents and cacti can be grown to impressive sizes in the Bay Area. When given space and proper care, medium and large succulents become the focal points of colorful low water-use gardens that make the most of our seasonally arid climate. This talk will discuss choosing, planting and maintaining large succulents as well as the best taxa for Bay Area gardens. The talk will also include lessons from building and growing my 12 year old succulent garden in Berkeley.



Kipp McMichael is a web developer by trade and a horticulturalist by passion. He has several degrees but none of them are plant related. He lives with his husbands in Berkeley, California where he grows far too many plants including geophytes, succulents and cacti.



PLANT EXCHANGE TABLE We will continue our popular plant exchange table for upcoming meetings. It is an added incentive to attend our meeting in person. If you have extra plants that have been taking up too much space on your patio or greenhouse or wish to share cuttings, seeds, bulbs or other propagules of plants that you like, please bring them to the meeting to share with others. We also welcome books, tools, pots, or other garden related items for which you would like to find a good home.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Mid-winter wild blooms abound—hound's tongue, milkmaids, manzanita lanterns, garrya tassels, blue dicks, roadsides of lupins and paintbrush – so we are wobbling along and trying not to despair, although there has been scant rain in 2022! And here's the long view: <https://ntrs.nasa.gov/api/citations/20205001039/downloads/BCookScienceLargeReprint.pdf>

Meri-Beth Bird has agreed to join the board as our new co-president and will be up for a vote at the March meeting. We are grateful to all who step forward (and the many who have done so over the past years). You are essential to the success of our speaker presentations, field trips, plant discussion, plant sales, seasonal parties/picnics plus all the behind-the-scenes running of WHS!

Our March meeting will be in person at the Shoup Park Garden House. With the off-peak, decreasing COVID virus prevalence and our safety measures (masking, vaccinations and ventilation), we are hoping members will venture out to hear Kipp McMichael on "Succulents at Large: Designing with Larger Succulents" on March 9th. You will want to hear about his garden and then have a chance to visit his Berkeley garden on the following weekend, Sunday, March 13, 2022! We are not planning to broadcast this meeting via zoom, but we will make a recording available afterwards.

See you March 9th with your vaccination card and mask,

~ Grace Tsang

HORTICULTURAL HAPPENINGS

Kipp McMichael shares his Berkeley Garden- March 13th from 10 to 12 noon. His address is 1515 Ashby Ave., Berkeley, CA. Kipp recommends parking on Sacramento, north of Ashby if parking is full on his street. Also sharing their gardens are **Mark Delepine 2127 Bonar St.** 12 noon to 1:30, and **Marcia Donahue 3017 Wheeler St.** 1:30 to 4 PM. All locations are in Berkeley. Nearby is the Berkeley Bowl Market and the Gourmet Ghetto for dining options.

California Horticultural Society- Monday, March 21st at 6:30 pm via Zoom, *MORE About South African Amaryllid Geophytes for California!* with Ken Blackford. Ken is a hobbyist gardener from San Diego with roots in the Bay Area. He will extend his October Cal Hort presentation about South African bulbs for California, picking up from where he left off on South African Amaryllids, also elaborating on others which may be appropriate for our Mediterranean climate. Ken will discuss his experience and share images of geophyte genera: *Veltheimia*, *Scilla*, *Lachenalia*, *Massonia*, *Ixia*, and more. The Zoom link for this meeting will be sent to Western Hort members prior to the meeting. For more information: <https://calhortsociety.org/>.

Growing Natives Garden Tour- April 2, north and April 3, south, Santa Clara Valley Chapter, California Native Plant Society and Master Gardeners of Santa Clara County. Opportunities to tour local gardens in-person are back this year. Free but pre-registration required. Volunteers also needed at some gardens. For more information and registration: gngt.org.

San Francisco Bay Flower and Garden Show- April 7-10, Alameda County Fairgrounds, Pleasanton. Beautiful Floral Arrangements, Informative DIY - Hands-on Workshops, over 75 Free Seminars and Workshops from some of the top experts in the world! Hundreds of vendors with everything for your garden and outdoor living. Tickets and more information: norcalgardenshow.com.

Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour- Virtual tour April 16 and 17, In-person tour April 30 and May 1. Free tours of East Bay native plant gardens, including the garden of our February speaker, Leslie Buck. Suggested donation \$15, pre-registration required. More information at bringingbackthenatives.net.

Robin Parer featured in American Gardener

For those of you who have a passion for pelargoniums and know plantswoman Robin Parer, the American Gardener Magazine has a wonderful article about her in the January/February 2022 issue. Written by Marty Wingate with photographs by Saxon Holt, it is well worth the read. Born in Australia, she began her gardening life at nine years old. In the early 80's she found herself in England, leading her to join the International Geraniaceae Group and becoming acquainted with Peter Yeo at the Cambridge Botanic Garden. Her knowledge and passion for these plants grew and she decided to open her own nursery upon returning to the United States. She has been instrumental with Richard Ward in planning horticultural trips for the "Hortisexuals" for the last 25 years and has a dedicated following of geranium lovers. Included is a list of Robin's favorite cultivars. She says her prime objective in growing pelargoniums is to keep old varieties in cultivation. Here is a link to the online catalog <https://geraniaceae.com/cgi-bin/welcome.py>

FEBRUARY SPEAKER NOTES

Leslie Buck shared highlights from her book *Cutting Back, My Apprenticeship in the Gardens of Kyoto*. Leslie began her horticultural studies as a student at Merritt College in Oakland. She has always been an admirer of Japanese gardens and had a dream of going to Japan to learn more about them. She got to know Dennis Makishima, a world-renowned pruning instructor and bonsai artist, at Merritt College. Through him and other associates she learned the requirements to fulfill her dream. One was to have three good references; but they couldn't just be any references. In the Japanese garden business they take references very seriously and will cease their relationship with the referee if the person they recommend does not work well. She managed to secure these references over a period of a few years and also studied Japanese in night school to prepare for her trip.

In 1999, Leslie was finally able to realize her dream and got a job with Uetoh Zoen, one of the oldest and most highly acclaimed landscape companies in Japan. She shared with us photos of her co-workers and explained the hierarchy of employees in Japanese gardening as well as the high degree of respect given to gardeners in Japan. Leslie started at the bottom of the ladder and had to prove herself through hard work and dedication under the observation and tutelage of the lead gardener. One of the first things that she learned was to wear a traditional uniform down to special soft form fitting boots called jikatabi and up to a white towel over her head. (She found the towel quite helpful in keeping her hair clean of dirt and debris.)

Leslie shared numerous slides of the gardens that she worked on during her three seasons in Japan and also shared some of what she learned about Japanese garden practices and culture. The Japanese strongly believe that gardens are for enjoying and harmonizing with nature not just for passing through and taking photos. Even though the gardens are carefully tended and manicured, they aim to emulate nature but control for size and affect. Trees are seldom allowed to get more than 15' to 20' tall and pruned to allow light to the plants underneath. Their gardens tend to use seasonal color and textures with flowers as accents, not the main theme. Leslie also shared examples of how Japanese gardens are built out from one or more viewpoints, sometimes using structures to frame the view. Depth and perspective were important elements in every garden.

One practice that Leslie shared that we all could emulate is that the Japanese gardener's scrupulous attendance to maintaining very sharp tools. They clean and sharpen them about every two hours while working. Some suggested resources for Japanese garden tools include suzukitool.com and hidatool.com in Berkeley.

Ms. Buck wrapped up her presentation with photos of Japanese gardens in the US including the Portland Japanese Garden and the Woodland Garden in Arkansas, and more locally the Lake Merritt Japanese Garden and Hakone Gardens in Saratoga. Leslie's own garden uses Japanese garden philosophy and techniques in a native plant garden. Her garden will be on the [Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour](#) in April.

For those of you who missed her lecture we unfortunately were not allowed to record it. You can buy [Leslie Buck's book](#). Or check out some of her recommended resources including the North [American Japanese Garden Association](#) and the [Sukiya Living Japanese Garden Journal](#) for informative publications and the [Merritt College Pruning Club](#) for virtual and more hands-on training. If you are looking for others who use these practices the [Aesthetic Pruners Association](#) is a good resource.

Leslie shared a few passages from her book that really conveyed the spirit of Japanese gardening and ended with this quote from Eto-San, "Gardeners leave money behind when they die, great gardeners leave beautiful gardens, the best leave apprentices."

~ Janet Hoffmann

Upcoming Meetings

April 13th: **Patricia Rain, Vanilla Queen**, author, educator, culinary historian and owner of *The Vanilla Company*, Santa Cruz, CA, *Vanilla: The Botany, The History and The Culture*

May 11th: **Dave Muffly**, arborist, horticulturalist and ecological engineer, Santa Barbara, CA, *Resiliency: Choosing Trees for Climate Adaptation in Coastal California*

FEBRUARY PLANT SHARE



Oxalis purpurea

Janet Hoffmann from Campbell presented:

Oxalis purpurea

(Purple woodsorrel) Janet got this Oxalis identified after our meeting via the Pacific Bulb Society. Her patch has white, pink and shades of lavender flowers (all with red stems). Winter blooming and dormant in the summer. It apparently can be somewhat aggressive but hers has been in the ground for about 30 years and has not spread to more than a 4' by 4' patch. Receiving full sun most of the day, except where it is under a rather large manzanita, it is growing in a rocky, clay loam soil. The bulb patch is bordered by a driveway and a sidewalk and nearby plants are drip irrigated or do not have any supplemental watering. All of these factors probably help to control the spread.

Seen on rare plant hikes:

Erysimum franciscanum

(Franciscan Wallflower) Seen on Coyote Ridge growing in serpentine soils. Endemic to the northern California Coast, from Sonoma to Santa Cruz County. Flowers from February to April, but can be seen as early as January and as late as June depending on the site.



Erysimum franciscanum



*Adelinia grandis/
Cynoglossum grande*

Adelinia grandis/Cynoglossum grande

(Pacific Hound's Tongue) Seen on Pulgas Ridge. This is the only species in the genus Adelinia. The genus name of Adelinia is in honor of Adeline Etta Cohen, the daughter of the American botanist James I. Cohen. A member of the borage family this perennial herb has clusters of flowers, pink in bud changing to blue. Pictured is an unusual white flowering one. Height can exceed two feet. Janet has had no luck growing it in her garden. (Also seen in the Midpeninsula Open Space Fremont Older Park on the Seven Springs Trail. Ed.)

Scoliopus bigelovii

(Fetid Adders Tongue) Seen in February on Pulgas Ridge. Only reaching 6" tall with flowers only 1.5" across. Janet thinks it has a sour earthy smell but would say it's not stinky in her opinion. Growing in mossy, moist places this California native is in the lily family. The flower is pollinated by fungus gnats and the seeds are dispersed by ants.



Scoliopus bigelovii



Dirca occidentalis

Dirca occidentalis

(Western Leatherwood) - seen at Foothill Park in January. This rare and endemic deciduous shrub was somewhat easy to spot because of its yellow flowers and really bright green leaves (which appear after the flowers) but leaf out earlier than other deciduous shrubs. Janet has also tried growing it but has had no luck. It is very, very slow growing in the wild where it is usually found growing on moist shaded slopes. It used to grow at Rancho San Antonio but has disappeared from there. Judy Wong has seen it in Stulstaff and Edgewood Parks in Redwood City.



Russian 'House' Tomato



Camelia 'Changii'

John Hammerschmidt from Los Altos presented: 'House' Tomato This really good tomato is originally from Russia. These cherry tomatoes can be grown outdoors in pots during the summertime and then brought into the house. It can get to be 2' tall but only grew to 1' tall for John when it received full sun. The small red tomatoes are not as sweet or acidic as regular cherry tomatoes. It petered out in the summer but re-sprouted so John potted them up and placed them in an unheated greenhouse and until last month had ripe tomatoes until the rats found them. They started eating the ripe ones first and then ate the unripe ones, although he does still have a couple of tomatoes that the rats missed.

Judy Wong from Menlo Park shared: Camelia 'Changii' aka C. azalea
 Judy got this plant from Nuccio's when she was in Los Angeles in December. Tom Nuccio recommended this grafted cultivar from China since it is supposed to bloom from **July all the way to December**. It grows in part sun in well drained soil. It can get to be 4' tall and needs regular water. It has glossy dark green elliptical leaves and attractive red flowers. Frost tolerant. It is in bloom right now for Judy.

Cantua buxifolia (Sacred flower of the Incas/Andes) This evergreen shrub grows in full sun to part shade in well-drained soil. It can get to be 9' tall x 6' wide. It has a rangy/lanky form for Judy as it reaches to get more sun but she says it can be cut back to maintain size and shape. Bright red 3" trumpet flowers which normally start appearing in the spring are already blooming this year. There is also a yellow and a tricolor variety (which is not yet in bloom for Judy). Janet has tried growing it in Campbell but it never bloomed for her and now it's gone. Hummingbirds are attracted to the flowers. It is hardy to around 25°F. It is the national flower of Peru and Bolivia.

Ribes sanguineum 'White Icicle' This deciduous shrub bloomed early in December but dropped most of its leaves in January.

Pelargoniums : **'Platinum'** Judy loves this plant she got from Mark. Beautiful variegated leaves are the main attraction.

'Arctic Star' Judy got this pelargonium from Betsy Clebsch. Blooming with umbels of white, flushed palest pink, starry flowers with toothed petals. Blooms spring through autumn.

~Ana Muir

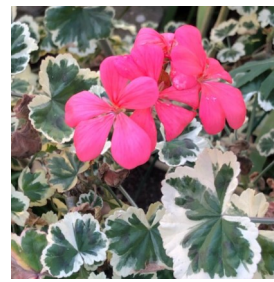
Pelargoniums



Cantua buxifolia



Ribes sanguineum



'Platinum'



'Arctic Star'

28 YEARS AGO

Western Hort met on Wednesday March 9, 1994 to hear “Bill Grant, world traveler and excellent photographer speak on *Secret Gardens of France*”.

Announcements included several programs offered by Gamble Garden: “*The Design of Gamble and Other Small Gardens of that Period* – Lucy Tolmach, *Distinctive Plants of the Peninsula and Their Use in Eichler Gardens* – Albert Wilson”.

Field trips in the offing: one to Saratoga Horticultural Research Foundation on April 9, “...three of the gardens in the East Bay that Ted talked about will be on May 15.” and “*10 East Bay Secret Gardens* which will benefit the Park Day School...Included are gardens by Marcia Donahue and Harland Hand.”

Plant notes describe a table full of blossoms! What a sight it must have been. “Barrie Coate has gone in heavily for magnolias in his garden (arboretum) in the Santa Cruz Mountains and was able to bring in flowers from four species. *Magnolia soulangiana* ‘Lennei’ (flowers are great goblets, rosy-purple on the outside, white within), *M. salicifolia* (...the anise magnolia...white fragrant flowers, generously produced, with 6 narrow petals), *M. x loebneri* ‘Merrill’, a cross between *M. kobus* and *M. stellata* (flowers especially large and freely produced even on small plants) and *M. stellata* ‘Kikuzaku’ (many petalled white flowers).”

“Ed Carman brought a charming magnolia that he had just obtained from Toichi Domoto who raised the original from seed. The cupped flowers are small for a magnolia, maybe three inches across, deep red on the outside, white on the inside, a striking contrast. It reminded Ed of one Monrovia Nursery had listed years ago named ‘Lilliputian’.” Ed also “showed his 35 year old *Sinningia canescens*, a most remarkable plant from Brazil. It grows from a thickened stem called a caudex that is nearly as big as the pot. The leaves are silver-white and heavily felted and the combination with the coral pink tubular flowers is beautiful.” (I’m sorry to admit I’ve lost that plant - NLS)

Barrie also brought *Prunus* ‘Okame’, a flowering cherry. In addition, “Barrie introduced us to a new groundcover, *Cotula minor* (now *Leptinella minor*), a very low, dense grower that is not invasive like other cotulas.”

Betsy Clebsch shared *Viburnum tinus* ‘Spring Bouquet’ (white and very fragrant flower clusters), *V. bodnatense* (pink, fragrant flower clusters and red fruit), *V. x ‘Anne Russell’* (flower clusters are pink in bud, opening creamy white and very fragrant), *Helleborus niger* as well as *H. niger* ‘White Magic’ (white flowers, dark shiny green foliage) and *H. lividus*.

“Connie Gould has kept the notoriously temperamental *Boronia megastigma* going for two years. It is said to be exquisitely perfumed, powerfully fragrant.” Our plant note author Elizabeth Garbett goes on to complain: “But I cannot smell anything! I’m not the only one, either, so I think the world is divided into the boronia sensitive and boronia immune, something genetic, like blood types.” Connie also brought *Bulbinella floribunda* to share.

Bob Young shared *Crassula multicava*. Dick Dunmire showed *Rhipsalis* and *Parochetus communis*. Sherry Austin brought *Aristolochia californica* and *Ferraria crispa*. The Rodals brought four hardenbergas: *H. violacea* “usually violet, but also rose (‘Rosea’) or white (‘Alba’) and *H. comptoniana*. “Bill Grant tells us a yellow form is coming out before long.”

Elizabeth Garbett “...brought in a few odds and ends from (my) garden”: *Arisarum proboscidea*, *Mentha sp.* ‘Eau de Cologne’, *Campanula glomerata* and *Bellis perennis*.

~Nancy Schramm

IMPORTANT REMINDER TO SPRING FORWARD

Daylight savings time starts Sunday, March 13th. Remember to turn your clocks forward one hour on Saturday night so you won't be late to the garden tours at Kipp, Mark and Marcia's homes.

Plant Share

You will once again have the opportunity to bring actual plants or cuttings to the March meeting for sharing information about with others in attendance. Please be ready with information about the plant's geographical location, exposure, soil, water and other growth requirements. If you have plants that you would like help identifying or for which you want some cultural advice, feel free to bring these also.

UPDATES

Betsy Clebsch is moving to Palo Alto Commons. To stay in touch, calls to her current phone number will be forwarded for a number of weeks.

The Crevice Garden: How to make the perfect home for plants from rocky places. Kenton Seth sends word that his new book about crevice gardening will have a release date of August and is on pre-order at Barnes and Noble bookstores. Local North American Rock Garden Societies have been invited to receive batch orders directly from the distributor so if you are a member of a NARGS chapter be sure to sign up with them. He thanks us all for our interest in this topic and says it could not have been done without us!

STROLLING AROUND THE INTERNET

Trained Detector Dogs Track Down Lanternflies and Beetles

<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/planthealth/ppq-program-overview/plant-protection-today/articles/detector-dogs-lanternflies-beetles>

Mountain View Voice- Two of our **WHS members** are in the latest magazine insert (Home + Garden Design, winter 2022 special) from the Mountain View Voice. Page 10 has a story about how the supply chain is impacting contractors and John Hammerschmidt comments on the boom in requests for remodels and the delays for permits. Page 17 has *Uncovering Your Home's Secret Past* with Steve Staiger. As the historian at the Palo Alto Historical Association he helps people research the history of their homes. Here is the link to read these articles online:

https://www.mv-voice.com/special_pubs/mountainview/159/section1.pdf

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Vice President: Open
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About Membership in Western Hort:

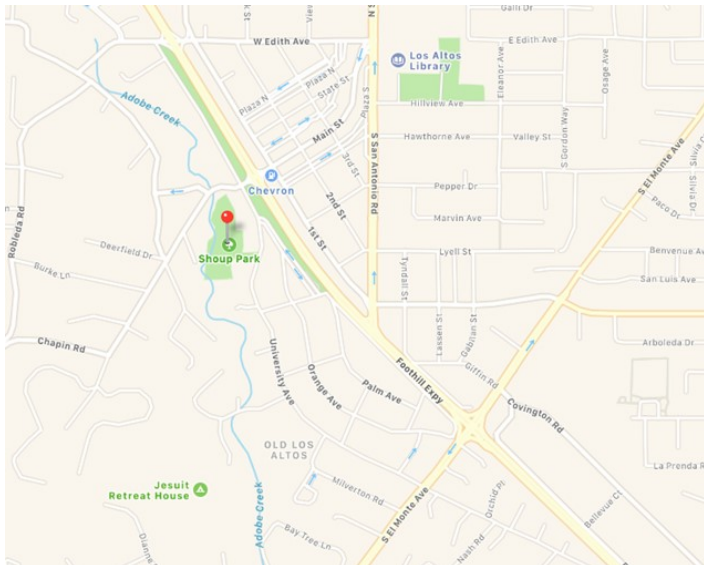
Membership Rates: A one-year membership (Sep-Aug) includes an e-mail copy of this newsletter and admittance to all of our monthly meetings. Regular membership is \$35, Family membership for two or more members at the same address is \$50, and a discounted rate for students is \$20. To receive a print copy of this newsletter by mail add \$10 to the membership fee listed above. Please visit the Pac Hort page for more information or to join Pacific Horticulture Society, for whom we are now a sponsoring organization, go to: pacifichorticulture.org.

To join or renew visit our website at: <https://www.westernhort.org/membership> You may pay online with a credit card or print form and mail with your check to the contact us address below.

To contact us: Please send email to: info@westernhort.org or snail mail to: PO Box 166, Mountain View, CA 94042



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Meeting location : March 9th
In person meeting at the Garden House in Shoup Park, 400 University Ave., Los Altos
Doors open at 6:30 meeting starts at 7:00
Bring proof of vaccination and wear a mask
Would you like to **sponsor a lecture** or suggest a speaker for the WHS that is of particular interest to you?
It would be much appreciated!
Please call Leslie Dean at 650-966-8364.

Newsletter Submissions
The newsletter publishes on the first of the month. **Note: deadline for submission for the next newsletter is the 22nd of March.** Submissions after this date will likely appear in the next month's newsletter. Send submissions to: Kjanberg@gmail.com or snail mail to Kathy Anberg, 1332 Peggy Ct. Campbell, CA 95008-6342