



## April 2015 Speaker

Wednesday, April 8, 7:30 pm. Doors open at 7.

Speaker: Greg Starr, Owner of Starr Nursery, Tucson, Arizona. <http://starr-nursery.com>

### “Juicy Succulents and Plant Exploration”

Greg will entice us with Juicy Succulents and share his travels to seek Agaves, Hesperaloes, other succulents, perennials, flowering shrubs, and small trees from arid and semi-arid regions around the world.



Agave featured at Greg Starr’s nursery, <http://starr-nursery.com>

Starr Nursery has been in business since July of 1985. Greg has been traveling to Mexico in search of exotic plants ever since. Agaves have been a passion since 1990, and Mexico is the center of diversity. He has written a book, “Agaves: Living sculptures for landscapes and containers”, published by Timber Press in 2012.

### *Dinner at Bella Vita restaurant with our speaker, Greg Starr*

Join us at 5:30 p.m. on April 8 at the lovely Italian restaurant **Bella Vita** in downtown Los Altos to enjoy each others’ company and meet our speaker Greg Starr. Address: Bella Vita Restaurant, 376 1st Street, Los Altos. Please contact Rosalie Shepherd to confirm: [shep8283@comcast.net](mailto:shep8283@comcast.net) or 650-321-8283. Ample free parking.

**March 2015 Speaker Notes** A unique evening was in store for this month’s guests as we experienced a host of topics such as religion, philosophy, design, and nature from the talk “Fences and Gates of Japanese Gardens”. Our speaker, Paul Discoe, grew up in a family of woodworkers, going back three generations. Listening to him speak about wood alone, it is evident that Discoe has a passion for it, yet his life’s journey has taken him into a deeper and more personal enlightenment than just carpentry.

After learning all he could about woodworking from an American point of view, Discoe felt he reached a stage in his life where he needed to expand his horizons. He chose Japan, first gaining knowledge at the Tassajara Zen Mountain Center (Monterey County, California), where he apprenticed under Suzuki Roshi, noted Zen monk and teacher. Discoe became a Zen Buddhist teacher and priest, integrating his wood skills with religious philosophy. Discoe later was sent to Japan where he labored for five years, earning the title of Master Builder.

With a vast array of slides, Discoe explained how Japan’s two major religions (Buddhism and Shintoism) have influenced this country’s style of architecture. The fence, in this case a boundary fence made of wood, is considered part of the house, just as the garden is. The fence is constructed in the basic Japanese design principle of enclosure. This philosophy has a practical side as well, understanding the fact that Japan is densely populated and individual properties are smaller than in this country. Privacy and serenity are of chief concerns in Japanese gardens.

Our speaker shared examples with us of various gates, bridges, paths, decks, and houses, all featuring the various elements of Japanese architecture and precision craftsmanship. Discoe’s two firms in Oakland, Joinery Structures and Paul Discoe Design, carry these principles in their projects throughout the San Francisco Bay Area today. ~Mark McCabe

**May 2015 Speaker: Wednesday, May 13. Katie Wong, “Upgrade Your Garden – Download Rare Fruits”**



**Agave lophantha 'Quadricolor'**, one of our Hot Plant Picks at the SFFGS 2015. *Photo: Richard Tiede*

**Plant Table** The April meeting will feature our annual silent auction of plants from the Hot Plant Picks at the San Francisco Garden Show. Nancy Schramm outdid herself this year. There are many interesting plants from a variety of nurseries. Shoppers will want to come early to get a chance to look over the plants and start bidding on their favorites.

~Roberta Barnes

**Hot Plant Picks** I hope everyone had a chance to visit the SF Flower & Garden Show this year to see the new location and layout of the Hot Plant Picks exhibit. What did you think? We had masses of cool plants, but without the tiered carts from past years, I think things looked a little crowded. If any of our fabulous designers have an attractive, creative solution for the HPP exhibit, we welcome your suggestions. I'd like to thank everyone who volunteered to help with the exhibit, but especially my team of plant nerds. Without you, and your dedication and hours of time, the Hot Plant Picks exhibit would not have happened. Sherry & John, Jessie, Judy, Carrie, you're the best. Extra helpers included Richard, Cheryl, Roberta & Katie and I'm very grateful for every one of you.

~Nancy Schramm



**Water feature** at the San Francisco Flower & Garden Show 2015 – filtering grey water from washing clothes into a garden fountain. *Photo: Rosalie Shepherd.*

**28 Years Ago** Western Hort was treated to a talk by Dick Dunmire on March 11, 1987. Unfortunately I'm missing the newsletter with the title, but I do have the plant list—and I'd love to see the slides again: *Iris cristata 'Alba'*, *Celmisia spectabilis*, *Daphne petraea*, *Ramonda nathaliae*...these are only a few of the 96 on the list. Plant notes included a number of drought tolerant plants—something especially worth noting these days. (Maybe a book of our favorite drought tolerant plants would make a good companion to the first two WHS books?) Bart O'Brien showed *Ranunculus cortusifolius* which is dramatic and great for dry shade, and "Daphne Dorney...brought seven different *Grevilleas* to the meeting...what impressed us most about the grevilleas was their fresh, vigorous appearance although they have never had summer water since their initial settling-in period. The oldest is 18 years old and looking great. The most charming of all...*G. lavandulacea 'Tanuda'*. About two feet high and six feet across, its branches are densely clothed with silvery grey foliage and masses of pink and cream flowers. It has a blooming season of three to four months."

The April 8th Western Hort speaker was Dr. Raabe, plant pathologist at UC Berkeley and his topic was "Rapid Composting and Soil Improvement". The April plant notes started with the following: "With the prospect of a summer with less water for our gardens than we might like to have, plants from Daphne Dorney's dry garden invite our attention." Déjà vu anyone? "Dry" plants listed include: *Rulingia luteifolia 'Norseman'*, *Acacia glaucoptera*, *Eutaxia obovata*, *Babiana stricta*, and *Homeria aurantiaca*. ~Nancy Schramm



## *Attention Epiphyte*

**Lovers!** Craig Robert (Cisco) Dietz, Director of Orchideas Moxquivil Botanical Garden in Chiapas, Mexico, is speaking twice this month: on April 6 at the Orchid Society and on April 16 at the San Francisco Bromeliad Society. This garden is the only official epiphyte rescue garden in Mexico, with the mission to conserve threatened epiphytes of all kinds in Chiapas: orchids, bromeliads, ferns, cacti, and others.

<http://www.orchidsmexico.com>

**Tillandsia eizii**, a rare and endangered epiphyte the Orchideas Moxquivil Botanical Garden garden is working to conserve.

*Photo: Martin Grantham*

## *Horticultural Calendar ~or~*

### *It's Spring! Tours and Plant Sales, a partial list*

**Monterey Bay Master Gardeners' Smart Gardening Fair.** Saturday, April 4, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. Highway 1 at Rio Road, Carmel. Presentations, demos, activity areas and loads of plant vendors. Free. [fair@mbmg.org](mailto:fair@mbmg.org)

**Friends of Master Gardeners of Santa Clara County 21st Annual Spring Garden Market.** Saturday, April 11, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. Location: History San Jose, 1650 Senter Road, San Jose. Huge selection of tomato and pepper starts, as well as herbs and flowers, along with presentations, the Green Elephant sale, and the Vendor Fair with many purveyors of wonderful plants and all sorts of gardening items. Free. <https://mastergardeners.org/21st-annual-spring-garden-market>

**Master Gardeners of San Mateo and San Francisco Spring Garden Market.** Saturday, April 11, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. Redwood High School, 1968 Old County Road, Redwood City. Large variety of tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, herbs, and other plants. Gardening workshops, educational tables, Green Elephant sale, and more. <http://smsf-mastergardeners.ucanr.org>

**Going Native Garden Tour.** Saturday & Sunday, April 18 & 19, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Self-guided tour with hundreds of gardens to choose among. Free but registration required: <http://gngt.org>.

**Gamble Garden 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Spring Tour.** Friday & Saturday, April 24 & 25, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Gamble Garden, 1431 Waverly Street, Palo Alto. Tour of five private gardens (\$35). The event also features a Vendor Fair that includes the Gamble Garden Plant Sale (free). <http://www.gamblegarden.org>

**Carmel Valley Flower Show.** Saturday & Sunday, May 2 & 3, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Plant and floral displays with accredited judging and demonstrations, vendor fair, silent auction, garden art, and a children's garden with activities and music for kids preschool through elementary. Free. <http://cvgardenclub.org>

## **Western Horticultural Society**

### **Officers and Board Members**

President: Richard Tiede  
Vice President: Judy Wong  
Recording Secretary: Liz Calhoon  
Corresponding Secretary: Rosalie Shepherd  
Treasurer: Daxin Liu

Other Board Members: Roberta Barnes, Liz Calhoon, Chris Egan, Patricia Larenas, Carrie Parker, and Katie Wong.

**To contact us**, please send email to [info@westernhort.org](mailto:info@westernhort.org), or contact Chris Egan at 650-948-4614, or send mail to Western Horticultural Society, PO Box 60507, Palo Alto, CA, 94306.

### **About membership in Western Hort:**

To join or renew, send your name, address, phone number and a check made out to "Western Horticultural Society" to PO Box 620673, Woodside, CA 94062-0673.

Membership Rates: A one-year membership (Sep-Aug) includes four issues of Pacific Horticulture magazine. Regular membership is \$35, Sustaining is \$45, Contributing is \$60 and Plant Lover is \$100+. We have also added a Family membership of \$50 for two or more members at the same address, and a Student rate of \$20.

Please visit our website at [westernhort.org](http://westernhort.org) for a membership form.

### **Newsletter Submissions and Address Changes**

Please send info for the May 2015 newsletter by April 18 to Marianne Mueller, [mrm@sonic.net](mailto:mrm@sonic.net) or 333 Kingsley Avenue, Palo Alto 94301.

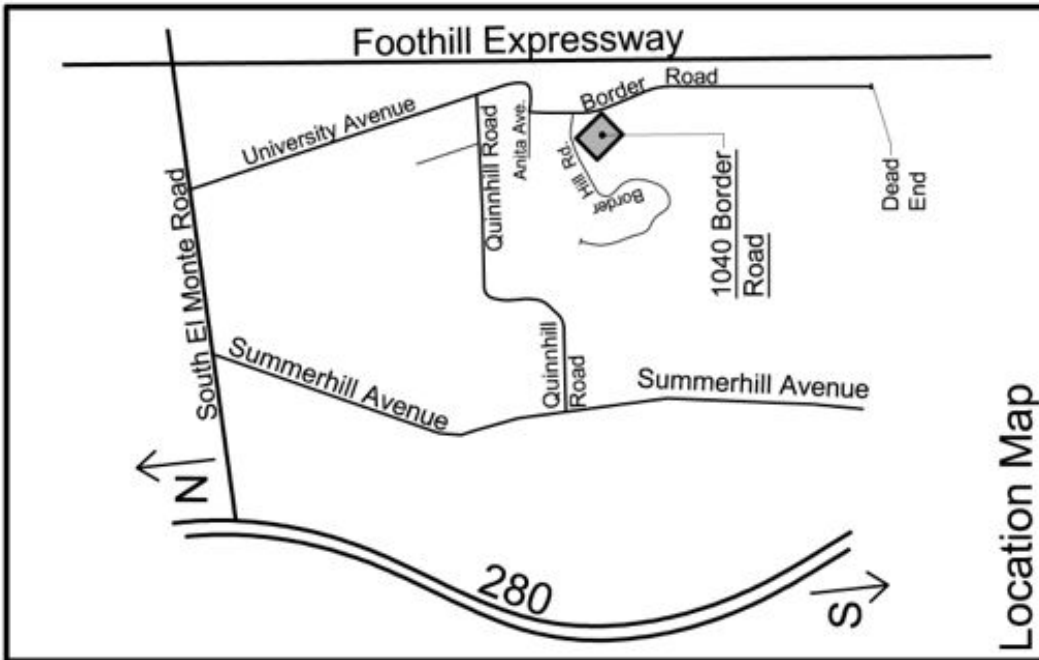
Please send address changes to [grew@pacbell.net](mailto:grew@pacbell.net) or 650-851-5162.



PO Box 60507  
Palo Alto, CA 94306

First Class Mail

VISIT US AT WESTERNHORT.ORG



Western Horticultural Society  
Monthly Meetings  
Christ Episcopal Church  
Parish Hall  
1040 Border Road, Los Altos

#### MEETING LOCATION

Christ Episcopal Church, Parish Hall, 1040 Border Road, Los Altos  
Doors open at 7:00 pm. and meetings begin at 7:30 pm.

Join us for dinner at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, April 8, 2015, at **Bella Vita, 376 1<sup>st</sup> St., Los Altos**. Meet our speaker Greg Starr and enjoy the company of other WHS members! Contact Rosalie Shepher to RSVP: [shep8283@comcast.net](mailto:shep8283@comcast.net) or 650-321-8283.

Would you like to **sponsor a lecture** for the WHS that is of particular interest to you? It would be much appreciated! Please call Pat Knight at 650-941-6136.