

SEPTEMBER 2022 MEETING

September 14th, 7:30 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 wear masks while indoors and please respect the health of others and do not attend if you feel ill or may have been exposed to Covid.* If possible please arrive early to help with set up at 6:30, meeting starts at 7:30 PM. There will be no recording for this meeting. 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: Madeline Marrow

Topic: Year-Round Color with Native Plants

Enhancing biodiversity can be beautiful. Learn how to select and group plants with varying bloom times so your garden is never without color. See how to choose different plant forms and include beautiful bark, berry and seed producing species for maximum interest all year long. You'll enjoy your garden in every season and so will the bees, butterflies and other insects, lizards and birds!

Madeline Marrow is a past President of the Santa Clara Valley Chapter of the California Native Plant Society, and a current board member. A former computer programmer, she now volunteers in her community and works extensively on her native garden. Her garden was featured in *Bay Nature* magazine in March 2013. She is an avid gardener who switched her focus to native plants in 1993 when she learned how essential native plants are for wildlife, first in upstate NY, and then in California. In her current garden she has learned a lot about gardening on heavy clay as well as strategies for drainage problems and retaining rainwater. These include installing a rain garden. Her garden is usually on the CNPS-SCV Growing Natives Garden Tour because she is passionate about spreading the word about native plant gardening.



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.

CO-PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

"In the spring of 1936, a writer planted roses. As Michael Pollan wrote in *The Botany of Desire*, we think of these plants as something we domesticated, but it could be argued that they domesticated us to tend and propagate them. The story of how this particular person and these particular plants came together has many beginnings and unfolds in many directions. One lineage begins a little earlier in that year, another in the history of the Industrial Revolution, and a third about 330 million years ago.

If you dig into Orwell's work, you find a lot of sentences about flowers and pleasures and the natural world. If you read enough of those sentences the gray portrait turns to color, and if you look for these passages, even his last masterpiece, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, changes complexion." (from *Orwell's Roses* by Rebecca Solnit)

Welcome back from our summer break! The book just mentioned, *Orwell's Roses*, traces many strands of writer George Orwell's life, his times, our times and geological time including a fair amount of horticulture. A rich and rewarding read.

We look forward to seeing you on the second Wednesday of September, the 14th, to hear Madeline Morrow's talk, "Year-round Color With Native Plants". Join us at 7 PM to catch-up with WHS members (bring your vaccine card and mask). Consider helping with set-up at 6:30 PM.

~ Grace Tsang & Meri-Beth Bird

Upcoming Meetings

October 12th: Q&A with Andy Mariani and Charlie Olson with Robin Chapman. In a question and answer format this discussion should answer many of your questions. **BUT** only if you submit them for the speakers at least one week before the meeting. Submit your questions to info@westernhort.org

November 9th: Lynne Trulio. Beautiful California diversity: The biodiversity crisis and what we can do about it. As an environmental studies professor at San Jose State, Ms. Trulio will discuss endangered species, plants and animals and regional efforts to preserve them.

December 14th: Kristin Jacob. A Botanical Art Journey. Ms. Jacob will give an overview of the rich history of botanical art and illustration and describe the evolution of her own artwork.

HORTICULTURAL HAPPENINGS

California Horticultural Society, September meeting on Monday, September 19th, 6:30 PM. Josh Williams, California Flora Nursery, Fulton, CA. Josh will give a talk on the nursery and what's ahead there. Watch for an email giving details on how to view this zoom presentation.

The Midori Bonsai Club has their 59th Annual Show on Saturday, October 1st from 10-5pm at the Quinlan Community Center, 10185 N. Stelling Road, Cupertino. Free.

California Native Plant Society, Santa Clara Valley Chapter 50th Anniversary Celebration, Annual Meeting and Fall Plant Sale, Saturday October 8, 2022, 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM, Dana Center at Hidden Villa, 26870 Moody Road, Los Altos Hills. This year marks the Chapter's 50th Anniversary, and they are celebrating with activities for kids, a food truck, talks and more at the event. Plants must be pre-ordered prior to the event from <https://california-native-plant-society-santa-clara-valley-chapter.square.site/> or [Grassroots Ecology](https://grassroots-ecology.com/). There will be a seed exchange, native plant art, T-shirts, books and other related goods from CNPS-SCV and other vendors at the event. The event and parking are all free to the public. For more information: www.cnps-scv.org.

California Native Plant Society Conference, Rooting Together, Restoring Connections to Plants, Place and People, October 18-22, 2022, Doubletree by Hilton, 2050 Gateway Place, San Jose. For registration and more information: <https://conference.cnps.org/>.

MAY SPEAKER NOTES

Trees for Climate Adaptation was the timely topic for our May meeting. Dave Muffly, our speaker, has spent his career studying the effects of climate change on native oaks. He has a wealth of information on this topic on his website: [Oaktopia](#). He discussed how various oaks species are migrating from their original native ranges and hybridizing with adjacent species as our climate changes. To illustrate the progress of change, he showed slides of dying coast live oaks, *Quercus agrifolia*, in southern CA and of both coast live oaks and valley oaks dying off in our area. The Engelmann oak, *Quercus engelmannii*, seems to be doing better in the areas where coast live oaks are dying. The same is true of the interior live oak, *Quercus wislizenii*.

Dave has been studying oak species in the wild from areas with warmer climates like the Southern US, Northern Mexico and countries around the Mediterranean with dry summer climates. He is looking for promising oak species to replace the local native oak species that are currently dying out. He is especially looking for species that work well for urban use. He has experimented with growing a number of oak species and hybrids. One hybrid that he likes is *Quercus x ganderi*, which is a hybrid of *Q. kelloggii* and *Q. agrifolia*. While he feels that hybrids like this one may become important for oak survival, he says that hybrids have to be carefully evaluated as they can be quite variable in growth habit. They can also be hard to find in the trade. Other oak species that he thinks show good potential for landscape use in our area include the Island oak, *Q. tomentella*, the Tuscan silver oak, *Q. hypoleucoides*, Chisos oak, *Q. canbyi* and the netleaf oak, *Q. rugosa*.

Mr. Muffly has found opportunities to experiment with many of the oak species and hybrids in plantings that he has done on the Stanford University campus, at the Apple Park in Cupertino and along a sound-wall on Hwy 101 in East Palo Alto. He shared photos of some of these in his presentation as well as taking some members on a tour to see the Apple Park plantings in person later that week and again later in May.

If you missed his presentation and the tours but want to hear more of Dave's observations about oaks, he did a presentation for the CA Native Plant Society, Santa Clara Valley Chapter in July, about landscape uses of oaks and a few other native trees. CNPS has mastered recording their presentations and they can be seen on their YouTube channel: youtube.com/c/CNPSSantaClaraValley.

For our presentation, Dave also gave us his recommendations of some non-native tree species for planting in the restricted spaces of urban landscapes. Some of them are trees that used to be grown only in southern CA but their range has move north and they can now be grown successfully in many parts of the Bay Area. These include the pink trumpet tree, now classified as *Handroanthus impetiginosus* (some of you may remember this as *Tabebuia*), *Eucalyptus spathulata*, and the Macedonian oak, *Quercus trojana*. Other good trees for urban spaces include the holly-leaf cherry, *Prunus illicifolia x lyonii*, crape myrtle, *Lagerstroemia indica*, *Arbutus unedo* 'Compacta' and *Arbutus* 'Marina'. Mr. Muffly said that he consulted with the city of Santa Cruz on updating their street tree list, so more of his picks can be found there.

One other point that Dave promoted was the growing of trees in special pots with a basket-like exterior that allows air-pruning of the roots. This helps to prevent circling and girdling roots on trees prior to planting them out. The pots are made by Pioneer and are now being used by Devil Mountain wholesale to grow most of their trees.

Dave Muffly closed out our 2021-22 speaker year. We will be looking forward to another season of great speakers and useful topics as our 2022-23 season starts in September. Remember to renew your membership now so that you do not miss out on any of these!

~ Janet Hoffmann

Dave Muffly generously led tours around the Apple Park in Cupertino which he was instrumental in developing the plantings. 80 percent of the site consists of green space planted with drought-resistant trees.



MAY PLANT SHARE

Nancy Schramm from Gilroy presented:

Nancy brought several maple species seedlings. Her dad told her that Japanese maple trees grown from seed were much tougher than grafted plants. These maples are all deciduous and grow in full sun to part shade (zones 5-9).



Acer monspessulanum

Acer monspessulanum (Montpelier Maple) – This tree with a round form can get to be 20' to 30' tall (zones 5-9). The trunk caliper increases at a young age which makes it attractive for bonsai. The yellowish green flowers appear before the opposite leaves, which are 3-lobed. The leaves can turn yellow, pink or red in the fall. The leaf buds are black before they open and the first time Nancy saw them she thought the plants were dead. It transplants very well. The samara are reddish. Nancy lost her source for seedlings but fortunately Janet Hoffman called her in the fall of 2020 to tell her she had seeds on her tree. Nancy stratified them by putting them in the refrigerator for two months and they germinated well. Janet mentioned she only waters her tree once a month in Campbell.

Acer pentaphyllum – Bill MacNamera from Quarryhill (now Sonoma Botanical Garden) collected many seeds of this maple from China. It also gets to be 20' to 30' tall. The opposite leaves are palmately compound with 5 very slender and long leaflets. It has small yellow flowers. This maple is the absolute last plant to leaf out in Nancy's nursery, one year as late as June. The penta refers to the 5 petals and the phyllum to the leaflets. It has lovely fall color.



Acer pentaphyllum



Acer truncatum

Acer truncatum (Shantung Maple) – Tolerates more sun, heat and drought than Japanese maples.

Acer palmatum (Japanese Maple) – It needs a little extra care in our area.



Acer palmatum



Aquilegia

Aquilegia (Columbine) – This deciduous perennial grows in full to part sun (zones 5-9) in well-drained soil. It gets to be 18" to 24" tall. Her dad always had it growing in the garden. It has rich blue-purple flowers and reseeds nicely. Nancy discovered that her dad called it *Aquilegia* 'Border Blue'.

Judy Wong from Menlo Park presented:

Lathyrus odoratus 'Cupani' (Sweet Pea 'Cupani') – Judy is showing this as a tribute to Elizabeth Garbett who loved it. Judy loves the fragrance and flower color from this heirloom sweet pea that was discovered in 1695 by a Sicilian monk, Father Francis Cupani. This climber grows in full sun and can get to be 8' tall and spread to one foot wide. Gorgeous flowers with deep red and purple petals start appearing in the spring. The two flowers per stem can help you identify it against 'Matucana', which has 4 flowers per stem. Judy lets it reseed and it comes true from seed.



Lathyrus odoratus

Leslie Dean from Mountain View brought in a couple of houseplants and one shrub that have interesting foliage.

Peperomia columella (Columnar Peperomia) – This endangered evergreen xerophyte can be found growing on the cliffs in the deserts of Peru and western South America. It gets to be 16” tall x 20” wide and is great in hanging baskets. Leslie has it growing in a pot containing standard cactus mix (peat moss, perlite, charcoal humus and mulch) on top of a pebble tray which provides humidity and has it growing in a NE facing window indoors since it likes filtered light. The spadix is lime green, and white or green tiny tail-like flowers appear in spring on the top of the stems. She waters little, liking to keep it on the dry side. It is hardy to 41 degrees and it takes 10 years to reach maturity.



Peperomia columella

It is unusual among xerophytes because it has leaf widows (epidermal windows). This specialized leaf structure has a translucent area through which light can enter the interior surfaces of the leaf and where photosynthesis occurs. The translucent structure may include epidermal tissue, and in some succulent plants it consists of several cell layers of parenchyma, which may also function as water-storage tissue. It is found in some succulent plants native to arid climates, allowing much of the plant to remain below the soil surface where it is protected from desiccation by winds and heat while optimizing light absorption. Many plants of this type are native to Southern Africa making this peperomia unusual since it comes from South America. Columella is a Latin word meaning little columns.



Peperomia obtusifolia

Peperomia obtusifolia (Variegated Peperomia, Baby Rubber Plant) – This perennial epiphyte can be found growing in Florida, Mexico and the Caribbean. It likes medium to bright light indoors, in moist but well-drained soil. It gets to be 1’ tall and wide. It has variegated leaves and rarely blooms indoors. However, if it does bloom you will notice an unusual 5” long green spike with the tiny cluster of flowers at the top. Here again, Leslie doesn’t water too often, keeping it on the dry side for better success. She pinches back new leaves to create a more bushy plant. It is hardy to 30 degrees and doesn’t require much fertilizing. Less is better.

Illicium simonsii (Anise Tree) – This evergreen shrub from SE China (from the Dan Hinkley collection) grows in filtered sun to part shade (zones 8-10) in well-drained soil and likes regular water. It has a pyramidal growth habit and gets to be 8’ tall x 6’ wide. The leaves when crushed release a spicy anise fragrance. Creamy yellow 1” wide fragrant blooms start appearing in late spring. It may sporadically produce fragrant non-edible fruit and showy seedpods that resemble culinary star anise – but do not ingest. The fruit is poisonous!

When Dan Hinkley gave the lecture about his Collection at Monrovia he brought several 2” pots of this plant and Leslie has grown it to a 5-gallon container.



Illicium simonsii

~Ana Muir

**If a plant is sad
Do other plants photosynthesize with it?**

Plant Share

You will once again have the opportunity to bring actual plants or cuttings to the September 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.

28 YEARS AGO

Western Hort met on Wednesday, September 14, 1994 at Loyola School for the first meeting of the 1994-95 season. The meeting featured “Barrie Coate, Arborist and advisor to a number of communities (who) is the author of *Water Conserving Plants and Landscapes for the Bay Area* and co-author of *Compatible Plants Under and Around Oaks*. He will speak on *Trees that Merit Attention for the Bay Area*.”

Nurseries that had donated plants to the raffle table during the previous year were thanked: Carman’s Nursery, Digging Dog Nursery, Dynasty Gardens, Heritage Garden Growers, Tiedemann Nursery and Wegman’s Nursery.

September plant sales were announced at Strybing Arboretum (SF Botanical Garden) and Saratoga Horticultural Foundation. Also at Strybing, Ted Kipping’s presentation *Flower Borders in Seattle* was to include “gardens by award-winning designers.”

Two summer events that had been announced in the June newsletter were held at Gamble Garden in Palo Alto: “John Fairey, owner of Yucca Do Nursery” (closed 2016) “and Peckerwood Garden, in Houston, TX who talked on *Plant Explorations in North Eastern Mexico* at our Nov 1992 meeting...and his partner John Schoenfeld...a class called *Seldon Seen Plants of the Sierra Madre Oriental*. Through slides you can follow these adventurous plant collectors through Mexico’s northern provinces. Among their finds are new species of salvias.”

Also at Gamble during the summer, our very own: “Betsy Clebsch will present a class called *The Pleasure of Salvias with Companion Plants*. Betsy, who planned Gamble Garden’s salvia bed will be choosing plants from it as well as her own cooler Skyline zone to demonstrate the many desirable traits of this large family.”

Once again the Plant Notes author Elizabeth Garbett bemoaned the “disappointingly small number of plants on the display table.” She announced (and I second her statement) “**Members should not feel that the plants they display must be exotic or rare, it is just as interesting to us to know about the plants that have done well for you or have especially pleased you.**”

Bob Young brought a mystery plant that general accord ID’d as “a physalis but the species is unknown.” Dorothy Rodal shared a collection of rose hips from seven different plants, “all round and red and differed chiefly in size, but with one exception, the flask-shaped hips of *Rosa sweginzowii*.” Elizabeth Garbett showed *Euphorbia cotinifolia*, “a ‘maple-leaf geranium’ (really a pelargonium, of course)” and *Begonia* ‘Tony Avila’ (easy to grow and attractive). “Clayton Neece got *Fuchsia encliandra* from Louise Blakey’s hummingbird garden. The tiny jewel-like flowers are a deep, glowing red, only 3/8” across but the hummingbirds can find them.” He also brought a fruiting branch of *Eugenia uniflora*, the Surinam cherry, and *Perovskia atriplicifolia*, Russian sage.

~Nancy Schramm

WHS June, 2022 Picnic at the Williams House Garden at the Museum of American Heritage, Palo Alto



Our June picnic at the Williams House Gardens & Museum of American Heritage was a mix of good conversations, delicious food and perfect weather all in a beautiful setting. The ongoing garden restoration gave us a sense of period plantings from the days when Dr. Williams and his wife Dora lived in the house in the early 1900’s. They packed quite a few fruit trees, herbs and vegetables in the space with ornamentals delegated to the front of the house. This garden is a wonderful example of how to add a mix of edibles into an average garden space allowing it to provide both flowers and food for the family. These are ideas we can all incorporate into our own gardens.



Our tables were set up under the beautiful vine covered arbor which gave us shade and such a lovely sense of being within the garden space. Food was not lacking and many folks brought dishes to share. A tour by Betsy Fryberger, a member of the Palo Alto Garden Club, filled us in on the history of the property and the Williams family making our picnic not only a joyful occasion but an educational one too! Many thanks to Rosalie Shepherd who arranged the event for us.

~Leslie Dean

In Memory of :

Budge Garbett passed away at the age of 106, on July 8th, 2022. He was the husband of very active, long time member Elizabeth Garbett. Budge created a unique garden railway (named the Matadero Valley Railroad) around the family pool and built many of the train cars and structures from scratch. He paid particular attention to landscaping the layout with dwarf and miniature plants that nicely complemented the G-scale fantasy. Budge was also an accomplished artist and musician.

Clayton Neece passed away in May 27th, 2022.

Clay was a passionate plant lover, a musician, an artist, a writer and a garden designer. He was an enthusiastic member of Western Hort in the 1980's and 1990's, serving as president in 1991. He wrote heartfelt tributes about former WHS members for the newsletter, Ed Carman in January 2020 and Barbara Worl in May 2021. He was working on another for Louise Blakey, "The Hummingbird Lady". Clay was a friend of mine, and despite many health problems was always cheerful when we spoke on the phone. ~Nancy Schramm



Lyn Dearborn passed away on April 13th, 2022. She was a long time member of WHS. Lyn's love of nature began on a ranch in Santa Barbara where she tended fruit trees, horses and cats. With many interests she competed in swimming, skin diving and sailing as well as studying piano, cello, tenor sax and Chumash basket weaving. Folk dancing, backpacking, rafting, urban farming, gardening, ethnobotany, travel and music were her talents and passions. She was an accomplished musician singing, playing guitar and accordion with her band Shady Grove.

A resident of Portola Valley she is survived by her son Kevin, his partner Greg, her companion Bruce and countless friends and loved ones.

For more about Lyn view the San Jose Mercury News/ San Mateo Times for May 8, 2022: <https://www.lastingmemories.com/memorial/lyn-dearborn?obituaries>

STROLLING AROUND THE INTERNET

Australian research in whitefly control using RNA to specifically target only the whitefly.

<https://cosmosmagazine.com/earth/whitefly-pesticide-rna/>

Officers and Board Members:

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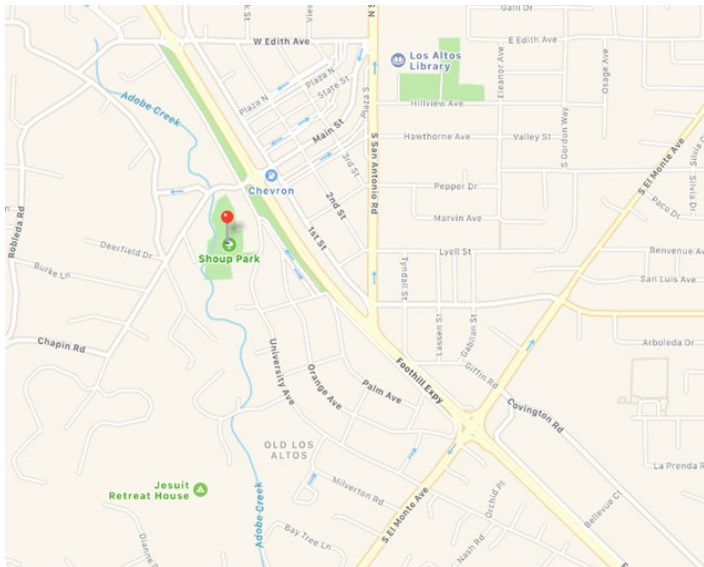
Membership Rates: A one-year membership (Sep-Aug) includes an e-mail copy of this newsletter and admittance to all of our monthly meetings. Regular membership is \$35, Family membership for two or more members at the same address is \$50, and a discounted rate for students is \$20. To receive a print 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.

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Meeting location : September 14th
In person meeting at the Garden House in Shoup Park, 400 University Ave., Los Altos
Doors open at 6:30 meeting starts at 7:30
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 September.** 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