



## March 2017 Speaker

**Wednesday, March 8, 7:30 pm.** Meeting room officially opens to members and the public at 7pm but if you can arrive by 6:30-6:45pm to help with set-up, your assistance would be greatly appreciated.

**Speaker:** Jeff Rosendale, Sierra Azul Nursery, Watsonville, CA

*Mediterranean Climate: Create Beauty with Appropriate Plants and Less Lawn*



Mound with *Dasyllirion longissimum* and *Leucadendron salignum* 'Winter Red' with garden art at Sierra Azul

Replace your lawn or enhance an area, conserving water while adding lasting character and beauty. Emphasis in Jeff's presentation will be on drought tolerant plants that are useful when replacing your lawn and plants that are smaller in size and will fit into established landscapes. Learn the fundamentals of practical design, plant selection, building mounds and pathways, drip-irrigation, mulching and maintenance.

Jeff and his family own and manage Sierra Azul Nursery and Gardens in Watsonville. Jeff has been designing gardens and landscapes in the Bay Area and Central Coast for the last forty years, always with an eye towards replacing lawns with more drought tolerant plants. Sierra Azul specializes in plants from the five Mediterranean climate zones in the world. The nursery includes over two acres of demonstration gardens.



Entrance to display gardens at Sierra Azul Nursery  
photos: Gerhard Bock, <http://www.succulentsandmore.com>

*Join us for dinner with Jeff Rosendale on  
March 8th ~ Chef Chu's Restaurant*

Enjoy a wonderful meal and intimate conversation with our speaker.  
Contact Katie Wong to RSVP: [alivensilk@aol.com](mailto:alivensilk@aol.com), 408-251-2742

## February 2017 Speaker Notes

In a time of need, who couldn't use a good friend, maybe several? With all of the recent rain we have been receiving you can bet our gardens will be brimming with activity in the coming spring months; just one big party for both the invited (friends) and the interlopers (enemies). A timely topic of "The Good, the Bad, and the (B)Ugly" presented by Frederique Lavoipierre was just what we needed to hear to get our invitations out to the right guests.

A biologist by training, with a particular interest in entomology, Ms. Lavoipierre began her presentation with a brief discussion about biological control. Simply put, biological control is any activity of one species that reduces the adverse effects of another species. Applied biological control can be one of three types:

Classical- the deliberate introduction and establishment of exotic natural enemies

Augmentative- the artificial supplementation of natural enemies, native and exotic

Conservation- the preservation and enhancement of existing natural enemies, both native and exotic

Who will you invite to your garden party? Frederique suggested a list of the following: birds, mammals, invertebrates, and bacteria, as a start. Want to pare the list down some? Let's talk about insects—you know—bugs. It is still a big list, as our speaker explained, with basically two groups, predators and parasites. How will you invite them? Ms. Lavoipierre pointed out that it starts with basic garden health, the soil food web for organisms to thrive and interact with each other. A healthy soil and diverse number of plant species (presumably a majority of natives) ensures the possibility of long-term garden sustainability.

Some WHS members have already sent their invitations and some are just getting started. Healthy gardens begin with an understanding and appreciation for the basics, putting them into practice and yes, being patient and understanding. No need to be overwhelmed, take it day by day, hum that tune "With A Little Help From My Friends" by that (imported) group the Beatles, and you will be fine.

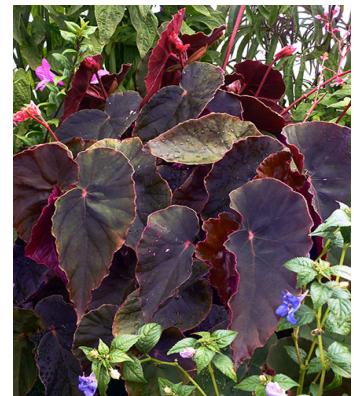
~Mark McCabe

## February 2017 Plant Notes

**Ted Kipping** who gardens in SF in the fog (cloud forest conditions) brought in:

*Abutilon* (Flowering Maple, Chinese Bell Flower, Chinese Lantern): Ted brought in 2 more from his extensive collection. The first one had great big pinky violet flowers with a touch of red. It grows to 16' tall. The second one was a smaller one that had dinky pink flowers and only grows to 10-12' tall.

*Begonia* 'Gene Daniels' – This tropical cane Begonia grows 6' tall and wide in well-drained soil in bright to part shade (zones 9b-11). Ted loves the huge (almost 1') heart shaped leaves. The top of the bronze colored leaves are tinged with red at the margins and can become can almost become blue-black with some sun. Ruby red buds give way to pink flowers, which in Ted's garden bloom all year. It is hardy to 30°. Ted bought his from Annie's Annuals. Ted also brought a second unnamed Begonia that with huge 6-9" long glossy heart shaped leaves.



**Begonia 'Gene Daniels'**  
photo: <http://anniesannuals.co>

*Senecio cruentus* species (Cineraria) – This herbaceous plant is from the Canary Islands. It grows in full to partial sun and belongs to the Asteraceae family. Ciner is Latin for ashen or ashes and the leaves have an ash-colored down. The showy, daisy-like pink flowers start appearing in late winter and will continue to early summer. Some blooms are fragrant while others might have no fragrance.



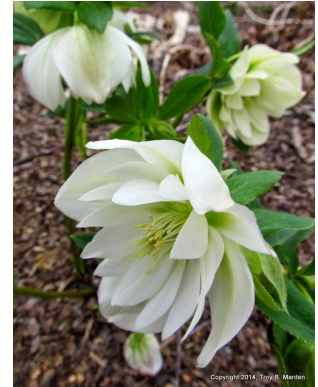


**Cestrum elegans var. smithii**  
photo: <http://www.smgrowers.com/>

*Cestrum elegans* var. *smithii* (Pink Cestrum) – This fast growing evergreen shrub grows in full sun or shade (zones 8-11) in well-drained soil. It gets to be 8-10' tall x 4-6' wide. The opposite mid-green leaves are ovate with entire margins. Masses of lovely pink tubular flowers start appearing on arching stems in spring and continue through summer.

*Helleborus* (Christmas Rose, Lenten Rose) – This evergreen perennial grows in partial shade (zones 4-9) in acid, moist but well-drained soil. His plants flower from November to early summer. Hellebores come in many colors. Ted has over 20 different types and likes the Marietta O'Byrne Winter Jewels

varieties developed at Northwest Garden Nursery. Some people remove the leaves in December to appreciate the blooms that appear later and to prevent disease from spreading from the old leaves to the new emerging flower stems. Ted does this for some of his but leaves some marbled leaves that he thinks of as "sexy leaves". Today Ted brought 2 different types: a single white cultivar and a double white. Remove the spent flowers down to the stem to control reseeding.



**Helleborus hybridus 'Sparkling Diamond'** photo: Troy B. Martin  
<http://www.http://3.bp.blogspot.co>



**Iris confuse 'Chengdu'**  
photo: <http://davesgarden.com/members/Anniehayes>

*Iris confuse* (Bamboo Iris) -This evergreen perennial grows in full sun to part shade (zones 8b-11), although it does well growing in full fog for Ted. It forms a mat and gets to be 2-3' tall. The stems holding the leaves resemble bamboo. In the spring, clusters of beautiful white (species) or violet ('Chengdu') 2 1/2" flowers (as many as 75) appear and give off a vanilla fragrance. Be careful when pruning the leaves since the flowers are produced from these and appear the second year.

*Salvia* 'Anthony Parker' (Anthony Parker Bush Sage) – This evergreen shrub is thought to be a cross between *S. elegans* 'Pineapple Sage' and *S. leucantha* 'Midnight' and was discovered in the garden of designer

Frances Parker who named it after her grandson. It grows in full to part sun (zones 8-10) in rich, well-drained soil. It generally grows to be 4' tall and wide, although Ted's is 5' wide. The broad gray-green leaves taper to a point. Deep blue-purple flowers appear on 2' long arching stems, which are still graceful even when the dark petals fall off. Like most salvias, hummingbirds love it.



**Salvia 'Anthony Parker'**  
photo: <http://www.gardenexpress.com.au>

*Salvia guaranitica* 'Costa Rica Blue' (Costa Rica Blue Sage) – This semi-shrubby perennial was pinched from the grounds of Costa Rica Hotel in Panama City. It grows in full sun (zones 8-9) in well-drained rich soil. It is 6-9' tall at Ted's place, but usually only gets to be 4-6' tall and wide. It has 3" heart shaped leaves and its dark blue flowers (with almost black calyxes) begin to flower in the spring or summer and continue 'till frost. It has a comestible fragrance and is hardy to 20-25°.

**Judy Wong** from Menlo Park brought:

*Dianthus* (Carnation) - This evergreen perennial species is from La Huerta at the Old Mission in Santa Barbara. It grows in full or part sun and prefers well-drained and moist soil. It is an old-fashioned heritage carnation that flowers in the spring and has a wonderful scent.



**Muscari macrocarpum**

photo: <http://www.whiteflowerfarm.com>

*Muscari macrocarpum* (Yellow Grape Hyacinth) – Judy got this deciduous bulb from Baldassare Mineo at his former Siskiyou Rare Plant Nursery in Talent, Oregon. It is originally from Eastern Crete and SW Turkey and grows in rocky environments. It grows in full sun and well-drained soil. It has fragrant purple flowers in the spring that turn to yellow as they mature. It also can be grown in a deep pot.

**Nancy Schramm** from Gilroy brought:

*Iris reticulata* ‘Harmony’ – This deciduous bulb grows in full to part sun (zones 5-9) and well-drained soil. It has gorgeous royal blue flowers with a white-rimmed gold crest on the falls (3 outer petals). The flowers are somewhat fragrant and grow on 6” tall stems, which begin blooming in the winter. The narrow sword-shaped leaves can get to be 15” long before disappearing in the spring as the plant enters its dormancy. It likes to be dry in the summer, so please do not water it since the plant is setting bulbs for the following year.



**Iris reticulata ‘Harmony’**

photo: <http://www.botanous.com>



**Ipheon uniflorum ‘Froyle Mill’**

photo: <http://www.nargs.org>

*Ipheon uniflorum* ‘Froyle Mill’ (Froyle Mill Star Flower, Spring Star Flower) – This hardy deciduous bulb is originally from Uruguay, grows in full to part sun (zones 5a-10b) and requires well-drained rich soil. It has 1” lavender blue to blue-purple flowers on 6-8” tall stems, which begin blooming in winter. It is hardy to 20° and also likes to be kept dry in the summer.

**Katie Wong** from San Jose brought:

*Edgeworthia chrysantha* (Oriental Paper bush, Mitsumata) – This deciduous shrub can be grown in full to part sun (zones 7-9) and needs well-drained soil. It grows to be 4-6’ tall and wide. The dark green, alternating, lanceolate leaves are 3-5” long and 2” wide. The word chrysantha is a Greek derivation that means ‘Golden Flower’. Yellow, fragrant flower clusters (as many as 40) appear on the branch tips in the winter. The bark is processed in Japan to make Mitsumata tissue paper. It is hardy to 20°.



**Edgeworthia chrysantha**

photo: <http://www.mailgardenshop.co.uk/>

*Daphne odora* (Winter Daphne) - This evergreen shrub grows in full sun to part shade (zones 5-9) and needs slightly acid and well-draining soil. The leaves can be green, dark green, or variegated with thin or thick banding of white, cream or yellow. Katie did not know the name of this cultivar but it had plain green leaves. Note that some daphnes are deciduous but not this one. However, all daphnes are prized for their wonderful fragrance (odora means fragrant) and begin blooming in the winter. It is hardy to 14°. ~Ana Muir



## 28 Years Ago

On Wednesday, March 8, 1989, Western Hort met to hear a talk about seeds (*one of my favorite topics*) from our very own Margery Edgren (*one of my favorite people!*). Her talk *Growing Rock Garden Plants Under Lights from Seed to Flower* was informed by over 25 years of experience of doing just that, not only for herself, but also for Strybing Arboretum (now the SF Botanical Garden). At that time, Margery was President of the Western Region Chapter of the American Rock Garden Society (now NARGS). As a side note, I'd like to add that the NARGS has probably one of the best seed exchange programs in the U.S.

The March plant table must have been a riot of color. I'd love to see such a varied collection this year. (Hint-hint!) Daphne Dorney's garden was a showcase for lovely drought-tolerant plants, she showed *Acacia acinacea* and *Grevillea* 'Olympic Flame'. Keith Bickford brought in two shade-tolerant, winter-blooming evergreens, *Viburnum suspensum* and *Sarcococca ruscifolia*. A branch of *Ribes sanguineum* 'White Icicle' was admired as was a two-foot long spike of brilliant golden *Bulbinella floribunda*. Betsy Clebsch shared blossoms from an extensive collection of miniature daffodils (*and I am so impressed I have to include them all*): 'Peeping Tom', 'Jenny', 'Tete-a-tete', 'Beryl', 'Waterperry', *Narcissus tazetta* 'April Tears', *N. tazetta papyraceus* (paperwhites) and *N. bulbocodium* v. *conspicuus*. Bill Kurtz brought in *Lachenalia aloides* 'Aurea' and *Ipheon uniflora* 'Wisley Blue'. And finally, Bart O'Brien treked down from Yerba Buena Nursery accompanied by a selection of natives: *Arabis blepharophylla*, *Erythronium multiscapoideum* 'Cliftonii', *Montia siberica* and *Erysimum concinnum*. ~Nancy Schramm

## Plant Table

How about a little spring-cleaning? Bring your unused garden miscellany to the plant table this month. Plus, any plants you would like to donate. Here's a big thanks to all the regulars who bring in such great plants. Please label plants and a description or pictures are always appreciated.

Questions? Contact Roberta Barnes: [robertabarnes2011@yahoo.com](mailto:robertabarnes2011@yahoo.com)

## Hot Plant Picks

It's that time of year again! WHS is again sponsoring the Hot Plant Picks exhibit at the **San Francisco Flower & Garden Show in San Mateo**. The event runs from **April 5th - 9th**. As you may remember, we need volunteers to babysit the plants at the exhibit. In return for just over a two-hour commitment, you get into the show for the entire day for free! Sign up at the March meeting or call Nancy Schramm to see when help is still needed 408-847-2313. For more information about the show: <http://www.sfgardenshow.com>

## Horticultural Happenings

**Edgewood Spring Wildflower Walks:** every Saturday and Sunday, March 4 - June 4, 10am-1pm, Edgewood County Park. Edgewood's serpentine grasslands are renowned throughout California for their lush wildflower carpets and rich biodiversity. You might see dozens of species of flowers on a single walk! Friends of Edgewood volunteers conduct these walks every spring. For more information: <http://www.friendsofedgewood.org/springtime-wildflower-walks>

**The Ruth Bancroft Garden's Spring Fling:** Friday, March 31 thru Sunday, April 2, 10am to 3pm, Ruth Bancroft Garden, Walnut Creek. The garden has the Bay Area's best selection of new release and hard to find succulents and water-wise plants. Receive expert advice on growing and using

succulents in your garden. Unique garden related gifts will be available including: books, Plantillos—garden inspired art pillows by Sabine Herrmann, pottery, and a selection of garden art by local artists. 10% discount on plants and nursery items, members receive 20% off. Cost: Free – including admission to the garden. For more information: <http://www.ruthbancroftgarden.org/>

**UC Master Gardeners Spring Garden Market:** Saturday, April 8, 9am to 2pm, History Park at Kelley Park, 1650 Senter Road, San Jose. Choose from our huge variety of **tomato**, **pepper**, **herb**, and **flower** seedlings and **succulents** that are raised in Santa Clara Valley. Many varieties are not readily available elsewhere, selected for outstanding taste, beauty, and performance in our local soil and climate. For more information: <http://mgsantaclara.ucanr.edu/events/spring-garden-market/>

**Going Native Garden Tour:** South SC Valley gardens, Saturday, April 22, 10am to 4 pm, North SC Valley and Peninsula: Sunday, April 23, 10am to 4pm. 60 native gardens in the Santa Clara Valley & Peninsula will be open to the public at no cost. To participate and obtain a garden tour guide, register online prior to the tour dates. Volunteer help is also needed. Tour volunteers work one 3-hour shift on tour day at one of the gardens either as a docent or as a greeter. Tour volunteers are invited to Garden Preview events throughout the year and receive a custom GNGT T-shirt with artwork that changes yearly. To register for the tour, volunteer, or for more information: <http://gngt.org/GNGT/HomeRO.php>

**California Native Plant Society Wildflower Show:** Saturday, April 29, 10:00am to 4:00pm, West Valley College, Saratoga. The show will feature hundreds of species of wildflowers and native plants. Expert botanists and gardeners will be on site to describe different samples and answer questions. There will be free lectures on wildflower identification and photography, pollinators, choosing native plants for local gardens, and the Vasona Creek Restoration Project. A variety of activities for children will be available as well. More information: <http://www.cnps-scv.org/index.php/events/wildflower-shows>

### *Upcoming Meetings*

**April 12, 2017** – Bart O'Brien, Tilden Park Regional Parks Botanic Garden, Oakland, CA, *Flora of the Oaxaca Region of Mexico*

**May 10, 2017** – Daxin Liu, Mountain View, CA, *Fragrant Plants Throughout the Seasons*

### *The Bees Knees or This and That About Bees*

Nothing whatsoever connects these items except that they are all about bees and they piqued my interest...

First is a book review. I picked up *The Bees* by Laline Paull not knowing exactly what to expect, and was completely enchanted. It follows the life of Flora 717 (yes, a bee) as she travels throughout the hive doing different “bee jobs”. It is a combination of the real and the imagination woven together in a way that made me not care which was which. I especially enjoyed the “bee’s eye view” of the world and Flora 717’s description of square orchards as less pleasing than hexagonal shapes, as well as the bee/flower interactions. There is a great review of the book in *The New York Times*, May 23, 2014 by Emma Straub.

Second is a story from NPR from this morning, February 24, 2017. The title is *Could a Bumblebee Learn To Play Fetch? Probably*, by Rae Ellen Bichell. How could I *not* look at that? It turns out that researchers at Queen Mary University of London offered bumblebees a source of sugar water and

then made it more difficult to access. The bees had to learn to roll a ball to the middle of a platform to get at the sugar water. The researchers made a bee puppet to demonstrate how to move the ball by pushing. Some of the real-live bees went one better and found it easier to drag the ball while walking backwards to the middle of the platform. The story also mentioned something I'd previously not known—that bees can count.

Third is an email conversation from CRFG about bees and pollination from 2016 that I found enlightening:

Question—Does anyone know of studies where researchers have counted the number of bees on a flowering fruit tree with nearby blooming ground plants, and then compared that count with similar trees without nearby blooming ground plants?—DG

Reply—I think counting active bees is a bit like herding cats, but to the extent that they can quantify the activity, I suspect that it's been scientifically established that bees will work attractive herbaceous cover crops almost to the exclusion of fruit tree blooms. There are many references that stress this point: mow your cover crop BEFORE you introduce the beehives and bring the bees in after there is 20% bloom so that the bees lock into working the fruit tree blossoms instead of any other competing crops.—AM

Fourth is a “bee cam” site from the USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS) “that gives real time insight into the 80,000 bees that live on the roof of USDA’s Headquarters and pollinate the surrounding landscape”. <https://peoplesgarden.usda.gov/content/bee-watch>

You can also support bees by going to the following site: [www.feedabee.com](http://www.feedabee.com)

Hmmm. I’ve probably gone on too long, but one bee thing made me think of another. What started it was seeing all the bees on my ‘Mozart’ rosemary plants. They are just *humming!* To bee or not to bee...and I’d better stop there! ~Nancy Schramm

## Volunteer

Hello WHS members, we need your help to keep our chapter running smoothly. Patricia Larenas is stepping down as our board Secretary. Taking this position would mean attending 5 board meetings per year, taking notes, and compiling the notes to send out to the rest of the board. We can also use help with setting up the computer/projector and microphone/sound system at meetings. In addition to being your chapter Co-president, I am handling our membership database after the departure of Judy Fulton. If someone would be willing to step up to manage the membership database it would make my duties much more manageable. Talk to me, Liz, or other board members for more information about these or other ways that you could contribute. We will greatly appreciate any help that you can offer. ~Carrie Parker

### Officers and Board Members:

Co-presidents: Carrie Parker and Liz Calhoon

Vice President: Judy Wong

Secretary: Patricia Larenas

Corresponding Secretary: Richard Tiede

Treasurer: Chris Egan

Other board members: Janet Hoffmann, Laura Wilson, Katie Wong

### 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: Western Horticultural Society, PO Box 166, Mountain View, CA, 94042. (Note: we have a new PO address)

**Membership Rates:** A one-year membership (Sep-Aug) includes four issues of Pacific Horticulture magazine. Regular membership is \$35, Family membership is \$50 for two or more members at the same address and a Student rate is \$20.

**Please visit our website at** [http://westernhort.org/membership\\_form.pdf](http://westernhort.org/membership_form.pdf) for a membership form.

To contact us, please send email to: [westernhortsociety@gmail.com](mailto:westernhortsociety@gmail.com) or snail mail to address above.



PO Box 166  
Mountain View, CA 94042  
First Class Mail

VISIT US AT WESTERNHORT.ORG



#### **MEETING LOCATION**

**Los Altos Youth Center,  
1 North San Antonio Rd.  
Los Altos, CA 94022**

Main entrance and parking are on the north side of the building. Turn off San Antonio at the sign for the City Hall and Police Dept. Doors open at 7:00 pm. and meetings begin at 7:30 pm.

Would you like to **sponsor a lecture** for the WHS that is of particular interest to you? It would be much appreciated!

#### **Newsletter Submissions**

The newsletter publishes on the first of the month. The deadline for submissions is the 25th of the month prior. Submissions after this date will likely appear in the next month's newsletter. Send submissions to: [Janet@hoffmann.net](mailto:Janet@hoffmann.net), or Janet Hoffmann, 826 Lana CT, Campbell, CA 95008