

# WESTERN HORT

May 2019 | PO Box 166, Mountain View, CA 94042 | [www.westernhort.org](http://www.westernhort.org)

## MAY 2019 MEETING

**Wednesday, May 8, 7:30 pm** **Los Altos Youth Center**, 1 North San Antonio Rd. Los Altos, CA 94022

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

*Meetings are free for members, non-members \$10. See page 6 of this newsletter for information about joining WHS.*

### Speaker: Lara Hermanson

#### Growing Community in Northern California Agrihoods

California is at the forefront of the Agrihood movement. Come learn from Farmscape's Lara Hermanson what these new communities are all about, how they are organized, and what you can grow for yourself and your neighbors. Farmscape is involved in some of the most exciting urban agriculture projects in California, including Faithful Farm at Levi's Stadium, the farm at Patterson Ranch, and the Agrihood in Santa Clara.



Since joining Farmscape in 2010, Lara has overseen the design and installation of over 350 urban farming projects, including Faithful Farm at Levi's Stadium, Trellis by Pulte Homes, and the STEM Garden. Lara is a licensed landscaper contractor and has a certificate in Project Management from UCLA Extension. Her design work is influenced by her additional studies in permaculture, biodynamic farming, and native California plants. Lara began her career working alongside her landscaper mother on the south side of Chicago. She also managed the 7-acre Vital Zuman farm in Malibu, introducing the CSA program before starting at Farmscape.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This is our last newsletter for the season. We are in the process of organizing our end-of-season picnic in June, which will be an informal get-together before going our separate ways for the summer. In the meantime, please welcome Carol Moholt to our board. You all know her if you attend meetings, she is one of our greeters at the welcome table and picks up the key to get us into the building. Please thank her for her help and for stepping up for this additional service. Some of our board members may be approaching you asking you to step up and join our governing group. Please give their requests due consideration, we really do need new people involved and the fresh ideas that they bring to the table. As always, if you have suggestions on how you could help or questions or comments on our group, feel free to contact me at [janet@hoffmann.net](mailto:janet@hoffmann.net). I hope that all of you have a lovely summer in your garden or visiting others. ~ Janet Hoffmann

*Join us for dinner with Lara Hermanson on*

*May 8 ~ 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

## JUNE PICNIC

This year Western Horticultural Society members, John and Sherry Hall, will open their nursery and beautiful garden for us to enjoy! The event is scheduled for June 22nd at 12:30pm at **Terra Sole Nurseries, 240 Pioneer View Road, Corallitos, CA. 95076** Their driveway is the 1st one on the right after turning onto Pioneer View Road. It is recognizable by stone pillars at the entrance. Enter the nursery and park inside. We encourage you to carpool with other Western Hort members as parking space is somewhat limited. Due to events in the surrounding neighborhood, please do not arrive early as the road will be crowded until 12:30pm.

John and Sherry will supply a table for serving and a few chairs. You may want to eat something before coming or bring a sack lunch and some snacks to share if you like. Western Hort will provide water and other non-alcoholic beverages. Bring your own folding camp chair if you have one. If you want to head over the hill early to avoid afternoon beach traffic and make a day of it, the list below contains some other nurseries in the area that you may enjoy visiting:

Sierra Azul Nursery 2660 East Lake Avenue, Watsonville 9:00-5:30

Succulent Gardens 2133 Elkhorn Rd, Castroville [sgplants.com](http://sgplants.com)

Dig Nursery 420 Water St., Santa Cruz [diggardens.com](http://diggardens.com)

Dig Aptos (formerly Hidden Gardens) 7765 Sequel Dr. #A, Aptos [aptoshiddengardens.com](http://aptoshiddengardens.com)

Open Farm Tours <https://www.openfarmtours.com/farms/>

**We will be sending an e-mail to all members in June with a reminder**

## MARCH PLANT NOTES

Pat Ley brought in a mystery plant for identification. Our intrepid Judy Wong has tracked down an answer via Don Mahoney, whose vast knowledge gave us the answer to the name of the delicate little plant brought in to the meeting.

*Melasmaerula ramosa*. It is a genus of flowering plants in the family Iridaceae, first described as a genus in 1803, and it is native to Namibia and the Cape Province in South Africa. An image search on Google shows it in yellow as well as the white form.

Also from Pat was *Libertia peregrinans* (Orange Libertia) This New Zealand evergreen from the Iris family grows in full sun or light shade (Zones 8-11) and spreads



*Libertia peregrinans*

by rhizomes growing to be 2' tall x wide. The long sword-like leaves, are green in the middle and are lined with an orange-copper color. Pat calls them the wandering Libertia because she has plenty of them wandering in her garden. They have very shallow roots and white flowers start appearing in the spring.

with benign neglect because if you fertilize it, it will die. Katie doesn't water it at all and it is hardy to 30°.



*Fortunella margarita* 'Nagami' (Nagami Kumquat) - This small to medium sized evergreen tree grows in full sun (zones 8-10). It has very tasty kumquats and it the most common Kumquat grown. These are from Sherry's brother's yard grown organically in Los Altos Hills and is only 8' tall and wide. The oblong orange fruits are eaten whole, with the rind having a sweet taste but the inside flesh a sour and acid taste. Katie puts the fruit in a jar with vodka, and in the winter when she has a sore throat she takes a spoonful and it works. Katie thinks this is one of the hardiest citrus being able to handle 18°, but Nancy Schramm says it will even take colder temperatures.



*Melasmaerula ramosa*



*Leucospermum cuneiforme*

## Yellow Flowers



*Ranunculus californicus*

## Orange Flowers



*Amsinckia menziesii v. intermedia*

## White Flowers



*Chlorogalum pomeridianum*



*Claytonia perfoliate*

### Yellow Flowers

*Ranunculus californicus* (California Buttercup) – This perennial yellow composite has many yellow glistening petals. 2 other NYC (Damn Yellow Composite) flowers, which were not identified.

### Orange flowers:

*Eschscholzia californica* (California Poppy) – Our state flower, which has a rim at the base of the petals and not to be confused with *E. caespitosa*, which has no rim.

*Amsinckia menziesii var. intermedia* (Fiddleneck) – Has 4 small orange petals and the signature curve at the end of the flower resembling a fiddleneck.

### White flowers:

*Chlorogalum pomeridianum* (Soap Plant) – has wavy green leaves whose flowers are just starting to bloom and are really fragrant at night.

*Claytonia perfoliata* (Miner's-Lettuce) – A spring green, eaten for its high concentration of vitamin C by miners, to prevent Scurvy. The circular disk is a result of fused leaves.

## Blue Flowers



*Sisyrinchium bellum*



*Dichelostemma capitatum*



*Triteleia laxa*



*Lupinus*

*Sisyrinchium bellum* (Blue-Eyed-Grass)

*Dichelostemma capitatum* (Blue Dicks) – Bulb was eaten raw or roasted by Native Indians.

*Triteleia laxa* (Ithuriel's Spear)

*Lupinus* (Dwarf annual lupine)

### Purple Flowers:



*Castilleja exserta*

*Catilleja exserta* (Common Owl's-Clover) A member of the genus which includes the Indian paintbrushes. Native to the southwestern United States, an annual reaching about a foot tall. Spring blooming attracting bees and butterflies and is a crucial host plant for the Bay Checkerspot butterfly.

*Vicia* - Several different vetches (Common Vetch) A member of the pea family this is an annual herb. Known since ancient times and probably native to the Mediterranean countries.



*Vicia sativa*

Janet Hoffman from Campbell brought:

*Tulipa clusiana* (Species tulips, Lady Tulip) – This deciduous Middle-eastern bulb grows in full or part sun in clay or well-drained soil and gets to be 1' tall and wide. It flowers in the spring and naturalizes really well. It's flowers close up at night. Janet has had them in the ground for 30 years.



*Tulipa clusiana*  
Photo: John Lonsdale,  
Pacific Bulb Society



*Homeria collina*

*Homeria collina* or *Moraea collina* (Cape-Iris) - This deciduous South African bulb grows in full or part sun in clay or well-drained soil (zones 9-11). It is very easy to grow; she put it in the ground 10 years ago and forgot about it. Now it is a very big clump (since it has spread). She gives it no extra water. The 3" salmon-orange or yellow 6-petaled flowers start appearing in the spring and have a light fragrance to them. Even though they only last one day, buds keep opening for many weeks.

*Hyacinthoides hispanica* (Spanish Bluebells) – This deciduous bulb grows in full or part sun in most soils (zones 3-9) with no additional care other than winter rain. Stalks of blue bell-shape flowers start appearing in April and May. She pulls out the flower stalks as soon as they are done blooming to prevent them from seeding but clumps do still expand each year and need occasional thinning.



*Hyacinthoides hispanica*



*Watsonia meriana*

*Watsonia meriana*? (Bugle Lily) – Janet checked the Pacific Bulb Society website and believes this is it. This deciduous bulb grows in full or part sun in clay or well-drained soil (zones 9-11). It forms a nice big clump and makes a nice little present of beautiful flowers every year for her.

Judy Wong from Menlo Park brought:

*Lachenalia matthewsii* - This deciduous South African bulb grows in full sun or part shade. (zones 9-11) It requires very well-drained soil, so Judy grows it in a pot. 8-12" tall strap shaped leaves appear in early spring followed by stalks of tiny, bell shaped, pale yellow flowers with green markings. Keep moist from the time that leaves start appearing until flowers fade, then allow to dry out when leaves start to wilt. Allow to go dormant until the following spring.



*Lachenalia matthewsii*  
Photo: Mary Sue Ittner,  
Pacific Bulb Society

## APRIL SPEAKER NOTES

Ann Northrup gave us a great overview of “Bugs You Hope to See Fewer of in the Garden”. First of all she prefaced her presentation with the admonition that everything has a place in our ecosystem, but admitted that something needs to be done if insects are disturbing the ornamental or food quality of your garden.

She divided her presentations by the major orders of insects that may be causing damage in your garden. First of all she said, that to an entomologist, true “bugs” belong to a order called *Hemiptera*,. The name is derived from the Greek, hemi for half, and tera for wing. The wings on members of this family are folded over each other on the insects backs forming an x pattern and the appearance of only partial wings. All *Hemiptera* have piercing and sucking mouthparts and most do not do significant damage to plants. A couple to watch out for are the brown marmorated stink bug, which can be first identified by the clusters of pearly white eggs on the underside of leaves. These hatch in mass into rust and brown nymphs which along with adults feed on a variety of fruits, berries and legumes, leaving disfiguring pockmarks and distorted fruit. Another pest, which is less likely to cause significant damage to plants is the red and black box elder bug or milkweed bugs, which emerge in large numbers in the spring and usually are more annoying than damaging to plants. There are also a couple of true bugs who are insect predators and can be good to have around. These include the assassin bug and minute pirate bug. (Warning: some people do have an adverse reaction to bites from the assassin bug.)

The main group of insect pests that Ms. Northrup discussed includes the all too familiar aphids, psyllids, leafhoppers, scale, whiteflies, and mealybugs. Their order, *Homoptera*, also have piercing and sucking mouthparts and often leave plants with unsightly and weakening, curling of leaves. They are also transmitters of some very damaging plant pathogens. One of these is the citrus psyllid which transmits the Huanglongbing disease that is presenting challenges to California’s citrus industry. The best way to identify these psyllids is to look for the waxy exudate left by juvenile insects on new growth of citrus. Contact your county agricultural extension service if you suspect that you have this pest in your yard.

Ann next discussed the largest insect order, the *Coleoptera*, or beetles. The Greek derivation of coleo, is sheath, and tera for wings again. Beetles all have hard outer wings, and some have soft wings for flying underneath. Many beetles are our friends including ladybird beetles (the proper scientific classification of “ladybugs”) and mealybug destroyers, whose larva look like mealybugs but actually feed on the latter. A couple of beetles to look out for include red and black rose curculio, a weevil which can cause ragged blossoms and punch holes in flowers and canes. Another is the gold spotted oak borer, which is currently attacking oak trees in southern California, but could move north. A few other damaging beetles include the polyphagous shot hole borer, Asian long-horned beetle, and emerald ash borer. In addition to these adult beetle pests there are beetle larva (grubs) that may eat the roots of many plants especially lawns. There are non-toxic pathogenic nematodes that can be used in the soil to control these grubs.

Ms. Northrup, also briefly discussed flies, moths, and butterflies all of whom have larva as their juvenile form instead of nymphs. Most of these insects are beneficial in our yards, the adults as pollinators and the larva as decomposers. Apparently soldier fly larva are becoming more popular for composting than red worms. Ann mentioned that you can tell fly maggots (larva) from worms or caterpillars because they have no discernable head. Hover or syrphid flies (the ones that look a bit like bees) have larva that eat aphids. Another larva that comes out in large numbers this time of year are Tussock moth caterpillars. They usually are not in sufficient enough numbers, nor do they stick around long enough to cause significant damage to oak trees, although some people have reported an allergic reaction to the caterpillars. Other possible larval pests are the anise swallowtail, which feed on members of the carrot family and the *Buddleia* tip moth, a type of budworm that destroys flowers of its namesake. Another is the rose slug, which is actually the larva of a sawfly and eats the leaves of roses. BT will not work on these because they are maggots not caterpillars, but they have many natural enemies and can be washed off with a strong spray of water if they become problematic.

All in all, Ann Northrup provided a great introduction to the insect world and if you want to learn more check out her classes on insects and diseases at Foothill and Merritt Colleges.

## PLANT SALE TABLE

This will be your last opportunity for the season to bring in your extra vegetable seedlings and any other plants that you have been propagating to sell to add to our coffers! I will be bringing in the fancy leafed Heuchera's and some Rex Begonias that were grown from donated plugs from Terra Nova Nursery in Oregon. Books and other garden related items are also welcome. Please label books and other items with prices that you think are appropriate and label plants with botanical names. Pictures and/or cultural information are also helpful in selling your plants. Bring your checkbook or cash if you wish to make some great purchases!

## 28 YEARS AGO

Western Hort met on May 8, 1991. "Mabel Crittenden, author of *Wildflowers of the West* and *Trees of the West*, and a board member of Western Hort, will give a slide-illustrated talk about her plant studies in Alaska." The talk was entitled *Land of the Fireweed*.

The meeting was held at the "Hillview Community Center's Social Hall...just next-door to the multipurpose room where we have been meeting." This was the last meeting in Los Altos (at least for awhile) because "...due to expansion of recreation programs...the City can no longer guarantee us a meeting site. A site committee...has selected a wonderful facility in Atherton at the Jennings Pavillion in Holbrook Palmer Park." WHS was to have a booth at the Atherton sponsored "Day in the Park" on May 18<sup>th</sup>, an opportunity to "display cut flowers, talk to people about perennials and drought tolerant plants, have our book for sale, and distribute information about our organization."

The WHS exhibit at the SF Landscape Garden Show was a resounding success, receiving two awards. Well-deserved thanks was especially given to designers Tom Andrews and Mary Kaye, carpenter Budge Garbett, plant loaner Don Brandeau and "masterful co-ordinator and planner Elizabeth Garbett" as well as "the members who helped with the construction of the 30 stackable planters."

The Plant Notes for May reflect an interesting selection. Albert Wilson brought *Rosa multiflora*, "the wild rose of Japan"; "Lowell Cordes of Saratoga Horticultural Foundation brought along a collection of gems, new to most of us: *Hydrangea microphylla* 'Pia', *Anthylla barba-jovis*", (I tried looking this one up but found little information, our Plant Notes author, Elizabeth Garbett said it resembled Scotch broom, has good potential as a drought tolerant hedge plant, grows quickly and is not invasive as far as is known), *Betula utilis* and 'Sundance', a new cultivar of *Choisya ternata*. Elizabeth mentioned that "*C. ternata* has done surprisingly well in the drought, putting up with a fourth its usual water ration in my garden and looking none the worse for it." Don Brandeau brought *Fuchsia procumbens* (not your usual fuchsia); Ed Carman showed *Laurentia minuta* and there was also a blooming branch of *Kolkwitzia amabilis*, preferred by E.G. to *Weigela* "for its more graceful habit, longer blooming period and softer color."

~ Nancy Schramm

## HORTICULTURAL HAPPENINGS

**Edgewood Wildflower Walks**, March 16-June 2, 2019, every Saturday and Sunday, 10am-1pm, Edgewood Park, 10 Old Stage Coach Road, Redwood City.

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! Free walks are led by docents at Edgewood Park every Saturday and Sunday from March 16 through June 2 and vary according to what's in bloom. The walk covers about 3 miles, at a moderate pace, with frequent stops. Walks start from the Bill & Jean Lane Education Center and, on Saturdays in April, also from the Clarkia trailhead. Bring water, a hat, sturdy shoes, sunscreen, and a snack if you wish. Walks don't stop for lunch, but picnic tables are usually available after the walks in the Old Stage Day Camp area.

<https://parks.smcgov.org/edgewood-wildflower-walks>

**California Native Plant Society, Santa Clara Valley Chapter, Going Native Garden Tour**, Saturday and Sunday, May 4 and 5, 10am-4pm. Visit native plant gardens in the southern parts of Santa Clara County on Saturday and in the northern parts and further up the peninsula on Sunday. For more information and required free registration or to volunteer to help go to [npgt.org](http://npgt.org)

**San Francisco Botanical Garden Spring Plant Sale**, Saturday, May 4, 1-3pm and Sunday, May 5, 10am-3pm, San Francisco County Fair Building on Ninth Avenue at Lincoln Way. The Bay Area's largest plant sale of the year. Over 4,000 different kinds of plants are featured—many are exclusive to the Garden's Nursery!

<https://www.sfbg.org/springplantsale>

**Carmel Valley Garden Show**, Saturday and Sunday May 4 & 5, 10am-4pm, Hidden Valley Music Seminars in Carmel Valley Village, 104 West Carmel Valley Road, Carmel Valley, CA. Proceeds from this event are used to make grants to nonprofit organizations in Carmel Valley that contribute to the natural beauty and sustainability of their area.

[https://cvgc.clubexpress.com/content.aspx?page\\_id=22&club\\_id=324042&module\\_id=330668](https://cvgc.clubexpress.com/content.aspx?page_id=22&club_id=324042&module_id=330668)

**Gamble Garden, Mother's Day Spring Floral Arranging**, Wednesday, May 8, 1:30-2:30pm, **Writers in the Garden**, classes June 5, 12, 19, and 26, 1431 Waverley St, Palo Alto. For more information about these and other classes and events: <https://www.gamblegarden.org/events/category/events/>

**Santa Clara Co. Master Gardener Events: Growing Vegetables in Containers**, Saturday May 11, 3-4 pm, Willow Glen Public Library, 1157 Minnesota Ave. Willow Glen. Short on space? Santa Clara County Master Gardener Laura Monczynski will show you how you can grow almost any vegetable in a container if given the proper care. Free Event. **Succulents Plant Sale**, Saturday, May 18, 9am-12pm, Martial Cottle Park-Shade House, 5283 Snell Ave, San Jose. The Sassy Succulent Group will be selling plants and succulent arrangements. We will be on hand to answer your questions about growing and propagating succulents too. Please note the park charges \$6.00 for parking, or you can park on Chynoweth Avenue near Vauxhall Circle for free. Bring cart, boxes and bags to carry your purchases. More information about this and other classes and events: <http://mgsantaclara.ucanr.edu/events/>

### Officers and Board Members:

We are still looking for someone to fill the Vice President position.

President: Janet Hoffmann

Vice President: Open

Secretary: Leslie Dean

Corresponding Secretary: Laurie Schofield

Treasurer: Jennifer Doniach

Other Board Members: Richard Hayden, Laura Wilson, Carol Dahout, Carrie Parker, Grace Tsang, Carol Moholt  
Plant Discussion: Katie Wong

### About Membership in Western Hort:

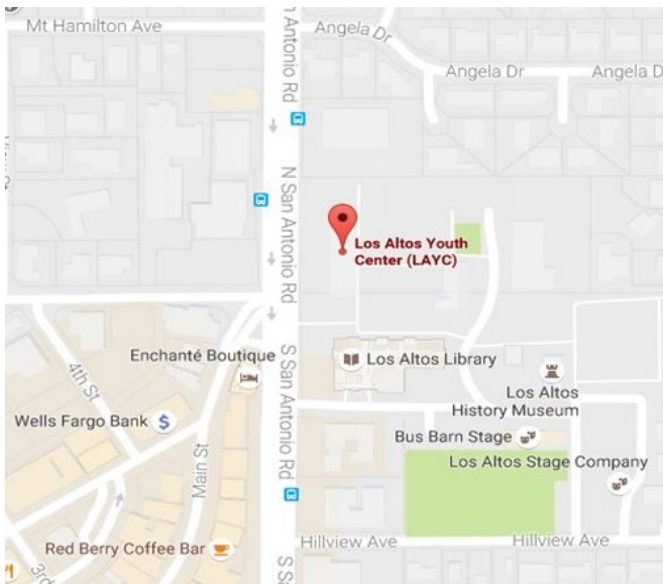
**Membership Rates:** A one-year membership (Sep-Aug) includes an e-mail copy of this newsletter and an e-mail copy of Pacific Horticulture Magazine. Regular membership is \$35, Family membership for two or more members at the same address is \$50, and a discounted rate for students is \$20. To receive a print copy of this newsletter by mail add \$10 to the membership fee listed above. To receive a print copy of Pacific Horticulture Magazine you will need to join Pacific Horticulture at: [pachort.org/join](http://pachort.org/join). WHS members can get a 10% discount on Pac Hort membership. Affiliate Organization Discount Code available by e-mailing us at contact e-mail below.

**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](mailto:info@westernhort.org) or snail mail to: PO Box 166, Mountain View, CA 94042



PO Box 166  
Mountain View, CA 94042  
First Class Mail  
VISIT US AT WESTERNHORT.ORG



**Meeting location May:**

**Los Altos Youth Center  
1 North San Antonio Road  
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.

Check-in starts at 7:00 pm. and meetings start 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!

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 24 of August.** Submissions after this date will likely appear in the next month's newsletter. Send submissions to: [Kjanberg@gmail.com](mailto:Kjanberg@gmail.com) or snail mail to Kathy An-berg, 1332 Peggy Ct. Campbell, CA 95008-6342