

## **NOVEMBER 2022 MEETING**

**November 9th, 7:30pm**

We will be meeting in-person at the Garden House in Shoup Park. All attendees may be asked to provide proof of vaccination and to wear masks while in the building. Check the WHS website for Covid updates. *The meeting room officially opens to members and the public at 7pm but if you can arrive by 6:30pm to help with set-up, your assistance would be greatly appreciated.* Meetings are free for members, non-member in-person attendees \$10. See page 5 of this newsletter for information about joining WHS.

**SPEAKER: LYNNE TRULIO**

**TOPIC: BEAUTIFUL CALIFORNIA DIVERSITY: THE BIODIVERSITY CRISIS AND WHAT WE CAN DO ABOUT IT.**



Dr. Trulio has been a professor of Environmental Studies at San Jose State University since 1991, the department chair for the past 15 years and the Associate Dean of the College of Social Sciences for the past 2 years. Dr. Trulio was the Lead Scientist for the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project from 2003-2008 and 2016-2018, directing the Project's science program. From 1999-2001, she was an American Association for the Advancement of Science Environmental and Engineering Fellow, conducting work as a visiting scientist for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in Washington, DC. She received her Ph.D. in Ecology from the University of California, Davis, and her undergraduate degree in Biology from Goucher College in Towson, MD.

We share the Earth with millions of other species. But our planet is experiencing a biodiversity crisis in which a significant portion of these species are in danger of extinction in the coming decades. While the Earth has undergone mass extinctions in the past — such as when a meteor strike doomed the dinosaurs — the current mass extinction event is caused by humans. This loss of species is a tragedy for the Earth's ecology and non-human inhabitants, but will also have a significant impact on human societies. In this talk, we will discuss the causes of the current biodiversity crisis, with a focus on California biodiversity. We will discuss which species are most endangered, what we can do to try to limit the loss of species, and efforts in our region to preserve our local biodiversity, especially endangered plants, invertebrates and animal species.



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

"I am not suggesting that one can discharge all one's obligations towards society by means of a private re-afforestation scheme. Still, it might not be a bad idea, every time you commit an antisocial act, to make note of it in your diary, and then, at the appropriate season, push an acorn into the ground." ~ George Orwell

"...to plant a rose...can mean so many things... [The planting of roses] were questions about who Orwell was and who we were and where pleasure and beauty and hours with no quantifiable practical result fit into the life of someone, perhaps of anyone, who also cared about justice and truth and human rights and how to change the world."  
~ Rebecca Solnit

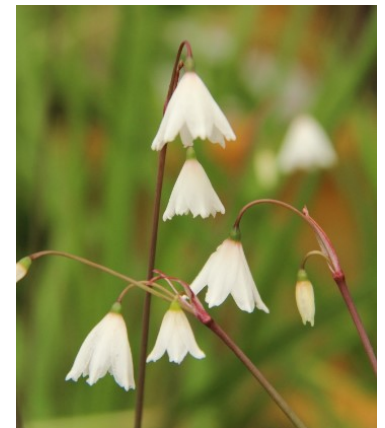
Speaking of acorns (and knowing that native oak trees support a hugely disproportionate number of all sorts of caterpillars for baby birds), November's meeting will feature SJSU ecology professor, Lynne Trulio, speaking on the rapid extinguishing of many of our planet's species. In the pipeline is the video of last month's rousing conversation among Robin, Charlie and Andy on growing and selling stone fruit.

~ Grace Tsang

## SEPTEMBER PLANT SHARE

Nancy Schramm from Gilroy presented:

***Acis autumnalis*** — (Autumn Snowflake or 'September Snow' which is a selected pure white form) Formally known as a *Leucojum*, this Amaryllidaceae family member is a dainty deciduous perennial with slender grass-like foliage and nodding, bell shaped, pure white flowers with a pinkish tint at the base. It is native to Southern areas of Portugal and Spain as well as Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia. Nancy got this bulb from the Hot Plant Picks and tells us that it self seeded into the pots she brought to show us. Short in stature it only grows to six inches and care must be taken not to mistake the foliage for a weedy grass. Hardy to Zone 7B it will grow in sun to half sun and needs average moisture during the growing season but drier conditions when dormant. Good drainage is beneficial.



~ Kathy Anberg

## Upcoming Meetings

**December 14:** Kristin Jakob, A Botanical Art Journey.

**January 11:** Rebecca Sweet, Refresh Your Garden Design: Simple Strategies to Wake Up a Weary Garden. **Note:** This will be a Zoom only meeting.

**February 8:** Eric Hsu, Of Heartbreak & Flowers: The Domoto Family & Their Horticultural Legacy in the United States.

## VOLUNTEERS PLEASE!

**WE ARE SEEKING A VOLUNTEER TO MANAGE THE PLANT SALE TABLE SO WE CAN BRING BACK THAT POPULAR EVENT TO OUR MEETINGS. CONTACT ANY BOARD MEMBER FOR DETAILS. SEE PAGE 4 ON HOW TO VOLUNTEER!**

## OCTOBER SPEAKER NOTES



Our October meeting was very well attended, with 85 people arriving to hear the reminiscences of two venerable orchardists familiar to most who live in the South Bay. Charles Olson and Andy Mariani talked about their lives growing stone fruit in Santa Clara Valley. Robin Chapman, a Los Altos native and retired journalist, was our interviewer for the evening. She is author of *The Valley of Heart's Delight: True Tales from Around the Bay*, published in July, as well as *California Apricots: The Lost Orchards of Silicon Valley* and *Bay Area Visionaries*. Together, the books are a trilogy on the place, the people and the stories of the Santa Clara Valley.

Both gentlemen were born into well-known orchard families. Charles said he was groomed for the work since he was eight years old. His mother, originally from Lebanon, started the first Olson fruit stand in 1933. At that time, cherries were 5-10 cents a pound and her rent in

Mountain View was 10 dollars a month. She turned down an opportunity to buy 100 acres in Mountain View for \$35,000, at the time too dear for her, but instead was able to buy fifteen acres in Sunnyvale. The business grew and became a fixture in the community over the decades, so it was a sad day when the fruit stand closed in 2018. Now an octogenarian, Charles still manages the ten-acre Sunnyvale Heritage Orchard, one of the last working apricot orchards in the Santa Clara Valley. Charles' daughter Deborah, the fourth generation, distributes his cherries and apricots through their family company, C.J. Olson's Cherries.

Andy's dad came to the valley in 1931. After five years of fishing, he had enough money to buy some land. Andy was the youngest of three boys all of whom wanted to stay working the land. There are many challenges to growing fruit, and specifically, growing cherries has been called a profession of despair. For example, Andy said the last two years were terrible for cherries though the apricots and peaches have been good. He currently has 45 acres of cherries in Morgan Hill, where he has been growing fruit for commodity sale; he got a negative return last year. However, the specialty varieties can go for 12 dollars per pound and helps to keep the business going.

Charles remembers a very cool summer when the cherry picking was done in overcoats. One year, no cherries were picked because of three straight days of rain. It takes eight years for a cherry tree to bear fruit and about thirty years is the typical lifespan of a tree. Non-human creatures can decimate the fruit; Andy recently lost 15-20% of his fruit to squirrels. Though in the old days, strychnine was used to kill rodents, now live trapping and owls are used. Andy said that one owl family can get a thousand rodents in a year. Sometimes, carbon monoxide and CO<sub>2</sub> can be used to pump into burrows as a less harsh way to reduce populations. During the apricot harvest it is an early start to the day, 5am or so, with picking continuing until about 4pm. The same trees must be revisited three or four times to get the ripe fruit. Apricots not sold fresh are sulfured overnight, and then set in the sun to dry.

Despite the difficulties, neither Charles nor Andy seemed to have any regrets. Growing up in Cupertino, Andy's favorite tree was a Moorpark apricot, grafted on a Crawford peach. He has tried to recapture that flavor ever since. For peaches, his favorite is the Baby Crawford (which was a cast off from the UC Davis testing program). Though Blenheim is the most typical apricot variety, there are many alternative varieties and the Valley still provides the unusual mix of climate and soil required for this fruit. Apricots from Los Altos are particularly fine and recognizable, possibly because of the soil coming down from the Santa Cruz Mountains. Normally, the drying ratio (number of pounds of fresh fruit to dry fruit) of apricots is 5, but in Los Altos it is closer to 4. Of the four cherry varieties that can be grown here (Royal Ann, Republican, Tartarian and Bing), Charles' favorite is the Bing.

When asked about the most satisfying thing about their careers as orchardists, Andy enthused about the tours he offers, when he can share the joy of the fruit growing process. Charles cited his contentment about having treated his employees well over the years. Audience members were able to buy Andy's Orchards' dried apricots, nectarines and other specialty fruit at a side table – they went like hotcakes!

~Jennifer Dungan

## WEB LINKS FOR OCTOBER SPEAKERS

About C. J. Olson Cherries

<https://www.cjolsoncherries.com/about-us/>

Sunnyvale: Landmark C.J. Olson's Cherries fruit stand to close Sept. 30

(Competition, heavy workload contribute to tough decision)

<https://www.mercurynews.com/2018/08/29/sunnyvale-landmark-c-j-olsons-cherries-fruit-stand-to-close-sept-30/>

Andy's Orchards - About Us [https://andysorchard.com/?page\\_id=18](https://andysorchard.com/?page_id=18)

The Last of His Kind Farming Fruit in the Silicon Valley

<https://www.growingproduce.com/fruits/the-last-of-his-kind-farming-fruit-in-the-silicon-valley/>

Meet Robin Chapman, Author of The Valley of Heart's Delight: True Tales from Around the Bay

<https://smcl.org/blogs/post/meet-robin-chapman-author-of-the-valley-of-hearts-delight-true-tales-from-around-the-bay/>

## 28 YEARS AGO

On November 9, 1994, the plan was for Western Hort to meet to hear "Sean Hogan, horticulturist at UC Botanical Garden, Berkeley who is in charge of the New World Desert and African Hill...speak on *Lewisia* and Associated Flora". Part of the plan included meeting (for that month only) at Springer School instead of Loyola School.

Well, we all know what can happen to plans! As it turned out, and as announced in the December newsletter "We were very sorry to have to cancel our last meeting. As many of you know there was a storm related power outage at the Spring School necessitating a number of noble people to spend some hours on the phone trying to reach all of you. I hope they were able to save you a trip. I understand that it is possible that we can reschedule the talk for a later date."

As a result, there will be no plant notes from November 1994! But there are other items of interest in the newsletter. For instance, Leslie Dean was welcomed as a new member.

Last month I mentioned an announcement of a number of video tapes that WHS had available for rental in 1994. This month there was a review of the first episode of *The Great Gardens of England: Hidcote, Mottisfont Abbey and Sissinghurst*, by Carol Coate: "The quality of this video is above reproach, for all the elements flow together. The guide is unobtrusive and speaks clearly. We are given an opportunity to view a site plan for each garden which I found helpful, as is the pleasant use of botanical names. The photography and editing are first rate. The portion devoted to Sissinghurst made me pine for a real chat with Harold Nickelson instead of his rather self-important son, Nigel. But seeing the White Garden at its peak made putting up with him worth it. The music on this video is a bit stuffy."

One last announcement made me sentimental for the "good old days": "In appreciation for the continued rent free use of the Loyola School multipurpose room WHS has again made a donation of \$200 to the school."

~Nancy Schramm

## GET INVOLVED

We are actively looking for a few new board members including a Vice President. Yes, to your question, "If I was on the board in the past, can I join again?" We enjoy having new board members as well as members who have served in the past. It makes for a well rounded board. Volunteer and get to know other WHS members and keep our organization growing.

Available Positions:

**Vice president:** In addition to board member duties below, the vice president runs the general meeting or board meetings when the President is unavailable. Helps the President as needed and updates new board members on duties and functions of the organization.

**Board Members:** Position involves regular attendance at monthly meetings Sept – June and regular attendance at bi-monthly board meetings as well as helping on committees as needed to carry out Western Hort activities.

**Plant Sale Table Manager:** Set up and help with the sale of donated plants at the meeting.

If you have an interest in helping in any one of these capacities, or feel you can help in any other way, feel free to e-mail us at [info@westernhort.org](mailto:info@westernhort.org) or speak to any of the current board members at our meetings.

## DID YOU MISS SOMETHING? OR DO YOU HAVE FOMO?

A reminder to our members that previous meetings that were recorded are available to be seen on the Western Horticulture YouTube channel. Go to: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCKfxEU-vV0Ug9RiAbG1eQkg> and catch up on those informative meetings!

If you have a vague feeling of FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) you can join the WHS email forum which trades gardening tips, announces horticulture events, lets you know about plant and garden supplies that are being given away and more. Click on this link: <https://groups.io/g/WHSmembers> to keep up with the latest news.

## HORTICULTURAL HAPPENINGS

**Cal Hort Society:** General Meeting on Monday, November 21st at 6:30pm. In person and online including the final big plant sale of the year. Ken Lavin, the outing coordinator for Greenbelt Alliance will give us a peek at the secret life of some California native flora and the adventures of early day botanical explorers. <https://calhortsociety.org/>

### *STROLLING AROUND THE INTERNET*

#### **32,000-year-old Plant From the Ice Age Comes Alive Again**

<https://www.news18.com/news/buzz/32000-year-old-plant-from-the-ice-age-comes-alive-again-6122557.html>

#### **Officers and Board Members:**

President: Grace Tsang  
Vice President: Open Position  
Secretary : Leslie Dean  
Corresponding Secretary: Rosalie Shepherd

Treasurer: Jennifer Doniach  
Other Board Members: Carol Dahout, Carol Moholt,  
Michael Craib, Janet Hoffmann, Jennifer Dungan and  
Eva Huala

#### **Volunteer Committees and Responsibilities:**

Zoom Host: Carol Dahout  
Email and website maintenance: Ursula Haschke  
Publicity and Outreach: Grace Tsang  
Membership: Ursula Haschke

Speaker Program Committee: Leslie Dean (chair),  
Nancy Schramm, Judy Wong, Glenda Jones  
Newsletter Editor: Kathy Anberg  
Scholarships: Grace Tsang and Jennifer Doniach

#### **About Membership in Western Hort:**

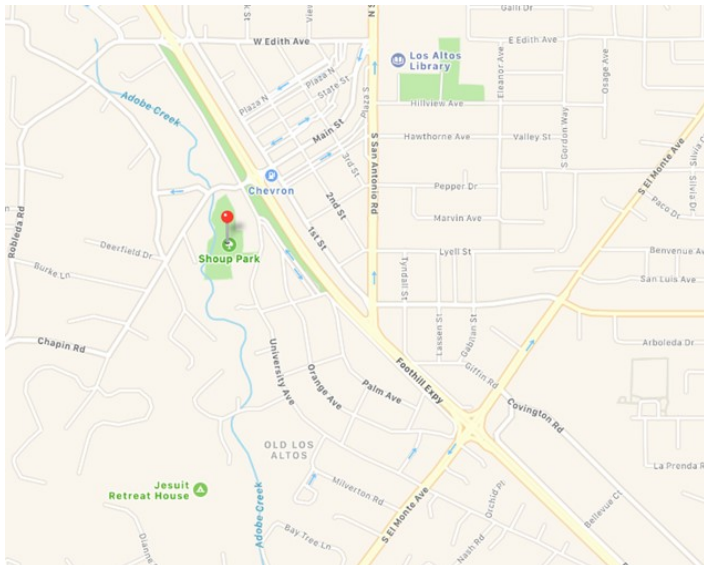
**Membership Rates:** A one-year membership (Sep-Aug) includes an e-mail copy of this newsletter and admittance to all of our monthly meetings. Regular membership is \$35, Family membership for two or more members at the same address is \$50, and a discounted rate for students is \$20. To receive a print 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](http://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](mailto:info@westernhort.org) or snail mail to: PO Box 166, Mountain View, CA 94042



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First Class Mail  
VISIT US AT WESTERNHORT.ORG



**Meeting location : November 9th**  
In Person at (Wear Masks and bring Vaccination Card):  
Shoup Park Garden House, 400 University Ave., Los Altos  
Meeting starts at 7:30 pm.  
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 November.** 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 Anberg, 1332 Peggy Ct. Campbell, CA 95008-6342