



October 2016 Speaker

Wednesday, October 12, 7:30 pm. Doors open at 7.

Speaker: Rolando Uria, "Salvias of Northern Argentina"

Rolando Uria, is an Agricultural Engineer and Associate Professor of Gardening and Landscaping at the University of Buenos Aires, Buenos Aires, Argentina. For our October meeting, he will discuss Salvias he has found during his many exploration trips in Northern Argentina. These include many *Salvia guaranitica* cultivars including *Salvia* 'Amistad' which he discovered and named. 'Amistad' means friendship in Spanish, and Rolando has shared many cuttings of his discovery to encourage its planting.



Rolando Uria

Photo: <http://salvias.com.ar>



Salvia 'Amistad'

Photo: www.lsuagcenter.com

Rolando Uria has taught at UBA for over 15 years. He is also the Head Gardener at Jardin de Salvias, Mar de Plata, Argentina. He coauthored the book *Jardines Para Atraer Picaflores* (Gardens to Attract Hummingbirds). You can check out some of his discoveries on his web-site- <http://salvias.com.ar> (in Spanish but some browsers have English translations.)

Rolando has presented his salvia discoveries at numerous conferences and seminars in Argentina and at the Salvia Summit in San Marino, CA in 2013. Like California, Argentina has a wide range of biomes from desert to subtropical rainforest and winter temperatures can vary from USDA zones 5-13. Roland will discuss some of his discoveries suitable for planting in our local zones.

Please note: New Meeting Location for fall 2016

Los Altos Youth Center, 1 North San Antonio Rd., Los Altos, CA 94022
(Same area as last meeting, drive behind Los Altos Library and turn left.)

*Join us for dinner with Rolando Uria on
October 12th ~ Chef Chu's Restaurant*

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

September 2016 Plant Notes

Judy Wong from Menlo Park brought in the following:

Lithops (Living Stones)- This succulent resembles pebbles or stones and only needs to be watered every 10 days to 2 weeks, but like all succulents it likes well-drained soil. It will tolerate temperatures down to 32°.

Ecomis 'Freckles' (Dwarf Pineapple Lily) – This late summer blooming perennial (10" tall x 14" wide) grows in clumps and produces short 10" dark purple flower spikes. It is a fun plant to grow and makes a great specimen plant. It is a cross between E. 'Leia' and one of its parents again (*E. vandermerwei*) and was introduced in 2010 by Terra Nova. It likes well-drained soil with humus, grows in partial shade and will tolerate temperatures down to 32°.

Iresine herbstii (Chicken gizzard plant or Bloodleaf) – This tender ornamental perennial has fabulous reddish-purple leaves and will tolerate temperatures down to 35°. It is semi-deciduous, likes moist but well-drained soil and will grow in part shade to be 12-18" tall if grown in a container according to Judy. In its native habitat in Brazil it can grow in full sun to part shade and be 5' tall x 3' wide.

Rhodophiala bifida (Oxblood Lily) – This very adaptable perennial bulb (6-12" tall) likes full to part sun and has pink or red flowers in the late summer to early fall before the leaves appear. Originally from Uruguay and Argentina it belongs in the Amaryllis family and it will increase in size over the years. Unlike many bulbs, it doesn't like to be divided every 2-3 years. However, if you notice the bloom size getting smaller, give the bulbs more room to grow. It can grow in any type of soil including clay and tolerates bog type water conditions. Judy bought it from Sierra Azul's booth at the Menlo Park farmers market.

Gladiolus carmineus – This wonderful SW African Cape perennial corm is one of the first South African plants to bloom at the end of summer and has intense red-pink flowers. It takes sun and NO SUMMER WATER. It will tolerate temperatures to 32°. It is great that it can grow here because it is considered to be an endemic plant restricted to the SW Cape coast and grows in sandstone cliffs or rocky areas with only rainwater.

Nancy Schramm from Gilroy brought:

Baccharis pilularis (Coyote Brush)– This is a native sun loving, fast growing evergreen shrub (4-8' tall and as wide). It is an excellent habitat plant as well as a nectar plant that supports 220 species of insects, 8 species of mites, plus 62 species of parasites. All *Baccharis* are somewhat deer resistant..

Baccharis pilularis 'Twin Peaks #2' (Dwarf Coyote Brush)– This is a commonly grown, lower growing cultivar of the species (2-3' tall and 8' wide.)

Baccharis magellanica– This species is a groundcover (6-12" tall x 60" wide). This is a John Hinkley selection, which Monrovia calls the Christmas plant. It can be grown in zones 7-9, takes full sun, but likes afternoon shade inland. It likes some water until it is established and then only occasional watering. In its natural habitat it is found on lean and rocky soils in the Falklands, Chile, Argentina and the Andean Patagonia.

Janet Hoffman from Campbell brought:

Physalis peruviana (Cape Gooseberry, Golden Berry, Peruvian Ground Cherry or Poho Berry). This sun loving plant can be grown as a summer annual or perennial in mild winter areas. It can grow up to 3' tall, but if given room to spread will stay much lower. It's foliage and fruit is similar to the more familiar tomatillos, but smaller. The ½" diameter fruits are yellow to orange when ripe and covered with in a papery husk. It likes moist well-drained soil. The sweet fruit will drop to the ground when ripe. They can be eaten raw, dipped in chocolate, or cooked into dessert toppings. Spider mites can be a problem in hot dry climates.

Katie Wong from Los Altos brought:

Mespilus germanica (Medlar) – This hardy deciduous fruit tree (down to minus 10°) grows in zones 5-9, is self-fertile and grows to be 10' tall. Its small 1" round fruits ripen in the fall and taste like cinnamon-apple sauce and can be eaten raw or made into jelly. It takes full sun and will grow in any type of soil be it clay or

well-drained soil with humus.

Asimina triloba (Paw Paws)

The Native American deciduous fruit tree grows in zones 5-9, has leaves which are long and tropical looking and can grow to be 25' tall. It takes full to part sun and flowers in the summer. It produces heavenly smelling 3-6" dark green oblong fruit whose texture is custard-like with a strawberry-banana taste.

September 2016 Speaker Notes

Chris Woods presented photographs from the many gardens throughout the world that he has explored in preparation for writing a book about contemporary gardens. The gardens that he selected were very creative in both plant use and hardscape elements. They included gardens from Europe, Asia, and Australia to Chris's past post at Chanticleer Gardens in Pennsylvania. Chris's commentary was also entertaining and imaginative. I suspect that his upcoming book will also be a treat for both the eyes and the spirit. ~Janet Hoffmann

Plant Table

A big thanks to all the folks who donated plants for our first table of the season! We had loads of great plants! WHS members enjoyed shopping and buying. This is a fundraiser for WHS. Please label your plants. Pictures of flowers or fruit are helpful. We are also happy to see donations of books and anything else garden related.

28 Years Ago

As you may recall from last month's column, in September 1988 Louise Blakey spoke about flowers that would attract hummingbirds to your gardens. The plant discussion table was filled with great examples. "Three plants from the Acanthus family were brought because of the attractiveness of their tubular flowers to people as well as to hummingbirds." Keith Bickford brought in *Justicia carnea* and *J. spicigera*, and Betsy Clebsch brought in *Dicliptera suberecta*. Mary Kaye brought flowers of *Cestrum elegans*, a "silvery pink form, probably the Mexican cultivar 'Smithii'." *Cestrum nocturnum* was shown by Marilou Vivanco. Salvias loved by hummingbirds were also on display, brought in by Betsy: *Salvia guaranitica*, *S. cacaliae-flora*, *S. patens*, *S. azurea*, *S. azura grandiflora*, *S. officials crispa*, plus a hybrid with a cultivar name of 'Purple Majesty'. Other flowers shown included *Monardella villosa* v. *obispoensis* (Bart O'Brien), *Hernia primulina* & *Echeveria crenulata* (Roman Gankin), *Stanhopea wardii* (Gerda Isenberg) and *Pentas lanceolata* (Barbara Barlow). Moving along, on October 12th, 1988 WHS heard Barry Coate's talk *What's Life Really Like on a Freeway (From a Plant's Point of View)*. Barry identified "...what plants are delighting us as we drive past them on our freeways." as well as explaining "...why some plants fail on our freeways and...why some amazingly unexpected plants are successful." There was a plea for everyone to renew their membership and send in dues to Bob Young, the treasurer as soon as possible. I'll echo that sentiment for 2016! ~Nancy Schramm

Upcoming Meetings

November 9, 2016 – Brian Kemble, *A Succulent for Every California Garden*

December 14, 2016 – Holiday Potluck, *A Celebration of Dick and Helaine Dunmire*
with Music by 27strings

January 11, 2017 – Nancy Garrison, *Designing Fruit Trees into the Garden*

If you wish to hear all of these great speakers please do not forget to renew your WHS membership for 2016-2017. Early membership payment also ensures that you will receive your Pacific Horticulture Magazine for the full year. We'd like to give a special thanks to those members that added a donation above their membership level to support Western Horticultural Society programs and activities such as special speakers and trips, scholarships and equipment. Thank you.

Ghosts and Witches

In honor of that big October holiday, let's take a look at a ghost and a witch. *Euonymus fortunei* 'Wolong Ghost' and *Hamamelis x intermedia* (witch hazel), that is. You'll have to forgive me this combination, since there is no reason to put these two plants together except for a nod to Halloween. But if we try hard, we can find something a little spooky about each of these plants.



Euonymus fortunei "Wolong Ghost"
Photo: <http://tinytreasuresnursery.com/>

'Wolong Ghost' is one form of a plant (*Euonymus fortunei*) that is sometimes called winter creeper. It is a medium-low groundcover brought back in 1996 from the Wolong Nature Preserve in China by one of our modern-day plant hunters, Dan Hinkley. The narrow, leathery green leaves grow in pairs along a supple stem. The leaves have silvery white veins that make them look somehow less substantial and yes, ghostly. If given a chance it can climb a fence, wall or tree, but it won't be an invasive plant in our dry summer climate. There are a lot of things going for the groundcovers in this family. They are deer resistant, use less water once established, will help prevent erosion and are recommended as a fire resistant groundcover. 'Wolong Ghost' stays a foot or less tall, and tolerates a wide range of sun exposure, from deep shade to pretty much full sun. It is completely frost hardy around here, surviving temperatures of minus ten degrees or more.

I learned something new while researching this plant. Like common ivy, *E. fortunei* has both a juvenile and an adult form. That means that when it is immature, it grows like a vine and it doesn't bloom, but when it matures (something that might, in fact, never happen) the form changes from a vine to a shrubby plant, it blooms, will set seed and will very often start growing completely different leaves.

The astringent witch hazel was originally made by American Indians from the native plant, *Hamamelis virginiana*. But the hybrid *H. x intermedia* has more ornamental value. It is a deciduous large shrub or small tree, often producing showy fall color before dropping its leaves. As a bonus, selections have been made from the *H. x intermedia* cross that have brightly colored flowers ranging from yellow to red. Witch hazel blooms in the winter or early spring, and (here's another Halloween connection) the flowers are not big and showy, but



Hamamelis x intermedia 'Barmstedt'
Photo: <https://static.99roots.com/uploads/images/Hamamelis-x-intermedia-Barmstedt->

look like little clusters of shredded coconut or even (gasp!) like spiders with extra legs. The flowers might not be large, but witch hazel blooms profusely so the effect can be dramatic. In addition, the flowers are often delightfully fragrant. *Hamamelis x intermedia* will grow in full sun or part shade and is happiest in rich soil with regular water. Two selections worth recommending are 'Arnold Promise' with clear yellow flowers and a reddish calyx cup, and 'Diane' with copper red flowers and rich fall color.

~Nancy Schramm

Volunteer

The Western Horticulture Society is a dynamic group of Plant loving folks. We have a great lineup of guest speakers for each of our meetings and we have ongoing plant sales all thanks to our member volunteers. There is a lot of activity in the background to keep our group running smoothly. We need to have volunteers to help

behind and in front of the scenes to make this happen so all of us can enjoy our meetings. Without the help of our members, we cannot do what we do to make our meetings as great as they are. The time commitment is not much for helping out in our various functions. Please help us. Please contact any of our board members for details.

Western Horticulture Society Volunteer positions to be filled Currently Fall 2016

- **Board members** – 5 meetings/year, various jobs/tasks to help run an amazing group of plant loving folks
 - **Treasurer** – Need to be a board member, Can you balance a checkbook? Keep our WHS organized? Daxin Liu has been our treasurer for 6 years and needs to step down per our bylaws now. We need to find a new person to take over now. He can help you transition into this role. Please see Daxin Liu
 - **Webmaster** – Pat is retiring after many years of managing our website. We need someone to take over the role as soon as possible. She has it all setup on Dreamweaver. Please contact Pat or a board member to get in touch with Pat for more details.
 - **AV Person** – Colin is retiring after many years of setting up our projector and computer setup for our guest speakers. We need someone to step up now. Colin will show you how to set up the projector and set up the computer for the meetings.
 - **Membership misc.** – Help our Membership chair Judy Fulton with some behind the scene functions of Membership. Please see Judy Fulton
 - **Room setup and take down** – Come in around 6:45 to set up chairs and tables for the meeting – After meeting – take down chairs and tables and put in storage room. Make sure room is ready for next meeting
 - **Sound setup** – Take care of setting up our speaker system, insure microphones are working – See Liz Calhoon
 - **Ongoing help** during the year for various functions as needed – Holiday party/June Picnic, San Francisco Flower and Garden show help with our booth. Will post for help when needed
- Submitted by Carrie Parker – Co-President**

Officers and Board Members:

Co-presidents: Carrie Parker and Liz Calhoon

Vice President: Judy Wong

Secretary: Patricia Larenas

Corresponding Secretary: Richard Tied

Treasurer: Daxin Liu

Other board members: Chris Egan, Judy Fulton,
and 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 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 http://westernhort.org/membership_form.pdf for a membership form.

To contact us, please send email to: westernhortsociety@gmail.com, or contact Chris Egan at 650-948-4614, or send mail to Western Horticultural Society, PO Box 60507, Palo Alto, CA, 94306.

Horticultural Happenings

October 15 and 16, 2016, Russian River

Changing Times, Changing Gardens, PacHort Summit

For more information see www.pachort.org/summit

October 15, 2016

CNPS Fall Native Plant Sale

Hidden Villa, Los Altos, CA

For more information see www.cnps-sc.v.org



PO Box 60507
Palo Alto, CA 94306

First Class Mail

VISIT US AT WESTERNHORT.ORG



NEW MEETING LOCATION

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

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!

Please call Pat Knight at
650-941-6136.

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, or Janet Hoffmann, 826 Lana CT, Campbell, CA 95008