

WESTERN HORT

December 2021 | PO Box 166, Mountain View, CA 94042 | www.westernhort.org

DECEMBER 2021 MEETING

December 8th, 7:30 in-person & Zoom via Internet

Wednesday December 8, 7:30 pm, We will be meeting in-person at the Garden House in Shoup Park. (Map and address on page 8) All attendees will be asked to provide proof of vaccination and to wear masks while in the building. *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.* We will also be live-streaming the meeting via Zoom. The Zoom link will be sent out before the meeting for Western Hort and Cal Hort members only.

Meetings are free for members, non-member in-person attendees \$10. See page 7 of this newsletter for information about joining WHS.

Speaker: Lynn Chan and David Eger

Topic: Gardens to Lure You Out of California

Are you looking for inspiration on how to design your garden? Are you waiting for it to mature? Do you want it to be lush but don't have the water? Regardless of the reason, it is always a joy to visit someone else's creation. It rejuvenates the way we look at our own. In this talk we would like to take you on a tour of some of our favorite gardens that we have visited around the world. Each one gave us more than a postcard photo. We saw new plants, unique arrangements, or even a new perspective of looking at life all together!



David and Lynn grew up in the lush countryside of Delaware and Malaysia. They love traveling to see gardens and to meet the gardeners who tend them. None is too big, too small, too far, or too old. When they're not traveling, they can be found puttering in their edible-focused cottage garden in Burlingame.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Response to our survey about in-person meetings was mostly positive. Thank you to all who gave us your feedback. As promised, we will be once again meeting in person this month and plan to do so through May unless there are some unforeseen circumstances that force us to shut down again. Please note that going forward our meetings will be in the Garden House in Shoup Park. As a result of changes in the city offices for Los Altos, they are no longer renting out the Youth Center where we met before. The board felt that the Garden House was the best alternative, so we will be meeting there for the remainder of this program year. If any of you know of other suitable locations for next year, feel free to reach out and let us know.

Please be sure to bring your mask and proof of vaccination to the December meeting. Most survey respondents told us that they would only be comfortable attending with these conditions. Please respect your fellow members by following these rules. You can bring a vaccination card, copy of your card, or copy of your State of California digital COVID-19 vaccine record on your phone. To learn how to get a digital verification go to <https://myvaccinerecord.cdph.ca.gov/>. This takes a couple of days to process, so please do not wait until the last minute.

We are also planning on continuing to stream our in-person meetings via Zoom and record them for later viewing as we have been doing for the past several months. If any of you have experience with this process and want to help us get it working at the December meeting, please respond to info@westernhort.org. It takes all of us working together to keep an organization like ours going and we are most appreciative of the members who step forward to help on a regular basis.

I look forward to seeing many of you again in December!

~ Janet Hoffmann

NOVEMBER SPEAKER NOTES

I have heard much positive feedback about our November speaker, Kenton Seth and his topic of crevice gardens. For those of you who missed his talk I will give you a brief synopsis and you can catch our recording on [Youtube](#).

Kenton lead off with an explanation of what crevice gardens actually are and their history. He started with some of the gardens in Czechoslovakia that sparked his interest. This inspired him to see crevices and their potential for growing plants in broken concrete, spaces in steps, rock walls and even in containers. He shared photos with examples of his work from the Yampa River Botanic Garden in Steamboat Springs not far from where he lives to the Cheyenne Botanical Garden, Far Reaches in Port Townsend, WA and Plant Delights in Raleigh, NC. If we wish to get a feel for crevice gardens he recommends the new crevice garden in Tilden Park and the rock garden at Lake Merritt in Oakland.

Mr. Seth explained that crevice gardens are a niche of the alpine or rock garden. Crevice gardens originated in Prague, in the 1980's. The people there developed the gardens because they had little space to work with and wanted to grow some special plants in their small plots. Two early developers of the method are Zdenek Zvolanek and Vojtech Holubec.

Crevice or rock gardens are a good way of growing plants that naturally do not want much in the way of irrigation, which makes them ideal for our water deficient climate. The basic structure can be made using many different kinds of rocks (as long as only one type is used per crevice garden) and they do not have to be vertically oriented, rounded rocks can work well too. The soil between the rocks should not contain any organic matter and should follow the basic rule of being made of a coarser grain than the soil material underneath them. The Czechs use the same rocks that they used to build their gardens and break them into smaller pieces to fill in the cracks. Kenton bare roots his plants before planting them into this mineral soil. He also emphasized that you want to keep the garden free of excess organic debris like fallen leaves from landscape trees.

After this inspiring talk more than one person in attendance is examining their yard and trying to figure out where they can put their own crevice garden. A good source for information about all types of rock gardens is the [North American Rock Garden Society](#). Kenton and his co-author, Paul Spriggs are working on their own book on crevice gardens which will be coming out around June, 2022, Filbert Press. For more information visit his website [paintbrushgardens](http://paintbrushgardens.com).

~ Janet Hoffmann

28 YEARS AGO

Western Hort met December 8, 1993 at Shoup Park for our annual potluck holiday party. There was a gift exchange (value limited to no more than \$5.00) and table centerpieces created by Gerda Isenberg which were given away as door prizes.

Digging Dog Nursery in Albion & Heritage Garden Growers (formerly on Alpine Road) were thanked for supplying the plants for the November plant raffle.

The Board of Directors nominating committee submitted names for filling upcoming vacancies and second terms, two of those mentioned (John Hammerschmidt and Sherry Austin) are still WHS members all these years later!

The theme for the 1994 San Francisco Landscape Garden Show was announced: *A Fair to Remember*. “The...1894 California Midwinter Fair...celebrated the glory of California and the enormous riches of the state’s mines, fields, vineyards, forests and especially the enviable climate. We have agreed to submit a design for a Japanese Garden using California native plants. Members are invited to submit plans using this theme.”

There was an interesting suggestion about Gift Memberships: “If you are stumped for a special gift for a western horticulturist, consider a gift membership to Western Hort. If you request, we will send a letter announcing your gift to arrive just before the holidays.” (I’ve taken advantage of this idea myself as it’s a fun way to introduce someone new to WHS - NLS)

Since there was no plant share and thus no plant notes for December, I’d like to share some of the comments from the plant notes that came out with the September WHS newsletter. Elizabeth Garbett (our former plant note author extraordinaire) and Alicin Rauzin (of Green Sun Nursery) were “privileged to attend one of Goldsmith Seeds” (now Syngenta) “invitational viewings of the All America Selection Trials for annuals in July” (1993). “Each year seed companies, here and abroad, send seed of their new introductions to test sites similar to this one in different parts of the country. This is a blind test. The new introduction is grown beside plots of similar varieties already on the market for comparison. You will read about the winners in the January issue of magazines like *Horticulture* and in next year’s seed catalogues and you will, the seed companies hope, be suitably impressed and rush to buy them.”

Elizabeth described how side by side comparisons can clearly show advantages of either the new introduction or the reference plant. “Thompson & Morgan’s *Anagalis linifolia* ‘Gentian Blue’, a bushy 9” mound with light blue flowers and typical pimperl foliage...” (was grown next to) “The new introduction (which) had deeper green foliage that resembled *Iberis* and flowers that were twice as big and a deeper blue, much more gentian-like to my eye. It remains to be seen if it will live longer in the garden than its reluctant predecessor.”

“New to me was *Laurentia axillaris* (*Isotoma*), a mounding plant about a foot high with star-shaped flowers held well above the foliage. The trial plant with pale blue flowers, about the same color as blue star creeper, to which it is related, was not superior to the reference plant from Thompson & Morgan that had white flowers in good contrast to its darker green, dandelion-like foliage. I liked it so much that I got out my T & M catalogue to order it and it wasn’t there! And as if this wasn’t frustrating enough the next plant that caught my eye, *Wahlenbergia undulata*, also supposedly from T & M wasn’t in the catalogue either. This member of the campanula family has bright green linear foliage and pale blue starry flowers, looking a bit like a *Linum*.”

~Nancy Schramm

Q & A WITH ANDY AND CHARLIE

Our February program, a discussion between Andy Mariani and Charlie Olson, will be a question and answer format. Members are asked to submit their questions for the speakers at least a week before the meeting to:

info@westernhort.org . Put your thinking caps on and get those unanswered questions asked! February 1st, 2022 is the deadline, but send in your questions anytime before then!

NOVEMBER PLANT SHARE

Judy Wong from Menlo Park presented:



***Forsythia ovata* 'Tetragold'** – This fast growing deciduous shrub grows in full sun to part shade in well-drained soil. It can get to be 5' tall x 9' wide with arching branches. Judy's is growing in part sun under a *Lagerstroemia* (Crepe Myrtle) and she keeps it to 4' tall x wide. It has exceptionally large and showy 4 petaled bright yellow flowers in the spring and sometimes in the winter. It is from Emerisa (who still carries it) and she believes she got it from a Western Hort Raffle table. It is somewhat drought tolerant. You have to be careful when you prune it to maintain the draping form.

***Osteospermum ecklonis* 'Zion Purple Sun'** – Judy prefers this African Daisy to *O. 'Zion Copper Amethyst'*. It grows in full sun in well-drained soil and can get to be 2' tall and wide. It blooms year round. Vibrant orange flowers have a purple ring of at the center; it varies from being very thin to taking over all of the petals as it radiates out from the center. Judy got a cutting grown by someone at the Pacifica Garden Club. It is easy to start from cuttings when it's warm. It survives mild winters and responds very well to shearing



***Conophytum meyeri*?** – Judy thinks this is what this small South African dwarf cushion succulent is, even though the tag says *Aloinopsis*. Notice the epidermal windows at the split where the yellow flowers originate. It needs bright sunlight, well-drained soil and gets to be 2-4" tall but spreads. It is summer dormant. It blooms from late summer through fall. Judy doesn't water her succulents much but she still got a good bloom this year. It is not frost tolerant.

Janet presented this plant for Kathy Anberg from Campbell:

Crassula perfoliata* var. *minor* aka *C. falcata (Propeller Plant or Airplane Plant) – This native South African succulent is growing in a pot containing cactus mix in part shade. It has pale greyish-green leaves, which contrast nicely with the many tiny star-shaped red flowers. It was growing in the ground but got run over by a neighbor's dog. Kathy then replanted some of the pieces. It can get to be 2' tall but hers is only 1' tall. It is hardy to 20°.



Leslie Dean from Mountain View presented:

***Senecio cephalophorus* 'Orange Flame'** – Leslie got this Emerisa grown succulent plant at Flora Grubb. It grows in full sun to full shade in well-drained soil and gets to be 2' tall and wide. Leslie has it growing in full sun (zone 9) and it grew quickly and bloomed for her. Thick bluish grey foliage contrasts nicely with the bright orange rosettes. The flowers should have attracted hummingbirds and butterflies but Leslie has not seen any.

***Vitis vinifera* 'Purpurea Nana'** (Compact Purple Leaf Grape) - Leslie has this deciduous vine growing on a twisted metal structure. It grows in full sun, to part shade in well-drained soil and can grow up to 6' tall and wide. It has small cream-yellow flowers in the spring through summer; which then become small, seeded grapes in the fall. The fruit has sour skin but sweet flesh. The leaves turn a bright red in the fall. Leslie gives it moderate watering and prunes it back every year to the structures height. It is very hardy to 0°.



PLANT SHARE CONTINUED:

Nancy Schramm from Gilroy shared pictures from her recent trip to Washington State:

Plants seen at Windcliff Gardens:



Mahonia – Nancy loved the yellow foliage on this 5’ tall plant. I’m not sure about the cultivar since the leaves don’t appear to be *M. eurybracteata* ‘Soft Caress’. It could be *M. pinnata* ‘Ken Hartman’ or *M. x media* ‘Lionel Fortescue’ which were listed on the website but I couldn’t verify the fall color anywhere.

Tetracentron sinense – This deciduous tree is native to China and grows in full sun to part shade in well-drained soils. It grows best in the Pacific NW and in zones 6-7 but it may also grow in zones 8-9 if the summer weather is not too hot or humid. It can grow to 85’ tall but the one Nancy saw was only 15’ tall. Some of us thought this mystery plant was a *Cercidiphyllum*; because of the heart-shaped leaves but were confused about the long slender catkin chains. However, upon closer observation we would have seen that it has alternate leaves whereas the *Katsura* leaves are opposite. The flowers only have 4 sepals (no petals/

apetalous), 4 stamens, 4 carpels and the fruits are 4 celled, giving more meaning to the Tetra in its’ name.



Acer palmatum tree showing its vibrant fall color.



Fall garden can be beautiful without flowers

Plants seen at Heronswood:

Petrocosmia – has a low rosette form and was growing in the stumpery area where the dead logs are slowly being grown over by ferns and other plants. It grows in part shade and can get to 6” wide.

***Eriogonum wrightii* var *subscaposum*?** - Nancy saw this buckwheat in the basalt crevice garden. Does anyone know what it is? I know there can be a lot of flower color variation since the flowers can be white, cream or pink but the flowers here are much more colorful than the ones I see on the web for Wright’s Buckwheat and the leaves are not that gray.

Darlingtonia - Lastly seen was a Pitcher plant in the crevice garden

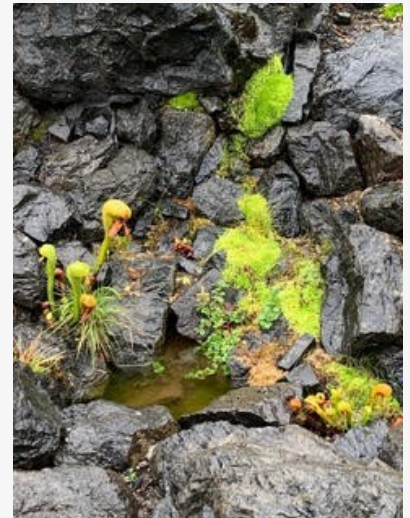
~Ana Muir



Petrocosmia



Eriogonum wrightii



Darlingtonia

UPCOMING MEETINGS

January 12th: Del McComb, horticulturalist, consultant, designer and co-owner of *Blossoms Farm*, Corralitos, CA, *Growing Gorgeous Gardens from the Ground Up*

February 9th: Andy Mariani and Charlie Olson, longtime Santa Clara Valley orchardists, **with Robin Chapman**, author of *The Lost Orchards of Silicon Valley*, moderator, *Olson and Mariani: Farming in The Valley of Heart's Delight* **Remember to submit your questions for our February speakers prior to the meeting date to info@westernhort.org**. Due to an expected substantial interest in this meeting, in-person attendees will be required to register on Eventbrite before the meeting. Priority will be given to Western Hort and Cal Hort members. See our January newsletter for details.

March 9th: Kipp McMichael, web developer and passionate horticulturalist, Berkeley, CA, *Succulents at Large: Designing with Larger Succulents*

April 13th: Patricia Rain, Vanilla Queen, author, educator, culinary historian and owner of *The Vanilla Company*, Santa Cruz, CA, *Vanilla: The Botany, The History, and The Culture*

May 11th: Dave Muffly, arborist, horticulturalist and ecological engineer, Santa Barbara, CA, *Resiliency: Choosing Trees for Climate Adaptation in Coastal California*

HORTICULTURAL HAPPENINGS

Cal Hort Plant Forum: End-Of-Year Party Edition! Monday, December 6

Our End-of-Year Party on Monday, December 6 will include a special edition of Plant Forum. This edition will be little different from our normal program. ANYTHING (horticulturally related) GOES—stories, advice, pics that you would like to share or get opinions on that are garden related or plant related. This is a chance to show off, tell a story, do a little reminiscing, share a success or maybe a failure that we can all learn from as well as give advice or get advice, the more sharing the better.

Please send your images and a little bit about the subject(s) or a prompt for your story **directly to Ellen Frank** at ellenfrank@sbcglobal.net anytime **before 5 pm, Sunday, December 5** (though you can make things easier for Ellen if you can get them in even sooner).

Here are some ideas to get you going:

Garden and Plant stories

- Before and after photos of your overall garden or of a new garden bed
- Your favorite plant ever and why, or a particular type of plant you collect and what started you on collecting them
- A plant that was given to you that, because of the connection with the giver, you cherish all the more.
- The most extravagantly expensive plant that you bought (and did it survive?)
- Propagating or grafting successes or failures

Resources

- Your favorite plant/gardening book, pod cast, YouTube channel, or website
- Your favorite gardening tool, or a gardening tool that turned out to be useless
- The best gardening advice you've ever received
- Your favorite or the most unusual garden art that you own or have seen
- How you control Gophers—everyone wants that story!—or other garden pests.

Miscellaneous

- Something beautiful in nature that inspires you
- Plants you have used to make holiday wreaths (and if you have pictures, all the better)
- A harvest story of your edibles and what delicious dishes you create with all that fresh produce
- Wildlife in your garden—birds, insects, mammals, amphibians, reptiles—treasured or reviled
- Travel photos of exciting gardens and natural sites you have visited.
- A story of how you got interested in gardening, or of gardening with a child

We must limit the number of slides in the forum to a maximum of 3 per person so send us just the best of your pics and stories Note: this doesn't limit sharing stories that are spurred by others slides.

California Horticultural Society

Website: Calhortsociety.org

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

We are looking for volunteers at our in-person meetings to help at the Welcome Table and to check vaccination verification at the doors. Grace Tsang has volunteered to step in as President next year if we can find a co-president to share the position like Carrie Parker and Liz Calhoun did for a couple of years. By sharing the responsibilities there is less burden on one person. Please email info@westernhort.org or talk to Grace if you are interested. The president presides over our member and board meetings and has the primary responsibility of managing the work of all other members who keep our organization going.

Plant Share

You will once again have the opportunity to bring actual plants or cuttings to the December meeting for sharing information about with others in attendance and on Zoom. You may also submit photos to share but you will need to be in attendance to share the information about your photos. Please send photos to info@westernhort.org by Monday December 6th. Be prepared to speak about the plant's geographical location, exposure, soil, water and other growth requirements. If you have plants that you would like help identifying or want some cultural advice on, feel free to submit these or bring them in also.

PLANT SALE TABLE

We are going to kick off our in-person meetings with a different kind of plant table. Rather than a sale we will have a friendly exchange. 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 December meeting to share with others.

Officers and Board Members:

President: Janet Hoffmann
Vice President: Grace Tsang
Secretary : Leslie Dean
Corresponding Secretary: Rosalie Shepherd

Treasurer: Jennifer Doniach
Other Board Members: Carol Dahout, Carol Moholt,
Michael Craib

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:

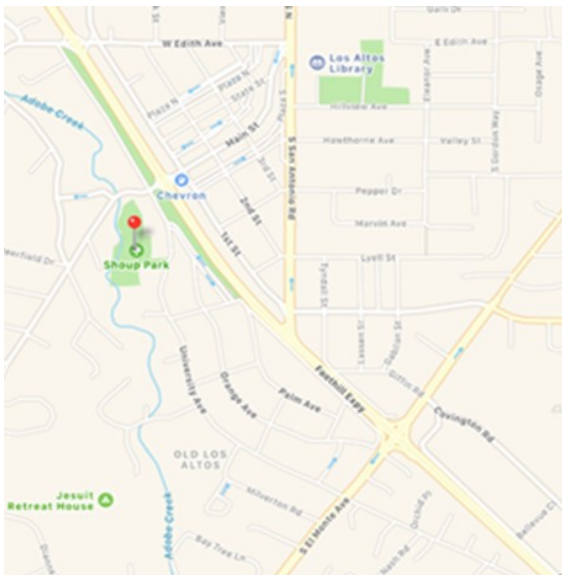
Membership Rates: A one-year membership (Sep-Aug) includes an e-mail copy of this newsletter and admittance to all of our monthly meetings. Regular membership is \$35, Family membership for two or more members at the same address is \$50, and a discounted rate for students is \$20. To receive a print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

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 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 : December 8th

Meeting Shoup Park Garden House and Zoom via internet

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.

Shoup Park Garden House, 400 University Ave, Los Altos. Located near Lincoln Ave.

Newsletter Submissions

The newsletter publishes on the first of the month. **Note: deadline for submission for the next newsletter is the 22nd of December.** 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