

FEBRUARY 2000 PLANT FORUM NOTES

It is hoped (due to so much recent rain) that more people will feel encouraged to bring in plants to show at the forum table. The plants displayed at the February meeting were: *Camellia* seedling, *Camellia* 'Moonlight Sonata', *Camellia* 'Marchioness of Exeter', *Camellia* 'Reg Ragland', *Deppea splendens* – clone C, *Justicia leonardii*, *Pandorea pandorana*, *Pelargonium* 'Old Spice', *Pelargonium tomentosum*, *Reinwardtia indica*, and *Yucca whipplei*

Chasmanthe floribunda var. *duckittii* (Iridaceae). South Africa. A clear bright yellow form of this well-known plant. This plant is a vigorous grower and may become a garden pest, though generally not to the degree as the typical form. Though most references state that this species will reach from 2 to 2 ½ feet tall, these plants are frequently 3 feet tall in our region. (Angelika Brinkmann-Busi)

Eranthemum pulchellum [= *E. nervosum*] (Acanthaceae). India. The most notable features of this plant are the striking large terminal clusters of true-blue flowers. The flower buds are hidden by showy bracts that have an attractive light green and white pattern. From a distance, this plant could easily be mistaken for one of the Mexican *Salvia* species, but the main differences are: a stiffer growth habit (not prone to floppiness as many of the *Salvia* are; ample mid-green, +/- shiny foliage that tends to hide the stems; and the presence of numerous basal stems. The plant will not survive freezing, so it is best grown along the coast. The plant does best in partial shade and will require regular watering. (Angelika Brinkmann-Busi)

Helleborus X sternii [*H. argutifolius* X *H. lividus*] (Ranunculaceae). Hybrid of garden origin. A spectacular vigorous plant for the garden. The best plants of this cross combine the choicest features of their parents: slate green leaves with a blush of red, scalloped leaf margins, red petioles and stems, and a reddish flush throughout the greenish inflorescence. Plants will reach about three feet in height, but may grow taller. Older plants will produce numerous stems from the base. Each stem will produce one terminal inflorescence. The plants do best in partial shade to bright full shade. Though the parents of this hybrid are among the most drought tolerant of the hellebores, the plants do best with regular watering – especially when they are grown in the hotter inland valleys. Protect these plants from snails and slugs, as these will disfigure the beautiful leaves. This hybrid (and its parent species) is also easy to grown in containers. (Susan Rudnicki)

Hesperaloe parviflora [creamy yellow flowers] (Agavaceae). Texas and Mexico. A pale cream-colored form of the plant. I find that the cream-colored flowers are not particularly effective in the garden or landscape. A true yellow-flowered form would be a most welcome addition to the palette of drought tolerant landscape plants for our region. (Joan Citron)

Hyacinthus orientalis 'Carnegie'. (Liliaceae). Syria, Lebanon, and Turkey. This is the best perennial white-flowered cultivar for our region. The plants will come back year after year in either pots or in the garden. The flowers carry the typical hyacinth fragrance. Hyacinth bulbs are reportedly poisonous to humans. (Joan Citron)

Pelargonium abrotanifolium. (Geraniaceae). South Africa, from the Cape Province to the southern part of Orange Free State. The plant is found in dry rocky areas where it tends to bloom nearly throughout the year. Small clusters of pale magenta to pink $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ inch flowers. The foliage is finely cut and is quite attractive. The leaves are said to be scented like those of *Santolina*. Mature plants may reach a height of about three feet tall and will be equally wide. (Cathy Ratner)

- B.O'B.