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# SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

## GREEN SHEET

## NOVEMBER 2002 PLANT FORUM NOTES

In addition to the plants discussed, the following plants, described in the Society's *Selected Plants for Southern California Gardens*, were also shown:

*Barleria obtusa*

*Begonia fuchsioides*

*Crotalaria agatiflora*

*Felicia echinata*

*Hypoestes aristata*

*Polygala* × *dalmaisiana*

*Salvia cacaliaefolia*

*Salvia regla*

*Salvia splendens* 'Van Houttei'

*Urginea maritima*

Thank you to all those who brought plants to the November meeting! All are encouraged to bring in plants to share with the group. Remember that you do get one free "exhibitor's ticket" for the plant raffle if you bring in one or more plants for discussion at the forum table.

*Ajuga reptans* – a stunning variegated sport of 'Catlin's Giant' (Lamiaceae). This new plant appeared as a sport at Magic Growers in Pasadena in a block of 'Catlin's Giant'. The plant has the appearance of one of the fancy-leaved lettuces, or of a smaller, thinner-leaved *Bergenia*. Variegation is small white dots and blotches. Joe is looking for a good cultivar name for this plant! (Joe Brosius/Magic Growers)



*Ajuga reptans*



*Bidens nudata*

*Bidens nudata* (Asteraceae). Baja California, Mexico. Baja Tickseed. According to Ira Wiggins the plant is found in the Sierra de la Laguna and the Cape region of Baja California, Mexico on "north facing slopes and ridges, margins of meadows, and pine-oak woodlands." The plant is widely adaptable both in gardens and in the wild – tolerating sun to partial shade, regular to occasional watering, and clay to sandy-rocky soil. Bright green foliage is finely cut and gives the plant a frothy, billowy texture. Yellow daisy flowers appear from summer until cold weather strikes. This plant is successfully grown in cismontane Southern California and to at least as far north as San Luis Obispo. Trish reports that it's attractive to small butterflies that are still lingering in your garden in fall. (Trish Meyer)



*Hernandia bivalvis*

*Hernandia bivalvis* (Hernandiaceae). Queensland, Australia. Grease Nut, Shitwood. Despite the unattractive common names, this is a rare and beautiful large shrub to small tree from relictual rainforest stands near Brisbane, Australia. The plant's infructescences are similar in size and shape to those of *Koelreuteria*, except those of this plant are fleshy, orange-red, and are composed of two parts that hide a half-inch hard black seed. Leaves are shiny and bright green. Inflorescences are composed of three tiny flowers: a single female flower set between two male flowers. Elliot & Jones note that the plants may go semi-deciduous if drought stressed. They also note that this plant is finding a market as an ornamental – but I would strongly recommend a new common name! Regular watering is recommended for our region. (Jim Jaeger/Huntington Botanical Gardens)



*Morinda citrifolia* (Rubiaceae). India to Australia. Indian Mulberry. The plant shown was in flower and in fruit. Brenda noted that the fruits may be toxic, the flowers are used to make a red dye, the roots are used to make a yellow dye, and that some parts of the plant are used medicinally. The plant is growing in a container in a greenhouse. (Brenda Kanno/Cal-State Northridge Botanic Garden)

*Operculicarya decaryi* (Anacardiaceae). Madagascar. no common name. The plant is growing as a large bonsai specimen in a greenhouse. The shiny green compound leaves resemble those of our native *Bursera* (elephant tree). In nature, it is a pachycaul tree reaching up to 30 feet tall. It grows in the xeric limestone area of southwestern Madagascar. Tiny flowers are red, and are followed by small berries. Mature trees resemble miniaturized baobabs. Plants may be grown as container specimens for many years – the specimen shown is uncharacteristically thin. There are three species of *Operculicarya*, this one is the only one with fleshy, water-storing roots. (Brian Houck/Cal-State Northridge Botanic Garden)

*Plectranthus neochilus* (Lamiaceae). Southern Africa. No common name. Elizabeth notes that this plant is a low spreading groundcover to about one-and-a-half feet tall. In her garden it is aggressive but easily contained. Plants are noted as more compact in sun, but it grows and blooms equally well in bright shade. (Elizabeth Stromme)

*Salvia semiatrata* (Lamiaceae). Oaxaca, Mexico. No common name. This is one of those “in between” sages – not herbaceous, yet not entirely woody either (it is in the same category as *Salvia melissodora* and *Salvia regla*, though this plant is easier to prune successfully than the other two). The small leaves have an attractive textured surface. Plants bloom heavily in late fall and continue through the winter. Calyces are an unusual rosy-purple and are an interesting counterpoint to the two-toned flowers. The upper lip of the flower is pale violet, while the lower lip is an extremely dark purple-black.



Betsy Clebsch writes that plants in the wild may reach 6 feet tall and 3 feet wide, but that half that height should be expected in California gardens. Inflorescences on mature plants may reach up to 6 inches long. Cathy notes that her plant has stiff stems that don't flop. Chris mentions that his plant drapes nicely, and suggests the plant may be useful in hanging pots. (Chris Meyer, Cathy Ratner, Peggy Stewart)

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The identity of the following two orchids could not be completely ascertained: *Cattleya* and *Oncidium* – both are grown outdoors in the Silver Lake area of Los Angeles.

The following plants were also shown but are not described in the Society's *Selected Plants for Southern California Gardens*:

*Diospyros kaki* 'Giant Fuyu'

*Erysimum menziesii* var. *menziesii*

*Gnaphalium canescens* ssp.

*microcephalum*

*Hoya multiflora* (aka: "Starshowers")

*Muhlenbergia lindheimeri*

*Salvia involucrata* 'Bethelii'

*Salvia madrensis*

*Salvia microphylla* (Belize form)

— Edited by Bart O'Brien



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