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SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

GREEN SHEET

DECEMBER 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:

Eremophila maculata

Rhigozum obovatum

Ribes malvaceum 'Dancing Tassels'

Salvia brandegei

Salvia iodantha

Salvia spathacea 'Kawatre'

Senna (*Cassia*) *artemisioides*

Thank you to all those who brought plants to the December 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.

Arctostaphylos – mutation of 'Emerald Carpet' (Ericaceae). California. No common name. This very unusual manzanita occurred as a bud mutation at Santa Barbara Botanic Garden. The plant has very tiny leaves and blooms profusely ('Emerald Carpet' is a stingy bloomer). This is a beautiful container or rock garden plant. It is hoped that Santa Barbara Botanic Garden will officially name and release the plant soon. (Bart O'Brien, Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden)



Columnnea arguta (Gesneriaceae). Panama. No common name. This beautiful epiphytic plant has long, straight-hanging stems that carry sharp-pointed, waxy, oval-shaped leaves. The large, open-faced flowers are salmon-red and are marked with yellow. Cathy notes that her plant rarely blooms, due to lack of heat, even though it is grown indoors. She notes that this plant requires very little water. (Cathy Ratner)

Hypoestes artistata 'Purple Stars' (Acanthaceae). South Africa. Purple Stars. This new cultivar has darker flowers and a more compact growth habit than the typical species (see species description in *Selected Plants*). (Gary Hammer, Desert to Jungle Nursery)

Justicia brandegeana 'Pink' (Acanthaceae). Mexico. Pink Shrimp Plant. This new South African cultivar has pink bracts (instead of the typical coppery-salmon color), otherwise this plant is as described in *Selected Plants*. (Gary Hammer, Desert to Jungle Nursery)

Knowltonia vesicatoria (Ranunculaceae). South Africa. No common name. A new introduction, this low clumping perennial blooms in fall and winter. It prefers light shade. This genus is separated from *Anemone* by their fleshy drupelets. (Gary Hammer, Desert to Jungle Nursery)

Mimulus (*Diplacus*) 'Valentine' (Scrophulariaceae). California. Valentine Monkeyflower. This is the largest flowered, pure red, named Verity hybrid. "Pure red" could be misleading, but these flowers are really fire engine red. Flowers have a white throat and two linear orange nectar guides. Plants typically bloom in spring, but this container-grown specimen decided to bloom now. Plants need regular pinching when young, but will then develop





Ribes malvaceum
'Christy Ridge'

into dense subshrubs from 2 to 3 feet tall with an equal spread. Plants prefer full sun near the coast and partial shade when grown in hot inland gardens. The shrubby monkeyflowers are almost always avoided by deer. (Bart O'Brien, Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden)

Ribes malvaceum 'Christy Ridge' (Grossulariaceae). California: Santa Cruz Island. Christy Ridge Chaparral Currant. It seems as though the chaparral currants that are found on the Channel Islands are characterized by profuse blooming; or so it is with both 'Christy Ridge' and 'Dancing Tassels'. 'Christy Ridge' has pale pink flowers in drooping clusters up to four inches long. If pollinated, the flowers are followed by blue-black succulent quarter-inch fruits that are covered with a waxy, dusty-blue bloom. Plants may reach 6 to 8 feet tall with a slightly narrower spread. Drought tolerant when established, this plant prefers full sun near the coast and partial shade when grown in hot interior gardens. Plants are fast growing and begin flowering shortly after the first winter rains. Chaparral currant flowers are hummingbird favorites. Young stems and foliage are densely covered with a glandular pubescence that gives the plant its distinctive aroma. (Trish Meyer)

Salvia holwayi (Lamiaceae). Guatemala to the state of Chiapas, Mexico. No common name. Showy bright red flowers appear in large clusters from October to March, making this species a hummingbird favorite. One of the larger sages, this plant can easily grow 3 to 5 feet tall and, because of its readily rooting stems, can spread indefinitely (8 feet or more in one season). Pruning is necessary to keep the plant under control, and should be done after plants have finished blooming. Plants have a tendency to climb or drape. In the wild, this plant inhabits the forest understory, so it is not surprising that this plant prefers partial shade, rich soil, and ample water. Chris suggests trying it in a large hanging basket. (Chris Meyer)



Senna (Cassia) alata

Senna (Cassia) alata (Fabaceae). Tropical Americas, Africa, Australia, southeast Asia. Candle Senna, Christmas Candle. In our region this plant is normally a shrub up to 10 feet +/- tall, though in the tropics it can become a tree over 30 feet tall. Plants have compound leaves with from 7 to 14 pairs of oval-shaped leaflets; the terminal pair of leaflets is noticeably larger than the others. The terminal, densely packed inflorescences do appear candle-like. The fragrance of the flowers is noted as strikingly similar to buttered popcorn. It was noted that this specimen blooms all year. (V. Pullian)

The identity of the following plants could not be completely ascertained:

unknown Lamiaceae
Oreopanax sp.

— Edited by Bart O'Brien
Photos by Joe Brosius, Chris Meyer



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