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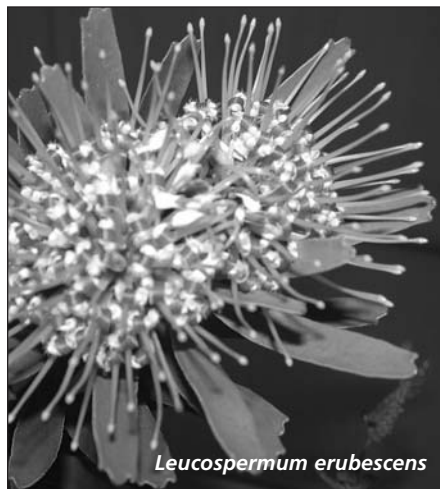
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

GREEN SHEET

FEBRUARY 2003 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:

Adenium obesum
Aechmea recurvata
Cerintho major
Chorizema cordatum
Citrus medica
Helleborus × *sternii*
Melianthus major
Pelargonium echinatum
Phlomis fruticosa
Salvia dorisiana
Tulbaghia comminsii
Vriesea hieroglyphica hybrid



Leucospermum erubescens

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

Hebe sp., *Musa acuminata*(?)
'Variegated Hawaiian' – white variegation on both foliage and fruits!, and (?) *Pachyphytum oviferum*.

Thank you to all that brought plants to the February, 2003 meeting – it was a very good showing!!! 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 – a better deal than ever with the special March raffle!

Lavandula stoechas (Lamiaceae). Spanish Lavender. Western Mediterranean. Evergreen shrub. Always a welcome addition to the sunny garden, Spanish lavender typically blooms from spring through early summer (the drought and heat last month must have tricked this plant!). The pungency of the foliage's aroma varies between individuals and clones, but is most often categorized as fresh and pine-like. Narrow leaves amply cover the stems and vary in color with the seasons – from greenish during lush growth in the winter and early spring months to gray-white during the plant's summer and fall dormancy. The showy inflorescences are spikes of tightly packed tiny purplish flowers and are capped by four large purplish long-lasting bracts (often referred to as wings or flags). Because of these bracts, Spanish lavender is typically thought of as the showiest of the lavenders. Full sun and well-drained soils are preferred, but the plants are adaptable. (Ruth Ingham)

Leucospermum erubescens (Proteaceae). Pincushion. Cape Province of South Africa. Erect, single stemmed, evergreen shrub up to 7 feet tall and spreading slightly wider. Plants are naturally found in a very limited area on hot dry slopes that receive from 10 to 14 inches of winter rainfall per year (sounds like an ideal candidate for our foothills!). Plants are noted for their numerous inflorescences – up to eight are produced near the top of each shoot. Flowers emerge pale yellow and age to brilliant crimson. Christian notes that this plant prefers sandy acidic soil and wants no phosphorus or chemical fertilizers. Like many proteaceous plants, this pincushion should do well on slopes of decomposed granite – the closest conditions California has to offer sandy-acidic loving plants. (Christian Cobbs)

Phlebodium aureum (synonym: *Polypodium aureum*) (Polypodiaceae). Golden Polypody Fern. Tropical America. Evergreen fern from slowly creeping rhizomes. This fern "species" is thought to be a fertile hybrid between *Phlebodium decumanum* and *P. pseudoaureum*. The genus *Phlebodium* is closely related to *Polypodium*, and is differentiated primarily by the profuse veination in the former. Fronds reach from 1 to 3 feet high and are usually a unique blue-gray color. The terminal portions of the rhizomes have light brown to straw colored prominent scales that give the stems a soft, shaggy appearance. Susan notes that this fern is grown for its beautiful color and distinctive structure. Her plant takes dry or wet conditions at Manhattan Beach. This fern may also be beautifully displayed in a decorative pot or in a hanging basket. (Susan Rudnicki)



Ribes malvaceum 'Montara Rose'

Ribes malvaceum 'Montara Rose' (Grossulariaceae). Montara Rose Chaparral Currant. This cultivar was selected by Roger Raiche (formerly of UC Berkeley Botanical Gardens) from Montara Mountain in San Mateo County, California. Deciduous to semi-evergreen shrub. This clone was selected for its unusually dark rose-colored flowers. Plants usually develop a narrow (eventually spreading) vase-shaped growth habit. Maple-like leaves are covered with sticky glandular hairs that give the plant its distinctive aroma. Chaparral currant is often the first California native plant to bloom – often commencing in advance of the first fall rains, but this particular cultivar usually blooms a bit later. Plants in shaded sites that receive (or retain) a bit of summer moisture will keep some of their foliage through the summer months whereas those in sunny dry gardens will go completely dormant. Like many of our native *Ribes*, this plant is subject to sudden death from root rot organisms – an apparently healthy plant can die in a matter of days. In hot inland gardens chaparral currants are best placed on north facing slopes amongst other chaparral species. (Chris Meyer)



Ribes thacherianum

Ribes thacherianum (Grossulariaceae). Santa Cruz Island Gooseberry. California: endemic to Santa Cruz Island. Near deciduous to evergreen shrub. This attractive plant inhabits the margins of the pine woodlands. It looks rather similar to the common *R. californicum*. Axillary nodding flowers have spreading to upswept pinkish to dark rose colored sepals and tiny white petals. The small fruits appear to be quite spiny, but like all of our native gooseberries the spines don't cause any pain or discomfort when popped into your mouth and eaten. Unfortunately, these fruits don't have much flavor and are composed principally of seeds. Mature plants often grow in fits and starts, often producing wild watersprouts from the base that can reach 5 to 6 feet tall in a matter of weeks. Santa Cruz Island gooseberry is best grown in partial shade as a barrier plant as it typically has from one to three spines per node (though spineless plants are known) and produces prickles along the internodes. It is also an excellent plant for the habitat garden where the spiny stems provide welcome cover to small animals and birds. (Chris Meyer)

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

- Bulbinella nutans* var. *nutans*
(shown as *B. robusta*, a synonym)
- Ceanothus* 'Wheeler Canyon'
- Ludisia discolor* var. *dawsoniana*
(shown as *Haemaria discolor* var. *dawsoniana*, a synonym)
- Kalanchoe* 'Elfin Bells'
- Lilium* 'Kiss Me Kate'
- Malacothamnus clementinus*
- Persicaria* 'Red Dragon'
- Pitcairnia* (*flammea* × *smithiorum*)
- Rhipsalis burchellii*
- Viola corsica*.

Verbena gooddingii (Verbenaceae). Desert Verbena. California (eastern Mojave Desert and northeastern Colorado Desert) east to Utah and New Mexico. Herbaceous perennial. These plants love sun, heat, and good drainage – and in such conditions can bloom in their first year from seed. Plants are usually about a foot tall and are up to 2 to 3 feet wide. In colder areas they can die back to the ground in summer and reemerge in February or March. In our area, they are almost evergreen and everblooming (though they can be stopped by drought or a cold snap). Flowers can vary in color from the typical lilac/pink/pale purple tones to pure white. The flowers are particularly pleasantly fragrant, and can be used as cut flowers. Foliage and stems are covered with long soft hairs. (Trish Meyer)

Whiteheadia bifolia (Hyacinthaceae). Whiteheadia. South Africa. This summer dormant bulb has tiny white flowers and rounded fleshy leaves that sit directly on the ground. The specimen shown by Bill was in full bloom and is grown in a small container, outdoors in 50% shade. The entire plant was less than about an inch tall. (William Baker)

— Edited by Bart O'Brien

