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# SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

## GREEN SHEET

## NOVEMBER 2003 PLANT FORUM NOTES

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

*Aloe bellatula*  
*Ampelopsis brevipedunculata*  
*Anthurium andraeanum*  
*Barleria obtusa*  
*Bidens aequisquama*  
*Clerodendrum thomsoniae*  
*Cuphea* × *purpurea*  
*Dahlia imperialis*  
*Dalea* sp.  
*Dichorisandra thyrsoflora*  
*Diospyros kaki* 'Fuyu'  
*Distictis* 'Rivers'  
*Holmskioldia sanguinea*  
*Hypoestes aristata*  
*Lapageria rosea*  
*Salvia purpurea*  
*Solandra longiflora*  
*Sprekelia formosissima*  
*Tagetes lucida*



Thank you to all who brought plants to the November 2003 meeting – and sorry for the delay in getting this material written up! Everyone is 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!

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

*Araucaria bidwillii* (Araucariaceae). Bunya-Bunya. Australia: Queensland. Evergreen tree that may reach 80 feet tall and 60 feet wide. The “leaves” are very sharp. Plants prefer rich soil and regular watering. Eileen brought in a large cone and noted that these may weigh up to 18 pounds – which leads to another name for the plant: Widow’s Tree. This specimen is from a tree growing in Camarillo that is reportedly 111 years old. *Sunset* notes that this may be grown as a house plant, and is the most commonly encountered *Araucaria* in California. (Eileen Fiumara)

*Begonia* ‘Little Miss Mummy’ (Begoniaceae). Little Miss Mummy Begonia. Evergreen cane begonia hybridized by Brad Thompson. Grow this begonia in partial shade with adequate water (but don’t overwater or the plant will rot). Plants should be blooming from summer to fall, but Debra’s plant has yet to bloom. Her plant has been in the ground for 1 (?) year and has branched out nicely and is notable for its foliage. (Debra Galliani)

*Bidens nudata* (Asteraceae). Baja Tickseed. Mexico: Baja California. Evergreen perennial. This plant is endemic to Baja California and is only found in the Sierra de la Laguna of the Cape region. In the wild, it is found on north-facing slopes and ridges along the margins of meadows and in pine-oak woodlands. Flowers range from 1 to 3 inches across and are the typical golden yellow of many of our native daisies. What makes this plant particularly attractive to gardeners is the attractive foliage. Leaves are bright green and are twice pinnate into filiform segments – giving the plant a soft, lush appearance. Trish notes that her plant is 1–2 feet tall and 4 feet wide and that it blooms from November through March on their north-facing clay slope. Surprisingly for a *Bidens* (most are water-loving), Trish notes that her plant needs very little watering once it got established. Plants may be grown in full sun near the coast and partial shade inland. Although this plant is from the Cape region of Baja, it is quite happily growing at least as far north as San Luis Obispo, where it is thriving at the Leaning Pine Arboretum. This plant was originally collected by Townsend Brandegee in 1890 from the Sierra Francisquito. It was published in volume one of the Brandegee journal *Zoe* later that same year. Earl Sherff noted that this species is “distinguished from most others in the genus by the styliiferous and fertile ray florets, also by the achenes, which are parallel-sided throughout almost their entire

Our regular Forum hosts  
Bart O'Brien and Kathy Musial.



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

- *Amaranthus* sp.
- *Mucuna* sp. (a large vine growing in Santa Monica in full sun).
- *Salvia* sp. (a very sticky species with showy red flowers from Tingo, Peru).
- An unknown vine from CSUN Botanic Garden was also shown.
- There was also an unusual asteraceous plant (not a *Montanoa*) whose identity remains a mystery.



length." This plant is known to have been grown successfully at the Harvard University Botanical Garden in 1894. (Trish Meyer)

*Cobaea scandens* (Polemoniaceae). Cup-and-Saucer Vine. Mexico. Evergreen vine, usually grown as an annual. Surprisingly, this plant has never made an appearance on the Forum table until now. Plants are very fast growing and may reach 20 feet tall during the warmer months. The common name comes from the cup-like arrangement of petals and the saucer-like green calyx. When the flowers first appear they are greenish, but as they expand and mature they turn from pale purple to a deep rosy violet. A white-flowered form is sometimes grown. The compound leaves are composed of 2 to 3 pairs of leaflets. Plants climb from tendrils that emerge from the ends of the leaves. Plants are often attacked by red spider mites when grown in dry, hot inland portions of our area. (Harvey Meyer)

*Cyclamen cilicium* (Primulaceae). Cyclamen. Southwestern Turkey, particularly centered on the Cilician Taurus Mountains. Deciduous tuberous perennial. In nature, this plant is found growing in partial shade in pine and fir woodlands and in rocky areas and screes from 2,000 to 6,500 feet elevation. Flowers are a pale pink with darker markings near the base of the petals. An albino form is known. Flowers are somewhat fragrant and appear with the leaves. Plants may be grown in containers or in the ground. Elizabeth mentioned that her plant is one year old and appears to be well adapted to growing in partial shade and well-drained soil with no summer watering. She also notes that the flowers appear before the foliage on her plant. This species was first described in 1843. (Elizabeth Stromme)

*Dalechampia dioscoreifolia* (Euphorbiaceae). Costa Rican Butterfly Vine. Central to South America. Evergreen vine. This vine is particularly striking when in bloom. The inflorescence is backed by two large purple bracts that have serrated margins and the tiny and yellowish flowers are held in a cluster between the two bracts. Flowers appear from summer to fall. Dick notes that the plant should be grown in full sun to partial shade with regular watering. It was noted that plants in this genus can have especially irritating stiff hairs on the stems – in addition to the typical euphorbia family's caustic sap – though this plant did not appear to have any of these damaging hairs. (Dick Kohlschreiber, South Coast Botanic Garden)

*Tillandsia fasciculata* (Bromeliaceae). No common name. Florida through the Caribbean, Central America and northern South America. Extremely variable epiphyte, growing from sea level to 6,000 feet elevation. This is one of the larger species of *Tillandsia*, ranging from 8 inches to 3 feet in height. Leaves appear silvery due to a dense coating of scales and may reach from 1 to 2 feet in length. These leaves are brittle and will break if they are bent. Floral bracts are green with a red margin and the flowers are mauve to indigo. Unlike many *Tillandsia* species, this plant has more of a root system, and it may be grown in pots. Like most *Tillandsia* species, this plant prefers bright light and fresh air. Cathy notes that when the plant receives more sun, the bloom spikes become a brighter red and yellow. Plants readily make offsets that are easily grown. (Cathy Ratner)

— Edited by Bart O'Brien  
Photos by Chris & Trish Meyer



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