



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

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GREEN SHEET

FEBRUARY 2004 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 cameronii
Arbutus 'Marina'
Aristolochia californica
Chaenomeles japonica
Cyrtanthus mackenii (an especially impressive potted specimen with dozens of yellow-flowered inflorescences)
Encephalartos trispinosus
Geranium × *cantabrigiense* 'Biokovo'
Echeveria 'Set-oliver'
Justicia leonardii
Kalanchoe manginii
Kerria japonica 'Pleniflora'
Lachenalia aloides
Lachenalia bulbifera
Lophostemon confertus 'Variegata'
Michelia doltsopa
Pyrostegia venusta
Salvia gesneraeflora 'Tequila'
Schefflera arboricola.

Thank you to all who brought plants to the February 2004 meeting; it was a particularly rich assortment of winter blooms. 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*:

Centradenia floribunda (Melastomataceae). Spanish Shawl. Mexico. Evergreen sprawling shrub to about 2 feet tall. This plant has simple opposite leaves up to 2 inches in length with deeply impressed veins. Though the leaves are produced in pairs, one is often much larger than the other. Stems and leaves are frequently flushed with reddish tones. Individual flowers are small – about 1/2 inch across – but are produced in showy panicles. Plants are fast growing, require plenty of water, and prefer rich soils with ample leafmold. Rangy specimens respond well to pruning. (Note: this plant was shown as *Centradenia grandifolia* – however this is a much larger species up to 5 feet tall, with leaves up to 6 inches long and flowers that are 1/4 inch across.) (Dick Kohlschreiber / South Coast Botanic Garden)

Crassula arborescens 'Blauvogel' (translates to: Bluebird) (Crassulaceae). Bluebird Silver Dollar. South Africa. Evergreen succulent shrub. The species is known to reach heights over 10 feet, but in cultivation it is usually around 3 feet tall and wide. The species produces showy clusters of pinkish flowers in fall and winter, but the main attraction is the beautiful foliage. This succulent is easily grown in most gardens. No specific information was found about the cultivar 'Blauvogel'. Joan notes that her plant is grown in partial shade in the San Fernando Valley and has been in flower for the past six weeks. (Joan Citron)

Kniphofia 'Winter Cheer' (Asphodelaceae). Winter Cheer Torch Lily. South Africa. Evergreen perennial. This plant is similar in appearance (flowers and foliage) to *K.* 'Christmas Cheer', except that it blooms later – typically from New Years through February. Plants are vigorous and easy to grow. Like most torch lilies, they require very little care other than deadheading, seasonal removal of dead basal leaves, and occasional watering. (Bart O'Brien)

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

Epidendrum hybrid (from Trader Joe's); *Kalanchoe blossfeldiana* – a double rose-pink flowered cultivar with large leaves (Note: There are several different double-flowered cultivars available, in a range of flower colors); and a *Bletilla* hybrid (from Bob Ornduff's collection) with cream-colored flowers.

Plectranthus comosus (Lamiaceae). No common name. Tropical East Africa, Western Asia, Nepal, Bhutan, India, Sri Lanka, Southern China and Thailand. Evergreen shrub to nearly 10 feet tall with a wider spread. At UCLA, this plant is cut back by half at the end of the flowering season to keep it a manageable size. The velvety leaves are covered with short, soft hairs and have crenate margins. Showy deep violet flowers are produced in whorl-like clusters on 6 to 12 inch spikes that appear from winter through spring. Joan's plant is growing in partial shade, though it is known to grow with minimal direct sunlight. Watch out: This plant is noted as a "noxious weed – garden escape" in South Africa. (Note: As with several *Plectranthus*, the identity of this plant is suspect!) (Joan Seidel)

Salvia melissodora (Lamiaceae). Grape-scented Sage. Mexico: from 4,000 to 8,000 feet elevation in the Sierra Madre Occidental from Chihuahua to Oaxaca. Evergreen shrub reaching at least 6 feet tall with a narrower spread. Ovate leaves to 1.5 inches long. This is one of those odd semi-woody sages that does not respond well to hard pruning. Small sky-blue flowers are produced in short spikes and are powerfully fragrant and remind many of grape soda or grape Kool Aid – leading to the plant's common name. The flowers are fragrant at all times, but are especially so in late afternoon and early evening. This is a plant for the back of the border, rather than front and center, as in most of our area it isn't one of the showiest plants. Near the coast the plant is nearly everblooming, in hotter inland areas it blooms from late fall to spring. (Bart O'Brien)

— Edited by Bart O'Brien

