

### APRIL 2005 PLANT FORUM NOTES

Thank you to all who brought plants to the April 2005 meeting it was a diverse showing of spring blooms - many are early since we've had so much rain over such a long period of time. 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!

In addition to the plants discussed below the following plants, described (or listed) in the Society's ***Selected Plants for Southern California Gardens***, were shown: *Allium unifolium*, *Callistemon* 'Rosea', *Dierama pendulum*, *Dianthus* 'Gloriosa', *Iris germanica*, *Lathyrus odoratus*, *Lupinus microcarpus* var. *densiflorus* f. *aureus* 'Ed Gedling', *Monochaetum vulcanicum* (shown as *Heterocentron elegans*), *Nicotiana alata*, *Nigella damascena*, *Rosa* 'Sombreuil', *Salvia guaranitica*, *Salvia saggitata*, *Tillandsia usneoides*, *Tulbaghia cominsii* (this is the correct spelling), and *Weigela florida* 'Variegata'.

The identity of the following plants could not be completely ascertained: *Billbergia pyramidalis* – variegated (shown as *B. nutans* – variegated), *Paphiopedilum* – hybrids, and *Puya* sp. (from a clump growing on the San Francisco peninsula).

The following plants were also shown but are not described in the Society's ***Selected Plants for Southern California Gardens***: *Clematis* 'John Warren', *Clematis* 'Sunset', *Oncidium* Tiger Crow Golden Girl, *Rosa* 'Dr. Huey', *Rosa* 'Eden', *Rosa* 'Route 66', *Scabiosa columbaria* 'Butterfly Blue', and *Tritonia* 'Bermuda Sands'.

*Aquilegia vulgaris* f. *vervaeneana* (Ranunculaceae). Variegated Columbine. Europe. Semi-evergreen perennial growing from 12 to 18 inches tall. The forma *vervaeneana* covers all the plants with leaves that are yellow splashed with green, flower color of the original plant was violet-purple but now there are many different flower colors that have this unusual variegated foliage. Plants prefer partial shade to full shade in most areas, but may be grown in full sun near the coast. As with nearly all columbines in our region, these are subject to leaf miners and occasionally mildew. Kathleen notes that, "The Huntington guarantees it will come back!" (Kathleen Brown)

*Pinellia ternata* (Araceae). No common name. Japan. Highly unusual in appearance - and in the horticulturally trendy Araceae no less – but be careful what you wish for. This plant has a bad reputation in other parts of the country. Seems that many of those seeds tend to germinate and the profuse, branching tubers can be difficult to control – particularly in shady and/or watered garden. Plants are perfectly hardy in our region and are not at all fussy about soils. Watered specimens will remain evergreen until late fall,

whereas plants grown dry may disappear as early as July or August. This plant does have handsome three-parted broad light green leaves. Flowers appear in spring and are green cylindrical spathe about a half inch across that surround a central pale green to whitish spadix. Shortly above the spadix, the spathe curves at 90 degrees to cover the spadix and then continues on in horizontal fashion for at least 2 to 4 inches as a thin green thread. As a personal note, I started with one plant (it was a gift) in a pot way back in the early 1990s. It was perfectly happy in that pot at my Mt. Baldy garden where it spread – slowly – into other pots. Now that I've moved downslope to Upland, in five years it has spread to many pots and has invaded all along water drainages along the north side of the garage and it isn't slowing down. (Anonymous)

*Rosa x damascena* f. *semperflorens* 'Quatre Saisons' (Rosaceae). Damask Rose, Rose of Castille. Asia Minor. (*Rosa gallica* x *Rosa moschata*) Semi-evergreen shrub. Thorny, arching canes may be 6 to 8 feet long. Sheldon notes that this plant is easily adaptable, but that the flowers are sensitive to sun and are fragile. Flowers are semi-double, have pink petals, and are extremely fragrant. This rose was planted at the at the Spanish missions of California. (Sheldon Lisker)

*Salvia concolor* (Lamiaceae). No common name. Mexico. Shrubby perennial to about 5 feet tall. Stems often flushed blue-violet as are the calyces. Flowers are deep blue, are about an inch long, and are carried in whorl-like clusters of 6 to 10 flowers. The coarsely serrated, pubescent leaves are 3 to 7 inches long and are deltoid to ovate in shape with a long attenuate tip. Plants require regular watering and sun to partial shade. (Dick Kohlschreiber/South Coast Botanical Garden)

*Sarcochilus fitzgeraldii* (Orchidaceae). Ravine Orchid. Australia: New South Wales. Evergreen orchid. This attractive plant has flowers that are white to pink with a central reddish splotch in the center, and the lip is yellow or orange. Fleshy leaves are linear to oblong and war slightly twisted. This specimen is being grown outdoors in the Silver Lake area. (Lyle Wiedeman)

– Edited by Bart O'Brien